

Kali just wanted a friend.

Lonely Lunchtime

By Stacy Lynn Carroll

(Based on a true story)

"The Holy Spirit whispers with a still small voice"
(Children's Songbook, 105).

Kali walked into the lunchroom and looked around. All the other kids were running straight to their friends and gathering at tables. The room was noisy with excited voices and happy laughter. It was only the second day of school, but it seemed like everyone had someone to sit with but Kali.

She squeezed the handle of her lunchbox and walked to one of the tables. "Can I sit by you?" Kali asked.

A girl with a long, brown braid looked up. She huffed and shook her head. "No. It's taken," she said.

"OK." Kali moved to another empty seat and set down her lunchbox.

"You can't sit here! I'm saving that seat," a boy in a green-striped shirt said. He pushed Kali's lunchbox onto the floor. His friends all laughed.

Kali bent down and picked up her lunchbox again. She walked across the lunchroom and sat at an empty table. She saw someone from her neighborhood and tried to wave, but he looked the other way. Kali frowned. Why didn't anyone want to be her friend?

Kali looked down at her food. She didn't feel like eating anymore. She wiped her eyes, closed her lunchbox, and walked outside.

Everyone was already playing with their friends. Kali sat by herself on a bench and watched the other kids having fun without her. Then Kali noticed a boy about her age





sitting alone on the grass. He was wearing a stained yellow shirt, and his hair stood up in the back.

Kali looked away. She saw a group of girls from her class playing foursquare. She wished they would invite her to play with them.

Kali looked at the boy again. His head was hanging down, and he was picking the grass around his feet. Kali remembered something Mom sometimes said: *Look for the kids who are lonely.*

Kali frowned. *She* was lonely too. Nobody was trying to be *her* friend!

But then Kali thought about when she got baptized last year. She promised to listen to the Holy Ghost. Maybe the Holy Ghost was helping her remember what Mom told her. Maybe the Holy Ghost was trying to tell her to play with the boy in the yellow shirt.

Kali sighed and got to her feet. A warm feeling spread in her heart. She walked over and sat next to the boy in the grass.

"Hi," she said.

"Hi," he mumbled back.

"What's your favorite color?"

"Um . . . green."

"That's cool. I like pink," said Kali. "Do you have a favorite animal?"

The boy sat up a little straighter and looked at her. "Yeah. I really like dinosaurs."

"Oh, me too. My favorite is a triceratops."

The boy smiled.

Then the bell rang. Kali got to her feet and waved goodbye to the boy. She smiled as she walked back to her classroom alone. She might not have a best friend, but she felt happy knowing she had made someone else's recess a little better. ●

The author lives in Utah, USA.



I was in a big rush to get to school. But then I had this feeling that I should grab a bag of chips at home first. After lunch, my friend Drew looked kind of sad. I asked him what was wrong. He said that he had forgotten his lunch. I remembered my chips, so I gave them to him. Drew said, "That's the nicest thing anyone has done for me at school."

Durham M., age 11, Utah, USA



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