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THE HUNDRED DRESSES – I

(Explanation)

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Today, Monday.....noticed her absence.

Today is Monday. Wanda Petronski is not at her seat. [Means she is absent today] But nobody has noticed her absence. Two girls Peggy and Madeline had started making fun of her. They have also not noticed her absence.

Usually Wanda.....dirt on the floor.

Word Meaning

Rough boys Naughty boys

Scuffling of feet Noisy movement of feet on the ground

Normally Wanda sat in the last row of the Room Number thirteen of the school. She sat in the seat next to the last seat of the last row. She sat in the corner of the class. In this row naughty boys who did not score good marks used to sit. Students sitting in that row used to move their feet a lot. They used to laugh loudly. The floor of the corner used to be full of mud and dirt.

Wanda did not sit.....but that was all.

Word Meaning

On the contrary Opposite to something

Quiet Calm

Crooked Naughty

Wanda was not naughty nor made noise but she still sat in that corner. Actually she was very clam and rarely spoke anything. She had never laughed loudly. Sometimes she twisted her mouth to give a naughty smile.

Nobody knew exactly.....the corner of the room.

Nobody was aware of the true reason of Wanda sitting in that corner seat. Other students thought that Wanda used to sit there because she came from Boggins Heights area of the town.

This area was very far from school. Her feet were always full of dry mud. But after Wanda had sat in her seat nobody bothered about her.

The time when they.....to have fun here.

Word Meaning

To have fun with her To tease her

They (other students) thought about Wanda only when they were out of the school. They thought about her at the noon time when they were coming back to school and in the morning before school started. On these occasions students would be in groups of two or three. They would be talking with each other and laughing while coming to the school campus. Sometimes students waited for Wanda to come so that they could tease her.

The next day.....that wanda wasn't there.

On the next day, the Tuesday, also Wanda did not come to school. Once again nobody paid attention to her absence. But on Wednesday Peggy and Maddie took notice about absence of Wanda. These two girls used to sit in front row with children who scored good marks. Their feet were never full of mud.

Peggy was the most.....had made them late to school.

Word Meaning

Pretty Beautiful

Peggy was the most popular girl of the school. She was beautiful. She had many beautiful clothes. Her hair was curly. Maddie was the best friend of Peggy. Maddie and Peggy noticed absence of Wanda because they got late because of her.

They had waited.....to have fun with her.

They had waited for Wanda to make of fun of her but she did not come. Many times they used to wait for Wanda Petronski to make fun of her.

Wanda petronski.The most of.....the same way that petronski was.

Most of the students in the room number thirteen did not have names similar to Wanda Petronski. Their names were easy to pronounce like Thomas, Smith or Allen. Name of one boy

in the class was Willie Bounce. Other students thought that his name was funny. But name Petronski was more funny.

Wanda didn't have any friends.....never been ironed properly.

Word Meaning

Did not hang right Did not fit correctly

Wanda did not have any friend in the class. She used to come to school alone and went home alone. She was always wearing a dress of faded blue colour. It did not fit her correctly. The dress was clean but it was never ironed properly.

She didn't have any friends.....to worn hard ground

Word Meaning

Hopscotch Name of a game kids play

Wanda did not have any friends but many girls talked to her. Sometimes in the school yard girls stood around her. They did so while she was watching other girls play hopscotch. The playground of the school was old and hard.

"Wanda,peggy would say.....hanging up in your closet?"

Word Meaning

Courteous manner Politely

Closet Cupboard

Nudge A gentle push

Miss Mason is teacher of the class. Peggy would address Wanda as politely as she would address her teacher Miss Mason. Peggy would give a gentle push to one of her friends and ask Wanda to tell how many dresses she had in her cupboard.

"A hundred, Wanda would say.....

Playing hopscotch and listen"

Word Meaning

Exclaimed Surprised

Incredulously In disbelief, Not able to believe

Wanda used to reply that she had hundred dresses. All small girls used to get surprised by the answer. It was difficult for them to believe it. The girls playing hopscotch would stop playing upon listening the answer.

"Yeah,a hundred, all lined up.....yeah, all silk, all colours"

Word Meaning

I bet I am sure

Wanda replied that she had hundred dresses. All dresses are neatly put in her cupboard. Then she will remain silent. Peggy said that she was sure these dresses were of silk. Wanda replied that these were of silk and of various colours.

"Velvet too?".....peals of laughter

Word Meaning

StolidlyCalmly, Without any feelings

Burst into shrieks and peals of laughter Loudly laugh a lot

Peggy asked if Wanda has velvet dresses also. Wanda calmly replied that she has velvet dresses also. All the hundred dresses are neatly placed in her cupboard. After this they would allow Wanda to go. After Wanda went a little away, they would loudly laugh a lot. [Nobody believed that Wanda had hundred dresses]

A hundred dresses!.....what a story!

Everybody thought that Wanda did not have hundred dresses. They believed that Wanda had only one blue dress. She wore this dress every day. Why did she say that she had hundred dresses? Everybody thought that she was telling a fantastic story.

"How many shoes did you say you had?".....All colours All lined up"

Word Meaning

Exaggerated Make it look bigger

Peggy asked how many pairs of shoes Wanda had. Wanda replied that she had sixty pairs in her cupboard. Peggy would ask with more politeness if all the shoes were same. Wanda replied that every pair was different. These were of all colours. These were neatly stacked in her cupboard.

Peggy who had thought up.....the last to leave.

Peggy had thought of this game of asking Wanda. Maddie was Peggy's friend who was always with her. These two friends left the discussion in the last.

Finally Wanda would move up.....finishing the walk to school alone.

Word Meaning

Hitch To give a jerk

Now and then From time to time, occasionally

After everybody had gone Wanda would start walking in the street. Her eyes would be dull and mouth closed. While walking she would occasionally give jerk to her left shoulder in a funny manner. Wanda would walk towards the school alone.

Peggy was not really cruelif she saw an animal mistreated.

Word Meaning

Cruel Inhuman, Merciless

Bullies Who trouble others, Naughty

Mistreated Not cared correctly, Injured

Actually Peggy was not a merciless girl. She protected small children from naughty boys. If she saw an animal was not taken care of nicely, she would cry for hours.

If anybody had said to her.....she had a hundred dresses ?

If anybody told Peggy that she did not show any sympathy to Wanda, Peggy would have been surprised. Peggy thought that Wanda should not have told that she had hundred dresses. Because it was a lie.

Anybody could tell that that was a lie.....anyway, they never made her cry

Anybody could tell that Wanda was telling a lie. Why she wanted to tell a lie. And she was not an ordinary person because she had a different type of name. But Peggy never made Wanda cry. Peggy did not tease Wanda too much.

As for maddie, this business of asking.....Boggins heights or have a funny name

Word Meaning

Bother Worry

hand me down clothes Old clothes given by someone

Maddie did not like students asking Wanda everyday about her dresses, hats and other things. Maddie was herself a poor girl. Normally she wore old clothes given by someone else. She

thought she was lucky not live in Boggins Heights area. Nor did she have a funny name. [Other girls would have teased Maddie also]

Sometimes, when Peggy was asking.....saying nothing herself.

Word Meaning

Mocking False, Hidden

Embarrassed Ashamed, Felt sorry

Maddie did not like Peggy asking such questions to Wanda. She knew that the politeness shown by Peggy was false. Peggy wanted to tease Wanda. Maddie would look at the marbles in her hand. She would roll these in her hands and say nothing to anybody.

Not that she felt sorry for wanda,exactly.....started in on her next?

Maddie did not truly feel sorry for Wanda. Maddie paid attention to Wanda only because of the dress game. This game was invented by Peggy. Maddie was worried what will happen if Peggy and others started playing the same game on her.

She wasn't as poor as wanda,perhaps.....stop teasing wanda petronski.

Word Meaning

Have more sense Be wise, Have wisdom

Begin on her Start teasing her

Maddie was not as poor as Wanda was but she was poor. Maddie would be more wise to say that she did not have hundred dresses. But she would not like that others should start teasing her. She wanted Peggy to stop teasing Wanda Petronski.

Today, even though they had been.....let's see

Word Meaning

Glad Happy

Absentmindedly Unaware of others, Not concentrating

Today they reached school late. But Maddie was happy because they did not tease Wanda. Maddie was learning her lessons of arithmetic. But she was not able to concentrate on her learning.

She wished she had the nerve to.....how many dresses she has.

Word Meaning

Had the nerve Had the courage

Maddie wanted to have the courage to write a note to Peggy. Maddie knew that she will never be able to directly tell Peggy to stop asking Wanda about dresses.

When she finished her arithmetic.....a new target for peggy and the girls.

Word Meaning

Paused Stopped

Shuddered Shivered, Got afraid

After completing her lesson of arithmetic, Maddie started writing a note to Peggy. Suddenly she stopped writing and started trembling. She was afraid. She imagined herself standing in the school yard as a new target for Peggy and other girls.

Peggy might ask her.....Thirteen would recognise it.

Word Meaning

Disguise Hide

Trimmings Decoration on a clothes, Design

Peggy may ask about her dress she was wearing. Peggy may ask from where she bought it. Then Maddie will have to tell that it was an old dress of Peggy. Maddie's mother had put new design on the dress so that no one in the class would recognize it.

If only peggy would decide of her own.....what difference did it make?

Word Meaning

Of her own accord By her own wish

Blonde hair Golden coloured hair

Maddie thought it would be better if Maddie stopped the fun by her own wish. Maddie ran his hand through her short and golden hair. She wanted to push the thought out of her mind. It really helped her a lot.

Slowly maddie tore into bits.....really wrong, she thought.

Slowly Maddie tore the note she had started writing into small pieces. She was the best friend of Peggy. And the class liked Peggy the most. Maddie thought that probably Peggy would not do anything that was wrong.

As for wanda.....yard about her hundred dresses

Word Meaning

Stood alone Did not have a friend

Scarcely Rarely

Wanda was just another girl living in the Boggins Height area. Wanda did not have any friend in the school. She rarely said anything to anybody. The only thing she talked in the school was about her hundred dresses. Wanda talked about her hundred dresses when other girls were teasing her in the school yard.

Maddie remembered her telling.....said in pretended admiration.

Word Meaning

Sash Decoration of shoulder

Pretended admiration False appreciation

Maddie recalled that Wanda had talked about a dress that had yellow blue decorations. She also remembered another dress of bright jungle green colour with a red decoration on shoulders. The girls had told Wanda that she would look like Christmas tree in that dress. The girls were giving false appreciations to Wanda.

Thinking about wanda and her hundred dresses.....of designing motorboats.

Word Meaning

Contest Competition

Began to wonder Started guessing or thinking

Maddie was thinking of Wanda and her hundred dresses. She thought of hundred dresses stacked in the cupboard of Wanda. Maddie was trying to guess who will win the competition. The school had organised a competition of drawing and colouring. For girls competition was to design a dress and for boys it was for designing motorboats.

Probably peggy would win.....that's what everybody thought.

Probably Peggy would win the competition for girls. Peggy could draw better than anyone in the class. This is what everybody in the class thought.

She would copy a picture.....Then they'd know.

Peggy could draw any picture from a magazine. She could draw face of a film star which looked so real. It was easy to recognize the film star from her drawing. Maddie was sure that Peggy would win the competition. Tomorrow teacher would announce the result. Then everybody would know the winner.

The next day it was drizzling.....under peggy's umbrella.

Word Meaning

Drizzling Raining slowly

Hurried to school Quickly walked to school

The next day it was raining slowly. Maddie and Peggy quickly walked towards the school. They both were under the umbrella of Peggy.

Naturally, on a day like thisled to Boggins Heights.

On a day of raining, obviously, they did not wait for Wanda Petronski at the corner of Oliver Street. The street was very far and under the railway bridge. Beyond Oliver Street, the area on a small hill was called Boggins Height.

Anyway, they weren't taking chances.....asked peggy.

They did not want to get late today because it was an important day. The result of the drawing competition was to be announced today. Peggy asked Maddie if their teacher Miss mason would announce the result today.

Oh, I hope so,.....said peggy eagerly.

Maddie replied that she hoped the result would be announces as soon as they reached school. Maddie said that Peggy will certainly win. Peggy said that she was hopeful of winning.

The minute they entered the classroom.....great sheets of wrapping paper.

Word Meaning

Stopped short Stopped suddenly

Gasped Surprised

All over Everywhere

Dazzling Shining

Lavish Royal

Wrapping paper Paper used to cover something

As soon they entered the class room they were surprised and suddenly stopped. Everywhere in class room there were drawings. Drawing were on the ledge, windowsills. The colours were shining, design was royal. All the drawings were drawn on a wrapping paper.

There must have been a hundred of them.....whistled or murmured admiringly

Word Meaning

Murmured Spoke in low voice

Admiringly With appreciation

These must be a hundred drawings. All were neatly displayed in class. Actually these were the drawings for competition. Everybody stopped to see these drawings. They whistled and spoke in low voice to appreciate.

As soon as the class had.....by all the other boys.

As soon as everybody had come in the class, Miss Mason announced winners. Jack Beggles was the winner for boys. She announced that his drawing of motorboat was placed in the Room Number twelve. Drawing of other boys was also placed in the same room.

"As for the girls, she said.....all different and all beautiful

Miss Mason said that most of the girls had submitted one or two sketches. But one girl from Room Number thirteen submitted hundred drawings. This class should be proud of her. All the drawings are different and all are beautiful.

In the opinion of the judges.....winner of the girls' medal

Word Meaning

In the opinion of According to

Worthy Deserving

According to judges, each drawing from this girl deserved the first prize. Miss Mason was happy to announce that Wanda Petronski was the winner of competition for girls.

Unfortunately, wanda has been absent.....at her exquisite drawings.

Word Meaning

Applause due to her Appreciation she deserves

File around Move around

Exquisite Very beautiful

Unfortunately, Wanda has not been coming to school for many days. So she is not here to receive the prize and appreciation she deserves. Let us hope she will come to school tomorrow. Now you can quietly move around the room and look at her beautiful drawings.

The children burst into applause.....were not interested in dresses.

The children clapped. Boys were happy because they got a chance to make noise by thumping their feet on the floor and to put their finger in mouth to whistle. But they were not interested in looking at the drawing of dresses.

"Look peg,whispered Maddie.....and I thought I could draw.

Maddie whispered to Peggy to look at the blue drawing. Wanda used to talk about that dress. That drawing was really beautiful. Peggy agreed and asked her to look at the green dress. Now Peggy agreed that she did not make good drawings.
