

The Story of Ms. Thompson

Ms. Thompson was a fifth grade teacher in an affluent suburb. Each year at the beginning of the school year she would tell her class, "Children, I have no favorites, I will treat you all the same." This of course was not true.

There was one student; a boy named Teddy Stollard that Ms. Thompson knew nothing about, but just decided that she didn't like him. This of was justifiable because Teddy was a quiet boy who did not participate in any of the extracurricular activities that went on in school. He also was a little un-kept with his hair not always in place and cloths usually wrinkled and sometimes soiled

Well it came time for conferences and Ms. Thompson was prepared to meet with her student's parents and discuss their progress in her class. That evening of the 23 students in her class, she saw 22 sets of parents and at the end of the night the only ones that did not show were the Stollards'. Ms. Thompson was rather upset because she was stood-up, so she immediately went to the records room and pulled Teddy's file.

- His third grade teacher's comments read: "Teddy is a good boy, but too quiet, his mother is seriously ill. "
- His fourth grade teacher wrote: "Teddy is very distant, does not interact with other students, his mother died last year and father shows no interest or support. "

Ms. Thompson paid no attention to the comments, but was outraged not with the fact that Teddy's father showed no support, but because he missed his appointment with her. The next day she continued to take pride in marking Teddy's homework down for the littlest things.

The end of the first semester came and it was now the day before Christmas Vacation was to start. It was a half-day of school and all Ms. Thompson had planned was a party for her students of which everyone would bring a treat to pass, would play games and sing Christmas Carols. When she arrived at school that day, Teddy was already in his seat before any of the other students had even arrived. He placed on the reading table a brown lunch bag that was obviously used before, on it written in crayon was: To Ms. Thompson, From Teddy Stollard. Ms. Thompson paid no attention to the package and continued ignoring Teddy. She couldn't help but think, why would this boy whom I hate bring me a present and what would he possibly give me that I would ever use again?

The other students arrived and placed nicely wrapped presents with bows and ribbons on top of Teddy's. Throughout the morning when the students played games, sang carols and ate their treats, Teddy stayed in the background, just watching the others. He had nothing to give or share with the other students; all he had was in that paper bag.

Time to open Ms. Thompson's presents came. Purposely, she was forgetting about this present from Teddy, hoping there would not be enough time to open it and she could just throw it away after school let out. Fortunately, there was enough time to open all the presents. Teddy's was the last one on the table so she felt obligated to open it because another student reminded her it was there. When she opened this paper bag she pulled out a rhinestone bracelet with half the stones missing. The students immediately began to chuckle, Ms. Thompson had enough sense to put it on and quieted the kids with her eyes saying, "Look boys and girls, isn't it lovely. " The next item was a used bottle of cheap perfume of which she put on her wrists and let all the student's smell. They immediately responded with all sorts of oohs and ahhs. Just after that, the bell rang and the students gathered up their belongings and raced home.

Teddy stayed behind and was slow to leave. Ms. Thompson was gathering all her presents and couldn't wait until he left so she could throwaway his present. Finally Teddy approached her and said, "Ms. Thompson, I'm really glad you like my presents, Mom's bracelet looks real nice on you and her perfume smells real pretty too." He said nothing else and walked out of the room.

This comment hit Ms. Thompson, she immediately thought of how she had treated this poor boy, got down on her knees and begged God for forgiveness. She decided from that day forward, it would be her mission to help students like Teddy.

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The class returned after New Year's and she made it a point to do just that. What Ms. Thompson found when she spent this extra time with Teddy was that he was starting to grasp his studies and by the end of the third quarter caught up to most of the students. At the end of the fourth quarter he surpassed almost all of them academically.

That summer Teddy and his father moved. Ms. Thompson continued her mission the next school year. She had not heard or thought of Teddy since fifth grade.

One day a letter arrived at the school and read:

Dear Ms. Thompson,

I wanted you to be the first to know. I just graduated second in my class. The university hasn't been easy, but I made it.

Love Teddy Stollard.

Four years later, another letter arrived and read:

Dear Ms. Thompson:

I wanted you to be the first to know. I finished first in my class! ! ! Love Teddy Stollard

Some more time passed and another letter arrived and read:

Dear Ms. Thompson:

I wanted you to be the first to know. I am now Theodore Stollard, M.D. How about that?? I will be getting married next month, the 27th to be exact. I would like you to come to my wedding and sit where my Mom would have sat, Dad died last year and you're all the family I have left now.

Love-Teddy

Ms. Thompson went to Teddy's wedding because she deserved to be there. She made a difference in his life. Ms. Thompson attended wearing the bracelet and perfume Teddy gave her as a gift so many years before.

Is there some of Ms. Thompson in you?