

Big Bully



"Remember, being a good citizen means helping others," said Mr. Richmond. "Now clear your desks and get ready for lunch."

Lily thought about what her teacher had been telling the class about citizenship. She always tried to be a good citizen, but she knew another person who did not. Brett Larson was a bully. He always picked on the new student, Jie, who had recently moved here from China.

As the class walked to the cafeteria, Lily witnessed Brett poking Jie in the back. Jie didn't do anything about it. He was quiet and polite; just the opposite of Brett. After Jie got his tray of food and turned the corner to sit down, Brett stuck out his foot in front of Jie. Jie and his food went flying. All of Brett's friends started laughing and slapping Brett on the back.

Lily's family were new American citizens, and she remembered words that her parents told her about this new responsibility. They said that it was important to be respectful of everyone and to be responsible for your actions. Most important, they told Lily to always follow the rules or laws. If she didn't, then she would have to suffer a consequence for her actions.

Lily watched Jie clean up the food on the floor and slowly get up. Lily had had enough. It didn't matter if Brett was bigger than she was, and it didn't matter that he would probably make fun of her, too. Brett Larson was a big bully, but Lily was a good citizen.



She started to quietly point out Brett's behavior to her friends. After a while, she noticed that the majority of people weren't laughing with Brett anymore.

The next day, Lily sat with Jie at recess and tried to get to know him. He told her about what his life was like back in China. Jie was just learning English, so they laughed together over some of his word choices.

As Lily and Jie were walking back into the classroom, Brett started teasing them.

"Jie likes Lily. Jie likes Lily," Brett said in a singsong voice.

"Knock it off, Larson," said a fifth grader in the hallway. "I wonder how you would feel if your family moved to China? Leave Jie alone!"

Brett's face turned red. He became even more embarrassed when the rest of our class started laughing at him! Unfortunately for Brett, Mr. Richmond happened to be walking by, too.

DID YOU KNOW?

There are only two ways to become a **U.S. citizen**; either by law or by birth.

"Let's talk after school today, Brett," said Mr. Richmond. "I think we need to review some points about being a good citizen."

Brett must have gotten the message because the next day he was very quiet. In fact, Mr. Richmond paired Brett and Jie up to write a report about their favorite sports. Brett was surprised to learn that he and Jie both loved baseball. Lily couldn't believe it when she saw the boys laughing together.

"I guess it *is* possible for a big bully to turn into a good citizen!" smiled Lily.

