

The Candy, by Horea

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Greenshoe village was situated in a valley surrounded by big hills planted with apple trees. All the kids in the village studied at the local school so they all knew each other. John, Tom Johnson's son, was the best pupil in the whole school. He was 14 and rather big in stature; he had red hair and a dark tan.

Anna and Violet were two of John's colleagues. They were very pretty and very good in school. The two girls were also best friends and used to spend their spare time playing together. One day, they walked down Main Street to Mr. Smith's store to buy some bread for home. Just as they walked through the door they saw John stealing a fistful of candy.

Violet wanted to call Mr. Smith, but Anna stopped her and walked up to John.

"Why did you steal that candy John?" asked Anna. "Don't you know that stealing is a bad thing?"

John blushed.

"I took them... for my little brother, Tommy," he mumbled. "Today is his birthday. I know it's wrong to steal, but I don't have any money and I know Tommy would really enjoy this candy. Please don't tell Mr. Smith. I'll put them back."

Anna felt sorry for him. "You don't have to put them back; I'll give you the money you need. Consider it a present from me," she said.

But as Anna was talking to John, Violet told Mr. Smith that John was stealing from his store. Anna didn't have time to give John the money before Mr. Smith came, so Tom Johnson, John's father, was called in to pay for the stolen candy. Needless to say, Tom was very angry with John, especially because he had to give away all the money he had earned that day.

Anna went straight to Violet.

"Why did you tell Mr. Smith?" she asked.

“Because John was wrong to steal that candy. It’s a bad thing,” Violet replied. “I know it’s wrong, but it’s not nice to turn someone in either. Especially when you don’t know everything about that person or about his situation.” Anna didn’t wait for Violet to answer. She went straight home.

Word quickly spread around the village. Because of what his son had done, no one hired Tom anymore; they said what John did was illegal and immoral and that he probably learned it from his father. The family had no income and it was becoming harder and harder for them to earn their living. Tom even had to pull John out of school.

Anna wasn’t very worried the first day John didn’t come to school. She thought that John was probably feeling ill and couldn’t come. But on the way home Violet came up to her in tears.

“Anna, you were right. I shouldn’t have told Mr. Smith about John and now I’m sorry I did. What can I do now?” cried Violet.

“But what’s wrong? What happened?” asked Anna.

“Didn’t you hear? It’s because of me that John had to quit school. Can you believe it? I probably ruined John’s future.”

“Oh, no! We have to do something!” said Anna.

“It was all a big mistake,” said Violet with tears in her eyes.

“Violet, that’s it! We’ll just tell them that you were wrong!”

“What? What are you saying?” asked Violet.

“Look, this is what we’ll do. We’ll go to Mr. Smith and we’ll tell him that I was the one who asked John to buy some candy, but I forgot to give him the money. When I remembered and went to the store to pay for the candy, you thought he was stealing and turned him in. Because of all the fuss we forgot to tell Mr. Smith what happened and that it was all a big mistake,” said Anna smiling.

“Hey, that’s clever! Let’s go get John and then we’ll run down to the store and tell Mr. Smith everything.”

A few days later, John was back in the front of the class reading his homework.