

Bob's Market

It was a usual Saturday. But sometimes important lessons happen on ordinary days. Betty, Connie, Kim and I went to Bob's Market for penny candy. Bob always teased me about being short, and I always ignored him. But everyone else laughed.

After picking our candy, we went around the corner into the alley along back of the market toward the railroad tracks and the woods between our neighborhood and the high school.

Connie noticed the sheet of glass. The corner was broken and it leaned against the trash bins. Betty said, "We should break it."

"Yeah, great idea. Me first," Kim and Connie said together.

Together, they threw a handful of pebbles. Nothing happened. Betty threw two large rocks. Nothing happened. Then I picked up a huge boulder. I stood right next to the glass and threw the rock down. The glass broke with a huge crash.

Almost immediately, Betty, Connie and Kim cheered. And Bob slammed the screen door at the back of the market. We looked at Bob simultaneously. Connie yelled, "Run!" And everyone ran, including me. At the end of the alley, I stopped. Why had I run away? What was I thinking?

We rounded the corner at the end of the block, and Betty kept telling how I got found the biggest rock, how I threw the hardest and the best, how I broke the window. Kim just stared at me, knowing that she would tell Mom when we got home. She always told. I didn't care about any of that. I could only think of Bob.

"I'm going back. We have to turn ourselves in. He knows us," I said.

"No way. He doesn't know me," Betty said.

"Me either."

"I didn't do anything," said Kim.

"Well, he knows me, and I broke the window, and I have to go back."

"Well, I'm not."

"See ya at school."

"I'm going home and tell Mom," Kim said.

I walked back to Bob's alone. He was waiting behind the counter. There was no smile on his face. I walked straight up to the counter and apologized. He didn't yell. He just handed me a broom.

For the next week I swept floors and carried out trash after school. To be honest, I enjoyed it. I knew I was wrong, and it was better to face my mistake and make it right. It was a good lesson to learn at ten years old.