

Trouble at the Park

Hunter took a deep breath. "I don't say those words."

By Diana Evelyn Nielson
(Based on a true story)

This story took place in the USA.

Hunter ran across the park with his friends. He grinned as he felt the wind rushing past him. He felt so fast and light!

Kyle touched the fence first. "I won!" he yelled.

Hunter reached the fence a moment later. "Not fair! You started first."

"Yeah," said Miguel. "Race you to the tree!"

Hunter started running again. This time, he touched the tree first. But Miguel was right behind him.

"I won!" Miguel said.



"No, Hunter won," said Piper.

"Yeah," said Kyle.

Miguel folded his arms. Then he said a bad word.

The other kids laughed. Miguel said the word again, and they laughed some more.

Hunter felt sad inside. He knew that word wasn't good to say. But he didn't want to be teased. He didn't say anything.

Piper said another bad word. Then Kyle said another one.

"Now you say one, Hunter," said Kyle.

"Yeah, come on," said Miguel. "Say a new swear word."

Hunter took a deep breath. "I don't say those words."

"Saying one word won't hurt you," said Kyle.

"I don't want to," said Hunter.

"Are you too scared?" Miguel laughed.

Hunter's face felt hot. "I'm going to go play somewhere else."

The rest of the kids kept laughing and saying bad words. Hunter wanted to get away. The park didn't feel fun now. "See you later," he mumbled.

Hunter put his hands in his pockets and slowly walked past all the other kids. He didn't feel fast or light anymore. He felt weighed down.

He found Mom and Dad sitting on a bench. Dad put down his book. "Are you OK?"

Hunter shrugged. "They started saying bad words. I didn't want to do it, so I left."

Mom smiled. "That was brave."



"We're proud of you," Dad said. "It's hard to make good choices when people around us aren't."

Hunter sighed. He was glad he made the right choice, but he still didn't feel good.

"Do you want to go home?" Mom asked.

Hunter thought about it. "Not yet," he said. He looked over at another group of kids playing on the zip lines. "I'm going to go over there."

As Hunter walked over, one of the boys waved at him. "Hi, I'm David."

"I'm Hunter. Can I play with you?"

"Sure!"

Hunter took a turn on the zip line and felt the wind rush by. As he played with David and the others, he felt fast and light again. He had done what was right, even though it was hard. He was glad he had made a good choice. ●

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