



BOOMERANG GIFT

- 1 “Gee, thanks, Grandma.” It was hard for Sara to keep the wobble out of her voice. She had hinted so hard about wanting a new pair of jeans for her birthday. And what had Grandma given her? A totally gross white knitted cardigan. A cardigan! No one wore cardigans.
- 2 “It fits beautifully,” said Sara’s mother, doing up the top button. “Straighten your shoulders, Sara. Isn’t it lucky that tomorrow’s mufti day? No school uniform. You’ll be able to show it off at school. It’s much nicer than that faded, old denim jacket.”

Wear this terrible thing to school? Not if Sara could help it.

- 3 “Mum, I LOVE my denim jacket. It’s just what everyone’s wearing,” said Sara wearily. She’d almost given up expecting Mum to understand.

“And what else did you get for your birthday, Sara love?” asked Grandma. “What did Joyce send?” Joyce was Grandma’s sister who usually sent a \$20 note.

“Joyce’s card hasn’t arrived yet,” said Mum, and added quickly: “The post’s getting worse by the day.” Grandma sniffed knowingly. She and Joyce still scored points off each other as jealously as if they were ten.

- 4 Sara struggled to undo the pearl buttons on her new white cardigan. At least it wasn’t pink — absolutely no one wore pink any more.

“Oh, leave it on for a while,” said Grandma. “I like to see you in it.”

"I don't want to get it dirty before tomorrow," lied Sara. Yes she did. She wanted to tear the revolting white cardigan off and stomp on it, jump on it in a mud puddle, scrunch it at the back of her wardrobe and never see it again. But she couldn't tell her dear sweet Grandma that – Grandma who cuddled and sang to her when she put her to bed; who always slipped her an extra chocolate after dinner; dear Grandma who had absolutely no idea that everyone now wore denim jackets, not daggy white cardigans.

- 5 "You're up bright and early, love," said Mum in surprise the next morning. "And doesn't Grandma's cardigan look lovely? Oh love, why are you wearing your old trainers? Put on your party shoes."

"Mum, you're meant to wear casual gear for mufti day," Sara explained. "You're not supposed to wear party stuff. This cardigan's bad enough," she couldn't help adding.

- 6 "I'd have given anything for a white party cardigan when I was your age – especially with pearl buttons. You'll look smarter than anybody else," retorted her mother. "Try to keep it clean, will you?"

Sara nodded. It wasn't going to get a chance to get dirty.

"Go on then. Enjoy your mufti day. Watch out for your new cardigan," said her mother.

- 7 She certainly would, thought Sara. As soon as she was out of sight of the house she

stopped, unzipped her school bag and took out her beloved denim jacket that had been hiding at the bottom of the bag. Then she set off at a brisk pace. She'd have to walk fast if she was going round the long way. The way past the charity used-clothing bin.

- 8 "But how could you have lost it, Sara?" Mum asked for the third time that afternoon.

"I told you, Mum, when I went to get it after school, the cardigan just wasn't there in my bag," said Sara. "Maybe one of the other girls liked it so much that they took it."

"Maybe you left it in the playground if you took it off at lunchtime," worried Mum. "Honestly, Sara. The very first time you've worn it. You'll just have to look in the lost property basket tomorrow."

"Of course, Mum," said Sara. That wasn't lying. She'd certainly look in the lost property basket, and then she could tell Mum with a clear conscience she had done everything she could to find it at school.

- 9 "Oh love, I forgot to tell you, there's a parcel here for you from Great Auntie Joyce," said Mum. "Isn't that a nice surprise?"

A parcel? That meant no \$20 towards a pair of jeans. But, it might mean something much more exciting. The parcel was large and sort of squashy.

"It might be jeans – or something else really cool," said Sara as she struggled with the

string. "Can I have the scissors, Mum?"

"They're around here somewhere," said Mum, searching through the kitchen drawers. "Trust Auntie Joyce to tie a parcel up with string. Ah, here we are. Now let's see what she's sent you."

- 10 Sara ripped open the brown paper, tore off the flowery paper – and gasped.

"Well, you lucky thing," said her mother. "Imagine Auntie Joyce knitting you a cardigan as well. Grandma must have boasted about it when she was visiting Joyce last summer."

- 11 Sara looked glumly at the pearls, the fluffiness, the absolute horror of it. How on earth could she get rid of this one? Mum would never

believe the same story twice.

Her mother looked at her keenly.

"Cheer up, Sara," she said. "At least if the cardigan Grandma knitted you has really been lost you'll have this one – and what a pretty pink it is, too."



Questions

- Sara's mum wanted her to
 - wear a denim jacket to mufti day.
 - wear a white cardigan to mufti day.
 - wear a pink cardigan to mufti day.
- Sara's grandmother scored points off
 - Sara's mother.
 - her husband.
 - her sister Joyce.
- The only positive thing Sara thought about Grandma's cardigan was that
 - it wasn't pink.
 - it had pearl buttons.
 - it was made of denim.
- Sara put the white cardigan
 - in a garbage bin.
 - in the school lost-property bin.
 - in the used-clothing bin.
- Sara thought Great Auntie Joyce's parcel may be
 - a new cardigan.
 - something really cool.
 - a twenty dollar note.
- When Sara's mum was a school girl she
 - wore cardigans with pearl buttons.
 - didn't have any nice party clothes.
 - thought cardigans with pearl buttons were attractive.

Vocabulary

Match the words from the text to the clues.
The brackets show the text sections ().

wearily retorted mufti conscience revolting

- 7 Casual clothes worn instead of the usual uniform (2)
- 8 Feeling tired and speaking unenthusiastically (3)
- 9 Disgusting (4)
- 10 Answered in a quick, angry manner (6)
- 11 Thoughts which give a sense of right or wrong (8)

Alphabetical Order

The following words appear in the text.
When placed in alphabetical order, which one would be **first**?

- 12 sister, still, sniffed, scored
- 13 always, absolutely, after, any
- 14 birthday, buttons, back, by
- 15 wore, wanting, wear, white

Back To The Text...

- 16 The illustration on the front of the card shows the cardigan knitted by
 - a Grandma.
 - b Joyce.
- 17 In which part of the library would you find this text?
 - a fiction
 - b non-fiction
- 18 The purpose of this text is
 - a to entertain the reader.
 - b to explain something to the reader.

Sequencing

Look back through the card to find what happened first. Choose **a** or **b**.

- 19 a The present from Joyce arrived.
 - b The present from Grandma arrived.
- 20 a Mum said "Try to keep the cardigan clean".
 - b Mum asked "Why are you wearing old trainers?"
- 21 a The cardigan went in the clothes bin.
 - b Sara opened Joyce's present.

Think About This

- 22 A set of asterisks (***) appears between sections 4 & 5 and 7 & 8.
These are used
 - a to separate ideas in the story.
 - b to show the passage of time.
 - c to break the text into equal parts.
- 23 Which of the following do you think motivated Sara's actions?
 - a a misunderstanding at home
 - b peer pressure at school
 - c the price of clothes

Challenge Option

Writing: Write a description of a gift you would not like to receive.

