

### Nelson's Story

Nelson woke up suddenly. It was late. Somehow he didn't hear his alarm clock go off.

"Nelson! Get up! You're going to be late for school!" his mother shouted.\*

Her voice sounded so loud!

"Okay, okay, I'm coming," he grumbled, but it was too soft for his mother to hear.

"Nelson!" His mother was inside his room now. Her voice sounded even louder. It sounded like a horn blasting in his ear. He felt his ears ringing. They hurt a little bit.

"I heard you!" Nelson said, grumpily.

"Then get out of bed," she said.

Nelson stumbled out of bed and started to put on his clothes. He was feeling tired and a bit irritated and he knew it would be cold outside, so he made sure to get his favorite blue scarf. It was super soft. The instant he felt that scarf go around his neck, he started to feel a little bit better. He rubbed it and it felt so nice on his skin. When he put the scarf on, he always thought of his grandmother who had given it to him, and he saw her smiling face in his mind. Suddenly he felt a little bit happier.

"Come on!" called his mother. She took his backpack and put his lunch in it together with a little juice box that he really liked, and soon he was in the car on his way to school.

When Nelson got dropped off at school, he saw a group of boys who he didn't like very much. They were a couple years older and often weren't very nice to him. He tried to avoid them as he made his way into the school, but one of them called out at him. The instant he heard that boy's familiar voice, he felt a chill go through his body, right down his spine and his legs seemed to go numb. One of the boys started walking towards him and got near enough to grab at him. Nelson quickly dodged him and hurried into the school building.

At last he was in the classroom, seated at his desk, right next to his friend Albert, who he felt glad to see. His heart was beating so fast and hard, but it felt a little bit better now that he was sitting down and next to his friend. He could barely hear the words of his teacher, Mr. Pink. They called him Mr. Pink because he always wore ties that were pink.

But then he saw Mr. Pink handing out a sheet of paper. Nelson's eyes opened wide. What was this? A test?

“Do we have a test?” Nelson asked Albert.

Albert nodded. “Yeah, didn’t you study for it?”

“No, I completely forgot. I didn’t study at all!” Nelson wailed.

He was feeling even more frustrated now. When did Mr. Pink even mention the test? He felt angry with Mr. Pink and with himself for not having remembered it.

Then Mr. Pink put the test on his desk, and Nelson felt afraid because he knew he would probably fail the test. His stomach felt all tight and knotted. He reached for the scarf around his neck, since sometimes its softness made him feel better.

But the scarf wasn’t there! Nelson realized that the boy who came after him when he was dropped off at school must have taken it. When he realized that, he felt completely deflated and even more sad and angry. He couldn’t concentrate at all on the test.

At the end of the day, Nelson went outside to wait for his mother to pick him up from school.

“Please don’t let those boys be out here,” he thought to himself. “That’s the last thing I need.”

But sure enough, the boys that didn’t like Nelson were there.

“Where’s my mother?” Nelson wondered when he saw them.

“Hey Nelson!” one of the boys called out to him. They started walking towards him again.

Just then Nelson’s mother arrived. He quickly opened the door and jumped into the car.

“Where were you!” Nelson shouted at her. “You’re late!”

Nelson’s mother looked surprised. “Nelson! Why are you shouting?”

Nelson took his backpack and threw it on the floor of the car and stomped on it. “I hate this school!” he said.

“Nelson! Behave yourself!” said his mother.

Then Nelson looked down and saw that he had stomped on his lunchbox and the juice box he had saved, and now the juice was spilling out all over the car floor and onto his backpack. It was a complete mess. His anger turned to sadness and he started to cry.

“Nelson, honey, I’m sorry you’re upset,” said his mother. “We all have difficult days. We can talk about it if you want to. Let’s think about something fun we can do when we get home.”

[The End.]