

Freddie Wants a Friend – Isaac, Year 6, VIC

Here we go again... I thought as I walked into Gardenvale Grammar. I thought through for what seemed like the millionth time what my mum had always told me: I was a kind, good natured boy that was fully capable of making friends. But that hadn't worked at the other four schools I had been to... I thought nervously.

The bell went, and I decided to start early. I walked up to a nice looking boy and asked what his name was.

“Hi! I’m Freddie! What’s your name?” I asked desperately.

“What’s yours? Sumo wrestler?” the boy replied.

A couple of boys around him laughed, and I turned around with tears in my eyes.

I knew that I was quite overweight, and in the past, people had bullied me and told me that I was wider than I was tall. I knew I couldn't let just that one person stop me, but I decided to wait until recess for my next attempt, so I could work out who was actually nice.

When the bell went for recess, I went up to a boy who seemed nice, and had said he liked soccer. “Hello! Can I play soccer with you?” I asked hopefully.

“Uh... ok,” he said unenthusiastically, clearly sceptical because of my size.

“Thanks so much!” I said gratefully.

I was determined not to waste this chance, and I promised myself that I would give this soccer match everything I had. As I had guessed, I was the last pick, and neither team really seemed to want me.

As soon as I stepped onto the field, I saw a foot stuck out in front of me. It was the same kid that was mean to me before! Before I could react, I tripped over and felt the dust all over my face.

“You can't even walk, can you?” shouted the kid who had tripped me. I think his name was Blaze. No one had seen Blaze trip me, they all thought I had fallen over myself. I decided there was no point playing anymore, so I walked around the school looking for other people, but eventually I gave up.

I went home that day, and when mum asked me how my day was, I just started crying. No one wanted to be my friend. I would just have to live alone for my whole life. If only someone was nice to me, like I always tried to be.

But suddenly I felt a rush of determination. Tomorrow I was going to make a friend, no matter how much I weighed. For the first time, I believed what my mum kept promising me. I was a nice, and good hearted boy, and that's all that mattered.

As I was walking to school the next morning, I saw Blaze walk in just before me. I started running, to get away from Blaze.

But Blaze grabbed my t-shirt, and pushed me into a wall.

“What’s wrong, you fat ugly pig?” he asked me because I was whimpering.

“Hey!” a voice said. “Leave him alone!”

I turned around and saw an unfamiliar boy walking towards us.

“What did he do to you?” the boy asked Blaze. I was incredibly grateful, but at the same time I felt really sorry for the boy because of what would happen next. But Blaze didn’t push the kid over, or bully him as well, but just grunted and walked away.

“Hi! My name’s Winston. You?” Winston asked.

“Freddie!” I said happily.

“Do you want to play basketball with me?” Winston said.

“Sure!” I said hopefully.

I think I’d just found myself a friend.

#

I walked home with Winston that day.

“Do you have Discord? Winston asked.

“No, because no one wants to talk to me,” I said. “But I could get it!”

“Sure! I’m called WinstonTheWhale#5689. You can friend me!” Winston said.

We were at my house now, so I said goodbye and then walked inside. I told mum about Winston, and then downloaded Discord and friend requested him.

But I paused before texting him. I had never had a friend before. I couldn’t mess this silently vowed to myself that I wouldn’t waste this chance.

4.09 Hi Winston!

4.09 Hi

4.10 Freddie...

4.10 Yeah

4.10 There’s something I gotta tell you

4.10 KK

4.11 Please don’t be mad...

I paused. What if Winston didn't like me? What if he thought I was just fat and useless? I would be back to being friendless again.

4.16 What?

4.18 I'm leaving the country next week D:

4.18 Whta? Nooooo

4.18 U don't understand wintson

4.19 I don't hve any other friends

4.20 I know. I'm so sorry I've been begging dad.... But he's got work so I can't change anything....

4.20 We can still call Freddie

4.22 Freddie?

No... This couldn't be happening to me. For seven hours, I had a friend. But now the one person who saved me from Blaze, humiliation, and loneliness, would probably never see me again.

#

I hung up. Dad came up to my room. He must have heard me crying. Going to Gardenvale Grammar and meeting Freddie was the best thing I'd ever done.

Everyone else told me I was fat and useless, but seeing Freddie completely transformed that. Freddie was the only person who had understood me...

A friend. And only half a day later I had to tell him I was leaving the country. Stupid dad. Couldn't he get a job in Australia?

"Hey Winston. I'm so sorry mate," said Dad.

"Did you know I made a friend today Dad?" I told him bitterly.

"Really? Tell me about him!" said Dad.

"He was just like me. Overweight and everything. But... he was different to everyone else. He knew what it was like. Freddie was my best and only friend." I groaned unhappily.

"Listen Winston, people say there is a reason, a season, and a lifetime people come into our lives. Freddie came into your life for a reason. He proved to you that you could make friends, have fun, and socialise. You can do all of that just as easily as anyone else. Let Freddie teach you a lesson, Winston. In America, you can make friends. You *will* make friends, if you want to. You're a great child," said Dad.

I blinked. It took a minute for me to take in what Dad had told me. But eventually I understood. Freddie showed that I could make friends. He proved to me that I was capable. I can make friends and nobody will care about my weight.

And Freddie was just the same.

#

Three months later I still remember Winston. He changed my life, and from what he has texted me about, I think I changed his, too. We both have friends now, and none of our friends seem to care how much we weigh, for some reason. Winston is still my best friend. He changed my life.