

“A Curious Thing to Do”

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By Rebecca Enney

Yesterday afternoon Elizabeth’s mother came into her bedroom to talk. “Aunt Gertrude is not doing so well today.” she explained. “Her speech is hard to understand and I’m not sure what she is asking for. Could you help?”

“Sure.” said Elizabeth.

So Elizabeth and her mommy went into Elizabeth’s FORMER bedroom and there, in the fan bed, was her sick Aunt Gertrude.



“. . . ome ere ild . . .” she mumbled weakly. Elizabeth was pretty sure Aunt Gertrude said “Come here child.” She looked at her mommy and went and stood beside the bed.

“The . . . oy with the shirt . . .” she said. “The boy with the shirt?” Elizabeth said back to her Aunt.

Aunt Gertrude nodded. Once again Elizabeth looked at her mother. “I think she wants to see Barabas!” said Elizabeth. This surprised them both, because they were both sure that Aunt Gertrude never has liked Barabas. From the very first moment she laid eyes on him, that time when Aunt Gertrude was staying with Elizabeth while her mommy and daddy went to Tanzania. Aunt Gertrude wrongly and cruelly accused Barabas of hurting Elizabeth while she and Sam and Barabas were playing in a canoe in the back yard. Aunt Gertrude told Barabas to “Go away! Stay away! You are too big to play with these nice little giraffes! You don’t even have a mother and your father is in jail!” She said she planned to tell Elizabeth’s parents, when they got home, that Elizabeth should never be allowed to play with the likes of Barabas again. “Besides,” she said. “He’s not even a giraffe!” Ever since that, everyone kind of knew that Aunt Gertrude and Barabas would never be friends.

So why would she ask for him now?

Elizabeth’s mommy called Uncle Floyd and asked if it would be possible for Barabas to come right over and Uncle Floyd so “I reckon so.”

Soon Barabas stood there at the doorway, nervously wondering “Why would she call for me?”

“. . . rong shirt . . . “ the aunt managed to say. “Wrong shirt?” asked Elizabeth.



Barabas looked down at his orange shirt. The purple one he usually wears was in the laundry. “She called me over here to criticize my shirt?” thought Barabas to himself.

“Go put on your purple shirt!” whispered Elizabeth. So Barabas ran all the way down the alley to their house and ran in the back door, up to his room and pulled the purple shirt out of the dirty clothes bag and quickly put it on and ran back up the alley to Elizabeth’s house.

He came panting up the steps and again stood at the doorway with the others, each of them wondering what would happen next.

“. . . ome . . . loser.” Aunt Gertrude said to Barabas. Barabas stepped closer. She looked hard at him and his shirt. Then she asked “How is your vase?” Barabas knew she was asking about the surgery he had to get a new vase. But that was years ago. “It’s good,” he said, “But why do YOU want to know.”

Aunt Gertrude smiled and said “Thanks be to God.” Then she closed her eyes and went to sleep. Everyone looked at Barabas’s shirt, his purple shirt that says “John 3:16, the gospel in a nutshell.”

**GOD SO LOVED THE WORLD THAT HE GAVE HIS ONLY SON,
SO THAT EVERYONE WHO BELIEVES IN HIM
MAY NOT PERISH BUT MAY HAVE ETERNAL LIFE.**

Aunt Gertrude wanted to see this shirt on this little boy before she fell asleep. Now, isn’t that a curious thing?
THE END