

How Zach Won

by

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Zach stood in the kitchen grinding cheap hamburger meat for his mom's meatloaf and listening to an old radio. In spite of his Mother working two jobs, they were always having to find ways to save money. Zach's little brother John walked in. "What's for dinner," he whined at Zach?

Zach looked at John and frowned. "Meatloaf," said Zach, answering his brother's question.

Disappointment filled John's face. "I hate meatloaf," he complained as he stormed out of the room.

Zac thought how he too hated meatloaf. It was what they ate all the time. Suddenly a voice on the radio exclaimed that the lottery had no winner for the last 5 weeks. Zac had an idea. "If I could get enough money to buy a lottery ticket, I could win the lottery," Zac thought to himself.

Zac needed a way to make money. He decided to go through the neighborhood and ask people if they would pay him to do odd jobs.

That night Zac fell asleep, the thought of winning the lottery drifting through his head. The next morning Zac woke, dressed, inhaled a bowl of cereal, and walked out the door to find a job.

After an unsuccessful three hour search, Zac was about to call it quits for the day when his eyes fell upon a pink house with an orange picket fence . Zac stared at the strange color combination, and began walking up the stone path towards the brown door. He knocked. Moments later the door opened, and an old lady appeared wearing purple pajamas. She squinted and looked up at Zac through her spectacles which were carefully balanced on the tip of her pointy nose. At first Zac was too shocked to speak.

“Hi,” Zac choked out. The lady blinked at him with her wrinkled eyes. “A... I’m looking for a job.” said Zac.

“Well then Sonny, you have come to the right place.” Said the old lady, her eyes darting back and forth as if she were watching an invisible fly.

“Oh, great,” Zac said nervously, wishing he had never knocked on this door. He stepped inside and introduced himself. The lady closed her eyes for a while and then said,

“I think my name’s Anabeth.”

Zac began spending lots of time at Anabeth’s house. She made him do nonsensical chores like watering dead plants. One day Anabeth asked Zac to plant bird seed. Zac asked why, and she told him she wanted to grow birds.

Two months after starting, Zac woke early and jumped out of bed. It was payday, and Zac would finally be able to buy the lottery tickets.

When Zac arrived at Anabeth’s, he greeted her with a hug.

“What do you plan to spend the money on?” asked Anabeth.

“Lottery tickets,” Zac replied, carefully folding his thirty dollars.

“No!” said Anabeth, “you can’t waste your money on such a silly thing.”

But Zac wasn’t listening and he bought 13 tickets. Of course, he didn’t win. Zac felt SO SURE that he was going to win that when he realized he had lost, he just laughed like a crazy person. And then he cried. Eventually Zac realized that if he continued to work for Anabeth, he would make enough money to help his Mom buy better food for the family. At first, Zac had mistaken Anabeth for some loony old woman. Over time he had come to realize that she wasn’t loony; she just had a colorful personality.

No, Zac hadn’t won the lottery, he had won much more. He had won a friend.