THE SCHOOL DANCE

by

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It was one of the most embarrassing times of my life.

I was in the eighth grade at school. I did not have many friends because I was so shy, and I did not like a lot of attention. I did OK in school, and my teachers liked me. I just did not make friends very easily.

It all started when a letter was sent home to my parents that there was going to be a dance after our eighth grade graduation ceremony. I was surprised that my parents told me about it. They did not think that dancing was a very good idea, and I agreed with them. Having to dance with a girl made me nervous.

Most of the kids in my class went to dance lessons every Thursday night. My parents did not sign me up for the classes, mostly because they knew how shy I was. Looking back on it, I may have been less shy if they had made me go to dance lessons, but at the time, it did not really matter to me.

I was surprised when they told me about the party. We had made plans to have dinner with my grandparents, but my parents said we could do that another time. I wanted to go to dinner with my family, not the dance. I was shocked that they wanted me to go. They said it would be good for me to have a celebration with my classmates.

As graduation got closer, I had to prepare for all of the activities. I had to buy a nice suit. I hated wearing nice clothes. I liked my blue jeans and sneakers better. I only

wore nice clothes to church on Sunday, or if we were going to a really nice restaurant with my family.

I never liked shopping for clothes. My mother always chose the clothes that I disliked. She loved to dress me in blue. I liked gray or brown better. I hate to try on clothes at the store. She also wanted me to buy nice shoes. I also don't like to try on shoes at the store. I had no choice. My mother was there.

After we went shopping for my clothes, my mother took me shopping for my graduation present. This was a lot more fun. I found a radio that I liked. My mother said it would be a secret. She said my grandparents were buying the gift for me, so she wanted me to keep it a secret.

The day of the graduation came. We did the usual things for the graduation. There were speeches and awards. Then each of us went onto the stage and received our diplomas. Then someone sang a song. The graduation ceremony itself was not that scary. What was going to be scary was the dance afterwards.

Finally, the ceremony was over, but now we were going to the community center for the dance. My mother teased me, asking me with which girl I was going to dance.

I told her, "No one!"

My mother just laughed.

The ride in the car seemed to take forever even though the building was close to the school. I could only think about how much I was going to be teased by the other students because I did not know how to dance.

I decided I was not going to dance. I was going to just sit on the side and watch.

When we got to the community center, my parents walked me to the door. To my big surprise, they were going to stay and watch! Oh no, my parents were going to be there the whole time. They were going to be chaperones. What was I going to do?

My mother smiled at me. I grinned a small smile with a look of panic at her and then sat down. I liked the music. I sat and watched the others as they danced. They were dancing so beautifully.

During a break in the music, I got up to get something to drink. I was not paying attention where I was going, and I almost knocked down one of the girls.

I was startled, and said, “Excuse me.”

She said, “It’s OK”.

And then, to my surprise she asked me, “Would you like to dance?”

I was scared to death. She was one of the prettiest girls in my class, and she invited me to dance. What was I to do?

For some reason I said, “Sure.”

She had on a pretty red dress, black shoes and white gloves on her hands. She took my hand and pulled me out to the middle of the floor. I did not know how to start. I think I was shaking in fear, but she was so nice to me. She took my hand, showed me where to put my other hand, and then showed me a simple dance step.

I followed her steps. We began to move with the music around the room. I got lost in the music. My mind wandered as we moved from side to side and from end to end. It felt so easy.

When the music stopped, I was shocked to see that everyone else had stopped dancing and everyone was looking at me! To my bigger surprise, no one was laughing, they were clapping.

My mother looked surprised, and my dad had a big smile on his face.

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VOCABULARY: *(Match the word to its definition)*

1. embarrassed ____	a. gym shoes, casual shoes
2. graduation ____	b. formal ceremony
3. sneakers ____	c. small smile
4. present (n) ____	d. beautiful, good looking
5. diploma ____	e. gift
6. prettiest ____	f. ashamed, uncomfortable
7. speech ____	g. applaud, cheer
8. grin ____	h. dialog, lecture
9. wander ____	i. move about without direction
10. clap ____	j. credential, certificate

TRUE / FALSE:

1. I liked to dance. T / F
2. I bought new clothes for the graduation. T / F
3. My mom took me to the hardware store. T / F
4. I was very popular in school. T / F
5. My dad was happy for me. T / F
6. The prettiest girl taught me how to dance. T / F
7. I fell down at the dance. T / F
8. I sat alone all night. T / F
9. My parents were at the dance. T / F
10. I like to shop for clothes. T / F

MULTIPLE CHOICE:

1. Why were we having a dance? ____
   a) graduation
   b) funeral
   c) Christmas party
   d) wedding

2. What did my classmates do after I finished the dance? ____
   a) laughed
   b) cried
   c) yelled
   d) clapped

3. What color of clothes did my mother like? ____
   a) brown
   b) blue
   c) grey
   d) pink

4. What did my grandparents buy me as a graduation gift? ____
   a) radio
   b) bicycle
   c) motorcycle
   d) clothing

COMPREHENSION: *(Write a complete sentence to answer the question.)*

1. What was my gift for graduation from my grandparents?

   _____

2. Where did we go for the dance?

   _____

3. Who took me shopping?

   _____

4. What color was my dance partner's dress?

   _____

5. What happened when I got up to get something to drink?

   _____

6. Who drove me to the dance?

   _____

7. Why did not I like to dance?

   _____

8. Why did our class have a dance?

   _____

9. Who really paid for my graduation gift?

   _____

10. What were my plans before I was invited to the dance?

    _____