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Dreams

by Miriam Silver

It was when that Joan something or other did not pick me for her team, I knew I would never dream again. Admittedly I was only about six, in spite of her rejection, I remember joining in my team's 'bad luck' when hers lost, when all I wanted to do was to shout, "serve you right."

Thirty years on here I am in a playground with my baby, both of us having first day at school problems, when he was pushed, albeit not knocked over, causing him to clutch my hand even tighter. When I looked away nonchalantly, to my horror I saw I was being approached by a well-groomed Mum.

"So sorry, my son, I'll call him to apologise."

"Please, no damage, come on Nathan, in we go," I replied, dragging my reluctant son.

"No," she called, "Jason, come back, he must apologise."

Jason had disappeared by then, and I waved to Nathan as he went into school leaving me wanting only to be left alone.

"So sorry, I'll tell him later," Jason's mother offered.

"Please forget all about it, Nathan must learn, sorry, must rush," I replied and made my way to the gate.

“See you at 3.30, talk then,” she called after my disappearing back.

Needless to say the boys came out of school best friends. That did it, play dates, and girlie gossips, which forced me to explain I had to get to work. Nothing stopped her, and I entered an unwanted friendship for my son’s sake.

She lived in a very different world of local events and ‘keeping up’ while I only wanted to write, which is what I did while Nathan was at school making excuses to get me out of associating with her. Living locally too it became increasingly obvious that the only thing we had in common were our dreams for our boys.

Nathan admired Jason’s outgoing ideas building dens with materials his friend hauled. Eventually exploring places foreign together, leaving their parents to their drinks parties.

Nathan was quite academic, following his father into law while Jason played the field, both with girls and drugs, the latter, providing him with the things to collect the former. This we only gleaned from a reluctant Nathan. Jason’s parents never faced their son’s problems, admiring only his entrepreneurial skills, leaving us colluding in this myth.

The trouble began seriously when Jason contacted Nathan, begging him not to say anything, he was in deep, something to do with drugs.

“Don’t tell my folks, please, I’ll sort it.”

And we didn’t, thinking he meant it and wouldn’t do it again.

Very soon we were proved gullible, he asked my husband, a solicitor, to help him out, this time from jail. We had no option, we made him contact his parents.

And that was that really. End of friendship, they moved away, their son was sent to prison for dealing, so awful for them, Nathan visited him, but we lost touch.