Nicest Thing Anyone Has Done for Me

She Saved His Bacon and Fed Him a Pear

IN 1936, I was in the third grade, in St. Johnsbury, Vermont, and rather meek, which made me a target for a fourth-grade bully.

One day, at recess, he tried to grab me from behind and I instinctively swung around to defend myself. My elbow hit him in the eye and gave him a bloody nose.

The principal had both of us stay an hour after school.

Miss Vance, my teacher, knew that my father would not be pleased that I got home late to do chores and that he might punish me severely for getting into trouble at school.

She also knew that I was not the kind of boy to fight, but she had to do what the principal ordered. During my detention hour, I helped her sort papers, and we talked. She even gave me a pear to eat and was surprised that I had never eaten one.

When I got ready to leave, she handed me a note for my parents. It said an older boy had teased me and, in defending myself, I had given the boy a bloody nose. She said it was her opinion that I was not at fault and that it was self-defense, although the principal had decided to set an example by having both of us serve detention.

The note placated my father, and he even seemed pleased to learn that I had fought back.

—Charles Welcome, Tavares, Florida

Teacher Saw a Need

IN 1938, I was attending grade school in Baltimore. My mother was raising nine children, and I had very few clothes. I dreaded going to school because the other children always made fun of me

During Education Week, I went to an evening activity alone because Mom was at home with my younger brothers and sisters.

My teacher, Mrs. Young, asked me to stay after class because she wanted to talk with me. I was scared because I was failing arithmetic.

After everyone else had left, Mrs. Young took me in the back coatroom. There were three boxes of clothes, and she tried several items on me.

That night, a poor little girl went home happy; I had some nice clothes and shoes.

These many years later, Mrs. Young still remains in my heart and prayers.

To me, she was truly an angel in disguise.

—Bessie Schubert, Raleigh, North Carolina