

Dialogue Sample from
BLESS CRICKET, CREST TOOTHPASTE AND TOMMY TUNE

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[CRICKET, a girl in middle/high school, is embarrassed by TOM, her brother with Down syndrome. REESE, CRICKET's classmate, drops by unexpectedly to study. Before REESE's entrance GRAN has coaxed TOM to the kitchen for a popsicle.]

(CRICKET opens door for REESE.)

REESE

(Excited and smiling)

Hi!

CRICKET

(Unemotionally)

Hi.

REESE

My mom called your grandmother.

CRICKET

Yeah, I know.

REESE

So my mom dropped me off ...

CRICKET

Yeah, I see.

REESE

(Confused by CRICKET's reactions and getting nervous)

So, uh, we could ... study English. She went to Sack and Save ... to shop ... she's got a whole pile of coupons ... my mom ... you know, for groceries and junk. I'm gonna walk down and meet her when we're done.

CRICKET

Great.

REESE

So ... should I come in?

CRICKET

Sure. Come on in.

(REESE comes in and stands awkwardly in middle of room, trying to make conversation.)

REESE

I'm sure glad we have science and English together.

CRICKET

Yeah.

REESE

My mom said your grandmother was real nice on the phone ... So you live with her?

CRICKET

No. My parents are out of town, on business. My grandmother came to stay while they're gone.

REESE

Oh ... cool ... I brought my English book and my old tests.

CRICKET

Great.

REESE

I'm sure your tests have all the right answers anyway. Well, it shouldn't be too hard. Ms. Alcart's tests are pretty easy.

CRICKET

Yeah, should be easy.

REESE

At least for you. I wish I had your brain.

(TOM bursts through kitchen door, wearing his top hat but not his tails. HE has a half-eaten, dripping, red popsicle in one hand and another still in the wrapper in the other hand. TOM's mouth, hands and front of his shirt are stained red. GRAN appears a moment later, trying to keep up with him. SHE carries TOM's tails.)

TOM

I ga red popsicle!

GRAN

Tom!

TOM

For you, Cricky!

(TOM hugs and kisses CRICKET, covering her with popsicle juice.)

TOM (Continued)

(Noticing REESE)

Who he?

(CRICKET is frozen with embarrassment.)

GRAN

(Sensing CRICKET's feelings)

Oh, that's Cricket's friend, Tom. His name is Reese.

(GRAN takes unopened popsicle from TOM.)

GRAN (Continued)

Come on, we better get you cleaned up. Okay, Tom?

TOM

Okay, okay.

(Pointing at REESE)]

He come, too?

GRAN

No. Come on, Tom.

TOM

(Shoving half-eaten popsicle in REESE's hand, TOM takes from his pocket a folded picture of a primitive stick figure with top hat along with a yellow squiggly shape.)

You wan buy pitcher?

(Pointing to figure)

Tha me.

(Pointing to yellow shape)

Tha big bird.

GRAN

(Taking half-eaten popsicle from REESE)

Tom's having an art show at school.

(Trying to ease TOM away)
I'll buy it, Tom. How about twenty-five cents, okay?

TOM

Okay!

GRAN

(Firmly)
Come on, Tom. Now. We have to wash that face and brush your teeth. And you'll get your quarter!

(TOM stares at REESE.)

TOM

(Proudly pointing to his teeth)
I brush teeth Crest too-paste, right?

GRAN

That's right, Crest toothpaste.

(Tapping TOM on the shoulder)
Go on, right now, Tom. I'll come checking, okay? Take your pretty picture with you.

TOM

(Still focused on REESE)
I pud big bird on fridge wha my mom stick awe my pitchers.

GRAN

That's good.

TOM

My dad say I draw gud.

GRAN

That's right, you do. Now get moving, okay?

TOM

O-kay!

(TOM runs off. GRAN is relieved.)

GRAN

Hello, Reese. I'm Cricket's grandmother.

(Juggling the two popsicles, SHE offers her hand to REESE. HE shakes it politely.)

REESE

Nice to meet you.

GRAN

I'm so glad ...

(Eyeing CRICKET)

... we're so glad you could come over and study. We'll try not to disturb you again.

(Hanging TOM's tails on the hat rack)

I'll just hang this right up. Just let me know if you want some fruit or something.

(GRAN exits.)

REESE

(Nervously thumbing through an old test)

So ... uh ... I guess Mrs. Alcart'll ask us to do some stupid diagramming.

(HE looks at CRICKET, wishing HE hadn't used the word, "stupid.")

I mean --

CRICKET

So, I guess you'll be telling everyone.

REESE

What?

CRICKET

About my "stupid" brother.

REESE

(Nervously)

Oh, he's your brother? I ... I didn't know you had a brother.

(Pause)

CRICKET

Well, go on. Ask.

REESE

(Innocently)

What?

CRICKET

Oh, please!

REESE

(Tentatively)
So ... what's wrong with him?

CRICKET

Don't you listen in science?

REESE

Yeah. Actually, no. Not too much.

CRICKET

My brother has Down syndrome. He's a genetic mistake. Remember, chromosomes? Hel-lo? He's a mistake - a stupid mistake! A bunch of stupid brain cells and I'm stuck with him - a mutant!

REESE

I'm ... I'm sorry ... I didn't know.

CRICKET

Well, now you know! You know! We had to move so I have to start all over again! And I don't have my stupid science report done because he tore it up! My stupid brother tore it up to make rain!

REESE

Look, I ... I --

CRICKET

What do you think it's like - trying to study here with his music and tapping all the time?!

REESE

I ... I --

CRICKET

Can't you think of anything to say? You'll have a lot to say at school tomorrow, I bet, Mr. Reese's Pieces! "The new girl's brother is a retard, a stupid retard - drooling, talking like a moron!" Right?

(REESE crams tests into his backpack.)

REESE

I ... I wouldn't do that ... I wouldn't say --

CRICKET

Oh, yeah?! Why not?! 'Cause you're so sweet?! Don't come over here ever again! Understand?! Don't talk to me!

(Pushing REESE out the front door)
And don't ever ask me to any stupid, stupid, stupid movie!!!