The New Girl in Class (B1 · English B1)

Tekst / Transcript

Nadia arrived at our school in October, in the middle of a cold and rainy week. She was an immigrant from Morocco, and her family had moved here only twelve days earlier. Our teacher, Mr Holt, asked us to be friendly and patient. On her first morning she sat by the window and said almost nothing. My first impression was that she was very shy, but I was completely wrong.

At lunch the rain was heavy, so we all stayed in the indoor sports hall. Someone threw a basketball to Nadia, and she caught it without looking. Then she scored three times in a row. The whole hall went quiet, and after that everybody wanted her on their team. It was impressive, because most of us had played basketball for years and she had never trained with a club. She laughed and said that her brothers were much better than her. Nobody believed that.

Her English was still difficult in the first weeks. She often used long, indirect sentences instead of short ones, because she was afraid of making mistakes. Mr Holt gave her extra exercises every Friday, and by December the improvement was clear to everyone. She could explain her ideas quickly, and she even made jokes. When the teacher asked if she felt more comfortable now, she smiled and said, "Yes, indeed." Her marks were incredibly good in mathematics too, so the school gave her a small prize in the spring.

I learned something from that year. A new student does not need our pity; she simply needs a chance and a normal conversation. Nadia had a real impact on our class, because we started asking each other more questions and listening better. Small signs, like an open seat at the lunch table, can indicate that somebody is welcome. Our teacher understood the importance of that from the beginning, and he never made a big speech about it. He simply put two chairs together and let us talk. When Nadia's family later opened a bakery near the station, half the class came on the first day. There was no immediate reward for us, but the bread was warm and the coffee was free, and we stayed until the shop closed.

Woordenlijst

Word	Meaning
immediate	
immigrant	
impact	
importance	
impression	
impressive	
improvement	
incredibly	
indeed	
indicate	
indirect	
indoor	
indoors	
influence	
ingredient	
shoot	

simply
slice
slightly
slow
sort
spicy
spoken

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