

By Julie Cornelius-Huang

(Based on a true story)

“Let’s speak of all the best we can”

(Hymns, no. 233).

Lina swung her lunchbox as she walked to the lunchroom. Lunch was the best part of the day. Lina loved sitting with her friends and talking about who said what, who liked who, who got in trouble – there were always fun things to talk about. And today Lina was sure she had the most exciting news. She couldn’t wait to tell her friends.

“Guess what!” she said as soon as she sat down. “Shara Johnson had to go home early today ... because she has lice!”

The girls gasped and stared at her.

Trish moaned. “I walked right by her like six times today!” she said. “What if I have lice too?”

“Oh no,” Katy said. “I have to work with her on a science project next week.”

Melissa shuddered. “That is so gross. I don’t think I can be her friend anymore.”

Lina stopped smiling. She squirmed in her seat. She had been excited to share some news, but she didn’t like how they were talking about Shara now. She didn’t want Shara to lose any friends! Getting lice didn’t mean anything bad about Shara; it could have happened to any of them. Lina tried to forget about it and just eat her food, but she just couldn’t.

When the bell rang for them to go back to class, the girls were still talking about Shara. They kept laughing and making faces. Lina felt awful.

Back in class, Mrs. Currier called Lina to her desk.

DID YOU
HEAR ABOUT
SHARA?

“Since you’re Shara’s neighbor, would you please take her today’s homework?” Mrs. Currier asked.

Oh no. Lina didn’t want to face Shara. Not after what she’d said. But she nodded and took the worksheets.

On her way home after school, Lina stopped by the Johnsons’ house. She rang the doorbell and hoped that anyone but Shara would open the door.

“Hi, Lina!” It was Shara. She smiled when she saw Lina standing on the porch. “What’s up?”

“I’m just bringing your homework,” Lina said, trying to smile too.

“Thanks!” Shara said. “I was worried I would fall behind after missing today.”

“So you’ll be back tomorrow?” Lina asked.

“Yep! I’ll see you in class.”

“Awesome. See you tomorrow.” Lina smiled the best she could, then walked away. Now she felt even worse. Shara was so nice, and now the girls at school were saying mean things about her. Lina wanted to fix things. But how?

Lina didn’t know what to do, but she knew who could help her. She stopped walking, closed her eyes, and bowed her head.

Heavenly Father, I really messed up today. I gossiped about Shara, and now I feel really bad about it. I am so sorry. I don’t know how to make it right. Please help me fix my mistake.

After Lina finished praying, she felt peaceful. She knew that making things right might be scary, but Heavenly Father would help her.

The next day at lunch, Lina saw her friends at their usual table. As she walked toward them, she said another quick prayer.

Please help me be brave.

“Hey,” Lina said. She didn’t sit down. “I just wanted to say ... I wanted to say that I’m sorry I told you Shara had lice. Shara is really nice, and I shouldn’t have said anything. We shouldn’t spread bad news about other people.”

Trish, Katy, and Melissa stared at her. They looked too surprised to say anything. Lina turned away. She felt better for the first time since yesterday! Then she spotted Shara across the lunchroom and waved. Shara waved back, and Lina walked over to sit by her. The warm feeling in her heart told her that she had made the right choice. ♦

The author lives in Nevada, USA.

How could Lina make things right?



“Our words, like our deeds, should be filled with faith and hope and charity.”
Elder Jeffrey R. Holland of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles
“The Tongue of Angels,” *Ensign*, May 2007, 18.