

Love Notes and Juju Fruits

By Marilyn Reeves

It was the third week of school, so Melissa was surprised when a new boy showed up in class. Their 4th grade teacher Miss Harris said, "I'd like your attention, everyone. This is David. His family just moved here from California. Please make David feel welcome." Then she turned to the boy and said, "There are a couple of empty desks, David. Take your pick."

While he was making his way down her aisle Melissa was sure he'd pick the empty desk across from Karen, the girl who always bragged about how pretty she looked in her new clothes and matching shoes and made fun of girls like Melissa who had to wear hand-me-down's.

But when she looked up again, the new boy had plunked himself down at the desk next to her own. And grinned. Melissa blushed from head to toe. While most of the other boys in class – whom she'd known since 1st grade – were nice, none of them had ever smiled at her like that! And this David was really cute. His dark hair hung down at a rakish angle over his right eye and he had a one-inch scar that traveled down his left cheekbone in such a way that it looked like an extension of the dimple in his cheek. He reminded her of a pirate.

At recess her friends all gathered around her to giggle and gossip about the new boy. "How'd you get so lucky, Melissa?" they all wanted to know.

"I don't know," she said. "Maybe he was afraid of Karen. Or just playing it cool so she'll have to work to get his attention."

But the very next day, while Miss Harris had turned to the blackboard, David tore off a corner of paper from his tablet and passed Melissa a note across the aisle. "What's your name?" the note said. "I think you're cute."

Well, Melissa about died when she read the note. She was afraid to even look over at him. But she scribbled a reply and handed it back to him the next time Miss Harris wasn't looking. "My name is Melissa. I think you're cute, too."

The note passing went on almost daily, until one day at recess David walked up to her and said, "Can I sit with you at the matinee on Saturday?"

"Yeah, I guess so," said Melissa.

So that Saturday, once the lights went down and the movie started, David whispered, "Can I hold your hand?"

"Yeah, I guess so," said Melissa. But when he reached for her hand, his was all sticky from eating Juju Fruits and she pulled her hand back. "Sorry," she said, "but your hand's kinda sticky."

"Oops, sorry!" he said. "Well, maybe next time. Hey, would you like some Juju Fruits?"

So they didn't hold hands after all, but now Melissa had a cute new boyfriend and she couldn't have been happier. Across the aisle, Karen's eyes had turned as green as her new dress with matching shoes.

In the meantime, Melissa developed a definite liking for Juju Fruits.