

Entry #5 **Jack and the Babysitter** by Ben Li

**This is a clever set up of a conflict—between Jack’s obligation to babysit and his desire to go to his friend’s party—and a good description of how the protagonist digs himself deep into a hole (and takes big risks!) by not thinking through the implications of his actions. I also like that the title is a reference to “Jack and the Beanstalk” where the character Jack similarly defied his mother’s instructions. Improvements could be made with some clarifications—for example, suggesting why Jack’s mother would accept a babysitting job for him when he had other plans (maybe the family needed the money?) and explaining why Jack thinks offering to invite Dave and his family to a party is a good resolution (does he realize that he should have taken Dave with him to his friend’s party?)**

Jack was a very mischievous person who does very mischievous things. This morning Jack was very happy and excited. Tomorrow was going to be Jack’s best friend’s birthday party! But this morning Jack heard his mom on the telephone.

“You need a babysitter tomorrow at three o’clock? Jack would be the perfect babysitter!” exclaimed Jack’s mom.

When Jack heard that, he thought about the words three o’ clock. Three o’ clock was the time when his friend’s birthday started!

“I’m going to miss out on my friend’s birthday party,” Jack realized, groaning in horror.

The next day, Jack figured out the person he was going to babysit was a person named Dave. His mom told Jack Dave’s name, trying to make things go smoother and calmer when Jack arrived at Dave’s house. While Jack’s mom drove Jack to Dave’s house, he thought about a very mischievous idea. When Jack’s mom dropped him off at Dave’s house he immediately first put Dave into the bathtub with hot, warm, cozy and soapy water so it could first put Dave into a little nap. It would sometimes work on Jack too, so Jack figured that it would work on Dave too.

Next, he slammed the bathroom door hard and then quietly snuck out of the house through the open window and quickly shut it before Dave could shout.

Lastly, Jack ran to his friend’s house for the birthday party. Jack stayed for a long time at his friend’s house without remembering the time. When Jack saw the time he panicked and shouted, “Oh no! It’s already six o’ clock!” Jack sprinted back to Dave’s house.

When Jack arrived back at Dave’s house, he saw the door was open! Jack first did not care about this, but he still went in and checked the whole house for Dave. Dave was gone! Jack was breathing hard and he was also in panic.

“This is a disaster! I’m going to be in big trouble if I don’t find Dave!” shouted Jack in panic.

Jack needed to find Dave quickly before Dave’s parents came back. Jack knew that he had to find Dave, so Jack quickly ran out of the house to look for Dave outside. Jack ran around the whole neighborhood looking for Dave.

Finally, Jack saw Dave shouting and waving his arms like crazy. Then Jack quickly grabbed Dave and sprinted back to Dave’s house. Jack could feel the sweat trickling off his neck and back. When Jack arrived at Dave’s house Dave’s parents were already there! “Oh no!” thought Jack. When Dave’s mom saw Jack carrying Dave she asked, “What happened? Why is the floor all soapy and wet?”

Just then she slipped and fell onto the ground. After Dave’s mom got up Jack told her what he did and what happened. After that he was sent home by Dave’s mom. When Jack arrived home he saw his family sitting at the dining table slurping tomato soup and munching on bread sticks.

“Dave’s mom told me that you left Dave in the bathtub for three hours then left. Is that true?” asked Jack’s mom.

“Yes mother” mumbled Jack, ashamed.

“Young man, you are grounded for a week. While you are grounded you must write apology notes to Dave and his family.” ranted Jack’s mom.

So Jack went into his room and started writing apology notes with his best handwriting. Jack noted:

Dear Dave and his parents,

I apologize for leaving Dave in the bathtub for three hours just to run off to one of my friend’s houses. I hope you forgive me. P.s please come over to my house for a party. I will also bring my friends to the party too. Remember the party is on Saturday at two o’ clock!