

Winning Entry for the 2020 LBW Page 100 Writing Competition

A few days later, Violet was working in her backyard, tending to a few tomato plants growing in pots lining her small patio when Tommy appeared at Mrs. McCabe's. Mrs. McCabe showed him her tool shed and set him to work on some shrubs. Violet doubted ten minutes had passed before Arabella bounced over and introduced herself and began peppering him with questions as he clipped hedges on the side of the trailer that faced Violet's house.

"Do you have brothers and sisters?"

"One older brother."

"What grade are you in school?"

"Going into twelfth."

"What's your favorite subject?"

"I don't know." He stopped clipping the branches and regarded Arabella.

"Do you like to read?" she asked.

"Not really."

"Oh. Do you like movies?"

"Yes."

"What's your favorite movie?"

"2001: A Space Odyssey. Why do you ask so many questions?"

She shrugged, not the least bit offended by his terseness. "It's how I learn things. Why don't you ask any questions?"

"I just did," he said, and his lip twitched a little.

Arabella laughed. "Well, you could ask me how old I am and stuff like that."

He went back to clipping. "I have a feeling you are going to tell me whether I ask or not."

"I am seven years old, and I live over there. I have a baby brother. And Miss Violet is my best friend."