



Caro's Present

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1

Jules loves sweets. It is Monday.
In five days it will be Jules' birthday. He will be five.

2

His big sister, Caro, has bought him a present:
A beautiful box of sweets, an assortment
of five special fruit jellies of different colours.
She hides it in the drawer of the old sideboard...

3

... But Jules sees her.

4

And that night his dreams are full of sweets

Tuesday. Jules gets up before everybody else,
he opens the drawer silently, loosens the golden ribbon.

5

He picks up the pink sweet.
How delicious! It tastes of wild strawberries.
Now, one sweet is missing,
but Jules has thought of everything.

6

He has made a sweet out of plasticine.
Now there are four sweets in the box,
and one fake sweet not quite pink, more red.

7

Wednesday. No school. Caro is at her music lesson,
Jules grabs that moment to taste the green sweet.
It tastes of mint and feels very cool in his mouth.

8

The imitation is a little darker but still, Jules is happy with it.
Now there are three sweets in the box and two fake ones, a red one, and a green one.

9

Thursday morning. Caro is hanging around in the bathroom and Mum is on the phone inviting friends to the birthday party. Jules steals the yellow sweet, it must taste like lemon. He will eat it on his way to school.

10

His copy is perfect.
Now there are two jelly sweets left in the box and three pieces of plasticine. The cover is a little dirty, finger marks are clearly visible, but Jules will clean it tomorrow.
On **Friday**, just before leaving for school, Jules pretends he has forgotten his book. He goes to pick it up off the sideboard, and takes the blue sweet, the one tasting like violets.

11

Paul has promised to give him a marble for the blue sweet. Jules does not like the taste of violets. It is weird. Now there is only one sweet left in the box and four fake ones, quite pretty indeed but the bow on the box is wrinkled.

12

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13

Friday night. Jules is a little nervous. Caro will not leave him alone. She wants to know who is invited to his party the next day, if he is expecting lots of presents and whether she should wear her pink dress or her new jeans overalls. During the night Jules gets up, grabs the last fruit jelly, the one tasting of licorice, his favourite. He sucks on it for a long time, lying on his bed in the dark. A dark spot will probably show on his pillow.

14

15

Jules can't sleep.

He dreams of a giant box with five pieces of plasticine,
and Caro, dressed up as a witch is making him eat them.
A red one, a green one, a yellow one, a blue one, and a black one.

Jules has a stomach ache.

16

Saturday afternoon. All his friends are there.

There are five candles on the cake.

Caro gives him her present.

Ah, she has put a new golden ribbon around the box!

Jules is worried. He blushes and opens the box.

17

– What is it? He exclaims.

– A zero, a big zero in plasticine for my darling little brother!
