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Readers

Jacqueline Wilson

LOVE
frankie





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Note about the story

Jacqueline Wilson has written more than one hundred books for children and young adults. Her stories are often very different from other children's stories because they are sometimes very sad. But they usually have a happy ending.

Love Frankie is about thirteen-year-old Frankie Bennet. Frankie does not have many friends and feels different from most of the other girls at her school. Her mum is also very ill, and her only friend, Sam, is acting strangely. Frankie **hates*** the beautiful and **popular** Sally Macclesfield, a girl at her school, because Sally and her friends are always horrible to Frankie. But one day, the two girls suddenly become friends, and Frankie starts to like Sally in a **romantic** way. This is Jacqueline Wilson's first book with a **lesbian** love story.

Before-reading questions

- 1 Read the "Note about the story". What will happen between Frankie and Sally, do you think?
- 2 In the story, it is Christmas. What do you know about Christmas in the UK?
- 3 In the story, Frankie is at school. What do you know about English schools? Are they the same as the schools in your country?

*Definitions of words in **bold** can be found in the glossary on pages 78–80.

CHAPTER ONE

Sam, my best friend

"I have to go shopping for Christmas presents. But I haven't got any ideas," I said.

"Yes, it's difficult," Sam said.

It was a Saturday morning, and I was sitting on my bedroom floor with my dog, Bear. He was sleeping, and I was doing my homework. Well, *Sam* was doing my homework.

Sam is my best friend in the world. He's very handsome. He has blond hair and brown eyes. And he's very intelligent. He's better than me at everything, even English. This is really **annoying** because I've always wanted to be a writer. I've written many stories in my notebook. But they are not **romantic** stories. My older sister, Zara, loves romantic stories, but I **hate** them.

Sam and I met when we were little. He lives next door with his parents. His house is bigger than my house. My house is small and has two bedrooms. Mum has one bedroom, and Zara and I sleep in the other one. Sam doesn't go to the same school as me any more.

His parents are rich, so they sent him to an expensive school. I hate this because I don't have many friends at my school.

Sam was looking in the mirror. "Should I cut my hair? What do you think, Frankie?" he asked.

He found some scissors and began cutting his hair. It looked terrible.

"Stop!" I said. "Your hair is fine!"

"Can your mum cut my hair for me?" Sam said. He put down the scissors.

"She's sleeping," I said. "She isn't feeling very well."

I wasn't **lying**. Mum was very tired when she woke up that morning. She still got up early and tried to make us breakfast. But five minutes after breakfast, Zara and I had to take her to bed. Only Zara and I knew that this was normal for her now.

"Oh, sorry," Sam said. "Then let's go into town. I'll get my hair cut, and we can look for Christmas presents."

"Do you have enough money?" I asked. I knew that it was a stupid question.

"Dad gave me some money to buy Christmas presents. I can give some to you if you want?" Sam **offered**.

"It's OK. I have money," I said.

This wasn't true, and Sam knew that I was lying. I had some money but not enough to buy presents for three people. Mum, Zara and Sam. I wasn't planning to buy Dad a present because I hated him. He left Mum a few months ago.

"I'll tell Mum that I'm going to the shopping centre," I said to Sam. I left him in my bedroom and went to see Mum.

"Mum?" I said, quietly.

"Hi, Frankie," she said.

"Sorry, were you sleeping?" I asked.

"I have so many things to do," she said. "I should get up."

"No, you should sleep!" I said.

"I'll sleep for ten minutes, and then I'll be fine," Mum said.

Mum has **multiple sclerosis**. She told us about a month ago. When she first told us, we were very **scared**. Zara and I usually fight a lot because we're very different. But that night we slept in the same bed and cried.

I said goodbye to Mum and went back to my bedroom. Sam was reading my notebook.

"Don't look at that!" I said. "It's secret!"

“But we’re friends. We don’t have secrets,” Sam said.

“Yes, we do,” I said.

“Have you written about me?” Sam asked.

“No,” I said.

Sam looked **disappointed**.

“Come on, let’s go shopping,” I said.

There were a lot of people at the shopping centre. First, we found the hairdresser’s. A woman with scissors was cutting a girl’s hair very short.

“Do you like her hair?” I asked Sam, quietly.

“She looks like a boy,” Sam said.



“I think that it looks really **cool**. I might cut my hair short,” I said.

My hair is very long, and it’s not very tidy.

“Don’t! You have beautiful hair!” Sam said.

It was strange. He never usually said nice things to me, and I never said nice things to him.

“Your hair looks great,” I said, turning to the girl.

She smiled, and I suddenly felt a little **embarrassed**.

“She’ll think that you **fancy** her,” Sam said, laughing.

After the hairdresser’s, we looked for Christmas presents. Sam kept offering to buy things for me, but I said no. I found something cheap for Zara, but I couldn’t find anything for Mum. Everything was so expensive.

“Let’s go home,” I said, **annoyed**. “I just need the toilet first.”

“I’ll wait outside,” Sam said.

“Hello,” a voice said, as I walked into the toilets.

Sally Macclesfield was there with her friend Marnie. They went to my school, and I hated them.