

# MATINEE

Movie Prices  
Children 3-11  
\$3.75  
Adults 12 and over  
\$5.00



BY ERIN HILL LITTLEFIELD

(Based on an experience from the author's family)



*Do that which is honest* (2 Corinthians 13:7).

Elisa's mom pulled the car up to the curb near the movie theater, and Elisa jumped out onto the sidewalk. There were already dozens of people in line. Luckily, she saw her friend Tracy waving from near the front.

"Have fun!" Mom handed Elisa some change.

"Call me if Tracy's mom isn't here to pick you up."

"Thanks, Mom," Elisa said, shutting the car door.

It was Elisa's 12th birthday, and she and Tracy were going to a movie that they had been waiting to see for months. Elisa saw the movie posters displayed outside the building and started to feel excited. She patted the ticket money in her pocket.

"I'm glad I got here early," Tracy said. "The line is already getting long, and the movie doesn't start for another 20 minutes."

Finally they reached the ticket window. The list of ticket prices was displayed above the cashier's head.

"One child's ticket, please," Tracy said, telling him the name of the movie they wanted to see. She handed him her money and he slid a ticket under the glass.

Elisa stepped up next. "I'm getting a ticket for the same show."

He slid a child's ticket toward her and she put her money under the glass. Then she realized she shouldn't have done that. The sign above his head said "Children 3–11 \$3.75. Adults 12 and older \$5.00."

She was supposed to pay the full price, but the man had already pushed forward her change and was helping the next person in line. "Oh, well," she thought. "It's no big deal, right? I just *barely* turned 12." Elisa pocketed the change and walked into the theater behind Tracy.

"This is perfect," Tracy said as they found some seats in the middle. Elisa nodded, but she was thinking about what had just happened at the ticket booth.

"So, happy birthday!" Tracy said, smiling. "I'm so glad we can celebrate together. Are you still going to have a birthday party next weekend?"

"What?" Elisa was picturing the sign above the cashier's head.

"The birthday party—are you having it?" Tracy repeated. "I can't wait until I turn 12. I'll be able to go to girls' camp with you in July."

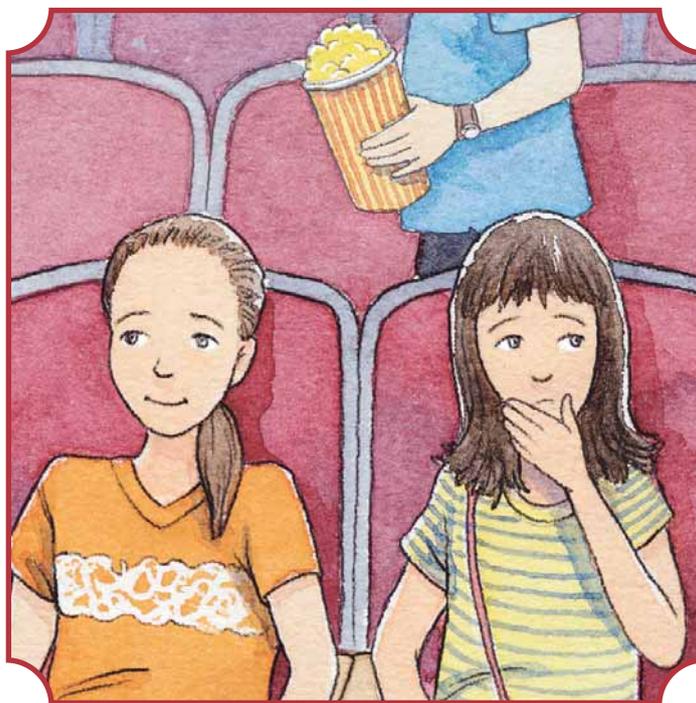
"Oh, that's right," Elisa said. "We'll share a tent together."

"I'm going to miss activity days," Tracy said, "but turning 12 will be so cool. Do you already feel more grown-up?"

Elisa felt less grown-up at that moment. She wasn't sure what to do. "I guess so," she said. The uneasy feeling wouldn't go away.

"You'll have to tell me about our Young Women's class so I can be prepared," Tracy said. "I don't want to feel silly at my first activity."

The theater lights dimmed and music started to play. Elisa wanted to go back to the ticket booth, but she thought the cashier would think she was being foolish.



"It's only a matter of 24 hours, right?" she reasoned to herself.

The movie previews started, and Elisa and Tracy sat back to enjoy the movie. It was great—just what they had hoped it would be—but Elisa couldn't forget what had happened at the ticket booth. She hadn't been honest.

When the movie was over, they waited in the aisle for a few minutes while everyone filed out. Elisa stared at the red carpeted wall, barely listening to Tracy rave about the movie. Elisa knew what she had to do. As soon as they stepped outside the theater, she turned toward the ticket window.

"Um, I need to take care of something at the ticket booth."

"Ticket booth? Are you going again?" Tracy laughed. "It was good, but—"

"No, I just have to fix a mistake." Elisa stepped toward the ticket booth.

"Wait, Elisa," Tracy called. "My mom's here. We need to go."

"I'll hurry," Elisa called back to her. She walked quickly to the front of the line and approached the window.

"What movie?" the cashier asked.

Elisa slid her ticket stub under the glass. "Well, I just saw this movie. I bought the ticket before it started."

"Do you want to see it again?" He looked puzzled.

"No, I paid the wrong price," Elisa said nervously.

"See, I paid for a child's ticket, but really I'm 12 and I should have paid the full price. Today's my birthday."

"So?"

"Well, I should have told you I was 12, because the price is different."

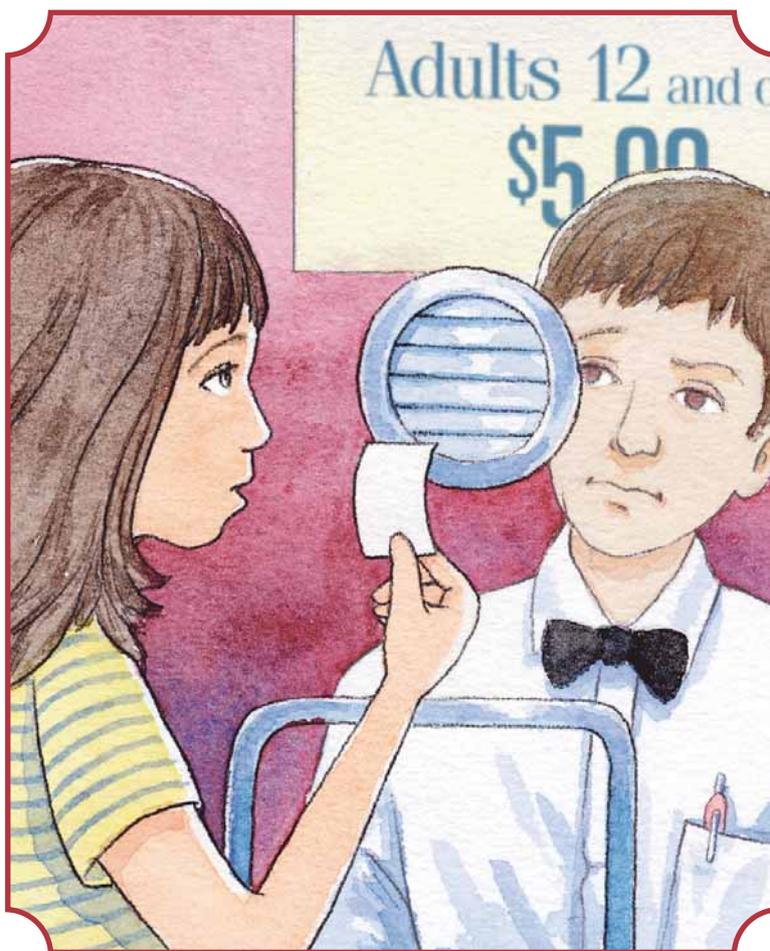
"Look, I don't care," he said, laughing at her. "Just forget about it."

"Well, I didn't tell the truth and I should have," she said again. It didn't feel funny to her.

"What's the problem?" the manager asked, stepping into the ticket booth. Elisa explained to her what had happened.

"I want to pay the extra money," Elisa said again.

"Some kids try to sneak in without buying a ticket at all." The manager shook her head, smiling. "You can keep the change."



Consider it a birthday present for being honest."

"Really?" Suddenly Elisa *did* feel grown-up. She walked toward Tracy with a big smile on her face.

"Did they fix their mistake?" Tracy asked.

"No, it was *my* mistake," Elisa said, "so I fixed it myself." ●

*Erin Hill Littlefield is a member of the Bryan First Ward, College Station Texas Stake.*