

LITTLE  APPLE

GOOD GRIEF... THIRD GRADE

School is out—
of control!

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 SCHOLASTIC

Chapter

One

Marsha leaned back in her chair and looked around her third-grade classroom. Today was the first day of school and Mrs. Byrnes was finishing a new bulletin board. It was filled with apples. Each apple was slightly different and had the name of a student in Room 10. Mrs. Byrnes was a very good artist. Marsha was glad she had Mrs. Byrnes for third grade, and not Mrs. Lodge in Room 9. Mrs. Lodge *never* let the kids in her homeroom get drinks. Not even when they had tacos for lunch. Marsha opened her desk. Not one crayon was broken, not one pencil was bitten. Everything was fresh.

Third grade was going to be a fresh start, too. Marsha had promised her parents over breakfast that she wasn't going to get in any trouble in the third grade. She had even decorated a sheet of white paper with roses and rainbows and printed: *I, Marsha Cessano, promise to be very, very good all year long.* She'd signed it and given it to her parents. Boy, were they happy. Mrs. Cessano stuck it on the refrigerator with her favorite magnet. Third grade was going to be the beginning of straight A's, neat desks, and never, ever again being sent down to the principal's office. This year, Sister Mary Elizabeth would have to find somebody else to wave her finger at. By Christmastime, Sister Mary Elizabeth might pick Marsha to carry the poinsettia plant for the manger scene. Marsha knew her parents would be happy. Her grandma might even come to watch. Her parents would tell everyone that Marsha was doing a great job in the third grade. Since she was an only child, they had to count on her for *all* their proud moments. It was kind of a hard job, being an only child.

“Well, look what we have here!”

Marsha didn't even look up. She knew it was rude old Roger Friday, trying to get her mad. He was good at it, too. Too bad his parents hadn't moved to New Mexico over the weekend, or a large dog hadn't picked up Roger by his scrawny neck and run off to Michigan. No such luck. Roger was right back in the middle of the third grade.

“Oh, get out of here, Roger. Go stick your head in the fish tank.”

Roger and his two buddies laughed hard. Roger leaned down and grinned right into Marsha's face. He smelled like waffles and maple syrup.

“Now, Marsha. Is that any way to talk to an old friend?” Roger patted Marsha on the back. “Did you wake up on the wrong side of bed, again?”

Marsha wiggled her shoulders until Roger pulled away his hand. She noticed his hand already had ink marks all over it. He had drawn little eyes on top of each knuckle.

Roger was so weird. He didn't belong in the third grade. He didn't belong on the



Good grief...it's Marsha and Roger!

Marsha Cessano promised her parents that third grade will be her best school year ever. But that yucky Roger Friday will do anything to get Marsha in trouble! Now third grade couldn't be crazier—because Marsha and Roger have to work on a class project *together*!

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