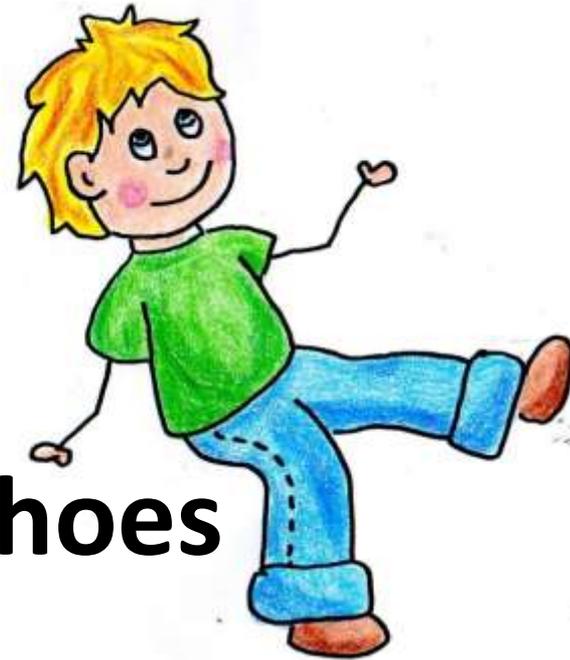


Children's literature



In Daniel's shoes

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Chrysallis. Asociación de Familias de Menores Transexuales
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Miss Simona is worried... Is her classroom a cage? Her naughtiest pupil always manages to drive her crazy.

The one who wears a ripped skirt and doesn't like wearing pink.

The one who dresses as an Indian or a cowboy during Carnival and wants to be a firefighter in the Christmas play.

The one who wears a tie when she wants to dress up.

The one who leaves the door open on purpose because she wants to be punished so she doesn't have to play skipping rope.

The one who happily laughs when she draws a moustache with watercolours on herself.

The one who happily jumps when she scores a goal and all her friends celebrate.

The one who hides her braid under her shirt collar, and who hates tulle and silk.

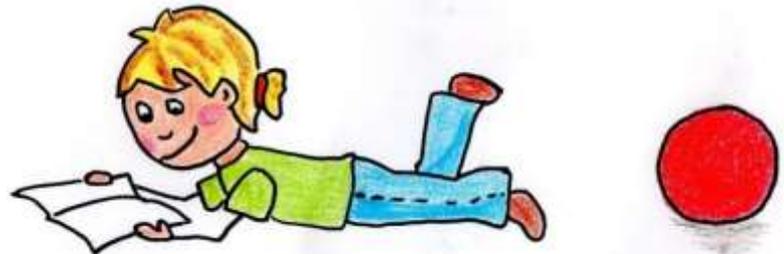
The one who doesn't wait her turn during games at break time and joins groups that are not meant for her.

The one who uses the wrong bathroom or prefers not to use the girls' bathroom because it embarrasses her.

The one who seems lost when she has to choose a queue.

The one who always loses her earrings and doesn't care about finding them.

Berta, the one who takes off her hair clip as soon as she gets to class, may not be a girl.



A few days ago, her mum and dad have now understood everything. They have gone to her school to explain what is going on.

- Berta is a boy! It seems confusing but it's very simple. He said it since he was very little, but we didn't know how to help him because we didn't see it. And now we have realised what we couldn't see before. He's Daniel!



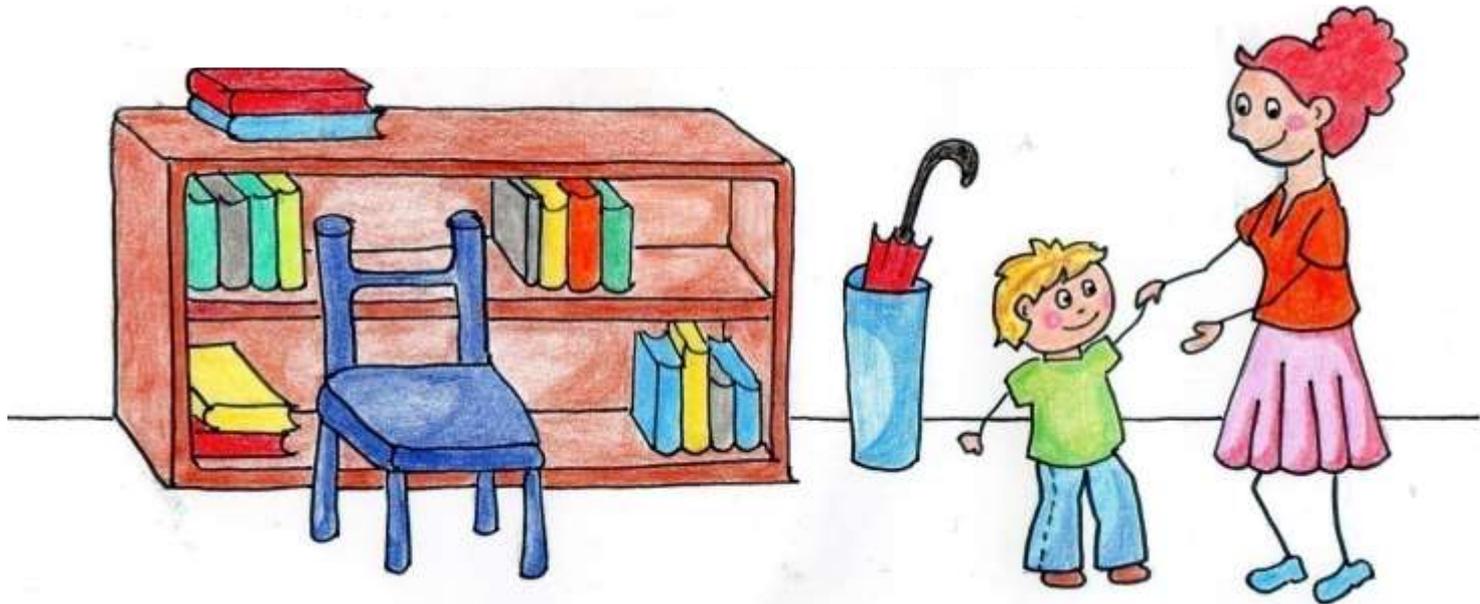
Miss Simona is friendly and caring and, as she listens, she begins to understand lots of things.

- There's no need to panic, we can handle this! If we have made a mistake, we will fix it!

Yesterday the sky was dark, almost stormy but now the sun is shining and a new day begins. Everything is ready, the school has been informed.

Slowly, Daniel enters his teacher's office and, very nervously, takes two steps. Miss Simona is in front of him. She calms him and tells him that everything will be alright, and that he should just have fun and go with the flow. But Daniel is not sure how to explain his reality.

- What a mess! How are we going to explain that I was never Berta?



The teacher, who is generous, smart and understanding, kindly says:

- Don't worry Daniel, we are going to put ourselves in your shoes!

The pupils have arrived, hung their coats and sat at their desks. Some throw paper balls around, and Daniel relaxes and smiles.

Today the teacher seems different. She hasn't taken the register for the kids to say 'Here!'.

- Let's play a game where we all change our identity. You'll learn a lot, you'll see. Boys have to pretend to be girls and choose a name, and girls must do the opposite. I'll give you some clothes and accessories to wear. You must talk to one another according to your new reality. You can't laugh at or insult each other, because respect is very important. You can stop playing the game whenever you want.



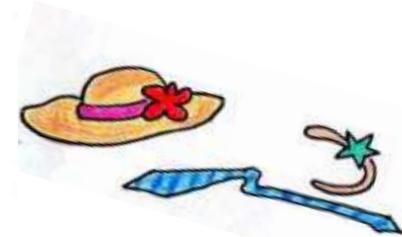
And she added:

- One, two, three, let's play and perhaps it will become true!

Miss Simona puts on her costume first, and gives herself a strange and foreign name.



She has prepared a little piece of cardboard for each pupil to write their new names and put them on their chest.



Everybody removes their school smocks, and starts swapping clothes with other pupils. Everything is a colourful chaos! The teacher hands out hair clips and fake moustaches, top hats, shawls, braces, rag dolls and some shoes. And, of course, new paper for the pupils to do their tasks. And everybody begins to have fun.

At the beginning, everybody laughs, looking at each other and pretending. They mix up their words, stand in the wrong queues, and make mistakes while playing.

A girl gets angry because someone says she is handsome, and other girl secretly plays with her quartz ring.

Everybody makes the effort, but they get bored trying to fake their new identity and in the end they do it badly.

Faking is not easy, and in the end the game is sad and hard to follow. They experience a lot of frustration, because they feel the opposite way.

A few hours later, both boys and girls complain. Going against our natural instinct is exhausting!



Only Daniel is comfortable in his own skin. He is happy and living the moment. He isn't playing, he's being himself. He's not faking, he's breathing. He's not pretending, he's feeling.

The kids are tired of this silliness, and they decide to start a riot to stop playing the game. They amazingly tell the teacher about all their complaints:



- This game is very complicated and I want to be who I am!
- I don't like my fake name and being called a girl bothers me because I am a boy!
- I didn't have fun during break time because I had to play pretending to be someone that I'm not!
- I feel embarrassed wearing this ridiculous hat with a flower!
- I'd rather have a paper with coloured stars! And this tie is annoying me!
- I don't feel good in the school smock I'm wearing! And I don't like dolls, I prefer the roulette!
- It's very difficult, I can't say I'm a tired boy if what I'm is an exhausted girl!
- This necklace is embarrassing, and this wig makes my neck itch.
- What a chaos and confusion, I don't want to imagine myself wearing a nightgown!
- I don't want to go to that bathroom anymore! And if I have to, I will hold my pee!



Finally a voice saves them:

- One, two, three, the game is over!

The pupils clap and take off their clothes and accessories. They quickly remove their costumes. They crumple the papers that were not meant for them and throw away the cardboards with fake names. They are finally out of that delirious, uncomfortable and infuriating trance!

Daniel smiles. His eyes sparkle and he seems happy.

Only Daniel held on to his velvet moustache and his man trousers, and to the cardboard with his name in big capital letters.



The teacher takes off her bow tie and washes her three-day beard. She takes off her apron and gets back to reality. She's not a butcher anymore. And now that she's ready, she asks her pupils to write about how they felt.

- How did you feel? How was your experience? If playing pretend for one morning is tiring, imagine what it's like having to do so for your whole life! I want you to write about your frustration from the bottom of your heart.

Everybody starts writing, expressing their feelings, and they suddenly notice something. Someone is still wearing his name badge.

Daniel!!

Everybody looks at him and quickly understands, because, deep down, they already knew him. They approach him and give him a big hug, showing the same respect they had always shown.



There are no questions, doubts or intrigues... but rather excitement, acceptance and appreciation. And they all learn that it doesn't matter how hard you try to pretend, you can't play with destiny.

Daniel is at home painting pumpkins, while his grandma takes care of him making pancakes and many doughnuts. They have to celebrate! So, to begin, she will prepare an apple pie. Later on, she will go to the garden to pick some raspberries. She will make croissants and crème caramel. She will also make cinnamon biscuits and some refreshing lemonade. A feast for her beloved grandson!

This afternoon all of Daniel's friends will go to his house to have a snack. His aunts, uncles and cousins are coming too, the whole family will get together! He will have many guests to celebrate his happiness without any hurry.



Daniel needs this party and also deserves to be joined by all of them to celebrate the beginning of his new life.

Let's think!

1. What would you do if one of your classmates were sad?
2. Would you try to help them?
3. How could you make them happy?
4. Would you defend them if they were in trouble? Would you stand by their side?
5. Did you understand what was going on with the pupil called Berta?
6. Is Daniel a boy or a girl? What does his heart say?
7. Why did Daniel have another sexual identity during some years?
8. What is respect to you?
9. Do you know what it means to put yourself in someone else's shoes?
10. Do you know someone like Daniel?

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**MENORES
TRANS**

LG  **BI**

