

Name \_\_\_\_\_



### Left Out

At first, Mica High was fascinated by Stargirl. She was different in every way—cheering for both teams, playing the ukulele at lunch, and showing kindness to strangers. At first, her classmates welcomed her uniqueness, clapping along as she sang “Happy Birthday” to students she barely knew. But then, something changed.

When Stargirl cheered for the opposing basketball team, the students turned against her. They saw her kindness as betrayal. Whispers filled the hallways. Students no longer greeted her with smiles but with cold stares. They stopped sitting near her at lunch. It was as if she had become invisible.

The worst part was that no one spoke about it. No one told her why they had turned against her. They simply stopped including her, making her feel alone even in a crowded school. This kind of silent bullying—social exclusion—was powerful. It didn’t involve mean words or physical harm, but it hurt just as much.

Leo, who had once admired Stargirl, found himself caught between her and the rest of the school. He still cared about her, but he was afraid of becoming an outsider, too. He wanted her to be accepted, to act more like everyone else. But no matter how much she tried to fit in, the other students refused to welcome her back.

Stargirl’s story shows the painful effects of social exclusion. Instead of direct bullying, she was ignored, making her feel unwanted. Jerry Spinelli’s novel teaches us that excluding someone can be just as harmful as teasing them. The book challenges readers to think: What would you do if you saw someone being left out? Would you join in, stay silent, or stand up for them?