

Name _____



The Hot Seat

At Mica High, "Hot Seat" was the most popular show on the school's television network. Hosted by Kevin, Leo's best friend, the show invited students to sit in a chair under bright lights while a panel of classmates asked them questions. Some guests had fun answering, but others found the questions uncomfortable. When Stargirl was invited to be on "Hot Seat," Leo and Kevin weren't sure what would happen.

At first, the questions were lighthearted. The panel asked Stargirl about her pet rat, Cinnamon, and why she played the ukulele at lunch. She answered cheerfully, showing no fear of the cameras or the students watching. But then the mood changed.

The panelists began to accuse Stargirl of being "too different." They asked why she acted the way she did, why she didn't try to fit in, and if she was trying to get attention. Their voices grew louder, and the kindness in the room disappeared. The audience, once curious, turned against her. Some students whispered, while others laughed cruelly.

Leo watched, feeling helpless. He had always admired Stargirl, but now he wasn't sure what to do. He could feel the pressure from the crowd, the way everyone seemed to agree that Stargirl was "too much." He wanted to stand up for her, but he also wanted to stay invisible.

Stargirl, however, didn't seem afraid. She answered honestly and calmly, refusing to be ashamed of who she was. But the panelists weren't listening anymore. They were caught in the excitement of judging someone who dared to be different. The show ended in chaos, with Kevin quickly shutting off the cameras.

The "Hot Seat" episode revealed something powerful: how easily a group can turn against someone who doesn't fit their idea of "normal." It showed how fear of being different can make people follow the crowd, even when it's unfair. Later, Leo would think about this moment and realize how dangerous it was to let others decide what is right and wrong.