

Chapter 3



She's a Liar

“This is Chum and this is Champ,” said Tilly. Her eyes sparkled.

The wild bears didn't move. They were stuffed toys!

Tilly Perkins likes to tease, thought Jeff.

The other kids began to talk all at the same time. They had been excited when Tilly said she'd brought the bears. Now they were disappointed. They were mad at Tilly.

“I told you she tells lies,” Poppy said.

“Poppy, that's not nice,” said Mrs. Frank. Did Tilly Perkins cry?

Did Tilly Perkins confess?

No, she did not. Tilly Perkins chuckled. "These are *pretend* wild bears," she said.

"Tilly, sit down now," said Mrs. Frank. "You and I will talk later."

"See!" Bruno said to Jeff. "I told you Tilly Perkins was crazy."

"She's not crazy," Jeff said. "She was joking. Anyway, her bears *aren't* teddy bears. They look just like wild bears."

"So?" said Bruno. "Maybe you're crazy too. Maybe I shouldn't play soccer with you."

"You don't have to," Jeff said. "I don't care."

But he did care. He did not talk to Tilly Perkins any more. Nick and Alex were the only ones who played with her. And who wanted to play with guys who couldn't kick a ball?

Tilly did. At recess she pretended there was a bear cave under the bushes. She and the twins and the bears lived there. Great growls came from the cave. Excited squeals came from the cave. Laughter and giggles



came from there, too. Jeff wondered if Tilly Perkins was really having fun. Maybe she was only pretending.

After Mrs. Frank talked to her, Tilly Perkins did not tell any more news about her bears. Jeff missed Tilly's news. Now the news was boring — like stuff about Sally's grandma. Jeff yawned. It was hard to listen politely.

Did Tilly Perkins frown?

Did Tilly Perkins fidget?

No, she did not. Tilly Perkins wrote pages and pages in her journal. Mrs. Frank pretended not to notice.

“What's she writing?” Poppy whispered in Jeff's ear. Jeff wondered if Tilly was writing about her bears. He leaned over to see. He leaned over so far he fell off his chair. His cheeks were hot.

“Did you see?” whispered Poppy.

“No,” Jeff said.

He didn't try to see Tilly's journal again. Maybe now that Tilly had stopped talking about her wild bears the other kids would

forget them. If Tilly Perkins stopped telling stories, maybe the other kids would get to like her and start to play with her. Jeff sure hoped so.