

C H O I C E S

friend or foe?

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 **SADDLEBACK**
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chapter

1

Jazz sat at the front of his school. It was almost time for the bell to ring. His best friend, Key, sat with him.

The boys read their science notes. They had a science test today. And they wanted to study some more before school started.

“Did you study a lot for our test?” Jazz asked.

“Yeah. I had to. I didn’t study much for the last one. And I failed it. I have to get a good grade this time,” Key said.

“I did okay last time. But not that great. So I need to get a good grade, too,” Jazz said.

“Do you know what will be on the test?” Key asked.

“You know Mr. Lee. He’ll have everything on the test that he told us to study. Just to make sure we studied *all* of it,” Jazz said.

“You’re right about that,” Key said. Then he laughed. Mr. Lee always gave them a lot to study. His tests always covered everything they learned.

“Did you study everything?” Jazz asked.

“I tried to,” Key said.

“So did I,” Jazz said. The two boys read their science notes for a few more minutes. Then Jazz looked at Key.

Jazz said, “You look like you’re half asleep.”

“I feel that way, too,” Key said.

“Why? Did you stay up late last night to study?” Jazz asked.

“Yeah. Did you?” Key asked.

“Yeah. I hope I can get to bed early tonight,” Jazz said.

“Yeah, me, too. Did you hear about Trace?” Key asked.

“No. What’s up?” Jazz asked.

Trace was their class president. He was a good guy. All of the students liked him.

Jazz hoped that nothing bad had happened to Trace. He hadn’t seen Trace for a few days.

Key said, “His dad has a new job. Trace has to move. So he won’t be going to our school any more.”

“Too bad. Trace is a good guy,” Jazz said.

“Yeah. One of the best,” Key said.

Trace wouldn't be back at their school. So he couldn't be their class president.

"What will we do about a class president?" Jazz asked.

"I asked Miss Lopez about that," Key said. Miss Lopez was their math teacher.

"What did she say?" Jazz asked.

"She said we need to hold an election," Key said.

"I hope it's soon. Did she say when it will be?" Jazz asked.

"Yeah. The week after next," Key said.

"Who do you think will run?" Jazz asked.

"I don't know. I hope it's someone who listens to the other students. Trace always listened. We might not be that lucky next time," Key said.

"Yeah. The president before Trace did whatever he wanted. He didn't listen to us," Jazz said.

Key said, "I'll ask around. Maybe I can find out who wants to run."

"I'll ask around, too," Jazz said.

The bell rang for school to start.

Jazz said, "Time to get to class. Good luck on your test."

chapter

2

Later that morning, Jazz walked down the hall. He had a PE class next. He was on his way to the gym.

His friend Cory yelled to him, “Jazz. Wait for me.”

Jazz needed to get to class. But he stopped and waited for Cory.

Cory hurried up to him. “I need to talk to you about something,” Cory said.

Jazz said, “Okay. But make it quick. I need to get to PE. I can’t be late. What do you want to talk to me about?”

“Did you hear that Trace has moved? We have to elect a new class president,” Cory said.

“Yeah, I heard that,” Jazz said.

“Did you hear that Eli is going to run?” Cory asked.

“Yeah. He told our math class this morning,” Jazz said. Eli and Jazz were in the same math class.

Eli always liked to tell others what to do. So Jazz hoped Eli wouldn't win. He hoped someone else would become president. But Jazz hadn't heard of anyone else who would run.

Jazz said, “I need to get to PE, Cory. Is that all you wanted to talk to me about?”

“No. I think I might do something. And I want to know what you think,” Cory said.

“Okay. What are you going to do? But hurry up and tell me,” Jazz said.

“I might run for class president,” Cory said.

That surprised Jazz very much. “Why, Cory?” Jazz asked.

“I don’t want Eli to win. You don’t want Eli to win either, do you? He wouldn’t be a good president,” Cory said.

Jazz didn’t think Eli would be a good president. But he didn’t tell Cory that.

“Why do you think that?” Jazz asked.

Cory said, “You know how Eli is. He does whatever he wants. We don’t want a class president like that.”

Jazz knew Cory was right. Eli wouldn’t care about what the other students wanted.

“So what do you think, Jazz? Should I run?” Cory asked.

“It’s up to you,” Jazz said.

“Yeah. I know. But what do you think? Do you think I should run?” Cory

asked again.

“I told you. It’s up to you. Do what you want to do,” Jazz said.

“Would you vote for me?” Cory asked.

“Yeah, sure. Why not?” Jazz said.

Jazz wasn’t sure Cory would be a good president either. But he would be a better president than Eli. Besides, no one else wanted to run. Or at least Jazz didn’t know of anyone else who wanted to run.

“Thanks, Jazz. I knew I could count on your vote. I talked to a lot of people this morning. I told them I might run. And they all said they would vote for me,” Cory said.

Jazz said, “Great. So are you going to run?”

“Yeah. I think I will. But I’ll let you know for sure later,” Cory said.

“You need to make up your mind soon.

Or it'll be too late to run," Jazz said.

Cory said, "Yeah. I know. But I'm still not sure I should run. Do you think I can beat Eli?"

"I don't know. But you have a good chance to win. A lot of us don't like Eli," Jazz said. And Jazz was one of them.

"I know. But that doesn't mean that I can beat Eli. Do you think almost everyone likes me?" Cory asked.

"Yeah," Jazz said. They liked Cory okay. But Jazz wasn't sure that they would vote for him. Jazz wished someone else would run.

But who?