

Tricia had woken in a frenzy of excitement, but her day had since become more and more depressing with each passing moment. She had walked into the kitchen for breakfast, fully expecting cries of, "Happy Birthday!" from her parents and sister, but was instead greeted by nothing but silence. Tricia was so shocked by this lack of birthday wishes that she failed to even ask why her family sat mutely, as though today were a day like any other. She started to feel really sorry for herself and wasn't sure what she should do about it.

At school, this disturbing pattern continued throughout the day. Tricia thought that her best friend, Jimmy, would remember her special day. However, Jimmy, like her family, failed to offer any indication that he was aware of Tricia's birthday. Again, Tricia was too sad and embarrassed to point out to Jimmy that it was her birthday. By the time school let out and not a single person had wished her a happy birthday, Tricia herself was beginning to feel like it was just an average day. She even began to second-guess herself, and wondered if she had somehow mixed up the date her birthday fell on.

Tricia walked home from school with Jimmy like usual, but not much conversation passed between them. Tricia kept quiet, knowing that she was going to miss out on birthday events like cake and presents. Jimmy seemed strangely oblivious to Tricia's mood and rambled on about the weather and homework. Strangely, Jimmy walked Tricia all the way to her door instead of parting ways with her at the corner like he usually did. Tricia unlocked her door and was surprised to see that the living room was completely dark. Suddenly, the lights flashed on, and Tricia was greeted with a loud, "Surprise!"