It should've been a perfect summer. My dad helped me build a tree house. My sister was at camp. And I was on the best baseball team in town. It should've been a perfect summer. But it wasn’t.

It was all good until Jeremy Ross moved into the neighborhood. I didn’t like Jeremy. He laughed when he struck me out. He had a party on his trampoline, and I wasn’t invited.

Jeremy Ross was the only person on my enemy list. I never even had an enemy list before. But he came along, and I needed one. I hung it up in my tree house, where Jeremy Ross was not allowed.

Dad understood stuff like enemies. He told me that when he was my age, he had enemies too. But he knew a way to get rid of them.

He pulled an old recipe book off the kitchen shelf. Inside was a scrap of paper with faded writing. Dad squinted at it.

“Enemy Pie,” he said, satisfied.

**What’s in It?**

You may be wondering what exactly is in Enemy Pie. I was too. But Dad said the recipe was so secret, he couldn’t tell me. I begged him to tell me something—anything.

“I will tell you this,” he said. “Enemy Pie is the fastest known way to get rid of enemies.”

This got my mind working. What kinds of things—disgusting things—would I put into a pie for an enemy? I brought Dad weeds, but he shook his head. I brought earthworms, but he...
didn’t need those. I gave him the gum
I’d been chewing. He gave it right back.

I went out to play, alone. I listened to
the sounds of my dad making Enemy
Pie. I tried to imagine how horrible
it must smell. Instead, I smelled
something really, really good coming
from our kitchen. I was confused.

I went in to ask what was wrong.
Enemy Pie shouldn’t smell this good.
But Dad was smart. “If Enemy Pie
smelled bad, your enemy would never
eat it,” he said. He pulled the pie out of
the oven. It looked good enough to eat!

But still, I wasn’t sure how Enemy
Pie worked. What exactly did it do to
enemies? Maybe it made their hair fall
out. I asked Dad, but he wouldn’t tell me.

While the pie cooled, he filled me in
on my job. “There is one part of Enemy
Pie that I can’t do. You need to spend a
day with your enemy. Even worse, you
have to be nice to him. That’s the only
way Enemy Pie can work. Are you sure
you want to go through with this?”

It sounded horrible. It was scary. But
it was worth a try. I just had to spend
one day with Jeremy Ross, then he’d be
out of my hair for the rest of my life. I
knocked on his door.

**No Enemies Allowed!**

When Jeremy opened the door, he
seemed surprised.

I was nervous. “Can you play?” I
asked.

He looked confused. “I’ll ask my
mom,” he said. He came back holding
his shoes.

We rode bikes and played on the
trampoline. Jeremy’s mom made us
lunch. After lunch, we went to my house.

It was strange. I was kind of having
fun with my enemy. But I couldn’t tell
Dad that, since he had worked so hard
on the Enemy Pie.

Jeremy knew how to throw a
**boomerang.** He threw it, and it came
right back to him. I threw it, and it went
into my backyard. When we climbed
over the fence to find it, the first thing
Jeremy noticed was my tree house.

“Can we go in it?” he asked.

I knew he was going to ask that!
But he was the top person, the ONLY
person, on my enemy list. And enemies
aren’t allowed in my tree house.

But he did teach me to throw a
boomerang. And he did let me play on
his trampoline. He wasn’t being a very
good enemy.
“Okay,” I said, “but hold on.”
I climbed up first and tore the enemy list off the wall.
We played games until my dad called us down for dinner.
Dad made macaroni and cheese—my favorite. Jeremy’s too! Maybe Jeremy Ross wasn’t so bad after all. I was beginning to think that we should just forget about Enemy Pie.

**PAUSE AND THINK:** Why does the narrator tear down his enemy list?

**Losing a Best Enemy**

But after dinner, Dad brought out the pie and cut it into slices.

“Dad,” I said, “it’s sure nice having a new friend in the neighborhood.” I was trying to tell him that Jeremy was no longer my enemy. But Dad only smiled and nodded. I think he thought I was just pretending.

“Wow!” Jeremy said. “My dad never makes pies like this.” Suddenly, I panicked. I didn’t want Jeremy to eat Enemy Pie! He was my friend!

“Jeremy, don’t eat it! I think it’s poisonous or something!” Jeremy crumpled his eyebrows and looked at me funny. I felt **relieved**. I had saved his life. I was a hero.

“If it’s so bad,” Jeremy asked, “why has your dad already eaten half of it?” I looked at my dad. He was eating Enemy Pie!

“Good stuff,” was all Dad said. I watched them eat Enemy Pie. Dad was laughing. Jeremy was happily eating. And neither of them was losing any hair! It seemed safe enough so I took a tiny taste. Enemy Pie was delicious!

Afterward, Jeremy invited me to play on his trampoline in the morning.

I still don’t know how to make Enemy Pie. I still wonder if enemies hate it or if their hair falls out. But I don’t know if I’ll ever get an answer, because I just lost my best enemy.

**PAUSE AND THINK:** What happens when Jeremy eats the Enemy Pie?

**THINK AND WRITE**

Write a letter from the narrator to his dad telling how his feelings about Jeremy changed because of Enemy Pie.

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**WORDS TO KNOW**

- **relieved:** relaxed because something unpleasant stopped or didn’t happen
- **panicked:** had such strong fear that you couldn’t think or act in a normal way
- **crumpled:** wrinkled