



# Honest Oliver's **TERRIBLY TEMPTING Opportunity**

A Draw-it-Yourself Short Story

**Proverbial Kids<sup>©</sup>**

Wisdom for Young Families

**By Karen Anderson Holcomb**

# Honest Oliver's Terribly Tempting Opportunity

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Draw-it-Yourself:  
Oliver Jones

Young Oliver Jones was bursting with excitement to go to the recreation park the first sunny Saturday of Spring after a long, cold winter. Simple things like sunshine, bumpy slides, and sandboxes made him happy. Add playmates and picnics to the mix – Oliver called that a *party!*

The seven-year-old tied his shoes quickly! He could hardly stand still for his Mom to pull a red hoody over his head.

“I don’t need a coat, Mom,” he said. “I’m not cold.” But she insisted he wear it. “Honest, Mom, I’m not cold!”

Oliver's toy cars and trucks, shovels, and action figures.

He ran to his room to grab his three favorite toy cars and trucks, stepped into the bathroom for his orange and green plastic shovels, and stopped by the playroom for his four strongest action figures.

His mother asked, “Do you need that many toys, son?”

“Yes, ma’am,” Oliver replied, “I need them for the sandbox.”

“A boy needs his equipment,” his father agreed.

“You won’t lose them?”

“No, ma’am, I know how many I have. Three, plus two, plus four. Nine, Mom. Trust me, I will not lose them.”

Oliver and his parents in  
their car

The twelve-minute drive to the park seemed like *forever* to Oliver. His hoodie was bunched up around his neck, like it had been all winter long, with his seat belt confining him to the same backseat at the same tinted window he had looked through every day on the way to Second Grade.

Oliver in his carseat,  
the window stickers, cracker  
crumbs and old french fries

The once-colorful stickers he had stuck to the window were old and peeling off at the edges. And the cracker crumbs and withered French fries in his cup holder just made everything seem even more stale. Yes, Oliver was ready for sunny days. He craved something new and fresh!

A flash of red at the swing-set caught Oliver’s eye as they pulled into a parking space. *Jared!* His friend from school leapt from a swing mid-air and jogged to the spiral staircase of the bumpy slide. Blue overalls in the sandbox—*Gabe!* A flash of purple with yellow pig tails—*Morgan!* And two identical figures in orange on the pirate ship—*the Cooper twins, Drew and Lou!*

This was going to be the best play-date ever.

Oliver's friends on the playground equipment

Oliver jumped out of the car with his bucket of toys. His Mom's voice called to him.

"Ollie, come here, son."

Both of his parents used that serious tone of voice when they needed to give him some instructions.

*Instructions are for structure*, his Dad often said. *It's our job to build you for success, son.*

Mrs. Jones set baby brother's car-seat on a bench outside the fenced playground.

"What, Mom?" Oliver asked impatiently, watching his friends play while he stood outside the fence.

Your favorite sandwich and picnic items

"Don't be rude, Ollie. Listen to me," she looked him in the eyes, "We are going to be here for two hours. Have fun. Don't leave this area without me. Stop by for a sandwich when you are hungry. Do you understand?"

"Okay, Mom," Oliver's eyes were big with anticipation. His every muscle wanted to run and jump and swing and dig.

"Okay. See you later, alligator. Don't lose your toys," she said.

His Dad winked at him and held up nine fingers.

Mr. Jones pushing Oliver on the swing

“I won’t,” Oliver hollered over his shoulder as he raced through the gate to be with his friends.

Time flew by!

Oliver hopped onto a black rubber swing and pumped his legs until he was as high as possible. His father pushed him even higher! Then he jumped out of the swing onto the woodchips and ran off to find his friends.

Oliver on each area of the playground, with Morgan on the rope spider web

He easily crossed the balance beam, climbed the ladder rungs of the pirate ship, hopped across the swinging bridge, and swooshed down the slide. He hollered to Jared over the wired telephones, raced Morgan on the rope spider web, and played Hide-and-Seek with Gabe ... until Gabe grew tired of counting to ten.

“You are supposed to count all the way to ten, Gabe,” Oliver told his friend. “That’s the rules. I’ve got to have time to hide. And no peeking, either,” he said.  
“It’s not honest.”

Over and over again, Gabe cheated. Oliver grew angry. Gabe either counted half the numbers or he said them so fast that Oliver had no time to hide. Gabe also peeked from where he was counting to watch Oliver hide.

Gabe cheating at counting to 10,  
Oliver's angry face

"I quit!" Oliver declared. "You're cheating!"

Gabe shrugged and walked away, like it did not bother him at all. But it bothered Oliver, because he wanted to *win* at Hide-and-Seek. Fair and square. He had never cheated Gabe. He had kept his eyes closed and counted all the way to ten, slowly.

"Oliver, come play in the sandbox with us!" the Cooper twins called.

The Cooper twins playing in the  
sandbox with Oliver's bucketful  
of toys, Oliver's surprised face

*The sandbox!* Oliver thought of his bucket of toys. It had been more than an hour since he had arrived. *Where was it?*

"We found this bucket of toys," Lou said.  
"Somebody left it here."

"Those are my toys!" Oliver said loudly.  
"That's my bucket. You got them out of my bucket," he said, grabbing six of his nine toys from the sand and clutching them to his stomach.

“I told you those were Ollie’s toys,” Drew looked at Lou. “You should have brought your own toys, Lou. Like I did.”

Drew’s arm in a mound of sand, Drew’s toy ATV

Oliver looked down to see the toy in Drew’s hand, but his friend’s arm was hidden in a deep tunnel bored in a mound of moist sand.

“I brought my brand new four-by-four *Sprint Terra-mobile*,” Drew said proudly.

*Your what?!* Oliver was stunned. *A terra-mobile?* What was that? He didn’t have one of those.

A big tire, a driver wearing camouflage

Drew pulled his sandy arm out of the tunnel, his hand immersing at last, grasping a big-tired object covered with sand. He brushed the sand off then blew the rest away from the miniature ATV.

Oliver was mesmerized by the hand-sized toy.

“You see this?” Drew pointed to the tires. “Flip a switch and these ag treads flatten out for road driving. And this camel color shows it’s for deserts and stuff. AND, there’s a driver inside here, wearing camo. He’s the real thing, buddy.”

“Stop bragging, Drew,” Lou said. “I got one, too. Our Dad said he worked over-time to buy these.”

Oliver looking at his own truck and action figure

Oliver looked down at his old toys. They were his favorites at home—the cars and trucks, the shovels, the action figures.

Suddenly, he didn’t want to play in the sandbox anymore. His toys were not fun anymore. He was *jealous*.

“Do you mind if I use this green shovel?” Drew asked, drawing it from the sand.

“Sure, go ahead,” Oliver shrugged. “It’s nothing special.”

A pirate ship

“It’s better than nothing,” Lou said. “You don’t mind if I still play with these, do you?” He asked, holding out Oliver’s last truck and action figure.

“Go ahead. I’m going to play with Jared on the pirate ship.”

Oliver ran off to play with his other friends until their own parents began calling them to pack up. Drew joined them for one last ride on the bumpy slide.

“Let’s go, Ollie!” Mrs. Jones called. Oliver ran to the sandbox and gathered his toys. He trudged through the sand to his bucket and was just about to drop all nine toys inside when he saw a familiar shape in the bottom of the bucket. *Drew’s big-tired ATV!* He had left it when he went to slide!

The inside of Oliver’s bucket,  
containing Drew’s toy ATV

Quickly, Oliver looked to see if the Cooper twins were still at the park. He saw them walking with their mother to the parking lot. *What should he do?*

Ollie’s face flushed with heat. His thoughts raced with images of his old toys, his grimy car seat, the cold winter. He peered at the shiny tan vehicle, dusted with sand, with the camouflaged action-figure at the steering wheel.

Oliver’s thoughts,  
his face while he thinks

The ATV’s fat tires with thick rubber tread were just right for rambling over Oliver’s back yard. And he had not yet seen how they converted to smooth at the flip of a switch. Wouldn’t Drew want him to see that? Couldn’t he keep it for a few days, then pretend to find it later?

Or maybe he would not say a thing. How fun it would be to play with something new! Didn’t he deserve it? After all, he was a good boy.

“Oliver, let’s go!” Mr. Jones called.

Drew and Lou leaving the playground, Drew's sad face at losing a special toy, the twins' father's sad face

Oliver tore his eyes from the vehicle and glanced at the parking lot. The twins' mother was talking with Gabe's parents. Drew, Lou, and Gabe were sitting in the grass, dumping sand out of their shoes, talking big and laughing. He imagined Drew would not be laughing when he got home and realized his loss.

Their father would be sad, too.

Oliver grabbed the toy ATV out of the bucket, dumped his other toys inside, and ran with it to his own father.

"Drew forgot his toy, Dad! I've got to take it to him!"

Oliver returning Drew's toy

"Hmph," he said, "That looks like a fine piece of equipment. I'm sure he would not want to lose it."

Oliver hollered, "Drew!" and ran through the grass to his friend.

"You left your toy, Drew."

Oliver held out the toy to his friend, who quickly grabbed it and held it close to his chest.

"What do you say to your friend, Andrew?"  
Mrs. Cooper asked her son.

“Thank you, Oliver.”

Drew thanking Oliver, showing Oliver  
the wheels of his ATV, running  
Drew's ATV on the sidewalk

“I found it in my bucket,” Oliver said.

“Yeah, I put it there when Drew went to the bumpy slide, so it wouldn't get buried,” Lou added.

“It's my favorite toy,” Drew said, “Do you want to see what happens when I flip the switch, Oliver?”

Oliver nodded, feeling very good about his decision. He grinned as he watched the toy's tire conversion. The friends played for a few minutes in the grass and ran the ATV on the sidewalk, then they climbed into their cars and went home.

Oliver talking to his parents in  
their car

“I'm proud of you for returning that toy, Oliver,” Mrs. Jones said to her son in the back seat.

“It was terribly tempting to keep it, Mom,” he confessed.

“I'm sure. But that wouldn't have been honest, would it, Oliver?”

“I know,” he agreed.

The Bible,  
the word *temptation*

“The Bible says in Proverbs 11:1 that God hates dishonest scales,” Mr. Jones said, looking at Oliver in the rearview mirror. “That includes being sneaky and pretending something that is not true, son. It harms others.”

“It feels bad, too,” Oliver said, recalling the heat of temptation.

His Mom chuckled.

“Yes, I agree. Temptation feels terrible. Love feels so much better.”

Oliver smiled. He so much loved his friends!

Thoughts of another play date crowded his mind. He would want it to be at the same playground with the same friends (even Gabe), and even his same good old toys. He closed his eyes, resting back in his worn, but comfortable, car-seat, and drifted off to sleep.

Oliver and his friends, a heart, Oliver falling asleep in his carseat

*The End.*

# Proverbs for Parenting

## (G: Gain Honestly)

A troublemaker and a villain,  
who goes about with a corrupt mouth,  
who winks maliciously with his eye,  
signals with his feet  
and motions with his fingers,  
who plots evil with deceit in his heart—  
he always stirs up conflict.

Therefore disaster will overtake him in an instant;  
he will suddenly be destroyed—without remedy. **6:12-15**

The LORD detests dishonest scales,  
but accurate weights find favor with him. **11:1**

A kindhearted woman gains honor,  
but ruthless men gain only wealth. **11:16**

One person gives freely, yet gains even more;  
another withholds unduly, but comes to poverty. **11:24-26**

A generous person will prosper;  
whoever refreshes others will be refreshed.

People curse the one who hoards grain,  
but they pray God's blessing on the one who is willing to sell.

Those who work their land will have abundant food,  
but those who chase fantasies have no sense. **12:11**

From the fruit of their lips people are filled with good things,  
and the work of their hands brings them reward. **12:14**

Dishonest money dwindles away,  
but whoever gathers money little by little makes it grow. **13:11**

A fortune made by a lying tongue  
is a fleeting vapor and a deadly snare. **21:6**