

MEAN ANNA ROSE

Hal Ames



Anna Rose never loved anyone. She did not even like herself. When she was nine years old, she got sick and became blind, and because of this, she felt like she had been given a poor chance to succeed in life. She made sure that people stayed away, even when they tried to be her friend, she just pushed them away and made them dislike her. It was fine for her. She did not need or want any friends. She was mean to everyone who wanted to help her. She would yell at them and tell them to leave her alone.

Her parents tried to help her. They took her to see many doctors in many clinics, but they all said the same thing. An eye transplant could help her, but the donor had to match her tissue type. Hers was very rare and the possibility that a donor having the same type with her was nearly impossible.

Her parents took her to many counselors to try to help her with her attitude, but it did not change. She was still as mean as ever.

She went to a special school to learn to read Braille. She did not like her teacher, so she did not learn very quickly. She did not make friends, not even in the blind school. She was a very mean and angry person. No one liked her and soon they just avoided her.

She only dreamed of what it would be like to see the colors of the world again. She wanted to see far-off places and travel the world. She wanted to do the things sighted people do. Because she knew she would never be able to do these things, she remained angry and spent all her time alone.

One day, while she was sitting in the park, she heard a voice talking to her. It came from someone who was sitting on the bench next to her.

“Hello, my name is Mardave. I think you are very pretty,” the voice said.

Anna Rose responded, “You must be blind like me. I’m the ugliest person in the world!”

When she answered like this, it usually made people go away, but Mardave did not leave.

“I’m serious, I think you are very nice. I would like to get to know you,” he said in a kind and gentle voice.

“Won’t you just leave me alone? Can’t you see that I’m trying to be by myself?!” Anna Rose yelled at him.

“I don’t want to. I want to get to know you. May I please sit here with you for a little while?” Mardave continued to try to make a conversation with Anna Rose.

“You can do whatever you want. It’s a free country. Just don’t talk to me,” Anna Rose rudely responded.

After a few minutes Anna Rose asked, “Are you still there?”

Mardave replied, “Yes, I’m still here.”

“Why are you sitting with me? I want you to go away,” she again said in a mean way.

“No, I think I’ll sit here and enjoy the warm sun. It’s a beautiful day. Plus, I enjoy the park, especially when I feed the birds,” Mardave replied.

“Are you serious? Are you just going to sit there?”

She then paused.

“I think I want to move,” Anna Rose said starting to stand up.

“Sure. May I help you find another bench?” Mardave asked.

“Will you just leave me alone?” Anna Rose shouted at him again. “Did someone pay you to stay here and talk with me? If so, you can give the money back. I’m not talking to you anymore,” Anna Rose yelled, as she sat back down and turned her back to

Mardave.

She tried to ignore him, but she could hear him doing something while he sat with her. Soon, she could not stand not knowing what he was doing.

“What are you doing?” she asked.

“Me?” Mardave said with a smile in his voice.

“Yes, you. What are you doing?” she asked.

“Oh, I thought you weren’t talking to me anymore,” Mardave responded.

“I asked you, what are you doing? You’re making so much noise,” she insisted.

“I’m feeding the birds. I brought some seed to feed them. I do this almost every day. The birds are my friends,” Mardave answered. “I know you come here often and that you like the park just like I do. Since I always see you here, I was hoping you would be my friend.”

“I don’t want any friends. I’m happy being by myself,” Anna Rose stated.

“That’s a bad way to go through life,” he commented on her response.

Before she said something else, he added, “I wish I were as good looking as you. Then I would have many friends.”

There was a long time of silence and then Anna Rose spoke.

“Do you really think that I’m pretty?” she asked in a small and questioning way.

“Yes, you are very pretty. Hasn’t anyone ever told you that?” Mardave told her.

“No, and I don’t believe you. You are just trying to be nice,” she responded in a mean tone.

“Have it your way. I think you are pretty. You’ll just have to accept that,” Mardave said disagreeing with her.

“I think I will go home now,” Anna Rose said to him.

Then she got up and left.

The next day, when Anna Rose arrived at the park, Mardave was there.

“Hello Anna Rose. It is nice to see you again,” he said to her as she sat on her favorite bench.

“You’re here again?” she asked.

“Yep, and I’ll be here every day. I like it here,” he responded.

This happened for many days. Mardave kept being nice even though Anna Rose tried to make him go away.

Eventually, Anna Rose began to talk to Mardave.

Because Mardave was so nice, and because he would not take no for an answer, Anna Rose soon decided to not be so mean to him. Eventually, they became friends.

They enjoyed sitting in the park feeding the birds. It was nice to have a friend, she found out. They talked about many things.

When one of them was not in the park, it was lonely.

When school began, Mardave asked Anna Rose if she would go to a dance with him.

“I don’t know how to dance. How am I supposed to go to a dance with you?” she said to him.

“I can teach you. Then we can be the best couple there,” Mardave laughed.

Anna Rose was surprised at herself when she said yes to him.

Every day they practiced dancing together. At first, Anna Rose stepped on Mardave’s feet many times, but he did not care nor did he complain.

The day of the dance came. Anna Rose’ mother had bought her a new red dress. She looked beautiful when Mardave walked into the house to pick her up.

They had so much fun at the dance. Many people came up to Mardave and asked him, “Who is the pretty girl you’re dancing with?”

“This is my friend, Anna Rose,” he said over and over. “I met her in the park.”

Many people told them how nicely they danced together. Everyone was so friendly to them. Anna Rose was very surprised that his friends were so nice to her.

A few years later, Mardave asked Anna Rose to marry him. They had fallen in love.

She said yes, but she wanted to wait for a while. She needed to figure out what she

wanted to do with her life.

Mardave was patient and told her he would wait as long as it took.

She told him that before she would marry him, she wanted to have her eyesight, so she would be able to do the things she wanted, like travel and see the world.

Unfortunately, Anna Rose became sad again.

She went to see the eye doctor again to find out if there was anything the doctors could do. They told her a transplant was the only thing that could help her. Once again, they checked her name on a list for possible donors, but no one was a match.

They told her not to get her hopes up. Her tissue type was very rare.

Anna Rose did not go out much after that. She avoided seeing Mardave. She stayed in her home very depressed. She became like her old self: very rude and mean.

One day, Anna Rose' parents told her the hospital had called. They said they had found a donor for her eyes. She would have the operation within the next two days.

Anna Rose got excited. She called Mardave and told him the news. He was excited for her.

Before the surgery, Mardave visited Ana Rose' room. They talked about traveling the world and seeing the amazing things she had never seen. They talked about their future.

“Anna Rose. Now that you will be able to see, will you marry me?” Mardave asked.

She replied, “I must wait until my bandages are off before I can answer that question. If these eyes help me to see, I will do all the things we talked about. Then I can share all the places I will see. We can do all this together. It will be wonderful. Then we can be married.”

She was excited that she and Mardave would be able to do all these things together.

The surgery went well.

She had to stay in the hospital for many days for the operation to be successful.

She had to lie very still until her eyes healed. After several days, the bandages came off her eyes. When they did, the first person she saw was her mother. She looked so different from her memory.

“Mom, you look so different,” Anna Rose commented to her mother.

Her mother answered with a laugh, “It’s been over fifteen years since you saw me last. I’m sure I’ve changed a lot since then.”

Anna Rose turned and looked outside at the flowers and the trees as she giggled in excitement.

“I can’t believe all the colors. It’s *so* beautiful! I don’t remember them being so bright.” she exclaimed.

She spent the day going from place to place in her wheelchair as her mother pushed her around the hospital. Anna Rose wanted to see everything,

The next day, Anna Rose realized that Mardave had not come to see her.

“Where’s Mardave? Why hasn’t he come to see me?” Anna Rose asked her mother.

“We don’t know. No one has seen Mardave since he last came to see you before the surgery. No one knows where he went,” her mother said.

Anna Rose began to cry, “What happened to him? Why hasn’t he come to see me?”

Her mother answered, “Maybe he thought he was not handsome enough for you. I’m not sure. He didn’t say anything to us about his plans. We haven’t seen him either.”

“But just a few days ago, he asked me to marry him again. Now he’s not here. Where’s he gone?” she asked her mother.

She did not have an answer.

When Anna Rose arrived home, her mother gave her a letter. She told her it was from Mardave. She set the note on her bed and then forgot about it.

After she was fully recovered, she traveled to many places and did the things she always dreamed about. She wished Mardave was with her, and she never forgot him.

A couple of years later, when she was packing the things in her room to move to her own apartment, she found the note. It had fallen under her bed.

She sat on her bed and opened it.

The note said, *'I'm sorry that I had to leave. You have many things you want to do and I won't be able to go with you. I hope you have a wonderful life. Please take care of my eyes. I'll always love you.*

Mardave.'

VOCABULARY: (*Match the word to its definition*)

- | | |
|-----------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1. transplant _____ | a. therapist, psychiatrist |
| 2. match _____ | b. most not beautiful |
| 3. clinic _____ | c. talk with others |
| 4. counselor _____ | d. the same |
| 5. ugliest _____ | e. demand, persist |
| 6. pretty _____ | f. replaces a body part or organ |
| 7. conversation _____ | g. a small hospital |
| 8. insist _____ | h. operation |
| 9. ignore _____ | i. beautiful, nice |
| 10. surgery _____ | j. not respond, to look away |

TRUE / FALSE:

- | | |
|--|-------|
| 1. Anna Rose was a nice person. | T / F |
| 2. Anna Rose lost her sight when she was nine years old. | T / F |
| 3. Anna Rose had many friends. | T / F |
| 4. The doctors told her she needed new eyes. | T / F |
| 5. Mardave was a kind boy. | T / F |
| 6. Anna Rose went to a school to learn how to dance. | T / F |
| 7. The students at the dance liked Anna Rose. | T / F |
| 8. Anna Rose got a new red dress for the dance. | T / F |
| 9. Mardave asked Anna Rose to go to Europe with him. | T / F |
| 10. Mardave married Anna Rose. | T / F |

MULTIPLE CHOICE:

1. Why was Anna Rose mad? _____
 - a) she hated her parents
 - b) she did badly in school
 - c) she got sick and became blind
 - d) she wanted to be alone

2. Who became her friend? _____
 - a) John
 - b) Robby
 - c) Mardave
 - d) George

3. What did the doctors tell Anna Rose? _____
 - a) she would be blind forever.
 - b) she needed a transplant.
 - c) she would die when she was twenty-one.
 - d) her eyesight would come back in a few years.

4. Who gave her the new eyes? _____
 - a) her mother
 - b) her father
 - c) a doctor
 - d) Mardave

COMPREHENSION: *(Write a complete sentence to answer the question.)*

1. How old was Anna Rose when she lost her eyesight?

2. Who told her she needed a transplant?

3. Who met her in the park and would not take no for an answer?

4. Did Mardave love Anna Rose?

5. Why did Anna Rose get a new red dress?

6. Who taught Anna Rose how to dance?

7. What did Anna Rose want to do before getting married?

8. Who was the first person Anna Rose saw when the bandages came off?

9. What did Anna Rose read at the end of the story?

10. Who gave Anna Rose her eyes?
