

Chapter 31

David's Dilemma



Mariana Lopes de Morais 

Audience: Adults and young people (from elementary school on)

Field: Education

Pietro and David were 12 years old and had been best friends since they were very young. Pietro had many problems at home; his father was an alcoholic, violent, and constantly beat him and his mother. After a fit of rage from his father, Pietro goes to school and tells David that he will spend the afternoon in the library to study. The next day, when the librarian arrives, she finds that the entire library has been trashed.

After the incident, the school board called all the classes of the final years of elementary school and high school to tell them that during the night someone had depredated the library, probably at the time of the watchman's shift change, demonstrating that the culprit knew the exact times at which shifts occurred.

The board also claimed that if the culprit did not show up, everyone would have to take responsibility and miss the end of year trip, which the students had been planning since school started.

David knew that his best friend had been in the library the day before and heard from some neighbors that Pietro had not come home that day. He felt it was his duty to tell the school board about this, but he knew that his friend would suffer harsh punishments, since the school was known for its strictness. David also knew the problems his friend faced at home, and if he were expelled from school, his father might become even angrier. What should David do?

M. L. de Morais (✉)
São Paulo State University, Marília, Brazil
e-mail: mariana.morais@unesp.br