

ENGLISH

THE FUN THEY HAD

~Summary~

-by Isaac Asimov

Diary Entry by Margie

The present story is set in the future when children don't have traditional books and schools. Margie, a little girl in the story, makes a diary entry-'Tommy found a real book'. The entry reveals the date, 21st May 2157, showing that the story is set much into the future. The book was a very old one, just like the one that her grandfather had in his time as a student. Its pages were yellow and she found it funny to read the words that were not moving like that on a computer screen.

Feelings about the Book

When Tommy had the book in his hand, he called it a waste because after one time reading, it could be thrown away. The same feeling was with Margie too. Tommy found that book in the attic of his house and that book was about a school. Margie hated her school and her mechanical teacher a lot. Her teacher was not a living being. He was an image that flashes on her screen in her study room. He gave her test after test in geography, and she was not doing well. Her failure in geography had invited an inspector who tried to trace out the problem. So, her mother had asked the County Inspector to come and find what was wrong.

The Arrival of the County Inspector

The County Inspector was a round little man with a red face. Margie had thought that he would take her mechanical teacher away completely, but it was not so. The Inspector set the teacher right within an hour or so. He told her mother that nothing was wrong with the girl rather the screen was too fast for the girl and therefore Margie was having troubles. Now, it had been slowed down so that, she would be okay with its level.

The Old Kind of School

On reading that book, Tommy had a discussion about the school with Margie. The old kind of schools were a building common to all and with human teachers who would teach all the boys and girls the same thing if they were of the same age.

He gave them tests as well as homework. Margie wanted to know more about those kinds of funny schools, but it was time for her to go to her school. It was time for Tommy too for his school and both of them decided to read the book later.

Margie's Schoolroom

Margie's schoolroom was next to her bedroom, where the mechanical teacher was on and waiting for Margie. Her school was open every day except Saturday and Sunday. Margie's mother believed that girls learn better if they do it regularly. The mechanical teacher (the screen lit up and started) was going to teach lesson on arithmetic. It was about the addition of proper fractions. Margie had no interest in it. Margie had to put yesterday's homework in the proper slot too. The mechanical teacher never forgot to ask for the homework.

Margie being Nostalgic

Margie was sitting in front of her mechanical teacher, but she was thinking of the good old days when the kids had a common time and place to study. She was also thinking of the human teacher that used to teach them. She was thinking of the fun they had at the school.

Conclusion of The Fun They Had

In the chapter – The Fun They Had illustrates how emerging technology is slowly taking precedence over various things around us. In the near future, it wouldn't be surprising to see if human teachers are replaced by mechanical devices or robots.