

PERFEKCTIONISM

FLAWLESS TESS

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ENA SAVRŠENA

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

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Tihana Fraculj • Jelena Brezovec

FLAWLESS TESS



*To all the little and big children who sometimes
think they have to be perfect.*

 **evenio**
Priče grade put do srca

Before you start reading this story, I want to ask you something... Do you sometimes worry too much that everything you do must be excellent? You start writing, drawing or counting, but then you start all over again because it's not good enough? Or you make a small mistake, and you must start everything from the beginning? You want every drawing to be perfect, every homework flawless and your letters and numbers to stand straight like soldiers in line? If you've recognized yourself in these questions, you are a lot like my friend - a girl named Flawless Tess.

Tess needed things to be precise and in order. She wanted everything to be in its place and look just right.

When others didn't confirm that she had done everything well or even perfectly, or when she thought more was expected of her, Tess would become very upset.

Disturbing and persistent thoughts would appear in her head, whispering that she has to be even better, even more careful, even more perfect. As if there were only two options: everything had to be perfect, or everything was totally worthless.

That's why some of her classmates nicknamed her – **Flawless Tess.**



Tess often felt a strange knot deep down in her belly. As soon as the thoughts of not doing something right popped up in her head, this knot would tangle and new unpleasant thoughts would appear: *"I can't make mistakes. I have to try harder!"*

She tried to loosen the knot by being even more careful and attentive and trying even harder. But instead of loosening, the knot usually got even tighter.

It was Wednesday afternoon and Tess was trying for hours to draw a poster color drawing of the magic garden for homework. It wasn't just any drawing; it was a drawing for the school board. Tess had set a goal for herself – her drawing had to be the best and deserve the highest place on the board!

But Tess didn't like poster colors. They were kind of messy, smudged, clumsy and never did what she wanted on the paper. And the worst thing about poster colors is that once you make a mistake, you can't erase it!

And so, on this Wednesday afternoon, Tess started to draw the same drawing for the tenth time. The wastebasket was full of snowballs of dumped crumpled paper.



When it seemed, she was finally getting it right, a drop of water slipped off the brush and fell straight onto one of her perfectly drawn blue clouds. The cloud became a smeared stain, and everything Tess was carefully creating, collapsed in a second in her eyes.

"It's over," she thought. "**This is no good.** I can't do it." Tess slowly put down her brush. She gave up. The drawing was lying on the table, unfinished.

But instead of relief, Tess felt even greater discomfort, because even though she didn't have the strength to continue, she still desperately wanted to have the most beautiful drawing on the board.

And right now, all she felt was disappointment in herself and the fear that she would disappoint the teacher who always praised her drawings in front of the whole class.



Her stomach began stirring up like a steaming pot, as if something was going to boil over at any moment. Cluck-cluck... gurgle-gurgle... and then... plooop! Suddenly, something unusual, the size of a cherry, jumped out of her stomach onto the table.