Darcy's Dreadful Birthday

Darcy was six years old. He was nearly seven – and you'd never guess what day his birthday was? It was on …………. December 25th. Wait I can hear you thinking? isn't that…. "Oh, yes, it is", said Darcy. "My birthday is on Christmas Day! It's not fair!!" Mum tried really hard to make it ok. She made sure that Darcy had separate Christmas and birthday parcels. She made sure that at teatime on Christmas Day, they had Darcy's birthday cake. Everyone tried really hard to be glad for Darcy – but actually it was quite hard work. By the time it was teatime on Christmas Day everyone was full of food and they didn't want any more to eat. The children were all really tired because they'd woken up early to see if Santa Claus had come. They had all had lots of presents and they didn't want to watch Darcy unwrap more presents. And even though Mum told them not to, some of the aunties and uncles just gave Darcy one big present for Christmas and birthday so instead of one Lego toy, Darcy sometimes got a Lego toy **and** a book and a card that said, "Merry Christmas **and** happy birthday!" That made Darcy feel quite cross . It just wasn't fair. Everyone else had a birthday **and** Christmas. Only he had both celebrations on the same day. Why did he have to miss out?

Dad found Darcy sitting behind the curtain feeling sad. "What's wrong, Darcy?" asked Dad. Poor Darcy started to cry. He was cross and he was sad all at the same time. "It's not fair", he told Dad. "I want my birthday to be on another day. I hate having a birthday on Christmas Day." Dad gave Darcy a hug. "Yes", he said. "It is a bit tough. Mind you, my birthday's on April 1st and every one calls me an April fool on my birthday". "That's not good," said Darcy , "but at least you get two lots of presents and people have enough room in their tummies to eat your cake." "That's fair enough", said Dad. "You don't have it easy, young Darcy."

Then Dad started to remember. "I remember when you were born, Darcy", he said. "We had just sat down to eat Christmas dinner. Your Mum had said to me that she thought you might be a Christmas baby but you weren't due until December 27 so we thought it was ok. Mum had just started to have her first bite of new potatoes and spring lamb when you started to tell her that you wanted out of her tummy in a big hurry. We thought maybe we could finish our dinner – but no. Very soon we were driving to the hospital and just four hours later we had the most beautiful baby in the world. That was you, Darcy."

Then Mum came along. "I'm just telling Darcy about when he was born", said Dad. "I think he'd rather have been born on another day".

"Not much chance of that", said Mum. "You were in a big rush to be a Christmas baby. But I was so happy when you were born. I remembered that Christmas was when another very special baby was born. You know who that was, don't you?"

"Yes", said Darcy, "I know that was when Jesus was born."

"Absolutely", said Mum. "Jesus who was God's Son and who came to show us what God was like and how to live in God's way was born on Christmas Day.   So now we have two reasons

to celebrate Christmas Day, Jesus' birthday and our very own Darcy's birthday.   You are a very lucky boy, Darcy to share your day with Jesus."

"I suppose I am", said Darcy, "but I still don't like it when people only give me one present. Do you think Jesus had that problem?"

"Probably not", said Dad. "I think we only started to celebrate Christmas quite a long time after Jesus died. But I have an idea. When don't we celebrate your birthday twice? You don't have to get older any faster, but what about we just have a small celebration on your real birthday and we have your party on your half year birthday? That would be June 25th. What do you think?"

"That might be a good idea", said Darcy. "I'll think about it."

"You do that" said Dad, "and while you do, I think there might be a cake out in the lounge with seven candles on it. I wonder who that's for."

When Darcy went to bed, Mum came up to tuck him in. "Have you had a good day, Darcy?" she asked. "What was the best part?" "There were two best parts", said Darcy. "One was getting a skateboard from Santa Claus, and the other best part was knowing that Jesus and I have a birthday on the same day. "I'm really glad that he was born as a baby just like me."

"I'm glad too", said Mum. "And I know that he loves you very, very much, Darcy. Have a good sleep, wee man."