

Inquiry STEMs from Mystery!

65 Short Mysteries You Solve with Science...

Double Dealing

Sherry and Marlena were identical twins, but usually it wasn't too hard to tell them apart. Unlike some twins, they didn't wear the same kinds of clothes, and they wore different hairstyles.

But for the ballet class's performance of "The Nutcracker", the teacher, Miss Jody, had put them in identical costumes and pulled up their hair into identical buns to be Snowflake Princesses.

Then she decorated their faces with a shiny plastic snowflake, one on Sherry's right cheek and one on Marlena's left cheek, so that when they faced each other at the end of the dance, the light from the spotlight glittered back into the audience. They received a big round of applause.

Afterward, while the girls were removing their makeup and standing in front of the dressing room mirrors, Blaise came up from behind. The face that reflected back at her had a flake on the left side.

"Nice dancing, Marlena," she said.

"Thanks. You did your Sugarplum Fairy dance very well, Blaise. But I'm Sherry. Can't you tell us apart?"

"Quit joking, Marlena."

"I'm not joking," the girl said.

"Yes, you are," Blaise said. But she was beginning to wonder. It was Marlena who had the snowflake on her left cheek, she had been sure of that. Up to now.

"Why would I pretend to be Marlena? I'm much better looking," the girl laughed, her back still to Blaise. "Or am I Marlena? Can you tell?"



Mystery No. 34 (page 87) from
One Minute Mysteries: 65 Short Mysteries You Solve With Science!



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Answer to...



Double Dealing

“I see now,” Blaise said. “When I look at your reflection coming back at me in the mirror, the flake is on the left side as I see it, but of course the mirror reverses everything. So the flake actually is on your right cheek, so you really are Sherry.”

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