

'The Scholarship Jacket' is a story by Marta Salinas and is about a Mexican girl named Martha. It was a tradition in her school, in Texas to present a scholarship jacket to the class valedictorian; to the student with the best grades over eight years of school. Martha got the highest grades in the school for the past eight years and became eligible to get the scholarship jacket. Her sister Rosie had won the jacket a few years back. Thus the scholarship jacket was the only object in Martha's mind. She was a skinny girl and not very pretty either. However, she was incredibly smart and had

maintained an A plus average in her eight years of school. So she was anticipating to be the valedictorian and earn the scholarship jacket that she had been dreaming of. Her father could not support her and so was raised

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

MARTA SALINAS was born in 1949. She is a native of Coalinga, California in U.S. She received a degree in creative writing from the University of California at Irvine. She is still active in the field of writing. 'Scholarship Jacket' is taken from her "Collection of short stories".



by her grandparents. As a result, any extracurricular activities that required money was not allowed. Besides, it was something they could not afford. So the scholarship jacket was her only way to continue her education.

All the hopes of Martha came to an end when she overheard a conversation between two teachers Mr. Schmidt and Mr. Boone, arguing whether the jacket should be given to Joann, since her father was a member of the Board and owned the only shop in the town or Martha, who had the right to the title, but a Mexican. The next day, the Principal called her in, telling her that the scholarship jacket would cost 15 dollars and she had to pay for it. If she couldn't pay for it, it would be given to the runner up. Martha left the school tearfully. She was heartbroken when her grandfather told her that she could not have the money. Grandfather told her: 'If you pay for it, Martha, it is not a scholarship jacket'. She shouldn't have to pay for something that she had earned. The next day Martha explained dejectedly to the Principal as to why she could not have the scholarship jacket. The Principal feeling guilty, told Martha that she would have the scholarship jacket which she rightly deserved.

Joann's father had a higher social status than Martha's father. It would be beneficial to the school, if Joann was presented with the scholarship jacket. But her grandfather was very wise. His words, 'Then if you pay for it, Martha, it's not a scholarship jacket, is it?' convey the message of the story. Thus Martha earned her scholarship jacket and didn't purchase it.