



Milton, a bright and cheerful boy, loved life. He loved his mom and dad and his nice house. He loved his cat Snuggles.

He loved school and his teacher, Mrs. Ferguson.



He loved to play dodgeball at recess.



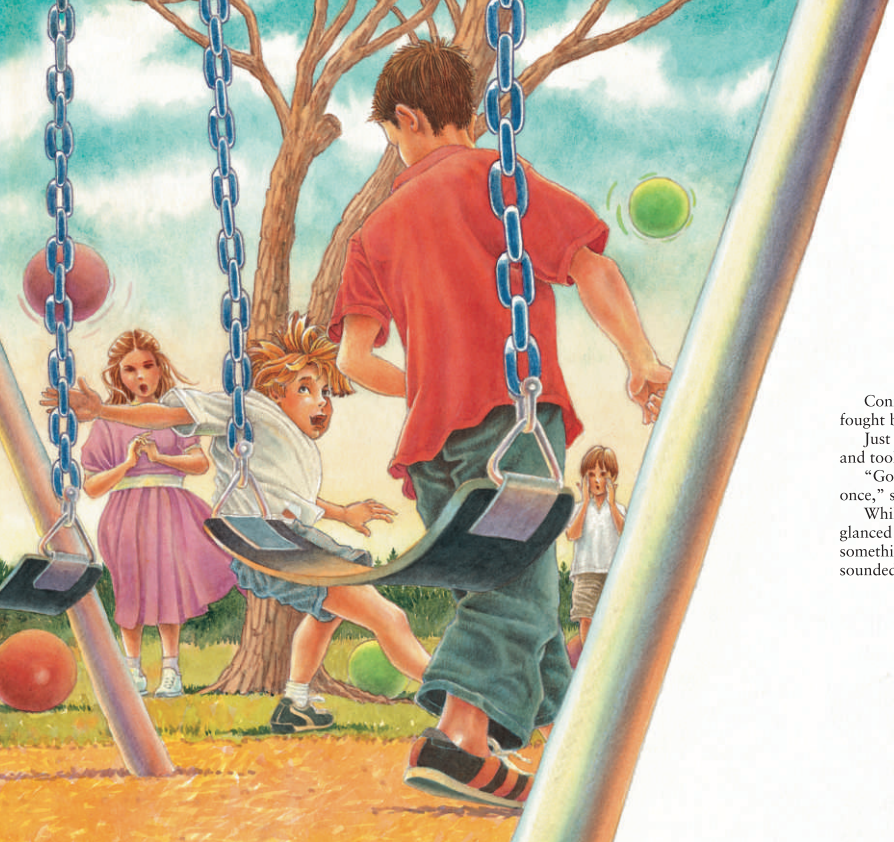
But most of all, he loved going to the ice-cream shop with his dad after dinner to get his favorite sundae.



One day at school, he was playing catch with his friend, Timmy, when a mean-looking, much bigger boy named Carter walked over to him, screwed up his face, and said, "Milton. What kinda name is Milton? You weirdo."

Suddenly, he pushed Milton so hard that he stumbled and fell to the ground, scraping both knees.



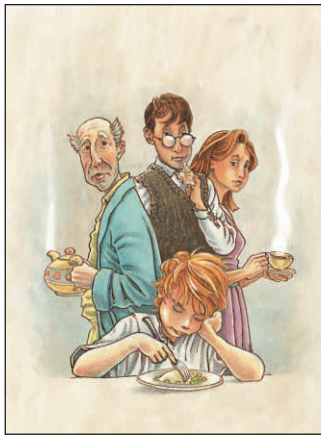


Confused and frightened, Milton fought back his tears.

Just then, Mrs. Ferguson ran over and took him by the hand.

“Go back to your classroom at once,” she said to Carter.

While walking away, Carter glanced back at Milton, mumbling something under his breath that sounded like, “I’ll get you next time.”



In the evening, his parents and his Grandpa Howard, who was visiting with them, noticed he wasn't the same Milton. He didn't smile much, he picked at his food, and he wasn't even excited about going to the ice-cream shop after dinner.

"What's the matter with you, Milton? Is something wrong?" his mother asked.

"No, nothing," said Milton.

That night, Milton couldn't get to sleep. He was thinking about what happened—and what *would* happen when he ran into Carter next time.

"Why did he pick on *me*," he kept thinking, over and over.

"Why *me*!"

"What's he going to do to me *next time*?"

The more he thought about all of this, the more frightened he became. He thought about it so much that he became more and more scared until he completely forgot that he was in a warm bed in his little room.

