



# Extract 1

## From Chapter 1

As Mrs. Ebbel began the lesson, Bradley took out a pencil and a piece of paper, and scribbled. He scribbled most of the morning, sometimes on the paper and sometimes on his desk. Sometimes he scribbled so hard his pencil point broke. Every time that happened he laughed. Then he'd tape the broken point to one of the gobs of junk in his desk, sharpen his pencil, and scribble again.

His desk was full of little wads of torn paper, pencil points, chewed erasers, and other unrecognizable stuff, all taped together.

Mrs. Ebbel handed back a language test. "Most of you did very well," she said. "I was very pleased. There were fourteen A's and the rest B's. Of course, there was one F, but ..." She shrugged her shoulders.

Bradley held up his test for everyone to see and smiled that same distorted smile.

As Mrs. Ebbel went over the correct answers with the class, Bradley took out his pair of scissors and very carefully cut his test paper into tiny squares.

When the bell rang for recess, he put on his red jacket and walked outside, alone.

"Hey, Bradley, wait up!" somebody called after him.

Startled, he turned around.

Jeff, the new kid, hurried alongside him. "Hi," said Jeff.

Bradley stared at him in amazement.

Jeff smiled. "I don't mind sitting next to you," he said. "Really."

Bradley didn't know what to say.

"I have been to the White House," Jeff admitted. "If you want, I'll tell you about it."

Bradley thought a moment, then said, "Give me a dollar or I'll spit on you."

