

3. *Maniac Magee* by Jerry Spinelli (Excerpt)

A ¹"Where you goin'?" he said.
²Candy bar flakes flew from his mouth.

B ³"I'm looking for Sycamore Street," said Maniac. ⁴"Do you know where it is?"

C ⁵"Yeah, I know where it is."

D ⁶Maniac waited, but the kid said nothing more.

E ⁷"Well, uh, do you think you could tell me where it is?"

F ⁸Stone was softer than the kid's glare.

G ⁹"No."

H ¹⁰Maniac looked around. ¹¹Other kids had stopped playing, were staring.

I ¹²Someone called: "Do 'im, Mars!"

J ¹³Someone else: "Waste 'im!"

K ¹⁴The kid, as you probably guessed by now, was none other than Mars Bar Thompson. ¹⁵Mars Bar heard the calls, and the stone got harder. ¹⁶Then suddenly he stopped glaring, suddenly he was smiling. ¹⁷He held up



the candy bar, an inch from Maniac's lips. ¹⁸"Wanna bite?"

L ¹⁹Maniac couldn't figure. ²⁰"You sure?"

M ²¹"Yeah, go ahead. ²²Take a bite."

N ²³Maniac shrugged, took the Mars Bar, bit off a chunk, and handed it back. ²⁴"Thanks."

O ²⁵Dead silence along the street. ²⁶The kid had done the unthinkable, he had chomped on one of Mars's own bars. ²⁷Not only that, but white kids just didn't put their mouths where black kids had had theirs, be it soda bottles, spoons, or candy bars. ²⁸And the kid hadn't even gone for the unused end; he had chomped right over Mars Bar's own bite marks.

P ²⁹Mars Bar was confused. ³⁰Who was this kid? ³¹What was this kid?