

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

A <sup>1</sup>“Where you goin’?” he said.  
<sup>2</sup>Candy bar flakes flew from his mouth.

B <sup>3</sup>“I’m looking for Sycamore Street,” said Maniac. <sup>4</sup>“Do you know where it is?”

C <sup>5</sup>“Yeah, I know where it is.”

D <sup>6</sup>Maniac waited, but the kid said nothing more.

E <sup>7</sup>“Well, uh, do you think you could tell me where it is?”

F <sup>8</sup>Stone was softer than the kid’s glare.

G <sup>9</sup>“No.”

H <sup>10</sup>Maniac looked around. <sup>11</sup>Other kids had stopped playing, were staring.

I <sup>12</sup>Someone called: “Do ‘im, Mars!”

J <sup>13</sup>Someone else: “Waste ‘im!”

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



the candy bar, an inch from Maniac’s lips. <sup>18</sup>“Wanna bite?”

L <sup>19</sup>Maniac couldn’t figure. <sup>20</sup>“You sure?”

M <sup>21</sup>“Yeah, go ahead. <sup>22</sup>Take a bite.”

N <sup>23</sup>Maniac shrugged, took the Mars Bar, bit off a chunk, and handed it back. <sup>24</sup>“Thanks.”

O <sup>25</sup>Dead silence along the street. <sup>26</sup>The kid had done the unthinkable, he had chomped on one of Mars’s own bars. <sup>27</sup>Not 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. <sup>28</sup>And the kid hadn’t even gone for the unused end; he had chomped right over Mars Bar’s own bite marks.

P <sup>29</sup>Mars Bar was confused. <sup>30</sup>Who was this kid? <sup>31</sup>What was this kid?