

For David and Nancy Melton with gratitude

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Library of Congress Control Number: 2013935584 ISBN 978-0-545-49908-8 10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1 13 14 15 16 17

> Cover design by Phil Falco Book design by Kathy Westray and Phil Falco Color by Jose Garibaldi

Printed in Singapore 46 First Color Edition printing, september 2013



CHAPTER 1 GEORGE AND HAROLD

Meet George Beard and Harold Hutchins. George is the kid on the left with the tie and the flat-top. Harold is the one on the right with the T-shirt and the bad haircut. Remember that now.



George and Harold were best friends. They had a lot in common. They lived right next door to each other and they were both in the same fourth-grade class at Jerome Horwitz Elementary School.

George and Harold were usually responsible kids. Whenever anything bad happened, George and Harold were usually responsible.

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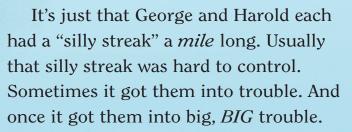
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But don't get the wrong idea about these two. George and Harold were actually very nice boys. No matter what everybody else thought, they were good, sweet, and lovable. . . . Well, OK, maybe they weren't so sweet and lovable, but they were good nonetheless.





But before I can tell you that story, I have to tell you *this* story.

