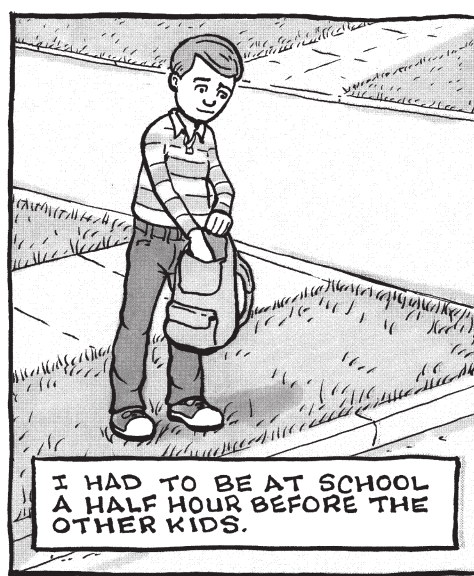
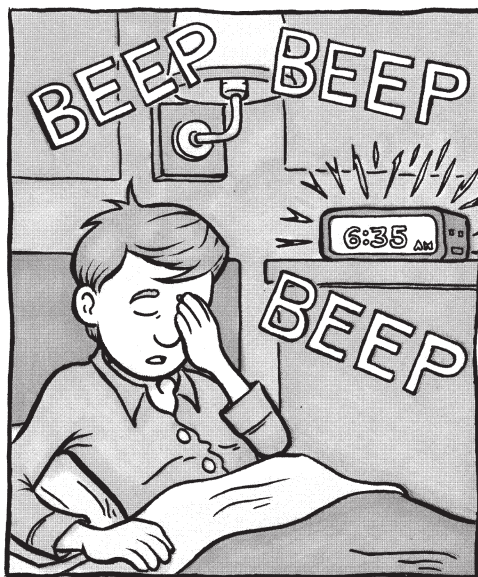
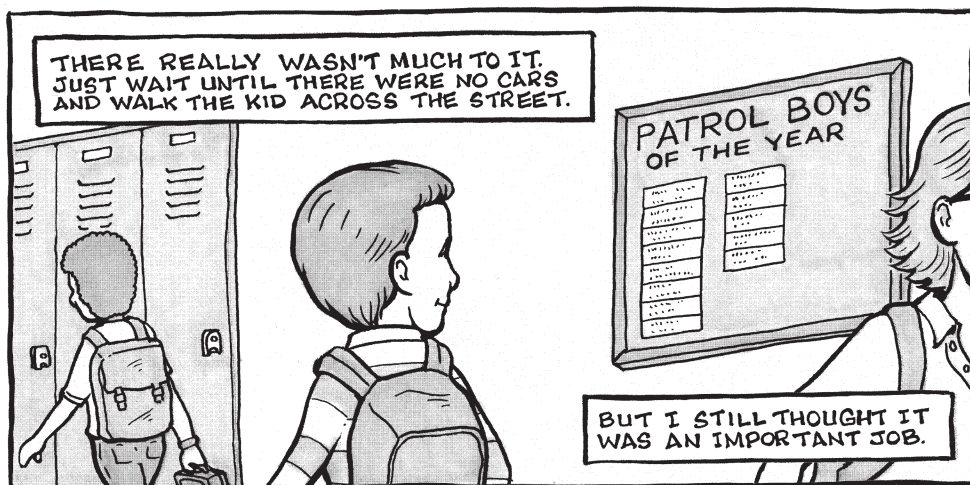
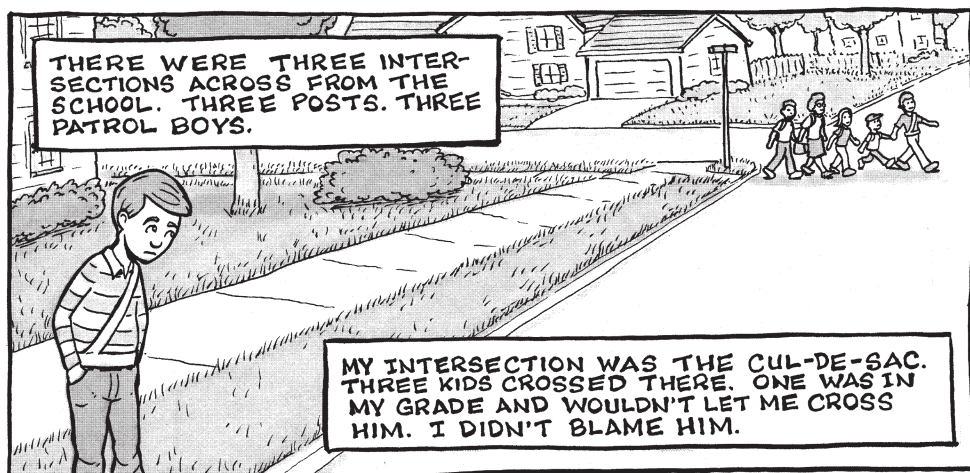
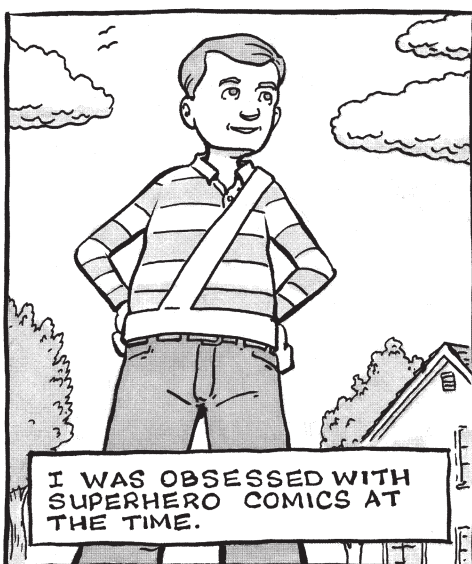


PATROL BOY OF THE YEAR

BY TOM CASTEEL



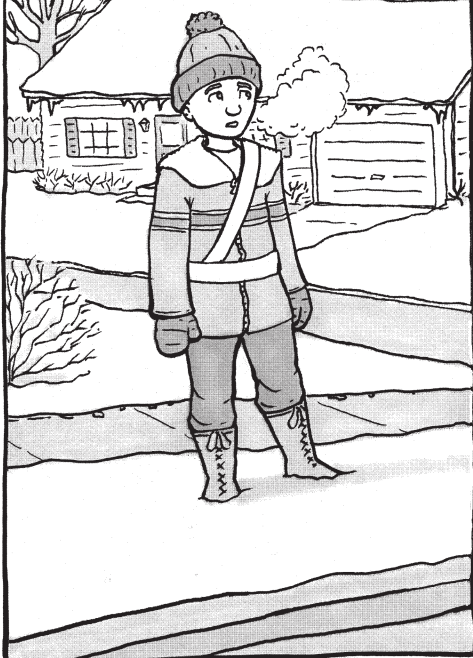


AFTER ABOUT THE FIRST MONTH OF SCHOOL THE OTHER PATROL BOYS* PRETTY MUCH STOPPED SHOWING UP.

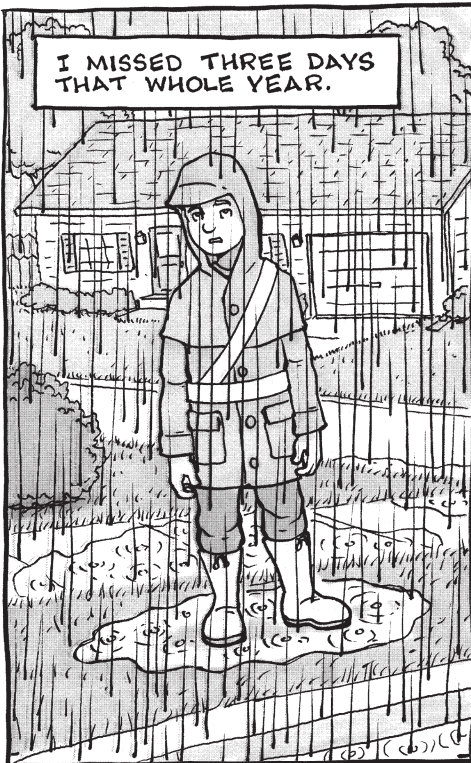


* ONE WAS A GIRL. THIS WAS BEFORE POLITICAL CORRECTNESS.

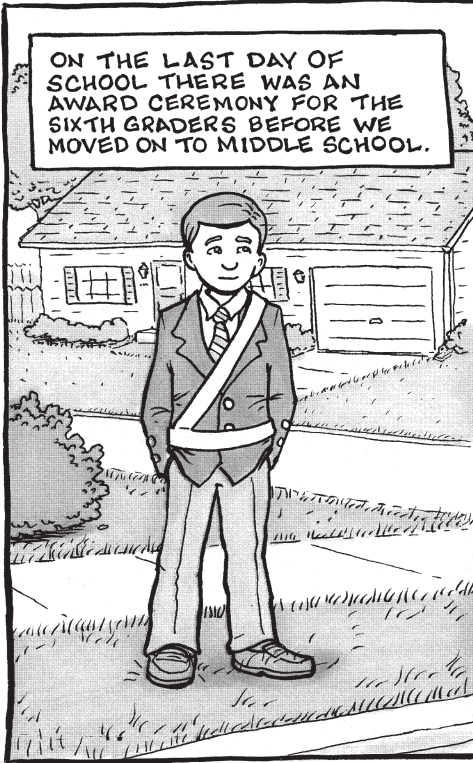
NO ONE SEEMED TO NOTICE.



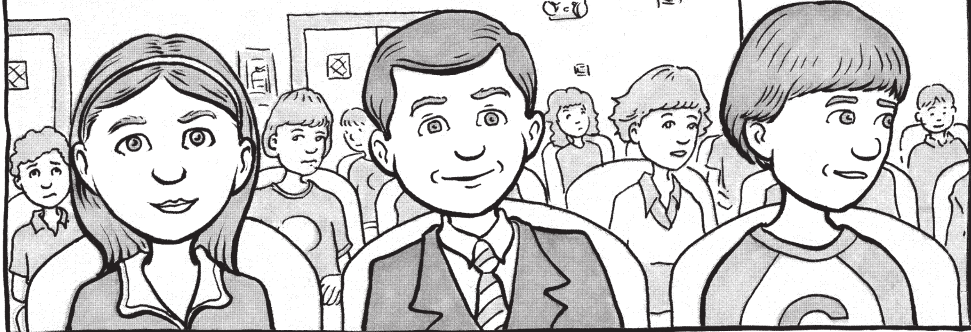
I MISSED THREE DAYS THAT WHOLE YEAR.



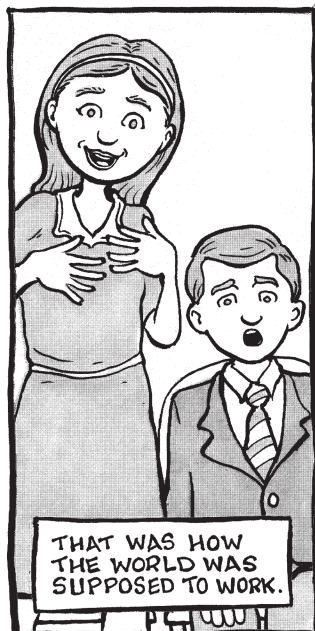
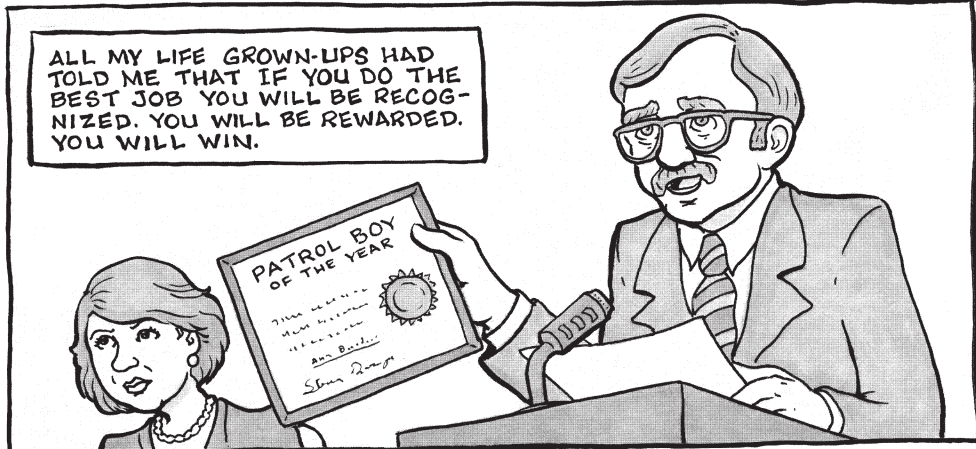
ON THE LAST DAY OF SCHOOL THERE WAS AN AWARD CEREMONY FOR THE SIXTH GRADERS BEFORE WE MOVED ON TO MIDDLE SCHOOL.



THE PATROL BOY OF THE YEAR
AWARD WAS GIVEN OUT LAST.

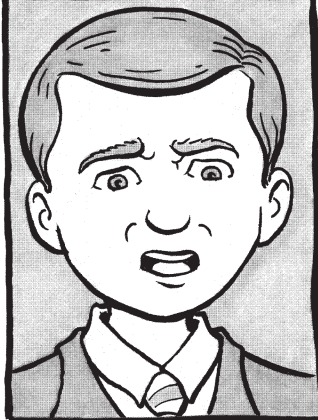


ALL MY LIFE GROWN-UPS HAD
TOLD ME THAT IF YOU DO THE
BEST JOB YOU WILL BE RECOG-
NIZED. YOU WILL BE REWARDED.
YOU WILL WIN.



THAT WAS HOW
THE WORLD WAS
SUPPOSED TO WORK.

JUST THIS WEEK I
TOLD MY SON "GOOD
WORK IS ITS OWN
REWARD" WHEN HE
DEMANDED CANDY
BECAUSE HE PICKED
UP HIS TOYS.



AND MOSTLY I
BELIEVE THAT.

