

# THE HARDEST

A Happy Birthday Card.  
and story.

Dedicated to Troy.

Once upon a time, in a land not too far away,  
but far enough that it's not here, there  
was a little boy named Troy.



Troy was the hardest worker around. He studied.  
Hard. He played. Hard. He ran. Hard.  
He did everything hard.



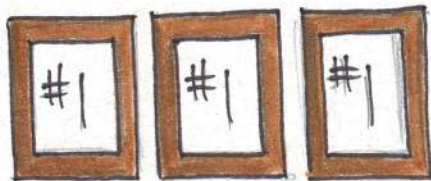
Except for drinking.  
He didn't do that hard.



Some days Troy was so hard at work that he would crack; but he always put himself back together again.

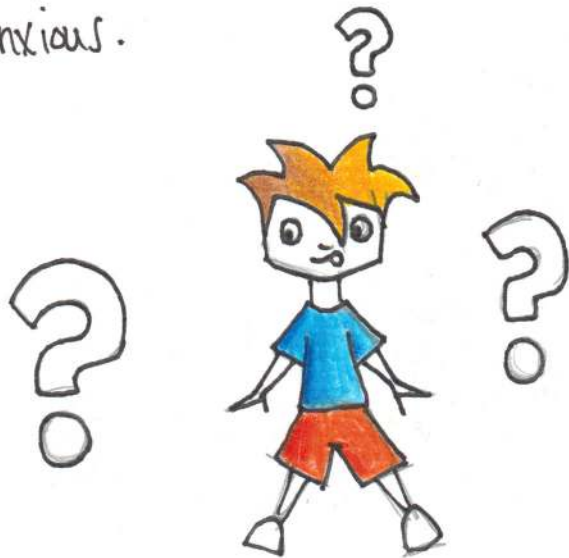


"Why are you so hard on yourself?" People would ask.



"Because I have to be the best!"  
He would say.

He didn't always believe he was the best though. Sometimes the future would make him anxious.





Sometimes he would envision impending doom...  
Enter Neil [insert ominous sound effects].



And then one day Troy met a little boy  
named Neil.

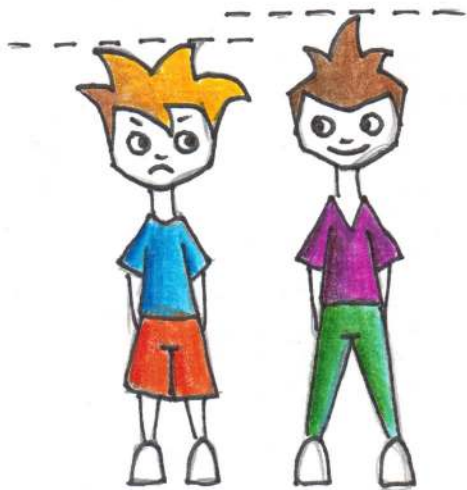


Neil wasn't as industrious as Troy. Neil liked many things, but not one thing the most and so he worked well, but not his hardest,

all the time searching for direction.



Troy soon began to take time away from hard work to play with Neil.



He encouraged Neil to set goals and work toward them. He taught Neil a lot - even though he was younger and appeared shorter than Neil.

Sometimes Neil would teach Troy math,  
but usually he taught him other things -



$$2 + 2 = 4$$

like when not to use  
the words

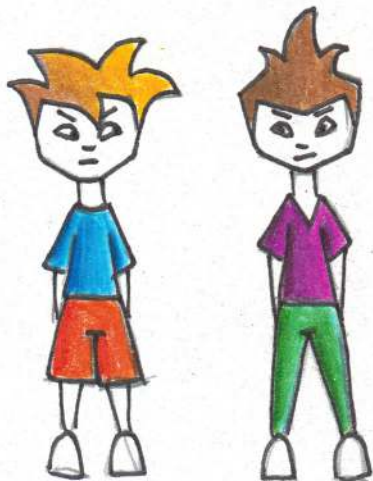
"this" and "that."

Neil thought the hardest thing in life was  
waiting for someone phenomenal.

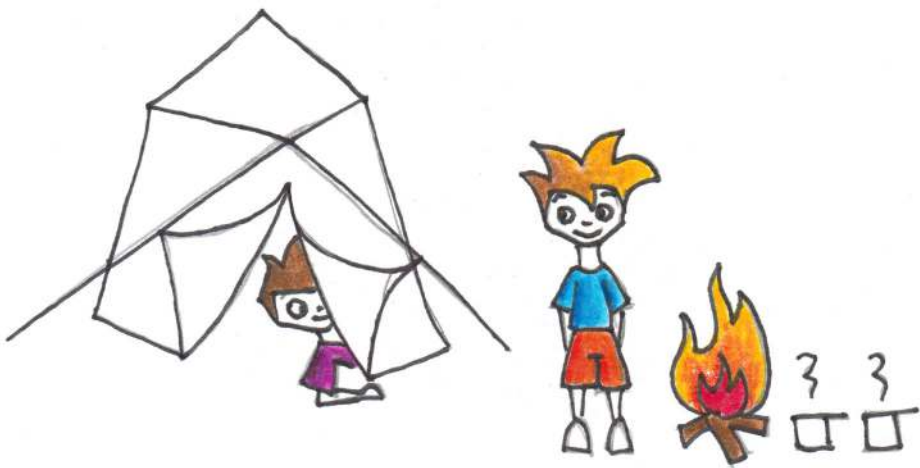
Thanks to Troy,  
Neil isn't waiting  
anymore.



Everything isn't always easy...



But they have each other and many adventures ahead of them!





Happy birthday Troy. Thank you for being your absolutely AMAZING self. You mean so much to me. I can't wait to experience more life with you.

Only the beginning...  
(Happy Birthday!)

PS. Your present is MEC.  
You need to be prepared for our next adventure!

x                      x  
x    Neil    x  
x                      x