

The Case of Billy Briefcase

There was a funny kid name Billy that had lots of friends. They called him Billy Briefcase because brought his books to school in a briefcase instead of a backpack. Kids thought it was funny and he did too. It was his Dad's old briefcase, which made it kind of special.

Billy's best friend was Marcos. Together, they had many friends, but they had been best buddies since before kindergarten. One day something strange happened. Marcos started teasing Billy about something small. During a sleepover, Marcos saw Billy's Teddy Bear on his bed. It was an old bear that he no longer played with, but his dad gave it to him when he was little, so he still kept it on his bed. Marcos said stuffed animals were for babies and started calling Billy a baby. Billy laughed when Marcos said it, but he didn't think it was funny. Marcos was supposed to be his friend. It was a little thing that he carried with him. He felt bad but didn't tell anyone. It was a little secret.

Billy didn't talk about the teasing, but he stopped playing with Marcos; he played with other friends and so did Marcos. Some of his friends only played with Marcos. Some of his friends would not play with Marcos. Billy's friends formed two sides-- they did not play with each other, but they talked about each other. One of the kids on Marcos 's side said that Billy played with Barbies, which wasn't true. One of Billy's friends said that Mark was just jealous because Billy's dad lived at home and Marcos 's dad didn't. Someone made a joke that Marcos 's dad was in jail and everyone laughed. Except for Billy. Billy felt terrible but he did not tell anyone, and his secret grew larger and more tangled.

One day a boy that Billy barely knew said that he should fight Marcos after school to show that he wasn't a baby. When he said no, more kids called him a baby. They said that he had to run home after school to play with his Barbies and teddy bears. They did not realize that Billy still liked Marcos, even though he was angry with him. Now it seemed like he had to fight his friend. It seemed like everyone was against him. Billy did not want to go to school. He did not tell his parents why. His secret had too big and heavy for him to carry.