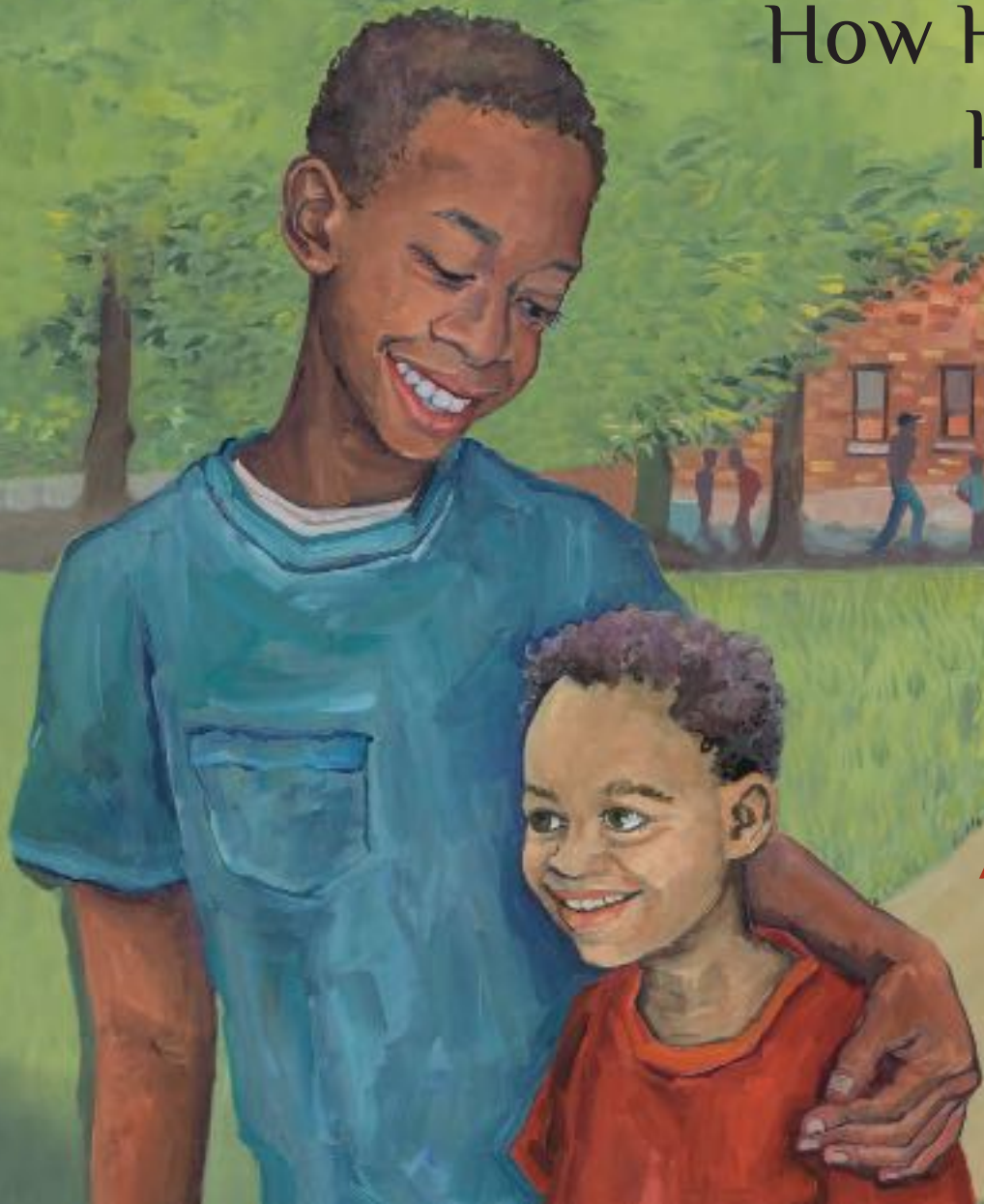


# Your Happy Heart

How Helping Others  
Helps You, Too



Written by

**Amie Dean**

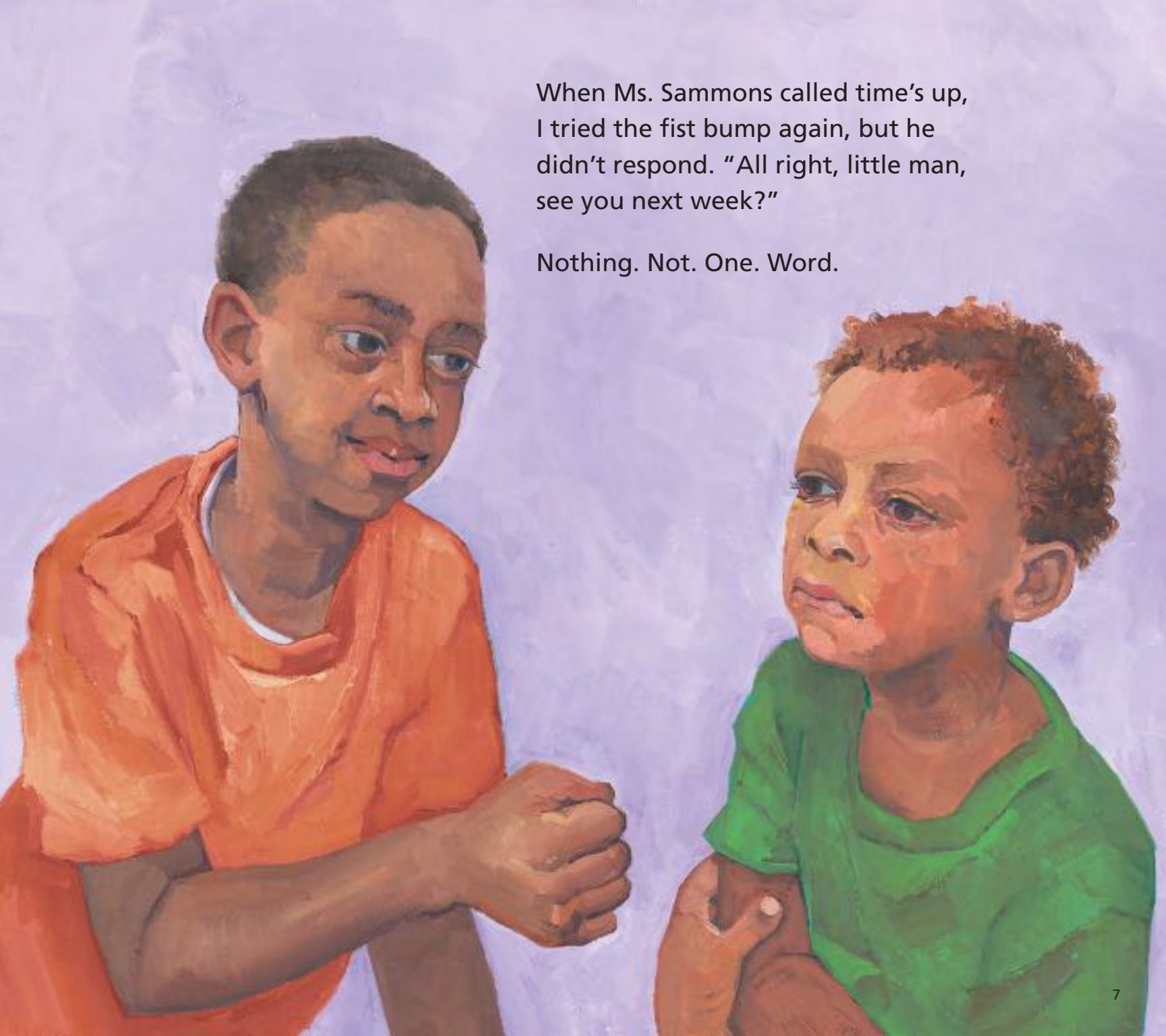
Illustrated by

**Susan Keeter**

“Richard, this is Javon, and he will be your Book Buddy. You’re going to love him.”

Richard barely turned his head around to look at me and then slowly faced the wall again. I felt kind of disappointed. Most of the other little kids jumped up and ran to their Book Buddies.





When Ms. Sammons called time's up,  
I tried the fist bump again, but he  
didn't respond. "All right, little man,  
see you next week?"

Nothing. Not. One. Word.

Tuesday came around,  
and I had a plan.

When I got to Richard's class,  
I took a deep breath and  
walked straight to him.




"In second grade, Mr. Sharpe, our school counselor, taught us about finding our gifts. Your gifts are what make you special, and help you feel proud of yourself. We made a list of the things we like about ourselves. Do you want to see my list?"

I unfolded the piece of paper and read:

*I'm smart with heart.*

*I run fast, too.*

*I'll be me, and you be you.*



I'm Smart  
With heart  
I run fast too.  
I'll be me  
and you be  
you.

I had something special planned for Richard for our last visit. But when I got to the room, he wasn't there. Ms. Sammons looked stressed. "Javon, Richard had to leave the classroom this morning. He's in Mr. Sharpe's office."

"Can I go talk to him? I think I can help."

She paused for a minute, "Okay, let's give it a shot."



Richard sat up and smiled at me.

“I made this for you so you can fill your heart with the things that make you happy. It can be anything you want.”



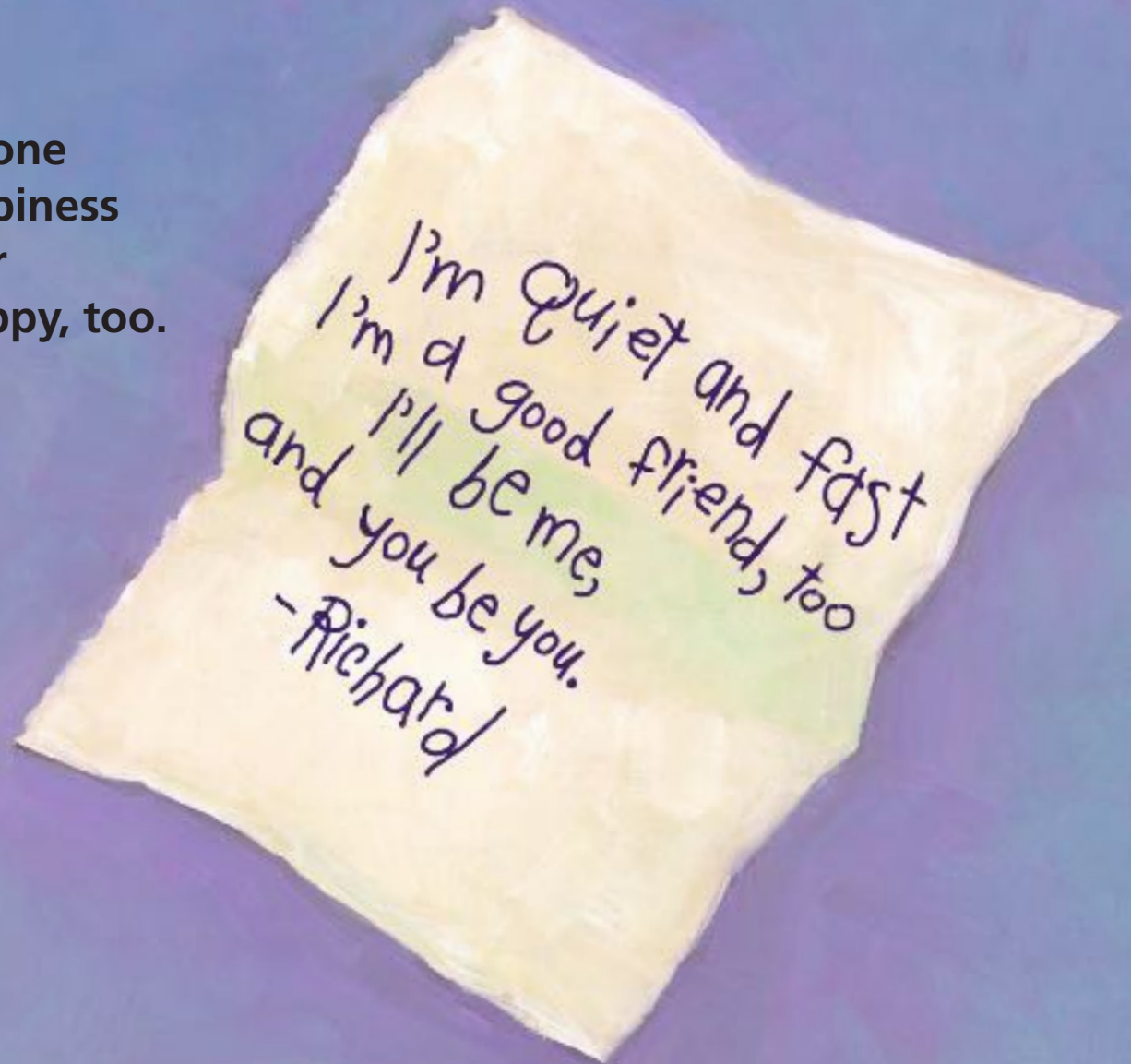




I've learned so many things at East Elementary. I can find my "Zen Zone" in lots of places. I learned it is okay to have a favorite stuffed animal to help you stay calm. I learned everyone feels angry or sad sometimes. I learned I have many gifts that make me special. But I learned the most important thing from Richard.

**Helping someone  
find their happiness  
can make your  
own heart happy, too.**

**Win-win.**



# A Story from the Heart...

Fifth-grader Javon has the big responsibility of being a Book Buddy to a kindergartener named Richard. But when he meets Richard for the first time, he isn't so sure he's up for the challenge. Both boys learn a lot that year, but what Javon learns from Richard is the most important lesson of all: that helping someone find their happiness can make your own heart happy, too.



**Amie Dean's** personal mantra is: Teach Hard. Love Harder. She has supported students with academic, behavioral, and emotional challenges for over 25 years as a teacher, behavior interventionist, and consultant. Amie's mission has always been to help children recognize their gifts, know their worth, and find their passion. She knows that children often need a champion to help with those endeavors. Amie has found great joy in helping educators all over the country become true champions for their students.

Amie resides in Roswell, GA with her husband and three sons – the source of her own happy heart. Becoming an author has always been a dream, so she is thrilled to share her debut book, *Your Happy Heart*, with you. Connect with Amie at [www.behaviorqueen.com](http://www.behaviorqueen.com).



**Susan Keeter** has illustrated over a dozen titles, including picture books on Underground Railroad conductor Harriet Tubman and 18th-century poet Phillis Wheatley. Keeter's work has received best children's book awards from Bank St. College and the Society of School Librarians International, and one of her books was a finalist for the NAACP Image Award. Keeter has done mission work in Ghana, West Africa, and volunteers with grassroots

organizations in her hometown of Syracuse, New York. She has a Master of Fine Arts degree from Syracuse University and lives in a 100-year-old house with her husband, two daughters, two dogs, two cats and a mouse.

*A heart-warming story about the power of helping others, "Your Happy Heart" illustrates how all children face challenges which are made easier through caring relationships.*

**Marilyn Price-Mitchell, PhD**

*This book is a gift to the next generation, as it shows kids the light at the end of the tunnel. Amie Dean has created an amazing tool for any parent or teacher to nurture happiness in the young people they know and love!*

**Pat Quinn**

Educational Consultant and Author of  
*"Motivating the Unmotivated Student"*



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