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# 1

## The Bug Van Pick-Up

Zack slid down in the front seat of the van. How could his dad do this to him?

Zack hated first days of school. They were bad enough in February. But starting a new school in the middle of the year. That was the worst. He knew he'd be the only new kid. And, worst of all, his dad was taking him in the bug van.

## DON'T BUG ME

Dad stopped the van for a red light. 'Hey, Bobby! Lookit the giant ant on top of that van!' The voice came from the car next to them.

Zack peeked over the window rim. Great. A car full of teenagers. They were all hanging out the window, pointing and laughing.

He felt his face turn red. Why couldn't he be invisible? He ducked back down and pretended to hunt for a pencil on the cab floor.

'Yeah! Lookit what it says on the side!' another voice yelled. 'The Squish 'Em Squad! You Got 'Em, We Swat 'Em!' 'Howls of laughter echoed in Zack's ears.

Why did his dad have to drive him to school in the bug van? He had begged his dad to drive the old Ford. Anything was better than the bug van.

'We're almost there, Zack', Bill said. He smiled at Zack.

Zack's stomach churned. He could see the school ahead. It squatted in the middle of the block. 'Thomas Paine School', read the signboard on the front lawn.

'Uh, Dad?' Zack asked quickly.

'Yes?' Bill replied.

'You don't have to drive me all the way to the front of the school', Zack answered. 'You can drop me off here. If you want'. He looked at his dad. 'It'll save you time'.

'No problem, Zack. It's on my way. My first call is in the next block', his dad said.

Great, Zack thought. Just great. Now everyone at his