

I SURVIVED

THE BATTLE OF
GETTYSBURG, 1863



by Lauren Tarshis
illustrated by Scott Dawson

Scholastic Inc.

TO KAREN TARSHIS, MY BEAUTIFUL MOM

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CHAPTER 1



JULY 2, 1863
A BATTLEFIELD IN GETTYSBURG,
PENNSYLVANIA

It was the battle of Gettysburg, the biggest and bloodiest of the Civil War.

Mighty armies from the United States' North and South were fighting to the death. Cannons shook the ground and set the sky on fire. Bullets flew through the air like deadly raindrops.

And in the middle of it all stood an eleven-year-old boy named Thomas.

Just three weeks before, Thomas had been a slave living on a farm in Virginia. And now he was on this battlefield in Pennsylvania, trying to help the Northern soldiers, who were fighting so he could be free.

Thomas had come to bring the men more ammunition for their rifles. He had to get away from here. He needed to get back to his little sister, who was waiting where it was safe.

But then a huge cannonball came sailing through the air. It crashed into an ammunition wagon.

Kaboom!

Flames shot up. Tree branches turned into torches. Razor-sharp strips of metal and nails flew through the air, stabbing Thomas in the leg and cutting his forehead. He dove for cover, rolling down a slippery hill. Gun smoke filled the air, choking him, blinding him. He had to get away!

He staggered across a field, coughing and

gagging. Blood spilled into his eyes from the gash on his forehead and gushed from the cut on his leg.

And through the blood and smoke was a terrifying sight: hundreds of rebel soldiers charging across the meadow, their rifles pointed right at him.

Boom!

Boom!

Boom!

Thomas ran, but not fast enough.

He turned and saw a rebel soldier running straight for him. The soldier's eyes were red with fury. His face was twisted into a crazed grin.

He aimed his rifle at Thomas.

No! Thomas couldn't die here!

Boom!

Thomas's chest seemed to shatter like glass.

He jerked back, and fell onto the blood-soaked grass.