

don't blame the mud



ONLY JESUS MAKES US CLEAN

WRITTEN BY
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ILLUSTRATED BY
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**For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son,
that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.**

JOHN 3:16



My troubles began one spring day as I was walking home from school.
The rain had stopped, and the sun was shining.

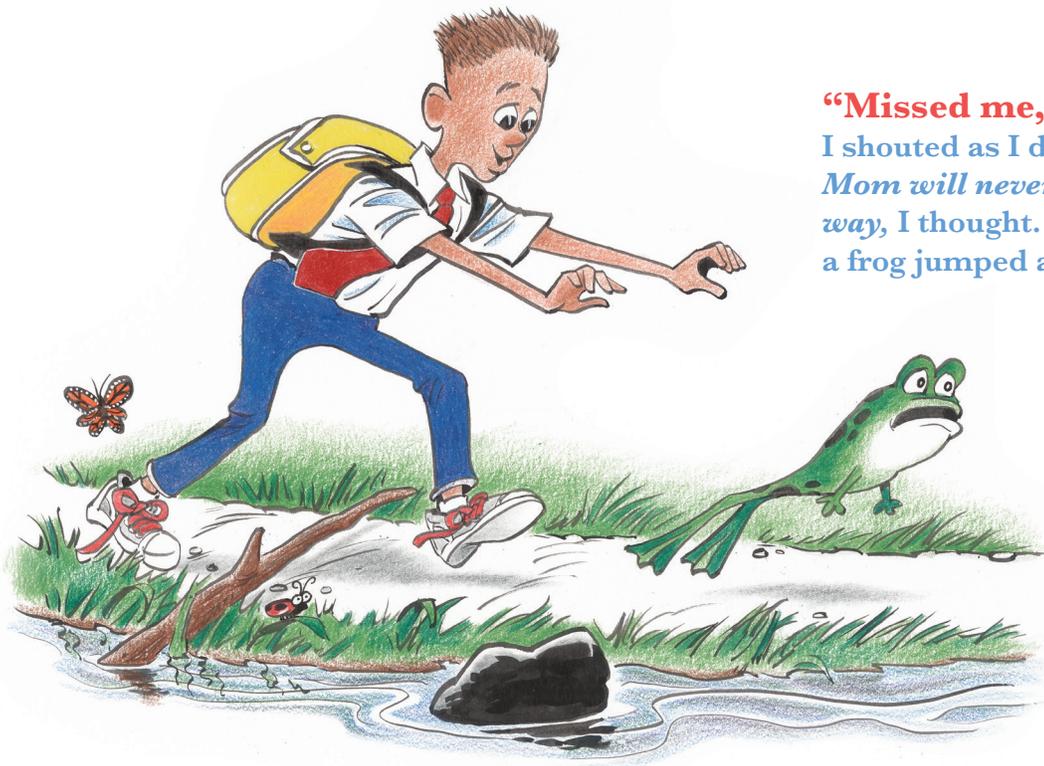
As I jumped over mud puddles, I could hear my
mom's parting words echoing in my head:
**"Max! Don't get those clothes dirty!
Come home and change before you play."**



I looked down at my new school uniform—it was still clean. *Whew!*

I should have kept walking down the sidewalk, but the trail that ran along the creek looked so much more fun. The muddy path seemed to call out to me that day. *I can keep my clothes clean, I thought, and I can catch frogs and skip stones.* Soon I forgot all about Mom's warning.

I walked on logs.
I hopped from rock to rock
over puddles and patches of mud.
I dodged the mud splashes.



“Missed me,”

I shouted as I ducked a huge one.
Mom will never know I came home this way, I thought. Then, all of a sudden,
a frog jumped across the path.

I ran after the frog,
but tripped on a stick.



I grabbed hold of a tree branch.
I hung on tight.
The branch broke my fall
and swung me over to a mossy log.

*That was a close call, I thought as I let go of the branch.
It sprang back into place, far back on the other side of a sea of mud.*

Now, I was trapped.

Everywhere I turned, the mud blocked my way. My only hope was to make it to a large flat rock in the middle of the muck. I backed down the log to get a good start. Then I took off and ran. But just as I jumped, my foot slid and slipped. I missed the rock, fell toward the mud, and this time there were no branches to save me.

