Carmine’s Story

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Carmine pulls no punches. He won’t smile at the camera if he doesn’t feel like it and he’s honest about his feelings of isolation. At the time of the interviews for this children’s book, he was 10 years old and living with HIV. This book, recommended for children in grades two through four, may in fact be considered *too* honest by some parents and teachers.

All the same, the photo of Carmine wearing an oversized Jets jacket and a defiant look will stay with you. You may wish that his face beamed like more media friendly children with HIV, but that doesn’t seem to be Carmine’s way. He’s a quiet, thoughtful boy who may have learned more about addition by counting out 10 pills a day than in any classroom, but he wants to learn nonetheless. As he says: “If I live to be 30, I have to be able to count and spell and know things like everyone else.”

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