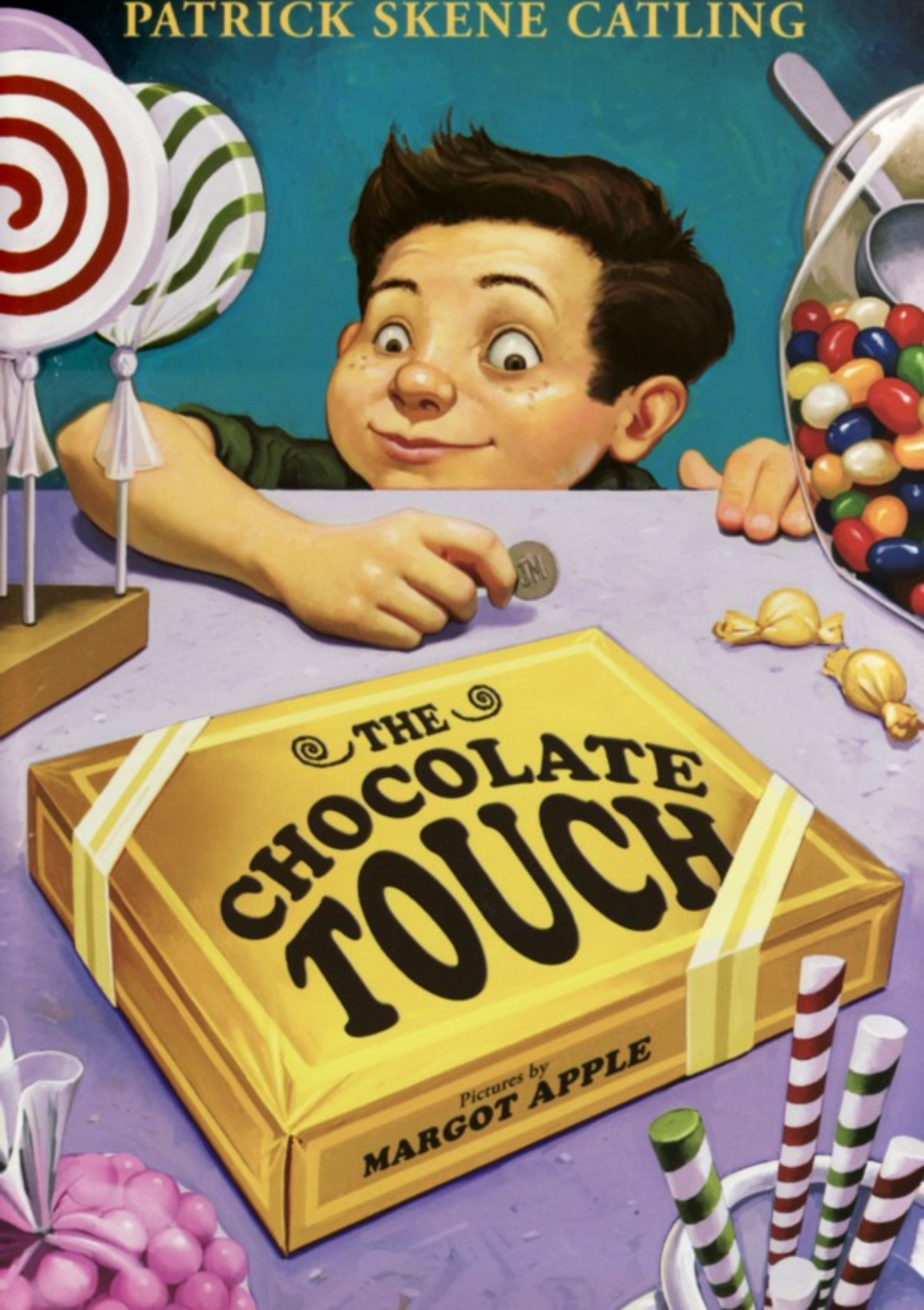


PATRICK SKENE CATLING





Most of the time John Midas was a very nice boy. Every now and then, of course, he broke a rule, such as the rule against pretending to be a tiger when his sister, Mary, was supposed to be getting to sleep.

Generally speaking, however, he behaved very well.

He should have behaved better.

He lived in a comfortable house surrounded by a green lawn and wide-spreading shade trees that were suitable for climbing. His mother was gentle as well as practical. His father, when he didn't have to hurry to town, spent hours telling John interesting things about baseball, beetles, birds' nests, boats, brigands, and butterflies.

John went to school and liked it. His teacher, Miss Plimsole, was fairly easy to get along with, as long as he did careful work. He had received a new, shiny golden trumpet and music lessons as a going-to-school present. Mrs. Quaver, the music teacher, had soon agreed to let him play small parts, a few notes at a time, with the school orchestra.

Finally, there was Susan Buttercup, who was in his class. Susan had soft yellow curls, round pink cheeks, blue eyes, and one of the best collections of marbles in the neighborhood.


John should have been completely well-behaved. But he wasn't.

He had one bad fault: he was a pig about candy. Boiled candy, cotton candy, licorice all-sorts, old-fashioned toffee, candied orange and lemon slices, crackerjack, jelly beans, fudge, black-currant lozenges for ticklish throats, nougat, *marrons glacés*, acid drops, peppermint sticks, lollipops, marshmallows, and, above all, chocolates—he devoured them all.

While other boys and girls spent their money on model airplanes, magazines, skipping ropes, and pet lizards, John studied the candy counters. All his money went on candy,

CHOCOLATE, CHOCOLATE, EVERYWHERE!

JOHAN MIDAS loves chocolate. He loves it so much that he'll eat it any hour of any day. He doesn't care if he ruins his appetite. He thinks chocolate is better than any other food! But one day, after wandering into a candy store and buying a piece of their best chocolate, John finds out that there might just be such a thing as too much chocolate. . . .

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