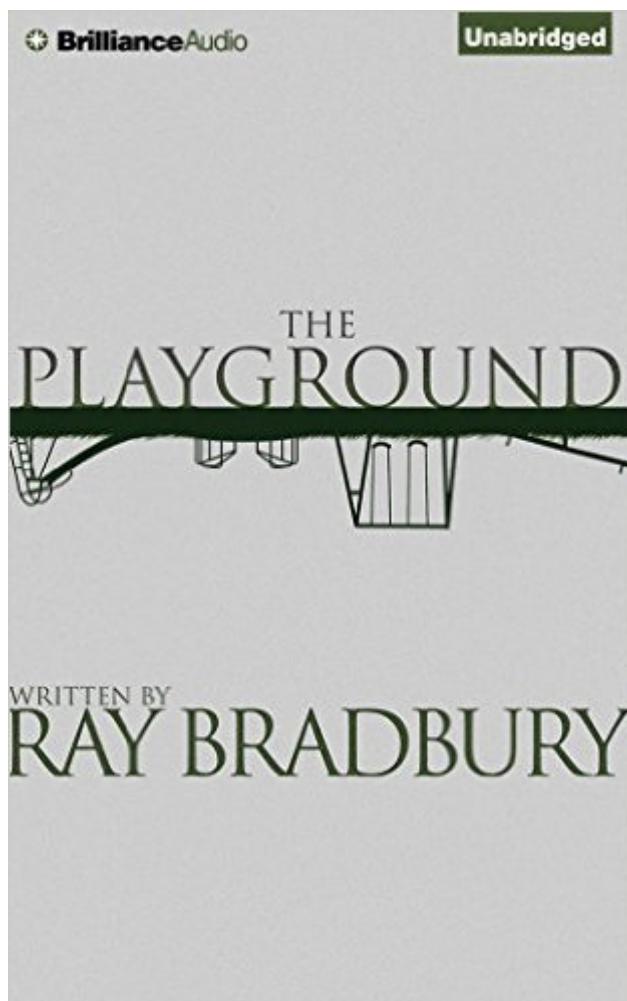


The book was found

# The Playground



## Synopsis

"The Playground" was part of the first hardcover edition of Ray Bradbury's legendary work *Fahrenheit 451*, published in 1953. In the story, Charles Underhill is a widower who will do anything to protect his young son Jim from the horrors of the playground—a playground which he and the boy pass by daily and the tumult of which, the activity, brings back to Charles the anguish of his own childhood. The playground, like childhood itself, is a nightmare of torment and vulnerability; Charles fears his sensitive son will be destroyed there just as he almost was so many years ago. Underhill's sister Carol, who has moved in to help raise the young boy after his mother passed away, feels differently. The playground, she believes, is preparation for life, Jim will survive the experience, she feels, and he will be the better for it and more equipped to deal with the rigor and obligation of adult existence. Underhill is caught between his own fear and his sister's invocation of reason and feels paralyzed. A mysterious boy calls out to him from the playground, and seems to know all too well why Underhill is there and what the source of his agony really is. A mysterious Manager also lurks to whom the strange boy directs Underhill. An agreement can be made perhaps—this is what the boy tells Underhill. Perhaps Jim can be spared the playground, but of course, a substitute must be found.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

A great read if you have a cup of hot tea...you'll finish before the tea goes cold. I particularly love Bradbury's description of the Playground, the imagery can almost be smelled and touched. The way he weaves this story is a cultural testimony to American childhood, and to parenthood. And having a

young son myself, living not far from several playgrounds, this story hit a little close to home. Unfortunately, living in the suburbs means that the biggest scares for my young kids are not the anguishes of this story, but the fears of plastic swings, splinters from wood chips, and runaway scooters. So, enjoy this taste of Bradbury's best, from the safety of your couch and Kindle.

I have always loved Ray Bradbury and have never read this short story. I loved it. It was so "Twilight Zone". I read it at night on my Kindle and was a little disturbed/scared with the ending. I wish Kindle had more stories by Ray Bradbury. I would read all of them but maybe not at night.

Great little short story, mysterious and dark. I love Ray Bradbury, great author and great writing, only thing is I kinda saw where this story was going after the first few pages of this short story.. Not really any surprise ending here..Overall: B+ (Enjoyable short read)

I discovered science fiction in the mid-1950s when I was about ten years old. Ray Bradbury quickly became one of my favorite authors. Now, many years later, I'm delighted to see some of his works being republished as ebooks. Although "The Playground" was one of Bradbury's earlier works, it evokes the same kind of vivid sensory images of later classics like Something Wicked This Way Comes. In the story, Charles Underhill is determined to spare his son Jim from the years-long cruelty and suffering of childhood. He would do anything, even trade places with his son if he could. But that meant entering the Playground and being beaten and tormented by the other kids for years. Was the Playground a real place, or was it simply a symbol for the pain of growing up and learning life's lessons the hard way? There was only one way for Charles Underhill to find out. This was a creepy, captivating story told by a master storyteller. We'll miss Ray Bradbury, but his work lives on.

Underhill has a young son named Jim. His sister Carol has decided it is time for her nephew to enter the Playground. The Playground is a park where the children run wild literally with no supervision. Underhill hates the idea. Twists and Turns. What are you willing to go up for your chick.

What an amazing short story! I could totally picture the time and place, and the characters in this story. Very well written. My first Ray Bradbury story but definitely not my last! It's very short, but you'll be thinking about it long after you've finished reading! The story is about Charles, who has recently

lost his wife. It's about childhood cruelty and a parent's devotion so intense that he's willing to make a deal with the playground manager (the devil?) in order to protect his three year old son. How far would you go?

A surrealistic short story that deals with bullying. I read this when I was in 6th or 7th grade. I have often quoted it as an adult, but couldn't remember the details. It helped me realize that contrary to what a lot of adults told me, childhood is not necessarily the best time of one's life. I think if I had really believed that I might have considered suicide. Unfortunately some do.. I had forgotten who wrote it and was glad to come across it again. I have recommended it to my daughter to share with her kids.

"When you have two precious bits of porcelain and one is broken and the other, the last one, remains, where can you find the time to be objective, to be immensely calm, to be anything else but concerned? No, he thought, walking slowly, in the hall, there seems to be nothing I can do except go on being afraid and being afraid of being afraid." -Charles Underhill Do you remember what it was like to be a kid? The fears of children are varied and this novelette by Ray Bradbury crystallizes the hardship of children through the expressed fear of the Playground by Charlie, the parent, in a tight, disturbing, trippy story that will send a shiver up your spine. "Are all playgrounds like this?" Underhill said. "Some," replied the boy on the playground. "Maybe this is the only one like this. Maybe it's just how you look at it, Charlie. Things are what you want them to be." And in this story, the Playground is hell, the place where children go to be bullied and beaten, and it is this fate, that of living a childhood of torment, that Charlie wants to save his son from experiencing. The bottom line: Mr. Bradbury takes the traditional viewpoint--that childhood is the best time of our lives--and flips this notion on its head, holding a mirror to the reader that says, "No, it isn't! Here's why!" This was my first Ray Bradbury story and it won't be the last.-Raeden Zen

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