

# Turtle Boy

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Amer had always cherished his green backpack, that was a special gift from his father on his first day of school, he carried it everywhere he went.



But what was unexpected is that this nice small backpack had made him the target for bullies at his school.



It all began in first grade. Some classmates called him “Turtle Boy” very funny because of the way his green backpack stuck out of his thin body, without considering how hurtful this could be to Amer.



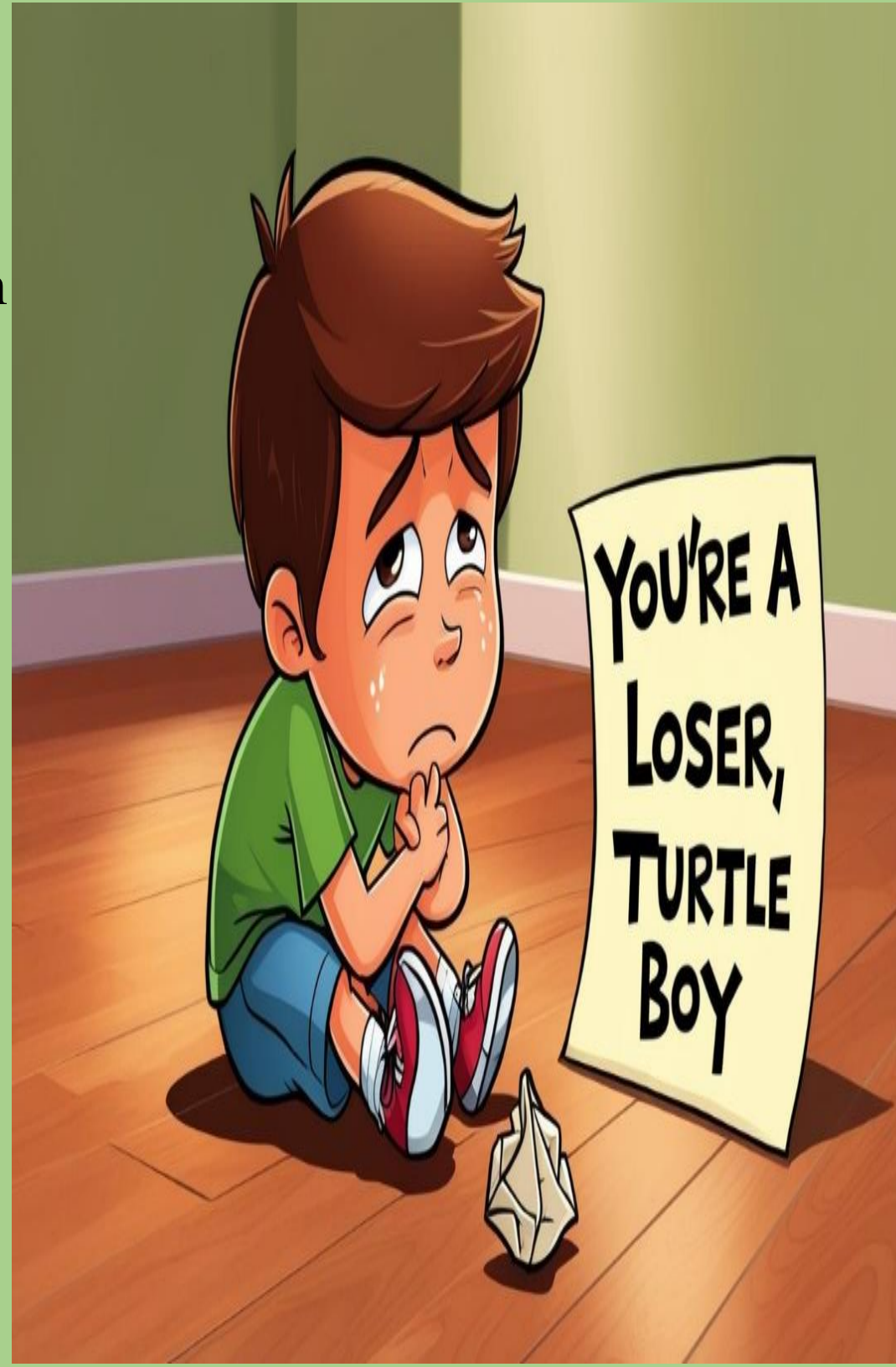
It was merely teasing at first; yet, the jokes have turned into something worse. By the second grade, the same group of students would pass by Amer in the hallway, and drop off the books he would be holding in his hands. “OOPS, SORRY, Small Turtle boy;” they’d say while laughing at him.



Sometimes they may  
also hide his backpack  
in their lockers to make  
him late for class.



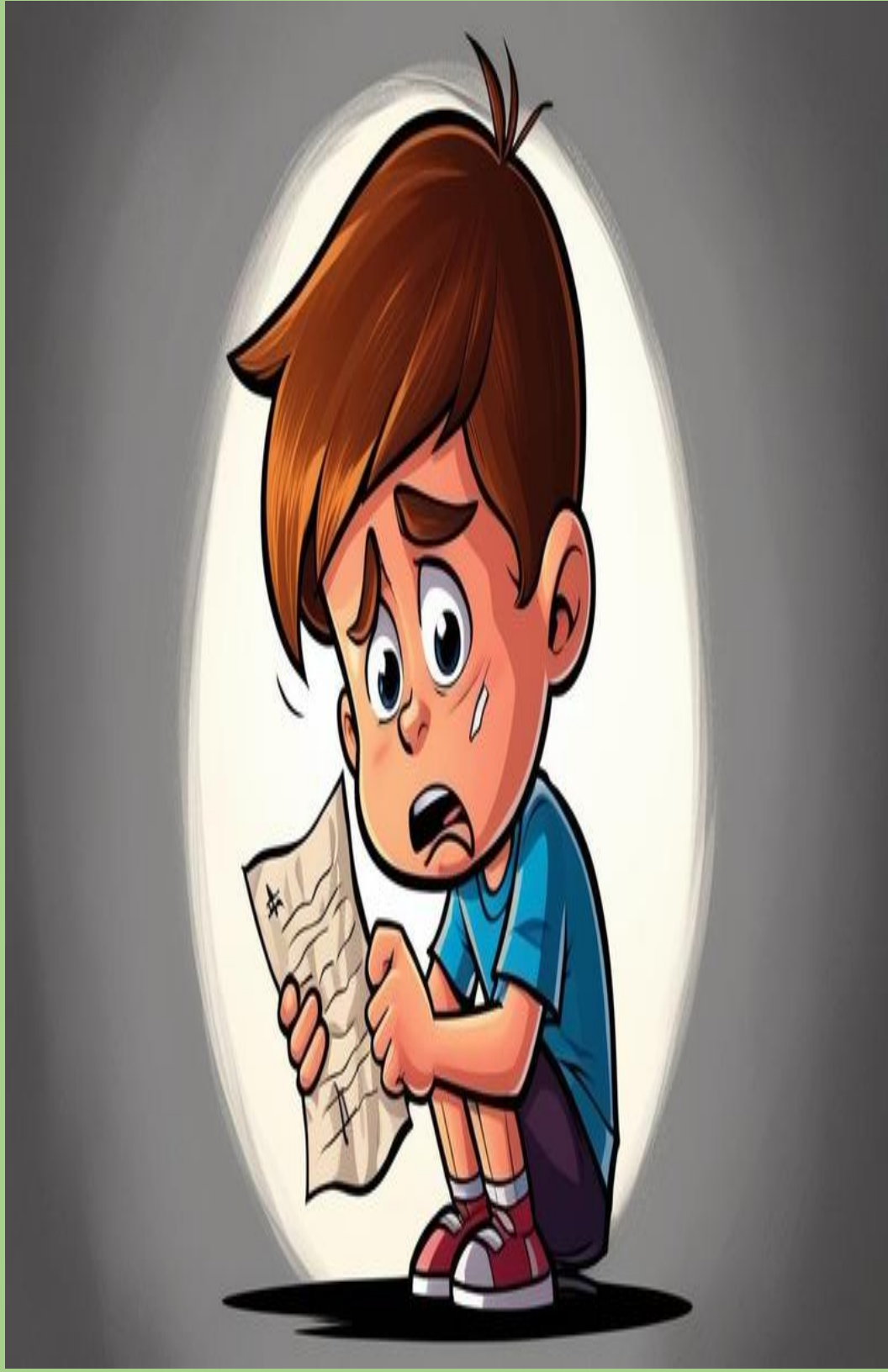
In third grade, the bullying didn't stop; instead, it got even worse. The bullies would trip Amer in the lunch break and whisper mean things to him when no one is supervising. They would give him papers with mean notes on them. They even leave mean notes on his desk in class.



By fourth grade, Amer had lost his interest in going to school. He decided to stay silent in class to avoid drawing attention to himself.



One afternoon, Amer got back from his recess time, as he found a note on his desk. Amer's stomach tightened afraid to find another mean note from the bullies.



Hello, I am aware of all what you're going through. Would you like us to sit together in lunch break? The note was surprisingly from Mohamad, a silent kid in Amer's class.



Although Amer hesitated to sit with Mohamad, he still sat with him during lunchbreak. The bullies were carefully watching what was happening but didn't get close to Amer.



Despite that it was not very smooth for Mohamad and Amer to sit together every day and talk. As they weren't used to having friends surrounding them, they have become best friends as time passed. They would now eat together, laugh together, and even play together.



Throughout this whole time, Amer has noticed something very strange, the more Amer had Mohamad by his side, the less pain the bullying caused him.



Some students started having the guts to defend Amer.



This didn't happen overnight, sure, there were still hard, and tough days. But with Mohamad by his side, Amer has recognized something very important.



Amer wasn't alone, and that's what made a life changing difference.

