

The Very Bad Day That Amy Didn't Have

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Did you ever have a really bad day where things just kept going wrong? That's exactly what happened to Amy and her friend Margaret.

But while Margaret just got mad and felt sorry for herself, Amy kept a positive attitude and found ways to solve all of her problems.

I hope this story inspires you to have a good attitude about your problems, even when things seem really tough. Developing problem-solving skills and coping skills is sure to help!

Always do your best!

Sincerely,
Dr. Larry



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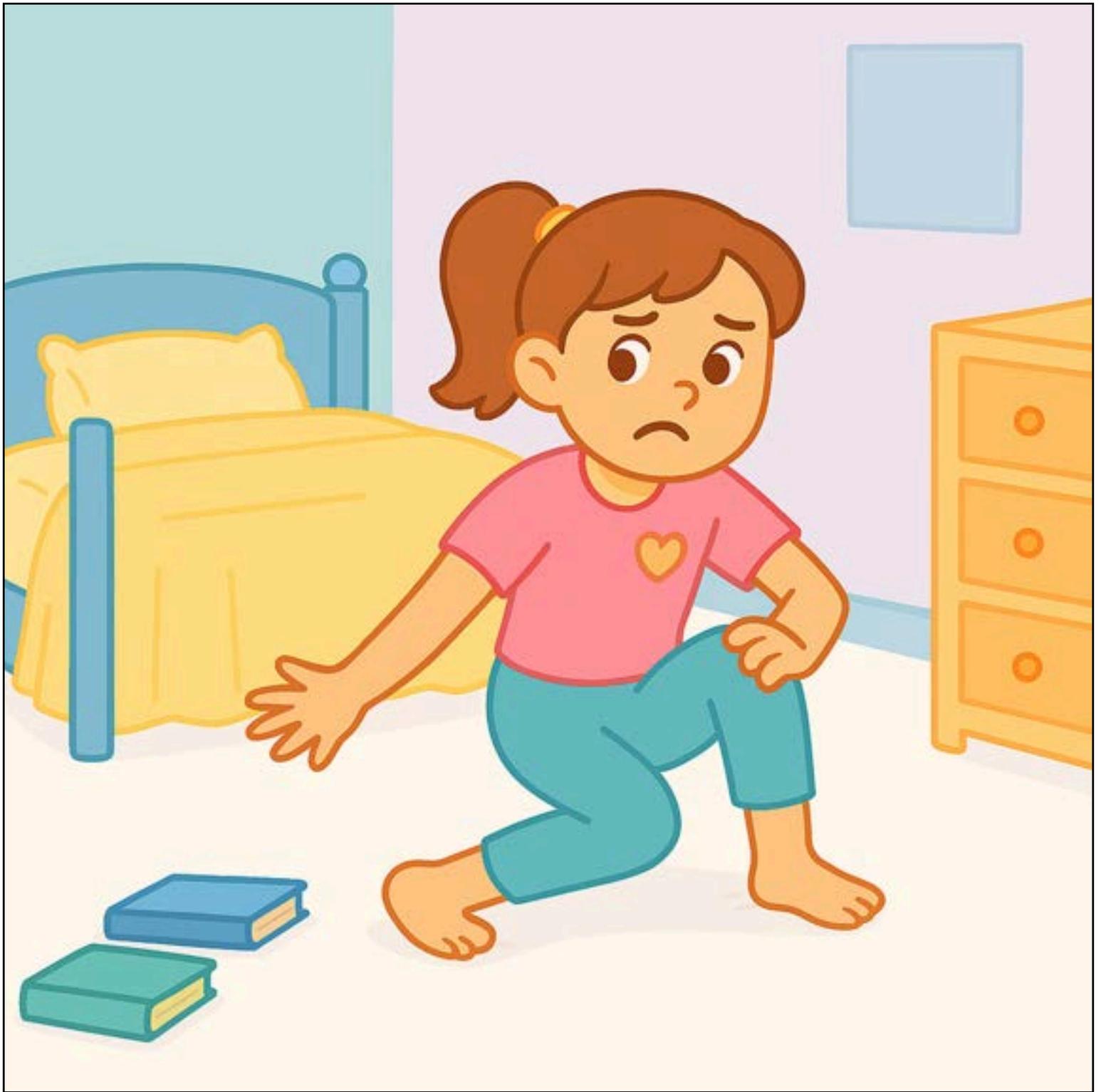
The Very Bad



Margaret got out of bed, tripped over her slippers, and bumped her knee on the drawer that she had left open the night before. She screamed, "Who left my slippers on the floor?! Who left my drawer open?!" But, of course, it was Margaret herself who had caused her own accident.



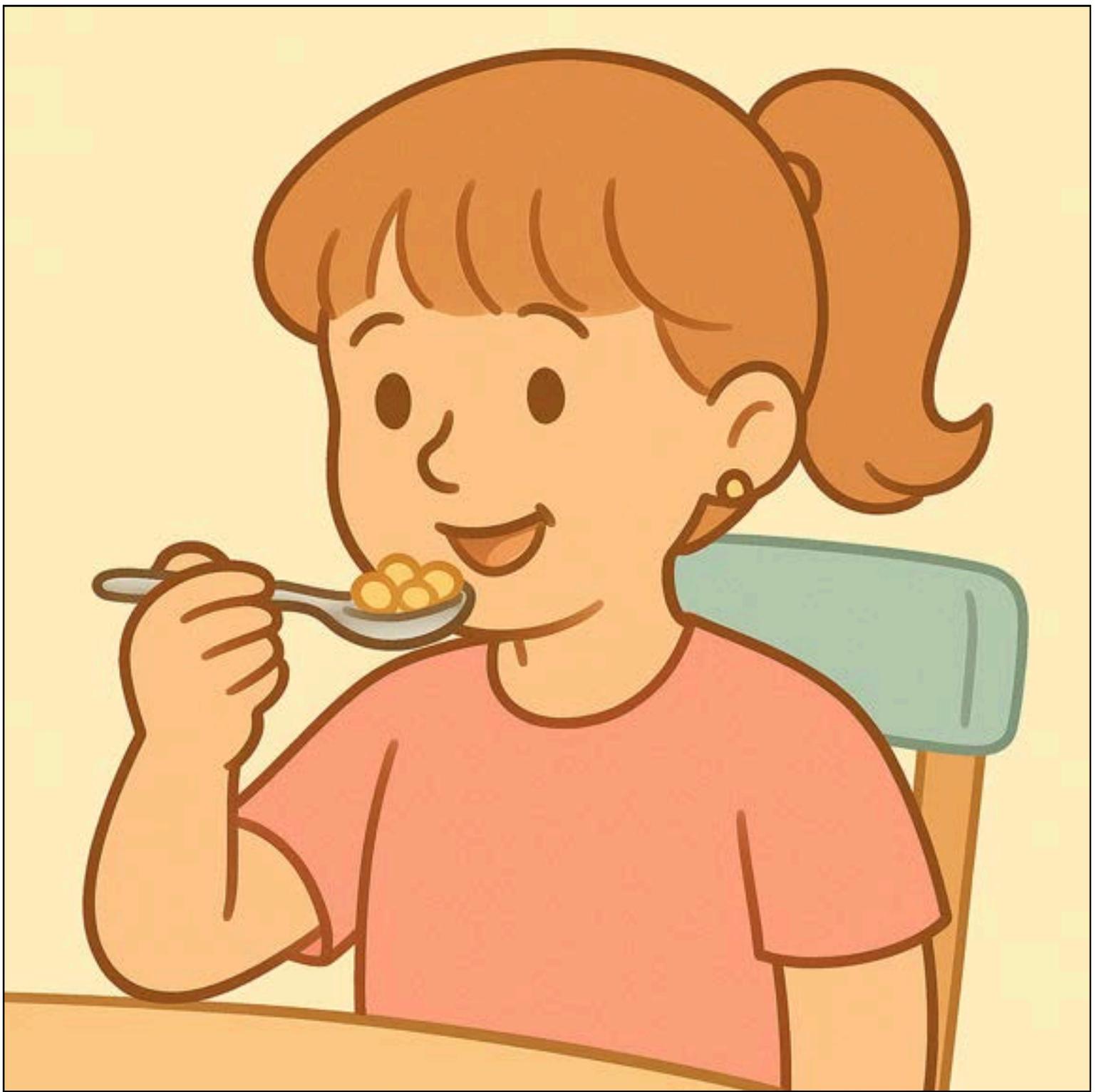
Margaret didn't feel any better at breakfast. She wanted Cocoa Poppers cereal, but her mother hadn't replaced the box that was emptied the day before. Margaret glared at her Mother and said rudely, "Why can't you keep my favorite cereal in the house?"



Amy, a girl in Margaret's class, had nearly the exact same thing happen to her that morning. She tripped over the school books that were piled next to the side of her bed and bumped her knee, too! She thought, "I should have put those books away before I went to bed", as she rubbed her sore knee.



Amy asked her mother for her favorite cereal, too. But her mother said, "I decided not to buy Sugar Crispies anymore. It has too much sugar in it. I bought you Oat Flakes instead, and I'll put strawberries on it to make it sweet. Okay?"



"Sure, I'll try it," Amy said. And she liked it, too!



Margaret got on the school bus and sat next to Amy. She looked at Amy and said, "You ALWAYS get to sit next to the window because you get on the bus first. I want to sit next to the window today." Margaret squinted her eyes a little, as if to say, "And I'm not going to take 'no' for an answer!"

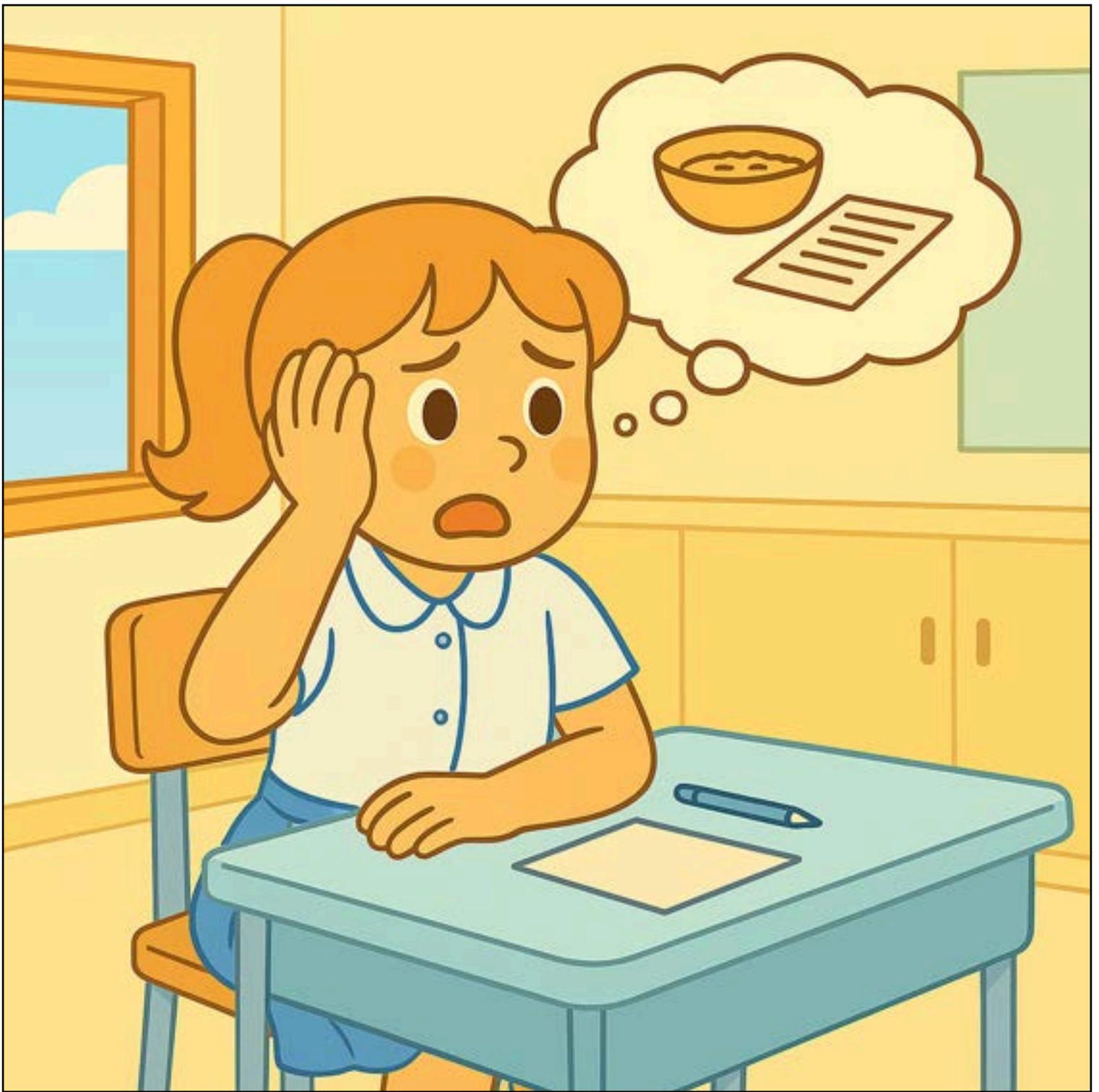


Amy thought, "That's not really true. Margaret sits next to window most of the time." But since it seemed like Margaret was in a bad mood anyway, she gave Margaret her seat. Amy thought, "Maybe Margaret is having a particularly bad day."



Almost as soon as Margaret sat down at her desk, her teacher, Mrs. Mitchell, collected everyone's homework. But Margaret just frowned. "I lost my homework on the way to school", she said, but it wasn't the truth.

Margaret acted like Mrs. Mitchell had done something wrong, and Mrs. Mitchell frowned back at Margaret.



Amy was watching this when a terrible thought crossed her mind. She didn't have her homework either! She had left it on the kitchen table!

Amy thought, "I'd better just tell Mrs. Mitchell the truth," and so she did.



She said, "My father is leaving for work late today. Can I call him and ask him to bring my homework to school?" Mrs. Mitchell smiled and said, "Okay. But it is your responsibility to get your homework to school, not your father's." Amy felt embarrassed, but she also felt that Mrs. Mitchell wasn't mad at her.



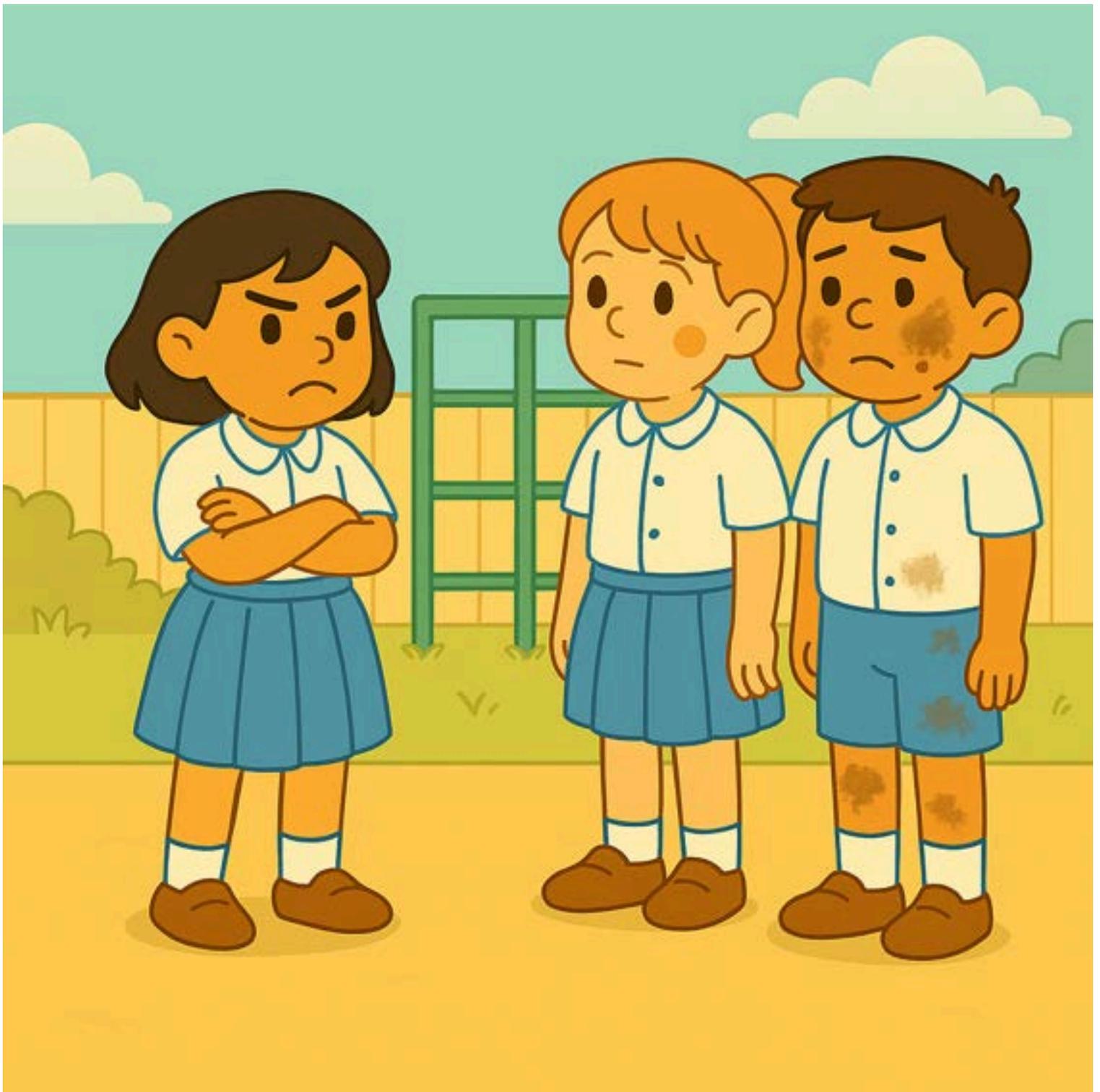
On the playground, Margaret, Billy, Alphonse, and Tony were playing tag. Billy was running so fast as he chased Margaret that when she turned to get away, he ran right into her and knocked her over. When Margaret got up, she had fire in her eyes. She socked Billy in the stomach and he fell to the ground and started crying.



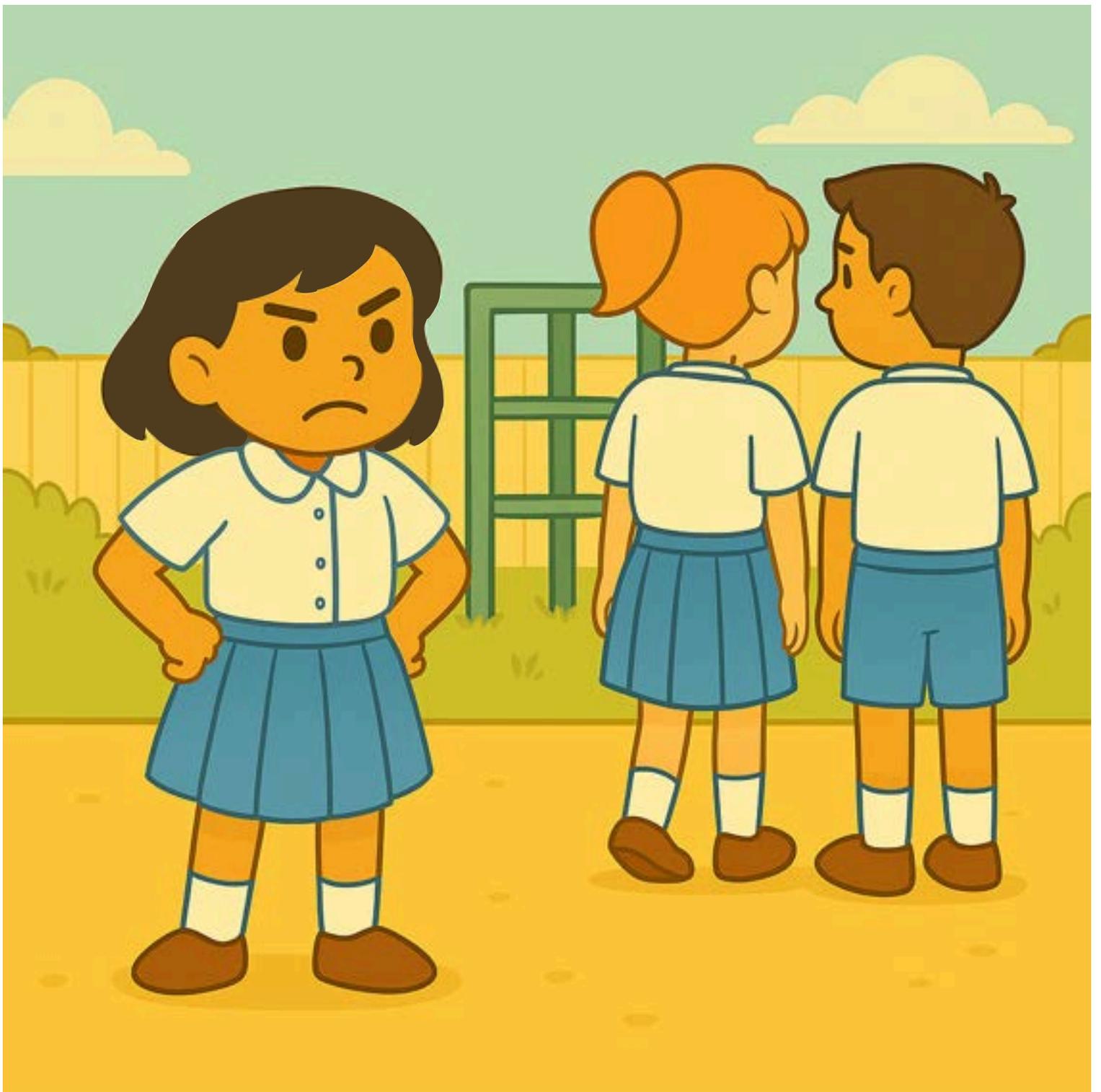
Margaret stood in front of Billy with her fists still clenched and a mixture of fury and fear on her face. "Get up, you crybaby," Margaret muttered.



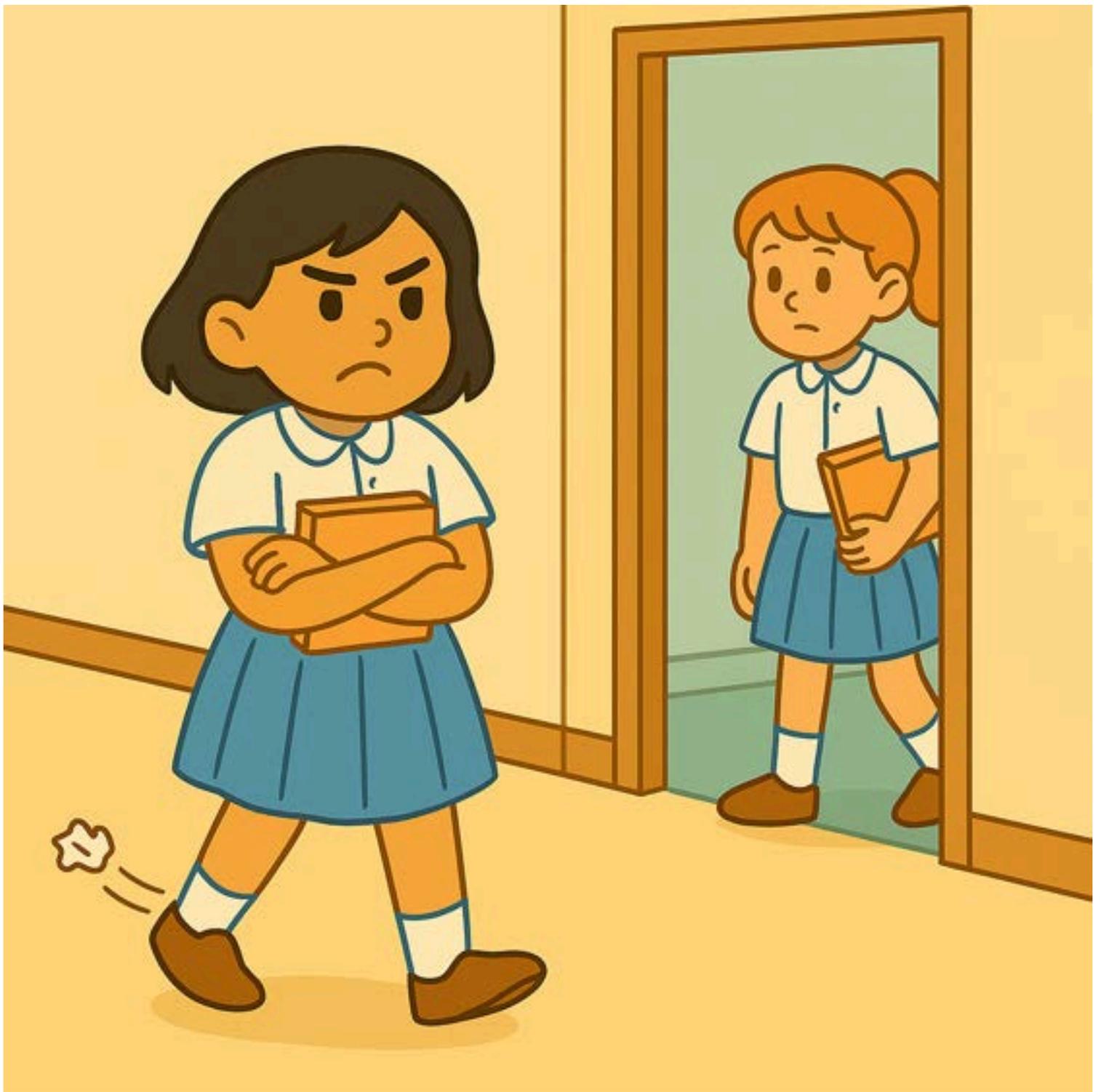
Amy ran over to the fight. Billy was her best friend, and Amy thought, "I'll show you who can hit hard, Margaret!". Amy wasn't afraid of Margaret. Amy had three older brothers who she wrestled with all the time and she wasn't afraid of anybody.



But as she walked over to Margaret, she remembered something that her oldest brother Tommy had told her: "Fighting never helps." Instead of taking a swing at Margaret, she bent over and helped Billy up and walked away with her arm around him.



Amy could feel Margaret looking at her as she walked away, but she didn't turn around.



For the rest of the day, Amy kept an eye on Margaret and what she saw made her very sad.



Margaret teased a little girl in the hallway.



Margaret glared at Mrs. Mitchell when her back was turned and stuck out her tongue and crossed her eyes to make fun of her.



Margaret spit in the drinking fountain, because she knew it would upset Tanya who was in line behind her.



Margaret drew nasty pictures when she was supposed to be practicing her writing.



On the bus ride home, Amy could hardly believe it when Margaret sat next to her again. She waited for Margaret to say that she wanted to sit next to the window. And she didn't have to wait long.



"I want to sit by the window," Margaret said, stiffening her body and looking straight into Amy's eyes.

"Too bad for you, then," said Amy, and she looked straight back at Margaret.



The girls just glared at each other as the bus pulled off. It was a staring contest, and neither would look away.



For blocks and blocks they stared at each other. The other children squirmed in their seats, laughed, and poked fun at each other, but Margaret and Amy just kept on staring at each other, eye-to-eye.



Then Amy spoke. "I don't like the way you act, Margaret Browning. You're mean and angry all the time. If you keep this up, you won't have anyone in the world who likes you, and you'll be mean and angry and alone when you grow up."



Then it was time for Amy to get off the bus, and she quickly stepped past Margaret to get out.



Margaret didn't say a word to Amy or even look at her as she left. Margaret was frozen with being mad and feeling sorry for herself. She had a very, very bad day. A very angry day. She just wanted to get home and watch some TV.



Amy felt very good and light as a feather. But as she ran into her house, calling to see if her brother Tommy was home yet, she tripped over a skate that she had left in the hallway and went down with a crash onto the floor.



Amy got up, rubbing her knee. Silently she picked up the skate, and found the other one, in a corner nearby. She put them both in the closet.



Then, with a smile, she dashed up the stairs yelling,
"Tommy, I'm home!"