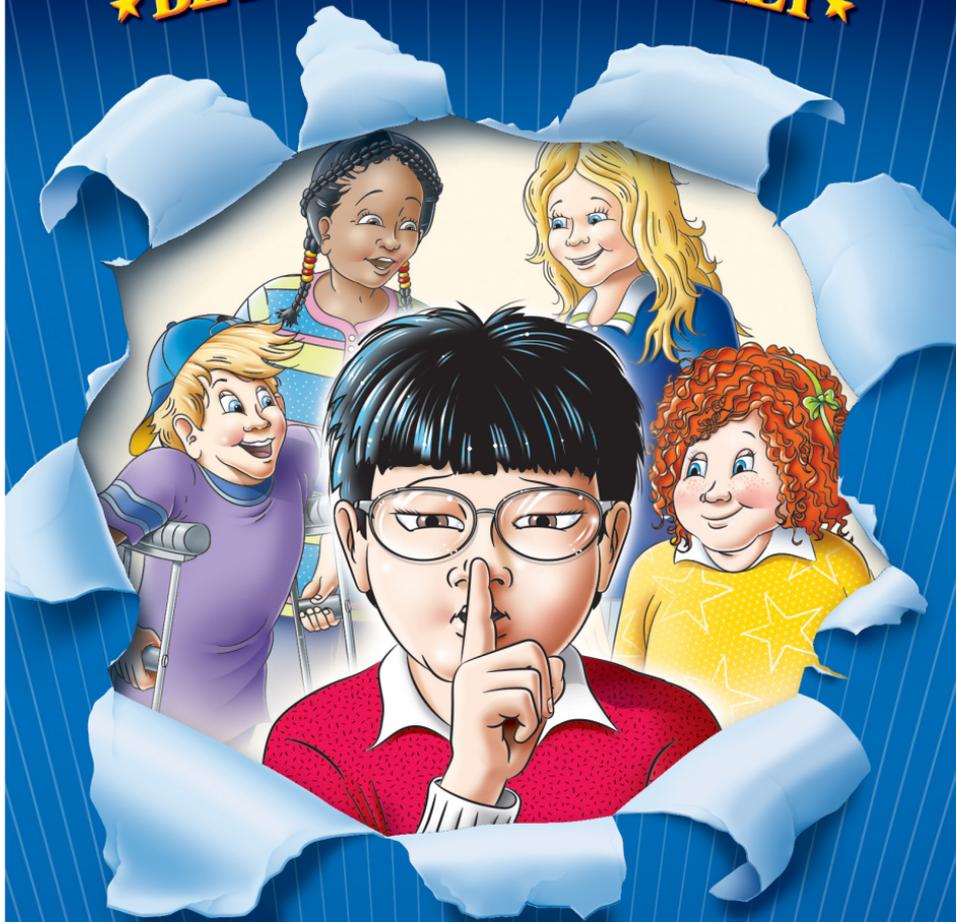


★ BETTER THAN A BULLY ★



J.J.'s Friendships & Secrets

..... Tina Levine

BETTER THAN A BULLY



J.J.'s Friendships & Secrets

BOOK #2

Tina Levine

.....
Illustrated by Ned Levine

www.readonbooks.com

This is a work of fiction. Names, places, incidents,
and characters are products of the author's
imagination and are used fictitiously.

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ISBN 978-1-7344611-1-4

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**PRAISE FOR *BETTER THAN A BULLY:*
*J.J.'S FRIENDSHIPS & SECRETS***

Better Than A Bully: J.J.'s Friendships & Secrets fits the middle school dilemma perfectly, giving kids resources without talking down to them.

Dr. Sherryll Kraizer, founder, Coalition for Children
kraizer@safekid.org

J.J.'s Friendships & Secrets, the second title in the *Better Than A Bully* series by Tina Levine, is a delightfully entertaining story that follows the transformation of the title character, J.J., from his unfortunate experiences of being bullied to his learning how to rise above peer cruelty, reach out to helping adults, forge positive friendships, and make a positive difference for his entire school community. *J.J.'s Friendships & Secrets* is a great read for anyone interested in learning how to stand up for themselves, connect with others, and turn a problem situation into an opportunity for leadership and growth.

Signe Whitson, author of
8 Keys to End Bullying: Strategies for Parents & Schools

Better Than A Bully: J.J.'s Friendships & Secrets is a heart-warming story about the transformation of a boy scared to tell adults about being physically bullied at school. In this second book of the series, we hear and see the effects physical bullying has on the bullied, the bystanders, and the bully. Bravo to this upper elementary and middle-grade fiction book engaging readers while sharing strategies on how to handle these challenging situations.

Andrew Pleener, psychiatrist, MD
CEO of Regional Psychiatry
Windermere, Florida

I am dedicating this book to my children and grandchildren. May they be compassionate and tolerant of others. May they reach their greatest potential and become the best versions of themselves.

Inspiration

*“When someone is cruel or acts like a bully, you do not stoop to their level. **Our motto is, ‘When they go low, you go high.’**” —Michelle Obama*

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{ CHAPTER 1 }

The Pickup

Best day ever! Can't wait to meet up with my buddies. My wish is about to come true.

Last night, after the fifth and sixth-grade spring band and chorus concert, my buddies and I decided to form a band. I've wanted to do this since third grade. Almost all of us play instruments, and we know we can sing, so we made a plan to meet on the school grounds today to try out our voices together.

That was where I was headed now—once we've picked up Ace. Mom agreed to drive him

because he still has a cast on his ankle from falling into a hole last week.

Ace has been my friend since kindergarten. Since my name is Justin Jon, Ace nicknamed me “J.J.” I like it when he calls me J.J. It means we are buddies! Since I don’t have any brothers, I make-believe he’s one of mine.

He’s always loved coming to my house for home-cooked Chinese food, and I love playing ball in his backyard. There’s a huge empty lot behind his house, and no one bothers us there. Sometimes we get kids together for football, baseball, or kickball. I still remember back in third grade when he started hitting baseballs out of the lot, making touchdowns, and tagging people out in kickball. We’d always yell, “You aced that one, Aaron!” That’s his real name—Aaron. But because he’s so athletic, we call him Ace.

“Justin, Aaron is not outside waiting,” Mom said as we pulled up to his house. “Please go ring his bell.”

Mom never liked to honk her horn 'cause she didn't want to disturb the neighbors.

I headed up Ace's walk, excited to get to the playground and start singing. Then I heard it: yelling from inside. Through the screen door, I saw Ace's brother, Billy.

"Damn, Aaron, can't you do anything?" Billy screamed. "Just because you have a broken ankle doesn't mean I have to do all your chores. You're so useless!"

I jumped! Something crashed to the floor inside their house. *What was going on in there?* My heart pounded. I didn't want Ace to get hurt again!

"It's all your fault, you little turd!" Billy shouted. "You and that stupid broken ankle! Did you actually slip into a hole on the playground playing tag? How lame is that? Don't forget to look where you're going *today*, dummy. I don't want to have to pick up any slack for you if you go off and break your *other* ankle."



From the door, I watched as Billy laughed and got in Ace's face, poking him in the chest.

Billy made my skin crawl. He was such a bully. I wished someone would put a stop to how he treated Ace, but that seemed like a grown-up problem. *What could I do?*

Suddenly, Billy turned and walked toward me. I stepped back. When I visited Ace, I tried to steer clear of Billy, but it wasn't always easy. With Ace's mom at work or sleeping late some mornings, Billy was sort of in charge. That was a big reason Ace was usually late for school.

Taking a deep breath, I knocked on the door.

"Hey, Aaron, your little friend is here!" Billy called out. "Let yourself in, Little J!"

I hated being called "Little J," but no way did I have the guts to tell Billy that.

Through the screen door, I saw Ace hobbling toward me on his crutches. "I'll be right out, J.J.," he said.

Today, I could tell he was feeling extra quiet from the soft sound of his voice.

I turned around and headed back to the car. Then I heard the screen door slam, with Billy still yelling in the background.

Mom rolled down a window. "Good morning, Aaron," she said. "How are you feeling today?"

“Hi, Mrs. Chang,” Ace said quietly. “I’m okay. Thanks for picking me up.”

“I’m happy to help you, Aaron,” Mom said as Ace slid inside. “How are your mom and dad?”

“They’re okay,” Ace said. “My dad is in South Africa and won’t be home until next Saturday. Mom is probably getting up soon to drive Billy to work so she can use the car to do the food shopping. Then she’ll go to the hospital for work.”

“Boy, your dad really gets to see the world,” my mom said. “I’ll bet he comes home with great stories about the places he’s been.”

Ace shrugged. “Most of the time Dad’s too tired from traveling to talk about what he did. But he does take some cool pictures. Mom says she wishes he’d travel less. She doesn’t like being home with just Billy and me.”

I nodded. I wouldn’t want to be alone with Billy, either. I’ve seen him in action, and it’s not just Ace he’s mean to. He fights with his mom a lot, too.

“Okay, here we are, guys,” Mom said. “Have fun. And Justin, don’t forget we have that appointment this afternoon. Call me when you’re done. If you’re still here when it’s time, I’ll come get you.”

Ace and I walked toward the back of the school. We saw Annie, Tara, and Lexi by the giant concrete barrels at the playground as we got closer.

It’s sad to think that just last week, we were still bullying Annie. We used to call her “Carrot Top.” Not anymore, though!

She has become a hero in our crowd. After Ace’s accident, we found out that she’s actually a great leader—not to mention talented and funny. Annie taught us to be calm in a stressful situation. *I wonder where she got those skills?*

It turned out that Annie is really cool. She hasn’t had it easy, though. Not only did her dad die in a car accident, but her mom was badly injured. Now Annie has to help at home a lot. The more I learn about her, the cooler I realize she is. Now, we’re buddies!

“Hi, Ace!” Annie yelled. “Hi, Justin!”

“Hey, Annie!” I said. “Ready to test out our sound?”

Annie nodded. She, Lexi, Tara, and I ducked into a barrel. Ace leaned against it.

“Okay, Annie, what song should we start with?” Tara asked.



{ CHAPTER 2 }

The Intruder

We sang for a while, testing out different harmonies. It was cool the way our voices echoed in the barrel. Personally, I thought we sounded great! We were about to start a new song when we heard a voice outside the barrel.

“Hey, Ace, what are you up to?”

“Hey, Noah,” Ace said.

Noah is in Ms. Ashton’s sixth-grade class. He’s also in chorus with us. I could tell from the sound of Ace’s voice that he wasn’t so happy to see him.

“What are you guys up to here with Gimpy?” Noah said.

“Just jamming with some songs,” Ace said. “Ignore him, guys. How about we do ‘Happy’ by Pharrell Williams? We can break up the verses, then sing the chorus together.”

“What will you do?” Noah asked.

“I’ve got my harmonica,” Ace said. “I’ll play along and sing when I can. I’m mostly here to learn the songs so I can join in later.”

“Want to play around with it now?” Annie asked.

“Great idea, Annie,” Ace said.

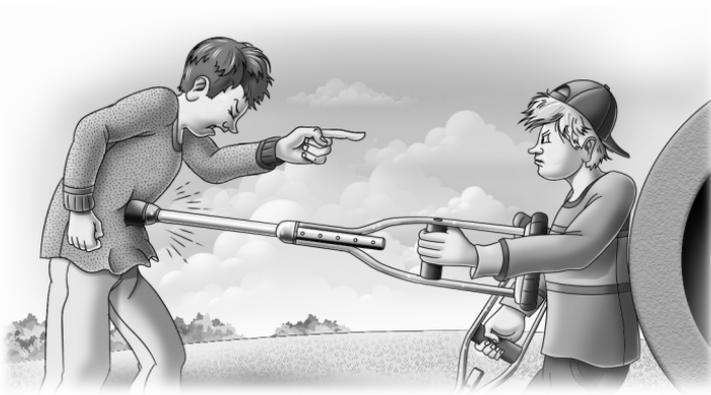
Lexi, Tara, and I yelled out, “Yes!”

“So, Gimpy,” Noah said to Ace as we warmed up, “how’s your pinhead brother? He is such a jerk. My brother told me your brother, Billy, was suspended from school last week. What’s wrong with him, anyway? He’s always in trouble.”

Billy goes to high school with Noah’s brother, Pat, and from what I’ve heard, they do not get along.

“Why don’t you mind your own business, turd?” Ace said.

I scrambled out of the barrel. Ace has a temper, and I didn't want him to do anything he'd regret. Sure enough, Noah and Ace were nose to nose, with Noah poking his finger at Ace's chest.



Pow! Ace slammed a crutch into Noah's stomach.

Noah fell to the ground, and Ace toppled over him. I ran over to Ace and helped him up.

“What's going on?” Tara shouted out as she, Lexi, and Annie climbed out of the barrel.

Noah was in pain, but he stood and ran at Ace. I jumped in front of him. I don't know where I found the courage, but when it comes

to my buddy Ace being bullied, I guess I just react without thinking. *What else could I have done?*

“Stop right there!” I screamed.

“Oh, good. Here comes the shrimp,” Noah said, smirking. “What are you going to do, cry?”

“How about you just leave now,” I said. “You’ve done nothing but cause trouble.”

“Who’s going to make me? You, pipsqueak?” Noah said with a laugh.

“How about we all chill out now?” Annie said in a firm voice. “We have had enough injuries in the last week. Besides, we came here to sing. This is just a waste of time.”

She turned to Noah—and stunned all of us.

“Want to join our band, Noah, instead of fighting?” she asked. “First, though, I think an apology to Aaron would be a good way to clear this all up.”

I wondered why she invited Noah to join us after all that fuss. But Annie always seems to

know how to calm stressful situations. And having Noah join our band might be good. I knew Ace wouldn't be thrilled about it, but Noah does have a terrific voice and slams it on guitar.

Ace looked at Annie with daggers in his eyes.

Noah glared at Ace, then walked away.

"You okay, Ace?" I asked. "Still want to fool around with some songs?"

"I'm okay," he said. "Noah has always been a pain. He has no right talking about my brother the way he does."

"You're right," Lexi said. "Your brother's business is no one else's."

"Noah does have a great voice, though," Lexi said, fluttering her eyelashes and smiling.

"That he does," Tara admitted with a big smile.

What's wrong with them? I wondered. Why do girls like older guys so much? And why Noah? What makes him so cool? Ugh, girls!

“I can’t stand being around him,” Ace said. “If you want Noah in the band, I’m out.”

“You’ve got to stay in the band,” Annie said. “We don’t want someone in the band who will be a problem, so let’s just get back to jamming.”

We all nodded.

The four of us got back in the barrel and began trying harmonies while Ace listened outside.

“How do we sound out there?” Annie asked him.

“Before that pest came along, you sounded terrific,” he said. “Your voices really echoed in there. Maybe next time we can record it.”

“YES!” we all shouted.

As we climbed out of the barrel, we saw Noah heading back toward us. All eyes turned to Ace.

“Oh, no. What does Noah want now?” Ace said. “Tell him to leave, or I’m out of here.”

“Come on, Ace,” Annie said. “Maybe we should hear what he has to say.”

Noah drew closer, stopped, and looked intensely at each of us, one at a time.

This was not going to be good. I could feel it in my bones.

“Okay, so... I want to apologize for being a jerk,” Noah said. “I need to mind my own business, Aaron. I’ve been told that I often say what is in my head without thinking before I speak. I’m sorry for calling your brother names. I hope you can forgive me.”

I could hardly believe this. Noah *apologizing*? I was shocked, but relieved.

“Justin,” Noah said. “I don’t think you’re a twerp. Last year, you and I worked on a really cool art project together, and our piece is hanging in the school entrance. We had a blast working on it, and you’re a talented artist and musician. If anyone’s a twerp, it’s me for acting the way I did.”

I'd never heard Noah talk so politely. I think we were all in a bit of shock.

"This apology is really to all of you," he said. "When I was walking away before, I realized I was jealous. I was standing near Justin after the concert last night. I heard you decide to meet here, and I was upset at not being included. I should have just asked then or called Justin to see if I could be part of your band. It's something I've wanted to do for a while. I figured you wouldn't think I was good enough."

Annie, Lexi, and Tara looked at Ace. His face was a deep shade of pink.

"I hope you will forgive me and let me join the band," Noah said.

Ace looked at us. He shrugged and said, "Whatever they want to do."

"It's really up to Ace and Justin," Annie said. "How about giving us a chance to discuss it, Noah, and we'll get back to you?"

Noah nodded and started to walk away.

“Wait,” Ace called. “I’ve been a bully to other kids at school, too. I bullied Annie for several years. So did Tara, Lexi, and Jus. It took me being in an accident to realize I had been bullying someone I really didn’t know very well. It turns out she is a terrific person.

“I’m not perfect, either,” Ace continued. “So, I forgive you, Noe... Is it okay if we call you Noe?”

I smiled at Ace. I knew his description of all of us was right. I also understood that a nickname would make Noah feel part of our group. Besides, as my dad always says, “Keep your friends close and your enemies closer.” Dad has an expression for everything. Something about this one makes sense.

Annie looked at Ace and said, “What is a Noe?”

Everyone laughed, even Noah. He was a good sport, after all.

“Yep, looks like you’re in our band, Noe,” Ace said with a smile.

Noah reached out a hand to Ace with a half-smile. Ace reached back and they shook hands.

“Peace?” asked Noah.

“Yeah, Noe, okay,” Ace said. “Just leave your comments about my brother out of our rehearsals.”

“You got it, Ace,” Noah said. “That ends now!”

“Hey, have you all decided on the first song?” he said, looking around. “I can learn the words and guitar part.”

“Do you know ‘Happy’?” Lexi asked with a twinkle in her eye.

“I know of it. But sure, I’ll grab the lyrics and listen to it tonight!” Noah said with a smile.

“That’s great, Noe!” Lexi said.

Yep, Lexi was thrilled to have Noah in the band.

“I can’t wait till we get the instruments into the song,” Lexi said. “Where can we rehearse?”

“I’ll ask my mom if we can do it at our house,” I said. “Dad lets me set up my drums in

the garage behind the house, so they don't have to hear me banging away. We can have some privacy. I'll check and get back to all of you."

"Great!" Annie said, giving her trademark Grand Canyon smile. "The only problem for me is that I won't have a ride to J.J.'s house if it is raining. Also, sometimes I have to do stuff at home and need to know ahead of time when you want to practice."

"My mom can probably pick you up, Annie," Tara said. "She's home on Saturdays."

Everyone agreed to practice the song on their instruments before rehearsal next week.

"That should work," said Ace. "I have a travel keyboard I can bring, so long as I have a ride to your house."

"Hey, Annie," he said. "Why don't you be the lead singer since you're not playing an instrument?"

That one got an enthusiastic "Yes!" from the whole group.

“How about a week from today at 2 p.m. for a couple of hours?” I said. “Let’s all check with our parents and see if we can set this up.”

“So, Gimpy, are you coming next week, too?” Noe asked with a smile.

“Yep, I’ll be there,” Ace said.

This time, Ace knew that Noah was just kidding around.

“You know,” Annie said, “teasing is cool if it’s for fun. I always tell friends something is up with me if I don’t tease you a little. My mom and dad always used to tease each other. I could tell by the sound of their voices they were joking around. Let’s promise each other not to be mean.”

Noah nodded. “I promise.”

Just then, my phone buzzed in my pocket.

“Ugh, I gotta go,” I said. “My mom made an eye doctor appointment for me. She’s headed here now. See you all on Monday. I’ll let you know if we can practice at my house next Saturday.”

As Ace and I walked up to meet my mom, I wondered if this was all going to work out with Noah. His apology *did* seem genuine. All in all, I had a feeling we were gonna make some great music together.



{ CHAPTER 3 }

Four Eyes

UGH! Over the weekend, I found out I have a weak muscle in one of my eyes and I'm farsighted, so now I have to wear glasses all day. *How unfair is that!*

"Mom, do I *really* have to wear these glasses all day at school?" I whined as I entered the kitchen for breakfast.

"Good morning to you, too, Justin," Mom said. "I know you're not happy about this, but the eye doctor gave you strict instructions. Dad wears glasses all day and he's fine. You will get accustomed to them, too. Now eat your breakfast."

I sat down but barely ate. Mostly I just pushed food around the plate. Then I went back to my room to get dressed. I looked in the mirror without my glasses while combing my hair.

Okay, so it's a bit blurry.

Sighing, I put on the glasses and looked again. There I was, clear as day. My eyes look magnified. UGH! It was bad enough that I was short for my age, now this! I could almost hear the insults. *Shorty with four eyes.*

Maybe I could make-believe I was sick and not have to go today. It was worth a try.

I walked downstairs, bent over with my head low.

“I feel awful, Mom,” I said. “My stomach is killing me. I just want to go back to bed.”

“Let me feel your head,” she said. “You don't feel warm. Did you use the bathroom this morning?”

“Yeah, I did. But I don't feel okay. My stomach keeps getting tight,” I said softly.

“Hmm,” Mom said. “Okay, go back upstairs, but don’t change your clothes. I’ll have Dad come up and look at you.”

I went back to my room to lie down. A few minutes later, Dad came in.

“Hey, buddy, Mom tells me you’re not feeling well,” he said. “What’s going on?”

“I have a stomachache, Dad. I need to stay home,” I muttered.

I looked up at my dad, hopeful he’d buy it, but I doubted he would. My dad happens to be a pediatrician—and a good one, at that.

“I can take your temperature and check out your throat,” he said. “Did you go to the bathroom this morning? Or is there something bothering you that you’re not telling me?”

Yup, when you have a dad who is a pediatrician, there’s no faking anything. As soon as I looked at him, tears welled up in my eyes.

“I just can’t go to school wearing these glasses all day,” I sobbed.

“I understand that you’re not comfortable, son,” Dad said. “But you *are* going to school. I had to wear glasses the whole time I was growing up, and I still do. Without them, I would not have been able to become a doctor to help children. Now *that* would have been a shame.

“You have so many talents that glasses will help with,” he continued. “How will you draw those amazing comics and whimsical characters? You love to read. How will you understand the comics you love so much? Don’t you have to read the words for songs in chorus and the music for the band?”

Dad paused and then added, “Think of it this way... four eyes are better than two. Do the math!”

Dad always cracks jokes—corny ones! I thought about it for a moment and held back my laugh. I wasn’t in the mood for a joke, but it *was* sort of funny.

“You’re right, Dad,” I whispered. “I never thought of it that way.” Then I smiled and hugged him.

“See you later!” I yelled out to my parents as I ran out to the door to meet up with Tara.

She was waiting outside her house. I knew Tara would be nice about my glasses, but I was still nervous. She would be the first friend to see them.

“Hey, Justin, what took you so long?” Tara said. “We’re gonna be late. You okay?”

“Yeah, thought I had a stomachache this morning. Let’s go.”

Tara nodded. “Glad you’re feeling better,” she said. “If we walk fast, we can get there on time. Cool glasses, by the way.”

I smiled. “Thanks, T!”

Even though I knew Tara wouldn’t say anything mean, it was nice to get her compliment.

I wonder what the other kids at school will say. I hope they're as cool about my glasses as Tara!

At school, the line of kids was already moving inside. Tara and I followed the others. We all waited for our teacher outside the classroom.

“Hey, Justin, when did you get those glasses?” Brittney shouted from the middle of the line.

I looked up, surprised to hear *her* talking to *me*. I've liked Brittney since second grade, but I didn't think she even knew my *name*. I froze for a second. My heart pounded and my thoughts raced.

Oh my god, Brittney is actually talking to me! Talk back. Say something!

“I got them over the weekend, because I was seeing stuff a bit blurry,” I finally managed.

“Well, they're cool,” Brittney said. “And they'll probably help you. My older sister wears

glasses, and she always talks about how much better she can see with them. Plus, you look smarter.”

Then there was silence. I could actually hear my heart pounding in my chest. I liked Brittney, but my brain always seemed to freeze whenever I had a chance to talk to her.

I was thankful Mrs. Lerner came along and opened the classroom door. We headed for our assigned desks.

I put away my jacket and walked to the front of the room with my head low to give Mrs. Lerner a note about my glasses. She looked up and smiled. “Good, Justin,” she said softly. “I know this will help you a lot with all of your subjects.”

On the way back to my seat, Annie said, “Sharp-looking glasses, Justin.”

I smiled. “Thanks, Annie.”

She always had something good to say. But that’s just Annie being Annie.

The morning went by fast, and I had to admit, the glasses helped me get through all of the classwork more quickly. Without squinting, I could read the assignments more easily, which meant I had more free time to draw before lunch and recess.

Mrs. Lerner lets us have free time if we finish our work early, so I pulled out my drawing pad. Some of the kids who sat near me in the class started passing around my drawings. It made me feel good to hear classmates laughing about the humor in my cartoons or complimenting me on how I drew them.

The bell rang for lunch. I was a little nervous about going to the lunchroom with my glasses on, but I hadn't brought lunch from home, so I didn't have a choice.

I was first in line with my class, but somehow I ended up behind a group of older

kids. I lowered my head, hoping none of them would notice my glasses. But it was no use.



A sixth-grade boy named Eric, standing right in front of me, said it loud enough for everyone to hear.

“You know, you’re only supposed to have two eyes,” Eric said. “Know who has more than two eyes? Bugs! You a bug?”

Suddenly, he kicked me. I yelped in pain.

All the sixth graders around him laughed, too.

I was used to Eric calling me mean names in the past, but the kick was a new low.



I limped away, embarrassed. I knew if I stayed, I'd probably cry, which would just get a teacher's attention. I didn't need any more attention.

Even though everyone knew Eric bullied kids, his kick hurt me inside and out. I decided to skip lunch and head to the nurse for some ice.

My leg didn't hurt that bad, but I needed an escape from being embarrassed in front of the other kids, and Miss Lolly's office was a safe place to chill out.

From his spot in the lunch line, Ace saw me limping away and followed on his crutches.

"You okay, J.J.?" he said. "What happened, and where are you going?"

"I bumped into something, Ace. I'm fine," I insisted. "I just need some space. I'll hang out with the nurse until lunch is over. I'm not hungry, anyway."

Ace nodded. "Give me your lunch money. I'll have someone bring you something to eat," he said. "I'll come by after recess and walk back to class with you."

I smiled. Ace knows when to give me space, but I also knew we would talk about it later.

In the nurse's office, Miss Lolly looked up as I hobbled into the room.

"What happened, Justin?" she asked.

“Oh, I just tripped as I was getting into the lunch line,” I said.

Miss Lolly looked at my leg. Then she had me lie down and put ice on it.

I felt weird lying to Miss Lolly. She was always kind whenever I came to her office. But I didn’t want to say anything about Eric. That would only cause other kids to think I was a wimp or a tattletale.

Ace was good to his word, and a few minutes later Annie came by with a sandwich for me.

I thanked her and bit into my sandwich. Any other day it would have been delicious, but today it tasted like cardboard.

By the end of recess, my leg felt better. Outside the nurse’s office, Ace was waiting for me.

“Hey, J.J., you okay?” he asked as we walked in the hallway. “Some kids told me what

happened with you and that kid Eric. I'll tell you, when I am healed from this dumb injury, I'm gonna take care of Eric after school for doing this to you!"

"No, don't bother with that, Ace," I said. "I have to work this out myself. He'll only think I am more of a loser if you try to fight for me."

Ace and I walked into class, and I went to my seat. Everyone stared at me, and I think I blushed, but I tried to ignore them. Now I was short, four eyes, with a limp. *Can things get any worse today?*

"Hey, Justin. You okay?" Brittney asked.

"I'm good," I whispered. *Does she actually care about me?*

SUGGESTED QUESTIONS FOR EACH CHAPTER

Chapter 1 The Pickup

How did you feel during the incident with Ace's brother?

Chapter 2 The Intruder

Have you ever felt left out or jealous of someone? What did you do about it?

How did you feel about Annie's offer to Eric?

Chapter 3 Four Eyes

Why do you think Eric bullied Justin on the lunch line in front of the fifth graders?

Would you have told someone or just left the lunch line, as Justin did?

★ BETTER THAN A BULLY ★
J.J.'s Friendships
& Secrets

..... BOOK #2



ABOUT THE AUTHOR



TINA LEVINE writes prose to inspire readers to be the best versions of themselves. As a classroom teacher and learning specialist for twenty-five years, she has observed children at school being bullied. These experiences, as well as personal ones inspired *Better Than A Bully: J.J.'s Friendships & Secrets*.

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR



NED LEVINE, an award-winning artist, has worked in the publishing, advertising and art licensing fields. He was a special artist and designer for Newsday, a New York newspaper, for forty-six years. Ned joined forces with his wife to create illustrations for *Better Than A Bully: J.J.'s Friendships & Secrets*.

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