



THE BOY WHO NEVER SIT STILL

(Based on a true-to-life story)

by: **ALARICE C. BANASIHAN**

In the quiet, sun-drenched suburb of Los Banos, Urijah lived under a label that felt like a lead weight: the "problem child."

His mother, weary from double shifts and the hollow ache of caring for her own husband as he mourned the loss of his mother, often found her reserve of patience evaporated by the sleepiness.

The house was a place of muted exhaustion, and Urijah, a seven-year-old boy vibrating with unexpressed adrenaline and grief, was left to navigate the maze of his mind alone.

Chapter 1: The Static in His Mind

To Urijah, the second-grade classroom wasn't just a room; it was a thunderstorm suppressed within four walls. And, while other children sat in neat rows, their pencils moving with rhythmic precision, Urijah's mind was a frantic kaleidoscope. His legs bounced like pistons, his fingers tapped out nervous codes on his desk, and his brain—his beautiful, chaotic brain—was always ten steps ahead and a thousand miles away.

And to him, the world felt like a television set stuck on the wrong channel—too much static, too many shifting images, and a volume that was always just a little too loud.

As a second grader, Urijah was a blur of kinetic energy.

His desk was a graveyard of broken pencil tips, shredded erasers, and half-finished drawings of planets, and their moons.

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His teacher, Ms. B, was a woman of infinite patience, but even she still finds it difficult to anchor him at times. The other children knew the rhythm: when Urijah started tapping his feet, a storm was brewing.

When he began to hum under his breath, some crayons were set, soon to fly.

"Urijah, please," Ms. B would say, her eyes kind but weary.

"Let's bring our focus back to the math worksheet."

"It's boring! The numbers are dancing!" Urijah would shout, his body vibrating with the effort to sit still.

He didn't want to be a disruption. It's just he really can't sit still.

He wanted to be like the others, sitting in rows, quiet as stones.

But his brain felt like a browser with fifty tabs open at once, all playing different songs.

"Urijah, focus, please," Ms. B would say again gently.

But focus was a phantom he couldn't catch, still he couldn't just sit still.

When his classmates whispered, it seems he heard them plotting against him.

When they laughed, he knew—*he just knew*—they were laughing at the way he couldn't sit still, or the way he blurted out answers before the question even finished.

One Tuesday morning...

"Stop looking at me!" Urijah shouted, his voice cracking.

He lunged toward a boy named Leo. He smiled at him and tried to offer his hand for a hand shake.

"I know you're laughing! You think I'm stupid, don't you?"

The classroom fell into a horrified silence.

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Ms. B hurried over, placing a steadying hand on his shoulder, but Urijah recoiled as if burned.

The day was spiraling, the static in his head rising to a deafening roar.

But Leo never wanted to fight with Urijah, he just wants them to be friends.

Chapter 2: The Desperate Plea

By the afternoon, the pressure had turned into a physical weight. Urijah stood in the middle of the classroom, his face flushed, his chest heaving.

He was a tall, sturdy boy, towering over his peers, but in that moment, he looked like a shipwrecked sailor.

He hurriedly marched up to Ms. B's desk.

His eyes were wild, shimmering with tears.

"Hit me," he demanded, his voice a jagged whisper.

Ms. B blinked, her heart sinking.

"Urijah, what?" she can't grasp the thought of what this boy who couldn't sit still tries to say.

"Hit me! Spank me!" he screamed, his voice filling the room.

"You have to hurt me! You must make it hurt so bad! He almost choked shouting.

If you don't hurt me, I'm going to hurt *you* until you have no choice!" trying his might to yell at his teacher.

The other children trembled, but Ms. B did not retreat.

Some of his classmates tried to stop him.

"Urijah, you are getting scary by a bit, please stop shouting at Ms. B". Audee, the class president tried to persuade him, but Urijah doesn't seem to give notice.

Ms. B looked at this eight-year-old boy—a boy who was drowning in emotions he didn't have the vocabulary to name.

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She saw the rage, but beneath it, she saw a bottomless, aching void.

"I will never hurt you, Urijah," she said firmly, her voice steady despite the trembling of her soul.

Urijah didn't hesitate. He swung his arm, his larger, stronger frame fueled by a desperate, misplaced fury.

"Urijah," Ms. B said, her voice is just like a steady anchor.

"I am telling you again, I am not going to hurt you. I am here to protect you."

"No!" Urijah lunged, his movements jolting and desperate.

He pushed her hard, his small hands driving against her shoulders with surprising strength.

Ms. B stumbled, her back slamming against the rough surface of the blackboard.

A sickening *thud* and a sharp crack sound. She gasped, a stinging bloom of pain radiating from her shoulder, and on her arm where she had slammed against the edge of the board.

He struck her again, pushing and swinging, trying to force her to be the monster he felt he deserved. But Ms. B didn't fight back. She didn't restrain him in anger; she simply absorbed the blows, her small, fragile frame taking the brunt of his pain, until finally, she caught his wrists.

She pulled him into a fierce, suffocating hug.

Chapter 3: The Broken Heart

Urijah fought for a moment, then collapsed into his teacher's motherly hug.

The sobbing that followed was the sound of a heart shattering.

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The fight drained out of him as suddenly as it had come.

The silence of the room was heavy.

Urijah went limp, and then, the dam broke.

He sobbed—a jagged, painful sound that seemed to come from the very center of his being.

Ms. B held him, rocking him slowly.

"Hush my dear, just let it all out, cry if you must, to let out the pain."

When the feels of the room became a little lighter from the heavy

"Why, Urijah?" she whispered into his hair.

"Why are you doing this today?

Why do you need me to hurt you?"

Urijah gasped for air, his face buried in her shoulder.

"Because... because Grandma is gone," he sobbed.

"And Mom says she's in a place where they call heaven.... If you'd hurt me... if you hurt me enough, maybe I'll get to go where she is. I just want to go home to her. Nobody here understands like she does...and no one tried enough to ask why I'm like this. Nobody sees me." And he begun to sob again.

"I—I just want my Grandma," he choked out, his tears soaking into Ms. B's Tuesday uniform.

"She's gone. They put her in the ground, and she's not coming back!"

"I thought if I was bad enough, maybe I'd get sent away, too. Maybe I'd find her."

The room seemed to stop spinning.

The "bad behavior" wasn't a defiance; it was a manifestation of a grief so vast he couldn't carry it alone.

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He felt like a broken machine in a world of gears that clicked perfectly, and he thought that if he could just break himself, he could stop the noise.

Chapter 4: The Canvas of Memory

Ms. B didn't reach for a punishment sheet or a disciplinary note. Although she should have been, given other circumstances, but choose to be the bigger person that she should be.

She reached for a sketchbook and a set of charcoal pencils.

"Urijah," she said, pulling back to look him in the eyes.

"You don't need to be broken to be with her. And you don't need to be perfect to belong here in our class."

"You are not a machine; you are a boy with a soul that feels more than most people can imagine."

She set the sketchbook between them.

"Your anger is just your love for her looking for a place to express. Let's give it a place."

Urijah hesitated, then took the pencil.

His hand, which just minutes ago had been a weapon, began to move with grace.

He started to draw—not the chaos of the classroom, but the soft, kind face of his grandmother.

He drew the way her kitchen smelled of cinnamon, the way she let him tap his feet on the floor when he was excited.

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As he drew, the static began to quiet.

The pupils begun to go back to their proper seats.

As the day passed by the Grade II Tulips room was never the same again.

The children now understand and love each other more.

Leo and Urijah are now besties.

Children often act out not because they are "bad," but because they are overwhelmed by burdens they cannot articulate. True discipline is not found in the infliction of pain, but in the patience to uncover the hurt beneath the anger.

When we offer empathy instead of retaliation, we give a child the permission to heal. Specially with little kids who have Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), judgement may not be avoided but understanding will always be free to give.

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