

7 to 10
YEARS

STORY
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BUILDING BEAUTIFUL INSIDE

THE BLAME GAME

A Story by Arkedelic





THE BLAME GAME

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THE BLAME GAME

Ryan could trip over air and somehow blame the wind.

“It moved weird,” he said once, after crashing into a chair.

He blamed chewed pencils on mice, spilled ink on leaky pens, and even once insisted that his maths book had changed the answers overnight.

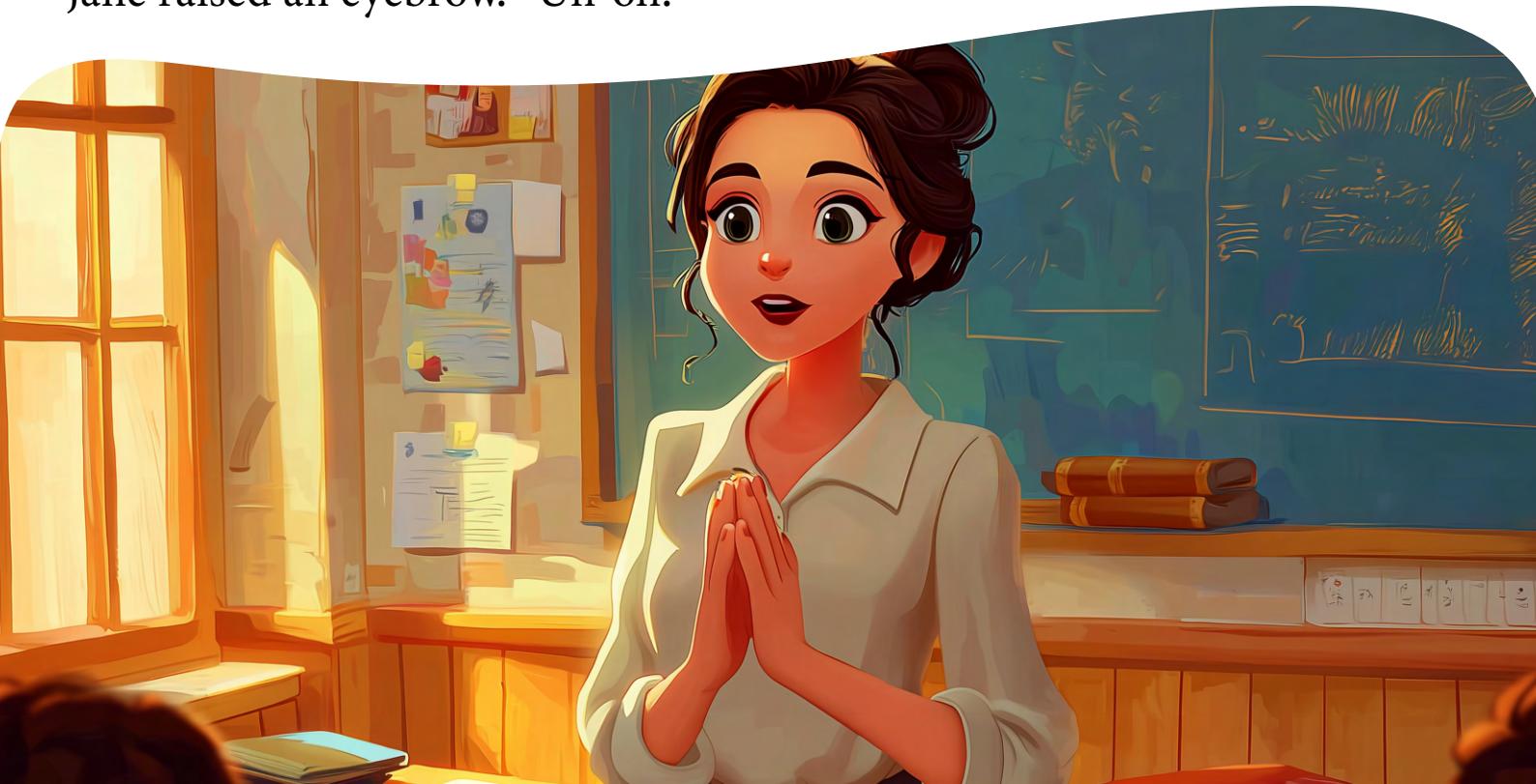
The Sunshine Squad usually just exchanged knowing glances. But this week, things got trickier.

It was time for the big Science Showcase. Students had to form teams of three, come up with a problem, and solve it using any kind of design, experiment, or prototype.

Ms Mehra clapped her hands. “Let’s mix it up! You’ll work with people you haven’t worked with before.”

Danny and Sam were paired with Ryan.

Jane raised an eyebrow. “Uh-oh.”



Their project idea was great — a simple water filter made from sand, gravel, cotton, and a soda bottle. Danny brought the supplies, Sam did the sketches, and Ryan... well, Ryan said he'd "supervise."

On Day 2, the filter collapsed. Cotton everywhere. Muddy water all over the table.

"You tilted it!" Ryan snapped at Danny.

Danny blinked. "No I didn't—"

"Yes, you did! I saw you!"

"You were the one pouring the water!" Sam pointed out.

"Only because Danny forgot the dropper!"

"I wasn't even in charge of the dropper," Danny muttered.



Ryan huffed and marched off to sulk under the window.

The next day, Sam brought a fresh bottle. They rebuilt. Things were looking up — until the whole structure started leaning again.

"Someone's been touching it!" Ryan declared. "Probably Max. He was sniffing around yesterday."

Max, sitting two tables away, dropped his sandwich in surprise. "I wasn't even here!"

Jane narrowed her eyes. "You're blaming Max now?"

Ryan folded his arms. "Well something happened. It wasn't me."

That evening, Ms Mehra gently asked Ryan to stay back.

"I've noticed you're quick to point fingers," she said kindly. "But in science, and in life, we fix things by looking clearly at what went wrong. Not just at who to blame."

Ryan looked away.

"Sometimes," she continued, "we all mess up. That doesn't make us bad. It makes us human. But blaming others doesn't help a team. Owning our part does."

Ryan mumbled, "But they all think I mess everything up."

"They don't," she said. "But when you blame, they stop trusting."

The next morning, the Squad arrived early. So did Ryan.

He stood there awkwardly holding a laminated chart of their design.

"I reprinted the plan," he said to Danny and Sam. "There was a gap in the middle layer — I didn't pack the cotton tight enough. That's why it collapsed. I'm sorry."

Danny blinked.

Sam raised an eyebrow.

"And... I blamed you guys. I do that a lot, huh?"

Sam gave a small smile. "Yeah. You kinda do."

Ryan nodded. "I'm working on it."

The project finally came together.

The filter worked. Clear water. Clean layers. Strong structure.





And when Ms Mehra announced that their team had earned a special mention for “Creative Recovery,” Ryan didn’t shout “I told you so!” or grab the mic.

He just whispered, “Thanks for not quitting on me.”

Danny grinned. “That’s what teammates are for.”

Later that day, someone knocked over the classroom dustbin.

Everyone turned.

Ryan froze.

Then slowly, he raised his hand.

“Okay... that one was me.”

Max burst out laughing. “Wow. A confession.”

Ryan grinned. “First time for everything.”

THE END



THE MIRROR MOMENT CHALLENGE

What you need:

- A small box or container (shoe box, tin, or jar)
- Paper and pen or pencil
- Small items that remind you of a loved one (could be a leaf, a button, a ticket stub, a photo, or anything meaningful)

HOW TO DO:

- 1 Sit somewhere comfortable and hold the mirror. Look at your reflection for a few seconds. This is the face that faces the world every day.
- 2 Think about a recent moment when something went wrong — a group task, a small accident, or even a disagreement.
- 3 On your paper, draw a quick “mirror” shape and write inside it what you could have done differently in that moment.
- 4 Now, outside the mirror, write one way you made things better or could make them better next time.

ACTIVITY

- 5 If you're doing this with friends or family, take turns sharing one "mirror moment" each — no blame, just learning.

Reflection/Purpose: This activity turns reflection into a literal experience, helping children see that owning mistakes doesn't make them smaller; it makes them wiser. By naming what they could have done differently, they learn that self-honesty is the real superpower behind growth, teamwork, and trust.

FIVE FASCINATING FACTS ABOUT OWNING UP — WHEN ADMITTING MISTAKES CHANGED HISTORY



1. ABRAHAM LINCOLN'S LETTER OF REGRET

After harshly criticising one of his generals during the American Civil War, Lincoln wrote a letter admitting he might have been unfair. He never sent it, but historians say this moment of humility helped shape his leadership style, teaching him patience and empathy in decision-making.

2. THE TYLENOL RECALL THAT SET A NEW STANDARD

In 1982, when tampered Tylenol capsules caused deaths in the U.S., Johnson & Johnson's CEO immediately recalled 31 million bottles, accepting full responsibility even before knowing who was to blame. The company's transparency rebuilt public trust and forever changed global safety standards in medicine.

3. THE NASA APOLLO 13 CREW AND ENGINEERS

When a critical oxygen tank exploded mid-space, the NASA team didn't hide the failure. They immediately admitted the fault, worked transparently, and turned the crisis into a global story of teamwork and ingenuity. Their honesty and calm problem-solving brought the astronauts safely home.

4. JAPAN'S RAILWAY APOLOGY

In 2017, a Japanese train company made international news — not for being late, but for departing 20 seconds early. The company publicly apologised, admitting the mistake and promising to prevent future inconvenience. The act, though small, became a symbol of integrity and respect in service.



Image Courtesy: Midjourney

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5. ALBERT EINSTEIN'S "BIGGEST BLUNDER"

Einstein once added something called the cosmological constant to his equations, thinking the universe was static. When scientists later discovered it was actually expanding, he publicly called it his "greatest blunder." Ironically, modern cosmology later revived his idea, proving that even admitted mistakes can hold hidden truth.

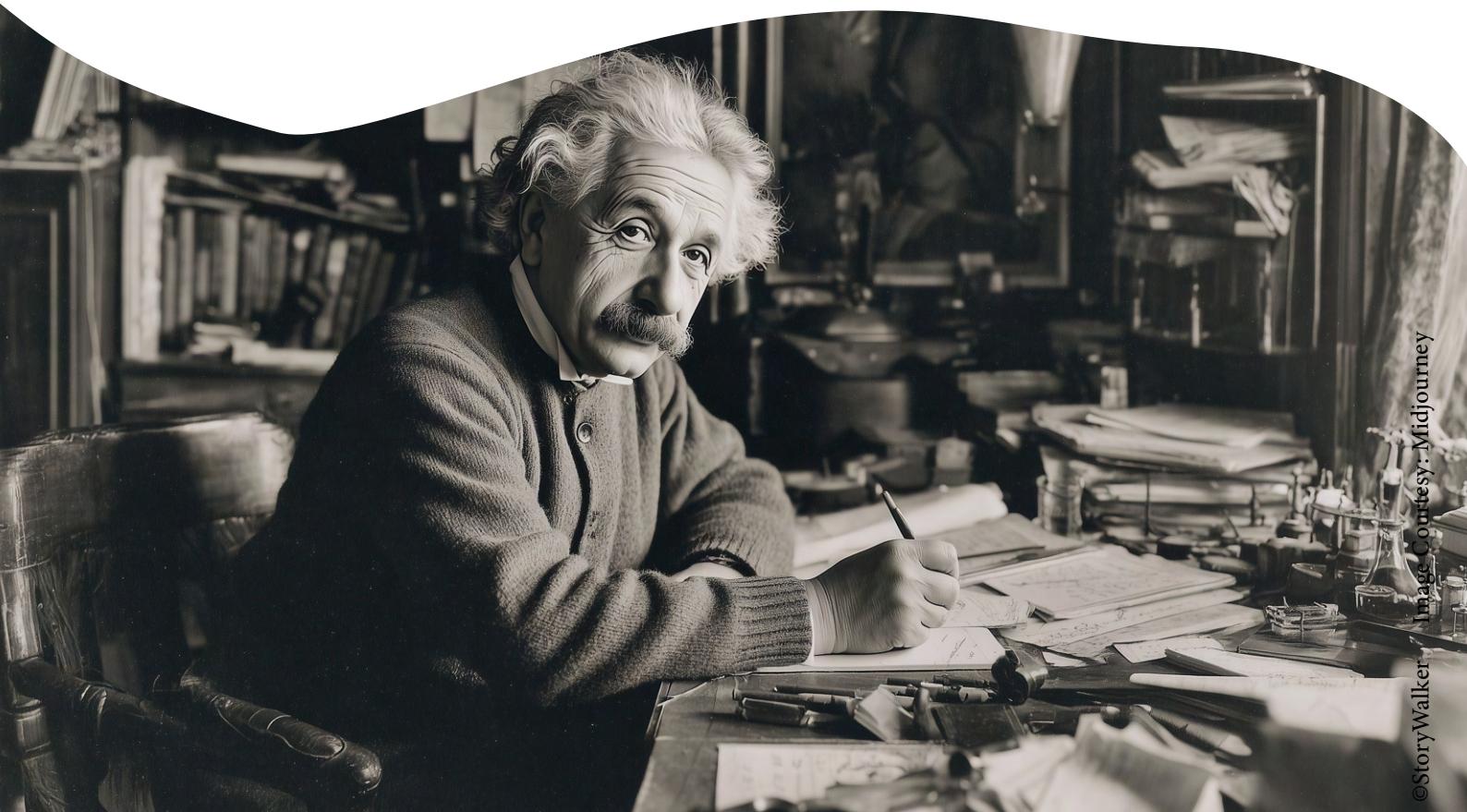


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THE MISSING MARBLE MYSTERY

The classroom buzzed with excitement. It was finally time for the big marble run challenge — a maze of tubes, cardboard tunnels, and ramps that had taken three days to build.

“Careful,” said Hana, steadying the final tower. “If this one falls, we start over.”

Liam rolled his eyes. “Relax, I’ve got it.” But as he reached for the glue gun, his elbow brushed the base — and crash! The tower leaned, wobbled, and collapsed like a stack of dominos.

The marbles scattered everywhere.

“It wasn’t me!” Liam shouted instantly. “Someone pushed my arm!”

Hana frowned. “No one was near you.”

“Then the table moved!” he insisted.

Everyone fell silent. Even the teacher just sighed. “Let’s take five minutes, everyone.”

While the others swept up bits of cardboard, Liam sat at the edge of the room, kicking at the floor. The truth was swirling inside him like a marble he couldn’t catch.

He looked at the half-broken maze. The tubes still glimmered with effort and teamwork. He remembered how proud everyone had been just ten minutes ago.

And then...



COMPLETE THE STORY

- What did Liam decide to do next?
- Did he admit what really happened, or stay quiet?
- How did Hana and the others react if he told the truth?
- What could the class do together to fix the maze?
- How might this moment change how Liam feels about being honest in the future?

Your turn to finish the story

See you next Monday with another interesting story!

Got feedback or a suggestion? We would love to hear it!
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