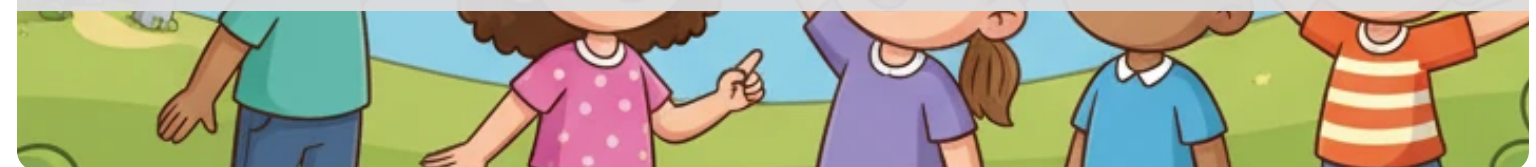


Leo's Bright Spark



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Wasso Najo





Leo sat at his desk, his shoulders slumped as his teacher announced the test results. A single tear welled in his eye, reflecting the bright classroom lights, as he knew he had placed last again. Around him, some classmates giggled softly, while others, focused and unaware, simply moved on to the next task.



Across the room, a group of students worked effortlessly, their tidy desks adorned with sleek, glowing tablets. Tutors quietly guided them through complex problems, their faces bright with understanding. Their surroundings were pristine, a stark contrast to Leo's worn textbooks.



The evening air was cool as Leo walked home, his backpack feeling heavy on his small back. A lone streetlight flickered above him, casting long, dancing shadows that seemed to mirror his exhaustion. Each step felt like a monumental effort after a long day.



The next morning, the teacher's kind but firm voice filled the classroom, asking about unfinished homework. A close-up showed Leo's face, eyes downcast and silent, unable to meet her gaze. The weight of his uncompleted work pressed down on him.



Later that night, the teacher, cloaked in shadow, followed a hunch down a bustling street. She spotted Leo, not at home, but diligently working. The vibrant glow of a food stall illuminated his small, determined figure.



Leo was busy wiping down a table, his small hands moving quickly and efficiently. His mother, her face etched with warmth and love, cooked delicious food behind him, steam rising in the dim, cozy light. It was clear this was their family's livelihood.



The following morning, Leo returned home to a wonderful surprise. On his small, simple desk, a brand new stack of colorful books and a bright, shining desk lamp awaited him. His eyes widened with surprise, then filled with a hopeful, joyful spark.



Months later... Leo
finished **FIRST** IN CLASS!

Months later, the classroom buzzed with excitement as the teacher read out the top test score. Leo stood tall, a confident smile beaming across his face, holding a perfectly graded paper. His classmates looked on, utterly shocked, as Leo had finished first in class!