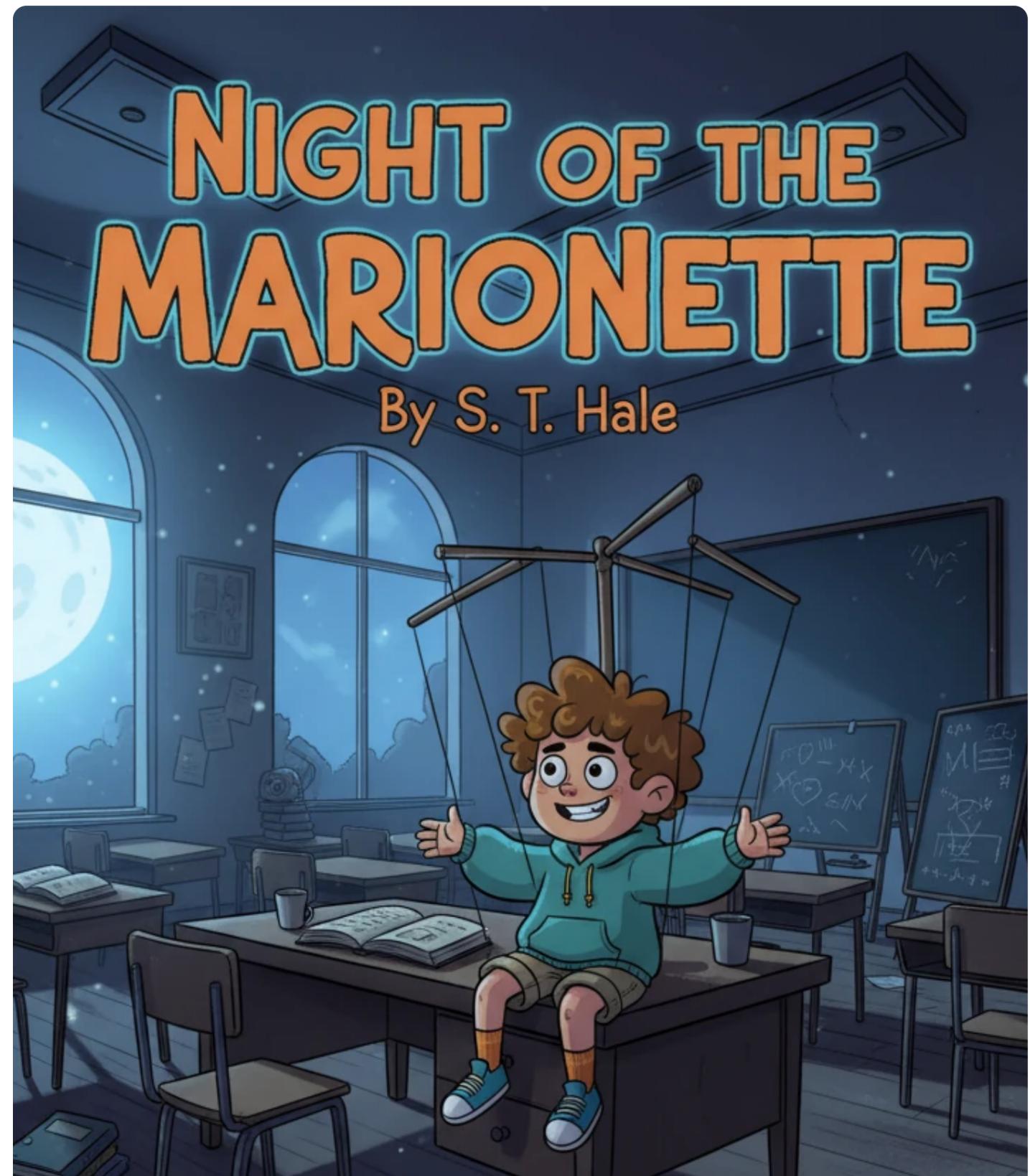


# NIGHT OF THE MARIONETTE

By S. T. Hale



Leo and the Impossible Equation

Ferhat Alicioğlu

He's just hanging around...



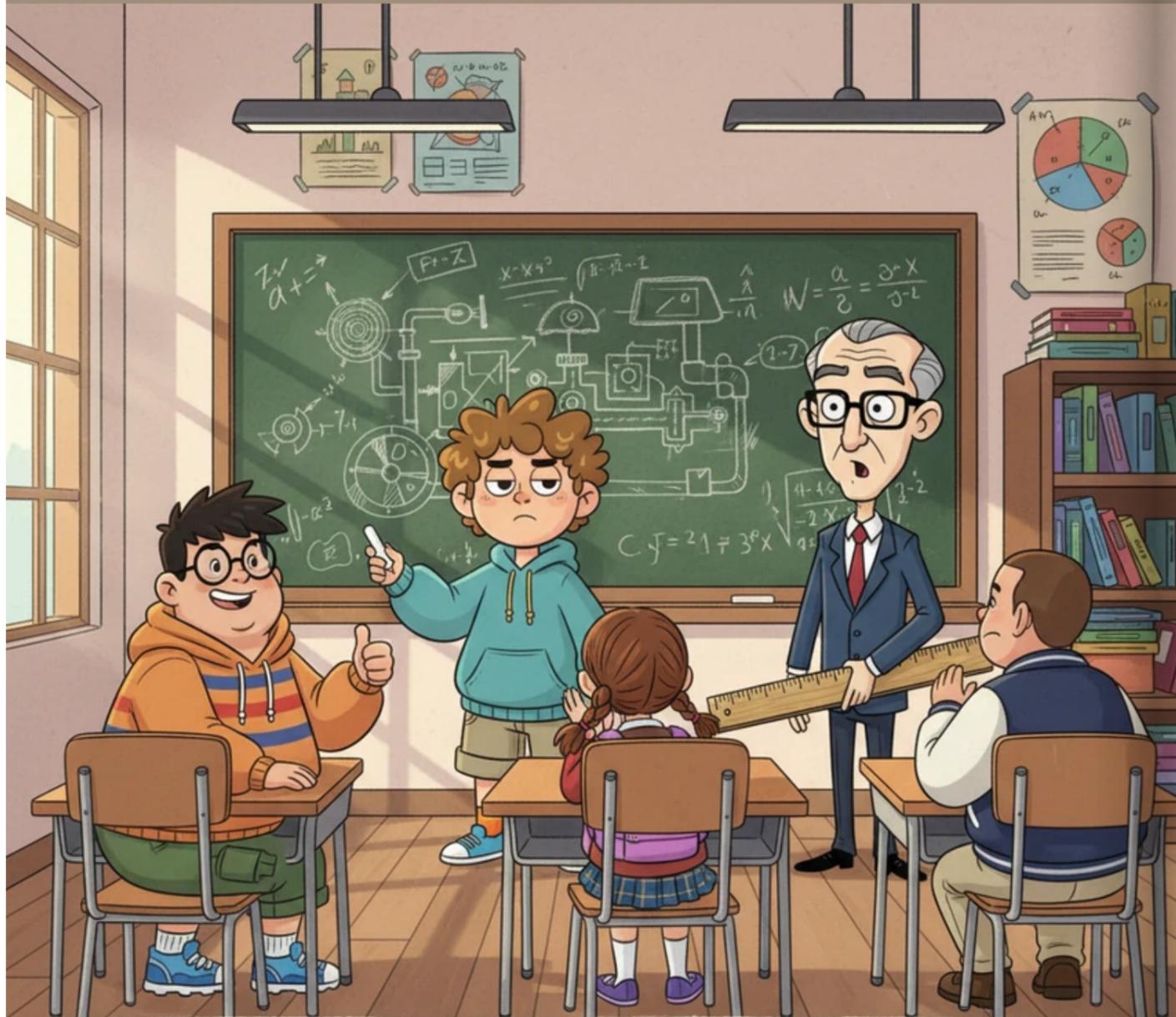
The morning sun shines through the large windows of Room 4B, where the air is thick with the scent of crayons and old paper. Most students are fidgeting in their seats, anxiously waiting for the final bell of the day to ring.



Suddenly, the heavy door swings open and Mr. Stern marches in, his eyebrows pulled into a sharp V and a giant wooden ruler tucked under his arm. The room falls into a deathly silence as he approaches the front of the class without saying a single word.

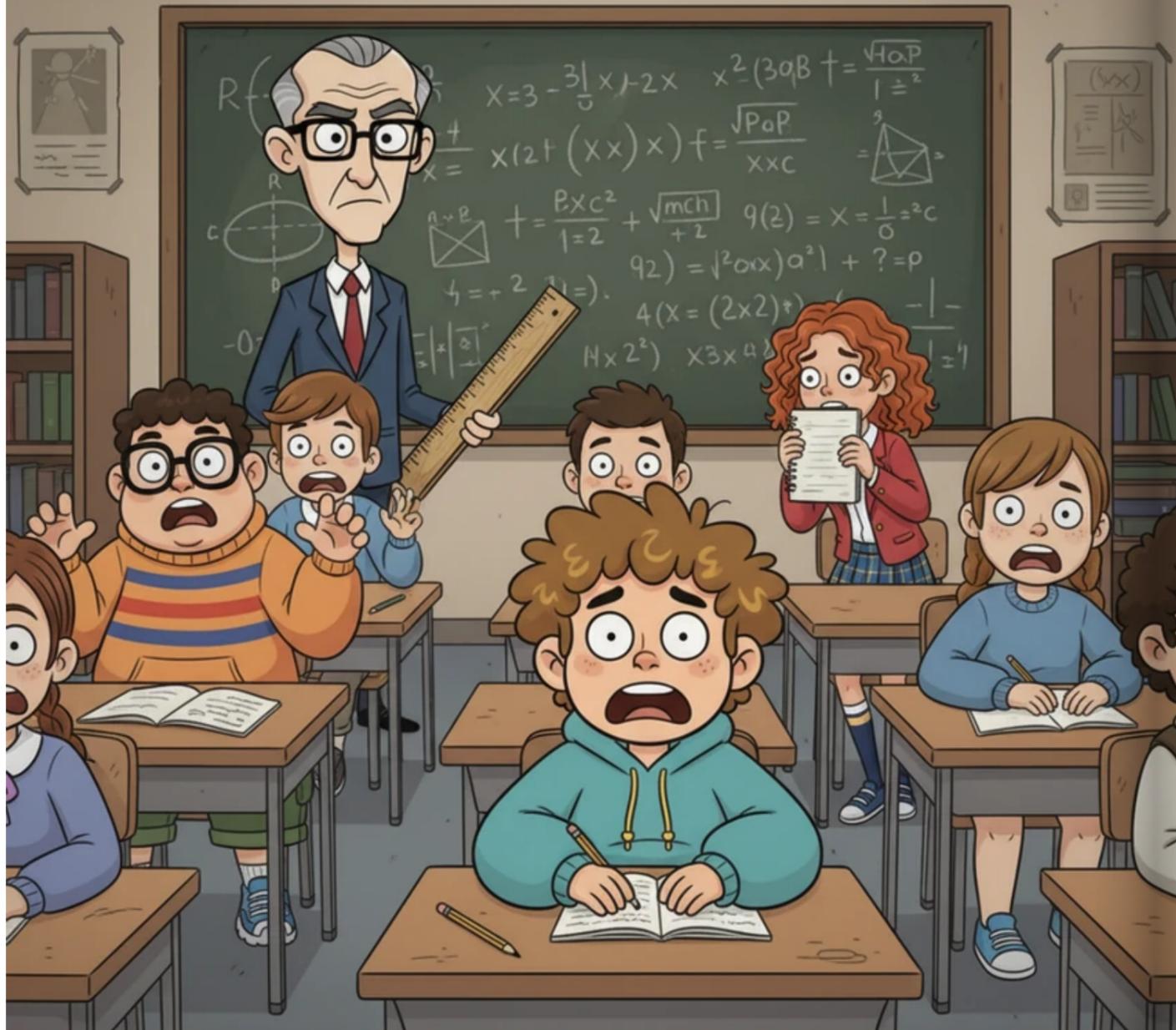


Mr. Stern picks up a fresh piece of white chalk and begins to write with such force that the board trembles. Each stroke sounds like a tiny explosion, echoing against the quiet walls of the nervous classroom.

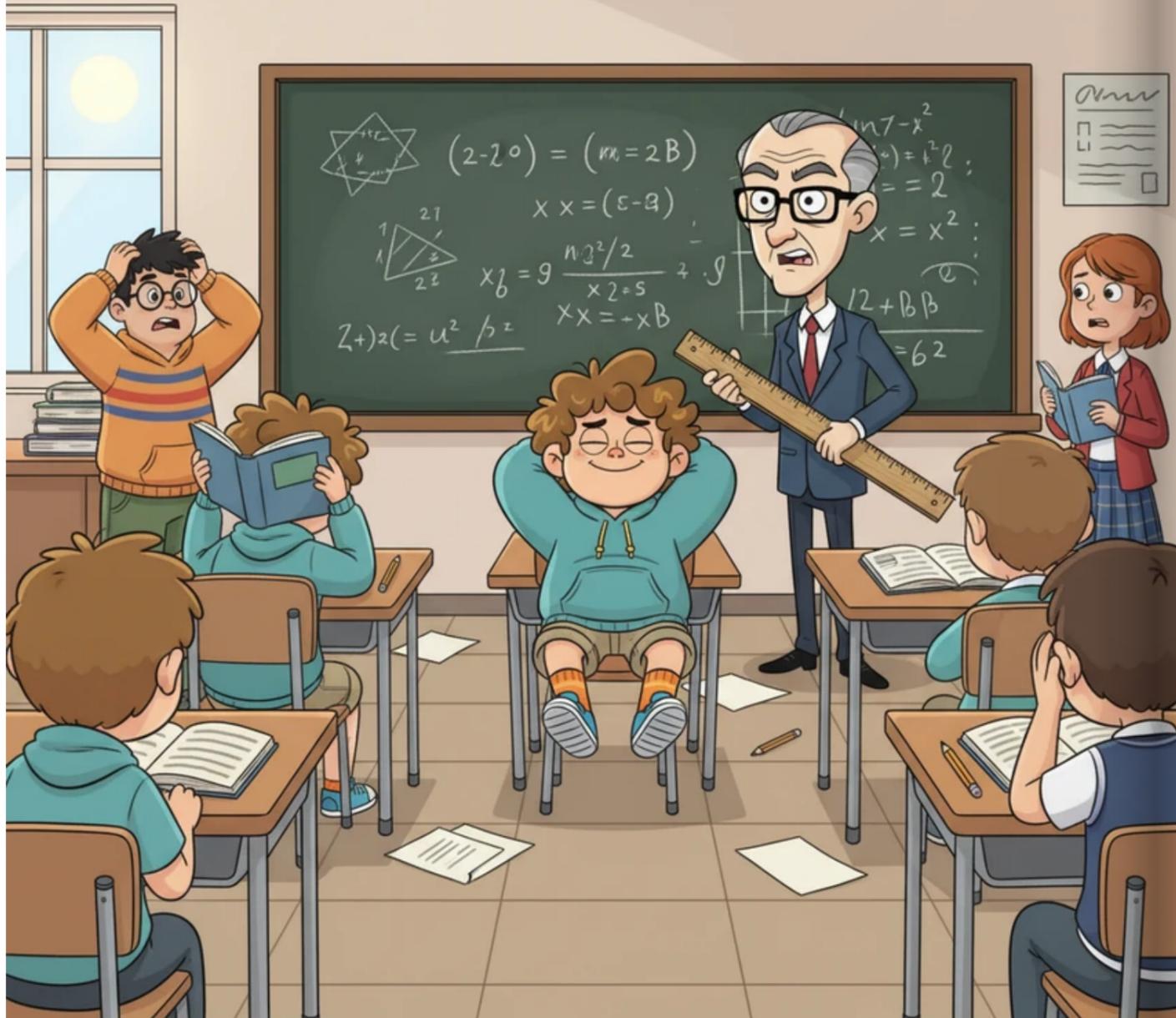


## THE BIG PRESENTATION

He finishes with a dramatic flourish, revealing a math problem so complex it looks like a secret alien code. The equation stretches from the top left corner all the way down to the bottom right, leaving no space for an answer.



The students stare at the board in absolute horror, their faces turning pale as they realize nobody knows where to even start. Toby drops his pencil in shock, and Maya hides behind her notebook, hoping the teacher won't notice her.



In the middle of the chaos, Leo sits with his chair tilted back on two legs, looking perfectly at peace. He has his hands behind his head and a sleepy grin on his face, completely unbothered by the academic nightmare on the board.



## CLASSROOM CHAOS

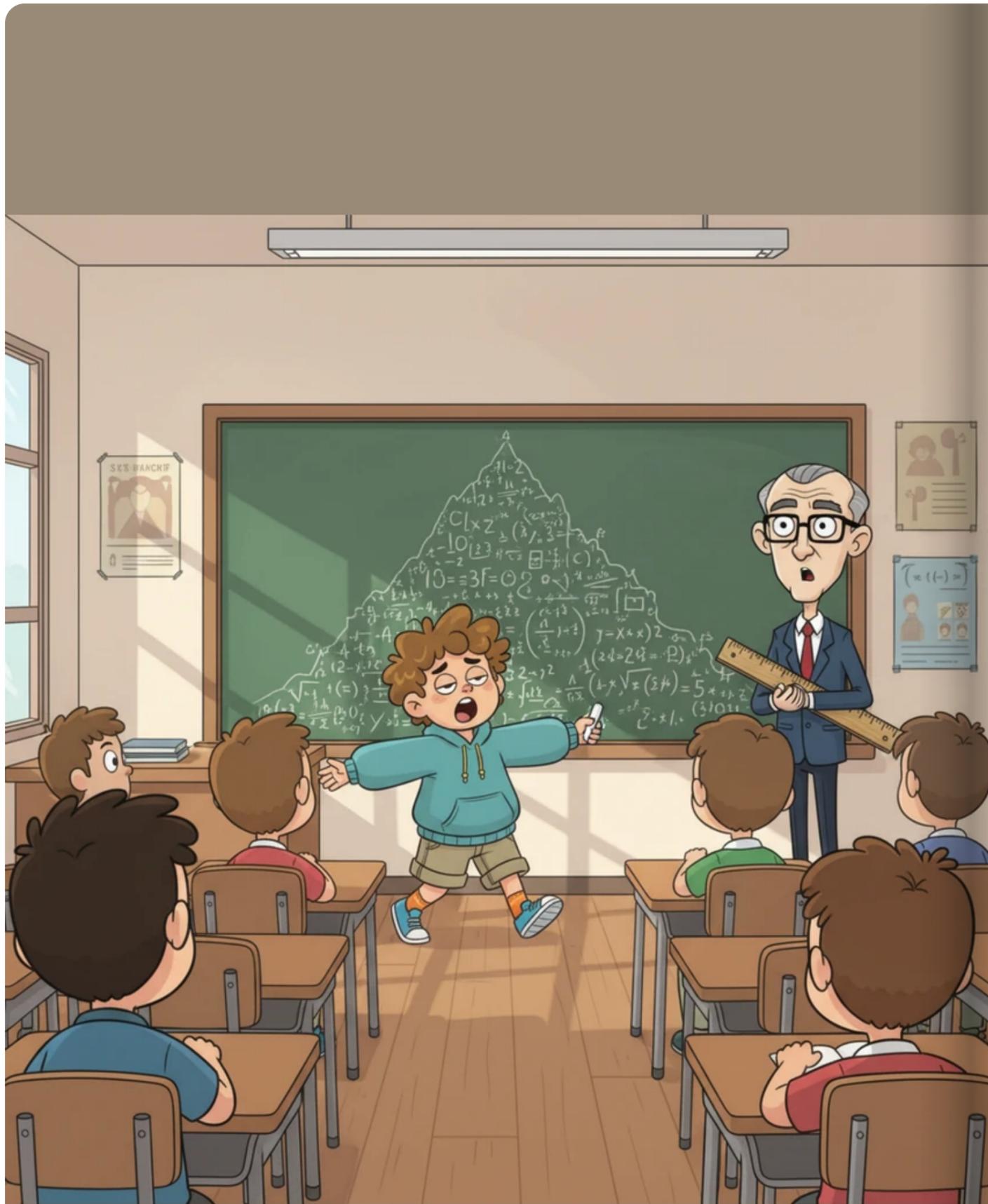
Mr. Stern turns around, his eyes narrowing as he scans the room for someone to solve the impossible puzzle. He ignores the trembling hands and the students trying to shrink into their desks, looking for a challenge.

# CLASSROOM CHAOS!

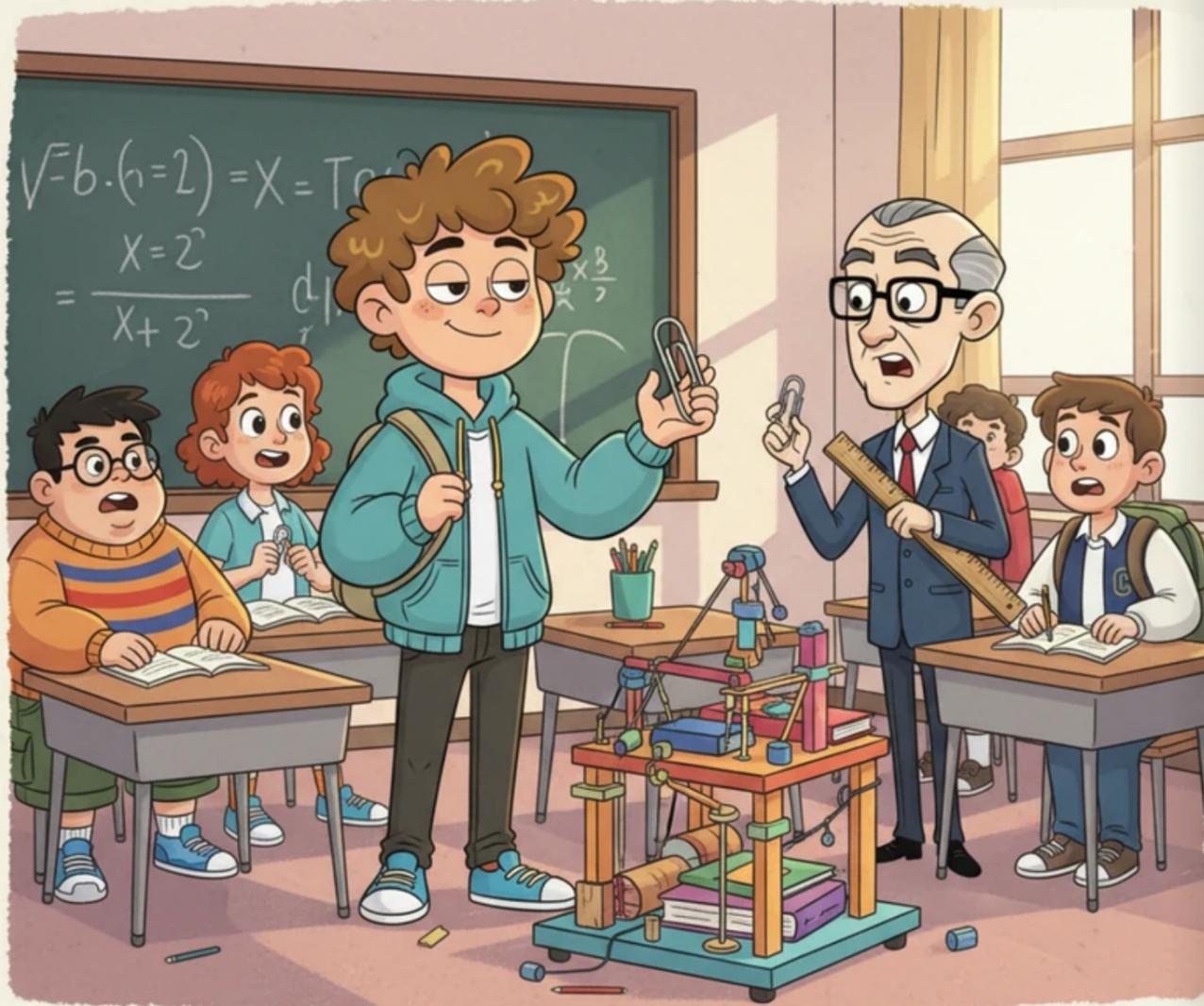


Art by Studio Scribble

His gaze lands squarely on Leo, who is currently trying to balance a single eraser on the tip of his nose. The rest of the class holds their breath, certain that Leo is about to face the ultimate classroom doom.



Leo slowly stands up, stretches his arms wide with a loud yawn, and strolls toward the front of the room like he is walking on a beach. He picks up the chalk, looks at the mountain of numbers, and does not even break a sweat.



## THE PAPERCLIP REVOLUTION

With a single confident stroke, Leo writes a tiny number in the corner and tosses the chalk back into the tray. Mr. Stern's jaw drops in disbelief while the rest of the class erupts into cheers for their unlikely classroom hero.