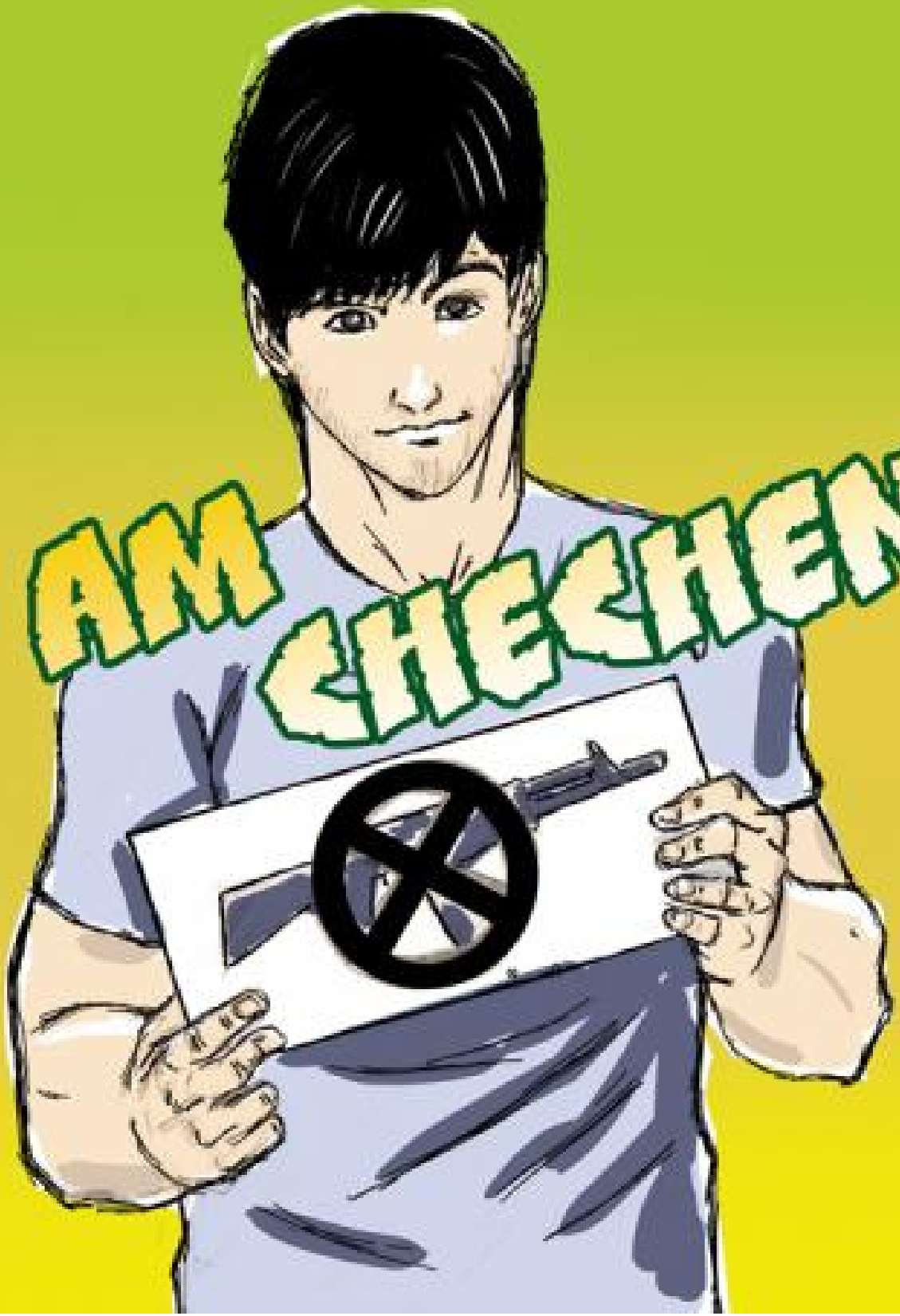


LORS LORSANOV

I AM CHECHEN



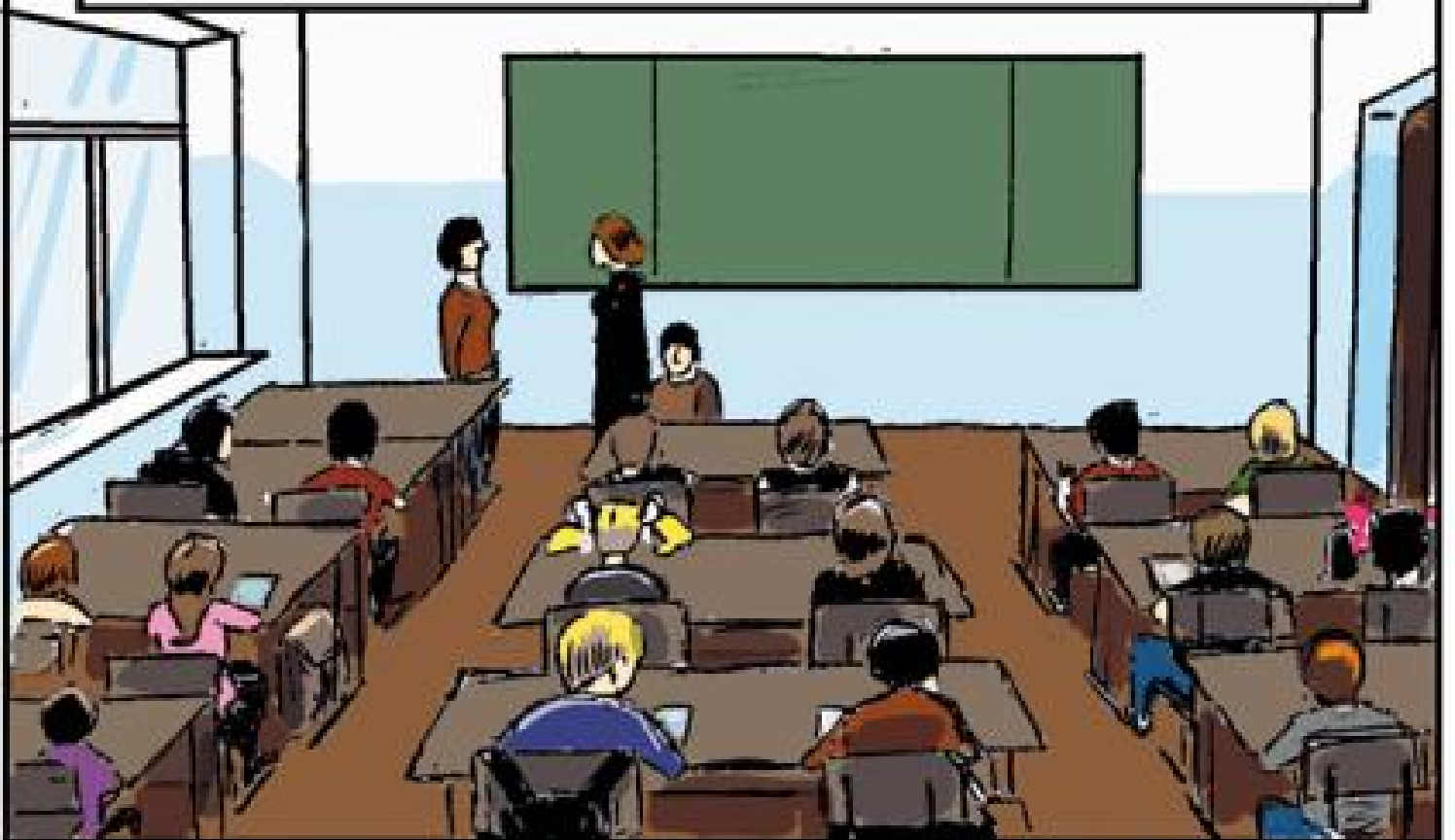


HELLO, MY NAME IS ASLAN.  
NOW I LIVE IN CHECHNYA,  
BUT AT ONE POINT DURING THE WAR I LEFT WITH MY  
PARENTS TO GO TO NIZHNEVARTOVSK, IN THE NORTH.  
I WAS VERY YOUNG AND EXCITED ABOUT GOING.





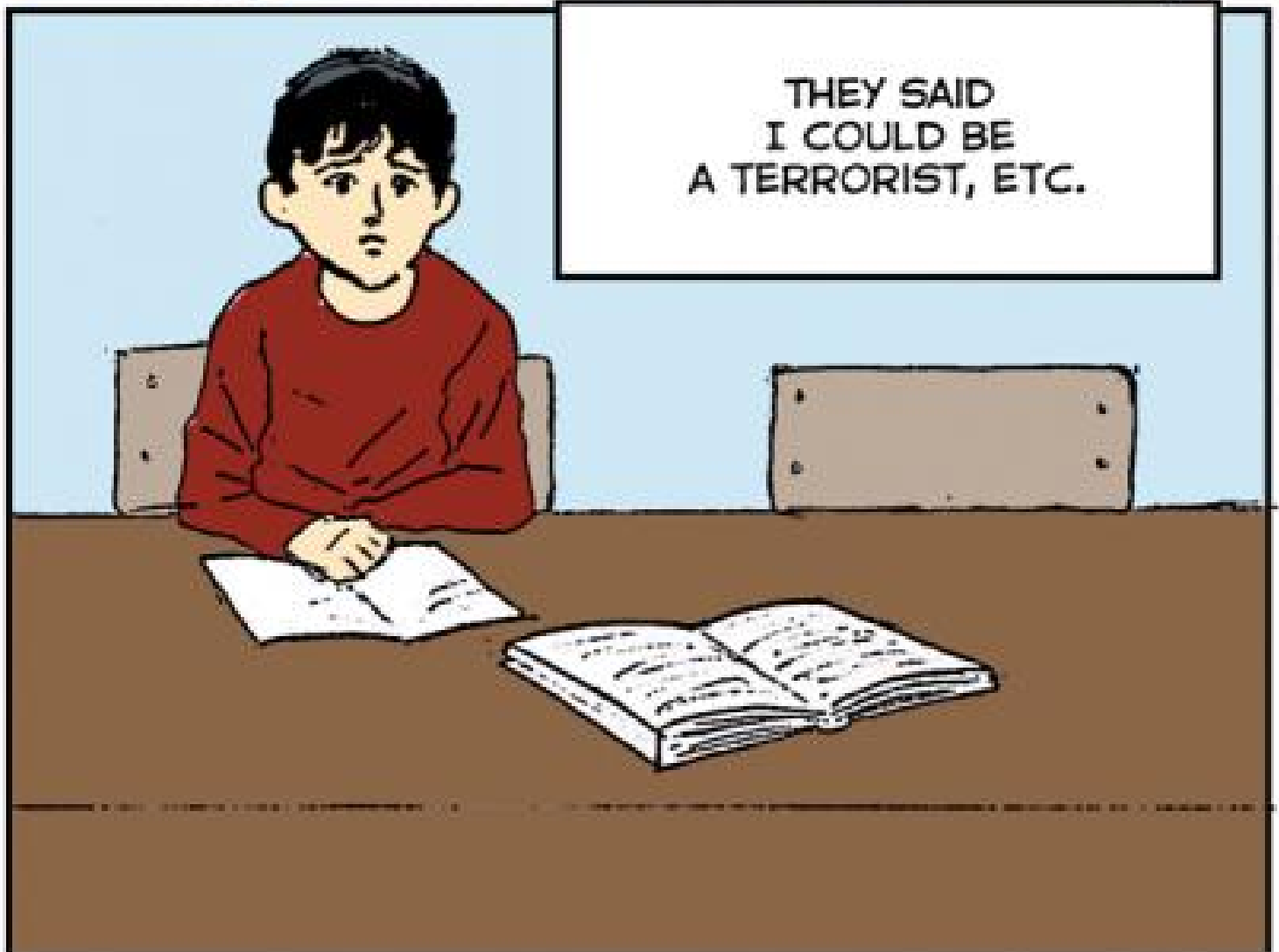
THIS IS ME IN NIZHNEVARTOVSK.  
MY MOTHER WANTED ME TO ENTER THE 2ND GRADE,  
WHEN I SHOULD HAVE BEEN IN THE 3RD.  
I WAS A YEAR OLDER THAN MY CLASSMATES.



AT FIRST, IT WAS HARD FOR ME,  
BECAUSE FEW WOULD TALK TO ME  
KNOWING I WAS A CHECHEN.



THEY SAID  
I COULD BE  
A TERRORIST, ETC.





BUT MY FATHER TAUGHT ME  
NOT TO PAY ATTENTION TO THEM,  
THAT I SHOULD BE STRONG - THAT  
CHECHENS WERE ALWAYS STRONG.

DON'T EVER GET MIXED UP IN  
ANYTHING, AND DON'T PICK ON ANYONE  
SMALLER THAN YOU, WHO HAVEN'T  
DONE ANYTHING TO DO.

WHY? WHY SHOULDN'T I MESS WITH THEM?  
THEY'RE THE REASON WE'RE HERE,  
WHY WE HAD TO LEAVE OUR HOME!



THEY'RE YOUR CLASSMATES - THEY'RE JUST  
LITTLE BOYS AND GIRLS, HOW CAN THEY BE  
RESPONSIBLE FOR WHAT HAPPENED?



MY FATHER'S WORDS MADE ME THINK...



BUT IN THE END I LEARNED TO BE PATIENT AND I MADE MANY FRIENDS, WHO HAVE REMAINED FRIENDS.

THERE WAS ONE TIME  
WHEN THIS GUY WAS  
BOTHERING A FRIEND OF MINE.  
MY FRIEND WASN'T MUCH  
OF A FIGHTER.

HELLO!

OK.

THIS GUY  
STARTED  
PICKING  
ON ME.  
HE WON'T LET  
ME WALK  
PAST HIM  
WITHOUT  
BULLYING  
ME.



I REMEMBERED MY FATHER TELLING ME THAT  
CHECHENS ARE ALWAYS STRONG,  
BUT DON'T SHOW OFF.



I FOUGHT WITH HIM  
ANYWAY.







BUT IN THAT FIGHT  
THERE WERE NO WINNERS OR LOSERS.  
AND WE LATER BECAME FRIENDS.



I OFTEN THINK BACK TO  
MY CHILDHOOD.  
FROM THE CAUCASUS  
WHERE MY HOME IS  
I REMEMBER THE URALS,  
WHERE I WENT TO  
SCHOOL, SO FAR AWAY.

BUT I HAVEN'T LOST TOUCH WITH  
MY CHILDHOOD FRIENDS.

SALAAM,  
ASLAN!

HEY GUYS!  
HOW ARE THINGS?





MY CLASSMATES HAVE  
GROWN UP, ARE WORKING  
IN ALL CORNERS OF THE  
COUNTRY...

BUILDING...



...MAINTAINING  
LAW AND  
ORDER...

A man wearing an orange hard hat and a blue safety vest with white reflective stripes is shown in profile, looking down at a large white document he is holding. The background is a simple grey and white gradient.

...LOOKING  
FOR NATURAL  
RESOURCES...

A man with dark hair, wearing a brown t-shirt, is sitting in a black office chair. He is leaning forward, focused on drawing on a large sheet of white paper that is spread out on a table. He is holding a black pen in his right hand. The background is a simple grey and white gradient.

AND I'M DESIGNING  
HOUSES FOR A PEACEFUL  
FUTURE IN THE CAUCASUS.