

JCT CREATIONS

Press & Media Kit



The Grumble-Gator's Greatest Raft

A Tale of Toby, Barnaby, and the Sunny-Stream Pond

A picture book for ages 3-8 • by Cory Tarwater

*“Being big just means you have
more room for friends.”*

ABOUT THE BOOK

A gentle story about kindness over conflict

At Sunny-Stream Pond, a kind young turtle named Toby is picked on by Barnaby — the grumpy “Grumble-Gator” everyone fears. But instead of fighting back, Toby answers Barnaby’s gruffness with patience and an unexpected invitation: help me build a raft. As they work side by side, Barnaby discovers that being big doesn’t have to mean being fearsome — and that the room inside him once filled with grumbles has plenty of space for friends. A warm, reassuring read-aloud about empathy, anti-bullying, and the truth that anyone can change.

Book at a Glance

TITLE	The Grumble-Gator’s Greatest Raft
SERIES	Sunny-Stream Pond (Book 1)
AUTHOR	Cory Tarwater
PUBLISHER	JCT Creations (independent)
CATEGORY	Children’s picture book · Ages 3–8
FORMATS	Paperback \$15.99 · eBook \$5.99
PAPERBACK	26 pages · 8.5 x 8.5 in · ISBN 979-8182359337
PUBLISHED	June 26, 2026 · English
AVAILABLE	Amazon — a.co/d/0ctCqe5s

THEMES

Kindness

Empathy

Anti-bullying

Friendship

It’s never too late to change

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Cory Tarwater

Cory Tarwater is a children's book author from Utah who writes heartfelt stories about kindness, friendship, and the magic of growing up. *The Grumble-Gator's Greatest Raft* is his debut picture book — the first of many planned adventures at Sunny-Stream Pond.



Cory writes from his home in Utah, drawing his stories from his own childhood — including his experience of being bullied as a young boy, and the lifelong friend who showed him what true kindness looks like. That friendship, now more than forty years strong, is the heartbeat behind his debut book. Rooted in being a good neighbor and the belief that it's never too late to change, Cory hopes his stories give children the words and courage for real-life moments: sharing, forgiving, standing up gently, and welcoming the lonely.

THE STORY BEHIND THE BOOK

“The Grumble-Gator’s Greatest Raft began with a memory. As a child, I was bullied for the way I looked, and for a long time I didn’t know what to do but carry it quietly. What changed everything was one friend who saw me and sat with me. Toby and Barnaby’s story is my way of handing that lifeline to the next child who needs it.”

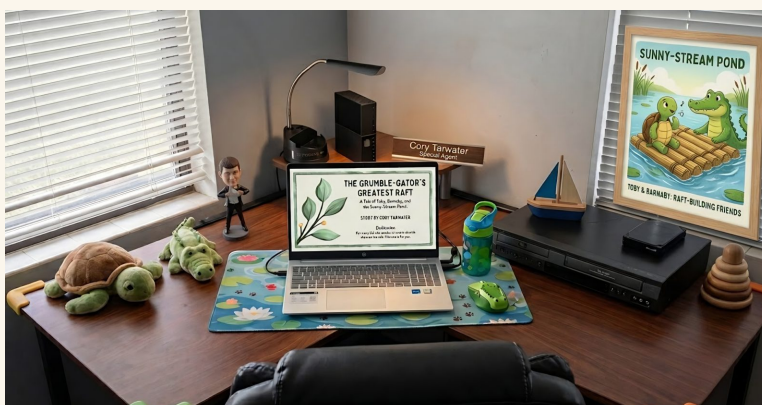
“Being big just means you have more room for friends.”

“A fist can break a branch, but a kind word can plant a forest.”

FOR THE PRESS

Suggested Interview Questions

1. The book handles bullying very gently. What made you want to write about it for young children?
2. Toby responds to cruelty with kindness instead of fighting back. Why was that important to you?
3. You've shared that this story grew from your own childhood. Can you tell us about that?
4. Barnaby changes over the course of the book. What do you hope kids take from his transformation?
5. What do you hope parents and children talk about after reading it together?
6. What would you say to a child who feels alone or is being bullied right now?
7. The book is set at Sunny-Stream Pond — will there be more adventures there?
8. What drew you to writing for young children in the first place?



Where the Sunny-Stream Pond stories come to life.

PRESS CONTACT

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High-resolution cover art and author photos are available for press use on request.