

Season 2, Chapter 16 – Zack's Hacks



A long but informative chapter, to be sure! I just wish Zack hadn't introduced a Hacking show into the novel. Thankfully, it's dead forever and will never be seen again! Right? Yeah?

Anyway, it all began with something apparently known as the *Super Ultra Omega Insanely Crazy Huge Zack's Hacks Marathon Special* which was already way too much for me to handle. I'm tired; can we just skip to the end? No? Phooey. According to the memo, this big event was anticipated for a full 16 hours by one single person! You know who you are. Let's just get this over with before I keel over and die. Oop! Wait! I'm already keeling!

--THE SIDESHOW-- ***Zack's Hacks!***

The show that we all hate so much opened once again with a shot of the *Viewer Fun* studio. At this point, let's just call it the *Zack's Hacks* studio since you already know it's gonna be a thing all year long. Zack then floated in from stage left and stopped when he was in the center of the room.

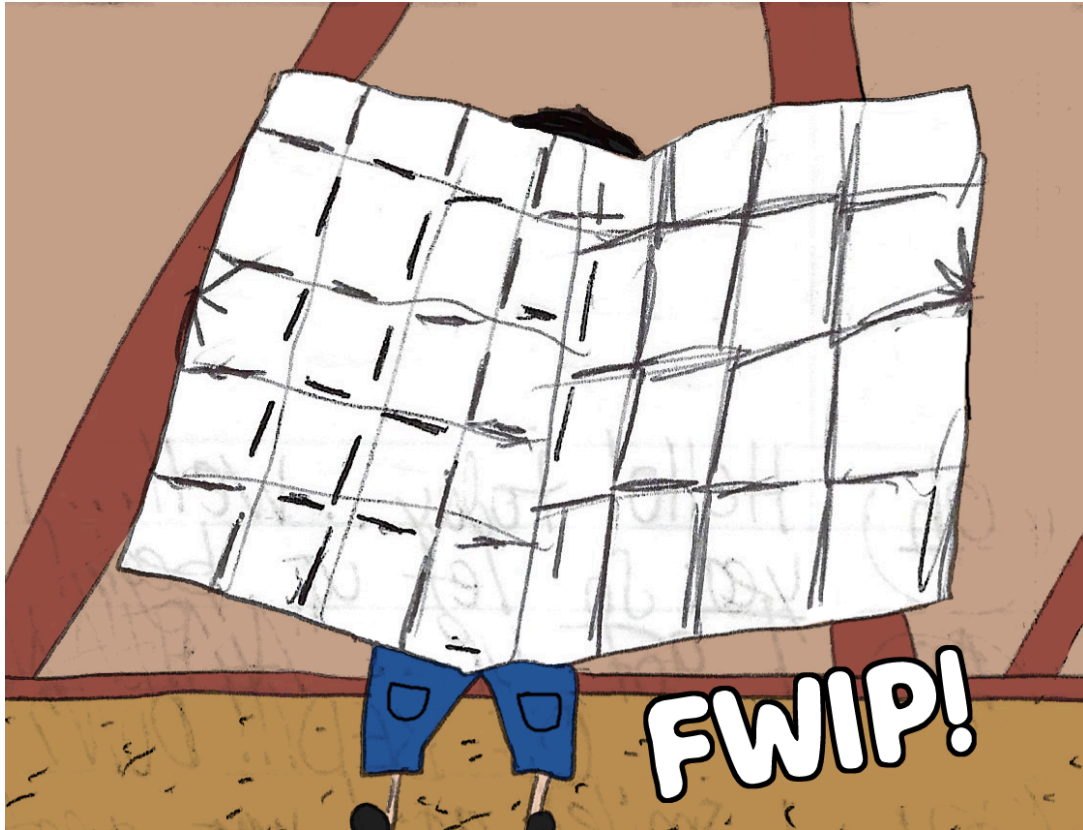
“Okay, I managed to hijack an entire chapter to play with my new show! This one was supposed to dive further into that vision Amber had and see everyone traveling into the future of the novel in a ten-page adventure, but instead we’re going to be doing me and MY thing today! Don’t worry, though; I just have this tiny list to work my way through.”

He pulled out a tiny slip of paper from his pocket.



“It’s just a few things.”

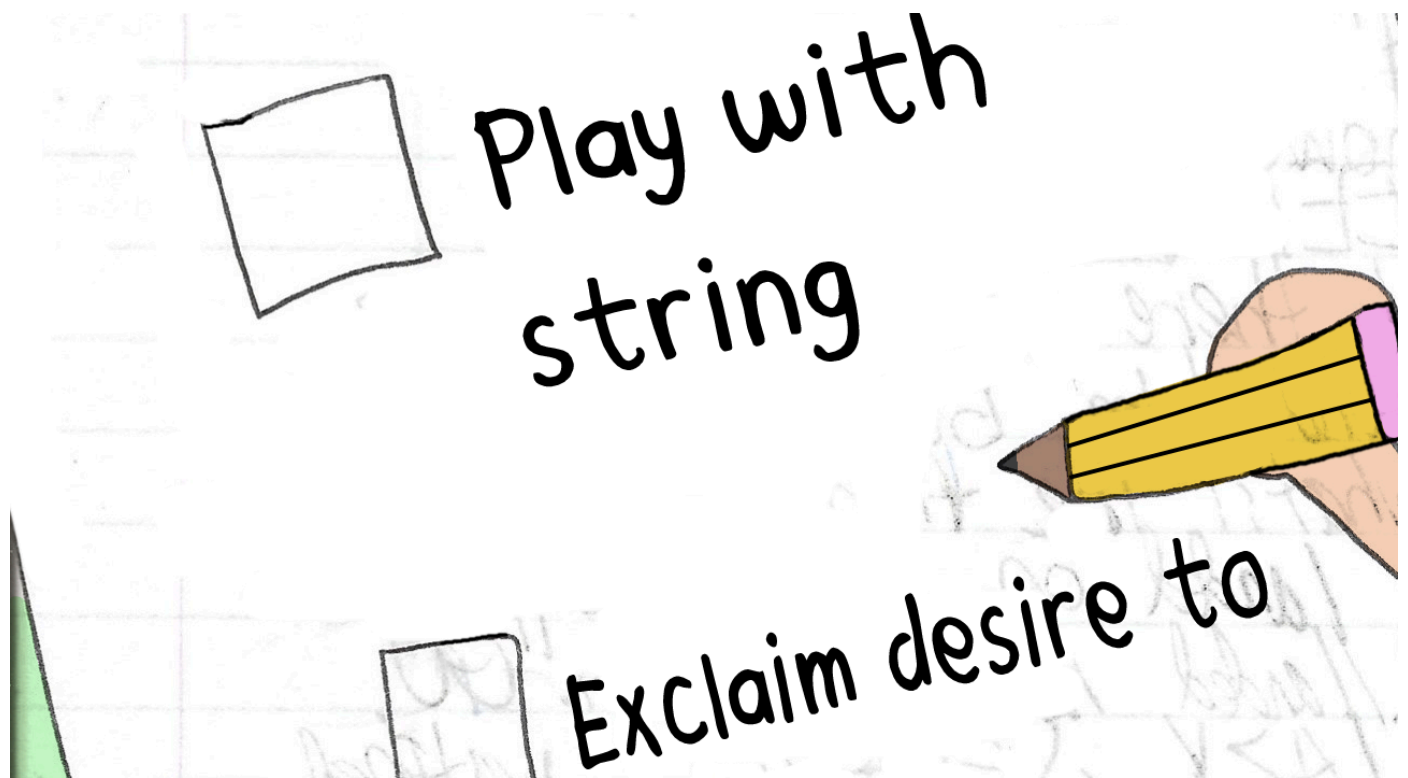
It then unfolded into a massive sheet of paper that nearly obscured his entire body.



“Okay... let’s get started! Item number one: play with string. Hmm, sounds easy enough.”

He waved his hand about and a piece of the most perfect string imaginable appeared floating in front of him. The map fell to the floor the moment he laid eyes on it.

“Oh... *Oh my GOODNESS*. It’s... It’s *BEAUTIFUL!*”



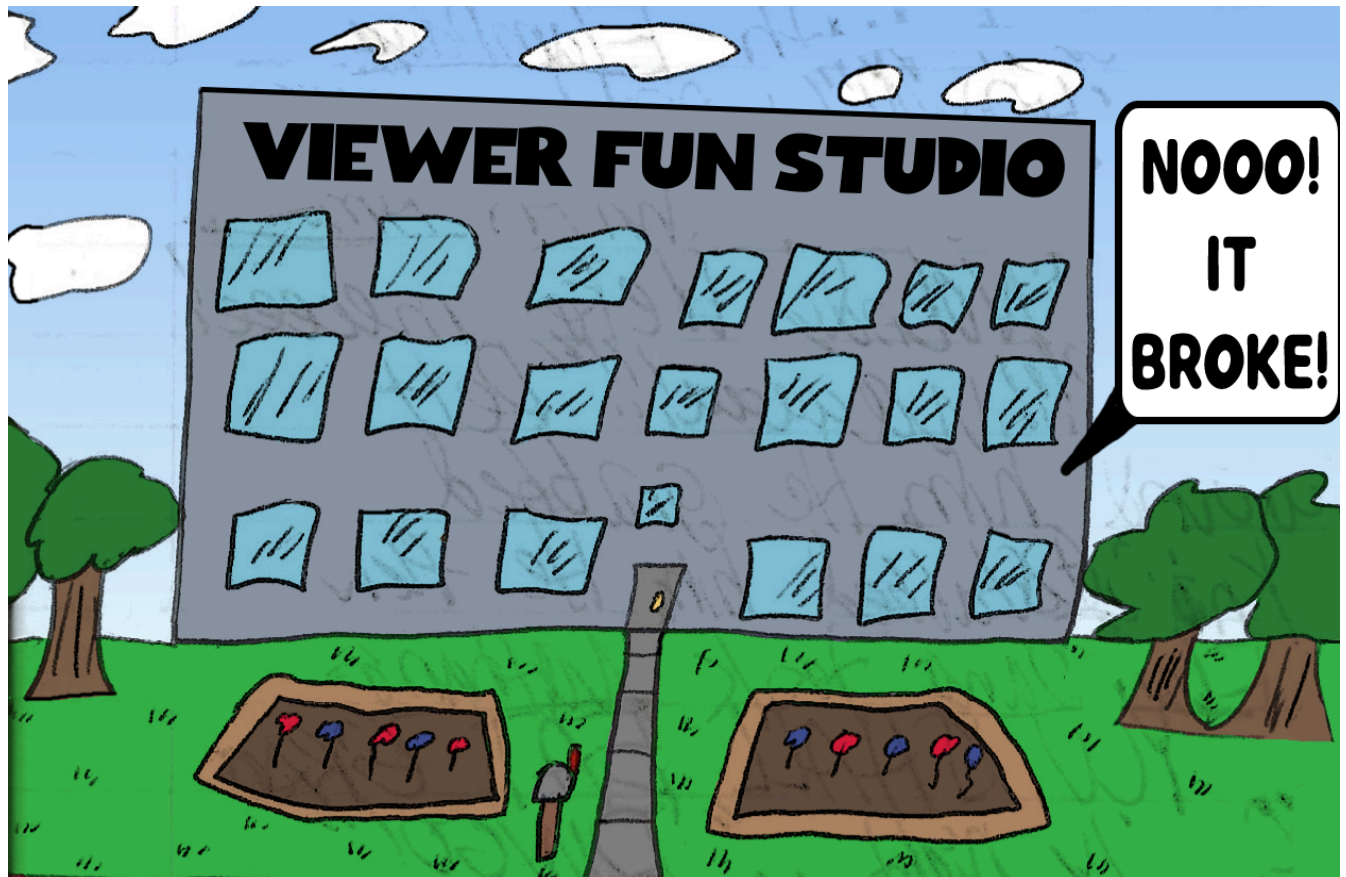
He snatched it out of the air and started playing with it; flailing it about and pulling on it.

“Hahaha! This is amazing! Who knew string could be so fun?!”

We cut to a shot of the outside of the building, which seemed to be located in the middle of nowhere, where his joyous laughter could still be heard.

“Yay, string! String string string! Woohoo! AH! NOOO! IT BROKE!”

Loud sobbing was then heard and he entered a state of despair for seven full hours.



Once that was all wrapped up, we cut back inside the studio so see him looking over the list again.

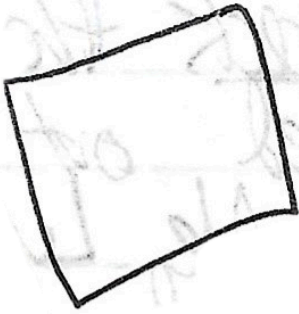
“Okay, that one took longer than expected, but CHECK! Item number two: exclaim desire to kill FlamDawg.”

He cleared his throat before raising a fist and shouting towards the heavens.

“I WILL KILL YOU, FLAMDAWG!”



Play with
string



Exclaim desire to
kill FlamDawg

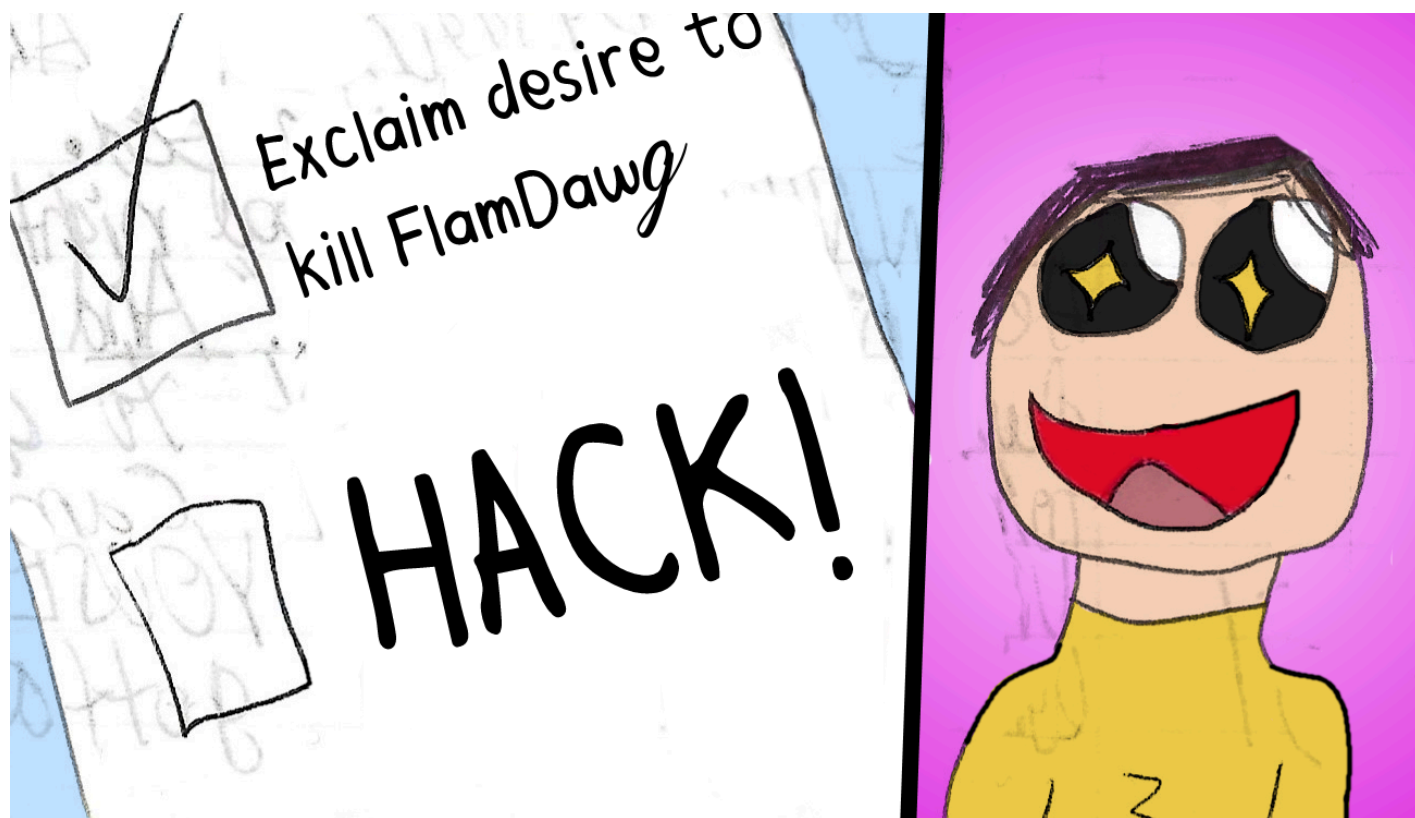


He turned back to his list.

"Check! Item number three: HACK for the rest of the day!"

His eyes sparkled upon reading that and he started dancing around before turning to you, the dear reader.

"See? I told you it was only a few things. I just write my letters really large."



Meanwhile, FlamDawg, Amber and I were standing in the far corner of the studio. Here, Amber was just about to unveil the great new thing she had just made. Or bought. Or stolen? There are a lot of possibilities here. In any case, the mystery object was placed on an easel which was entirely covered by a sheet. We stared at her, barely caring about any of this while she stood before us and smiled.

“Okay, you two! Prepare to be amazed by my masterpiece!”

At that very moment, Zack slowly floated through the floor between her and the easel and started rising into the air with a big smile on his face. We immediately noticed him and gasped, knowing full well that he was up to something. After all, today was the *Super Ultra Omega Insanely Crazy Huge Zack’s Hacks Marathon Special!* It was on the calendar and everything!



As he passed through, he lightly brushed against Amber's finger before disappearing through the ceiling. She slowly raised the finger as it started glowing red and sparking violently and a look of horror crossed her face.

"Uh oh..."



Almost instantly, she went shooting upwards, crashing through the ceiling and blasting off into the stratosphere!

“AAAAAIIIIYEEEEEE!!!”

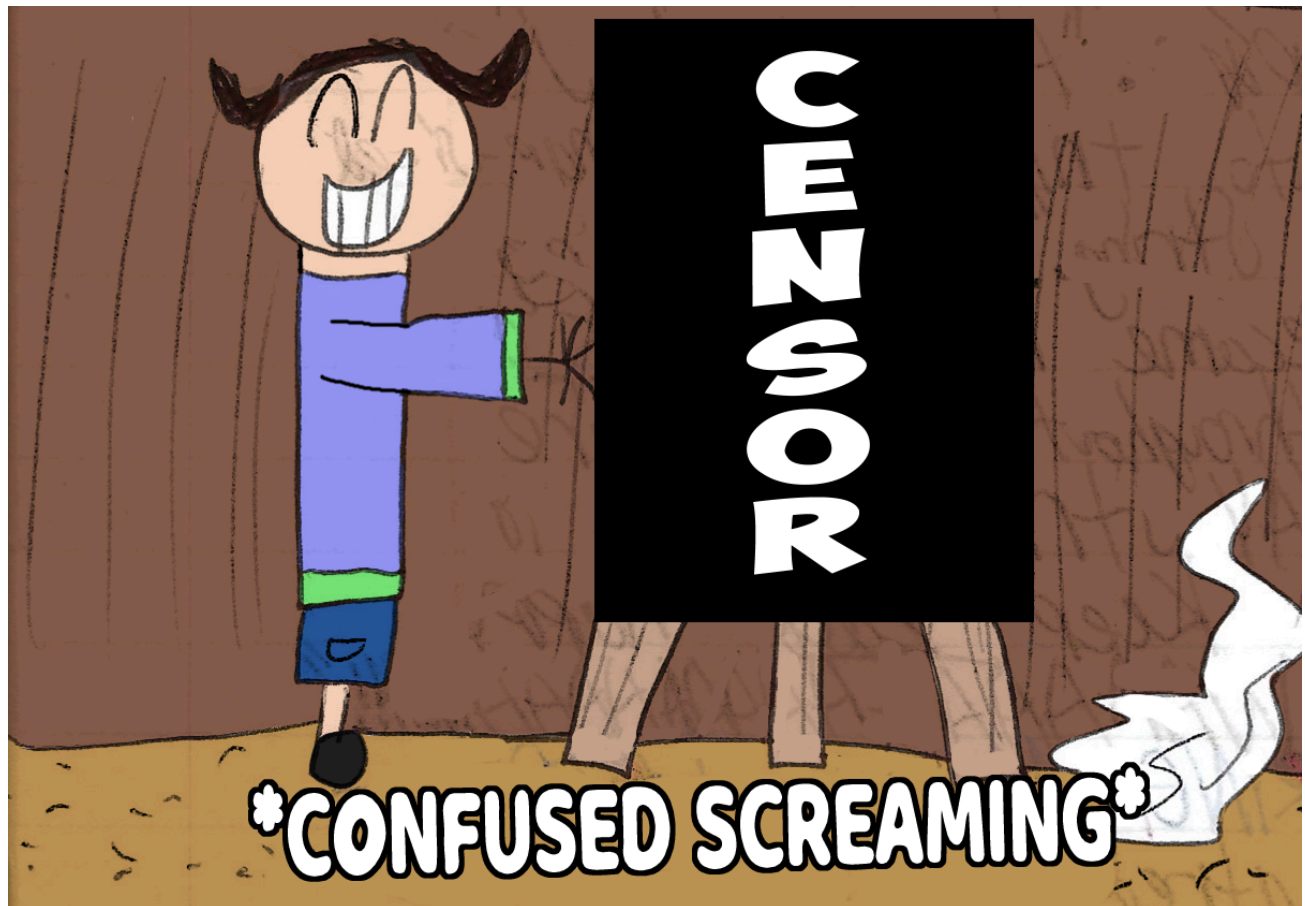
She disappeared into the vast blue sky, never to be seen or heard from again. FlamDawg and I stared at the hole she had created before turning and walking away, rather content with the fact that we didn’t have to pretend to care any longer.



We quickly cut to a “please stand by” screen before resetting the entire scene and trying the whole thing again. Apparently, that was *not* how it was supposed to go and Zack just ruined everything like always. This time, Cat, Rex, JT, FlamDawg, and I were standing next to Amber who was about to unveil her “latest masterpiece” - whatever that was.

“Okay, everyone ready? BEHOLD!”

She pulled off the sheet and it fluttered in front of the camera, blocking our view of what was apparently a painting before it cut to the rest of us. Our jaws *dropped* and the entire canvas had to be expertly blurred out for sake of the children.

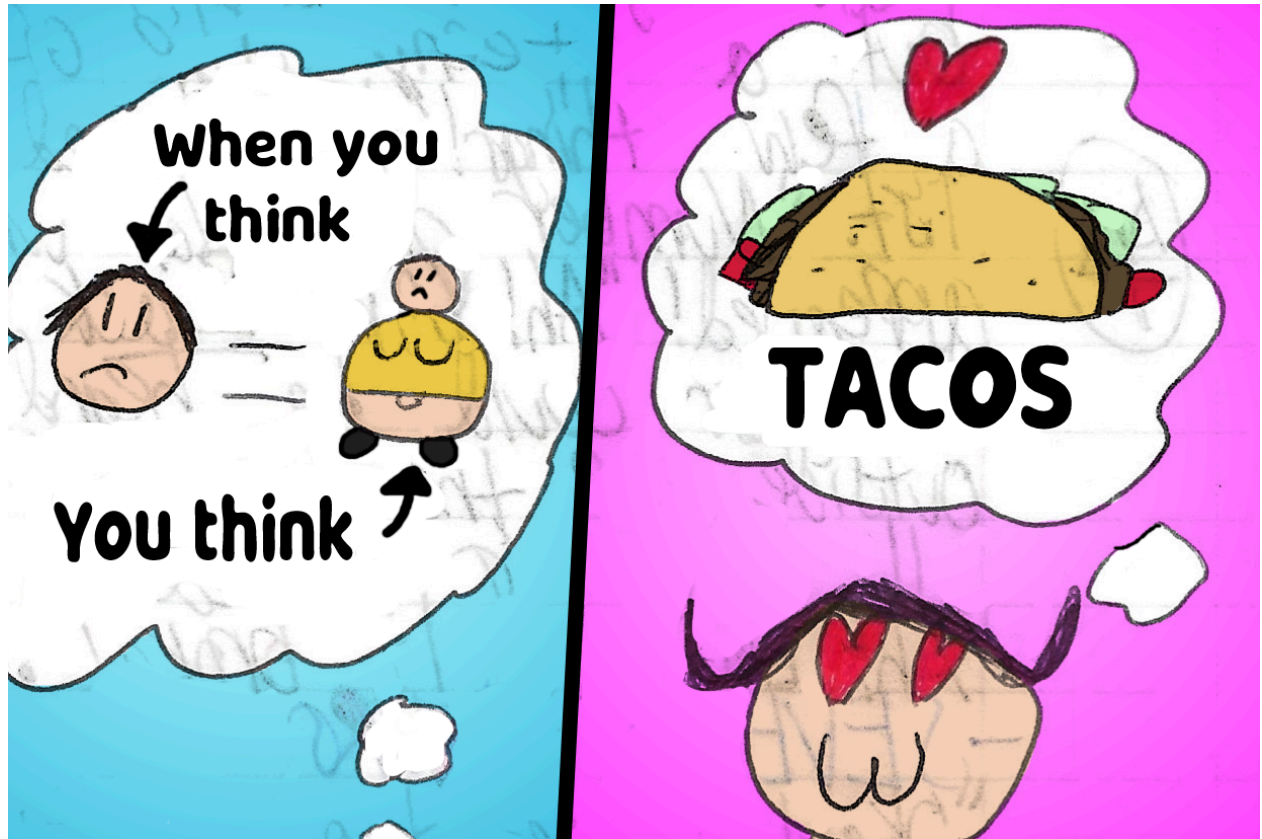


Rex immediately burst into tears and started wailing so Cat grabbed him by the paw and ran out of the room with him. JT’s eyes went in different directions before he collapsed onto the floor, then burst into flames. FlamDawg and I remained motionless and horrified. When the reception was not overwhelmingly positive like she had expected, Amber snatched her painting and stormed out of the room.

“You people just don’t appreciate the fine arts!”

We cut back to Zack who was now moving onto the next stage of whatever plan he was formulating. He floated there and thought for a moment, bringing to mind a certain phrase.

When you think Zack, you think fat! Amber probably thinks about tacos, but this isn't about her. It *never* is.



“Okay, for this next scheme, I’ll need to lure everyone into this room so I can Hack them all at once! It’ll take some expert strategizing to figure out how to do that, but I’m sure I can manage.”

Suddenly, there was a puff of pink smoke and a talking green beetle appeared in the middle of the room! Zack turned and noticed it.

“What the...?”

This beetle wore a top hat and immediately began strumming on the lute it was holding.

“Greetings! I am a magical entity here to warn you of the future... in *song!*”

Zack blinked a few times in confusion as the song began.



“I am here to speak to a boy named Zack! This is me warning you not to Hack! You must stop at all costs, lest you get smacked!”

Zack rolled his eyes before waving his hand in the beetle’s direction as it danced around.

“It may be tough, but you must hold back!”

A small rock appeared in front of it with a pie close by.

“If you Hack too much, you’ll... waaaaaaah!”

It tripped on the rock and fell face-first into the pie! The lute fell and broke into pieces on the ground, rendering everything silent for a few moments. Then, the beetle burst into flames which made Zack smile.





“That’s taken care of! How dare that thing tell me not to Hack! It must be done! For peace! For justice! For today’s chapter to have a plotline!”

He thrust his fist into the air as dramatic music blasted, masking the sound of the smoke alarm. With that, he headed off into the Great Beyond to trick all of us into going somewhere we did not want to go. He started with Amber, who was surprisingly easy to manipulate. She was upstairs in her bedroom, sitting on her bed while talking to one of her girlfriends on her cellphone. The blurred-out masterpiece painting from earlier was hanging on the wall behind her. Amazing how one bout of creativity could blow our entire censor budget for the chapter.

“-so I lifted the sheet and Nathan screamed, Rex started crying, and FlamDawg was all like ‘holy mother of’-”

She trailed off when she noticed something shiny was floating in the air just outside her open door.

“Ooh, is that a shiny?! Girl, I’mma have to call you back.”

She threw her phone on the ground without even bothering to end the call and ran over to the shiny thing. The moment she got close, it flew away and she ran right into a fake tarp that was painted to look like the hallway! It tore off, revealing there was a teleport portal behind it which she immediately fell into. Seems we have another brilliant painter in the house! I'm going to be disappointed if he just bought that tarp from PrintScape.

Next on the list was FlamDawg, who was idly standing around in the living room. I feel like he never really does anything unless the rest of us are around. Maybe it's a coding error? He stood in silence until a teleport portal opened up next to him and a tiny candy wrapper floated down from the ceiling. He noticed it fluttering in the breeze and his eyes grew wide, watching as it fell into the portal and disappeared. This left him staring at the portal rather intensely before his face twisted up in anger and he spun around with such speed that he became a blur.

"BANG ACTIVATE!"

Triumphant music played as he spun, quickly donning his Little Bang police uniform!

"Litter? In my very own home?! NOT ON MY WATCH!"

He straightened his expensive Rolex watch to make sure there was nothing on it before marching over and dropping down into the portal. I appreciate that this trick involved FlamDawg becoming Little Bang; we don't see that much these days.

I was last on the list to be lured in, though I was far too oblivious and beautiful to realize what was about to happen. I was seated on the couch in the living room, watching TV at present. I had actually been there the entire time FlamDawg was getting lured in, but I paid *zero* attention to it and hadn't even realized he was in the room. It was at that moment that the door rang so I got up and answered it. There on the porch was a package addressed to me.

"Oh, what have we here?"

I picked it up and looked it over, but couldn't seem to find a return address, leaving me rather suspicious as I opened it up.

"If this is another fart-in-a-box, I swear I'm gonna-"

The moment the flaps opened, a large hand emerged from the box, grabbed me by the head, and pulled me in! There was a teleport portal inside which I then went right into.

"Oh, this is *much* more pleasant."

I traveled through the portal and soon found myself landing in a quaint lobby room with light blue walls and deeper blue carpet, reminding me of Amber's bedroom. Speaking of Amber, she was sitting on the floor with a smile on her face. There were chairs along the wall, a single door, and some plants to add some life to the room. There was also a sign near the ceiling that read "*Zack's Hacks Waiting Room*" and below this was a picture of Zack smiling and giving a thumbs

up with the words “*Please wait your turn! Zack will be available to Hack you shortly*” next to it. Below the sign was a TV screen showing what was happening in the show so we could sit and watch.

“Dang it. I knew that giving Zack a Hacking marathon would be a bad idea. Run away!”

I hurried over to the only door and reached for the handle, but a small turret emerged from the ceiling and shot me with a blast of ice, freezing me solid from the neck down!

“Aw man.”

Meanwhile, FlamDawg was standing in the *Zack’s Hacks* studio as the lucky one chosen to be Hacked first. Zack drifted over to him with a rather wicked look on his face, then spoke in a surprisingly deep voice that was unlike him.

“Prepare to be tortured.”

He snapped his fingers, causing hundreds of colorful expensive designer handbags to fall from the sky and land on top of FlamDawg! Say whatever you want about Zack and his Hacking ways, but this is some *quality* merchandise! FlamDawg tried to swim to the surface of the endless ocean of trendy fashion but found himself slowly sinking to the bottom.

“NOOOO! TOO... GLAMOROUS...!”

His arm, the only part of him left above the surface, slowly slid down beneath the waves of color.

“ACK! AHEEH! GAH! Ah. Oh. Hmm. I can breathe just fine down here. A bit perfume-y but I can manage. I kinda like it. Do they have this for men?”



Zack jumped into what I can only assume to be his invisible car, now once again floating around while appearing to be driving something like he had done previously. The handbags disappeared and FlamDawg found himself riding on an invisible motorbike, floating in much the same way Zack was except he was holding onto handlebars instead of a wheel.

“What the...? What is this?”

Then, Zack dns erernwj jahdh jenn mdkauhw ndsjkasls...!

“Whoops! Looks like I Hacked the very words of the novel by mistake!”

The narrator is extremely displeased.

“Yeah, isn’t everyone?”

Hatred for Zack aside, a timer appeared in the corner of the screen with one minute on the clock.

“Wait, is this some kind of online match? I don’t have a good Internet service provider for this!”

Alas, Zack did not care. The bell rang and “GO!” appeared above them as the match started.

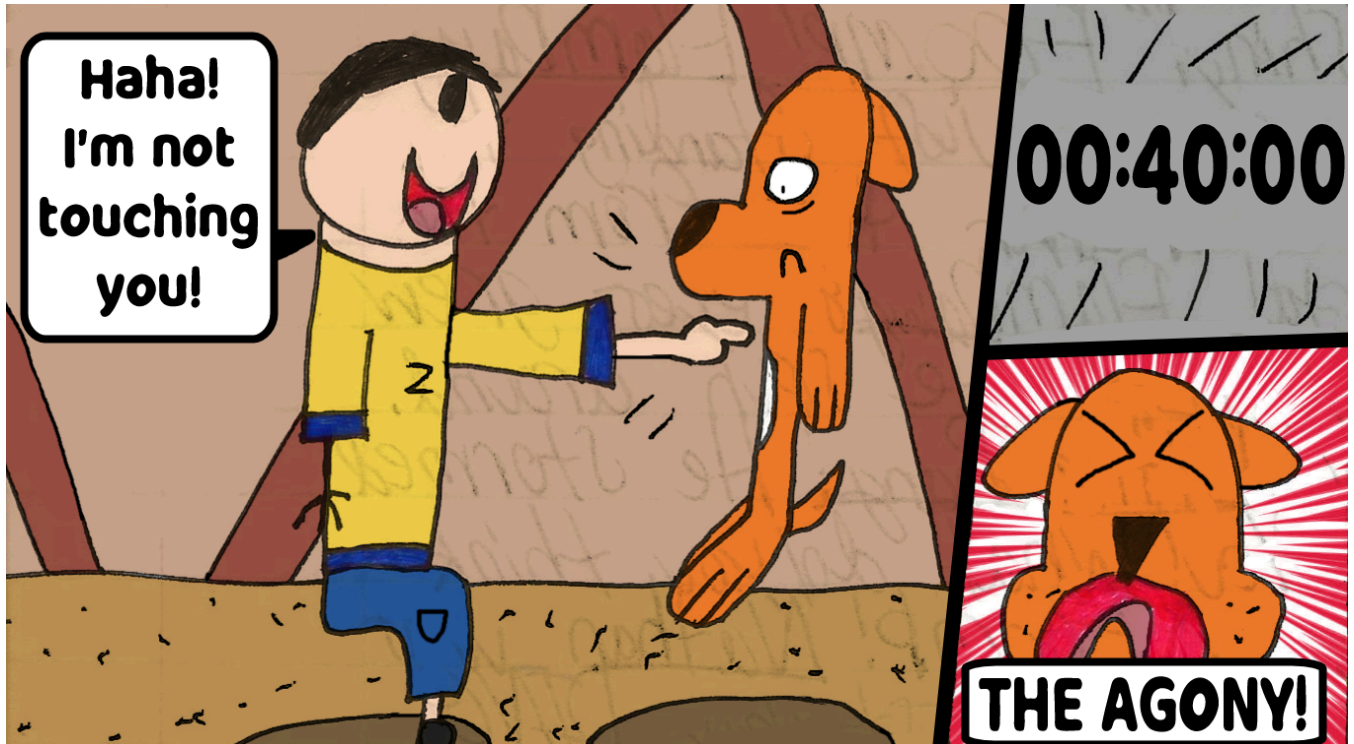


Before FlamDawg even had a chance to drive over an item box, Zack sped up to him until he was inches away from him. Good thing those invisible vehicles don't have collision! FlamDawg's eyes grew wide as Zack extended a pudgy finger and commenced the most excruciating torture known to man.

"I'm not touching you!"

FlamDawg spasmed as he took obscene amounts of psychic damage, unable to escape as Zack continued to just barely avoid touching him time and time again. He glanced up at the clock above them, noticing that only twenty seconds had passed.

"THE AGONY!"



Thirty-nine seconds later, Zack was still not-touching him while he was hanging backwards over his vehicle, having fallen limp at some point during the match. Finally, the buzzer sounded indicating the round was over and he popped back up.

“THANK YOU! Any longer and I would have had to slap him.”

Instead of moving along to the results screen, however, the match kept going! FlamDawg was unable to move his bike around and Zack remained in his car with a smile on his face.

“This is some serious lag.”

Suddenly, Zack started driving around!

“What the...? Hey! Now he’s Hacking to drive around even after the match is over!”

Zack threw his head back and cackled manically while whipping the wheel back and forth. This was the epitome of wickedness in his eyes and he was loving every moment of it. He then held up his hands and released a squid which shot into the air before dropping down in front of FlamDawg and aggressively spraying ink in his eyes.

“EEEEEEYAAAAH!”

He flailed around as the squid flew off somewhere.

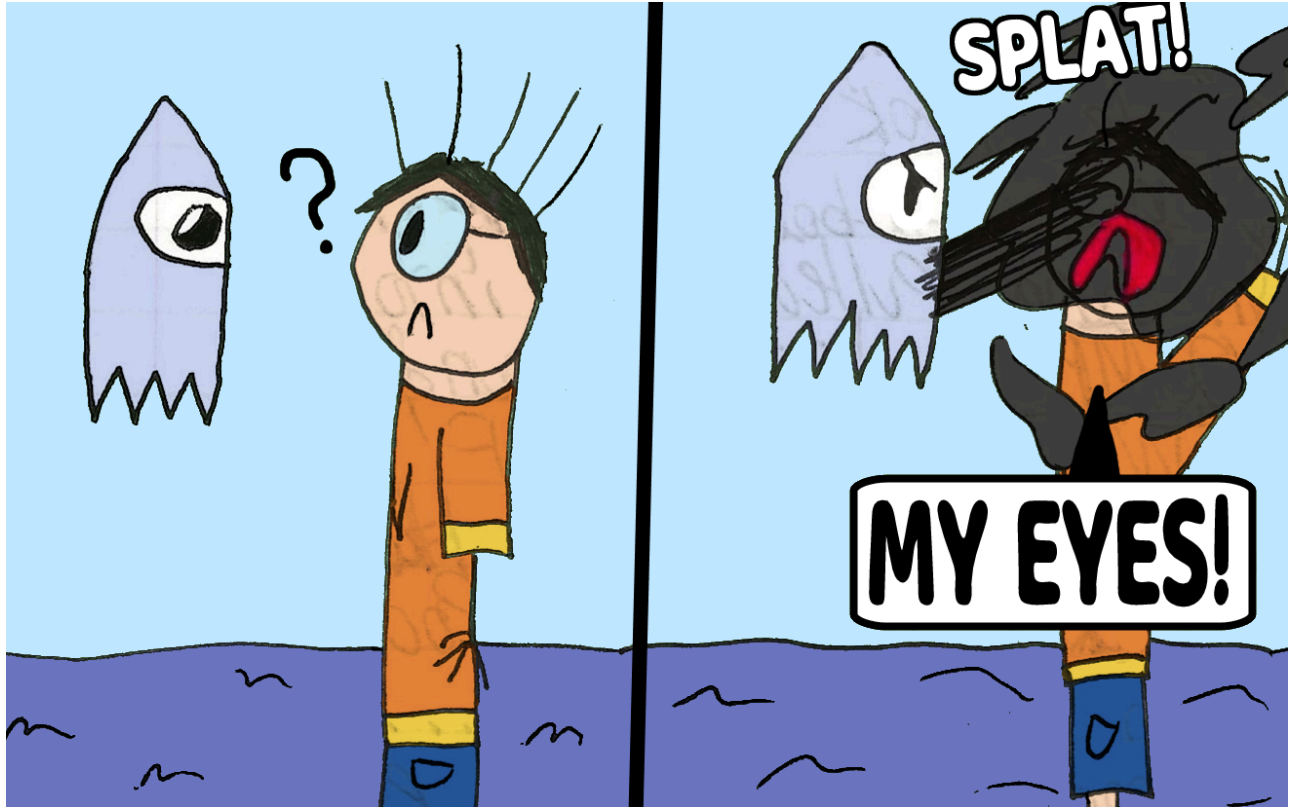


Meanwhile, in the waiting room, I had since broken free of the ice and was now wandering around, hoping to find a way out without triggering security. Judging by the various burn marks and ice shards covering several of the walls, it wasn't going well so far. Suddenly, a squid dropped down from the ceiling and floated in front of me.

"Whoa, what?"

It sprayed ink in my eyes before flying off, leaving me writhing in agony!

"GAAAHH! MY EYES! HOW UNEXPECTED!"



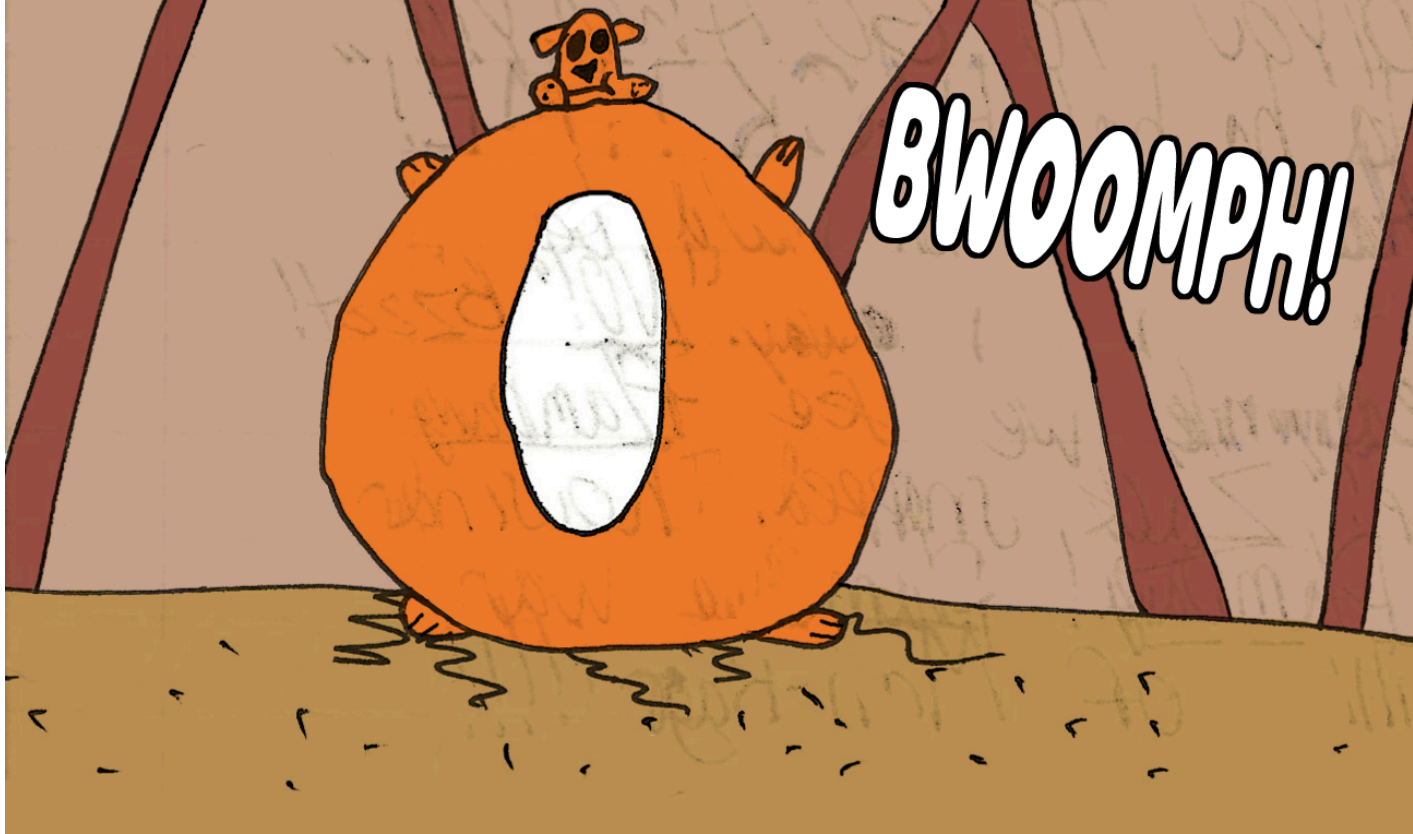
It then dropped down in front of Amber, who was still sitting on the floor with a cute smile which was immediately stained by potent squid ink. Out of the three of us, she was the only one who seemed to enjoy being sprayed in the eyes.

“Teehee! It tickles and burns!”



Back in the studio, the match ended and the vehicles were done away with in the time it took for FlamDawg to wipe the ink from his face. Moving right along to the next stage, Zack flailed his hand in FlamDawg's general direction and FlamDawg immediately bloated up into a massive ball of pure fat! He shrieked as he lost control of his body and succumbed to his now extremely round shape.

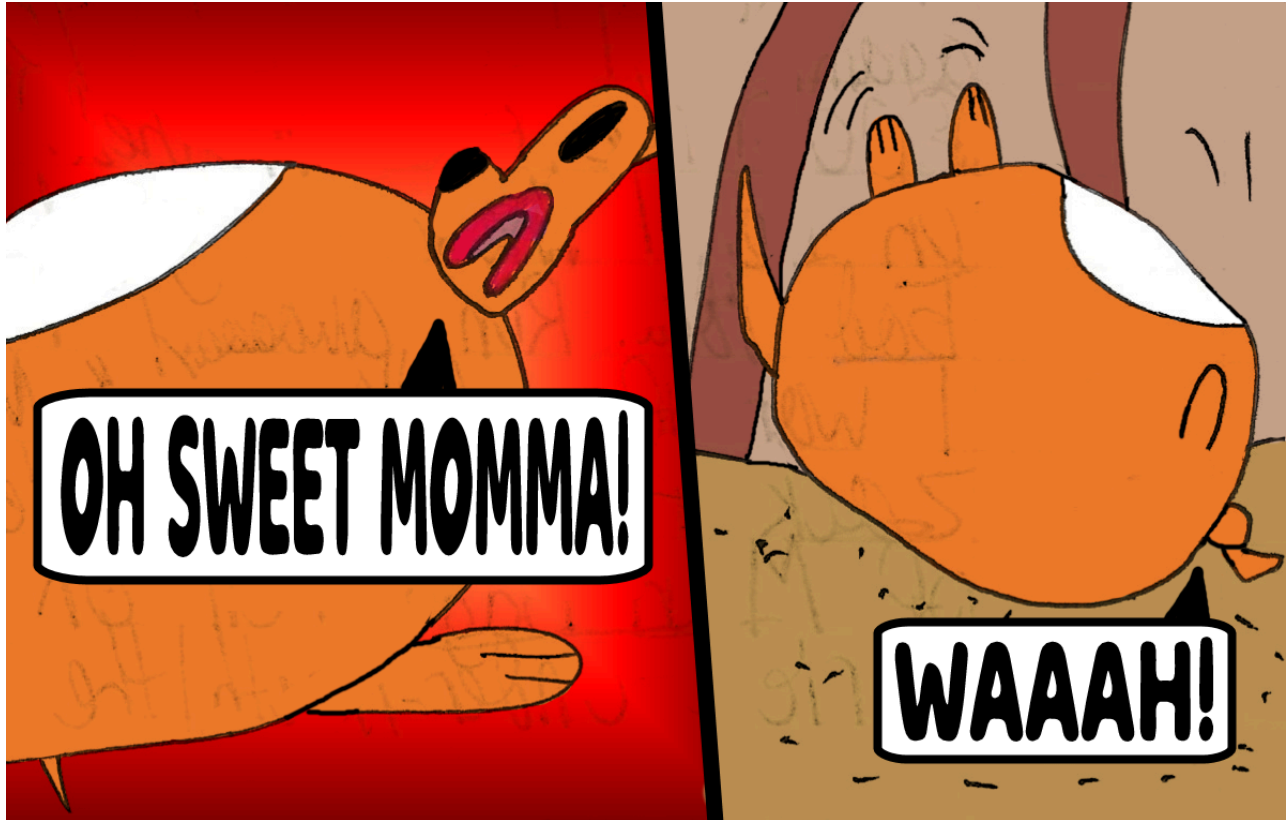
"BOY, WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOU?!"



Zack floated over to him and nudged him with a finger, finally touching him after all this time and causing him to start rolling backwards!

“OH SWEET MOMMA!”

He crashed down onto his back and started flailing about erratically in an attempt to get up. Sadly, the sheer amount of fat he now possessed made this feat impossible. Instead, he rolled around while screaming at the top of his lungs.



It then quickly cut to the far corner of the studio which was empty and quiet until Amber suddenly appeared in a puff of pink smoke and then it was neither of those things. It was now her turn for torture and so she had been ripped from the waiting room that she didn't even realize she was in. Though it seemed to immediately dawn on her because her eyes got really big and she started looking around.

"Heyyy... this isn't my room!"

Upon turning, she saw that Zack was standing right next to her with the usual blank smile on his face. She did *not* like this one bit no she didn't!

"You... You... It's *YOU!* I hate you! I HATE YOU!!"

She pulled out the shockingly real knife that came with her Barbie dreamhouse and stabbed him in the throat with it while screaming rather intensely! He immediately burst, popping in a way that made it seem like he was a balloon or something instead of the real deal. Honestly, I didn't expect her to be so aggressive! I should learn that's just womanly instinct. She smiled to herself, quite satisfied with that result, and turned to leave the room, only to see that Zack was now standing on the opposite side of her. She jumped and screamed, not at all prepared for something like this. She had just *killed* him and yet now here he was, back alive again in a fraction of a second! This was all too much for her and she grabbed onto her head as she screamed, soon swelling up like it was inflating with air.

“YEEEEAAAAAHHH...!”

KA-POW! She swelled up and promptly burst, sending pieces of clothing fabric flying in all directions! Honestly, she is *such* a drama queen! Did she really have to explode like that? No! She could have just yelled and had a panic attack like everybody else.

Meanwhile, I was wandering around the studio, having also been pulled from the waiting room and thrust into my own corner. Not content with waiting around to die like some people, I started to explore in hopes of finding an exit. It wasn't long before I spotted a large round ball that turned out to be FlamDawg upon closer inspection. I headed over to him and he nodded at me as I approached.

“Sup.”

“You got Hacked?”

“Big time.”

“Have you seen Amber?”

“I think she just screamed so hard that she exploded.”

“Oh, that's what that was?”

“Yeah.”

“I've never known someone to get so freaked out that they explode. You know, the other day she straight up told me that her backup dream in the event she can't become a world-famous popstar is to become a world-famous superhero. I told her there was no way because she freaks out about everything.”

“Honestly, she wouldn't even get that far. She's so lazy that she'd never actually do any superhero work.”

“Oh, I could totally see that being a thing.”

“Shall we see it in a more literal sense?”

“Let us do so.”

We cut to a fantasy sequence in which Amber was a world-famous superhero. World-infamous, more like! After saving the world again from Mr. Dr. Evil Villain Sr., she was taking a brief respite and sleeping peacefully in her bed at home. This lasted for all of two minutes before a siren went off on her phone, indicating that the world was in danger of being destroyed once more. Her eyes clenched in irritation and she squirmed around under the covers as the noise assaulted

her ears. Finally she sat up, turned to the source of the audacious audio with an annoyed look on her face, and aggressively prodded the “ignore” button under the alert. This put an end to the sirens going off around town as well and she laid back down, getting comfortable with a smile on her face.

“Five more minutes.”

Later in the day, she was sitting on the couch in the living room, watching TV with a bowl of salty snacks in her lap. She had just flicked to her favorite drama channel and gotten her blanket pulled around her just so when the loud screams of the general public came flooding into the house.

“HELP! OH MY GOD! HELP! WE’RE DOOMED!”

“CAN ANYONE SAVE US?!”

Her eyes narrowed in irritation and she raised the remote, turning up the volume on the TV until the pleas and cries could no longer be heard over the dramatic music.

“Ah, better.”

We returned to the present where FlamDawg and I were now nodding in agreement over the fact that Amber would make a *terrible* superhero. While we were distracted, Zack slowly floated over to us with a wicked grin on his face.

“Here’s Zacky! Time to get Hacky!”

I turned to him.

“No. Just... *stop*.”

He stared at us for a moment.

“Hmm... I’m not liking this.”

“What?”

“This... vibe. It’s not what I’m going for.”

“I don’t understand.”

“I want more... ‘please don’t kill us’ aesthetic instead of this... ‘goofy fat dog’ vibe.”

I still had no idea what he was talking about but I guess it didn’t matter. He flailed his hand about, causing FlamDawg to instantly explode in a flurry of orange fur that rained down upon the entire studio! The blast knocked us both back, sending us flopping around on the floor. Zack

did little to no flopping as you might expect, but I took spill after skin-shearing hard spill until I was lying face-down on the floor with Zack floating in front of me.

“Well, that was fun.”

I picked myself up and rearranged my deformed face before glaring at Zack who seemed quite pleased.

“This is better! But it’s missing something.”

He snapped and Amber suddenly appeared between us in a puff of pink smoke!

“Woah, what the...?”

“There it is! Now I can torment both of you at once!”

“Oh, how great.”

He leaned in close to us.

“Start panicking.”

Amber and I immediately flung ourselves at each other and hugged for dear life.

“Amber... I just want you to know this before we die... I never once followed your Instagram page.”

She was already in tears.

“Nathan... I think that orange shirt makes you look fat...!”

I stopped sobbing and gave her a look.

“Excuse me?!”

We turned to see that Zack was charging up a rainbow-colored ball of energy while laughing manically.

“HAHAHA! FINALLY, THE TIME HAS COME FOR ME TO-”

A loud, digital beeping sound reverberated throughout the studio as he suddenly vanished in the blink of an eye. Speaking of blinking, Amber and I did so in confusion.

“What the...?”

POOF! We quickly vanished in a puff of pink smoke as the *Zack’s Hacks* studio dematerialized beneath us, reappearing at home where an announcer’s voice was heard.

THE SIDESHOW SHOW “ZACK’S HACKS” HAS BEEN SUSPENDED FOLLOWING A LAWSUIT BY AN INDIVIDUAL KNOWN AS MAX TONHAK. HE CLAIMS THAT ZACK HAS STOLEN HIS IDEA FOR A HACKING SHOW AND SO HE SHALL BE PUT ON TRIAL FOR HIS CRIMES AGAINST THE HACKING

COMMUNITY. WE TOLERATE CHEATING BUT NOT DESPICABLE BEHAVIOR! HIS HACKING ABILITIES HAVE ALSO BEEN SUSPENDED FOR THE TIME BEING. REJOICE, DEAR MORTALS, FOR YOU WILL LIVE TO DIE ANOTHER DAY!

The voice faded away and that was the end of that. This left me and Amber sitting and hugging on the floor which we soon noticed after sitting in silence for a moment. We let go and jumped up before heading off in opposite directions.

“Alright, that’s enough of that!”

“Yeah, see you at dinner.”

With that, I headed upstairs and into my bedroom to throw all of my orange shirts away.

Later that afternoon, I was sitting on the couch in the living room playing a video game on a console that was unnamed out of fear of copyright. It involved me running around a bustling city while shooting people in the face and committing various felonies one after another. Two things I can’t do in real life for some reason! I had just torn an innocent man out of his car and was aggressively beating him with a baseball bat when Amber came downstairs holding a Barbie doll. She approached and stared at me for a moment before saying something.

“Hey!”

I didn’t look away from the screen.

“What?”

“I thought you were playing Barbie Dreamhouse Car Jackers with me!”

“Yeah yeah, I told you I was taking a break.”

“Nooo, you sat on the floor looking bored the entire time, then said you saw something shiny in my closet and locked the door on me when I went in to look!”

“Oh. I guess my foot slipped.”

“What? That doesn’t even have anything to do with... Stop playing that game!”

“No way. This game is better than you in every way.”

“Excuse me?! How?!”

“It has a mute button.”

Her jaw *dropped* and she was left standing there in silence for several minutes while I sat there and played with a smile on my face. Then, she threw her arms around in a fit of rage.

“You need to get a life!”

“I’m a gamer, I have lots of lives.”

“You’re stupid!”

“My stupid what?”

“UGH!”

“Why don’t you cough up that hairball in the sink upstairs?”

Fed up with this conversation, she turned and stormed upstairs while cradling her Barbie doll.

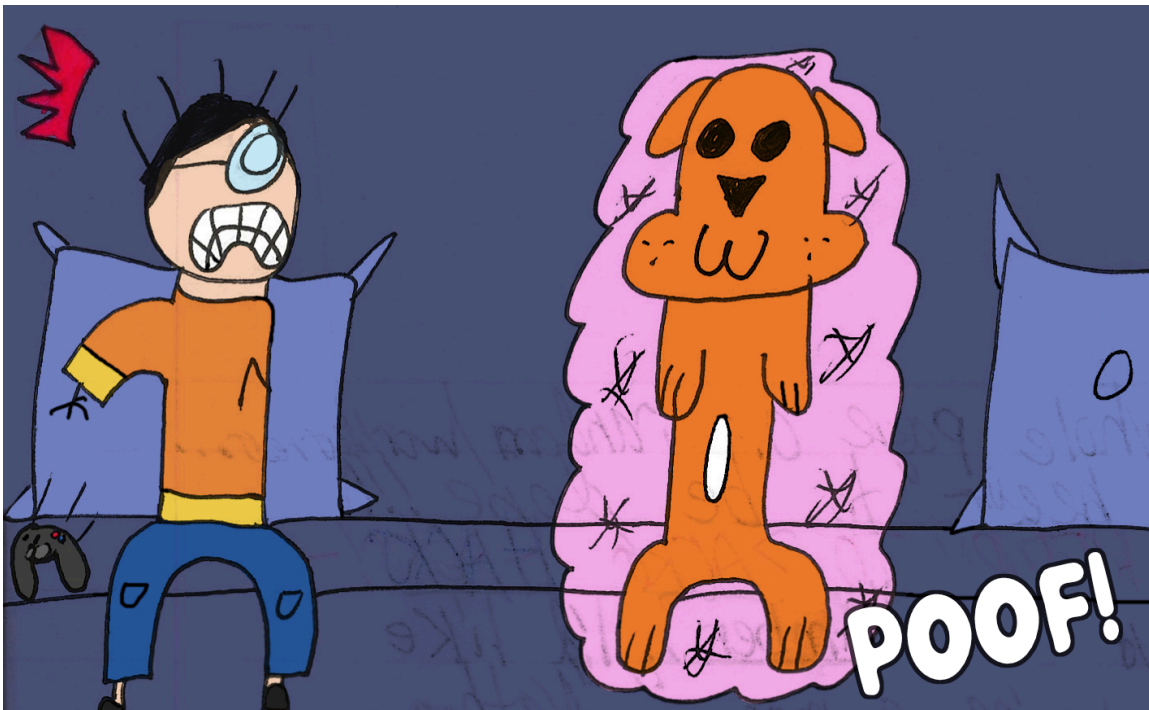
“Guess I’ll just have to jack the president’s Bugatti *ALL BY MYSELF!*”

She shouted in my direction about halfway up, but I wasn’t paying attention anymore. In truth, I wasn’t paying attention to begin with! My gaming session continued in silence save for the loud sounds of gunfire and women screaming after I didn’t pay them for their time, but that was until FlamDawg suddenly appeared next to me in a puff of pink smoke!

“What the...? FlamDawg?!”

He turned to me with a big smile.

“Hi! I don’t want to play Dream House Car Jackers anymore so here I am.”



I really just wanted to be *alone* while I did my gaming thing so it was time to get rid of him. Thinking quickly, I stood up and wandered over to the front door before turning to him with a smile.

“Hey, FlamDawg! I got something for you!”

I held my hand up, acting like I was holding some sort of ball. His head immediately cracked around and his eyes got all big.

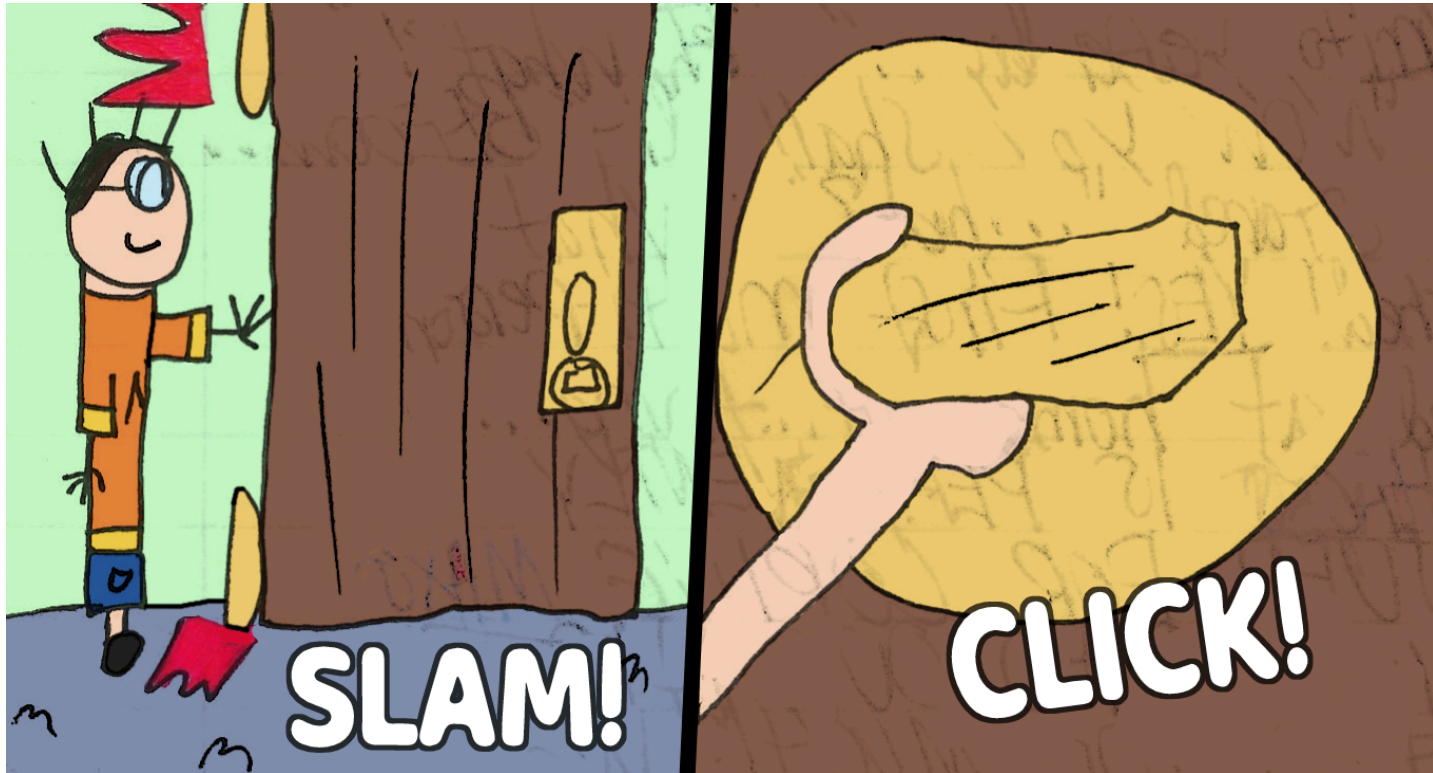
“Is that... *a ball?*”

I opened the door and flung nothing in particular outside, sending him into a frenzy.

“OOH OOH A BALL! I GOT IT I GOT IT!”



He flew off the couch and ran outside, flailing his arms about wildly. A smile crossed my face as I slammed the door shut behind him, locking it to ensure that he would be out of my way for the rest of the afternoon.



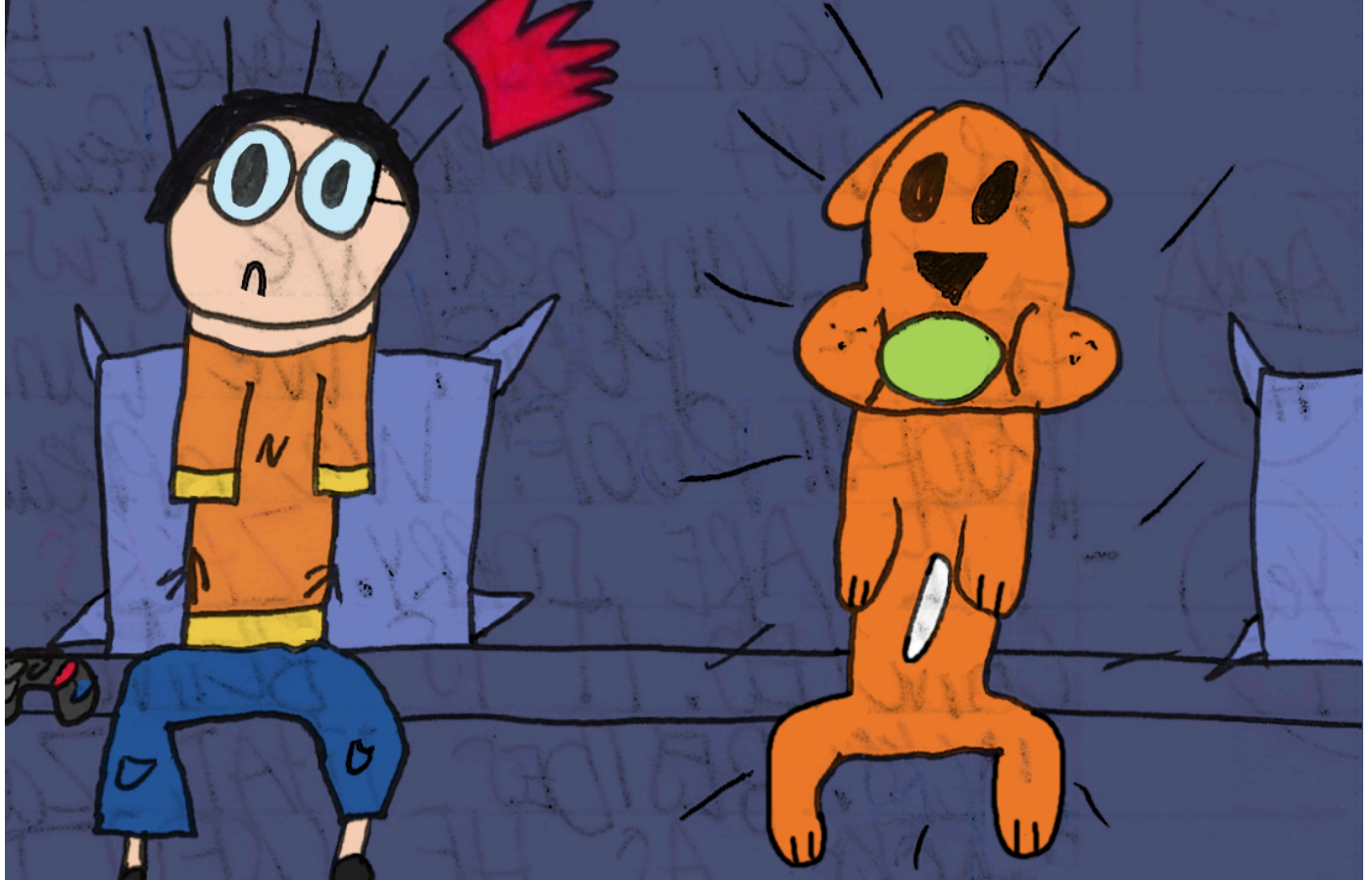
With that, I turned and headed back over to the couch.

“Now, where was...”

I sat back down and noticed that FlamDawg was sitting right next to me with a bright green tennis ball in his mouth.

“I...?”

I immediately slumped over in defeat and held my head in my hands, utterly done with everything at this point.



It was then that JT ran in, holding what appeared to be... nothing. There was absolutely nothing in the paw he was holding up.

“Hey! What’s the what, guys?! So, I’ve been thinking about what I can do to really stand out among the main characters, and I think I’ve got it! I’ll be the one who creates all sorts of wacky invisible inventions! I shall dub them... Invisiventions!”

Neither me nor FlamDawg was paying attention, yet he kept going.

“First up, I made this invisible slice of pie! You can’t see it, but it actually tastes *really*...!”

Suddenly, there was a splattering sound and his gaze shot downwards with his eyes growing wide. He stood in silence for a moment before screaming began.

“NOOO! I DROPPED IT! MY HARD WORK... RUINED! BWAAAAAH!”

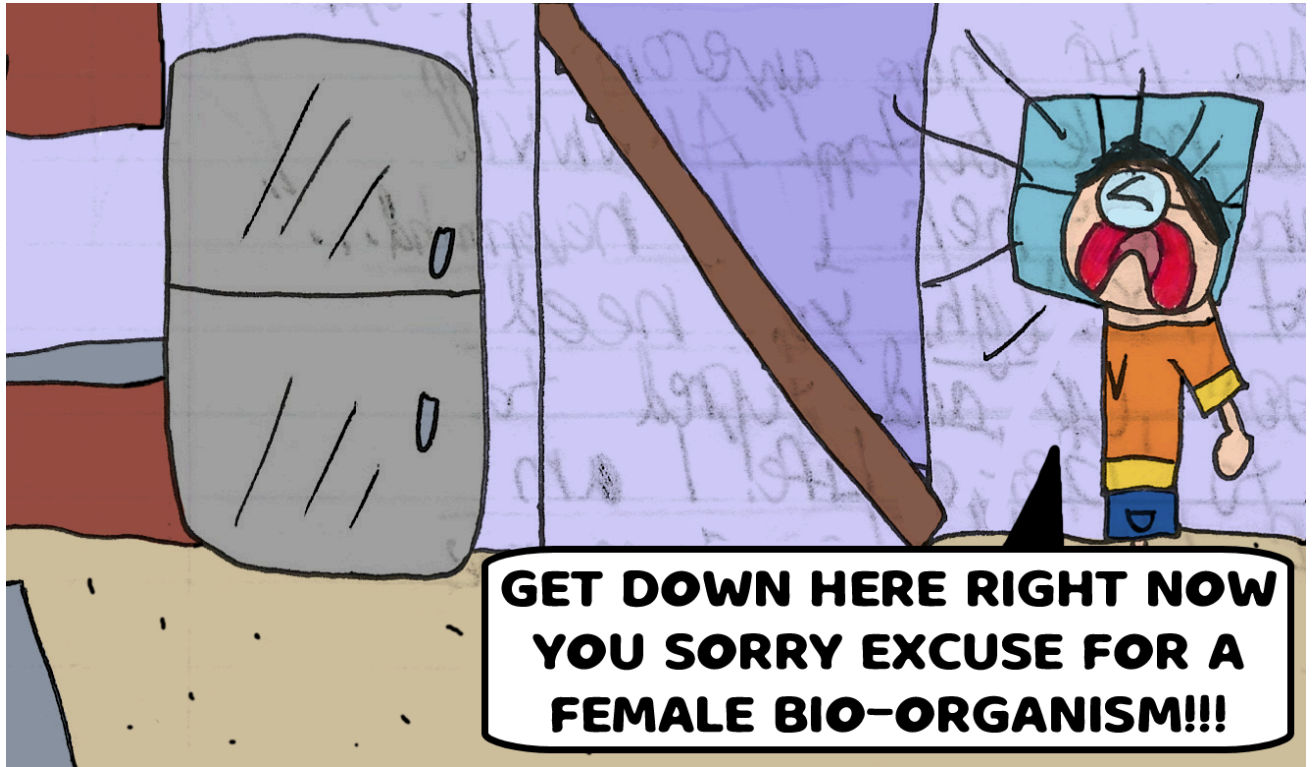


He turned and ran out of the room, crying hysterically. No, he did not bother cleaning that up and now we'll be wondering why the carpet is sticky for the next seven months. Finally, I pulled myself together and stood up, ready to move on with my day. I headed over to my cabinet full of video games and went to grab *Smash Cars* off of the golden pedestal it sat upon. It's a game about RC cars racing and smashing into one another and I play it every weekend when I don't have school!! Imagine my surprise when I saw that in its place was a game called *Cat's Rainbow* instead!



I stood there in shock for several silent minutes before I turned and stomped into the kitchen like a raging demon and shouted up the stairs.

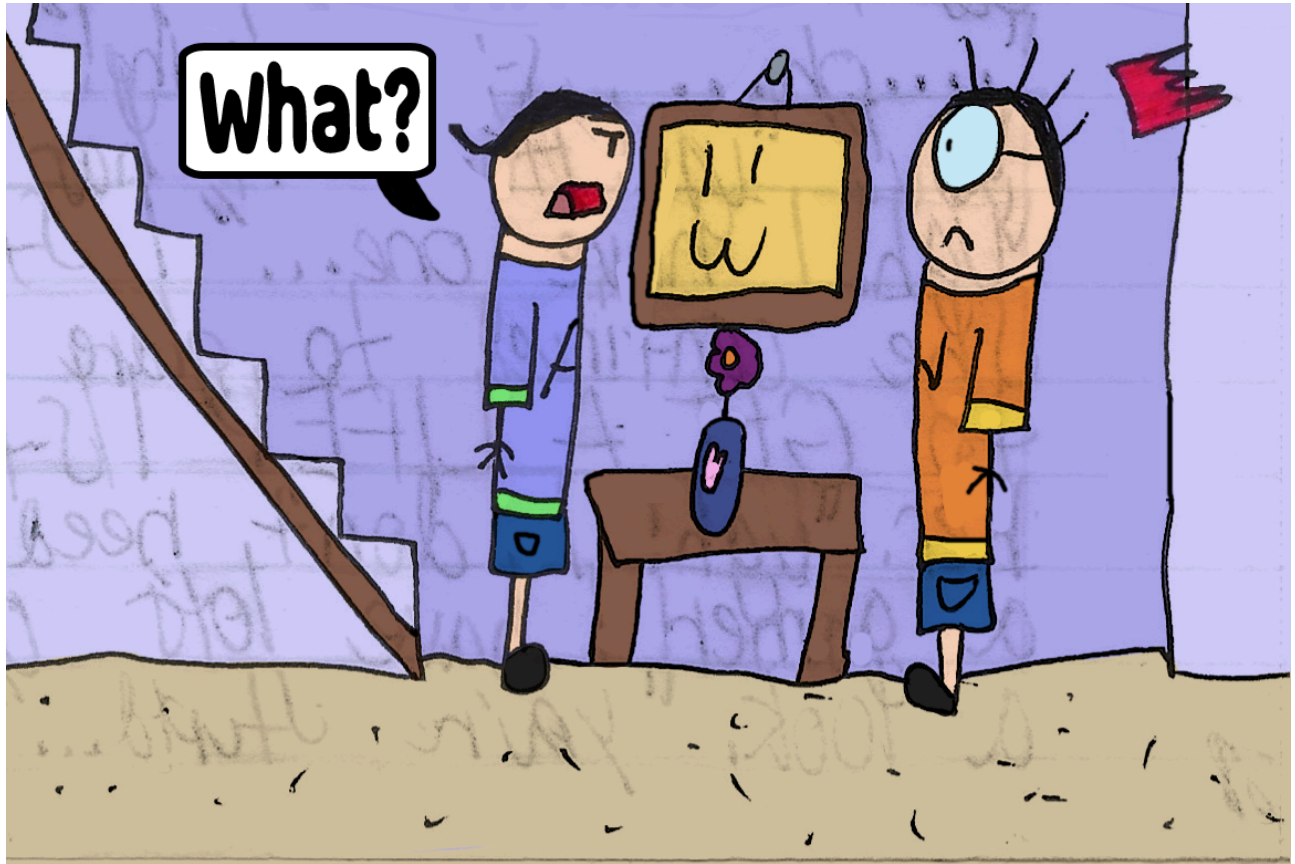
“GET DOWN HERE RIGHT NOW YOU SORRY EXCUSE FOR A FEMALE BIO-ORGANISM!”



A moment later, Amber came downstairs with a look on her face.

"What?"

I was rather surprised she thought I was calling for her, but then again I do yell at her on a daily basis.



This was unexpected, but I figured it would be a good opportunity to get something out of her.

“Um... well... *I know what you did* so don't try to hide it! Tell me the truth right now!”

She rolled her eyes and sighed.

“Fine. I spilled paint on, like, your entire wardrobe when I was painting my Dreamhouse earlier. I guess I should have put the laundry away before doing that, but whatever.”

I stared at her for a moment. In truth, all of that was fine because she's so unreliable at putting the laundry away that I just give her a basket of clothes to carry around to make her feel like she's doing something helpful. I haven't worn those clothes in *years*.

“I see. Well, Amber... I am hurt by what you did. I want you to go upstairs and think about what you have done!”

“Okay, fine...”

She turned and headed back upstairs in a rather guilty fashion. Once she disappeared from view, FlamDawg, who was now seated at the kitchen table, turned to me.

“Wow, that was good.”

“I know, we should do this once a week!”

With that little victory in my pocket, I turned back towards the stairs.

“CAT YOU DESPICABLE THING I CAN’T COME UP WITH BECAUSE I ALREADY USED MY BEST ONE! GET DOWN HERE RIGHT NOW!”

A moment later, she waltzed down the stairs with a look that begged the question as to why I was wasting her time.

“Yes, what?”

“Where is that game I had on the pedestal in the cabinet...?”

“Oh, you mean that Crash Cars thing?”

I struggled to speak through grit teeth.

“*Smash Cars, yes...!*”

“I thought it was a stupid game so I threw it away.”

My face turned as red as the illustrator could possibly color it.

“What is *WRONG* with you?! I let you into MY house for this Season and you think you can just come in here and make all of the rules?! I can kick you out any time I want! It’ll be a swift jab in the pants you don’t wear and you’ll be like ‘woooo- cccck!’”

I went so far as to mimic her flight through the air and crashing onto the cold sidewalk with my hand. In response, she simply rolled her eyes.

“Whatever. I don’t need this. Just like *you* don’t need that dumb car game!”

She twirled around and headed back up the stairs with a smile, passing by Amber who came back down and headed for the refrigerator. All the while, I stood there practically burning with rage before turning to FlamDawg.

“That is IT! Forget my hatred of JT that kinda trailed off in recent chapters, I want her OUT OF THIS HOUSE!”

Amber suddenly turned around with tears in her eyes.

“God, it was just some spilled paint! I’ll clean it up! WHAT DO YOU WANT FROM ME?!”

She ran back upstairs, sobbing hysterically. This left FlamDawg and I alone, blinking in confusion.

“Hey, did you hear that loud snap?”

“What?”

“That was her heart breaking.”

“It’ll mend. It always does.”

It was at that moment that JT entered the room, also sobbing hysterically. I guess it's just one of those days! Yeah, one where we get Hacked to death and everyone cries. I turned and gave him a look.

"What's your problem?"

He looked up at the two of us and spoke through his tears.

"Don't you remember?! I dropped my new invisible pie and now it's *RUINED!*"

We stared at him in silence, having absolutely no idea what he was talking about.

"You were both *RIGHT THERE* when it happened!"

"I have no idea what you're talking about."

"Yeah, I must not have been in the room."

"Are you mistaking me for Zack?"

"It was probably Zack who was in the room."

His lip quivered before he blubbered and boo-hooed some more. I responded, as I often do, by rolling my eyes.

"Oh puh-lease. It was just some pie no one could see. Must you always be so dramatic?"

"I am NOT dramatic!"

He said while twirling around like a ballerina on a silver stage.

"Luckily, I have a flashback for this."

We cut to a flashback where JT was walking down the sidewalk on a warm summer's day. He strutted into the local ice cream shoppe, Scoop Troupe, and smiled at the man working behind the counter.

"What? Hi! I would like one super mega double scoop."

The man smiled and tried to say something in response, but we don't have any background character dialogue for this scene so just ignore that. After a lengthy process of scooping and stacking followed by JT trying to pay with Bitcoin, the man handed him his ice cream cone. He grabbed it, twirled around, and held it high into the air.

"ICE CREAM GET!"

One of the other workers walked over and stared at him.

“Why do they always do that...?”

Instead of cutting back to us in the kitchen, we immediately cut to an episode of *Viewer Fun* because that’s something we just absolutely need to see with our eyes right now.

--THE SIDESHOW--

Viewer Fun!

It all began with FlamDawg standing in the middle of the room, something he immediately recognized and began to fret over.

“Oh, come on! Not again!”

Suddenly, there was a puff of pink smoke and I appeared next to him, followed by Amber who appeared next to me!

“Wait, what?”

“Hiii!”

Then there was a bigger, more violent puff of smoke as Zack appeared right in front of us! This warranted some screaming, light crying, and a little bit of peeing. Without even waiting for us to compose ourselves, he started to float in the air which was a sign of horrible things to come. My crying and peeing instantly stopped and I glared at him as he drifted through the skies above.

“Hey! How does he have his Hacks back?! I thought he lost them because of the lawsuit thing!”

He smiled down at me.

“I managed to find a loophole that allows me to use them until the day of the trial! This is Zack’s Hacks Backs!”

I waved my hand around.

“Yeah yeah, save that for the last Season Amber predicted. And by the way, we're calling it '*The Zreboot*'.”

He then proceeded to drop pinecones behind him, leaving them floating in the air and defying all logic and gravity, that of which gave me a brain cramp. This nonsense was interrupted by yet another puff of pink smoke as Bob suddenly appeared before us!

“What the...?!”

He immediately started dancing about.

“Hey! I'm here as the entertainment for today's episode!”

He shimmied and flailed around until he noticed one of the pinecones floating in the air.

“Oh, are these free to take?”

He reached up and plucked one out of the sky, resulting in a large tearing sound as the fabric of the novel was quite literally ripped open, leaving a massive black hole that quickly sucked us all in! We screamed and peed more as everything that ever was or ever could be was devoured by Bob's foolish mistake. Thankfully, everything resets once *Viewer Fun* ends so we'll live on, but it was still pretty traumatic. I might need some time off to heal my weary mind!

AND THAT IS ALL FOR VIEWER FUN!

So then! That was... quite a chapter. Zack Hacked us into oblivion, then I had to deal with women and an emotional JT, and then it ended with all of us dying! Are we done for the year yet?!