

# Season 2, Chapter 13 – The Sportside Island Adventure



**We're off on our next grand adventure! Ah, I love when we get up and *do* things. I just hope we don't abandon the entire thing halfway through like everything else we've done...**

Anyway, we had finally reached the top of Mayweather Mountain, a little spot known as Heartbreak Peak, after a grueling bike race that tested our friendship or inherent lack thereof. Mostly the latter one. Now, we were ready to head off to our next destination and put in some work on this grand adventure! Although, the thought of "putting in work" made me suddenly recall that Amber and work don't tend to go well together. I'm pretty sure I have a flashback that I can use as an example... let's see...

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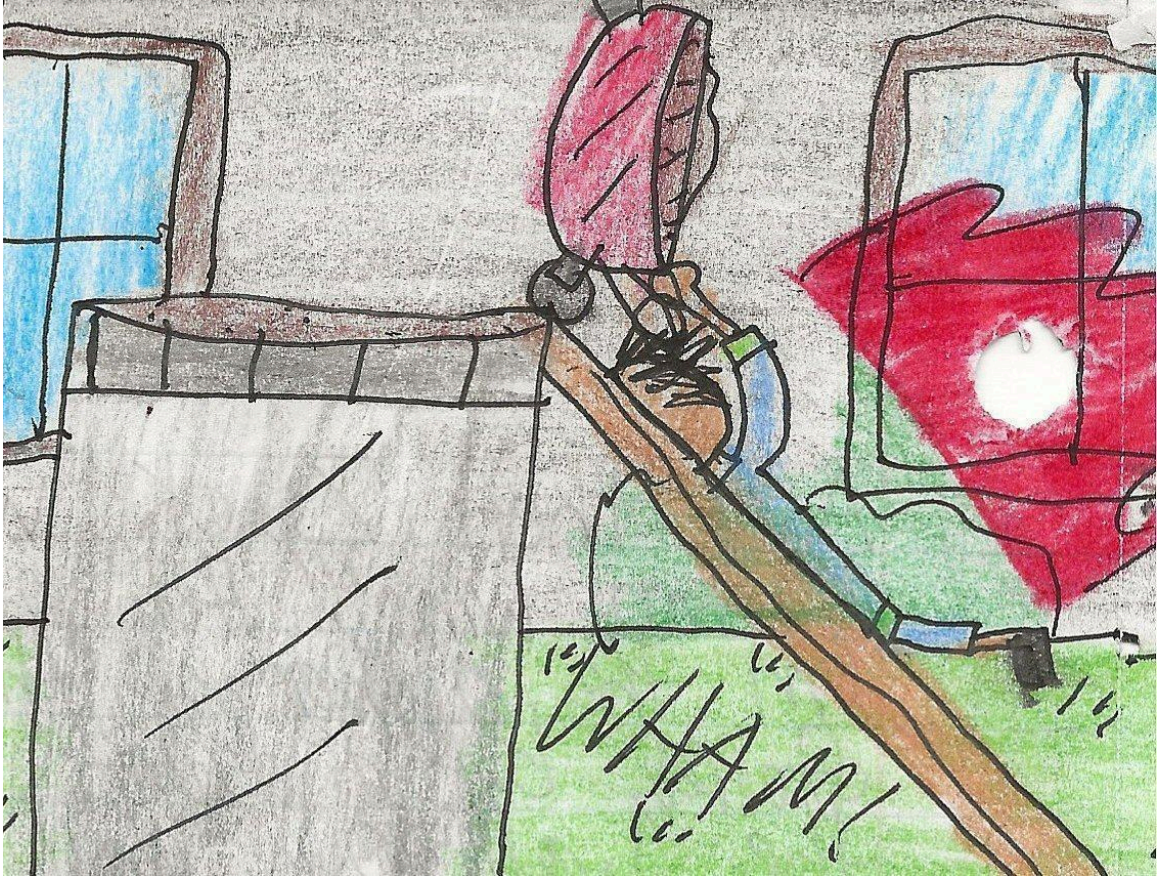
We cut to a flashback where it was the start of summer, just after the first Season had finished, and Amber was outside, fully prepared to put in work on transforming the rather bland backyard into a lush forest of flowers and greenery. Her first mistake was buying a five foot tall flower bed meant for... I'm not even sure what. Flowers with deep roots, maybe? Gardening next to a building atop a massive flight of stairs? Who knows. In any case, she bought the first flower bed that popped up when she searched for the Five Feet brand of flower beds and now she has to live with that decision.

She chose to persevere through the adversity and came up with a strategy to garden easily and effectively. She placed a wooden plank against the side of the flower bed, allowing it to act as a ramp which she could use to get the wheelbarrow full of dirt up to where it needed to be. With

everything in place, she grabbed the wheelbarrow and started heading up the makeshift ramp with a smile.



Almost immediately, she slipped and fell face-first into the wooden board with a loud smacking sound that reverberated throughout the neighborhood. The wheelbarrow full of dirt then fell backward, dumping all of the dirt on top of her before it hit her on the head, fell to the ground, and broke into pieces. She laid there for several silent minutes, presumably either dead or depressed, up until the board snapped in half and sent her flopping to the ground below. Then the entire flower bed caught on fire, but at that point it didn't even matter.



We returned to the present and got to the actual story where we were all still standing atop Heartbreak Peak, waiting for Cat to tell us where to go next. And, in case you were wondering, I was alive again and that was just great.

“So... where to?”

She smiled wide.

“First, we have to go through this magical portal over there which will take us to Sportside Island!”

She turned and pointed to the area with buildings and beaches we could see in the distance. Closer inspection revealed that it was, in fact, surrounded by water on all sides, making it an island. I looked over at the shimmering portal near the cave Rex popped out of and blinked a few times.

“Oh. Well, that’s pretty convenient. But why is it called Sportside Island?”

“Because they host *all kinds* of sporting events! They have tennis, basketball, wakeboarding, fencing...”

“And we’re going to have to participate in each event one by one over several pages in order to gain access to the place we want to go to?”

She nodded aggressively.

“Uh-huh!”

We all groaned and stomped around.

“UGGGH!”

“I HATE MY LIFE!”

Cat ignored this and continued.

“So, after we go through the portal and teleport to the island, we’ll head into town! Ooh, I hope some of the locals are out today! I heart people!”

Amber’s tantrum quickly ended and she joined in.

“Ah! I heart potato sauce!”

I started screaming to interrupt them.

“And I’d heart it if you two would SHUT UP!”



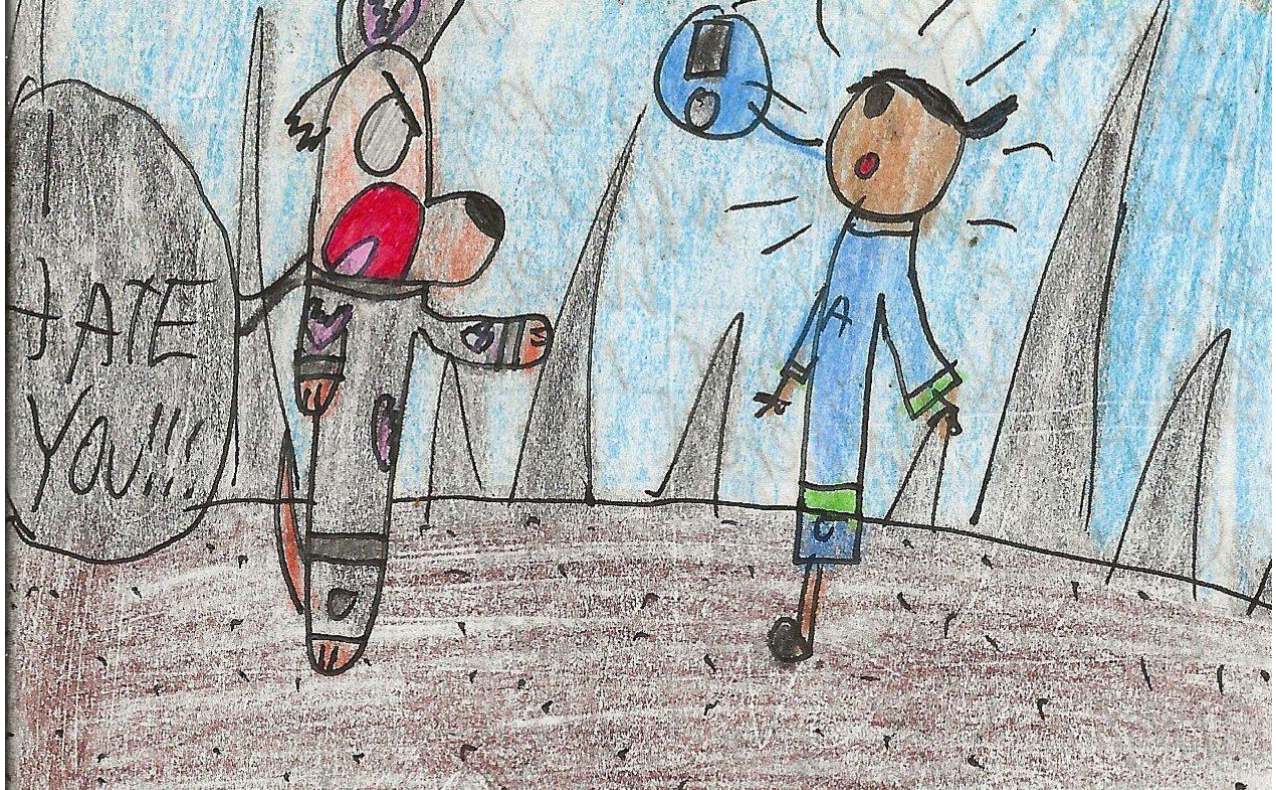
They both stopped giggling and slowly turned to me with open mouths, hardly able to believe I just said such a thing. I didn't say it, I *screamed* it! It was then that we heard some death-metal police music and a Heartbreak Bang stormed over to our little loitering group. He was actually standing around off to the side this entire time but we just never noticed him. He went right up to Amber and started pointing at her rather intensely.

"Hey! YOU!"

She spun around with a smile.

"Yeah? Hi! Hello!"

"I HATE YOU!"



All at once, the music stopped and her smile turned into a blank, shocked expression. A cracking sound was heard, presumably her heart, and several of us gasped. Then, her lip quivered before tears welled up and she started sobbing. FlamDawg and I were none too amused.

"Here come the tears..."

"Oh God..."

The Heartbreak Bang seemed to be enjoying it, however.

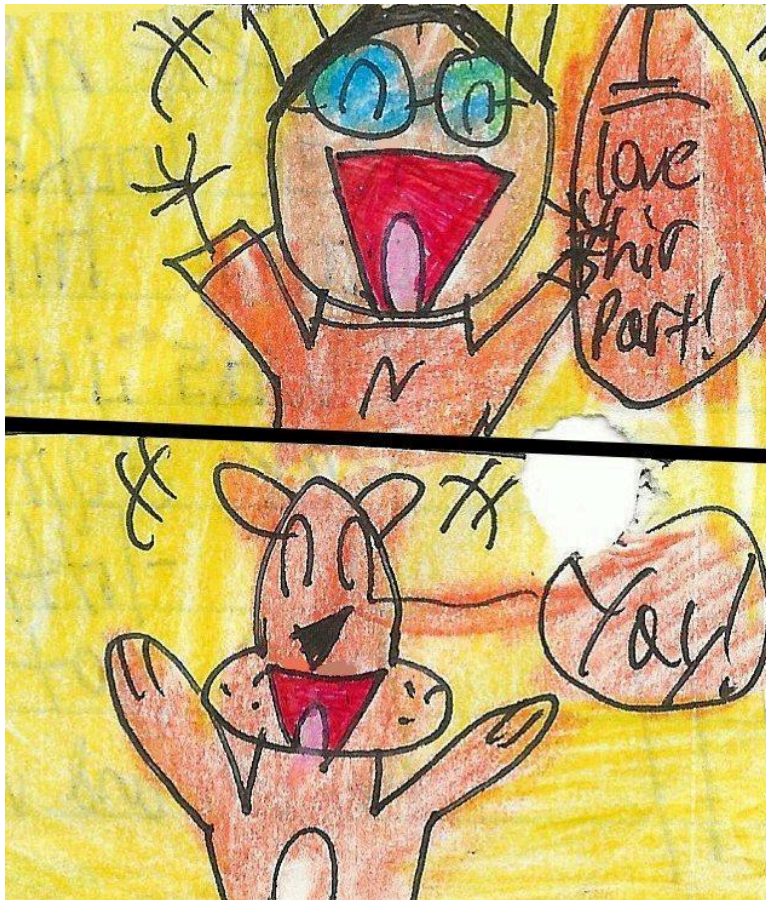
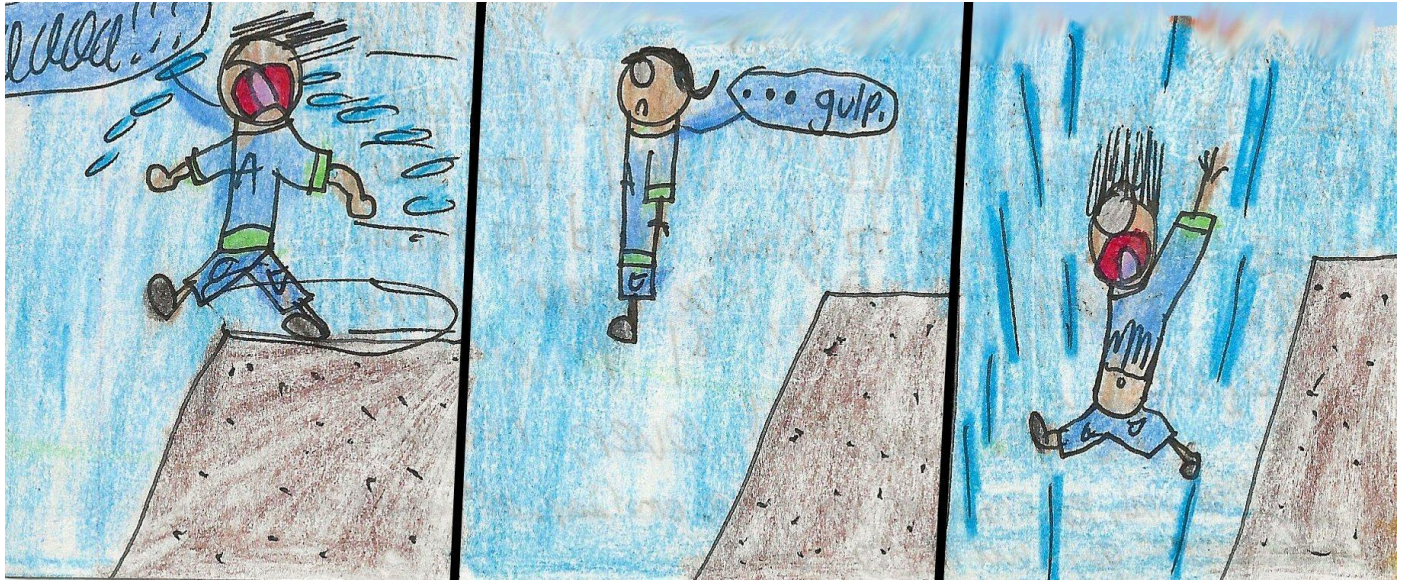
"I love this part!"



She attempted to turn and storm upstairs to her room so she could sob into her pillow for an hour, but forgot that we were atop a mountain at the moment. This led to her walking right off the edge and cartoonishly hovering in the air before plummeting down to the world below. This was where FlamDawg and I became interested.

"I love this part!"

"Yay!"



We danced around in victory and the Little Bang slid in and joined us. This lasted until she fell down far enough that she unloaded and magically reappeared right next to us, putting a stop to our little celebration.

"Oh no... she's back."

“Aaand the darkness returns.”

We sighed loudly while she crossed her arms and glared at us. This was enough to scare the Little Bang who quickly took his ticket pad and hurried into the cave before he got into any trouble. He can dish out the heartbreak, but can't take it! With that taken care of, we all turned back to Cat who was just standing there with a silly look on her face.

“So, shall we get going?”

She didn't respond and I could hear a sound that sounded like a loss of signal. Static, perhaps?

“HELLO? CAT?!”

This returned her to reality where she immediately jumped into the air.

“AAAH! WHAT?!”



"Can we get going now?"

"Oh, yeah sure. Let's see... the ultimate goal is to make it to the volcano!"

"The what now?"

She turned and pointed to the massive mountain in the center of the island.



Once again, I groaned loudly and slowly turned to FlamDawg.

“UGH. What did we even leave the house for again?!”

“You know, I can’t remember.”

“Didn’t we have that Bang building to finish?”

He started laughing as if I had said something funny. Then everyone else joined in, including Cat and Rex who weren’t even here for that.

“What? What did I say? We’re going back, right?”

The laughing intensified until Amber ruptured something which kinda killed the mood.



"Well, whatever. We're here, so we might as well do whatever it is we need to do."

Amber, now with a bandage over her spleen, slid in looking like some sort of glamorous tourist.

"Yay, sports! I'm not athletic in any way, but taking lots of pictures of me pretending I am will look great on my Instagram page!"

I gave her a look.

"Yeah, we're not doing that."

She immediately went limp and her bandage popped off, causing more fluids to spill out. Ignoring this, Cat walked over to the portal.

"Alright, everyone! Follow me to Sportside Island!"

She jumped into the portal and we all followed her one by one. After a rather lengthy loading screen that featured an important tip, "FlamDawg is the Dawg of Fire", we magically appeared on the island on the outskirts of what appeared to be a town filled with colorful buildings of all shapes and sizes. Cat once again took the lead and smiled.

“Come on! Let’s head to the main square.”

We all followed her in an orderly fashion until the order was disrupted and everyone went wild in every direction. The biggest offender was Amber, who started skipping about like a pretty girl in a fairytale land. Neither of those things were true! The moment I saw her, I started yelling.

“NO SKIPPING!”



Upon realizing that we had to do some rather boring walking, I signaled everyone to commence their daily exercise regimen.

“Everyone! If we’re going to do sports stuff, we must be prepared! Thighmasters READY!”

Amber and BlueEye held theirs up while a squeaking sound was heard coming from FlamDawg’s direction.

“NOT NOW! Wait for my signal!”

I paused for a moment before waving my hand and we all started Thighmaster-ing while jogging down the road to the main square of the town.



It wasn't long before we arrived in the main square and were surrounded on all sides by buildings of varying sizes with colorful roofs. The architecture was quite grand and there was even a fancy fountain in the middle which we all approached. When we did, Cat ran over to a small billboard and started looking through all of the sporting events that were listed.

"Okay, so our goal is to win at as many sports as we can to gain access to the dance competition cutscene which will be held at the top of the volcano."

JT smiled.

"Things are really heating up!"

I turned to him.

"What was that? Was that a volcano joke?"

"It's spicy."

"What?"

"Anyway, what sport should we do first? There's wakeboarding, bowling, swordplay..."

Amber immediately started flailing around.

“Ooh! Swordplay sounds fun! I want to swing a sword around!”

I stepped forward and waved my arms, trying to convey the emotion that I did not approve of this and that Amber wielding a sword would mean the end of all our lives.

“Absolutely NOT! Last month you almost accidentally cut Zack’s head off with a butter knife! I would have been very outraged had I not enjoyed it so much.”

“That’s because I thought you had to jab, not lather.”

“In any case, playing with swords will just result in all of us breaking our bones.”

Cat waved her paw about.

“Oh, don’t worry. They’re not *real* swords, just plastic things. And the players wear padding to minimize damage! I’ll go ahead and sign us up, then!”

I watched as Amber’s face curled into a wickedly malicious grin the moment Cat’s pen hit the sign-up sheet. I extended an arm and tried to stop what was sure to be a tragic event from transpiring, but then a timeskip occurred and I was too late.

**Sometime later**, we were all in the swordplay arena, watching the current match. First up was Amber and FlamDawg who were fighting each other while wearing armor in blue and orange, respectively. They stood atop a large, circular platform that was suspended high in the air above a pool of water and the goal was to whack one another until someone fell off. How fun! The rest of us were seated in the stands, intently watching what was sure to be a very entertaining match. Amber had glowing red eyes and an evil smile while FlamDawg was looking quite terrified.

“Um... hello? Guys?! How did I get here? And why am I fighting Amber of all people?!”

I shoved a handful of popcorn into my mouth before calling out to him.

“Because the rest of us don’t want to die!”

“Death is a possibility?!”

“With her as your opponent, a very high one!”

The bell rang and Amber immediately charged at him, coming in swinging. He screamed and flailed about, doing his best to fend her off, but her overwhelming tenacity for destruction of all living creatures proved too much for him to handle. Eventually, she swung her sword around and slammed into him with such force that he flew backwards, tumbled off the edge, and splashed down in the water below. The bell rang again, ending the round, and the crowd cheered as Amber breathed fire like some sort of raging demon. In truth, this is just normal woman behavior!

A few minutes later, FlamDawg was hoisted back onto the platform, now soaking wet. He remained still for a moment before his eyes snapped open and fire practically blasted from his pupils from his sheer determination. Sure, Amber was quite scary and unpredictable, but *no one* knocks him into water! He stared at her with that same fire in his eyes before the bell rang and he finally spoke.

“I hate taking a bath.”

Before Amber could make a move, he came flying at her with his sword raised! She screamed, not prepared for him to suddenly start playing offense. He whacked her a few times, pushing her back while she desperately tried to block and find an opening for a counterattack. Clashing filled the arena until Amber was pushed right to the edge of the platform and she glanced down at the water below. When she turned back around, FlamDawg was looming over her with his sword raised. He stared down at her with a dark look on his face before uttering but a single word.

“*Perish.*”

He whacked her across the face in such a way that warranted six slow-motion replays from different angles, one of which showed a tooth flying out. She went spiraling down towards the water below, and as she fell, she saw FlamDawg staring down at her. Zack’s face slowly faded over his own and she gasped, realizing this was just like all those times in Season 1 when she was powerless to stop Zack’s relentless onslaught. Accepting her fate, she closed her eyes.

“So... this is what it means to lack the strength to pursue your dreams...”

She dropped into the water with a loud splashing sound and the audience clapped and cheered. In our section, we were all cheering.

“Wow, no way! He really managed to knock her off the ledge! That’s impressive!”

Cat started slapping me with an angry look.

“Hey! Don’t spoil the fight! I haven’t processed what happened yet! Ugh, I *HATE* it when people tell me what happens! Like, ooh, this is the part where the monster eats that girl! And I’m like SHUT UP! You think you’re POPULARRRRR!”

She finished and started breathing heavily, prompting me to scooch away from her. Turning back to the action, I saw FlamDawg standing near the edge of the platform while Amber was being hoisted back up.

“I wonder how this will pan out? FlamDawg could probably beat her if he...”

Suddenly, there was a loud bone-snapping sound as all of FlamDawg’s joints gave out at once and he collapsed onto the ground in a squishy heap. The audience members started screaming while ambulance sirens started blaring and the match was immediately canceled. Amber, now

back on the platform but soaking wet, started dancing around in victory because she knew this meant she had gotten a free win. In the stands, I just sighed loudly before turning to Cat, taking my turn to slap her.

“I TOLD YOU THIS WOULD HAPPEN IF WE PLAYED WITH SWORDS!”

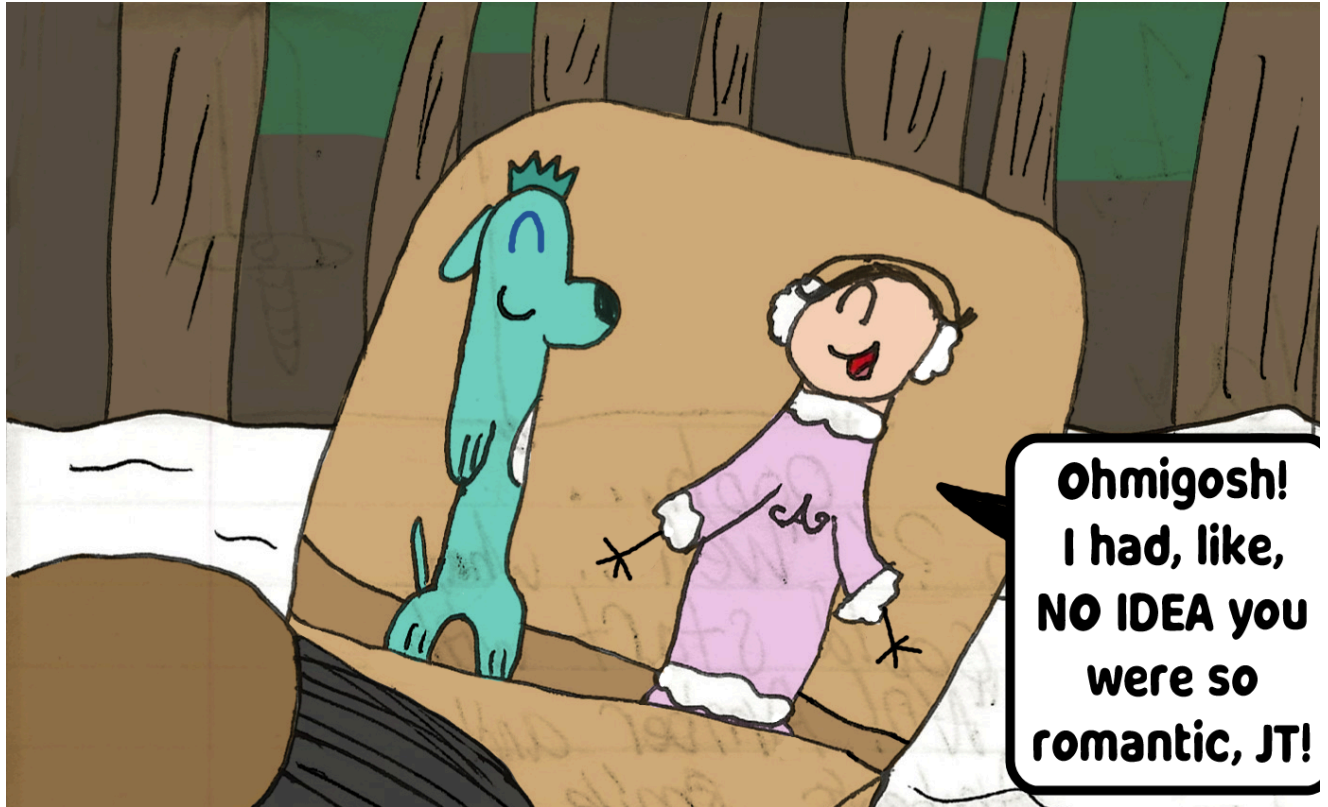
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## **--THE SIDESHOW--**

### ***A Moment of Romance***

The scene was set deep within a snowy winter forest. The air was quiet and still as the cold air blew around, but then the camera panned over, revealing that Amber and JT were sitting inside a horse-drawn carriage that was stationed within a tranquil clearing. She was wearing a fluffy pink coat, likely imported and expensive, complete with earmuffs and Ugg boots while he was naked like he always is. It seemed as though these two were on a hot date, taking time away from their busy island adventure to have a moment of romance in the snow-covered woods. After absorbing the calm tranquility of the surrounding area, she turned to him with a smile.

“Ohmigosh! I had, like, NO idea you were so romantic, JT!”



He returned the smile with a charming one of his own.

“But of course. I wanted to... return the favor and show you a nice time after you invited me into your lovely home. I also find you to be quite beautiful and mesmerizing... like an ice-covered rose.”

She giggled and waved her hand about.

“Oh, you! I’m having a wonderful time on our snowy carriage riiide!”

What neither realized was that Zack had been hiding behind a tree in the background behind them and there were dozens of empty bean cans next to him. The horse pulling the carriage burped and there were signs of beans on the ground below it, proving that something sinister was brewing in this scenario.



As the date continued, JT pulled out a lit purple candle and handed it to Amber.

"Here! I got you a lavender candle! Hold it close if you get cold at all."

Her eyes brightened and she happily took it from him.

"Ooh, as a woman, I LOVE candles!"



She held it close as he reached down, slipping into the small space where they put their feet where a cooler was stored.

“Hold on, let me grab some drinks. Do you like Spearblast?”

“Ooh, you mean that delightfully fizzy soda that serves as the novel’s signature beverage? I love it!”



All the while, the horse neighed loudly, appearing to be in some sort of distress. Perhaps it was... intestinal. Amber looked around at the scenery before turning to the horse which suddenly reared up and neighed again. Her eyes grew wide before there was a loud farting sound. Almost immediately, the candle became a makeshift flamethrower and the flame blasted her right in the face!



JT rummaged around in the cooler below before pulling out two bottles of Spearblast and sitting back up to hand one to her.

“A beverage for the lovely lady...”



He turned to her, revealing that she was now fried to a crisp and resembled more of a skeleton than a woman. The entire area around her was also burnt, though the candle she held in her lap was still perfectly fine. He screamed and the bottles of soda went flying.

“OH MY GOD!”



They flew through the air, heading over to Zack who quickly snatched them and smiled at the camera.

“And that’s how to easily get two free bottles of soda!”

The scene faded out as Amber fell limp over the side of the carriage and JT started sobbing, knowing their zesty romance would never be sparked again.

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**Sometime later**, we all shuffled out of the local hospital with FlamDawg’s bones now back in their proper places. Thanks to that little mishap, the swordplay arena was promptly shut down- likely forever- meaning that the rest of us were no longer able to partake in whacking each other with plastic swords. I never get to enjoy anything around here!

“Well, it’s good that FlamDawg’s healed up but now we can’t do anymore sword stuff!”

Cat smiled confidently.

“Don’t worry! There’s actually another swordplay event called Speed Slice! It’s where you have to slice random objects with your sword as quick as you can!”

My face quickly brightened.

“So I still get to use a sword after all? This day might not be so bad! I got to see Amber get whacked and now...”

I slowly turned to see that she was glaring at me, though it was quite hard to tell because her face was completely swollen from the beating she received earlier.

“Oh, hi. Did you enjoy your match against FlamDawg?”

Her glare never wavered.

“Oh yeeeeeaaah. I *loved* it. SMILEY FACE.”

I stared at her for a moment.

“Okay, you’re saying smiley face yet your actual face tells a different story.”

She slowly raised a fist.

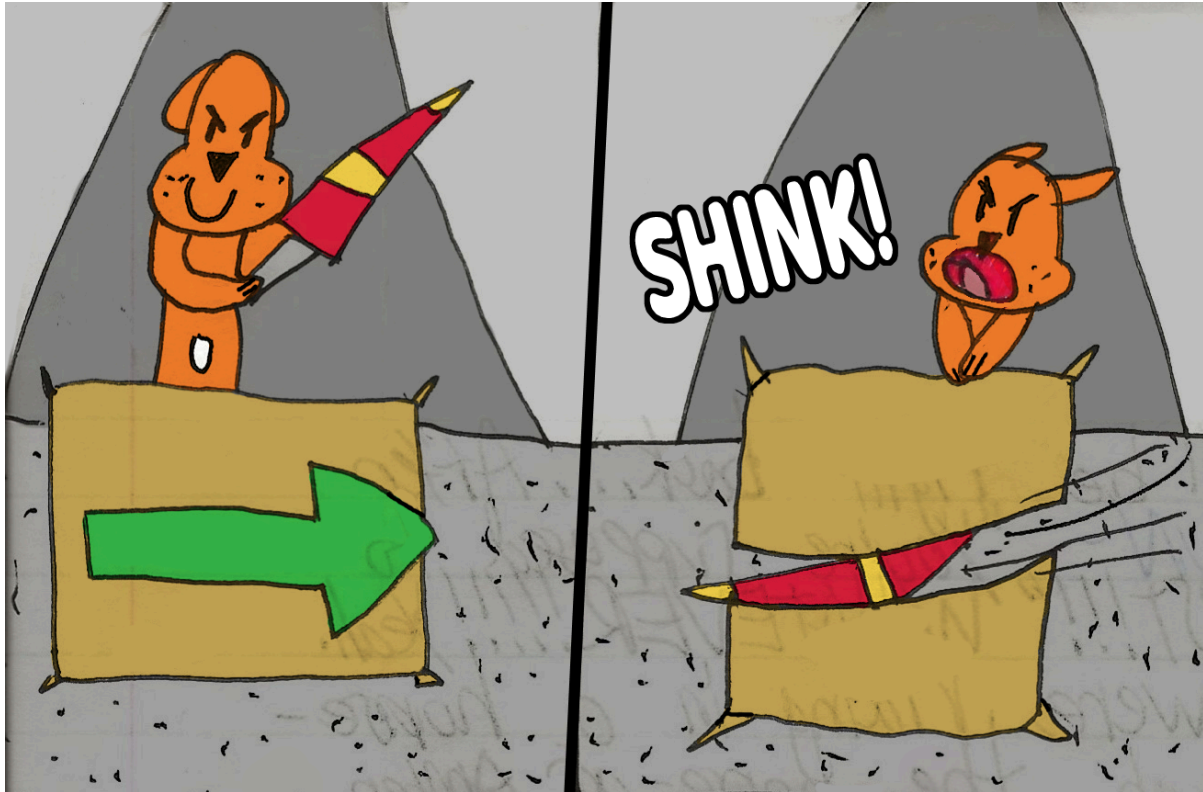
“Wanna know what story my *fist* is about to tell...?”

I spun around and raised a finger.

“Quickly! TO THE SPEED SLICE ARENA!”

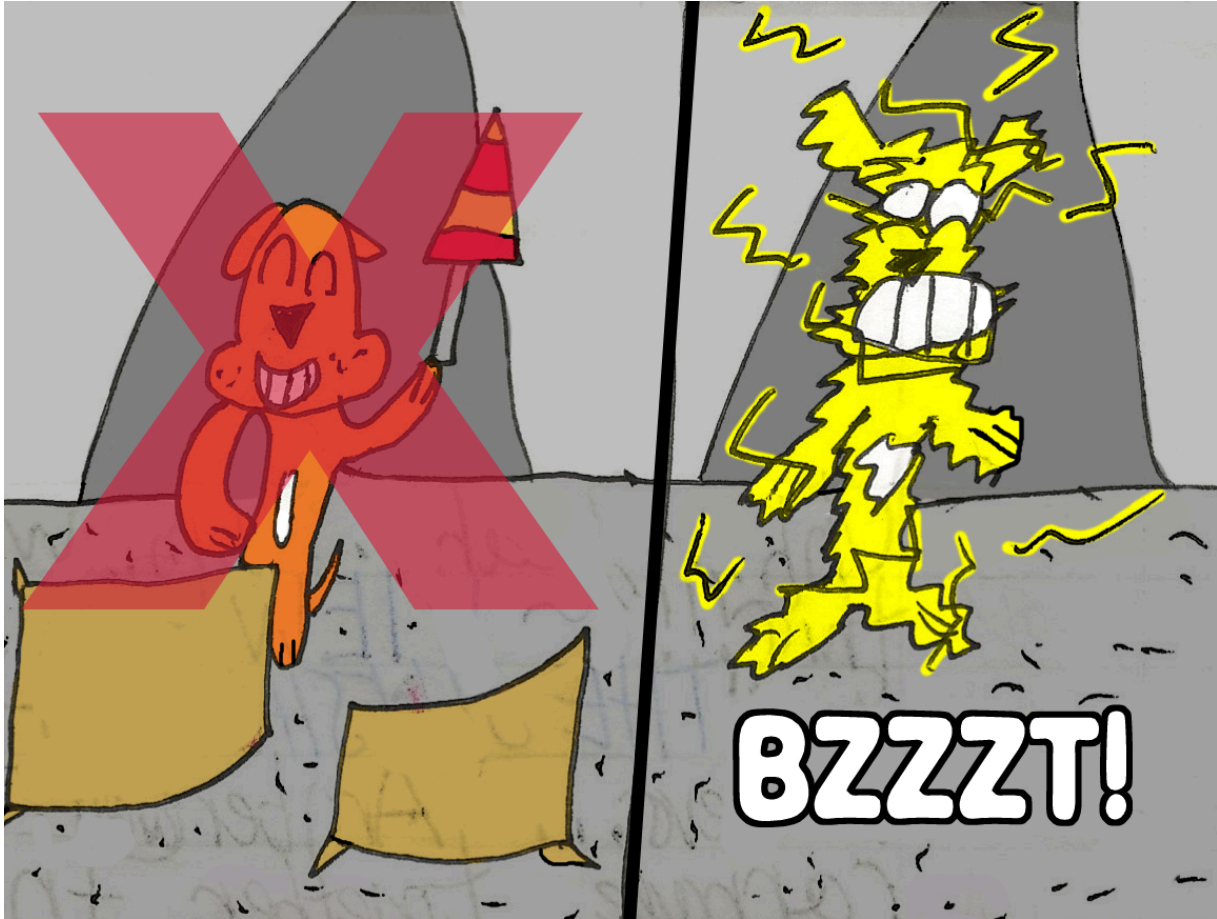
I took off running in a random direction while everyone else went in the opposite one.

**Sometime later**, we were standing in a rather unassuming courtyard area, surrounded on three sides by tall, stone walls. There were various random objects such as cardboard boxes and old TVs strewn about for us to take turns slashing. FlamDawg picked up a plastic sword and approached a cardboard box. When the buzzer rang, a green arrow appeared indicating that he was to slice the box in a certain direction, that being to the left. He wasn’t paying attention and sliced to the right, putting his whole body into it.



The sword cleaved the box in twain like it was made of tissue paper and he smiled proudly, holding up the sword to strike a victory pose. The buzzer rang loudly as a large X appeared over him, indicating he had utterly failed his very first objective. He was then struck by lightning which thoroughly electrocuted him, putting an end to his swordplay and sending him back to the hospital once more.

“Hey, does anyone smell bacon?”



Amber took her turn and cleaved a watermelon in half after some... coordination issues that caused her to throw her sword behind her. When she finally managed to accomplish the guided tutorial slice, she held up both halves of the watermelon and admired them.

“Ooh, it’s such a perfect slice!”

The buzzer rang rather aggressively and she was immediately electrocuted, causing her to drop her so-called “perfect slice” which splattered all over the ground, ruining it forever.



Stunned and confused, she wobbled around over by Rex who picked up a sword and prepared to cut an old TV. He wound the sword back with both arms, sending it over his head and smacking directly into hers! The spinning stars turned into fish as she stumbled over to a corner, thinking it was an airplane. No, I'm not sure either.



Off to the side, Zack, who had since revived and rejoined the adventure after his Hacking incident, attempted to swing his sword and chop a wooden log. Clearly he forgot that he was supposed to *hold onto* the sword because it instead flew out of his hands, shot across the arena, and impaled Amber right in the face which indented rather cartoonishly. This was the nail in the coffin and she went limp before flopping onto the floor. Zack seemed rather surprised when he opened his eyes, seeing that the log remained unscathed and that his sword was now lodged in Amber's face.

"Oops! My bad! You good? ...Amber? Hello?"



I was off in the far corner of the area, partly because I did not want to be disturbed but also because I knew the others would cause all sorts of trouble. After all, they were given *swords*. Plastic, sure, but still. Zack probably already impaled Amber with one by now! I picked up a sword and looked it over, realizing that I wasn't exactly sure what I was supposed to be doing.

"Um... okay... so what do I...?"

I cringed as the buzzer rang, indicating it was time for me to begin. Sweat beaded on my brow before I swung the sword, attempting to slice the thick tree log in front of me, but instead hit myself in the face which knocked me back and sent me crashing onto the ground. The buzzer rang again, indicating I had failed, but thankfully I was not electrocuted because I had already failed hard enough. The pity system works!



Finally, the buzzer rang so loud that it reverberated throughout the entire arena, forcing everyone to stop what they were doing. We were then promptly booted from the swordplay grounds and found ourselves forcibly loaded back into the main square, now standing in front of the fountain like before. Well, some of us were on the ground for obvious reasons. JT fell limp.

"I guess we weren't good enough to keep playing..."

Cat shook her head.

"Yeah, I think you all just sucked so much that it kicked us out. We were only in there for two minutes and how many of you got hurt?!"

"Most."

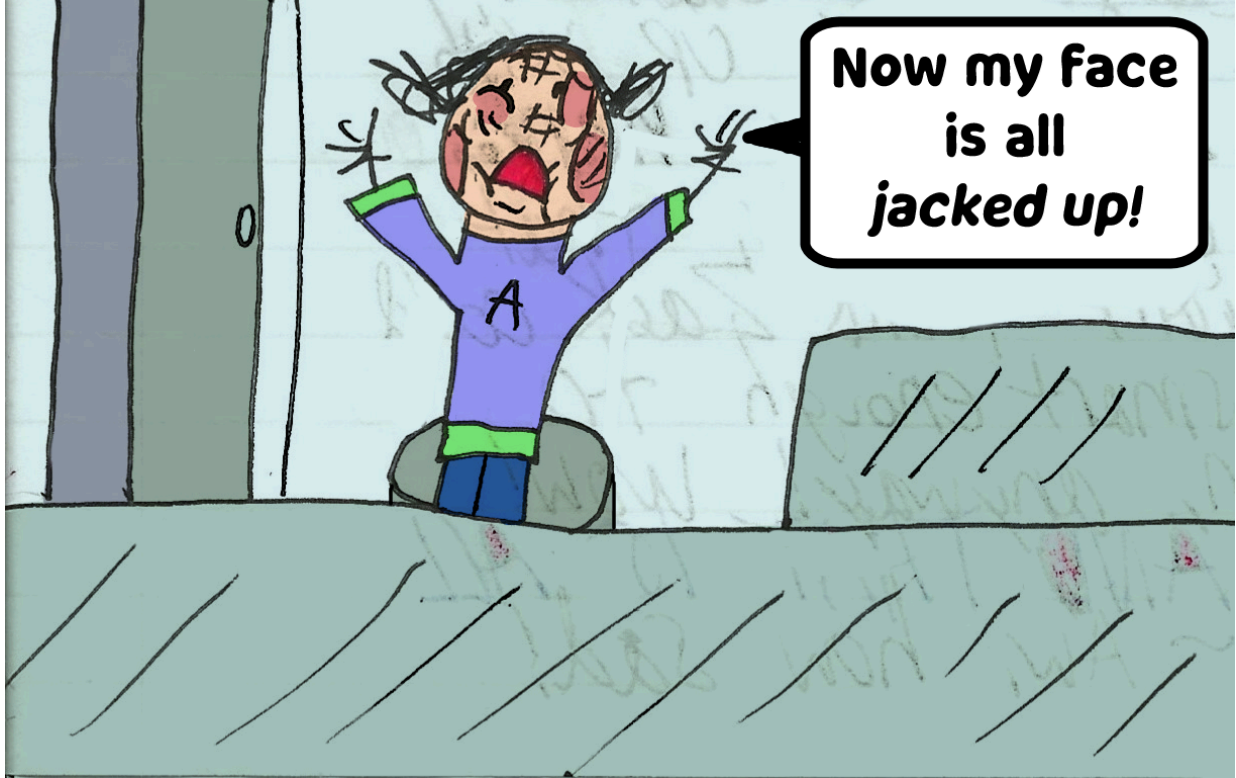
She nodded.

"Most."

We cut to the camera inside of the confessional booth where Amber was seated. Her face was all red and swollen and it was clear any Instagram photos she tries to take would not be well received.

"I got hurt! Again! This is, like, the worst vacation ever! Now my face is all jacked up! My makeup... is RUINED!"

Her lip quivered before tears welled up and she started to cry. As she did, Fleemee's head slowly peered in through the doorway before sliding back out a moment later. Interestingly, he wasn't wearing his hat but I'm sure that's just a developer oversight.



We returned to the rest of us standing around the fountain as Cat looked over the bulletin board again.

“Okay, so we failed horribly at swordplay... Next up is wakeboarding!”

FlamDawg raised his paw.

“Um! Excuse me! What is wakeboarding?”

I turned to him.

“It’s where you ride on a little board across the water while a boat pulls you around. The goal is to do lots of flips and tricks over the waves to look stylish and sexy.”

Amber started to get really excited.

“OOH! I’m *great* at looking stylish and sexy! This is the sporting event for me! I’m gonna go change into my slimming wetsuit!”

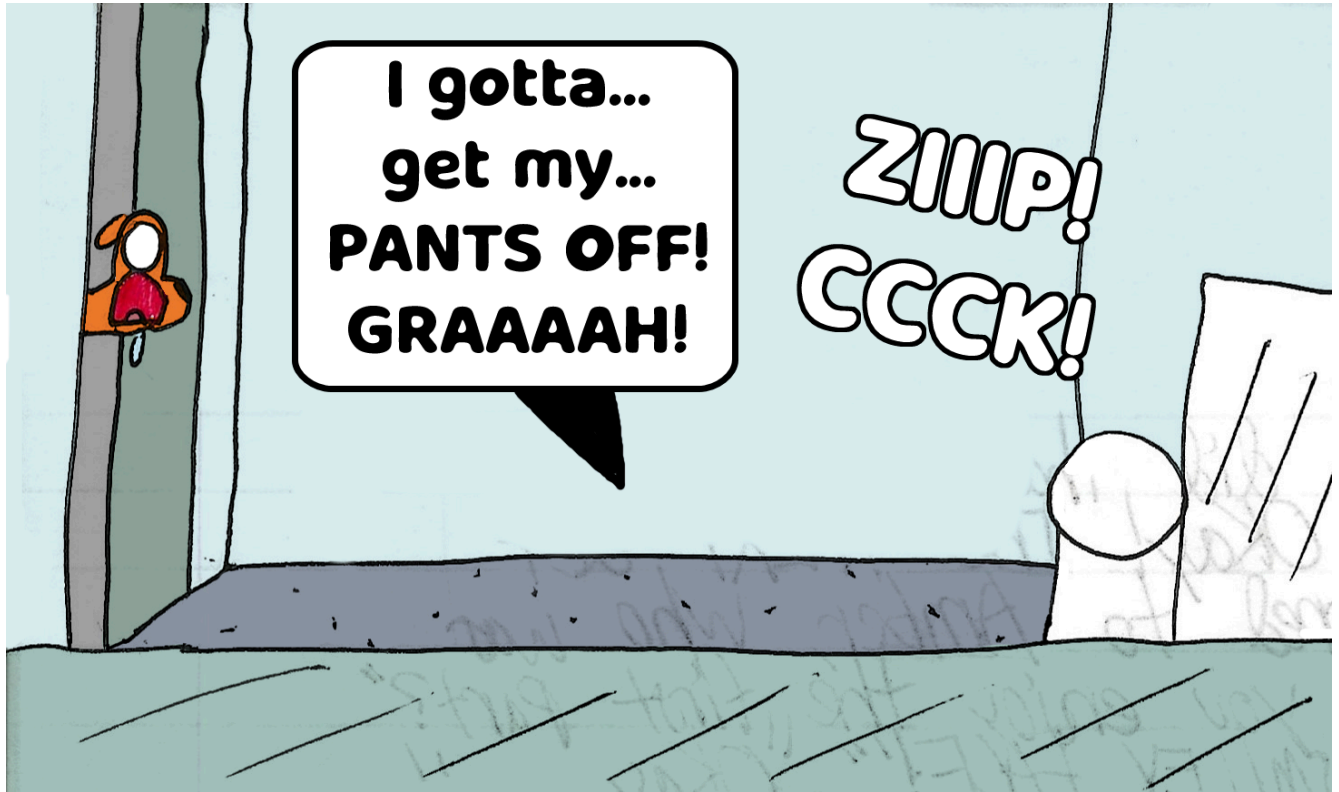
She turned and skipped off in the direction of the changing rooms while the rest of us watched her go.

“That girl is going to kill herself.”

We once again cut to the confessional booth where Amber was changing into her slimming wetsuit. Thankfully, she was writhing around on the floor so we couldn’t see anything that might potentially raise the age rating. Grunting and frantic zipping sounds could be heard amidst her angry screeching.

“EH! GAH! I GOTTA... GET MY PANTS OFF...! EHHHHH! GRAAAAH!”

This time, FlamDawg’s head slowly peered in the doorway before his face went white and he quickly slid out. Not long after, there was a deafening ripping sound and Amber screamed before everything went silent and nothing was heard again.



We cut to the middle of the ocean where we were all preparing to do some wakeboarding. Amber was wearing a slimming blue wetsuit while standing on a surfboard and holding onto a rope attached to our boat, the S.S. Speed Sailor. The rest of us were inside the boat, though I was the only one actually doing anything. Rex was the one steering, though I'm not sure that was the best choice.

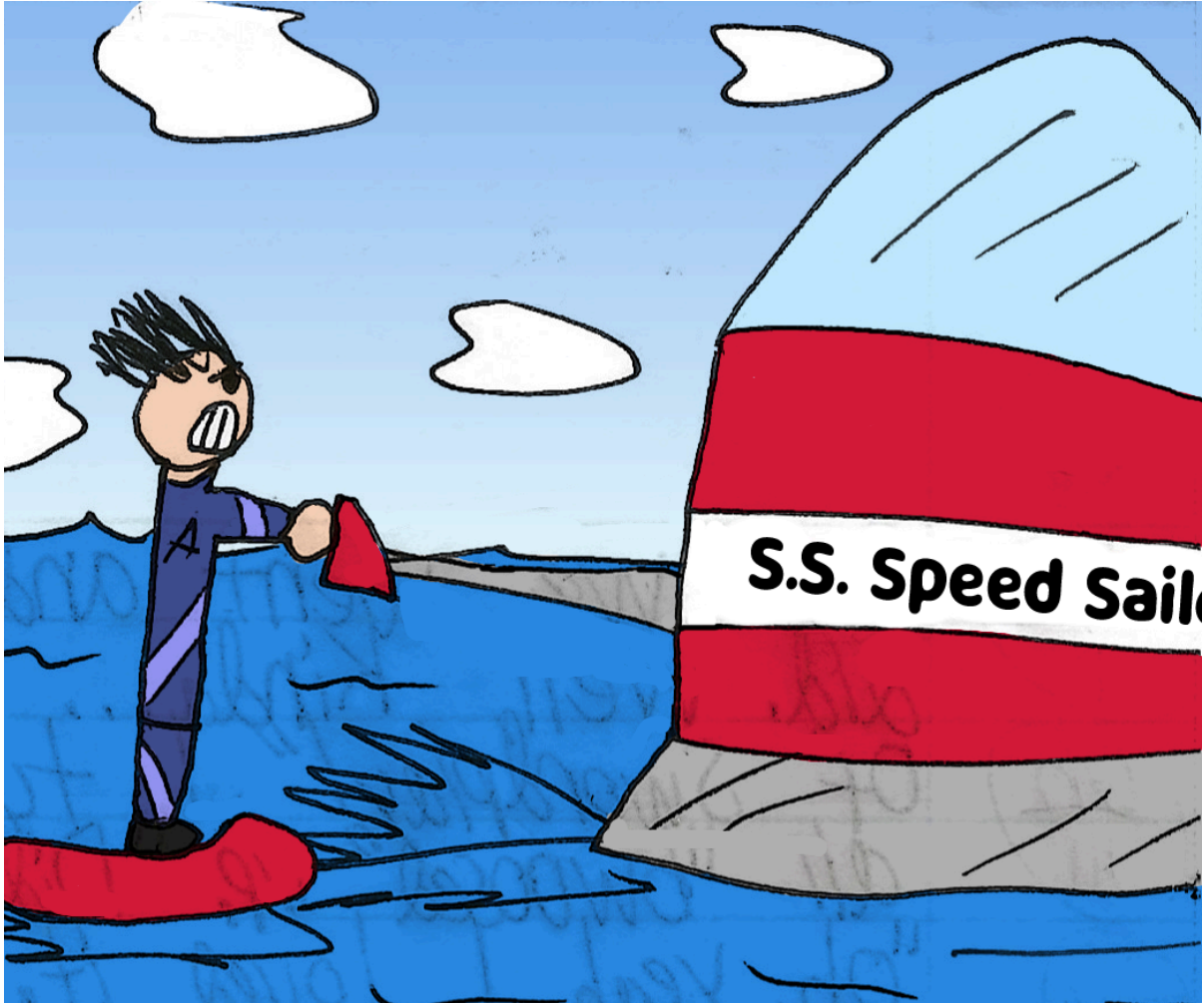
"Amber! Are you ready?"

She appeared to be quite nervous.

"Um... I think so!"

"Okay, great. HANG ON WOMAN!"

She flailed around as I yelled and gripped onto the rope as the boat started moving forward, pulling her along with it. I watched as she skimmed along the water's surface, looking rather terrified of the whole thing.



“Come on, this is boring! Try to catch one of the waves!”

“Um... okay!”

She started steering herself back and forth until she hit a wave and flew several inches into the air. This immediately improved her mood and she found herself suddenly enjoying the experience.

“Ooh! WHEEE! I flew in the air!”



"Yeah, keep going! Do some stunts!"

She swerved back and forth with a smile until she caught another wave and flew into the air, automatically striking a pose and performing a stunt while sparkles surrounded her and the word "NICE!" appeared below her. It seemed she was getting the hang of things! She continued hitting waves and doing flashy stunts, looking as though she was actually quite good at this.



Each stunt sent her higher into the air and became flashier as she thrust her legs out, threw her head back, and even did a spin. All the while, I was cheering from inside the boat.

“WOO! Yeah! Haha! Go go go!”

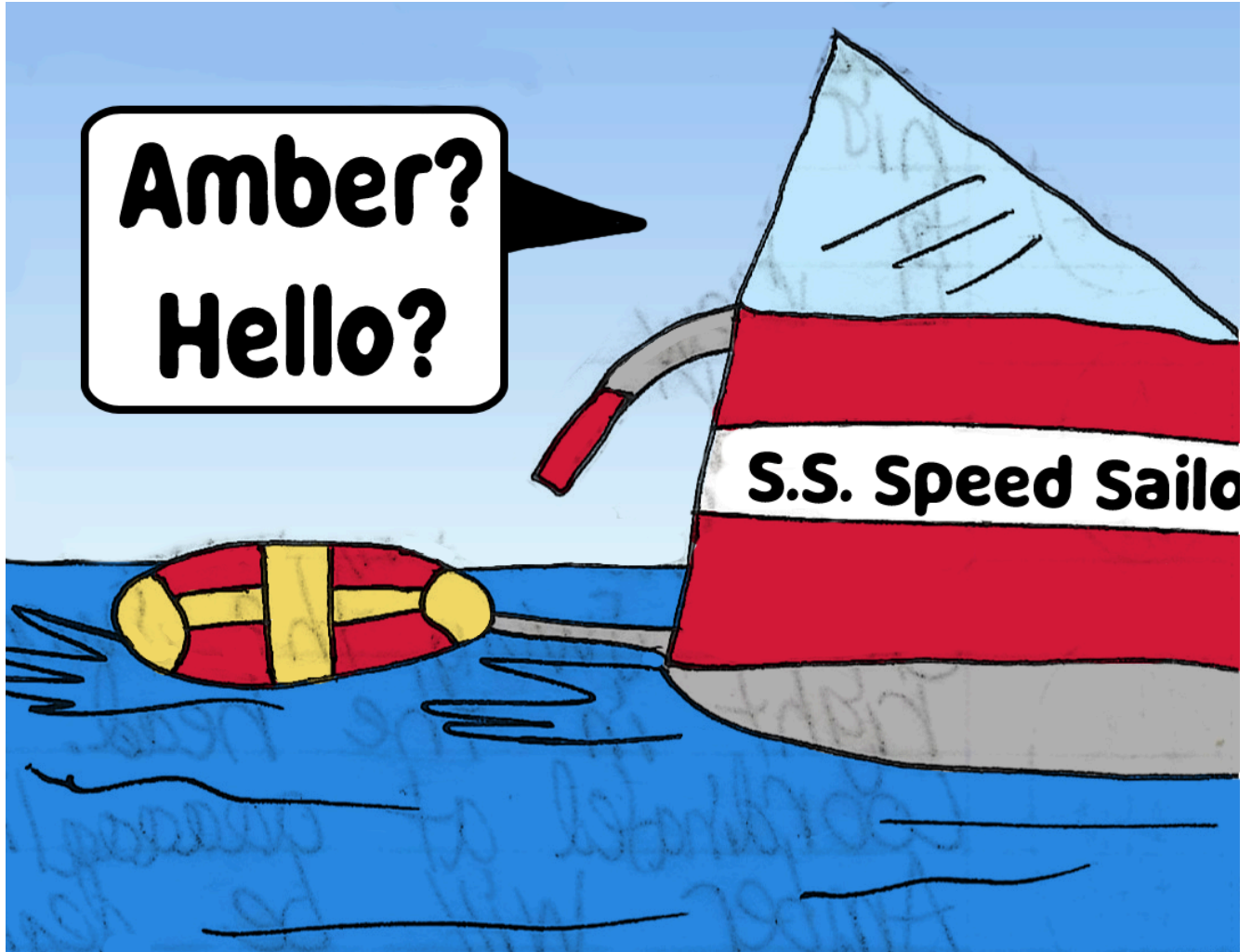
I failed to notice the loud sound of collision amidst my cheers. When I opened my eyes, I saw that the surfboard was empty and Amber was now nowhere to be seen.

“Um... Amber? Hello?”



Yeah!  
Haha!  
Go go!  
Uh...

**BAM!**

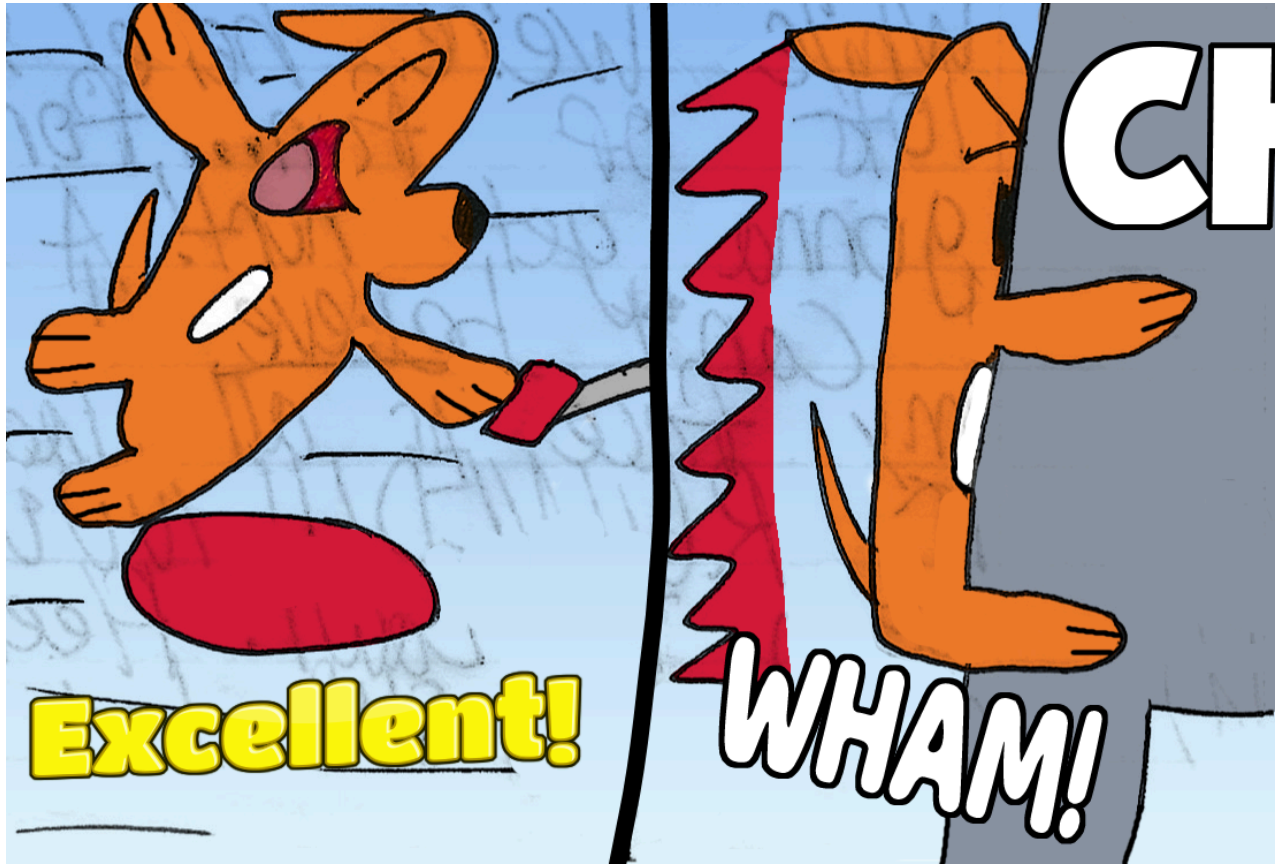


I signaled Rex to turn around and he spun the boat around like a professional ship captain. We backtracked a ways before finally spotting Amber stuck to one of the buoys that marked the path we were supposed to take. She was firmly embedded in it, indicating that she had collided with it while doing flashy stunts. It was likely instantaneous because I never even heard her scream. Ignoring the fact that she was likely injured (again), I started yelling at her.

“HEY LAZY! Quit napping! Everyone else is waiting to take their turn!”



And take their turn they did. Well, FlamDawg did, anyway. Despite being the Dawg of Fire and having a weakness to water, he really seemed to be enjoying himself as we sped along and he did all kinds of jumps and flips, racking up lots of points. This lasted until he hit a large wave and flew into the air, colliding with one of the checkpoint arches floating in the water. His point count dropped to zero and he remained adhered to the arch for a moment before peeling off and falling into the water, immediately dying a tragic death because fire and water do not mix.



This once again put an end to the sporting event because we had to rush both Amber and FlamDawg to the hospital. Well, we were *supposed* to bring Amber to the hospital but we kinda forgot and just left her stuck to the buoy. About an hour later, FlamDawg received the treatment and extensive therapy he needed to recover and we found ourselves walking along a gravel path back towards the main square just as Amber surfaced from the nearby shore and marched over to us with a dark look on her face. Once again, her face was swollen and bruised, her wetsuit was completely destroyed while her regular clothes were soaked and tattered, and there was even a piranha biting down on her ear. We all picked up the pace as she approached except for FlamDawg, who turned to her with a smile.

“Hey! Did you have fun out there?”

Her head slowly cracked all the way around until she was glaring at him. Almost instantly, he started spasming as he took massive psychic damage and was then struck by lightning which reduced him to a pile of ash on the gravel below. This made her feel a bit better and she strutted off to the main square with a smile.



Hey! Did you have fun?

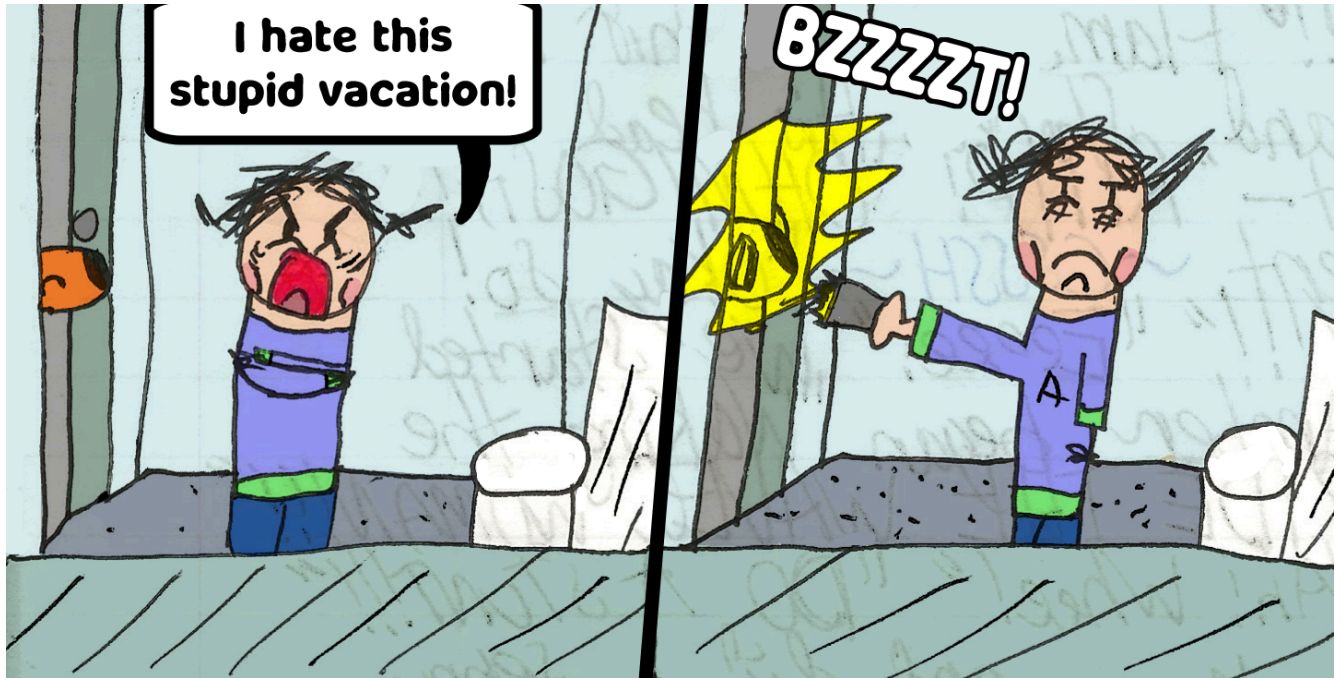
GLARE



We quickly cut to the confessional booth where Amber was sitting in front of the camera with her arms crossed and her face once again a swollen, lumpy disaster.

“I! HATE! THIS STUPID VACATION! My face... MY BEAUTIFUL FACE!”

FlamDawg’s snout appeared in the doorway but she was more than prepared for this, extending a taser in his direction before violently zapping him in the nostril. Once it was sufficiently electrocuted, the snout disappeared from the doorway, leaving her to continue complaining about everything.



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## --THE SIDESHOW--

### *News For You!*

*LIVE FROM SPORTSIDE ISLAND, IT'S NEWS FOR YOU- THE BROADCAST THAT KEEPS YOU UP TO DATE WITH THE LATEST NEWS, WEATHER, AND TRENDS! HERE ARE YOUR HOSTS... NATHAN PEPPERS AND AMBER SHINE!*

A graphic featuring the Earth spinning floated around before it crossfaded to a shot of me and Amber seated at the anchor desk. I was smiling wide while Amber had a paper bag over her head because her busted face was not suitable for television.

"Hello and welcome to News For You! I'm your host, Nathan Peppers."

Coughing and gagging could be heard as Amber's paper bag heaved in and out.

"I CAN'T BREATHE!"

"That... is some great news."



It cut to camera two, removing Amber from the shot and focusing only on me.

“Speaking of great news, today we ventured to Sportside Island, home to the most popular resort for all things sports. So far, we’ve participated in swordplay and wakeboarding, but neither of those events ended too well. Camera three?”

It cut to camera three which was Amber’s camera, showing that she was just sitting there with the bag on her head.

“Are we live yet?”

“Camera two.”

It cut back to camera two and I smiled.

“That’s what happens when we do things.”

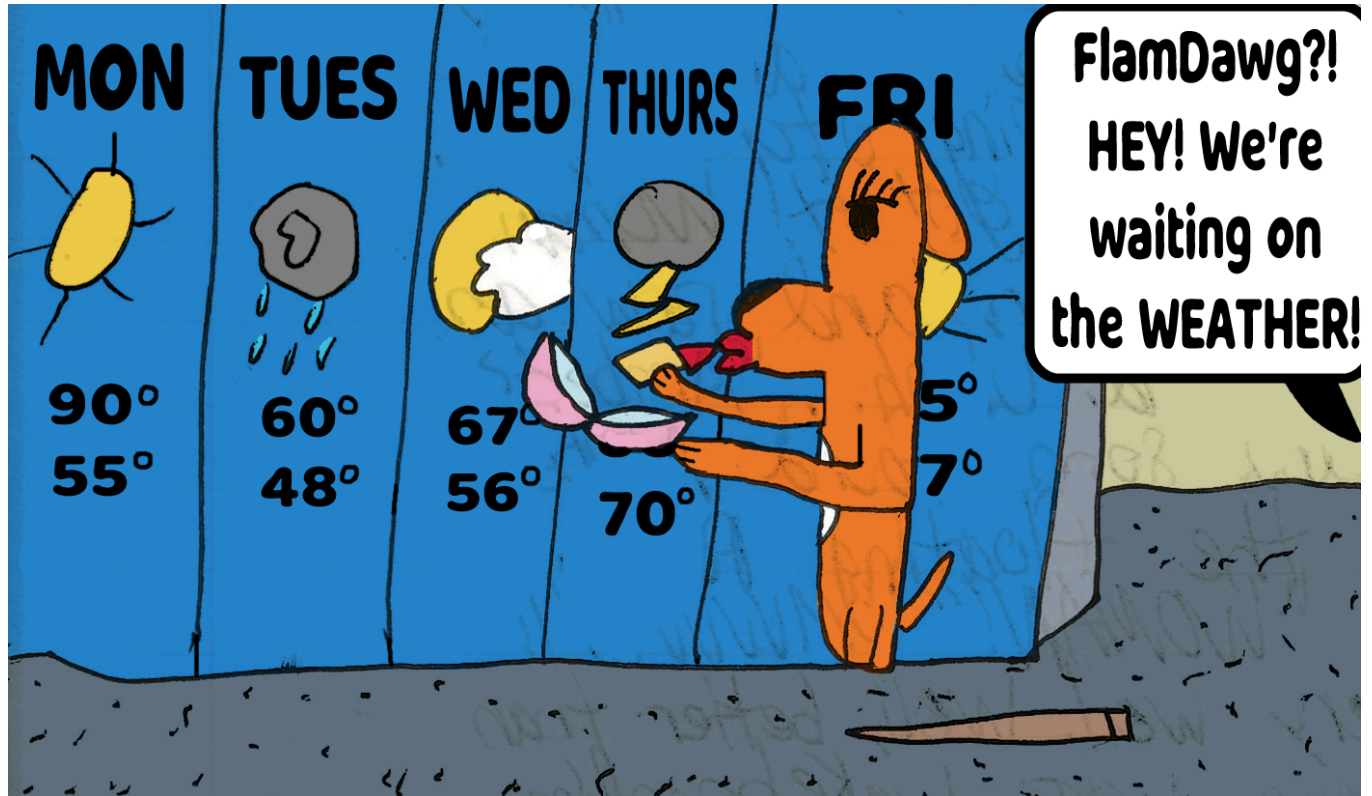
It cut back to camera one with both of us at the anchor desk.

“Now over to FlamDawg with this week’s weather forecast. FlamDawg?”

It cut to camera four, showing that FlamDawg was standing in front of the weather green screen while smearing on lipstick. He admired his reflection in the pink hand mirror he was holding as

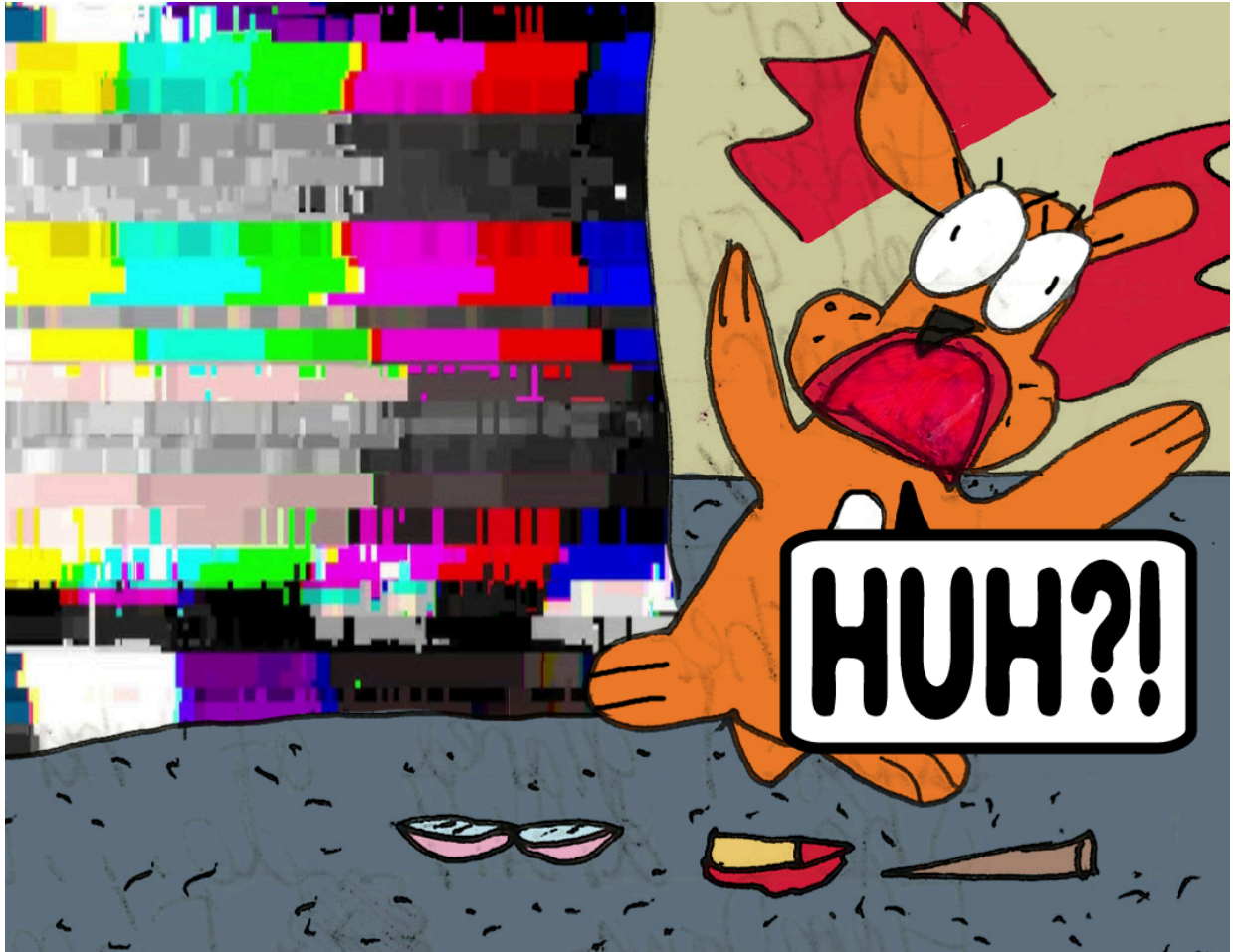
he did so, occasionally making a few kissy faces and batting his long eyelashes to make sure he looked good. Little did he know that we were live and this was being broadcasted to the entire town.

“FlamDawg?! HEY! We’re waiting on the WEATHER!”



He suddenly screamed and jumped into the air, dropping his hand mirror which shattered on the floor while the green screen short circuited behind him.

“WHAT?! HUH?! We’re LIVE?! NO ONE TOLD ME! UM! T-TODAY’S FORECAST CALLS FOR...”



It quickly cut back to camera one at the anchor desk where I was smiling awkwardly and Amber was face-down on the desk.

“And now let’s go to JT with his new segment, What’s The What!”

A little hip-hop sound effect played featuring a record scratch and some gangstas chanting “What’s The What” like it was part of a rap song. It probably was! It cut to camera five which was positioned in front of JT who was sitting at his own little desk with a blank look on his face.

“Um... what? What am I supposed to do again?”

It cut to me because I was getting impatient.

“Hurry up! Do your thing!”

“Oh, okay! Can-do!”

Sexy music started blasting from his desk as snapping and popping sounds echoed throughout the studio, accompanied by inappropriate moaning.

“Ooooh yeeeeeah!”

I started flailing frantically around when the hot ladies started moaning in the sexy music.

“NOT THAT THING! DEAR GOD, THE AGE RATING!”



Thankfully, it had been on camera two all this time so we weren't paid a visit after the show. Someone give that cameraman a raise! The music shut off and it returned to camera five where JT was now smiling.

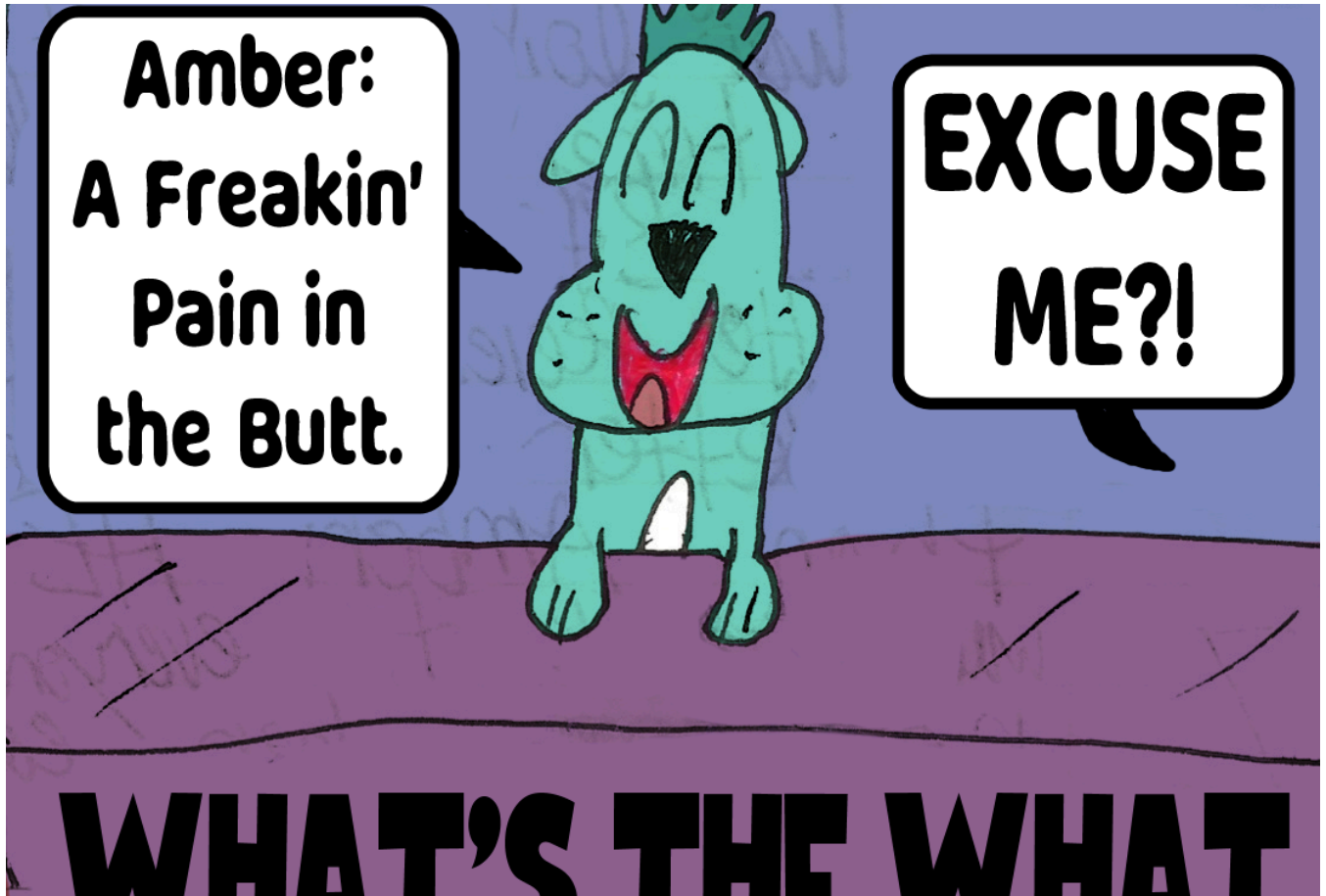
“Okay, I got this now! Welcome to What's The What!”

The hip-hop sound effect played again.

“In this segment, I'll be telling you what's the what! Today's what is 'Amber'. What is she? Allow me to explain further with a little expose I call, 'Amber: A Freakin' Pain in the Butt'.”

At the anchor desk, Amber's bagged head suddenly shot up.

“EXCUSE ME?!”



JT continued smiling, not realizing she had gotten up from her chair in a rather aggressive manner.

"I will now share with you some interesting images. These are actually Instagram posts that she deleted because she felt that she was too ugly and they only got four likes. In this first one..."

She suddenly lunged across the studio, tackled him out of his chair, and slammed him onto the ground. What followed was perhaps even worse than the sexy music incident from a moment ago. I started screaming while FlamDawg's embarrassed crying could be heard from his microphone.

***JOIN US AGAIN NEXT TIME ON NEWS  
FOR YOU!***

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## ~BANG CHAT!~

The camera panned around a rather generic-looking talk show set before flying over the studio audience as they clapped and cheered. Eventually, it zoomed in on a brown Little Bang wearing a tuxedo. He was holding a microphone and smiled before throwing a paw into the air.

“Hello everyone and welcome to Bang Chat, the ultimate talk show for lovers of all things Little Bang! I’m your host, Show Bang!”

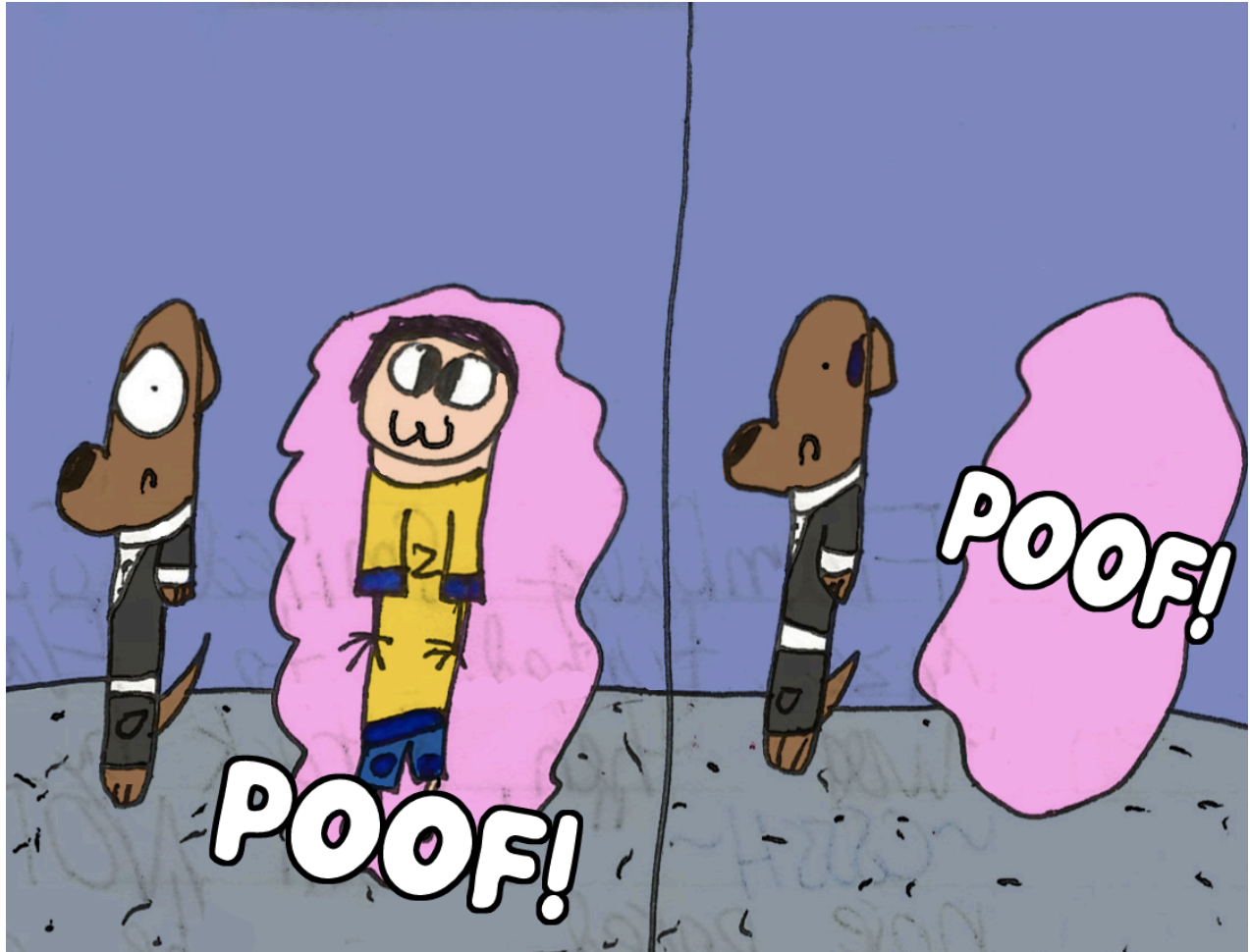
Several ladies in the audience screamed in delight while others fanned themselves feverishly. I guess this bland Little Bang was actually quite the looker.



“Today, we’ll be sitting down to talk with...”

Suddenly, there was a puff of pink smoke and Zack magically appeared right next to the Show Bang! The audience stopped cheering and everything grew silent before there was another puff and he vanished! Something wasn’t right about this, though... Sure, characters have been

known to Poof in on occasion but this felt more... deliberate. There was no doubt about it- Zack was *Hacking!* It seems he mastered the Hacks he used during the bike race and is now capable of using them whenever and wherever he pleases! This means he's now capable of using cheat codes in real life to defy all logic and reason while causing unlimited chaos! Surely this won't turn into a massive Season-wide issue... right?



Soon there was another puff of smoke and Zack reappeared clinging to the stage lights hanging above the set like some sort of leech creature! Yeah, "leech creature" does describe him well. Realizing that someone was actively trying to sabotage the important thing he was doing, Show Bang glared up at him and started yelling.

"HEY! YOU! GET DOWN HERE!"



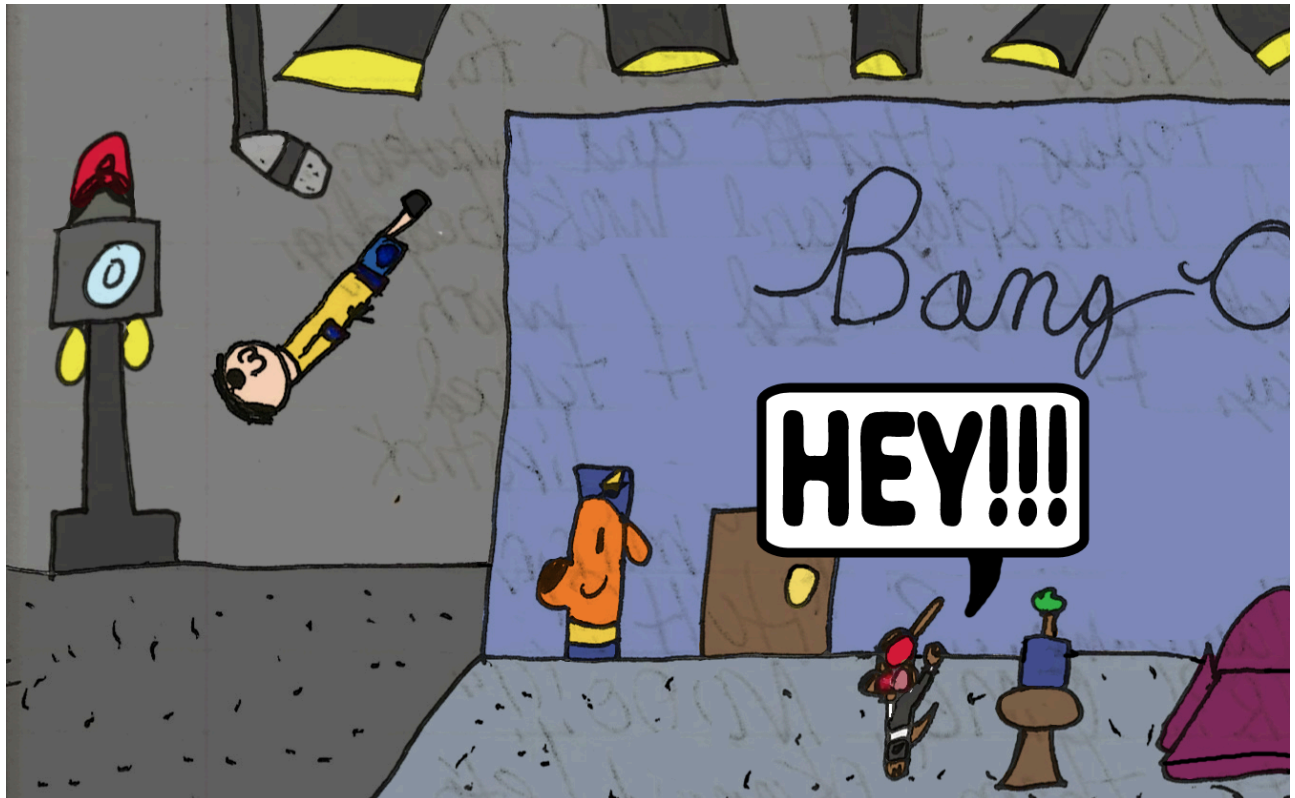
Another puff of smoke followed as he vanished again, then reappeared next to the Show Bang who was seething with fury at this point. Such strange, logic-defying antics would not be tolerated!



“Listen up, buster! I don’t know who you are or how you’re doing that, but you better STOP IT before I-”

Suddenly, Zack slowly ascended into the air and began to float all around the studio! He simply spun around in the air, still maintaining the basic standing position he had when he was standing. He was so good at using his Moonjump code that he didn’t even need to jump! Show Bang absolutely lost it and started screaming while the studio audience looked on in horror and disappointment. This was still live, after all.

“HEY! STOP THAT! GET DOWN HERE! DON’T YOU FLOAT AWAY WHILE I’M SCREAMING AT YOU!”



This sudden bout of rage was interrupted by another puff of pink smoke as I magically appeared on the set! Show Bang screamed in a different sense while I just stood there with my eyes going in different directions.

“WHAT THE-?! Who are YOU?!”

I blinked a few times before looking around.

“Huh? Where am I?”



Then, my eyes narrowed.

"I... this is... I have... the *inspiration*."

"The what? This is MY show! Get out!"

"Shush. As I teleported, I saw the sun and the moon and traveled through the cosmos. This has allowed me to achieve Ultimate Enlightenment and now... I know what you all must be called."

"You... what?!"

"Silence... for I... shall bestow upon you your new names."

The audience gasped and several people leaned in to hear better. Noticing I was now in the area, Zack slowly floated down and landed in front of me. I immediately turned to him with a serious look on my face.

"You...shall henceforth be known as... Ploob."

He blinked a few times in confusion.

"What?"

“You are Ploob.”

He suddenly seemed upset.

“But I don’t want to be-”

“NO! QUIET, PLOOB!”

“You can’t just-”

“LISTEN, PLOOB! I HAVE SEEN THE STARS! I MAKE THE RULES!”



Show Bang was standing behind us with an intense look on his face.

“If you two... don’t get off my set right now...!”

I whipped around and stared at him with a couple of wild eyes.

“YOU DARE SPEAK TO ME, MOOF?!”

Much like Zack, he seemed confused.

“Uh... what?”

My intensity quickly faded.

“You’re Moof.”

I waved at him.

“Hi, Moof.”

He turned to the camera with an annoyed look on his face.



I turned back to Zack, who appeared to be on the verge of tears because of his new name.

“No tears, Ploob! This is your name now and forever! Ploob, spelled QPNXW. HA! Write *THAT* on a Scantron test!”

He stared at me for a moment.

“Scan...tron? I’m not sure what that is.”

I inhaled sharply before a wooden board hanging from ropes lowered down between us. It had Ploob’s name on it which I promptly gestured to.

“Ploob. See? PLOOB.”



Suddenly, Show Bang came flying over and beat him over the head with a baseball bat! He screeched and flailed around like a demon that had been impaled in the chest with some sort of... something. We haven't exactly learned his weaknesses yet.



Assuming he was crying because of his name again and not because he had just been whacked on the head, I reached out at the sign that now somehow had his name spelled correctly instead of the consonant nonsense I was trying to propagate.

"Crying again? You better stop. I *WILL* shorten it to 'Poob'!"

His eyes grew wide as he watched me reach for the L on the sign, threatening to remove it completely.



Finally, Show Bang seized control of the show again and the camera cut to a shot of him. Sadly, by this point the audience had left and his ratings had plummeted to rock bottom.

“And that’s all the time we have for today! Join us next week when we sit down with supermodel actress Heather Melbourne as she talks about the new Pencil Man remake scheduled for 2013 as well as her unnamed princess project rumored to be releasing sometime in the next two years!”

Funky music played, serving as the show’s outro, as he swung the bat around and cracked Zack in the back of the head, giving him a concussion so intense that he actually believed Ploob was his real name for a full seven minutes.

***Get chatty again next time, only on  
BANG CHAT!***

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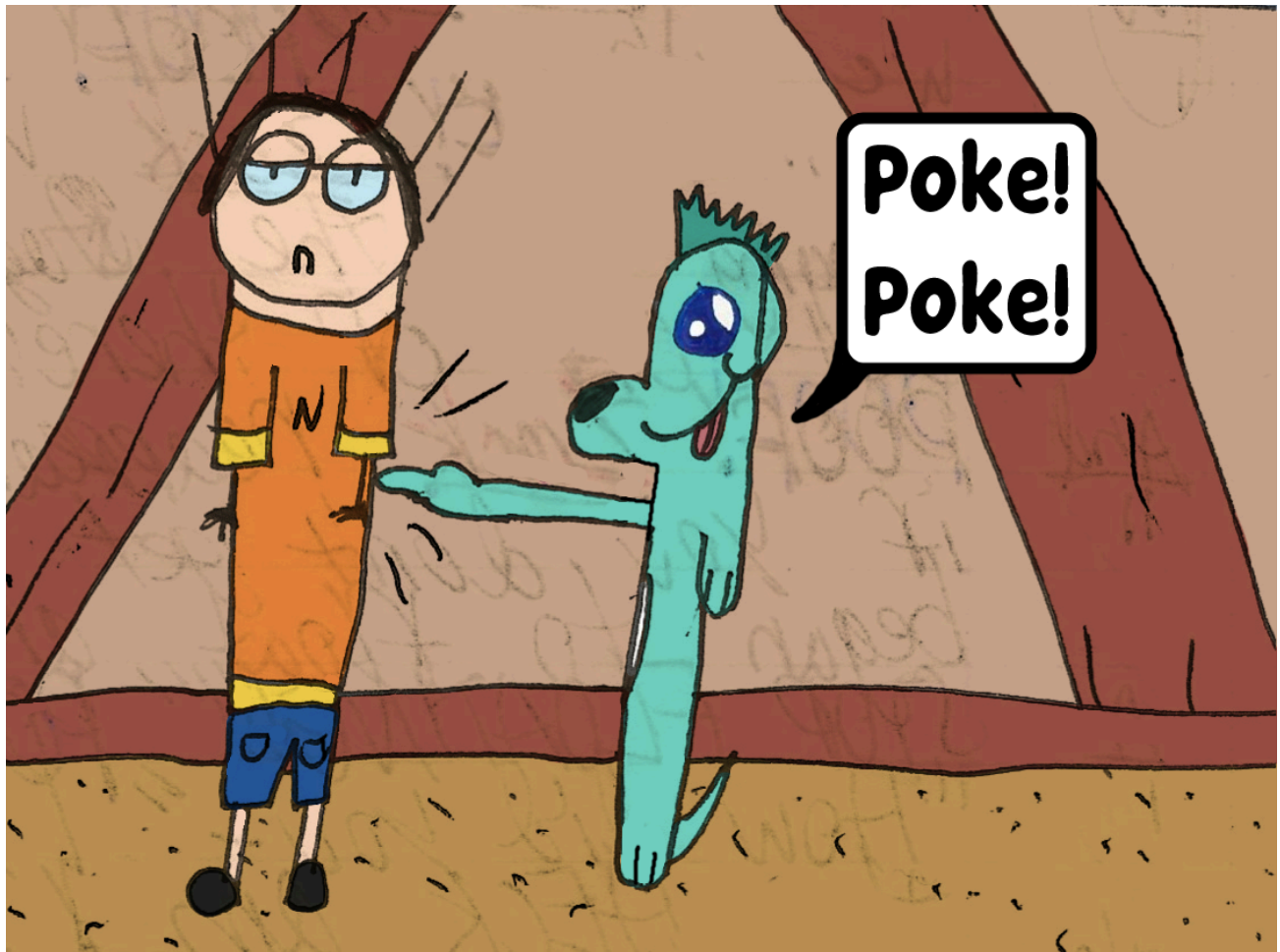
## ***Viewer Fun!***

I was now standing in the middle of the *Viewer Fun* studio looking both extremely confused and extremely annoyed.

“Really? Can we PLEASE get back to the island stuff? At this point I’m worried we’re just going to end up doing one more event and then head back home!”

Suddenly, JT slid in next to me. I tried to ignore him, but then he slowly reached out a finger and started poking me in the arm with starry eyes.

“Poke! Poke! Poke! Poke!”



I sighed loudly.

“Why is this my life...?”

Then Rex’s head slid in from the other side and he emitted a heart emoticon upon seeing me being violently assaulted. Some people just like watching others suffer!



**AND THAT IS ALL FOR VIEWER FUN!**

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With that, the random filler shows ended and we were all back to standing near the fountain in the main square. Thankfully, Amber managed to heal her face during the *Bang Chat* fiasco and was back to her usual bubblegum pop self. Most of us were sprawled out on the pavement because this whole “island adventure” thing was becoming a bit too much for us to handle. FlamDawg was lying on his back, staring up at the clouds and contemplating his life choices.

“Well, we completely failed at wakeboarding...”

I was holding my head in disappointment.

“I’m starting to notice a theme here... We try to do something fun and sporty, but then two of us get hurt and we’re forced to quit and move onto the next thing. Which two? Amber and FlamDawg. Amber gets hit in the face while FlamDawg just overestimates himself and does well until he dies.”

Zack seemed to be enjoying himself.

“All the events have been great so far.”

We all turned to him with dark looks on our faces while Cat went up to the bulletin board again. When he noticed we were glaring at him, he quickly vanished in a puff of pink smoke.

“Okay, next up is frisbee!”

“What kind of frisbee?”

“It takes place on the beach. You stand in a specific spot and throw the frisbee so that it lands in a specific area. The closer to the target area it lands, the more points you receive.”

Amber danced around.

“Ooh! I’m GREAT at frisbee! This is the sporting event for me!”

FlamDawg sat up and gave her a look.

“Isn’t that what you said about wakeboarding?”

Her smile faded and she slowly turned to him with an angry look before she sprayed him in the face with a can of highly-toxic hairspray, causing him to instantly shrivel up into a pile of delightful-smelling fur on the ground. We stared at this for a moment before Cat sighed.

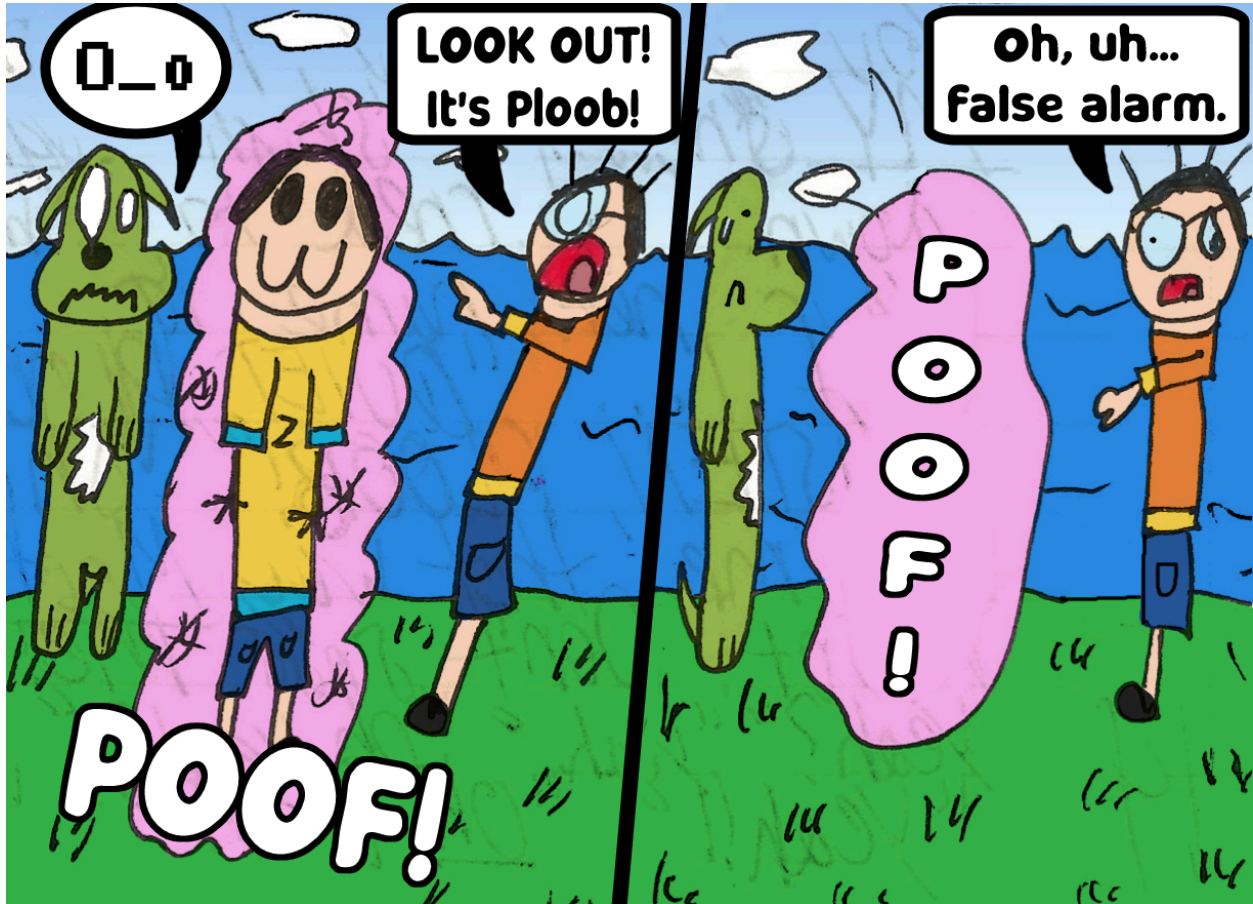
“You guys are lucky they allow free hospital visits to competitors.”

Suddenly, there was a puff of pink smoke and Zack appeared next to us again! I immediately started screaming like I hadn’t seen him in three years.

“LOOK OUT! It’s PLOOB! Everyone, TAKE COVER!”

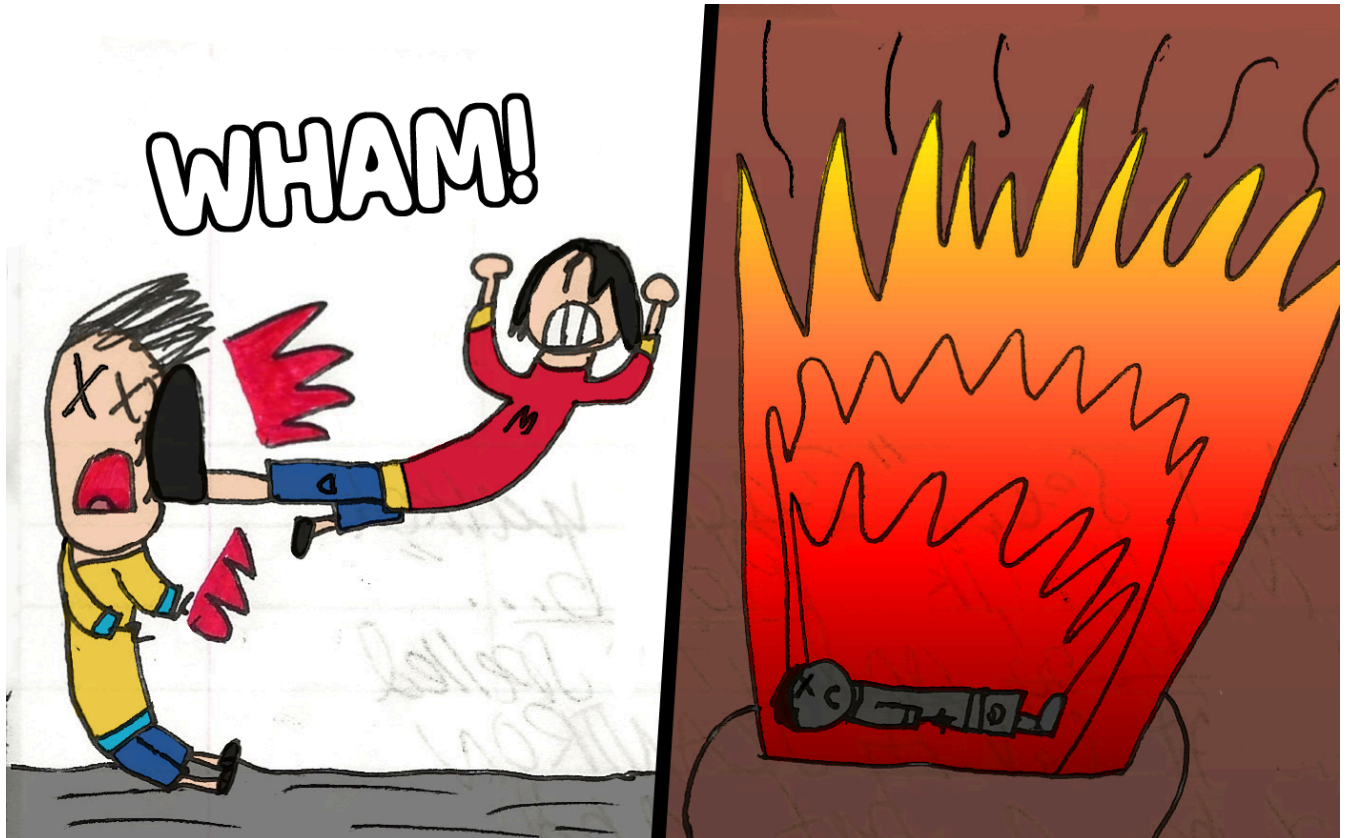
No sooner had he appeared that there was another puff of smoke and he was gone.

“Oh... uh, false alarm. Never mind.”



We then turned and awkwardly shuffled down to the beach to play frisbee. After signing up at the registration and hearing Amber insist that she's amazing at everything she does, we wandered over to the site of the frisbee event and waited for our turns to start.

**Meanwhile,** we cut to a shot of an empty white void. A familiar empty white void! All was silent before there was a puff of smoke and Zack suddenly appeared! He smiled before attempting to activate some sort of Hack code, but it was at that moment that another person flew in and kicked him in the side of the head! Zack blasted backwards and fell into a hole in the middle of the floor, dropping down into a flaming pit where his corpse fried and burned for the rest of the day. This new person, a special character known as Max, took a bow before temporarily taking over Zack's role!



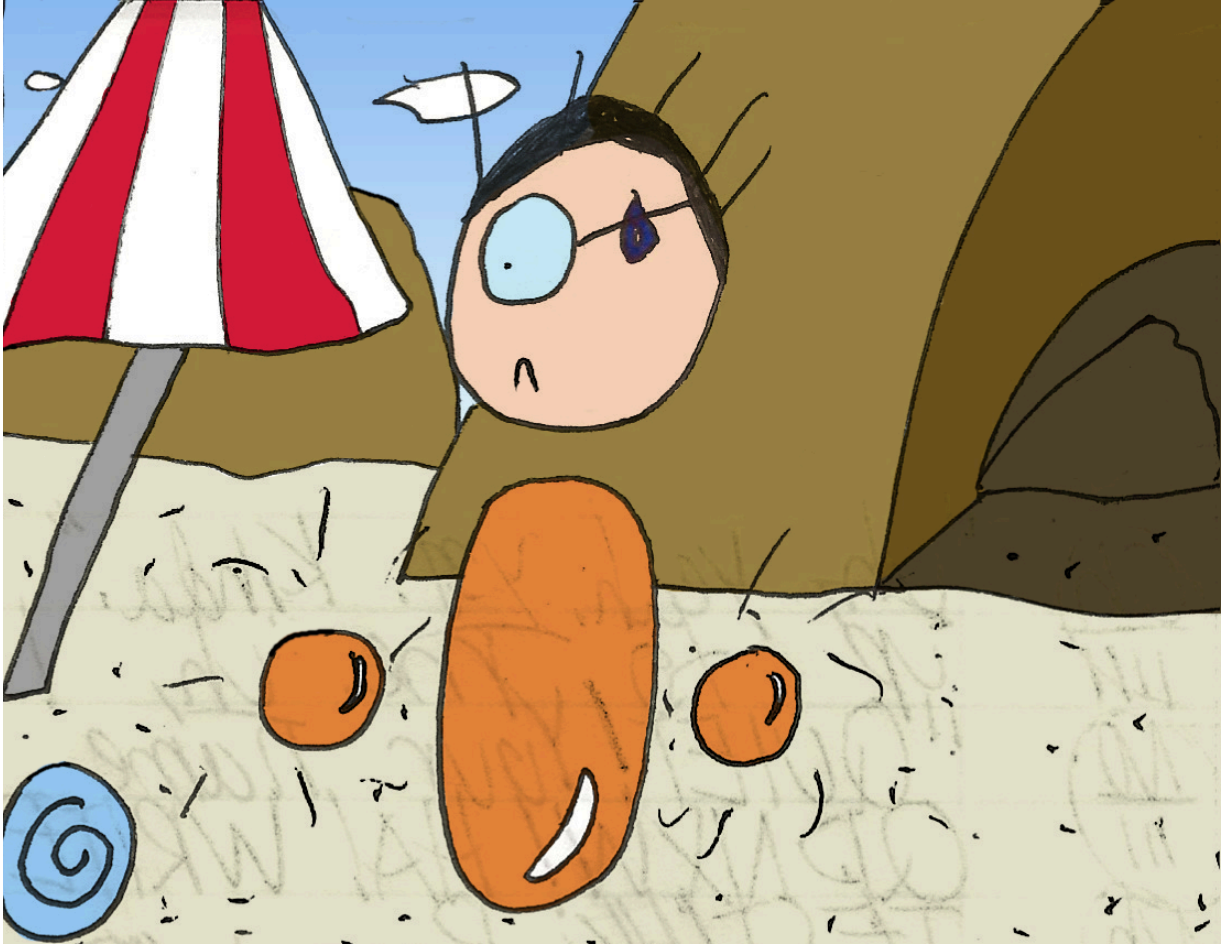
I realize this is probably confusing, so let me introduce him properly. You see, Zack is actually a real-life person who exists outside of the confines of this novel and he would often supply me with ideas as I wrote. Of course, I could use his character in the novel as leverage against him, threatening to remove him if he didn't do certain things I asked of him or made me mad in any way. It seems in the original print, back when I was an evil, manipulative child, this was the moment I followed through on the threat and removed him from the novel for a day. Sadly, Zack is a key component in the novel so I couldn't just remove him completely. Thus, I created a similar character who is like Zack but better in every way. This is Max, a character who might randomly appear at times whenever Zack gets removed! Ah, the more you know.

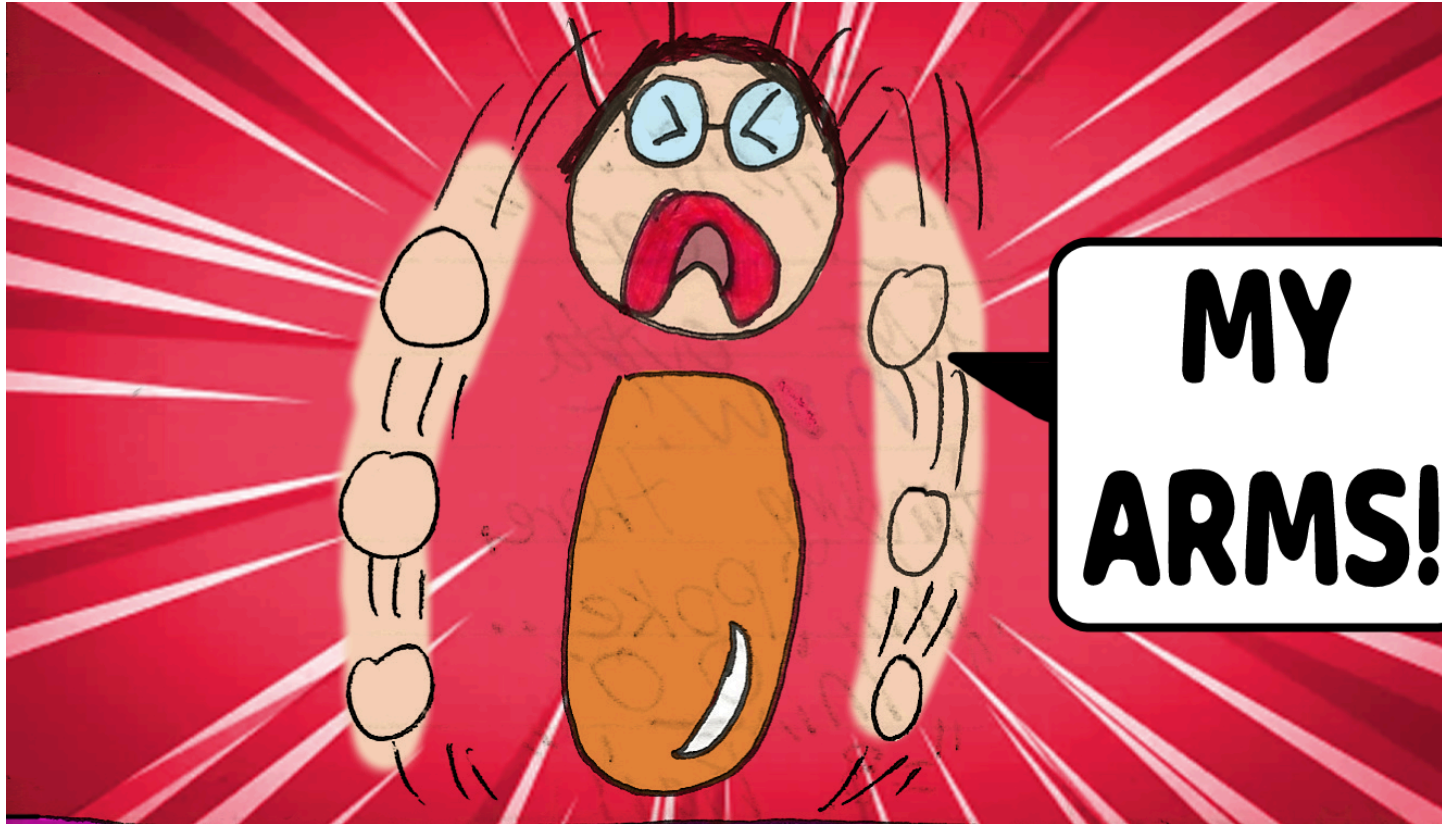
**Back at the beach,** it was time for us to start playing frisbee. At this point, it was no surprise to see that Amber was up first. She stood in the middle of the event area, holding a blue frisbee and striking a pose as the camera panned around her. There was also a dog next to her, likely as the one who would retrieve the frisbees. The area was surrounded on all sides by barricades that had various advertisements on them and behind these stood the people watching the event. In the background, you could see me and the others jumping around with smiles, though closer inspection revealed that we were extremely low-poly to save on resources.



After a while, I stopped my childish bouncing and looked down at myself, realizing that my body was just an orange tube and my hands were little balls. I also had no arms, legs, feet, or a neck to speak of because I was just *that* low-poly. Who knew rendering a sandy beach required so much processing power?! Of course, my eyes grew wide upon the realization that most of my body was now missing and I was just hovering in the air somehow.

“MY ARMS! WHERE ARE MY ARMS?!”

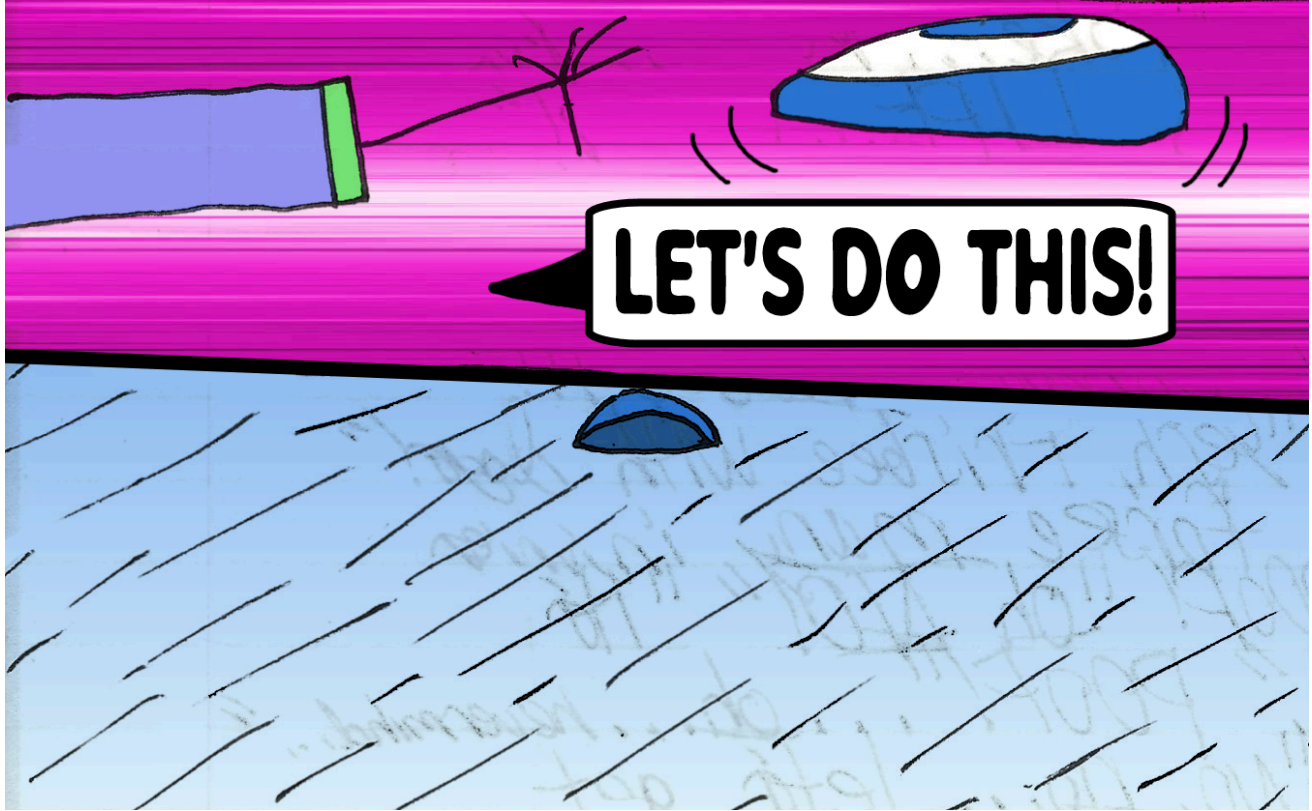


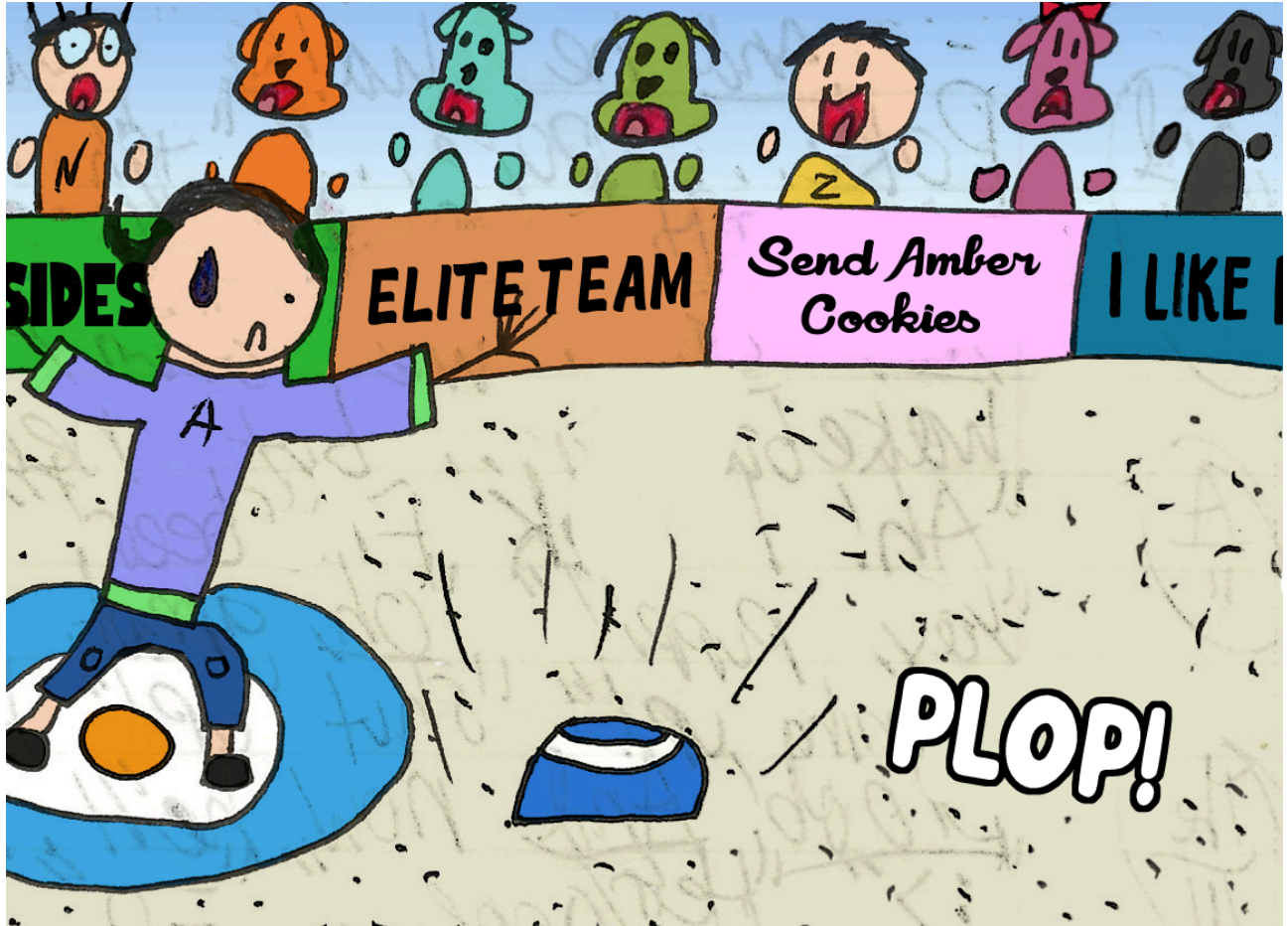


I flailed and screamed while everyone else stared at me, but then the event started and I was instantly back to jumping around with a smile like nothing was wrong. Scripted events change who I am as a person! Once Amber tired of posing for the readers of the novel, she raised her frisbee and turned to the far side of the arena where a series of colorful rings were located. Green was the largest and was worth 50 points, orange was smaller and worth 100 points, and purple was the smallest and worth 200 points. Her goal was to toss the frisbee so it landed in the rings to get a ton of points! I'm sure she'll do *great*.

"Okay, let's do this!"

Dramatic music played as she wound her arm all the way back and flung the frisbee, causing it to fly into the sky! There was a shot of it soaring above us before it... landed on the ground right in front of her. Somehow, she managed to get it closer to the ring she was standing on than the ring that gave her points. Everyone in the crowd went "aww" in disappointment except for Zack who was flailing around with a big smile on his face. Wasn't he supposed to be dead for the day?

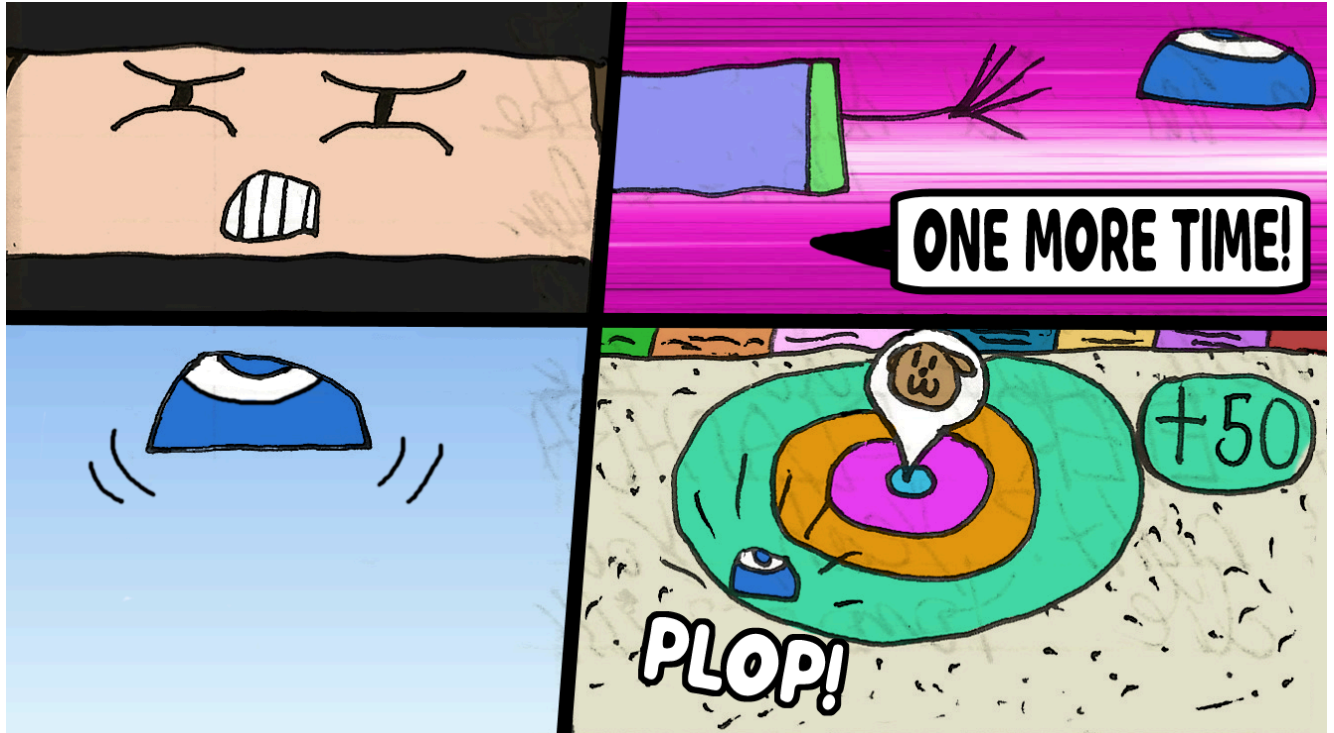




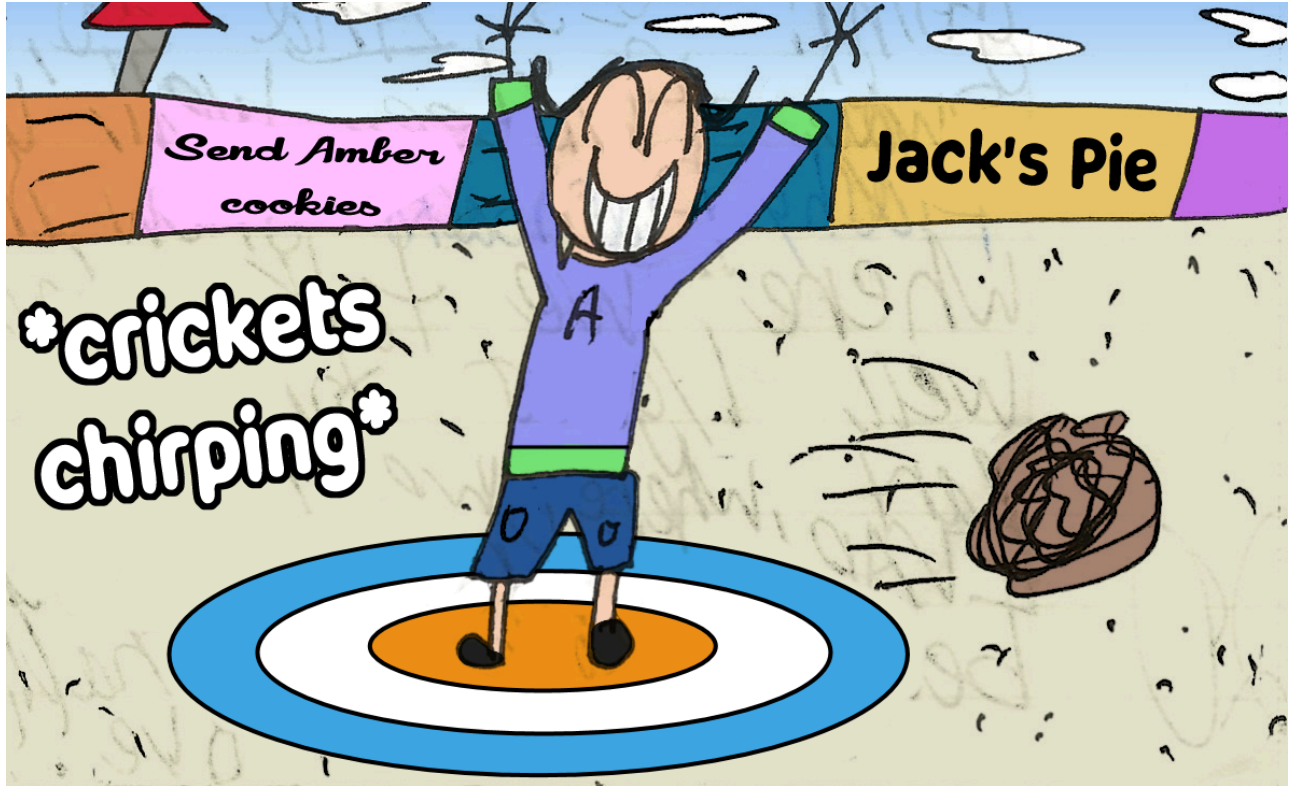
She stared at it for a full minute with her arm outstretched before she glanced down at the dog who turned away in embarrassment. Sighing loudly, she bent over, picked up the frisbee, and attempted to try that whole thing again.

“One more time! I’ve got this!”

This time, there was a dramatic shot of her eyes narrowing before she flung the frisbee with all the strength she could muster! It flew through the air, soaring over our heads as we watched in wonder. After a short flight, it landed on the very edge of the difficult-to-miss green ring, granting her 50 points.



She threw her arms into the air and waved them around like she had achieved something quite spectacular, but no one cheered for her. Instead, she was met with the sound of sand crickets chirping loudly. The dog shook its head before trotting over to pick up the frisbee and bring it back to her.



Once the frisbee was back in her hands, she prepared for another throw, now more determined than ever after her last big success. As she did a few practice arm swings to ascertain the trajectory, I noticed there was a wooden sign lodged in the sand next to me.

“Huh, I didn’t notice that there earlier. ‘Beware of sand worms’. Sand worms? Does that mean there are... Uh oh.”

My eyes grew wide, knowing that this would not end well for Amber. Of course, I could have just stopped her and saved her from further potential humiliation, but nah. What could I really do with my lack of limbs anyway?

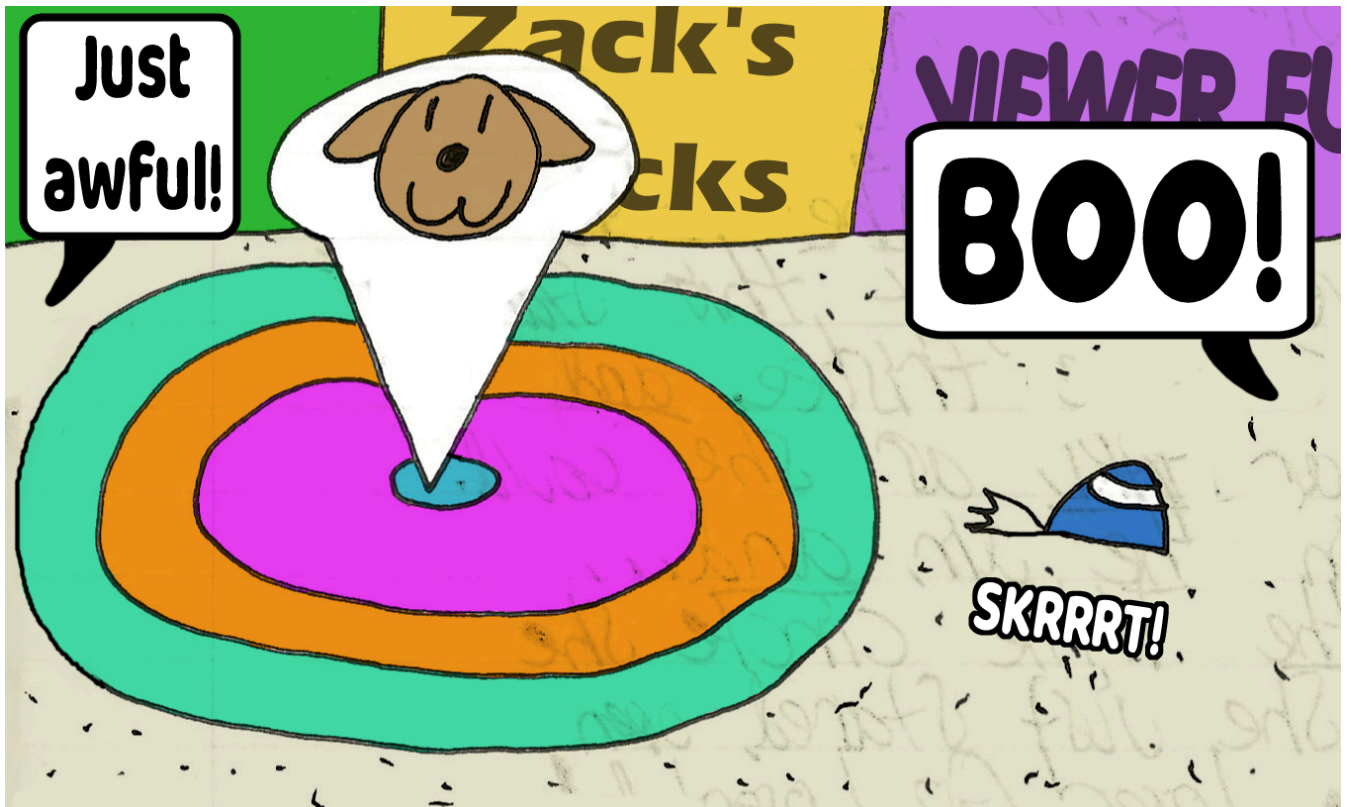
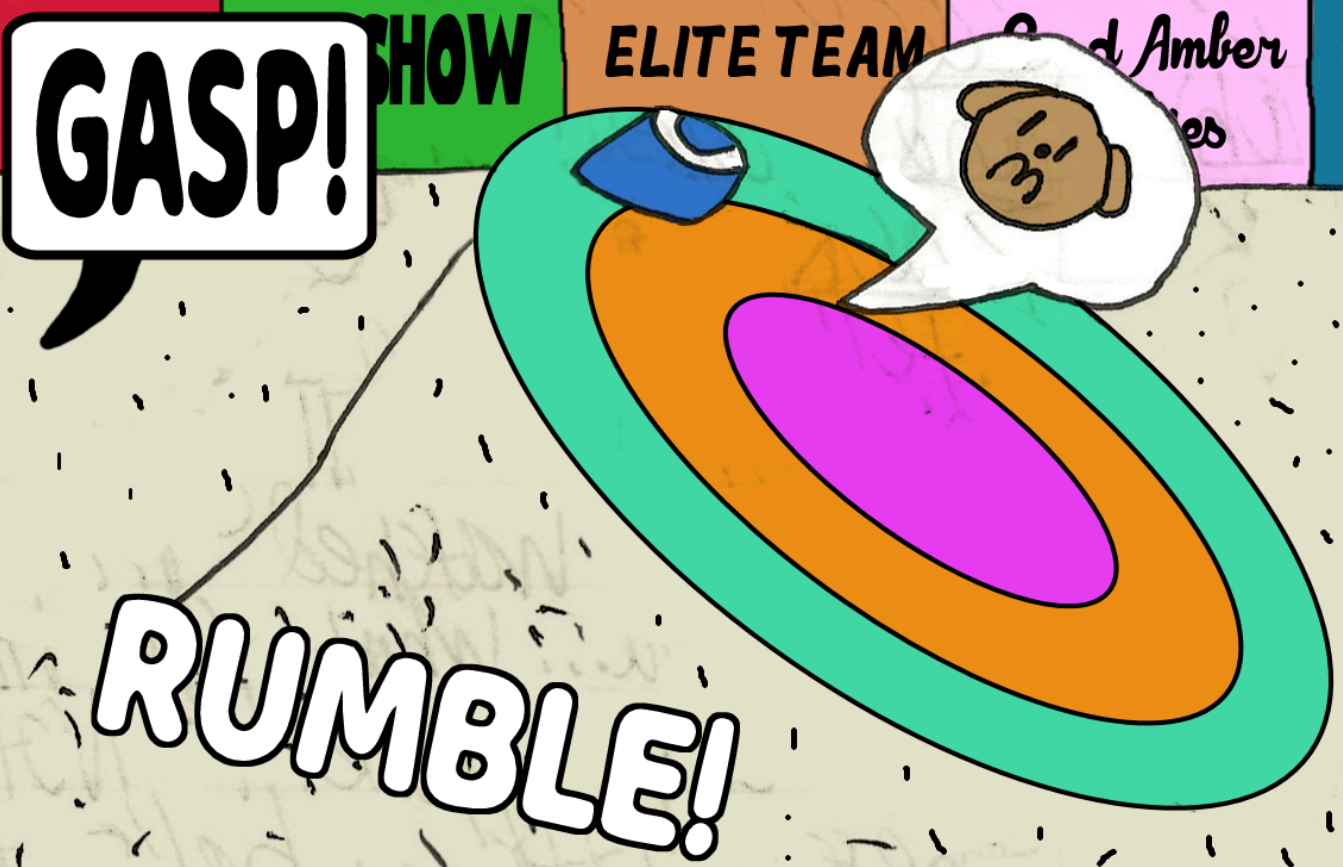


I turned back to the event and watched as Amber tossed the frisbee with a level of skill and flair that was unlike her. It cleanly drifted through the air before landing right on the purple ring, netting her a whopping 200 points. This was even accompanied by a "NICE!" sound effect and little visual graphic to really let her know she had done well for once. We all clapped and cheered as she waved and started blowing kisses which several audience members started running from. They call that the Kiss of Death!



Suddenly, there was a loud rumbling sound and everyone gasped as something started slithering around beneath the sands! It rushed by Amber, causing her to flop and fall on her

face, then sped directly under the goal rings, creating a mound that forced them to shift and tilt! This inevitably caused her frisbee to slide off of the purple and out of the ring entirely.



She got back to her feet and screamed when she saw that her incredible throw had just been undone by a rampant sand worm. The audience booed and she slumped over in defeat as the 200 points were instantly ripped away from her overall score.

“BOO!”

“Just awful!”

“Worst thing I have EVER seen.”

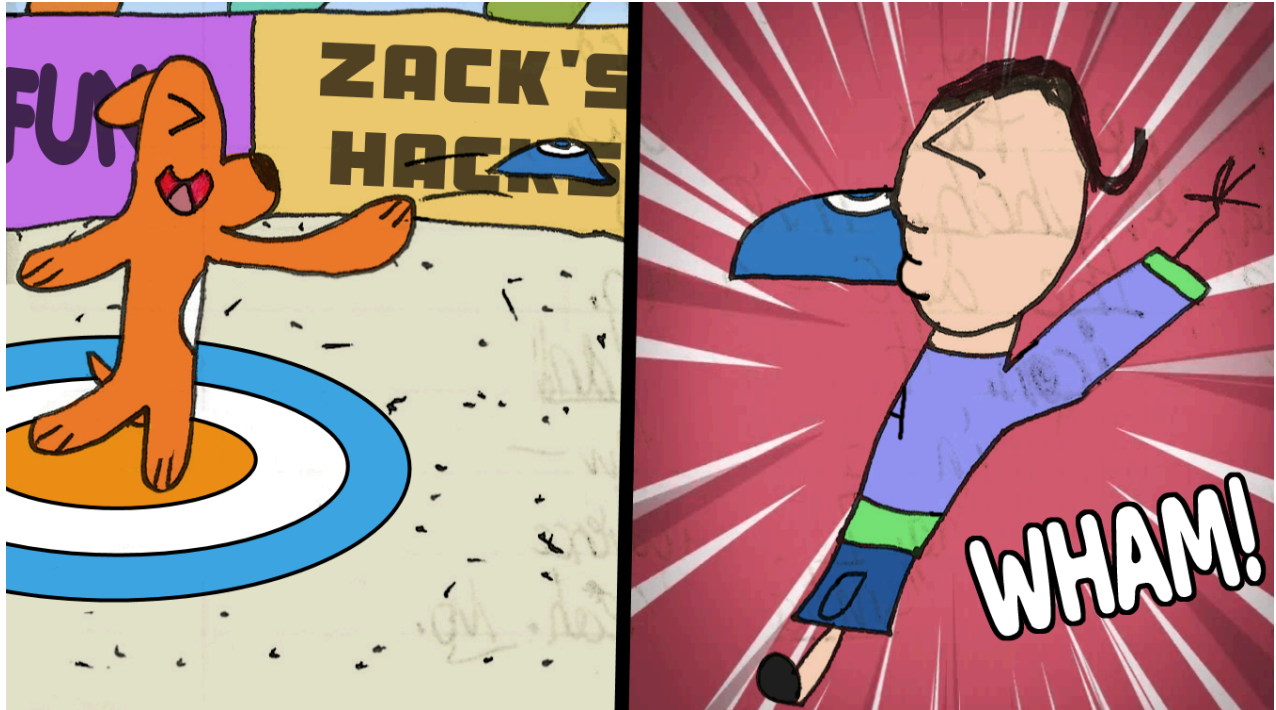
“Someone get her OUT of here!”



Zack went out of his way to throw a few raw, solid tomatoes at her which hit her in the face and caused more lumpy swelling to ensue. A buzzer then sounded, indicating she was finished and her total score of 45 points popped up on the big scoreboard next to an image of her head. Seeing as the only possible results could be even numbers, she must have *lost* points somewhere along the way!

She was promptly removed from the premises and a small loading screen followed. When it finished, FlamDawg was standing in the middle of the event area, now fully rendered, striking a pose while some random frisbee-fetching guy stood beside him. I mentioned there had been a bit of a pattern with the events thus far so I bet you can guess what's going to happen next. He smiled as he hurled the frisbee with all of the strength he could muster, sending it flying clear

over the goal rings and directly into Amber's face! It cartoonishly embedded in her skin and he gasped while the crowd cheered.



The buzzer instantly sounded and he glanced up at the scoreboard to see a whopping 1000 points appear next to his little head. This was, by far, the highest score anyone had ever gotten and the game simply ended because he achieved the maximum amount of points possible. Everyone in the audience jumped over the barricades, stuttering for a moment as they quickly rendered, and cheered while grabbing him and hoisting him into the air. Amber, meanwhile, was now sprawled out in the sand with her face as red and swollen as ever. It then cut to a small results screen where FlamDawg's score popped up over the event arena which served as the background.



Catchy music played before the scene faded out and we all returned to our usual spot- loitering in front of the fountain in the main square. Amber was now unconscious in a stretcher and FlamDawg was wearing a golden crown, a fancy cape, and was holding a bouquet of roses. I think he just became king of the island. I, meanwhile, was standing there with an extremely angry look on my face.

"You know what? I think I'm done."

"What?"

"Yeah. We can't seem to do a single thing in this quest without hurting ourselves. It's not worth it!"

FlamDawg pulled off his crown and cape and threw them on the ground.

"Yeah, I kinda just want to go home. I don't even care about the dance competition or whatever we originally came here for."

"I'm pretty sure that was Amber's thing."

"Well, she's unconscious so who cares."

“Exactly. Well, if everyone is in agreement, then I say we just scrap this adventure and head back home!”

Everyone nodded except for Amber who was, as we stated, in a coma. Or... unconscious. Same thing. Cat blinked a few times in confusion.

“Oh. Okay... If you guys just want to go back home then I guess my work here is done. Rex and I will head back to our huts so I guess this is...”

Ignoring her completely, I stomped my foot and flailed my hands in the air.

“I CALL UPON THE GREAT HEAVENS TO SUMMON FORTH A CONVENIENT TIMESKIP!”

Everyone watched in awe as the clouds parted and miracle light shined down upon my flailing form. Then, the world began to twist and distort, reshaping to better fit my desires.

**Back at home**, we were all gathered in the living room with confused looks on our faces. It was silent for a few minutes before I smiled wide.

“All’s well that ends well.”

It seemed that Cat and Rex had teleported with us because they were standing by the window.

“Hey! What did you DO?! We don’t live in some suburban sitcom setting! We live on Sportside Island!”

JT waved his paw.

“Yeah yeah, and I used to live under a pile of newspapers on the side of the road until a certain someone dragged me here. You’re not the first and you won’t be the last.”

She started throwing a tantrum while Rex collapsed on the floor.

“NO! You better take us home RIGHT NOW!”

“Can’t. It’s time for *Viewer Fun*.”

“What?!”

“Yeah, we’ll air a show or two while we brainwash you into firmly believing you live here.”

“Excuse me?! What does that even-”

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**--THE SIDESHOW--**

# Viewer Fun!

It all began in the *Viewer Fun* studio which was devoid of life until there was a sudden puff of smoke and Michael appeared in the back of the room! You might remember Michael as the self-proclaimed “Man in Green Shoes” from last Season. He was, like, the only one who was able to counter Zack’s killing attempts? Watched our house, snooped through our rooms, taped Zack to the wall? Yeah, good times. He left the novel after being discovered by some talent agency people and can now be found starring in various action movies, dodging bombs and flying off of walls after getting impaled to them because he’s actually wearing two shirts. I’m not sure why he’s here, but it seems Max might be trying to take him out before Zack ever gets the chance to. He suddenly appeared in a sitting position, holding what was probably meant to be a sandwich, but neither a chair nor a sandwich appeared with him so he was just kinda sitting on nothing and looking weird. He blinked a few times in confusion before falling onto the floor and staring at his empty hands.

“Oh, come on! Really? I lost my sandwich!”



To the right of Michael was the edge of the set with curtains and various other background props hidden just out of sight. Max suddenly popped up behind the curtains and pointed at

Michael with an evil grin on his face before FlamDawg came prancing out and ran over to him, clearly under some sort of obligation to help with this scheme. Michael picked himself off the ground and turned to see that FlamDawg was heading his way.

“Huh? Oh, I remember you. Dog-guy.”

His eyes narrowed.

“The fug you call me?”

Max flailed his arm around, reminding FlamDawg of the matter at hand. Getting back into character, he spun around and pointed at the air above them.

“Uh, I mean... LOOK UP THERE! What is that... in the... air.”

His acting was terrible but the show went on.



“It looks like a... a... um...”

Behind the curtain, Max was pointing to a cue card that read “distraction”.

“It’s a... um... disssss... trackt... teeee... on! Oh no. Aaaaah.”



He proceeded to panic by slowly walking around in a circle with a bored look on his face. Michael immediately whipped around and started screaming.

“WHAT?! This sounds serious!”

FlamDawg flailed around.

“QUICK! Toss your stylish green shoes at it to defeat it!”

Michael stared at him.

“Whut.”

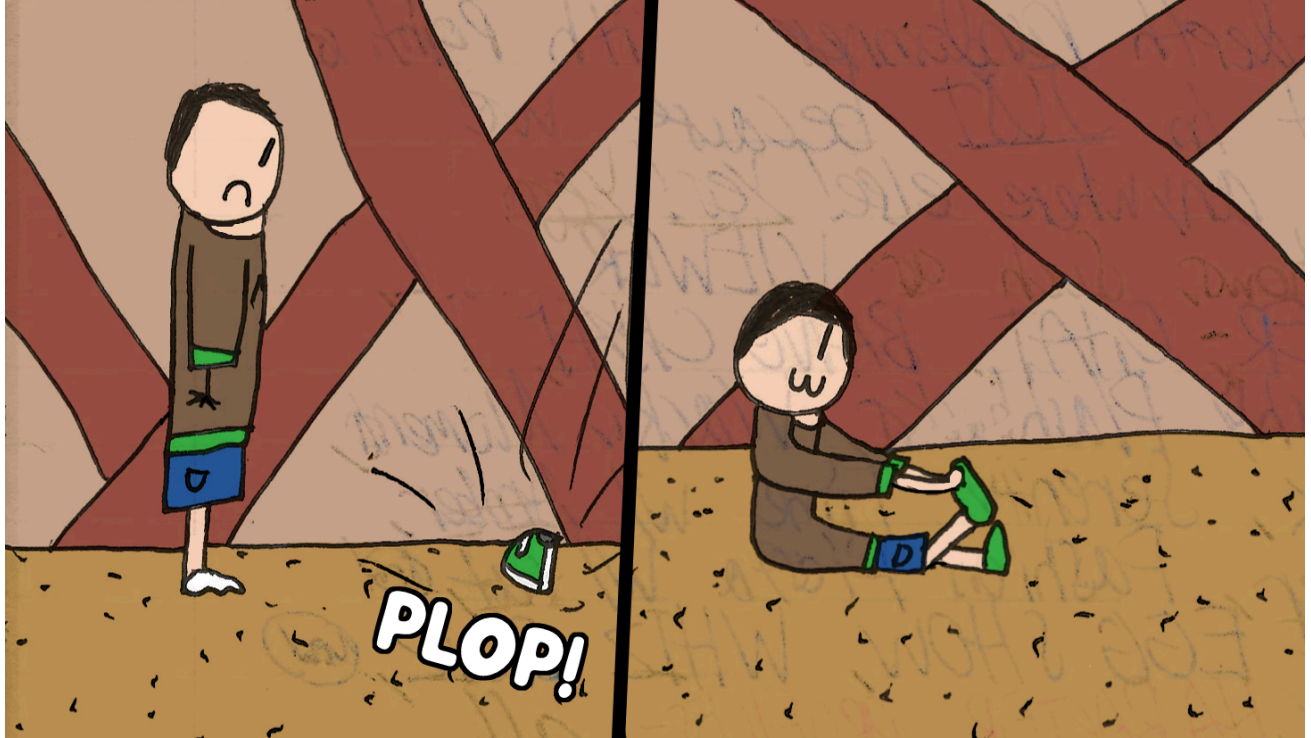
Max shook his head.

“He can’t process all this.”

Finally, Michael understood and proceeded to pull off one of his signature green shoes and throw it into the air! It flew up, did absolutely nothing, and fell back down to the floor. It conveniently landed near Max who swiped it, switching it out for a different one which he flung back over to him.



When the shoe landed nearby, Michael grabbed it and slid it back onto his feet, feeling whole again now that his green shoe had returned to him.



This feeling didn't last long because his shoes suddenly started changing colors and shimmering in a rainbow pattern!

"AAAH! MY SHOOOES! NOOOOO!"

I'm not sure how the other shoe was affected when Max only switched out one, but nevertheless Michael spasmed violently as he took massive emotional damage right there on the spot. I guess we're just going to forget about the time he put on Rainbow Strides and walked around on rainbows during his big adventure last year without suffering any shoe-related trauma whatsoever.

"Ugagagagagaaaa! Need... GREEN!"

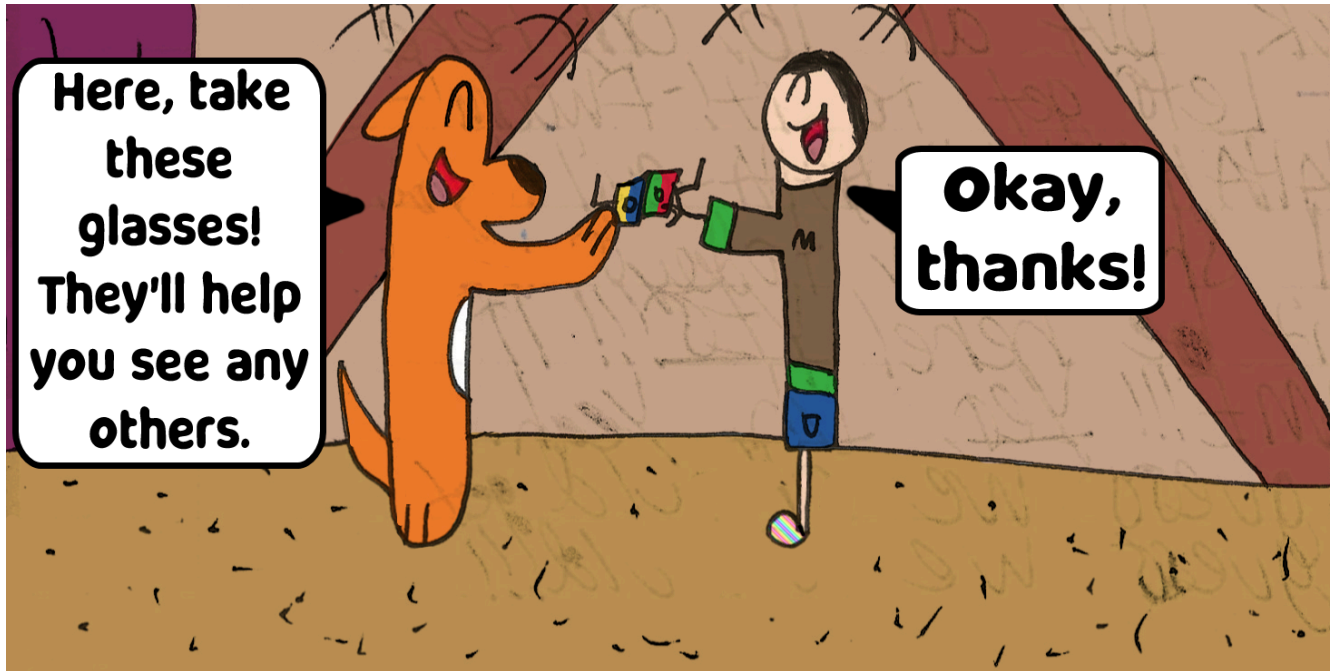


It was then that FlamDawg held out his paws and offered him a pair of glasses that had multicolored lenses.

“Great job defeating that distraction! Here, take these glasses! They have special lenses that will let you see any others that might be lurking in the skies above.”

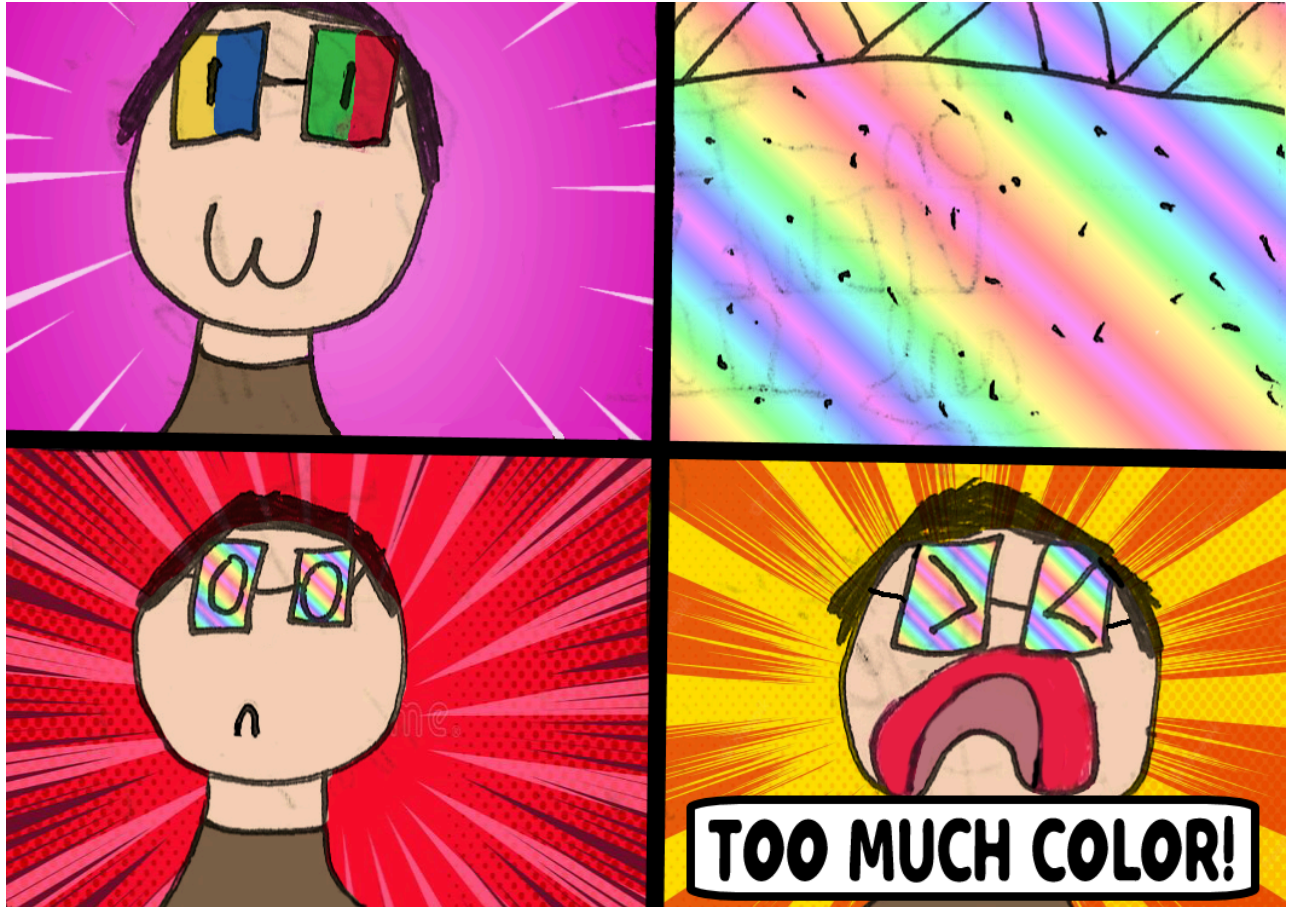
Michael immediately stopped dying from color overload and took the glasses from him with a smile.

“Okay, thanks! I’m sure there’s nothing wrong with them at all!”



FlamDawg stared at him, watching as he put them on and wondering if he was this dumb all along. In truth, Max was likely Hacking to make this whole thing go smoothly. Shortly after slipping on the glasses, Michael realized that the multicolored lenses made everything he saw appear rainbow-colored! This prompted more screaming as he overloaded on color once again.

"TOO MUCH COLOR! CAN'T... TAKE IT!"

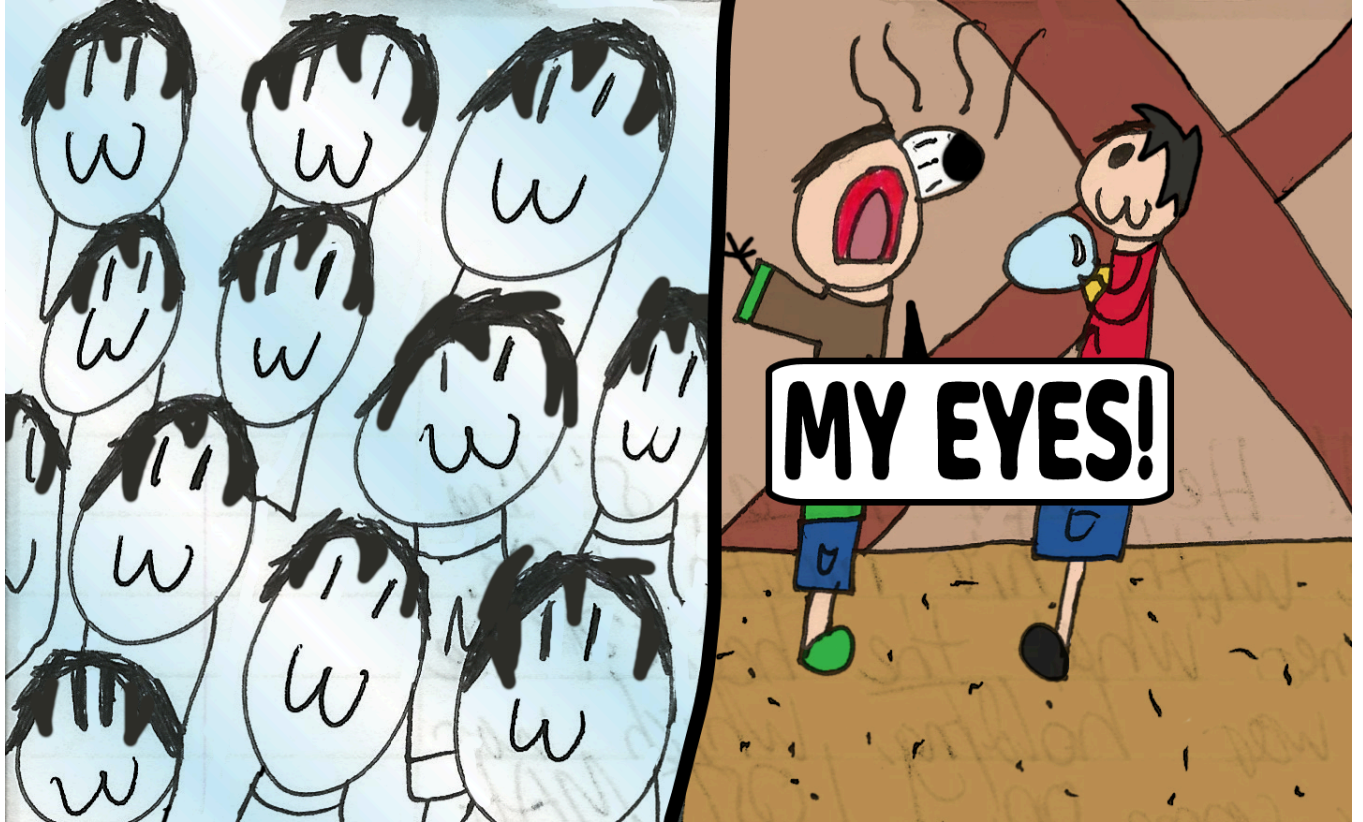


He writhed and spasmed in unyielding agony until Max popped out from behind the coward's curtain and ran up to him holding a shiny crystal ball. Once again, the unnecessary theatrics stopped and Michael turned to him with a smile.

"Oh hey, whatcha got there?"

He peered into the ball, only to be met with Max's reflection amplified a thousand fold! All these mirror copies smiled at him which was apparently the final straw for his suffering eyes with bulged cartoonishly out of his head.

"TOO SHINY! MY EYES!!"



He started writhing about again before his head trembled and snapped right off, landing on the ground. His body then went limp and flopped to the floor as well, prompting Max to reach down, grab his severed head, and hold it skyward. I'm sure he's perfectly mentally stable! Triumphant music blasted as a colorful background flashed behind him and he struck a victory pose.

*CHALLENGE: MAX KILL MICHAEL...*

*SUCCESS! VICTORY!*

And, just like that, the random replacement known as Max was able to achieve a feat that Zack never could, and in record time, no less! The credits for the episode rolled and Michael's various broken bits vanished in a puff of pink smoke, sending him back to the movie trailer from whence he came. I'm sure the new Greater Genesis movie will be delayed since one of the actors is dead, but with any luck he'll be back to his old self in six to eight weeks.



***AND THAT IS ALL FOR VIEWER FUN!***

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***Fashion Fiesta with Cat!***

The camera panned over a professional runway before zooming in on Cat, who was all dressed up and holding a microphone off to the side.

“Hey, everyone! Welcome to my new show, *Fashion Fiesta with Cat!* This is the one and only place where you can see ME showing you the latest styles and trends for the upcoming fiscal year! Let’s not waste any time and have our models take the stage!”

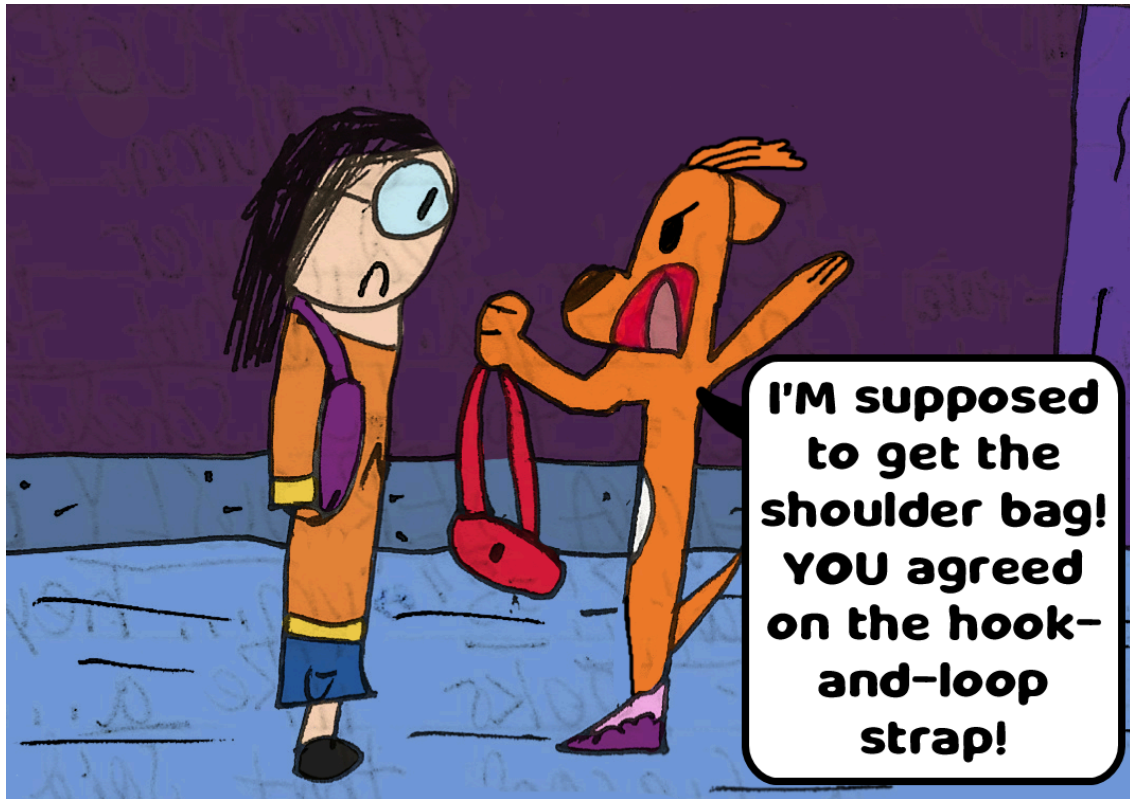
She gestured to the runway behind her and the camera panned over, giving us a front-row view of the stage. Hot pop music blasted as I suddenly emerged from behind the curtain, now with longer, flowing hair and a purple purse over my shoulder. I strutted down the runway with a level of skill that indicated this wasn’t my first professional show, twisting and turning and puffing my lips out with every step. When I reached the end, I struck a few poses while photographers eagerly snapped pictures, then put my hand on my hip and threw my head back, causing a few to faint.

“First up on the runway, an all-new violet Evaress shoulder bag! Look your best this fall with the one-and-only purse that compliments any outfit! Black will be releasing sometime next year, so don’t wait and pre-order yours now!”



I turned and headed back, but about halfway down FlamDawg suddenly ran out onto the runway. He had his hair done up differently, was wearing a pair of heels that oddly matched the bag I was showcasing, and looked particularly peeved. He held out a bright red purse and flailed it around in my face.

“HEY! What do you think you’re doing?! I’M supposed to get the shoulder bag! YOU agreed on the hook-and-loop strap!”



My face wadded up in distress before I started stomping around like an upset diva because he was ruining *everything*. I then took off running backstage, girly-laughing at the top of my lungs while some large paramedic men pursued me in an attempt to send me back to the mental ward I had escaped from. In actuality, that was not really me.



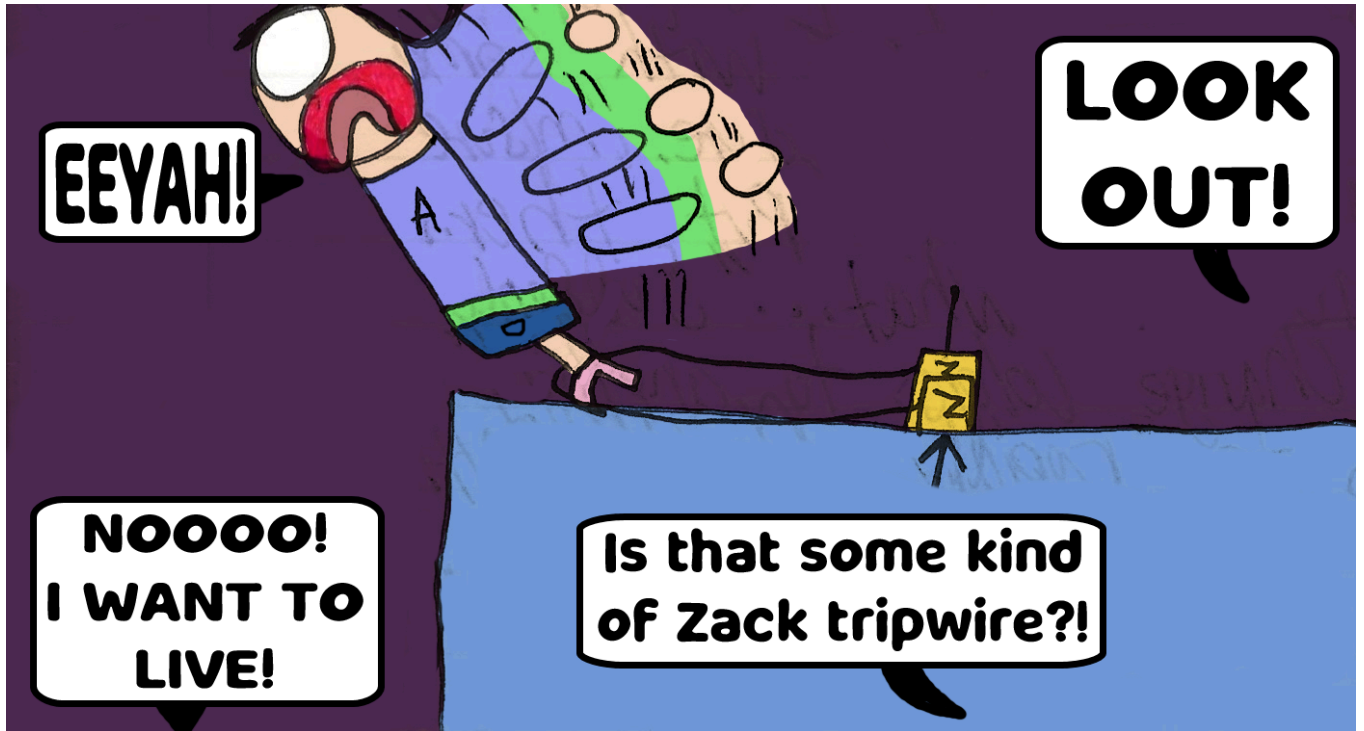
FlamDawg sighed, his big debut ruined, and slowly disappeared behind the curtain. A moment later, Amber stepped out and posed, now wearing sparkly pink pixie heels.

“Next up, we have a fan favorite- shimmering glitter heels from Pixie Plant, now in pink! If you’ve always wanted a pair but couldn’t find anything to match purple or red, this is the color for you! These elegant shoes sparkle with every step to ensure that you’re always the center of attention whether you want to be or not!”

She started heading down the runway, but it became immediately obvious that she had absolutely no experience walking in heels. She hobbled and wobbled, nearly falling off the stage with every step.



In an attempt to recover from all of this embarrassment, she flipped her hair and twirled around in an awkward fashion, but only one camera flash went off and it was on accident. When she finally made it to the end, she tripped on what appeared to be a conveniently-placed tripwire, flailing around and screaming before tumbling off the runway and slamming down on top of the group of photographers. Every camera fell and exploded on the floor, destroying all of the incredible pictures of the Not-Me that looked so amazing.



Ignoring the fact that several people now needed to go to the hospital, the runway show continued. The curtains at the far end suddenly swung open, revealing a single green shoe. This shoe was actually one of Michael's and was blown off earlier when his headless body flopped to the floor. I guess Cat ran out of high-end fashion sponsors and had to resort to picking up pre-owned clothing off of the floor.

"Last but not least, a special brand of uniquely green shoes worn by the star of Greater Genesis, in theaters whenever we feel like it! If you've ever wanted to make a bold fashion statement that really turns the heads of onlookers, this is what you've been searching for!"

The camera zoomed in, revealing that Pillbug was inside the shoe, acting as the model. He flailed around while the various review-writers ooh'd and ahh'd.

"Pillbug has arrived!"



The shoe slowly slid along the runway an inch at a time before it inevitably fell over and Pillbug spilled out of it. Those in the audience gasped and immediately rushed to his aid, stepping on Amber and the photographers in the process. Medic crews swarmed him and he was raised onto a stretcher while several women screamed and cried. It then cut back to Cat who tried to pretend things weren't that serious.

"And that's all the time we have for today! Next week, we'll be showing..."

An intern then ran in and handed her a piece of paper which she quickly looked over.

"Oh. I've just been informed we've been canceled. Goodbye."

***Goodbye forever from Fashion Fiesta  
with Cat!***

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The shows finally ended and we returned to the living room where everyone was seated in various spots around the room. Cat, FlamDawg, and I were sitting on the couch, Amber was in the armchair, Zack was floating in the corner, and Rex was playing with a puzzle on the floor. We sat in silence for a long time, watching a documentary about the most dangerous flower, until Cat smiled and spoke.

“Ah, I’m so glad I live here.”

“You do?”

“Always have.”

It was then that JT entered the room from the kitchen.

"Um, guys? The fridge is empty. We're out of food!"

It grew silent in the room for several seconds until I sighed loudly.

"Let's just go to the store."

**So then! Our spectacular island adventure comes to an end! We never got to finish it, but considering all the pain and suffering Amber went through, that’s probably for the best.**