

Alright campers, grab a partner and a kayak!  
Oh, and don't forget your life vests!



Hey, Cooper!

Oh great, here comes your little girlfriend...

What?  
Girlfriend?

Hey, do you wanna be in my kayak?

Uhh...  
sure.

Cool! Blue is still your favorite color right?

Yeah...  
'Kay! I'll get it.

Why'd you call him that?

What?

My "girlfriend".

I mean, isn't it obvious? He's obsessed with you.

He is?

Totally!

He's like a little girl with a crush on you.

Bullshit...

You know it's true. Why didn't you just tell him to fuck off?

Our moms are friends. She'll take my playstation away again if I'm mean to him.

Aw, lame.



... Hey! Know what you should totally do instead?



What?



Put this banana slug in his shirt out on the water!



Ew! I don't wanna hold that!

Don't be a pussy.



Do it! It'd be so funny!

Yeah, I bet Andy'd laugh!



Did you know that these trees can live up to like two thousand years old? An'-and there like twenty feet in diameter!

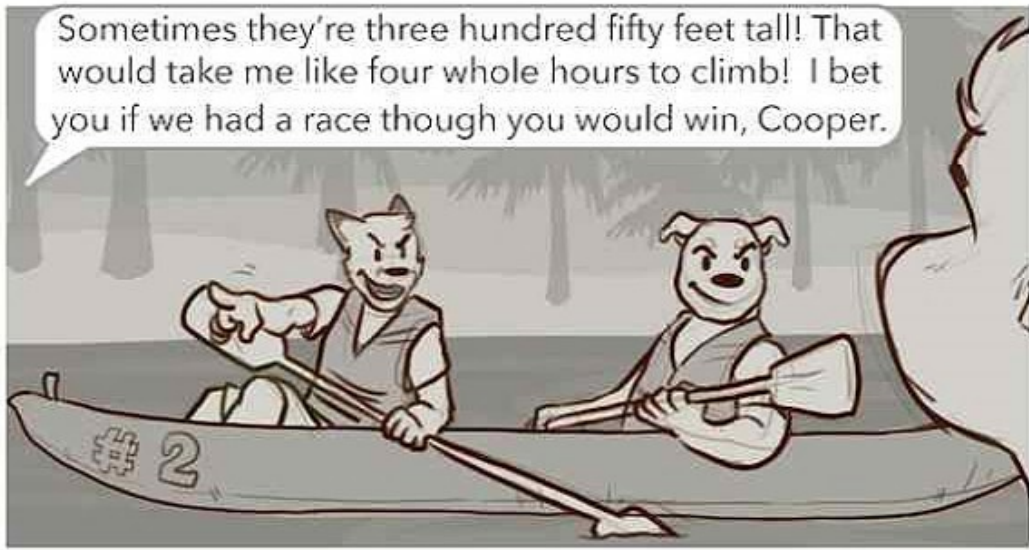


Cool.



My dad says that there's this one tree that's so big tha-that p... actually... big hole... and you can go through it... awesome... kinda scary. Like when I... 'cause the... to the edge... for a... talk... this...

PSST!



Sometimes they're three hundred fifty feet tall! That would take me like four whole hours to climb! I bet you if we had a race though you would win, Cooper.

could do that too! Some trees are-



If I could build a treehouse in... of these it'd be... cool! I would... my video... there... d be a se... way to go... when par... looking for... with snack... hidden away!... Wouldn't th... wonder... why no on... Maybe... we sh...





SPLASH



LATER

Are we feeling a little better now, Andrew?

\*sniff\* Yeah...

Good, good. You mother will be bringing your new glasses tomorrow. In the mean time, why don't you get some rest back in your cabin?

Okay...





Hey!  
Where are  
you going?

Yeah, everyone's  
going to the lake!  
We're gonna  
have a raft war.

Aw, dude! That sounds-



I gotta go! Bye!!







We were just havin' fun!  
The guys thought it would  
be funny, and I did too.

Sheesh, It's not my fault  
he got all freaked out  
and tipped the canoe-

YIPE!



Don't you get no fuckin' attitude with me  
neither! You're the one in trouble here!

OW! I'm sorry!  
I'm sorry!!



Why you always  
pickin' on Oleander's  
boy, anyway?



B-Because, they...  
my friends think he's  
a sissy, and he's  
always whining and  
never stops talking...  
and he follows  
me around.



They told me  
he's gay.





Heh, yeah. I always thought Oleander's boy was a little faggy.

You did?

'Course I did! That's what they get for raising him up like a little girl. Shit, you mighta' done him some good by roughin' him up a little.

Heh...

But don't you get into that shit, ya hear? I catch you bendin' your wrist funny and you're out, boy. You hear me?

Y-yeah...



You better. Won't have none of that in this house. You're gonna be a man someday, and I expect you to act like it.

Okay, dad... I will.

Good boy.





KNOCK  
KNOCK  
KNOCK



Special delivery for  
Captain Asshole.

Just been in your underwear  
all day, eh? You're such a  
gentleman, getting so  
dressed up for me.

Mm.

JSSS



Need to get out of the  
box for a little while?  
It's five dollar pool  
night at Madera Dive.

Nah, it's alright.

Okay, party-Cooper.  
Wanna pop in a movie  
or something, then?

Sure.





Okay, I'm calling it now that he's the killer. That was some sketchy shit right there. This show thinks it's so sneaky. Come on, son.



Andy already knows who it is because he watched ahead of me, the little turd.



Take off your clothes.



Yes, sir. Someone's feeling dominant...



Mmh...



Ah, slow your roll, Tiger. I'm not wet enough yet.



How about a little foreplay first and earn it? That sounds hot.



Wait a minute... you're not even hard yet. What's the rush?



Ngh, just... give me a second.

It's okay, dude. Really. You want me to help you or-

No! Just give me a second!



Okay, hold on ... Are you okay?

I dunno, maybe I'm just tired, alright?

After sleeping for like fourteen hours? That's not normal, Coop.

It's fine.

Look, you know I wouldn't judge you if you couldn't get it up once out of the many times we've done it. It's that, *plus* the crazy amount of sleep you've been getting that's concerning. Is there something you need to talk about?

No.

Are you sure? You know you can talk to me.

Yeah, I'm... sure.

Okay... do you want me to stay or should I go?

... Probably go.

**10 Minutes later**

Okay... try and get out of the house tomorrow, alright? Maybe go pick yourself out a nice shirt for the New Year's Eve party. I'll text you in the morning, kay?

Okay.



Fuck... the party.





### Grade Report for Cooper J Estevez

School Year: 2003-2004 (Senior)  
School: Oak Hills High School

CREDITS	COURSE	GRADE	
1.0	Algebra 2	42.7	F
1.0	English	76.4	C
1.0	Marine Biology	55.2	F
1.0	U.S. History	60.4	D
1.0	Physical Education	66.8	D
0.5	Health Science	57.0	F
<b>5.5</b>	<b>TOTAL CREDITS</b>	<b>59.7</b>	<b>F</b>

GRADING SCALE

A+	95
A	93
A-	90
B+	85
B	83
B-	80
C+	
C	
C-	
D	
D-	
F	





Heh-heeey, little-Drew! Wait up!

Cooper? Uh, wow. Hey...  
Hey, buddy, been a while, hasn't it? How have you been?

Heh, well, for a long time I didn't... I thought you were a big jerk after the slug prank...

Oh, good I guess, but... why are you talking to me all of the sudden?




Well, I missed my little buddy, duh! Didn't 'cha miss me?

Aw, we were just dumb kids! We're past that, aren't we?


Anyways, I was just wondering if I could borrow your Marine Bio study guide for this semester when you're done with it!

... Yeah, I suppose so.






Okay, I get it now... Sorry, can't help you.




I gotta go.



Hey, wait!



Hey! Let go-



No, I, I didn't mean it like that!


Like what, just being nice so you can copy all my schoolwork??

No, I mean yes, I just-


Three years of no talking and all you have to say is you want my study guide? Forget it!

Fuck, you're gonna make me say it, aren't you?

Say what?!



Yeah, I'm a huge jerk! And yeah, I need you for school stuff because I can't admit to anyone else how fucking stupid I am, okay?!

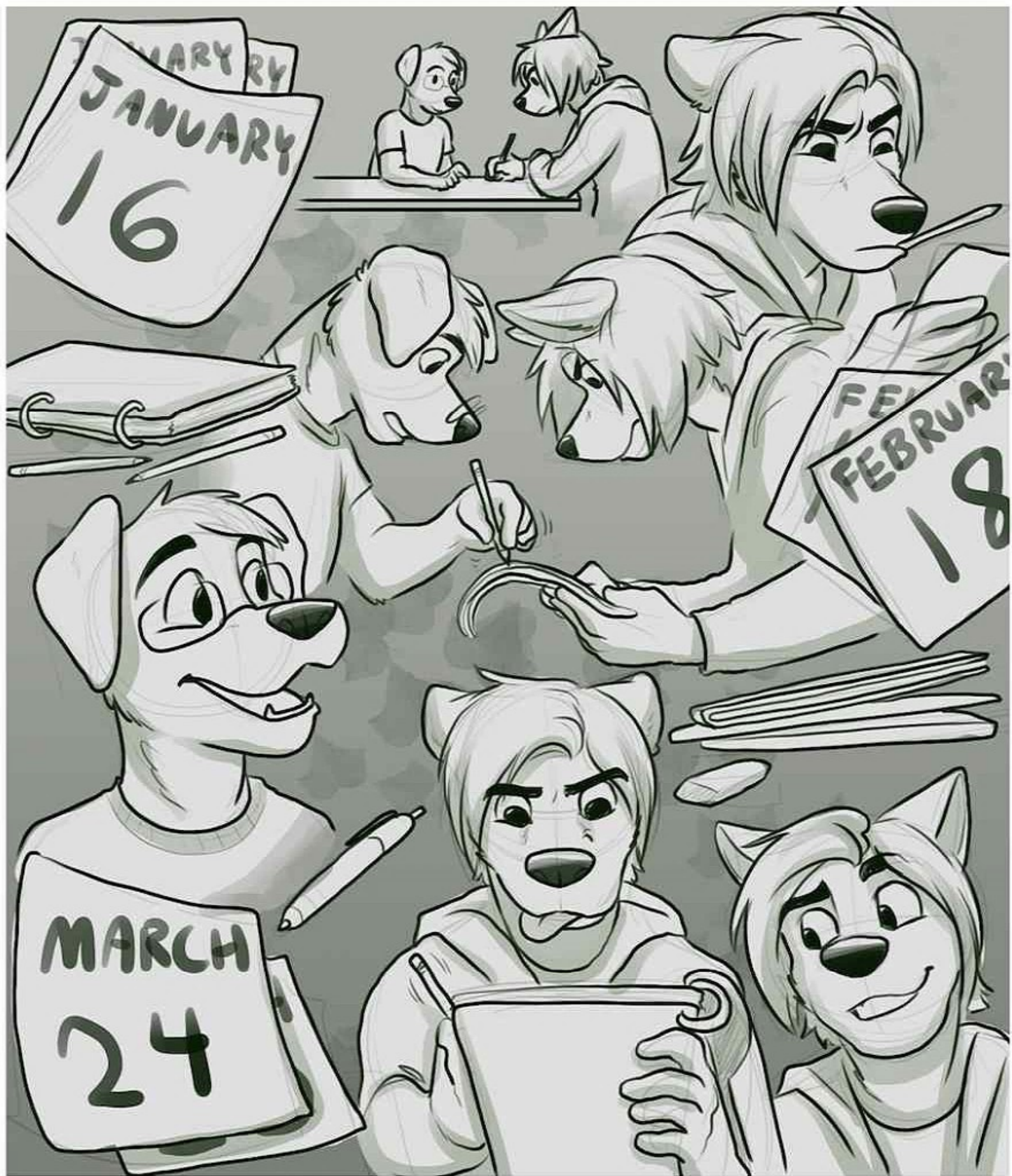


... You're not stupid, Coop...



... Yeah, alright.  
Let's do that.

Okay! Tomorrow  
just meet me at my  
locker after school.



# LAST WEEK OF SCHOOL



Alright guys, County Finals are just around the corner and we've been focusing a lot on expository. We need to sharpen up on Impromptu so we don't drop the ball again in that category.

Oh god...

What? What's that one?

It's where you get two quotes from a judge and you gotta pick one and only get seven minutes to prepare and present a speech about it and it's usually if you agree or disagree with it. I'm really bad at spontaneous stuff like that, I clam up and can't think straight.



What, so it's basically just improv bullshit?

I mean, I guess but

Boys, come on. We're trying to get started here.

Sorry, Miss Jill.



Hey, can I try the improv one?





Cooper? I suppose so... but I need to give the actual team priority to practice before you can go. Any volunteers?



... None? Really guys?



-Sigh- Alright, Cooper. Come on up. Set a good example.



You know how this one works, yes?



Yup.



Okay, here are your two quotes then ... "History repeats where education is selective"... or "disappointment isn't felt where love is devoid."

... The, uh, the second one...

Okay, go ahead and prep for a little bit, and let me know when you're ready.




So, ah, I've been told recently that disappointment isn't felt were love is devoid, a... subjective!... statement. Such a claim brings me to ask why anyone would ever think that...



I get that they were trying to say that you need to care about something before you can be disappointed in it, but that's just it.

Caring about something doesn't mean you love it! I believe a better phrase would be that disappointment cannot exist if there is no hope.



Unlike with love, disappointment comes easily when there is hope. I mean, heck, a manager can be disappointed in some no-name worker he doesn't give a crap about. A son can be disappointed in an alcoholic father without ever loving him like a son should. Regardless of love, you can still hope they'll be good, but... then you're let down.

That's why I believe that quote on, uh, how you can't be disappointed unless you love is... wrong.

... That's all I got..







Pretty good first try, Cooper!  
With a little practice, you could  
become quite a competitor.

You ought to take a speech course  
in college and see how you like it!



Heh...  
College...  
right.



Right...



Hmm...









This is it. If my name's not on the list for the cap and gown orders... I didn't make it.

You brought them up to at least passing levels! There's no way you're not.



Still, I've failed classes in earlier years...

Student ID?

Right here.

Okay, and what is your height?

Five foot, seven inches.

Okay, thank ya dear. Next!



Thank you.



...



Okay. How tall are ya, hun?

Heh, five-ten!

Wow.

Yeah.

Guess that's it then.  
No more bullshit to  
go through.

I guess not...



But hey, it's half day! Now that we don't  
have to study, wanna go get burgers or  
something? We've never actually hung  
out this whole time, so maybe-



Are you kidding? No way, I need to go  
shove this in my stupid dad's face! He  
bet I wouldn't get to graduate! Hah!



Oh. Okay. Then... yeah.  
There's always next time!



Alright, fine. Just... I'll skate  
by your house later. But I  
gotta do this thing first.

Okay! Cool! I'll just-  
I'll be at home!

Alright. Lates!



LATER



Hey, back.

Damn, it fuckin' stinks in here.



Dad, wake up. I need you to see some shit. It'll be worth it, I swear.

Dad.

Dad.

Fuckin'... Seriously?



Ugh, get up you drunk old prick!



AAAAHHH!!!



F-Fuck... MOM!  
MOM!! **HELP!!!**

Help...



Well, I'll be damned! Who let your ragged ass in the door?! Heheh!



For real though, how's it hangin', Coop? It's been a while, man!

Yeah, hey Gary.



Woah, dude. You look, uh, different.

Yeah, lost a lotta the tub, huh? Left it back in the army.

Oh shit, you still serving?

Only booze now. Completed my enlistment last year.

Damn. Speaking of which, can I get an apple ale?

Yeah bro!



So, whatcha been doing, dog? Last time we chilled was the summer after high school. Wasn't the greatest of times though...



Yeah. I stopped hanging out with a lot of people after dad died. Sorry I never called.

Nah, dude, that was some heavy shit. Now that it's been so long though, what happened? You never told any of us.



Accidental overdose. He drowned in his own puke while he was fucked up.



Shit, Coop. That's rough. I'm surprised you didn't get the hell outta town for college.

Mm.



Bah, he was an old bastard. Not much grieving to do there. It's not so much the dead that fuck me up nowadays anyway.

Heh, I suppose it's the living that continue the fucking huh? I hear ya there.



Lemme ask you something. How do people just live with unfinished business?

How do ya mean? Like ghosts?

I'm talking like... You and Holly broke up, but you stayed neighbors for the next three years. You had to watch her live her whole life without you, taking home guys, getting engaged, all that shit! How did you fucking stand not ever saying anything to her?

Well, I was living my life too. Our thing ended and we got closure.



Psh, "closure"... that's such a fucking myth. Like after this supposed "closure", that's the magical cure to make everything feel perfectly fine and everyone moves on and is happier than before.

I mean, it does happen, dude. Happened to me.

Then tell me what's wrong with me, because I'm expected to pretend that the past is this vanished, intangible thing when the past is literally just a phone call away, living and breathing right next to me, and I'm not supposed to do a damn thing about it!



I thought you were with that one girl! The one from out of town for school, long brown hair- Chelsea.

Yeah, that's the name!



She dump you or something?

No. We're still together.

Then what's the problem?

Not her.

Ohhkay, then you've got someone else on the brain. Not good, muchacho. Who is she?



Hh... She's...



A friend. We don't talk anymore though.





What...?



... Okay, fine. But you have to be quiet! My brother and parents are sleeping, obviously.

Yeah, uh huh, I know, yeah.





Okay! Congratulations, you pushed your way into my house. Now will you **please** tell me what the hell is going on??



I don't fucking know, okay?! I woke up and my heart was pounding and my stomach feels like shit and I can't fall asleep because laying down feels terrible and it's like I'm fucking dying, man! What if the same thing that happened to my dad is gonna happen to me?! Cause it sure fucking feels like it!

Oh. Is... does it feel like your mind is racing?

YES! The world won't stop fucking spinning for two seconds so I can get a fucking grip, god dammit!



Well, you're definitely not dying, Coop. I think you're just having a panic attack.



What??



It's fine, my brother gets them. Sometimes me too. Let's just get your mind off things and see where it goes from there. Come on, sit. Sit, boy.

Alright, jeeze! Fine!



What is... seven minus four?

What- Just answer it. Seven minus four.

Three.

Okay, how about five plus nine?

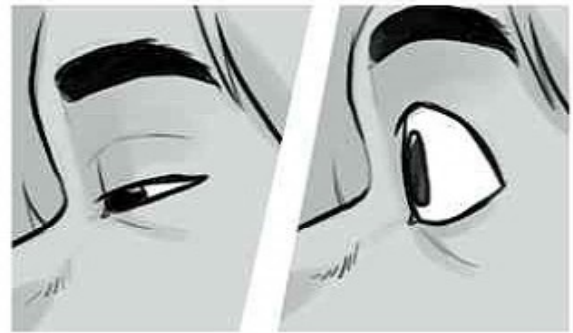
... Fourteen. No, fifteen.

Heh, you were right the first time.





Okay... Night.





What the fuck... is he awake? I can't tell.



He's like... lightly rubbing me.

What if I...?



Mm..?



OW!



Jeeze, I'm awake already! You don't have to smash me.



... What?

Uh, hello? You were all folding me in your sleep! You were like, moaning and everything! Jeeze, you were getting crazy!



Nu-uh!  
Stop, your  
elbows are  
so pointy...



Wait, did I actually  
give you a boner?

Everyone gets morning wood! It's weird that you don't! Although it looks to me like you've already had the early bird special. What are you, nine? Heh! Wow.



I'm gonna  
take a piss.





DUDE wanna shave my head?!

GOD do you *always* have to barge in!?



I'm serious! Shave my hair off.

Damn, are you sure?

Yeah!  
Either you do it or I do it myself.

Wow.  
Uhh, okay...





Can I back out of this?

Nope.



Okay, uhh... ehh...

I'll just... Go for it!



DUDE hurry-

AUGH!!

AAHH!!



Hah! Holy shit.

**THIS IS WHY!** This is why we shouldn't have done this! Oh my god, you're **RUINED!**

Jeeze, chill! You just got my eyebrow! But damn, that's...

I didn't get your eye?!

Nah.



I messed you up. It's fine, keep going.

A-Are you sure?

Yeah!

I promise, we will look back on this and laugh.  
God, I hope so...  
Wait, did you not put the clipper comb on it?  
... No..?  
... Fool, you need that or you'll make me bald!  
Gaah!!

Thanks for putting this together... Chelsea, was it?

Yeah, for sure! They want us to "network" and "build relationships" and all that, so yeah!

Where's everyone from, anyway?

I'm from just an hour south of here.

Oh yeah? \*\*\*\*\* county?

No, right next to there, \*\*\*\*\*.

Oh sweet! What about you, Chelsea?

I'm from Washington, actually!

Washington? Why would you wanna come all the way down to this boring old place??

Obviously for the charismatic people. Heh, no, I lived in SoCal till middle school and wanted to come back. NorCal was the closest I could get.



What about you guys?

Hah, locals, actually. We went to community college around here and transferred since it's so close.

Oh awesome! You'll have to show us around sometime!

Yes!! Let's do it!

So I take it you guys know each other, then? Good friends?



Psh, this guy? He's more like a little squid wrapped around my leg. Can't get rid of 'em!

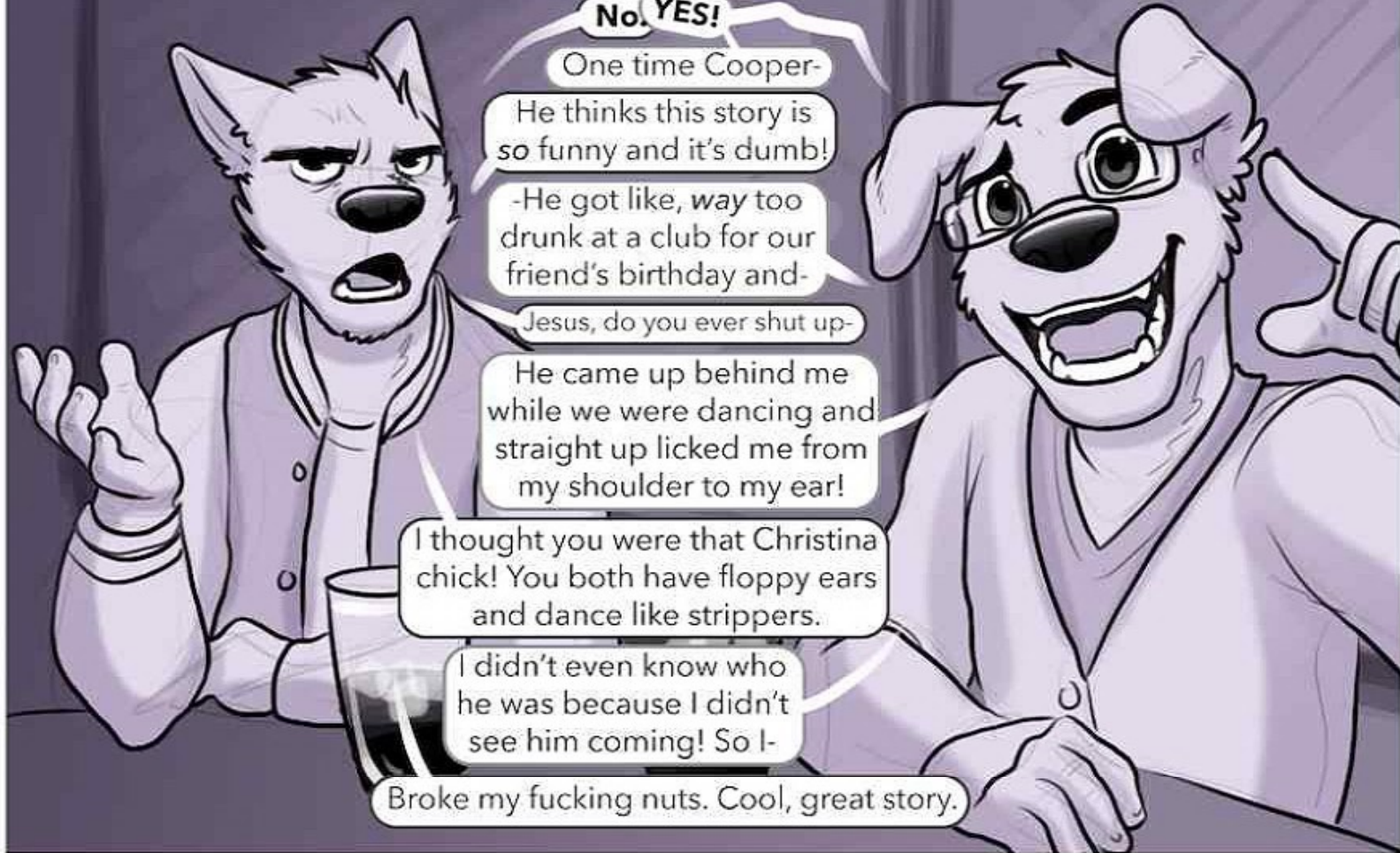
Wow, find your own ride home!



We've known each other since we were like eleven. We're kind of on and off friends, but we argue like an old married couple.

Hah, that's cute! Got any good stories of each other?







That was so much fun! Everyone seems super cool and the class doesn't sound so bad.

I really like Chelsea. She seems like... like she knows what she's doing, you know? Like she's got her life together and she's so smart. Heh, I'm jealous.



She actually seemed like she was interested in me too! It's so weird, it feels like I have a weird crush on her, haha! You liked her too, right?



Coop?



Helloooo??



Seriously? What even-



Um, alright! See you Monday then!... prick.



Morning.

Haha! Yeah, ain't that a bitch.

Haha!  
Too funny  
Cocoyr  
Cheheh



Aw, there he is! Little Dee in his fancy pants.

Hey, are you alright?



Last time I saw you, you seemed off. Were you sick or something?



Pff, yeah, I had to get through hanging out with you dweebs without any booze in me!



Alright then. Since you're too busy trying to act cool in front of people, I'll see you when you come crying to me about writing your next paper.



Ha! W-Well, that's fine! Jeeze, take a joke, heheh~

ccccccchh



Besides, I don't need you! I bet I can get a better grade than you on the paper!



Really? A better grade. You, piggybacking off *my* academic career for how many years now? Quit while you're ahead, Coop.



Fine, don't take an opportunity to show me up, little Miss Confident. Loser could have bought the winner lunch! Not like you're risking much.



You know what? Fine. Deal.

So that was it.



The only place we ever really found stability is in mutual annoyance of each other.

It was the only thing that kept us...

... I don't even know how to finish that sentence.

All I know is, somewhere down the line... the cycle was broken.



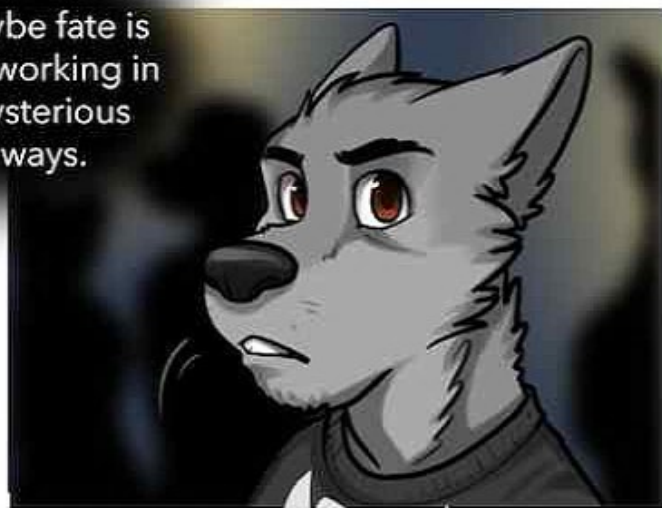
So what do you do when the only thing that makes you feel anything up an' leaves?



Beats me.

All I really have left to think is...

Maybe fate is just working in mysterious ways.



TO

CONTINUED



BE

CONTINUED

