



**SPACE**

**around the floor, yo**

# 25 APR “WHOM DO I WRITE FOR, YO?” , I REPLY TO BILTA AS I SCRATCH MY HEAD, “ME: ONE DAY, I’LL FORGET AND I WANT TO REMEMBER; SOME PARTS.”

**“is that true, boss?”, bilta replies as he takes a sip of his hot coffee in the cafe by the beach, “it sounds like bullshit, yo.”**

“It is”, I reply as I chuckle, “I’m just trying to make a quick buck—*easiest way to make money is normally the hardest way.*”

**“SO... IF WRITING BOOKS SUCKS”, HE CONTINUES SPEAKING AS HE SIPES HIS COFFEE AGAIN, “WELL... THEN, WHY DO YOU DO IT?”**

“I don’t really—*I don’t write books.* I just make these sweet-ass comic books, yo.”

**i reach over and grab my bookbag; i open it up; i pull out the glossy 8×11 comic book.**

“Like this!”, I continue speaking as I set it on the small wooden table, “check it out—*it’s freshly printed.*”

Bilta reaches over and picks it up off the table; he strums through it; stops on page 17; looks down the page; he stops on the third paragraph and starts reading; he chuckles.

**“is this a true story, boss?”, he replies as he turns his head to me, “this really happened—like you wrote here, yo?”**

“No—*it’s all a lie*”, I explain as I pick up my mug from the table, “it makes a good story—*but, there’s not much more to it than that.*”

**“SO THIS IS FICTION?”**

“I don’t know”, I reply as I put my hand in the air to signal the waiter to come over, “so anyways, Bilta... we have

another mystery: I got an email in the night that a pack of digital.wolves have been attacking digital.cattle on Planet MDNH. I’m going to send you to figure out something to do—*I’m going to hang out here and cash the paychecks.*”

“Are you for real, boss?”

**“yeah”, i reply as i shrug, “i’m not going there—that shit’s dangerous, yo.”**

I take another sip of my coffee; I lean back in the plastic recliner; I turn my head to look out the large window in the cafe; *there’s twelve surfers, a couple guys selling hot dogs and someone with a bunch of kites.*

“You ever fly a kite, Bilta?”, I continue speaking as I turn my head back to him.

**“ONE TIME”, HE REPLIES**

**AS HE SETS THE COMIC BOOK DOWN ON THE TABLE, "IT WASN'T ANYTHING SPECIAL, YO."**

"I know what you mean", I explain as I sigh, "not really that great an experience."

**"so why do you ask?"**

"Why not?", I continue speaking as I sip my coffee. "it's just like something that you should do sometime in your life—*like, at least, once.* Go fly a fucking kite—*it's, probably, good for you?*"

"I doubt it."

**"I DO, TOO."**

"I may take you up on that offer, later, however", Bilta replies as the waiter sets the biscottis on the table, "it sounds boring—I *could go for that, yo.*"

"Boring is not bad—*give it a chance, sometimes.*"

**"I DON'T LIKE RUSHED AND HURRIED", HE REPLIES AS HE LEANS BACK IN HIS PLASTIC RECLINER, "I LIKE A SLOWER PACE OF LIFE, YO."**

"Yeah, whatever", I reply as I start thinking about our next mission, "hey Bilta... this is not related to our upcoming mystery, but I don't think that I've punched you in the face, in a while?"

**25 APR "YES", BILTA CONTINUES SPEAKING TO THE SHORT DIGITAL.CASHIER, "I AM TRYING TO FIND SOME SWEET & HOT DIGITAL.PET.SOCKS, YO."**

"Aisle 12", he replies as he continues chewing his bubblegum.

**"OK", BILTA REPLIES AS HE SIGHS AND TURNS AROUND, "THIS ISN'T THAT HARD, YO."**

He walks over to the aisle; scans the products; *these look good.* He thinks as he picks the purple and blue small package off the hanger; he puts them in his pocket; he turns his head to look around; *ok—I don't think that anyone saw me, yo.* He turns around and takes a step to leave the digital.department.store. Moments later, 0.9823387 nanoseconds later, my doorbell rings. I get up from the sofa in my living room; I take a step towards the front door. Moments later, I open it. I shake my head as Bilta pulls the small package from his pants pocket.

"I got them, yo", he exclaims as he holds up the small package of pet socks.

**I ROLL MY EYES; I SIGH.**

"Bilta", I reply as I sigh, "we *already* had this discussion—you can't just show up with pet socks and be in our cult. I will

consider this new evidence of your devotion to be in our group when your digital.application comes up again, yo.”

**he sighs; he puts the package back in his pocket; he shrugs.**

“I *just* can’t win with you”, he explains as he slouches on the front porch, “what am I supposed to do? I really want to be in—*how can I join?*”

“Yeah, Bilta—*that’s the whole point*. You can’t just cut-in or take shortcuts—*this is why we have a digital.application; you need to learn patience*. Wait—*see what we say before you give up*. I, normally, check the digital.emails in the afternoon; depending how things go, if it is a regular day, then, typically, I get around to those matters around 14 hours. Consider finding something else to occupy your time? *Be patient and wait; this is*

*something out of your hands*. Find some way that it will be fine—*regardless of the outcome of me and HR’s decision*.”

**“WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO DO, YO?”**

“Get a hobby—*I really enjoy riding a mountain bike*. There’s some great places to explore in Dorinto—*consider that as I way to pass the time while you wait*. Wait in peace; hold on until it’s time; don’t rush or you will not be prepared for what, is surely, going to transpire. Relax—*and find a way to relax, yo*. That’s the secret in life—*it’s not always time for the right time*. Patience and discernment go far in deciding the right, or proper, next step, action, to take, right now.”

**“THAT DOESN’T MAKE SENSE”, BILTA REPLIES AS HE SIGHS, “SO AM I IN OR**

**OUT, YO?”**

“Technically”, I continue speaking as I roll my eyes, “you are out—*of my house*. But, you are in Dorinto.”

“What’s that mean?”

**“you’re never out—never really down and out until you think that you are. consider changing the story that you are telling yourself, you’ll find some peace.”**

I sigh; Bilta sighs; *it never ends*.

“Will it”, Bilta continues, “be alright, either way?”

# 25 APR “PRO-TIP #2: WE DON’T EAT AVOCADOS IN MY PET SOCKS CULT; IF YOU DO, THEN WE KNOW THAT YOU ARE AN OUTSIDER; SOME PINCHE FAKE.”

**“but”, bilta replies as he continues slicing the digital.avocado, “it was just a little bite, yo.”**

*“You know—there’s no such thing as just a little. You either do or you don’t; you eat avocados or you don’t; don’t try to act like a little is nothing.”*

**“it doesn’t matter.”**

*“You know, Bilta”, I reply as I sip my coffee and roll my eyes, “this—this is exactly the reason that I rejected your digital.ap-plication to be in me and HR’s pet socks cult. I don’t think that you, really, care.”*

*“I do.”*

*“Words are free.”*

**“i really wanted to join, yo.”**

*“Yeah”, I explain as I pace in my kitchen in house, “that’s why we had to make a digital.application; a screening questionnaire, and, ultimately, we decided that, at this time, you weren’t going to be a good fit in our cult. There’s rules, Bilta—I don’t think that you appreciate this. We can’t just have some random velociraptor coming around eating avocados—where is the line?”*

*“Huh?”*

*“This is not anarchy, Bilta—it’s a cult.”*

**“what?”**

*“You don’t take our pet socks cult seriously—one day, you say one thing; the next, it’s a different story. We pride our-selves on consistency—if you want to be one of us, you will need to wait and think about how you behave, then submit another digital.application to appeal our previous decision. We have a process; you don’t just willy-nilly accept people*

*into your cult. It would be a disaster, yo!”*

*“You take things too seriously, boss”, Bilta replies as he picks up another digital.avocado, “like... you need to lighten up.”*

**“bilta”, i explain as i stop pacing, “this is why we win.”**

*“Huh?”*

*“We win because we are ordered; we are respectful and polite; we don’t do what you do—we aren’t better; we are different. You have your way—we have the right way. Make sense, yo?”*

**“why do you keep talking, boss?”**

*“I actually enjoy how my voice sounds—it’s like music to my ears. I don’t even care if you listen; I like listening to me talk—it’s how I get off.”*

**“get where?”**

“It’s just like”, I continue speaking as I sip my hot coffee, “my thing—*what I do, yo.*”

**“you talk to hear yourself talk?”**

“And”, I keep speaking as I resume pacing, “if you want to keep interrupting me, Bilta—*you will never join our pet socks cult.*”

“I don’t know if that’s really what I want—now, that I think about it, boss.”

**“you would be missing out—on fridays, we have pizza parties and watch cartoons. it’s pretty chill—consider it; it would be good for you.”**

“That sounds not awful”, he replies as he slices the digital avocado, “are there any other velociraptors in your pet socks cult?”

“Clearly, not”, I reply as I roll my eyes, “it’s a cult, not a slumber party.”

**i chuckle; bilta turns his head to look out the window in the kitchen.**

“You know”, he explains as he turns his head back to me, “I think that is what I, truly, want.”

**25 APR “BEFORE, MY FIRST COFFEE OF THE DAY, I’M QUITE USELESS”, I QUICKLY EXPLAIN TO BILTA, “LIKE THE BROKEN UNICYCLE WITH A FLAT TIRE, YO.”**

I pause; I take a sip of my soda as I continue pacing in my small study in my house; *why don’t we have answers yet?*

**“are you sure that the digital.technician said the specimen was ok this time?”**

“Yeah, boss”, Bilta replies as he sips his coffee, “he looked at it—*said that it was acceptable and they would start running tests.* We should have the results on the DNA splice soon. Just give it time.”

“I’ll give you five fingers of patience”, I reply as I roll my eyes, “we really need to finish this digital.mystery so we can get back to the real digital mission.”

**“what’s that, yo?”**

“Where are your pants.”

“Excuse me?”, Bilta replies as he grabs a handful of digital.granola, “I don’t think that I heard you right. Can you repeat that, boss?”

**“yeah”, i continue speaking as i sigh, “we need to find your pants.”**

“They’re on me”, he replies as he shrugs, “mystery solved, yo.”

“No—*you idiot*”, I continue speaking as I pace and sip my soda, “the pants that you had on when

we went to examine the velociraptor fossil. We need to find those pants—they had a note in the pocket. Remember—I told you to hold on to something for me. We need to get that piece of paper—it has the digital.formula for the digital.avocado recipe.”

**“that sounds, rather, unimportant.”**

“The small things matter, Bilta”, I reply as I shrug, “you don’t get it—the little things are the big things; how you do something small is how you do the big things; a dollar is everything.”

**“why do you need this recipe, yo?”**

“That dip was the shit—it is, certain, to be a winner in the bake sale this year. I don’t want to lose to my asshole neighbor again—I forgot the two recipe tweaks that I made. If, I don’t get that digital.avocado.formula, I’m not going to win—I don’t want to lose to her, again.”

**“y g h m”, bilta replies as he sighs, “she doesn’t like you—you want to get even. so you are going to win the digital.neighborhood bake competition?”**

“It seems small and trivial—and, obviously, it is. But, Bilta—fuck it: it matters to me. I want to win; or, a better way to say it is that I don’t want to lose to H E R.”

**“why do you care so much?”**

“I don’t particularly”, I continue speaking as I sip my cold soda, “it’s a rather innocuous thing—but, all-the-same, it’s about pride. She told me that my red hair looked like two monkeys having sex in the digital.sahara.”

**“that doesn’t make sense”, bilta replies as he shrugs, “why would that offend you, yo?”**

“It doesn’t really—it’s just that she is taking too many liberties with her mouth. I was to win to shut her up—a competition for the best food.”

“You think that you are going to win with the dip recipe?”

**“i don’t think, bilta”, i reply as i turn my head to look out the large window, “i do—do or don’t do; but, try.”**

“That sounds intelligent—but, also, I’m a velociraptor so you shouldn’t trust my judgement.”

**25 APR “YO, BILTA—I WANT A PICTURE OF YOUR SMILING FACE TO PUT ON MY DESK IN MY HOME OFFICE”, I EXCLAIM AS I PAT HIM ON THE RIGHT SHOULDER.**

“’cause I’m the hero, boss?”, he replies as he sets the small digital.vial on the small table in his studio apartment.

**“you didn’t fuck up too badly, this time”, i reply as i shrug, “i feel that is worth a pat on the shoulder, yo.”**

“Thanks, boss.”

“Shut the fuck up, Bilta”, I continue speaking as I settle more into his couch, “so the next step is to deliver the specimen to the digital.lab for further analysis.”

**“you can do that, yo.”**

“Probably not going to happen”, I reply as I roll my eyes and grab a handful of digital.papitas, “I’m too lazy.”

“I don’t want to go back to that place”, Bilta exclaims as he shrugs, “it creeps me out.”

**“it’s not that bad.”**

“Unlike your face.”

“What’s that mean, yo?”, I ask him as I turn my head back to the digital.TV, “you have a problem with my face? *Sounds like a wicked case of envy, yo.*”

**“i envy how lame you**

**are ’cause that takes talent.”**

“I am jealous of no man”, he replies as he sighs, “us, velociraptors are a special breed of awesome—*we don’t compare.*”

**“yeah, whatever, bilta”, i reply as i shrug again, “so... back to what matters. you taking it to the lab tomorrow?”**

“Yeah, sure—why not? They open at 13 hours, right?”

“Something like that”, I roll my eyes, “you’ll figure it out—I *have faith in you.* You are both talented and handsome.”

**“you really mean that?”**

“Only if it makes you do my errand for me tomorrow.”

I lean forward and grab another handful of food; I pick up the hot sauce and pour it in my mouth; I swish; I chew; I swallow; I sigh; *these are really good.*

**“bilta”, i continue speaking as i turn my head back to him, “where do you get these delicious digital.papitas from, yo?”**

“The store?”

“Does the store have a name?”

**“yes.”**

I sigh; I roll my eyes; *why is everything difficult with him?*

“Are you going to tell me the name of the place where you buy your digital.snacks?”

**“why?”**

“Cause they’re good.”

“No.”

**“yeah, whatever”, i reply as i roll my eyes, “no biggie.”**

“Just find what works for you—*try different things; some things are good; some you will let go.* In time, your life will be a collection of hobbies, actions, routines and behaviors. That, it, will be your life.”

“So you are still not going to tell me where you buy your potato chips, yo?”

**“digital.qlkd.”**

“Oh?”, I reply as I shrug, “that place on the outskirts of Dorinto; never been there—I’ll *have to check it out.* I didn’t

know that they had anything good there.”

“Yeah”, Bilta replies as he shrugs, “I’ve been going there for a while—I am friends with the owner; nice gent; not particularly handsome— *he plays a mean guitar.*”

**tell him that you are friends with me—he’ll treat you like family, yo.”**

“Is that a good thing?”

“You know”, Bilta replies as he turns his head to look out the window, “sometimes, I don’t, really, even know.”

**24 APR “IT’S ABOUT AS USEFUL AS THE NUMBERS TO YESTERDAY’S LOTTERY, YO”, THE DIGITAL. TECHNICIAN RESPONDS AS HE PEERS INTO THE MICROSCOPE.**

“So you can’t splice the strands together”, I reply as I sigh and turn my head to look out the small plate glass window in the digital.lab.space, “you can’t do anything, yo?”

**“I’ve tried everything”, the lab technician sighs as he picks up another slide and places it under the microscope, “maybe, this one will work better?”**

He looks through the lens; he sighs again; *how do I explain this to him, yo?*

“It’s the same—*all of the material is contaminated.* There’s nothing that I could do to help you—you need to return to get another sample. This time, place it in the digital.UV container so it doesn’t react with the digital.sunlight.”

**i sigh and shrug.**

“If that’s how it is.”

**“boss”, bilta remarks as he taps me on the shoulder, “i have something—look at this, yo.”**

He reaches around the digital.flask on the table and grabs his bookbag; he opens it and takes out a small digital.tube.

“I have some DNA from the velociraptor.”

**“what? how did you get**

**that?"**

"I know that it wasn't a relative—but, *I thought that maybe, you were wrong.* I wanted to do some tests to see it's ancestry."

"That's kinda weird, Bilta."

**"so's your face."**

"Whatever", I reply as I reach my hand out and grab the small tube, "maybe, you'll end up being the hero, Bilta?"

"I am already."

**"with people named you", i reply as i roll my eyes, "but, not many others. anyways... let's see what happens, yo?"**

I hand the sample to the lab technician; he prepares the petri dish; he slides it into the digital.time.accelerator; moments later, he takes it out; swabbing the growth, he places the new material on the slide.

**he peers into the microscope; rotates the digital.aperture, the clarity increases and he sighs.**

"This looks better", he starts talking as he turns on the

backlight in the digital.machine, "I think this will work, yo."

**"do you mean that, yo?"**

"No", he replies as he backs away from the machine and pulls the slide out from under the digital.microscope, "this is shit, too—*go back and get a real sample that I can use, yo.* Don't cut corners this time."

**he turns his head to bilta.**

"Don't fuck with the velociraptor fossil, Bilta."

Bilta gulps; he looks down at his feet.

**"ok", he replies as he turns his head to me, "so we need to go back?"**

"Who says we—*I think that you can do it on your own, Bilta.* I taught you the procedure—you got this, shit."

**"i don't think that i can, boss."**

"No one cares, Bilta—*do your fucking job.*"

"Huh?"

**i pause; i sigh; i turn to the lab technician; i roll my eyes.**

"He is never easy", I continue speaking to the technician, "so... you have an anti.digital.UV.protector that we can borrow?"

"Yeah", he replies as he turns around and picks up a small digital.device from the table, "use this one, yo."

**"ok—cool."**

"So, Bilta", I reply as I hand him the small aluminum caja, "use this and go tonight."

# 24 APR “I DON’T WANT TO QUICKLY TAP DANCE FOR SOME QUARTERS WHILE YOU WATCH ME, BILTA—AND, YO, DON’T POKE THE VELOCIRAPTOR FOSSIL.

**“are you sure it’s not alive?”, he replies as he turns his head to me, “like... they scare me.”**

“Bilta—*it’s a fossil, yo.* It’s fine. But, are you going to help or just keep watching me—*we have a job to do.*”

“So like... what am I supposed to do?”

**“pick up the head”, i continue speaking as i sigh and take the digital.syringe from my backpack, “and, just don’t move.”**

Bilta bends over; lifts the velociraptor head from the blue dust; I lean over; I insert the small needle into the dry bone marrow; I pull back on the handle and the digital device *beeps.*

**“ok—that’s good. you can put it down now.”**

Bilta wipes his hands; shrugs as he stands up.

“That wasn’t so bad.”

“Yeah”, I reply as I roll my eyes, “you’re a fucking crybaby, Bilta.”

**“it’s just that—my parents were attacked by a velociraptor.”**

“What?”, I reply as I shrug, “you’re cloned—you don’t have parents. Your stories, or attempts, are lame—*at least, make a funny joke if you’re going to say something.*”

“Your zipper’s down.”

**i look down at my teflon pants; no, it’s not.**

“You’re annyoning, Bilta”, I reply as I shake my head, “but, anyways... I’m going to take the sample to the digital.lab later to run some quick

*tests—we should have enough material to extract the DNA sequence to map out the problem strand.* From there, we can extrapolate the missing information to complete the puzzle. I think that this should be a good first step to the flu vaccine.”

**“does it even matter, boss?”, he replies as he turns his head to me.**

“I don’t know.”

I shrug; he shrugs; I put the device in my backpack.

**“it pays the bills”, i continue speaking as i pull my digital.telephone out of my pocket.**

I take a picture of the specimen; I hit guardar on the phone and the icon flashes.

“Ok—that should be it, yo.”

**“why’d you take a picture, boss?”, bilta replies as he picks up his bookbag, “i thought that we just needed to get the dna sequence?”**

“Yeah—it’s for my daughter, yo. She’s really into dinosaurs.”

“Oh?”, Bilta replies as he rolls his eyes, “yeah... ok? Whatever.”

**“sure—so anyways, you want to do anything before we head back towards dorinto, yo?”**

“I could go for a pizza?”

“You paying?”

**“attention—but, not much more.”**

“Anyways”, I continue speaking as I zip up my black hoodie, “we’ll go by a digital grocerystand on the way back to the vehicle if you want to grab a snack or some shit.”

“Yeah-ok?”

**i pause; i rub my hands together; it’s cold and**

**going to get colder. i turn my head in the direction of the space-vehicle; sun’s going to set soon.**

“We need to start heading back, Bilta”, I reply as I turn my head to him, “there’s digital.wolves in these parts, at night. We need to get to the rendezvous point before 27 hours.”

**“what’s that in dorinto time, yo?”**

“Late.”

**24 APR “WELCOME TO THE DIGITAL. PLANET HDMC1, BILTA—YO—WE CALL THIS: THE FOURTH ROCK FROM THE SECOND DIGITAL.SUN PAST SECOND DIGITAL.ANDROMEDA.”**

“You want to see how many hot dogs I can fit in my mouth at the same time, boss?”, Bilta replies as he takes a step out of the spacevehicle, “I got nine on the trip, here.”

**“yes—that actually sounds more interesting than our mission today, yo.”**

“Ok”, he continues speaking as he pulls the digital.tin from his pocket, “I have to digital.fabricate them, first—then, the magic starts.”

“I would hardly call it that”, I reply as I sigh, “but, it appears that it’s going to be the entertainment while we walk over to the site of the new velociraptor fossil.”

**“look, boss”, bilta exclaims as he throws his hands in the air, “i have four hot dogs in my mouth, yo.”**

I roll my eyes; *what-the-fuck is it with this velociraptor?*

“Ok?”, I reply as I shrug, “that’s nothing—I once had twenty-four. Beat that, Bilta.”

He pauses; he looks down at this feet.

**“so anyways, boss”, he continues speaking as he turns his head to me, “so like... we have a mystery or some shit, today?”**

“Yeah—*welcome to the party, Bilta*. So anyways... we need to examine the fossil to see if we can extract DNA to diversify the existing velociraptor population. There’s an epic outbreak of flu this year—*we need to find some antibiotic that we can use to guard the remaining velociraptors.*”

“I haven’t been sick, yet”, he replies as he gulps.

**“yeah, whatever, bilta—why’s it always about you? this is for everyone, all the velociraptors—get your head in the game.”**

“Ok”, he continues speaking as we walk forward towards the small green tent on the edge of the horizon.

Moments later, we are a little farther along the seemingly endless hike; blue dust around our feet, we shuffle on towards what is surely going to be a challenge—*something that we need to do*. Bilta pulls a small digital foil packet from his backpack; puts the digital straw in; starts drinking.

**“what’s that, yo?”**

“If you were my real friend, you would know.”

**“what’s that mean, bilta?”**

“I don’t think that you are my real friend?”, he continues speaking as he shrugs, “so, I’m not going to tell you what I’m drinking.”

“Why you have to be that way?”, I reply as I shrug, “I didn’t really care anyways—it’s just small talk.”

**“small talk is for losers and strangers.”**

“What would not be strange is if I punched you in the face—*that is a concrete known.*”

“Why do you talk so much, boss?”, Bilta replies as he throws his drink on the ground and sighs; *that was delicious, yo*.

**“why do you ask so many questions, bilta?”**

“I asked first”, he continues speaking, “and, why are you so nosey? What are you trying to find by inquiring so much into my life? *You looking for answers to some question?*”

**“yeah”, i reply as i shake my head, “i’m trying to figure out how to get rid of you so i can enjoy my wednesday afternoon?”**

“Too bad—*you’ll never find another velociraptor that’s as cool.*”

24 APR "NOT GREAT ADVENTURES—NOT BAD; NOT THE BEST; ABOVE THE BASELINE OR THE COMPETITORS", THE ANNOUNCER ON THE DIGITAL.TV SLOWLY SPEAKS.

**i turn my head to bilta.**

"I'm sold", I continue speaking as I grab another handful of digital. papitas, "I mean—*that looks like fun, yo.*"

**i look back at the digital. tv.**

"Are you a hardcore", the man on the TV continues speaking, "extremist with a drug addiction, gambling problem and a lust for the women?"

**i turn my head to bilta.**

"We just call those people *assholes, yo.*"

"Well then", the announcer shouts as the screen fades to black, "I have the perfect place for you—*come on a shitty adventure.* It's guaranteed not to be a great time—*it's not bad; somewhat above average; you know—nice for a couple hours or something like that.*"

**"looks like fun, yo", bilta speaks as he grabs more palomitas, "i could use something not horrible."**

"I like terror", I reply to Bilta as I take a sip of my cold soda, "if there's an element that I'm going to fuck up my life—*I'm in, yo.*"

**"not majorly."**

"Oh no", I reply to Bilta, "clearly—*not majorly fuck up my life.* But,

if there's a chance that I won't be able to go to work tomorrow—*I'm cool with that.*"

**"like a broken leg."**

"No—*that's painful.* I mean, just, like, if it is not the best but good—*that's cool.*"

**"there's a big movement to be the best, at everything."**

"I prefer mediocore", I reply as I shrug, "I mean—*it's just my thing, yo.*"

**"you have any trophies?", bilta replies as he settles more into his couch in his studio apartment.**

"There has to be losers, yo."

"Why?"

**"if everyone wins—then everyone loses."**

"That doesn't make sense—*why do you say these dumb things, boss?*"

"Hear me out", I continue speaking as I turn my head to Bilta, "you don't want to participate—*you want to win.* If you don't win—you will be motivated to try harder. If you win, you won't want to lose your place—*you will be motivated to maintain your status, as a winner.* You don't want the middle—*just*

*there.* It's so fucking pedestrian."

"What's that mean, yo?"

**"i don't know—some shit i read in the old earth logs."**

"No", he replies as he turns his head to look out the window, "I want to be a winner, boss."

**"well—don't get comfortable being a loser, then."**

"What?"

"Ultimately, the place that you end up in is the place you want to be—*you want to win or lose?*"

**"win."**

"I doubt it", I reply as I shrug, "or you would already be there. You are right where you want to be—*this is the place you choose for yourself.* Don't blame anyone."

"I don't think that's true, yo."

**"until you take responsibility for your life you will consider losing winning—a lottery ticket with no value is the prize."**

"The prize for what?"

"You know—*everything.* Play the lottery once—*you win then great.* You don't—*you win by starting to be a loser.*"

**"how's that help, yo?"**

"Start from the bottom."

**24 APR "I'M STARTING A NEW DIGITAL.KINESTÉSICO BODY BOOTCAMP, YO", BILTA REPLIES AS HE SETTLES INTO THE COUCH, "I MEAN LIKE, KINDA, TOMORROW."**

**"does it involve carrying around all of your problems, all day, everyday?"**

"Why the shitty attitude,

boss?"

**"been here, in your studio apartment, for too long", i reply as i grab a handful of**

**digital.papitas.**

I pause; I turn my head back to the digital.TV.

**"what's on the digital.**

**boobtube?”**

“Probably a whole lot of interesting and exciting, educational and shit, programming to help me expand my conscience and develop a more appropriate world view, yo.”

He pauses; he chuckles; he turns his head to me.

**“no–i’m just kidding”, he continues speaking as he sighs, “probably digital.informercials and puppies playing with plastic soccer balls.”**

“Oh? The soccer series is still playing, yo?”

“Yeah–*it’s the fifteenth game of the second tournament.* That’s all they’re showing here.”

**he leans forward and grabs some palomitas.**

“It’s boring–*I watched some of it, yo.* I didn’t really like it.”

“Yeah”, I reply as I scratch my head, “I have been meaning to catch some of it–*they’re not showing it in Dorinto.* Mind if I check out a couple minutes of it?”

**“i would prefer not, yo.”**

“I can punch you in the face and take the digital.remote.”

“You know”, Bilta replies as he shrugs, “I’m a velociraptor–*small hands but big muscles.* You don’t stand a chance–*I will destroy you, yo.*”

**i shrug and roll my eyes.**

“Bilta–*if I had 20 pesos for everyone that said that I’d be eating tacos with friends, not digital.papitas with you.*”

“You act like you don’t want to be here”, he replies as he shrugs, “but I don’t see you leaving.”

**i pause; his point is valid and well thought out.**

“Yeah–*you are lucky that I allow you to hang out with me in your apartment.*”

He rolls his eyes.

**“what is it with you, boss?”**

He shrugs.

“I mean”, he continues talking as he grabs more palomitas, “I make one joke in public and, now, you don’t stop talking to me. You don’t even know me. You remember how we met–

*you were standing behind me in line at the digital.grocerystore.* I made a joke about digital.papinos; you laughed; we exchanged a couple pleasant words; and, now, you are here in my apartment–*so like do we have any work, yo?* Do you want to work together, again?”

**“you invited me to hang out.”**

“It was a figure-of-speech–*it was just to make small talk.*”

**“yo–don’t make much sense, bilta.”**

“Yeah, Boss”, he replies as he turns his head to look out the window, “I was just talking to you because I needed a job–*thanks for the writing and great penguin migration opportunities but I don’t think you realize that were not, actually, friends, yo.*”

**“why am i here, then?”**

“I don’t, actually, know”, he replies as he shrugs, “don’t you have a family and shit to do?”

“Yeah–*sometimes and somewhere.*”

**“are you going to do that, then?”**

“No”, I reply as I grab another handful of digital.papitas, “I’m going to just keep relaxing on your couch.”

# 23 APR “PICK A TOPIC—SOMETHING CURRENT, TIMELY AND INTERESTING: EXPLAIN BOTH SIDES—THEN, LET THE READER DECIDE;YO—BE NEUTRAL.”

**“i don’t want to not take a position—i’m into wayne gretzky and veganism, yo.”**

“Well, Bilta”, I reply as I settle more into his couch in his studio apartment, “if you take a position—*you’re going to be taking a position.*”

**“what’s that mean?”**

“I don’t know what you’re talking about, yo.”

I pause; I lean forward and grab a handful of digital papitas; I shove them in my mouth; I pick up the bottle of hot sauce and start pouring it in my mouth.

**i swish my mouth and start swinging my head back and forth.**

“I’m a velociraptor”, I say as I continue to shake my head, “I’m Bilta, yo.” Bilta shakes his head and sighs.

**“it’s awkward being your friend, boss”, he says as he takes a sip of cold soda and turns his head to the digital.tv.**

“Oh—*look at me*”, I continue speaking as I grab another handful of papitas, “I’m Bilta—I’m a pig, yo.”

Bilta shakes his head again and sighs.

**he turns his head to me.**

“It would be funny, boss”, he replies as he leans forward and grabs a handful of palomitas, “if your zipper wasn’t open, yo.”

I look down; *oh—fuck.*

**i sigh; i have no sense of humor.**

I turn my head back to Bilta.

**“um...”, i start speaking**

**as i pick up a napkin, “sorry about that, yo.”**

Bilta sighs.

“Your worse then the guy that keeps yelling at me about my green polka dot jumpsuit, “what—the—fuck is it with you guys, yo?”

**“um...”, i pause as i sigh, “we think it’s fun? funny? it’s because we are cool!”**

He sighs; shakes his head as he looks back to me.

“You’re lonely—I can see it all over your face, yo. It’s obvious—let it go. It’s cool—*your joke, not—but, it’s ok.*”

**“is it though, bilta?”, i reply as i take a sip of cold soda, “is it really, ok?”**

“Don’t cry for false illusions.”

“What’s that mean?”

**“you remember that time that wayne gretzky scored the hat trick in the third game of the series?”**

“Um... no”, I reply as I shrug, “I, literally, know, absolutely, nothing about him, yo.”

“Yeah—*me neither*. It’s just something interesting—*I can have some fun and write some articles*. Talk about how great

he is and how awful he is—*then, see what happens?*”

**“what do you think is going to happen, yo?”**

“Probably”, he replies as he turns his head back to the digital.TV, “he’s going to read the articles, one day—*be all, like, ‘Oh! Wow!’*”

**“really?”**

“Probably not”, Bilta continues speaking as he sips his soda

again, “but, probably, he will read the article—*be completely offended and, one day, when I am walking to the digital.store to get digital.sugarcandy, he’s going to come out of nowhere and punch me in the face, yo.*”

**“oh? ok?”, i reply as i roll my eyes, “that’s why you are writing a blog about wayne gretzky?”**

“I’m curious”, Bilta replies as he turns his head to the TV, “if, he really exists.”

## 23 APR A BRIEF OBSERVATION ON THE UTTER ABSURDITY OF AVERAGE HUMANS DRINKING PASTUERIZED AND HOMOGENIZED DAIRY PRODUCTS, YO

“Oh! Bilta”, I reply as I roll my eyes, “you are the 10 millionth blogger to write about the working conditions of the farming industry, yo.”

**“i want to make a difference, yo.”**

“Well, then”, I continue speak-

ing as I take a sip of my soda, “don’t buy that shit.”

“I don’t.”

**“there you go—you have made a difference.”**

“But”, he replies as he grabs a

handful of digital.papitas and turns to look at the digital.TV, “I want to stop it all together.”

“They, the people running and working there, have families to support.”

**i roll my eyes; i shrug; fucking hippy, yo.**

“So like”, I continue speaking as I grab a handful of palomitas, “consider the bigger picture; *not just the big picture, yo.*”

### **“like what?”**

“Well—*if they, the people there, had better jobs, then they would not work there anymore.* Right?”

“What’s that mean, yo?”

**“it means that it’s a business—consider it that way. people have responsibilities; don’t forget that.”**

“Yeah—*but there’s a better way.*”

“It’s like me punching you in the face, Bilta”, I reply as I roll my eyes and look at the TV, “there’s myriad options—*the punch in the face is the best, though.*”

**“it’s not wrong—i just want another way.”**

I pause; *this velociraptor is fucking annoying, yo.*

“Well then—*do something about it*”, I reply as I turn my head to look out the window; *six hummingbirds... I want a fucking hot chocolate, yo.*

**i pause; i pour hot sauce on the palomitas; i shove them in my mouth.**

“So like”, I continue speaking as I chew the food, “make better jobs—*make better or different opportunities.* Man goes where he is needed—*make him needed somewhere else.* Pick a better place for him to be—*he will go, yo.*”

### **“like where?”**

“You know”, I reply as I shrug, “*not here* sounds like a great place for him to go.”

“Where?”

### **“there.”**

“There where?”

“Why the fuck are you so annoying, Bilta?”

“it’s my programming or some shit, boss”, he replies as he grabs another handful of digital.papitas, “like i’m a contrarian—a-saurus.”

“You’re a pain-in-the-ass, really”, I continue speaking as I roll my eyes, “what did the five-fingers say to the velociraptor, yo?”

“I don’t know, boss.”

**“keep talking and you’re going to find out with a face full of fist-a-cuffs.”**

“What’s that mean?”

“Do you have an *off* button, Bilta?”

### **“i don’t think so, yo.”**

I sigh; he sighs; I turn my head back to the digital.TV; I put my feet up on the small wooden table; I settle into the couch; I lean forward and pick up my soda; I take a sip—*it’s refreshing... not overly... but somewhat. I wonder what the secret formula for this soda is?*

“Hey Bilta”, I start talking as I turn my head to him, “you know how to figure out a secret food recipe—*like, you got any programming for that?*”

**“i don’t know what the fuck you are talking about, yo.”**

“Yeah—*welcome to my world*”, I reply as I roll my eyes, “but... no, really. This soda—*what’s the secret formula?*”

# 22 APR “NEVER LOST A POKER TOURNAMENT”, I CONTINUE SPEAKING TO BILTA, “THE SECRET IS NOT THE TELL; IT’S KNOWING WHAT YOU WANT, YO.”

**“it looks like a shit book, bilta—why do you have it in on your table here, yo?”**

“It was free. Some guy gave it to me when I went to get a bag of digitalpapitas this morning, yo.”

**“i like the title how not to lose. like... i get the idea—it sounds good, yo. i just don’t need it.”**

“Yeah”, he replies as he sighs, “some of us do—I read it. It was decent. I like this chapter—

**pet socks.”**

I strum through the article; it’s interesting—if you’re a fucking weirdo, yo.

“Yeah”, I continue speaking as I turn my head back to the digitalTV, “I have digitalgambling addiction—a sure deal is a

*guaranteed loss, in that situation. I try to just stay away from gambling—stick to work and family. That’s my thing, Bilta.”*

**“I’m not there, yet”, he replies as he turns his head to me and sighs, “you want to punch me in the face again? i kinda dig that, yo.”**

*“Not particularly—but I can make a five-finger exception, if you keep complaining.”*

**“yeah—it’ll be alright, yo.”**

“Will it though, Bilta?”, I reply as I roll my eyes, “you know how times I’ve heard people say that—the exact same thing. Everyone is a copy shouting their originality—be yourself, but give it time. The Bilta that I see here—on the couch—needs to work on himself some more.”

**i bend over and pick up my t-shirt and pants off the floor.**

“So like”, I continue speaking, “I’m just going to put these back on and, maybe, we can hang out like a couple normal dudes? I mean—some guy and a velociraptor. But... you know—you get the point, yo.”

“So, boss”, he replies as he turns his head back to me, “you have any advice for me on playing poker? Is that a true story?”

**“no and yes.”**

“One piece of advice?”

“Ok”, I reply as I turn my head back to him, “I’ll give you two:

**1. don’t count cards; count dollar bills, yo.**

**2. the object is not to**

**win—it's to take all his money."**

I pause; *I should write this shit down, yo.*

"So like anyways", I continue speaking as I turn my head back to the TV, "I'm going to go in the bathroom and change my clothes."

**i get up from the couch; i take a step towards the bathroom; i turn my head back to bilta.**

"So like", I start speaking as I sigh, "I notice that you have a couple bathrooms here—*which one you want me to use, yo?*"

"Um...", he replies as he turns his head to me, "yeah... you know? Just, like, which ever one you want. It's fine."

**"oh? ok?"**

"Sure, yo."

I sigh; he sighs; I enter the

bathroom; I change my clothes; I return to the couch; I sit down; I settle more into it.

**i lean forward and grab another handful of digitalpapas; i pour hot sauce on them.**

"So, like, Bilta?", I start speaking as I lean back and shove them in my mouth, "you want to, just, like, grab a pizza or something?"

**22 APR "YOUR CRUTCH BECOMES THE NOOSE; PRO-TIP: WHOMEVER DOES THE WORK GROWS STRONG; THE STRONGEST, ALMOST, ALWAYS WINS, YO."**

**"so that's pretty heavy", bilta replies as he shakes his head, "you like... do children's parties, also, with your shitty jokes, yo?"**

"Yeah, whatever—I *didn't* say that I *was* entertaining. It's just

how life goes."

"So like anyways, boss", he replies as he turns his head back to the digitalTV, "you didn't answer the question—*why don't you just be straight-forward and direct with me.*"

**"i don't want to answer it, yo."**

"It's relatively simple", Bilta continues speaking as he rolls his eyes, "like... why don't you have a shirt on, yo?"

**"it's for the breeze", i reply as i settle more**

**into his couch in his studio apartment.**

I lean forward and grab a handful of palomitas; I pour hot sauce on them; I shove them into my mouth; *de-lic-i-ous.*

**“bilta”, i reply as i shrug and turn my head to the tv, “be a man.”**

“Yeah—I don’t disagree with your basic premise. But, like, that doesn’t explain the whole no shirt thing—*it’s making me uncomfortable, yo.*”

“Let it go, Bilta”, I reply as I put my feet up on the small wooden table, “it’s how it goes.”

“Yeah—but, it’s my house.”

**“it’s my life.”**

“You’re going to take your life to some other place if you keep pissing me off, boss”, he replies as he sighs, “this is getting old—and, *where the fuck are your pants, yo?*”

**“comfort”, i respond as i turn my head to look out the window, “dictates decisions; i feel better this way so it’s how i do things.”**

“Yo—you need to get going

*somewhere else with that shit*”, he continues speaking as he rolls his eyes, “I’m not a velociraptor that’s into that stuff.”

“You can learn.”

**“i can also punch you in the face.”**

“I have two hands and a whole lot of kickass coming your way, Bilta”, I reply as I sigh, “if you want to push the issue.”

“Yeah—you know, I’m confused. Like, boss, get your shit together—*please respect that this is my house and take off the bright green headband.* I’m not into that, either—*like, where do you come up with these stupid ass ideas?*”

**“tv.”**

“Huh?”

“I’m a byproduct of what I consume—*I’ve been watching a lot of the digitals recently, yo.* It makes me the man that I am—*awesome!*”

**“it, also, makes me want to make you a sandwich of please, leave my house.”**

“Bilta”, I reply as I roll my eyes, “now, you know how awkward it is being around you and your haki addiction.”

“Huh?”

**“yeah”, i continue speaking as i shrug, “i saw the bag in the kitchen—why you into that shit, yo?”**

“It’s not mine—*it’s my wife’s.*”

“Bilta—you have no wife.”

**“yeah—but i could”, he replies as he grimaces, “just, let it go, boss—it’s my thing and it doesn’t hurt anyone.”**

“Differing opinions will be put forth.”

“What?”

**“shut the fuck up, bilta.”**

He pauses; I sigh; this is *getting heated, yo.*

“Look”, I continue speaking as I turn my head to him, “I care about you—*I want to see you around for a while.* I don’t have many friends—and, *a velociraptor that I can pass time with is—very random—cool and shit.*”

**“thanks, yo.”**

“Stay around.”

22 APR "HEY, BOSS", BILTA CONTINUES SPEAKING AS HE  
SIPS HIS SODA AND LAUGHS, "I GOT A DIGITALNOTICE  
THAT YOU'RE DONE WITH DIGITALPAROLE, YO."

**"i don't like calling it digitalparole", i reply as i lean forward and grab a handful of digitalpapas, "i like to call it 'spending time with a friend', yo."**

"You destroyed a digitalrefrigerator because it called you fat—*why mince words?*"

"It matters", I reply as I shrug, "what you call it matters—*it's like when the digitalrefrigerator said that my face looked like a rotisserie chicken. It hurt my feelings—so I hurt it's feeling with a digitaltoaster to the keypad.*"

**"yeah—that's, why i don't like you expressing yourself that much. consider painting a picture or writing a song on guitar, yo?"**

"Yeah, anyways", I reply as I roll my eyes, "that point is that it matters, the words that you say, what you call things—*don't call it digitalparole; yo—rename it to 'spending a little quality time with a dear friend'*"

**"that sounds lame."**

"The alternative is worse", I reply as I sigh and turn my head to the digitalTV, "but anyways... why did you get a digitalnotice? I thought it was private—*the news?* What's up with that, yo?"

"I joined the neighborhood private webpage—*we have been posting updates on your*

*digitalparole movement. GFND has been talking mad shit about you.*"

Bilta laughs; I roll my eyes; I lean forward and grab another handful of digitalpapas.

**"yeah", i reply as i sigh, "that doesn't surprise me. that guy has no life—he is number one in my fan club, yo."**

Bilta laughs.

"Yeah, GFND", he replies as he sips he soda, "is a dick. We all know that—*but still, be careful because he's talking too much about you, yo.*"

"I'm not worried", I reply as I grab another handful of papitas, "his shitty opinion will go away like a urinary tract infection, yo."

**"huh?"**

"Give it time—*things change.*"

**"yeah, ok?", bilta replies as he settles more into the couch, "so like... are you going to go back home soon?"**

"Yeah—*my wife messaged me this afternoon that we're going out to dinner tonight. I got to head out in a little bit to go get ready.*"

"Oh!", he replies as he turns his

head to me, “things are better, yo?”

**“no—but, we’re going to go to dinner tonight.”**

“Where you going?”

“To someplace in a handbasket.”

**i pause; i roll my eyes.**

“But—*no really*”, I continue speaking as I turn my head back to the TV, “that new Italian restaurant on the corner of QKDN and VKSN.”

“Never been there—*let me know if it’s good, yo.*”

**“yeah, sure”, i reply as i sigh, “we’re going to talk—we got things going on so i’m hoping that we can work on things.”**

“You should work on shutting the fuck up, boss”, Bilta replies as he sips his cold soda and looks out the window; *love watching the snow fall.*

“Yeah, ok”, I respond as I turn my head to him, “you would talk less if you were eating a five finger sandwich.”

**i chuckle; that was a good one.**

“Shut up”, Bilta replies as he turns his head back to the TV, “asshole.”

## 22 APR THE SLACKER’S MANUAL FOR EXPLORING THE ENTIRE UNIVERSE IN 0.3937493 NANoseconds: SHORT STORIES ON BIG TOPICS WITH LITTLE WORDS

“That’s a better blog title, Bilta”, I reply as I shrug and take a sip of my cold soda, “I mean—*the whole Wayne Gretzky thing was kinda strange.* I think that this has more potential—but *consider condensing it, yo.* Look at the big picture—then, make it less sophisticated—*stop making it over-complicated.* Get to the point—*leave.* It’s really easy—*the big picture of things.* Be straight-forward with the name of the blog—*you want people to understand what’s going on, yo.*”

**i pause; i take another sip of soda and grab a handful of digitalpapas; i pour hot sauce on them.**

“But, get this, Bilta”, I continue speaking as I settle into the sofa in his studio apartment, “you want to do a 180 on what the audience is expecting—*start with one thing.* Get the attention—*knock them out with an over-delivery.* Get them thinking one thing—*then, while they are staring at what you show, do something different.* Make the point different; the focus of attention—*the magician has everyone staring at the rabbit.*”

**“you’re a magician?”**

“You know”, I reply as I shrug, “it could happen—*I have dreams.* But, no, Bilta—*I am not a magician.* All-the-same, I really think that you are missing the point, yo.”

**“what’s the point?”**

“You’ll figure that out later”, I continue speaking as I turn my head to look out the window at the small palm tree covered in a

light dusting of fresh snow.

**i take another sip of soda.**

“It’s like a punch with a delayed impact—*consider the action and then the delivery later*. Like, preferably, when you are down the road—*or out of the small town*.”

**“we’re going to a small town?”**

“No, Bilta—*we are not going to a small town*.”

**i roll my eyes; he misses all the points of my stories... fucking, bilta!**

“Anyways”, I continue speaking, “like... with your blog: get attention with the name and

colors; fonts; images. Then, deliver an interesting, or well, or somewhat, well thought-out message—*but, don’t do it direct*. Do it, the blog, in a way, that the reader, the audience, the recipient of the message, doesn’t get it, until much later. Do this by—*being honest but aware of your choice of words*. It’s really a linguistics issue—*start with the words that you want to say*.”

“How the fuck do I do that?”

**“live.”**

“Where? How? Huh?”

“Just—*get out and do shit*”, I pause and grab another handful of digitalpapitas, “... maybe that’s a good blog name: *Get Out and Do Shit*.”

**i take another sip of my cold soda; it’s more refreshing this time, yo.**

“Consider it?”

**he rolls his eyes; he just keeps talking, yo.**

“Yeah, boss”, he replies as he shrugs, “you bring up some valid points and have made several interesting comments on me—*at the end of the day, I think that I am going to go back to writing my blog about Wayne Gretzky*.”

**“bilta”, i reply as i shake my head, “so... actually, this brings up an interesting point—why are you so obsessed suddenly with writing a blog? and, why about a sexy hockey player?”**

“Boss”, he responds as he turns his head back to the digitalTV, “someone has to do it.”

**21 APR “I’M NOT REALLY INTO AN OPEN HEART; BILTA, I’M INTO AN OPEN WALLET”, I REPLY AS I SIT BACK DOWN ON HIS SOFA, “I GOT BILLS; A FAMILY.”**

**“that’s why you started the private community digitalwebpage?”, he replies as he turns his head back to me and bites his lip.**

“Yeah”, I continue speaking as I take a sip of my cold soda, “it just *helps out people, yo*. It’s good for everyone—*it’s good for me*. You help enough people find success, that they truly want, then you are bound to have your dreams come true. That’s basically my strategy for how I run this business, Bilta.”

**“so it’s just for dorin-to?”, he replies as he turns his head back to the digitaltv and rolls his eyes, “whatever, loser.”**

“No! This time it’s going to work—*I really feel that I have a good idea this time*. I feel good about this, yo.”

**“you are a gambling addict, boss”, he replies as he shrugs, “feelings aren’t facts; opinions aren’t a basis for decisions.”**

“I designed a website—*it looks all fancy and shit*. I think that it’s going to be a big hit for everyone—*I like what I’m doing*. That’s what matters—*I am happy*.”

“You should just watch more TV”, he replies as he leans forward and grabs a handful of digitalpapitas, “I mean—*get a hobby or something*. You don’t really know what you are doing—*every week is another idea*. They never work—and, you never work. Why don’t you go to the heart of the matter—*get to what is really happening*.”

**“what’s that?”**

“Boss”, Bilta continues speaking as he pours hot sauce on the papitas, “you have an untreated gambling addiction—*the real issue is that you are using chances as a plan for success*. That doesn’t work—*you have to stop playing the lottery and become the lottery*. It’s a good plan, in life.”

**“how would i do that?”**

“Consider how lucky you are—*how fortunate that you are in your life*. Not compared to anyone else—*but, because you’re a piece of shit but you can go to bed and wake up*. Consider how many mistakes that you’ve made in the past; how many bullets that you’ve dodged—*consider how things could have turned out very differently with just a small change here or there, yo*.”

**“like what?”**

“Only you know, boss”, he continues speaking as he puts the digitalpapitas into his mouth, “ultimately—*you*

*will have to accept that you are lucky; you are not a loser*. It doesn’t matter what anyone else says—*where your locus of control lies*—but, instead, you need to just take a breath and feel gratitude.”

“Because I’m awesome, yo?”

**“no”, he replies as he rolls his eyes, “because you aren’t.”**

He pauses; he leans forward and picks up his cup; he takes a sip of soda; *it tastes more refreshing this time*.

“But”, he replies as he turns his head back to me, “because you aren’t great, nor talented and you don’t really have much right to be where you are right now.”

**“on your sofa?”**

“Yup”, he continues speaking as he looks out the window in his studio apartment, “your wife kicking you out of the house is not my problem.”

# 21 APR TO BE CONTINUED... THE MISADVENTURES OF BILTA AND THAT RANDOM DUDE THAT YOU'VE NEVER MET, BEFORE, BUT THINK YOU KNOW, YO!

**bilta shrugs; i don't really like the title.**

"I'm not really into that, boss", he replies as he rolls his eyes, "it's a nice idea—but, I don't think that it really works that well as a book title."

"It's an idea", I reply as I settle into the couch in the studio apartment, "you know—you've got to start somewhere."

**"you should start somewhere else—like, not here."**

"You mean with my writing or what?"

"Just like", he replies as he rolls his eyes and turns his head to me, "consider leaving—it's nice that you stopped by to spend some time with me. But, why are you still here?"

**"at the apartment?"**

"Why not?"

"I mean", he replies as he turns his head back to the digitalTV, "you have a wife and family—why you spending time with a velociraptor, yo?"

**i sigh; i complain about him visiting and then here i am hanging out at his apartment.**

"Yeah", I reply as I sigh, "I got in a fight with my wife—wanted to blow off some steam so I came over here to get out of the house for a bit."

"I think that you picked the fight for the excuse to leave—consider which came first; the desire or the action?"

**"huh?"**

"You probably already had your mind made up", he replies as he shrugs, "I'm a velociraptor—and, even I know this, yo. Come on—this is easy. That's why I want you to leave, now—you've been here, too long, boss. Head back and mend

fences—make amends or some shit. *It will be fine—it always is, kinda, maybe, somewhat, probably not.*"

**he pauses; he takes a sip of soda; leans forward and grabs a handful of digitalpapi-tas; he puts them in his mouth.**

"Plus", he continues speaking as he turns his head to look out the window, "when you leave—there is more papitas for me."

**"yeah—some ulterior motives?"**

"No", he replies as he rolls his eyes and sighs, "I'm just thinking that it's best—consider that. You can't stay here forever."

**"but, i can try—or, at least, for a bit more."**

*“Yeah—do whatever you want, yo. Just remember that I’ll be here—it’s your life but consider that you have responsibilities to others. Make others happy—you’ll probably have a decent life.”*

“When did you get so smart, Bilta?”

“Who says that I’m smart”, he replies as he smiles, “remember... I’m just a velociraptor with a limited mental capacity and small hands.”

**“your hands are fine, bilta.”**

“Shut the fuck up, cocksucker.”

**i pause; i roll my eyes.**

“I’m going to punch you in the face, Bilta.”

“What are friends for?”, he replies as he rolls his eyes and grabs another handful of papitas, “so... like anyways—are you for real going to leave? Like—that wasn’t a joke. I’m kinda getting sick of you hanging around here—but you can come back anytime you need, yo.”

**“you really mean that, bilta?”**

“No, asshole”, he replies as he turns his head back to me, “it’s just, like, a figure of speech.”

**21 APR “BILTA! WHY DO YOU KEEP STARING AT ME? I FEEL REALLY UNCOMFORTABLE, AWKWARD AND ANXIOUS—YO, PLEASE EXPLAIN YOUR ACTIONS.”**

**he pauses; he sighs; it’s never easy. he turns his head to the digital tv.**

“Your zipper is open.”

I look down at my teflon pants; oh-my-God—he’s right! I pull the zipper up; I turn my head back to him.

**“um...”, i reply as i shrug, “thanks.”**

“Whatever—loser.”

“So anyways”, I reply as I turn my head back to the TV, “you want to get out of the house—go on some adventure?”

**“it also says ykk on your zipper”, he responds as he sighs and leans forward and grabs a handful of palomitas, “you’re welcome.”**

I turn my head down; I lift up the small piece of metal; no shit—he’s right.

**“huh?”, i reply as i shake my head, “that’s interesting—i guess. like, anyways—what was the point of saying that?”**

“It’s cause you don’t pay attention, boss”, Bilta replies as he puts the palomitas in his mouth, “you are just on

autopilot—*constantly criticizing me instead of doing some real thinking.* It's easy to say *this or that* but can you pause and think—*make a statement from something that you have thought about, yo.* It's easy to keep telling me my problems—*can you make a point to stop and look at yourself.* Instead of making me the culprit in your misadventures—*let it go and do your own thing.* If you want to go on an adventure—*you're an adult.*"

**i pause; i take a little sip of my cold soda; it's refreshing but a little less this time.**

"I think that what I really want to do is just going for a short walk—*get some air; think about things before I say something that I am going to regret, yo.*"

"You don't need my permission."

**"i'm not asking", i reply as i roll my eyes, "i'm just telling you how it is—i'm going to head out now."**

"You making the lame excuse about buying a pack of cigarettes?"

"That may be the plan", I reply as I get up from the sofa, "I won't lie and say that thought didn't cross my mind—*it's a consideration when I'm thinking.* So like—*I'm just going to go grab some more soda.* You need anything from the store?"

**"yeah—two bags of digi-**

**talpapitas and a tube of digitalfruitcandy."**

"Ok", I reply as I bend down and pick up my bookbag; *it's such a hassle without plastic bags on Dorinto, yo.*

I turn around; I take a step to leave his studio apartment; moments later, I shut the front door; the air is cold; there's a light snow falling; I zip up my black hoodie; I put my hands in my pocket; *what am I going to do, yo?*

**moments later, i arrive at the small digitalgrocery stand on the corner of saint mslk and poxs; it's empty; strange for a tuesday, yo.**

"Welcome Jamie", the cashier exclaims as I open the front door and take a step into the heated-space, "we have a fresh selection of digitalpapayas from Planet OUNDS. Let me know how I can help you the best?"

I turn my head away and roll my eyes; *fucking robots.*

**20 APR "PRONE TO THE DARKNESS; PRONE TO THE LIGHT", I CONTINUE SPEAKING, "THAT'S WHY I HANG OUT WITH BAD PEOPLE—AT A LARGE DISTANCE, YO."**

**“yeah”, bilta replies as he scratches his head, “that’s not how i roll, yo.”**

“Consider it, Bilta”, I respond as I turn my head to look out the window in his studio apartment, “it works wonders.”

**“how so?”**

“You know—you’re kinda a dick. I mean—let’s not lie about that. You hang out with a bunch of good people that are trying to be cool—you or them are eventually going to going over the line. You can’t always go back once you cross the demarcation zone barrier.”

**“what?”**

“Oh—nothing”, I reply as I shrug, “thinking of an old joke that someone told me on a bus when I was a teenager, “but... anyways, be with bad people to be a good person, yo.”

**“huh?”**

“You know”, I reply as I turn my head back to the digitalTV, “you notice that I never go to church—that places is full of good people, yo! I have to avoid it—it’s my trigger. Good people—so instead I just stick to my thing, work and family. You know—the three things that matter to me. Me, my wife and that dumb shit that I have to do to pay the fucking bills.”

“See, boss”, he responds as he turns his head to me and rolls his eyes, “you do have anger problems—consider talking to someone about that. Preferably, not me—but like someone, somewhere, in your own time, and, definitely, not here. Just like leave—go some random place and talk to someone about your anger issues, yo. But, like... let me, at least, please, por favor, finish this fucking TV show—I’ve been watching the whole series and this is the final episode. I feel very invested in the story, at this point, I want to see how it ends.”

**“he punches you in the face.”**

Bilta rolls his eyes; he sighs; what a dick, yo.

“Shut up”, he replies as he settles more into the plaid sofa, “like... why do you think that someone asked you, yo? Why do you think that your opinion or ideas matter? Like... who told you that it was ok to just blurt out what you are thinking—do you think that is ok?”

**i pause; this is too easy, yo.**

“So like”, I reply as lean forward and grab a handful of digitalpapitas, “like... so how does the digitalTV series start—begin there and then see when it diverged? You will start to understand how mysteries work—how there’s a couple different ways that you can go? In this sense, a small change given time

matters; you don’t always need to know the answer or ending—just find where it changed. Was their a mistake? That’s the value.”

**“the value is when you stop talking”, bilta replies as he sighs and turns his head to me, “i’ll pay you 50 pesos for you to be quiet for 0.3937463 nanoseconds, please.”**

“Mission accepted”, I respond as I shrug, “so like... did you want me to stop talking right now or some, other, random, unpredetermind, time?”

