

ARCHETYPICAL

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INT. PRINCIPAL'S OFFICE - DAY

Chris and Simon sit on a row of chairs in the waiting area.

Chris is visibly upset.

Simon, who is nursing a black eye with an ice pack, is not upset.

SIMON

(to himself)

Sufficient compression and subzero temperatures have properly restricted blood flow thus reducing inflammation while also numbing the epidural sensors...

CHRIS

What are you mumbling about?

SIMON

(re: ice)

The cold...feels good.

There is a beat of awkward silence.

SIMON (CONT'D)

Look at us - the proverbial archetypes.

CHRIS

Huh?

SIMON

You know? The "nerd" and the "bully". It's classic Greek structure. Or David and Goliath if you prefer. A meek but wise figure is constantly tormented by the mentally inept brute. I am the nerd and you are the bully.

CHRIS

I'm not no bully.

SIMON

I beg to differ.

CHRIS

I'm not. I was minding my own business and you bumped into me.

SIMON

I concede that the collision was indeed my fault. I have a habit of read-walking.

CHRIS

What?

SIMON

Read-walking. Studies have shown a boost in memory and mentally capacity when you couple cardiovascular work with synapse activity.

After a long, blank stare from Chris:

SIMON (CONT'D)

...I walk and read at the same time.

CHRIS

Why didn't you just say that?

SIMON

It's just my way. Anyway...I'm sorry I read-walked into you. Nevertheless, your violent retaliation to such a harmless incident does warrant the title of "bully".

A beat.

SIMON (CONT'D)

So what happens now?

CHRIS

The Assistant Principal, Mr. Hernandez, is gonna call us into his office, then he's gonna suspend us both for fighting.

SIMON

I can't be suspended! Tomorrow is my presentation on 17th Century diseases.

CHRIS

I wished you'd shut up. Because you decided to walk-read into me-

SIMON

Uh, it's "read-walk".

CHRIS

Whatever! Now my dad is gonna kill me. Last time I got written up he looked at me and said "That's two strikes boy, and you know what happens on three."

SIMON

It seems improbable that he's going to *kill* you. The forensic clean-up alone...Have you seen CSI?

CHRIS

You don't know what it's like at my house. First he's gonna kill me then he's gonna send me to MacArthur.

SIMON

R.G. MacArthur High School? The facility for juvenile criminal offenders?

CHRIS

It's a place for "bullies" like me.

SIMON

Do you ever think about why you so frequently find yourself in physical altercations?

CHRIS

No.

SIMON

Perhaps your volatile home life has entrenched in you a sense of helplessness.

CHRIS

Dude, don't do therapy on me. Okay?

SIMON

Okay.

CHRIS

After you bumped into me, everyone in the lunchroom was looking at me. Almost like they all knew I was about to hit you.

SIMON

They did know. You did hit me.

CHRIS

But I wasn't going to. Not at first. Then I thought about what everyone would've said if I didn't hit you.

SIMON

So you hit me because you were scared?

CHRIS

I didn't say that.

SIMON

I too know what it's like to have the expectations of the entire student body hanging over you.

CHRIS

It sucks.

SIMON

Yes. It does indeed "suck". Y'know, we could perpetrate a rouse and attempt to deceive Mr. Hernandez in our retelling of this afternoon's events.

CHRIS

Dude, I can never understand what you're trying to say.

SIMON

We should lie and say that we weren't fighting.

CHRIS

Why would you do that?

SIMON

Well I feel bad that I was read-walking carelessly. Furthermore, I'm not going to miss blowing some minds with my powerpoint presentation - "Scurvy: Symptoms of a Dying Sailor."

CHRIS

You'd be saving me a lot of trouble at home.

Mr. Hernandez comes out of his office.

MR. HERNANDEZ
Boys, come in and have a seat.

He goes back in. The two boys trail behind him.

CHRIS
(quiet to Simon)
Here's the plan - we'll pretend
we're friends and the fight was all
just a joke. Alright?

SIMON
Okay. But we don't have to *pretend*
to be friends you know?

Chris raises his fist. Simon flinches like he's about to get punched again...then he realizes that Chris is trying to give him a fist bump. They do an awkward hand shake and go into the office together.