

CHAPTER 18

'THE TABLE'

The scene outside of the gym was blue skies with a cool and refreshing breeze, that 'BA' 'BA' 'BLEW' past the dandelions and the branches within the trees. Boys and girls sat and stood around the cool kid's table- laughing and chatting away, about the dodge ball game, clothes. movies, and other coolio things that happened that day. Louis was at the center of it all- he was!

"Man- look at that stupid expression on her stupid face when I hit her with that ball!DOG-LOOK AT IT!", exclaimed Louis- as he sat atop of the table watching a replay of the game on a cellphone. He was surrounded by his shade wearing crew*all -NINE- of them.*

"Dude that was dope the way you bounced that ball off of her head- and hit Hoag'man too!Pure skills!", praised Mike P.

"Yeah- knocked her stupid little hat right off!This is going right on the internet for all to see! ...There- done!", chimed Louis- as he 'TA' 'TA' 'TAPPED' on a few buttons. That video went viral in a matter of seconds- it did!

Stuart made his way up to the table with a shirt full of ice cold Fizzy Pops, one for all of his buddies who quickly 'PA' 'PA' 'POPPED'- their can tops. The cool kids 'SA' 'SA' 'SIPPED' on their cold sodas, enjoying their kickball victory in style. They just chilled- they did!

"Look- here comes Hoag'man now!", informed Big George- as he took in another refreshing sip from his grape Fizzy Pop.

"WHAT'D UP- HOAG'MAN!Come to hang with the winner circle!", chimed Louis- as he passed the phone to a kid behind him.

Hoagie stopped before the Minister of Cool, as he took in a large sip from his strawberry Fizzy Pop. **"I'm part of the crew now- right?"**, asked Hoagie- which caused Louis to involuntarily 'SPA' 'SPA' 'SPEW' forth his mouthful of soda like a fire extinguisher, all over Hoagie's clothes! The cool kids had a good 'LA' 'LA' 'LAUGH'- they did!

"Hoag'man- It's not that easy my boy!There's only two ways into the crewOneYou gotta do something totally extreme that shocks everyone!Like for instance- take Johnny Boy G hereLast summer he spray-painted a big white smiley face on the hood of principal Glumly's new red sports car!INSTANT COOLIO STATUS!Or twoYou become a pledge like Dougie here- and go through the ninety day pledge periodIt's your choice Dog, but nobody just walks onto the crewNobody!", informed Louis- as Dougie wiped the droplets of red soda from Louis's sneakers with a couple of napkins.

"But-but- but!But you said that!", wailed Hoagie.

"Let me stop you right there Hoag'man!I say a lot of things that people misinterpret, when I want something really bad!The shades are technically yours- but that's only after the mando two week probationary period is completeBut- even if I wanted to, rules are rules DogI let you just walk right on and every other kid will expect the same thing!".

"**YEAH!Nobody just walks on dude!**", agreed Mike P.

"**YEAH- Louis's older brother Marcus made up the rules back in 0-six, and it's been that way ever since!**", informed Big George.

"**WOW- Hoagie!Are you really going to pledge for coolio status?**", exclaimed Maria- who stood to the left of the table in between two other girls.

"**I-I-II!**", stuttered Hoagie. He couldn't believe that Maria- the love of his young life, had actually spoken to him!

"**He sure is!Hoag'man here will be a part of the crew in no time!Ain't that right!**", chimed Louis- as he hopped down from the table and threw his left arm around Hoagie's shoulders. Hoagie quickly replied by '**SHA' 'SHA' 'SHAKING'** his head- up and down**YES!**

"**WOW- That's cool Hoagie!**", sang out Maria- as she smiled and '**BA' 'BA' 'BATTED'** her little eye-lashes.

[*Suddenly*] The bell '**RING' 'ALING' 'LINGED'**- signaling the end of the lunch period! The cool kids quickly finished up their Fizzy Pops, '**BU' BU' 'BURPED'** and '**CA' 'CA' 'CRUSHED'** their cans. They then '**TA' 'TA' 'TOSSED'** them to the ground like a couple of litterbugs- they did!

"**Your first task Hoag'man is to help Dougie here clean up our area.....**", instructed Louis- as he '**PA' 'PA' 'PATTED'** Hoagie on the back.

Dougie instantly sprung into action and began collecting the cans and other trash from the ground around them! "**.....Now which one of you girls has my books?**", tooted Louis- as he released Hoagie.

"**ME'EEE!**", exclaimed a tall girl with short brunette hair- holding an armful of heavy textbooks.

Louis '**SNAPPED'** his fingers, instantly causing everyone to walk away from the table, leaving Hoagie and Dougie behind on cleanup detail.

"**You get the table- and I'll take the ground**", insisted Dougie.

"**ZONKERS- your talking again!The rumor was that you ate an atomic comet jawbreaker, and it melted a hole through your tongue!**", informed Hoagie- as he scanned the tabletop.

"**Pledges can't speak in front of any kid with coolio status unless given permissionYou'll learn all the rules soon enough Hoag'man**".

Hoagie began collecting trash along with Dougie in silence, until an excited Dougie soon exclaimed- "**WE'RE GONNA ACTUALLY BE COOL KIDS! CAN YOU BELIEVE IT!**".

"**I know!I can't wait!**", replied Hoagie- just before he began picking up the chip bags and other trash with a little more pep in his step.

Meanwhile across the schoolyard.....

Brent watched on as Hoagie helped Dougie collect the trash and walk it over to a nearby trashcan, before he '**TA' 'TA' 'TAPPED'** Cindy on the shoulder, who leaned over a fountain '**SA' 'SA' 'SIPPING'** water.

"WHAT'S UP -YO! ...I'm trying ta get my water on!", wailed out Cindy- as she stood up straight and 'WA' 'WA' 'WIPED' her mouth with the back of her hand.

"Check it out!", informed Brent- as he pointed in Hoagie's direction.

Cindy watched on in silent confusion, as Hoagie dumped cans into a recycling bin along with Dougie. They were chatting it up- they were! **"I think our boy has found himself a new team!"**, sang Brent.

"NO WAY!I know Hoag'ster Gee! ...He's probably infiltrating their crew so he can gather info on their next plot to cheat or something! ...Yeah-yeah- that's it!", reasoned Cindy.

Brent didn't have the heart to tell Cindy what he believed, that Hoagie had switched sides and most likely helped the cool kids win the dodge ball game. It was best that she realized it for herself- it was!

"Yo- what are you doing Hoag'ster?", she whispered to herself.