

CHAPTER 5

‘CLOCKWORK’

‘TIC’ ‘TOC’ ‘TIC’ ‘TOC’- clicked the clock inside of Miss Killington’s fourth grade class, as she watched the children read their textbooks silently- waiting to bite off the head of the first one to sass.

[*Suddenly*] Feeling the two bottles of spring water that she had recently guzzled, she stood to her feet with a look that appeared most troubled, causing the students to look upwards from their textbooks- to the teacher’s desk- puzzled.

“Listen up classI’m going to run to the ladies room for a quick minute and I don’t want anyone to act up while I’m goneIf anyone acts up- the whole class stays behind for five minutes of the lunch period Bridget you’ll be my eyes and ears while I’m goneNOW- BACK TO WORK!”, instructed Miss Killington- while rushing for the door as if her bladder were ready to burst. She had to go really really bad- she did!

“YES- MA’AM!”, sang a tall lanky girl wearing large bifocals- who sat in the front row of the class, though the teacher did not hear her because she had disappeared within a flash.

“Hoag’sterpsstHoagster”, whispered Cindy- who sat two desks to the left of him, in the center of the classroom.

Hearing Cindy’s call- Hoagie abruptly awoke from his Super Dog sidekick daydream, in which he and Super Dog had rescued the love of his life- Maria- from an exploding train. His resting hands ‘SLA’ ‘SLA’ ‘SLIPPED’ from beneath his chin- as he returned back to reality. Not only was the girl ruining his life, but- she was also beginning to ruin his fantasies!

“Five minutes til game timeGet that arm ready Gee”, whispered Cindy.

“SH’HHHHH”, shushed Bridget- the teacher’s pet- with a hushing finger over her lips.

Cindy quickly poked her tongue out at Bridget for a brief spell, before she gazed to the rear of the class at Louis’s pet chimp Stuart. Stuart locking eyes with her slowly slid his right index finger across his neck with his eyes ‘RA’ ‘RA’ ‘ROLLING’ into the back of his head, then drooped his head down low and pretended to be dead!

Hoagie nervously ‘NA’ ‘NA’ ‘NIBBLED’ upon his fingernail, as he watched the wall clock ‘TIC’ ‘TOC’ ‘TIC’ ‘TOC’- closer- and closer toward the lunch bell. They had four minutes to go- they did!

Upon the kickball field- beneath the bright blue skies, the glorious sun above ‘SHA’ ‘SHA’ ‘SHINED’ blinding all eyes. Hoagie and Cindy stood side by side on the first baseline, examining the crowd of kickball hopefuls- keeping the best players in mind. Louis and Stuart stood to their far right ‘WA’ ‘WA’ ‘WINKING’ their eyes at a few key players*something just wasn’t right-it wasn’t!*

On the right side of the players' pile- stood the best of the best- best runners- best kickers, and to the left were all of the rest; and the rest weren't hardly the best. The right side of the pile consisted of mainly fifth and sixth graders, while the left was mostly composed of fourth graders. The left side was the side that any smart team captain would avoid in the first draft- if they wished to win the game, and both teams really wanted to win- they did!

"We got first pick HoagsterWe need ta focus on offenseBig George is the best kicker- so we should pick him upWhat do you think?", suggested Cindy- as hoagie continued to 'SCA' 'SCA' 'SCAN' the players.

"I agreeLet's pick him up", agreed Hoagie- for the first time believing that they had a chance of actually winning the game.

"BIG GEORGE!", shouted Cindy- while pointing toward the biggest kid in the pile, who appeared more like a high school senior than a fifth grader.

"AW- DUDE!I change my mind- I don't feel like playing anymoreI'm outta here", piped Big George.

Big George put on his cool shades and quickly abandoned the players' pile, causing Hoagie and Cindy to exchange a confused look. **"He's not playing anymore- so hurry up and pick somebody elseWe ain't got forever"**, tooted Louis- as he 'BRA' 'BRA' 'BRUSHED' his hair.

"What's up with that yo!", wailed Cindy.

"Who knowsHe probably just doesn't want to be on a team of fourth gradersLet's just get the next best player Cind", reasoned Hoagie.

"MIKE P!", shouted Cindy- as she pointed towards him.

"UR'RRRGH- MY STOMACH!MY STOMACH HURTS!.....", wailed out Mike P- while clutching his stomach as if in excruciating pain. **".....I think I'll have ta sit this one out!"**. Mike P- still holding his stomach, got out of the players' pile and disappeared right along with Hoagie's faith.

Cindy looked over at Louis with a look that could kill, while Louis glanced right back- with a wide smirk upon his bill. She smelt a wavy headed weasel- she did! **"Yo Hoag- there's something really stinky going on 'round here"**.

"What did you expect!This is exactly why I wish you hadn't taken the bet- I told you! But you didn't listen- you never do!And now we're getting cheated by the older kidsOh well- I guess I can kiss the Super Dog movie goodbye!", ranted Hoagie- with tears forming in his eyes. He 'LA' 'LA' 'LOVED' him some Super Dog- he did!

"Calm down Hoag'ster- You forget!If we can't pick 'em- neither can they!", reasoned Cindy.

"HEY- that's right!Your right Cind!I didn't think about it that way!Let's get Brent then!", exclaimed Hoagie- regaining his faith in the game. The kid was emotionally unstable- he was!

"BRENT!", shouted Cindy- while pointing toward a tall kid with a short blond surfer's haircut, who accepted the draft by 'JA' 'JA' 'JOGGING' towards his team with both hands held high in the air.

“Okay- now it’s our turn to pickHM’MMMM Let me see- let me see”, tooted Louis- while examining the players from left to right, causing several players to cross their fingers in hopes of being selected.

[*Suddenly*] Big George made his way back into the players’ pile! **“I changed my mindI’m back to play”**, chimed Big George- as he removed his shades and rested them upon his shirt collar.

“WE GOT B-G!”, shouted Louis- while pointing.

“WHAT!HE CAN’T DO THAT!YO- HE SAID THAT HE WASN’T PLAYIN’!”, protested Cindy- with scissor fingers *‘WA’ ‘WA’ ‘WAIVING’*.

“It’s a free country- he can change his mind if he wantsNow stop whining and make your pickor go play hopscotch or something”, chimed Louis- as Big George cavorted over to his team.

“OH- OH!SO THAT’S HOW Y’ALL GONNA DO US!JUST STRAIGHT CHEAT!YO- THAT’S SUPER DUPER POOPER WHACK!”, wailed Cindy- as she finally got the picture; and she didn’t like it one bit- she didn’t!

Big George *‘SLAP’ ‘SLAPPED’- ‘SLAP’ ‘SLAPPED’* Louis and Stuart double high-fives, before they all *‘WA’ ‘WA’ ‘WIGGLED’* their fingers together in a three-way wiggling session.

Cindy wrapped a comforting arms around Hoagie’s trembling shoulders. **“Hoag- I got some- BAD- news”** she chimed.

Several minutes later.....

All of the players to the right side of the players’ pile had been chosen with nearly all of them somehow ending up on Louis and Stuart’s team; including Mike P- who was mysteriously healed by a can of cream soda. With only two players from the right side and five from the left, Hoagie and Cindy searched through the remaining lefties for their final pick. There wasn’t much talent left- there wasn’t!

“Hm’mmmSheldon?”, questioned Cindy- as she eyed the scrawny waspy-looking kid, who wore large protective sports goggles and a pen protector upon his sweater pocket.

“No way!He’s got two left feet”, tooted Hoagie.

Hoagie and Cindy’s eyes moved further left, stopping on the next choice; the runt of the pile. **“Too small yo”**, she said.

“Too small”, agreed Hoagie- before their eyes moved further left to the next kid; who appeared normal enough.

“What about Christopher?He’s pretty good”, she suggested.

“No way- he’s a quitter!He always quits halfway through every game he plays- just to go play anotherNo way!.....”, protested Hoagie. With these words said- they moved on further left to the third and final remaining pick. A tall freckled girl with thick glasses and a long braided ponytail. **“.....What about Bridget?She’s got height- and she can run pretty fast”**, he suggested.

“BRIDGET!No way Gee!I don’t play with people who kiss teacher rumpI’d rather take the runt!”, she wailed out.

“HURRY UP ALREADY!There’s only four players left- it’s not brain surgeryChoose one of the losers and let’s play ball!You can even pick our last player while your at it”, piped Louis- as his team ‘LA’ ‘LA’ ‘*LAUGHED*’ knowing that the match would be an easy win*A KICKBALL MASSACRE!*

“Yo- this is hard Gee”, sighed out Cindy- as they slowly scanned the remaining players from right to left. They glanced from Sheldon to the runt, who ‘TA’ ‘TA’ ‘*TAPPED*’ his small left foot impatiently. From the runt to Christopher, who let out a lion’ish yawn. Then from Bridget’s long stork legs and knee-high socks *TO THE NEW GIRL IN LINE!*

Hoagie and Cindy swiftly looked upon each other with faces exploding with surprise- they did!