

DANGERZONE DAVE VS. THE REALISTIC DOLPHIN
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EIGHT PAGE SHORT STORY

A NOTE ABOUT THE DANGERZONES:

Our main character David likes to draw “dangerzones” on the back of his classroom worksheets. These are caves with an ABSURD amount of booby-traps. There are hydraulic presses with steel spikes, tubes that shoot poisoned darts, razor-sharp swinging pendulums, buzz saws, lava pits, spiked pits, Chinese throwing stars flying through the air, flamethrowers, tripwires with bombs attached, etc. Any variety of booby-traps can be used multiple times throughout the cave. The object is to pack as much “danger” into the caves as possible. (And yes, I obsessively drew this stuff in Elementary school.) I’m mentioning this because I would like a “dangerzone” to go across the bottom margin of pages 1-8. A reader should be able to follow the cave continuously from the first page to the last.

PAGE ONE

PANEL 1. David, a first grader, sits at his desk and doodles on a sheet of paper. He’s deep in concentration, biting his tongue.

CAPTION: Like most kids, I love to draw.

CAPTION: There’s nothing better than when the teacher gives up for the day – and allows us a few final minutes to make art.

PANEL 2. Two of his friends lean over to look at what David’s drawing.

CAPTION: And not to brag, but my friends think I’m the best artist in class.

FRIEND #1: Cool!

FRIEND #2: Whoa! A triple buzzsaw!

PANEL 3. Over the shoulder of David to see what he's drawing. It's Dangerzone Dave. (It's basically a crude drawing of someone who looks like Chuck Norris in a ninja outfit, but without the mask. He's jumping over the triple buzzsaw. Whatever that looks like.)

CAPTION: I created this guy called Dangerzone Dave. He goes on adventures. And no matter how dangerous it gets, he always survives. He's pretty rad.

PAGE TWO

PANEL 1. Lucas Spitler is a classmate. His hair is greasy and slicked back. He shows a drawing to the elderly teacher. (The reader only sees the back of the paper, not the drawing itself.) The teacher is wide-eye in amazement at Spitler's artwork.

CAPTION: One day, Lucas Spitler showed his drawing to our teacher.

CAPTION: She loved it.

PANEL 2. Lucas Spitler, now standing next to the teacher at the front of the classroom, shows his artwork to the whole class. It's a pencil illustration of a dolphin jumping out of the water. (If you don't mind, I'd like for you to break from your style and try to make the illustration of the dolphin as realistic as possible.)

CAPTION: It's a drawing of a dolphin. And it looks like a real dolphin!

PANEL 3. David and his three friends are walking home from school. They all have their backpacks and carrying lunch boxes. The two friends are about five steps ahead of David. David looks disgruntled.

CAPTION: Now, none of my friends care about Dangerzone Dave.

FRIEND #1: That dolphin was amazing!

FRIEND #2: I know! Lucas Spitler is going to be famous.

PAGE THREE

PANEL 1. David, at the kitchen table with a large piece of poster board, draws with passion. Beads of sweat fly off his forehead.

CAPTION: I decided to draw the most dangerous dangerzone ever. Then everyone would forget Lucas Spitler and his realistic dolphins.

PANEL 2. David continues to work on his masterpiece. The energy he had in the previous panel is now gone. There are dark lines under his eyes. He's tired and exhausted, but still drawing.

CAPTION: I stayed up late working on this masterpiece. It took five pieces of poster board!

PANEL 3. Back at school! In a scene that should be reminiscent of page two, panel 1, David holds up his poster board for the teacher to see. Her eyes are wide, but not in amazement. She is horrified by what she sees.

CAPTION: When I showed my teacher, she didn't like it at all.

TEACHER: Oh my.

PAGE FOUR

PANEL 1. Parent Teacher Conference. David's solemn father, wearing a sports jacket, shirt, and tie, sits next to David. David looks down in shame. The teacher rambles on.

TEACHER: ...And I'm a little concerned with your son's fascination with death and weapons. It's just not healthy.

PANEL 2. The father casts a stern eye at David, David who looks away but can feel the glare.

FATHER: I'm very sorry. I'll talk to him about it.

PANEL 3. Close on the teacher.

TEACHER: He's a good kid, but maybe he should try to draw happier subject matter... like dolphins?

NOTE: On this page, the dangerzone at the bottom margin should probably include a watery pit of deadly dolphins with razor-sharp teeth. They are grinning menacingly.

PAGE FIVE

PANEL 1. David's POV. A piece of paper with several failed attempts at drawing a dolphin. They all look cartoony and monstrous. He's X'd through several of them. Nearby is a copy of "Geo Kids" (a kid-friendly National Geographic).

CAPTION: I try to draw a dolphin that looks like a real dolphin, but I can't do it. I even try tracing from a magazine. Then I try other animals. No luck.

PANEL 2. David's POV. David's hand holds a pencil. It X's through a face he tried to draw.

CAPTION: I try drawing realistic people, and they're even harder.

PANEL 3. In frustration, David throws a crumbled up piece of paper across the room. He's crying.

CAPTION: All I can draw are spikes, bombs, knives, ninja stars, and other dangerous stuff.

DAVID: Aaaaaarrgh!!!

PAGE SIX

PANEL 1. The Father pokes his head into the bedroom. He peers in from behind the door.

FATHER: Everything okay?

PANEL 2. The Father enters the room. David sits on his bed -- arms folded and in tears.

DAVID: What's the point of doing something unless you can be the best at it?

PANEL 3. The Father stands before his son giving a warm comforting smile.

FATHER: Maybe because it's fun? And you enjoy it.

DAVID: That's stupid.

PAGE SEVEN

PANEL 1. The Father leaves the room. David rolls his eyes.

FATHER: I don't think so. You shouldn't compare yourself to others. Do it for yourself.

Follow your bliss.

PANEL 2. David's POV. A blank sheet of paper with a pencil laying next to it. The great starting point for all creative impulses – the void with its unlimited potential.

PAGE EIGHT

NOTE: Okay, that dangerzone at the bottom margin you were working on? Now, at the left bottom corner, the cave climbs upward to the top of the page. Maybe some danger-filled ladder? The cave now snakes the page left to right, drop down, right to left, drop down, left to right, and so on. It almost overcomes the entire final page leading to an exit at the lower right hand corner, where...

PANEL 1. No panel border. There's David, lying on his stomach, on his bed. There's a hardcover picture book underneath his paper so he can draw. He's doodling happily on his paper.

CAPTION:

Everyone knows that dangerzones are so much cooler than dolphins.

END.