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Opening extract from

Middle School: Ultimate Showdown

Written by

James Patterson

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This book would not have been possible
without the help of Frank Nicolo, Ned Rust,
Lindsay Cliett, Gregg Wasiak, and Chris Grabenstein.
Many thanks for all your hard work
in making this book come together.
—J.P.

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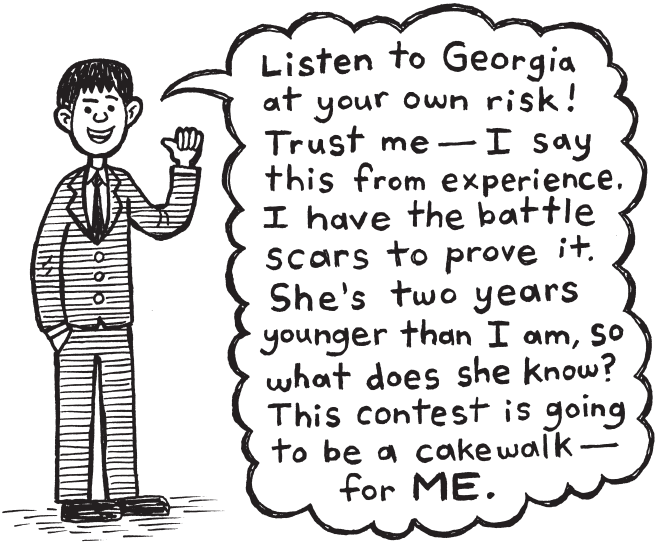
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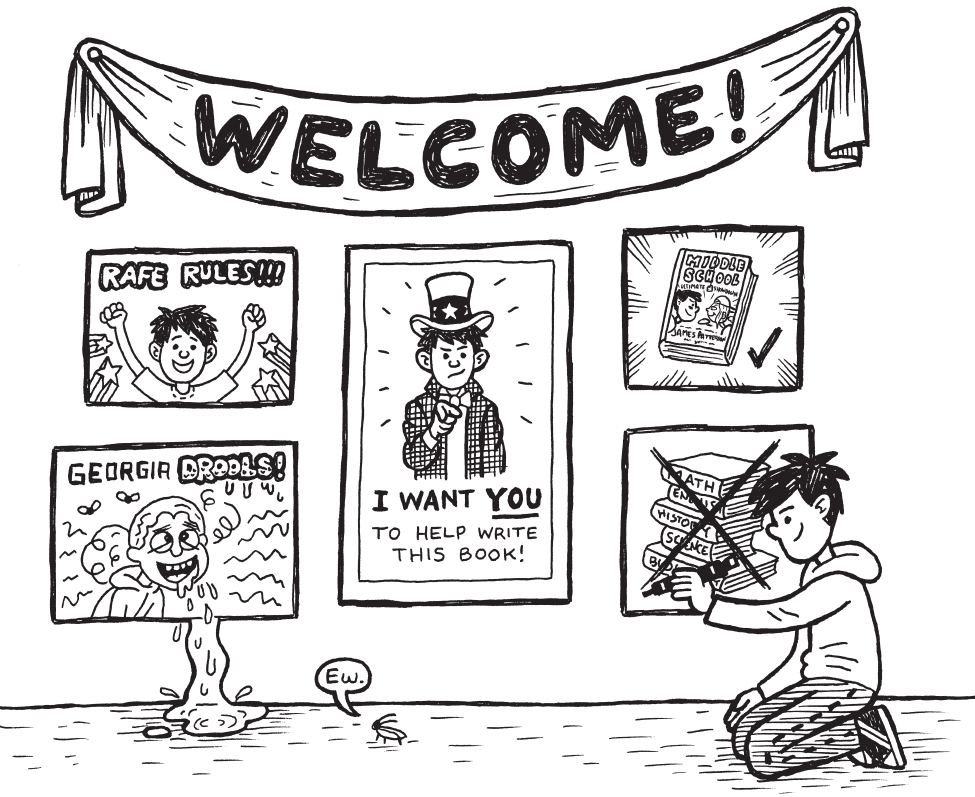


DON'T LISTEN TO GEORGIA— YOU'VE BEEN WARNED!



Welcome to the book version of a Doomsday Cage Match. My sister and I are going to go at it mano a mano, which, I'm told, means "hand to hand," not "man to man." Fine. Whatever. Thanks for the vocab lesson, Georgia. *(Not.)* She may have the book smarts in the family, but I'm way funnier. My point is, Georgia will lose this thing the second she opens her mouth. So over to you, Georgia Peach.

Oops, I almost forgot something important. Georgia and I agreed (can you believe it?) that we want YOU to be in the story too. So you get to talk, draw, play a couple of games, do whatever you want. This is YOUR book. Plus, your whole class, your whole school, can join in if they're in the mood. Even teachers!





Please Listen to the Voice of Reason and Sanity



In this book, Rafe and I will give our honest opinions on various aspects of middle school life. Like so many of my role models—Gandhi, Oprah Winfrey, Martin Luther King Jr., Hillary Clinton, Barbara Bush, and Mister Rogers—I believe in the importance of friendly dialogue.

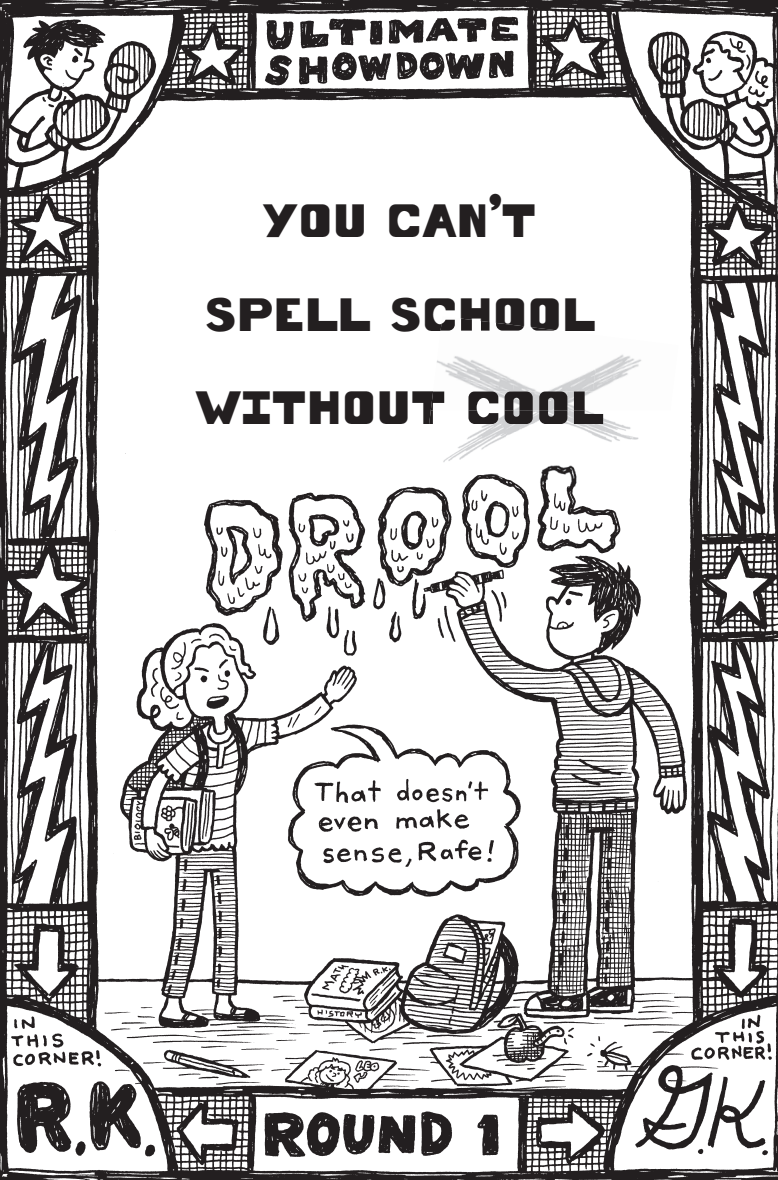
In a good, fair debate, you respect your opponent's intelligence, and you should walk away from the experience having learned something new about yourself...unless you're "dialoguing" with an idiot like my brother. Then you just have to prove how unbelievably dumb he is. Talk about easy!

And of course, I'm *really* looking forward to your opinions and anything you'd like to draw. That's why there

are all sorts of fun activity pages up ahead. Trust me, though: Rafe couldn't care less what you think. Seriously. He won't even understand most of it.

By the way, I thought up the book's title, though Rafe claims he did. What do you think? You don't have to like it. I do.



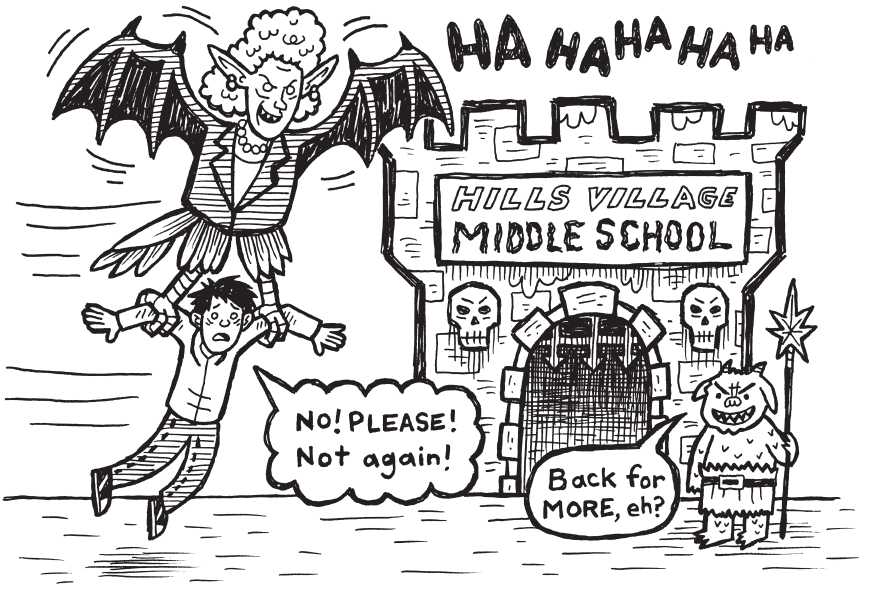

ULTIMATE SHOWDOWN
YOU CAN'T SPELL SCHOOL WITHOUT COOL
DROOL
That doesn't even make sense, Rafe!
MATH
HISTORY
IN THIS CORNER!
R.K.
ROUND 1
IN THIS CORNER!
G.K.



MY YEAR—IN GRIEF

The life of a middle schooler is really hard. Am I right? Most definitely. On a month-to-month basis, here's what my year looks like.

SEPTEMBER: Back to school, aka my worst nightmare.



OCTOBER: All memory of summer vacation has been stripped from my brain, thanks to

nonstop teacher torture. Halloween candy helps, but only a little.

NOVEMBER: Feels like forever until Christmas vacation. Plus, turkey is not my favorite food, especially when it's served with Georgia's jiggly cranberry jelly.

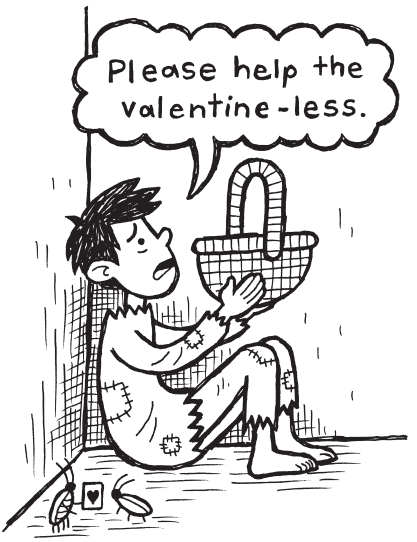


DECEMBER: Teachers load up on homework and tests before Christmas vacation. Mom listens to the "All Rudolph All the Time" radio station in the car.

JANUARY: I stay up late to watch the New Year's ball squash the very last of my vacation, and fall asleep in class for the next week. Teachers decide to yell their lessons for the rest of the year.

FEBRUARY: HVMS gets all gooey over Valentine's Day, and Mom makes me give out cards to everyone in my class. I get approximately two valentines back.

MARCH: Spring break turns into "spring cleaning time," which means if I sit down even once the whole vacation, I'm not "pitching in."



APRIL: Rain. No matter what I do—raincoat, umbrella, galoshes—I get soaked going to school and soaked coming home from school.

MAY: Flowers everywhere make me sneeze. Also, bees. They're after me.

JUNE: FREEDOM!!! Except now there's nothing to do and I'm stuck in the house all day with Georgia.

JULY: Is it possible for a person to sweat to death?

AUGUST: Wait in horror for school to start, while Mom and Georgia get way too excited about buying school supplies and dorky clothes.

