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Opening extract from

Double Down

Written by

Jeff Kinney

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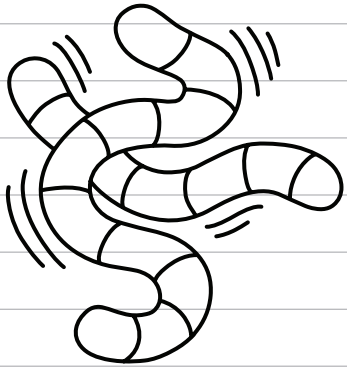

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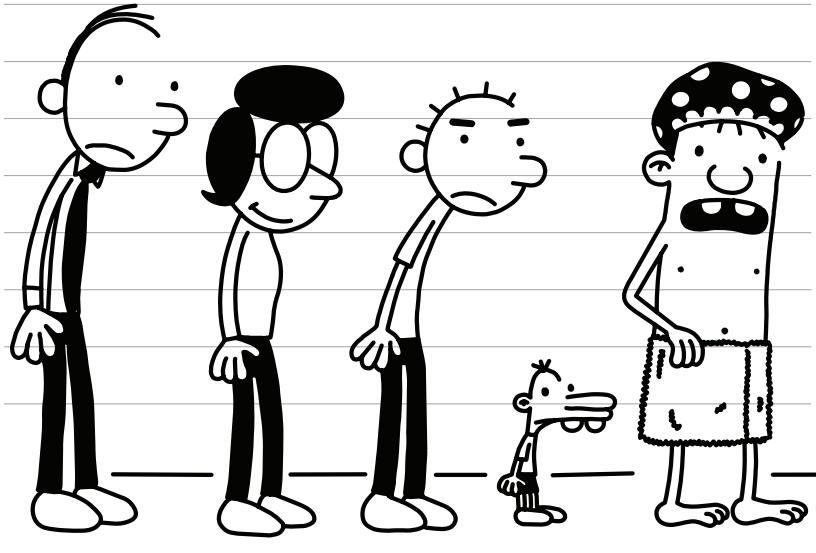
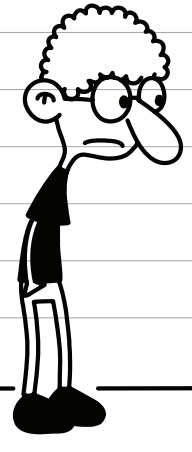


DIARY of a Wimpy Kid

DOUBLE DOWN

by Jeff Kinney



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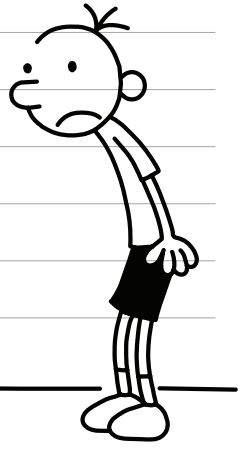

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TO DORIAN

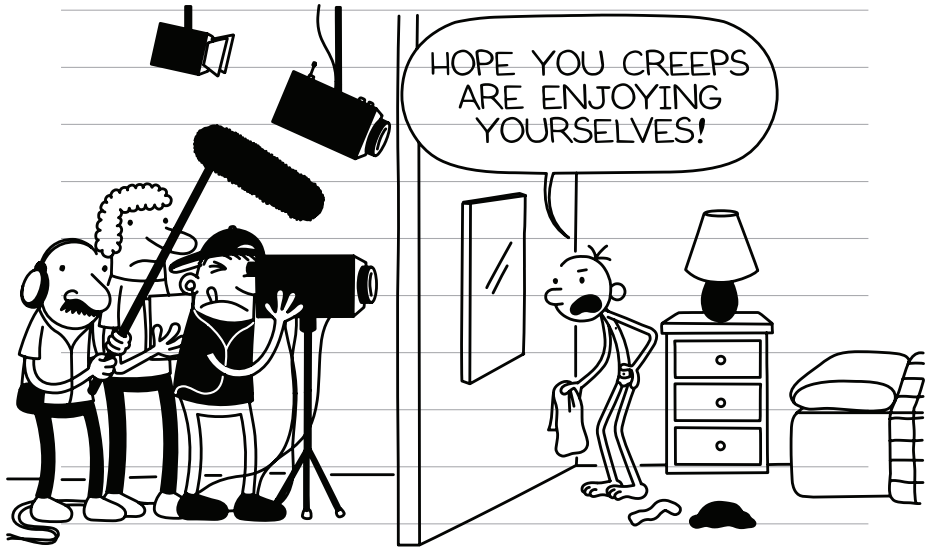
OCTOBER

Wednesday

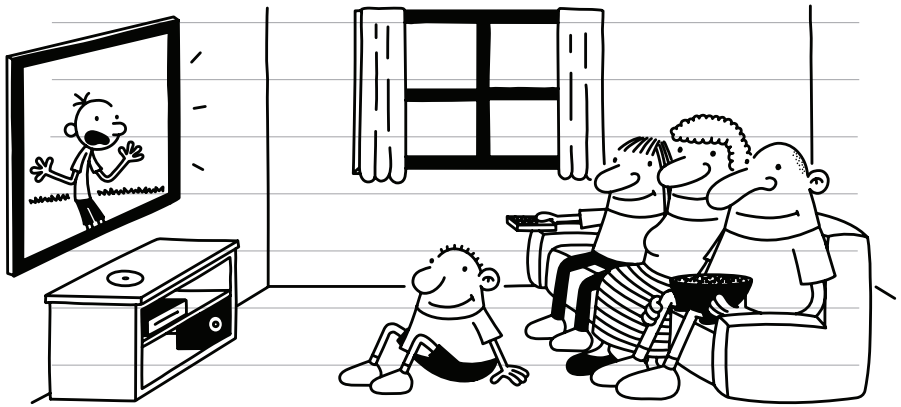
My parents are always saying the world doesn't revolve around me, but sometimes I wonder if it actually DOES.

When I was a little kid, I saw this movie about a man whose whole life is secretly being filmed for a TV show. This guy is famous all over the world, and he doesn't KNOW it.

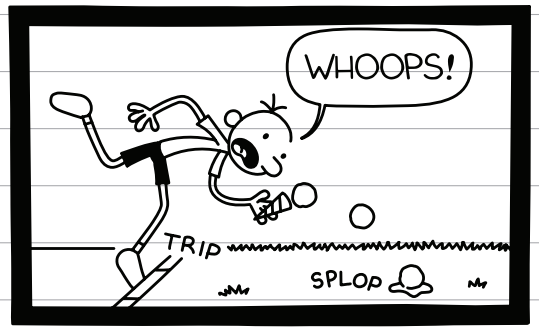
Well, ever since I saw that movie, I've kind of figured the same thing is probably happening to ME.



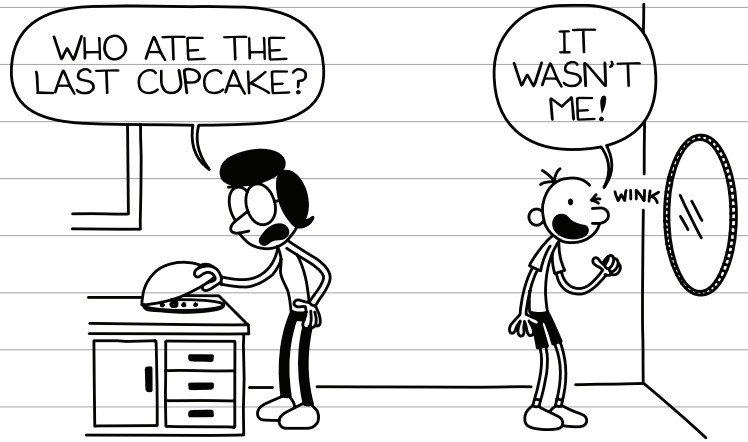
At first I was annoyed my life was being broadcast without my permission. But then I realized that if millions of people are tuning in every day to see what I'm up to, that's actually kind of COOL.



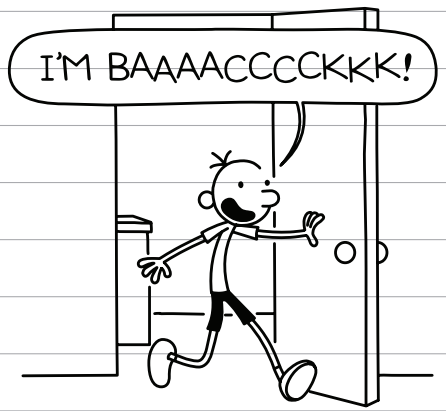
Sometimes I worry that my life is too BORING to be its own television show, so I try to do something entertaining every now and then to give the people watching at home a good chuckle.



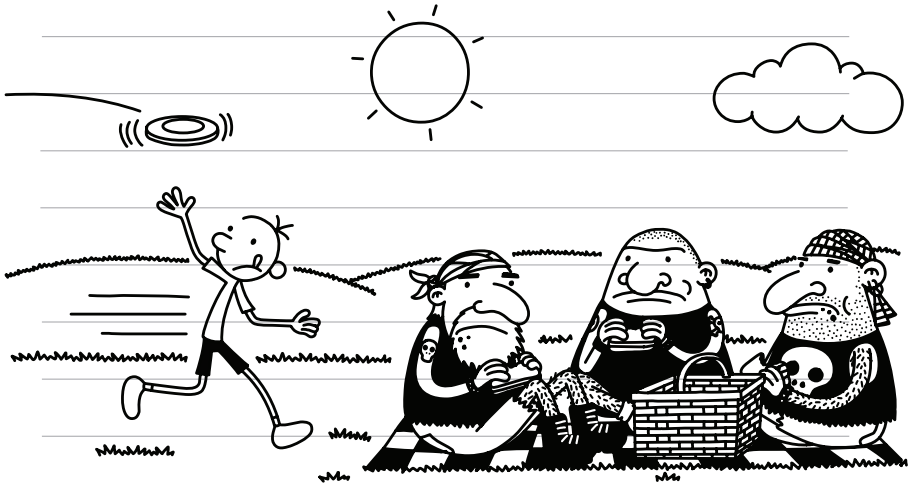
The other thing I do is send my audience little signals to let them know I'm in on the secret.



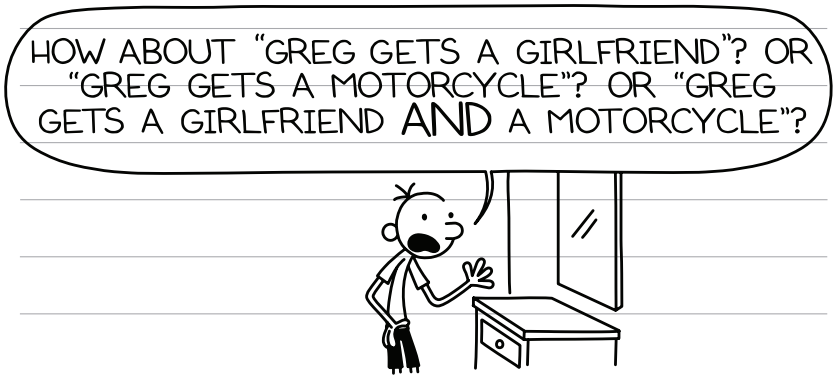
If my life's a TV show, then there's gotta be commercial breaks. I figure they must run the ads when I'm in the bathroom, so I always make a big entrance after I finish up in there.



But sometimes I wonder how much of my life is REAL and how much of it is RIGGED. Because half the things that happen to me are so ridiculous, I wonder if someone ELSE is pulling the strings.



If it's all fake, the LEAST the people in charge can do is give me some juicier story lines to work with.

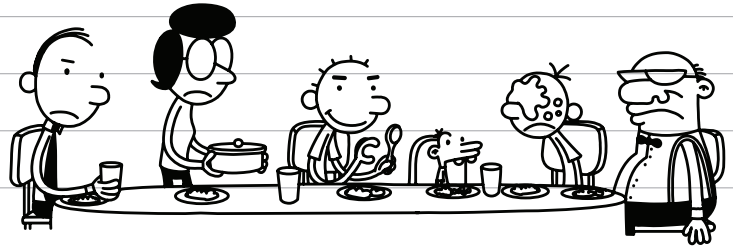


Every once in a while I wonder if the people in my life are who they SEEM to be, or if they're really just ACTORS.

If they're actors, I hope the kid who's playing my friend Rowley gets an award, because he's doing a great job pretending to be a doofus.

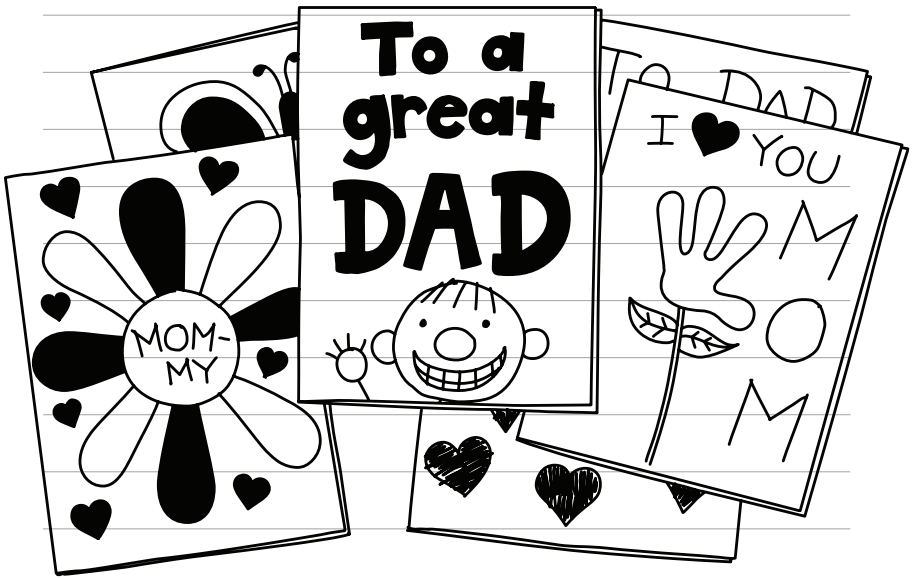
And if my brother Rodrick is actually just some guy getting PAID to act like a jerk, then that makes me see him in a whole new light.

Who knows? Maybe he's a nice guy in real life, and one day we'll be good friends.

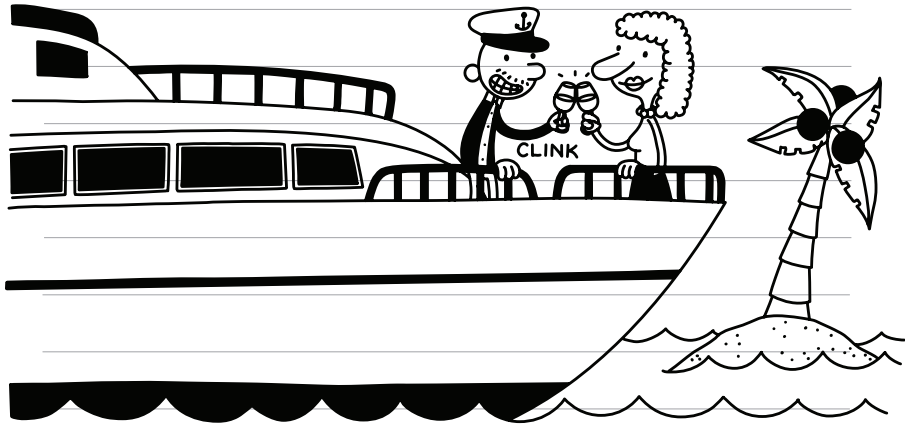


But if my PARENTS are actors, then that's just wrong.

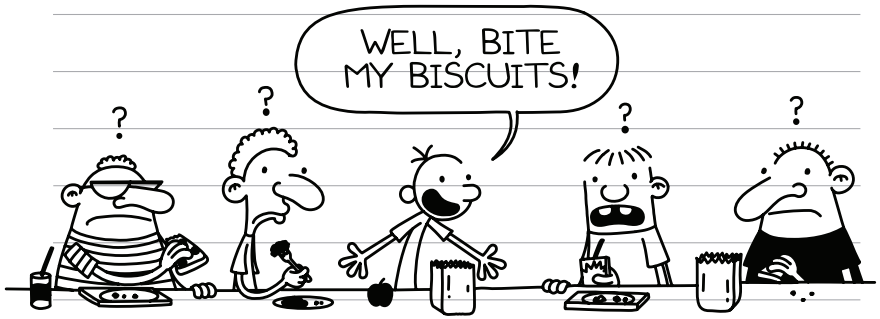
I've made a lot of Mother's and Father's Day cards over the years. If this is all a sham, then I deserve to get paid for my time and effort.



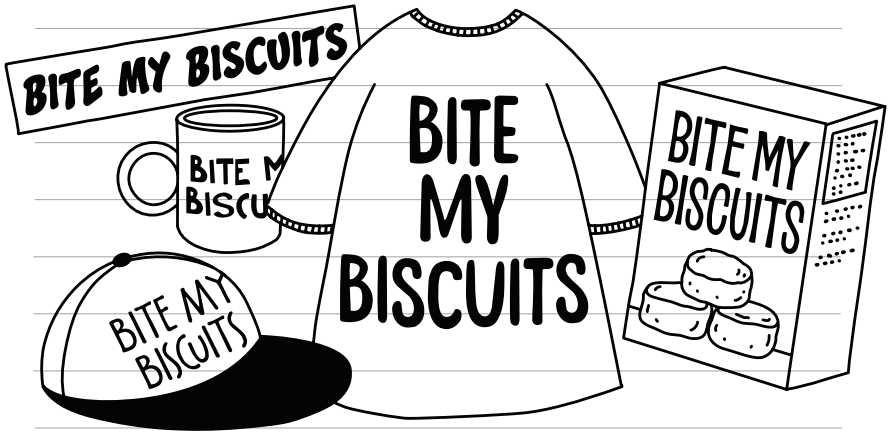
And speaking of getting paid, I'll bet my REAL parents are set for life, thanks to me.



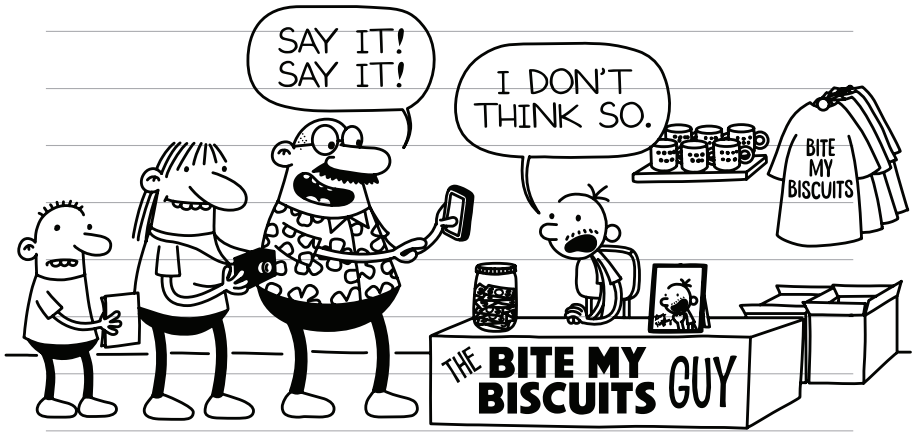
But I'm doing everything I can to make sure I can cash in later. On most TV shows, the main character has a catchphrase that they say at least once per episode. So I've come up with a catchphrase of my OWN, and I drop it into conversation every once in a while.



Later on I'm gonna slap my catchphrase on every piece of merchandise I can think of and wait for the money to start rolling in.

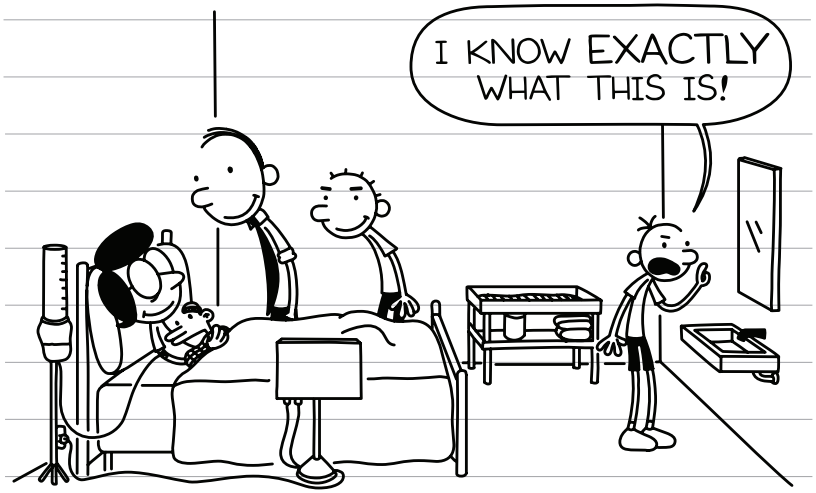


I'll guarantee THIS, though. I'm not gonna end up as one of those washed-up celebrities who sells pictures at autograph conventions just to make a cheap buck.



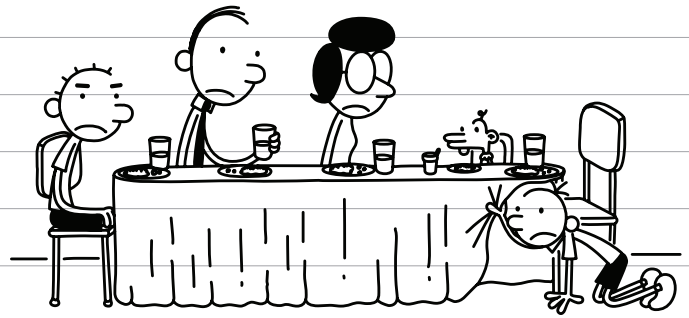
The one thing I've learned about television is that sooner or later, every show gets canceled. But in the last season they usually introduce a new pet or a cute kid to bump up the ratings.

So when my little brother, Manny, was born, I figured they were trying to replace me as the star of the show with a fresh new face.

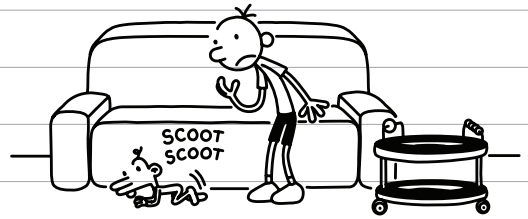


The thing I couldn't figure out was how a newborn baby could be an ACTOR. I thought maybe Manny was a puppet being controlled by an adult who was hidden from view.

I never found any evidence that this was true, but that didn't stop me from checking every once in a while just to make sure.

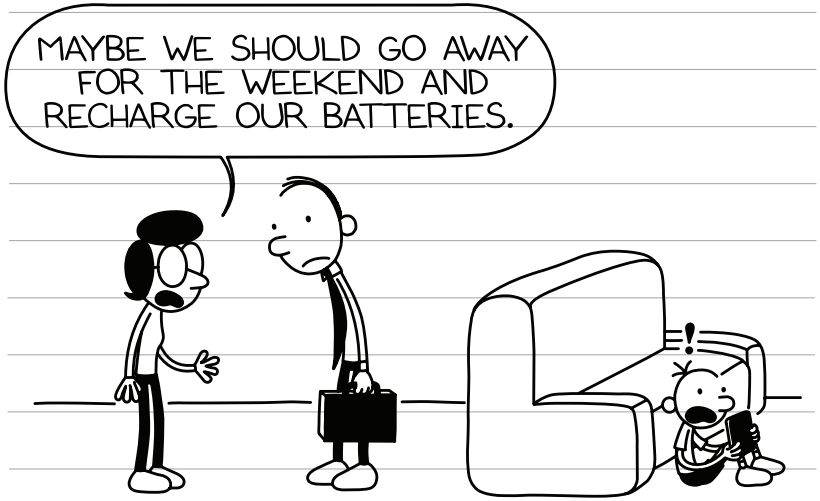


As Manny got older, it was pretty clear he was getting around on his own. So then I wondered if he was actually a super-high-tech windup toy or even some kind of ROBOT.

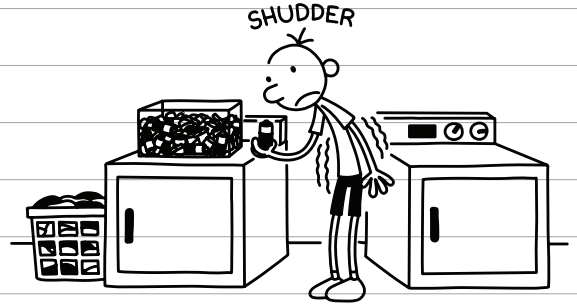


Then I thought maybe EVERYBODY around me was a robot and I was the only actual human being in the family. Robots need electricity for power, so that would explain why we have two or three outlets in every room of the house.

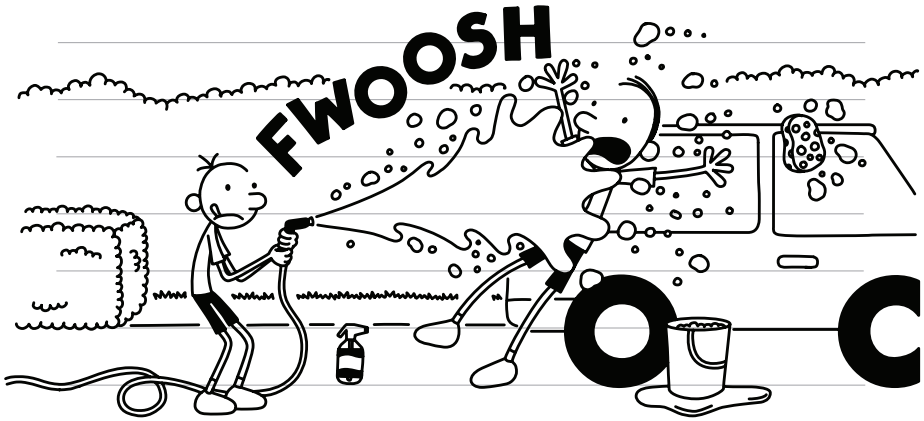
It would ALSO explain some of the things my parents say when they think I'm not listening.



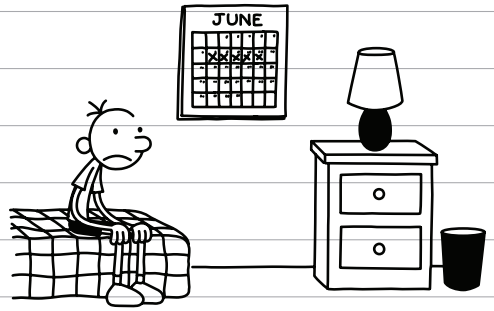
If robots use batteries, it explains why we have so many of them in the plastic bin in the laundry room. I'm not exactly sure where the batteries GO, but I do have a few guesses.



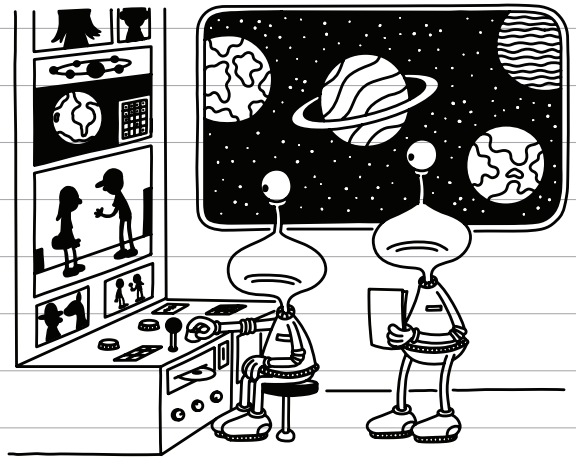
I figured the only way to find out if my family members were robots was to see if I could get one of them to short-circuit. But either Dad's a waterproof model or he's just a regular human with no sense of humor.



THAT incident got me grounded for a week. The people watching my show probably had a good laugh, but I'm sure the ratings were in the toilet for a while after that.



I guess there's a chance that I'm just an ordinary kid living a normal life, and I'm NOT the star of some TV show. But there could still be SOMEONE out there watching.

With all the planets in the universe, there's GOTTA be intelligent life out there. Some people say that if aliens were real, UFOs would be zipping around our skies all the time. But I figure aliens are SMART, and they're just keeping a low profile until the time is right to invade.

They're probably spying on us at this very second, gathering information about the way we live our lives.