

The Snellas turned in those videos, but they didn't win anything. So I guess they're just gonna keep having babies until they do.

Dad HATES performing in front of people, so he'll do everything he can to avoid having to act like a fool in front of the whole neighbourhood. And, so far, Dad has weaselled his way out of every single Snella half-birthday party.

At dinner, Mom told Dad he HAS to go to Seth Snella's half-birthday party in June. And I'm pretty sure Dad knows that this time his number is finally up.

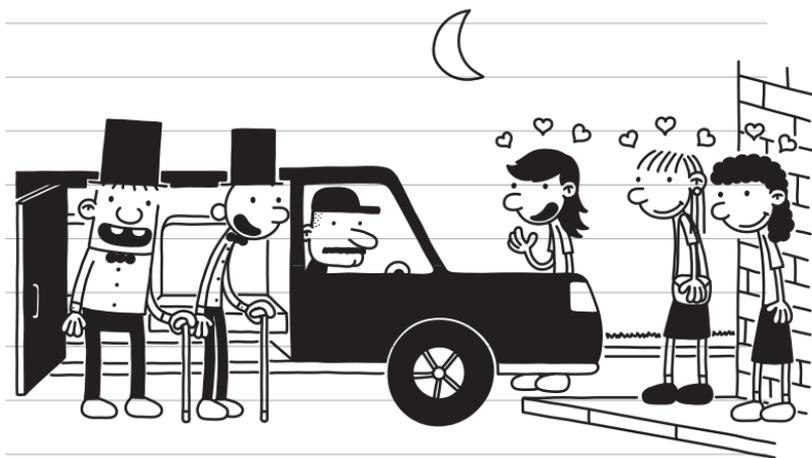


Thursday

Everybody at school has been talking about the big Valentine's Dance that's coming up next week.

This is the first year at my school that they've actually had a dance, so everyone's all excited. Some of the guys in my class were even asking girls if they would be their dates to the dance.

Me and Rowley are both bachelors at the moment, but that's not gonna stop us from arriving in style.



I figured if me and Rowley scraped together some money in the next few days, we could rent a limo for the night. But, when I called the limo company, the guy who answered the phone called me "ma'am". So that pretty much blew any chance he had of getting MY business.

Since the dance is next week, I realized I was gonna need something to wear.

I'm kind of in a pinch because I've already worn most of the clothes I got for Christmas, and I'm almost out of clean stuff to wear. I went through my dirty clothes to see if there was anything I could wear a SECOND time.



I separated my laundry into two piles: one that I could wear again, and one that would get me sent down to Nurse Powell's office for a lecture on hygiene.



I found a shirt in pile number one that wasn't so bad, except it had a jam stain on the left-hand side. So at the dance I'll just need to remember to keep Holly Hills to the right of me at all times.

### Valentine's Day

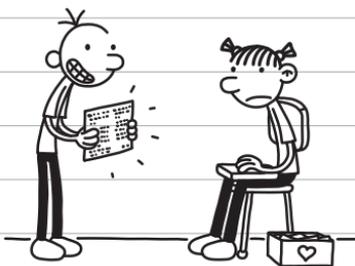
I was up late last night making Valentine's cards for everyone in my class. I'm pretty sure my middle school is the only one in the state that still makes all the kids give cards to one another.

Last year I was actually looking forward to the card swap. The night before Valentine's Day, I spent a lot of time making an awesome card for this girl named Natasha who I kind of liked.

<p> Beloved Natasha -</p> <p><i>For you, a fire blazes in my heart</i></p> <p><i>So strong that the embers alone could bring a thousand hot tubs to a boil</i></p> <p><i>So intense that it causes snowmen everywhere to despair</i></p>	<p><i>Let the bonfire of my love wrap you in its warmth</i></p> <p><i>Only your kiss could quench the flames that so consume me</i></p> <p><i>To you I pledge my love, my desire, my life</i></p> <p> Greg</p>
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I showed Mom my card to check for spelling errors, but she said what I wrote wasn't "age appropriate". She told me maybe I should just get Natasha a little box of candy or something, but I wasn't about to take romantic advice from my mother.

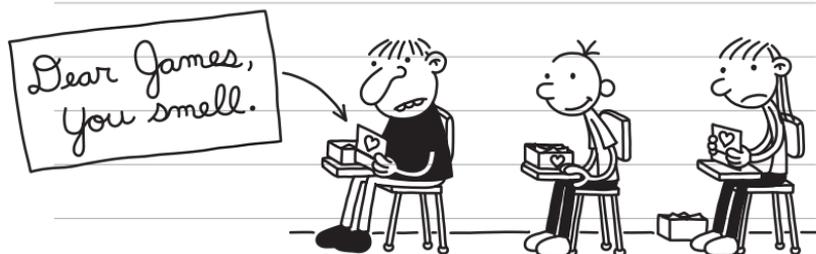
At school everyone went around the room and put their Valentine's cards in one another's boxes, but I delivered my card to Natasha personally.



I let her read it, and then I waited to see what she made for ME.

Natasha dug around in her box and pulled out this cheap store-bought card that was supposed to be for her friend Chantelle, who was out sick that day.

The trick was, I didn't actually SIGN any of my cards.



A few of the kids complained about the cards to our teacher, Mrs Riser, and then she went around the room trying to figure out who'd sent them. I knew Mrs Riser would think that whoever DIDN'T get a card was the culprit, but I was prepared for that, because I made a card for MYSELF, too.



After the card exchange came the Valentine's Dance. The dance was originally supposed to be at NIGHT, but I guess they couldn't get enough parents to volunteer to be chaperones. So they put the dance smack in the middle of the school day instead.

The teachers started rounding everyone up and sending them down to the auditorium at around 1:00. Anyone who didn't want to cough up the two bucks for admission had to go down to Mr Ray's room for study hall.

But it was pretty obvious to most of us that "study hall" was basically the same thing as detention.

