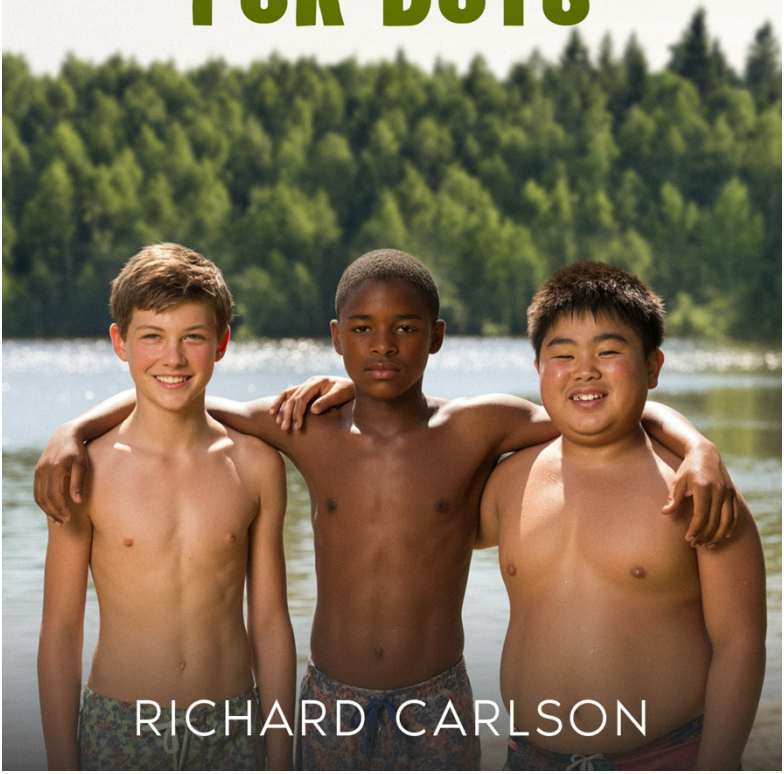
BARE FEET AT RATTLESNAKE SUMMER CAMP FOR BOYS



RICHARD CARLSON

Bare Feet at Rattlesnake Summer Camp for Boys

Richard Carlson

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PART I

PART II

PART III

PART IV

PART V

PART VI

PART VII

PART VIII

PART IX

PART X

PART XI

PART XII

PART XIII

PART XIV

PART XV

PART XVI

PART XVII

PART XVIII

PART XIX

PART XX

EPILOGUE

TJ'S VOCABULARY LIST

Part I

"Howdy," Cody exclaimed to the Black kid he just caught up to. The boys were carrying their luggage to their cabin for their three-week stay at a boys' summer camp, Camp Rattlesnake, in Upstate New York. It was 1983.

"Hi," the other boy said. "My name is Tyrone Jackson, but my friends call me TJ. I'm from New York City—in Brooklyn. I'm twelve."

“Nice to meet you,” Cody exclaimed. “I’m also twelve. I’m from Tucson, Arizona—in the desert.”

The boys approached a chubby Asian kid.

“Hi, I’m Cody. What’s your name?” Cody asked the boy.

“I’m Buu. I’m from New Jersey,” Buu said with an Asian accent and a big smile.

“I’m Tyrone Jackson, but my friends call me TJ.”

The boys were friends already!

"I'm in cabin *East Germany*," Cody said, hoping that they were, also.

"So am I!" TJ exclaimed with a big smile.

"I am, too," Buu said happily.

The boys approached three cabins in proximity to each other: one marked *Poland*; the next, *West Germany*; and the last, *East Germany*. Every cabin at the boy's camp was named after a European country and had a flag of their respective country on a pole attached

to the outside wall, right next to the cabin door. Other cabins were further down the trail.

The door to the *East Germany* cabin was open; the boys carried their luggage inside. There were sixteen bunks in the cabin, one for each of the fifteen boys and one for the cabin counselor.

"Hi, guys. Welcome to cabin *East Germany*," an eighteen-year-old young man said. "I'm Eric, your cabin counselor."

Other boys were already unpacking and sitting on the bunks.

“Nice to meet you,” Cody exclaimed.

“Hi,” TJ and Buu said.

The boys chose three top bunks adjacent to each other and then started unpacking. The first thing TJ took out of his luggage was a pocket dictionary.

“You brought a-a dictionary? To camp?” Cody quizzed.

“Yes. I am always learning the meanings of new words,” TJ announced, revealing his penchant.

“Oh. That’s . . . that’s . . . *really* cool,” Cody said, somewhat sarcastically, but with a big smile.

“Carrying a pocket dictionary with me and learning the meanings of new words is a *quirk* or *idiosyncrasy* of mine,” TJ declared. “*Quirk* means a peculiar trait; *idiosyncrasy* is a synonym.”

The boys listened in pure amazement. A twelve-year-old who

carries a dictionary wherever he goes, Cody and Buu each thought. Imagine that!

"*Plebeian* means one of the common people, crude or coarse in manner or style, common," TJ continued, educating his friends.

"I didn't know that," Cody said.

"I have never heard of *plebeian* before," Buu said, making TJ smile.

"Now you guys know," TJ said. "And now you can use the word in a

sentence: TJ and his family were plebeian, hard-working people.”

The boys finished unpacking. There were rows of cubbies along a wall to store their clothes. As they settled in, the cabinmates joked and bantered.

“Here’s a funny joke for you guys,” Cody said to TJ and Buu. “Cody goes to this ranch in Texas. There is a barrel there. Cody is told by the head of the ranch that Cody can have sex with the hole in this barrel every day, except for Tuesdays. That day is

Monday. So, when the ranch head goes to clean the stables, Cody has sex with the hole. Then, Cody goes to the ranch head and says, ‘Having sex with the hole in the barrel felt really good. But, why can’t I have sex with it on Tuesdays?’ The ranch head explains, ‘Because that’s when it’s your turn to sit in the barrel.’”

TJ, Buu, and the boys around them cracked up.

“Do you guys want to know something embarrassing that happened to me?” Cody asked his

new friends once the other kids wandered away.

TJ and Buu shrugged and nodded.

“This happened about two years ago. I was in my backyard with two friends, and I was hanging from the monkey bars, when my friends pulled my shorts and underwear right off my body. It was so embarrassing. Then, they ran around with my shorts and underwear, tossing them to each other, until I finally caught one of

them. And all that time, I was running around half naked."

"They shouldn't have done that to you," Buu exclaimed. "It wasn't fair to you."

"Yeah, you're right. After, they said they were sorry and that they shouldn't have done that. I forgave them. Then, each of them removed their own shorts and underwear and hung from the monkey bars until I stopped laughing and jeering at them for being so mean to me. I guess we're even, now," Cody said.

“Yeah,” Buu said, and TJ agreed.

“But we agreed to never do anything like that to anyone because it isn’t nice or right to do. Some people might not think it would be funny to have that happen to them,” Cody explained. He was having a good time talking about his goofy friends at home, even if that particular experience was unpleasant. “John and Rizzer are my really good friends, and I like them a lot.”

Another boy, Anthony, a tall and broad-shouldered fourteen-year-old, had overheard Cody's story. He said, "Sorry to be listening in, but I know how you feel. I had a physical last year for football. At the doctor's office, I was told to strip to my underwear. The doctor came in and checked my ears, nose, and throat, and he listened to my heart and my breathing. Then, I was told to drop my underwear to my ankles. I was completely embarrassed, but I did it. Then, the doctor held my balls and

told me to turn my head to the side and cough. I did. ‘Harder,’ he said, and I did. Then he asked me to turn my head the other way and cough again. I did. ‘Harder,’ he said, and I did. While I was still standing there, naked, he signed the form for my physical. Then, he finally told me to get dressed, as I was done. How embarrassing!”

The three friends smiled and murmured sympathetically.

Buu told them, “My family went to a beach vacation a few summers

ago in San Diego. I was nine. I had never been to a beach, and I had a lot of fun. Before we went back to the hotel, my mom told me to shower and pointed to a pole with a shower head that was not too far away. It was out in the open. I was confused, but assumed I'd have to be naked, just like when I showered at home. No one else was around, so I removed my swimsuit and showered. Just then, a family with two girls about my age walked by and saw me completely naked. How embarrassing! I covered

myself with my hands the best I could until they walked away. My mom explained, ‘You leave your suit on when showering here, in the open.’ I sure realized my mistake.”

The three friends and Anthony giggled.

“That must have been so embarrassing!”

“Being seen completely naked by girls? That’s awful!”

Just then, Eric, the camp counselor, gathered the boys together

and explained the daily routine and cabin rules. The boys were to shower each evening together in the large shower room behind the cabins. Showering together bugged Cody and most of the other boys. They had never showered in a room with a bunch of other naked boys.

"Don't let showering with the other boys bother you. You'll get used to it pretty quick," Eric said.

"I showered after P.E. and football last year," Anthony, the

fourteen-year-old, said. “It’s no big deal.”

It was twelve thirty, time for lunch and then a welcoming message from the camp leader, Mr. Roberts.

As Cody and his friends followed Eric to the mess hall, Cody kept thinking about those showers. He planned to just wear his underwear in the shower. But what about getting into bed? He’d have sopping wet underwear on; he’d have to remove his underwear at some time, exposing his body to the others . . . unless he

could change in the restroom. That was it! Problem solved. Now he felt safe.

Part II

Lunch was pepperoni pizza and fresh cold milk. The boys enjoyed eating their meal.

Buu shared with them, “I’ve been on a diet for the past three months. I’ve lost over twenty pounds so far, and it’s been hard. I’m going to watch what I eat here, too.”

“That’s awesome,” Cody exclaimed, happy that Buu was losing weight.

“Great. You’re “less” twenty pounds closer to what you want to weigh,” TJ praised. Shifting gears, he then looked around and cleared his throat. “*Palatable*,” TJ challenged his friends. At their perplexed expressions, he looked in his pocket dictionary and recited, “agreeable to the taste.”

“That’s what our pizza is,” Cody said with a big smile. “Our pizza is much more than palatable.”

“That’s a good sentence for it,” Buu said.

“Where are you from? What country?” Cody asked Buu because of Buu’s Asian accent.

“My family immigrated from Vietnam when I was eight. We lived in Ho Chi Minh City, which was formerly called Saigon, until the Vietnam War was over. The Communists changed the city’s name to their leader’s name.”

“It’s awesome and really cool that you’re from a country clear across the world,” Cody said.

Buu smiled. “You guys are great. I wish I had friends like you two at home; a lot of the kids where I live tease me about being overweight. It makes me very angry and sad at the same time. I can’t stand being overweight.”

“Oh, you’re cool with us. We’re your buddies, no matter what. I think you look great just the way you are, but I hope you lose weight, if that’s what’ll make you happy. It’s awesome that you’ve lost twenty pounds. I’ll tell you what: TJ and I will keep tabs on

you to make certain you stick to your diet. How about that?" Cody asked, excited to be a part of Buu's transformation.

"Yes. That'd be really cool. Thank you," Buu exclaimed with a tear in his eye.

"We support you," TJ said, shaking Buu's hand to make it official.

"Thanks, guys," Buu said with a big smile as he shook TJ's hand.

"You know what I'm going to do, Buu? I'm going to eat and drink

whatever you eat and drink, to be in solidarity with you," TJ announced.

"I'm going to do that, too," Cody said. "That's a great idea, to show our support for Buu and to help encourage him."

"That's great, guys. You're the best friends I've ever had," Buu said, grinning from ear to ear. After a moment, his forehead furrowed. "But what does *solidarity* mean?"

TJ looked it up in his pocket dictionary. "*Solidarity*: unity of purpose." He looked at his friends.

“What’s another sentence using *solidarity*?”

“We are in complete solidarity with our new friend in his plan to lose weight,” Cody stated. “How’s that?”

“Perfect!”

Part III

For dessert, ice cream was on the menu.

“Guys, I’m not going to have any ice cream, but you can if you want,” Buu said. He really meant it; he was so happy to have support from his new friends that he didn’t mind if they ate ice cream without him.

“Oh, no. I’m not having any. Remember: *solidarity*,” Cody said emphatically.

“I’m not having any, either,” TJ exclaimed. “I’m with you, Buu,” he added, making Buu smile and laugh.

“I mean it, guys: you two can have ice cream if you want,” Buu stressed.

“Oh, no,” Cody and TJ said as they watched the other boys getting and eating their delicious ice cream.

“Let’s change the subject. Do either of you have girlfriends?” Cody asked. A sensitive and romantic boy, he wanted to have a girlfriend to love and care for.

“No,” TJ said, “not yet.”

“No,” Buu said.

“There’s this girl at home, Dusty, and she’s cute. She’s got long black hair and nice brown eyes,” Cody explained. He wondered if he’d date her sometime soon after he went back home.

“There’s this girl, Sarah, at my school that is pretty. We’ve flirted before, a little—but she’s not allowed to date until she is sixteen,” TJ said sadly. “But I can wait that long. Maybe

I'd date her," he declared with a glimmer of hope.

"There's this girl at my church who's cute and pretty. She always has nice ponytails that I'd love to tug on if I could. Maybe, I'd date her someday," Buu shared.

"You've got to talk to her," Cody encouraged. "Maybe she'd like you, too. You'll never know unless you try."

"Yes. You're right," Buu said. "Maybe once I lose enough weight, I'll have more confidence in myself."

“That’s good,” Cody exclaimed. “That’s another reason to support you.”

It was time for the camp leader, Mr. Roberts, to address the campers. The boys were led to an area where logs encircled an unlit campfire, which they assumed would be lit tonight.

Mr. Roberts tapped a microphone.

Part IV

Mr. Roberts, the camp leader, explained to the boys the expectations, rules, and procedures at camp. The boys were excited to learn that they'd have a dance with the girls from Camp Butterfly Field, every Friday. The girls' camp was not far away, just across the lake from Rattlesnake Camp. The girls were all twelve- to fourteen-year-olds, just like the boys.

After the meeting, the friends headed back to their cabin.

“What if there was a cure for being overweight?” Buu asked, rubbing his finger on his chin.

“A panacea!” TJ exclaimed. “A panacea is a remedy for all ills or difficulties.” He checked his pocket dictionary to make certain he was correct, and he was.

“What we need is a panacea,” Cody said, “like a miracle cure.”

“But we already have a panacea,” TJ said. “It’s called eating healthy foods and exercising.”

“You’re right,” Buu said. “That’s what my doctor explained to me.”

When the boys got back to the cabin, they each had to urinate. They walked to the shower and bathroom building.

They instantly noticed that there were two troughs for urinating against a wall, with no privacy. The toilets had skimpy dividers and no doors or real privacy.

Cody unzipped his shorts, and TJ and Buu followed. The boys urinated in one of the troughs, standing next to each other. Cody aimed his stream into TJ's stream, causing it to splash on TJ.

"Dude. Please aim," TJ said, making Cody and Buu smile.

"It's just like a firehouse," Cody said, starting to feel better about being exposed to his friends.

The boys finished and washed their hands, and then they went back to the cabin. Once there, they lay on

their bunks and bantered. There were several other boys there.

"Notice how we're lying down? *Supine*: that means lying on the back. We're lying *supine*," TJ explained, holding up his pocket dictionary.

"TJ, Buu, and Cody lie supine on their bunkbeds," Cody said, with a big smile.

"What is it called to lie on your stomach?" Buu quizzed TJ.

"Lying on your stomach is called *prone*. He lies prone on his bunkbed,"

TJ explained, happy with his knowledge.

"The babe lies prone on her bunk, exposing her beautiful bare soles," Cody said, smiling and giggling.

TJ sighed. "I don't know how we're going to survive until Friday without any girls here."

"Yeah, I don't know what I'll do not being around girls' beautiful bare feet," Cody said.

His friends laughed.

“We’ll see girls’ bare feet this Friday,” Buu said. “I’m sure of it.”

“I want a pretty girl with pretty feet—she’s got to have pretty feet, or I won’t be happy,” Cody declared, making the boys laugh even more.

“Cody wants to pork a girl with beautiful bare feet. Cody wants to pork a girl with beautiful bare feet,” Anthony chanted, having fun. Everyone giggled.

“Eric, do you have a girlfriend?” Cody asked, as Eric lay supine on his bunk.

“Yes. She’s hot and has got beautiful bare feet,” he told them.

“Ooooooooooh,” many of the boys said. “Ooooooooh.”

“Have you porked her?” Cody asked, happy to be talking about sex.

“I’m a gentleman. I don’t talk about my girlfriend and our relationship that way,” Eric stated emphatically.

“Okay. Sorry.”

“We have a great time together,” Eric said. “I’m going to miss her. I

won't see her until Friday when the girls come over from the other camp. She's a camp counselor at the girls' camp."

Amid their sympathetic murmurs, he said, "You boys shouldn't be worried about having sex until you are older or married. Sex is something special between two people who love each other very much and are committed to each other."

Cody exclaimed, "I plan to lose my virginity after I'm married." He

smiled, feeling very happy to think about the sanctity of intimate relationships.

“I’m going to make love, too, after I’m married,” Eric said, letting the boys know he was a virgin.

“Hey, Eric. Do you think you’ll be married soon?” Cody asked.

“We might, soon,” Eric replied. “I really love her and care about her.”

“Does she have nice boobs?” TJ asked, laughing and smirking.

“You shouldn’t ask me that,” Eric responded calmly. “I like the way my girlfriend looks. She’s beautiful.”

“What is so special about being in love?” Cody asked him. “What makes it so wooooonderfullllll,” he trilled, making the boys grin.

“It’s true that love is special,” Eric said. “It’s something sacred.”

“I’m going to ask Dusty to date me after I get back from camp,” Cody announced. “She’s pretty, and she lives in my neighborhood, close to where I live.”

“Oooooooh,” the boys said again and again, teasing Cody.

“Don’t wait too long, or she might find someone else,” TJ said, “if she is a desirable girl to the dudes.”

“I know,” Cody said. “I think she is a great person.”

“I’d like to have a girlfriend, too,” another boy, Toby, said. “I want to kiss a girl again and again.”

“So do I,” Cody said, smiling. He could feel his heart flutter at the thought of Dusty.

“Do you drool over her?” TJ asked. “Like, when you think about her?”

“I want to marry her,” Cody proclaimed, ignoring the silly question. “Very much so,” he added, happy with his fantasy about having a girlfriend and being in love.

“I just thought of a fitting word: *promiscuous*,” TJ exclaimed. “*Promiscuous* means having a number of sexual partners.”

“Promiscuous. Cody is not promiscuous; he is celibate,” TJ said.

"*Celibate* means . . . an abstention from sexual intercourse," he announced, and then he looked the word up in his pocket dictionary to make sure.

"But what does *abstention* mean?"

TJ flipped through the pages. "*Abstention*, or *abstain*, means to refrain from doing something."

"I abstain from sex," Buu said, using the word in a sentence.

“That’s a good sentence,” Cody exclaimed. “But I abstain from sexual intercourse because I value being a virgin until I am married.”

“You’re such a goody-two-shoes,” Anthony exclaimed. “You’re so righteous.”

The boy shrugged.

Anthony explained, “How am I supposed to lose my virginity as soon as possible with you around? Like, what? I’m supposed to not have any sex with a girl until I am married? That’s a long time from now,” he said.

“I don’t want to be a dad at my age,” Cody exclaimed, defending his beliefs.

“A real goody-two-shoes,” Anthony replied.

“I’m right,” Cody exclaimed crossing his arms.

“It’s time for fishing,” Eric told the boys before Anthony had a chance to reply.

Putting his arms down, Cody and the others headed to the lake.

Part V

"I'm going to catch a huge catfish or bass," Buu said. "I've fished with my dad and grandpa a couple of times. It's a lot of fun."

"We'll see. Which one of us will catch the biggest fish? I'm willing to bet it's going to be *me*," TJ declared. "I'm great at fishing, too."

The boys bantered as they followed Eric, the cabin counselor, to the lake.

“What about us?” another boy, Ricky, said. “I’m going to catch the longest and heaviest fish, I bet.”

“Let’s have a bet: Whoever catches the smallest fish has to be naked in the cabin after activities until camp is over. How about it, dudes?” Cody exclaimed with a grin.

Practically jumping in place, all the other boys happily and excitedly agreed.

At the long dock, Eric explained all about fishing. Cody, TJ, and Buu didn’t really need the explanation,

because they already knew how to fish; they listened politely, though. Then, Eric handed out fishing poles and bait: huge fresh earthworms in buckets.

Cody, TJ, and Buu stood next to each other at the end of the long dock.

Buu shared, “One time, I was fishing with my dad, and I got the lure stuck in his back. He begged me to just cut it out with a knife, after I fiddled with it, trying to remove it. I finally cut it out. There was blood

everywhere, but he was very happy after it was finally removed.

“How was he afterward?” Cody asked.

“He was all right,” Buu said.

Suddenly, there was a tug on his line. Buu caught a fish and reeled it in.

“A bass,” Eric exclaimed as Buu held it up and out of the water.

“Twenty and a half inches,” Eric pronounced, measuring it.

“Cool. Everyone else has to beat twenty and a half inches,” Buu bragged, having a blast.

Then he put his fish back in the lake, and the boys continued to fish. Before long, TJ caught a bass, too.

“Just shy of eighteen inches,” Eric said after measuring it.

The boys continued fishing. Shortly thereafter, Anthony caught a catfish.

“Twelve inches,” Eric exclaimed after measuring it.

Then, Cody caught one: a bass.

“Eleven and a half inches,” Eric proclaimed.

Other boys caught fish, too, but none were as big as Buu’s.

Then, Cody caught a branch.

“That doesn’t count,” Eric exclaimed. “It has to be a fish.”

“Who has had the smallest?” Cody asked, now wishing he hadn’t made the bet.

Eric looked through the list. “Cody has the smallest so far,” he smiled, “and Buu, the longest.”

Now Cody knew he was in trouble: he’d have to be completely naked in the cabin after activities, until morning every day, in front of everyone in the whole cabin!

Part VI

Buu had caught a total of eight fish; TJ, ten; and Cody, thirteen. Cody's biggest fish was the smallest compared to all of the other boys' catches. Now he knew he would have to be naked in the cabin after activities in the evening until morning. He wished and wished and wished he hadn't made the bet.

Buu said, "Cody must have the smallest willy, since he caught the smallest fish."

Cody smiled. “I have the biggest willy out there,” he said.

“We’ll see tonight,” Buu said. Then, he and TJ cracked up.

“Everyone is going to see Cody’s bright white ass tonight,” TJ exclaimed, having fun with his friends.

“Yeah. His butt’s going to be shining on display for everyone to see. I’ll bet his butt is so pale, it will light the cabin after lights out,” Buu said, laughing.

“It was a really dumb, dumb, dumb, dumb, dumb bet!” Cody exclaimed.

“Are you going to renege on your bet with everyone?” TJ asked. He thumbed through his dictionary. “*Renege* means to go back on a promise or commitment,” he read.

“No,” Cody exclaimed indignantly. “I honor my bets.”

It was snack time at camp for fifteen minutes; the campers headed to the mess hall.

“Oh, good. There’s plenty to choose from,” Buu said, taking a Honeycrisp apple and a bottle of water.

There were Honeycrisp, Granny Smith, Gala, and Red Delicious apples, cans of soda, and water in a cooler with ice. There were also granola bars, small bags of pretzels, and various potato chips and other snacks.

Cody and TJ each took the same as Buu, and then they sat down near the stage and podium.

“It’s great that camp offers some healthy foods,” Cody commented.

“Yeah. I love apples,” TJ said, taking a big bite. “*Plethora*. What does it mean?” he mumbled around a mouthful of apple as he looked it up. When he friends remained silent, he read, “*Plethora* means excess.”

“There is a plethora of things to eat at camp at snack time,” Cody said.

“How about a new word? How about . . . *tantamount*?” TJ said, looking it up to refresh his memory.

"*Tantamount* means being essentially equal to something."

"How about this: Cody being completely naked in the cabin is tantamount to a show, where he shows everything and reveals everything? Cool, isn't it?" Buu exclaimed, having fun.

"Don't remind me of my predicament," Cody said, making TJ and Buu grin at him.

"*Predicament*: that means a delicate and difficult position," TJ explained with a smile. Then he

laughed. “You’re in a big predicament, Cody: You have to bear it all tonight.”

“You guys,” Cody said, “you don’t know how hard it is to be naked with a bunch of boys. I’ll have to get used to it, though; after all, we have to shower together—and then you guys will be in the nude for all to see.”

TJ announced, “But you will be naked first and all by yourself with your cabinmates.”

“Don’t rub it in, TJ,” Cody begged.

“It’s recreational time, everyone. Follow me to the game room,” Eric said. He led the boys to a larger building full of arcade and pinball games.

“Let’s play Galaga,” Cody said, heading to the game booth.

TJ and Buu followed.

Cody started playing right away. He was a good player; he often played at home at the mall arcade. TJ and Buu watched for a few minutes, and then, TJ started playing Galaxian at the booth next to Galaga.

“There’s another Galaga booth over there,” Buu exclaimed, hustling over to play.

The boys and other campers stayed busy, playing games in the arcade room, each having fun.

An hour and a half passed, and it was time for dinner. Eric gathered the boys, and they walked to the mess hall.

Once there, the friends were each given their meals: meatloaf, mashed potatoes, and steamed broccoli, with the option of chocolate

or regular milk. Buu chose regular, and Cody and TJ followed suit. With their trays loaded, the boys sat at a table.

Buu decided to cut back on how much food he was eating: he left a forkful of mashed potatoes on his plate to help him learn how to control how much he ate. Cody and TJ did the same.

Part VII

"I need some advice," Cody said during dinner. "I'm going to ask Dusty if she'd like to see a movie with me. How should I ask her?"

Buu offered, "You could say something like 'I am planning to see *Star Wars* this Saturday. Would you like to see it with me?'"

TJ joined in, "You could then say, 'Everyone says it's a great movie, and I think it would be exciting to watch it together.'"

Buu added, “If she wants to, then that’s awesome. But if she doesn’t, you could say, ‘Oh, that’s okay. Maybe some other time,’ or ‘Let’s go some other time.’”

Cody exclaimed, “Thanks, guys. It’s not as difficult as I thought it would be to ask her out.”

“How about a word based on our discussion?” TJ suggested. “*Woo*. *Woo* means to try to gain the love or favor of someone,” he said, looking it up in his dictionary. “How about a good sentence for *woo*?”

“We wish Cody all the luck in wooing Dusty, the girl he likes,” Buu exclaimed with a smile.

Cody grinned.

“That’s a perfect sentence for woo,” TJ said. Then he moaned and groaned to make sounds like two people were having sex. The boys giggled.

“There’s nothing like making love to a girl,” Cody said. “I’m really looking forward to being married.”

TJ and Buu smiled as they thought about it, too.

“What about having a romantic relationship?” Cody asked. “That’s important, too. Girls like a romantic man,” he said with a grin. “I can have a great relationship with my girl, even though it does not include a sexual relationship, because girls need to know they are loved and cared about by their man.”

His friends nodded agreement.

“I can make a girl go crazy, by how romantic I am,” Cody bragged.

“She’d be so happy to be with me,” he added.

“I am romantic, too,” Buu exclaimed.

“Me, also,” TJ said, making a farting sound with this hand and armpit, “Bwwwwwooooooooommmp.”

“How romantic: a fart,” Cody scoffed.

TJ shook his head and thumbed through his dictionary. “*Flatulence*. That’s another word for a fart.”

“I’m romantic,” Cody exclaimed, “I’d pick wildflowers to give to a girl, and give her a bear hug.”

“I’d grow flowers to pick and give to my girl,” Buu said making Cody wish he had said that.

“Cool,” Cody said with a big smile, “A better idea.”

Part VIII

After Cody and his friends finished dinner, it was time for dessert: red, white, and blue bomb pops.

Buu got the attention of one of the staff members. “Could I please have an apple or something healthy for a snack, instead? I’m trying to lose weight.”

“Certainly, that sounds great,” the man replied. “What kind of apple? Or do you want a banana?”

“I’ll have another Honeycrisp, please. They’re my favorite,” Buu replied, happy at the thought of losing weight.

Cody asked the man, “Can we also have Honeycrisp apples? We’re Buu’s friends, and we are in solidarity with him with his weight loss plan. We are going to eat exactly what and how much he eats, to support him.”

“That’s very nice of you boys! Of course, you can!” the man declared, happy that an overweight tweenager

had such great support for his weight loss.

The boys enjoyed every crunch of their apples. Now, it was time for their next activity: basketball.

At the basketball courts, Eric explained, “We are going to have two teams: shirts and shirtless. Buu, what team do you want to be on?”

“Shirts, please,” Buu requested, hoping he could keep his shirt on as much as possible, because he was uncomfortable with his body.

Cody and TJ were also on Buu's team. The shirtless boys removed their shirts, and the boys played.

During the game, Buu was struck in the forehead and almost fell backwards. Then, Cody got smacked right in the groin and collapsed to the ground.

Holding his groin, Cody said, "Ohhhh, my God!—my God!"

Anthony, who had tossed the ball to Cody, said, "Sorry dude," and helped Cody stand up.

“My nuts are okay now. They’ve returned to normal,” Cody joked, having fun despite being hurt, “Sometimes we get hurt, but I go back to having fun right away,” he proclaimed.

In the four games the boys played, Cody got six baskets; TJ, three; and Buu nine. Buu was a great basketball player.

“You did great!” Cody exclaimed to Buu as they slapped their hands together above their heads.

“You’re so good, I bet you could play varsity in high school,” TJ said. He knew he wasn’t great at it himself, but he was happy for his friend.

It was eight thirty and time to learn how to square dance. But who would the boys practice dancing with? Each other?

Eric explained as they walked to the mess hall, “We’re going to learn square dancing. We’re going to dance with other boys, but don’t worry: You don’t have to kiss your partner when the caller calls for it. This way, you

guys can dance with the girls on Friday when they come over for the evening."

The boys clapped and cheered: They couldn't wait to learn how to dance if it meant they could dance with the girls. It had almost been one full day since the boys had seen any girls; they missed them already! They were all looking forward to Friday night.

Part IX

At the mess hall, the entire camp of boys was there. The tables and benches had been stacked in one corner.

The boys had fun learning how to square dance. It was awkward dancing with other boys, but they did what they had to do. They did it for a good cause: girls!

Afterward, on the walk back to the cabin for the night, Cody, TJ, and Buu bantered and joked. Cody wasn't

really paying much attention, though; he felt his stomach twist and turn like an out-of-control bread machine on mach one hundred speed.

"It is almost time," Buu exclaimed, "for Cody to don his birthday suit in the cabin."

"Yeah, buddy. It's time." TJ grinned.

It was about to happen. Cody realized he was going to be completely naked in front of the other boys.

“Wait, I forgot. Everyone has to shower, too,” Buu exclaimed. “We’ll all be naked.”

Sure enough, as soon as they entered the cabin, Eric announced, “Time for showers!”

Anthony was the first one to strip, and then other boys followed. Eventually, Cody, TJ, and Buu did the same, feeling their hearts beat up and out of their throats because they were so self-conscious about their nude bodies. Each boy donned a towel and walked barefoot on the grass to the

shower building shared by the three cabins.

Once inside, Cody reluctantly removed his towel and began to shower, feeling glad to have gotten this awkward moment over with. TJ and Buu joined him.

Cody looked at all the naked boys showering in awe. He had never been naked in a shower with so many naked boys. There were forty-two boys, fourteen from each cabin. The shower room was packed. Neither Cody, TJ, nor Buu had hair on their

chests or under their armpits. They had pubic hair, though, and had started puberty not too long ago. Cody also had some hair on the top of his feet. He noticed that some boys had no pubic hair, others had some, and still others had just as much as TJ, Buu, and he did. Cody also noticed that his legs were hairier compared to many of the other boys, even the older ones, although Anthony had hairy legs and some underarm hair. Some of the other boys had larger

willies than Cody. Not all the boys had erections, though.

When Cody turned twelve, his dad had explained to him all about puberty. Cody now knew the difference between a circumcised penis and an uncut penis: some of the boys at camp were uncut, but not many. TJ and Buu had been circumcised, like Cody.

After washing the lather off, the boys headed back to the cabins barefoot, donning towels again. Cody, TJ, and Buu followed the group and

felt happy to be having so much fun, even though it had been awkward being naked with the other boys for the first time.

In the cabin, the boys dressed, except for Cody; he stayed naked. He wasn't going to renege on the bet.

The boys bantered and joked before bed. Cody lay supine on his bunk, with his hands behind his head, as he talked with TJ and Buu, who sat on their bunks in their night clothes: white T-shirts and comfy night shorts.

Fortunately, Cody got used to being naked very quickly.

“This dance is going to be so much fun,” Cody said, making the other boys’ eyes light up.

“I can’t wait to get better at square dancing, so I can dance with the girls on Friday,” Buu exclaimed.

“Let’s have another bet. How about, whoever gets homesick first has to be naked at the lake during swimming?” he said.

“All right,” TJ and Cody agreed.

The boys chatted until lights out, bedtime. Cody stayed naked and slept nude on top of his sleeping bag, as it was a bit warm in the cabin. He was surprised to realize that he loved the feeling of his sleeping bag under his naked body.

Part X

Cody yawned and stretched his arms. It was early morning.

"Someone's got a morning woody," TJ teased, looking at Cody.

Many of the boys looked over.

Cody sat up, embarrassed, looking at his full erection. He knew what a *morning woody* was. He woke up just about every morning with one, like other tween boys in puberty. It

was something tween, teenage, and older males experienced.

The boys got ready for the day.

On the walk to the mess hall for breakfast, TJ enlightened his friends.

"*Peccadillo* means a slight offense," he said, looking in his dictionary.

"We need a sentence for peccadillo. How about this: Cody's peccadillo was at full mast this morning." Cody pointed to his groin and grinned.

TJ and Buu smiled.

“No. That’s not a good sentence.” TJ explained, “Your penis is not called a peccadillo. How about this one: Buu doesn’t cheat on his diet. He has no peccadillos regarding eating just a hair more than he should at even one meal or one snack time.”

“Thank you. That’s very true,” Buu said, smiling.

For breakfast, the campers had the option of pancakes, waffles, sausage, bacon, and scrambled eggs.

Buu showed restraint: He chose some scrambled eggs, a link of sausage, and a glass of low-fat milk. He also got a bottle of water. Cody and TJ did the same.

Sitting at a table, the boys enjoyed their delicious breakfast.

“Sometimes, when I feel hungry, it’s not because I need food; it’s because I need to drink some water,” Buu said.

Cody and TJ thought about that and then agreed.

“I’m going to ask for another bottle of water,” Buu exclaimed after drinking his milk. “That way, hopefully, I won’t be tempted to get more food. Also, I need to slow down when I eat, so my brain can know when I’m full. That way, I won’t overeat.”

The boys each enjoyed the bottles of cold refreshing water and then headed back to their cabin to clean up a bit.

Upon arrival, they cleaned up and put things away. Cody swept the floor.

“Who here has hairy armpits?” Anthony suddenly asked.

One older boy wearing a muscle shirt raised his arms to show.

“Just me and him? Who else?” Anthony asked.

“I do,” another older boy said, holding open his short-sleeve shirt so everyone could see.

“Only the three of us are really *men*,” Anthony exclaimed, showing off by sniffing his arm pit.

“Let me sniff your arm pit,” he then said, grabbing and lifting Cody’s arm. He took a deep sniff of Cody’s armpit.

“Delish,” Anthony pronounced with a smile, still holding Cody’s arm up. “Absolutely delish.”

TJ looked up *delish* in his dictionary.

"*Delish* means delicious. Cody's armpit is delicious?" TJ quizzed.

"I really like to smell boys' armpits and feet," Anthony explained with a smile.

"They're pen . . . *penchants* of yours," TJ exclaimed. "*Penchant* means a strong and continued inclination or liking."

"Yes. It's a penchant of mine, like kissing babes," Anthony said, "and making love."

“Let me sniff your armpit,” Anthony demanded, raising TJ’s arm. Sniffing, he said, “Yummy, just like Cody’s.”

“How about licking my armpits,” Cody suggested, joking. “Would you like that?”

“Hmm. Maybe. I’ll have to see,” Anthony said, making the boys laugh a little.

“My penis is my penchant,” another boy, Marty, exclaimed. “It’s something I like.”

“Your penchant is probably masturbation,” TJ told him, making the other boys laugh.

“Okay, sure,” Marty replied, happy to be joking with his cabinmates. “My penchant is slapping the monkey.”

“Try slapping the monkey to this,” Cody exclaimed, bending over so his tush was facing Marty. He wiggled his tush as he said, “Come and get it, Marty.”

“Try doing that when you’re naked,” Marty dared. “I triple dare you.”

Cody stood up straight. “You’re on, buddy,” he said, smiling. “Why? Are you going to pork me?”

“You wish,” Marty replied, laughing as everyone started giggling.

“Pork, pork, pork,” Cody chanted, moving his hips forward and back repeatedly. “Pork, pork, pork.”

Eric announced, “Now it is time for the first activity for the day, badminton.

Part XI

At the outside badminton courts, a camp counselor went over the rules of the game. Cody and Buu were on one team, and TJ and Anthony were on the opposing team. Cody held the birdie and his racket. He and TJ had played badminton in elementary school and knew how to play. Anthony had played a little in seventh grade. Buu had never played before.

The game began. Cody spiked the birdie once, and it flew down onto

TJ's nose, and then ricocheted to the court, but TJ was only stunned. The boys cracked up.

After the games, Buu exclaimed, "That was great exercise for us; I'll bet it'll help me to lose weight."

Sweaty, Cody and TJ removed their shirts, but Buu left his on.

It was ten forty-five, time for the second activity of the day: go-karting.

At the racetrack, the boys gazed in awe at the go-karts. They were just like Formula One racecars, except

smaller. Cody got a green car, number five. TJ got a blue one, number eight. Buu got a yellow one, number eleven.

Wearing helmets, the boys raced each other, having a blast speeding around the track. They loved the fact that the cars were so loud, like real racecars.

One time, Cody accidentally smacked into Buu's car and did a tailspin; everyone had to stop to wait for him to turn back around.

After they were done racing, Cody exclaimed, "I went to a NASCAR

race once. These go-karts are just like the cars there, except smaller.

“Cool,” TJ said. “Just like real racecars.”

It was twelve thirty and time for lunch. The boys walked to the mess hall.

There were grilled chicken breasts, hamburgers, and hot dogs to choose from. The hot dog buns were long, like the hot dogs, and replete with sesame seeds. There was also macaroni salad, potato salad,

steamed broccoli, carrots, and cauliflower.

Buu made his choice: grilled chicken breast, steamed vegetables, and low-fat milk. As per their pact, Cody and TJ ate and drank the same.

“Delicious!” Buu said with his mouth full of chicken breast meat. “Absolutely delicious!”

“It’s as good as my mom’s,” Cody declared.

“Same here,” TJ exclaimed. “It’s like my mom is the cook here. . . . I’m

starting to miss her," he added sadly, wishing she were there.

Cody said, "It's all right. You won't be at camp forever—and then you'll be back home."

TJ smiled his thanks and soon cheered up as the boys finished their delicious meal. Afterward, Buu asked for a bottle of water and was given one; Cody and TJ also got one each.

For dessert, there was Jell-O and whipped cream. Buu chose some Jell-O, but without the fattening

whipped cream. Cody and TJ followed suit.

It was one thirty and time for an hour's rest period, back at the cabin. With full bellies, the boys followed Eric.

At the cabin, the boys bantered and joked.

"Yeah, BJ. That's my name," a tall boy, the tallest in the cabin (except for Eric), said to another boy.

Cody's eyes lit up. "Blow job," he said. "That's your name. BJ, the blow job."

"Hey, man," BJ fumed, "I'm BJ. Not *blow job*. I am not some kind of faggot." BJ, a spitfire, jabbed his finger into Cody's chest.

Cody quickly realized that he'd made a big mistake. "Hey, dude. I'm sorry. It's only a joke. Let's be friends," he said, holding his right hand out for a shake.

The anger melted from his face. BJ said, "Okay. Dude. You're cool." He

shook Cody's hand. Then, the two boys man-hugged for a second. They were friends already!

Cody took off his sneakers and socks.

"Does anyone want to wrestle here on the floor?" Cody asked, looking for a competitor to beat.

"I will," BJ exclaimed. "I'm no weakling. I'm a man," he rumbled like a big shot, removing his sneakers and socks as Cody had.

The boys removed their shirts and stood across from each other, prepared for war, as the others watched. Then, they went at it.

BJ was older and taller than Cody and had the advantage. He quickly managed to get Cody in a headlock with his legs in front over Cody's chest and his ankles crossed tight right over Cody's stomach.

Mercilessly, BJ tightened his hold as Cody struggled. Cody stretched his hands above his head, grabbing BJ's arms and hands, but to no avail.

BJ continued to hold Cody in his headlock as Cody struggled and struggled with all his might, wearing himself completely out. Their cabinmates watched in silent awe.

Cody eventually stopped struggling, realizing that he was beat. BJ then picked him up and put him across his shoulders, with one arm over Cody's neck and the other over Cody's leg, Cody's feet and arms dangling. He carried Cody around the room, showing off. In that moment,

Cody knew he was not very tough, at least not as tough as BJ.

Despite losing, Cody reminded himself that he was a sensitive and caring person, and in that respect, he was a winner, too.

BJ finally put Cody down, and with Cody lying there, supine, BJ rested his right foot on Cody's chest. He held his hands up triumphantly and cheered, "I am the winner!"

Most of their cabinmates cheered and clapped. Buu and TJ helped Cody up after BJ moved away.

Cody managed to climb on his bunk and just lie there, staring at the ceiling, with his arms out to his sides hanging over the bed, physically worn out.

Some of the boys started to arm wrestle. Others played blackjack and five-card stud. Cody eventually spoke with TJ and Buu.

“Well, he’s a lot taller than me; plus, he is two years older—so that’s why he beat me.” Cody lowered his voice and said, “He is a blow job, for being such a jerk about it.”

“Yeah,” TJ and Buu said.

Cody, TJ, and Buu played seven-card stud until two thirty, when rest time was over. It was time for the boys’ third activity for the day: horseshoes.

Part XII

The boys followed Eric to the horseshoes field.

On the walk, TJ exclaimed, “I’m going to *extirpate* Cody and Buu at horseshoes.”

“Extirpate?” Cody asked.

“Yes. *Extirpate* means to completely destroy, or uproot,” TJ explained, holding his dictionary up. “It’s a really cool word.”

“So, you are going to uproot Buu and me at horseshoes?” Cody quizzed. “What’s that even mean?”

“No. I’m going to completely destroy you guys at horseshoes,” TJ exclaimed, chuckling.

“We’ll see,” Cody said, feeling happy to be playing a fun game.

At the horseshoes field, Eric explained the rules. Cody played against TJ, and Buu played against Anthony, as the game of horseshoes has two or four players.

Cody went first, then TJ. Cody earned zero points, as none of his horseshoes were even close to the rod. TJ earned one ringer, three points, but his other horseshoe was too far from the rod to earn additional points.

Then Buu went, followed by Anthony. One of Buu's horseshoes was within six inches of the rod, so he earned one point. Anthony didn't come close.

In the next round, Cody earned one point as one of his horseshoes

was close, and TJ earned a ringer, leaving TJ with two points. TJ was in the lead with five points.

Buu scored a ringer, and Anthony scored one point, which meant that Buu earned two points, for a total of three points.

As the boys continued to play, the humidity increased, so the sweaty boys—except for Buu—removed their shirts. Thankfully, a passing breeze cooled them off every so often.

In the end, TJ beat Cody with twenty-one points, compared with

Cody's five points. Buu beat Anthony, with twenty-two points to Anthony's eleven.

At three forty-five, snack time was announced.

Anthony followed the boys to the mess hall. "Let me sniff your armpit," he joked as he held up Cody's arm. "Sweaty—just the way I love them!" Anthony giggled as he let go of Cody's arm, making the boys smile.

Cody and TJ waited for Buu to choose his snack, and then they

picked the same: a banana and two bottles of water.

Hanging around the stone fireplace in the mess hall, the boys enjoyed their bananas and cold refreshing water. When Buu got another bottle, Cody and TJ followed suit.

“It’s so weird that Anthony wanted to sniff your armpit,” TJ commented. “Your armpits smell noisome.”

“Noisome? I take it that means they stink?” Cody said.

TJ thumbed through his pocket dictionary. “*Noisome* means offensive to the senses and especially to the sense of smell,” TJ explained as Cody and Buu listened.

The boys each had to use the restroom in the mess hall. They went inside the restroom and saw another trough along a wall adjacent to a toilet with no door and skimpy dividers.

The boys peed. Cody, TJ, and Buu each joined their streams, splashing urine against the trough.

By the time they returned to the mess hall, it was recreational time; the boys followed the others to the arcade room. Cody played Galaga again. Buu played Galaxian next to the Galaga game booth. TJ played a pinball game nearby with fire-breathing dragons, knights, sorcerers, kings, and queens. The boys had a lot of fun.

In his first game, Cody got the highest score. He entered his initials in the game for all to see, along with his record-breaking score.

The boys also played Pac-Man, Mrs. Pac-Man, Centipede, Asteroids, Dig-Dug, and several pinball machines.

Before long, it was five thirty, dinner time.

Part XIII

The triad walked to the mess hall. Cody was suddenly feeling homesick, but didn't tell his friends. After all, he didn't want to lose another bet. And then, he remembered. . .

"Hey. Wait a minute! Remember our bet? Whoever got homesick first has to swim naked during swimming time," Cody said. "And TJ had homesickness first."

“Oh. I guess you’re right,” TJ exclaimed. “Now, I’ll be the nude one.”

“There is a farrago of options to choose from for dinner,” TJ noted as they walked inside the mess hall. “*Farrago* means a confused collection, or mixture. They have foods all mixed up on the heating rack. Hotdogs next to fish, then hamburger patties next to tacos, etcetera.”

“There was a farrago of penises in the shower room last night,” Cody joked, laughing.

“A good word for that would be ‘plethora.’ There was a plethora of penises in the showers last night. *Plethora* means an excessive quantity,” TJ explained.

“You could also say that, at camp, there is a plethora of foods during dinnertime,” Buu said.

“That’s correct,” TJ replied.

The boys enjoyed two hamburger patties each, since Buu had decided to avoid eating bread to help lose weight. The boys also ate some macaroni salad and drank low-fat milk. They then downed, like an anti-aircraft battery shooting down a fighter jet, two bottles of cold water each.

Cody had been considering his friend's situation and decided to offer some advice. He said to Buu, "Maybe you should try to convince yourself to lose weight, take it to heart, so that

your mind might aid you in your weight loss."

"That's a good idea: to convince myself of something, hoping it comes true," Buu said with a smile. "I'm going to do that!"

After dinner, it was time for their fourth activity: soccer.

Part XIV

Eric divided the boys from the two cabins into two teams, shirts and shirtless. The first person he asked what team he wanted to be on was Buu: Buu said that he wanted to be on the “shirts” team. Cody and TJ said they wanted to be on Buu’s team.

The sweaty boys had fun playing soccer. Cody got hyper after getting the ball kicked to him; he scored a goal. Buu scored two goals, and TJ,

four. The Upstate New York humidity soon had them drenched in sweat.

“I’m glad we got some strenuous exercise,” Buu exclaimed.

“Yeah, I’m completely worn out,” Cody said. His shirt was soaking wet.

“I am going to zonk right out tonight in bed,” TJ said, his shirt also soaking wet.

By this time, it was eight thirty; the campers gathered around a bonfire and listened to stories told by the camp staff, as they toasted

marshmallows. Buu had just one, and so did Cody and TJ.

After, the boys practiced square dancing again in the mess hall. They couldn't wait to dance with the girls from the other camp.

The fun at camp continued, day after day. They fished, kayaked, and canoed, and they played tennis, baseball, touch football, badminton, volleyball, and a plethora of other fun activities. Finally, it was dinnertime on Friday night. The boys couldn't wait to dance with the girls. They

missed seeing and being with females their age.

For dinner, cheese raviolis and garlic bread were on the menu. Buu showed restraint: He had some raviolis, no garlic bread, and a glass of low-fat milk. Cody and TJ showed solidarity with Buu by making the same selection.

“This morning, when I put on my shorts, they were looser than they used to be. I think I’ve lost some weight,” Buu shared with a big smile.

He was so glad that he was sticking with his plan to lose weight.

“That’s great!” Cody exclaimed.

“We’re very happy for you,” TJ said, and Cody nodded.

Then the boys drank two bottles of refreshing, cold water each.

“Did you know that you can die from drinking too much water at one time?” TJ said. “It’s true. Don’t ever force yourself to drink too much water.”

“Oh!” Cody said. “I never knew that.”

“Yeah. I heard about that on the radio,” Buu said.

Time passed much too slowly that day. Then, it was finally time for the dance. Two buses arrived at the mess hall, full of tween and young teenage females. The boys enthusiastically welcomed them. They could all feel their chests tingle with excitement!

Part XV

Cody exclaimed, “Look at those babes,” gazing at two beautiful girls who were getting off the bus.

“Yeah. They’re cuties,” Buu exclaimed. He couldn’t wait to dance with a girl and be close to her.

“There’s the girl I like,” TJ said, looking at a beautiful Black girl with pretty long hair and beautiful brown eyes.

The boys approached the girls as they gathered around the mess hall entrance.

One of the girls winked at Cody, and he blushed.

“That girl likes you! Oooooooh,” TJ teased Cody, giggling along with Buu.

The girl and her friend approached the triad.

“Hi. I’m Melanie,” the petite girl trilled to Cody in a sweet, feminine, caring, and gentle voice. She was

petite, just the way Cody liked his women.

He blinked at her, and his eyes lit up. “Hi! I’m . . . I’m . . . I’m . . . Cody. Nice to meet you,” he said, feeling very attracted to her.

Melanie had beautiful brown hair and beautiful green eyes and a cute smile. Cody felt his chest tingle as they shook hands.

Then, her friend introduced herself to the boys. She was pretty and a little chubby, with black hair and brown eyes.

“I’m Denise,” she said, as Buu stared at her.

“Quit staring,” TJ said, slapping Buu’s chest—but not hard.

Buu looked at his shoes, embarrassed. His chest tingled, too, as he was attracted to Denise.

“I’ll be back in a minute,” TJ suddenly exclaimed, leaving the group.

“We’re twelve,” Cody said.

“We are, too,” Denise said with a pretty smile.

The four young tweens giggled, feeling giddy. They were having fun already. They all bantered for a short while, and then TJ came up to them with the beautiful Black girl he had seen getting off the bus.

“This is Laura,” he said to his friends and the girls.

The group continued to chat.

“I’m on a diet,” Buu said to the girls. “I’ve lost at least twenty pounds so far,” he said, smiling with pride.

“I’m also on a diet. I’ve lost weight since I’ve been at camp. And before camp, I had lost fifteen pounds,” Denise shared, smiling at Buu.

Cody and TJ explained that they were in solidarity with Buu’s diet and weight-loss plan.

“That’s wonderful,” Melanie said, happy for Buu. “It’s great that your

friends support you. How encouraging!”

After a while, it was time for square dancing. The campers went inside the mess hall, and the boys danced with their girls, having a blast.

Cody loved Melanie because she was so pretty and so petite. He liked petite girls.

After dancing, the boys and girls gathered around the bonfire and listened to love stories from different cultures around the world. One love story was about two young teenagers

meeting on a beach, building a sandcastle together and falling in love.

Cody reached for Melanie's hand and held it. Glancing at each other, Cody and Melanie smiled. Then, Cody held her hand even tighter. His chest tingled with joy. He felt very excited to be so close to a girl. He loved being so close to her; he was practically in love.

Then, it happened: he fell in love.

When it was time for the girls to be bused back to the girls' camp,

Cody hugged Melanie tight, lifting her off her feet and swirling her around. He didn't want Melanie to forget him.

Holding hands, they said their goodbyes. "I'll see you next Friday," Cody said. "I really want to spend time with you." He could feel his heart beating up and out of his throat as his chest tingled and tingled with love.

"I'll see you next week," Melanie promised as she got on the bus.

Cody and Melanie waved as the bus drove away. Cody smiled, knowing how great it felt to be in love.

He was so preoccupied with Melanie that he forgot all about TJ and Buu and their girls.

"Those girls are great," Buu said as he and TJ approached Cody from behind. "I really liked dancing with Denise," he added, wishing he could do it again right now.

TJ exclaimed, "I had a blast tonight. What about you, Cody?"

"Yeah. It was great," he said, overwhelmed with love for Melanie; all he wanted to do was spend more time with her.

The triad walked back to their cabin and got ready to hit the showers. The boys undressed in the cabin and, clad in white towels, walked to the shower and bathroom building. They used the trough urinal first, after hanging their towels on the hooks on the wall, and stood there, completely naked.

"Cross the streams," Cody directed. The boys crossed their urine streams, making urine splash on the side of the trough.

“Mine’s just like a firehose,” TJ declared.

“Mine’s like a firehose out of control; I’m peeing so much and so hard,” Cody said.

The boys then happily showered under the same shower head. All Cody thought about as they showered was being in love with Melanie, his dream girl.

“We were holding hands,” he told his friends as they lathered their bodies. Then, as he kneeled down to wash his feet, he announced, “I l-love

her!” He felt positively giddy as his insides tingled with intense joy. He also felt an enjoyable sensation in his soles as he washed them and thought about what Melanie’s petite feet looked like. They were absolutely beautiful, like her, inside and out—he just knew it.

“That’s pretty cool that you’re in love,” TJ said. “Like, she’s hot, just like Laura and Denise,” he added, making Cody smile at him.

“You’re madly in love,” Buu observed. “You’re a fool in love,” he

added. “I bet you’d do just about anything to be with her.”

That was sounding really serious. “Bwwwwooooooommmmmp!” Cody made a farting sound with his hand and armpit. Then, he bent over so his tush was facing toward TJ and Buu.

“Bwwwwooooommmp!” He made another farting sound with his hand and armpit.

TJ and Buu laughed.

“See the brown liquid butt juice spray out,” Cody exclaimed, moving

his tush side to side as he was bent over, mooning them. Still bent over, he joked, “Come and get it. Come and get it. Come and get it, boys.”

TJ and Buu chuckled at their comical friend.

“Brown stuff is dripping from your ass down your legs,” Buu exclaimed, having fun.

“Gross,” TJ said.

The boys continued to wash their bodies. Cody suddenly had an idea about the dance next Friday and a

way to spend more time with Melanie. He smirked and smirked and smirked as he schemed and schemed and schemed while the trio rinsed the soap off their bodies under the spraying warm water.

Cody had come up with an ingenious plan to be alone with Melanie next Friday at camp.

The next time the boys had a swimming activity, TJ took off his suit at the lake, not reneging on the bet. Throwing his suit on the shore, he swam with the other boys.

Cody exclaimed, “How about it? You seem to be a faggot,” Cody accused in a joking manner. “TJ’s a faggot,” he teased.

“No, I’m not! You are!” TJ said as he swam in place next to Cody and Buu.

“I’ll bet that Anthony’s gay,” Cody exclaimed. “He loves to sniff boys’ armpits and feet. What kind of dude does that?

“I’m going to ask him if he’s gay. If he is, I’m going to expose him,” Cody said.

Buu said, “No. Don’t. It’s best not to.”

“Yeah, you’re right,” Cody replied.

The boys swam to shore and took turns jumping into the lake off the long dock. Cody and Buu removed their suits and swam naked, like TJ. Buu was still self-conscious about his body, but trusted his friends not to be mean or tease him. Other boys were swimming in the same area, some also removing their suits. Before long, all the boys there were

skinny dipping, having a blast. The trio knew that they were making memories that would last a lifetime.

The days at camp went by fast because the boys were having so much fun. Every day was a big adventure. Before they knew it, it was Friday.

Despite the excitement of each new day—or maybe because of it—Cody felt really homesick. He started crying one morning after breakfast in the cabin.

“I really miss my mom,” he moaned, wiping his tears. “I miss my mom,” he bawled, stomping his foot.

“It’s okay,” Eric told Cody, as the boy cried on his shoulder. “You won’t be at camp forever. Before you know it, you’ll be home—and then you’ll miss camp.” Eric pat Cody on the back.

Cody cheered up at that thought and wiped his tears. “You’re right. I’ll be all right,” he said. “Camp is really fun, and I have made great friends here. Soon, I’ll see my family again.”

Part XVI

By Friday, Cody and the other boys couldn't wait to spend time with the girls. Cody planned to kiss and cuddle with Melanie to show her his love for her. He knew all about teenage pregnancy and didn't plan on having a sexual relationship until he was married. He had a great deal of respect for Melanie. He didn't want to ever hurt her. He knew he had to show her that he loved and cared about her very much. What would

happen after camp? he wondered. Then what? He loved Melanie very much and didn't want to lose her!

For dinner, the friends ate vegetable lasagna and drank cold, refreshing, low-fat milk.

Buu took about half as much lasagna as most of the other boys; Cody and TJ remained in solidarity with Buu's weight-loss plan. The boys also drank two cold, thirst-quenching bottles of water each to stay hydrated.

TJ thumbed through his pocket dictionary. “*Salubrious*. *Salubrious* means favorable to or promoting health or well-being. Buu watching his portions is salubrious to him losing weight.”

“That’s a great word,” Cody exclaimed. “I like it.”

“I’m Buu the Magnificent Salubrious Dieter,” Buu declared, smiling.

“Buu the Magnificent Salubrious Dieter. That’s your moniker,” TJ said.

"*Moniker* is another word for nickname."

Overhearing, Eric asked, "Do you know what *plethora* means?"

"*Plethora* means an ample amount or number," TJ replied. "I remember that one."

"What word is the opposite of plethora?" Eric quizzed.

"I don't know. What?" TJ asked.

"Dearth," Eric said.

TJ looked up the word. "*Dearth* means an inadequate supply. At least that's one definition," he said.

When the boys were almost finished eating, Buu exclaimed, "I can't wait to see Denise again." He was excited at the thought of being with her again.

TJ said, "Yeah. I want to dance with Laura again, very much. She's a great square dancer."

Cody said, "I can't wait to see Melanie. I love her."

He was keeping his scheming master plan a secret from everyone, including his buddies.

Later, the buses finally arrived with the girls. Cody remembered his plan. The boys quickly found the girls they had met last week. Cody and Melanie were soon by themselves: Cody put his master plan into action.

While the kids and camp staff were busy, he held Melanie's hand, and they absconded around the mess hall building and then behind a nearby smaller building for privacy.

There was a light post above them on the side of the building. Cody held Melanie's hands as he looked into her beautiful brown eyes. Then, they kissed and kissed and kissed. Cody had the time of his life. Then, after their tongues were all tired out, they hugged and hugged.

"I really like you," Cody exclaimed. "Melanie, I-I-I love you," he said.

Melanie was excited to be loved by a handsome and cute boy. "I really,

really love you, too," she replied, happy to be in someone's heart.

The two of them bear-hugged and then cuddled, as their chests tingled and tingled with love.

"*Melanie*," Cody said, hugging her, in love.

"*Cody*," Melanie said, hugging him, in love.

"*Melanie*," Cody said, hugging her, in love.

"*Cody*," Melanie said, hugging him, in love.

In addition to being in love, Cody couldn't help but feel sexually attracted to Melanie. He imagined making passionate love to her as they embraced and embraced.

Then, Cody French-kissed Melanie as he imagined making love to her. His chest tingled and tingled with love. The feelings in his chest made him feel wonderful.

After their tongues grew too tired once again, they stopped kissing and simply stood there, looking into each other's eyes.

Cody broke contact and led her away to sit against the wall of the building. Melanie sat in front of him with her back against his chest and their legs facing out. Cody loved the nice smell of her brown hair. The din of the shoes on the dance floor and loud square-dancing music permeated the ambience.

“I’m very much in love with you,” Cody whispered in her ear as he hugged her against his body. “I’m having so much fun being with you.”

Melanie was thrilled by his words; he made her feel very loved and cared about.

Cody asked hesitantly, “Melanie, will you be my girlfriend?”

“Yes! I love you!” she declared, feeling excited to have a boyfriend, especially one as handsome and charming as Cody.

“You’re my first girlfriend,” Cody confessed, so happy to be madly in love.

“You’re my first boyfriend,” Melanie replied, also happy to have a lover as they cuddled and cuddled, feeling love as never before.

“Where are you from?” Cody anxiously asked, hoping he could see her after camp.

“I live in Arizona,” she said. She also was hoping very much that she could see Cody again.

“So do I,” Cody exclaimed. “I live in Tucson. What city do you live in?”

“I also live in Tucson,” she replied, making Cody’s chest tingle with intense love and relief.

“Great,” Cody exclaimed, “Where do you live in Tucson?”

“I live not too far from the Tucson Mall. I am going to go to Amphi Junior High School,” she answered.

“I live near the mall, too. I am going to go to Cross,” he said happy to live close to her. “Let’s go in the mess hall with the others,” Cody suggested. “I’m so happy to have a girlfriend. I want to show you off,” he explained.

Melanie agreed, happy to have someone to care so much about.

Inside, everyone was dancing. Holding hands, Cody and Melanie stood along a wall near the entrance, watching everyone dance. Soon, the square dancing was over, and it was time for the girls to return to their camp. Cody and Melanie exchanged phone numbers; Cody tucked hers safely into his wallet. Cody and Melanie kissed, and then she boarded the bus. He felt so happy as he waved goodbye.

TJ and Buu were also happy about having a great time at camp. The boys walked back to their cabin.

“Melanie is my girlfriend,” Cody announced to TJ and Buu.

“Oh, that’s nice,” Buu exclaimed. “So, you guys are seeing each other?”

“Yes,” Cody said, confirming he was in love with Melanie.

“You two make a really cute couple,” TJ said. “Like, you two are the epitome of a romantic relationship.”

“*Epitome*?” Cody asked.

“Yes. *Epitome* means a typical or ideal example,” TJ explained, educating his friends.

Cody, looking at his shoes as he walked and not paying attention because he was in love, almost walked right into a tree.

TJ and Buu broke out laughing.

“You’re in love,” TJ teased.

“You’re in l-o-v-e,” teased Buu.

Cody just smirked and then smiled and giggled.

At the cabin, the boys got ready to shower; they were soon undressed and walking to the shower and bathroom building, barefoot and clad in white towels.

The triad urinated at one of the troughs, having hung their towels on the rack. Cody, TJ, and Buu crossed their streams, splashing urine on the far side of the trough.

“Melanie is my dream girl. She’s my Aphrodite: petite and beautiful,” Cody gushed to TJ and Buu as the gang showered.

“Just don’t be *quixotic*. One definition is romanticism to an impractical degree,” TJ said.

So excited about having a girlfriend, Cody did karate moves in front of TJ and Buu and other boys nearby. Then, he did a funny dance as TJ and Buu, lathering their bodies, cracked up.

Still having fun, the boys rinsed off their soapy bodies and dried off. In the cabin, some of the boys played cards, while others arm wrestled. Standing in the center of the cabin

naked, as per the bet, Cody asked a boy, Travis, who was about his size, “Do you want to wrestle?”

“With you naked, dude? That’s crazy.” Travis said, “I bet I’d get my hand stuck up your butt hole.” Everyone laughed.

“I’ll put on my underwear and sleep shorts,” Cody said.

“Okay. All right. We’ll wrestle,” Travis exclaimed.

Cody put on his underwear and sleep shorts. Travis also was wearing

sleep shorts. The boys stood ready, across from each other. Then, they wrestled.

Cody maneuvered Travis on the floor so that Travis was supine and Cody was sitting on the boy's neck, facing him, while his folded legs were pinning Travis's arms down. He held Travis's wrists flat on the floor as the boy moved his legs and torso upward, trying to get free. Then, Travis just gave up. Cody was the victor. Cody got off Travis and shook his hand.

“You’re a good sport,” Cody said, being modest. He didn’t want to hurt Travis’s pride because he knew what that felt like.

“You are, too,” Travis said, smiling. He was a bit embarrassed about losing at wrestling.

Cody undressed again, making sure not to renege on the bet, and the boys went to sleep for the night.

One day at camp, the boys’ activity involved casting an arrowhead sterling silver necklace using molds. The arrowhead was

molded from an ancient Native American arrowhead found in Upstate New York.

The boys made two-piece molds using a special sand. They compressed the sand in one half of the wood-framed mold and then pushed the arrowhead in the sand of that half to form half of the mold.

“This is really fun,” Cody exclaimed. “I can’t wait to cast them.”

“I think they are going to turn out great,” Buu said. “I’m going to keep mine forever.”

The boys sprinkled mold release on that half of the mold and then, putting the other half of the mold frame on the first half, pushed sand in the second mold half against the first half with the arrowhead now inside the mold halves.

“This sand is very fine,” Buu noted. “It’s like the sand in my hourglass.”

After separating the mold, they removed the arrowhead and created a hole in one side of the mold where

the silver would be able to flow to fill the mold.

Cody was the first to melt his sterling silver in a crucible using a blowtorch. He poured molten sterling silver into the hole in the mold. Then, TJ and Buu took turns.

After the sterling silver cooled and hardened, the boys carefully removed the cast arrowhead from the mold.

“These are awesome—much nicer than what I had imagined,” Cody said. “I can’t wait to wear it.”

“Mine’s like some jewelry my mom has. She’s got a feather pendant in sterling silver,” TJ told them.

Buu said, “Mine’s got some flashing on it.”

The boys cut off the sprue from where the sterling silver was poured into the mold and shaped the cut surface and flashing with a file.

Then, they filed off the flashing. With Eric’s help, the boys drilled a hole in their pendant to fit the necklace through.

At last, the pendants were finished. Each boy was given a sterling silver chain to hang their pendant on.

“Thank you,” Cody, TJ, and Buu said to Eric as they each received their necklace.

“These are so cool,” TJ said, and Cody and Buu agreed.

They put their necklaces on and admired themselves.

“The girls at Butterfly Field are making the same necklaces,” Eric told them.

“Oh, good. That way Melanie and I will match,” Cody said to TJ and Buu.

Part XVII

During one activity, panning for gold, the boys had to hike up a steep hill for about a half mile to get to a river.

At one point on the hike, they came across wild raspberries and blackberries growing on the side of the trail. They planned to pick them on the walk back down.

At the river, the boys learned how to pan for gold. Once they understood

the process, they enthusiastically began panning.

“Have you guys found any gold?” Cody asked TJ and Buu after a while.

“No,” TJ murmured. “Not yet.”

“Nope,” Buu said, staring at his pan in the river.

“What’s this?” Cody said excitedly, looking into his pan. “It looks like gold.”

Eric came over as Cody held up his pan for him to see.

“It looks like gold,” Eric exclaimed.

Eric fished out the nugget and put it in a small clear container for Cody to keep.

“That’s about two grams, which would be worth about twenty-five to thirty dollars. Gold is over four hundred dollars per ounce. That’s great, Cody. You found a small nugget,” Eric exclaimed, happy that someone had found some gold.

“Cody is a rich man now,” Buu said. “He’s got money.”

“Yeah. He’s a rich person,” TJ added, making Cody wish the others would find some gold, too.

Then, another boy, Rick, found some gold, but not a nugget.

On the hike down the hill, back to camp, the boys stopped and picked the raspberries and blackberries. They each used a large plastic sandwich bag to hold them and stuffed the bags full.

On the hike down the hill, TJ said, “*Lexicon*. Lexicon means the vocabulary of a person.”

“My lexicon has grown since camp, because of TJ,” Cody said. “There’s a sentence for lexicon.”

“Correct,” TJ said with a big smile.

“We are increasing our lexicons every day, with TJ around,” Buu said and smiled.

“Correct,” TJ exclaimed, happy to educate his friends and himself.

During dinnertime, the boys washed their berries in the mess hall

kitchen, with permission, and ate them one by one.

“I’ve never tasted fresher blackberries and raspberries,” Cody exclaimed as he chewed.

“Mine taste great,” TJ said, and Buu agreed.

For dinner, the boys each had two beef tacos, three small tomatoes, and their berries. They flushed it all down with cold, refreshing milk. Then the boys drank two bottles of refreshing, cold water.

“We need to weigh Buu,” Cody reminded them. “Maybe we can do it in the medical building. Let’s ask Eric!” He really hoped that Buu had lost weight.

“You’re right; there’s a scale in the medical building,” Eric said. “But you’ll have to get the nurse to help you use it.”

The boys hurried to the medical building.

Part XVIII

At the medical building, the nurse had been getting ready to go to dinner.

“Can we weigh me, please?” Buu asked her. “I’m on a diet and am trying to lose weight.”

“Well, certainly. Step up here,” she said, pointing to a scale in the corner.

“Let’s see . . .” the nurse said as she adjusted the scale. “One hundred sixty pounds” was her verdict.

“I’ve lost five pounds in two and a half weeks! Hooray!” Buu cheered. The boys were so happy for their friend.

“That’s wonderful! But are you getting enough food?” the nurse quizzed him. “You don’t want to starve all day. You must eat reasonable meals.”

“Oh, I do. I eat proper meals. It’s just that I make choices about how

much and what I eat and drink. Since being here, I have not had any soda, for example, but plenty of low-fat regular milk and lots of water," Buu said. "Thank you for weighing me," he added with a big smile before they walked back outside.

"Let's celebrate! How about we each have a chocolate-covered ice cream sundae?" TJ joked.

Cody and Buu smiled. Then Cody made a farting sound with his hand and armpit:

"Bwwwwwwooooooommmp."

“Just joshing. About the ice cream,” TJ said, as the boys happily meandered back to the mess hall.

Later, after activities, the boys showered and got ready for bed. Cody, as per the bet, stayed naked in the cabin.

“I think I should start doing sit-ups,” Buu said, “to strengthen my stomach muscles.”

“Try to do one,” Cody suggested.

“Okay.” Buu tried, but he couldn’t do it.

“We’ll help you get started,” TJ offered. “Cody, hold Buu’s feet down.”

“Okay,” Cody said and knelt down to do so.

TJ stood behind Buu as he lay on the floor.

“Now try to do one,” TJ said.

Buu struggled to lift his shoulders up and managed to do it a little bit. When he reached the point where he couldn’t go up anymore, TJ helped by pushing him upward.

“Yes, this is a winning strategy,” Buu said, reaching the acme, “My muscles are going to be really sore; I can tell already.”

Buu did several sit-ups, and the boys helped.

Then, Cody and TJ did sit-ups: Cody did fifteen easily and TJ, eleven.

“After camp, you will need to get someone at home to help you with sit-ups,” TJ said to Buu.

“My dad can help. Thanks, guys. My muscles are already sore,” he said

proudly, pressing his palm to his stomach.

The boys bantered and bantered.

“Would anyone like to remove the lint from my belly button?” Cody asked everyone.

The boys all smiled.

“How about my ass crack?” Cody then asked. “How about in between my toes?”

Everyone just smiled and giggled.

“How about in my crotch?” Cody then asked. He sighed dramatically and then giggled. “I’m ready for a total cleaning!”

Everyone laughed.

“Okay, I guess I’ll have to do the work. I’ll sniff your feet. I like the smell of boys’ feet,” Cody joked.

No one took him up on his offer, of course, but the campers had much fun goofing around.

Suddenly, TJ pinched his nose. “Someone farted. It smells like—*egg*. Gas mask, gas mask, gas mask!”

“Phew! That stinks! *Egg*,” Buu exclaimed, also pinching his nose. “Did you fart, Cody?” he asked, smiling.

“No, I didn’t do it. My farts don’t smell bad—they smell like pizza,” Cody said with a smile.

“What could cause that fart to smell so bad?” Cody asked Eric, who was also pinching his nose. “It smells like a rotten egg.”

“It’s probably something someone ate, or maybe they’re just not feeling well,” Eric said.

The smell of the fart eventually faded away.

“Guys. The fart *dissipated* in the air. *Dissipated* means to cause to spread thin or to scatter and gradually vanish,” TJ said, thumbing through his dictionary. “The egg-fart has finally vanished like a magician. Now, we can breathe.”

Cody, lying supine on his bunk, spread his legs and passed his own flatulence.

“Gross,” TJ exclaimed. “Now Cody is farting.”

“Go outside to do that,” Eric pleaded.

“Yeah. Go outside,” Buu added.

“Okay, boys,” Cody replied, “Next time.”

The boys went to bed and happily fell asleep.

Part XIX

It was the last Friday of camp. Tomorrow, everyone would go home. The boys felt sad and happy at the same time about going home. They wanted to see their families again but would miss the new friends they had made.

It was almost time for the final dance. This dance was not a square-dancing event, but a rock music dance. The boys looked forward to having fun.

Cody schemed and schemed and schemed about Melanie: he had another plan. Cody, holding his arms downward in in front of him, twisted them together as he schemed and smiled and schemed and smiled: he wanted Melanie to be exposed to him—her bare feet, that is.

The boys waited outside the mess hall for the girls' buses to arrive. Rock music played inside. The din of the loud music reverberating against the walls filled the air.

“There’s no farting tonight,” Cody ordered. “I don’t think girls like boys farting, especially if it smells like egg.”

“Speak for yourself—you need to control yourself,” Buu rounded on Cody, “so we don’t all need a gas mask.”

“No one fart. If you must fart, excuse yourself and use the restroom,” TJ ordered. “We don’t want a whopper to deter the girls from hanging around us.”

Just then, the buses arrived, and the girls got out. Cody patiently

waited to see Melanie. TJ and Buu waited for Laura and Denise. Then, Melanie stepped off.

“Hi, baby,” Cody exclaimed. “I’m so happy to see you.”

“Hey. I really missed you,” she replied as she and Cody wandered away from TJ and Buu. Unnoticed by the camp staff, Cody and Melanie snuck around the building to their spot against the shed.

“Your necklace looks really cool. Just like mine,” Cody exclaimed, as

they gazed at each other's sterling silver necklaces.

"I'm going to keep mine for life," Melanie promised with a smile.

"So am I," Cody declared.

Standing under the lamp post, Cody explained his plan. "I want to bring you to my cabin. I've got something to ask you once we get there." He smiled, revealing his nice white teeth—he made sure to brush his teeth twice before the girls arrived.

“Okay,” she replied.

Holding hands, Cody led her to his cabin, watching for any camp staff.

“Cabin *East Germany*,” Melanie exclaimed as they arrived. “I like the East German flag. I’m in cabin Monarchs. Our cabins are named after butterflies.”

In the cabin, Cody flicked on the light. He giggled self-consciously as he stood there for a moment, holding her hands there in the middle of the cabin.

“Melanie. I’d like to ask you something. I’d like—I’d like—to see your—bare feet. Please?” he asked.

“My feet?” she asked, rather puzzled.

“Yes. Your bare feet,” he replied nicely. “Here. Let’s sit on my bunk, and you can take off your shoes and socks.”

“Okayyy,” she said, climbing on his bunk. Then he sat next to her.

As she removed her sneakers and then her socks, Cody’s chest

tingled and tingled with joy. She dropped her sneakers to the floor and put her socks next to her. Then, Cody removed his sneakers and socks, dropping his sneakers to the floor. They sat across from each other.

"Your feet are really pretty," Cody said. "Can I touch them?"

"All right," she said with a smile.

Cody delicately rubbed her soft soles. His chest tingled and tingled with so much joy that he was feeling a natural high.

“Your feet are so, so beautiful, just like you,” he said as he rubbed her soles and toes.

He was so in love.

Then, Cody asked, “Would you please curl your feet?”

And she did.

“Very pretty,” Cody declared with a big grin, looking at her soles; he was loving every minute of this.

They sat there in the cabin for a long while.

Eventually, Cody said, “Let’s go dance, with the others.”

They put their socks and sneakers back on and held hands as they hurried back to the mess hall.

Cody and Melanie slow danced in each other’s arms. Then, a fast-paced song played, and they went wild, dancing with each other.

When the dance was over, Cody and Melanie French-kissed, standing there with their eyes closed, their dreams having come true.

Then, the girls had to leave.

“I’ll see you after we get home. Love you,” Cody exclaimed, waving as Melanie waved from inside the bus at the window.

TJ and Buu caught up with Cody, who was still waving as the bus drove away. He felt sad that this was the last dance of camp and that tomorrow they’d be going home.

The boys showered one last time together. Cody stood there, lathering his body, remembering how uneasy and nervous he had felt about being

naked and showering with the boys the first time. He knew he had built memories that would last a lifetime. Plus, he'd met the girl of his dreams at camp.

Lying in bed that night, naked as per the bet, Cody felt a little teary-eyed, thinking about how much he'd miss seeing TJ and Buu after camp. Earlier, before they'd gone to bed, they had exchanged phone numbers and addresses. Cody was hoping Buu would lose the weight he wanted to lose; he intended to continue to

encourage his friend, even after they left camp.

Part XX

The next morning, the boys woke up, filled with sadness. The campers slowly got dressed and packed their bags.

“I really hope you will lose the weight you want to lose,” Cody said, hugging Buu. “I know you can do it!”

“Thanks so much for your support,” Buu said. Then he hugged TJ. “You, too.”

“You’re welcome,” TJ replied.

“I’m going to miss the walking-and-talking dictionary man,” Cody said, hugging TJ.

“I’m going to miss you, too,” TJ said hugging back. “I had a blast with you dudes here.”

The boys said their goodbyes to the others and to Eric; by then, the busses had arrived.

Carrying their luggage, the boys headed to the buses. Some boys were crying, and others were teary-eyed. Cody was crying as he got on his bus.

“I’m going to really miss you guys,” he said to TJ and Buu from the window at his seat, wiping his tears.

TJ and Buu got onto their buses, teary-eyed. Camp was over for the summer.

Epilogue

The next summer, the trio and the girls attended camp again, and again the following summer. Everyone had a blast each year.

Buu lost the weight and, soon after, became a devout and hardworking bodybuilder. He went to college and became a nutritionist, helping children lose weight and be healthy.

TJ got mostly A's all during junior high and high school. He went to

college and became a well-loved junior high school English teacher.

Cody and Melanie dated all through school and got married after college. On their wedding day, both wore their arrowhead necklaces. Cody became a world-famous writer of young adult books, and his first million-copies-sold bestseller was a story about three tweens at a boys' summer camp. Melanie went to college and became Cody's agent and publicist.

TJ's Vocabulary List

Quirk: a peculiar trait

Idiosyncrasy: a peculiarity of constitution or temperament: an individualizing characteristic or quality

Plebeian: one of the common people

Palatable: agreeable to the palate or taste

Solidarity: unity (as of a group or class) that produces or is based on community of interests, objectives, and standards

Panacea: a remedy for all ills or difficulties : CURE-ALL

Supine: lying on the back or with the face upward

Prone: lying with the chest and stomach positioned downward

Promiscuous: having or involving many sexual partners : not

restricted to one sexual partner or few sexual partners

Celibate: not engaging in or characterized by sexual intercourse

Abstention: the act or practice of choosing not to do or have something

Renege: to go back on a promise or commitment

Plethora: an ample amount or number

Tantamount: equal in value, meaning, or effect

Predicament: a difficult, puzzling, or trying situation

Woo: to try to gain the love of

Flatulence: the presence of too much gas or air in the stomach or intestine

Peccadillo: a slight offense

Delish: delicious

Penchant: a strong liking

Extirpate: to destroy completely

Noisome: offensive to the senses and especially to the sense of smell

Farrago: a confused mixture : HODGEPODGE

Salubrious: favorable to or promoting health or well-being

Moniker: nickname

Dearth: an inadequate supply : LACK

Epitome: a typical or ideal example : EMBODIMENT

Quixotic: impractical especially in the foolish pursuit of ideals

Lexicon: the vocabulary of a language, an individual speaker or group of speakers, or a subject

Dissipate: to cause to spread thin or scatter and gradually vanish

About the story: Summer is going to be a lot of fun at Camp Rattlesnake for the tween and young teenage boys. Three twelve-year-old boys, Cody, TJ, and Buu, become good friends and have the time of their lives! A fictitious story taking place in Upstate, New York, USA, summer 1983.

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