

Matthew Gizzi

The Absolutely True Diary of a Part Time Indian

Chapter 1: The Black-Eye-of-the-Month Club

- Arnold Spirit Jr. (also known as Junior) is the main character
- He was born with too much spinal fluid (brain grease) inside of his skull which has led to his thinking, breathing, and living engine being slowed down and flooded
- He likes to say he was born with water on the brain
- As a 6 month old, he was supposed to have the surgery and wind up a vegetable afterwards if he survived.
- Junior wound up with 42 teeth (10 more than the usual)
- His white dentist felt that Indians only feel ½ the pain of white people so he was only given half of the Novocain
- His brain damage also led to Junior having lopsided eyes
- Junior's skull is enormous and he wore a size eleven sneaker in the 3rd grade
 - ◆ The kids used to call Junior "orbit" and "globe"
- At least twice a week Junior would have seizures which would damage his already damaged brain
 - ◆ He hasn't had one in over seven years
- He also had a stutter and a lisp
- Junior is fourteen years old and still has a lisp, making him feel as if he is the biggest retard in the world
- Junior gets beat up at least once a month for being a retard and he claims that he belongs to the "Black-Eye-of-the-Month Club"
- Junior enjoys drawing cartoons
 - ◆ He draws because words are too unpredictable
 - ◆ He draws because words are too limited
 - ◆ Anybody can understand a drawing
 - ◆ He draws so that he can talk to the world
- He feels the only way that he can become famous and rich is through being an artist
- **The word is a series of broken dams and floods, his cartoons are tiny lifeboats**

Chapter 2: Why Chicken Means So Much to Me

- Junior wishes that he were magical, but instead he is a poor reservation kid living with his poor family on the poor Spokane Indian Reservation
- He explains that his family often misses meals and go hungry
- He wishes that his family will bring home a bucket of KFC
- “A piece of chicken can make anybody believe in the existence of God”
- Junior explains that the worst thing about being poor is seeing his best friend Oscar get sick
 - ◆ Junior thought that his dog had heat exhaustion
 - ◆ The dog was whimpering in pain
 - ◆ Oscar was the only thing living that Junior could depend on
 - ◆ Oscar was a better person than any human Junior had ever known
- Junior knows that bringing Oscar to the vet will result in his death and his mother tells him that they do not have the money to pay for the visit
- There was nothing that could be done to save Oscar
- His dad pulled out a rifle and bullets and told Junior to take the dog outside
- Junior is mad at his father but realizes how much his parents have gone through and the dreams that they once had
- His mother enjoys reading and would've went to college if given the chance
 - ◆ She recites whole pages my memory
- His father would've been a musician
- Junior emphasizes that Indians don't get to live out their dreams
- Poverty only teaches you how to be poor
- Junior placed Oscar down and Oscar looked relieved, as if he knew what was going to happen.

Chapter 3: Revenge Is My Middle Name

- After the death of Oscar, Junior was ready to give up and disappear forever
- His friend Rowdy, one of the toughest kids on the reservation, talked him out of it

- ◆ Rowdy is long and lean and strong like a snake
- ◆ His heart is the same
- Rowdy is his best human friend
- Junior feels that no one would miss him if he vanished
- Rowdy's father is an alcoholic who beats up on Rowdy and his mother
- Junior's parents are alcoholics as well but they do not hit him
- Junior's home is a safe place so Rowdy spends lots of time there
- Rowdy and Junior were both born on November 5, 1992
 - ◆ Junior is two hours older
 - Junior was broken and twisted, whereas Rowdy was mad
- Rowdy fought everybody... boys and girls, men and women, dogs, and the weather
- Rowdy tries to convince Junior to go to the Reservation Powwow
 - ◆ Rowdy promises to protect Junior
- At the Powwow, Junior liked the chicken dancers because they danced like chickens
- Rowdy tripped and stumbled into a minivan
 - ◆ Junior laughed and the two got into a fight
 - ◆ Rowdy grabbed a shovel and started destroyed a random minivan
 - Junior fled the scene to avoid getting in trouble
 - He ran into the Andruss brothers' camp... the three cruelest triplets
 - These thirty year old men beat up Junior
- Later in the night, as payback, Rowdy snuck into the brothers' camp and shaved their eyebrows and cut their braids
- Rowdy loves comic books
 - ◆ He likes to pretend that he lives inside of the comic books
- Junior draws Rowdy's dreams for him
- Junior believes that Rowdy is the most important person in his life

Chapter 4: Because Geometry Is Not a Country Somewhere Near France

- Junior was excited about his first day of highschool and geometry class

- Regardless of how much Junior likes curves, he is infatuated with right angles of buildings
 - ◆ He's always found comfort through corners and coziness
- He explains that his sister, Mary, often ruins things for him, such as his tendency to sleep in his closet
- His sister is also beautiful, funny, and strong
 - ◆ She is so crazy that they call her Mary Runs Away
 - She differs from Junior in that Junior is steady
 - He is excited about life and school
- Junior worries that Rowdy is going to make the varsity basketball team, fermenting his relationship with the older guys, and leaving Junior by himself
- Junior's geometry teacher is named Mr. P
 - ◆ He is a weird-looking guy and often forgets to come to school
- All the teachers of the school are forced to live in a compound on the property
- When Junior received his geometry textbook he wanted to kiss it
- When he opens the front cover of the book, he realizes that his mother's name is written
 - ◆ "The Book Belongs To Agnes Adams"

Chapter 5: Hope Against Hope

- Junior hit Mr. P with the textbook and was suspended from school
- This was the first real time that Junior had gotten in trouble
- Mr. P asked Junior if he could sit down with him
- Mr. P explains that he forgives Junior for his actions but is still very angry at him
- Back in the day, the white teachers were instructed to beat the Indian students to the point where they no longer were Indian
- Mr. P explains that he had hurt a lot of Indian students, may have even broken a few of their bones
 - ◆ Mr. P was confessing to Junior!
- Mr. P says that Mary was the smartest student he ever had

- ◆ Mr. P explains that Mary wanted to be a writer
- ◆ Mary was scared that people would make fun of her because she wanted to write romance novels
- The difference between Junior and his sister is that he hides magazines filled with images of naked women, whereas Mary hides novels that tell stories of naked women
 - ◆ He wants the pictures, Mary wants the words
- Mary and her father are similar in the way that they both enjoy being alone
- Junior wants to know why Mary gave up on her dream of being a writer
- Junior believes that there is never enough time to change your life
 - ◆ “You don’t get to change your life, period”
- Junior was the smartest kid in the school
- Mr. P tells Junior that he has to leave the reservation
 - ◆ He claims that all the kids are being taught on the reservation is to give up
 - ◆ He explains that everyone on the reservation is defeated but he wants Junior to make it in life
- Mr. P tells Junior that he has kept his hope throughout his whole life
 - ◆ He has never given up
- “You’re going to find more and more hope the farther you go from this reservation”

Chapter 6: Go Means Go

- Junior asked his mother who has the most hope
- His parents simultaneously say that white people have the most hope
- Junior tells his parents that he wants to transfer schools
- His parents pitch schools around the area but he denies them all, as they are filled with more poor Indians
- He wanted to go to Reardan
 - ◆ This school was a white farm town that sits in the wheat fields, twenty miles from the reservation
 - ◆ The school is one of the best in the state
- His parents explain that Reardan is a school for the best of the best

◆ Junior persisted

- His parents agreed to send him their immediately
- Mary is running away to get lost, while Junior is running away to find *something*
- Getting to Reardan will be difficult and Junior will have to deal with the backlash from his fellow tribal members

Chapter 7: Rowdy Sings the Blues

- Junior tells Rowdy that he is transferring to Reardan
 - ◆ Rowdy thought that he was joking
- Junior tells Rowdy that he wants him to go with him
- Junior recalls when Rowdy and him played Reardan in flag football and lost 45-0
- They also lost to Reardan in basketball (their only two losses of the season)
- They also lost to Reardan in baseball
- Junior led the Academic Team after baseball season and lost to Reardan 50-1
 - ◆ Junior recalls that the Reardan students were brilliant and **filled with hope**
- Junior was scared of the Reardan kids because he was scared of hope
- Rowdy pushed Junior and they both began to cry
- Junior touched Rowdy on the shoulder again and this time Rowdy swung on him
 - ◆ Junior's nose bled like a firework
- Rowdy had become Junior's worst enemy

Chapter 8: How to Fight Monsters

- In the car on the way to Reardan, Junior's father reminds him that white people are no better than he is
 - ◆ Junior doesn't believe this
- The kids that attended Reardan were not white... they were translucent
- They white kids stared at Junior as if he were a UFO or Bigfoot
- More than half of the students who graduate from Reardan go to college, whereas nobody in Junior's family had ever gone near a college

- Reardan was the complete opposite of what Junior had ever known
- Everybody in the building stared at Junior when they saw him
- Once he got to Mr. Grant's classroom, he sees a beautiful white girl named Penelope
- She laughed at the fact that his name was Junior
- Junior feels as if Arnold Spirit is one part of him, whereas Junior is the other part
- Penelope asked Junior where he was from and he said the reservation
 - ◆ He did not say another word for 6 days and on the 7th he got into a fist fight
- He then addressed the unwritten rules of Spokane Indian fist fights (page 61)
 - ◆ The loser is the first one who cries
 - Junior's record was 5-112
- Instead of fighting him at Reardan, the kids called him names
- Junior was afraid that the monster white boys were going to kill him
- Roger the Giant, a huge country boy, makes a racial slur towards Junior and really upsets him
 - ◆ This was the most racist thing that Junior had ever heard
- Junior decided to punch Roger in the face
 - ◆ His nose bled and he fell
 - ◆ Roger tells him to meet him after school at the same place so they could finish the fight
- Junior soon realized that the white boys did not follow a set of rules in fights

Chapter 9: Grandmother Gives Me Some Advice

- Junior wishes that Rowdy was still his friend so he could beat up Roger for him
 - ◆ King Kong vs. Godzilla
- Junior recognized how his sense of safety was based on Rowdy
- Junior turns to his grandmother for help
- After explaining to his grandmother the situation, she claims that the reason Roger did not hit back was because he respected Junior

- Junior couldn't sleep that night because he was afraid that Roger was going to seriously injure him
- The next day Junior was forced to hitch a ride with his dad's friend, Eugene
- When dropping off Junior, Eugene tells him that he is very brave for attending an all white school like Reardan
- As he walked into the school, Junior sees Roger but Roger does not attack him, but instead makes a nice comment about Eugene's bike
 - ◆ Junior had challenged the alpha male and earned his respect
- He had impressed the king (Roger) but the queen still hated him (Penelope)

Chapter 10: Tears of a Clown

- When Junior was 12 he fell in love with an Indian girl named Dawn
- She never cared about Junior
- She was always out of Junior's league
- At a sleepover with Rowdy, he confessed his feelings to Rowdy and he replied by saying that Dawn does not care about Junior
 - ◆ This made Junior cry
- Junior asked Rowdy to keep his secret that he cried over Dawn and Rowdy did just that
 - ◆ He was Junior's secret-keeper

Chapter 11: Halloween

- For Halloween Junior dressed up as a homeless man
- Penelope went dressed as a beautiful homeless woman
- Penelope said that she was wearing the costume to protest the treatment of homeless people in the country and that she would be asking for spare change instead of candy
- On a whim, Junior made up the fact that he was dressed as a homeless man so he could protest the treatment of homeless Native Americans
- Junior suggests that they pool together their money that they get from trick-or-treating
 - ◆ Penelope agrees

- That night, Junior got a lot of money from spare change
- Walking home that night Junior was jumped by 3 guys wearing Frankenstein masks
 - ◆ They wanted to remind Junior that he was a traitor
 - ◆ They also wanted to steal his money and candy
 - He had about \$10
 - He wondered if Rowdy was one of the guys who jumped him
- The next morning he told Penelope what happened
 - ◆ Penelope says that she will still put his name on the money that she sends
 - ◆ Junior hoped that this confrontation would lead to a greater relationship between them but nothing changed

Chapter 12: Slouching Toward Thanksgiving

- The next few weeks at Reardan were the loneliest weeks of Junior's life
- He walked like a zombie for that time period
- He claims that when he arrives to Reardan he becomes something less than an Indian
- During this time, Junior learned that he was smarter than most of the white kids
- He once corrected his teacher on the topic of petrified wood
 - ◆ Mr. Dodge asked Junior to explain to the class how petrified wood works
 - He did it perfectly
- Gordy, the class einstein, raises his hand and backs Junior's claim
- On the way home, his dad did not pick him up so he had to walk 22 miles back to his house
- Junior got to his house and caught sight of his mother crying
 - ◆ Mary had gotten married
 - ◆ She had met this man at a casino
 - ◆ She liked him because he wasn't afraid to gamble everything
 - ◆ She moved with him to Montana
- Junior realized that Mary was trying to live the life of a romance novel
 - ◆ She moved without telling anybody and wants to have 10 children

- Junior approached Gordy and asked him to be friends
 - ◆ He agreed
 - Gordy taught him how to study and how to read
 - There are 3 stages to learning how to read a book (page 94-95)
- Gordy explains to Junior that his hobby of drawing cartoons is not pathetic and is a good hobby because it helps him navigate the river of the world
- Gordy was the smartest person that Junior had ever known
 - Gordy taught Junior that hard work can be joyous

Chapter 13: My Sister Sends Me an E-mail

- Mary writes an email to Junior and describes what Montana is like
 - ◆ She rode a horse for the first time
 - ◆ She is still looking for a job there
 - ◆ She explains that there are seven different towns in the reservation that she is staying on
 - ◆ There are even some of these towns that are inhabited by white people
 - ◆ She is ecstatic and talks about the great Indian fry bread that she had at a hotel when her and her husband were honeymooning

Chapter 14: Thanksgiving

- Junior's family had a feast for Thanksgiving
- Junior questions why Indians celebrate Thanksgiving
 - ◆ His dad says because they should be thankful that the whites did not kill them all
- Junior missed Rowdy and wished that he would come over so they could have there annual pumpkin pie eating challenge
- Junior went to Rowdy's house and asked if he was home
 - ◆ His dad responded with no
 - ◆ Junior gave his dad a sketch that he had drawn of him and Rowdy and asked him to deliver it to Rowdy

- ◆ As Junior walked away he saw Rowdy in his bedroom upstairs as he looked at the sketch with sadness

Chapter 15: Hunger Pains

- When Junior is in the bathroom, attempting to avoid classroom time, he hears a girl aggressively vomiting in the girl's bathroom
- Penelope walks out of the bathroom chewing cinnamon gum to cover the smell
- Penelope suffers from bulimia
 - ◆ She contrasts anorexia and bulimia
 - She is bulimic because she is only bulimic when she is throwing up
 - An anorexic is anorexic all the time
 - Junior compares his father's alcoholism to Penelope's bulimia
- Penelope started crying because everyone feels that she is so perfect, but in reality she is scared on the inside
- Everyone is shocked that Penelope chose Junior to be her friend
 - ◆ Penelope's father, Earl, is a racist
- Both Penelope and Junior were using each other
 - ◆ Junior became popular and Penelope wanted a break from the smart and athletic dudes
- Penelope explains to Junior that she wants to get out of the town and travel
 - ◆ "I think I was born with a suitcase"
- Penelope says that nobody takes her seriously
- Penelope wants to go to Stanford to study architecture
 - ◆ She wants to build something and be remembered for it
 - ◆ Neither Junior nor Penelope were settling with their limitations... they both wanted to go beyond the limits of their societies

Chapter 16: Rowdy Gives Me Advice About Love

- When watching Penelope at a volleyball game, Junior wishes she would focus on him as much as she focuses on the ball
- Junior went to the computer and emailed Rowdy asking him what to do since he is in love with a white girl
 - ◆ Rowdy told him to stop treating women like bowling trophies
- Junior then went and asked Gordy what he should do
 - ◆ Gordy did some research and gave him a report
 - ◆ His research was useless and deemed Junior a racist asshole

Chapter 17: Dance, Dance, Dance

- The kids at Reardan thought that Junior had much more money than he really did
- Junior's parents tried their best to scrape together as much money as possible for Junior to buy clothes, lunch money, etc.
- Junior went with Penelope to the Winter Formal
 - ◆ He didn't have money for gas, nor a nice car so he told her that he would meet her at the gym
 - ◆ He had to wear his dad's old suit
- Penelope made everyone love Junior's suit and he was no longer ashamed of it
- Junior had the best night of his life and so did Penelope
 - ◆ Junior managed to make it the entire night without bringing up his poverty
 - (They forgot to get a photograph)
- Instead of taking the dark walk home that night, Roger and the popular upperclassmen asked Penelope and Junior if they wanted to go with them to a 24-hour diner
 - ◆ Penelope was ecstatic but Junior was sick to his stomach... he had \$5
- Junior knew that as soon as Penelope learned that Junior was a poor Indian Roger would take his spot
- After Penelope explained to Earl that Roger would be there she got the ok to go
- At the Denny's Junior ordered a feast before his execution

- As Junior went to the bathroom to throw up, Roger saw him
 - ◆ After telling Roger that he had lost his wallet, he slipped him \$40
 - Junior could not believe how nice Roger was being
- Penelope finally asked Junior if he was poor
 - ◆ He could not lie to her anymore... he said that he was
- She then asked him if his dad was really coming to pick him up... he said no
- Roger drove him home that night
 - ◆ “If you let people into your life a little bit, they can be pretty damn amazing”

Chapter 18: Don't Trust Your Computer

- One day Junior emailed Rowdy a picture of him smiling
 - ◆ Rowdy responded with a picture of his bare ass
- Gordy wondered why Rowdy hated Junior
 - ◆ Junior explained to him that the Indians don't appreciate when other Indians leave their culture to assimilate into the white culture
- Junior explains that the Indians at home call him an apple
 - ◆ Red on the outside, white on the inside

Chapter 19: My Sister Sends Me a Letter

- Mary explains once again that she has still yet to find a job
- Due to the immense free time, she has begun to write her life story
 - ◆ She plans to title it, *How to Run Away From Your House and Find a New Home*

Chapter 20: Reindeer Games

- When Junior thinks about not trying out for the Reardan basketball team due to the fear of being cut, his dad explains the story of how he met Junior's mother
 - ◆ The moral of his story is that you have to dream big
- He signs up for basketball and steps on the court to see 40 kids who are much better than him

- ◆ Coach explains that there are only 24 spots available (12 varsity, 12 junior varsity)
 - Junior had his hopes set on making the “C squad” but it turns out that they did not have the budget for that team this year
- The first thing they did was run 100 laps around the gym
- Then they did full court one-on-ones
 - ◆ Roger is paired up with Junior and dunks aggressively on both attempts
- Coach pulls Junior off to the side and says that he remembers him from when he played for the reservation team
 - ◆ “You were a good shooter”
 - ◆ Coach asked if Junior wanted to try and take Roger again or take a break... he chose to go again
 - He made a pull up jump shot over Roger and the gym yelled and clapped
 - When they were back in line Roger told him “Good Job”
 - Junior felt like a warrior
- Coach placed Junior on varsity, saying that he was the best shooter he ever had
- The first game of the season was against Wellpinit High School... Junior’s old school
- All the Indians turned their backs to Junior except for Rowdy
- Coach told Junior that he has to use his tears to power him... he’s got to get mad
- When he got into the game he was hit in the head by a quarter from the stands
 - ◆ Eugene treated his cut in the locker room
 - ◆ It turns out, Eugene was a phenomenal basketball player and probably could’ve played in college but he was unable to read (you can’t read you can’t ball)
- Junior tells Eugene that he wants him to stitch him up instead of bring him to the clinic
 - ◆ Eugene protests but does the stitching on his forehead
 - ◆ Junior returns to the game in the 2nd half and sees that Rowdy is playing a fantastic game
- Junior on the first touch, drove for a layup and was elbowed and knocked unconscious by Rowdy

- After that, both teams got into a fight and tribal cops had to pull thirty Spokanes off the court
- Due to a plethora of technical fouls, Wellpinit was given 10 free throws and they went on to win by 30
 - ◆ Junior ended up with a concussion
 - ◆ Coach went to visit him later in the hospital
 - ◆ He told Junior that he has never seen a player more committed than Junior
 - ◆ “The quality of a man’s life is in direct proportion to his commitment to excellence, regardless of his chosen field of endeavor”
- Since Junior wasn’t allowed to fall asleep, due to the fact that they were monitoring his brain, Coach stayed the whole night with Junior and they spent the time telling each other stories

Chapter 21: And a Partridge in a Pear Tree

- When Christmas rolled around the family did not have money for presents, so Junior’s father took whatever money they had and got drunk
- He returned on January 2nd
 - ◆ Junior made things seem as if they were ok but deep down he was not ok
- His dad gave him \$5
 - ◆ Junior was surprised because he figured that his father would’ve spent the money on whiskey or alcohol
 - “It was a beautiful and ugly thing”

Chapter 22: Red Versus White

- Junior explains to the reader that he loves Indians just as much as he loves whites
 - ◆ He still loves his sister, although she is still without a job and still working on her book
- Junior recognizes that his parents make sacrifices for him and he is grateful for that
 - ◆ The worst thing a parent can do is ignore their children according to Junior

- There are many Reardan kids who get ignored by their parents
- Junior has learned that white people are good at hiding in plain sight
 - ◆ White dads can completely disappear without leaving the living room
- The best thing about the reservation for Junior was his grandmother
 - ◆ Her greatest gift was **tolerance**
 - ◆ His grandmother does not judge, regardless of sexual orientation, looks, or age
- She sometimes even speaks to invisible people just in case they really exist
- His grandmother was the only one who was 100% on board with the move to Reardan
 - ◆ She loved the idea of him meeting new people (she loved everybody)
- Junior's grandmother was killed by Gerald, a drunk Spokane Indian
 - ◆ As she said her last words she uttered, "Forgive him"
 - ◆ She wanted Gerald to be forgiven for his egregious acts
 - This demonstrates how loving of a person grandmother was
- They found Gerald hiding out at Benjamin Lake and took him to jail
 - ◆ Junior's father went to see Gerald and did not kill him, but left him to the justice system
 - He was sentenced to 18 months in jail
- The irony is that Junior's grandmother had never had a sip of alcohol in her whole life

Chapter 23: Wake

- Two thousand Indians showed up to grandmother's wake
- All the Indians let Junior grieve in peace
- Everyone on the reservation stopped hassling Junior after his grandmother's death
- Mary did not have money to make it back for the funeral
- Out of everyone in the crowd, Billionaire Ted stood to reflect on his grandmother
 - ◆ Billionaire Ted explained to the crowd that he was a collector of Indian merchandise and that he loves the Indians
 - "I love your songs, your dances, and your souls"

- One day an Indian knocked on Ted's door with a fifty pound powwow dance outfit that was obviously stolen
 - ◆ The man claimed that his wife was dying of cancer and needed money to pay for her medicine
 - Ted knew the man was lying but the outfit was so beautiful that he took the outfit and gave the man \$1000
 - Ted then explains that the outfit belonged to Grandmother Spirit
 - Ted was fed up with his conscience and decided to come to the reservation to return the outfit just to find out that grandmother had died
- After Junior's mom went up to look at the outfit she realized that it was not a Spokane piece and it wasn't made by grandmother
- The Indians laughed together and laughed as they said their goodbyes to grandmother

Chapter 24: Valentine Heart

- A few days after Valentine's Day Eugene was shot in the face in the 7-Eleven parking lot in Spokane
- Eugene was shot when he was drunk by his friend Bobby who was also drunk
 - ◆ They may have been fighting over who could get the last drink of wine
- A few weeks later, Bobby hung himself in jail with a bed sheet
 - ◆ He punished himself for his sins
- Junior was mad at God, he was mad at Jesus
 - ◆ He began making cartoons to mock them
- Junior asked Gordy about grief
 - ◆ He wanted to know why his family had been given so much to grieve about
- Gordy showed him Euripides definition
 - ◆ It was a story about Medea and it described how there is no greater grief than losing one's native land

- ◆ Medea was so distraught that she murdered her own kids... Junior agrees and says that he could've easily killed himself and his family
- Junior wanted to kill God
 - ◆ He wanted to drop out of Reardan and blamed all of the deaths on himself
- After being absent for twenty days, he sat with his social studies teacher Mrs. Jeremy
 - ◆ Mrs. Jeremy embarrassed Junior in front of the whole class by saying that she didn't even think he went to the school anymore due to his numerous absences
- Gordy stood up for him and encouraged the other students to drop their textbooks
 - ◆ All of the students then walked out of the room
 - It was just Junior and Mrs Jeremy in the classroom now and Junior took his opportunity to talk back
 - "The world is only broken into two tribes: The people who are assholes and the people who are not."
- To stay joyful, Junior made lists of the things that gave him joy (people, foods, books)
 - ◆ Catcher in the Rye is #2 on his favorite books list
- Junior made lists of things that brought him joy, and made cartoons of the things that made him angry
- This became his grieving ceremony
- His cartoons shift from things that he loves to things that he hates

Chapter 25: In Like a Lion

- Junior never thought it was possible, but he became a freshman starter on the varsity basketball team
 - ◆ No one could shoot like Junior could
- Junior became good at Reardan because the coach and other kids believed in him, unlike on the reservation
- He was averaging twelve points per game and it was due to the power of expectations
 - ◆ He wanted to live up to everyone's expectations
- After losing that first game to Wellpinit Reardan went on a 12 game win streak

- ◆ Junior wished that in the future parents would compare good basketball players to Arnold Spirit
 - He wonders if an Indian can have a legacy in a white town
- In the 2nd matchup against Wellpinit, Junior hoped to win and embarrass Rowdy
- Wellpinit was ranked #1 in the state and Reardan was ranked #2
- After acting like an asshole to the local news station, Junior tells of how this night is the most important night of his life and that he feels as if he has something to prove
 - ◆ He tells the camera crew that he has never wanted anything more in his life than to win on this night
- Coach tells the Reardan boys that they cannot win with their talent, that they will have to use their heart and their “secret weapon”
 - ◆ Arnold was this secret weapon
- Coach informs Arnold that he will be covering Rowdy the entire game and that if he guards him well they will win
- Coach had become Junior’s priest of basketball
- Junior’s mother and father were in attendance... he was a drunk, but he never missed an organized event
- Penelope blew Junior a kiss from the stands
- Off the tip Rowdy rushed down court for a dunk, hoping to send a message to crowd
 - ◆ Junior would not let this happen so he decided to jump with him
- Standing on the hopes of his mother and father, the shoulders of his grandmother and Eugene, Junior jumped higher than Rowdy and took the ball right out of his hands
- Junior raced down the court and pump faked Rowdy, allowing him to drill a three pointer in his face, sending the crowd into mass hysteria
 - ◆ They went on to beat Wellpinit by forty points... the game was over as soon as Junior hit that shot
- As the gym was celebrating, Junior looked over at the Wellpinit team and realized that maybe they weren’t the enemy after all

- ◆ Junior knew those kids and knew that many of them hadn't had all 3 meals that day, their parents did drugs, and some of their parents were alcoholics
 - In a situation of David vs. Goliath the Reardan boys were Goliath
- Junior was crying tears of shame after the game
 - ◆ He had broken Rowdy's heart
 - ◆ He knew that Rowdy's father would beat him for losing the game
- Wellpinit did not qualify for the playoffs and the Reardan boys lost in the playoffs at the buzzer

Chapter 26: Rowdy and I Have a Long and Serious Discussion About Basketball

- Feeling sad, Junior decided to email Rowdy and apologize for beating them so bad
 - ◆ Rowdy responded by saying that they Wellpinit will beat them next year and Junior will cry like a little faggot
 - ◆ Junior writes back and the two boys joke for the first time in a while
 - ◆ Junior was a happy faggot

Chapter 27: Because Russian Guys Are Not Always Geniuses

- Junior is 14 years old and has been to 42 different funerals
 - ◆ He considers this the biggest difference between Indians and white people
 - White children do not attend many funerals it seems
- Gordy had given Junior a book written by Tolstoy that said:
 - ◆ "Happy families are all alike; every unhappy family is unhappy in its own way."
 - Junior argues this and says that all Indians are unhappy for the same reason: booze
- Mrs. Warren, his guidance counselor, walked into his chemistry class and said that she needed to speak to Junior in private
 - ◆ Mary had died
 - Junior persisted and asked how Mary died but Mrs. Warren would not answer

- Mrs. Warren said that Junior was vulnerable but he asked to stand outside and wait for his father anyway
 - ◆ It was snowing so Junior prayed his father would make it to him safely
- After throwing a party in their tiny home in Montana, Mary and her husband passed out in the back of the house
 - ◆ Somebody tried to cook some soup on a hot plate but they left it and soon the whole trailer was burned down
 - They were so drunk that they never even woke up
- Junior was so depressed and in shock that he was laughing out of control
 - ◆ He even threw up cantaloupe... a fruit that he hadn't had in years
 - It was ironically something that Mary loved to eat
- Junior laughed insanely until he fell asleep where he dreamed about cantaloupe
- Junior's mother was heartbroken
 - ◆ She makes Junior promise that he will never drink alcohol
- Junior could barely remember burying his sister, as he was in a fog for a long time
- As soon as Mary was lowered into the ground Junior sprinted into the woods hoping to never be found
 - ◆ He ran right into Rowdy
- Rowdy was crying
- Junior tried to touch Rowdy's shoulder to comfort him but he instead got punched
 - ◆ Junior dodged the punch
- Rowdy tells Junior that Mary's death was caused by Junior leaving them
 - ◆ Mary got married so quickly and left the reservation because she had seen Junior's decision to go to Reardan
- Rowdy told Junior that he hates him and ran away
 - ◆ Rowdy had never run away before
- Junior went to school the next day because he his home was full of unhappy and drunk Indians

- When he got to Reardan everyone comforted Junior, hugging him and showing him that he mattered to them
 - ◆ Penelope came up to Junior last
 - ◆ She was weeping and could not formulate words

Chapter 28: Remembering

- Junior, his mom, and his dad decided to clean graves on this day
 - ◆ They took care of grandmother, Eugene, and Mary
- Junior was inspired by his sister as she went out and chased her dreams
 - ◆ Junior cries because he knows that many more people Indians will die to booze
 - ◆ After all, reservations were intended to kill Indians
- Junior realizes that he belongs to the tribe of Indians, but he also belongs to the tribe of American immigrants and many other tribes
- Junior missed Rowdy

Chapter 29: Talking About Turtles

- Junior talks about the very tall and old pine trees that surround the reservation
 - ◆ There was one higher than 100 feet tall and he remembers that him and Rowdy climbed that once
- Junior thinks back to a July day when Rowdy and him went to Turtle Lake
 - ◆ Junior was scared to go because the Lake was every deep and no one had ever been to the bottom
- Some say it is called Turtle because it's shaped like one, others think it's because it was once a giant snapping turtle that ate Indians
- Junior's dad told him a story about a horse that walked into the lake and disappeared
 - ◆ A few weeks later, the horse showed up on the shores of Benjamin Lake, ten miles from Turtle Lake
 - ◆ It was burned
 - A few weeks after the horse was burned Turtle Lake caught on fire

- After the fire was out they found the horse washed up on the shore again
- As Rowdy and Junior approached the lake Rowdy suggested that they climb the huge tree
 - ◆ So they did
- Junior ends the flashback by saying that Rowdy and him stayed on top of the tree for 2 hours and then climbed down... he still believes that they were the only ones to climb it
- The school year ended and Junior said his goodbyes to the Reardan kids
 - ◆ One day Rowdy came and knocked on the door
 - ◆ Rowdy asks Junior if he want to play some basketball
 - Junior agrees
- Rowdy tells Junior of how he read a book describing Indians as nomadic
 - ◆ Nomadic: People who move around, keep moving, in search of food and water and grazing land
 - Rowdy tells Junior that he doesn't believe Indians are nomadic anymore
 - Rowdy tells Junior is the only nomadic one
 - ◆ Rowdy says that he always knew Junior was going to leave
 - ◆ He had a dream about Junior where he was standing on the Great Wall of China... Junior was happy and Rowdy was happy for him
- Rowdy tells Junior to send him postcards when he moves around
- Junior got emotional and hoped and prayed that someday he will forgive himself for leaving the tribe
 - ◆ Rowdy tells him to toughen up and they plan one-on-one for hours
 - They didn't keep score