

Chapter 1: Slugman without his sidekick

"Please, Doraemon, I've tried so many tutors" said Nobita. "It doesn't have to be your gadgets nor some future celestial from centurion 5, but can you at least scorch the Earth to find the best mind alive whom only spending a few minutes will be enough?"

Doraemon scowled, never accosted to Nobita's begging (nor Doyaraki bribes)

"Ok, but you have to listen." Said Doraemon, munching on one at a time "He IS a genius, but he is also an American exile living in Vladivostok right now. I'll set

up a meeting, and his payment, but just follow these three rules"

Nobita nods.

"One, don't talk about anything EXCEPT math, as tempting as kindred interests may seem. Two, don't divulge his presence, if you can give each other signals in public that would be best"

Doraemon closed his eyes.

"Three and most importantly: Don't stay longer than 10 minutes. To make it simple his alias is The Slugman, but he has this short term thing that ails him to forget to

keep his name a secret when discussing his interests in mathematics, that's why he's hard to find for many without my gadgets, can you follow those rules for me, Nobita?"

Nobita nods.

(The day arrives)

Doraemon and Nobita are at a cold train station, when a stranger covered in scarves with glasses, yet about Nobita's size, approaches.

"Dobre Vyetcher" said the stranger in a slightly thick accent. "minya Zabut

Slugman"

Doraemon almost forgets to give Nobita the package labelled "payment" and the translation gum.

"Dont forget" said Doraemon, entering the Anywhere door "10 minutes, starting now!"

The stranger signals Nobita to follow. They enter a slightly abandoned apartment.

"As your friend put it, it doesnt take an Einstein to realize time is relative" he says, slamming a book labelled "discrete mathematics" on a table "let's begin"

5 to 7 minutes pass before Slugman and Nobita finish.

"Hence why the dead sea scrolls contributed to this conundrum" Slugman said, chuckling a bit.

Nobita giggled, suddenly remembering an occasion as he took his wallet out. Upon doing so a picture of his old friend Piisuke emerges.

Slugman looks at it. He couldn't help but remove his scarf.

"Is that a" said Slugman.

"Ah yes, I once rode a loch ness monster, hehe" said Nobita, picking the photo up.

Slugman looks at Nobita.

"You like dinosaurs?"

Before Nobita could reply excitedly he froze in fear before looking at the clock.

He was supposed to stop a minute ago.

He starts packing his stuff, knowing he already broke two of Doraemon's rules.

"Where ya going?" Slugman asked.

"My time was up!" Said Nobita, as he searched in his backpack for the Anywhere door. "I'm so sorry for putting you at risk".

The Slugman sighed.

As Nobita took it out, he felt the same stranger poke at his shoulder.

"It's a cold world" The Slugman began as he pulled a switch or two to propel the building to quake before the stove opened up. A large rocketship with a seat and a parachute attached emerged.

"Whats another year of hot pursuit?"

Nobita was surprised yet mildly sad.

"Thank you, Slugman" he said with a bit of a smile.

The stranger removed the scarves on his head.

"My name is Jason Fox." He said.

(Note: the last line was the only thing written with ai)

Chapter 2: Denise calls up (with big guns this time)

Nobita was watching Kamen Rider in the living room when a knock was heard.

He goes to the door and opens it.

"Good evening" says the figure: a blonde girl with short hair, black glasses, and a pink jumpsuit,

"Are you Nobita Nobi?"

Nobita realized one thing: she was blonde and American.

Like the mathematician who revealed himself to be "Jason Fox". He knew this spelled nothing but trouble.

"Uh... Nope, he moved out after the... Uh... Tsunami... Sorry" he said, closing the door.

It was a few centimeters from closing when something blocked the door: a white cane.

Nobita was now left aghast, trying to kick the object away before brute force somehow opened the door and pushed him over.

"Which tsunami?" She asked, mockingly yet mildly upset.

Nobita realized he had opened something between Pandora's box and a can of worms before running off upstairs. He headed towards his room and closed the door.

"Sigh... Boys" she said, removing her glasses to reveal robotic high tech eyeballs "like a pack of cards: when they're against you they're against you, no matter the culture".

Nobita opened the window and put on his "bamboo copter" before flying off.

"Gotta find Doraemon" he said to himself as he floated swiftly across the rural sprawl "I know it's Doyaraki Day in his favorite restaurant, if I could only find-"

Just then, he felt a strange force pulling him downwards. The bamboo copter was being magnetically tugged by something. Panic set in as he saw the blonde girl from earlier, now dressed in full ninja gear, standing on a rooftop with a device in her hand.

"You're going to make this so much harder than it needs to be," she called out with a sigh, "Come down peacefully and I won't have to involve the authorities."

Nobita's heart raced as he clutched the controls of the bamboo copter, the magnetic pull growing stronger. He knew he had to act fast. Doraemon's anywhere door was his only hope. He reached into his pocket and pulled out the shiny gadget, feeling its familiar weight in his hand.

With trembling fingers, he opened the door to reveal the familiar sight of Suneo's living room. He stepped through, the door snapping shut behind him with a satisfying click. The moment he entered, Suneo looked up from his video game, his eyes widening at the sight of Nobita.

"What's up, Nobita?" Suneo asked casually, noticing the desperation etched on his friend's face.

Nobita's eyes darted around the room, searching for somewhere to hide. "Suneo, I'm in big trouble. There's this American blonde girl looking for me and Doraemon. She's not playing around, she's got some serious gear!" He panted, trying to catch his breath.

Suneo paused his game, a smirk spreading across his face. "So, what's the big deal? You've got a hot blonde on your tail and you're running? You've got to be kidding me!"

Nobita's expression didn't change. Instead he just departed the home. Fortunately the

restaurant with Doraemon was a few blocks away, meaning finding him wouldn't be hard.

Upon arrival, Doraemon was found, munching away at his favorite dish, Doyara-yaki. He looked up and beamed upon seeing Nobita, until he saw the panic in his eyes.

"What's wrong, Nobita?" Doraemon asked, his voice muffled by a mouthful of food.

Nobita panted, trying to form words.

"American... girl... after us... Jason Fox... exile... she's got some kind of magnetic device!"

Doraemon's smile dropped as he swallowed his last bite of Doyara-yaki.

"Calm down, Nobita," he said, his voice a

mix of concern and curiosity. "Tell me everything."

Nobita relayed the encounter with the blonde girl, her robotic eyes, and her magnetic device. Doraemon nodded thoughtfully, his whiskers twitching. "It seems we're dealing with Denise Russo," he murmured. "An old friend of mine, and the first human to test the same cybernetic eyes that I have."

"Ok..." Nobita said, only slightly relieved "mind explaining what she wants with me?"

Doraemon took a deep breath, setting aside his empty plate.

"Nobita, why didn't you just tell her to wait for me?" He said, his voice a mix of exasperation and calmness. "You know I

can handle situations like these."

Chapter 3: Against all odds (uneven)

"... Did he HAVE to go all the way there?"
Asked Nobita. "I would've chosen
Australia, or even Antarctica"

"Nobita!" Doraemon stated, finding his
words vulgar.

"It's ok, Doraemon, I had similar
sentiments at first" said Denise, taking a
remote out of her pocket "But we chose
North Asia BECAUSE it's tricky. Because,
somehow it rivals America. Otherwise he'd
be with my cousin Guido in Sicily"

Nobita couldn't help but scratch his head.

"Has it seriously gotten that bad for him in
the USA?" Nobita asked.

Denise realized she'd be getting into personal details from Jason's life, so she searched for a different angle.

"Nobita, you know why I chose robot eyes, right?" She asked.

Nobita couldn't help but take it as both rhetorical and literal.

"Because you didn't want to be blind?" He asked.

"Because I wanted to take a risk. I didn't want my disability to define me if it was optional" she added before raising the remote "do you know why Jason ran away from his home country?"

Nobita shook his head.

Denise then pressed a button on the control.

The tv turned on to static before it was transported to an abandoned theater stage.

Jason was on it. He saw a note, a microphone, and a boombox on a chair, before picking it up. He read it:

"It's never too late to go back. Sincerely,
***** P. S. Play it all the way to finish the
process once, miss a word and no deal"

Jason looked close at the boombox: the letters read "Against all odds by Phil Collins karaoke".

Jason let out an exasperated huff of air before grabbing the microphone. He

hesitated, knowing the words yet perplexed at the effect that awaited anyway.

He pressed play before hesitating any further.

The music began, as was the microphone turned on before starting:

"How can I just let you walk away?
Just let you leave without a trace?
When I stand here takin' every breath with
you, ooh
You're the only one who really knew me at
all"

Jason's eyes widened as he saw the first shadowy figure emerge from the dark corners of the theater. His heart skipped a beat as the silhouette grew clearer - it was

his mother, her eyes filled with a mix of love and pain. He had to keep singing, but the emotions were threatening to overwhelm him. The music continued, and soon, more figures appeared. His father, stern but with a hint of sadness in his gaze, his sister Paige with tears streaming down her cheeks, and his brother Peter, looking conflicted and torn. He didn't dare to miss a beat, not wanting to risk losing this chance.

"How can you just walk away from me
When all I can do is watch you leave?
'Cause we've shared the laughter and the
pain
And even shared the tears
You're the only one who really knew me at
all"

Jason's voice grew stronger with each line,

the theater's acoustics amplifying the raw emotion in his voice. The shadows grew denser, and soon, the rows of seats began to fill with more figures from his past - teachers from school, the principal with his usual stern look, even the school janitor who had always had a soft spot for him. Each person who had played a significant role in his life in the States was there, watching him perform with a mix of curiosity and concern. The vividness of the scene was almost too much to handle, but the music and the lyrics pushed him forward.

"So take a look at me now
Oh, there's just an empty space
And there's nothin' left here to remind me
Just the memory of your face
Ooh, take a look at me now
Well, there's just an empty space

And you comin' back to me is against the odds

And that's what I've got to face"

As the chorus of "Against All Odds" filled the theater, two more figures emerged from the shadows, capturing Jason's astonished gaze. William Shatner, the iconic Captain Kirk, and the actors who portrayed Scully and Mulder from his favorite TV show, "The X-Files," stepped into the spotlight. Their presence was surreal, a testament to the depth of the emotional turmoil he was facing.

"I wish I could just make you turn around

Turn around and see me cry

There's so much I need to say to you

So many reasons why

You're the only one who really knew me at all"

Jason's eyes widened even further as the stage behind him filled with the most unexpected sight - the iconic couple from "Titanic," Jack and Rose, standing hand in hand, their eyes meeting his. The gravity of the moment was palpable, as if the entire room was holding its breath. Then, the sea of shadows parted, and his entire class from the USA began to file in, filling the theater's seats. They were all dressed in their school uniforms, looking just as they had when he'd last seen them. But there was one empty chair, a glaring absence that sent a shiver down his spine.

"So take a look at me...

Well, there's just an empty space

And there's nothin' left here...

Just....memory of your face

Now take a look at me...

'Cause there's...an empty space-"

Jason's voice cracked as the words failed him, his eyes drawn to the empty seat that was now filled by a brunette girl with a polka-dotted skirt. She smirked at him, her eyes cold and unyielding. The music continued to play, the lyrics echoing in the theater, but he couldn't bring himself to sing them. The girl was a painful reminder of his past, someone who had tormented him relentlessly in school, turning his life into a living hell. His hands trembled, the microphone slipping from his grip. The sight of her brought back a flood of memories he'd tried so hard to bury.

With a roar of frustration and anger, Jason threw the boombox at her with all his might. Time seemed to slow down as it arced through the air, the cassette tape

still playing the haunting melody. But as the boombox reached the spot where she'd been sitting, she vanished into thin air, leaving nothing but the cold, hard chair. The boombox smashed against the back wall of the theater, shattering into a hundred pieces, the music cutting off abruptly. The silence that followed was deafening, only broken by the echo of his own ragged breathing.

It was then that Nobita was left in his own state: he saw everything on the screen. Yet just as he thought nothing could shock him any further Denise's phone rings, to which she picks it up.

"Soja compromise Nobita's memory?" Said the unexpected pitch: it was Jason, heard simultaneously on the phone and television.

"Wait... You told me Doraemon's people were exempt" she added.

"Whatever, just find anyone who heard my name within that diameter and go Men in Black on their asses, asap!" He added, before hanging up and leaving the theatre.

Denise hangs up.

She notices Doraemon and Nobita's expression.

"Oh, and I used to date his older brother when I was still blind" she added.

Chapter 4: Nightmare in a teapot

Eileen clutched the spare keys in her trembling hand, the cold metal a stark contrast to the sticky warmth of her palm. She had found them in the unlikeliest of places—under a loose brick in the alley behind the run-down house. The neighborhood was one she usually avoided, the kind where whispers grew legs and turned into tall tales faster than a rumor at a high school pep rally. But the words of Squee, the elusive boy with the crooked smile, had been burned into her mind. He had promised her that the answers she sought lay within this very house, hidden like a secret love note in the pages of a dusty old book.

The door to the house swung open with a

high-pitched squeal that seemed to echo through the desolate street. She stepped over the threshold, her sneakers squeaking against the ancient hardwood floor. The air was stale, smelling faintly of mildew and forgotten memories. The walls were adorned with peeling wallpaper, the patterns a ghostly reminder of happier times. She walked through the dimly lit rooms, her eyes darting around the space, searching for any sign of life. The house was eerily quiet, as if it had been holding its breath for years, waiting for the moment she would arrive.

As Eileen approached the basement door, she heard it—a heavy, rhythmic breathing that seemed to pulse with the house itself. It grew louder with each step she took, the demonic pitch making the hair on the back of her neck stand on end. Her hand

hovered over the doorknob, heart racing. She could feel the anticipation building in the very air around her, thick and palpable. The door creaked open, revealing a narrow staircase that descended into darkness.

With a deep breath, she stepped into the abyss, the cold wood groaning beneath her weight. The basement was damp, the walls sweating with an unseen presence. The breathing grew closer, the air thick with the scent of decay. Suddenly, a guttural voice echoed through the space, resonating from the very walls themselves. "Why have you come?" it rumbled, each syllable a thunderclap in the silence. "Johnny doesn't feed me kin."

Eileen's eyes searched the shadows for the source of the voice, her heart pounding in her chest like a caged animal. "I'm not here

for you," she managed to reply, her voice shaking. "I'm looking for someone. My friend, Jason."

The breathing stopped, and the room grew eerily quiet. Then, from the far corner of the basement, a figure began to materialize—or rather, the darkness around it did, as if peeling away to reveal a man bathed in shadows. He had a mischievous glint in his eye, a smirk playing on his lips, and a swagger that suggested he knew more than he was letting on.

"Ah, so you're the one," he said, his voice a low, gleeful whisper. "The one who's desperate enough to make the flowering tea pact."

Eileen's eyes widened in horror as she took in the figure before her. He was tall, lanky,

with a grin that was more of a twisted snarl than a smile. His eyes gleamed with an otherworldly light, and his hands twitched as if eager to perform some dark act.

"The flowering tea pact," she murmured, her voice barely a whisper. "What does that entail?"

The figure, who could only be Johnny, chuckled darkly. "It's quite simple, really," he began, his eyes never leaving hers. "You make the tea, with a very special ingredient. Then, you find someone—a volunteer, if you will—and convince them to drink it. The tea will burn them from the inside out, and as they die in agony, you will absorb their soul and the powers of Mike Mignola's idea of Ariel Castro over here"

Eileen's shock was palpable, but she fought to keep it from showing on her face. "What happens to the person who drinks the tea?" she asked, her voice steady despite the quaking in her chest.

Johnny shrugged nonchalantly, his eyes still gleaming with amusement. "Oh, they just pass on, darling. Maybe they'll find their way to purgatory, or if they're particularly spicy, they might even get a ticket to Valhalla. It's not like the dull afterlife the Bible promised, that's for sure."

Eileen felt a chill run down her spine at the casual way he talked about the end of a life, but she steeled herself. "I can't do that," she said firmly. "I won't."

"Suit yourself" says Johnny, opening the

door for her to leave the basement (and his abode) "YOU'RE the one who wanted to know which part of Russia your aryan nerd was in"

Eileen bites her lip, torn between the horror of his proposal and the desperation to find her friend. She glances around the room, searching for any sign of a way out of this grisly deal. The walls seem to close in on her, the shadows stretching out like gnarled fingers, whispering of the fate that awaits her if she fails.

Johnny reads her thoughts with ease, his grin widening. "You think I'm a monster, don't you?" he says, his voice a serrated blade slicing through the silence. "But let me tell you something, sweetheart. The world outside these walls is much crueler than anything you'll find here. This little act

of sacrifice is just a mosquito bite compared to the feasts of pain that await in the real world."

Eileen closes her eyes, fighting back whatever emotions she knew didn't help.

"I can't sacrifice someone" she said "even if I could Squee was too kind-"

Johnny cut her off with a sharp gesture, his smile turning into a grimace. "Fine," he spat. "If you're too much of a goody-two-shoes to play the game, I'll do it myself." He stepped closer, his eyes flashing with something that looked almost like anger, but was too intense to be anything so mundane. "I've survived worse than a little tea. Bullets, tasers that could drop a whale, curve stomps by hobos... I've felt the sweet kiss of pain more times than I can

count. If it means giving you what you want, I'll swallow the whole cauldron."

Johnny gets the kettle boiling, opens a drawer and removes a box of the same tea. He takes out what resembled a small balled up wad of wet newspaper and looks at it.

"Hello light, my oldest foe, I know, this is fucking low" he sang as he poured the kettle's boiling hot in a translucent glass teapot before placing the wad.

Eileen wanted to leave, up until she saw it: the wad slowly flower inside the water, morphing into tertiary colors with monochromatic shadows, as it was lightly eclipsed by the steam.

"It's beautiful, isn't it" said Johnny, knowing

she was just as intoxicated by the visuals as he was when this was first done.

But Eileen's eyes snapped open, her pupils dilating with horror as the walls began to writhe and pulse around them. Plaster cracked and peeled away, revealing a viscous, pulsing mass beneath. Johnny's smile grew wider, his eyes never leaving the flowering tea as it grew more vibrant by the second.

The creature that emerged from the walls was a grotesque amalgamation of nightmares. Its head was a twisted tapestry of tentacles, each one ending in a gaping maw filled with razor-sharp teeth. Its body was a bulbous mass of flesh, pulsating with an unnatural rhythm. It had the unmistakable form of John Carpenter's *The Thing*, but its tentacles bore the slick,

plant-like sheen of Biollante, and its bulk was tinged with the eldritch horror of Cthulhu.

Eileen's scream was swallowed by the monstrosity as it lunged from the wall, enveloping her in a suffocating embrace. The tentacles wrapped around her, tightening with a sickening crunch of bone and the wet tear of fabric. Johnny watched in horror as the creature pulled her into its central maw, his grin faltering for the first time.

The room was a cacophony of sounds: the sizzle of hot tea on wet flesh, the gurgling of the creature as it digested Eileen whole, and the unmistakable screams of her soul being torn apart.

Johnny's eyes grew wide with horror as the

creature turned its attention to him. He backpedaled, slipping on the damp floor, desperately trying to put distance between himself and the beast.

"Tell Squee he was my nephew all along," he choked out, his voice barely audible over the cacophony of destruction.

Johnny felt the hot tea forced down his throat, the tentacles wrapping around his neck in a vice-like grip. The monster's eyes were on him now, filled with a hunger that transcended the physical. The tea burned like liquid fire, scorching his insides as it traveled down his throat and into his stomach.

And then it happened. The creature's tentacles retracted, and it released him, slumping back into the wall with a wet

thud. Johnny choked and coughed, his eyes watering from the pain. He looked down at his body, expecting to see the ravages of the monster's hunger, but instead, he saw Eileen's form emerge from the writhing mass of flesh, before the last bit of light left his eye.

Her skin was now a mottled mess of tentacles and bulbous growths, her eyes burning with the same unearthly light that had once danced in the tea. She was a terrifying, yet mesmerizing sight to behold. The power of the flowering tea had transformed her into a creature of horror, a living embodiment of the dark pact she had refused to make.

As she rose from the floor, a dried floating dead bunny head appeared before her, its lifeless eyes somehow gleaming with a

twisted loyalty. "Mistress," it croaked, its voice a dry rasp, "we are your servants now."

Chapter 5: We live in a Dead Poet's Society

"Wow, everything's so...bright!" exclaimed Denise, her voice filled with a mix of awe and bewilderment. She squinted, her eyes unaccustomed to the vivid world that had been hidden from her for so long.

Doraemon nodded reassuringly, his metallic blue exterior gleaming in the midday sun. "Take your time, it's normal to feel overwhelmed. Your eyes are adjusting to the new sensory input."

Denise, her curiosity piqued, tentatively made her way through the park, the sound of children's laughter and distant chirping of birds creating a gentle backdrop to the momentous occasion. Each step she took brought a new pattern of colors and shapes into focus. The once familiar path

now seemed like a canvas painted by a master artist, with every tree, flower, and bench revealing intricate details she had never before appreciated.

As she approached the fountain, the soft sobs grew louder, tugging at her heartstrings. It was Jason, her neighbor and childhood friend, hunched over, his shoulders heaving with sorrow. His usually cheerful countenance was replaced by a mask of despair. The sight of him, so vulnerable and alone, made her stomach tighten with concern.

"Jason?" she called out gently, her voice carrying over the tinkling water.

He looked up, his eyes red and puffy from crying. The moment he recognized her, a spark of amazement flickered across his

face, quickly followed by confusion.

"Denise? How...how can you see me?"

Her heart went out to him, and she took a step closer. "It's a long story, Jason. But right now, I want to know why you're so sad. And why are you all the way out here?"

Jason sniffled, wiping his eyes with the back of his hand. "It's just...it's everything lit's like I can't do anything right" He paused, his voice thick with emotion. "I don't know what to do. I don't want to leave my friends, but I can't keep living like this. "

As Denise listened intently, Doraemon's antennae began to twitch. He discreetly scanned Jason with his futuristic gadgets, analyzing his vital signs and biochemical markers. The readings on his wristwatch indicated alarmingly high levels of stress

hormones, particularly cortisol and adrenaline. Doraemon knew that if these levels didn't drop soon, the consequences could be dire. The little robot's expression grew serious.

"Jason," he interrupted, his voice a tad more urgent than before, "I know you're upset, but we need to talk. There's something important I need to tell you."

Jason looked up, his curiosity momentarily overriding his sadness. "What is it?"

Doraemon sighed, realizing he would have to explain. "You know how Denise got her eyesight back?" He paused, watching as Jason nodded slowly. "Well, I'm not just here to help her. I can offer you something too."

Jason's eyebrows shot up in surprise.

"What do you mean?"

Doraemon's whiskers twitched as he leaned in closer. "Well, I can't exactly make you move to Russia, but I do have the means to give you a fresh start. A place where you can be free from whatever's been bothering you."

Jason's eyes widened in disbelief. "What are you talking about?"

Denise felt a sudden surge of excitement for her friend. "Doraemon, can you really do that?"

The robot nodded solemnly. "Within reason, yes. I can't change the past, but I can give him a new present. And it doesn't have to be Russia, if that's not what he

desires. It can be anywhere he wishes to begin anew."

Jason's eyes searched the horizon, as if seeking a glimpse of this untouched life Doraemon offered. "Could it be in an Asian country?" He whispered, hope blooming in his voice like a shy spring flower.

"Anywhere you wish, Jason," Doraemon replied, his voice steady and warm. "It doesn't have to be Japan, or even Asia. It can be the moon if that's where you'd like to start over."

Jason's hand trembled as he reached out to shake Doraemon's robot's hand "I'd love to go to Japan," he murmured, his eyes brimming with hope. "I've always been fascinated by its culture and technology."

Doraemon's whiskers twitched in a smile. "Consider it done," he said, his voice filled with certainty. "We'll need to get some things in order first, but I'll make sure you have everything you need for a fresh start."

As Jason's grip tightened around Doraemon's robotic hand, a peculiar sight caught Denise's newly-sighted gaze. An ice cream truck, seemingly out of place in the serene park, sat at the far end of the path. Two figures, obscured by the tinted windows, watched them intently. One of them, a young girl with a mischievous glint in her eyes, leaned closer to the other, a boy with a smug expression.

"Eugene, I'm telling you, this is going to be epic," whispered Phoebe.

"Not for your friend, though" Eugene added

coyly.