

Written by
Owen Lloyd-Fox

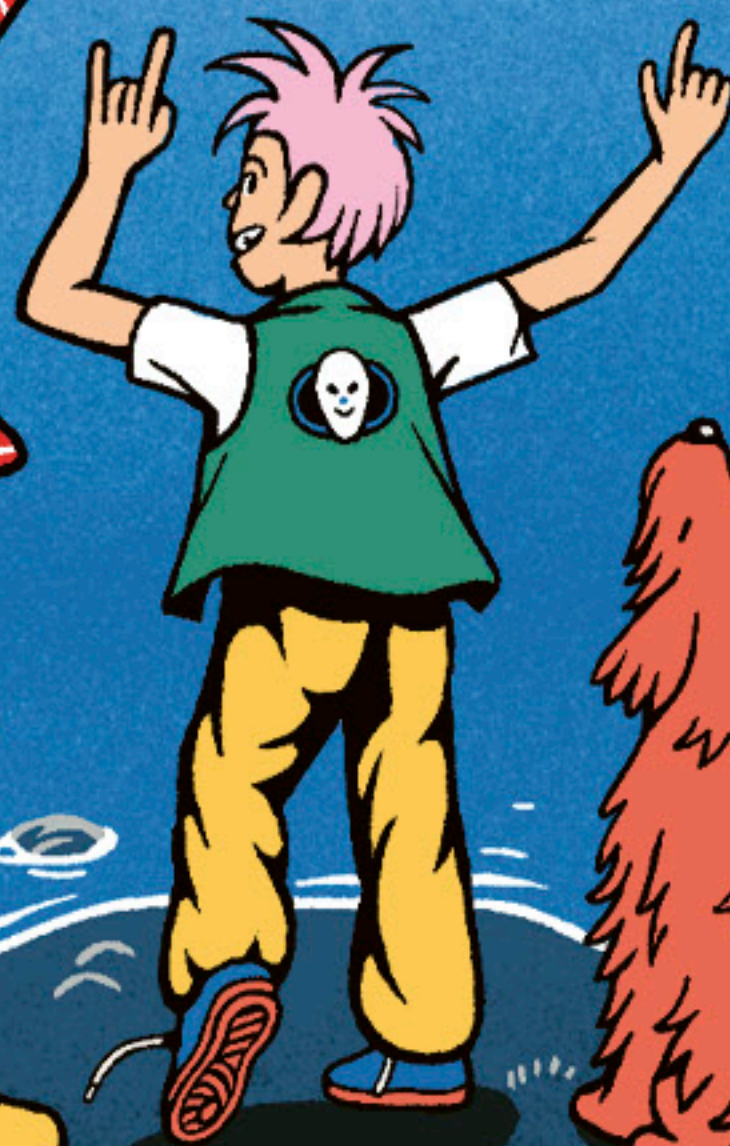
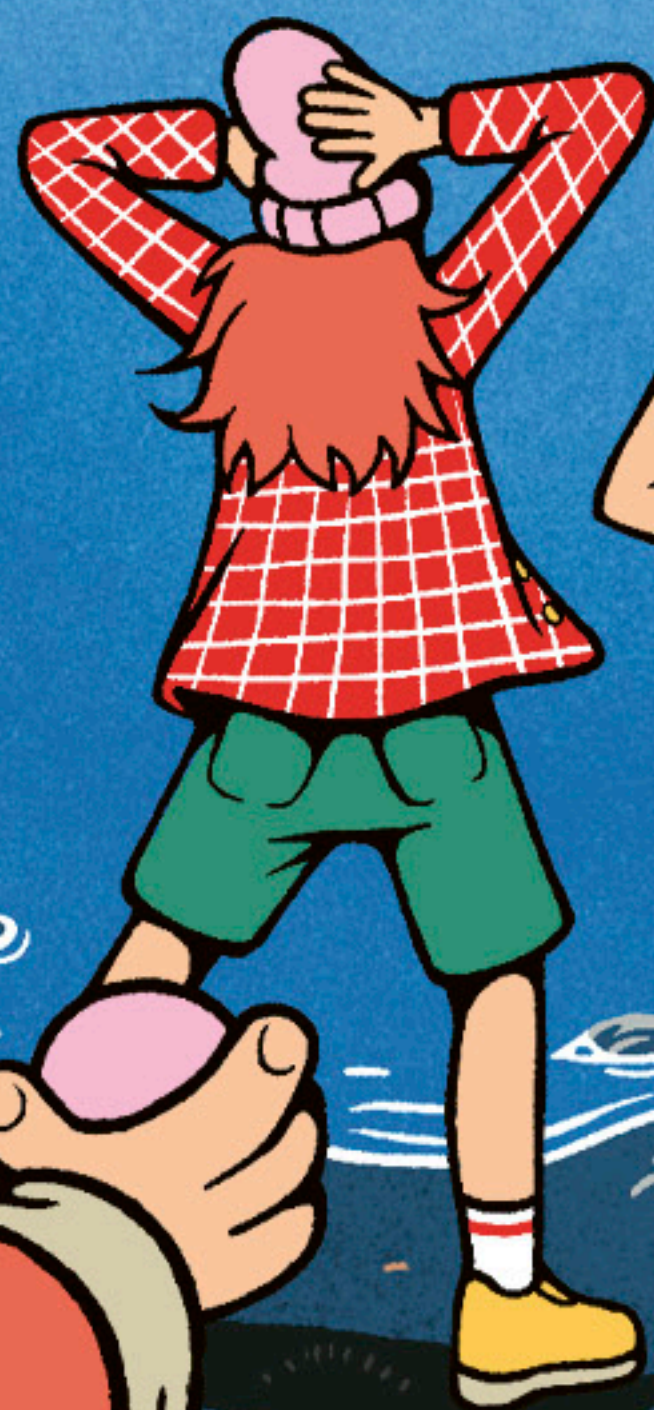
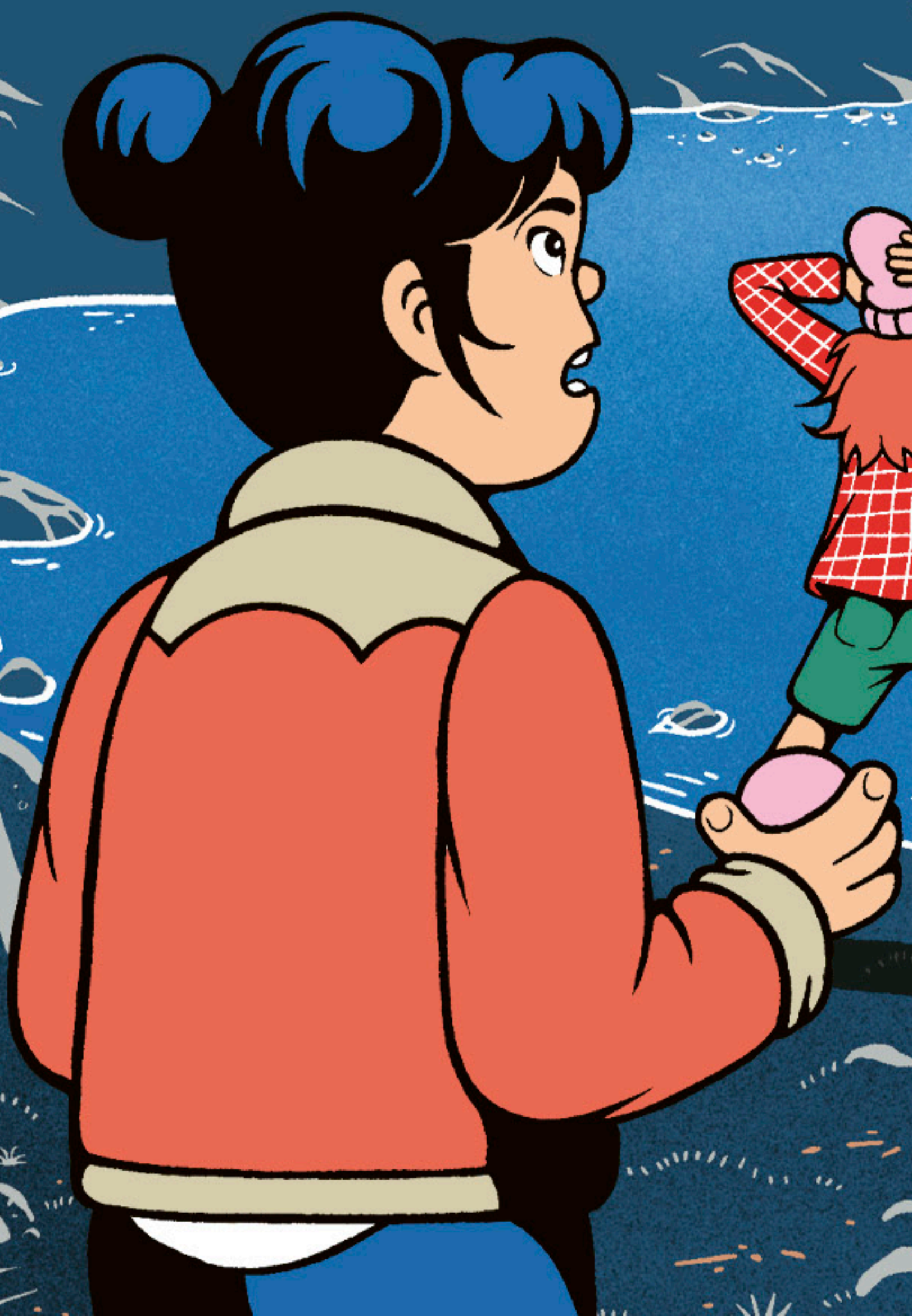
Illustrated by
Stephen Maurice-Graham

THE INCIDENT AT

CAMP
UFO

EST:
1973

NO:
1



COVER NOT
FINAL



CAMP UFO

LOCAL AREA MAP

"GETTING HERE IS PART OF THE ADVENTURE"

- ROUTES NOT SUITABLE FOR NON OFF ROAD VEHICLES.
- ONE WAY ONLY IN DIRECTION SPECIFIED.
- NO RIGHT TURN
- NO LEFT TURN



THE SATNAV IS TOTALLY FLIPPING USELESS!

It was raining hard on the drive to camp and the sky was getting dark. Frankie and Val and their dad were lost (and had been for some time...)

"Er, maybe just use the map they sent, dad?" said Frankie.

"Bored" said Val, kicking the seat. "Bored. Bored..."

"Trying to drive here!" snapped Dad, passing another identical – and unhelpfully signposted – junction.

"Can one of you lot PLEASE help me?" - So... CAN YOU?



Follow the map to get Frankie and Val to the Camp!



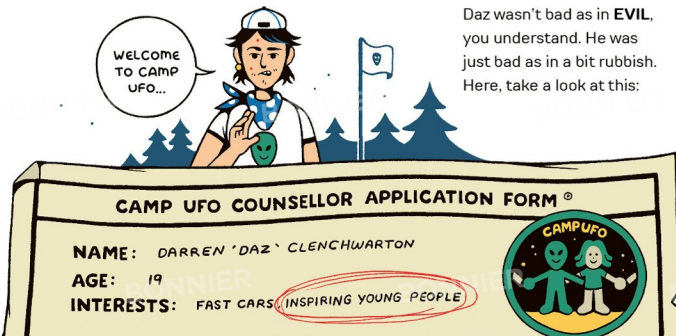
FRANKIE and **VAL** weren't late, though. They were early. 'Early Birds' – kids whose parents for one reason or another paid extra for them to start camp a day early. For alien-obsessed Val, this was a no brainer. And for Frankie, this was because Val was her sister.

PAWAN was also an Early Bird, however he was quite looking forward to camp. He didn't generally like to stray too far from his **EPIC** (and uber expensive) gaming setup, but he was at least happy to find a camp that was UFO-themed. Most other camps seemed to be off-puttingly outdoorsy or themed around ***shudder*** sport. At least here he had his phone.



XINYI did **NOT** want to be an Early Bird. She didn't want to be at camp **AT ALL**. She missed her home and she really missed her dog. She also struggled to talk to new people, so naturally, just as she was trying to pluck up the courage to utter a 'Hi', **DAZ**, the bad camp counsellor, interrupted.

Daz wasn't bad as in **EVIL**, you understand. He was just bad as in a bit rubbish. Here, take a look at this:



Daz couldn't care less about inspiring anyone. He just wrote that to get the job. "I think I'm supposed to be giving you a tour..." Daz said with absolutely no confidence.

"I have a question first: why is everything alien-themed? Do we get to do space stuff?" asked Pawan, hopefully.

"WAIT! STOP THE TOUR! START AGAIN!"



"Frankie and Val," said Frankie, introducing the siblings. "Sorry we're late, Dad got grumpy with the satnav..."

"Yeah, reception is **RUBBISH** here!" agreed Pawan. He offered Frankie a fist to bump. "Pawan. Ninth level Sword Mage, max XP." Frankie bumped him back with polite hesitation. She was fairly sure he just introduced himself with a video game rank (?) and didn't really know how to react. Pawan figured she was too impressed to speak.



"I'm Xinyi," offered Xinyi softly from behind the group. Frankie smiled at her.

"Right, everyone's here. Let's do the tour," said Daz, somewhat attempting to do his job. "Oh and um..." he pulled some crumpled up forms from the clipboard, "I think you're meant to fill these out."

'Sixty years ago, our founder, James Aldiss-Kneale III, was camping by the lake when he saw strange lights in the sky...'

Getting to know U(FO)!

Name: Frankie **Age:** 14

Pronouns: She/Her

Favourite Food: Fish Tacos

Favourite thing in the World:

Bearcats – half cat,
half bear, all awesome!

What's in your pocket right now?

Hairband, chewing gum

If you were a biscuit what biscuit would you be: Homemade chia and coconut oatie



'Inspired to share the magical splendour of the great outdoors with young people...'

Getting to know U(FO)!

Name: Pawan **Age:** 14

Pronouns: He/Him

Favourite Food: Food is fuel.

Also, burgers

Favourite thing in the World:

Anything I can game on
(+ decent Wi-Fi)

What's in your pocket right now?

Nothing now you've TAKEN MY PHONE!
Actually, I do carry a vintage first edition
Virtubuddi which is worth loads.

If you were a biscuit what biscuit would you be: Lambas bread (for the uninformed, that's a Tolkien Elf biscuit)



'... and, no doubt, keen to cash in on the craze for all things extra-terrestrial sweeping the nation...'

DAMNIT VAL!

I NEVER TOUCHED IT!

Getting to know U(FO)!

Name: Val **Age:** 12

Pronouns: Whatever

Favourite Food: I literally eat anything – even you *gnom gnom gnom*

Favourite thing in the World:

My sister... NOT. Umm... loud noises?
BLAM! Hahaha!

What's in your pocket right now?:

A can of sticky string. Waterbombs.
A bottle of water to fill the bombs.

If you were a biscuit what biscuit would you be: ALL THE BISCUITS!
Call me Captain Biscuity 'Le Crumb'
Biscuit Lord Mayor of Biscuit-Town

'...And so Camp UFO was born. Are YOU ready for an Out of This World Adventure!'

Getting to know U(FO)!

Name: Xinyi **Age:** 13

Pronouns: She/Her

Favourite Food: Nai Nai's crab soup dumplings. Delish!

Favourite thing in the World:

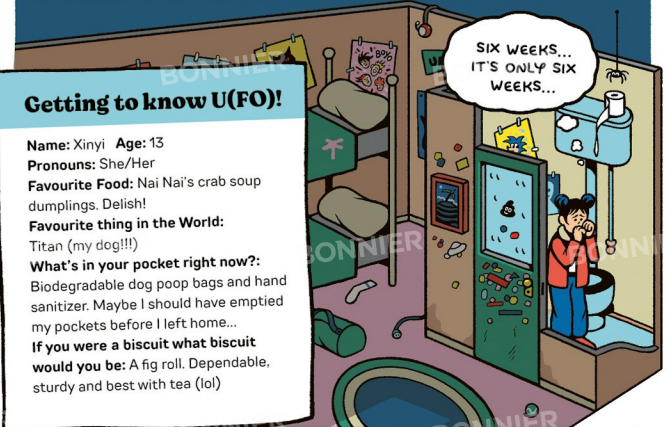
Titan (my dog!!!)

What's in your pocket right now?:

Biodegradable dog poop bags and hand sanitizer. Maybe I should have emptied my pockets before I left home...

If you were a biscuit what biscuit would you be: A fig roll. Dependable, sturdy and best with tea (lol)

SIX WEEKS... IT'S ONLY SIX WEEKS...





Pawan glanced around at the dark forest, the glistening lake and the far-off mountains... "Right, done that. What now?"

"Um..." said Daz, scanning his list. "How about ghost stories? Anybody know any?" Nobody did.

"Come on!" Val whined. "Something scary HAS to have happened here. A masked local with a murderous vendetta against camp kids? Mutant blood-sucking leeches? A tragic dodgeball accident?"

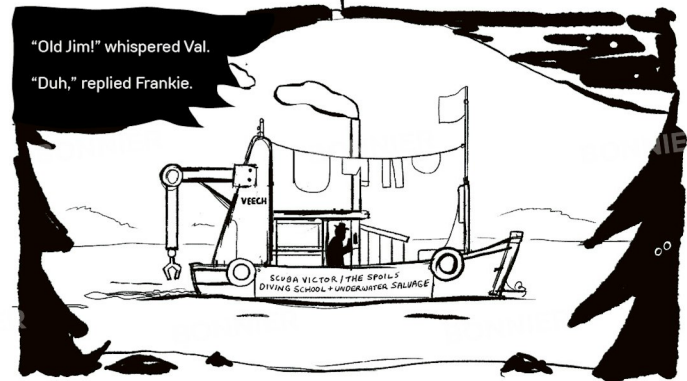
Daz thought for a moment. "Well, there is OLD JIM. He's this weird old timer who's lived alone in the woods for... well, longer than anyone can remember. He's just always there. Lurking. Sometimes you see him on the lake in a boat, cackling like this." Daz pulled a face like a cat that was about to be sick and produced a deep hacking cough.



Frankie, Val and Xinyi tensed. Even Pawan looked momentarily less sulky. "Go on..." prompted Frankie after quite a bit of silence. "Well... that's it really," Daz admitted. "So that's your ghost story, is it?" said Val "An old bloke lives in the wood, has a cough and boats around a bit?" "Well, yeah," Daz mumbled, defensively. "I mean, he is quite weird..."

ACH! **ACH!**
ACH! **ACH!**

The gang froze as a deep, hacking cough echoed across the valley. On the lake, a rusty old boat quietly chugged into view with a hooded old man hunched over the wheel.



"Old Jim!" whispered Val.

"Duh," replied Frankie.

The Early Birds watched in silence as the boat disappeared out of view.

"I mean... he's not that scary...?" said Frankie.

"Yeah," Val agreed, rather uncharacteristically. "He can't help being old and coughing."

"Forget it!" huffed Daz, giving up all pretence of 'inspiring young people' for the day.

"I'm going to bed. Put the fire out before you leave and be careful of the... uh... water." He waved vaguely towards the lake before scuttling off in the direction of the hut.

"C-can he do that?" asked Xinyi. The others turned to her, surprised.

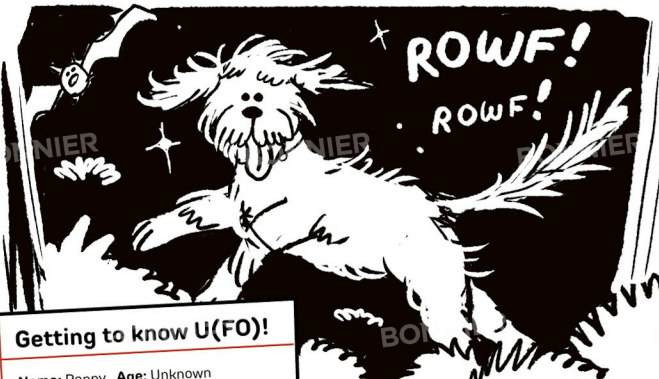
This was the first thing they remembered Xinyi saying since they arrived.

"He is a TERRIBLE camp counsellor!" she added.

Then suddenly, she screamed.

AAAHHHH!!!

Out of the dark wood, a furry figure with teeth and claws rampaged toward the gang.



Getting to know U(FO)!

Name: Poppy Age: Unknown
Pronouns: She/Her/Good Girl
Favourite Food: Ball
Favourite thing in the World: Ball
What's in your pocket mouth right now?: Ball
If you were a biscuit what biscuit would you be: Dog biscuit



"It's a DOGI!" exclaimed Xinyi, bundling over to the furry creature before the others could even register the transformation of their quiet campmate to a doggy fangirl. "Who's a good boy! Who's a good...No! She's a girl! On her collar it says Poppy! Helloo Poppy!" Poppy's tail thumped in reply. She LOVED when people knew her name.

"Where did she come from?" frowned Frankie.

"I don't know," Pawan shrugged. "Maybe she's the camp dog?"

Xinyi excitedly grabbed the ball Poppy had dropped. "Do you want your ball, Poppy? Okay, go fetch!" She launched the ball as far as she could, to which Poppy sprang up in response, skilfully turning herself over mid-air to catch it.



SPOILER ALERT: THIS WAS NOT AS INTERESTING AS IT WAS GOING TO GET.

INCIDENT INCOMING

LOOK AT THAT STAR.
IT'S MOVING!



THEN IT'S NOT A STAR, DUH.
IT'S A PLANE, OR A SATELLITE.



DOES IT... DOES IT LOOK LIKE IT'S
GETTING BIGGER? OR... CLOSER?



OH MY GOSH IT'S FALLING THIS WAY!
IT'S FALLING THIS WAY!!

