

# Creative Control

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*Ohnoes! A H\*R fanfic!?*

*Yup. Be prepared for the random.  
And yes, they're humanish in this story.  
Or part of the story, anyway.*

*Boo.*

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# 1 - Disturbed Peace

Strong Badia.

A place where the population is tired. A place where the only danger is that bear holding a shark. A place where the fence is ideal for mural painting. A place where amazing things happen. A place of complete peace and harmony.

“THE CHEAT!!! I told you to fill the bucket with vinegar, not Mountain Dew!”

Or maybe not.

“Who really cares?” retorted The Cheat. “This plan is never going to work.”

“Of course it will!” argued Strong Bad. “When Homestar takes the bucket to Marzipan’s, I’ll launch the bicarb soda, and it will asplode all over her garden! Without a garden, she can’t win the garden contest! How can we sabotage her garden with *Mountain Dew*?”

“This plan is *stupid*. It’s not going to work.”

“Well, it won’t now, thanks to you!”

“It wasn’t *ever* going to work!”

“Yes it was!”

“STOP IT!!” groaned Strong Mad.

They ignored him.

“Why do we always follow *your* plans, anyway? And why does the writer keep emphasising words by putting them in italics?”

“Because my plans *rock*, El Cheaterito. As do italics.”

“Italics *suck*. So do your plans. And your lame nicknames.”

“Hey! No one insults the nicknames of Teh SB, not even you, CheatBob MoronPants!”

“This is ridiculous. I can’t believe I have to put up with you.”

As the two were arguing, Homestar walked past them.

“Hey, guys!” he said. “Has you got that bucket-o water that I comes over here to pick up?”

“Uh...” Think fast, SB. “Yeah, man. But the water was... abducted... by these... antelope... who drink water. So we put poison in there instead.”

“Aww, cool! Poison is my favourite colour!” Homestar guzzled down the contents of the bucket in one greedy mouthful. “Wow! This poison tastes like Mountain Dew.”

“Yeah, whatever. Say, can you steal me a pair of oven mitts from Marzipan’s kitchen for me? I lost mi- I mean, I never had oven mitts.”

“Aw-wight, Pom Pom.”

Homestar left quickly. The Cheat was not impressed.

“I thought / was your henchman.”

“Well, yeah, but... you’ve passed your prime. You’re no use to me anymore.”

“What are you talking about? I’m nowhere near past my prime.”

"Dude, you're thirty-nine years old. That's, like, a hundred and fifty... six... in The Cheat-years."

"I'm *twelve*, moron. It sounds like you're the one getting old and senile."

"Senile? What are you talking about? That would make me like H-homsar." He cringed as he said Homsar's name. "That guy creeps me out, man."

"Daaa-aaa-aaaah! I'm the Seven-Eleven of the ages!" said Homsar, who suddenly popped out of the bucket. Strong Bad yelped in surprise.

The Cheat chuckled.

"Only someone as old and uncool as you would be scared by something like that."

"Uncool!?" cried Strong Bad. "But I gots to be cool! There *is* a reason why the ladies love me, you know."

"Oh, I thought you just paid them to hang around and make out with you."

It was not the remark, but The Cheat's smirk that caused Strong Bad to lose it.

"Ooh, you're in for it now, Cheateron McDorkson. You do that one more time-"

He did, of course.

"That's it. You're out of here, Cheatiot! You no longer have the privilege of being my lackey. You're officially *fired*."

The Cheat was outraged.

"*Fired!?* You don't even *pay* me! With money, I mean. Pencil shavings *do not count*."

"Fine. You're being disowned. You're a dog, aren't you?"

The Cheat shot Strong Bad a cold stare which could rattle even the most ferocious bear-holding-a-shark.

"No, Strong Bad. I'm not a dog. I *am* leaving, though."

The Cheat stormed into the house.

"*What are you doing?* Get the crap out of here!"

He gathered all the food and other supplies he could carry in his small yellow arms.

"The Cheat, if you don't leave right now-"

He stormed out of the house.

"*Get. Out. Of my face. NOW.*"

He disappeared over the hill."

He took my apron," said Strong Bad.

## 2 - Impatience

“Coach Z, I thought I asked you to replace the batteries in this thing.”

Coach Z whimpered. I usually had that effect on him.

“I did.”

“Then why isn’t it working?”

I shook the remote in front of his face.

“Jeez, I dunno... maybe The Chort came ‘round and borrowed them for somethin’?”

This was ridiculous. “Like *what?*”

“Um...”

I sighed. “Just find out what’s wrong with it.”

“Why don’t you get Bubs to fix it?”

“Because Bubs has done enough for me over the past week. Besides, I don’t know where he is. He wasn’t at the Concession Stand when I checked earlier.”

Before Coach Z could ask exactly what Bubs had done for me, the latter walked through the door.

“Nice timing, Bubso. Can you work out why the remote’s not working?”

“Coach Z forgot to replace the batteries.”

“I did *not!*”

Bubs rolled his eyes. “Give it here.”

I tossed him the remote. He studied it for a moment before giving me his analysis.

“It’s broken.”

“Nice work, Captain Obvious. What exactly is wrong with it?”

“Maybe it’s-”

“Shut up, Coach.”

Bubs frowned. “It seems to have short-circuited. What did you do, dunk it in the sink?”

“I haven’t *used* the sink, Bubs. There’s got to be a logical reason why it’s not working.”

I grabbed the remote and flipped it over. The batteries were gone. I glared at Coach Z.

“What are you lookin’ at me for? I didn’t take them!”

“Then who did?”

“Um... The Chort?”

“Why do you automatically blame him for everything?”

“Because I saw him take them.”

Duh.

“Why didn’t you tell me earlier?”

“Well, you were yelling at me...”

“Give it a *rest*, you two.” Bubs snatched the remote from my hands. “If we want to find The Cheat before he does something stupid with those batteries, we have to hurry.”

“What would The Cheat want with my dead batteries?”

“*Your* dead batteries? But I paid for them!”

“Shut up, Coach.”

He would have responded to that had Bubs not grabbed him by the neck.

### 3 - Slight Confusion

The Cheat tossed the batteries on the top of the pile. Homestar was confused.

"But The Cheat, what are you going to do with all this useless junk?"

"It's not junk. Well, ok, maybe it is junk. But it's certainly not useless."

Homestar gave him a blank stare.

"Oh, ok, it *is* useless. But it gives me something to do, ok? It's not like I've got that idiot Strong Bad around anymore to keep me occupied."

He looked around.

"I really should have brought my computer."

He grabbed a purple handkerchief from the pile and tied it around his neck.

"I'm going to sneak over to Strong Bad's house and grab my iMac. You stay here. Don't touch anything, and *don't let anyone in*. Got that?"

"...huh? Sowwy, I was looking at the couch."

"Good."

The Cheat disappeared out the door.

"Uhh, why am I guarding my own house again?"

Homestar sat down on his stool and looked up at the massive pile of random stolen items. 'Why is The Cheat such a jerk, anyways?' he thought, and suddenly fell asleep.

---

The Cheat slipped in through the window of the house of Strong. Tiptoeing past Strong Sad's room, he snuck into his computer room. He lifted the computer off the desk and made to leave the room when he froze in place at the sound of a voice.

"Strong Bad, have you seen my scanner?"

Oh crap. Strong Sad's coming in.

The Cheat knew better than to panic; instead, he charged out the door and into Strong Sad. Or rather, *over* Strong Sad. He jumped out the window, leaving Strong Sad on the ground.

Strong Sad sighed. "This is just not my day."

---

Homestar was dreaming. Fluffy white marshmallow clouds drifting over the Mountain Dew sea. What a tasty dream. He jumped from cloud to cloud, eating them as he went. Suddenly he saw a figure. A Mountain Dew bottle, maybe? Nah, it couldn't be. It was yellow. And it had arms and legs. And spots. And a purple hankie around its neck. And it was yelling at him.

"HOMESTAR!! Wake up, you no-armed whitey!"

Homestar woke up. "I need to pee."

"I don't care. Did anyone else come in here?"

He thought for a moment. "No."

"Are you sure?"

"No."

The Cheat smacked his forehead. "*Who came in?*"

"I was having the tastiest dream before you came in."

"Homestar-"

"Homsar says he's a truck full of cranberries."

"HOMESTAR!!!!"

"Aw-wight, it was Strong Bad. He said he wanted his apron back."

The Cheat looked at his pile of stuff. "*Homestar!* Half of my stuff is gone!"

"What? It's not like you needed it anyway."

"What would you know- wait a minute." He searched through the pile. "Oh crap! He took the laser gun!"

"You have a laser gun?"

"I *had* a laser gun. I nicked it from Bubs."

"That's illegal."

"Yeah, well, so is the gun. Now, come on. I have to get it back." The Cheat dragged Homestar out the front door.

"But why do I have to come?"

"Because I can't even trust you to guard *your own house*. So we're getting someone else. I think you can help me."

Homestar gulped. He was just smart enough to know that whatever The Cheat meant by 'help' couldn't be good.

## 4 - Twisted

The Poopsmith was bored. It seemed there was no way to break the endless monotony of shovelling crap. 'Surely there is some way to get out of this stupor?' he thought. His thoughts were instantly answered by a little yellow guy and an armless white dude.

He shook his head.

"Aww, come on!" nagged The Cheat. "I desperately need your help!"

The Poopsmith narrowed his eyes.

"I do! I can't guard the stuff myself, and I sure can't trust this armless idiot to do it!"

"Hey!" interjected Homestar. "I'm not armless!"

"Whatever. *Please help us!*"

The Poopsmith snorted.

"I'll give you Homestar!"

The Poopsmith raised an eyebrow. Homestar jumped. Literally.

"But- but you can't give me away! I'm too delicate to be stuck around a guy shovelling crap all the time!"

"Watch me."

The Poopsmith shook his head. You do that a lot when you're a Poopsmith.

"Come on!" he nagged. "I'll do anything! Just name it, and I'll do it!"

The Poopsmith blinked.

"Oh, right. The vow of silence. Well, there's gotta be something I can do to get you to help me!"

He looked at the Poopsmith, and at the pile of whatsit, and had an idea.

The Cheat dragged the wriggling sack through Homestar's front door.

"What did this have to do with the pile of poosit?"

"Nothing, Homestar. But he didn't know that until we nabbed him."

"But you told him-"

"It was a trick, Homestar. I tricked him."

"I don't get it."

The Cheat sighed. Getting through to this idiot was harder than it seemed.

"Just forget it. He's essential to the plan."

"You have a plan?"

"I do now."

"Cool! What is it?"

"I'm not telling you."

"Aww, come on! Why not?"

"Because you're untrustworthy. You could spill the beans at any time. This plan could change the way Free Country USA is run for all eternity."

"Why do you want to change Usa?"

"Because it sucks and I'm bored."

"Fair enough."

Homestar stared.

“Why?”

“Keep talking and I’ll gouge your eyes out with a sharpened pencil.”

“You’re twisted.”

“Yup.”

“Wow. I was kinda expecting you to deny that.”

## 5 - A Lost Possession

“Calm down, King.”

Tori sighed. The King of Town was overreacting. As usual.

“MY POOPSMITH MY POOPSMITH MY POOPSMITH MY POOPSMITH-”

“King-”

“OH NO OH NO MY POOPSMITH MY POOPSMITH MY POOPSMITH MY-”

“King, would you just-”

“THEY’VE STOLEN MY POOPSMITH-”

“King, SHUT UP!!”

He shut up.

Strong Sad sighed. “Crime rate is on the rise. Any idea why?”

“Try your brother.” Desdemona smiled. A weird twist between angelic and downright evil.

“Strong Bad’s bad, alright, but mass theft like this isn’t his style.”

“Maybe it was The Cheat?”

“Maybe. Strong Bad fired him, though. He usually acted on Strong Bad’s orders.”

“Do you think he might have started acting on his own free will?”

“It’s possible.”

“We need to find out.”

“How?”

“I dunno. Have you seen anything suspicious?”

“Now that you mention it, I do remember The Cheat breaking into the computer room to nab his iMac.”

“But it was *his*. He was just retrieving his own possession. That doesn’t necessarily explain anything.”

“We should head to the crime scene.”

“What for?”

“You know, search for evidence?”

“How do we do that?”

“Why do you ask so many questions?”

“I don’t know. Ask Tori.”

“Why?”

“Because she created me.”

“Do fan characters always ask this many questions?”

“I don’t know. Ask Tori.”

“Stop saying that.”

“Ok.”

“Well, that brought this conversation to a screeching halt.”

“What conversation?”

“You’re right. It wasn’t much of a conversation.”

“No, seriously. What conversation?”

Tori interjected. “You know what we need?”

“Tell us.”

“A professional.”

The others stared at her.

*“What?”*

## 6 - The Professionals (seriously)

“Coach Z, get the phone.”

“Why do I have to get the phone?”

“Because I told you to.”

“That’s stupid. I shouldn’t have to take orders for you.”

“We should argue about the batteries again.”

“Why?”

“One word - continuity.”

“This story has *no* continuity. The description says we’re all humans, and yet the narrator still calls Homestar a no-armed whitey.”

“We have a narrator?”

“Apparently.”

“Right.”

“And I’ve been totally out of character this whole time. What’s up with that?”

“Quit talking about the story.”

“Why not? This is, like, fourth wall breakage at its finest.”

“Is it possible to break the fourth wall in a story?”

“Apparently.”

“Have you noticed that the writer keeps repeating certain short quotes?”

“That’s a bit hypocritical.”

“What?”

“You told me to stop talking about the story, but you’re doing it yourself.”

“So?”

“That’s being a hypocrite.”

“I don’t like you right now.”

“Why?”

“Because you keep proving me wrong.”

“But I haven’t proven you wrong.”

“See? You just did it again.”

“That doesn’t make sense.”

“Why does the writer keep writing chapters with only dialogue?”

“This is the *first* chapter with only dialogue.”

“Well, the previous chapter had mostly dialogue.”

“That’s different, though. It still had a scene setup.”

“This chapter had a scene setup. Just in dialogue.”

“*What* setup? You telling me to get the phone?”

“Do the readers even remember who’s talking anymore?”

“Well, they will now.”

“Why?”

“Because I told them that you told me to get the phone.”

“So?”

“Stop using one-word lines of dialogue.”

“I’m allowed. I’m the writer.”

“So why did you call yourself ‘the writer’ earlier? You don’t usually speak like that.”

“Shut up, Coach.”

“No.”

“Coach Z, get the phone.”

## 7 - The Really Short Chapter

Tori hung up.

“That was pointless.”

She stuffed her phone back in her pocket.

## 8 - A Few Deep Thoughts

The Cheat was thinking. Thinking about what he was doing. And whether it was the right thing to do. What was he really going to accomplish from doing this, apart from his own satisfaction? Was he actually regretting his actions?

“Nah.”

---

Homestar walked through the door.

“Oh hey, Homestar!”

“Oh great, the hippie.”

Marzipan stared at him.

“Where have you been?”

“My house.”

“That makes sense.”

“It does. But The Cheat doesn’t.”

“The Cheat was at your house?”

Homestar gasped. “I’ve said too much! He’s gonna get me now!”

He started running in circles around his girlfriend.

“Homestar, what’s going-”

“He’s gonna kill me! He’s gonna kill me!”

“What are you-”

“I’M GONNA DIE!!!”

“*HOMESTAR!!!*”

Homestar fell still and silent.

“Wow. That’s, like, the eleventh time someone’s said my name in this story.”

“Homestar, shut up.”

“Make that nine.”

“Homestar, I’ve been thinking.”

“About cornbread?”

“...no, Homestar. About us.”

“What about us?”

“Do you think we’re doing the right thing here?”

“Huh?”

“Us going out. Do you think it’s right if we keep this up?”

“Well, yeah. I mean, I’m, like, a sporty cool guy and you’re a dirtless hippie. We’re a perfect match.”

“This is exactly what I’m talking about. We keep breaking up and then we always get back together. Do you really think it’s worth it?”

“Did Elvis ever get barrels thrown at him?”

“...no, actually.”

“My point exactly.”

“Homestar, I’m breaking up with you.”

---

Bubs was on a silent rampage.

“Hey, Bubs-”

“NO.”

Ok, so not really a silent rampage.

“Bubs, what’s up with-”

“*What?*”

“Why are you being such a bi-”

“*A what?*”

“...a dog.”

Bubs sighed.

“Do you really need to know?”

“Are you going to tell me?”

At that moment, Coach Z walked back into the room.

“Hi, Coachy.”

Coach Z blushed. “Coachy?”

“Am I not allowed to give you a nickname?”

“Of course, it’s just-”

“Just what?”

“Why are you being so kind to me all of a sudden?”

I smiled. “What are you talking about?”

Coach Z stared. “Was that an attempt at a flirt?”

“Yeah, I guess.”

“Well, it was pretty pathetic.”

“Shut up, Coach.”

“Hey, where’d Bubs go?”

Bubs was nowhere to be seen. And I suddenly knew why.

“He’s gone to get doughnuts.”

Or maybe not.

## 9 - Pwned

“You just *had* to take the laser gun, didn’t you?”

Strong Bad was in a panic. New recruits can be so stressful.

“Out of all the bits of useless stolen crap in that pile, you had to take the *laser gun*? I mean sure, it’s a laser gun. Laser guns are wicked and awesome and wicked awesome. But that was the gun The Cheat *specifically* stole from the concession stand! Don’t you really think there’s a reason why he wanted that *particular* one? It was a limited edition! They only made *two* of those friggin’ things! And you *took* it! What is *wrong* with you?”

“Aaaaa’m a little too close for comfort!”

Strong Bad threw a book at him.

---

Bubs slumped down at the counter. Life was hard on him. Why was it that when he finally finds a girl who’s nice, single and actually notices he’s there, she’s snatched away from him by someone else? He pounded his fists onto the counter. Stupid world. Stupid, stupid world. Stupid, stupid, stupid- crap, is there a customer coming?

“Hey, Bubs.”

Bubs frowned. “What do you want, Homestar?”

“To get away from Hippie.”

“Your girlfriend?”

“Oh, no, she broke up with me again.”

“Why?”

“I dunno. I think she’s gone all ‘fiercely independent’ on me again.”

“Homestar, did you come up here for a reason?”

“Freedom.”

Bubs glared. “No. We’re not resorting to quoting previous adventures.”

Looks like you are now.

“W-*why*? It’s stupid and unoriginal and not funny.”

Oh, it’s very funny, Bubs. To us.

“Who’s *us*?”

Me.

“Oh, very nice, Miss Writer-pants. You think you’re so special just because you control what we all say and do in this frickin’ story!”

Yes. I do. And there’s nothing you can do about it.

(Bubs was losing his temper. Again.)

“What are you talking about-”

Stop arguing with the narrator.

“Shut up, Tess.”

“That’s right. I know who you are. Get out of that one, why don’t you?”

Oh snap.

## 10 - Back and Forth

Now that I'm done degrading my favourite characters (for now), let's get back to The Cheat, shall we?

"Let me guess, Strong Bad sent you?"

He stared at Homsar, who said nothing.

"Isn't this usually the part when you come up with this random word salad?"

"Salad is ten times the length of my shoebox!"

"Whatever. Are you gonna actually *attempt* to take my stuff?"

"Daaaa-aaah! I'm the illustrator of Carol's guardian angel!"

The Cheat glared. "Get out of the house."

Right then, a scrunched-up piece of paper hit him in the side of the head.

The Cheat unfolded the piece of loose leaf, and read the note scrawled on the inside.

*HAHAHaha! You should learn  
to pay more attention!  
- SB*

It hit him then like a lightning bolt. He turned around to find his stuff still there. Except for one thing...

"My computer!"

The Cheat fiercely tore up the piece of paper. Strong Bad had crossed a sacred line here. No one touched a Flash artist's computer and gets away with it. Not even the infamous Strong Bad. Oh, he was going to pay, alright. With his life. Nah, we're not getting that extreme. But Strong Bad's not gonna like what's coming to him.

---

We were both curled up together on the couch asleep. What? We've had, like, no alone time in this story. So anyway, Coach Z and I were asleep. And sleep-talking, apparently.

"Coach Z, get the butter."

"But... why me?"

"Because you *ate* the last stick."

"Oh yeah... Tess, get the butter."

"Are you kidding me?"

"Yes. Yes I am."

"Y-you asking for a challenge?"

"Yeah... like Stinkoman."

"Who the hell is he?"

"You know, double deuuuuuuuce..."

"Oh yeaah. Remember that time when he was fighting that guy and he did that thing?"

“No, he didn’t do anything that time. That was the other guy.”

“Are you sure? I was pretty sure he did something that time.”

“Well, you’re obviously mistaken, German.”

“Wha- did you just call me Polish?”

“No, I’m not being racist.”

“Good. Because I thought you said I was fat.”

“No, I think *you* said that *I* was fat.”

“I never called you that.”

“*And why not?*”

“Because I love you.”

Coach Z woke with a start.

“You *what?*”

---

Strong Sad looked at Tori.

Tori looked at Desdemona.

Desdemona looked at the King of Town.

The King of Town looked at Strong Sad.

“So what do we do now?”

## 11 - Serious Trouble

Coach Z had me cornered. Figuratively.

"I didn't say it!"

"Yes you did! I heard you!"

"You were *asleep!*"

"That didn't stop us having a conversation."

"It wasn't a conscious conversation!"

"Meaning?"

"Meaning we both had no control over what we were saying!"

"You did! You're the one writing this story!"

Crap. This wasn't good.

"*It wasn't me!*"

"Then who was it?"

I didn't bother trying to answer. I'd run out of words, and Coach Z was running out of patience. I had to end this argument before Bubs came back, or it would be all over for me.

"*Fine.* I said it. What are you going to do about it? Throw me in jail for all eternity?"

"Who's to say I wouldn't?"

"What is your *problem?* What have you got against me being-"

I couldn't continue. There was no need.

"Look, Coach..."

Oh God. I was going to be in serious trouble for this. But what else could I do? I grabbed him by the collar and kissed him. Unfortunately for me, Bubs chose that exact moment to walk back into the house.

---

The Cheat stormed out of the house.

"That friggin' idiot! How *dare* he! I can't believe he did that," bla bla bla. The Cheat's rambling gets pretty boring after a while. Whatever. All you need to know is that he's off to get his computer back.

"Hey! Why did you cut off some of my dialogue?"

Why are you characters all so rebellious?

"Because you're a crap narrator."

Hey, shut up! I'm the one writing this story!

"I heard you got sprung by Bubs a couple of paragraphs ago."

Ooh, you're gonna pay for that.

"Says who?"

Me. Duh.

“I don’t like you.”