



## Series 2

### Episode 2: Buckle Down, Schmegeggie, Buckle Down

Lily Maru sat at her desk, clicking away at her computer.

Princeton? *Click.*

Harvard? *Click.*

Upenn? *Click.*

Brown? *Click.*

Yale? *Click.*

Upper Schmegeggie Community College for Total Losers? No click, because there was no such place. Which meant that that was probably where she'd end up going to college. Upper Schmegeggie. Community College. For Total Losers.

It was painful looking at all the college websites. Lily would have to pick one for early admission, and she was leaning toward Yale, because that's where her oldest sister Jasmine had gone, and the place had a nice feel to it, a mix of scholarship and camaraderie that appealed to her. Camellia, her second oldest sister, had gone to Princeton, but Lily felt that the home of the Tigers was just too bow tie and boater hat for her taste, which probably explained why Camellia had dropped out as a sophomore to front a rock band in Detroit of all places, before winding up at Stanford and an international business program. Her other sister, Dahlia, was still at MIT, but Lily did not have a scientific bone in her body, so that was definitely not right for her.

But who was she kidding? An Ivy? With her grades? She was third in her class. How could she possibly get into a good school with a miserable academic record like that?

Upper Schmegeggie Community College for Total Losers. Yep, that was it. Or something close to it.

*Click.* And, oh yeah, welcome to the Bahamas...

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**Facebook. News feed.** What's on your mind?

**Lily Maru** is going to rewrite her aff tonight.

*One hour ago.*

**Tucker Gallstone** and 6 others like this.

*11 comments*

**Tucker Gallstone** hahaha whats wrong with the ones you already have

**Lily Maru** its about an hour too long

**Tucker Gallstone** have you seen the Parsifal evidence

**Lily Maru** joint pain in otters? Got it.

**Tucker Gallstone** there's about 20 blocks against it though. Veil may be running it.

**Kennerji Allawalla** You going to the Pup?

**Tucker Gallstone** wouldn't miss it for the world. we're all going to totally bid up haha

**Kennerji Allawalla** How many cases do you have, Tucker?

**Tucker Gallstone** 3 affs 4 negs but none of them are any good

**Lily Maru** You could run your own tournament all by yourself

**Tucker Gallstone** hahaha

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It was after midnight, and the alarm was set for 6:15, giving her twenty minutes to get up and out to the bus in the morning. She should have been asleep hours ago, but Tucker Gallstone was simply too deep into working on her cases to notice, or care, about anything as counterproductive as sleeping. She may have been a fifteen-year-old high school sophomore, by some reckonings, but by her own reckoning, Tucker was a debater. Period. Everything else was out of the running.

Oh, sure, she did her homework. She kept up with the assignments. Her grades were pretty good. She wasn't about to let bad performance at school get in the way of her real life. After all, if she starting slipping anywhere, they could tell her that she couldn't debate anymore: they wouldn't be so understanding about her taking off almost every Friday for some tournament or another. So she did what she was supposed to do, and occasionally a little more, just to cover all the bases. But when all was said and done, it was only debate that mattered.

The question, of course, is why. What was there about debating that had caused Tucker Gallstone to make it her definitional activity?

To be honest, she didn't really know.

If she had been, like, a total nerd, then it would be understandable. But she was popular and did a whole bunch of athletics and didn't seem nerdy in the least. On the outside, that is.

She was smart, but she wasn't blatant about it, certainly not a homework drone or anything. She could be in the top ten of her class without overworking herself, so why bother? She knew she was attractive enough—she was thin and tall and blonde and presentable—and she knew there were boys out there that were drawn to her, although none of them had impressed her much yet beyond being just friends to hang out with. No matter how you looked at it, she was a fairly average high school girl, blessed with a less gawky adolescence than most, open to whatever might grab her fancy.

And that fancy had been debate.

She loved debate. She loved thinking about debate. She loved writing cases, and rewriting cases, and then rewriting them again. She loved arguments, and she loved arguing. She loved progressive approaches and she loved traditional approaches. She liked talking persuasively to parent judges and flying faster than a gnat on crank in front of college judges. She liked traveling on school buses however far it took, she liked the lukewarm ziti they served in the high school cafeterias on Friday nights, she liked watching other people debate when she wasn't debating, scouting out who was running what and taking voluminous notes on it and prepping out her teammates on it.

She was a debater through and through. Of that there could be no doubt.

She had to be thankful that she went to Nighten Day, where they had an official, district-sanctioned debate program. In the northeast, debate programs were pretty rare. In her county immediately north of New York City, you could count the serious debate high schools on the fingers of one hand. In other counties nearby, you could count some of the programs on one fist. In most counties, you wouldn't need any arms at all.

Tucker had had a solid year as a freshman. She had won a lot of trophies, and made it to a couple of finals. She had gone to summer debate camp, and polished her skills. She had the potential, and she knew it, to be one of Tarnish Jutmoll's superheroes. There hadn't been a superhero on the Nighten Day School team for years now. And that was Tucker's goal. To be the next superhero.

Faster than a speeding bullet.  
More powerful than a locomotive.  
Able to leap tall buildings in a single bound.  
Look, up in the sky.  
It's SuperTucker!

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*Will Lily Maru get early acceptance into Upper Schmegeggie Community College for Total Losers?*

*Will Kennerji Allawalla get his cases written in time for the Pup-A-Roni?*

*Is Facebook the official social network of the National Forensic League?*

*Will Tucker Gallstone become a superhero?*

*Are there enough commercials during the Olympics, or should we order up a few more and eliminate the sports altogether?*

~~*Why don't debaters dress more like figure skaters?*~~ *Why don't more debaters dress more like figure skaters?*

**The answers to the above questions, and many others like them, will not be found in our next startling episode: "Webelo, Half Cub, Half Scout, or, Badges? We Do Have Badges, We Do Need Badges, We Do Need to Show You Our Stinkin' Badges!"**