

Frustrations with Exes and Whys

By

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FADE IN:

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY

DEVIN MARCUS (15), brown hair, regular build, sits at a desk in a quiet classroom. His school uniform is worn, creased and scruffy. Around him, other students write furiously on the paper in front of them.

Devin just stares at the unopened booklet which reads "Year 11 Algebra Exam."

He glances up at the analog clock on the far away wall, sighing when he sees the time.

DEVIN (V.O.)  
I hate Algebra.

He taps his pen on the desk. A few students look at him, annoyed.

DEVIN (V.O.)  
No, I seriously hate algebra. If there was a way of abolishing it from our school system, I would quite happily do so.

Devin looks behind him, at a GIRL (15) who writes neatly on her page.

DEVIN (V.O.)  
I hate people who like algebra even more.

The girl catches Devin watching her. He looks away, immediately.

Devin looks down at his exam paper.

DEVIN (V.O.)  
I guess I should at least make an effort.

He opens the test booklet, beginning to read.

DEVIN (V.O.)  
Question One: Solve the following--  
Two ex plus one and--

A frown develops on Devin's face.

DEVIN (V.O.)

What the hell does that sign mean?  
What is that? A weird arrow with a  
line underneath?

Devin circles the algebraic symbol that stands for 'equal or bigger than.' He puts a line through the question, moving on.

DEVIN (V.O.)

Question two: Harry wants to fence off his chicken run. The front of the chicken house is one metre wide and has no fence. Harry has not decided how wide to make the rectangular chicken run, but will make its length three times its width. Give an expression in terms of  $x$ , then simplify it, for the total... what the shit-balls?

Again, Devin just stares at his paper.

DEVIN (V.O.)

You'd think the dumb ass would think of finding a friggin' tape measure and doing this himself. Is D.I.Y. honestly that hard these days?

Devin looks around him, again. His classmates still write, without looking up.

DEVIN (V.O.)

Moving on.

He turns the page of the booklet, reading.

DEVIN (V.O.)

Question three: Harry has chickens, sheep and a three-legged cat--

He stops with the reading, looking up.

DEVIN (V.O.)

How the hell is the cat important?  
(going back to the paper)  
Altogether, he has twenty animals with a total of fifty-five legs. If 'C' represents the number of chickens and 's' represents the number of sheep, then  $c$  equals nineteen minus 's.'

(beat)  
 That doesn't make sense.  
 (beat)  
 Form a second equation and use this  
 to find the number of chickens and  
 sheep.

Devin looks up, clearly frustrated. He glares at nothing in particular.

DEVIN (V.O.)  
 Are you kidding me?

He slams his fist down on the desk. Devin's classmates look at him.

DEVIN  
 (mouthing)  
 Sorry.

Devin returns to his paper, a frown evident on his face.

DEVIN (V.O.)  
 In what twisted world does that  
 question make sense? How's about  
 this, you dumb ass... Count your  
 friggin' animals yourself, instead  
 of relying on some poor teenage sod  
 to come along and magically come up  
 with an algebraic equation to solve  
 your stupid problems that no-one  
 gives a rat's ass about.

Devin slams his fist down again.

GIRL  
 (from behind Devin)  
 Shhh!

DEVIN  
 Piss off!

The girl retreats to her exam.

Devin's eye catches a glance from a FRIEND from across the classroom. Devin creates a gun shape with his hand, before pretending to shoot himself.

The Friend sniggers, returning to his test.

DEVIN (V.O.)  
 Algebra just doesn't make sense.  
 It's unnatural to bring the

DEVIN (V.O.)  
alphabet into math. It's like  
trying to chew water. It's  
possible, but pointless.

Devin turns back to the cover page of the booklet.

He smiles as he writes '1 Devin + 1 Algebra test = One  
confused teenage kid.'

DEVIN (V.O.)  
Solve that equation, bitch.

The school bell rings. The kids get up to leave.

FADE OUT:

THE END.