

The Problems with Us

by

{REDACTED}

Opening credits. In shaky letters, THE PROBLEMS WITH US pops in one word at a time in time to music box sounds. After a brief pause showing the title, the music box sounds deteriorate, going off key and warbling as we cut to a "black screen"

SCENE 1

EXT. EVENING - THE FRONT OF THE MAIN CABIN AT CAMP

CAMP SUPERVISOR

(A burly, jolly character, his face hidden mostly by beard and the late evening shadow. The bottom half of his body is ghostly and is floating off the ground)

Alright counselors, that's a great week one from most everyone. Y'all are free for the weekend to go into town, call your folks, set up campfires, just don't burn the forest down, put em on the beach or designated fire spots. Thanks for your hard work, you done made this old man proud!

The counselors disperse with a cheer, dying into a low murmur of voices.

CAMP SUPERVISOR

All of you are dismissed! George, could I speak with you privately please.

GEORGE goes over to speak with the CAMP SUPERVISOR. Our camera slides over to see TOBY(at this point just an oddly shaped silhouette) from far away, slinking into the main cabin hall.

INT. EVENING - MAIN CABIN

We see TOBY (this time up close. He is a human with a goat head, but has 5 eyes, and twisting horns) with a sullen face making himself some coffee and then sitting at a table in the mess hall. He looks out the window, taking a sip of his coffee and watching the sun set. His frown deepens. We use a jump cut to zoom out to show JUNO (a human with a rat head: seemingly normal until she smiles and shows a set of wickedly sharp teeth) slowly sliding next to TOBY while he's caught in thought. TOBY takes another sip at which point-

JUNO

ROAAAR!(reminiscent of a lion's roar)

TOBY snorts into his coffee, flinging it all over his shirt.
JUNO breaks into laughter while TOBY glares.

TOBY
What do you want Juno, now that
you've ruined my shirt.

JUNO
(Wiping away a tear of
laughter)
Nothing, nothing, just wanted to
give you a quick scare, Toby. See
you at the campfire later?

TOBY
(Still glaring, but
looking down)
Yeah sure, once I change into
something that isn't full of
coffee.

He says this and looks up, but JUNO is already gone: he sees her out the window (we zoom in on this from with him in the corner) going to meet with KIT (a thin-faced girl with stubby horns and markings under her eyes) and GEORGE (human, but his head is simply a huge hairball, covering everything but his wide, toothy smile). They don't look through the window at all at TOBY, but instead speak for a bit. KIT looks very focused, looking back and forth between holding 2 coffee cups and her backpack on the ground. She then takes her cup of coffee and attempts to stab it onto her horn in order to free her hands, immediately dumping the coffee all over her. The three of them laugh, and head off in the same direction. TOBY glares at them all but lets his face drop to one of longing, sighs, and dumps out the last of his coffee. He puts his cup in the sink, and heads out. The faucet drips as we see the door close behind him. Fade to black.

END SCENE

EXT. DAY - SCENES FROM CAMP WITH CHILDREN - TRANSITION
SCENES

We see still shots that pan horizontally of each of the main counselors (TOBY, JUNO, GEORGE, and KIT) interacting with their campers. Scenes include: The opening ceremony, where the counselors stand in a line in front of a throng of children; TOBY looks terrified, while KIT and GEORGE are shaking with excitement, the only normal one among them being JUNO. TOBY seeing an injured camper and freaking out, while GEORGE immediately steps up and puts a bandaid on it. KIT falls into a stream, cue shocked look; campers laugh, and KIT begins to laugh as well. JUNO in a darkened scene scares GEORGE with the help of some of her campers; they laugh about it. JUNO plays increasingly malicious pranks, ending with one of her campers going "feral" to scare an unknown counselor. The last scene is her with her camper being confronted by the CAMP SUPERVISOR, cutting out to show the clearly shaken counselor, and JUNO and the wolfish

camper trying to hold back laughter. Fade to purple (dark).

SCENE 2

EXT. EVENING - THE FRONT OF THE MAIN CABIN AT CAMP

CAMP SUPERVISOR

Congrats on making it another week!
Some of you had a rough time this
week, but take this time to unwind,
and talk to me if you need
anything. Once again, you're free
to go into town, and don't burn
anything down in camp. Good work
everybody!

Another, weaker cheer goes up from the counselors. Cut to
TOBY standing on the outside of a group containing KIT,
GEORGE, and JUNO, as a couple other groups move away to do
their own activities.

GEORGE

Juno, like, you know me, I'm
usually down with your shenanigans,
but like, you really took it too
far this time.

KIT

Yeah Juno, like sure it was funny,
but someone could've really gotten
hurt this time around.

TOBY

(Attempting to join the
group)

Yeah Juno, not cool.

GEORGE gives TOBY a frown. It's unclear whether or not he's
angry because we can't see his eyes, but TOBY takes this
correctly to mean that he should back off, and falls silent.
JUNO is holding back tears but has an angry expression, not
one of remorse.

JUNO

(Whispered)

Jeez, I already said I was sorry.

GEORGE

What?

JUNO

(Loudly)

I said, you're both being big
babies! Nothing bad happened, and
it was funny, so what's the harm in
a little prank?

KIT

But it wasn't a "little" prank this time! You put one of your campers in danger, and for what, a quick laugh? I'm not one to talk about responsibility, but that was the definition of reckless!

JUNO

(Clearly crying now, she begins shouting)
Whatever! It's not my fault that you guys can't take a joke! I'll just find some other friends that actually have a sense of humor!

JUNO races off, not bothering to wipe her face. The CAMP SUPERVISOR drifts over.

CAMP SUPERVISOR

Is there a problem? Why'd Juno go running off like that?

TOBY opens his mouth, and gets unhappy looks from both KIT and GEORGE. He closes his mouth.

GEORGE

It's nothing. She's just like, stressed out you feel? Probably be best to let her be for a while.

KIT looks down uncomfortably, but not wanting to let JUNO get in trouble, but not knowing how to defuse the situation.

KIT

She missed her favorite sports game, the one where they throw the ball real good and we didn't tell her?

The CAMP SUPERVISOR is silent, looking at both of them, and finally turning to TOBY

CAMP SUPERVISOR

Toby, you got something to say?

TOBY

... No.

Cut out to the four of them. The CAMP SUPERVISOR stands there for a moment, then leaves. After he's out of sight, TOBY begins to argue with KIT and GEORGE soundlessly. Fade to black.

END SCENE

EXT. DAY - TRANSITION SCENES

This time, the stills focus on GEORGE and KIT. KIT starts to open up to GEORGE and TOBY about her special interest: speech bubbles detail an outlandish tale about a pair of duck siblings that find themselves in weirder and weirder situations: defeating a crime boss, dressed as superheroes to fight aliens, and eventually being dressed as very unamused clowns to bring down an evil ringmaster. TOBY eventually drifts away, uninterested. GEORGE is raptly paying attention, more to KIT than the speech bubbles. TOBY will make side eyes at this with a frown while speaking to campers. Fade to green (bright).

SCENE 3

INT. EVENING - MAIN CABIN

Unusually, we see JUNO walking in to the main cabin, with TOBY already sitting at a table, sipping a coffee and looking out what seems to be a darkened window. She initially looks around for a different place to sit, but finally decides to sit across from TOBY. She starts to speak, but is cut off by TOBY. She's initially mad at this, until TOBY points out the window where KIT is walking towards GEORGE in the back of the cabin.

TOBY

He's gonna get rejected.

JUNO

Oh no.

GEORGE stands from sitting on a step that leads up to the cabin, and begins to talk to KIT, pushing something into her hand. He gesticulates a little frantically, and then stands still. They both pause, with KIT staring at whatever GEORGE had put in her hand. She looks up and very decisively shakes her head, gives GEORGE the object, and puts a hand on his shoulder. She leaves, and GEORGE sits back down, frozen for a moment. He puts his head in his hands. Cut back to JUNO looking shocked, and TOBY simply finishing his coffee. He leaves without saying another word. Cut back out to GEORGE, still sitting with his head in his hands, fade to blue.

END SCENE

EXT. DAY - TRANSITION SCENES

Stills are once again panned across the screen. This time, most of the stills are of TOBY, in increasingly irritating situations with campers. TOBY first tries to show them safety procedures on a whiteboard, outside, and most of the kids aren't listening in any capacity. TOBY then takes them on a nature hike on which one camper tries to eat everything in sight, with TOBY trying to intervene at every step of the way. During this, many of the campers simply wander away, back to their cabins to play camp games with other campers. In most of these scenes, one of the others, JUNO, GEORGE,

and KIT step in, who the campers raptly attend to. TOBY finally gives up, and talks with the CAMP SUPERVISOR, who has to step in. The kids are unhappy, and TOBY's anxieties are only mildly assuaged. The week ends, and the campers are going home at the end of the week. The campers still give TOBY a group hug before leaving. Cut to pink screen.

SCENE 4

INT. AFTERNOON - MAIN CABIN

TOBY and KIT are sitting at a table together, having a hot mug of something together; not a particularly rare sight, but an odd one for sure. It's a zoomed out view, and like in the transition scenes, KIT is talking about her favorite show, Mallard Malady (name to be decided), via some large speech bubbles. Eventually, KIT starts talking about the previous week at camp, and brings up TOBY's trouble with his kids this week.

KIT

What's going on Toby, you've been great for the last couple weeks! What happened this week? You were all over the place.

TOBY

I don't know... I just feel like I'm losing the ability to relate to them?

Kit nods sagely and strokes an imaginary beard.

KIT

Ah yes, the feeling of growing older. They have their fourthnights, and nurntendo swirches, and you just can't keep up. I get it.

TOBY

(laughing weakly)

No, no. It's not that, I just feel like they, like, don't respect me at all. I try so hard to appear knowledgeable and that they can confide in me, but they just don't listen.

KIT

Ah, that's your problem! They're in like 7th grade, they don't need a confidant. They want someone who's just their friend, but like super cool because they're older.

TOBY
(with disappointment)
So just, be George. (he adds quickly) or Juno.

KIT
(laughing uncomfortably)
Ha, maybe not either of them. Toby, buddy, you need to loosen up a little.

Kit stops and takes some gum out of her mouth, and sticks it onto one of her horns.

KIT
Or like, loosen up a lot. I'm kind of serious about this, like, you need some chorizo.

TOBY
... Do you mean chutzpa?

KIT
(brightly)
Yes, exactly!

TOBY is not amused, if anything a little frustrated. KIT continues after a beat of smiling widely, as if something clever just took place. Her smile lessens into something a little sad.

KIT
Look Toby, I don't want you to take this the wrong way, but the kids walk all over you for a reason. You're so unsure of yourself, and they can see that. Your confidence is shot, and that makes you a doormat.

TOBY
... Was there a right way to take that? Because it sounds like you're just insulting me.

Kit waves her hands in front of herself

KIT
No, I just meant, like, that's something to work on! Like you also have this like, attitude where you quit before you even start, and that's just bad for morale -

Toby's face darkens as she continues

KIT

and just like, probably the easiest way to fix that is to make yourself more confident! Like in Mallard Malady they always say confidence -

Toby finally breaks in, and is clearly hurt, and somehow angry that Kit is trying to describe his own personality.

TOBY

Kit, enough with your stupid show, I don't need lessons from something made for children, and I definitely don't need your lecturing about whats wrong with me.

KIT

... Stupid?

TOBY

Yeah ok, while we're on it, your show is terrible, Kit, its about ducks, and the plot makes no sense. It's kid stuff, and honestly, you should be done with it by now. Besides, it's not like you actually learn anything from it that you didn't by the time you were twelve. It's a dumb show, and apparently, all it's done is make you condescending.

KIT is shocked, but straight faced, for a bit. She looks at the ground for a second, before she stands up and is angry, but her face is still flat; it's the type of angry that is so cold that it doesn't even register on the body.

KIT

I was trying to help Toby, and if you had any common sense at all, you'd have seen that. I don't know why I bothered actually, because clearly you don't want to be helped in the first place, and I can't help someone who won't help themselves at all. My show isn't dumb, and it helps me cope when I have to deal with people like you.

KIT leaves, with TOBY looking away angrily. KIT takes her paper coffee cup, and chucks it into the trash with force on her way out. As she walks out the door, right before it slams, she yells.

KIT

I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT CONDESCENDING MEANS!

The door slams shut. TOBY doesn't react to either of these stimuli. Fade to black.

END SCENE

SCENE 5

EXT. NIGHT - BONFIRE ON THE BEACH

Fade in. A bonfire on the beach rages, as the counselors around it talk for a while. Eventually, groups of counselors fade out and the fire dies down a little. Zoom in to the only four figures left, sitting close to the campfire, all on opposing sides: TOBY, KIT, GEORGE, and JUNO. Close up shot of each of their faces, clearly unhappy, but intently staring into the fire. Finally, TOBY looks guiltily over at KIT, and opens his mouth to speak. As soon as he starts, KIT abruptly stands, glares deeper into the fire, and leaves. TOBY looks back at the fire. After a moment of the fire crackling, GEORGE sighs, and stands. He leaves, walking in a different direction than KIT. JUNO looks at TOBY in pity, but leaves as well, leaving in the last direction. TOBY is alone at the dying bonfire, and finally, his lip trembles, he bends over on himself a bit, and he begins to cry. Fade to black.

END SCENE

CREDITS ROLL