

Synopsis

In ancient Rome, it's good to be a gorilla. Marcus lives in a palace-like home, is surrounded by his animal servants, and is blissfully ignorant about the world. Until he arrives home one day to find his room completely empty. Apparently, someone named Dogneetus is taking over it, and one of Marcus' servants hints to him about what this might mean - He is getting kicked out of the family.

Marcus is ultimately pleased to discover that Dogneetus is not his replacement, but his new art master. And Dogneetus also happens to be a Stoic, something Marcus hears about all the time, but knows nothing about.

Unfortunately for Marcus, the surprises continue when a bully of a crocodile joins his private classes. Marcus, spoiled and ill-prepared, is at her mercy -- She elbows him out of his seat, plays dumb, and nicknames him Fart-cus. All on her first day!

Marcus is livid. He can't ignore her, he can't intimidate her, and his lazy bamboo-chewing teacher is ambivalent. Suddenly, every day with the crocodile is excruciating. He needs her to stop.

After learning about Marcus' crocodile problem, Dogneetus shares some advice. Do as the great animals of Rome have done, and master the powers of Stoicism. It could make him invincible to creatures far worse than crocodiles.

Unfortunately, learning Stoicism requires many things that Marcus lacks. Like persistence. And general knowledge. He fails spectacularly in his early attempts and wants nothing to do with this great power.

But the crocodile keeps bullying him in class, and nothing Marcus tries seems to have any effect. Worse still, the crocodile comes to his home even when there are no classes. But Marcus witnesses something that changes his mind about the Crocodile. Her father humiliates her and reveals that she is an illiterate disappointment.

Next class, Marcus takes pity on her and shares his stylus. The crocodile breaks it in two, and then continues to harass Marcus. Just when Marcus is about to lose his mind, he has a breakthrough. Using his new Stoic powers, he realizes that the crocodile is disruptive in class because she wants to distract everyone from the fact that she cannot read. Marcus even suggests a possible cause for her illiteracy, dyslexia, something he has heard of but never truly understood. Their teacher, a dyslexic expert, confirms the diagnosis with a simple exercise.

The crocodile, grateful, thanks Marcus and finally refers to him by his real name.