

FIGHT CLUB

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A stunning grip, a golden complexion, shiny metal armour and a sharp 0.7 mm nib – he had it all. The barcode across his barrel ignited envy among the others; he came from a royal family in Japan while the rest of us were still trying to locate our birth places. Fuelled by satin smooth gel ink, there's no way I could defeat him. My yellow plastic limbs didn't stand a chance.

As I stood by the sidelines inside the safety of a pocket, I watched him annihilate each of my unfortunate brethren in this brutal game. One flick from him and all the contestants went flying across the wooden rectangular ring and crashing on the cold, hard ground. Linc thought he could take him on but little did he know that an aggressive headbutt would lead to ink exploding from the top of Linc's head. Poor guy, he was only 2 days old.

"You're next, Natador," snarled Nontex. He looked daggers at me and I wished I was never made.

Oh no, I thought to myself. How do I get myself out? The fright was so palpable that it was enveloping me. Suddenly, my mind drifted off – there were multiple times when my friends had mysteriously disappeared into thin air.

Where did they go? How did they become so lucky?

Before I could finish that

thought, I was slammed down onto the ring. Nontex stared at me and that alone made me leak some ink. Oh, why did I make it out of that cruddy factory in China?

It was too late, I might as well come up with a game plan. I need to play to my strengths. Let's see, what are my plus points? A small and moderate head cap, light weight and a slender body. The key is to hit him where he's weak – he seems to spiral uncontrollably from the impact of his opponents since he has a sturdy, heavy head-gear where all his centre of gravity acts. I might have a chance.

And the fight began. He went first and I'm glad he did – the first hit took me by surprise and gave me an idea of the fate laid ahead of me. Pain throbbled through my mid-section right across where my name was written which now read "ATADOR". The heavy blow had smudged off the N.

Okay, think Natador. The angle that he was laying at seemed easy. If you hit him right across the end of his barrel he will spin and stop at an awkward angle. Let's see whether that works in

my favour.

I hit him with all my might and sure enough, he was set off wildly and it took him about 8 seconds to come to a halt. He was dizzy but that didn't mask the bewildered look on his face – he was enraged by my unforeseen retaliation. Frankly, so was I.

He was having a hard time performing his usually brilliant hits because his head cap was bearing him down. *I can win this!*

There was no stopping me, a beast had awakened within me. He came forward with his best swings to which I retorted with even better attacks. However, pain had me cocooned. There was numbing in places where there should never be any numbness. But it was do or die.

We were down to the last minute of the fight. He bludgeoned me across my head and sent me skidding towards the brink

of the ring. Even though everything became blurry, I held on and tried to compose myself. 30 seconds till it ended and I wanted to put Nontex in his place. I shot right across the ring, the wooden floor burning against my plastic skin, and planted a sharp strike on his head cap; and it was over. It was all over.

"Natador! Natador!" – the crowd roared in triumph. I, flimsy old Natador, had defeated the mighty Nontex Clue! Somewhere in the corner, a flabbergasted Nontex was talking to himself, probably trying to figure out the debacle.

Maisha Maliha speaks what crosses her mind in the most positive way but is often misinterpreted and thought to be a lunatic. Unfollow her at fb.com/MyshoeMaliha

