

## Chris Puzzle

“Y’know,” I said as I plopped down next to Chris on the couch, “you’re messing me up.”

Through a mouthful of spaghetti and hamburger bits, he asked, “Why?”

“I can’t finish my assignments. I’ve been getting writer’s block.”

“What’s that got to do with me?” He shoveled another forkful of lunch into his mouth. His hair, I noticed from where I sat, didn’t smell pleasant.

“I, uhh...” I broke eye contact and scooted away slightly, “I’ve been thinking too much about Panel de Pon.”

A smirk formed on Chris’ face as he swallowed his food. “Really?”

“Yes, man. Eating, sleeping, doing homework; all I see are different-colored blocks, and I gotta match them up in my head so they flash white and disappear.”

Abandoning his plate, Chris stood up. “Doro, come with me to your bathroom.”

I raised my eyebrow at him. “Why?”

“I wanna show you something.”

“In *my* bathroom?”

“It can be my bathroom, too. I don’t care. Get up.”

I trailed cautiously behind as my roommate walked across the common area, entered my bedroom, then arrived at my bathroom. I stood in the doorway, and he reached around me to flick the lights on. Then, traversing the tight quarters to approach my shower, he yanked the curtain to the side.

“Come closer,” he said.

I stood right beside him, smelling his funky hair again.

He raised his finger. “You see that?” He pointed at nothing.

I cocked my head to the side. “See what..?”

“The tiles on the shower wall,” he clarified.

“Oh. What about them?”

“Whenever I come home and try to bathe, instead I just stand here. I stare at the tiles, imagining if all of them were different colors. And I have to match them up like the game.” He turned to me and said, “I haven’t shampooed in a week!”