

The Test

Mags hadn't gone to school that morning. Not that she did most mornings. It had become an unfortunate habit of hers that she couldn't seem to break. Something about the stares that she received when she did show up set her off. It deepened the discomfort that school already provided.

So the dismissive text she'd gotten from her mother this morning about how the school was called had become nearly a daily message. Fine by Mags, her mother's indifference didn't encourage her to try any harder anyways.

It gave her more time to dedicate to the thing she really cared about. Her drums.

Plus, she was playing again tonight, she needed to go over the set list a couple times. It was one of the bigger events and she needed to nail it.

Especially considering... her face turned slightly red and she finally rolled out of the bed she'd been laying in for almost an hour. She needed a cold shower, to wash her hair most of all. Mags needed to get her mind off of everything. It was almost midterms and she was probably about to fail out of most of her classes.

Maybe she should have gone to school. Maybe she should have gone to school just to see if she could find *her*. The mystery girl who'd been coming to her and The Rebels' shows for the last couple weeks. Always comes late, always leaves early, always stays at the back...

No. No, what was Mags thinking. The mystery girl was probably into the lead singer, or maybe the guitarist, or even the bass player. There's no way her gaze ever fell on the purple-haired girl who sat at the drums. All of those times Mags looked up and they made eye contact, and the mystery girl turned red and shyly averted her eyes...

Clearly Mags was making all this up.

As she made her way across her room from her bed to her door, she caught a glimpse of herself in the mirror. Christ, she looked tired. There's no way someone could look at the mess she saw in her reflection and think she was remotely attractive.

The second mirror she came across confirmed this. Her 5 o'clock shadow, at 10 in the morning ironically enough, was coming in too. Christ, when was the last time she'd shaved? That was step one.

And so she went through the steps of getting ready, and by the time she was done, 3rd period was just about to start. And as much as she wanted to head to the warehouse early, she knew there was a math test today. Time to fail it, like usual.

Every eye was on her as Mags walked through the door to her math class. They were surprised to still see her in this class, especially considering it had been almost two weeks.

The purple-haired girl sat at her desk at the back in silence, the earbuds she wore playing nothing. She discovered early on that if it looked like she couldn't hear, she could hear their jokes and comments about her. Bunch of backstabbing freaks, that's what they were. Almost as bad as the assholes at her old school.

A sigh escaped her as her math teacher came up to her desk and stood next to it.

"Magnolia." She looked up at her with dead eyes, similar to what her eyes would look like considering how ancient this woman was. "I see you've chosen to join us today. I assume you'll be taking this period to catch up on the tests you've missed?"

Mags shrugged.

"Excellent." Her teacher made her way back to her desk, picked up a stack of papers about 3 inches thick, and then returned, setting them on Mags' desk. "You can begin."

"What is this? There's no way you guys did all of these in the past two weeks."

"Oh no, of course not, these are all of the tests for the rest of the semester, considering you don't think you need to be in class to learn the content, might as well do them all now."

Mags scowled at her teacher before pulling a pencil out of her backpack and opening the first test. And then that bitch smiled and walked away.

Ever since class started, she could feel eyes on her, but now it was like they were drilling into her from every angle. Boring into the back of her head, her hands, her face, her hair. She could hear their whispers. She kept writing.

And when the bell rang, she was only done with half. The only eyes still staring were her teacher's, as she watched with a glint in her eye as Mags struggled to finish the one she was on.

"Miss Magnolia, your time is up. I presume you're finished?"

Mags flipped her off. She scowled.

"Young woman, I do not appreciate your attitude towards me."

"Good thing you don't have to see me then, huh?"

"I'll call your fourth period teacher, tell him you're excused from your next class so you can finish these tests. Which I trust you will do by the end of the school day, correct?"

"God man, don't you have another class to teach or something? Homework to mark? Anything other than making my life miserable?"

"I just want what's best for you, Magnolia, and what's best for you is to pass this class."

Of which the remainder passed in silence, and when the bell finally rang, Mags was finally finished. The freedom that overtook her senses as she left was euphoric. Maybe she should show up to school just for that feeling.

And just as quickly as she'd left the school, she entered her favourite place. The warehouse. The one place of solitude that allowed her to scream, sing and hit her drums as hard as she could in peace. But as much as she wanted to scream today, some of her bandmates were already there - she'd been late.

"Ellie, Aljah, Nate." As she said her friends' names she nodded a greeting at them, they all returned one. They could see the look on her face and the angry glow in her eyes from school that day.

Taking her seat behind the drums, practice began.

That is, until an interruption entered the warehouse. 20 minutes before showtime. Long blonde hair, pink crop top, black miniskirt. The recognizable figure of the biggest bitch at school, Amanda Brown.

The band stood, instruments forgotten, staring at the girl who just entered the door. The girl stared back.

This was crazy, absurd, why was she here? How did she find this place? A million questions and emotions raced through Mags' head. She couldn't be here, she'll ruin this for her.

And finally, the silence was broken as a smile flickered across Nate's face.

"No. Fucking. Way."

End.