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Palshaw

English IV

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Freak

“Julia! You will never guess what happened today!” Marcie yelled, bounding into Julia’s room.

“Mrrgmmm... what?” Julia groaned, turning over in her bed.

“Oh my gosh, it was so crazy. We did an experiment in chem and Mr. Steck blew up the whole lab area and then a stick flew and hit Josh in the face and Mr. Steck laughed at him and then Josh started cussing him out and then--”

“Marcie.”

“What?”

“Ugh. Nevermind. Go on.”

“Ok. So as I was *saying*, that happened, and then Mr. Steck tried to send him out but that didn’t work because Josh refused, so then he had to call security down from the office, and oh Julia, you should’ve seen the look on everyone’s faces! I wish you could’ve been there!”

“Sounds like a super fun day.”

“Is something wrong?” A perplexed look crossed Marcie’s face.

“You’d know what’s wrong if you actually cared.”

“Listen, I know you’re upset about what happened yesterday, but you didn’t need to skip school just to mope around.”

“You just don’t understand how it feels. They all just… just… left me.”

“You don’t need girls who only eat kale salads, shop for sport, and who’s biggest source of stress is whether or not daddy will let them go to Paris over break.”

“I know I don’t need them. But I definitely don’t need the whole school knowing I’m fuckin’ schizophrenic.”

“Julia, not everyone knows, and people don’t care!”

“What do you mean? I’m a goddamn *schizo*.”

“Oh my god stop talking about yourself like that. These kids have known you since elementary school.”

“They’re gonna treat me like a mental case, they’re gonna be scared of me.”

“Hold on. Can we back up? You didn’t really tell me what happened yesterday.”

“Ughhhhh, I don’t even wanna think about it. It just makes my skin crawl.”

“Juliaaaa.”

“Fine. It was all Margaret’s fault.”

“I’ve always told you I didn’t like that girl!”

“I know. Whatever. We were hanging out in her room a while ago, and I had forgotten to take my meds.”

“As usual…”

“And so I went into Margaret’s bathroom, and I took out my med tray and took the day’s dose and… turns out… she had been watching me the *entire* time.”

“What a bitch.”

“*Such* a bitch. And when Mrs. Wallace called me in--”

“The principal called you in? How did I not know about this?”

“I didn’t tell you? There must’ve been so much going on I forgot.”

“Well doesn’t matter now, just keep talking.” Marcie’s eyes drooped.

“So when she called me in and asked me if I was “abusing prescription drugs,” well I just had no idea what she was talking about. I asked and she pulled up a photo on her computer.”

“What was it?”

“Well really there was only one thing it could be. Me, Marcie. Come on, use your head.” Marcie just looked at her blankly.

Immediately, regret filled Julia’s voice. “I’m sorry Mar. I’m just really screwed up about this whole thing, you know.”

“Yeah, I know. I’m sorry.”

“Anyways, it was a photo of me in the bathroom. I was holding my pill bottle and swallowing my meds. The only person who could’ve taken it was Margaret.”

“What did you tell her?”

“Well I asked her what the hell was going on, and she told me that someone had anonymously sent the photo in who was concerned about my “drug abuse”. She needed proof that I had a prescription or else there was grounds for suspension, but all my prescriptions are already on file!”

“So she let you go right?”

“Well duh, I’m not suspended are I?”

“Yeah, I’m just making sure.”

“Yeah, she let me go. But I still had unfinished business with Margaret.”

“And this all happened yesterday?”

“Yup, I know right. Long ass day. Tell me about it.”

“Wow.”

“So basically, I tracked down Margaret after school. She was at Louis’s, and I kinda went crazy on her.”

“Like… *crazy* crazy?

Julia cackled. “No, just regular person crazy.”

“Oh, haha.” Marcie forced a smile.

“I kind of started screaming about how she tried to get me suspended, used a select few defamatory terms, maybe made a couple threats, but they aren’t recorded so it’s fine.”

“Okay, Julia. But why does Maragaret give a crap if you take meds in the first place? What’d you do to piss that girl off?”

“That’s besides the point.”

“Well… no… that’s pretty much the point here.”

“So I ran for class vice president this year, and everyone knew it, you know. And so I was basically a shoe-in for it and everyone wanted me to win, and Margaret and I were pretty close at the beginning of the year.”

“Yeah, I remember that. You guys hung out a lot.”

“So that stupid dumb ginger idiot decided to run against me. Of all people, of all positions... Can you believe that? Do you know how many student council positions there are?”

“Uh, I think there’s around sev--”

“Rhetorical question. So after she backstabbed me like that, I raided the medicine cabinet, took my mom’s old laxatives, and made Margaret a nice milkshake the next day as a good luck gift for my “friendly competition”.”

“Holy shit Julia. What the hell.”

“Yeah, looking back in hindsight, it wasn’t the brightest move. It was mistake number one. She spent a lot of time in the restroom that day, ample thinking time. She put two and two together and basically figured out it was me. But I didn’t know that.”

“Damn.”

“Damn is right, Mar. So I’m at her house really pissed off right, because she tried getting me suspended when I didn’t do anything, or that’s what I thought she thought. Didn’t take long for me to figure out she knew.”
 “It sounds like you guys were even though. The pictures were mass texted to our class. Did you do anything else?”

“No, I literally didn’t do anything! I even told her what my meds were actually for, but she already knew.”

“How could she have known?”

“You know how she took that pic of me in the bathroom?”

“Yeah.”

“Well, she didn’t stop there. She actually went through my bag that day, found the bottle and took a photo so she knew what the meds were really for. They say curiosity killed the cat, but Margaret is very much alive and satisfied with herself.”

“That flamin’ carrot top.”
 “Exactly, thank you. So she had all this evidence. The pills, me taking the pills, and a dirty ass conscious to go along with it. I don’t know what made her do it, Mar, I really don’t.”

“She just sent the photos out like that?”

“Yep, ruined my life. Everyone knows now. Do you know what people think when they hear the term *mentally ill*? It’s a dirty word. There’s no escaping it.” Julia’s words caught in her throat.

“Please don’t cry Julia.” Marcie patted her shaking back. “Listen, people are gonna realize you’re the same person you have been, and if they don’t, screw ‘em! Why would you want people around you who don’t accept a part of you?”

“It’s just, so embarrassing,” Julia shuddered.

“No it’s not. If we knew half the crap wrong with the people at our school you would have a way lower bar of what’s embarrassing. I bet we could dig worse stuff up on Margaret if we wanted to.”

“Really, you think so?”

“Julia. Seriously?”
 “Fine, you’re right. I’ll be the bigger person, so they say.”

“You are the bigger person.”

“Wow, is that a fat joke? You know I told you it’s just Christmas weight.”
 “Oh god, Julia, you crack me up.” Marcie smiled.

Julia grinned, returning the same meaningful look. “Thanks for making me feel better, love you Mar.”

“Love you too.”