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A Peer Counseling Session at Jacob Grimm High School

J.M. Romig

They sat across the table from one another. One girl staring at her notebook. The other's eyes fixed on her classmate. On the broadside of the table sat a dark-haired woman, the only smiling face in the room. The shy girl's crimson hair hung out from under her hooded sweatshirt as she sketched axes on the front of her notebook. The other girl's golden locks hung in curls around her face. Her beauty was undeniable, as was the disdain in her eyes.

"So, can one of you two describe to me what happened today on that stairwell?" asked Mrs. White, the guidance counselor at Jacob Grimm High. Despite the gossip floating around the school about her, a smile was always plastered on her face. Most of the children found this unbearably creepy.

"Nothing ma'am. We were just having a friendly conversation, when that pig came along and insisted, very forcefully, that we come here," the blonde said, sarcastically, her eyes never letting go of their gaze on the other girl.

Mrs. White chuckled "That's not how it happened, Goldie. C'mon, tell us your side of things."

Goldie rolled her eyes. "Well, Mrs. White, it's like this: my bio class was just letting out, and I was heading down to calculus. She comes flying UP the DOWN stairs, like a maniac, slamming into my shoulder. I hit her, she hit me back. Now we're here."

"Is that true, Ms. Ridinghood?" asked Mrs. White, turning her head to the other girl.

"Not entirely," she answered, finally joining the conversation. "Ms. Princess here was going up those stairs before I even got to them. To be honest, I was zoned out, just following the sheep. I'm not having the best day, so a friend gave me something to take the edge off this morning. I was following her up the down stairs, apparently, and she turned around and started coming at me, shoving my shoulder as she walked past, then got offended - like I did something wrong - and hit me. So I punched her back. We wrestled for a minute before the cop came and broke it up."

"Hmm." Mrs. White turned to Goldie, who was looking down the floor. "Goldie, why were you going back up the stairs?"

"I don't wanna talk about it."

"So you did go back up the stairs and come down a second time?"

"It was actually my third time," Goldie admitted, embarrassed. "The first time I went too fast, the second time I went too slow. That time would have been just right. I have Obsessive Compulsive Disorder. Go ahead, laugh it up."

"No one's laughing," Mrs. White assured her. Although Red was a little, until Mrs. White turned to her. "Can you tell me why it is you needed to be 'zoned out' today?"

"None of your business, that's why," Red snapped.
"I have read your file, I know what day it is."
"Then why did you have to bring it up?" Red was now agitated.
"For Goldie to hear. So you can better understand one another."
"Bullshit! What kind of understanding am I to get from this preppy bitch with a silver spoon up her ass? I've spit puddles deeper than her!" The two girls rose up, over the table. Mrs. White was able to get in between them.
"Now, both of you need to just calm down and talk this out like civil adults. Keep in mind, this is your only alternative to expulsion."

Once everyone regained themselves, Red spoke again, this time directly to Goldie.

"Six years ago, today, my grandmother was murdered." Goldie began to see Red with new eyes. "Remember The Wolf?"

"That guy who went around vandalizing houses?"
"Yeah. He was hiding out in the woods. I was going to visit my grandma, who lived out that way. I saw him. He'd shaved so I hadn't recognized him from the news. I told him I was going to my grandma's place, dumb idea -- I know. He suggested a different route, said it'd be shorter. By the time I got there, grams was gone. He was in her bed, dressed like her, waiting for me. His eyes...were so...big. If it wasn't for Larry, a woodsman working nearby, I would be dead too."

"I heard about that! That was you? Wow...I'm sorry." Goldie shook her head in amazement, then added, "Didn't the woodsman chop off his head?"

"No. He shot him. Larry carries a gun when he's working in that forest, because of all the dangerous things that happen there."

"No doubt, that place is freaky. I got lost in it once, when I was six. I ended up at this cabin. I thought it was abandoned. Imagine my surprise when the family came home. I was sleeping in the kid's bed, and I'd eaten their food too. I think I even broke something."

"How'd that play out?"
"I did some time in juvy for property damage and theft."
"Wow...that's so messed up. At least you learned your lesson, right?"
"Oddly enough, no. When I turned eleven I started breaking into people's houses. I mean, I didn't take anything, just slept in their beds, or watched TV. I never got caught again." Goldie sounded mildly disappointed.

"You know," Red interjected "we are a couple of freaks, aren't we?"

"Yeah. Hey...where'd Mrs. White go?" Goldie said, finally realizing that Mrs. White had made an escape somewhere in the midst of their discussion.

"I don't know."

"Oh well...did you hear she has seven midgets living with her?"
"That's just a rumor," Red said.

On that note, the bell rang, and the two girls left the room giggling like old friends.