

Sunset High

Musical Chairs

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This series is dedicated to all of Emo Rawr's loyal fans.

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Chapter 1: Choosing A Victim

How could I have known that everything would go so wrong? If I had some wondrous gift of foresight, would I have even agreed to come to this town? I would like to have thought not.

The year started just like any other. A new school, a new set of potential victims. The same boring subjects that I had been over so many times that I could teach the classes better than the teachers themselves.

I sat in the back of my last class of the night and went over my list of potential candidates. Only two students. That was laughable considering the size of the school I was in.

I tapped my pencil briefly against the desk and sighed in exasperation as I watched the last group of students steadily pour in through the gloomy classroom door.

At this point I was drawn between an energetic annoying girl in my English class that appeared to be on the pep squad or dance team or flag team or something of the sort and a skinny gothic boy in the same class.

I would probably end up going with the girl. I liked girls better. They tended to have a much wider range of emotions than boys did and their blood typically tasted sweeter. I imagined her blood having a light bodied fruity taste to it, or perhaps like that of salty dark chocolate. Yes, she would do unless something better stepped into the room, which at this point was highly unlikely.

The class filled up slowly and I stared blankly at the door, scanning over each student that stepped into the room. I examined many things when choosing a victim: their body type, the amount of acne they had, their facial expressions and eye movements, the condition of their clothing, and the way that they dressed.

All of these things told a great deal about how someone would taste. Overweight people were typically rich and salty tasting with a bitter finish. Athletes tasted like lean juicy steaks. Thin people could taste like anything in between depending on their metabolism and diet.

Kids with a lot of acne typically had oilier blood and, often times, tasted like the remnants of fast food. I tried to avoid eating them as much as possible, though I wouldn't be opposed to eating one who was particularly distressed.

Facial expressions and eye movements were a great insight into the person's mind. That coupled with the rest of the list of mentioned items was what I was especially interested in.

I was admittedly an emotional eater. And by emotional, I don't mean that I ate when I felt stressed out or depressed. I mean that I enjoyed eating people who were typically very emotional. You see, emotions and memories are transferred through the blood. It's a complex thing to explain so I'll get into it a bit later on.

My goal on day one of class was to blend into the background as much as possible, to be almost completely unnoticeable so that I could observe without gaining any interest of the other students as

my eyes worked fervently to detect one of good taste.

I dressed neutral in a plain black t-shirt and boot cut jeans, with a comfortable pair of tennis shoes and my hair brushed straight with a plain boring part in the middle. No make up. Nothing to distinguish me from any other plain Jane girl in the room. Once I picked a target, I would adapt to whatever fashion and personality that would get me closest to them.

It would be a long year and I liked to get to know my victims completely before I took their lives. That made the draining of them all the more satisfying. Betrayal was a very tasty emotion. Betrayal and fear coupled together were one of my favorite dishes.

Within a few more moments the halls of the school were empty and the class had begun. As expected, no one of note had stepped in. The only potential victim of even the slightest interest to me was a thin hunky athlete who sat a few rows in front and to the left of me. I had watched him socialize with some of the other students for a few moments before the class had begun.

And then it was decided. I would kill the girl. Of course, I would have preferred to eat all three of them, but it wasn't allowed. In fact, my master strictly forbid it.

One kill per year, that was his rule as far as high school students went. A death in a high school typically stirred up quite a ruckus and sometimes even media attention. That is why I had to chose my victim so carefully, because there would only be one.

That's not to say that I only ate one person per year. On the contrary, I took a life on a daily basis,

the same as my master. But high school students were my yearly treat; my true hunt.

I settled down in my desk and envisioned how I would disguise myself to get closer to the female victim that I had chosen. I had nearly drowned the whole room out with thought when it was interrupted by the creaking of the classroom door. The teacher stopped speaking briefly and all attention was drawn to it as if the whole world had taken a break to listen.

A boy stepped through the door. He was tall and thin with skin almost as pale as mine and hair every bit as dark. His eyes were a solemn shade of blue and he kept them down on the floor, perhaps expecting that everyone would be looking at him.

“Sorry,” he muttered, and then quickly took an empty seat on the opposite side of the room.

I glanced at him for but a second as he moved across the room, but it was long enough to freeze every detail of him in my mind.

He was gorgeous, attractive, pretty, beautiful. I felt instantly drawn to him, but not for these reasons. He wore a black and grey stripped hoodie with black skinny jeans and a pair of Converse high tops. His hair was a little shorter than shoulder length and framed his face in subtle black tapered spikes that swooped across his stunningly pale eyes. There was a small silver stud on each side of his bottom lip and he carried a black backpack covered in band buttons.

He reminded me of my last victim, and that is what drew me to him the most; an emo kid, a girl. She had tasted like nothing I could have ever imagined, like a designer dish created for my taste buds alone. My mouth salivated at the thought.

There were a few things I now knew for certain. This boy was probably a complete slut that would taste like garbage and he would definitely not be my victim. But I could almost guarantee that he would lead me to a victim that would likely taste very close to the girl whom I had killed at my previous school. And for that fact, it was imperative that I got close to him.

Chapter 2: A Distraction

The next day I brought my A game to class. I had my hair cut into a drastically tapered female emo style the night before and styled it accordingly, accessorizing with a few small pink hair bows that I took from the corpse of my last victim. I wore a skin tight tank top with skinny jeans and ballerina flats. He should be easy enough to seduce, I imagined, just by showing a bit of skin and interest.

I made sure to get to class early and take a seat beside the desk he had been sitting in the prior day. There had been another boy sitting in it the day before, but I could have cared less how he felt about me stealing his seat.

I waited for the emo boy to stroll into class late, but to my surprise he was early. He glanced at me for a second before lowering his eyes to the floor and taking his seat. Promptly, he extracted a black notepad from his backpack and started writing, oblivious to the rest of the world around him.

“Hi,” I tried to quickly introduce myself before he got too involved in whatever it was that it was so important for him to write the very second that he sat down.

He completely ignored me.

I sat there, stunned. I knew he had heard me. There was no way he couldn't have. Was he just that much of a dick that he couldn't even be nice enough to greet me back?

I was going to try again when I heard the desk on the opposite side scratch across the cold tile in my

direction. I turned suddenly to see the athletic boy that I had been targeting the day before smiling at me from the desk next to mine, which he had just pulled half a foot closer before deliberately plopping down into it.

“I didn’t see you here yesterday?” He flashed a toothy white grin at me.

If I had been any other girl, it probably would have worked on me like a charm. But I was looking for a meal, not a boyfriend or a quick lay. And in my eyes, he was yesterday’s news, not my target.

I gave him an annoyed glare and quickly debated my next course of action. I had to be very careful with every move I made. I didn’t want to say or do anything that would jeopardize my chances of getting closer to the emo boy, and given that he wouldn’t give me the time of day as it was I didn’t want to come off as a bitch and scare him further away.

“I was here,” I mused and then turned forward as if I was actually interested in the class which was about to start.

“You were?” he asked. “Where were you sitting?”

He scooted his desk yet an inch closer and leaned forward in interest.

“In the back.” I replied between clinched teeth.

“Nah. I wouldn’t have missed a hottie like you,” he grinned at me again.

“Well I was there,” I smiled fakely back.

That short conversation was long enough to drain the rest of my free time away before the class started.

I sighed and rested my head in my hands in an exaggerated pouting manner as the class started.

Day two had not gone as well as planned. Mr. Uninterested Emo Boy was completely engulfed in his mysterious little black notepad and the athletic guy on the other side of me was a complete annoyance with his eyes glued onto me the entire class.

At the end of class I was the first one up and walking towards the door. The athletic boy tried to wave me down but I wasn't in the mood. What in the hell was wrong with that emo kid?

Chapter 3: Embarrassed

The next day when I stepped into class I was met with a surprise. The athletic boy who had been harassing me previously was already there, and sitting in my desk. I could feel my eyes glowing with annoyance as I walked up to him. My only other options for a seat, considering that the emo guy was sitting at the far left of the row was to sit behind him, in front of him, or diagonal of him. I wanted my seat back and I wanted it now.

“Move,” I said without reservation as soon as I stepped up to the athletic guy, who was gleaming at my angered expression in amusement.

“Why? Is he your boyfriend?” he asked. “It didn’t seem like it to me.”

“I was sitting there yesterday,” I said. There was no point in being nice and cordial without my temporary target nearby.

“And you were sitting in the back the day before, right?” he asked, and then abruptly stood up and offered to shake my hand. “I’m Mark. What’s your name?”

“Annabel.” I replied, shaking his hand gingerly in hopes that if I was nice he’d give me my seat back.

“Wow, your hand is really cold,” he looked shocked, quickly pulling his hand away.

I wanted to tell him it was because I was dead and if he didn’t get out of my seat that he would be too, but that would be a bit dramatic. Instead, I just smiled and said, “Yeah, I’m anemic .”

I had used that line a million times before to

explain away the cold touch of my skin. There was an excuse for everything related to my vampirism. I was anemic, allergic to the sun, and on a very strict diet.

“I could warm you up,” he mused.

“Not in your wildest dreams,” I replied, panic overtaking me as I saw emo boy rounding the corner.

“That’s a little bit harsh, don’t you think? You don’t even know me.”

My anger swelled to the point that I wanted to throw him across the room. I could envision grabbing him by the hair, forcing his head back, and ripping out his jugular. My frustration at my inability to get my seat back was almost overwhelming.

I watched helplessly as the emo boy took his seat, and then in an attempt to not seem petty or obvious, I admitted defeat and took the seat behind him.

“Hey dude, is that your girlfriend?” Mark asked the emo guy.

The question made my heart freeze in my chest in embarrassment. What a complete asshole, I thought. Was he that desperate to hit on me? He was going to ruin everything.

The emo guy finished pulling his notepad out of his backpack before looking at Mark and absently asking, “What?”

“I said, is that your girlfriend?” Mark asked again, gesturing to me.

I wanted to die. I almost didn’t think I could stand for him to turn around and look at me for verification.

“No,” he replied, not even looking up from his notepad as he flipped it open and began writing

again.

Anger and humiliation boiled up inside of me as class began. What in the hell was wrong with Mark? What in the hell was wrong with both of them? Maybe I should switch my target back to the girl. It would probably be much easier.

I flew out the doors of the classroom as soon as the school bell rang, same as the day before. My frustration was almost overwhelming and I briefly even thought about switching my target to Mark just so I could be rid of his annoyance.

I stepped into my red Corvette convertible and slammed my back against the seat, sighing in exasperation at the whole situation. I seemed to be getting nowhere fast and it was already the middle of the week. If I couldn't get close to him by the end of the following week, it would probably be better to change targets back to the girl, though the thought of killing him instead despite his bad taste was growing ever present with my frustration at his disinterest. How much was a good meal worth to me?

Chapter 4: Keep it Moving

The next day I made it a point to be to class way before it had even let out. I didn't care about getting in trouble for skipping out on my previous class early. I wanted that seat and I wanted it bad.

As soon as the bell rang I pushed past the kids who were busy trying to get out and I claimed my seat without hesitation.

Mark was there early as well, but I had beaten him and that was all that mattered. To my dismay and utter horror he took a seat where the emo boy had been sitting for the previous few days.

"You can't sit there," I told him heatedly.

"Why not?" He smiled slyly. "Or rather, whose going to stop me?"

"Don't be a dick. It's not attractive."

"Maybe I wouldn't be a dick if you weren't a bitch." His tone took a sudden change. I could see in his eyes that he was actually getting upset.

Before we could argue any further I saw the emo guy round the corner. He looked at both of us and to my surprise he walked up to Mark.

"Hey man, this is my seat," he said. His voice was steady and confident.

"Sorry dude, there's no assigned seating in this class. You're going to have to find somewhere else to sit." Mark replied arrogantly, gesturing to all of the other empty seats in the room.

The emo boy glowered at Mark for a second, his eerie blue eyes deep and piercing. Mark was unaffected, and gestured again in annoyance that he

should move on. The emo boy glanced at me for a moment, looking at me with equal distaste and I quickly decided to try to salvage the dismal situation.

“Mark, move! He’s been sitting there since the beginning of the week,” I exclaimed, but it seemed to have come a moment too late.

“Whatever,” the emo boy said in disgust and then turned to take a seat at the back of the class; the one that I had originally sat at on the first day. He slid into the desk with obvious disgust in every movement and pulled his notepad from his backpack with jerking deliberate gestures.

I could feel my blood pressure rising. Mark was really ticking me off.

“So, sweet stuff, now that emo douche is out of the picture, how about you tell me a little bit about yourself.” Mark returned to his haughty arrogant stance, looking me up and down as if he had just won a prize.

I plopped down in the seat beside him defeated, given that all of the other seats were already taken.

“You’re a jerk,” I told him and then pulled out my textbook to ignore him while the class started.

“You should stick around after class so that we can get to know each other better,” he smirked at me as he whispered.

“I would rather kill you.” I whispered back, keeping my nose in my book despite the fact that I was watching his every move in my peripheral vision.

I heard him snigger under his breath. I wondered if he would still be laughing if he knew that it wasn’t a joke.

Chapter 5: Ignored

The next day I showed up to class early again, though I wasn't sure why. I couldn't keep following the emo boy around the room like a stalker. That would make me look too desperate and would definitely drive him further away, if that was even possible at this point.

After thinking about ways to resolve the situation and coming up completely empty handed, I had resigned to the fact that I would have to drop the idea of using him to find a better target. The girl would do fine anyways. Who knew, he might not even have any emotionally damaged friends and I could have been wasting my time all along. The thought of it was exhausting.

My game plan now was to slowly change my fashion style to match hers, gradually shedding the emo image. I had even already made an effort to get to know her by switching my seat next to hers in English class. Tomorrow I would pitch my sob story about having just moved into town and needing someone to hang out with. Hopefully she'd buy it if I approached with a cheery disposition.

I thought about all of these things as I leaned against the cool brick wall next to the classroom door. A student rounding the corner suddenly came into my peripheral vision. My heart caught in my chest as I realized it was him, my temporary target, heading my way. He was probably coming to class early to reclaim his seat.

I tried not to act too obviously excited. This

was exactly the chance that I needed. My last shot at getting to know him.

“Hey,” I waved awkwardly as he approached.

He pulled his headphones off of his head and stopped a few feet short of me, looking the classroom door up and down as if he had expected it to already be open. I could hear the music blaring out from his headphones, some type of screamo band.

“I’m Annabel.” I extended my hand with a smile. “What’s your name?”

He looked at my face for a second and then his eyes trailed down to my extended hand. He shifted the weight of his backpack and then reached down to shake my hand, turning his attention back to the door while he spoke as if he was ignoring me, aside from the handshaking gesture, all the while.

“Aiden,” he replied.

“You’re here early.” I tried to make small talk, looking at my watch to estimate how much time we had before the bell would ring. Only one minute. I wanted to cringe at the thought. That wasn’t much time at all to salvage things.

“Yeah,” he replied, refusing to look at me, his attention ever on the door.

“So, I just moved here and was looking for other emo people to hang out with and I was wondering if you’d want to hang out sometime.” The words came out of my mouth in a hurried jumble of desperation. I cringed on the inside at how horribly despairing it sounded.

“I can’t,” he replied, and with that the bell rang and he forced his way inside and to his seat.

That’s it, I give up, I told myself as I followed

Aiden inside and slumped into the seat beside him. What I thought would be easy had turned into impossible. I had never had this problem before, especially with a guy.

Ironically, this was the first day that I actually looked forward to seeing Mark come into class aside from the day when I shortly considered him as a potential target. I needed someone or something to cheer my sour mood. This defeat tasted so bitter and surreal.

He thankfully arrived as expected and took the seat beside mine. I didn't say anything to him but instead waited for him to hit on me. To my surprise and dismay, he said nothing. He simply went right to work on completing his homework from the night before. Could the night possibly have gone any worse?

Chapter 6: Fight

Friday had finally come and I was completely over the situation in my last period class. I went to my English class with vigor, my outfit the complete personification of the word cute with a white tank top, short pink skirt, and white bobby socks with matching pink ballerina flats.

My plan went off without a hitch. The girl was interested in hanging out and seemed ecstatic to have made a new friend. Her personality made me nauseous but the end result was all that I cared about. I would go meet up with her and her friends later on that night.

I strolled into my last period class pleased with myself and without a care in the world. It didn't matter if Aiden or Mark were there. They didn't matter to me anymore. In fact, I would probably drop the class starting next week.

I went to class late and took the seat between them, quickly pretending like I was interested in my studies by pulling out my text book and ignoring both of them. Sometime in the middle of class, Mark slipped a folded up piece of notebook paper onto my desk. I smiled at him briefly and unfolded it. The picture that he had drawn was enough to make me want to jump out of my desk and beat him senseless. It was a crude stick figure drawing of him and I sexually entwined. I glared at him while he looked me up and down and then blew me a kiss.

I wondered how many other girls he did these crude things to. This was harassment to the 10th

degree. It was time that I did all of the women in the world that he may ever come in contact with a big favor.

I smiled slyly at him and then scribbled something on the back of the piece of paper before tossing it carefully onto his desk when our teacher wasn't watching.

The expression on Mark's face after reading the paper was priceless. He had a cocky smile of delight mixed with content disbelief at my proposition.

I watched him rip a piece of notebook paper out of his binder and scribble something else on it before passing it back to me. This type of exchange went back and forth between us throughout the length of the class.

After class was over he walked me out to my car. I walked several steps in front of him and could only imagine the looks that he was giving to my backside. Lusty teenage hormones would be his downfall.

He stopped before reaching my car and his eyes widened in surprise.

"This is your car?" He asked, his mouth agape as he marveled at the shining reflection that bounced off my Corvette's black paint job in the moonlight.

"Don't be so shocked. My father is very wealthy," I replied, leaning against the car to watch everyone else depart from the parting lot.

"What year is it?" He asked.

"2011."

"He must be very wealthy to afford to buy you a brand new car like this. Hell, the basic model starts at over \$50,000. What does your father do?" He

asked while he walked around the vehicle, absorbing its every detail.

“He’s a cardiologist,” I replied, completely unamused.

I was very much used to boys drooling over my vehicles almost as much as they drooled over me. It was something I had endured throughout my whole immortal life due to my master seeing me well taken care of.

“So,” he mused, “When I beat you up we’re going to be having sex in the backseat of this baby, right?”

I cringed internally and gritted my teeth.

“You’re not going to win,” I insisted.

He stopped when he got back around to me and then propped himself up beside me, looming over me in what I’m sure he thought was an intimidating manner.

“Do you think I’m going to take it easy on you because you’re a girl?” He asked. “Should I take it easy on you?”

Mark reached up his free hand to caress my face. I swatted it away in annoyance, being careful not to unleash my full strength. I wanted him to be naive to the fact that I could crush him like a bug in the matter of half a heart beat if I wanted to. He was too stupid to know what he had signed up for.

“Can you keep your hands off of me until everyone leaves?” I gave him a sarcastic smile. “I’m sure you wouldn’t want everyone around to watch me break your arm.”

He laughed in amusement. “I hope you have that much fire in the sack.”

“You’ll never know.”

We waited around for what felt like an eternity. There were a few teenagers left in the parking lot who seemed intent on staying there all night, chatting it up as if they had nothing better to do.

“I don’t think they’re ever going to leave,” Mark whined impatiently.

“Yeah,” I replied. “Oh well, let’s do this.”

He was shocked at my sudden surrender to the situation. A small audience wouldn’t be much of a problem though. In fact, they could only make things better. Rumors spread like wildfires in high schools. Hearing of his defeat all around campus would only bruise Mark’s ego more.

I stepped away from the car and walked several yards before stopping and turning back towards him. His mouth curled into that stupidly arrogant smile that I had already learned to hate. I glanced briefly at the other high schoolers who seemed not to take much notice of us.

“Are you just going to stand there?” I taunted Mark, prompting him to walk towards me.

When he got to where I was standing he smiled down at me and then surprised me by bending over for a kiss. I quickly punched him in the nose, forcing him to take a step back as he bent over to hold his face.

“You stupid bitch,” he yelled.

Now all attention was on us, which is exactly what I wanted.

“Do you think I’m going to take it easy on you because you’re a girl?” I smiled at him as he straightened himself back up. He glanced at me in

quick anger before taking another moment to make sure that I hadn't broken his nose. "That was just a warning shot, by the way. Next time something is going to get broken."

"What in the hell? Do you take martial arts or something?" He asked with a concerned glance at the group of teenagers that were now intently watching us.

"Don't play down your weaknesses, Mark." I chided.

"I wasn't even really going to hit you," he said, wiping his nose with his shirt. I could see the tears glistening in his eyes, the effect of the crushing of sensitive nerves in his face.

"I really think you should, Mark. Cause I'm going to hit you again."

I could hear the teenagers whispering to one another.

"Is that Mark Baxter?" One of them asked.

"Yeah, Mark Baxter the football jock. He's getting his ass beat by a girl," the other one laughed.

Excellent, I thought to myself. This would definitely be spreading like VD around school the next day.

"Come on Mark, show me what you've got. I don't have all night, you know." I egged him on, watching his gaze turn to fire in humiliation.

"Alright," he straightened himself back up. "But you better not call the cops or tell anyone. I don't want people to think that I'm a woman abuser." He approached me apprehensively. "And it's a shame I'm going to have to look at that pretty little face of yours all bruised while I'm sticking it to you."

He lunged at me with sudden angry force, but it was all for not. His fist landed lightly into my palm as I caught his hand mid-punch. The sudden shock in his eyes was quickly replaced by tension and pain as I squeezed. He cried out and clutched at his wrist with his free hand, trying to pull his fist out of my grasp.

“Down boy,” I said, forcing his body to bend in an unnatural position as he crumbled away from the pain.

“You’re going to break my hand!” He screamed in agony, totally oblivious to our onlookers. I knew very well that the only thing he could think about was the pain and anything that he could possibly do to get away from it.

“Yeah,” I smiled. “I am.” And with that, I squeezed.

Chapter 7: A Piece of Paper

The rest of the weekend went off without a hitch. I spent time with my target, Melissa, on Friday after the fight with Mark and a few hours shopping with her at the mall on Saturday night before it closed. Everything was starting to come together as planned, well, at least as far as my plan B was concerned.

I decided to spend one more week taking my last night class, just so I could have the pleasure of seeing Mark's reaction to me when he walked in. I would be much amused to smile at him as he entered the classroom with his hand all wrapped up. But he seemed like such a prideful creature that I was almost sure he'd disappoint.

As expected, he didn't show up. Oh well, one more week and then I would be out of the class as well. Besides, there was always the chance that he could have just been out of class due to having reconstructive surgery or something to that effect. I wasn't exactly sure how badly I had broken his hand. I just remembered listening in contentment to the crushing of bone beneath my fist. The warm feel of it sinking away from my icy touch as it warped and pressed itself further into his hand. The thought brought a smile to my face and a happy sigh to my lips.

Clack. A piece of paper skipped across my desk into view and startled me out of my pleasant thoughts of maiming Mark. I looked down at it and then glanced over at Aiden, who glanced briefly back

at me and then down at the paper.

I didn't bother smiling or showing any other type of concern or interest as I took the paper in hand and unfolded it. It said, "Did you really break Mark Baxter's hand?"

A sly grin crawled its way across my face as I grasped my pen in hand and admitted to the dastardly deed.

And that sparked the beginning of a very long series of notes back and forth. We talked about all sorts of things, from why I had moved to this quaint little town, to my various medical conditions, to issues that he had with his girlfriend which had been what had kept him from talking to me in the first place. Apparently she was very jealous. I informed him that she had no reason to consider me as a threat. Since my father and I moved around so much, I didn't bother investing time in dating anyone. My father wouldn't stand for the thought anyways.

Chapter 8: Finally

By the next day Mark had returned to class, and as predicted his hand was all wrapped up in bandages. He completely ignored me as he took a new seat at the opposite end of the classroom.

“Looks like he wants to be as far away from you as possible,” Aiden joked.

“It would seem that way.” I smiled in Mark’s direction.

The class went on as normal and ended the same as it had every previous day. Aiden offered to walk with me to the parking lot and I cheerfully took him up on his offer.

“So,” he said awkwardly as we approached my Corvette. “Oh man, is this yours?” His eyes bugged as I clicked the automatic locks on the car to open it.

I smirked at the fact that the car had completely made him lose track of what he was originally going to say.

“Do you like it?” I asked, well knowing the answer already.

“Yeah. It’s amazing,” he replied, doing the same walk around that Mark had done. “I had seen it in the parking lot but thought it belonged to a teacher.”

“Nope. It’s mine.” I shrugged. “Daddy spoils me.”

“You’re not kidding,” he paused to look back up at me seriously. “No offense.”

“None taken.” I smiled, watching his adorable wonderment. He looked absolutely delicious in the

moonlight, and the fact that he was honest enough to tell me that he had a girlfriend indicated that he probably wasn't as bad tasting as I had originally thought. "Maybe I'll let you drive it sometime."

"Really?" He asked with excitement in his voice. His eyes caught the moonlight just perfectly enough to add drama to the already emotionally infused response. I couldn't help but giggle.

"If you want."

"Wow! Cool."

It took him a few more minutes to recompose himself before he walked back over to where I was standing beside the car door. He looked suddenly nervous, reaching behind his head to scratch the back of his neck.

"Are you alright?" I asked, looking at him strangely.

"Yeah, I'm fine," he hesitated. "I talked it over with my girlfriend and she said it would be cool if you came and hung out with us one night . . . Since you don't have any friends here and all," he continued slowly scratching the back of his neck for a few moments before putting his arm back down.

"Yeah, that would be great." I smiled, now wishing I hadn't wasted so much time getting to know that Melissa girl.

"So, um, maybe Friday after class. We usually go to J's Burgers to hang out and grab something to eat. Well," he hesitated again. "Not usually, but that's when Deblin wants to go, so, yeah, that's where we'll be."

I giggled at him again. I couldn't tell if he was nervous because he liked me or because he truly felt

awkward about asking me to come hang out with them.

“Just you and your girlfriend?” I inquired.

“No . . . my best friend will be there too. He’s kind of weird, but we love him anyways.” Aiden laughed uncomfortably.

“Sure. Sounds good.” I smiled and nodded, opening the car door and getting ready to step inside. He was so nervous that it was making me feel awkward.

“Well, see ya,” he waved as he watched me get into my car and start the engine.

My eyes trailed him back to his old beat up Volvo as I pulled out of the Sunset High parking lot. I couldn’t believe that it had taken so much effort just to get to this point.

Aiden hadn’t been a dick because he wasn’t interested in getting to know me. It was because he had an overbearing girlfriend that he was trying to keep happy. What a strange guy?

Either way, I had finally wormed my way into his world, and soon I would be turning it upside down. I certainly hoped he had more than just two friends though. He had to. He looked like he would be a popular guy.

I hoped for the best but he had already proven me wrong once. The school year had just begun though and there was still a lot to learn. Only time would tell who my next victim would be.