

I'm traveling on the streets through the freezing rain, not sure which direction to go. The whole world seems to be a black hole, as if soon it would suck me up inside of it, and there would be no way back. I wouldn't want a way back into this wretched and undesirable world anyways: there was nothing here to love, and nothing to love me.

I'm cold. I'm tired. But there is no chance I'm going back there. I focus my eyes on the tip of my black combat boots and keep walking forward, away from the disaster that is my life. Right when I would think things were good and happy, it all plunged down by the next day, just like the stock market right before the Great Depression. I just had to keep moving forward. I just had to keep moving forward. I just have to keep moving forward...

I wasn't even well into my seventeenth year when my mother decided that I should be put into private school. I was Leila Black after all, so from my view, I had to live up to the stupendous last name that was mine. So, I started to wear darker clothing, dark makeup, and dyed my disgusting blond hair black. That's when mom decided I was depressed and unhappy, and I acted as if I didn't care when she put me in private school.

Unfortunately, though, my mother had chosen the only private school in all of Aurora, New York, with a gross uniform and a dress code. Therefore, I could not wear black clothing of my own- I had to wear the bright red shirt and horrid navy skirt that they so kindly provided me with everyday. And to make matters worse, I couldn't wear my combat boots. I had to wear strapped navy flats; it was absolutely horrific. I could continue to dye my hair black though, and thank God no one had to see my repulsive blond hair. But even with that one thing I could retain, I could no longer show my identity. So now, I was legitimately depressed.

The first day of Cole Gregory Private School, I sat outside on the bench, alone, eating my lunch at twelve fifty two p.m. No one ever talks to the new girl- there was not a single person among the two hundred something kids who was the least bit interested in me. To make matters worse, every period I would be forced to stand up and say my name and an 'interesting fact' about me. Every period I would say the same thing:

"I'm Leila Black, and I don't want to be here."

I said what I wanted to, and after I was done, the teacher would nod as I sat, not caring. I saw other student's eyes glance at me, but only until I met their gaze- they would drop theirs' like they were never even looking at me, but I knew better. This always happened when there was a new girl. It usually wore off after a week, but the glances didn't stop for me - they got worse. They started by subtly whispering, but shut up when I got near. Later on though, they just kept talking as I walked by, not oblivious to the fact that I was standing right there, but knowing that I wouldn't do anything if they talked inadequately about me. So the rumors then started. There were at least a dozen different versions, and they continued to mutate and spread like a virus. But that's how everyone knew me now, whether I liked it or not.

I was bored one day, so I broke into someone's locker, and I drenched everything he or she owned in water from the nearby water fountain. I didn't know whose locker it was, and it didn't really matter to me, but that got me landed in, for everyone else, the dreaded principal's office. For me, it wasn't a paralyzing office of broken dreams and punishment; it was just another room I didn't care about in a school I didn't care about.

I was sitting outside the office in a too small blue plastic chair when someone walked over and laid out across the row of chairs, his head hanging off the edge upside down, blonde hair almost touching the ground. He stared up at me through his Ray Ban sunglasses. He was another student in my tedious English class.

He nodded his chin towards me. "You're the new girl right?" I kept my gaze straight ahead, focused on a Chess Club poster.

"Yup." I answered in one word. I expected him to stop talking, but he continued on.

"Why are you here?"

"Drenched someone's stuff."

"Cool." He was waiting for me to ask him why he was here, but when I didn't he told me anyways. "I threw an apple across the room."

I turned to him this time.

"What's so bad about that?"

"I may have broken a window..." I cracked a smile.

"Aren't you a good boy?" I said sarcastically. He grinned, and that's where our conversation stopped. I turned my gaze back to the Chess Club poster, but I could feel his gaze still on at me. After ten long minutes, I was finally called into the office, and I still felt the nameless boy's green eyes staring at me as I walked into that room.

Long story short, I walked in, I got a pointless lecture, and two weeks of detention. But it gets worse. Or better, depending on your view of the situation and whether you like that sappy, romantic stuff that dumb guys do.

I walked into detention that afternoon at three eighteen, eighteen minutes fashionably late to see the Ray Bans from before and the floppy blonde hair sitting in the back of the room, obviously waiting for me. He saw me and pointed to the chair next to him, but I ignored him and sat three rows in front of him. I turned around, and there he was looking at me, a cocky grin across his face, hands behind his head. I turned away, but I heard the squeak of a chair being moved, walking, and in a matter of seconds, he was sitting next to me.

I turned to him. "What do you want?"

"Nice to see you again too." He smiled and I kept a straight face, but he kept on running his mouth.

"So I'm Chase. And you're Leila. We're on a first name basis now."

"Why do you keep trying to talk to me?"

"Well, I noticed you have a very poor sense of fashion." I looked at him.

"You're wearing practically the same thing as me. All you need now is a skirt." He smiled. He wore the same red collared shirt as me, and the same cement gray color pants as my dreaded skirt. Instead of flats though, he was wearing brown loafers.

"I take it you don't like the uniforms then?"

"Bingo. This looks like something a Barbie would wear." I responded.

"Well, I have a proposal. Meet me at six o'clock Saturday at the theater on Clearway Street, and you can wear whatever you would like." I turned to him.

"Are you asking me on a date?"

“I suppose I am.” He stood up. “I will see you on Saturday. Until then m’lady.” He bowed to me, lifted his head and winked, and left the room, that grin still on his face. I watched him, me still in shock, as he walked out the door into the parking lot, got in his truck, and drove away.

Today is Saturday. I told mom to drop me off at the theater. It was six o’clock exactly, as I had chosen not to be fashionable late. I walked up to the side of the building, leaned my chest against the cold brick, and peered around the corner. Sure enough, there was Chase, standing there, waiting for me in a blue polo shirt and jeans, still wearing the same loafers from yesterday at school. I started to walk over to him, and he waved, but then noticed the tears flowing down my cheeks. His green eyes got serious and his grin faded.

“Leila, are you-” he started, but I cut him off.

“I’m sorry,” I said, and took off sprinting down the street, just as it started to rain.

It’s currently raining hard, so I stopped at a diner in town. It’s 9 o’clock, and I haven’t eaten all day, so I’m desperately hungry. I sat down in a booth and ordered waffles. My hair and pants are soaking wet, and my makeup is running down my face from the rain. I cursed under my breath at the blond that was starting to show through at the roots. When my waffles came, I devoured them. I didn’t have anywhere to be at any time, so I sat there in the torn up, bright red booth and read the book I had brought with me in my backpack- or at least I tried to read, but I couldn’t. I have no interest in this fictional person’s life, and why should I? So, I put everything back in my backpack and am sitting here, wondering what I’m going to do.

I heard jingling behind me as the door opened, and I glanced over. His back is turned to me, but I knew exactly who it was when I saw the brown loafers on his feet as he turned around to face me. He walked over to the booth and sat down across from me, his blonde hair a floppy wet mess. My eyes traveled up to meet his before I sighed and spoke.

“What the hell are you doing here, Chase?”

“What the hell are *you* doing here, Leila? Why did you run from me?”

I bit my lip, a habit I do when I don’t know what to say. He sighed and looked away.

“If you didn’t want to go out with me, you could have just said so.”

The thing is, I wanted to go on the date with him. He was confident and interesting, and I had started to like him.

I finally spoke.

“I don’t want to go on a date with you. I don’t want to be friends with you. I don’t want to know you, or anyone in this town. I am running away, and I don’t care what you have to say about it, because a guy I met only this week isn’t going to change my mind.”

He looked at me with an icy cold stare. All the beautiful green had left his eyes, and all that was there was a glare.

“That’s all you had to say. Good luck with whatever you’re doing.” He lingered for a millisecond, then left the restaurant, slamming the door behind him. The jingling of the bell on the door hung in the air. I breathed a heavy sigh, feeling no regrets. I know exactly why they name storms after people, and I had no time for annoyances and interferences like him. I could finally go anywhere and be anyone. Nothing could stop me now.

