

I arrived at school today all dressed for success as my dad would put it. I looked up, Olympia High School, my new home and social watering grounds. I had recently moved to Olympia in Washington because my father had a business there. Needless to say I was pretty upset. I had to leave my friends and school behind, and that wasn't something that could easily be done. Bright and luminescent Nevada was my life; it was all I had ever known. I grew up thinking, "I'm going to have great high school time with my friends and gonna graduate from here," but now that dream was washed away. Probably from the constant rain Washington has... especially during the spring, which happened to be now. I had only lived here for about a week and it had either rained or been extremely cloudy and damp every day. This I was not used to.

It was my first day of school in Olympia, and I didn't plan on being the kid who sat at lunch, eating alone. I made my way to the building and headed to music. The only problem was I didn't know where I was going. I bumped into a girl with short messy brown hair and owl glasses, on my way. I managed to make her drop all her books though. "I'm so sorry I wasn't watching where I was going. I'm kind of a klutz," I apologized bending down to help her gather the books. Man they were heavy, how such a small girl could hold that many books was beyond me. There were at least eight on the ground, all looking around three hundred pages at minimum. All them looked worn, the spines were falling apart, the covers almost off completely. I guessed with how many times she had read them it was only natural that would happen.

"It's okay," she said softly. She had this air of intelligence to her and a calmness that helped to settle the anxious feelings I was having here at the school. I was certain she was the brains of the grade with all the books she was carrying. We finished picking her books up and the girl said to me, "I haven't seen you around here, are you the new girl everyone's been talking about?"

"Uh yeah... wait, how did everyone know I was coming here? I hadn't met anybody my age during the week I've been here..." I said confused.

"Joseph Herman, no one uses his first name though, just Herman. He knows everything about the school's happenings. It's a bit disconcerting to think about actually," the girl said thinking. "Oh! I'm sorry I haven't introduced myself yet. I'm Minnie." I

raised an eyebrow, that was a new one, “Minerva, that’s the whole thing, but everyone just calls me Minnie.”

“Alexandra, everyone, well, all my old friends call me Alex,” I said and she smiled. “Do you know where the Music room is? Or could you show me where it is if it’s not too much trouble...,” I asked a bit awkwardly.

“Sure thing, the music room from here is...right down the hall, on the left. I think you have music with a guy named Paul O., he’s one of my friends, and he’ll tell you anything you want to know if you’re having trouble,” she said.

“Yeah... Okay so I go down the hall to the...left and meet Paul?” I asked making sure. I didn’t want to walk into a classroom then be forced to leave just because I didn’t read the schedule correctly or hear her right. She nodded, the bell rang and she excused herself. I slowly made my way to room 113. I opened the door and presented myself to the teacher, I noticed that everyone was talking. There was just so much noise in the class.

“Could you tell me if I’m supposed to be in this room sir?” I asked handing him my schedule.

“Can you read child?” he asked sitting at his desk, feet up on the top leaning back in his chair, he almost reminding me of a student.

“...yes?” I said uncertainly.

“Well if this says go to room 113 and you can read numbers, then why would you be in the wrong room?” he asked giving me a smart answer. I couldn’t tell if this guy was being serious.

“Dunno, maybe I have a defective paper,” I said shrugging.

“Good answer, because of that you can stay here until the period is over, instead of wandering the halls looking like a lost new kid.”

“But that’s exactly what I am, a lost student here...,” I said trying for an angelic face, he laughed and got up out of his chair.

“Okay class, shut up,” the class grew quieter; it wasn’t an immediate silence like I had expected. I looked at the man orchestrating this madness, “Who wants to learn some music theory?” he asked in a sing song voice. The class groaned and he began to hand out the sheets. “Too bad,” was his response. I took a seat near the back next to a boy with

bright blond hair. He was sitting there tapping on his desk with his fingers like he was drumming. At first I thought he was crazy, but then I noticed he had headphones in. I looked at the sheet of paper that the teacher had given us. The boy next to me wrote his name "P-a-u-l-O.", Paul wasn't I supposed to meet a Paul?

"May I help you?" he asked. I sat there thinking, what is he talking about? "You've been watching me this whole time" he said pulling out his headphones.

"Uh yeah sorry, I was supposed to talk to...a "Paul O." actually" I said.

He lifted his sheet of paper, "that would be me."

"Do you know Minerva?"

"Yeah, I know her? Why?" he asked still facing forwards.

"She told me to ask you things about the school if I had any problems or anything," I said.

"...and what would you like to know?" he inquired.

I hadn't thought about this..., "could you possibly tell me about some people?" I said thinking off the top of my head.

He turned to face me and looked me over, "you're the new kid?" I nodded, "okay there are a few people you should know about. Herman... the guy over there" he said pointing to a boy diagonal from me who was bent over at his desk and had bright neon sneakers with a winged logo on the side, you could hear rhythmic taps coming from the keys of his cell phone. I honestly thought he would break the thing though, with how fast his fingers flew. "If you want something spread, give him the message. He is capable of spreading it through texts, emails; he even created a website one time. He can make sure anyone knows what you want said." Isn't he the one who spread that I was coming here? But how did he know? How could he have possibly known? There aren't neighbors for a while and dad starts work today... "He usually finds out anyway, and don't even ask how he knows he just does. I'm Paul O. head of the Literati, the school's newspaper club. I also do track, Herman too he's one of the fastest kids here," he informed. Why did he choose himself and Herman? What's so special...are they friends, or do they have some past problems like a vendetta? "Minnie. Genius, she's a walking library. Go to her if you want any information, she's like Google personified, an equivalent to...Wiki if you will."

“That’s a crazy analogy,” I said laughing, Paul reminded me of sun-drenched Nevada for some reason. It was like he radiated that sunny feeling that came from it.

“It’s all true though,” he said turning back to the crazy teacher again.

“Hey what’s this guy’s deal?” I asked Paul. “He almost reminds me of a student...I’ve never encountered a teacher like this,” I confessed.

“Dr. Linus Links, the music teacher here at Olympia, he may seem crazy and might just be, but he’s a good teacher,” Paul said. I nodded and didn’t really pay that much attention for the rest of the period.

The bell rang soon enough and everyone got out of their seats. Paul said a casual good bye and I nodded. I looked at my schedule to see my next class, home and careers.

Everyone took their seats and I was drawn magnetically towards the back row. It was a good five minutes before the teacher had gotten into the room, “sorry kids, I was helping a student with his locker,” she said, putting her things down on the desk. She looked a bit disheveled but like a nice, sincere lady. She went to the front of the class and wrote on the board for the class to respond to a prompt “What makes a home?” She turned back around and spotted me. I saw her eyes widen and she smiled pleasantly. She then calmly walked to the back row. No one really noticed they were all still talking. “And just who are you?” she asked her voice like ambrosia. It was so...motherly.

“I’m the new student Alexandra,” I said.

“Oh how nice,” she said. Her voice was almost on the brink of being too sugary, her circle bangles around her wrist jingled slightly. “Okay then, just respond and listen into the conversation and I won’t call on you unless you raise your hand. I don’t want you to feel like I’m picking on you,” and she returned to the front of the room.

The whole period the class had a discussion on how homes aren’t just where you live they are also where you feel accepted and loved. These later ideas were mainly sparked by Ms. Vesta. Like Paul, this woman gave off a friendly, warm aura. She was sweet and never picked on the kids who were having trouble, instead feeding them ideas and concepts off of which they themselves could think, like a host to her guests. She seemed truly concerned about the well being of others. I was a bit sad when the bell rang though; the woman had made me feel welcome in this, her home.

I followed some kids who were talking about gym being today to get to my next class and sure enough I reached the gym. I spoke to the teacher and he told me I could sit out for today since I was wearing jeans. Today's activity was dodge ball. The coach chose two students as captains to pick their teams. I sat and watched the procession from the bleachers. "Big Tuna get up here," the coach said and a boy stepped forward from the crowd. I was convinced he was Adonis. His dark hair was short and kind of curly but it looked wet, and he had a strong build.

"That's Philip, people call him "The Shark" or "Big Tuna" though, and he's captain of the swim team. He holds the record for the fastest 1500 meter freestyle, in the state. When he's in the water he's just so... fast," the voice said at a loss for words. I looked to my side and saw Minnie sitting with me. "Some people are convinced he just lives in the water that's how good he is," she kept looking forward telling me about the boy.

" 'Arry, get up here," the coach commanded, and another boy stepped forward. This boy was a bit shorter than the first; he walked with his shoulders out, and wore a scowl. It seemed he had an arrogant quality about him.

"That's Harry; he's basically the school bully. He's on the football team and plays quarterback. He's very aggressive and, well...you'll see," Minnie said. The boys had finished picking their players and began to line up. The coach blew his whistle and an epic dodge ball war was waged in gym that day.

I noticed that Harry didn't exactly play by the rules, repeatedly going for off the wall head shots. There was no way he could have "accidentally" hit seven people like that, the simple explanation would have to be, he was a cheater and he didn't play fair. He also hit people in the legs with the balls to make them fall over and that in turn would make a clear shot at someone who was behind the first person. The worst part of this madness was that he smiled every time he hit a person, and it looked like it hurt. The Shark on the other hand wasn't as out rightly aggressive. He stayed towards the back and waited until he could get someone out.

Finally in the end there were two, but as they say, there can only be one. Both The Shark and Harry stood there representing their teams. Harry threw his weapon at a deadly speed towards The Shark who dodged it. Not realizing though that all the other dodge

balls were scattered on The Shark's side, Harry then began taunting The Shark to try to get them back. For just a second The Shark's face flickered to rage. "Why you-," he started to yell, but he composed himself like the calming of waves. He was very composed about the whole situation lined up the balls in a clean row on the ground, then picked up two of the balls at the end, went to the beginning of the line and stood behind the one of the balls. I wondered what he could possibly be doing. He then kicked the ball towards Harry, who ran to the left, then threw the next one a bit to the left. This missile almost hit Harry who was running so fast. The Shark went down the line kicking the balls that he had lined up previously. Harry was dazed, and I was surprised he lasted so long. He was the little fish who thought he was big, but when he went up against the big tuna, it decimated him. The Shark kicked the last ball that was on the ground; Harry dodged this and almost fell over. The Shark then threw the one in his right hand higher than I expected. It bounced off the wall, and Harry the head shot master, was defeated. The whole gym screamed, even the people on Harry's team. I guessed that most people didn't like him very much; his attitude was what made me so angry.

Mrs. Cerenne, the teacher of global studies, was wearing an abnormal amount of green. She greeted me and I went off to sit in the back like my other classes. Today we learned about the food supply of the world. She started off talking about how good grains and how most people in the ancient world needed and used them. Soon though, I began to realize that half the period had gone by and she was still talking about grains. I began to worry that she wasn't going to stop this rant. Mrs. Cerenne gave this spring time feeling off, and I liked her for that, she just seemed to talk about grains a lot, this I found a bit annoying. In time though she got off the topic and moved to the other categories of food.

I had study hall the next period and decided I would go to the library. There were just shelves and shelves all around. I was happy; I used to be called Alexandra the librarian, because I practically lived in the library. As I was looking for a book, I noticed two girls sitting at a table not far from me. I also noticed from where I was, I could overhear them without much trouble at all. One was sitting there doing her makeup, looking in a mirror, powdering her nose, she was incredibly beautiful, and was wearing a deep red shirt. The other was pretty as well but looked like she was in charge. She was

wearing a dark green shirt with purple in it. It almost reminded me of a peacock's feathers.

"So I found out that it really wasn't Rex's fault it was that stupid girl Selma. She had tricked him. He didn't know what was going on," the second girl said.

"Are you sure Sera?" asked the girl adding lipstick.

"Yeah, he explained everything. I was still angry though so I pulled a prank on her. I just had to," she said smiling telling the other girl about her evil deeds. I pretended to look for a book, still listening. "By the way how are you and Harry doing, Amy?"

"Oh it's going well. Nothing really, just a little thing, he's so amazing though." I assumed that this was the same Harry that I had met in gym class, but how he had gotten a girlfriend was beyond me. He was so aggressive and mean to others... The two girls chatted while I picked a book at random and went to sit at a table near the girls. Amy and Sera continued telling stories to each other about Harry and Rex. After a while I zoned out, the girls at the table next to me wouldn't stop talking.

During lunch I met a girl, who was sitting alone outside feeding the birds. I came over to ask her if I could sit and eat with her. We had a brief chat, I discovered her name was Luna, and I told her how I was new here. "Luna, I don't mean to be rude but why are you sitting alone out here?" I asked her she seemed like a nice girl. Why was she alone?

"Oh, I'm feeding the birds. I love animals," she said smiling and tossing some bread at the birds around her. She was like a magnet to them. They flocked to her and stayed wary of me. I was a bit envious. "I feed them every day, and then I go and sit with my brother at lunch."

"Oh who's your brother?" I asked the nature lover.

"Paul, do you know him? He's a nice boy." she said.

"Yeah actually I do...are you two twins or something, you don't look alike," I said. In contrast to her brother Luna gave off a sleepy, earthy feel not an exciting, sunny one. She seemed a bit darker and more imaginative.

"Yeah, we're twins," she replied.

The rest of lunch was spent with me telling her stories about Nevada. I was off to art class when the next period came around. I sat at one of the tables and saw Paul come to sit near me. He asked about my day and I told him how it had gone. I was interrupted

by the teacher talking about the current project though. Everyone got out their clay busts, a lot looked very nice, especially Paul's. Mrs. Chiron told me I could sit the kiln room with the janitor, Heft. She led me to the kiln and I found Mr. Heft loading the clay busts into the fiery pit. It was kind of hot in the room but I was there to stay until school was over, this being my last period. The teacher left me and I was alone with Heft. When he turned around, he wasn't exactly the best thing to look at.

"Hello," he said. I found he was a good conversationalist. I also found out about his life. When he was eighteen his own mother threw him out of the house saying he was a disgrace to his brothers and sister. His mother couldn't stand his imperfections. I felt really bad for this man. He seemed so nice and down to earth, but for a mother to do such a thing would be horrible. He had been paralyzed in his right leg because he had nerves severed there since he was a child. That's why he sits in the kiln all day. He physically can't walk around and do things most people can do. When the period was over he thanked me for listening to his stories and I told him he was a nice man.

On my way out of the school I noticed a large crowd gathering. I wanted to see what everyone was doing so I pushed my way to the front of the crowd. I saw Sera clinging to, who I assumed was Rex. The only thing was, he was waving to everyone and winking, like he was a king or something. I thought that was very ostentatious. He smiled and high-fived a few kids, while making his way to the parking lot. Sera seemed oblivious to this show, instead resting her head on his arm and dragging sleepily on with him, like she was in a trance. He got into a big SUV type car that was silver. I noticed it was the only SUV car in the parking lot. It towered over all the others and they drove off. As the crowd dispersed, I tried to see what kind of car it was, but I could only see the logo. It was a lightning bolt on a cloud. I made a mental note to look the car up later.

I waited for my dad to come pick me up from school for about five minutes. When he arrived I got in the car. "Hey hon, how was your day?" he asked nicely, keeping his eyes on the road pulling out of the school.

I laughed a bit, "I could write a book on my first day here, and let me tell you, it was nothing like Nevada," I said shaking my head lightly, as it began to drizzle. For the first time here I wasn't saddened by the water coming down around me it was nice and calm, and in a way cleansing, but isn't that to be expected in rainy Washington?