

It's Still You

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Abstract

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Abstract: This thesis is a metafictional collection of art and words created by the author between the ages of twelve to eighteen, and edited as a novel documenting roughly seven year's worth of self-reflection and growth. Diary pages, writing journals, and miscellaneous doodles are woven together to tell the coming-of-age story of a young girl trying to record and understand her passions, relationships, and dreams. In this reworking of true events, Madison writes about major changes in her life, starting with entering a new school, and ending shortly after her graduation from the same institution six years later. Her story shares direct insights into her mental health and true ambitions for writing and art as she faces intense social and familial pressures to change almost every aspect of herself for the sake of fitting in or finding success.

Poetics Statement

“Growth continues to be possible, forever. That’s a really exciting thing, as difficult as it can be.”

- Rebecca Sugar (creator Steven Universe)

Around the age of eleven, I was falling in love with reading and writing. Friends at school had recently become obsessed with numerous titles from the genre of “diary fiction” (Diary of a Wimpy Kid and Dork Diaries had the strongest hold on me). When I got the brilliant idea to keep my own set of diaries, it was with the intention of writing the next young adult bestseller. It didn’t occur to me then that those books I admired were written by adults and not actual children my age until only a year later when I reread my first diary and couldn’t stop cringing. While the dream to use my diaries and content for a future book faded away, I continued writing in my diaries. I found it endearing and fun to reread what past me had written, and although I didn’t always like the writing of past me, it made me happy to read it and see how I had changed in the past year. I made a habit out of rereading my diaries every year on my birthday, each year experiencing more cringe than the last, but also an even stronger sense of self-development.

Over the past ten years, I’ve filled twelve diaries and am still counting. Suddenly, I found myself with an expansive personal archive and the lingering question of what I was going to do with it other than my yearly read throughs. Years later when I was preparing to enter my master’s program, I eagerly began brainstorming what I would do for my thesis project. I had a number of brand new projects that I wanted to start developing, but somewhere in the back of my mind I felt my diaries haunting me, and I felt that my MFA would be the best space in which to thoroughly exorcise them. Only eight diaries make an appearance in this project as my primary source material, featuring an expansive collection of writing and art. Secondary sources include random chapters of unfinished books kept in writing journals and in lazily titled word documents, drawings that I did on the backs of homework assignments and in sketchbooks, and the memories that I have found and kept or maybe misremembered throughout the past decade.

This decision to move forward with my diaries as the subject of my thesis wasn’t immediately clear or easy. I originally thought it might have been less challenging to work with my diaries for this project since I was already so familiar with my source material, but this past year has been filled with exhaustion. In my many diaries, there were several moments I was overjoyed to reconnect with. At the same time, there were traumas I had suppressed, nightmares I had forgotten, entire book’s worth of sadness and self-loathing which heavily tired me to reread and digitally transcribe. It took me much longer to work through my diaries than I anticipated, especially with so much content to work through, so I made the decision to work with the specific age bracket of 12-18 for the scope of this thesis project. I felt this period was strong enough to stand alone, as it captured my years through adolescence right onto the cusp of adulthood. Additionally, it follows my years at a single school institution and ends right before I plan to begin college.

The diaries start as I enter 7th grade. In that time, I tried my best to document what was happening in my academic and social lives, although most of my writing ended up recording my undying love for shows I was watching, books I was reading, and the stories I was writing in my free time. There were a lot of specific events that I didn’t write about, but remembered vividly

and felt were important to my character development, so I made the decision to approach my thesis as a mix of both archived materials and memories. Even with my memories filling in many of the narrative gaps, I acknowledged quickly in my rewriting of events that there were many chapters of my life that started without ever receiving any sort of ending. Additionally, there are details in my diaries that I've censored, changed, or kept out of this project entirely. Each choice to cut out a character or at times completely rewrite history was not made without careful consideration. In my experience, life usually doesn't make much sense at all, and trying to turn roughly seven years worth of confusion into a concrete narrative has been my most consistent challenge. To help craft a more coherent story for my audience, I started to categorize my work as a mix of both memoir and fiction. What is real and what is imagined is a blurred line throughout this final product, but every element is still deeply rooted to my diary and fiction writing which I produced as a young creative. Still, in this tidiest version of my story, there are gaps, and where these exist, I hope they are filled in by your own experiences and stories.

My biggest concern for working with my diaries was the same thought that I held the first time I dismissed my diaries as publishable material: so much of my writing was hard for me to read without wincing in pain. Internally, I've had an extremely difficult time accepting the writing I made as a twelve year old to be anything valid enough to bring into public viewership, let alone into my thesis work as a graduate student. This created an initial instinct to transform the original source materials as much as possible. I considered many different forms: a comic, a collection of poetry, even a video game. However, after weeks of trial and error, I eventually came to the conclusion that the best form for my diaries to take was simply another diary. The physical and visual element of my diaries are an important part of what makes the experience of writing in and reading my diaries so much fun, so it was important for me to include those elements into my final thesis. I created a customized font with my handwriting and template that looked like many of the diaries I've kept, then scanned in images from my actual diaries and sketchbooks to match with what time period I was writing in. I wanted the overall experience of reading through these diaries to best mimic my own experiences with these diaries.

After years of not knowing if any of my diary pages would see another set of eyes, I now found myself picturing a very real audience of my thesis advisors and fellow cohort. Although the project was very clearly important to me as the individual creator of the original diaries, I wondered what the benefit would be in sharing my work with a public readership. I took breaks to read recommended works by friends, my fellow cohort, and thesis advisors. I started with Jenny Bouilly's *The Body*, moved to *The Place of Scraps* by Jordan Abel, spent days holding Anne Carson's *Nox*, dreamt about Wendy Ortiz's *Bruja*, and arrived at *A Tale for the Time Being* by Ruth Ozeki. Through all these works (most notably, among many others), I heard multiple voices. I found memoirs, commemorations, mediations, and confessions all facilitating the same space that I was trying to find for myself. There was clarity without sacrificing authenticity. There were raw elements of the past placed beside shiny, new pieces of the present. There was unfiltered and unapologetic love, rage, sincerity, apathy, shame, pride. I decided that my archive of diaries was important to share as a very real and intimate collection of the different voices I've had through growing up. I wanted to share my experiences as a growing girl for all of the other writers and readers who will or who already have experienced many of the stages and experiences I faced myself. This thesis is an homage to girlhood and growing up.

It took a lot of patience to uncover where the strongest threads of my former selves lived and how I could best weave them into my final thesis. Those threads would have never been accessible without my past selves' passion for writing. I'm in a sincere amount of debt to twelve year old me and her ambition to start keeping diaries. If you had told me ten years ago that I'd be publishing my diaries today, I probably wouldn't have believed you, but I'd definitely be excited and insanely relieved to be doing something I love so far into the future. I'm so grateful to be here in this moment, writing to you and sharing this project with you. I wonder who you'll meet when you read my thesis. I hope you remember her kindly. She's been waiting a long time to talk with you.



It's Still You



a diary written and drawn by
Madison Nikfard

CHAPTER 12



Monday, September 5

Welcome to the start of my new diary!

Tomorrow is my first day of school at [REDACTED] and I'm super nervous, but also super excited to meet new people and make new friends.

I already met one girl named Nora over the Summer at a cooking class Mom signed me up for. It was actually a lot of fun! Good food and a new friend so I can't really complain. Nora is super nice. She also watches Naruto just like me!! I hope we have classes together so we can keep fangirling together. Of course... never during lectures (just during the unrelated ones).

I'm spending my last day of Summer getting my hair straightened and visiting the bookstore next to the salon. For my birthday, Mom took me to get my hair permanently straightened but after a whole day of sitting with the awful smelling straightening conditioner, it didn't even work!! Mom even took me back in to try again the next day. She thinks it just made my hair even more curly than before (face palm).

At least I got rewarded with a new book afterwards. Maybe I'll get one today too! I'm still missing Naruto volumes 11, 20, and 23.

It's time for me to go to my appointment. I'll write more soon. Talk to you later!

Bye!

Tuesday, September 13

It's only been my first official week of 7th grade and already things are SUPER crazy!! We get a TON of homework every day. I heard that about [REDACTED] from the kids at my old school. That's why none of them came here with me. I didn't want to go either after hearing all that. I begged Mom and Dad to let me go to school with Euphie (she is my childhood bff!) but they said going to [REDACTED] will help me get into a good college. I guess the struggle will be worth it!

Good news: Nora and I have classes together! She introduced me to other kids she knows and I've been sitting next to them during lunch. There's a girl named Daiah who draws really good art!

All 7th graders are taking Humanities, Math, Spanish, Biology, Art, and History. So far we get the most work from History and Math. Typical. Monday after school I have Choir and Fridays I found a club called The Author's Society! I went to the first meeting last week and it was a small group of older kids who all knew each other. I was the only newbie!! Everyone there is so cool! I really liked feeling like everyone's younger sister.

After being inspired by Author's Society I finally started working on my original book series which I am naming Crimson Tears. That or something with "Roses" in the title. I have a ton of other plans for books too, but I'd like to finish that one first. Almost done with homework and I was just dying to tell you this idea I had for the intro. Here's how it starts:

My name is Madison Springfield. I lived a normal life for the average twelve year old with curly brown hair and brown eyes. I had a good high school, good friends, good grades, good health and a great family. My brother, twenty-two year old Nicholas, and I are super close. We even have nicknames for each other. I call him Nicky and he calls me Maddy, like I allow most people to call me, but if you call my brother Nicky he'll knock you into tomorrow. One thing you should know about my brother is that he is more overprotective than my own mother, which can get annoying sometimes when I know he means well. Still, I'm grateful for him to care about me so much. Yep a perfectly normal life for a perfectly normal girl. Of course, all that went away faster than I ever thought it could. It's a really long story so you better get comfortable.

Thursday, October 6

I may not get to finish my entry today with all the stuff I wanna talk about. Two reasons: One: My History final is worth 100% of my grade and the first draft is due Friday!! (I'm a little scared...) Next, Choir Junior Competitions are coming up and I haven't even glanced at our 50 pages of music or listened to the practice tracks yet!!

Aw well, I'm still gonna try to write everything down. First we had humanities and I forgot my book. I am praying that I didn't lose points, but we didn't really need it in class so I probably didn't. In homeroom we are having another spirit week and the choices weren't that exciting. I had dancing in Spanish today and it sucked! No one asked me to dance, so I waited for a partner switch. Eventually, I got to dance with Icarus. He was a good dancer and the only boy who didn't act like a doofus.

Nora just started posting AMV's on YouTube and already has 100 subscribers and 2000 views!! She was working on making a video all day today to air tomorrow for her new YouTube channel. She finished it just now so I asked if I could watch and she said yes! I was first to watch and comment! So extreme!

I also uploaded a video this week of a few of my inked Naruto drawings. Someone left a comment that said: "Good work!" It made me super happy c:

Ok, we'll talk more soon. Gtg, ttyl, bye!!



Sunday, November 27

Greetings from the inside of a plane that's on it's way to home sweet home! Yeah, forgive me for the messy handwriting but it's extremely difficult to try and detail your life while trying to keep the people around you from peering down your shoulder. So as you have probably guessed, I'm on my way back from Disneyland with my family. We went for Thanksgiving and it was SO much fun (even if traveling is a bit stressful).

So sorry that I couldn't update you sooner, but this has been my first opportunity. To cap my trip, Thursday we went on a few rides while baking in the heat. When our hotel room was finally ready, we all changed into swimsuits to swim in the pool. After the pool was some Disneyland fun, but the Princess Castle I wanted to visit was closed ;a;

Friday we went out to the park early and spent the whole day in lines for different rides. I think we did every single one, even the super scary ones thanks to Nicky letting me hold his hand on The Tower of Terror and the Pirates of the Carribean.

We spent most of Saturday relaxing in the hotel. I got some time to work on Crimson Tears. Nicky went to the arcade and won me a Naruto plush!!! (It's a Shikamaru plush. He's not my favorite character, but so cool that he was even here!) Nicky and I went to the pool again. He and I stayed up past our parents and closed the park down going on Splash Mountain over and over since the line was empty.

Such an extreme trip!! Lots of fun and I made really good progress on Crimson Tears! I'll share a bit of what I wrote today in the airport:

I wasn't exactly sure how to be taking all of this. My brother goes missing, I find a weird spaceship, end up captured by a bunch of freaky aliens and I still didn't know where Nikki was. The room they were keeping me in was like a prison cell that had at least been recently cleaned. I sat on the bed and just stared back at myself from the cracked window in the bathroom. My face was dirty and my clothes were torn up.

"Okay stay calm. That's right. The key here is to stay absolutely calm or else you'll have a total breakdown," I told myself.

I basically just kept repeating that to myself, trying to comprehend everything until a boy with neon red hair walked in with a fresh set of clothes and some water. Thankfully these people had some humanity. Well, maybe not humanity. He tossed them on the bed and then just stood there staring at me.

Eventually he asked: "So, you're a human?"

Gee, great conversation starter.

"Yeah. How about you?"

He scratched his head. "Wish I could say yes."

This was officially the worst conversation I had ever had. I tried to think of a clever plan to get out of here or at least find out where Nicholas was. For all I knew he might not even be here, but I did hear his voice and there was no mistaking that.

I put on my innocent, cutesy face. "I was wondering if you knew where my brother was." I said.

He looked confused, but after a little time of thought, he snapped his fingers. "Oh, that guy we picked up a while ago? The one you answered to and referred to as Nicky?"

"Yes that's him! So he is here!"

The boy laughed. Er, I guess alien. "Yeah, he's here. Guess he's not who we thought he was after all."

"What do you mean? Who did you think he was, and why would you want them?"

He quickly placed his hand over his mouth and cursed.

"What is it?" I asked.

"I said too much. If Colin wants you to have answers then he'll tell you, but for now I really shouldn't be saying anything he wouldn't like."

"I take it Colin is like your captain."

"Not only is he like our captain, he is our captain." The boy replied smiling.

"You seem afraid of him."

"Oh I'm not afraid, I'm terrified of him. You should be too." He turned and made his way to the door. Before he left I pulled his jacket back and stopped him.

"Wait, just tell me if my brother's okay. Please! I've been so worried!"

The alien nodded. "He's alright. You'll be able to see him soon. Colin's orders have been to treat you both as guests for now. You can relax. Now get changed. I'll see you soon."

Frustrated, I wanted more answers. This was too scary, and way too complex to be some sort of prank, but there was nothing I could do but follow orders and wait to see Nicky. At least that would have been my only option if the alien hadn't forgotten to lock

my cell door when he left.

See me soon? Fat chance.

I think we're landing now. We'll talk soon! Bye!

Friday, December 2

It's one o'clock... in the morning!!! I can't sleep and I just finished my History final! I'm too active (and loud!) to crawl into bed. I can't stop thinking. I thought watching TV would make me sleepy, but now I'm fully awake! The only thing on is Good Luck Charlie and the high school students there are learning what I'm learning!

Only a few more hours till I have to get ready for school... I just hope it comes soon so I can get through the day ASAP. My face is a trainwreck. My unibrow is coming back. My hair isn't straight. My forehead? Zit city!! I mean look at me. There's a lot of reasons for me to be picked on.

I just want to escape to my corrupted anime dreams. I love dreams (sadly I always either wake up at the good parts, or forget them) especially since they have all been Naruto themed lately. I had this one dream (an awesome inspiring dream) last week that took me to the battlefield with Naruto. We were running from monsters (remember this was a dream), then we got captured, causing Naruto to be severely injured. I was soo mad! I just wanted to escape, then Sasuke came and helped. He held me and used absolute defense. It was the best fight ever!!

Of course Mom woke me up so I never found out what happened at the end.

I had an even weirder dream two nights ago. I don't remember much of it, but in one part, Icarus kissed me. Really weird!

I found a channel playing anime!! It's a Naruto episode I've already seen, but it's still a good one (Gaara's fight against Rock Lee! so extreme!!) Maybe this is a sign of good luck for my day! Wish me luck anyways hehe. Bye!



Sunday, January 1

It's a new year, a new me, a new dream!

My drawing has skyrocketed this year, but I want to be able to draw full body art like in manga. Still not professional work (far from) but I'm having fun doing it.

For the holidays, I got a Naruto plush, sharingan necklace, and Naruto DVDs!

So about that I watched Volume 2 (still looking for Volume 3) and it was hilarious! But, Haku and Zabuza died so I was up all night bawling. Sasuke almost died! Even though I knew he wasn't, Naruto and Sakura's crying was making it unbearable!!



I also finished my new Shippuden game! I know the entire Naruto series now! I can't wait to tell Nora and Daioh!

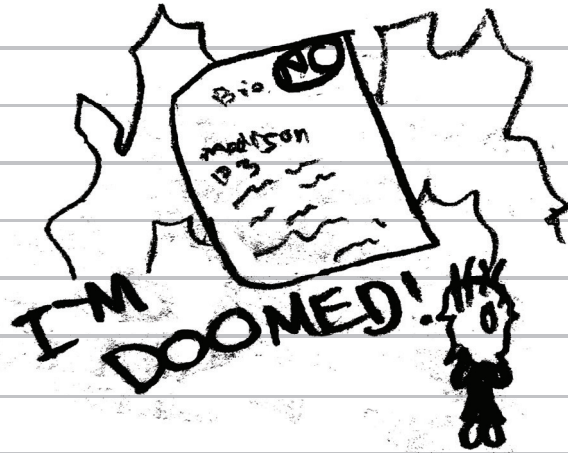
I'm sad that I have school tomorrow but I'm thrilled to see my friends again. Guess who I'm partners with in 5th and 6th period? Icarus! We can only talk for a bit but we laugh and chat like old friends and I was in a trance about 15 minutes listening to him talk about all the video games he was going to play over break. But it's strange because he never notices me when he's with the populars.

Hatchet sits next to us too and he's also fun to talk to. He's Icarus' best friend from middle school and they're both super funny. Hatchet actually told us a few jokes that I just found out some were kinda pervy... Now I feel dirty! It's like getting gum on your hands that won't come off no matter how hard you try and eventually it eats you alive!!! Things were going so well before that. I'm not a perv so why do I feel all icky? I can't even look at kissing without feeling like it is too mature for me to handle! Seriously, I won't even touch any show or book rated T+. Maybe that's just another perk for the future...

If you're my kid and has made it this far in reading without being scarred, I'm so sorry. Are you bored? What should we talk about next? I'll come up with something good. I promise. Bye!

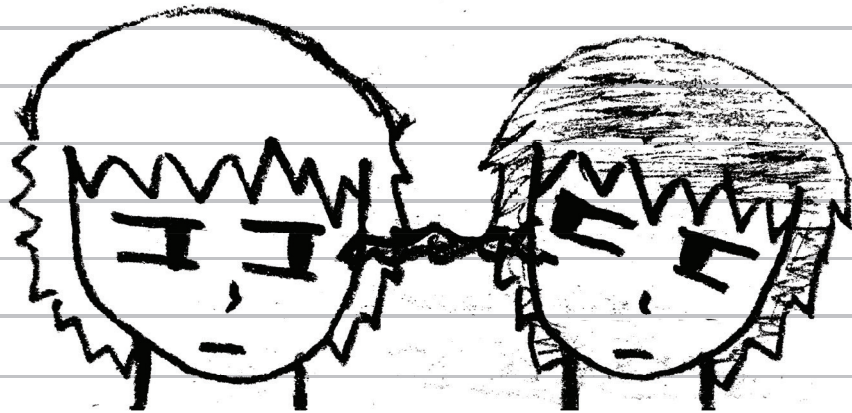
Tuesday, January 17

AAAAAHHHHH!! I failed my bio final!!!



Great. How do people expect me to study bio every freakin minute when I wanna read Naruto?! And I got a C+ on a math final. History hasn't been graded yet but I can only imagine how that went (face palm). Damn it all! Sorry just had to say it. Oh well, better luck next time.

To cool me off, let's talk about boys. First off, real boys. I might have a crush on Icarus. I think he likes me! Oddly enough, I think Hatchet might like me too...



Hatchet actually texted me Monday if I liked anyone at our school. I didn't text him back because I was in Choir and he sent another text after that said: "When the fxxx are you going to reply?" I told him I liked a lot of people as friends, including him and Icarus. Then everything went weird and he hasn't texted me back and he wouldn't talk to me today in class. I'm having a fxxxing heart attack!

This didn't help at all. Let's talk about fictional boys next time.

Oh! Wait! Hatchet texted me! Sorry for overreacting... I'm gonna go text him back before it gets too late. Bye!

Wednesday, February 8

Finished all my homework and I finally have a night off! So here I am just chilling watching anime and writing. Living the high life!

Today I decided to open up my new Naruto volume 3 box set! It's the best yet with all the extra bonus content and new opening! But it is really dragging on. The first DVD isn't even over yet. Finally finished the first DVD! I cried in this volume too! The second is a lot faster and is picking up and also giving me some ideas for my own stories!

I've been working hard on Crimson Tears. I finally named the love interest in Crimson Tears. Dear diary, meet Isaac:



He's based on a boy with bright red hair I met in a dream. He's the Kyo to my Tohru, the Howl to my Sophie, the Gaara to my... sand? Now that I think about it, all of my fictional crushes have bright red hair... Wanna sneak peak at the latest chapter? Here ya go!

Isaac, though he may not act it, was born smart enough to earn a PhD. Nicky was naturally born a bright child and learned a lot in his years as a child with help from our parents. He taught everything he knew to me. Everything... except World History, which was why I was struggling to do some of the given worksheets. Nicky described history as, "Humans making mistakes, doing something good, screwing it up, and then writing about it so other people know how big a mistake they have to beat to get into the History books."

While Isaac was just finishing up his last worksheet, I was still trying to make sense of my first. Apparently, the amount of effort I was putting into my ability to fathom who the fifth president of the United States of America was became noticeable, and before too long, Isaac came to my aid.

"Hey, do you want to do these together? It'll probably go faster that way."

I nodded, blushing. "Uh, I guess."

"Cool!" He said, leaning in so close that he was now against my shoulder. "So what problem are you on now? The second sheet, huh?"

"Yeah, I'm actually no good at this stuff. How do you know any of this? You're not even from this planet."

"I've spent a lot of time here watching TV. During most of the day, all the channels play game shows or kids cartoons about the revolutionary war."

"Oh... Well, thank you. I don't know how I'll ever make it up to you."

Isaac smiled softly. His blue eyes sparkled. "Maybe after school, you can come over and watch Liberty's Kids with me."

"Like... a date?"

"Yeah, a date."

My heart began beating so fast I thought I might die.

Haha! Like it? I think it's cute! I can't wait to write more but it's night time now so good night! Bye!

Thursday, February 16

Valentine's day was this week and our school has a tradition where everyone gets a necklace with a paper heart on it that you're supposed to give to someone else. At the end of the day, the boy and girl who collected the most get crowned King and Queen of Hearts. I knew the popular kids would win since they have so many fake friends, but I was really happy to get so many for myself! Nora and Daioh both gave me theirs! Daioh even drew me a picture on hers. I gave mine to the president of Author's Society Selena who also gave hers to me with a cute poem written on the back!

Hatchet gave me his along with a couple other people's hearts during lunch and said that he'd rather have me win than the other girls in our class. I was hoping to get one of from Icarus, but I guess Hatchet took it from him earlier to give to me, so technically I did! >:)

I ended the day with seven hearts! Not even close to the winners numbers but I was really happy about getting any <3

My friends keep asking me if I have a crush on Hatchet or Icarus and honestly I really don't know. They're both dorky but funny. But if it ever came down to them both asking me out, I guess I'd go out with Icarus because he's really tall and very sweet.

Aside my conflicting boy feelings, I'm having some really conflicting thoughts on Daioh. She wants to "branch out" and "be popular" next year so she could "conquer the school." I don't understand why she's going for quantity when it comes to friends. I'm fine with her branching out, I just don't wanna branch out with her (at least not with the new people she's choosing to hang out with).

Ok time for me to study again. Bye!

Monday, March 12

I can never remember my dreams lately. Last night's dream I remembered, but it was... rather disturbing...

I was in Hell basically being chased by a creepy puppet doll girl and a spider woman who both wanted to eat my soul. It wasn't all bad though. There was a boy I met down there who was helping me to escape. We almost made it out, but I realized that Nicky was also there and I needed to go back and find him.

Speaking of dreams, I've been daydreaming about TOLO, even though it's not supposed to be until May.

Who I really want to ask is Icarus, but he's so popular now I'm afraid he'd already be asked and I'd be crushed out dry. I've already heard that someone in the popular girl group is planning to ask him. It's not that I'm in love (shudder) with Icarus, but since Icarus has been flirting with me, I've really enjoyed all the attention I was getting from him.

I haven't told anyone else yet. Whenever my friends ask me who I want to ask to TOLO I just say that I want to go with a good friend. Sooo yup. With so much academic stress I don't even know if I'll be able to go. Thankfully the only homework tonight was some geometry constructions and humanities reading but instead of doing that, I decided to clean my room and watch Naruto. I should probably go finish that (groan). Bye.

Tuesday, April 10

Almost done with homework and I was just dying to tell you this scene for Crimson Tears. Here's how it starts:

One night I had a dream that I woke up to see everyone gone. I ran around the house, even down the street screaming, but no one was there. Eventually, I noticed a light on in Isaac's house and ran in, only to see him dead at my feet. I woke up in a cold sweat with tears streaming down my cheeks. My first thought was to call Isaac and check if my nightmare was real.

"Hello?" He answered in a groggy voice.

I was talking a mile a minute. Fear and panic surrounded me in the dark. I felt helpless and alone, until Isaac interrupted me.

"Woah! Hold on. It's okay I'm here."

"Isaac... What if this is another vision?"

He was silent for a moment, scaring me again.

"Why? Why is this happening? Why would I see something so awful?"

"Maddy... I know it's sudden but will you come over?"

My heart skipped a beat or two. I couldn't speak I just nodded my head. Then I remembered we were on the phone and finally said "Yes!"

"Great! Don't get caught. I'll see you soon."

He hung up and again I was alone. Both feelings of excitement and terror were overflowing inside of me. I tried not to imagine what would happen if I were to be caught by my parents this late at night. The entire time I spent sneaking out of my room I couldn't help myself from guessing up all the different reasons why I would have that vision. I couldn't really come up with anything. Whatever it was, maybe Isaac would know. After all, he was the smartest person I knew other than Nicky.

Once I finally made down from climbing through my bedroom window, I made it to Isaac's house right before sunrise. He greeted me at the front door.

"Glad to see you made it safely." He was wearing an overcoat and had his red hair tucked underneath a hat. "Okay, listen closely. I need you to take this. If something happens to me you take this back to my world. My brother is waiting for me to come back. He'll recognize my ship and come to you." Isaac pulled out the key and paper and handed them to me, but I

rejected them.

"Isaac, I can't do that."

Isaac grabbed my hand, kissed it and then put both the items into my hand. He gently touched my face. In a flash of the moment, we had our first real kiss. It would have lasted longer if not for what happened next.

AHH!! So dramatic, right? Ok that's all I have time for tonight. Bye!

Saturday, May 12

For TOLO, me and Nora and Daioh are just having a girl's night out with some of our other friends. Why? Because who needs a non-animated boy? (and it was like \$15 per person for the fee)

I'm actually not looking forward to girl's night as much because I don't really wanna see Daioh again for a while until she calms down. Her major art ego is starting to annoy me. She always talks about how "perf" everything that she makes is and then tells me that my art style "annoys" her. What the actual fudge??? We actually had a long discussion on this type of crap and she just keeps doing it over and over again. Yesterday, Daioh actually pulled a picture I drew from my hand and started measuring the eye distances with her fingers. Then she said that she wanted to "crush all manga artist's hopes and dreams." When I took the picture back, she called me a BIXXX. She's really good at art, I admit I'm a bit jealous, but she won't ruin my dreams!

I have a lot of other stuff to talk about but I'm really tired.



Finals are coming up and I'm really scared. Thank God Nicholas said he would help me study. I am forever in his debt.

Talk to ya tomorrow unless I'm busy studying. (Sigh). Bye!

Thursday, June 21

Woah! It's been a long time since we last spoke. Well for starters school's out and it's a week into Summer!



I've pretty much spent every day upstairs drawing and writing and singing. I guess I've gotten better at drawing and writing! I've made a ton of progress with Crimson Tears too!

Funny story about the last day of school, Nora pulled Daioh to me and apologized for her being so rude. I can assure you I handled it maturely and even apologized for overreacting. (Tsk. Like hell I did.) Well, that whole conversation ended well, after all she's stopped trying to make fun of my art.

Daioh is a long lost cause that'll probably never be found, but we still act fake towards each other. It's not like I want that at all, but I just wish this whole situation with her wanting to hang out with the popular girls hadn't happened.

Lunch was awkward because everyone was signing yearbooks in our friend group, which meant Daioh ended up signing mine. It said:

Maddison

It was really fun getting to know you! Keep up the quirky style...

Daioh Azumon

PS don't think you're friendship with Icarus went unnoticed ;)

I had to sign hers too. I just tried to be nice and say that her art is cool.
Thankfully Nora's nice note made me feel a lot better. She wrote:

Maddy!

You are the prettiest, smartest, most talented, best anime friend eva! I <3 you so much and I hope you have an amazing summer cuz you're an awesome friend, dare I say, BEST friend! Hope we're in the same class next year!

<3 Nora

Later in History we finally got back our grades. I got a B. Things were perfect and I wanted to see how Icarus and the others did on their tests. Icarus was really depressed and sad. Turns out he failed and was going to have to repeat History. I spent the rest of the class comforting him. Well Hatchet didn't like that so he tried to split us up but since he was being really mean to Icarus we were just ignoring him. He gave up after telling me I "should just marry Icarus."

Math was the last period of the day where I was attacked for one last time by the popular girls throwing paper in my hair and laughing at me. Hatchet was sitting right next to them and didn't say anything. I think he might have been laughing too. Things were pretty bad until Icarus turned around and asked to sign my yearbook! He wrote:

Madison,

You are the coolest person I've ever met. Your sense of humor is the best, and talking to you is always fun. Also you're amazing at drawing (IDK if you noticed).

HAGS, Icarus Quintus

PS hahaha our history teacher hated us

So then I asked him if he had a yearbook I could sign. Turns out he didn't so I said I'd sign his arm. Holding his arm was really awkward but you should have seen how pissed Hatchet was.

Hatchet never said sorry, but at the end of the day he asked to sign my yearbook too. He just wrote:

Manga (anime) manga manga

I speak your language

- Hatchet

He's been texting me a lot like normal since school got out. Icarus texts me too but not as often. He said he's not allowed to use his phone at his step mom's house, so some weeks I can't contact him. At least Nora and I have been able to call and facetime a lot even though she's in California for the Summer! She said she's going to bring me back a Naruto keychain from Little Tokyo! Super cool!!

I think that's everything I needed to tell you. I'll write more soon! Bye!

CHAPTER 13



Wednesday, August 29

I'm really worried about school already... I just found out that I don't have any classes with Icarus or Hatchet.



At least I also have some very cool news: I'm the secretary of Author's Society! Selena emailed me last week asking if I wanted the position and of course I said yes! For AS all the executives are writing short stories or poems and I decided to read part of *Crimson Tears*. I've been stuck on this latest chapter for a while. Here's the end of it:

"Isaac!"

He continued to stare straight at the ground. I didn't know what was happening to him.

"Isaac! Are you okay?" I shook him a bit and then he seemed to be back.

"I'm fine. Really." He looked a little dizzy.

"Maybe I should take you to a hospital." I said nervously.

"No! No doctors. One look at my blood and they'll ship me off to the pentagon."

"But-"

"No doctors. I'm alright." He was being stubborn, but I realized he had a point. There was no way to explain why his blood was blue, and his body was so weak that we wouldn't be able to escape a bad situation.

Isaac took a few more steps before he collapsed to his knees clutching his head.

"Isaac?"

His teeth clenched so hard that he cut his lip, causing blood to stream from the corner of his mouth. Suddenly, he stopped, and his head dropped. He remained there silent and still, leaving me to wonder whether he was still alive or not.

Panicking, I carried him to his bed. "Isaac? Isaac wake up! Wake up Isaac! If you don't answer me, I'm taking you to a hospital. Isaac!"

I was screaming now, tears rolling down my eyes. It felt like a nightmare I couldn't wake up from.

So there you have it. That's it. Hopefully I figure it out before school starts up and steals all my time again. Wish me luck!

Sunday, September 9

School's a mess so far. First off, Spanish is the exact same. Biology sucks cuz we have a freaking workbook. History always sucks. Math is meh. Besides talking to Martin, my good guy friend, classes are quite horrendous. Nora is only in Art and Humanities (Thank God I have her at all). Unfortunately I have Daiah in every class.

The popular girls are driving me absolutely nuts! Daiah started to help the popular girls pick on me for money and popularity. I know, I know, you saw this coming, huh? All they do is yap about me in bad ways and take my food during lunch.

Icarus and I don't really get to see each other during the day, but we actually talked a lot after school on Friday. We were alone together for about 25 min. When he got picked up tho Daiah came up to me all casually and asked me if I was still "madly in love" with Icarus. When I said I never was, she said, "Oh, well that's what everyone's saying." Then she happily ran off. What a bitch. There I said it. (Pardon the teen rage.)



Oh! Also on Friday when I was walking to History I saw Icarus so I waved and he waved back but right after Hatchet's new best friend Basket yells "Hatchet you called it! Hey Madison, Icarus looooooves you!"

Here's what's wrong with this picture: Basket and I have never spoken to each other and I wasn't even aware he knew my name, which could only mean that Hatchet talked to him about me. If Hatchet's talking about me then he must still like me. If he likes me, he must be jealous. If he's jealous...then...well...omfg, he should say it, I mean, God, boys.

I cannot stand this everyday crap so I'm going to go deaf blasting KAITO through my earbuds from now on when I walk thru the hallways. Wish me luck.

Monday, October 1

Ok so first day back to school in a while... not as bad as I thought. I haven't been to school since last Monday. Why? I freaking threw up at 1 in the Tuesday morning. The rest of the week I've been useless but it's been nice to rest.



I didn't think anyone would really even notice I was gone but Nora texted me all week. She said Icarus was actually looking for me!

Because of my sickness I was constantly sinking into dreamville and there was one dream where I was back in school. Mom was going to pick me up but hadn't come yet, then I heard James Patterson was there and died cuz I just happened to have a copy of Crimson Tears with me. I gave it to his agent and wasn't allowed to see him after that one glimpse. Later I saw kids were lined up by the door giving JP high fives so naturally I ran up to also give him a high five but when he came up to me he smiled and offered his hand out for a shake. Then he said how talented I was and had my book in his hands and said I was gonna be famous! It was awesome!

I can't believe how much I missed school! (I'm gonna regret saying that later) Not so much actual school, but my friends, Nora and Icarus and Martin. Today was really nice because I was proved terribly wrong. I've always thought that if I was gone, no one would notice or care cuz that's how it always felt, but when I came back to school Martin came up to me right away and started asking how I'd been. Selena noticed I was back and ran up to me in the hall to say hi. Nora gave me a hug as soon as she saw me! Icarus had texted the night before and came

and checked up with me during lunch and omg guess what??? GUESS WHAT!!!!!!!
We talked about grades like math, (I got a 100% on my test btw!) but anyways,
he's like "I did terrible." and I'm like "No! 65% is good! U did good!! Ur smart!" and
then he's all like "Haha thx! You're always so encouraging! That's what I love
about you."



NO. LIE. Word for word I swear! Now I may be overreacting, but for a 13
year old, that's some serious stuff! I was giggling and smiling and I wasn't even
watching anime! OMGOMGOMG!!! I cannot express this into words.

My life is really great! I just need to get it all sorted out with all the
tests and homework I missed last week... Wish me luck!

Thursday, November 22

Happy Thanksgiving!!

I'm thankful for so many things: Family, friends, health, manga, and my imagination XD

We didn't have much homework at all this break (Thank God!) so I practiced singing and drawing and did a lot of work on Crimson Tears because this month is NaNoWriMo.

Best part of this week: Nicholas has been home for the holiday! We chatted yesterday for like an hour when I got home from school. Today we spent all day watching YouTube videos, my favorites were the Jesus Christ Lizard documentaries and one video about Spiders on Crack. Check them out if you get the chance.

Right now I'm eating pumpkin pie and working on Crimson Tears still. Wanna see where I'm at right now?

The weather when I left Isaac's house wasn't exactly bright and sunny. Dark clouds were moving in and by the time I reached the store it was pouring rain and thunder and lightning were forming overhead.

"Phew."

I grabbed a shopping basket and headed down the aisles.

"Hm, what should I make?"

I walked up and down looking through shelves while searching for inspiration. Being the amateur cook I was, I needed something not too challenging, yet nothing I only had to preheat. Finally I decided on French Onion Soup. It was one of my favorites as a kid so I already knew how to make it.

I ducked and ran through the rain until I reached Isaac's front door with my bag of groceries. I knocked once, but when he didn't answer I stepped inside with my spare key. Isaac was in his room sleeping. I wanted to let him rest so I didn't wake him up. I went over to the kitchen and started preparing dinner for us. It wasn't perfect but I managed to make my soup.

"Yes! I rule!" I said doing a little victory dance.

"Maddy?"

Blushing, I turned to see Isaac staring at me with concern. "Oh! Isaac, how are you feeling?"

"I'm fine. I just came to get water."

"I can get it for you." I offered. "You should sit down. I made dinner for us."

"Wow, thanks."

"Hehe, no problem."

Once we had both eaten, I cleaned up our dishes and put everything away. "Well, I should probably get going then. Nicky will be wondering where I am."

I got up to grab my things and go, but Isaac grabbed my hand and pulled me back down.

"Wait! There's...something I need to tell you." He looked a little nervous.

"Is something wrong?"

Isaac didn't answer, he just looked at the ground and took a deep breath.

"Isaac? What is it?"

Isaac's body leaned over mine and his face inched closer to mine. "It might be selfish of me to say this, but You make me happy, and... Maddy, I love you."

I was in too much shock to speak. I didn't know what to do. I couldn't believe it!

How rude of me to always leave you at a cliff hanger like some episode of a soap opera! Maybe it's more fun that way XD I'm hoping to get to 50,000 words by the end of the month. Until then, Nicky and I are going out to the bookstore and Home Depot later tonight for Black Friday 7am deals! Wish us luck!

Saturday, December 8

I'm ending NaNoWriMo up in flames with 16,000 words. I'm still working on Crimson Tears, and NaNoWriMo gave me some great motivation.

Holy gosh, now it's December! My how time flies, but that is why we must live in the moment!

School's okay I guess. Math is meh. Science is yikes. Humanities is a big yikes. History is a huge yikes. Art just got worse thanks to the new seating chart. Nora and I were living it up, but now we are on opposite sides of the room. I've been disconnected! Don't even ask about Spanish... A mi no me gusta.

Ugh and in every class the popular group has been so freaking annoying!! During lunch, Daioh took our class list from one of the classrooms to look at everyone's full names. Everyone wouldn't stop laughing at my middle name. I explained that it was my grandma's name, but their response: "Okay. That doesn't mean we can't make fun of it."

Sometimes Hatchet hangs out with Daioh and her new friends. If he sees me he always looks at me kinda like he's sad, but he never says or does anything to help. He doesn't really text me that much anymore either.

Yeah so I'm not looking forward to school as much lately because I don't really wanna see Daioh or Hatchet but embarrassingly enough I want to see a certain boy again because, uh, yeah...

I actually had the weirdest dream last night about school. So I was at my locker where I was putting my stuff away when Nora nudges my arm and smiles. Of course it's because Icarus was coming and I thought he wouldn't notice me but he did and said "hi" and we were talking but Hatchet came by. I rolled my eyes and Icarus laughed, but then said he had something to do and that he'd see me later. So then Hatchet keeps staring at me until he says "hi" but I ignore him. And then Daioh comes up and gives me crap but then she kissed Hatchet! Hatchet seemed to like it so I walked off from him a little pissed off. At the end Icarus caught up with me and we went on a date so it ended well. Still pretty crazy, right?

Sorry to cut our time short but finals are coming up and I've got to go study. I can't afford anymore slip ups like last year. Wish me luck!

Tuesday, January 1

Happy New Year!



I wish Nicky was here. He's off with his gf though, and he seems really happy with her. I'm happy for him c: I just wish he could spend more time with me.

You know, I thought my drawing hadn't improved that much from last year, but I looked at my old diary entries and thought: Oh, that's embarrassing! But what I do miss is that confidence I used to draw with. Hopefully I will regain my powers in the new year!

I must say I've really come a long way in Crimson Tears too. Over 31,000 words total now! It'd be cool if I could finish the book by next year.

Last night I had a dream about me and Icarus at TOLO and I think it was a sign! We were holding hands and it was awesome. It's a little early to talk about this but... I think I'm gonna ask Icarus to TOLO this year. Maybe. From my perspective, it can go two ways. 1) I'll ask and he'll reject me cuz he's already going with a popular girl, ending in complete devastation. Or 2) I'll ask and then... he says "yeah!" and an angel choir will sing <3

Pfft. Yeah, right.

About Icarus, we've been texting a bit this holiday break and he gave me some disturbing news. His family has the chance to go back to New York and start highschool there. Like, it'd be a permanent thing for him. I mean, I knew he was planning on studying abroad for college, but that meant our time together was already... well... timed. Now it's almost legit over. It's kinda sad to think about...



But you know what? I'm happy for Icarus! I know he really loves New York, so if he wants to leave our (insert swear word of your choice) school, good for him!

Uh, I'm gonna try to get off this topic cuz it's making me depressed... Right now I am doing nothing but listening to vocaloid music.

Oh! Actually, I got a solo in choir! We have a lot of performances coming up and a state choir competition next month. I like singing but I hate the dresses we have to wear for choir, especially up on the gym stage during school assemblies. There was an assembly right before Winter Break and I was so extremely embarrassed because it was my first time having a solo (in front of EVERYONE) but afterwards in class Martin told me I had a really nice voice and a couple other kids came up to me too saying nice things. Most important is that Mom and Dad are proud of me.

I'm gonna try and keep them proud of me by going to bed early so I wake up on time for school tomorrow. My sleep schedule got a little goofed by the break. Wish me luck!

Tuesday, February 18

Today I've been super busy watching the new Naruto episodes I got from Xmas this year. I should probably be doing homework, chores, etc. Actually, I will be doing homework with Nora tomorrow. She invited me to a study group at the library with some of her other friends, so I'll be hanging out with her group now every Wednesday. I'm really excited! Not much else has changed at school. Final grades were posted a while ago now but they were good! Definitely better than last year, aha...ha...

Daioh announced to everyone that she and Hatchet are dating... Can you fathom? Hatchet confirmed when he gave his heart to her on Valentine's Day. Daioh ended up winning Queen of Hearts so I guess she got her wish to rule the school. Whatever as long as she keeps away from me.

I was hoping to get Icarus' heart this year on Valentine's Day but when I saw him in the hallway, Basket went up to Icarus took his heart and freaking ate it!!! I was so mad. Icarus just got a new haircut too and it's really cute. I think he should keep it that way.

Author's Society has been fun. The sun came out last week so we all sat outside while we were writing. I hope we can do that again this week. Author's Society has been the only place where I can work on Crimson Tears lately so it's kinda like a safehaven. Here's part of the last chapter I got to work on:

Curfew was only minutes away, which meant that the gates were left to a single guard to close as the others patrolled the town streets. I walked right up to the guard at the gate and tapped his shoulder. When he turned to see who it was, I met him full forcefully with my fist, knocking him out. I felt bad about it when I saw it was a friend of Isaac's, but didn't have time to apologize. The gate was right in front of me, and I couldn't let this opportunity pass me up. If I did now, I'd be put to death for sure. I sprinted off into the murky atmosphere and heard laughter, only for it to be mine.

With the guard's keys, I unlocked the gate and stared out in amazement. Right beside the town this entire time was a barren wasteland. Endless rubble. The ground itself was charred black, and when I stepped on it, it made crackling noises.

I was out but the only problem now was that I had no idea where to go. My plan was to steal a spaceship but there was literally nothing around me for miles and miles. I was ready to just call it quits and get caught. Unfortunately that happened sooner than I

was hoping for.

As I was running back, I tripped and all the air got knocked out of me. If that wasn't bad enough, I heard footsteps nearby and even though I prayed they not come my way, that's exactly what happened. Two feet stepped right in front of my face. Before I looked up, a chilling voice spoke and I froze terrified.

"Hm. How did you get out?"

Colin. I could tell by the way he spoke. It was the same menacing tone he had used before. I hadn't picked up on it before but being so close to him, it was terrifying.

"Sigh. I wonder. Whoever let you out's sure gonna get it. Your room is actually right down the hall to the left. I'm sure you left it wide open."

I got up but I kept my eyes looking down at his shoes.

"Well go on."

Backing away, I ran down the hall as fast as I could. Anything to get away from Colin.

Now I realized why everyone was so afraid of him. Never again would I try to run away in my right mind. Never again.

Back in my cell, my head felt very light and my stomach, very heavy. I thought to myself, "This could be the day I die then I won't have to deal with this anymore" But as fate works, it would not be the end of my suffering.

Ok now I have to make some flashcards for Bio. Wish me luck!

Wednesday, March 27

My dream last night was... weird.

I was walking alone through school halls. The lunch room was closed cuz Daioh and her popular group blocked it off. I found a hall and sat and started eating my lunch until someone down next to me and started up small talk. Someone I haven't spoken to in, like, forever.



It was... Hatchet?! Yeah, and he was flirting with me and making me laugh. So weird...



I don't like him, do I? Definitely not, right? It was a dream after all. It's not real.

Hatchet and I don't talk at all anymore. We used to text a bit at least but once he started hanging out with Daioh I never heard from him again.

Nora said that Hatchet and Icarus aren't friends anymore either. I asked why and she said that Hatchet said some really awful things to Icarus over Summer but she wouldn't tell me what he said because I'm too "innocent" to hear the bad words he used (although after being friends with him I think I already learned all of them).

It feels like Hatchet still doesn't like me and Icarus being friends. Anytime he sees Icarus and me together in the hallway he sends Basket over to bother us. It doesn't make any sense if he doesn't want to talk to me himself. He has Daioh now too.

Daioh keeps doing everything in her power to make everyone know that Icarus and I are "dating." I've tried to ignore them but they started making drawings of me and Icarus getting married and posting them around school which is pretty hard to avoid. Yesterday my Spanish and Humanities teachers both asked me if Icarus and I were dating (all the kids in my class answered "Yes!" even though I said "No."). On Monday a girl from choir asked me if I was in love with Icarus and I don't even know her name.

I'm worried all the crap from Daioh and now Hatchet is going to make Icarus hate me. He still texts me pretty often and talks to me when he can at school though so that's a good sign.

Sigh, I'm SO stressed out now. I wish I could go back in time, or even fast forward. Hey, that's a good idea for a book. Wish me luck!

Monday, April 29

TOLO tickets are on sale!!! I'm gonna ask Icarus this week!!



Nicky surprised me and picked me up from school and we talked for a really long time. I told him about my crush on Icarus and he thought I should ask him out!

Thanks to Nicky pushing me to go for it, Icarus and I are going to eat lunch together on Friday, then I shall ask the question. I got my hair straightened and I'm wearing a dress to look super cute! I feel slightly overwhelmed and worried... I'm nervous! It's scary and like heaven at the same time!

I'm also really stressed already cuz finals are coming up. The finals I'm most worried about are probably Math, Biology, Spanish, Art, Humanities (only a little bit) and History. Always History. So I guess actually all of them ahahaha...

I guess before I go do homework, I really wanna say that I love writing in here. It's where I come clean and discuss the things too awkward to tell my family, but too personal to tell friends. Being able to be myself here, I just can't even explain how thankful I am for being allowed to do that. Sounds pathetic and corny I know, but this is a really nice refreshment for me after my worries have been so icky lately. I was so sick to my stomach earlier (still kinda am) but writing this has made me feel so much better! So thanks for being here! (Not that you have much choice)

I realized that all this diary writing I've been doing hasn't really been writing advice or another story for a book. It's only chopped up bits of feelings I got down in either times of despair or happiness. This writing obviously isn't going to be my next big novel but still I want it to be meaningful. I want to be a writer, but mom and dad say writing and art are hobbies more than jobs. They want me to be a doctor or lawyer, but I feel like I'll flunk at both of those and never accomplish anything.

Well... Wish me luck for Friday!

but he said it was probably for the best. He said boys are confusing and told me to not think of Icarus as a boyfriend and just as a friend.

Nicky also had some news to share with me: he's officially engaged! He and his gf are the real deal. That made me pretty sad. One minute we were staying up late on school nights talking and watching movies... and the next, he's moving out! He bought a house with his fiancée this month and that was the final step in losing our time together. I'm trying to be happy for him but I'm mostly surprised. I thought Nicky would be here with me until I was at least done with high school. Now I'm going to have to get through it all by myself. All I can say is I can't wait for Summer Break. Wish me luck!

Sunday, June 2

Dammit I don't really even have the time for an entry but I don't feel good and school is stressful! Things are just really fuzzy and shitty right now, so I want to write. School is a hell hole. On my spanish final I got 89.5%!!! .5 away from an A! And I actually skipped a true or false question so I could have gotten one more point! God I suck. All I am is a disappointment. Then I hate myself for thinking like that. I should be talking about how nice TOLO was even without Icarus (even if it was super awkward with Daioh and Hatchet acting like the most popular couple there). Or the fact that Icarus and I have a kinda date this Friday. Then again I'm losing Icarus with each day that passes until he moves away. With all this shit, I'm going insane.

Everytime I complain I just feel so ungrateful you know? I don't have it nearly as bad as anyone in Naruto so why do I have a reason to rant? My apologies to anyone who suffered through reading this. I don't know what else to say without sounding like a total pessimist but I'll try and give good news.

I've really improved (sorta) in drawing! Crimson Tears is still a work in progress but it's almost there! I'm healthy and more importantly alive so I guess there shouldn't be anything for me to complain about, especially since there's only one more week of 8th grade.

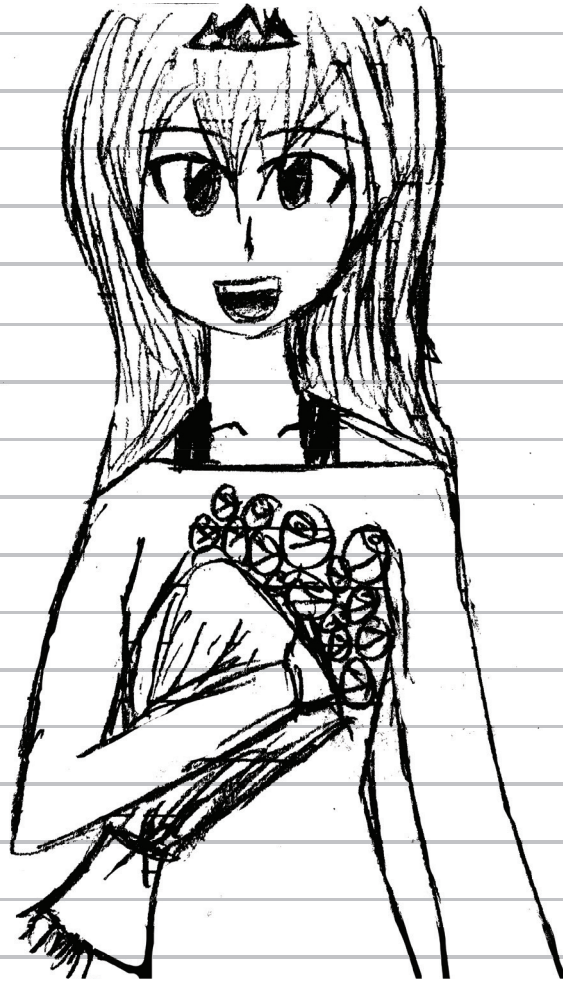
Oh! And I'm hanging out with Euphie tomorrow. We're going to the mall to buy Euphie some new clothes. I need some new clothes too. I've been wearing the same bootcut jeans and green hoodie all year long. I want a cute dress to wear this Summer. Every time I see Euphie she looks so cool like an actual teenager while I still look like a kid. I'm hoping she'll help me pick out some new looks.

Wish me luck!

Monday, June 10

AHHHHH!!!!!! Summer is saved!!!

I got 100% on all my other finals!!!!



I had the best night of my life last Friday because I had my date (first date with anyone!). I went to see the new Percy Jackson movie. You already know with who: Icarus! It was the last time we'll be able to hang out for a while. He flew out to New York on the weekend so I was really thankful we could meet in person before then.

At the movies, he was not only there early, but he actually bought both of our tickets when I was prepared to!! It was the most romantic thing anyone's ever done for me!! We talked a whole lot after the movie until he had to go. Besides the show being awesome, Icarus was funny and sweet and //cough// cute.

We spent a whole half hour outside walking around alone after the movie ended. No, no we didn't kiss or even hold hands but when he left he hugged me and said "We should hang out again when I come back to visit."

I had a playdate Saturday with Nora and told her all about it while she braided my hair and painted my nails! Life has been AWESOME!! I'm so happy <3

I promise I'll try to write in this diary over Summer but I might be too busy playing my new Naruto game (Mom and Dad rewarded me for my good grades)!!!! Talk to you later!

Wednesday, July 24

Hi! How are you? It's been a while, huh?

Summer has been good. It's mostly boring now that Icarus is gone and Nora is back in California for Summer Camp.

My Naruto game has been great! Lots of epic moments that got me super motivated to finish Crimson Tears! I'm almost done with this chapter:

Once Isaac left, I took the pillow off my bed and violently threw it at the door. I didn't know what I was thinking, but I felt betrayed. If anything I thought we were getting to know each other. Not that I was going to cry or anything but I did feel a little hurt. Things got even better when Mom knocked on my door.

She began to weep into her hands, leaving lots of fear and worry to strike into my body.

"Mom?"

She came over to where I sat on my bed. "Oh sweetie. Oh my gosh." Her arms clutched me tightly and next thing I knew I was tearing up myself.

"Mom, what's wrong?"

She began to take heavy, deep breaths before she spoke again. "Well honey, I don't know how to put this but your brother hasn't been seen for the last 24 hours. I would have told you sooner but I was hoping I wouldn't have to. Apparently he was last seen skateboarding with his friend Hank. Hank said Nicholas went home around three but no one has seen him since." My mom started to weep again. "I called Hank then the police, but—" My mom continued to cry and I collapsed to the floor with my hands covering my ears. I didn't want to hear anymore because I knew what she was going to say next.

My dear brother Nicholas was gone. Missing. It was hard to believe, and impossible to accept. I mean, how did you expect me to take it? Just sigh and say "That's life"? Well I apologize if you didn't get the reaction you had hoped for but this is how it happened.

Isaac heard about what had happened from Mo and had reached out to comfort me a few times, but I didn't need comfort. What I needed was my brother and I had a sick feeling that Colin took him.

I didn't tell Isaac my plan to save my brother. In the middle of the night, I drove Nicky's car to Isaac's house and snuck to the backyard where he kept the spaceship.

Isaac was already standing in front of the spaceship as if he was expecting me.

"Why are you here?" I mumbled, my voice hoarse and dry.

"You're at my house." He scoffed. "I saw your headlights pull in. Are you seriously trying to steal my ship?"

"I need to borrow it for the night."

"Why? What are you going to do?"

I was reluctant to answer him. "I think Colin took Nicholas."

"What? Why would Colin want your brother?"

"Colin wants you but he doesn't know where you are. He knows that I'm hiding your secret so he probably wants to use Nicholas to get me to give you up."

He was silent for a moment. "And...are you?"

"Am I what?"

"Are you going to give me up to him?"

"No. It's not even a question."

"But... I treated you badly. I lied to you."

"And I love you. I'm not giving you to Colin, but I need to get my brother."

"Ok, and I'm going with you."

"No Isaac, you can't come! That's what Colin wants!"

"If something happened to you, I couldn't live with myself. You already saved my life. Let me save yours."

To be continued... (lol) Wish me luck!

CHAPTER 14



Friday, August 9

I'm a high school student in September! Believe it! So today I will log the last entry of my childhood and (somewhat) carefree days!!

It's really scary to think I'm going into high school! Especially cuz Nicky won't be around anymore for me to rant to or get homework help from. Not only will Nicky be gone but Icarus won't be at school anymore.

Icarus hasn't texted me in a while... He hasn't texted me since we went out. I forgive him, knowing he's busy with the move and has crazy rules about his phone from his parents but I miss talking to him and I wanna make sure he's okay and everything without seeming pushy. I don't wanna keep texting him first cuz I'm all embarrassed.

I actually heard from Nora that Hatchet isn't coming back to [REDACTED] either. My only end of the year regret was ending things on a bad note with Hatchet. We used to be super close until Daioh and her group ruined things between us. Honestly I was hoping we could get in the same class again next year without any of the populars so we can bond again, but I guess this was the universe's intention.

I almost left [REDACTED] too. Mom wants me to switch schools next year to help my bullying problems, but I don't really wanna leave yet. I finally have friends. What if I go to a new school and I lose all my friends and find a bunch of new Daioh's and popular bullies? I know that I'm going to regret either decision. If that happens, no, WHEN that happens, I'm going to fall apart and I'm worried that I just won't be able to take it...

Don't get me wrong, I'm so excited for high school because every anime (okay, not every) starts with the protagonist in high school! My biggest hope is that I get classes with Nora and Martin.

I'm so unsure of my future. Sometimes I wish, pray even, for God to deliver all the answers (I don't know if that actually does anything but Dad tells me praying helps him). I want to simply know which schools I should attend, who to call friends, and the right path to take, not in the form of riddle or another question, but as a legitimate answer for me. However, if I really was to know everything, would it truly bring me peace or would it make life no longer worth living?

I just want to be happy, but I can't expect everything to work out the way I want it to. There's far too much to worry about. Clothing, grades, social status, personality, beauty. I'm not even pretty. Not my face, not my body.

Oh God... If I'm breaking down now in the summertime, how on Earth will I get through high school?!

I'm gonna try to calm my nerves with some singing before bedtime. I'll talk to you soon. Wish me luck!

Monday, September 1

I'm tired. High school starts tomorrow but I haven't gotten a single night of rest this week! It's terrible and frying my mind of imagination. Whenever I try to clear my mind, I just panic. I am so scared deep deep down for...life! Everything is changing so fast! I am 14 now, I'm a high schooler, Nicky is having a baby????!!! And also our family is moving!

The night before, I, ah, did some praying, and asked God for a class with Nora next year... I'm not sure how these spiritual things work, but now, I'm getting a new house and a niece/nephew to love dearly. I'm still in shock, I mean that's big news. Made me realize how quick life goes by. I'm a big believer in fate and signs so idk if this is a sign about change for the better or... if I'm crazier than I thought.

I have responsibilities piling up and I'm starting to stress out. Mom and dad put me in voice lessons to increase my range, and my coach is giving me a bunch of homework every week. She also wants me to upload videos to YouTube, but last year Daiah found my YouTube channel and would play my videos really loud during class for everyone to laugh at. I'm not risking that again.

After spending all day trying to record a video for my voice coach, I kept deleting clip after clip because I sounded or looked so bad. I wish I didn't have to do it, but Mom and Dad said they'll buy me the new Naruto book if I do it, so I really don't have a choice.

On a happier note, something good I wanted to say is that I went to the doctor's yesterday and I learned that I lost a lot of weight which is reassuring for my self esteem! I thought it'd be cool to start dressing up as a real high school student this year but you know... I looked in the mirror, and reality is I'm still overweight and I have acne and frizzy hair. Acne can go away with painful face washes but weight is an ongoing disturbance of evil. Dad says that by exercising for an hour a day for a month, I can be skinny and lose all my weight before school starts up. And with my new body, not only will I look good in new clothes, but I'll be sexy for any future dates! That's why I really wanna lose weight.

The next time we talk, I'll be an official high school student!! Wish me luck!

Thursday, October 17

Hey! So sorry that I couldn't update you sooner, but this has been my first opportunity.

So I started high school and well... it sucks. I guess it's actually not so bad, I mean I have AP Bio and History classes with Nora! Unfortunately those classes also include Daich (who's still evil). Martin is in all my classes again! Thank God for Martin!



Martin and I still joke around like old times, which is a great comic relief from all the academic stress. He is always talking to me and cracking jokes and I giggle. When I help him with homework, he kinda put his hands against mine. He compliments my drawings in my notebooks. He's so nice!!!

Not that I like like Martin, he's just cute and it's nice to feel flattered. I don't

think Martin likes me that way either. Although today when he got up to leave sixth period today, he leaned over me and said I smelled good. Is that flirting? Whatever it is, Martin always makes me feel better about myself. He was the first one to tell me that I looked good with contacts finally!! (Did I tell you about this? Aw well, now you know. They take an hour for me to put them in so they're kinda stressful but no more four eyes!) He's also the only one other than Nora who says I look better with my curly hair instead of my straight hair. Holy crap!! Maybe he does have a crush on me...

I really hope Martin and I always stay bros bcuz he is like my best friend but I still really like Icarus. I talked to him today (only like 5 minutes) about the new Percy Jackson book that's coming out. I just wish we could text more often. It's harder to talk to Icarus since he's not here and I'm all nervous to call or text him first. I'm really afraid that he just doesn't like me after our first date. That or now he's too embarrassed... Was I too nerdy or too sexy? Sigh, I need a fricking love potion or telepathy.

But what ticks me off even more than boys oh God let me tell you just how annoyingly frustrating high school is. Freaking Daiah asked if I had a crush on Martin today. I tried to shut that shiz down but she's already off telling everyone that I'm cheating on Icarus. I was all rage.

All this crap makes for good materials down the road, so I guess I can't complain. Okay well I'll try to talk (well, write) to you tomorrow. Wish me luck!

Thursday, November 28

Happy Thanksgiving!! Thank you dear diary for putting up with my crazy and dramatic teen phases. I truly appreciate it.

Another reason to be thankful is that I had a happy school day yesterday! Hard to believe, huh? Guess being somewhat optimistic pays off.

It was the club fair yesterday at school and as the Author's Society secretary, I was helping gain members. We had over 30 students sign up! And it was thanks to my idea to pass out bookmarks. I even came up with our new slogan: "Forever we write." Genius! Martin came over and helped me pass them out even though he's not even in the club. Selena helped design them and Dad printed them out for us. I'm not sure if all those students who signed up today will actually come to our next meeting, but either way I'm proud of our hard work as an exec team!

After club fair, there was an assembly and I got to sit next to Martin and Nora. It was an anti-bullying assembly. We watched a video about a girl who was suicidal after being bullied then the senior students sang a "Imagine" by John Lennon (Mom's favorite song). I was thankful choir didn't get asked to sing instead. Even though the assembly was sad I was happy to waste class time.

After the assembly Daiah and her group were all crying pretending to act sad. I told Mom about that and she thought it was pretty ironic. Mom also took me to the bookstore and bought me a new John Green book. Hopefully it doesn't make me cry as much as TFIOS.

This holiday break, I'm planning on exercising, doodling, maybe cleaning a lil bit, and of course writing. Crimson Tears is finally finished!! I just need to edit now. I had the idea for the ending in my head for a long time so I'm happy to finally share it with you:

I woke up alone in a dark sealed room. My first observation was that I had been placed in a bed, but it wasn't my own. Whosever it was, my cuts and scratches were getting blood all over the sheets. When I tried to get up, the cut on my hip started gushing blood, and if you think it sounds disgusting, trust me, it felt a million times worse than that.

"Ouch!"

I fell back down and began trying to apply pressure, but it was hurting so bad that

again I shot out a cry of pain.

"Ow!"

Whoever was outside the room heard me and opened the door violently. Isaac was in the doorway smiling at me. "You okay?" asked Isaac as he helped me sit up. "Yeah, great. Um," I looked around the room. Now that light had entered, I tried to get a better look at where I was, but it still remained unrecognizable. "Where am I?" I asked still adjusting myself up.

"Where is..."

Before I could even ask where he was, Nicky rushed into the room and kept me clutched tight in his arms, which, after so long, felt quite soothing.

"Are you okay?" I asked, holding him back.

"I'm fine now that we're going home. Home Maddy!"

"Home?"

"We're on one of Colin's ships heading back to Earth." Isaac explained.

"What about Colin?"

"He's gone for good. We won't have to worry about him ever again."

"Oh... Then what will you do now that you don't have to run from him anymore?"

"I... I don't know. I never actually thought about that before..."

"I think you should stay." I whispered, holding his hand.

Nicky gave Isaac a stern look before putting a hand on his shoulder. "You know," said Nicholas. "I full heartedly agree. I think you should too."

"Ok." Isaac smiled, nudging his head against mine softly.

"You're serious, right?" I asked, reaching for his hand.

He grabbed it and smiled at me with a nod. "Dead serious."

The ending makes more sense when you know that Zach and Maddy almost died fighting Colin. I let Nora read it and she loved it!! She even cried a bit which was great feedback!! c: I can't wait to show Mom and Dad my very first book!! Wish me luck!

Sunday, December 1

It's that time of the month for cramps. Well I have a little time before my ibuprofen or whatever kicks in and I can sleep so I can give you some updates.

Ack!! I've been very stressed lately. I've been stress eating all of my secret candy stash and all the toast I can find. I can feel myself gaining weight. No joke I've actually been gaining a lot of weight so I desperately am in need of an exercise schedule.

I woke up feeling so sick this morning and with bags under my eyes, but I carried on to school anyways since I was aware of the consequences for missing a day. For the past 3 nights I have been having these really scary dreams, so I haven't been getting any sleep. I don't want to remember them so I'm not writing them down... I hope I forget them soon.

I have a major voice recording due in a week and a major humanities test on Monday on Greek Mythology which isn't bad but there's just so much freaking info. On top of that, History project is due Monday too and already going up in flames but that's another long stressful story that I don't want to write. My last voice recording was a disaster. I got it done, but I didn't like it. My coach actually gave me very nice comments, but my parents were very unhappy, saying I "could have tried harder."

I thought I could try to make my parents proud but sometimes I don't feel like I'm good enough. Now I'm only saying this because this is where I vent (no one should ever read this). I wish I still had Nicky to rant to bcuz he was the only one who shared my news on how crazy mom and dad could be sometimes. I mean I love love love Mom and Dad to high heaven but it's normal for them to really pinch my nerves every now and then. I don't understand sometimes. Is it even okay to tell them how I'm feeling or are they going to assume I'm in another phase (like that time I asked for a goddamned skateboard)?

Thanks to all that I had a rather emotional day like the kind where you wanna run into someone's arms and not let go until the holiday break starts up. I would say someone like Icarus but let me just save you a world of ranting and tell you that I am over Icarus. He hasn't texted me in weeks. I think he must hate me. I'm pretty sad about how things ended. This was the longest crush I've ever had! For now I am simply done with pursuing a lovelife. I'll just stay in bed all day and dream.

(Sigh.) Winter Ball is Friday. I've been looking forward to it forever since it's my first dance where guys ask girls but now... not so much. Everyone's got a date except me. Even Nora got asked so now I can't even hang around her. I was going to just ask Martin

to go as friends but no one would buy that and Daion would spread so many freaking rumors. I don't need that. She's going out with Basket. Now that's one hell of a story. I'm just so done.

Okay I'm okay now. My pills kicked in finally! I think it's time to put away Naruto and study some more. Aw well, wish me luck.

Wednesday, January 1

Happy New Year's! Since it was NYE last night, our entire family came to our house, except for Nicky. His gf has family over so I won't see him until next Friday when we celebrate our late family Christmas. At least we get to see him at all I guess.

Man I am not ready for the new year at all, but I'm not going into the new year with any regrets bcuz I'd rather go with a bunch of resolutions. It's easy to make goals now but actually going through with them is a lot harder ;a;

I am determined to be a better person this year, meaning a better student, kinder and less of a worrier about other ppl. I'm also going to keep writing in this diary. Obviously I won't stop, can't stop. I want to keep improving myself and writing down how I grow. This is my third year of writing in here after all. Surely some things about me have changed for the best. Right?

I'm actually really happy with how this year ended! I'm completely done with Crimson Tears!! Dad is going to print it out for me this week! I'm so excited to see it all in print. There are 347 pages total (there were 512 before editing). It's such a relief. Selena wants me to present my progress at the next Author's Society meeting! I'm making a cute little powerpoint featuring art of some of my characters from Crimson Tears.

Another nice end to the year was going to Winter Ball. I almost didn't bother but Mom and Dad wanted me to go. I tried to straighten my hair at home (that was a hot mess... literally! very hot!) but thankfully Mom saved me by curling it. When they dropped me off they were both crying which was really embarrassing but they said it was bcuz I looked so grown up which made me feel good about how I looked.

I saw Nora first and mostly talked to her, but she was with her date Light and I didn't really wanna bother them. During the slow dances, I felt really awkward and went outside. Martin also came out on the balcony. He complimented me then asked who my date was. I told him I only came to hang out with Nora and he said he only came bcuz his friend Walker forced him to. Then he came up to me and grabbed my hands to try and dance with me. I warned him I sucked at dancing but he said he would teach me. So technically I had the first slowdance of my life (though I think we did it wrong and we couldn't really hear any of the music).

I wish I took pictures with everybody, but since I didn't I guess I'll just have to try and draw what we looked like:



Ok clearly I'm too tired to draw good...

In order to start this year off right I better get my butt to bed anyways so I'm not late for school tomorrow. Wish me luck!

Friday, March 14

I am in need of a decent dream, sleep, and a nice hug. I've been having weird dreams, stress, exhaustion... I'm tired.

Most of my dreams are me waking up late for classes, forgetting assignments, missing tests. The worst ones are when I'm being chased, sometimes by strangers, sometimes random villains, most times kids in my classes. Could be worse I guess. But I miss my Naruto dreams.

It was the talent show for the school last Friday and I got a new dress and a hair blowout! I can actually say I looked pretty hot. So many people gave me compliments after I sang even though there were tech problems and the sound was bad. Martin came just to see me! And OMG you have to hear this! Nicky came! He came to surprise me and celebrate afterwards, but I noticed him stand up after my performance and shout, "That's my sister!!"

It was so awesome! I haven't seen Nicky in forever so yes I was unproductive last weekend but for a good reason. Our family went bowling and had tons of fun!

More good news: I'm running the Author's Society meeting this Friday all by myself! I got myself a haircut today! But I haven't actually seen it yet since my hair is straight. And I got a job! Calm down, it's volunteering at my old preschool but Mom and Dad are really happy. Oh! The best news of all! My grades are so good right now! Go me! I feel on top of the world! Wait for it to crash and burn lol.

I'm glad Mom and Dad are proud of me lately. I thought Mom and Dad would be happy that I finished *Crimson Tears*, but when I asked them about sending it to a publisher, they said they didn't think it was a good idea. I wanted them to read it, but I forgot Dad doesn't read books and Mom only read the first page before she passed her judgement. I tried to research publishing on my own but everything I found needed an agent or a bunch of money that I don't have.

I'm not sure what I'll do with *Crimson Tears* now. Maybe I'll edit it this year or rewrite it (possibly from scratch) if I even have time. I might even rename it. I must keep up good work. Wish me luck!

Thursday, April 10

You won't believe what happened at school this week! Monday at lunch Nora and I went to the office to pick up my Choir State Audition form. We saw Daioh getting picked up by her parents and she said "Hi" to us. Later on we heard that she had a mental breakdown and wouldn't stop cry laughing.

I got home after Choir and Daioh was all of a sudden following me on Instagram and liking all of my pictures. The rest of this week she kept trying to say "hi" and actually compliment me in class and in the hallways. Today she asked to eat lunch together saying she "needs to talk" with me. It caught me so off guard! You can imagine how I felt.

So I did have my awkward lunch with Daioh. At first I was worried she was setting me up to tell me off about cheating on Icarus again (even though Nora heard he's dating someone in New York). Instead Daioh asked if I thought she was bullying me. I thought that was a dumb question but I assure you I handled it very adultish. I said that I didn't think how she treats me is fair since I still try to be nice to her and she said sorry and that she wanted to try talking like we used to so I agreed.

Long story short, she's still an immature child obsessed with grade rumors and gossip and talking to her now is so depressing bcuz we used to be friends. I know it sounds stupid but after talking to her I felt like I wasn't as mad at her as before. This doesn't mean we're friends (we can't after all the drama that happened). This was a one time thing. I still don't want to be friends with her again. Never again.

Guess what? There's more... I asked Daioh if she still talked to Hatchet and she said that Hatchet is a druggie now! I don't know what kind of drugs (Nora's guess is marijuana since his new school has a lot of weed smokers there). I got really worried about him so I texted him and he didn't freaking remember me. So now I don't have any lingering feelings for him at all.

Cai la vie (er whatever). Hopefully this means everyone's done bothering me about Hatchet and Icarus for good. For the first time in a LONG while I feel relief. Let's hope it stays. Wish me luck.

Saturday, May 24

Welp, finals are next week and I'm officially starting to freak out. I've been cramming for finals so I haven't had time to do anything else. Mom bought me a bamboo plant to give me luck during finals. Let's hope for the best and prepare for the worst.

I've been staying up late to study and sleeping in a bit which is giving me less time to get ready in the mornings so I've had very low self esteem recently. My acne has gotten rilly bad so I started wearing make up. I really haven't been liking my hair and started wearing it up in a bun. The first time I wore a bun to school Martin said he rilly liked it and I almost died of embarrassment.

Martin is so great. I really don't know how I'd make it through school without him. Whenever we have free time in class, Martin lets me draw all over his notes and it's flattering when he keeps them, even though they're just crappy doodles.

Martin asked what I'm going to study in college and I told him I want to be a lawyer. I used to want to be a doctor but I'm too squeemish... which surprised him. He thought I'd want to be an artist or a writer (which I do lol but that's more of a pipedream). I asked what he wanted and he said he's not sure yet but probably something related to math.

Thank the gods Martin is good at math bcuz he's been helping me study for our Physics and Biology finals. In return I've been helping him with his Art and Humanities finals. Unfortunately our Spanish final was suddenly changed on us. Instead of a test, we were told to gather in the gym on Monday morning for (drumroll...) dancing?!

I hate dancing in Spanish class. It's the most awkward experience ever. At least Martin already said he's going to be my partner. It feels rilly nice to know Martin likes me so much. I'll admit he's not my type but he makes me feel rilly confident.

I swear it was only 5PM a few minutes ago and now it's nearly 7PM! I don't think I can put off my hw any longer. Wish me LOTS of luck!

Wednesday, June 18

It's a very eventful time for our family right now. First off, I finished my freshman year with 4 A's and 2 B+'s which isn't great, but Nora told me that colleges look for improvement in your grades over all of high school so there's still hope.

I was having a lot of anxiety and panic attacks ever since the talent show at school but thankfully I've been able to feel calm. To celebrate the end of school, Nora had a sleepover party which was a lot of fun! I was kinda nervous and shaking before it started, but I felt much better after being around friends.

Nicky and his fiancée had their baby last month (a girl!). Her name is Patrice. It's crazy!!! Nicky's a dad!! Mom got the call right after picking me up from school. We went to the hospital after picking up my grandma. Mom got to actually go in for the birth but I had to wait in the lobby with Mema for HOURS. I started texting Martin but I hadn't gotten to charge my phone since school so it died pretty quickly. Eventually Dad came with flowers and Mom came out of the room with Nicky to bring us all back to their room. It was the first time in my whole life that I've ever seen Nicky cry... I didn't get to talk to him much, but I got to hold Patrice (even though Nicky didn't like that my nails were so long lol) and she's soooooo cute!!! She looks a lot like Nicky already.

This month is their wedding. It'll be my first wedding ever! I'm really excited! I've only ever been to church I think four times and unfortunately they were all for funerals. Today was a bridal shower for Nicky's fiancée at her parents house. Her family was super nice. I had fun playing with my new niece, Patrice! Patrice the niece! (it rhymes hehe)

Afterwards we went out to the Cheesecake Factor for dinner and the weirdest thing happened. At the table directly across from us I saw someone familiar eating dinner with his family. Yup... Icarus.

Now keep in mind I hadn't seen him in a year (not since I ditched my glasses for contacts!) and tonight I was all dressed up and hot for the bridal shower. I doubted he would even recognize me let alone remember me. But he did! He remembered me! He awkwardly waved and honestly I don't really remember much of what he said other than him visiting his grandparents. Then that was that.

I like to believe that the universe does some things (if not most) for a reason, and I hope the reason for seeing Icarus was just so we could say goodbye to one another. He's the last guy to be on my mind for a while. Don't get me wrong, the guy has great hair, but

he sends rllly mixed signals (nothing new from him...).

I think I'm forgetting to write about some things... Oh, Martin is coming over today! We're gonna play his new Pokemon video game and I'm finally gonna show him my favorite cartoon Steven Universe.



Before I go, I want to relieve you and say safely that 9th grade turned out to be the best year of school yet. Thanks for helping me get through all those dark spots (cuz w/ you as my unfortunate witness) I've experienced several of those in the past three years. But now I couldn't be happier. Honestly, I don't think I could have done it without you, so thx! Like srsly thank you. I love you! Talk to you soon!

CHAPTER 15



Wednesday, July 30

I'm 15! I'm finally maturing (at least I think so).

I'm trying to be more responsible and helpful to my parents. We've been preparing for the big move all Summer so I've been sorting and cleaning and packing stuff to move and sell on eBay. It's a lot of work for something I don't even want to do (-3-) I love our house. I wish we weren't leaving, but it's not up to me (sigh).

We also got a new puppy named Blue! I spend all day with him playing outside, watching him nap, and giving him baths when he needs them. He just started sleeping w/ me outside of his kennel (if you sing he falls asleep <3) I love him so much and I want to protect him forever and always.

I was rllly sad to leave Blue to go to Nicky's wedding but we had to drive out like 10hrs to go to some beach.

Apparently Nicky was going to elope but they decided to invite family and a few friends

last minute. The ceremony was super small and nice. If I ever get married I would want something similar cuz I hate attention. Honestly I'd probably elope if my husband was ok with it. Even with the small size of the wedding, I rllly didn't get to talk to Nicky at all. I said "congratulations" after the ceremony and gave him a hug, but after they were announced a couple, the ceremony was over and we started driving home. It was at least nice to see Nicky so happy. I hope I can be that happy someday too!

I wanted to hang out with Martin again but he hasn't texted me back since I sent him a meme on Thursday. I bet he lost his phone or charger... It's probably that cuz it happens a lot and when he finds it, he's always like "SORRY SORRY DONT HATE ME SORRY" and it's cute.

Martin's the first guy who rllly goes out of his way to talk to me. I don't feel like any other guy (or girl) in my life has ever put so much effort into talking to me. It makes me feel wanted and that's rllly nice c: I'm rllly scared of ruining whatever friendship/relationship we have cuz idk he's rllly important to me and you know better than anyone that I tend to screw a lot of things up (just look at what happened with Daioh, Hatchet,



Icarus...)

Nora comes home from California tomorrow so I might get to hang out with her at least <3

I went on Skype last week to ask Euphie if she wanted to hang out sometime this Summer but I noticed her status actually sounded suicidal. I was freaking out! I didn't know what to do or say, but I stuck with my plan to ask how she was and if she wanted to spend time together. She didn't reply that night so my dreams were all the different ways she might reply (or if she never did...). Thankfully the next morning she replied and said everything is okay.

Euphie and I called for a while to catch up and apparently she's dating a college boy now? Nora and Light are officially dating too. Everyone has a bf now! Who knows what's in store for me this year... Wish me luck!

Tuesday, August 26

Holy crap!! I'm a freaking sophomore next week help ;a; I'm not... ready...but also excited? I rllly want classes w/ Nora bcuz she's my go to bestie and I hope I have classes w/ Martin cuz I'd hate to have an awk year apart (especially after everything that went wrong w/ Icarus and Hatchet) but we've had our classes together each year at [REDACTED] so maybe that's a good sign. Well whatever happens I'm certain it's for the best. Going to have to make the best of it either way.

More terrifying than getting our class schedules are yearbook pics. They happen so quickly and you never get to see what they look like until you get your school ID. It's so stressful AHH!! Every school photo I've taken so far has sucked. I blame my pudgy cheeks. (At least I can still look decent in drawings...)

I'm rllly gonna give it everything this year. I can't afford to slack off in the slightest. Any slip up could effect the rest of my life for the worst now that colleges are officially watching. I stopped watching anime and instead I've been trying to watch shows like Law and Order to help me prepare for my future life as a lawyer. I even packed away all my books and drawing/painting stuff so I can focus on school only!!

I'm rllly scared that when I apply for college, I'm not gonna be extraordinary enough... At least I'm secretary of Author's Society and I'm a soloist for Choir. The big clubs at my school like Mock Business Association and Law Trial are super scary cuz they only let a few kids in every year and I'd need to "audition" for both. I tried out for Law Trial last year and didn't get in... I didn't write about it cuz it was too stressful and in the end it was a major fail... Dad keeps telling me to apply again this year but I know they're just going to keep their same team of students like they do every year so what's the point in me trying again? It's embarrassing and not worth the heartbreak. If I'm going to audition for another club I'd rather do something fun like Drama (maybe that's not a bad idea...)

I think I'm going to start dancing again so I at least have a sport on my resume. Dancing will also be a good way to get regular exercize. I'm at a good place w/ my body. I just need to be careful to stay fit since I can't rely on growth spurts anymore (I thought I was 5'9" but at my last check up they said I'm apparently 5'7"?)

My weight has been 160lbs for about four years and I've been going outside for at least 30-45min everyday (doesn't count the time I spend playing Blue) to tone up and loose some flub so I can look my best for school ('w') Wish me luck!

Sunday, November 2

AHH I AM SOO GLAD TO HAV YOU BACK!! I lost you during the dreaded "move in." I wasn't informed of the exact day we were moving, so everything I had out of my boxes for school was suddenly (and poorly) thrown into the most random places. A lot of my rilly nice things that I was waiting to pack like my locket, music box, headphones, and Naruto books are either ruined or lost forever (thankfully w/ you as an exception now). Blue has had a difficult time with the move as well. He's been behaving so badly around strangers (peeing and chewing on them and their stuff) that my parents are threatening to get rid of him. They're also blaming ME as if it's MY fault?? Everyone acts like he's my dog (which rilly he is) but my parents are the ones that bought him without telling anyone. I bought Blue a bunch of training toys and that's gotten a good response! I hope the parents see how much we're trying. He might act crazy sometimes but I love him and if they ever try to send him away, I'm leaving with him.

The only good part of this big family move is that Nicky has been hanging around to help my parents install and set things up for us. He was surprised to see my Ed Sheeran poster hanging up lol. He asked "Do you really like this guy?" and I was like "Of course! Haven't you heard his music?" and then Nicky said "Yeah, his music's good, but even I'm better looking than this guy." So rude!! I wonder what he'd say about Martin since I feel like they look kinda similar... (Especially when Martin wears his glasses)

School has been a living hell but friends make it okay c: I'm happy to report that I have all my classes with Nora and Martin this year!! The gods must have answered my prayers! It's nice to finally feel like I can be my dorky self at school now without ever having to hide. School has been a living hell but friends make it okay c: I'm happy to report that I have all my classes with Nora and Martin this year!! The gods must have answered my prayers! It's nice to finally feel like I can be my dorky self at school now without ever having to hide.

Now that I'm feeling more confident at school, I'm feeling a lot happier



about my hair. It's at a rllly good length now. I think I'm gonna keep growing it out. I also love my body a lot more lately, though I need to take better care of it to keep myself skinny... I've been rllly proud of my outfits lately too! Blue chewed up all my yoga pants which forced me to start wearing my skirts that Euphie helped me find at Hot Topic.

Classes are rllly hard this year, which has helped me to focus and not procrastinate as much. I'm trying to enjoy this year while I can bcuz according to Selena junior year is the hardest year of [REDACTED]. I'm already swamped with hw, tests, extra curriculars, and projects with not enough time or pants (-p-)

I signed up to be a student mentor this year and was assigned five 7th graders to check in with every month. I love my kids, but I rllly don't care for the program itself. The students and counselor that run it treat the whole thing like an award show for themselves when we're supposed to be focusing on the kids??? It's rllly weird and it kinda pisses me off. Even tho we don't meet with our kids very often, it eats up a lot of my time with all these stupid retreats that take up every other weekend. They're so unnecessary and just an excuse to pat everyone on the back. I don't get it and I rllly don't like it.

Like I said tho, I love the actual work I'm doing. I got rllly close to one of my kids during the school's annual anti-bullying assembly. She asked me if we could leave and go somewhere to talk. After confiding a lot in me, I spent the rest of the hour doodling and talking with her. Thankfully she was okay, but she had a friend who was cutting herself. Instead of keeping it secret, she went to her parents who went to the friend's parents, and now that girl is getting help but she's mad at my kid for spilling her secret. This poor girl thought SHE was being a bully to her friend after going to the parents for help. I assured her that she did the right thing and that after getting help, her friend will realize that too. She said she felt a lot better after telling me, and she liked my drawings so much that I let her keep them c:

Alas, I have plenty of hw to finish before tomorrow. I'm so glad you're back! Talk to you soon! Wish me luck!

Tuesday, December 2

It's freaking December already!?!?!?

I'm really sorry for the long update gap. As you can tell school has kept me pretty busy XD I took my first nap ever on accident today. I came home by myself (Mom was out with Blue) and I ate lunch, laid on the couch, and... woke up 2hrs later. It was so weird.

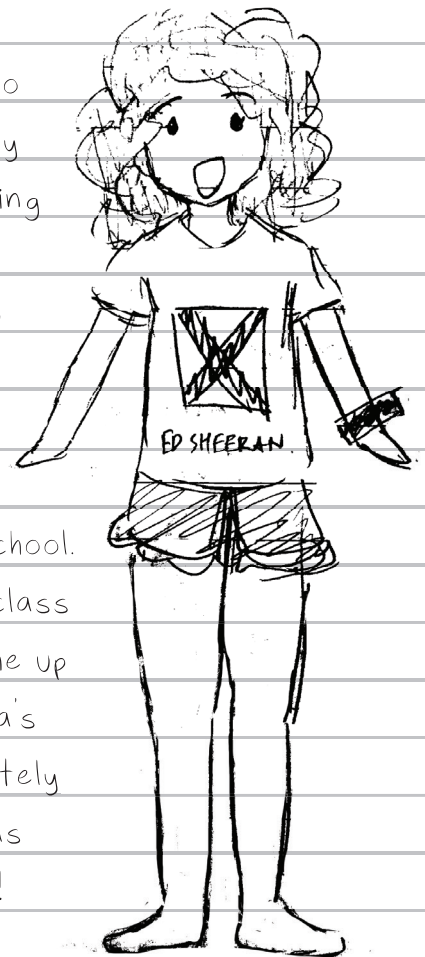
Winter Ball is coming up and I'm still single without a date. Nora is going with Light again. Martin is the only person I'd wanna go w/ but I think he's too shy to ask, which is also probs for the best bcuz that would probably make our relationship rllly awk anyhow XD

First semester finals are also coming up. I wrote my final History paper on the Revolutionary War and I'm actually very proud of it! There's a competition we can submit our papers to and... I wanna try competing cuz I feel I don't try enough or put myself out there enough. I've been trying to change that... at least I'm trying???

In Humanities, I wrote a speech for school about Nicky and my teacher entered it into a contest to be published after mine was voted best in the class! It's a contest for mostly adults' writing so I probably won't win but it was still kinda exciting (w) I now have a reputation as a writer!

Omg how could I forget to tell you??? Nora and I went to our first concert ever last night to see: Ed Sheeran! I think my heart was sobbing, his voice is beautiful!! Nora and I got matching shirts! I wore mine to school today c:

I slept over at Nora's house where I had a good dream so buckle up (w) I was DATING the lovely Ed Sheeran and we were out shopping for clothes together and I was teasing him cuz there was a shirt w/ him on it. Then he had to go to a recording sesh so he kissed me and said he'd pick me up afterschool. School was pretty much full of free periods so I spent every class watching Martin play the new Pokemon game. Ed came to pick me up and Martin got kinda jelly but then the dream ended when Nora's alarm woke me up. That was the most fun I've ever had! Definitely going to be my favorite memory from the year. Hopefully it was enough happiness to help me power through finals. Wish me luck!



Saturday, January 3

Finals are finally over (lol) and now Winter Break is too! My entire break has been me texting Martin (he's in Florida visiting grandparents). Obviously, Martin and I didn't go to Winter Ball together or I'd be screaming about it already. We did however spend that night on the phone until 3AM, so I still got to have a nice time and keep my friendship <3



The most interesting thing to happen over Winter Break was Nicky coming over last Friday to celebrate a late Christmas. We watched my favorite xmas movie Tokyo Godfathers and I got to see Patrice again! She likes to play with all my Disney Princess plushes whenever she comes over. Cuz Patrice has an early bedtime, Nicky didn't stay for too long but anytime with him is honestly great.

None of my final grades are posted yet which is making me rllly nervous but I've been trying to distract myself by playing Earthbound, cleaning my room, and sleeping. Sadly, the only nice dream I've had lately was a vague tragic romance where I was engaged to Ed Sheeran who was also a prince, and Martin worked for Ed as a knight...guard...thingy. It was a weird love triangle, which I used to rllly like in books and shows, but nowadays I don't much care for it.

For whatever reason, this week I was rereading my diary entries from 7th grade and I was about to actually rip out most of the pages in here lol, but I stopped myself. I realized that seeing all my old doodles and dreams and dumb stories actually makes me... proud of (or at least accepting of) who I'm becoming.

I'm trying rllly hard to be a better person. I'm trying. There are still plenty of things I don't know like wtf I'm doing or going to do w/ my life... I probably never ever will (T_T). Honestly, idk what to do but the plan for now is to stay determined. Staying optimistic is too difficult...

Ok, I'm tired. I'll talk to you soon. Wish me luck!

Thursday, February 12

I finally get to see Jurassic World tomorrow night w/ Nora, Light, Martin, and Walker after a week full of 4 tests, 3 supposedly unrelated acts of crime on our property, and 0 hours of sleep... I keep having nightmares about someone breaking in thru my window. I believe I'm turning into an insomniac...

WORIED



I rllly miss our old house. I sleep alone in the basement here and that hasn't exactly been the getaway I'd hoped for. My parents are all over my case for not unpacking and cleaning my room faster, even tho the real reason I'm stalling is that last time I tried, I encountered 3 very thick and nasty spiders... I wish Blue would protect me from them, but he's just as scared of spiders as I am.

Martin's bday is coming up. Idk if I should get him something or just go to another movie with him and our friends. I think I'm gonna get Martin the "Your Grammar Sucks" book cuz considering that he makes fun of me for being the "grammar dictator" I thought it'd be cute c: Sounds cute...right? I kinda wanna get him a video game but idk how expensive it'd be...

Martin's got a job already as a grocery cashier. He's making \$50 in one work day!! I wanna make that money to save up for nice gifts (and of course college aha) but most places I've tried to apply to are 18+ only.

Since Martin started work we haven't gotten to txt. Today was like the first time this week and he called me "bb" which at first made me happy, but then I remembered that Icarus and Martin both used to call me "bae" sO I RLLY don't know where we stand and it gives me a lot of anxiety but there's no chance in hell I'm asking him about it.

Honestly I've been worried that maybe writing down stuff here is all a jynx since, as you know, I've had a long stroke of bad luck when it comes to boys. But for a while

now, things have been great! (Oh shit, should I have said that?) I feel bad keeping you in suspense for so long and I wanna update you, but I'm also worried that my writing is cursed. That or it's this diary. I guess we'll find out eventually. Wish me luck!

Sunday, March 15

I'M SO TIRED.

I'm hoooooome and miserably sick. I slept until 2pm and I just want to keep sleeping (-_-;). I've missed 2 days of school, including a test (which has been a fukfest trying to resched). My suspicions that this diary is a jynx have yet again been confirmed as this past month has been quite awful. Martin texting me not to worry about it has made me feel a little better but I rllly feel like I've let my parents down with all these failures piling up which is rllly sad cuz I've been trying extremely hard this year.

I auditioned for the school play and only got an ensemble role. I reauditioned for Law Trial and (surprise) was rejected. I entered two fucking writing contests that were both busts (that's showbiz I guess...). On top of that, I've had a goddamn dream nightmare everynight where I'm back in school, and this morning I wanted to cry bcuz tomorrow, the weekly cycle of non-stop work starts all over again. School is literally killing me. I don't even have a lunch anymore bcuz I have to do my homework then cuz I have Choir, Drama, Author's Society, and Dance after school every day of the week ahhhh

I've tried writing again to help but I still feel so...lost. Honestly, I'm in a rllly bad creative slump in writing (-_-;) My writing's been really disapointing lately so I've been wondering whether all of this is all just a waste of time. You know, when ppl keep telling you "ur shit" everyday... you get to the point where you start listening to them and doubting yourself. The Transcendentalists would be rllly disappointed in me. Do you think I should keep writing?

If that wasn't enough, Martin txted me "r u dead?" yesterday, as he always does when I miss school. We were texting for a while until he called me "bb" again so it confirms b4 wasn't a typo, and then he sent me a heart! Now that we're even closer to a real relationship, I'm more confused than ever...

Me lyr ago would've jumped blindly into any sign of a relationship w/ Martin (or anyone rllly), but rn, I'm just busy and tired and too confused for that. I think... I mean idk the first thing about this kind of stuff and I'm worried making it official is just going to jynx us. After being disappointed by Hatchet and Icarus, I feel like I should wait until I'm older... Emotionally, I'm kind of broken inside. Numb is probably a better word actually. I feel lllllike a fuck up.

I'm RLLY sorry I'm venting here but I wanted to do something to take my mind off

how awful I feel rn and I rllly didn't wanna rant to the Internet. I feel like my life peaked last year. I'm so confused rn... I mean everytime I think I'm doing okay I fucking jynx it or something goes wrong. ldk what to do anymore...it always feels wrong.

I'm going crazy from how busy and tired and malnourished I am. ldk I think I'm just overexagerating tbh who knows. I've realized you know nothing about me... and that's kinda my fault. I don't always write what's rllly going on in here...

To be totally honest, I haven't rllly been eating. I started skipping meals cuz I was feeling so goddamn sick all the time and I didn't wanna eat. All day I eat maybe one energy bar until 5PM when I get super sick and the only thing I want to eat is advil. Yesterday I came home and grabbed my pill bottle, thought of how it would be best if I was gone, and cried a shit ton.

Since then I'm still not totally okay but I'm trying to be better. At least it's almost over. Wish me luck I guess.

Monday, April 20

~~I hate it all. Or at least I hate me. And my fucking school. I hate this place. It's a shitty-ass school. Fuck the high school experience. I should've done running start. I need to stop making choices I regret. Every month it's something new. I feel like a broken record. I feel like trash. I'm still trash. Kill me. I hate saying that and I feel kinda bad but holy fuk I DIDN'T ASK FOR THIS Ugh I'm just going to indulge myself in angsty music.~~

Tuesday, May 12

I broke down in front of my parents for the first time in forever (breaks into the song from Frozen). I just couldn't take it. I was ready to disappear. I tried to ask for help cuz I've felt so tired and awful and confused about what I'm doing with my life and whether anything matters. They FREAKED OUT and started yelling at each other. I felt horrible and begged them to stop. Shocker, they didn't, so I promised that I would never actually commit suicide and kept insisting that I was fine as I was crying. I've felt like absolute shit ever since cuz even tho Mom and Dad think the situation was "helpful," I think it just made everything worse.

I've been really "fragile" since my breakdown and I'm not eating right and I'm super stressed. I've felt rilly off, like I've sinned majorly and now I'm doomed or something. I built up all this rage inside and I finally cracked, I guess... I've kind of lost hope cuz I still don't know what I'm doing w/ life and I h8 school and living in this house. Mom and Dad are starting to get mad that I haven't gone back to my "old self".

I kinda wanna start making more decisions for myself but my history of making my own decisions usually ends in making HUGE mistakes like this...

ldk wtf I'm doing. ldk wtf to do. ldk.

Friday, June 15

Today was the last day of sophomore year! There's a lot of shit I could complain about but I'm rllly just glad it's over. I'm doing okay! I'm getting over panic fits faster and my anxiety hasn't been acting up as badly. I'm in another funk but I'm trying.

If I thought this year was bad, I've been warned by Selena that next year is the worst. She's done with high school now, lucky duck! Her graduation is this Sunday. After this, she's going to culinary school to be a baker! Nora and I are gonna go to say bye to her and our other senior friends. Martin said he might come too if he's not sleeping in lol. Nora wanted to plan another sleepover party with our friends today but I'm kinda glad plans were cancelled bcuz I kinda just wanna lay back and play Undertale for the next week.

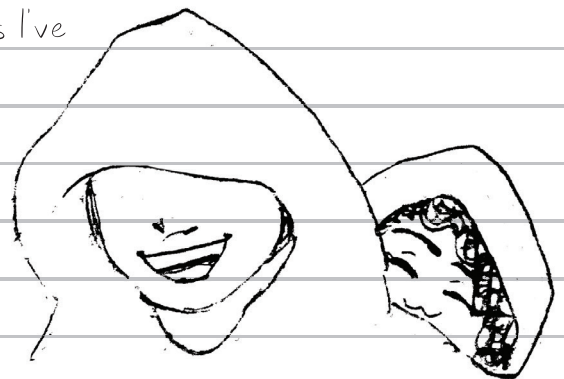
Finals took a lot out of me. All I want to do is sleeeepppp but that will ruin my bedtime so I decided to write in here instead. I felt like all of my finals went okay (we won't know for sure until next week). We had another Spanish final where we were dancing (-3-) I was hoping my dear Martin would awkwardly ask me, but before he even could someone else came up and asked me to dance first.

I've actually had a bunch of people, mostly guys, trying to talk to me lately. This includes a lot of Daiah's old popular friends. Honestly, I think it might have made Martin a little jealous which is good bcuz MARTIN OFFICIALLY ASKED ME OUT ON AN OFFICIAL DATE AND WE ARE GOING TO SEE CRIMSON PEAK THIS SUNDAY JUST THE TWO OF US AND OH MY GOD I'M RLLY EXCITED!!!!!!!

I am trying to mentally comprehend why Martin likes me?? Like, it feels so unreal??? I can't fathom why he gets a dorkish smile around me of all people, because he's so amazing and adorable??? After years of intense flirting we're finally going out???? Is this real??? How??? After Icarus I had accepted that I'd never have a high school romance and now it's unfolding right before my eyes like one of the stories I've written.

I'm a little worried things might be awkward, but I rllly never feel awkward around him... unless this godforsaken diary jynxes it. I'm really nervous for everything, but I should be OK right?

Wish me lots of luck!



Wednesday, July 22

Mom's starting to freak out over my 16th bday. I don't want anything fancy but she does, in fact she wants an extravagant co-ed party which I am very not for, though I appreciate her enthusiasm. I'd rly rather not have a bday cuz the entire birthday system just feels narcissistic to me... What's there to celebrate?

My ideal bday would just be grabbing McDonald's and hanging out with Martin. He's been rly busy with work this Summer, but he txts me on all his breaks and we've seen a bunch of movies together! (No, we haven't kissed, BUT we have held hands every time and that makes me happy :3)



Martin's already 16 and he says it sucks cuz his parents made him get his license as soon as he was of age so now he has to drive himself everywhere and pay for all his gas. Poor bb! I got my permit last week and my driver's ed classes start tomorrow. I've only practiced driving once with Mom and I think I'm pretty good at it so I'm trying to not be so nervous.

Turning 16 wouldn't bother me so much if it wasn't such a (historically) big deal. At 16, Dad moved to America, Mom met Dad, and Ed Sheeran ran away from home to pursue a music career. Is this going to be my epiphany year too? Who knows.

16 is also a big deal bcuz it's the age of consent in [REDACTED] and to quote the movie Flashdance: "I've been thinking about sex alot." But not actually doing it, just like questions about it that I'm too uncomfortable to talk to anyone about. Like what do I

even do during sex? Just lay there? I guess the devil is in my panties or whatever church ppl say lol.

The only person I've rllly talked about sex to other than Mom has been Euphie but she's only told me about things like birth control and "cherry popping" and honestly both sound pretty awful from what she's said... We hung out yesterday and when I told her that Martin and I were dating she thought I should be upset that we haven't kissed yet, but honestly the thought of kissing rllly scares me. I've never done it before so what if I do it wrong? I don't think Martin's ever kissed anyone either (he seemed pretty nervous when I wanted to hold hands for the first time) so there's a little less pressure on both of us, but I'm not in any rush. Honestly I'm happy with our 3+ hour hand holding sessions. They're a lot less stressful. Euphie thinks Martin's gay.

I don't even have the mental capacity to worry about sex or kissing rn bcuz I'm a junior this year and I wanna be brave but I'm RLLY rllly scared. Besides AP tests/classes, SAT, ACT, PSAT, NMSQT and just the future in general, what I'm scared for most now is college. Martin and I are going to a university showcase or something like that this Saturday to preview a bunch of colleges even tho I think the only one I'm going to apply to is [REDACTED]. We were told to dress "impressable" which will be difficult since my entire wardrobe is black...

I'm determined to prove myself to Mom and Dad this year. After last year they lost some faith... I just really don't wanna disappoint them...

CHAPTER 16



Thursday, August 27

Junior year is starting soon and I've had some bad luck this month. I've been having HORRIFYING dreams lately... those don't help. I failed my driver's test, Blue ran away (thank GOD we found him I couldn't stop crying), and I found out I only have one class with Nora. Maybe my luck will change when school starts. At least I have all my classes w/ Martin.

I really haven't been feeling good lately. My sleep sched is rllly fucked up. I've been waking up to puke in the middle of the night. I think this means I can no longer run from my anxiety. I woke up at 2AM today and yesterday I had woken up at 11PM of the previous night and just never went to sleep. Maybe I rllly am cursed...

Monday, September 7

School starts tomorrow and I'm nervous as HELL bc I desperately need to prove to the world (specifically college) that I'm a success! My problem is I'm not actually sure how to do that... Mom and Dad didn't go to college. Nicky went to community college but then he left after like a year to work in carpentry (parents were NOT happy about that at first). I asked our school's guidance counselor about community college and she also told me that wasn't a good option so I rllly don't have anyone to turn to for help figuring all this stuff out. My parents think college is gonna make my life easier but it's alrdy making my life so much harder.

Martin's parents are helping him but I don't want to bother him to solve my problems. I feel so fat, and alone, and confused...

Tuesday, October 13

Sorry I've been so busy. School is dumb as always. Aside having a shit ton of hw this weeked, and being sick, I wanted to say hi (-_-;) Tomorrow I have to write an essay on The Night of the Hunter (which is ok cuz I love the movie) and finish my painting for art (but it's ok bc I'm painting Ed Sheeran!). As much as I love my assignments, I'm so sick and tired and I just want to SLEEP.

I'm not only super stressed w/ all my academic bull shit, but this whole college thing is rllly starting to give me panic attacks and breakdowns. I have ONE plan which is to go to [REDACTED] and major in law. Even though I'm working rllly hard to make one, I don't have a backup plan if this fails.

Friday, November 13

November is my fave month and it's turning on me. I'm growing super anxious because I RLLY want to get into [REDACTED] for college but I'm rilly nervous w/ how my grades will turn out... My guidance counselor said it'd be a stretch for me to get in with a 3.7 GPA and 1700 SAT score. Mom and Dad want me to retake the SAT next year but idk wtf I'm gonna do about my GPA...

I'm tired and stressed for college. I'm... scared. Monsters in my nightmares are the least of my worries. Just keep trying I guess. Maybe it'll pay off. Maybe...

Friday, December 11

This month is

~~Tuesday, December 15~~

~~Today~~

~~Sunday, January~~

CHAPTER 17



Sunday, August 7

Re: my sudden break from journaling. I rllly wasn't feeling it idk why but here I am. I know there's a lot to report on so I'll try my best to recap the horrendous year that was 11th grade...

I reread my diary entries from last year and goddamn... I'm a mess. Well, not as much now thankfully, but this year has been ROUGH which makes me very, very thankful to be where I am now. I might not be at the exact place I'd like to be, but I'm a hell of a lot closer than I was last August. Some things have really started to make more sense lately. I think I've learned a lot of life lessons this year, #1 being that if you like something, fucking embrace it!

I'm watching anime again! I'm painting again! AND I'm writing again!! I realized all of those things rllly make me happy, and when I stopped myself from enjoying them I only became more miserable. So I am finally "back to my old-self" and I did it all on my own!

I was so scared for my college resume that I spent every second of free time outside of school and standardized tests working with clubs. Since I had a reputation as one of the best writers in our grade and an artist, I was elected Public Relations Officer for Author's Society and Choir when senior year starts up! I'll get to be making a bunch of posters for events, running social media accounts, and coolest of all is that I get to create and update the school bulletin boards every month!! I already bought a bunch of craft supplies and sketched out some ideas for when set up starts next month.

I'm no longer worried about my resume, but there are still plenty of things I'm worried about... My GPA dropped from a 3.7 to a 3.5 this year, so if it was already a stretch for me to get into [REDACTED], I can't imagine my chances are any more solid now. I retok the SAT yesterday morning (had to wake up at 6AM w/ nothing but 3 hours of sleep and nothing but blueberries in my system from the past 24 hours). Next to my desk there was a sports jersey beside me with the name "Sheeran" on the back. I hope that was a sign of good luck c:

Martin has been my major comfort source through last year. His cuddles and encouragement kept me determined to make it through all the crap that junior year brought us. Officially, he's my boyfriend which is still rllly exciting to say! Last year he asked me to Winter Ball with flowers and a sign in the school parking lot which was rllly romantic and cute. Our relationship status advanced after the dance to...



No, pervert, we haven't had sex. Sex is something I don't just wanna rush into w/ the first competent guy I date. I have so much stuff I need to worry about already that I don't want to add pregnancy, STD's, UTI's, and how I look naked to my list. Euphie thought I was making a mistake by not initiating anything, but Nora and Mom assured me that taking things slow is alright. Martin and I haven't even talked about it yet so I'm just not going to worry about it. Is it weird for me to write that? Idk who I'm even writing to. God or whatever's up there? Future me? My future kids? (pls no, kids, stop reading this right now omg)

Jk, but kids, if you are reading this far into my diary, just to clarify, I'm okay. I've just been dealing w/ a lot of shit. Although it's not perfect, life is starting to get better I think! I'm realizing that even the worst days can have some rad moments and it's those rad moments you wanna remember so I promise I'm gonna try to write more of those moments down in here, not just when I'm sad or angry. I'm trying my best. Also, I love you! I love you so so much!

Wednesday, September 14

Today was our first assembly of senior year! We moved up to the senior seats in our school bleachers and I legit started crying... Don't get me wrong, I despise this school w/ all my heart and I am SO ready to leave, but I also don't wanna say goodbye to all my friends :c (I also don't wanna start my college applications...)

College applications for [REDACTED] are due the 1st of December, then I won't hear anything until March. Because my GPA took such a hit this year, Dad asked me to apply to one other college so I agreed to [REDACTED] since Martin's applying there too. If I don't get into either school, I wanted to just say fuxk it and not go to college at all, but Dad says he wants me to go to community college if that happens. I guess we'll have to wait and see what fate has in store for me...

Martin isn't applying to too many colleges in state since his grandparents are paying for his tuition and they want him to attend a Christian school, so he might actually move next year which would be rilly said but we've alrdy said that if that happens we'll keep text and call everyday so I'm not too worried about it. I would apply out of state with him but I'm not allowed to. Martin is still undecided about his major which has me a little worried for him, but I don't wanna push him into anything or make him uncomfortable by bringing it up to him all the time.

Nora AND Euphie are only applying to colleges in California, which means both my besties will be far away from me since I only applied to schools here and they're both so smart that they'll definitely get in. Nora wants to study film which is super cool! We're in a film class together this year (Martin's w/ us too!) and it's already getting me super excited for her! Euphie says she wants to study Classical Literature or something similar sounding? I don't really know what that means. She said she doesn't really either but that it sounds cool.

Tomorrow Nora is taking my senior photo with her fancy film camera! I'm a little nervous only because I've been stress eating a TON lately and I know I've gained at least 10lbs over Summer. I was actually so stressed about senior photos that I impulsive cut my hair super short after school today (which Mom and Dad expressed that they highly disapprove of but I had a dream where I cut and died it pink so they're lucky I'm only chopping it off rn because I thought the pink ombre looked super cute on dream me). I rilly hope Martin thinks it's cute!

Monday, October 3

Last month from the 16th-19th, I was in Victoria, Canada for our senior trip. It was a lot of fun! I LOVED all the bright colors and lights around the city! The Parliament building had really pretty blue ceilings with gold all around and bright red carpets. Chinatown had red lights in every alley and colorful drawings of space done in chalk everywhere. There were also a lot of flowers everywhere and houses painted purple, yellow, even pink!

I got to room with Nora (Daioh was in our room too but I mostly ignored her). We were also in the same tour group most of the time.

Martin was in the other tour group but we got to see each other a lot still when we ate at restaurants. At night, Nora and I went down a few floors of our hotel to the boys' room to watch shows or play games with Martin and Light. One night though Daioh organized a sneak out to get some alcohol (drinking age in Canada is only 18). Since Martin was one of the few of us who was 18, she asked him to go and I was pretty unhappy that he said yes. They left but then came back only a few minutes later because the parent chaperones caught them. I was already kinda hurt that he left, but it made me more upset that all the parents thought Daioh and Martin snuck off to make out when both of them are dating other people... At least none of the students were saying that.

Thankfully, the trip ended with no more drama. Martin and I shared our first bubble tea, Nora and I bought matching sweatshirts, and for our very last stop we went to this BEAUTIFUL, big bookstore with two floors lined with books!!! I could have lived in that bookstore. I bought a really nice copy of "The Yellow Wallpaper" by Charlotte Gilman and "Slaughterhouse Five" by Kurt Vonnegut which are two of my favorite stories ever written! I had a ton of fun but jfc was I super glad to be back home (altho the break from college apps, clubs, and hw was super nice).

Idk, I'm rllly happy lately. A little frazzled, but my eye make up is on point! I'm also rllly happy with my new hair! I'm starting to look like a real adult! Seeing how much Euphie and Nora take care of themselves has inspired me to try and build up my self-confidence. I wanna try eating less and working out more. For some reason that was super easy for me last year when stress made me not want to eat anything, but this year stress makes me want to eat EVERYTHING. I'm hoping I can snap out of it soon... I was definitely slacking on my diet when school started up and during the senior trip lol. This month I'll be better!

Tuesday, November 15

I'm rilly scared that I'm going to fuxk up and waste my opportunities for a decent future, so I'm trying to take charge and start making my own decisions again. Selena emailed me a romance story contest that's online and I want to enter. I've been writing a lot of random garbage lately, but I think I can turn it into something good.

At first, I thought about finally rewriting *Crimson Tears* since that's been on my bucket list for years now, but every time I tried it just never felt right. Madison is supposed to be thirteen years old in *Crimson Tears*, but she doesn't sound like a thirteen year old when I write her now, she sounds like a sixteen year old bcuz I'm sixteen and I write like a sixteen year old. I thought about changing her age, but it just feels like a different story. So that's what I'm going to do: start a new story about a high school student who may or may not be a witch. Idk. I haven't decided yet. We'll figure it out together. Here's an exclusive preview:

"Winter Ball is next month. Please say you'll go." Melanie pleaded.

I sat beside her at our usual lunch spot. "Will you be my date?" I asked.

She sighed sadly. "I'd love to, but Brian asked me just yesterday after school."

"Why didn't you tell me?" I gasped.

"I thought it would make you feel bad." Melanie frowned. "You seemed so down yesterday..."

"Melanie, I'm always upset, but this is good news! You've liked Brian for a long time. I'm glad he finally got the guts to ask you out."

"I know, right?" she giggled. "You'll come with us, won't you? I'll pay for your ticket."

"I'm not making you pay so I can third wheel around on your special night with Brian."

"But I like you."

"It's okay, Melanie. There's a South Park marathon on that night anyways."

"If someone asks you, will you go?"

"Not with anyone from this school."

Someone from a different grade actually did end up asking me out, but after receiving carnations and a handmade sign, I guiltily told them the lie that I couldn't go because my brother was getting married that weekend and that he should ask someone else. I offered to give him the flowers back, but he said I could keep them. My mother put

them in a jar for me to keep in my room. Later that night, I couldn't handle the sick feeling they gave me in the pit of my stomach.

With the vase in my backpack, I snuck out of my house, hopped on my bike and set out to my local park. Between some bushes and a tree, I found the perfect spot to return the flora back to the earth. As I was finishing up my burial, a stranger's voice startled me.

"Are you okay?"

A question I didn't hear often.

I jumped up, brushing myself off in embarrassment. "I'm sorry, I was just leaving," I blushed.

"I'm not a cop. Don't worry about it," the deep voice chuckled softly.

I squinted to try and get a better look at him, but he was pretty hidden in the shadows.

"I'm sorry if I scared you." The figure came forward. He was tall and covered in black clothing with a matching backpack. His soft blond hair was covering half of his face. I couldn't see either of his eyes. "I thought since you were kneeling that maybe you were hurt."

"Me? No, I'm fine." I smiled towards him. "I have to get going. My father will throw a fit if he wakes up to find me gone."

"Maybe I'll see you again."

"Maybe. It's weird that I haven't seen you before. This is a small town. I know just about everyone here, but we've never met."

"I just moved here."

"Are you a high school student? Where do you go to school?"

"International High School. I start tomorrow."

"Oh, that's where I go."

"Great, so I will see you again." A sudden gust of wind blew the hair from the stranger's face, revealing his dark green eyes. Something about those eyes felt familiar. The longer I stared back at him, I realized this was someone I knew.

"Matthias?" I whispered.

"Hi, Maddy." His voice and appearance were new, but it was really him: Matthias Magnolia. He and I used to be childhood best friends. We had an innocent history of

spending Summers together, meeting at the park or library to read comics together, but then he moved away before we ever had the chance to say goodbye.

"It's nice to see you again."

"It really is you," I exhaled. "You're back!"

"I was worried you wouldn't remember me," he sighed with relief.

"Not that I'm not glad to see you, but can I ask why you're here so late?"

"I could ask you the same question."

"Yeah, but I asked first."

"Okay, that's fair. My plane just landed about an hour ago. The first thing I wanted to do was come here. I made some of my best memories here. You're in most of them. Do you remember?"

"Yeah," I giggled. "Of course I do. I still keep current with the Maximum Ride books. Do you still read those?"

"I never stopped," he laughed.

The winner of this contest gets an actual book deal which would be a real dream come true! I don't know if I'll ever get published (probably not), but I'm happy (and relieved) that I'm writing so much again!

Thursday, December 1

Last week, we celebrated Thanksgiving at Nicky's house! It was so good to see him again. He's obviously still busy whenever I see him because he's taking care of Patrice (and this time he was hosting a holiday party taking care of so many people) but I got to talk to him about college and writing. I asked him why he left college and he said that his biggest reason was that he just thought it wasn't for him. He said he always knew what he liked doing for work which was building things and not doing that was stressing him out. Nicky thought that I should be studying writing in college, but he understands why I'm applying as a pre-law student, and he said that whatever I decide to do in college, he's proud of me and knows I'm going to do well for myself which made me almost start crying in front of our entire extended family.

On that note, I finally submitted my last college application yesterday, so until the results arrive in March, I have to keep myself distracted. One of those distractions is writing! Unfortunately, I didn't win that book contest, but my Humanities teacher submitted one of my poems into a publishing contest last month. I got an envelope in the mail last night that said I **ADVANCED TO THE SEMIFINALS!!!**

Mom and Dad read my poem and called it "cute" which made me kind of mad but I channeled those emotions into research and great news! I found a website where I can self-publish my own books so my dreams are finally going to come true! I'm going to keep working on my romance book and plan to publish it by my 18th birthday! Not sure what I'm going to call it yet. Maybe the title will come to me soon.

Sunday, January 1

I am so thankful for Winter Break!! It snowed so I've been stuck at home. Even though I couldn't see my friends, I've spent a lot of time these past two weeks on the phone with Martin, Nora, and Euphie. Today is the last day and I'm spending it catching up on my new book c:

"Matt, why are you in here?" I asked, nudging the door open. He was sitting on the bed, facing the wall. When he didn't turn around, I started walking towards him. "Matt?" I put my hand on his shoulder, but he still didn't acknowledge me. "Sweetheart..."

Finally, I got him to face me, but I never expected to see him with tears staining his cheeks.

"Matt, are you okay?"

He shook his head repeatedly as I sat beside him.

"Do you wanna talk about it?"

He shook his head again.

"Do you want me to stay over?"

Nodding, Matt's hold on me grew tighter.

"I'm alright," he whispered. "I'm just tired."

"God, you sound like me," I mumbled against his collar bone.

"There's just never any time for us now, I suppose," he sighed, sinking back into my arms. "With school and jobs and everything else in between, we hardly get to see each other. I think it's the reason I've gotten so lazy."

"You think so?"

"I know so... I wish we could just always be like this whenever we wanted. I hate to be away from you."

"Me too," I mumbled.

"What are we going to do next year?" he asked, his voice turning quiet.

"I don't know baby..." I whispered.

"Me neither," Matthias laid down on the bed, pulling me down next to him. "Maddy, don't go tomorrow."

"What? I can't just—"

"Yes, you can. Don't go to school tomorrow. One day. Spend one day with me. No school, no students, no clubs, just us. Please?" he pleaded.

For the first day in what felt like forever, we were free. Maybe not really, but it felt like it in the passenger seat of Matt's car. As you can probably guess, we were having a wonderful time skipping school and catching up with one another.

"Gosh, you miss out on so much when you try to grow up. Maybe I never should have left..." Matthias chuckled, placing his arm around my shoulders and pulling me into his side.

"Please don't. Not ever again." I mumbled.

"I won't," he whispered as he angled his face closer to mine. "I don't think I can stand to be away from you ever again."

And with that, I finally got my first kiss from Matt in forever.

"Matt?" I whispered. His hands wrapped around me and pulled me into his chest.

"I'm sorry I ever left. The entire time I was gone, I was just thinking about you and all the things we were gonna do when I got back..."

"Was this on the list?" I giggled, putting my hands on his shoulders. Then I moved in and kissed him like this was our last night together.

Friday, February 24

In Humanities we're performing scenes from Hamlet in groups where I get to play the star role as Ophelia (Martin is in another group, but he's playing Hamlet!). I really love Humanities! It's been my favorite class for a while now but this year especially it's been so much fun.

I was talking to my teacher after school about college plans since everyone's starting to get their results in, and he said that I would make a really good teacher (but he also didn't recommend the job XD). Honestly teaching sounds like it would be fun. I like working with students in the school mentorship program. I never thought about it before, but if this law thing doesn't work out next month, maybe I'll bring it up to Mom and Dad.

I also got nominated by my Humanities teacher to speak at the senior assembly on the last day of school!! It's even scarier than graduation because it'll be in front of the ENTIRE student body, not just my class. I'm nervous as heck but I didn't want to say no to such a great opportunity.

Senior year has been crazy and scary but also so fulfilling already. Until college results come in next month, I'm still on edge, but I have a good feeling about the future. c:



Sunday, March 26

I didn't get in.

I'm pissed and everyone keeps telling me not to be, but don't I own the right? I dk I'm hurt rn...

I don't know what I'm supposed to do now. I don't know what you want from me. I wish you could just tell me.

I'm running out of journal pages so I guess I shouldn't waste this space. I'm gonna keep writing my story in here. Don't mind me.

That was the first time I ever cried in front of Matthias. I couldn't help it. I was sleep deprived, stressed out beyond belief; I had so many things on my mind and I felt trapped in a corner all by myself. "I don't know what to do anymore, Matt," I whispered. "If I can't do this one thing, then what the hell has all of this been for?"

He unbuckled his seatbelt and leaned over me, pulling me into his chest while nuzzling the back of my head. It caught me so off guard, the sudden warmth of his breath and nose hitting me. If I hadn't been sitting, surely I would've fallen over from shock and loss of all logical sense.

"What... What are you doing?" I stammered.

"I'll let you know when I figure it out." he said into my neck.

I slowly wrapped my arms around him, burying my head against his shoulder, absorbing his warmth, letting all of my worries drift away as I sunk into my unconscious. Honestly, I'm not really sure how long we were just holding each other like that. I didn't want to stop, but I could hear Nicholas pulling up into the driveway. Matthias and I both knew that I should go, so we hesitantly pulled apart, looking at each other with a new sensation.

The right words weren't coming to my mind, so I just stared back at him, trying to gather my thoughts.

"I—"

Before I could even finish my attempt at a goodbye, Matthias kissed me on the lips. When he pulled away, he couldn't stop smiling, and I realized I couldn't either.

"I love you," he laughed. That was another first for our relationship. Everything felt so perfect that the thought of things inevitably going wrong continued to torture me.

In my experience, nothing good can last forever.

Friday, April 14

Mom and Dad actually had a rllly nice talk w/ me about college. They said that they're trying to recognize my independence and that they appreciate me which was all rllly nice to hear and a relief in a lot of ways. I cried a lot in front of them and told them that I was sorry for disappointing them, but they both said that they were proud of me and that they know that I'm trying my best. That made me cry even harder lol.

Good news is that I got accepted into my backup school, and I've committed to [REDACTED]. I have no idea what I'm going to study in college since I didn't get accepted into the pre-law program, but maybe this is for the best. Dad said I can pick whatever major I want as long as I'm actually getting a college education, so I'm going to do some research this week. I really enjoyed working as a PR Officer this year for clubs, and I'm leaning towards a degree in public relations so I can keep doing art and writing after I graduate.

Martin also didn't get into [REDACTED] but he did get into a lot of out of state colleges. He's choosing the closest one possible, which will still be 8 hours away, but I'm excited to maybe visit him. Nora is also going out of state. She got into her dream school and film program: [REDACTED]! If anyone deserved it, it's Nora. She's been making YouTube short films since we were in 7th grade. Now she's going to be making real movies in Hollywood! Euphie got into [REDACTED] which made me even more upset that I didn't get in bc I could have gone to school with one of my best friends after all, but at least she'll be closer than I thought and I'll have one friend who's around for college.



I'm still excited for the future. Maybe a little more scared than before, but I'm still looking forward to it. Whatever's out there has to be better than high school, right?

Monday, June 19

This journal is almost full, and high school is almost finished I can't believe I started this diary at 12 and now I'm turning 18 next month... from junior high newbie to high school graduate.

I gave my speech last week in front of hundreds of students and staff and oh my god it was SO nerve wracking I thought I was gonna hurl backstage! But when I actually got on stage and started reading my speech, I looked out and saw Martin and Nora waving their hands, cheering for me, and I felt a lot better. A lot of the kids I mentor were cheering for me too. It felt really nice to be up there (and even nicer when I was finally off stage lol).

Martin rewarded me with a kiss and an ice cream date after school. For dinner, we met up with Nora, Light, Walker, and some other mutual friends for a dinner out at an Italian restaurant. It didn't hit me until afterwards that our meal was probably the last time we'd all be together in the same place... That's so weird. You grow up with the same people for seven years and then all of a sudden they're gone.

Surprisingly, I didn't cry a lot at graduation. I think I was too nervous and shaky. Mom and Dad both cried a ton though. Dad gifted me a Pikachu plush, Mom wrote me a really long and heartfelt letter, and even though Nicky couldn't come to my actual graduation, he planned a surprise graduation party with some of our extended family on Sunday and I ended up crying a lot after all lol!

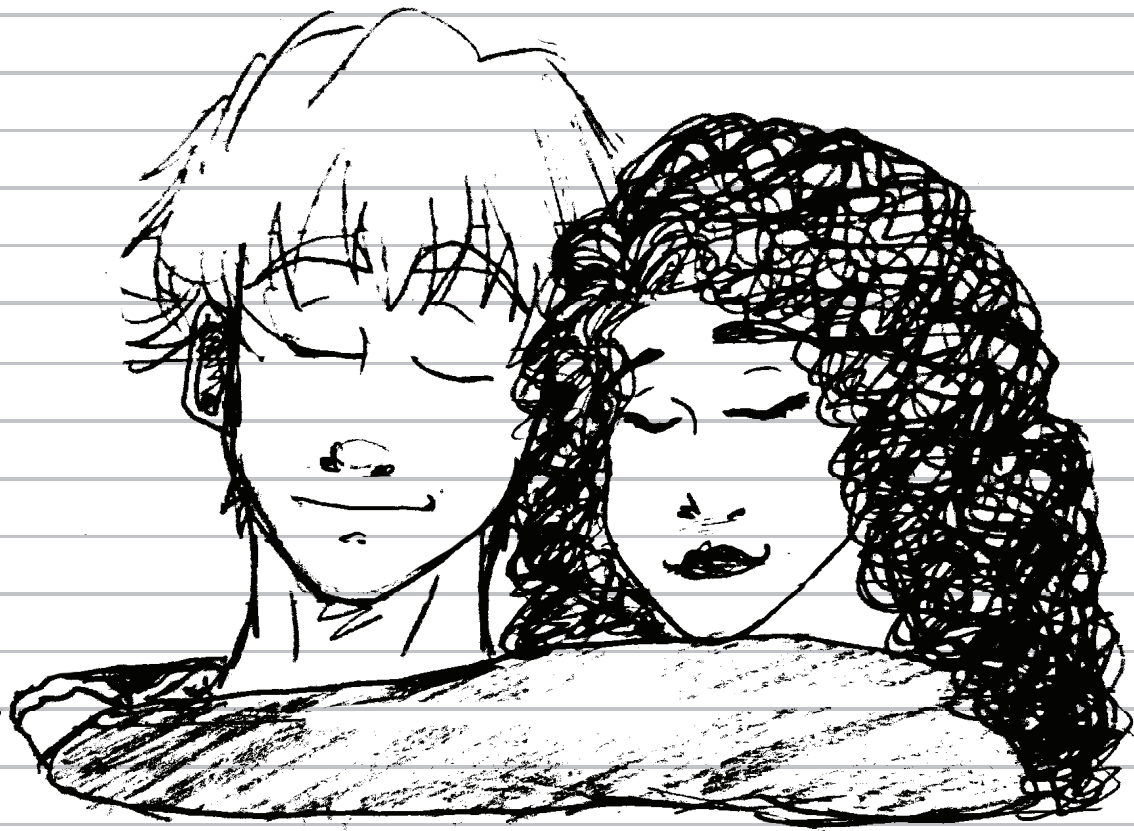
I think I'm still in denial about... everything. My life is so different from how I planned and pictured it when I started this diary. It's crazy but I don't think I would change anything (not that I could even if I wanted to lol). The last thing left for me to do now is relax, cuddle Martin, play the new Legend of Zelda game, and make final edits to my book, which I've decided to name: "Forget Me Nots" bc I just discovered the flowers and I think they're neat.

Saturday, May 20

My poem was published!!! They're sending me a copy of the anthology that I'm going to be printed in and I'm SUPER excited to see it! After years of writing, I'm finally a published writer c: I didn't think Mom and Dad were that excited, but apparently they've been bragging to everyone in the family about me and they're asking for extra copies of the book that they can share with everyone.

Of course, I'm most excited to keep writing and working on "Forget Me Nots". We've had a lot of free periods in school so I've been pulling out my laptop just to work on my writing everyday and I've made a ton of progress. I think I like this for a potential ending:

It's weird to write about this moment. I wish I had all of my memories, thoughts, and feelings all recorded somehow so you could be there with me and see exactly what it was that made that night so important to me, but all I have are these words, and no matter how many people read them, no one will ever really get to know how it all happened. And maybe that's for the best. Maybe that's how it's supposed to be.



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