The Books of Abigail Norris

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“ABIGAIL!”

I look up from my book, to see mother standing in the doorway to my bedroom. Her arms are crossed, her eyes glaring. The room is silent. It isn’t until now that I see the paper she’s clutching in her hand, turning her knuckles white.

My report card.

I instantly know what was wrong. I failed. Again. It’s last quarter of the year, and I failed. Then again, when do I *not* fail?

“Again Abigail?” You got a *D* as your overall grade!! A *D*!! I’m sick and tired of this nonsense!! You’re going into your sophomore year Abigail!” You need to learn to focus more in class! I’m sending you to summer school. And we’re selling all of these useless books of yours!!” Mother turns, slamming the door shut, and stomps down the hallway in her heels. My eyes tear up.

I sit up, closing The Wizard of Oz, and look around my room. It’s simple really. Ten feet by ten feet. Hardwood floors, yellow walls, white ceiling. There’s icicle lights hanging from the ceiling, along with some paper silver stars I made in fifth grade. There’s a blue rug on the floor, and blue curtains.

The bed-in which I’m lying on-is made up of pillows and blankets. Yeah, it’s a fort. Seriously?!?! Who doesn’t like forts?! Anyways, across the room from me was my desk. On my desk, was about three stacks of paper, each about a foot tall. And among those papers are; essays, papers, tests, homework, doodles, and other junk.

And then there’s the books. Everywhere. I have five bookshelves, each over flowing. Stacks in the corners of the room. Some under the bed, under the desk, in my closet, on the window sills, even on my cat’s bed.

I practically *own* a library.

I stand up, and pad my way over to my desk, tossing my book to the side of the room in the process. School finishes in about two days, the last being a freebie, so you can say bye to teachers and friends. And of course get your yearbook signed. Not that I had many friends. I always had my nose stuffed in a book so no one really ever wanted to hang out with me, only had Jacob.

Summer school starts in two week. It doesn’t stop for eight weeks. Then I have only a month before school starts again.

I tear through the papers on my desk, taking note that they go back to the first day of school. I pick up all the reading logs, only to find out, that I only turned in four out of twenty seven. And they were all completed.

I start to organize my desk. Apparently, over 75% wasn’t even started. And the stuff that was had to do with reading. As I shift it around more, I even find some pictures of me and Jacob in grade school, before my habit started. We were so happy back then…

***Ding Ding.***

I pick up my phone, to see a text message from Jacob. I click view, and my eyes scan over it.

*Hey Abi, we haven’t talked in forever. I was wondering if you wanted to meet me at the bookstore.*

It hit me. He was right. We haven’t talked in, what was is, three months? He had switched school, and is now currently at a private school. I guess he’s out of school already.

I stand, staring at the screen. Should I? It’s a risk, since I just got in trouble. But, then again, it’s Jacob. I can’t…

I reply once I make up my mind. As my fingers fly across the keypad, I hear my parents screaming at each other.

“SHE GOT A D HENRY! A D!” Mother screams.

“I KNOW MARGRET! SHE’S ONLY A FRESHMAN! YOU PRESSURE HER TOO MUCH!” Father replies.

I sigh. Father’s always been on my side. And he is right. Mother always expects me to grow up and mature quickly, and become a nurse or something. I want to be a writer though. UI can’t stand the sight of blood, so how am I supposed to be a nurse?

*Sorry bro, I got plans. I really wish we could. I got in trouble again anyways. I’m so sorry! ☹ Forgive me?*

I click send, and it goes back to my contacts page. Turning off my phone, I realize what I said. No. To books. To happiness. To my escape.

Being me is hard. Mother and Father are constantly fighting now, usually over me. My mom wants me to be someone I’m not. My dad tries to help me, but that leads to more fights.

It started happening about a year ago, when my brother, Rome, died. He was drunk driving, and he swerved off the road, and down a cliff. He and his best friend died. His girlfriend lived. Both of us had it hard. Rather than Jacob, he was the only person I was really close too.

*Forgive. Call me when you get the chance. :3 Talk to ya later.*

When I finish the text, I all most start crying. I walk over to my closet, opening it, and pulling up a loose floor board. Inside, was a blue backpack (if you haven’t guessed, I love the color blue). My runaway pack. Rome and I planned on running away when I was sixteen. And I am.

I pulled out the pack, and slung it over my shoulder. Inside, was a few extra pairs of clothes, some food and water, two books, my camera, and my journal. I look back at the hole in the floor, and start crying softly. It was a picture of my brother and me, when I was eleven, him fourteen. I was on his back, and he was trying to hit me with a water balloon. The tears pour from my cheeks, almost like a waterfall, and fall on the frame like rain droplets. I never put the picture there.

I pick it up, to see a gift under it. I cry more, and place both the present and picture in the pack. I stand, and walk over to the door, drying my soft, wet cheeks with my sweater sleeve. I open the door, and step out. I make my way down the hallway, and stop, at the doorframe leading downstairs.

I listen, and hear my mom softly crying. Guilt punches me in the gut. I keep walking down the stairs, and to the front door, hoping they think I’m just going out.

Right as I reach the door, a cold hand is placed on my shoulder. I feel the cold metal ring. Mother. I turn, and see she’s crying. Behind her, Father looks angry.

“Abigail please don’t le-“ Mother starts. Father stops her.

“Margret, stop it. You don’t need to make her stay. She’s sixteen for heaven’s sake!” He pulls her away from me. The face of sadness disappears. She looks almost as if she’s going to hit Father, but she storms away.

“I know what you’re doing.” He starts. I feel my eyes water. “Rome would’ve wanted it. I love you.” He hugs me. I cry into his shoulder. He hugs me, and as we pull apart, I see he’s crying.

“I love you too.”

I turn. And walk out the door. I sit on the lawn, and take out the gift from Rome. Rippiung the paper off, I find a small cardboard box, and a note.

*Dear Abigail,*

*I don’t know if I’ll make it. I’m sorry. Life is too hard. Mom makes it difficult to focus in school, with all the pressure. Same with Luke* [His best friend]*. But I know even if I’m gone you’ll run. So, I got this for you. Always remember me.*

*Love,*

*Rome <3*

By now, my face is stained with tears. I toss the note back into my bag, and open the box, cutting my pinky.

Sucking on my pinky, I take out the small velvet bag. Turning it over, I drop out the thing inside. As it hits the ground, I hear the sound of a chain. Picking it up, more tears flow.

It’s a charm bracelet. It had five different charms. An Eiffel Tower, Big Ben, a pyramid, the Coliseum, and the Statue of Liberty. All the places we wanted to go when we ran.

I held it in my fists, and pulled it to my lips, placing a kiss on it before sobbing. I probably sat there for ten minutes, before the door opened.

“ABIGAIL DON’T YOU DARE!” Mother steps out, I whip my heads in her direction, and stand up grabbing my bag and stuff everything in. “Don’t you dare.” She looked ready to murder someone. She’s never looked like this.

I start walking backwards. I trip over a twig, and fall to my butt. She lunges in my direction. I push myself up, as she grabs my ankle. I scream as I go down. She slaps me.

“LET GO!!!” I scream. She grips tighter. And she laughs.

“No! You’re staying here! With me and daddy. We’ll take good care of you Abigail. Just don’t go.” She says sternly. She starts crying. I yank myself from her grip, just as Father runs out the door, and picks her up.

“NO ABIGAIL DON’T LEAVE ME!!!” She’s sobbing. I look to Father. He nods. I turn.

And run.