

PRWC 2- "Tolerance"

*"She wants to go home
But nobody's home
That's where she lies
Broken inside
No place to go
No place to go
To dry her eyes
Broken inside"*
~ "Nobody's Home" Avril Lavigne

"Bed check." I said walking into one of the girls' rooms. Everyone was in their beds. "Ok, lights out. Goodnight girls." I said.

"Night Harley." Tiffany said.

"Yeah, goodnight." April said.

"Night." The rest of the girls chorused as I turned out the light.

That was the last room so I went up to my room. My roommate, Julia, was already back from her checks. We each had two rooms to check on. I went and sat on my bed. I tried to ignore Julia. She wasn't my favorite person in the world.

"So, how goes the work with the newest Wildcat?" she asked me.

I sighed, "Derek? Um, well...it goes."

"He seems normal enough...typical jock guy." She said.

"It's a cover."

"Duh it's a cover. If it wasn't he wouldn't be here."

"Well excuse me for pointing out the obvious." I said sarcastically.

"You're excused."

"Just leave me alone." I said.

"What's wrong Airy?" Julia asked using my nickname. She started calling me

"Airy" because she said I reminded her of Ariel, the princess in "The Little Mermaid".

"Nothing JuJu." I said using her nickname. I chose that name for her because she reminded me of that alien, Jar JarBinks, in Star Wars.

"You're snappy tonight even for you." Julia replied.

"I just don't feel like answering 20 questions." I said as I braided my hair and lay down.

"I wasn't asking 20 questions. I was just trying to make conversation."

"Whatever."

"You know you have major issues."

"I do not!"

"You do too. See I think you still have trust issues stemming back to when you found out you had two dads."

"Oh god, I can't believe I'm hearing this. You're one to talk. You're the one who tried to take out your dad with a baseball bat."

"Yeah, and I ended up at New Starts to deal with that. You didn't get any professional help."

"You think you know everything about me don't you? What if I told you I did get professional help? Would that shock you? I bet so because you think you know it all."

"You had professional help? Yeah right. Just for dealing with your Dads?"

"For your information I tried to fuc...I tried to kill myself and I almost succeeded. I ended up in counseling after that. Guess you didn't know it all after all did you? I'm out of here." I said getting up and leaving the room leaving a very shocked Julia behind.

I walked to the lake that was on site and sat down and looked out at it. I was really missing Jay. I didn't even know if we were still together. We had barely talked in months. I missed Mel too. She was my best friend and I missed running to her house. I missed all my friends. We had finally gotten close again now we were all spread out at different colleges. I even missed Aaron. Now that was weird to admit.

I was snapped out of my thoughts by foot steps. I turned around and saw Josh.

"What are you doing here?" I asked.

"I could ask the same of you." Josh said sitting next to me

"I needed to think."

"Me too."

"What did you need to think about?"

"Stuff."

"Yeah, me too." I said.

"Shouldn't you be in the dorm?"

"Nah. I'm a free agent. I'm not a student here. My parents wouldn't care."

"What does your mom have against my dad?"

"I don't know. I think they have this rivalry thing that goes way back."

"She needs to let it go."

"I know. My mom doesn't let go of anything easily though. That's just how she is."

"So why do you look so sad?" Josh asked.

"I'm just missing my friends."

"I'm your friend."

"You're all I have here."

"What about Julia?"

"JuJu? As if. She's anything but a friend. She's a major annoyance."

"She isn't that bad."

"You don't have to live with her."

"True."

"So what's new?" I asked for lack of anything better to say.

"My Uncle Eric is coming in next week with my cousin to check out Reefsides U."

"Cool. Is Eric moving back to Reefsides?"

"I don't know. Maybe."

"That's cool." I said.

"So what's up with the Britney look?" Josh asked as he messed with my pigtail braids.

"Something different."

"It looks good on you." He said.

"Thanks." I said smiling.

“You’re welcome.” He said as he leaned towards me. I swear he was about to kiss me when we heard someone clear their throat. I turned around and saw Julia.

“So how come no one invited me to the party?” Julia asked as she sat on the other side of Josh.

“Because it’s a private party. No alien life forms allowed.” I said.

“Then what are you doing here?” Julia asked.

I was about to attack. Since I found out about the whole Sataurian thing I was a bit defensive about being called an alien. I then reminded myself that Julia knew nothing about that so I just calmed down. “Whatever.” I mumbled.

“Oh great comeback Airy.”

“Stuff it JuJu.”

“Girls, girls...do I need to separate you?” Josh teased in his best teacher voice.

“No sir.” We said mockingly said in unison. We all cracked up laughing.

“Hey, Ai...Harley, I’m sorry.” Julia said.

I nodded. “It’s ok.”

“Did I miss something?” Josh asked.

“Nothing important.” I said.

“You girls should get back to the dorm. Both dorm monitors shouldn’t be gone.” Josh said.

“He’s right.” I said.

“Ok, let’s go back.” Julia said.

“Goodnight Josh. Thanks for the talk.” I said hugging him.

“Goodnight Har. Night Jules.”

“Night Josh.” Julia said as we headed for the dorm and Josh headed for his car to go to his home. He lived with his parents still.

“So how long have you had a thing for Josh?” Julia asked

“What?!” I cried.

“You know you do.”

“I do not!”

“Oh you so do!”

“He’s just a friend!” I cried.

“A friend with benefits?”

“Oh shut up JuJu!”

“Whatever you say Airy.” Julia said as we got back into the room.

I sighed as I got in bed. I thought back to the moment before Julia got there. Josh was so going to kiss me. And I planned on letting him. Why? What did I feel for him? Was Julia right? Did I have a thing for Josh? Of course not! I still loved Jay. Right? ‘Ugh! Forget it! I’m going to sleep!’ I thought to myself as I pulled the blanket over my head and went to sleep.

The next morning I was up at 6:30 to get ready so that I could get the students up at 7 sharp then get myself to class on time.

“Ok! Everyone up!” I said at 7 to the girls in room B. Then I went to room D and did the same.

“God, this is unfair. Can’t we sleep in just once?” April moaned.
“Sorry Ape. No can do. Up, now.” I said leaving the girls to get ready. I ran downstairs and grabbed a bagel. I saw my dad in the kitchen.
“Morning Har.” He said.
“Morning Dad. Gotta run.”
“Have a good day. See you this afternoon.” He said.
“Ok, see ya.” I said kissing his cheek as I ran out the door. I got in my car and drove to Reefside U.

Hunter

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After Harley left I got ready for the day. I would be coaching since Michelle still refused to let me hire Conner. I didn’t see her problem with it. He was qualified and willing but she was being insistent that it was a bad idea. I had to find some way to convince her otherwise because I couldn’t handle coaching, on top of everything else, for long.

I had decided that flag football would be something fun for the kids to do. I pulled out the flags and the footballs and the goal cones then went in to see to it that everyone was eating breakfast. I walked over to the Wildcats’ table.  
“Good morning Wildcats.” I said.  
“Morning Hunter.” They chorused.  
“Tiffany, what did you eat this morning?” I asked.  
“A bowl of oatmeal and 2 slices of buttered toast.” She replied.  
“She did, we saw her.” Jesse added.  
“OK, very good. Derek, how are you adjusting to Starlight?” I asked.  
“Eh, it’s alright.” He said.  
“Well, good. I look forward to talking to you more...for now I have to go get ready for football.” I said.  
“Oh yeah, you’re the new coach right?” April asked.  
“No, only temp.” I said.  
“Yeah, until Michelle hires someone else.” Jesse said.  
“In other words it’s like I said, you’re the new coach.” April laughed.  
“Ha, ha. Watch it or I’ll make you run laps.” I said rolling my eyes as I went to get ready for the first class.

A couple of hours later I had the Wildcats and Cardinals.  
“Ok guys, let’s get going. Wildcats, blue flags, Cardinals, red flags. I want a clean game, let’s go.” I said blowing the whistle. The kids got their flags on and the game started. April threw the ball to Chris who started to run it until he got flagged.  
“First down, Wildcats.” I said as Chris got his flag and the game continued. Chris threw the ball to Tiffany who ran away at the sight of a ball coming at her. April jumped in and caught it.  
“I knew Princess wouldn’t try to catch it.” April said as she ran down the field. She tried to pass it to Derek but it was intercepted by the Cardinals and they started the other way. Derek came running up from behind and tackled the guy and started beating the crap out of him. I ran over and pulled Derek off him.  
“Derek, this is flag football, not tackle.” I said.

"He cheated!" Derek screamed.

"No he didn't." April said.

"All of you go to the lodge and wait there until I get back. Derek, my office now." I said walking Derek to the office. Michelle wasn't in there, which meant 1) she was with Felicity and 2) we REALLY needed a new coach ASAP.

I sat Derek down. "Ok, I want to know what your deal is. Why did you tackle Kevin back there?" I asked.

"Felt like it." Derek said.

"Felt like it' doesn't fly here Derek. We're a non-violent school, which is why we play flag ball. Now, I can't force you to tell me what's wrong but I would like it if you would." I said.

"I have no deal. My parents didn't want me and here I am. Good enough for you?"

"No, it's not. I don't buy that for a minute but I won't push you. I will tell you that you're on lunch duty today. Maybe washing dishes will get out some of that energy you had on the field." I said.

"Whatever." Derek said storming out of the office.

I sighed, this was going to be a hard one.

Harley

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"I wish I knew what my mom's deal was. She won't even entertain the idea of hiring your dad." I said to Josh as we sat around in between classes.

"My mom is mad that he even applied. Your mom and my parents have some past issues or something obviously...I just wish I knew what." Josh said.

"Maybe we should sit them all in group and make them talk it out." I joked.

"Ha, ha. So how's the new Wild Cat?" Josh asked.

"Derek? Getting him settled is a long process. He hasn't let his front down yet." I said.

"He will...give him time."

"I know...I know." I said.

"So what's your next class?"

"History at 1:00." I said. Josh and I were taking our lunch break together.

"Cool. Hey you gonna come to Cyberspace tonight?" Josh asked.

"Um, well...if I can. With Dad pulling coaching duty they've needed me to do extra work." I said.

"Oh come on, Anna's band is playing...I'm sure they'll let you come." Josh said.

I sighed, "I'll try, I promise I'll try."

"Ok. Fair enough...you should head to class, you'll be late."

"Ugh, do I have to go?"

"Yes you do. What kind of example will that be for the Wild Cats if you skip class?"

"I won't tell them."

"Skipping class and lying? Good role modeling Har."

"OK, ok...I'm going...see ya." I said hugging Josh.

"See ya." He said. I turned and headed to class.

Hunter

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“Michelle, this can’t keep up. Come on, Conner is an excellent coach with years of experience. We’re lucky someone like him applied.” I said.

“No. I said no and I meant it.”

“Why? Give me one good reason, just one, and I’ll drop it.”

“Because I said so! I don’t like Conner, I don’t want Conner around, and I don’t want to deal with him on a daily basis again.”

“Those are childish reasons. Here’s the deal Mich, I own half this school and so I get some say in what goes on here. If we don’t get a new coach in 24 hours I’m hiring Conner with or without your consent.”

“You wouldn’t...” she said

“Oh yes I would.” I said.

“Hunter! No!”

“Yes. We need a coach and Conner is good. Like I said, you have 24 hours to find someone else. End of discussion.” I said.

“Mommy...” Felicity said toddling in.

“Hey Liss.” Michelle said picking her up.

“Hungry.” Felicity said.

“Can you take her for lunch? I have paperwork to do.” Michelle said.

“Sorry, can’t. I have a class to coach. If there was someone else to do it I’d be happy to.” I said leaving the office. I couldn’t believe Michelle was being so childish about this. I mean I didn’t like Conner exactly but the fact was he’d be a great addition to the school. I made it to the field.

“Hey Wildcats.” I said.

“Hey Hunter.” Tiffany said brightly.

“Did you eat lunch?” I asked.

“Yes sir.” She said.

“Witnesses?” I asked.

“I saw her.” Jesse said.

“Yeah, she didn’t even go barf afterwards.” April said.

I sighed at April’s comment. “Good to hear. You’re improving everyday Tiff.”

“Unlike some of us.” April said looking at Chris.

“Don’t start with me.” Chris said.

“Oh, you got something to say to me homeboy? You think you’re so badass? I bet I’d take you easy if we were on the streets.” April said.

“A chick? Take me out? Sorry chicka, ain’t how that works.” Chris said.

“Enough you two. Where are the Windchasers? We need to start.” I said.

“I don’t think they’ll be coming.” April said smirking.

“What did you do?” I asked.

“Me? Nothing at all.” April replied.

“It’s that tone that worries me. Stay put, all of you. I’ll be back.” I said taking off to find the Windchasers. When I found them they were cleaning their dorms.

Someone had flooded them, and I had a pretty good idea who. I told them to go ahead and skip class so they could clean it up then I went back to the Wildcats.

“Ok, someone used the garden hose to flood the Windchasers’ dorms, I want to know who and I want to know now.” I said.

“Wasn’t me.” Chris said.

“I didn’t think so, but I have a pretty good idea who it was...April?”

“Yes. It was me, ok?” April replied.

“Not ok. April, you’re on room restriction for 2 days.” I said.

“Like I care!” April cried as she ran for her dorm.

April

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I ran to my room and sat on my bed. I hated this school so much. I hated everything about it. I hated the perfect Bradley family...

Ok, not totally true...I was jealous of the Bradleys and I...ok, maybe I kinda liked it here...it was better than the streets anyway, and going home wasn’t an option. So why did I flood the Windchasers’ room? I guess I wanted to get a rise out of Hunter. Everyone is always so peaceful. It’s enough to drive a girl mad.

I looked around the room. Most of the girls had pictures of their families by their beds. Tiffany had a photo of her and her parents. I didn’t. I didn’t even have a father. Hell, I didn’t even know who my father was. For that matter I may as well not have a mother...she doesn’t even deserve that title...she’s such a mess...more than I ever could be. I’ve never had a ‘home’ before. Even when Tiffany was going through her worst times she could go home. I couldn’t. When I wanted to go home I had no where to go. Sure I had a house...more of a shack really...but it wasn’t home. It was the place he abused me...I couldn’t even sleep because I knew at any moment I might here the creaking of the door, warning me that he was coming. I guess Starlight really was the closest thing I ever had to a home...

Anyway, after sitting on my bed for awhile Michelle walked in.

“Hey April...what’s the matter? Hunter told me you pulled a little prank on the Windchasers.” She said.

“Yeah.”

“Why?”

“Felt like it. Is that so hard to get?” I replied. Seriously, was that a hard concept to grasp?

“You know ‘felt like it’ doesn’t fly here. Come on...why did you do it?”

I sighed, I broke so easily these days. I’d have to work on keeping my guard up, “I wanted a rise out of someone. Happy?”

“Why did you want a rise out of someone?”

“Ugh god! What is this? 20 question? It’s the quiet...the peace...it’s getting to me! You guys are always so calm, even when we lose it. I wanted to get a rise out of someone!”

“Is peace such a bad thing?”

“It’s a foreign thing”

“Maybe you should get used to it.”

“Why? So it can be taken the second I leave here? Thanks, but no thanks.”

“It doesn’t have to be that way.”

“As long as you can’t pick your mother, it does.”

“April, I know you’re angry but you’re getting closer and closer to being an adult and then you can live your life however you choose.”

“Sure...just like that.”

“I can see I’m not getting anywhere right now. I’ll be back later, for now you can work on cleaning up this dorm.” Michelle said walking out.