

Cernori

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1 The Beginning of the End

It was 7:55 on a Monday morning. Emily was getting ready for school without knowing what the new school year had in store for her. “I’m so excited to meet all my friends again! I mean, sure, my vacation in Thessaloniki was nice, but 3 weeks without Auriele and the others was a pain!” Emily spoke to herself while getting ready all the while a bright smile on her face. “Okay so, you are probably wondering who I am and stuff. Well, I am Emily Claire, a 7th grader who loves traveling around the world. As you can see here, I’m just getting ready for school,” Emily grabs her backpack. Emily goes outside and waits for the bus. “I live in Belgium—Brussels to be exact.” The school

bus arrives and Emily goes inside, eagerly walking down the aisle to meet the friends she has been waiting all summer to see.

“Hey Em!” Her best friend, Auriele shouted with a smile on her face.

“Hey there, Auri!” Emily echoes and takes a seat next to her. This is Auriele, my best friend from since I can remember. I admit, she’s a rich girl and can be a snob sometimes, but she’s still a good person. That’s what makes her my best friend.

“Sooo? Did you meet any cute guys on your trip to Thesalok..uh... whatever you call it?” Auriele asked.

“It’s Thessaloniki,” Emily answered. “And ... no, actually. Besides, you know why I don't want to be looking at other guys.” Because my heart only beats for one

boy in my school. His name is Luca Temmeling. Emily stares at Luca with big eyes. He's a dream!

"Please don't tell me you still have a crush on that guy from Biology." Auriele said with a look of disgust on her face.

"His name is Luca! And, no, of course I'm not crushing on him anymore. I've grown out of it," Emily said with a matter-of-fact tone. "For now, at least." Emily mumbled to herself. "Besides, he's more of a friend." Emily responded hastily.

A girl with short brown hair and a sports jersey enters the bus and sits next to Auriele and Emily. "Mhm, yeah, try not to crush on him too hard this year. We need some girl time." she started plastering. This is Debbie—she's a really sporty girl despite

her curves that every girl in the school would want. She also loves trying on makeup, Auri and I should know.’

Emily thinks back to the time when the three were at a makeup retailer. *“Mmh.. I love this shade of purple!” Debbie said after trying on one of the tester products. “Wait! This one is even better!” She yells with people starting to stare at them.*

“Girls, please buy something or leave...” The assistant says with an annoyed face.

Emily snaps out of her flashback and returns to reality with her friends on the bus.

“Whatcha girls been up to this summer?” Debbie asks.

“I went to Germany with my mom and we were right beside a beach, those German guys are pretty cute.” Auriele answered, slightly blushing.

“I went to Paris, the city of love, and all that jazz, yadda yadda blah blah blah.” Debbie said with a face mixed of annoyance and disgust.

A girl with blonde curly hair, a hoodie and sneakers walks onto the bus. “Hey people...” she quietly says. She gives a small smile when she looks at her friends. That’s Charlotte, a cute and shy nerd. The quiet one of our group. We’ve been friends since Kindergarten. Nothing much else to say about her.

“Have you guys finished your summer homework yet?” Charlotte asks.

“I haven’t even gotten the book yet.”

Emily snickers.

“But, you’ll fail!” Charlotte answers, shocked and slightly worried for her friend's fate.

“It’s not that much of the grade, I’ll do fine.” Emily answered with confidence even when she knows her grades aren’t the best.

“Maybe you’d actually be doing good if you, you know, stare less at that guy in the front.” Charlotte teases, giggling after. Auriele and Debbie join Charlotte in giggling, meanwhile Emily blushes and says, “Oh my god! I don’t even stare at him often.” Emily starts to hide in her hoodie.

“But, you admit you stare at him.” Auriele smirks. A girl with long black hair, a

choker, some very worn out trainers and a shirt that says *Yes, because I'm nice*. enters the bus.

“Oh my gosh, hi!!!” Emily says, excited.

“Hey girls, hope you didn't have too much fun without me this summer!” She says while giving off a sassy tone. ‘That’s Lydie, a funny and clingy girl. She can sometimes get too close to me, but I don’t mind. She’s really loyal and can keep secrets. Obsessed with fashion and loves Informatics. *Very* sarcastic.’ Emily narrates. Another girl with a short skirt and a very revealing crop-top, blonde dyed hair, and pierced nose runs into the bus.

“Ugh!!! I told you to wait for me, Lydie!!!” The girl said while looking annoyed.

“You said the same thing when you were going to “meet hot guys” without me.” Lydie says arrogantly.

“Good luck with that. I’m staying out of this.” Charlotte sighs, putting earbuds in and resting her head against the bus window. ‘That would be Joline. Boy obsessed and owner of the title of “hottest girl in school.” She’s nice, once you get to know her.’ Emily explains.

“So, Emily.” Joline says with a very seductive tone.

“Hm?” Emily squeaks.