

**Diary of an Almost Cool Girl**

**Meet Maddi – Oops!**

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**Smashwords Edition**

Hi Almost Cool Girls and Boys,

Some of you might have read Diary of an Almost Cool Girl- My New School.

In this book, you get to meet a slightly younger and less wise Maddi and find out what happened at her old school (before she was asked to leave).

Hope you enjoy it!

Almost Cool Kids Rock!

## Where it all began...

The shrill sound of sirens vibrated the frame of the window I'm looking through. Up here on the second level of my school, I have a good view of the science block. Although the smoke haze is still lazily drifting from the windows that were smashed so the firemen could put their hoses in. Within a minute, they called out that the fire was under control.



I personally think the second fire unit and the two ambulances were a bit over the top. Nobody got hurt and the fire was only in the waste paper basket.

I've been sitting in the Principal's office now for about 15 minutes, waiting for my mom to arrive so that the Principal can inform her about, "How Madonna Bull tried to burn the school down."

They are his words – not mine.

How did I end up in the Principal's office, you ask. Well let me explain, it's all in my diary.

## Monday

Hi everyone, welcome to my diary. Some people write their diaries as private memories for themselves, me...I'm different, I like to write it for an audience. My name is Madonna Bull, most people call me Maddi.

Some kids call me Mad or even Mad Bull, but I just ignore those types of kids. I'm not one of the "cool" kids and I'm not none of the "brainy" kids...I'm just a normal girl. Sometimes I like to think of myself as an "almost cool girl". Not in the "cool" group, but I'm not a nerd either.

I'm 12, well nearly 12. Okay, I'm 11 years, six months and 3 days to be exact.

I must confess, I have a bad habit. I like to give people nicknames, but don't panic, I don't call anyone by their nicknames, I just use them in my diary. So I guess only you and me know about them.

For example, my mom is an alternative hippy type mom, carefree and always looking on the bright side of things. Like when I dropped two dinner plates and they both broke, Mom just comes out with, "That's okay, Madonna, it just means less washing up to do." And that is why her nickname is Mrs. Absolutely Positive. She is positive and enthusiastic about EVERYTHING! Mom also loves exercise,

yoga and healthy food. She is really into those yucky green drinks with vegetables in them...gross!



Dad is big with a loud booming voice, so his nickname is Mr. Boom Boom. I wonder what my nickname for you would be if I knew you.

I blame my parents for the “nickname” thing. They give everyone in our neighborhood a nickname. Sometimes it is a bit embarrassing because we don’t remember their real names. Labrador man (yes he

walks a Labrador dog) and Bob (not his real name, but he is a builder – like in Bob the Builder) all live close by. So using nicknames is a family tradition that I have inherited.

My parents have given me some shocking nicknames. The first one was Poo Shooter because of my ability to shoot explosive poos across the room...when I was a baby.

When I got a bit older, around 6, they called me Princess Grotty Snotty, due to an unfortunate incident when I was wearing my best princess costume. I had a cold and my nose was full of thick goeey green snot.

Mom had taken me to the shopping center to go to the doctors and on the way out was taking a short cut through the food court. That's where it all went terribly wrong. Halfway through the eating area, a dear old granny type lady said to my mom, "What a beautiful princess you have there," – that's me of course. Granny lady stops eating her lovely looking cake and starts telling me how pretty I look. You know how, when you have a cold, you have no control over when your body decides to sneeze...well my body decided to sneeze just as she finished those kind words and smiled at me. Not just any sneeze, but perhaps the biggest and greatest sneeze in the history of mankind!!!!!!

That stopped granny lady in her tracks. She looked down at her yummy cake and it is covered in two rivers of snot. She claps her hands across her mouth. Making retching sounds she races from her table towards the toilets. Meanwhile, mom grabs my hand and drags me off to the car. Being Mrs. Absolutely Positive she says, "It's

okay, Maddi, better out than in. And besides, that cake was so unhealthy, she would have been much better off eating some nice fresh fruit.” Did I mention that Mom is really into healthy food?

And that is how I collected the lovely nickname of Princess Grotty Snotty.



Anyway, enough diary for today. I need to do my homework and so probably do you.

## Tuesday

My best friend Shelby and I walked to school this morning. We have been friends for a long time now, since about halfway through last year. I'm pretty quiet and try to avoid being the center of attention while Shelby is the opposite. She is loud and outgoing and loves being in the spotlight. Mom says we get along so well because we balance each other out. She said something about yin and yang, but I have no idea what she is talking about.

Today when we were in Music class we were sitting together as always. Mr. Canary (not his real name, just a great nickname, loves to sing his instructions to us), asked us to sit on the floor in a circle. Mr. Canary clapped out a rhythmic pattern and we each in turn had to copy his pattern. Of course the pattern changed for each student. Music is not my strong point, even when trying to clap the beat to a song, I'm likely to miss my own hands altogether. Obviously I'm not the only one feeling the pressure...as everyone is absolutely quiet as we await our turns.

There is a pause after each time Mr. Canary demonstrates a clapping pattern and in those few seconds you could hear a pin drop. It's nearly our turn, I can see Shelby is nervous as she keeps fidgeting. I'm so glad she is before me as it gives me a little more time. If you get the clapping pattern correct, Mr. Canary gives you a treat. So as well as not wanting to embarrass myself, I also really want a treat!



Mr. Canary claps out the rhythm for the girl sitting next to Shelby and the silence before the girl starts her turn seems absolute. Until an eardrum bursting fart noise rips across the room. I can even feel the vibration on the wooden floor and instantly realize that Shelby is the source of the noise. Poor Shelby! I feel embarrassed for her, so I try to think of something to say to ease her embarrassment.

No need – Shelby’s next comment solves the problem. “Oh Maddi, that smells terrible!”

“I’m sorry Sir, Maddi has been suffering diarrhea, I’ll just take her to the toilet and make sure she is okay.” Then Shelby rustles me out of the classroom door as the laughter from the rest of the class drowns out my protests of innocence.

Once outside Shelby breaks into hysterical laughter, humiliating me even more.



But in the end I just give up and join in the laughter. Eventually Shelby says, “Well, Maddi, I may have ruined your image, but at least I got us out of clapping those stupid patterns.”

## Thursday

Despite the odd embarrassing moment, I'm lucky to have a good friend like Shelby. Having friends is especially important when you have a Bethany Barker in your class. Bethany is the mean girl of our school, some kids love sport, some love achieving A's, some love the arts, but Bethany just loves being mean. That's right folks, a genuine bully in my class.

Generally I don't have too much trouble with her. Shelby and I are nearly always together and Shelby is simply too loud to pick on. I've already told Bethany – whom I secretly call MG (short for mean girl) that I don't really care about her opinion.

One day MG must have been low on her quota of kids to pick on, when she came across Shelby and I in the playground. MG started making negative and nasty comments about my appearance. Like all bullies, MG always seemed to have a little band of followers. Sarah and Sue (who must be very desperate for friends to hand out with MG) were with MG. As usual, MG would make the nasty remarks and her followers, Sarah and Sue, would laugh at her “amazing” wit.

Mom always taught me the best way to deal with bullies is to ignore them or stand-up to them. I decided to try a bit of both. First I just totally ignored MG's nasty comments and I kept talking to Shelby.

After about 5 minutes of ignoring MG's little rant, I saw Shelby's face begin to show her anger at her friend being insulted. I put my hand softly on her shoulder and said, "It's okay, I'll handle this."

I turned to MG and calmly said, "Thanks Bethany, I'm always ready to accept constructive criticism about my appearance from intelligent, fashionable and thoughtful people like yourself."

Bethany looked confused.

Then I continued in a calm and confident voice, "But hang on, I just realized, you're definitely not intelligent, nor thoughtful and perhaps not even fashionable, so I really couldn't care less about your opinion."

Shelby burst into laughter, even one of MG's cronies had a little chuckle.



I led Shelby away as MG growled at her friends for laughing.

## Friday

Today during the lunch break, MG was picking on Caroline. Caroline is only new to my school and tends to keep to herself. At first we didn't realize what was happening, but as soon as we did, Shelby and I sat on either side of her.

"Bye Bethany," says Shelby in her best "I'm not scared of you" tone of voice. Ever since our last run in with Bethany, she has avoided us – which we love! Bethany shrugs her shoulders, pokes her tongue out and stomps off in a huff.

That's when we see the tears in Caroline's eyes. She reveals to us that MG has been bullying her almost every day since she arrived at our school. MG has been quietly calling her names in class. So quiet that the teacher and other kids can't hear. And she has been pushing her books off the table as she walks past Caroline's desk.

We tell Caroline that she should tell the teacher what is happening, but apparently MG told Caroline that the teachers at our school hate kids who tell on other kids and that the teachers will only tell her to "just deal with it".

Shelby and I are horrified, I explain to Caroline that bullies often make up stories like this to stop their victims from getting help. "Our teachers are great! If you tell them about Bethany, they'll do their best to stop her," I explained.

## **Monday**

In the morning, Caroline told us that she had taken our advice and spoken to her favorite teacher, Miss Jenkins. At about 9:30 the principal came into the classroom and took Caroline away for about an hour.

Then when he returned with Caroline, he took MG away with him. She walked back into the classroom about 40 minutes later. MG's shoulders were slumped as she quietly returned to her seat. It looked like she had been crying.

At first break, MG kept well away from Caroline. She sat and ate her apple and didn't strut around looking for victims, like she does every other break.

Caroline told us that the principal (I call him Mr. Sausage Nose – he has a really long nose) wanted to know everything that MG had done. She said he was great and he assured her that he would speak to Bethany and that Caroline should come directly to him if she bothered her anymore. Caroline was so happy and couldn't stop thanking us for giving her the courage to speak up. Hi-5's all around.

Bullies 0 – Almost Cool Girls 1!

## Tuesday

Mathematics today was so boring! Mr. Wettan or as I like to call him, Mr. Facebook...was at his worst. Unfortunately I have him for both Math and Science, so he is double trouble and doubly bad!

Mr. Facebook (can you guess why?) is only a young teacher. He always has his phone on his desk with Facebook open.



Today he started out with a lesson on fractions and this lesson was starting to look interesting, when his phone made a quiet ding sound. You know the type of noise that lets you know when someone has posted something on your wall. Mid-sentence, Mr. Facebook stops talking and rushes over to his phone. He has a quiet chuckle to himself and suddenly realizes the whole class is sitting there watching him.

He quickly brings up a Math video on the data projector and instructs us to watch it. Then he sits at his desk and taps out messages on his phone for the rest of the lesson.

The video was really boring! The best part was when the principal walked in. Mr. Facebook jumped out of his chair like a startled rabbit! That phone disappeared so fast into his pocket that he may have set a new “hide the phone, speed record”.

I think the principal may have seen it. They had a short conversation and although I couldn't make out the words, the tone of voice from the principal didn't sound very happy. When the principal left, the phone stayed in Mr. Facebook's pocket. It was funny because every couple of minutes we could see it vibrating.

## Wednesday

The day I've been dreading has finally arrived. I did my best to avoid it! I tried to hide those notes in the bottom of my school bag. I deleted those online school newsletters as soon as I could from our home computer. I even tried to fake being too sick to go to school today, but all that got me was a big spoon of apple cider vinegar, yuck!!!! Seriously...do normal kids with normal parents have to gulp down that foul tasting vinegar? Uugghh! I'm sure that one day it will turn me into a full-blown zombie!



Sadly, all my best efforts have failed and today Mom is coming to school with me. She is volunteering in the school canteen for a day. Now I love my Mom...it's just when it comes to food she is VERY alternative. We eat enough salads to feed the vast grazing herds of Africa! Mom's idea of junk food is dipping your carrot stick into yoghurt. If it wasn't for Dad, I wouldn't even know about sugar or chocolate.

Our school canteen sells what they call a balanced menu. That means some healthy foods (by normal standards) and some less healthy foods – the really yummy stuff. So I'm a bit worried about

how Mom will cope having to serve up food that goes against her healthy food values.

Once at school, Mom puts on her school canteen apron and bids me goodbye, with a cheery, “Be the best you can be, Madonna.” That’s my Mom, Mrs. Absolutely Positive.

I should have realized something was wrong when I kept getting odd looks as some of my classmates arrived in our room, after putting in their canteen orders.

Lunchtime revealed the full extent of my problem when a group of about ten students approached me as I sat next to Shelby and we began eating our lunch. Tiny (my nickname for David Burrows – the class football hero – who was actually a giant!) stood in front of me. “Maddi, is that your mother in the canteen? The one who is ruining all our lunches!”

“Well,” I mumbled, “my mom is in the canteen, she is quite a good cook, I don’t think she would RUIN anyone’s lunch.”

Then the whole group started yelling out their complaints in a storm of jumbled words.



“She made me have brown bread!”

“My ham and salad roll had NO ham!”

“My hotdog had tofu instead of a sausage!”

“I ordered a bag of chips and I got carrot and celery sticks!”

“She scraped all the icing off my cake and said there was enough sugar in the cake!”

“And I wanted a chocolate milkshake and she gave me a green smoothie, gross!!!! It looked like snot!”

This required some quick thinking! I smiled, “Well the good news is that you are all looking a lot healthier and Mom is only working in the canteen once a week for the rest of the term.”

All the junk and fatty food fans started groaning and Shelby and I quickly made out escape towards the playground.

I didn't even bother discussing the canteen complaints with mom that night. I know what her response would be and I don't feel like a food lecture. Besides, I have to eat healthy food every day...it won't hurt them to have it once a week!

## Saturday

What a day! Mom had invited her friend Demi over for lunch. Demi is an artist and while Mom is a bit of a hippy, Demi is an extreme “free spirit” type of person. Her daughter’s name is Star and she is a year older than me. Star doesn’t go to school, she is home-schooled. Don’t get me wrong, I have nothing against home schooling, in fact I actually think home schooling would be great, but I think Star’s education would be very different to my school. Math would probably involve a visit to the local hippy store and adding up the prices of all the weirdo hats. History would probably be watching an old movie. And Science would be gazing at the stars when night falls. Actually, it sounds pretty good!

Anyway I discovered Demi and mom talking in the kitchen as they prepared lunch. Demi greeted me with a cheery, “Hi Maddi, wow, your aura is looking so bright and happy.” Then without touching me, she ran her hands around my body, “Your energy levels are magnificent, but I will have to talk to your mom about getting some crystal jewelry to protect you from bad energy.”

Mom could see that I’m feeling a bit uncomfortable with all this attention. She breaks in, “Maddi, Star is in your room, you should go and say hi.”

My mind races! Star is in my room. Who said she could go in there? My room is full of my private stuff. I race down to save my privacy.

TOO LATE!!!!

Star is laying on my bed reading my diary! She looks over the top of the book as I burst into my room. Before she even says, “Hi Maddi,” I rip my diary from her hands. She tries to snatch it back, “Come on Maddi, it was just getting interesting!”

Star is an imposing sight, tall for her age with her dyed jet black hair long on one side and almost shaved on the other side. She has multiple earrings and a fake tattoo on her arm (at least I think it is fake) and a stud in both of her eyebrows. I clutch my diary to my chest and screech, “How dare you read my diary, it’s private!”

“Not anymore,” she responds with a smirk. “Don’t worry Maddi, I’m not interested in your dull little school dramas, my life is much more interesting,” snarled Star.

At that moment Mom arrived, “Come on girls, we are going for lunch.” Good timing Mom, Star and I were about to have our own version of wrestle mania.

On the trip to lunch, Mom and Demi chatted constantly, while Star and I sat in the back seat – in total silence!

In the restaurant, things continued much the same, until in a moment of unexpected meanness, Star tips her glass of juice into my lap. I squeal as the cold liquid hits my thighs. Finally Mom and Demi stop

talking. They both grab some napkins and start to try and soak up the mess. The waiter comes over too and helps clean up the juice. He even replaces Star's drink.

Star keeps saying that she is sorry. I know she doesn't mean it. Mom says, "Don't worry dear, accidents happen." Star gives me her best fake smile and winks at me. I feel like tipping my juice over Star's head but show some restraint and decide to wait for a better chance for revenge.

The meals arrive, Star and I both have nachos with little side dishes of sour cream and chilli sauce. The chilli sauce is in a bottle that looks like a soda bottle. Star announces that she needs to go to the bathroom and I see my chance. As the waiter goes past I ask if I can I swap my chilli sauce for extra hot chilli sauce. I think he feels sorry for me and rushes off to change the sauce bottles. I quickly swap it with the bottle next to Star's plate.

Star returns and grabs the extra hot sauce bottle and dumps the whole lot over her nachos. She must be hungry, as she quickly scoffs two large mouthfuls of food into her mouth. Suddenly her eyes widen and she starts to cough. I guess that the extra hot chilli sauce is starting to take effect. While she is distracted I hand her the second bottle of chilli sauce, she thinks it is her soft drink and takes a large gulp. Her eyes bulge like some type of wild cartoon character and she explodes. A mouthful of sauce and nachos flies across the table. A bit hits Mom, but most of it splashes onto Demi. Needless to say, after that, lunch is over.

The ride home is pretty quiet, except for me munching my nachos and Star's occasional coughing and whimpering that her mouth is on fire. The waiter put my nachos in a take-away container and with a wink said, "Careful with that sauce."

Demi and Star head off in their car as soon as we got home. Mom gave me a stern look and asked if I had anything to do with what happened at lunch. I just smiled and replied, "I think those nachos had a dash of karma." Mom screwed up her face, trying to work out what I had meant. Then she shrugged her shoulders, gave me a kiss and went downstairs.

# Monday

D is for disaster!

D is also for devastated!

Today after school the worst thing ever happened. Mom called me into the kitchen, Dad was already sitting at the breakfast table. Dad's normal happy smiling face had disappeared, replaced by a very sad mask. A glance at Mom revealed that her expression closely matched Dad's.

A million things raced through my mind!

Had they discovered I changed a C in Math on my last report card into a B with skillful use of a fine black marker?

Could it be that zombies are real and we are the last humans left?

Or, was I adopted and today I was to be returned to my rightful parents...the King and Queen of some European country?

Wrong!!!!

Much worse!!!!!!

Mom and Dad haven't been getting along very well for the last few months and they have decided to separate for a while. There were tears all round, but Mom and Dad assured me they both still love me and we would still be a family, although Dad would be going away for a while.

I felt sad when Dad left that night, as did Mom. We cried on each other's shoulders. Dad had promised to contact us each day and Mom said she believed Dad would be back. She said it was the stress of his job causing him to be sad. True to his word, Dad calls or emails us every day and I just hope we'll all be back together one day.

I don't want to say...D is for divorce!

**2 Weeks Later...**

**Tuesday**

I haven't written in my diary for a while. I've been missing Dad and so has Mom, so I've spent more time keeping her company. For a while Mrs. Absolutely Positive lost her shine and sparkle, but we have both settled down now. Dad still contacts us every day and even though he isn't here, he is still part of my life.

The funniest thing happened at school today in Math. My History teacher's nickname is Mr. Oscar...because he is always super grumpy! He reminds me of Oscar the grouch from Sesame Street. He even has those big googly eyes behind his glasses, just like the Oscar puppet.



Anyway, in his normal grouchy way he made everyone shift their seats so we weren't sitting with our friends. I ended up sitting between Bethany Barker (MG – short for mean girl) and a boy called Justin Smithers. I haven't had a lot to do with Justin, but have heard some of the "less kind" boys call him "Dustbin" rather than Justin.

That unfortunate name goes back to last year in my English class. Our teacher was a very young and pretty lady who was always

beautifully dressed with perfect make-up and hair. So obviously I called her Miss Barbie!

Miss Barbie was quite a good teacher but was rather obsessed with neatness and cleanliness. Sometimes she would stop in the middle of a lesson to straighten the pencils and books on a kid's desk. She even had a bottle of hand sanitizer on her desk that she used every time after she touched our work books.

After lunch and playtimes she would spray an air freshener around the room. And she would always say the same thing, "We really don't want to be smelling all those sweaty bodies and foot odors all afternoon, do we children?"

Sometimes on particularly hot days she would tip some of her perfume onto a tissue and hold it up to her nose to protect her delicate senses from her foul-smelling students. So you get the picture...Miss Barbie is one delicate princess!



In her classroom the desks are always perfectly arranged in groups of six. One day as Miss Barbie moved around the room, I saw her nose begin to twitch and then her perfect face transformed into a grimace. With a puzzled look she slowly moved around the room, stopping at each desk and sniffing gently. “Does someone need to go to the bathroom?” she asks in her delicate sweet voice. She obviously thinks one of us has let off a smelly fart. Naturally nobody responded. Everyone put their heads down and focused on their work. Miss Barbie continued to sniff around the room.

“There is a really bad smell in here somewhere,” she announced loudly with her sweet voice turning shrill as her delicate senses are assaulted by the smell. This time a few kids responded that they can smell something bad too. Miss Barbie starts a more intensive sniffing campaign, moving from one group to another.

Finally she returned to the group next to mine. In that group are 3 girls and 3 boys, one of the boys is Justin Smithers. She calls each of the kids out to the front of the class, one at a time, for a whispered conversation. I manage to just hear the words, “Are you sure you don’t need to use the bathroom,” as she talks to each of the kids. Miss Barbie does another circuit of the room before returning to the same group.

This time she starts going around the group instructing each student to open their desk. Miss Barbie has a quick look and a big sniff and then moves onto the next desk. She’s found nothing so far and there are only two kids left, Justin and another boy.

Following Miss Barbie’s instructions, Justin opens his desk wide and Miss Barbie takes a big sniff. She recoils in horror and takes two steps back. Her perfect face is pinched up into a scowl. She holds her nose as she uses a ruler to poke around in Justin’s desk. With the tips of her fingers she lifts a plastic wrapped item from the desk, it oozes and drips and a disgusting stench floods the room.

Miss Barbie runs from the room, still clutching the stinking mess in her hand and making retching noises as she leaves. Five minutes later, Mr. Sausage Nose – the principal, walks in and announces he will be taking the class as Miss Barbie has gone home sick.

After class the kids are giving Justin a bit of a hard time for causing the stink. He explains that he hadn't finished his hot dog at lunchtime so he had hidden it in his desk, intending to eat it in class while the teacher wasn't looking.

It could not have stunk that bad...just from lunchtime. We saw that it was starting to decompose, turning to mush!



Justin's mouth opened wide, he went white, "Oh no, it wasn't my hot dog from today, it was a hamburger from about 3 months ago! I forgot about it."

Apparently Justin couldn't smell it because he had his nose broken twice playing football and the injury had totally destroyed his sense of smell. And that is unfortunately how Justin got to be called Dustbin by some of our nastier class members.

Anyway, here I sit between Justin and Mean Girl, as Mr. Oscar fires lightning fast questions around the room. I follow the standard "avoid being picked to answer questions" tactics, appearing to listen intently and making no eye contact with the teacher and nodding wisely when someone else answered correctly.

When suddenly Mean Girl jabs me in the ribs with her sharp and boney elbow. I give an involuntary "oomph" as I double over in pain and surprise. That's when I make my mistake, I panic and look up to see if Mr. Oscar has heard me. Bad mistake! Our eyes lock! EYE CONTACT! Oh no....

"Right Maddi, next question is yours," snaps Mr. Oscar. Panic overtakes me, my pulse is beating faster than a speeding bullet. Here comes the question, I hold my breath, trying to focus. "What is the bluzen dinky xyt24 62536477flmkjqu," he asks. At least that is what it sounded like to me.

My... "I don't know" response gets a swift reaction. "I'll see you at lunchtime for some extra work, Maddi."

I steal a glance at Mean Girl and she gives me a self-satisfied smirk while poking her tongue at me.



Justin asks for a loan of a blue coloring pencil and I hand it over with a smile. As I work on my assignment, I notice that Justin is using my pencil for NON-coloring purposes. First he uses the non-sharpened end to give both his ears a good clean out, then he does a bit of exploration of his right nostril. It's hard to be sure but I think I see a little green thing on the end of my pencil.

Justin returns my pencil with a “thanks”.

I reply, “Pop it on my desk.” After a while I ‘accidentally’ knock the pencil off my desk onto the floor. I don’t want to hurt Justin’s feelings, but there is NO WAY that I am going to put my fingers on that germ-covered pencil ever again! The cleaners can have that one,

they wear gloves when they pick up stuff from the classroom floor, so I know they won't catch anything.

Mean Girl must have seen me drop the pencil off my desk because she suddenly swoops down and picks it up. Why at this precise moment in world history does Mean Girl decide to be nice to me? I'm wracking my brain to think of reasons why I don't want the pencil back...without revealing the truth. If she knew why I didn't want the pencil back, she might use that information to tease Justin.

No need to worry! Mean Girl waggles the pencil at me and sneers, "Was this yours? Well not anymore, this is my favorite color."

As well as being a bully and a generally unlikeable person...Mean Girl has another off-putting habit. She chews on things – her fingers, her ruler, the ends of her hair and today she has something else to chew on...the end of my pencil.

GROSS! She has a good chew and I can't help but snigger. She hears me and turns and sticks even more of my pencil into her mouth to chew on. I laugh even more. A confused look shows on Mean Girl's face, me laughing was not the reaction she expected.

I decide not to tell her why I am laughing, not today...maybe another time when she is being a bully. It's so funny that I even manage to get through my lunchtime detention with a smile on my face.

## Thursday

Science is looking interesting today. Mr. Facebook is taking our lesson in the actual science lab! There are beakers and test tubes and Bunsen burners and bottles of chemicals labeled with A, B, C and D on each of the tables.

Naturally Shelby and I grab a table together. Our table is at the far back corner of the room near a window. Unfortunately, it is a bit hard to hear Mr. Facebook from our table as he is demonstrating what to do from the front of the room.

Mr. Facebook is on fire (well not really on fire) and teaching a great lesson. He has us mixing chemicals and stuff and creating all kinds of exciting reactions like clouds of colored steam and popping bubbles bursting out of beakers.

The whole class is really involved and having fun. To be honest, we are all being a bit too noisy because the activities are so exciting.

Mr. Facebook announces that our last activity can be a little dangerous and to listen and watch carefully. He starts giving instructions on how to measure out quantities of different chemicals.

In our far corner, Shelby and I are struggling to hear his instructions. When he measured chemical C...we couldn't tell if he said 15mls or

50mls. So I went to the front to ask him. Just as I got there, he pulled out his phone, obviously he had heard a Facebook notification. "Excuse me," I asked politely, "did you say 15 or 50?" His attention is firmly fixed on his phone now and he answers, "Yes" to my question. Even I know that "yes" isn't the right answer. I repeat the question.

Mr. Facebook is now typing away on his phone and if possible... giving me even less attention. "50!" he snarls, followed by, "get back to your table and do your experiment."

I go back to the table and tell Shelby he said 50. She looks doubtful but what can we do? We start to combine our chemicals into the one large beaker. First chemical A and then chemical B. We hesitate as nothing has happened. The group at the next table have just finished pouring in chemical C. From their beaker we see a puff of smoke and hear a loud pop.

That doesn't look too scary, so I grab the 50ml of chemical C that we have already measured out and pour it into the beaker (containing the other chemicals). I'm holding the beaker in my left hand, watching it closely. I can see the mixture of chemicals bubbling up, heading towards the top of the beaker. If the group next to us had a puff of smoke...we have our own little nuclear bomb mushroom cloud happening. The bubbly chemicals are about to spill over the side of the beaker! No way am I going to let that toxic brew touch my fingers! The only place I can see to dump it is in the waste paper basket next to our table.

I toss the beaker like an extreme basketball shot. The beaker lands in the basket and seconds later there is an extremely loud bang, followed by even more smoke pouring from the bin. The smoke is quickly drifting across the classroom. The loud bang has finally managed to draw the attention of Mr. Facebook from his phone. He gazes in stunned horror at the room rapidly filling with smoke. Finally he screams, "Get out, FIRE!" Everyone panics and runs for the door. Mr. Facebook hits the fire alarm on his way out of the building.

The Principal looks crazed, ordering everyone to evacuate all the school buildings. Soon our class is joined on the athletics field by the whole school. I sit listening to the sound of approaching fire trucks.



Once the all-clear signal is given, Mr. Facebook marches me up to Mr. Sausage Nose's office and firmly lays the blame on me. I sit in the chair outside his office, waiting for my mom.

When Mom arrives I try to explain what happened. But Mr. Sausage Nose keeps interrupting me, saying how no other group had any problems. Mr. Facebook had told him that I wasn't listening and that is the reason why I added way too much of the chemical. When I tried to tell Mr. Sausage Nose how the teacher was on the phone instead of answering my question, he went on to praise Mr. Facebook for having the sense to use his personal phone to ring the fire and rescue. He said that if it hadn't been for his quick thinking and action...I could have burned down the whole school. "That's why he had his phone out Maddi, you must be confused," he said sternly.

"Mom, this is so unfair, it's really not my fault. I'm telling you the truth!" I shouted.

The principal started to tell Mom that I would be suspended for 4 weeks for my actions.

To my shock, my mom butted in, raising her voice, "My daughter does NOT lie! She will not be suspended, we are moving to a new school." She grabbed me by the hand and stormed out of the office.

As we drove away, Mrs. Absolutely Positive simply said, "Maddi, don't worry, there are plenty of lovely schools to go to. There is a silver lining to every cloud of smoke."

And that's why I'm heading to my next adventure in 'My New School'.

*Keep in touch!*

*Maddi x*



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Maddi and Bill



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