

Melting Into Spring

SCENE 1: Winter

It was another exceptionally cold day and it had already been dark since 5 pm. Winter's mood had also been equally dark these days as her relationship with her mother got worse and worse. She couldn't help her mind drifting to dark places but had no one to talk to, even at school. Every day seemed like an endless routine to her, school, eating, reading, walking everything alone (of course). Winter was eating dinner with her mother. In complete silence, only the sound of the TV echoed in the small house. After she ate her plain bread for dinner, she washed the dishes that were piled up in the sink. Without making any eye contact with her mother, Winter walked up to her room. "Two more. Two more years and I'm out of here" Winter sighed as she dived into her bed.

As usual, Winter went to school alone, sat alone, and ate alone. Every class, she would be alone, doing every project by herself. And this was possible because Winter was academically gifted. She felt like working with someone made things slow down. "I like working alone. It's so much quicker. First of all, learning shouldn't be fun. It should be something that you do for yourself. To be successful." That was what she told herself every so often.

The bell rang, telling students that school had ended. Usually, Winter would walk back home right after school. But today, she didn't feel like going home. "I don't belong home. I don't belong at school either. Don't belong anywhere, or to anybody." Winter felt empty. She felt like she was alone in the world.

Whenever she felt like that, no matter what time it was, she brought herself to a place where she felt a little bit comfortable. The park. She didn't know why, but it made her feel happy. So Winter walked to the park from school.

However, today was strange, as she slowly dragged herself along her usual path through the park, she spotted someone. No one ever visited this park, especially not in winter. So naturally, Winter spends a lot of time there. This stranger was not only in the park but also using Winter's favorite swing. This made Winter annoyed and frustrated that the only place she could be alone was now occupied.

SCENE 2: Chamomile

The sound of heavy cardboard boxes against the hardwood floor and a brisk draft fills the air. This empty house's treasure cove of mysteries and potential felt exciting. Chamomile's heart beat a bittersweet rhythm thinking about it all. Pine Valley was so different from her last town. If she looked out the window kids were playing in the snow which was so unlike where Chamomile grew up. She smiled slightly at the thought. Today was reserved for unpacking and settling in, which means Chamomile was sitting on the ground of her soon-to-be oasis. Since her parents were out buying food Chamomile filled the quiet with the songs she was currently obsessed with to brighten the atmosphere up. She had imagined many times what Pine Valley would be like in her head, so far it was nothing she had expected. She tried convincing herself that starting a proper public school would be good for her but she didn't know what to expect. She wasn't nervous of course, in fact, she was rarely nervous when meeting new people. It was just that she didn't know enough people her age to know how to interact. The move had been fairly easy since she did pretty much everything alone in their last house; there wasn't anything changing in Chamomile's life besides setting. It's frustrating since of course it would be nice to

have some fun memories to take away from the last 16 or so years of her life. While doing puzzles with her elderly neighbors was nice it wasn't enough.

"This sucks, I need a break" Chamomile muttered to herself. Being in such a lifeless house was bothering her. Without thinking about it too much she got off the floor and walked out the front door. The kids from earlier were gone since most people were probably eating dinner right now. Snow crunched satisfyingly under Chamomile's shoes leaving a trail of messy footprints behind her. Amongst her wandering adventure, she saw a lone swing set in a park that looked a little uncared for. Maybe she could make something on this.

Snow fell to the ground as Chamomile brushed it off the swing seat and sat down. The clouds waltzed around the sky as she looked up watching them in a wistful reverence.

SCENE 3: The Park

Winter's initial reaction to the stranger was to freeze on the spot. As much as she was annoyed at this newcomer, she was somehow intrigued by the aura of this girl. She looked so care free with her long golden locks bouncy around as she swung back and forth. It was as if the snow melted around her and she had brought spring to this gloomy park.

After some time, Winter realized she'd been staring a bit too long. Slowly she crept backward towards home, praying that the girl wouldn't notice her. Suddenly she felt something slip underneath her shoe. It was a patch of fresh ice. She stumbled backward, catching herself only centimeters from sitting on the ground. She looked towards the swing in horror, dreading that the girl had noticed. "Hey, are you ok!" The stranger yelled across the park as she ran towards Winter. She crouched down to get on the other girl's level before continuing, "You should be more careful" the stranger grinned. Obviously not getting a reply she awkwardly continued "I'm Chamomile and I just moved in! it's nice to meet you" She rushed out as if the words were a foreign food on her tongue. Winter felt sick when she got the feeling this new kid was going to stick around. She stood up and returned the introduction quietly then left the park leaving Chamomile in the snow alone.

SCENE 4: Giggle

Every morning on the way to school, every class, every evening on the way back home. Chamomile kept bothering Winter. "Winter!!! Did you do your history homework?" "Hey, did you know? Today's lunch is hotdogs!! I'm so excited!!" "Winter! Let's go home!!" Even though Chamomile never got any replies, she kept on talking to Winter. They walked home together and went home. Rolling her eyes, Winter dived into her bed and sighed. "Finally, I get to be alone. Why doesn't that girl realize that I'm ignoring her?" For Winter, everything Chamomile did was annoying. She didn't have any homework that she couldn't do, she didn't care about today's lunch, and she definitely did not want to walk home with Chamomile.

A few months passed, and all the snow had melted. The view from Winter's room had changed from white to green, but nothing else had changed. Or at least it hadn't changed yet.

One day, Chamomile wasn't waiting for her at her door. She wasn't there walking with her from school. She wasn't there talking about everything she saw, and she wasn't there following her everywhere. Just when she stood up to ask the teacher where she was, she overheard two girls talking.

“I was wondering why the classroom was so quiet, but I finally figured it out! That new girl isn’t here.”

“I figured! I heard she’s sick. What was her name? Uhhhhhh... it was some plant right?”

“I don’t remember either,” the girls giggled.

“I’ve talked to her a few times and she’s quite annoying”

“Oh really? I mean she’s... unique” the girls giggle again.

Listening to her classmates' shallow conversation, Winter found herself clenching her fist, as if to keep her response inside. She walked out of the classroom and straight home.

The next day, Winter was surprised when she saw Chamomile in front of her door.

“Good morning Winter!! Did you miss me?” Chamomile asked teasingly.

“...maybe,” Winter replied. When Winter looked at Chamomile, she saw that Chamomile’s eyes were wide open. “What,” Winter asked bluntly. “This is the first time you ever talked to me!!!! Today feels like some kind of holiday!!! I’m gonna name it “the Winter talked to me Holiday”!!!” Chamomile exclaimed.

“That sounds stupid” giggled Winter. At that moment, they both froze. After a long, long silence, Chamomile slowly looked at Winter and asked, “Did you just... laugh...?” She was in shock. No one had ever seen Winter even smile. “Forget it,” Winter said as she looked away and started walking. She heard Chamomile screaming behind her, but kept on walking to school.

SCENE 5: Rumors & Secrets

From there on, Winter and Chamomile spent every day together. Winter started becoming oblivious to her surroundings, what others thought of them rarely crossed her mind. She started to forget about Chamomile’s self-centered flaws and how she used to make her feel embarrassed. Even her problems at home were much more bearable, now that she had something to look forward to every day. She couldn’t imagine anything getting in their way. She never noticed that people avoided them in the halls or heard the quiet snickers behind their backs.

At first, the whole school was stunned by Chamomile’s bubbly personality that they didn’t know how to react. However, unfortunately, people started to dislike the way she changed to the school environment. Because how could a person be so carefree? How could a person have zero embarrassment about anything they did? The fact that the quietest girl in school started to talk to her made things worse. The rumors increased and became more and more absurd.

“Did you hear she was raised by animals?”

“I think she’s a witch. That’s probably how she got that silent girl to talk.”

That following Monday everything went down. Winter was quietly reading her book in class waiting for Chamomile to come in. She noticed others in the class all giggling and whispering. The first block passed and there was still no sign of Chamomile anywhere. Winter felt like something was very off since Chamomile never missed school. She walked over to the bathroom to clear her head. As she was splashing water onto her face she heard a faint sniffing sound coming from the furthest stall.

“Hey, are you ok?” She asked softly. She would have never been this bold to talk to a random person before.

“...Winter?” a familiar voice replied.

“Cham!? I was worried about you! Why weren’t you in class?”

“I’m ok. It’s nothing really.” Chamomile replied quietly.

“Well can you at least open the door?” The door slowly opened revealing a drenched Chamomile with red bags under her eyes. “Cham.. what happened!?” Without waiting for a reply, Winter ran over to the sink

to get a handful of paper towels. “Here, dry yourself with these.” She said as she handed them to her. “I’ll go grab my jacket from the classroom. I’ll be right back.”

Winter came back, gently placing her jacket over Chamomile’s shoulders.

“Sorry.” Chamomile finally said.

“It’s fine. You shouldn’t feel sorry for anything!” Winter replied. “I know the other people in the class probably had something to do with this, but you don’t have to tell me if you don’t want to.”

“Thanks.” She smiled softly.

After sitting in silence for a while, Winter finally broke the tension. “My parents divorced when I was seven.”

“What?” Chamomile said in confusion.

“Just listen.” Winter asked. Although Chamomile was still confused, she continued to listen.

“I was an unwanted child, but fortunately, my mother decided to take me instead of throwing me away.”

Winter looked down, avoiding to look at Chamomile and continued, “But my mother never really took care of me. She gave me money to buy anything I needed, but nothing else. She never cared.” Winter let go of her clenching fist and looked up with a gentle smile.

“I know that you went through a lot of things today, but I just want you to know that I’ve always wanted someone like you. Someone who actually cares about me, and someone who I can really care about.”

When winter looked at Chamomile’s face with a slight bit of fear, she saw Chamomile’s teary eyes through her hands that were covering her face.

“Winter I had no idea!” she exclaims as the tears in her eyes overflow, “if you told my mom any of that I think she’d help me kidnap you or something!” She says matter of factly, like its something obvious. “Be careful when you say things like that! Because if you keep this up it’ll be really hard to get rid of me, you know.” Chamomile says with a smile that no longer matches the look in her eyes “For me growing up my parents were my best friends along with some of the grannies in my neighborhood so we’re kinda opposites! I guess that’s why I tried so hard to be your friend, Since you act like a granny and all.” she laughs weakly “It means a lot to me that we can be friends since if I think about it, you might actually be my first friend my age! Isn’t that crazy?”

After another short silence, Chamomile said, “Thank you Winter. For being with me. This really meant alot to me. And thank you for sharing something so personal.”

SCENE 6: The Dance

After a long day, Winter and Chamomile walked their way home holding hands. When they reached the park, Chamomile asked, “Winter, would you like to spend some time with me in the park before we go home?”

“Why are you being so polite all the sudden? I kinda got the shivers,” Winter asked.

“Winter!! Don’t tease me like that! Are we going, or not??”

“Come on, don’t get mad. Let’s use the swing.”

Chamomile took an earbud out of Winter’s ear and put it in her own, “I’ve never heard this song before!”

“Pulling an earbud out of someone’s ear? Uhhh, rude. Where did your politeness go?” Winter giggled.

“I thought you don’t like when I’m polite,” Chamomile said with a smug face. The two girls looked at each other and laughed.

“Just be quiet and listen to this song. It’s my favorite. I was listening to it when I met you here.” Winter mumbled. As the calming song filled both their ears, Chamomile smiled overwhelmingly.

“Fireflies,” Winter said as she pointed towards the sky.

“It’s summer already,” Chamomile said in awe as she looked up.

“Do you like summer?” Winter asked

“I do, but winter is my favorite,” Chamomile replies as she looks at Winter. After a small pause, Winter said,

“You know, I used to hate winter. Everything about it. The name, the coldness, the view. But since I met you here, I started to think that it’s not such a bad season. It feels special.” Winter said shyly.

Chamomile stood up and walked to the middle of the park.

“Cham? What are you doing?” Winter questioned.

Chamomile reached her hands out and shouted

“Come here, Winter!”

Winter suspiciously stood up and slowly walked towards Chamomile. When Winter took her hand, Chamomile kneeled and asked, “Will you dance with me?”

Winter froze. Her face soon turned red, and her mouth was open. A little while after her mini-panic, she finally said,

“I’d be happy to,” with the softest and most adorable smile Chamomile had ever seen.

As the two girls danced, fireflies surrounded them like a mist of light. They danced, danced, and danced until the fireflies disappeared along with the beautiful sunset.