

CAROLINE:

*Look, pushy.* I wasn't expecting you, you were not expected, and I don't understand or approve of this invasion so you're going to explain this to me before I...

ANTHONY:

What.

CAROLINE:

Pummel... you.

ANTHONY:

I don't think you're going to pummel me.

CAROLINE:

I have pummeled before.

ANTHONY:

I'm like twice your size.

CAROLINE:

*(re: herself)*  
Small but mighty. Like a dachshund.

ANTHONY:

A what?

CAROLINE:

They bite. Your heels.

ANTHONY:

Ok. Great. See. I just came here for homework- which *I don't want to do* either – but I have to and so do you and here's my shitty poster board which should prove: one) that this is not a joke, and two) how much I need your help.

*(he reveals a really crappy half-finished, not artistically done tri-fold poster board with a picture of Walt Whitman somewhere)*

CAROLINE:

Wow. That is super shitty.

ANTHONY:

ThankYouHelpMe.

CAROLINE:

Help you? Why would I help you? In what planet in what universe would I help with a school project when I'm not, in fact, *in* school right now. Like at all.

ANTHONY:

I know that. But –

CAROLINE:

Cause I'm kinda sick. Like everyone knows I'm sick and everyone is freaked out about it and no one comes here and brings – what is that?

*(points to his bag)*

ANTHONY:

Waffle fries.

CAROLINE:

And brings waffle fries and bad posters to my house – So why are you bringing poems and fries and posters to me, in my room, in my house – why are you doing anything in my room, in my house right now, guy I don't know what the hell.

ANTHONY:

Ok. I'm Anthony. Which I might have mentioned. And I have our assignment for American Lit, which she was supposed to email you about. And I didn't hear back from her or from you, so finally, like an idiot, I just came over, *in person*, which people still do. So please, *please*, can you calm down, pitch in, or at least sign the poster so it *looks* like we worked together.

CAROLINE:

I'm not signing that piece of crap.

ANTHONY:

Then I'm not leaving.

CAROLINE:

Then I'm having some of your fries.

*(Pause.)*

ANTHONY:

Accepted.

CAROLINE:

Well. Accepted. Back.

(Pause.)

CAROLINE (cont):

Also why did you say that weird “mystery” thing when you came in?

ANTHONY:

Making an entrance, I don’t know, girls are supposed to like poems.

CAROLINE:

Like *love* poems, duh. P.s. That poster is tragic, did you pass preschool?  
P.P.S. I’m not doing your project.

ANTHONY:

You don’t have to do anything except like - not kick me out right away. Can we try that?

CAROLINE:

I mean. We can try. Gimme fry.

*(He offers her the fries. She eyes him.  
He makes a point of eyeing her back. She offers him a cookie.  
They eat. He looks at her.)*

CAROLINE (cont.):

What.

ANTHONY:

Nothing.

CAROLINE:

You’re looking at me.

ANTHONY:

There’s no one else to look at.

CAROLINE:

Well don’t hover in the corner like a weirdo, you can come in. Come in.

*(she starts to make herself look more presentable.)*

It’s a mess or - it’s always a mess - whatever.  
Don’t look at me.

*(Anthony look anywhere but her.  
Lands on the plush turtle on her bed.)*

ANTHONY:

Ok. Nice turtle.

CAROLINE:

Don't bring turtle in to this.

ANTHONY:

ComeOn, would you give me a chance here. Why do you assume that you don't like me?

CAROLINE:

Why do you assume you're so likeable?

ANTHONY:

Wow, you are impossible.

CAROLINE:

True.

ANTHONY:

Why?

CAROLINE:

What?

ANTHONY:

*Why* are you impossible?

CAROLINE:

It makes a shitty life a lot more fun.

*(Pause. That was meant to scare him away. He doesn't flinch.  
He doesn't look away. He look right at her.)*

ANTHONY:

Ok.

CAROLINE:

"Ok?" That my life's super shitty? ThanksSoMuch.

ANTHONY:

That not what I meant. It sucks. I get that it sucks. I'm just saying that I'm not scared of... it. You're upset, you push. I get it - I'm saying that I get it.

CAROLINE:

Ok, I really doubt that you get it. And I'm not "upset," I'm sick.

ANTHONY:

I'm just saying that I understand why you push people.

CAROLINE:

You don't understand me, and I don't "push people", and you should go.

ANTHONY:

I'm sorry, come on - No - I was trying to say that I see where you're coming from and - Fine. Be impossible. Be anything you want, I don't care. I just don't want to get an F just because I couldn't convince you that Walt Whitman is amazing, which like all of humanity agrees on.

CAROLINE:

Uh huh.

ANTHONY:

Don't hate the poem, it's a good poem, a *great* poem. A really long old great poem.

CAROLINE:

You're making it worse.

ANTHONY:

Please just go with me on this. You don't have to be nice to me, but be nice to Walt Whitman.

CAROLINE:

Wait. Oh god. Ohhhh god. Did my mother set this up? Did she do this? She would totally do this - make up some stupid thing to make me feel *involved*. I have a life, ok. I text. A lot.

ANTHONY:

I promise I just want an A on this project.

CAROLINE:

Then fix your poster!

ANTHONY:

That was going to be your job!

CAROLINE:

Oh yeah, well, if this is a scheme to make me feel included,  
*(yelling to her mother)*  
*it's not working.*

ANTHONY:

Whoawhoawhoa, dachshund. There is no scheme. There is a guy with a snack. I am that guy and this is that snack and there is an email and you should check it and maybe find some super clear information and maybe – just maybe – though it seems you really like the high stakes perspective - try to de-freak yourself out.

CAROLINE:

*I don't care if there's an email, if there is an email it's gonna be about a book I don't want to read, and the only good thing about this bullshit is that I don't have to read anything I don't want to.*

ANTHONY:

Well I do, and I have school in the morning, and I care about school, and I'm sorry you're sick but and I'm sorry you're impossible, but you can take your *small-dog rage* and put in on YouTube because I don't actually have time for this – *ohmygodgirlsareawful.*

*(Pause.)*

CAROLINE:

Girls are pretty awful.

*(Pause.)*

Also you're in my room so we should be friends. Facebook. Check it.

ANTHONY:

When in the 5 minutes that I have been here have you had time to friend me on facebook?

CAROLINE:

I haven't friended you, IForgotYourNameAlready.

ANTHONY:

Anthony.

CAROLINE:

*Anthony.* You have to friend *me*.  
Friend me Friend me Friend me.

ANTHONY:

*I will friend you when I'm not in the room trying to be friends with you.*

CAROLINE:

That's weird.

*(A loud, short BEEP in the room.)*

CAROLINE (cont.):

Ugh - are you kidding me?

ANTHONY:

What's that?

CAROLINE:

Fire thing.

ANTHONY:

Smoke detector?

CAROLINE:

All day. My dad's out and my mom doesn't know where any of the *two* things you need to change the batteries are.

ANTHONY:

Do you want me to help? Or something. Or whatever.

*(Small pause.)*

CAROLINE:

Uh. Yeah. Thanks... newguy.

ANTHONY:

Sure. But I might have to stay... for a minute.

CAROLINE:

You can stay. God, that beeping is becoming - like - part of my spine. Stay. Yes.

ANTHONY:

Thanks. And I fix stuff like this all the time at my house so it's not a big deal. My dad is real smart and everything – like professor smart, he teaches at the university, so he knows *nothing* that helps change a battery.

CAROLINE:

Well you're a handy intruder, aren't cha.

ANTHONY:

It's not that complicated to fix.

CAROLINE:

It's housework. I like *just* figured out what Woolite is.

ANTHONY:

Do you have a nine volt?

CAROLINE:

Uh...

ANTHONY:

It's a battery?

CAROLINE:

How many A's does it need?

ANTHONY:

No. These are the boxy ones. Nine volt.

CAROLINE:

Yeah I don't know these things. I'll just text my mom. Not that she'll know much more than I do.

(ANOTHER BEEP)

CAROLINE:

(*to the alarm*)

*You are ruining my life.*

You see what I deal with? My body hates me, my house hates me, and here you come with *homework*.

(*He has removed the battery from smoke detector.*)