

Chapter TWO

I woke up on Tuesday morning and made the affirmative decision not to go to school. My parents were out of the house and my siblings would be at school soon enough. My mother Eve had gone away for the week with her friends. I could do this! I could sleep in and wag school and no one would have a clue! Not dad. Not my siblings and most importantly not the school.

I went back to sleep to wait and see if I could really do something so against my normal routine. You see I was never one to wag school and this would be my very first attempt. I was 16 and had never even taken a day off even when I was sick. I had finally reached the pinnacle of my life that I was going to be mischievous for once! I would pretend to my friends that I was sick, and all will be fine. I won't get caught lying and jiggling school. Nope. It wouldn't happen to me!

After I heard my siblings leave, we were lucky to catch different buses Trace the later bus and Marius the primary school one, I rolled out of bed, got dressed and went to make myself the strongest cup of coffee I have ever made. I am not a coffee drinker usually, but today while I was on a roll trying to be a rebel, I thought why the hell not? I needed my coffee. I needed to feel alert and awake. I needed my coffee to go through with my plans so I wouldn't feel this absolute horrible guilt that I should have gone to school. Coffee was my solution. Coffee was my savour. Coffee was what I needed. However, after I drank it, I felt no different. I still felt this deep deep guilt in the pit of my stomach. So much for that idea! I started pacing up and down the lounge room and corridor linking our bedrooms and bathroom thinking, pondering and wondering. The one thing I did not consider was what I would do for the day! How on earth could I have missed that? How, when I was considering jiggling school, did I not think of what I would spend my day doing? I had to go to work in the evening at Coles.

Then it hit me I would go out and go shopping for the day. Nope. I couldn't. I couldn't because what if someone from school saw me? What if one of my neighbours saw me and reported me! That wasn't the answer. I could watch a movie for the day? How on earth is that going to help me discover the meaning of life? I could read Charles Darwin's origin of species? Nope. I could eat something.? Yes, that was it. I was going to eat something.

I walked over to the fridge and rummaged through the food on the shelves. I found a packet of cheese cubes and started shoving them in my mouth. Then I found some premade Greek salad in a bowl and started devouring that too! I couldn't believe my life had resulted to me stuffing my face with Greek salad at 8.30 in the morning!!! UH!

After eating had to find something else to do! My mind was a blank as I was too worried I would get caught jiggling school! And I wasn't willing to do any schoolwork otherwise what is the point of not attending? What is the point of not going to school and then staying home to work on schoolwork? That defeats the purpose of breaking the law and not going to school in the first place! I think we should be free to do school from home without the need to truant! Therefore, because I did technically break the school rules and not go for the day without a solid reason, I am not doing any work at home! Nada. Nope. I ban myself from study.

So, then what was I to do? That's it I decided to watch a movie and eat some more. Why not? Considering I am risking it all to not attend school for the first time in my life I might as well try to have fun watching something! I flicked through my collection, or rather our collection, of DVDs and found a heap of kid's movies and then I found it. It was Star Trek. I started watching an episode from the 1st season. I was a big fan of sci fi and a range of other genres. AND here I was dressed in my denim skirt, white shirt now stuffing my face with plain chips, sitting on the sofa, watching TV feeling so guilty I wasn't at school. And mind you school was the most boring place to be and watching sci fi much more fun. Watching anything at all was more exciting than being surrounded by a pack of zombies being asked stupid useless questions that were not equipping you for your future!

After watching TV, I decided to mull around for the afternoon as I knew I was free of being caught. I thought if I can survive the morning then I can survive the afternoon. But that luck wasn't to last. At exactly 2.38pm, as my phone displayed the time, a knock at the door came. And I was so stupid that I opened the door to see one of my teachers standing right there in front of me. Mrs Davis-bell-green! What? I stood there and went into a frenzied panic inside my mind while my arms and body remained frozen on the outside. Then I decided to fake a cough. It worked; I think. At least she would think I was a little ill and that's why I was at home.

‘Mrs D. I mean Mrs Davis-bell-green? What are you doing here?’ I raised my eyebrows in shock that she was at my house as I practised my fake coughing.

‘Well Ivie you are never away from school and I wanted to check in to see how you are feeling? I asked your sister Trace and she was shocked you weren’t at school today. It’s not like you dear.’ Dear? I hate being called that! *And no, it’s not like me to be away from school because I was taking the day off on purpose you old biddy*, I felt like saying. And my little bitch of a sister should have said I was at school the cow! I bit my tongue and decided to reply correctly as any mature young woman caught in an awkward situation would.

I replied with: ‘Yes, I wasn’t feeling well this morning and decided to stay home today. I have a bit of a cough and cold I am afraid!’

‘Well I hope you get better soon. How are you going with the book I gave you?’ The old biddy only gave me the book yesterday and she expects that I have read it already? I will read it when I feel like it sometime before the next English class. I can’t believe she came over to my house! What teacher in the 21st century does house calls? I am angry now and pissed off that my psycho English teacher asked Trace and made it her objective to check on me! I nearly made it a whole day without being ‘discovered’.

‘Yes, I will. Thank you for checking on me,’ I replied in my nicest voice as I coughed and sniffed for the effect. ‘I will have your book read and returned to you by our next class.’

‘Very well. I hope you get better soon,’ I suspected that something was not quite right with my English teacher as why else would she be so focused about me reading that book she lent me? It was all a little strange. I wanted to find out why. First with her being a little distracted and giving me a book. Then with her coming over to check on me. Something was going on and I was determined to find out what it was if it killed me.

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Later that afternoon, when my siblings came home, and we were sitting at the dinner table with dad. It was something Trace said that raised the alarm bells.

‘Ivie?’ asked Trace at the table. ‘Are you feeling better?’

'Yes,' I told the whole family I was sick, and it felt good lying. I was sure to do it more often now I knew how easy it was to skip school without anything bad happening. And because I never usually skipped school, pretending I was sick and being believed was so easy for me. If only I had known how easy it was because I would have tried it years ago!

'Yes Mrs Davis-bell-green asked me where you were today. Gee she is so strange that lady!' came my sisters reply.

'Strange how?' I asked perplexed. I knew she was an old grumpy bag some days.

'It's just at first she asked me if you had finished the book yet and I was like what book? What is she talking about?'

'Yes, she gave me this book to read and I haven't yet.'

'Yeah well Ivie I get the impression you better read it because she sounded like reading that book was the most important thing you ever have to do!' Trace shrugged. It was at that moment that I knew something wasn't right with Mrs D and I knew I had to read the book now and not wait till later in the week. I knew that the book would possibly tell me something so important to Mrs D that I just had to read it. And read it with great speed.