

Momento Mori

Pilot

Abby Tattle

INT. DARK ROOM - TIME UNKNOWN

A girl SCREAMS a BLOOD CURDLING scream.

CUT TO:

INT. MORI'S BEDROOM - MORNING

MORI (16, dark hair, dark makeup smudges under both eyes, perpetually pouting) jolts upright. She SLAMS her head against her headboard.

MORI

Ow! Fuckk me.

Somebody YELLS her name from down the hall.

KATHERINE (O.S)

MOOOOOORI!

(sighs)

Christ child! You are going to be late  
to your own funeral!

KATHERINE (short, Japanese, intimidatingly beautiful) balances a plastic laundry basket on her hip. She passes Mori's doorway and chucks a folded towel off of the top of the bin. She aims right for Mori's head.

MORI

UGH! Trust me. I'm patiently awaiting  
the day I die. Can't come soon enough!

Katherine shakes her head at the messy state of Mori's room as she continues down the hall toward the laundry room.

KATHERINE (O.S)

Take a shower would you? You're  
filthy!

Mori angrily tosses the towel to the ground in protest. Katherine pokes her head back through Mori's bedroom door and points a stern, bony finger at her daughter.

KATHERINE

And cut that depression bullshit. I'm  
leaving with your brother in 10.  
Otherwise you're walking.

Katherine takes a good look at Mori's scraggly, unwashed hair and stained black, oversized sleep shirt.

KATHERINE

Please take a shower. I don't  
associate with the homeless.

Mori groans and flops back down on her bed.

MORI

(grumbling)

Yeah no wonder you hate the homeless.  
Heartless fuckin' bitch.

She begrudgingly gets up and dresses herself in black ripped  
jeans and a dark grey band hoodie.

CUT TO:

INT. KITCHEN - CONTINUOUS

Mori blunders down the staircase rubbing her tired eyes. She  
passes her grandma (BABA) who is contently cooking pancakes.

BABA

Mori! You want breakfast? I make  
pancakes.

Baba happily lifts the spatula out of the bowl and watches  
the thick batter drip off.

BABA (CON'T)

With bananas!

MORI

No thanks Babs. Not hungry.

Mori gives her grandmother a peck on the cheek and SLAMS the  
front door.

Her brother THOMPSON (7, long wavy hair) shoves the remainder  
of his blueberry pancakes in his mouth and bounces out the  
door after his big sister.

Katherine flies down the stairs in nursing scrubs.

KATHERINE

Bye Mama! Love you!

CUT TO:

EXT. MENDOZA HOME - CONTINUOUS

Mori puts in her headphones and BLASTS her music to full

volume, drowning out her nagging mother and brother behind her.

Suddenly Katherine steps in front of Mori's path, getting right in her face. Her eyes are ablaze with frustration as she SCREAMS.

Mori cannot hear her words. We hear only the ANGSTY METAL BAND blaring down her ear canals.

Katherine steps into the driver's seat, SLAMMING the door behind her.

Mori pauses her music. She can hear the NATURAL SOUND around her once again.

She SIGHS, annoyed. She takes a deep breath to steel herself and follows her mother into the car.

CUT TO:

INT. CAR - CONTINUOUS

KATHERINE

You are so, incredibly rude child! Do you know that? So disrespectful! These are the few family moments we get to spend together!

MORI

How can you possibly consider this "family time"?  
(grumbling)  
We're hardly a family.

KATHERINE

Do not use that tone with me child! And Christ's sake, take those god awful cancer causing ear butts out and turn down your music when I'm talking to you! You're going to go deaf and I swear to God I won't even be sorry--

MORI

Earbuds! Not butts.

THOMPSON

You know, earbuds don't actually cause cancer Mom. I was reading online tha--

KATHERINE

Well actually, that's crap. I am your mother and you would be wise to listen to me--

MORI

Ugh! Neither of you can ever be wrong! It's torturous to listen to you fight *constantly*. I'd rather get the friggin' ear cancer.

KATHERINE

Hey! Watch your language!

MORI

What?! I didn't even curse!

THOMPSON

Friggin'?

KATHERINE

Great. Thanks a lot Mori. Now my son is going to be kicked out of elementary school for profanity--

THOMPSON

Also, I'd just like to point out that you guys fight way more than Mom and I do.

BOTH

DO **NOT!**

Mori LAUGHS in disbelief. She turns her body to face away from her mother. She pouts out the window.

EXT. CAR - CONTINUOUS

The sky is overcast. Rows of picturesque suburban homes contrast the apocalyptic, looming, weather.

MOUNTGREGORY HIGH SCHOOL appears in the distance. It looks more like a prison than a public school.

A small plaque reads "Mountgregory High School Soar Eagles Soar!"

The car slows at a stop light in an intersection just in front of the high school's entrance.

INT. CAR - CONTINUOUS

Mori opens the door and unclips her seat belt.

MORI

I'll just walk from here--

KATHERINE

What THE HELL do you think you are you doing!?

Mori is tangled in her seat belt and struggles to get out of the car as the light turns green. Traffic stuck behind the car BLARES and BEEPS their HORNS.

Katherine reaches over to SLAM her car door shut. Before the door can close fully, it catches on Mori's hand.

Mori SCREAMS in pain.

Her mother SCREAMS in horror.

Thompson SCREAMS in fright.

CUT TO:

INT. NURSE'S OFFICE - CONTINUOUS

Mori sits with a bag of ice on her left hand and an ominous smile on her lips.

The school nurse (NURSE HELEN) fumbles around with some paperwork on the office computer.

NURSE HELEN

(muttering)

Kids these days...

Mori kicks her legs and stares at a motivational poster of a kitten hanging from a tree branch which reads "Hang in There". She snarls.

NURSE HELEN

Um... Just to let you know... I'm going to have to contact the guidance counselor about this... We have to take the necessary precautions when things like this happen... seeing as you threw yourself out of a car, onto a busy street. I have to ask, have you ever had suicidal thoughts? Otherwise

it's a serious liability for me and--

Mori shrugs.

MORI

Suicidal thoughts? About twice an hour. I'm too much of a pussy to ever act on it though.

Helen blinks. Her doll face full of alarm.

MORI (CON'T)

As for the therapist thingy. Go ahead. The shrinks love me.

NURSE HELEN

Um... Alright then.

The SCHOOL BELL DINGS warning students that first period is approaching.

NURSE HELEN

Oh! Here let me change your ice once before you leave!

Mori stands up and throws her ice pack in the garbage. All the while she maintains menacing eye contact with her handler.

Mori exits the room. Helen's jaw drops.

CUT TO:

INT. CLASSROOM - CONTINUOUS

Mori sits at her desk. She is one of the few already sitting in the classroom.

She stares down at her black and purple hand with a sort of victorious smirk on her face.

Students start to trickle in. Peter (18, lanky, with blonde wispy hair) slides into the desk next to Mori.

PETER

Mori!? Where T F were you this morning? You missed crew!

Mori waves her hand dismissively and grunts.

MORI

Listen. Simply existing has been more draining than usual today.

PETER

Ok?

NATALIA (Mori's best friend since middle school) bounces in with a huge smile. She wears a bubble gum colored bomber jacket over a Mountgregory t-shirt she has skillfully cut to reveal her cleavage. Her blonde hair is perfectly styled in two french braids.

NATALIA

Guys I have news!

She notices the purple bruise on Mori's hand,

NATALIA

Dude- what the fuck happened to your hand?

Suddenly, JOHN (17, curly hair, fit) flies in from the back of the room. He is wearing his standard lacrosse team warm-up suit and large red headphones.

JOHN

Mori! There's a rumor going around that you tried to kill yourself by jumping in front of one of the school buses this morning!?!

Mori LAUGHS.

Natalia's face brightens and she extends her hand out towards Mori's for a high-five. She quickly realizes her hand is severely bruised and extends to the other hand. The two high five.

NATALIA

You absolute, fucked-up legend.

Mori shrugs and leans back in her chair,

MORI

The actual story is way lamer. I just couldn't fucking handle my mother this morning so I tried to jump out of her car--

Peter GASPS and clutches his heart.

MORI  
We were going like maybe 5 miles an  
hour...

NATALIA  
Dude--

MORI  
It was at a stoplight!

NATALIA  
Oh my god.

MORI  
Yep.

NATALIA  
I can totally see the look on your  
Mom's face!

Natalia and Mori GIGGLE.

JOHN  
Wait wait wait. Can we just take a  
moment to acknowledge...

He throws both arms out towards Mori like he is presenting an  
invention on a big stage.

JOHN  
Are my eyes deceiving me? Or is  
Morinne Mendoza actually participating  
in a Mountgregory High spirit week??

Mori rolls her eyes and marks her words with air quotes.

MORI  
"Participating". It's not my fault  
that the Junior class color is  
*black*...

JOHN  
Honestly, I'm surprised you didn't  
like purposely show up in neon pink to  
protest...

MORI  
(sticking her tongue out)

Well, if you knew me at all you'd know  
I'm more of a *neon green* girl.

JOHN  
(smirking)

Mori lovelssss Mountgregory! Mori **loves**  
Mountgregory!

Mori punches John playfully in the arm.

MORI  
Watch it.

CUT TO:

INT. WOODSHOP ROOM - CONTINUOUS

Saw dust covers wooden stools and tool benches like a light dusting of flurries. Mannequins, plywood, and other odd props are strewn about the room.

Mori huddles in the center of the room. She presses her lips to a steaming mug of black coffee. She simmers in the serenity of a completely empty room.

In between sips, she sketches on the pages of a thick, leather bound sketch book.

Suddenly, MS. DOYLE (48, long graying hair, thin), affectionately called AUBREY by her stage crew students, enters the room. With a waitress-like mastery, she balances a coffee mug in one hand, while juggling jars of paint brushes in the crevices of her elbows.

AUBREY  
Morning kiddo!

MORI  
More like mourning...

Mori slowly traces an invisible tear down her cheek.

Aubrey heads straight to the tool bench. She sets the jars down and pours coffee into her mug from the pot resting amongst the clutter.

She begins dumping packet after packet of sugar into her cup. As she moves towards Mori she mixes the sugar in with the end of a pen.

Aubrey sets the mug down firmly next to Mori and swipes Mori's own coffee from her hands.

AUBREY

Looks like your life could use a  
little more sugar, sugar.

She winks and looks down. Mori's morbid sketch catches her eye.

AUBREY

My... goodness. This is some  
disturbing... and trippy shit honey  
bunches. You been smoking up  
again?What did I say about bringing it  
up in the shop room?

Aubrey gently grabs Mori's chin and stares into her eyes.

AUBREY (CON'T)

Absolutely off limits.

MORI

Aubrey you know would never!

AUBREY

Hmm okay love. I believe you-- this  
time.

She prances out of the room, taking a sip of Mori's coffee.  
Her face twists in disgust at the bitter taste.

Mori returns to drawing.

Suddenly, Peter frantically bursts into the room. Mori sighs.  
John trails behind him shaking his head.

PETER

I have exactly 10 minutes to finish  
and print this whole biology lab or  
Dr. Stevens is going to slit my pretty  
little throat!!

MORI

Sounds like a dream.

Peter thrusts his laptop out of his bag and flashes Mori a  
skeptical look.

PETER

Could you give up the "everybody dies"  
act for like 2 seconds?

MORI

It's not an act. We are all going to die.

PETER

UGH! I don't need to be thinking about death right now. When Dr. Stevens is going to absolutely *slaughter* me. My conclusion is a disaster! This is catastrophic!

JOHN

Geez. You're so dramatic.

John looks Peter up and down as if he's finally looked at him properly for the first time this morning.

JOHN

Dude... Your outfit is the actual "catastrophe" here. Did you even turn on the light this morning to see what pants you were putting on?

PETER

I was in a rush! I nearly missed first period. And *excuse you* these are comfortable! I've had them since the sixth grade!

JOHN

Clearly.

John glances skeptically at Peter's black and white checkered sweat pants which are short enough to reveal his ankles.

The SECOND PERIOD BELL echos throughout the corridors.

PETER

(groaning)

Well fuck-- What do I do?! I can't hand in this garbage!

MORI

Here.

Mori waves her lab report over in Peter's direction.

PETER

You're joking? Mori, I couldn't.

Mori shoves the lab report into his hands and shrugs.

MORI

Whatever. Grades are a bogus, destructive measure of self worth, created by an institution to brainwash children into believing their intelligence should be judged by how much of a textbook written by a bunch of straight, white, men they can regurgitate.

JOHN

Right...?

Peter quickly skims through the pages of the report.

PETER

Honestly I wish I cared and also didn't care as much as you do darling.

Mori scoffs and picks at her nails.

MORI

Well... I don't really care about college. My mom does. And you do... So just take it *please*.

JOHN

Yeah, just take it man. We all know you can't deal with anything lower than a B+.

MORI

And I woke up with this incredible migraine this morning so I'm really not in the mood to listen to you sob all day about how disappointed Dr. Stevens was in you.

Peter looks lovingly at Mori and runs over to hug her.

PETER

Awe! You show affection in the most twisted ways. I do love you darling!

He grabs Mori's hands and hugs her tightly. She squirms away from him.

The WARNING BELL RINGS a final time.

MORI

Well-- Can't delay Hell any longer.

CUT TO:

INT. SCIENCE LAB - CONTINUOUS

The students work in pairs on a biology lab. They are dressed in plastic LAB GOGGLES and WHITE LAB COATS which are covered with suspicious stains. Mori is partnered with Natalia.

DR. STEVENS (38, bearded, tall) stalks through the rows of lab tables as he facilitates the lesson.

MORI

UGH! This is bullshit.

Mori struggles to place a small green leaf under a microscope in her bulky goggles and ill-fitting yellow latex gloves. Dr. Stevens silently monitors Mori's work a few inches behind.

MORI

(loudly whispering)

They have us dressed like clowns to examine plant cells under a *fuck--*

Dr. Stevens CLEARS HIS THROAT loudly. It surprises the girls. Mori jumps.

MORI

Uhh! I mean-- *Friggin* microscope!

Dr. Stevens gives Mori a disapproving CLICK of his tongue and then moves on to evaluate the next pair of students.

NATALIA

(quietly)

Apparently some "toxic gas leak" back in my brother's junior year caused all this crazy safety regulation. Parents were pissed. It got so out of hand they made it mandatory for any classes with a lab as part of the description dress us like gross Albert Einstein groupies!!

Natalia smooths down the front of her lab coat, accidentally swiping at a weird stain. She shivers in disgust.

MORI

So pathetic. People will take any opportunity they can to sue for shit in this country... That should be reserved for the important shit.

NATALIA

Yeah! Like against companies causing climate change!

MORI

Ha! We've already fucked ourselves with that one. I meant date rape.

Mori continues to struggle with the microscope while Natalia giddily pops her bubble gum.

NATALIA

Well the best part of this whole things is that the leak was just a prank! Apparently some sophomore was just super gassy and a bunch of assholes started screaming "gas leak!"

Mori shakes her head.

NATALIA

(laughing)

And Dr. Stevens freaked out-- you know how crazy paranoid he is-- and he set off the school fire alarm and the school had everyone evacuate!

ANTONIO (17, thick curly hair) brushes Mori's arm. He carries a small cage which houses two white lab rats.

MORI

EW! Watch it *freak!*

She turns to Natalia and frantically brushes up and down her arms.

MORI

UGH! Now I have thousands of tiny disgusting *rat germs* festering on me.

ANTONIO

Hey! I *heard* you. My rats are not disgusting! They're probably cleaner than *you Morraine!*

Mori flips him off. Natalia LAUGHS hysterically.

MORI

Stop it! You know how much rodents.  
freak. me. out. Nat.

Natalia tenderly rubs Mori's arm and then quickly pulls her hand away. She examines it with an exaggerated look of feigned disgust. Mori glares at her, unamused.

NATALIA

Okay. Okay I'm done. Sorry dude.

As a peace offering, Natalia gestures for Mori to step aside and takes over the microscope work.

Suddenly, the FIRE ALARM begins BLARING.

Startled classmates turns around to face the back of the room where the ROARING alarm is situated.

Mori and Natalia see BRODY (17, handsome, athletic build) and JUSTIN (17, curly hair, douchey) frantically waving vape smoke away from above them.

Nat GIGGLES. Mori SIGHS with relief.

MORI

Really never thought I'd say this but  
Thank *God* for vape lords.

She pauses and assumes a prayer position, closing her eyes and folding her hands.

MORI

But dear Lord, if you could just  
magically set this place ablaze and  
let all the immature idiots in it burn  
to the fucking ground... Amen.

Mori doesn't wait for her friend and storms out of the classroom, lab coat and all.

Dr. Stevens frantically attempts to control the madness. He SHOUTS commands at students, begging them to leave the building and neglect their belongings.

DR. STEVENS

This was not a planned drill! I  
repeat: not a planned drill! EVERYONE!

Quickly, orderly, single file lines!!  
Outside! DROP YOUR PHONES!

In their haste somebody knocks over the plastic rat cage, causing it to CLATTER to the floor and forcing the door open.

The two rats escape into the swarm of feet and chairs and are lost in the chaos.

CUT TO:

EXT. MOUNTGREGORY HIGH SCHOOL SENIOR PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS

Mori sits on a curb away from her peers.

Natalia chats giddily with a group of her track team friends, Brody, and Justin just a few feet away. Mori shoots a disgusted glance in their direction.

She puts in her earbuds. She selects a MAYDAY PARADE ALBUM and blocks the world out.

*This is the first glimpse we as an audience get of Mori's artwork beyond her sketching:*

Her phone case is transparent but decorated with one of her own unique designs-- painted with a skull surrounded by psychedelic blue and pink designs swarming around the severed head. The phrase "Momento Mori" is etched along the very bottom.

John bounces over with excitement.

JOHN

Mori!

MORI

(removing an earbud)

Mmmhmm?

JOHN

I just texted you! I overheard Aubrey talking to crew students this morning during my shop class-- and guess what?

MORI

(sighing)

What?

JOHN

They were talking about you!

MORI

You say that like it's a good thing...

JOHN

Okay no, not *about* you. About you--  
our most talented stage crew artist--  
becoming Paint Captain for the show  
this year!

John gestures to Mori's phone case. Mori glances at the case and blushes.

JOHN

Come on. Your designs are always sick  
A F-- and I'm not just saying that  
cause I'm your friend.

He winks. Mori rolls her eyes.

MORI

I don't know though... A leadership  
position? Can you really see *me*  
getting up in front of everybody and  
telling people what to do?

JOHN

Why not? I feel like people respect  
you...?

MORI

More like they're terrified of me.

John shoves his hands in his pockets.

JOHN

Okay. Well... you don't exactly try...  
that hard to be approachable.

John's eyes glance from the groups of students back to Mori.  
Mori snarls and returns to her phone.

JOHN

Oh come on! Don't get all angry!  
You're the one who brought it up!

MORI

Well. I like it this way anyways. Keep  
my circle small. Less *annoying* people  
to deal with. Pff why would I wanna  
associate with the hot jocks or

numbskull actors anyways?

JOHN

Wow. Okay. Whatever. My point is, you'd make an amazing Paint Captain. You should really consider it.

Mori SIGHS again, expelling all the air from her lungs. She breaks into a soft smile.

MORI

Well, I guess it would be kind of cool to have some power over all the acting douches... and the freshmen...

JOHN

Aye! Now that's the spirit--

Suddenly Peter appears,

PETER

O.M.G there you guys are! I've been weaving through these Juuling idiots for ages trying to find you both.

Peter mimics swiping invisible E-cigarette smoke with his hands. His antics make the other two crack up.

PETER

I have big news. Look what I found taped to the bulletin board on my way out?

Peter excitedly holds up a poster that reads "*Auditions: Suessical the Musical! Thursday & Friday after school from 3-8PM*".

Peter throws up jazz hands. Mori sticks her finger down her throat and GAGS. She turns to John.

MORI

Well, now you can definitely count me out. That show is actual social suicide.

PETER

I know right? Like what is *this*? Middle school?

MORI

I would have been more happy with *Grease*- and you guys *know* I can't stand gooey love shit like that.

JOHN

Wait wait wait-- but think about it! If you were Paint Captain, we could make this show wayyy less lame.

PETER

(gasp)

You want to be Paint Captain?

MORI

Not really. John thinks I should be...

BOTH

Do it. Do it. DO IT!

MORI

Hey this is peer pressure! Hey, Mrs. Holkly, they're peer pressuring me!!

The group explodes with LAUGHTER.

JOHN

Seriously though. The only Suessical world I wanna participate in is one that is created by this beautiful brain of yours.

John taps Mori lightly on the forehead twice. She smiles up at him.

MORI

Yeah. No thanks. I want my name as far away from "Suessical" as possible.

John SIGHS with disappointment. He opens his mouth to challenge her when Dr. Stevens SUMMONS his class to join him back inside the building.

Mori hops up and walks back towards the building before he can get his words out.

CUT TO:

INT. CLASSROOM - DAY - MID AFTERNOON

Mori day dreams, gazing out the window. MS. MINDAL (young,

petite) drones on about geometry theories.

Suddenly, Mori is hit in the head with a wad of notebook paper.

Confused, she carefully unfolds the crumpled mess to reveal a message that reads: "*U down for dinner this Saturday? - Brody*"

Mori quickly turns around to see Brody flashing her a big, shockingly white, grin.

Mori narrows her eyes and points to herself as if to ask "Me?"

Brody mimes back an exaggerated NO, waving his arms like a goose trying to take flight.

He rolls his eyes and gestures in front of Mori to Natalia.

Mori cannot hide her disgust. She throws the paper on Natalia's desk as if it's covered in anthrax.

MORI  
(whispering)

Brody? Really Nat? Have you lost your  
*fucking* mind?

Natalia opens her mouth to explain herself. Ms. Mindal turns back around to face her class,

MS. MINDAL  
Alright. Well it sounds like you've all got a case of the spirit week jitters. Since no one seems to be paying much attention, I'll let you all go 10 minutes early--

Upon hearing their opportunity to escape, the students all jump up and file out the door.

MS. MINDAL  
Please get yourselves down to the gym for the Spirit Day Pep Rally! We will know if you skip it! We all have to attend...

She sounds less than thrilled.

CUT TO:

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

Mori catches Natalia alone at her locker just as Brody is leaving.

MORI

Nat! So exactly when were you going to tell me you started talking to Brody?

NATALIA

I don't know Mori. I knew you were going to be all judgmental about it.

The two start walking down the hallway, following the flow of students gathering for the pep rally.

MORI

Yeah and I have good reason too! That ape does nothing but grunt and drunk drive.

NATALIA

You don't actually know him! He seems really sweet. He asked me to dinner...

MORI

WOW! A real knight in fuckin' shining armor he is.

NATALIA

Dude-- I'm serious. Guys are only ever interested in starrin' at my chest. It's kind of refreshing to feel desired. To feel courted...

MORI

Who spiked your lemonade at lunch today? And where can I get some?

Mori pretends to search in Natalia's bag for a flask and grabs her bottle of water instead. She takes a swig and heads towards the left. Natalia laughs.

NATALIA

Hey! You're going the wrong way-- Gym is this way.

Mori and Natalia freeze in front of the lockers. Students continue to flow past them both.

MORI

Wait. We're not actually *going* to the pep rally? Are we!?

NATALIA

I promised John we'd be there! Plus Peter has to take photos for photojournalism or something dumb.

Mori rubs her temples.

NATALIA

Come on! School spirit can be fun!

MORI

Yeah maybe if you're stoned. I can't believe you today. Wait-- are you stoned?

Mori leans in to look deep into Natalia's eyes. She leans back, shaking her head furiously.

NATALIA

Listen. We'll just chill at the top of the bleachers for a bit, P will snap some pics... we'll be out of there ASAP!

Mori starts to whine in protest,

NATALIA

Andddd I'll even drive us to Mom's Diner afterwards? I actually do have bud. We can hot box my Jeep and drink strawberry milkshakes?

MORI

Fine.

NATALIA

Yay!

MORI

Just know that you're the worst and I hate you. And we're not finished with the Brody conversation. He's the worst.

Natalia embraces Mori who pretends to push her off but then pulls her back in for a bear hug.

CUT TO:

INT. SCHOOL GYMNASIUM - CONTINUOUS

The school bleachers are filled with students who are, SCREAMING, LAUGHING, and BLARING PARTY HORNS.

Teachers silently observe the madness from across the gym with arms crossed over their chests. Some check their wrist watches impatiently.

Student Body President, KYLE KREGGY (18, African American, handsome) YELLS commands into a microphone.

KYLE

Students of Mountgregory High! Welcome to **THE 2018 SCHOOL SPIRIT PEP RALLY!**

The crowd explodes into cheers and whoops.

KYLE

Each grade will compete in a series of friendly challenges! But only one grade can be crowned the MOUNTGREGORY CHAMPION and take home the *Gregory Golden Goblet!*

Mori, John, Natalia, and Peter are the only juniors seated amongst the chaotic bleachers.

MORI

(whispering)

Can we please go now? This shit is so rigged anyways. The seniors win every year!

JOHN

Hey. At least they cancelled 7th and 8th period. I'm content.

John leans back to relax against the wooden bleacher behind him, but is SMACKED in the head by an excited junior girl who jumps up and down to the KIDS BOP MUSIC which the gym speakers are BLARING.

KYLE

Freshman: are you ready?

Each grade responds with the intense excitement of INDECHIPHERABLE SCREAMS.

KYLE  
Sophomores?!

KYLE (CON'T)  
Lemme hear my JUNNNYAS!

MORI  
(pretending to vomit)  
Gross.

KYLE  
SENIORS! ARE YOU READY TO **DOMINATE??**

PETER  
Someone get this boy a Xan. Fast.

MORI  
Seriously.

KYLE  
First competition: STOMP OFF! Who's  
going to make the most noise? Your  
student council representatives are  
here to decide!

Kyle gestures to a panel of five preppy students, all as  
obnoxiously eager and overly zealous as himself.

KYLE  
Freshman. On your mark, get set,  
STOMP!

The freshman begin to pathetically, awkwardly stomp in  
unison. Some people getting really into it but most are just  
insecure and unsure.

Mori CHUCKLES at the stupidity. She suddenly feels something  
furry brush against her calf. She looks down and SCREAMS. She  
jumps up and begins frantically STOMPING, SCREAMING, and  
waving her hands around in the air.

John is startled out of his seats Everyone around them is  
confused and silent. Kyle turns his attention to Mori.

MORI  
(not audible)  
RAT! FUCKING RAT!

KYLE  
Looks like somebody just couldn't wait  
their turn!

Peter jumps up and begins to mimic Mori's spastic dance. He encourages Natalia and John to do the same.

The friends start a movement which has a majority of the junior class up on their feet, stomping and taunting the seniors across the room.

KYLE

WOW! Look at that Junior class spirit!  
That's the kind of passion I like to  
see people!

Mori is rushes down the bleachers still SCREAMING her head off.

She catches her breath when she suddenly notices that she is standing next to Kyle, on display for the whole school.

She blushes bright red. Kyle is enjoying himself. The Juniors continue to cheer while the other classes stand around confused.

KYLE

Well, I don't know about you guys, but  
I feel like this round has to go to  
the Junior class...

The senior class begins BOOING loudly as Kyle makes a big spectacle of shoving the mic in Mori's face.

KYLE

And may I ask, what is your name Miss  
Junior Class Spirit Leader?

Mori is paralyzed as all eyes in the auditorium rest on her. Seniors decked out in all blue Mountgregory HighSchool gear and face paint glare at her.

KYLE

Come on. Don't get shy on me now!

MORI

(weakly)  
Mori...

KYLE

Mary! You've just secured Round 1 to  
the Juniors! This is unheard of in  
Mountgregory school history. WOW--  
Isn't this just beautiful?!

Kyle's rant becomes MUFFLED. Many of the seniors flip her off.

Mori spots her friends jumping up and down and cheering for her, wearing the proudest smiles.

KYLE

To Class of 2019! To Mary!

Kyle lifts up Mori's hand victoriously. She awkwardly smiles, and then throws up her other arm in celebration.

She fist pumps at Natalia who blows her a kiss.

NATALIA

That's my best friend bitches!!! WOOO!  
 (turning to the others)  
 She's gonna *kill* me for dragging her  
 to this...

Peter quickly snaps a picture of a beaming Mori, looking down at the photograph and smiling to himself.

PETER

Maybe...

CUT TO:

INT. NATALIA'S CAR - LATE AFTERNOON

Mori and Natalia lounge comfortably in the reclined car seats of Nat's Jeep. They are parked in the lot of a local diner.

Smoke swirls above their heads and UPBEAT INDIE MUSIC HUMS on the radio.

The girls giggle uncontrollably, causing strawberry milkshake to squirt from Mori's nose. The incident only makes the pair laugh harder.

MORI

Nat!

She takes another large sip of her milkshake.

MORI (CON'T)

Dude... you've like hardly touched  
 your fries.

She picks up Natalia's cup and shakes.

MORI (CON'T)

Are you even drinking this? What's wrong are you sick? You are high aren't you?

NATALIA

Yeah... I don't know I just feel really bloated today.

She hands Mori her fries.

NATALIA (CON'T)

Here take some of my fries!

MORI

Ah! Best best friend ever!

Mori gobbles down some fries. Natalia stares with longing eyes. Then quickly averts her gaze. She starts playing with the end of one of her braids. She GASPS.

NATALIA

OH my God! Dude! That *pep rally*!!

MORI

(mouth full of fries)

Yeah. What about it?

NATALIA

I can't believe you were standing up there. In front of all those people...  
*You!*

She pokes Mori in the ribs playfully.

NATALIA (CON'T)

It must have been mortifying-- wait no... Mori-fying!

She starts laughing hysterically at her own joke. Mori is lost in somber contemplation. She continues to shove fries into her mouth like a robot.

MORI

Nah... Actually. It was... no it was just whatever.

NATALIA

Hmm? You sure it was just "whatever"?

MORI

Well... I mean it was almost kind of... nice. Actually...

NATALIA

Nice? Like how? You should have seen how red your face got!

MORI

Hey! You know I get really red when I'm embarrassed!

Mori starts to turn red.

NATALIA

Yeah and its cute. And I'll never forget how red you turned when you spilled apple all juice on me in eighth grade!!

Natalia takes a long sip of her milkshake. She smiles at her best friend.

NATALIA

But, so you said it was nice? Standing up there? Not embarrassing?

MORI

Well nice I guess so... I don't know-- it sounds silly... but I felt *important*.

NATALIA

Important?

MORI

Yeah. Like I inspired something. Even though it was totally accidental. It like made me believe in the universe for a second.

NATALIA

Wow you're stoned.

MORI

Yeah. And you know what? I think I'm gonna do it.

NATALIA

Do it? Do what? Do **who**?!

(gasping)  
Kyle?!

MORI  
Noooo, no Nat. **Focus**. I'm gonna run.  
For Paint Captain. Yeah I think I'm  
really gonna run for Paint Captain!

NATALIA  
Ohhhh. Yes! Duh! You totally should!  
But wait how does this relate to Kyle?

MORI  
It doesn't dummy. You brought him up.  
Remember?

NATALIA  
Sorry. I'm just a little high.

Natalia and Mori LAUGH.

NATALIA  
But whatever. Most important you're  
going to be the best Paint Captain  
Mountgregory has ever had!

MORI  
Woah woah don't get ahead of yourself.  
This is assuming anyone even votes for  
me.

NATALIA  
Dude stop. People definitely will!

MORI  
Yeah... I just don't know if that many  
people on crew know me. Ya know?

Natalia picks up a bong which rests gently on the floor of  
her passenger seat area and packs it.

NATALIA  
Well I know you. And I know you'll get  
elected and that you'll be great.

Natalia lights the bong. She hands it to Mori.

Panic seizes Natalia's face. She starts faking a coughing  
fit.

MORI  
You good dude?

NATALIA  
Yeah. One sec.

She steps out into

EXT. DINER PARKING LOT - CONTINUOUS

She rushes over between to cars and forces a finger down her throat. She vomits the little pink milkshake she has drinken.

She measures her wrist with her fingers. She sighs when it fits around.

She stands up, brushes herself off, and checks for any stains on her shirt before heading back to the car.

THE END.