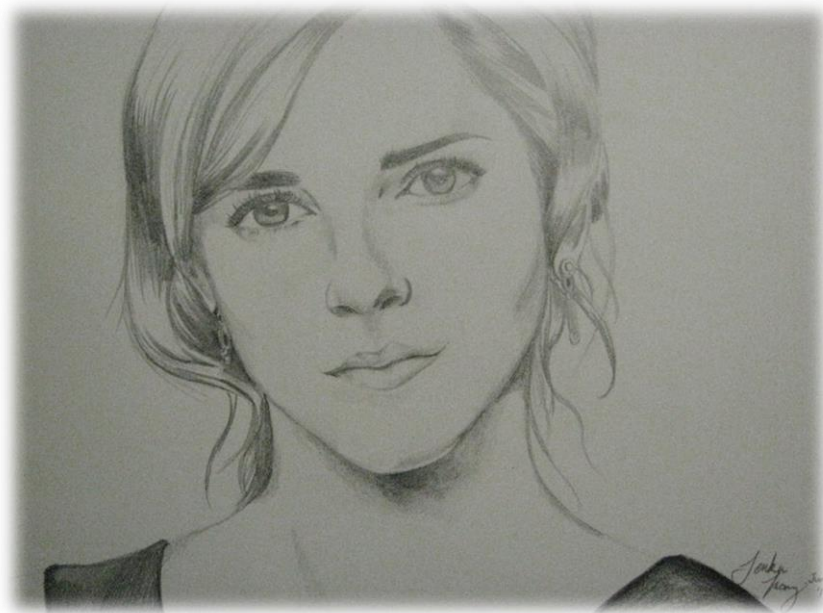
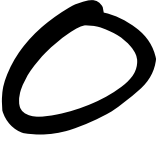


MARY AND THE NEW GIRL

A version of the story



Project Otherness
Campaigning against Violence

nce upon a time, there was a beautiful school in a land far away. Around it a rather small but tight community had been established. The building itself was painted in dashing colors and the schoolyard was practically a tiny wild forest. Students were few in this picturesque little school and they were all well behaved, hanging out together during school hours, no matter their different ages. Even the parents knew each other well and almost everybody were friends. The teachers were very well educated and truly communicating with the students, so families trusted them completely. One could say it was like a model school for this far

away land. Until a new student came along and everything changed.



This student was no different than the others. She was an only child in a single parent family, just like many others. She moved into this small community with her mother, who was working as the local judge's clerk. She was a rather good looking girl, quiet and insular by nature, even though she was an exemplary

student. Shy, though graced, no one could miss noticing how well-dressed she was as she was getting off her mother's luxury car each morning.

At first students welcomed the new student (they were really well behaved, remember?). As the days were passing by, the new girl, whose name was Helen, became quite popular; however this was not something that Mary liked.

Did we forget to mention about Mary? Well, Mary was the most good looking, popular girl at school. She was not one of the best students but this was not an obstacle to her everyday life. After

all, who cares about grades when you've got the looks?

So, when Helen moved into this small community, students and teachers were quite impressed by this special girl. Everybody but Mary, who started instantly feeling jealous of Helen as she came to realize that she was not the most popular girl at school anymore. Consequently to cope with her jealous feelings, she started a rumor, a really spiteful rumor about Helen and her family. She even found photos of her putative father and posted them on social media with catchy headings such as "what kind of father abandons his wife and daughter and runs off abroad to enjoy his life?",

or "poor daughter has to live now alone with her mother, because egocentric father does not care about them".



Naturally, Helen became unwillingly the center of all gossip at school. Her classmates began to distance themselves from her; however Helen did not complain to anybody (not

even to her mother) as she was an insular personality. Her efforts in school starting to fade out and she felt really lonely and confused.

One day she found out what Mary was posting online. She got terribly upset and did not want to school anymore. She felt exposed; why do kids behave like that? As time was passing by her mother, Kate, was getting really worried, she tried to communicate the problem with other parents within the community but she was feeling left out. Well, since she was a newer in the society it was very easy to be "banished" from the "parent's club". She also tried to figure out what was going on by asking Helen's teachers; without any success unfortunately. Finally, she got her daughter home-schooled and, after a year had passed by, she

*decided to move out and register
Helen to another school.*



*What was wrong about this story?
What would you do in order to
change it? Try to imagine what you
could do if you were:*

Mary,

*Helen's
classmates*

Helen,

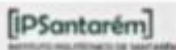
*Helen's
teachers*

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