

THE USUAL

Written by

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INT. CURIO'S COFFEE SHOP - DAY

It's quaint and homey. Brick walls, LED's, looking modern but retro in a cool sort of way. It's the place where your English Majors might take the psych Majors if they weren't too shy.

Waiting near the counter ABBY-- early 20's, bookish but bubbly underneath the thin veneer of nonchalance, waits like clockwork.

ABBY (V.O.)

Every day, I order the same thing.
A Double Ristretto Venti Half-Soy
Nonfat Organic Iced Mocha Latte
with 1 pump vanilla, 1 pump
hazelnut, 3 pumps caramel, doubled
blended, Vanilla cold foam, and 1
Sweet'N Low.

Abby checks her watch. 1 pm on the dot.

ABBY (V.O.)

I always go at 1-- because that's
when it's her shift.

Abby eye's steal a passing glance. At the counter, TEGAN-- same age, but looks a little older with her septum piercing and coiffed hair.

Abby keeps her eyes on her phone, flicking a dry screen, pretending to be busy.

TEGAN (O.S.)

One-- Double Ristretto Venti Half-
Soy Nonfat Organic Iced Mocha
Latte...

It's her turn. Abby walks up to the counter.

TEGAN (CONT'D)

... with 1 pump vanilla, 1 pump
hazelnut, 3 pumps caramel, doubled
blended, Vanilla cold foam, and 1
Sweet'N Low-- for a...

Showtime.

ABBY

Abby?

TEGAN

This says Amy.

Tegan turns the cup. The "AMY" in sharpie is unmistakable.

ABBY

Oh um... well, that's mine I guess.

TEGAN

Here you go "Abby."

ABBY (V.O.)

She said my name.

Tegan hands her the coffee. Abby takes it without making eye contact.

ABBY

So, Tegan-- is it? I was wondering--

Abby looks up, Tegan is gone. She's at some machine, back to work.

ABBY (CONT'D)

(to herself)

Alright, well... see you tomorrow.

Abby sees herself out.

TITLE CARD: THE USUAL

CUT TO:

EXT. UNIVERSITY QUAD - DAY

Abby sits on the grass. She's holding a notebook with countless scratched out passages. All ideas for what to say to Tegan.

ABBY

Hey, Men I Trust are going be playing next month, I remember you wore a cool shirt of theirs. I don't know. Would you like to-- No. No. No.

Abby scratches that idea too. She exhales collecting herself.

CUT TO:

INT. CURIO'S COFFEE SHOP - DAY

Abby stands in line. Her eyes darting until she spots Tegan sneaking a hit of her vape. Abby prepares herself mentally for the moment.

ABBY (V.O.)

You can do this. Just say something normal. You can be normal. You're cool. You're fine. You can do this.

Abby steps up to the window.

ABBY

One Double Ristretto Venti Half-Soy Nonfat Organic Iced Mocha Latte with 1 pump vanilla, 1 pump hazelnut, 3 pumps caramel, doubled blended, Vanilla cold foam, and 1 Sweet'N Low.

ABBY (V.O.)

Double Ristretto Venti Half-Soy Nonfat Organic Iced Mocha Latte with 1 pump vanilla, 1 pump hazelnut, 3 pumps caramel, doubled blended, Vanilla cold foam, and 1 Sweet'N Low.

Abby exhales.

ABBY (V.O.)

See. You got this. Now the waiting game.

Abby stands where she normal stands. Buried in her phone until her order is called.

TEGAN

Abby?

Abby rushes over.

ABBY

Thanks!

Abby stands at the counter smiling anything but innocently.

Tegan gestures with the cup, Abby doesn't grab it.

ABBY (CONT'D)

You remembered my name.

TEGAN

It says it on the cup.

ABBY (V.O.)

STUPID!

ABBY

Oh right...

Abby grabs the cup.

CUT TO:

EXT. UNIVERSITY QUAD - DAY

Abby furiously scratches out more passages in her notebook.

CUT TO:

INT. CURIO'S COFFEE SHOP - DAY

Abby waits in line. She orders the usual.

She stands at the pick-up counter. Tegan is there. Tegan puts Abby's order on the counter but leaves before abby can say anything.

CUT TO:

EXT. UNIVERSITY QUAD - DAY

Abby reclines onto her back, looking at the sky. She imagines the infinite permutations of first dates. What a cool couple they'd be.

BEGIN MONTAGE:

Abby and Tegan having a picnic.

Abby and Tegan at a trendy, indie concert.

Abby and Tegan on a cozy park bench.

Abby and Tegan wrapped in a warm blanket on the couch.

END MONTAGE

Abby sits up.

ABBY (V.O.)
You're worth it.

Abby opens her notebook. She writes frantically.

ABBY
Hey Tegan, I was wondering if I
could get your snap.
(she reviews the note)
Hey Tegan, I was wondering--

CUT TO:

EXT. CURIO'S COFFEE SHOP - DAY

Abby walks towards her favorite spot, on time as per usual.

ABBY
... I was wondering if you'd like
to go out some time...

She takes a breath and then walks inside.

CUT TO:

INT. CURIO'S COFFEE SHOP - DAY

Abby enters. Tegan is at the order window this time. Now's her chance.

ABBY
Hi Tegan. Long time no see huh?

TEGAN
Hi Abby? It's Abby right?

ABBY
(nodding excitedly)
Yep.

TEGAN
(Looking at the long line
behind Abby)
What do you want Abby?

ABBY
Oh, you know... the usual.

Abby smiles ear to ear.

TEGAN
And what would that be?

Abby's heart shatters. Her smile drops to the floor. Agony. She recoils, like a rubber bullet struck her chest.

TEGAN (CONT'D)
You alright?

ABBY
Fine. I-- I just realized. I'm not
feeling too well. I-- I don't want
coffee today.

She steps out of line.

ABBY (CONT'D)
(muttering)
Sorry.

Abby limps to the exit.

CUT TO:

EXT. CURIO'S COFFEE SHOP - CONTINUOUS

Abby exits and pauses to catch her breath, holding her knees for support. She takes a moment to breath deeply. She wipes away small welling tears before she opens her backpack. She pulls out her notebook.

Abby walks over to the trash and throws it away.

The notebook of her daydreams sits in the trash as she walks down the street.

FADE TO BLACK.

THE END