

## Keily | An I-Wouldn't-Mind-Killing-You Look

### Keily

#### An I-Wouldn't-Mind-Killing-You Look

His pink lips were twitching; he was trying to hide a smile. Even though this boy looked like the incarnation of Adonis himself, the look he was giving me screamed trouble.

*Uh...*

"Yes?" I asked. My tone was level, but my face was already burning up.

His eyes scanned my body from head to toe. I could already feel him passing judgment: *fat and lazy*.

"So?" he said, bringing me out of my daze.

"Huh?"

His lips pulled upward in a teasing smirk; my face flushed harder. "I asked if you're new here. If I'd seen you before, I'd *definitely* remember."

I blushed with shame as his dark eyes roamed over my body, over each fold and curve, before settling on my thighs.

His face, body, attitude—heck, even the way he was seated on his chair like a king—reminded me of all the entitled kids who thought they owned the world, the ones who ridiculed people like me at every given chance.

"Yeah, I'm new. So, what?" My voice came out harsher than I intended. I was trying not to sound weak, but I ended up sounding like a snob. *Good work*.

"So, I can't take my eyes off you."

I did a double take. His eyes were penetrating mine. I couldn't hold eye contact, and I looked away, stuttering. I'd heard it all before—this one especially.

It sounded like a compliment until they followed up with *How can I take my eyes off you when you take up so much space?*

I snatched my notebook from beneath his hand. “Well, I’m glad you’re enjoying the show. You seem to have nothing better to do.”

I turned my head away and pushed my chair back, preparing to leave. I’d already decided I didn’t want to be anywhere near this Haynes or have any reason to associate with him.

A scoff came from my side, and without even looking, I knew he was glaring at me.

“With all that jiggling fat, you sure got an attitude.” His words crushed the little confidence I had gathered.

I really wanted to bite back, but my tongue froze, and instead, I stood up and collected my books into my arms.

“Oh, and she’s blushing now too. Pink suits you, Piggy.”

His jibe followed me out into the hall.

*Asshole!*

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I shoved my books inside my locker and slammed it shut, my actions rather forceful. Haynes’s insult still burned in my mind, dampening my mood.

Coward that I was, my locker took the brunt of my anger instead of the boy who was responsible for it.

“Keily!” Addison was sprint-walking toward me, another girl—who’d introduced herself as Lola this morning—following her.

“How’s your day going?” I asked when she reached me.

“So far, so good.”

I looked at Lola, not wanting her to feel left out.

She just shrugged. Lola didn’t talk much.

“C’mon, let’s go. Sadhvi must be waiting for us,” Addison said, hooking her arms with mine and Lola’s and rushing us to the cafeteria.

“Anyway, what about you?” she asked. “Any scandals yet that us cheerleaders must gossip about?”

I let out an ugly snort. “I’ll let you know.”

“I heard that your English class is taught by Mr. Crones.”

I nodded.

“He’s a pretty cool guy—annoying, mind you, but cool. Although this entire year, you’re going to be saddled with lots of assignments, so be ready. We got stuck with Old Man Whitman, that bitter crow.”

The smell of food assaulted my nose as we entered the cafeteria. The booming noise of students’ chatter filled the large room. My mood lightened until my eyes landed on *Haynes*.

He was already looking at me. He was at the table just beside the window, sitting there like a king on his throne.

His eyes narrowed, and I looked away. *Jerk*.

“Let me introduce you to the boys,” Addison said. She waved at the guys at *his* table. *No!* Other than him, there were four more guys; two of them waved back.

“It’s okay. We don’t have to disturb them,” I insisted, but Addison had already begun dragging us to their table.

Despite my reluctance, she pulled me with her as if I weighed nothing, and that was saying a lot. *What does this girl eat?!*

“You’ll love them, except James. He’s a prick.”

We reached their table. Addison high-fived a blond guy. Lola greeted them all with a single nod. And I looked anywhere but at *him*, all the while feeling his glare.

“Is she the cousin you were talking about?” Blond Guy asked Addison.

Addison nodded. “Keily, this is Lucas. Lucas, Keily.”

“Hey.” I offered a shy smile, feeling the warmth of Lucas’s attention. He was undeniably handsome, with sharp features, green eyes, and heart-shaped lips—he had the kind of face girls probably swooned over.

“It’s good to have a beautiful face around,” Lucas said with a genuine smile. “I hope we’ll have some of our classes together. A cousin of Addison is a friend of mine.”

“She better remain your friend. We don’t want you bringing down our rep by dating a cow,” a voice commented. *Haynes.*

My smile dropped. *That hurt.*

“Shut up, James,” Addison glared at him. So, he was called James. “You just want everyone to be as miserable as you, don’t you?”

James Haynes rolled his eyes. Still, his tension hung in the air, thick and unsettling.

Lucas stepped in, his gaze flicking between James and Addison. “Come on, man. What’s your deal today? You’ve been in a bad mood since History.”

“I’m fine,” James muttered, but his eyes locked on me again

Addison huffed, putting her arm around my shoulder. I felt like a dwarf, a grateful dwarf. She’d stood up for me. If I could only do the same for myself.

“We’re leaving,” she spat. “Sadhvi is waiting for us anyway.”

As we began to walk, Lucas stopped us. “Hey, don’t let this sourpuss ruin your mood. Sadhvi must’ve found other girls by now. Don’t go.” He looked at me. “Keily, I apologize for him. He’s having a bad day.”

“That’s not an excuse,” Lola muttered.

Lucas smiled apologetically. “She’s right. Look, why don’t you sit with us? I want to get to know you, Keily.” His smile was playful now, a little more flirtatious, and I could feel my face warm at the attention.

I noticed James tense, his knuckles turning white where they gripped the edge of the table. He was probably holding in some remark about my weight and how I’d eat too much.

Addison, after a moment's hesitation, relented. "Fine. But you're buying." I had hoped she wouldn't, but by now, we all had established she was our leader. We did what she said.

Lucas grinned, victorious. "Of course. Anything for Keily."

I settled in the seat beside Lucas, hyper aware of how much space I occupied. It didn't help that James was right in front of me, looking like he wanted to chop my head off for sitting beside his friend.

*Am I that bad?*

The other guys introduced themselves. Matt wore glasses, which gave him a look of maturity. He, Axel, and Keith went to grab our lunch. It was their treat, after all.

Lucas drew me back in as he leaned closer, his voice dropping as if we were sharing a secret. "So, Keily, how's your first day going? Not bored with all this yet?"

"Not much. Teachers here are pretty okay."

He flashed another smile. "Good to know. And if anyone here gives you trouble"—he cast a pointed glance in James's direction—"you let me know. I'll handle it."

James scoffed again, louder this time, but said nothing. I caught his clenched jaw and the way his gaze hardened when Lucas leaned in closer to me. He looked like he wanted to explode but was holding himself back.

"You don't have to play the hero, Lucas. She's already got me for that," Addison chimed.

"Yeah, but Addy, I want to impress her." Lucas pouted dramatically, shooting me a wink that made my stomach flip. Why was he being so sweet?

A chuckle slipped past me at his adorable shenanigans, but it stopped as soon as it came when I saw James looking at me with narrowed eyes.

Matt, Keith, and Axel returned, carrying food for twenty people for just the eight of us.

Everyone dug in like the hungry animals teenagers are, but I was cautious not to take too much—especially with James sitting here. I didn't want to give him any more ammunition.

It felt like my every action was controlled by how he'd react.

As the food reached our mouths, the chitchat at the table ensued.

I learned that Lucas was the captain of our football team. I had suspected him of being athletic with all the muscles and height he had.

James was also on the team. The two seemed to be good friends. I gathered as much when Lucas kept throwing insults at James and received equally harsh ones back.

According to Matt, James and Lucas were their key players. I took him at his word.

Keith and Axel were on the track team. Addison spent most of the time talking to them about their next tournament.

Lola listened quietly as Matt whispered in her ear. He was so close that he was almost sitting on her lap.

"They're dating," Lucas informed me when he caught me glancing at them.

Lucas asked me about my town and previous school. I answered all his questions, and he listened patiently. It was flattering that a guy like him would pay any attention to me. His amiable nature gave me the courage to ask him questions myself.

When he saw me struggling to keep up football talk, he switched the conversation to the subjects he was taking. I learned we shared Calculus and PE.

This lunch would have been the best I'd had in a long time if not for James Haynes. I tried to block him out, but it was difficult when his simmering anger across the table was more menacing than any word he might've thrown at me.

Thankfully, he didn't make another remark about me. He didn't even say a word to me, silently settling on an I-wouldn't-mind-killing-you look.

This was going to be a long year.

Next Chapter

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