

SIDWELL FRIENDS
(excerpt)

Written by
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INT. SUNSHINE/GOVERNMENT CLASSROOM - DAY

A knock on the door, and then it opens. Emmen pokes her head in.

TODD FAIRLINGTON THE THIRD, 15, a fast-talking, preppy, douchey yet suave Harvard-bound overachiever looks up from the whiteboard.

Several students sit around a large group of desks:

Todd's best friend EVERETT BROOKSBANK, 17, Cornell, who can't stand

JOHN STAUNTON, 15, Harvard hopeful, who's in orchestra with

TING HUANG, 18, Dartmouth, who eats lunch with

ALEXI PROKOFIEV, 17, Stanford hopeful, who plays chess with

RACHEL EVENSMITH, 16, Princeton hopeful who is dating

TOM MACALESTER, 18, Princeton, who used to date

SHRAVYA KUMAR, 17, Yale, and

JENNA WILSON-POWELL, 16, Harvard hopeful (but with her grades, will probably end up at Cornell).

They engage in lively discussion cut short by Emmen's entrance. They all turn to look at her expectantly.

TODD
Can I help you?

Emmen steps inside and closes the door. Todd exchanges a confused look with Everett.

EMMEN
This is the Sunshine Club, right?

In the back corner at Mr. Sinclair's desk sits the substitute teacher, who at first glance looks like a student. ROB MULLIGAN, 20, no interest whatsoever in the Ivies OR Stanford, looks up from carefully ripping an assignment sheet into strips.

TODD
Yes...

EMMEN
Well, I'm here to join the club.

TODD
(all business)
All right. What's your name?

EMMEN
Emmen-

TODD

Yeah, I actually know your name, so never mind. Here's how it works, Emmen. We decide if we want you here. Contrary to our rather lighthearted name, we're a very busy organization with a very full agenda. We can't accept people who won't pull their weight. What's your GPA?

EMMEN

Four point oh.

Rob, who has since gone back to his very important activity, raises his eyebrows, impressed.

TODD

Not bad. Think you could pull it up to a four-two by the end of the semester?

EMMEN

(surprised)
Um- yeah.

TODD

Great. Like I said, we don't mess around here. Right now-

EMMEN

So what is it you actually do?

TODD

Right now we're in the middle of planning a career day for Jackson Middle School. Do you know where that is?

Emmen shakes her head. She puts down her backpack and takes off her jacket.

TODD (CONT'D)

It's north of the Hill, in an underprivileged neighborhood. Don't get comfy just yet. We're not done assessing you.

Appalled, Emmen looks around. Is anyone else hearing this?!

TODD (CONT'D)

So, why do you want to do this?

EMMEN

Honestly, it was the only thing-

TODD

Not good enough. We don't take people out of pity here. If you're going to-

EMMEN

Listen, I came in here because it was the only club that looked like it might not be filled with a bunch of goof-off slackers. Plus, what you're doing actually sounds interesting. But it looks like I turned out to be the only goof-off slacker here, so that's all right. I'm sure Men's Lacrosse would be happy to have me.

A snort of laughter comes from Everett. He composes himself quickly.

TING

(sotto, to Alexi)
She interrupted Todd.

ALEXI

(sotto, to Ting)
What's he going to do?

Ting glances around to the other members, who flash her similar looks.

Emmen puts on her coat.

TODD

Listen, Emmen. I'm... hmm. I think I'm going to let you stay. I like you. You're quick on your feet.

She picks up her bag. Todd walks over and pulls it back down, and takes off her coat.

TODD (CONT'D)

Plus, your dad is making my dad look pretty freaking good right now. So have a seat. Help us plan this thing.

SHRAVYA

Todd, I think it's actually time for us to go right now, so....

Todd kills her sentence with a look.

TODD

(to Emmen)
Come back next time. Right now we're going to go read books to poor kids, but you can't come, because you don't have the form. It's online; you can bring it to the next meeting.

They all stand and gather their belongings. They file out of the classroom. As Todd exits, he stops and looks at her.

TODD (CONT'D)
 One more thing. This is actually
 really important. Who can you bring
 to career day?

EMMEN
 What do you mean?

TODD
 I mean, everyone in the Sunshine
 Club has to bring someone to speak
 to the kids. Otherwise you're out.

EMMEN
 (thinking)
 Uh...

TODD
 Chief Justice, District Attorney,
 and Secretary of State are all
 taken. Obviously, I'd think twice
 about bringing your Dad. But
 perhaps another senator?

EMMEN
 How about the Senate Minority
 Leader?

TODD
 Senator Asborn. Great lady, if
 you're into immigration reform and
 all that jazz. Yeah, sounds good.
 See you!

Todd exits. Emmen thinks of something and quickly follows him
 out.

INT. HALLWAY - CONTINUOUS

EMMEN
 Todd!

Todd turns around.

EMMEN (CONT'D)
 How long before career day?

TODD
 Two weeks. Good luck!

Todd bounds away toward the exit. Emmen stands still, daunted
 by the task ahead of her.