

Damocles

Daniel Prior

Sarah had never been a good student. She talked or fell asleep during lessons, she smoked on the sly and in the past she had harassed other classmates. She had only enrolled in high school to avoid working, and her move was working out for her; despite her behavior problems, it was very rare for her to come down from the remarkable high.

She hated in a profuse and certain way the entire faculty. Including the professor of History of Philosophy, Daniel. She just hated them for diametrically opposite reasons. While she considered the rest of the teachers little less than mediocre or undeserving of her position, towards Daniel she processed a sincere admiration.

It was just hearing him talk and her mind would drift. He was fluent in speech, a gift Sarah herself possessed, only it was deeply frustrated for her.

That day, Daniel, as if reading her thoughts, invited her to get up, and took her seat in the class, and didn't say anything else.

Sarah understood the situation from the context. She first went straight to the “teacher’s” seat, and then she stood in front of the blackboard.

She remembered what Daniel said in the first class: “In Science they need a laboratory, in Mathematics a blackboard and in Philosophy we need ourselves”.

So she ignored the blackboard and the chalk and turned to address the rest of the class, to which Daniel now seemed to belong.

It was then that she realized that something was terribly wrong. Thumbtacks. She had thumbtacks all over her throat. Something screamed at her that if she said anything even remotely out of character she would be seriously hurt.

She spent several minutes in this situation of terror.

Daniel threw the eraser against Sarah's shoulder:

—You don't come here to sleep.— For this you stay at home, kay? Sarah was glad it had only been a dream.

—This is not the Elementary,— continued Daniel, —I'm not going to make you copy two hundred times.

— That would be just ridiculous.

»Instead, we're going to do something else, something where you might actually learn something. Yesterday we talked about the legend of the Sword of Damocles, why don't you tell the rest of the class about it?

The first thing Sarah did was swallow, with which she felt great relief. Later, she set out to tell the

legend of Damocles haphazardly when her head congealed under pressure what was happening.

Without giving her time to think that it had been a coincidence, Daniel winked at her and smiled mockingly.