

High School's Not Forever

20
Variety
Blows!



Jane Bluestein
and
Eric D. Katz

you
are
dumb

→
What are
you looking
at?



CHAPTER ONE



Delusions, Distortions and Daily Struggles: The High-School Reality

EVERYONE experiences high school differently. Some love it, some hate it, and some are just doing time. Here are some examples of how rules, restrictions and realities play out in high schools around the country. Take a good look and see if you recognize your own high school experience.

THE DAILY GRIND



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In the mornings, I'm already not in a good mood knowing that all I have to look forward to is going to a class to learn about dead guys and math formulas that I will never use again.

—Anthony, 15

Today, when I woke up, my heart was an emotion darker than black. I bet it's going to be a bad day. Why do I have to be me? I hate myself. I'm ugly, stupid and unlucky. I'm so unlucky that if I picked a fortune cookie out of a box of a hundred, I'd pick the only pessimistic one. Life is frustrating, complicated and confusing. It's 6:30 A.M. so I better go take a shower and shave my legs, not like it's going to help my appearance.

Figures, I missed a couple spots. I got a lot of bloody slashes from the blade. Oh well, a few Harry Potter Band-Aids will fix that. Next, what should I do with my hair? The only thing I like about it is the black gleam to it. Oh man, the curl is coming in the back. I better brush my hair before the curl discovers a counterattack. Finally, my face, wow . . . when did that get here? I'll need some concealer for that. I reach in the cupboard and pull out some shimmery powder the color of vanilla and dust it on top of my freckled cheeks.

This is as good as it's gonna get.

Mom made breakfast for me—some chai tea and two eggs, looking at me. They seem to mock me.

Okay, I'm at school for first block . . . oh wait, did I brush my teeth? Damn it! I'm so tired, I'm getting paranoid. Why do some days I feel like I want to cry? It's probably just a hormonal/mental thing; something else to add to my list of problems. Anyway, I have to go to next block.

The day is only half over.

Oh wait, my friend is up ahead but when I call her name and wave, she must not see or hear me, but the rest of the hallway does and now they're staring. I look like a complete idiot. Ummm . . . was that the final bell or warning bell? Gotta run.

I'm in Non-Western World and we are learning about Asian rulers. I can't concentrate. I wish I were an empress—ahhhh! No, bad Emily, bad. Focus on



the teacher. Unfortunately, the teacher has a case of *voxophilia* (love of hearing one's own voice). As a result, the rest of the class was blah blah.

Getting through the hallways is hell with people who can't walk and talk at the same time, the "popular" people who act like they are gods and the rest of us are untouchables, and the very tall ones you can't see around no matter what angle you crane your head. They should really put traffic lights in here because I'm beginning to feel herded. Dang it, I missed my freakin' class door. I'll get it in the next round I make. Cool! I think that cute guy just smiled at me. Nope, wait one sec. He was smiling at the pretty blonde behind me.

I'm at lunch, and I still feel like crying. I spilled salsa on me and now I wanna burrow into a hole and die.

After lunch, I got my math test back from Tuesday. An F! Why doesn't the teacher just put "You're a stupid cow" or "How did you make it to high school?" on the front of the test? The girl next to me says, "Man, this test was a killer!" I look down at her score, and she got an A.

Shut up! I think to myself. I just glare at her.

Whew! Last class of the day. Thank God. Today, nothing special happened . . . again. I wake up each morning hoping that maybe, just maybe, a guy will actually take interest in me or I'll get no homework. But who am I kidding? That won't ever happen, but I hang on to those ideas by a thread.

When my mom picked me up and drove home that day with the windows down (but in the "loser cruiser" so I sat in back with the tinted windows), I feel . . . I feel . . . like an exotic princess—beautiful and full of passion. Maybe I won't go home and blast Rob Thomas's song "Living Dead Girl" because no longer do I sense an oncoming mood swing screaming at me to slowly back away from humanity before I blast off. I actually feel quite good. The only problem I have now is how to last until the weekend.

—Emily, 17



Hookups, Breakups and
BREAKDOWNS

Hanging In,
Holding On and
Looking Back

Your survival guide to the maze that is the high-school experience



SAVING GRACES &
POSITIVE PLACES

Bonding, Buds
and Betrayal

We all experience high school differently. Some love it, some hate it, and some are just doing time.

With real-life stories from teens across the country—as well as high school “survivors”—this book paints a real picture of how teens like you feel about the struggles and triumphs of the daily grind and how they get through it.

If you ever feel like you're on the sidelines or that the pressure to perform, conform or maintain appearances gets to be too much, this is the book for you.

Bleddied, Bruised and Verbally Abused

DELUSIONS, DISTORTIONS
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