

THE DATE TO SAVE



Stephanie Kate Strohm

Point

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THE PROBLEM WITH POST-ITS

ANGELICA MARIE HUTCHERSON, *me*: Colin Von Kohorn has the most annoying Post-it note collection in the entire world.

BECCA HORN, *best friend*: Do I care about Colin Von Kohorn's Post-it notes? No. No, I do not. Do I care about our sad rag of a school newspaper, the *Prepster*? Definitely not. Do I care about the opinion of said sad rag's monomaniacal editor, Colin Von Kohorn? I think you know the answer to that one. I care about his opinion even less than I care about his Post-its.

ANGELICA: They're black. Seriously. Black. The Post-it was designed to *highlight* important information, to call attention to where attention needs to be paid, and Colin specifically chose Post-its that obfuscate information. They're the anti-Post-it, basically. And they tell you pretty much everything you need to know about Colin Von Kohorn.

BECCA: Angelica, however, has still somehow failed to grasp the fact that Colin's marginal position of authority has no real power over anyone, and he is in no way, shape, or form an arbiter of literary merit. Which is exactly why I'm starting my own underground literary magazine, *Riot Prep!* It's coming any day now, and it will blow this school's collective hive mind.

ANGELICA: Listen—I get Becca’s point about Colin, I do. He’s a freckled menace on a power trip. But I still want to be in the *Prepster*, and that makes it sort of impossible to *not* care about what Colin thinks. Avery, my brother’s girlfriend, is always going on and on about how validation can only come from within, and emailing me gifs with pictures of unicorns wearing sunglasses with captions like #GIRLBOSS or *No One Can Stop a Self-Actualized Female!* But I obviously know nothing about self-actualization, because I don’t understand why a unicorn in sunglasses is a #GIRLBOSS, and it bugs me to no end that Colin won’t publish any of my stories. Is it so wrong to want recognition from the establishment? I’m only human!

BECCA: Oh, Colin Von Kohorn is totally the establishment. He’s everything *wrong* with the establishment.

ANGELICA: He’s part of the West Coast establishment, at least. Because I’m pretty sure that Colin is a direct descendant of nineteenth-century shipping magnate Petyr Von Kohorn, who at one point owned most of Northern California. And if owning part of a state doesn’t make you the establishment, I don’t know what does.

COLIN VON KOHORN, *editor in chief of the Prepster, San Anselmo Prep’s only officially recognized publication*: Seriously, Angelica? I finally give you an assignment, and this is what you want to talk about? Post-its? This is not filling me with optimism for your final piece. No, I don’t special-order my Post-its. They’re right there in the aisle at Target. Why black? Yellow is

a frivolous color. I'm putting together a piece of serious journalism, not an Easter egg hunt. Black is clean. Timeless. Precise.

Note: This was almost as bad as the time Colin went on his font rant in English class. Yes, Colin, we all know how you feel about Helvetica.—AMH

ANGELICA: A black Post-it meant doom. That was Colin's signature move, a sticky black note that signifies rejection. There it was, stuck perfectly perpendicular to the top of my meticulously typed page. It was like a pirate flag appearing in a previously calm sea. Next to the Post-it note—which, again, totally defeats the point of using the Post-it note, why use it if you're going to write *on the page?*—he'd scribbled something. After several minutes of squinting at his chicken scratch—seriously, it is *impossible* to read—I deciphered it. “Sorry. Not what we're looking for.—CVK.”

COLIN: Angelica isn't a *bad* writer. Not at all. Especially if you're into genre fiction. Personally, it's not my thing, all those spaceship and alien freedom fighters and government drones whizzing about.

Note: The characters in my stories don't “whiz,” which Colin would know if he'd read anything I'd written with even the slightest attention to detail.

BECCA: Colin wouldn't know good writing if it jumped out of his Moleskine notebook and bit him on the nose. Angelica is a *great* writer. Which is something that pretty much everyone *but* Colin seems to realize. She's been published, actually published,

in a literary magazine! Like one that people subscribe to and *pay* for, unlike the *Prepster*, which they can't even give away. This is exactly why I don't understand *why* Angelica gives a flying fig what Colin thinks about her writing.

Note: I was published in a literary magazine for children when I was eight years old and paid the grand sum of five dollars. Not exactly impressive. But Becca is an extremely loyal best friend, and the kind of person who will defend the literary merits of "The Little Ladybug Poem, by Angelica Marie Hutcherson, Age Eight" until the day she dies.

COLIN: I wasn't trying to give Angelica a hard time. But, as always, I was only accepting material that aligned with my vision for the *Prepster*.

BECCA: Colin's "vision" for the *Prepster* is to induce sleep within fifteen seconds of having struggled through reading the first paragraph.

ANGELICA: Becca will never get it. She laughs in the face of rejection. When she didn't make marching band last year, she tipped her tuba in the trash can and shouted, "I REJECT YOUR MILITARISTIC MUSICAL EMPIRE," and then founded a punk tuba collective that somehow got school funding, even though she was the only member.

BECCA: I decided to retire Blitzkrieg Tuba Factory this year, as it was time for me to pursue other interests. But I'll still do my cover of "I Wanna Be Sedated" by request.