

PUMPKIN PRINCESS

Written by

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A skinny, 18 year-old girl with spongy auburn hair, and big, gleamy eyes, hidden behind bushy eyebrows and a thick black frame, dreams away while sitting in a high school classroom.

This is CINDER, who secretly stares at the seat right in front of her.

Sitting on it, is 18- year-old MAX. Dark hair and piercing blue eyes.

Cinder sighs as he runs his fingers through his hair and adjusts the cuffs on his elegant navy blue shirt.

She bites her lip and sniffs the air, catching a whiff of his expensive geranium-scented cologne.

MRS. CLEARY, the typical American high school teacher in her 30s, approaches Cinder's desk, bringing her back to reality.

MRS. CLEARY

Cinder? Cinder? Cinder Ellen James
are you joining us for class this
morning?

CINDER

No! I mean, yes, of course.

All around her, teenagers range from being half-asleep to texting and gossiping.

Cinder glances over at the walls only to have big, colorful cardboards with words written on them, the American, Chinese and French flags and a big white board with sentences in these same languages remind her that she is still sitting in her "Second Language" class.

Mrs. Cleary hands Cinder a paper with a big, red A+ on it.

MRS. CLEARY

Keep up the good work Cinder.

A few rows behind her, Mrs. Cleary hands back papers to ALEX and REGINA, two a gorgeous-looking 18 year-old girls.

MRS. CLEARY (CONT'D)

Alex, please make sure next time
you understand the assignment. And
you, Regina, well, additional help
wouldn't do you any harm either.

REGINA

Mrs. Cleary this is not fair! This assignment was, like, so hard!

MRS. CLEARY

You should ask Cinder for help.

As Mrs. Cleary argues with the girls, Max subtly turns to Cinder.

MAX

Cinder?

CINDER

Oh, hi Max.

MAX

Hey, thanks for helping me out with the paper!

She smiles, humbly.

MAX (CONT'D)

I'm kinda getting the hand of this! What was French for 'Orange'?

CINDER

(with French accent)

Orange

Max gives it a thought, attempting to look interesting.

MAX

Hmm, yeah.

He is about to write it down in his notebook.

MAX (CONT'D)

Could you spell that for me?

A beat.

MAX (CONT'D)

Oh, damn! Before I forget. Listen, I kinda have this party tonight.

CINDER

Party? That sounds great!

MAX

Yeah, well I've been meaning to ask... If you're not too busy...

Cinders face lights up.

MAX (CONT'D)

Would you mind helping me out with the final as well? I don't think I'll have time to do it.

CINDER

Oh.

MAX

I totally understand if you don't want to.

CINDER

No, it's fine.

He shoots her a smile.

CINDER (CONT'D)

By the way, I really like your shirt.

MAX

I know!! Seriously you can't imagine the compliments I've been getting all day! It's like everyone just knows it's SO iconically me!

The bell rings and Cinder exits after everyone else.

2 INT. SCHOOL COMMON ROOM- LATER

2

Cinder sits all alone at the school common room, doodling on her notebook.

After several sentences in French, she softly scribbles 'Je t'aime' followed by 'Max' and a heart.

All of a sudden, a hand yanks away her notebook.

ALEX

Awww, how cute.

Cinder turns to find Alex and Regina, along with two other great looking 18 year old girls, IVANA and CAROLINA, surrounding her. They all look at the notebook and laugh cynically.

CAROLINA

Are you going to the party Cinder?

ALEX

Guess who'll be there!

CINDER
Can I have my notebook back?

IVANA
Why? We can just show it to Max for you!

CINDER
I swear! If you do that I'll--

REGINA
You'll do what, loser?

The girls push Cinder all the way against a long cabinet with different art supplies.

REGINA (CONT'D)
Answer the question, stupid.

Ivana spots a bucket of orange paint and swiftly grabs it.

CINDER
I... I-

Ivana pours the paint on Cinder's head and they all laugh.

Alex finds Cinder's essay tucked inside the notebook.

ALEX
That's too bad. I know for a fact Max likes Cinderellas.

CAROLINA
And you're more like Cinderella's old, ugly pumpkin.

The girls leave as Cinder tries to wipe the paint off her glasses.

ALEX
See you later, Cinder Pumpkin.

CINDER
Great.

3 INT. CINDER'S BEDROOM- LATER

3

Cinder sits by her perfectly organized desk. On the walls, we can see framed diplomas and a picture of Van Gogh's sunflowers.

She browses pictures of models and stereotypical beauty icons, the antithesis of her appearance. Her eyes fill up with tears. Her hair is still orange from the paint.

A knock on the door.

TOM, a stylish, girly and flamboyant 19 year-old skips in cheerfully.

TOM

I saw your emo status on facebook and came right over- oh... new hair dye?

CINDER

Nope, went swimming in a Nickelodeon logo.

TOM

Oh, pooh.

Cinder puts her head down n her desk, defeated.

TOM (CONT'D)

Is this about Max again? Mr. "Oh look at me, I'm larger than life and twice as handsome"?

CINDER

There's a party tonight. He'll probably meet a super hot Nina Dobrev clone while I stay here getting the pumpkin-ness out of me.

TOM

Then go, silly.

CINDER

Yeah right.

TOM

Like, for realsies. What's stopping you? Alex and her friends? Please! It's called jealousy, sweetheart. You can spin three times around their cellulite-covered asses.

Cinder looks at her screen once more.

CINDER

Do you really believe I have a chance?

TOM
 I still think any guy who needs
 help spelling 'orange' isn't worth
 your time, but what the hell...

Tom pulls out his phone.

TOM (CONT'D)
 Or would you rather spend the rest
 of your life believing you'll only
 be as good as a pumpkin?

Cinder sighs and shakes her head 'no'.

TOM (CONT'D)
 (On the phone)
 Wendy? Tom here. Yeah, I need a
 favor. What do you know of a party
 going on tonight?

Cinder researches 'sexy make up tutorial' on her computer.

Montage of Tom helping Cinder try different outfits from her
 colorful closet, doing her hair with an iron, curler and hair
 dryer.

We see them studying pictures of models and celebrities.

4 EXT. HOUSE PARTY - NIGHT 4

Tom approaches an upscale house with a gorgeous-looking,
 skinny girl with flowing hair in a sparkling outfit. Cinder
 looks unrecognizably dashing.

The front yard is packed with teenagers entering and exiting.

5 INT. HOUSE PARTY - NIGHT 5

The place is wild. Everyone dressed in dark attire and
 dancing red lights make everything seem hell-like.

Teenagers go nuts with booze. Half-full red SOLO cups lie
 everywhere.

Cinder takes a deep breath and spots Max near a long table
 that's being used as the bar. Bottles of different shapes,
 sizes and colors stand in various rows.

She trips, accidentally leaning into the bar table, grabbing
 Max's attention.

Max approaches her, tumbling.

MAX

Hey...

CINDER

Oh... hi

MAX

Say, do I know you?

Cinder, smiles.

MAX (CONT'D)

DAMN! Cinder! Wow! What can I get for you?

CINDER

Like a drink?

MAX

Yeah, like a drink.

CINDER

Surprise me... I'm up for anything!

MAX

Awesome! I have just the thing!

While Max turns to pour a couple of drinks, Cinder struggles to get her balance back and calm herself down.

Max hands her a fluorescent purple shot.

MAX (CONT'D)

Purple slime. The definite bomb!

CINDER

This has alcohol right?

MAX

More like 4 different kinds, yeah.
Is it too much?

CINDER

No way!

She chugs it down, then tumbles a bit, adjusting herself to the strong flavor.

CINDER (CONT'D)

Is that all you've got?

Montage of Cinder and Max drinking and getting closer to each other.

6 INT. STAIRWAY- NIGHT 6

Now, in Cinder's eyes, everyone in the party wears pale blue outfits that match the dancing lights.

In the middle of the dance floor, bodies move up and down nearly merging into a single creature with 50 heads.

Everyone claps and dances seductively to the music.

Max holds Cinder by the hand and clears the way for them to go through.

Cinder dances into Max's arms and when they couldn't be closer, he kisses her. Bliss.

Cinder and Max walk up the stairs, bumping into BRIANNA, a cheery and good-looking 18 year-old girl, who immediately runs towards the door after noticing them go towards the bedrooms.

7 INT. BEDROOM- NIGHT 7

Montage of Cinder and Max making out.

8 EXT. HOUSE PARTY- NIGHT 8

Alex stands just outside the venue with her friends.

Alongside, Max's tall and attractive friends LUCAS, DIEGO, PEDRO and ADRIAN listen attentively.

ALEX

HAHAHA! I know right? I mean, did you seriously see the stupid sweater she wore today?

CAROLINA

I swear, one of these days I'll punch her ugly face.

IVANA

Hey... speaking of, where's Max?

LUCAS

Yeah, I haven't seen him anywhere tonight.

Brianna joins the group.

ALEX
What do you want, Brianna?

BRIANNA
Guys! You'll never guess! I think I
just saw Cinder!

ALEX
What? No way!

BRIANNA
Yes, yes.

CAROLINA
With someone?

BRIANNA
Yes.

PEDRO
Breathe girl! Are you high or
something?

BRIANNA
Yes.... No. Listen--

We pull back as we see Brianna spilling the beans to
ultimately hear the entire circle go--

ALEX, IVANA, CAROLINA, DIEGO, ADRIAN,
LUCAS, PEDRO
WHAT?!?!?

BRIANNA
Yes!

9 INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY- DAY

9

Cinder walks down the hall, lost in her dreams.

She stops, looks inside her bag and discretely pulls out
Max's blue shirt, smells it smiling and hides it again.

Soon, Pedro, Adrian, Diego and Lucas catch up to her.

ADRIAN
What up Cinder?

PEDRO
Way too smiley over there.

DIEGO
Anything special happened lately?

CINDER
Maybe...

LUCAS
Ooooooooooooh! Max you tiger!

The guys rush into the class room.

Cinder is about to go in but is stopped as her smile slowly disappears when she hears--

MAX (O.S.)
What are you crazy? That girl clearly made it all up! She's a goddamn' liar! Seriously guys, get a reality check!

ADRIAN (O.S.)
Dude! No one is stupid, people saw you.

PEDRO
Dude, you are so fried!

MAX
For the last time, that wasn't me.

DIEGO (O.S.)
(in a mocking voice)
So Maximilian, number one presidential candidate, tell us: how does it feel banging the ugliest girl in school?

MAX (O.S.)
You guys are jerks.

Having heard enough, Cinder turns away and starts tearing up as she leans against a row of lockers.

Soon enough, she lifts up her head, wipes her tears away and goes inside the classroom.

Cinder tries to concentrate as Max subtly turns around and shoots her a nervous smile.

Cinder barely smiles back.

Alex and her friends approach Cinder's desk.

CAROLINA
So... is it true?

CINDER
Is what true?

ALEX
Nice try Cinder Pumpkin, you SO
know what.

Max listens to the conversation from his desk.

REGINA
You better tell us.

Max is pale white, shaking his head no.

Cinder looks down and spots Max's shirt peeking out of her bag. His words run through her mind.

MAX (V.O.)
Seriously you can't imagine the
compliments I've been getting all
day! It's like everyone just knows
it's SO iconically me!

CINDER
No. It's not true. I spread the
rumor to get back at you for the
paint. I'm sorry.

ALEX
Not only are you a freak, a loser
and a nerd. Turns out you're also a
little lying bitch.

The girls sneer at her and walk away.

Max witnesses it, relieved.

11 INT. CLASSROOM- LATER

11

As everyone leaves, Max stops Cinder.

MAX
Hey, thank you so much for not
telling... It means a lot.

CINDER

It wasn't that difficult I mean,
after all I guess it didn't count.

MAX

Yeah. Whoa! What do you mean it
didn't count? Are you saying you
didn't like it?

CINDER

No, not at all. It's just, well I
can tell you don't have much
experience. But don't worry, I
don't judge.

MAX

Oh! I can definitely do better next
time!

CINDER

Next time?

MAX

Tell you what, as long as nobody
know we can keep seeing each other,
you know, having a good time.

CINDER

And what if someone finds out?

MAX

I'll just do like this time, I'll
deny it. Look it's not like your
reputation is at stake or
anything... pumpkin remember? So
this way we can both get what we
want.

Max brushes Cinder's hair out of her face with a hint of
tenderness.

Cinder moves away.

CINDER

I just don't think this is what we
both want.

Cinder starts walking towards the door.

MAX

Cinder! Seriously? I mean, do you
know how many girls would give
anything for a chance like this?

CINDER

My guess is all except for one.

Cinder walks towards the door where Tom waits for her.

12

INT. SCHOOL HALLWAY - DAY

12

Cinder and Tom walk down the hall.

Cinder pulls out the shirt and Tom starts laughing.

TOM

Is it too soon to say 'I told you so'?

CINDER

Tommy?

TOM

Yes princess?

She dumps the shirt in a trash can and they continue down the hall, towards the exit.

CINDER

This never happened.

FADE OUT.