

MISTAKES: a short story

It was 10pm when a boy fell out of a bedroom window, he tried to speak but his lungs folded in on themselves as he heard, "don't you ever fucking come back here, Atticus Amurao, you filthy bastard", a choked voice sobbed into the night. The entire neighborhood probably heard that boys broken screams, the window snapped shut and Atticus ran.

The afternoon of September 25th was when it all went downhill. our "protagonist" has just left the highschool he attends. You see that swanky guy getting into a ferrari? Yeah, look at the greasy asswipe next to him trying to start his pt cruiser. That's Atticus Amurao, 17, average student, kinda ugly, kinda annoying.

But aren't the best main characters like that? The final bell had just rang, and while other students were happily leaving for their friday activities. Atticus had applesauce leaking out of his jacket pocket and no plans. He finally managed to start the old car, and put the soiled garment in the backseat.

For a while it was peaceful, he was hoping to simply leave but no, of course he had to give his red haired cunt of a friend, a ride home. The rearview mirror revealed the bastard in question, running across the

lot, limbs flailing, glasses close to falling off. The tall figure in question was Derek Parker, a gaunt boy with doorknob joints. Old Ed Hardy shirt covering his wiry frame, Oversized cargo shorts only held up by a fanny pack carrying severely outdated tapes.

Long legs made for long strides as he approached Atticus's car, slamming the door open with the crooked grin of a man who had nothing left to lose.

"I did it", he gasped, holding onto the dashboard with heaving breaths.

"What'd you do this time Parker", Atticus hid a smile, this situation happened often. Derek pulled a crumpled ball of paper from his pocket, loosely tossing it at Atticus. The pale boy slunk into the seat, still trying to catch his breath. Atticus unfolded the paper to see the words: **Answer key** typed across the top.

"parker...", he trailed off with a wide smile. "parker you absolute friggin' madman"

Hidden on the wrinkled crevices of said paper were the answers to the cryptology test that was worth half the grade.

"In the words of Bram Stoker", Derek sighed, "I am very ugly but strong and determined"

Atticus thought himself to be average at best, everything about him was somewhere in the middle. Greasy brown hair sat falling over dark eyes, and somewhat proportionate features sloped onto a tanned face. His oversized pointed ears stuck out from the sides of his head like Dumbo. He didn't think of himself as someone people had a crush on.

"Atticus"

Although he liked to think he wasn't ugly

"Atticus get down here"

He was just-

"Atticus Maximilian Amurao"

He was snapped out of his trance by the voice calling out from downstairs, he sighed, splashing water onto his face and rushing down the wooden stairs. His mother stood with a disapproving look on her face.

"We're going over to the Parker's for the night , dress nice", she stated. Atticus only nodded, retreating back to his solitude. He pulled somewhat clean clothes from the mess of a closet. tan turtleneck, worn under a white poet shirt, the frayed v down the middle made it almost appear as a jacket. Both of these things lay tucked into the black leather belt holding up khaki pants. It felt good on paper, but looking at himself in the mirror he felt rather silly.

No time for changing however, by the time he had slipped on his shoes, his mother was already yelling for him to hurry up. The two didn't talk much, so the walk across the street was cold and silent. Derek's house was practically a mansion compared to others in the neighborhood. Vines crept up the walkway, almost as if they were preparing to creep up your bones. Atticus

rushed to the door, filled with no desire to stay in the abysmal yard for any longer than he had to. Atticus, being taller, rapped the large bronze knocker against the door 3 solid times. Almost immediately it was opened by Derek's mother, she was...*Interesting*, how could it be described. Mrs Parker, well, she was an alcoholic. She had a dazed smile on her face as she welcomed the two into the home. Derek stood near the table, uncomfortably pulling on his shirt collar. The much too pristine dress shirt hung loosely from his bones. Both mothers went off to chat in the lounge, leaving a thick silence.

"Why're we standing here like we don't know each other", Derek laughed.

Atticus found a smile on his face as he replied, "I don't know man, it's just", he paused trying to find the right words, "a *vibe*, like something feels *different* this time".

Derek eyed him with a raised brow, "you're such a stoner".

"One to talk, parker", atticus laughed.

The two went up to Derek's room. Vintage star wars posters covered the peeling walls, surrounding a mattress simply sitting on the floor.

Atticus found a clean spot to sit on as Derek leaned out the window, lighting a marlboro in between his lips. Circles of smoke puffed out towards the setting sun. it was quiet once again before he spoke.

"One day we're gonna get out of this town", his gaze was faroff, and atticus couldn't be quite sure if he was being addressed or if the boy was rambling to himself. The cancer stick hung loosely between his two fingers

as he turned, "you and me, Atticus, we're gonna hit the road once we graduate.", he smiled.

Atticus nodded, staring up at the ceiling. "We start a travelling punk band", he began, knowing that Derek knew the rest.

"And sell drugs on the side", they both said in unison. The two laughed, for what would be the only time that night, the silence was comfortable.

Derek put out the cig and closed the dusty window, he then began to rummage through the drawers. "Hate this dumb church shirt", he muttered, finally pulling out a dusty concert tee, band name faded beyond recognition. Derek turned around with an expectant look on his face, Atticus was as oblivious as ever, looking him in the eyes.

"I don't feel like going all the way back down to the bathroom", Derek stated, awkwardly shifting from foot to foot. Atticus didn't follow, "so can you-, like turn around", he laughed.

"Oh i'm retarded, yeah i got you fam", Atticus replied, turning to face the plethora of posters on the wall. He heard fabric rustling, followed by silence. Curiosity peaked the best of him, he wasn't gay, he just wanted to know. Slowly he turned around, being horrified at what he saw. Derek's back was littered with bruises, scars, burns, whip-marks, etc. not listening to any voice of reason he had, he quietly stepped forward. Derek was too trapped in his own thoughts to remember Atticus was there, too deep in his own mind to hear the quiet footsteps that came from the boy. Nimble fingers reached out, carefully brushing the ruined skin. Derek jumped, doing a 180 immediately only to see Atticus's saddened face.

"Derek", he choked out in only a whisper, their entire friendship he had never called him by his first name.

"Derek what happened", he placed a hand on the shaking boys shoulder.

The lanky boy forced a laugh, as he often told himself, he was the comic relief.

"Mom wasn't always the best at affection", he chuckled, ignoring the warm tears which had already begun to stream. He dragged himself towards the bed where

Atticus followed,

"she did all this?", he questioned, inspecting each bruise and every mark. Softly, he traced careful fingers around each welt.

"I know it's hideous, she already reminds me enough", derek mumbled

Atticus shook his head, "you're like an oil painting", he muttered, euphoria dripping from his voice. Derek didnt reply, for once he was silent. It shook atticus to the core to see his friend in such a broken state, like a porcelain doll that'd fallen from it's shelf.

Softly atticus trailed his hands up the garden of pain, laying gentle kisses on each shoulder. Derek shuddered, only featherlike gasps leaving his mouth. As Atticus's mouth travelled up the crook of his neck, for the first time in his life.

Derek felt warm

Atticus turned him around so they were face to face, inching closer and closer until like faeries in a garden their lips touched. Chapped dunes met bountiful gardens, one of heavy nicotine, and one of refreshing mint. The flavors mixed just as their hearts mixed. It felt like it was only them in the entire world. So much so that they didn't hear the stairs protest against

heavy footsteps, however they heard Miss Parker gasp as if she had just been shot.

"Derek Andrew Parker, you little faggot", she sneered. Once again she was drunk, Atticus pushed Derek so hard he tumbled onto the wooden floor. He looked down at him, with a grimace on his face. As if the porcelain boy was *filth*

"He came onto me ma'am I tried to get him to stop", he rushed out. Mrs. Parker looked at him with pity, before turning with dark eyes to Derek. His heart shattered as Atticus's words repeated in his mind, the moment was over. *He was cold again.* His eyes widened as the figure he was forced to call his mother walked towards him with a bottle of Chardonnay loosely hanging in her hand, before he could cower she had an iron grip on his wrist. He was crying now, and Atticus did nothing to help.

"Crybaby", she muttered, smashing the bottle on his arm. The half-full bottle shattered completely. Leaving shards of glass stuck in his arm and all over the bed. He almost threw up as the sickly mixture of alcohol and his own blood covered his unclothed body. "No wonder your father left", she spat. "Clean this shit up", she shouted, stumbling out of the room. Atticus tried to speak, but it would have been drowned out by the sobs. Derek glared at the boy who stood beside him. "Get out", he whimpered, Atticus didn't move. Derek stood up, shoving the boy towards the window. "I said, *get out*", he choked, covered in his own tears and blood. Atticus opened the old window, turning to look at the mess of a boy for what would probably be the last time. There was no crooked smile, no ancient shirt from the 2000s, only what was practically a skeleton.

"Parker, i-", Atticus mumbled, before being shoved out. *It was 10pm when a boy fell out of a bedroom window, he tried to speak but his lungs folded in on themselves as he heard, "don't you ever fucking come back here, Atticus Amurao, you filthy bastard", a choked voice sobbed into the night. The entire neighborhood probably heard that boys broken screams, the window snapped shut and Atticus ran.*

He knew he had made **MISTAKES**

The end

What? you thought Atticus was gonna get redeemed and live happily ever after with derek? I would have assumed the same thing, you probably thought the antagonist was Derek's mom or some hidden metaphor. The real villain is Atticus, right from the beginning he calls Derek a cunt, and sure that could just be an offhand joke. However, Derek then provides him with test answers, which implies their "friendship" is not what it seems. He makes Derek feel special then throws him under the bus before watching him get abused. no question about it, Atticus is an asshole. The main character isn't always the hero.

