

The East Edge

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JUNE

"Idiots! Could you believe them?!" June yelled, turning around and looking into a mirror, trying to style her hair. Her medium-length locs were not on her side this evening, and she plopped on her bed. She once again let them flow, but this time, looking out the window instead of making eye contact with Junior. Junior and June are multiple best friends who have known each other since kindergarten, and today was their friendship anniversary. That is if you were into those types of things. June wasn't.

"Well, I don't think they meant it in that kind of—" Before

"No they did they had to," She snapped back at him, but only this time did she look into his hazel eyes, ignoring his smile and pearly white teeth. For 2 hours, June had been ranting to Junior about how cruel her now ex-boyfriend Dylan was to her, then defending him when Junior had something to say about it. June proceeded to style her locs again, putting them in a swoop like she always did— two pigtails—then taking them out again.

If we face it- they were idiots. Dylan and his plaything of the century, Sanna, had been meeting each other constantly, stuck to each other like glue. It made June boil with anger when her ex-boyfriend would look into her eyes when he hugged her. It was not June who was hugged, which is what made everything worse for her. At least Sanna was sometimes nice, and that was the only thing June liked about her. What else would she like about someone who stole her ex from her? Any additional time she would constantly act like she didn't want Dylan when he would let the whole world know he would die for that girl. Junior was sitting in June's office chair moving in his wheely chair around the room like it was nobody's business- ignoring her next excuse as to why she didn't decide to speak up this time.

"I just don't get why she would make eye contact while she hugged him" June murmured looking down into her hands that rested on her lap.

"Why is it every time that I find interest in someone, they don't feel that emotional connection with me like how it's supposed to be? Adults are just as childish as teens,"

"Depends on what you consider being an adult is, I guess,"

Junior started shrugging his shoulders when he made up another excuse as to why Dylan stopped paying attention to her as he used to. "Maybe you should stop focusing on whatever he's got going on and focus on something else"

"And what would that be?"

"You idiot."

"WHAT?" June shouted, clearly making it known that she was not picking up what he was put down. Just as another excuse was about to come out of her mouth before Junior stopped her in her tracks.

"As your best friend, I do think that you need to focus on not comparing yourself to Sanna but genuinely finding something or someone who would make you feel like you were perfect or didn't need to be compared to someone for someone,"

It was like a waterfall without all of the chaos from underneath when he spoke. His words were like honey or caramel even dripping down slowly and smoothly for comparison. Who didn't love the way he worded things? There was only one answer to that.

June.

Junior

Hates when the summer ends. Every year this happens- she finds someone who she likes, completely ignores her best friend, and then comes back for comfort. Like any normal teenage girl of course. That's what Junior thought. Although he, for some weird reason, was still staring and looking at June who was smiling. That's something he adored about her though. Her beauty was surely something different of course. And out of June's mouth again was another reason why she and Dylan would never work, but why she wanted to stay even though he had a whole girl.

To Junior that was a bit of a stretch. That wouldn't come between his feelings for her. He still loved everything about her not in a friend or best friend way, but romantically. Who would anyone be to deny him of all people? Junior of all people. His hands started to shake while he was tuning out everything his crush was saying. June had been Junior's crush for about 2 years.

He sat on the chair playing with his half of the friendship bracelet putting his phone on silent after ignoring a call from someone he assumed was a scam. He didn't even check for that. Why would he when he was too busy staring at June? Her brown short locs came down her face. They weren't her real ones but he still admired her, like almost everything. June was getting ready to say something else when he tuned in again.

“See? You get me. Right? I mean how could I let this-

“I do not get you,”

“What?”

“Stop worrying about Dylan when he’s worried about a whole ‘nother girl who was not worried about him. You always think the only one who needs relationship advice is you, but in reality, I do too because I love you-”

Just like that, his phone started to ring, and June sat on the bed looking at him playing with her half of the friendship bracelet. He declined it. That’s what some sane person would do at this moment right? Wrong. He looked at the back of his phone moments before dropping it on the floor.

“Listen, idiot,” He started, making sure that he emphasized the word idiot since it was what she could call Junior which Junior was okay with. “I like you a lot, and if you don’t feel the same way that’s on you. That doesn’t mean chasing someone new when the summer ends every year. Don’t be so conceited,” Junior stated, smiling after grabbing June’s hand while she stared at his smile- I mean who wouldn't? They looked like veneers, and his locs made them look even better.

“I’m tryna show you I care, so let me” June smiled back at him. She was like a beaming ray of sunshine to him, always either happy or irked. Who was anyone to say otherwise to *her*, especially after how well she treated everybody around her, except him? “You’re chasing things you thought you wanted like you thought you should, without turning to look behind you” But it must’ve been hard for June to comprehend everything that was going on let alone in front of her.

Another ring is heard from Junior's phone
He declines.

"Wanna be my girlfriend?"

ROBIN

“This is not real life, no freaking way” Junior declined his call, again. Robin looks at his phone again turning it off and then back on with tears coming down his eyes over and over. Today was supposed to be special. Not his girlfriend getting into a car accident before he could propose and then Junior not picking up the phone or reading the texts Robin sent to him.

This is Robin's story, and Robin's story is different. All he could feel was anger coming through him as he held his girlfriend's hand while she was in bed, sound asleep. How could his best friend and cousin Junior do this to him? Lucy wakes up seeing Robin cry into her hands. She smiles at him as Robin looks up with sadness flushing over him. He was devastated. Anybody would be if they were in the same position as he was.

All of the sudden, out of nowhere his girlfriend, Lucy, starts to shake in her bed. The heart rate monitor goes up rapidly, and Robin looks around before yelling for doctors that come rushing in and push Robin out.

Robin is 20. Two years older than Junior, and one year older than Jun-- if you care about that sort of thing. Junior called and Robin stepped out of the hospital room where his girlfriend was. He screamed at Junior so loud he was worried that not just his girl could hear it, but everybody else in the building. Junior was already at the hospital, running towards Robin, trying to catch up to him. All that Robin could think of was how badly he was betrayed by Junior and he knew it was because of his crush June because he would constantly talk about her to whomever cared. Which was only him. He felt like someone just broke him down to build him back up to punch him in the stomach. He felt terrible.

When he gets to Robin it's already too late his girlfriend is announced dead by the doctors who were in there.

"I just want to know why you couldn't be here for me?" Robin murmured to Junior in disbelief, shaking his head and repeating it louder and louder until he was screaming. "FOR ONCE CAN SOMETHING BE ABOUT ME? ANYTHING?".

"I'm so sorry,"

ARTIST STATEMENT/NOTE

My inspiration from all of these characters and their stories all came from listening to different songs and feeling out multiple different things for myself. I see myself in each and every single last one of my characters. I see myself in the way that June rushes into things, Junior always declines calls, and Robin feels like his own friend doesn't understand him- like nobody really understands how Robin truly feels. I put the characters in order starting with Jamie and ending with Robin so that you can compare the character with the easiest problem to the one with the most problems and just see how it might feel from their perspective. I used the technique of starting out big and building up the emotion for every character in their start or their part so that the reader can get a better view of what is going on and not something plain. I wanted to do something that dragged my readers in a quick motion to exactly where I wanted them. A specific thought shot that I like the most was my one for Robin describing how he felt like Junior turned on him because I wanted it to be something where if a reader does see themselves in Robin they can feel what he might've been going through at this moment and how hurt he was. Just by the little thing Junior did and how much it had impacted Robin.

At first, for my characters' names, I wanted to do all J's because my name starts with a J, but I didn't want the names of them to be the same names as anyone I know in real life just to make sure that my characters wouldn't come to be how I see them. That's when I decided to switch the names from James John and Jamie to Julia Junior and Jordan. Then I decided that would not be as creative as I wanted to be. That is when I added Robin replacing him with Jordan and changing Julia for June.