

She's falling apart

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Based on the song "She's falling apart" by Lisa Loeb.

War

Chapter 1 of 1

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-They pull up their chairs to the table

She stares at the food on her plate

At the toast and the butter

Her father, her mother, she pushes away-

Hermione had been home from Hogwarts for about a month now. Her homework for the summer had long since been finished. With that out of the way, she was lying on her bed, idly flipping through a magazine she had bought the other day. She saw all of the models. They were all so pretty. They were all so skinny. She wanted to be thin. She wanted it more than life itself. She was taken from her thoughts when her mom yelled that breakfast was ready. She set her magazine down and headed for the stairs. She quickly scanned the food, trying to see what would be best.

'Bagel. 320 calories. Too much for a whole day, let alone breakfast. Banana. 105 calories. Forget this. What is there to drink. Grapefruit juice. 72 calories. I guess that'll have to do.'

She got her juice and sat down with her family. She put some eggs on her plate too, so they'd think she was eating. They kept bugging her about it, and it was getting on her nerves. As she moved the food around her plate absentmindedly, her mother decided to break the silence.

"Is that all you're going to eat? I can make you something else if you want."

'Here we go again.'

"It's fine. I'm really not that hungry today."

"Are you sure? That's not enough food for someone your age."

"I'm sure. If you don't mind, I'd rather not have this discussion again."

'Every time there's food around you just HAVE to do this.'

"It's just that..."

She was cut off by her daughter abruptly storming off to her room, not bothering with another word.

"Hermione Jane Granger! You get back here right now!"

The only answer she gave her father was the sound of her door slamming shut.

'I am NOT having this conversation again. Why do they have to interfere with every bloody part of my life.'

Her dad was still yelling, so she just locked the door and turned her stereo on full blast. Slowly, she began to cry.

'Please just stop.'

* * *

-She gets home from school too early

And closes the door to her room

There's nothing inside her

She's weak and she's tired of feeling like this-

Her parents the control freaks made her get a summer job. They said she needed to do something besides 'sitting around the house all day.' They told her that 'a little work wouldn't hurt her.' As they said this she just kept thinking the same thing over and over.

'You bloody idiots. I work harder than you probably ever have. Do you know how much work goes into planning every day? Do you know how much I have to exercise? Do you have any idea how hard I work to reach my goals?'

Of course she couldn't say this, so she ended up stuck with a job at a fast food place. If that didn't make her want to avoid food, then nothing would. All those people who stuffed their faces with the fat and empty calories disgusted her.

Her parents went to work after her, so she was supposed to get home before them. After the second day she started cutting out of work early. There was no way she was going to stay there. Even just looking at that much grease made her feel fat.

When she got home at noon, she had a routine. She'd grab a bottle of water and run three miles on the treadmill. Then it was fifty sit-ups. After that was an aerobic exercise tape. She usually did that two or three times before her parents got home at seven.

She always felt exhausted, and the lack of food definitely didn't help. She had passed out a few times, but that wouldn't stop her. Nothing would stop her until she reached her goal. Six stone even to be exact.

Now it was the time she dreaded. Time to face the scale. When she left Hogwarts she weighed eight stone one pound. She fearfully glanced down at the numbers. Her jaw dropped. Six stone, ten pounds.

'That's a whole pound more than yesterday! How can that be? I only had two hundred calories yesterday!'

She wanted to scream. She'd worked so hard to lose weight. She hadn't even thought that it might have been the weight of the water she drank. She hadn't thought about the fact that she was already underweight either. All that mattered to her was that the numbers on the scale got smaller every day.

She closed the door to her room, turned her stereo up, and cried as she sat on her floor. She was tired of never being able to lose enough weight. She was tired of being a slave to the scale. She was tired of this mess she called a life.

Her head shot up suddenly as she heard her door open. There in the doorway stood her father.

* * *

-They call her for dinner, she makes up a reason

She looks at her arms and she rolls down her sleeves

And her mother is starting to see through her lies

And last night her father had tears in his eyes-

She didn't cry anymore. Not since the day her dad found her. He had treated her like a child, and she hated that. She now refused to show any sign of weakness.

It was about a week later that she was in her room, flipping through another magazine. She heard her mom yell for her to come downstairs, so she slowly made her way to the stairs. She was extremely weak. Ever since the incident last week with the extra pound, she decided on a 15 day, water only fast. No scale until then either to avoid any more 'complications.' When she finally got downstairs, her mother addressed her.

"Dinner's ready."

"Oh, I ate at work."

"You should still eat something. You need to eat more while you're growing."

"Don't worry about it, Mum. Like I said, I've already eaten."

The look of concern still hadn't left her mother's face. "Are you sure you don't want anything?"

Hermione sighed and, gathering all the patience she had, said she was sure.

"At least have some chicken."

'That's it. Used all my patience on the last one. Up to my room.'

"Honey, wait."

She didn't. She wouldn't let herself stop, because she knew if she did, she'd break down.

'I cannot and will not show them any weakness. I will stay strong.'

When she reached her room, she locked the door and again turned up the stereo. What's different about this time was that she didn't cry. Instead she calmly walked over to her dresser and grabbed a small, dark red jewelry box with a little gold lock and carried it to her bed. She then pulled off a necklace she had been wearing under her shirt. The necklace was a small, simple chain with a golden key. As she opened the box, she appeared as though she was in a trance. The box opened to reveal a small, sharp pocket knife. Her newest coping skill. She pulled up the sleeve of her gray sweater to reveal about a dozen marks from the past week. As she made another mark, she started thinking.

'Kind of ironic if you think about it. This was supposed to help me deal with my problems. Now it is one. An addiction I couldn't break, even if I wanted to.'

She stood up to put back the jewelry box, still in thought.

'How is this going to work at Hogwarts? I have to share a room. Oh well, I'll just look for some... uh oh. I'm a little bit dizzy. Wh-what's going on. Oh no. My arm's never bled tha...

* * *

: Meanwhile :

"I don't know what to do, John. She's lying, skipping work, and she must have lost at least two stone since she came home. She could really end up hurting herself." The strained voice of a weeping Amelia Granger rang through the living room.

"I don't know what to do either. Last week I found her crying on her bedroom floor. She wouldn't tell me what was wrong, and only seemed to get more upset when I tried to help." John spoke softly as he tried not to let his own tears fall.

For a while it was silent as both of the concerned parents wondered what to do. They knew they had to do something. If they didn't, they would lose their only daughter.

Suddenly they heard a loud thud from upstairs. Faster than you would have thought possible, John and Amelia bolted up to their daughter's room.

They tried to open the door, only to find it locked.

* * *

Hermione could vaguely hear a pounding sound and ... a voice maybe? She wasn't sure. It sounded so far off. And then it became quiet once more.

* * *

"Hermione! Hermione, are you okay?" John began to panic when he didn't get a response. Fearing for his daughter's life, he rammed into the door until he knocked it down.

Amelia screamed at the site before them while John just stood, shocked.

Hermione was sprawled on the floor, surrounded by a pool of blood coming from her arm. John turned to his wife, "Grab your phone and a towel, and get the car started. I'll grab Hermione."

"But shouldn't we call an ambulance?"

"We don't have time to wait for an ambulance. Hurry." He quickly picked up his daughter as he spoke.

It hadn't been until then that he noticed how much weight Hermione really had lost. She weighed about as much as a young child, and he could feel the bones in her back.

With a quick nod Amelia left to get what was needed. On the way to the hospital, John sat in the back with Hermione while holding the towel on her wrist to try and slow the bleeding. As they headed to the hospital, Amelia called the only person they new of in the magical world who would have a telephone.

* * *

Harry had finally gotten a chance to escape number four, Privet Drive when the Weasleys invited him to the Burrow for the last part of summer. He had been playing wizard chess with Ron when they heard an odd sound. Giving Ron a strange look, he asked, "When did you guys get a phone?"

"A what?"

After that they heard Mrs. Weasley yelling at her husband about all of his "Muggle garbage."

Ignoring his wife, Arthur went to the living room to try and better hear what was being said.

"I'm sorry I couldn't hear, what did you say?"

His face suddenly became very grave.

"Hermione. Contact Dumbledore. Yes, yes of course. Let us know when you find something out."

Confused after obviously eavesdropping, Ron asked his father what was going on with Hermione.

Not even noticing his son, he raced to the fireplace to contact Albus Dumbledore.

* * *

-And they rise in the morning

And they sleep in the dark

And even though nobody's looking

She's falling apart-

Hermione started to open her eyes and look around. The room was dark, and she heard voices outside the door. Her brain seemed clouded, and she was having trouble thinking clearly.

'What happened? Where am I? There's a needle in my arm! What's going on?'

And then it all came flooding back. Shocked, she looked down at her arm. It was wrapped in a heavy bandage that looked like it was put on recently. As she slowly lifted the bandage she gasped as she saw a purple, blood smeared mark that, though it was stitched up, was still bleeding slightly. She was shocked. She hadn't pressed the knife to her skin any harder than the other times, yet the mark was about half a centimeter wide.

"Pretty bad, isn't it?"

She spun around immediately and was met with the emerald green eyes of her best friend.

"Harry!" She quickly wrapped him in a hug.

"Careful, if those stitches come undone I don't think you'll want to deal with them putting them back in."

She pulled back, her mind racing. "What happened?"

He sighed and looked down, grabbing her hand before telling her what the doctors had said. He said that she had cut a vein, and because she was so weak from the lack of food, the blood loss got to her quickly, and she passed out.

"Dumbledore says they'll send you to St. Mungo's, but they need to wait until your blood pressure's stabilized so you'll be able to handle the move."

Hermione looked up at him with a tear-streaked face. He embraced her and told her everything would be okay. She wouldn't believe it if anyone else had said it, but when he was holding her, she knew it would be.