

## Girl World

Sasha performed fine in History class. Honestly, it bored her, but she did her work and studied her notes and made A's in the course. History, to her, was purely brute memorization. Memorizing dates of days, names of people, details of events— History class was a game of memory, which is why she felt it bored her so. It never seemed like she *learned* anything in history class in the same way she did in Chemistry or Statistics or English. Instead, she had to spend hours memorizing dates and names (of times long gone and people far dead) that could easily instead be looked up in an instant with an internet search.

Not only did she find the memorization tedious, she found the content of her History classes uninteresting as well. All of the battles, wars, ratifications, emancipations, colonizations, everything she had to spend precious brain power burning into her hippocampus, took place long before she was born. Too long ago to matter. She especially thought that having to read about the dismal events of history was particularly irking. Reading about the worst inhumanities of time upset and bewildered and frustrated Sasha. Wars, genocides, colonizations— How could people be so *awful*? Sasha noted, when she was reading about World War II, that it wasn't *all* people who were doing the evildoing during evil times. There was a commonality that related all atrocities. It seemed that everything bad that has ever taken place was all the result of cruel, corrupt, greedy *men*. Men started the wars and fought in them, men built the ships and the guns and the tanks, men did the crime and the killing. Everything bad that has happened all seemed to come down to the workings of men.

A bunch of old dead evil men from long ago. Nothing that she could relate to and nothing that affected anybody today. Which too, contributed to why Sasha found studying for history so insipid.

History was boring. But Sasha was a diligent student, and she had dreams of changing the world when she grew up. So she always did her best, not just in History, but in every one of her classes, and in everything she did. She had a strong conviction she wanted to make the world a better place. And as history has demonstrated time and time and time again, a person with an idea can truly alter the course of things. With a little action, of course.

I

Sasha laxly leaned back in her schoolchair, pulling her knee up to rest up against the bar which fixed the seat to the desk. It was April, and it was first period, and Sasha sat coolly in her desk in the second row of Mrs. Anderson's Sophomore Honors History class. By no means was this an easy course, but Sasha excelled in the class, not making less than a 97 on any of the assignments, projects, or tests in the class the entire school year. And her comfortable A+ in the course certainly got to her head a little. So she laid back in her chair, doodled in her notebook, and waited for the bell to signal the start of class.

Today, Mrs. Anderson was to dictate the requirements for the class's final project. Mrs. Anderson was nice enough, though some of the class found her too strict at times. It was the Honors section of sophomore history, after all, so her rigidity was appropriate, but that, combined with the fact that Mrs. Anderson was six feet tall, led to some of the boys commenting

that she reminded them of Abraham Lincoln. Sixteen year old boys can be so cruel. Sasha, deep down, admired Mrs. Anderson's demanding presence— she felt she was a strong figure of authority, who always returned the respect she was given. If Sasha had liked history even a little bit, Mrs. Anderson surely would have been her favorite teacher.

Each morning before the first bell rang, the daily announcements came over the loudspeaker for the school to hear. A soft static spritzed, and then a monotone electronic voice read over the loudspeaker. Today there would be a track meet, and the school's theater team is running a production of "Romeo and Juliet" this week and tickets are ten dollars at the door. And, the social studies bowl was exactly one month away.

Mrs. Anderson began class the same way she did every morning. She rose from her desk, towered a full two heads over any of her classgoers, and cried, "Today and right now is a perfect place and time for some History!"

She began every class with that quip. Sasha wondered if she had thought of it herself.

"As you are aware, in lieu of a final exam for my class, you all will be presenting an individual project instead." Soft cheers sprang from the class. "Why," Mrs. Anderson remarked, "how come you all aren't this excited when we learned about the American Revolution?" The class returned amused huffs. Mrs. Anderson continued, "As for the topic of your presentation, you know we covered a wide scope of topics in the social sciences this year. Because we all have different interests and strengths, I am offering you the freedom to pick a topic of your choosing. Anything in the social sciences field. Covered this year or not. As an Honors class, I want you to really think about what interests you in history, and what you want to teach your peers about your subject." The class gave a collective satisfied murmur— with the freedom to choose their own subject, this would be a fun project and an easy boost to their grades. There was an air of excitement that held the class. Despite it being first period, the class was awake and all upright in their seats, emitting delighted whispers and passing excited glances.