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## A Spoon Full of Sugar Might Have Helped

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## A Spoon Full of Sugar Might Have Helped

Macy Kent

I walked alone for the majority of my month-long trip to France. Sound odd? Well, I was a tad odd at sixteen.

We were in the market. My travel-mates were in their cliques, and I was left in the dust as usual. Churning hot heat of embarrassment into spite, I strode away. Hating your body and thinking everyone hates you will lead to a lot of situations like this. I wasn't going to waste my time looking at clothes in stalls where everyone knew none of the items would fit me.

I found fabricated joy in imagining those that I detested were watching me walk away with even a skosh of remorse. I was projecting of course- but it was a nice thought.

French summers are hot. This was only my second summer of training my body to accept the heat that my entirely black ensemble demanded from the sun. A slushie sounded nice.

Labored confidence trickled out of me as I finally spied the vendor that I wanted tucked away in a little shadow on Cours Mirabeau. There was no line and I walked directly up to the counter; when I reached it, I opened my mouth and blacked out a bit. As I came to, the boy- whose being attractive and French did nothing to help the nerves stampeding through my bloodstream - looked at me like I was absolutely insane, I knew that I had fucked up.

*C'est ce que tu veux ?* The staring continued as he asked it.

I nodded. The dwindling well of my confidence groaned in protest as I reached into my pocket to pay him.

As I awaited my lemon slushie, I could tell that he had told the other employees what had happened. An *as-tu vu?* rang out every so often and was accompanied by a slight gesture in my direction. The waiting game for a slushie is already grueling on a hot summer day, but it was ten times more intense as I was left to stand and ponder just how my mix of French and pointing could have confused the boy so badly.

They were all looking at me in turns, each glancing just as another would turn away. A heat as dry as the desert overtook my mouth as their glances piled on and when the bitterness reached my lips I wished for the sweet arms of death.

*Citron!* He called out, pulling me from the pit I was digging for myself in my mind. Making the drink had taken quite a while, I hadn't the slightest idea why that could have been. The slushie machine was right there and certainly full of lemon slush. They hadn't even touched it.

I walked hesitantly up to the counter. As I picked up the cup, they gave up their turns and stared together, seeing if I really was a freak who ordered a giant cup of lemon juice. I guess that I was.

I picked up the cup and asked for a straw with a smile. The boy looked even a little more shocked than he had been previously but handed me one. I thanked him and spun around on my heel. If I was going to be a freak, I was going to do it right.

With a puckered mouth and a pocket six euros lighter, I sucked down that lemon juice. Even if I wasn't holding proof of my not-so newfound freak status the others would still look at me like I had four heads when I returned.

Plastering on the ideology of the emo loner took me every moment of the walk back.