

RCP

VER: 0.1.2

TOP: "MERE HOURS TILL"

???

over microphone

Everyone, find your homeroom teacher and sit with them! Those of you who are getting off the buses, find your homeroom teacher!

↓

The P.E. teacher was the first one I could hear clearly when I stepped foot in the gym. Everyone was talking, and as I made my way to my class' section, all I could make out was talk about the Complex. Except for a few who were already asleep where they sat, unsurprisingly. Also unsurprisingly, Vi was right behind me as I walked.

Vi

'Ey, c'mon. You aren't getting rid of me that easily, man.

↓

Nate

Yeah, unfortunately. Hah.

↓

Vi

What'd I ever do to ya? Ain't like you got anything better to do with this snoozefest of an assembly they're pullin'.

↓

Nate

Well, yeah. Everyone already knows this stuff, why'd they gotta make a whole *thing* for it?

↓

Vi

Prolly to cover their asses. Can't have one bad student killing their *spotless* reputation, after all. Go fuckin' figure.

↓

Nate

...Man, let's just get this over with...

↓

Despite having to go across the entire gym to get to our spots, it didn't take that long. In at most two minutes, we were in our seats. The school used the bleachers, but clearly they needed more seats for everyone, so we were stuck with metal folding chairs. We always got the folding chairs.

Vi

Damn these chairs don't get old. Same ass killing every time, sheesh.

↓

Nate

No kidding, huh. ...Wait. Where's Mel?

↓

Vi

Melody? ...Ooh, fuck, she got blasted by her parents last night. Might be coming in late.

↓

Nate

Blasted? For what?

↓

Vi

You think I know? She left the call last night like ten minutes after you did. All I heard was some screaming from her dad for a split second before she left. ...Man, I hate her fuckin' parents.

↓

Nate

Yeah, well, you and me both. ...Hope she's fine.

↓

Vi

Same. ...Oh, there she is.

↓

He pointed to the gym's front entrance. Among the few remaining latecomers, I could spot her. Given I knew her since middle school; she isn't hard to pick out from a crowd. But Vi beat me to the punch this time. Took her a bit, but she made her way over. The seat next to Vi was kept open, giving that he was lounging his feet on it. Like he always does...

Melody

Hey. Seat warm yet?

↓

Vi

Nah, we were only here a few minutes. Ya doin' alright? Ain't heard from ya since last night.

↓

Melody

I'm fine. They just got mad I stayed up late again. They always do that.

↓

Nate

Pretty sure that's unhealthy...

**Melody**

Don't you barely go outside?

**Vi**

Nothin' wrong with bein' a nerd. If it wasn't for him we'd still be usin' AIM.

**Nate***jokingly*Hey, you're *welcome*.**Melody**

So that aside, about the Complex--



She was quickly cut off by the sound of the microphone's feedback, and the sound of every homeroom teacher quieting down their classes. While we were talking, the principal went down to the mic, turned it on again and deafened everyone. They didn't even have a stage; it was just on the gym floor for them. Guess the auditorium must *still* be getting fixed... three months after that whole accident. I would have been wondering what they're actually doing with that place, but I was quickly interrupted by the principal's words.

Principal	<i>over microphone</i>
<p>AHEM. Good morning.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">↓</p>	

With that single throat clear, everyone turned their attention to him. And as he paused, everyone said "good morning" back to him. ...Except for us. We usually just mouth it.

Principal	<i>over microphone</i>
<p>Redland High School students, I'm sure you all already know about the importance of this assembly. And before you all groan like everyone does <i>every time</i>, we're required to do this by law. It's important, so listen up.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">↓</p>	

Principal	<i>over microphone</i>
<p>Tomorrow is the date in which the Recurrent Complex will appear once again. It is a structure that appears once every ten years, in a random location on Earth. Now, all of you might not remember ten years ago...</p> <p style="text-align: right;">↓</p>	

Principal	<i>over microphone</i>
<p>...when the last Complex appeared. It was never found. But on that day, thirteen people went missing in Taganrog, Russia. <i>Thirteen</i> people left their homes in the middle of the night and were never seen again.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">↓</p>	

Principal	<i>over microphone</i>
<p>And while nobody ever knew where the building was, it was widely assumed that those thirteen people were lost to it. Now while the likelihood of such a building showing up in our town of Redland is very, very low...</p> <p style="text-align: right;">↓</p>	

Principal	<i>over microphone</i>
<p>...I would like to personally urge everyone to stay as far away from it as possible, and to call 911 immediately should you see it. Now, some people from DARC are here to hand out some flyers...</p> <p style="text-align: right;">↓</p>	

By that point, I've started tuning him out. Taking a quick glance around, Vi seemed to be half asleep and Melody's been wrapping some of her hair around her finger. And all of the other students around didn't seem to care either. Out of the corner of her eye, Melody spotted my own boredom, and leaned forward to whisper.

Melody	<i>quietly</i>
Just sayin'... if it shows up here, we should <i>totally</i> go and check it out.	
↓	
Nate	<i>quietly</i>
Wh-- Are you nuts...?! People just disappear forever in there!	
↓	
Melody	<i>quietly</i>
Jeez, don't get all twisted about it. Besides, it's not <i>actually</i> going to show up here. ...But if it somehow does... it'd be better than this place.	
↓	

That shut me up quick. I know she goes through a lot at home, but to take the random appearing house that'd probably kill us instead of school life...?

Vi	<i>yawning</i>
Can you people quiet down? Tryin' to sleep here.	
↓	
Homeroom Teacher	
<i>Shh!</i>	
↓	

Melody*under her breath*

Dammit, Vi...!



We sat in silence for the rest of the assembly, while the school staff passed around flyers. The same flyer I saw posted on the bus ride here was handed out, alongside a "frequently asked questions" paper. I could see Vi already crumpling them up and shoving them into his pocket, and Melody folding them up herself. As for me, I couldn't help but stare at the flyer I got. It was like I was looking at a completely different piece of paper after what Melody said to me.

P.E. Teacher*over microphone*

Everyone, the assembly is now over! Please follow your homeroom teachers back to your classes!



And as everyone got up to leave, I finally put the flyer in my pocket and followed along. No use dwelling on it that much, I guess... we'd be discussing it more in homeroom and study hall anyway. As we left, Vi was the first to pipe up.

ViActually fell asleep there. I didn't think it'd be *that* much of a snoozefest.**Nate**

Heh, yeah... So, uh, about that--

**Melody***quietly*

Shut up! We get caught talking again and we're not sitting together today!



Nate	<i>quietly</i>
Jeez, fine, okay... ↓	

If only the school wasn't so strict, I'd have brought it up now. But as it is, all we could do was walk back to homeroom in silence. And our homeroom class... was on the other side of the school. Great..