

Klausur No. 1



Arnold Spirit, called ‚Junior‘, is a 14-year old Native American living on the Spokane reservation in Washington State. From one day to the next, he decides to go to Reardan, a white school outside ‚the rez‘. One day he hears someone being sick in the girls‘ bathroom. It turns out to be his popular classmate Penelope, who confesses to suffer from bulimia².

- 1 So I say to Penelope what I always say to Dad when he’s drunk and depressed and ready to give up on the world.
‘Hey, Penelope,’ I say. ‘Don’t give up.’
Okay, so it’s not the wisest advice in the world. It’s actually kind of obvious¹ and corny².
- 5 But Penelope starts crying, talking about how lonely she is, and how everybody thinks her life is perfect because she’s pretty and smart and popular, but that she’s scared all the time, but nobody will let her be scared because she’s pretty and smart and popular.
You notice that she mentioned her beauty, intelligence, and popularity twice in one
- 10 sentence?
The girl has an ego.
But that’s sexy, too. [...]
Everybody is absolutely shocked that Penelope chose me to be her new friend. I’m not some ugly, mutated beast. But I am an absolute stranger at the school.
- 15 And I am an Indian. [...]
And, yeah, you’re probably thinking that Penelope was dating me ONLY because I was the worst possible choice for her.
She was probably dating me ONLY because I was an Indian boy.
And, okay, so she was only semi-dating me. We held hands once in a while and we
- 20 kissed once or twice, but that was it.
I don’t know what I meant to her.
I think she was bored of being the prettiest, smartest, and most popular girl in the world. She wanted to get a little crazy, you know? She wanted to get a little smudged.
And I was the smudge³.
- 25 But, hey, I was kind of using her, too.
After all, I suddenly became popular.

Because Penelope had publicly declared that I was cute enough to ALMOST date, all of the other girls in school decided that I was cute⁴, too.

Because I got to hold hands with Penelope, and kiss her good-bye when she jumped on
30 the school bus to go home, all of the other boys in school decided that I was a major
stud⁵.

Even the teachers started paying more attention to me.

I was mysterious.

How did I, the dorky⁶ Indian guy, win a tiny piece of Penelope's heart?

35 What was my secret?

I looked and talked and dreamed and walked differently than everybody else.

I was new.

If you want to get all biological, then you'd have to say that I was an exciting addition
to the Reardan⁷ gene pool⁸. [400 words]

(In: Alexie, Sherman: The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian, 2009.)

Vocabulary in a box a. bulimia = an illness in which a person cannot stop themselves from eating too much, and then vomits in order to control weight; 1. obvious = clear; 2. corny = not original; 3. smudge sb./sth. = make sb./sth. dirty; 4. cute = sweet (referring to the outward appearance); 5. stud (informal) = sexually attractive man; 6. dorky (informal) = clumsy, stupid, boring; 7. Reardan = name of Arnold's school; 8. gene pool = all genes of a species.

Tasks

1. Sum up the plot. (10 Punkte)
2. Characterize Penelope. (16 Punkte)
3. Write the story from Penelope's point of view. Focus on the reasons she gives for dating Arnold. (14 Punkte)

!!!Good luck to all of you!!!