

Complicated

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If you really want to understand this town, then you must understand the people. People here are very complicated, but they are all simple. They are simply complicated. If you asked them about Amat, first they would reply with a question: "Who is Amat?" Everybody knows Amat, but not everybody wants to know Amat. That is complicated, but it is simple and obvious why nobody wants to know him. Amat has lived in this town his entire life, he grew up here. He used to spend his childhood running around with his friends. They are still his friends. That could be because Amat does not know how to make new friends or maybe he does not want new friends. Even he himself does not know the answer to that. Anyone who has dedicated their life to being the best at something will sooner or later ask themselves "Why?"

His friend Cain would just answer "Because." That reply would be enough for Amat to stop asking questions. Cain is one of those people that do not need a reason to establish their goals. He has loved boxing since he was a kid and now, he is the best at it. Martyn is the exact opposite of Cain. He does not have any goals in his life, but one - he wants to live a happy and stress-free life. The three friends are very different, but they all have one thing in common - they are complicated. They all have problems and they do not want to have problems. Cain has problems in school, Martyn at home and Amat will have problems with everything. Amat loved his life the way that it was before, he never wanted it to change. Unfortunately, things change and they will not change for the better.

While they were walking to school one day a student was looking at Amat strangely. At first, Amat was ignoring him, but after some time they started to talk during the breaks. The student was called Kris and he was not the right person that Amat should have been talking to, but he did not know that at the time. While Amat was meeting new friends, Cain was not having as much fun. Constant bullying in school never helped him find friends. He always had to rely on Amat and Martyn. If he hadn't had them, he would have been all alone. He had reported bullying in school a hundred of times already, but nothing ever changed. The bullies would just get smaller punishments such as apologizing or cleaning the classroom. The school declared that they were just kids joking around. This joke was not humorous for Cain. He started hating them, he even started hating the school. He had given up on reporting them and started ditching classes. Of course, his parents did not agree with that, but he could not stand being at school. After some time, Amat started getting closer with Kris. They were going out every day and Amat really enjoyed having Kris as his friend. He felt like Kris could understand him better than anyone else.

Same as Cain, Martyn was also having a hard time. Martyn was an excellent student and he liked school very much. He never wanted to leave school to go home, but that was not because he enjoyed school. He did not like going home because his parents were never quiet. They fought every day and when that happened, which was almost all the time, Martyn would just lock himself in his room. He could never talk to his parents about this because he knew it would just lead to another fight. They would yell at Martyn sometimes too, but lately they were too busy yelling at each other. In this situation, he would usually call Amat to go out because he did not

want to stay in his house. He knew he could always count on Amat when he needed him. Amat was always there for Martyn, he was his most reliable friend. He would never let him down because he knew what Martyn was going through.

So, he called him today. After about twenty seconds, which felt like hours for Martyn, Amat answered the call.

“Hello, Martyn. What do you need?” Amat said loudly.

“I was just asking if you wanted to hang out, you know. Things are going on again.”

Amat looked at Kris who had overheard the conversation the two friends were having. Kris stared at Amat looking a bit annoyed. After the short stare Kris shook his head telling Amat to decline the offer.

“Sorry I cannot today. I am kind of hanging out with somebody already.”

A short silence occurred. “Are you mad?” Amat asked with regret.

“No, I just thought... Actually, never mind. Have fun.”

Martyn hung up the phone filled with disappointment. Amat sat there looking at the ground for what seemed like ten minutes. Until he broke the silence:

“Why do you not want Martyn around?”

Kris stopped for a second to think of a polite way to say this.

“He is just not a type of person I would hang out with.”

Amat wanted to say something, but he just accepted the response and kept staring at the ground. The walk to the school the next day was the most awkward thing both Amat and Martyn had experienced in the past year, and they had taken part in a lot of awkward situations. They kept walking until Martyn asked:

"How was your company yesterday?"

Amat almost tripped over his own feet remembering the conversation they had yesterday.

“It was good,” was all that he could let out.

“Amat was on a date with a girl?!” asked Cain, almost screaming.

"No!" yelled Amat even louder.

“Who is your new friend?”

“I was just hanging out with a friend. His name is Kris. He goes to our school.”

Cain completely stopped walking.

“Wait! It is not Kris Evans, right?”

All three of them stopped walking and he turned to look at Cain.

“Why do you ask?” said Amat, confused.

“You know he had been nothing but mean to me for the past two years. Are you seriously hanging out with him?”

Amat stood there frozen, he did not know what to say. He could not let his friend know that he was hanging out with his bully. He knew Cain had been skipping school because of the bullying he had been experiencing every day. Kris would not do something like that. He did not know what to think, but he knew he had to lie. He would hurt Cain if he told him the truth.

“Of course, I am not friends with Kris Evans!” He saw his friend relax. “Why would you scare me like that?” Amat just responded with a weak smile.

When Amat saw Kris, he knew he had to ask him about this. He really hoped his friend would say it was not true. After failing to ask him at school because he was afraid of the answer, he decided to ask him the next day. Suddenly, his phone started ringing. It was Kris asking him to hang out. Of course, Amat agreed. When they met, Amat noticed that Kris was especially happy that day. He thought that this was a great opportunity to finally ask him. He was nervous, he was not sure if he wanted to hear his response. Luckily, he built up some courage to ask him the question.

“Can I ask you something?” he said nervously.

“Of course, what is it?” Kris replied.

“Do you, by any chance, know Cain?” he asked, wanting to run away from this conversation.

“I do, why?” Kris answered confused.

“Are you friends?” Amat said now even more scared than he was before.

“Not really. I would not hang out with somebody like him.” Kris said confidently.

“Can you, at least, not be mean to him?” Amat begged his friend almost crying.

“If you want me to.” Kris could not care less about Cain, but if it would make Amat happier, he was willing to try.

After this conversation, Kris stopped bullying Cain. Amat did not feel like it was fine for him to still hang out with Kris, but he was afraid that if he stopped, Kris would go back to bullying Cain. While Amat and Kris were talking during the break, Martyn saw them. He instantly realized that Amat had lied. At first, Martyn did not want to sell out his friend, but he remembered when Amat ditched him to be with Kris. He also knew that Cain would be hurt, but he decided that he deserved to know. Martyn knew that he had made the right decision, so he told Cain.

The following day, Cain and Martyn didn’t show up in the park where they would meet up to go to school. Amat tried calling them multiple times, but neither of them answered the call. After a

while, he decided to go alone. When he got to school, he saw Martyn, so he went up to him to ask him why he was not picking up his phone. Martyn saw Amat coming up to him, so he just turned around and left. Amat was very confused. He tried to catch up with him, but he had already left. Amat could not find Cain anywhere. He could not see him all day, and Cain had no reason to skip classes since he was not getting bullied anymore.

A few days passed and Amat could not get a hold of either of his friends. He wanted to figure out what he had done that made them so mad at him. After almost giving up, he decided to try calling Martyn one last time. Fortunately, Martyn answered the call.

“What did I do?” Amat asked as soon as Martyn picked up the phone.

“You lied,” Martyn said slowly because if he talked any faster, Amat would figure out how frustrated he was.

“I did not know it at first and I only kept being around him because he promised he would stop being mean!” Amat said louder than he wanted to. They did not say a word for a while, until Martyn said:

“I do not want to be mad at you and I am not anymore, but you have to explain it to Cain.”

“How can I explain it to him if he is ignoring me?” Amat said feeling desperate.

“I will talk to him,” Martyn said.

“Thank you,” Amat said starting to calm down.

Martyn forced Cain to finally talk to Amat. Although Cain did not want anything to do with Amat, he agreed. The next morning, Amat was waiting in the park. He was stressed out so he could not wait at home any longer and that made him come half an hour earlier. When he saw his friends from the distance, he was getting even more nervous. Cain did not look calm either, he looked like he could explode any second.

“What do you want to talk about?” Cain asked, just wanting to finish this conversation.

After explaining everything, Amat felt way more relaxed as well - he did not know he could talk that fast. Cain was still upset, but he knew he had to forgive his friend, and Amat was thankful for that. At first, they could still feel the tension between them, but after a few weeks everything went back to normal. Amat stopped meeting with Kris and he did not feel bad at all. He used to like hanging out with Kris, but he would never leave his friends for anybody, especially not for somebody like Kris. Kris tried talking to Amat, but Amat did not want to hear what he had to say. Amat was way more happier with his friends. All of this was very complicated, but they are used to complications.

They are the reason everything is complicated.