

Deleted Scene from A WEEK OF MONDAYS

In an earlier draft of A WEEK OF MONDAYS, I had a scene on the Third Monday where Ellie “accidentally” volunteers to try out for the school musical. It was meant to show a side of Ellie that she’d been suppressing, in favor of other activities that people in her life expected her to do (like softball). She actually really wants to try out for the musical, she just doesn’t know it yet. The book was running a little long so I had to make some cuts. I decided to cut this scene and just have Ellie *decide* to sign up for the musical at the end of the book, to show how she’s grown as a character. But here is the original scene from the Third Monday.

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As I head back inside to the locker rooms, I pass by the auditorium and can hear someone belting the opening lines of the song “Take Me Baby, or Leave Me.” It’s my favorite song from the musical *Rent*.

I slip inside and take a seat in the back row to watch. The girl on the stage looks extremely nervous. I don’t recognize her. She must be a freshman but she’s really good. After she finishes and exits the stage, the director glances back into the audience. “Anyone else auditioning for the role of Maureen?”

Oh, Maureen! She’s my favorite character in the play. I’ve sung “Take Me or Leave Me” in the shower so many times, my shampoo bottle probably knows all the words by now. When I was little I used to fast forward the movie to Maureen’s scenes and watch them over and over again.

“Oh! It looks like we have one more.”

I see the director squinting against the lights. In fact, it almost looks like he's looking at me.

"You in the back," he says. "Are you auditioning?"

That's when I realize that my hand is in the air. As in, raised in an upward trajectory. As in, willingly volunteering to sing in front all of these people.

I yank it back to my side where it belongs.

What are you doing, Ellie?

"I can't see you in these lights," the director says, shielding his eyes with his hand.

"Can you stand up?"

Crappity crap on a crap stick.

I slink so far down, my knees hit the chair in front of me and my head is practically wedged into the gap between the base of the backrest and the seat.

"Don't be shy," the director says. "Come on up."

I have to get out of here. I have no idea what caused me to do that. I can't audition for a play. For starters, there's no way in hell I'd ever be able to get up there and sing in front of this entire auditorium. Not to mention, helllooo? I just made the varsity softball team. Unless they perfect cloning in the next five minutes, there's no way I can do both.

"What's your name?" the director asks and I realize everyone in the auditorium has now turned and is looking at me.

I have no other choice. I'm going to have to crawl out of here.

I drop to my knees and shuffle along the questionably-clean floor until I reach the other end of the aisle—opposite of the side I was sitting on. I gently ease the door open

with my palm and slip through. As soon as I'm safely on the other side, I pull myself to my feet and take off at a run.

I wonder how long it'll take for them to realize that no one is there.