

Nell Side 1

13.

*later the same day
Mason and Nell work on their project
they're both studying their books*

START → MASON
so I know I said "cool"
when you said your idea
but I actually
I don't think I understand it
the devil's not a character in the play

NELL
or is he

MASON
um
yeah
no
he's not
see?
character list
no devil

NELL
he's a character in the minds of the townspeople
and the idea of him is visually represented by the yellow bird

MASON
whoa
but are we even allowed to do something like that?
like with characters that aren't there?

NELL
it's an interpretive assignment
we can do whatever we want

MASON
yeah but like
well
okay
how do we do it?

NELL
I don't know yet

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that's why we're meeting
that's the point of projects
we figure it out

MASON

oh

okay

last project I got Beth and she basically just like
did all the work

NELL

yeah that's Beth

MASON

I feel like maybe it would have made me feel a little bad
but she seemed to really like doing it

NELL

yeah

that's Beth

also I don't really believe you would've felt bad

MASON

(his feelings are a little hurt)

...I feel bad about stuff

NELL

okay

if you say so

MASON

I say so

beat

NELL

Beth's such a trip

I think she just like

assumes I'm cool

because I'm from somewhere else and she wants to *be* somewhere else?

but sometimes I worry everybody here's gonna like

find me out

'cause I'm super not cool

like

at all

like

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I was actually kinda having a hard time before this
in Atlanta
with like
my friends
or “friends”
blehhh
this is boring for you, I’ll stop

MASON
I’m not bored
and you *are* cool

Nell makes a face

I mean I think you are
I know you don’t care what I think

NELL
I don’t Not care what you think
...
don’t tell anybody all that stuff
okay?

MASON
I won’t

a shared smile
pause
they return to their work

wait
yellow birds are symbols for like the devil??
I totally missed that

NELL
how are you in honors?

MASON
I’m like really good at taking tests
I dunno

NELL
not all yellow birds are the devil
that’s just what it means in *The Crucible*

MASON

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oh
okay
thanks

beat

you're really smart

NELL
I know

MASON
damn
humble too

NELL
I mean
I'm not going to pretend I don't know something
if I already know it
that's part of what makes me smart

MASON
hmm
yeah
I guess that's a good point

NELL
"we teach girls to shrink themselves
to make themselves smaller
we say to girls
'you can have ambition
but not too much
you should aim to be successful
but not too successful
otherwise you will threaten the man'"

MASON
that sounds familiar

NELL
it's in a Beyoncé song

MASON
yes!!

END

~~NELL~~