

**Summary: Jason Montgomery has never been much for socializing, he's stuck mostly to himself for most of his life. He didn't necessarily enjoy it, but he never could manage to get out of that situation. Jason now finds himself depressed and anxious. After being told he couldn't return to the school he's been in his whole life, Jason is forced into a whole new environment, one he's even less comfortable in. The opportunity for a new beginning surges, but Jason is unsure if he is able to take it or not. He reaches out to a select few he hopes he can trust, but hope can be dangerous. He compares the emotions that keep him chained to poisonous flowers blooming in his mind, fueled by loneliness, and he's afraid of what he might do when those flowers bloom.**

My heart is racing, my breathing is heavy, and my chest has tightened up. I feel like I have no control, panic sets in, and I have nowhere to go, I have to sit still. What's going on, you might ask? Nothing. I'm having an anxiety attack out of nowhere. I can't really explain it. Sometimes when it happens I feel like I need to disappear for a while to just calm down, But I can't. I can close my eyes all I want, but I know that I'll open them and find myself still in the same seat, in the same classroom. Even sadder, I find that no one around me has noticed. Then it feels like I have no one, like I'm alone.

You just did.

alone x 4  
live with x 5

I hate feeling like I'm alone. I don't like feeling like I'm alone. The flower inside my mind blossoms in loneliness, and it brings sadness and disappointment. It drives me mad. I can't escape it. This feeling. Still, I've learned to live with it, I live with it like a man living with a wild animal that could ravage him any second. My depression isn't the only animal I live with, however. I live surrounded by animals. Animals that just happen to look like people, Hypocrites and liars disguised as friends. They're not all like that, and I know there has to be a lot more to them, but I can't have people like that beside me. I still haven't found a place for someone like

Redundant  
Choose one.

I want to  
find true  
friendship.

# #JULIE

## Episode 35 – Literary Novel

XZ

Until then,

Tighten

me. I keep looking, I know there has to be somewhere for me, but for now this is what I have.

Having anxiety attacks in the middle of class and no one noticing.

Introduce him sooner. Have someone address him.

My name is Jason Montgomery. I'm sixteen years old. I could have a whole lot of backstory to give you, but I'll keep it simple. [I never had friends at my old school. I had people I talked with, some on a daily basis, I had people I hung out with during lunch, but I never had a single

or put friends in the switched schools #.

real friend. It kind of aches to think about it, honestly. Still, I've just transferred schools and I've already had an anxiety attack, first period. Nice.

Choose one. antecedent?

I didn't choose to switch schools, I didn't want to. I would have preferred to just stay there. I didn't have any friends, but at least people knew who I was. None of them really knew me, but at least they had an image when they heard my name. I guess I always wanted to have more friends. I was never content the way I was. But I could never get myself to reach out to people. I just felt uncomfortable. So here I am.

~~There was one person that~~ spoke to me when I first sat down. I didn't get her name. ~~It was a pale girl with dark hair.~~ She asked me what my name was and welcomed me to the school.

Have him introduce self here.

She didn't drag on the conversation or expect me to say much and I was grateful for that. I was fine until my first <sup>(A)</sup> period teacher asked me to stand up and introduce myself. I did stand up, slightly trembling and dying inside. I said my name loud and clearly, but with a small crack in my voice. I guess I didn't screw it up very badly, but in my head that wasn't how it went. See, that's not how it ever goes in my head. In my head, I always screw everything up and make a fool of myself. I can't stop myself from thinking like that, it just always happens. I screw up the simplest things in my head. As long as I know people are paying attention to me, I immediately feel like I've made a giant fool of myself. It's just how it always goes.

Tighten redundant

NOT  
Literally

So here I'm sitting literally dying, with no one around me noticing. Not that they would care, anyway. At most, they'd probably just think what the hell is wrong with him? and move on. They wouldn't ask or worry. Or so I thought. I was lost in my own cynical thoughts when I heard a voice.

"Jason, are you <sup>OK</sup> alright?" My English teacher, a young man in his mid-20s, asked. Only now was everyone in the class <sup>staring</sup> looking at me.

strong

I nodded, not daring to say a word.

Mr. Asher looked at me for a moment before nodding and continuing with the class. I was a bit amazed by the whole thing. I think that was the first time a teacher, or anyone really, has asked me if I was okay. I was oddly somewhat relieved someone had noticed and at least cared enough to actually ask.

The rest of the class was a bit easier for me. After a few deep breaths, I managed to calm myself down a bit. The pale girl <sup>who</sup> had welcomed me, whose name I now know is Ashley, sat down and talked to me for a while after Mr. Asher was done <sup>teaching</sup> with the class. The bell rang and cut our conversation short.

tell  
some

"We don't have second period together, but I'll see you later, okay?" She said as she picked up her books and waved goodbye, walking away.

I stood up to pick up my things, but Mr. Asher called my name.

"Jason, I'd like to talk to you about something," He said. "Can you come here during lunch? It's serious."

I got nervous, and I was wondering if it had anything to do with the fit I had in class.

"Yes, sir," I answered, nodding. I picked up my things and turned around.

As I started off, I heard Mr. Asher behind me, "Well, okay. Welcome to the school!"

How does  
she know?

Why didn't he just  
keep him in  
minutes after  
class?

What class is in Room 17?

I forced my way down the hallway through the crowds as I looked for classroom 17. When I finally stumbled in, I <sup>noticed a</sup> saw her. ~~She was beautiful~~ <sup>girl</sup> with pale skin and blonde long hair in a braid. She turned around and I saw her face, her delicate features, and her green eyes. I only stood there, completely captivated. She walked up to me and introduced herself.

How does she know?

"Hey, there," her soft voice echoed in my head, "You're Jason, right? Nice to meet you. I'm Cynthia." As she spoke, I couldn't help but notice the smile etched on her face, the small laugh she constantly lets out when she talks. "Come on, sit next to me."

She led to me the seat right next to hers. She was sitting up front. I was a bit unsure whether to sit up front again like last period, but that melted away the moment I looked behind me and saw her eyes looking back at me. I immediately set my stuff down and sat down.

tighter

cut one

"Sorry, I just get really excited about new students, and you're cute," she laughed.

I let out a small laugh, "No worries."

"So tell me. Which school did you transfer from?"

"The academy." Ayres academy, actually, but it's mostly called the academy around here.

"Really? Wow. And why did you transfer here in the middle of October?"

I cleared my throat. I didn't want to talk about that, but I knew that if she kept looking at me like that, I would spill everything for the simple sake of keeping a conversation with her. Just then, however, the ~~Geometry~~ teacher walked in, and I was relieved. Cynthia smiled and turned to face the teacher as she set her things down at the desk.

~~The teacher~~ Mrs. Anderson, was an elderly woman with a really annoying squeaky voice and sarcasm that tops mine, and that's saying something. She was unbearable and I hated every moment that she was speaking, but it was fine because I was sitting next to Cynthia.

stronger word tempered?

Sometimes in class, I would glance at her and she was looking at me too. Then she would offer me a bright smile as she got back to work. I knew right then that I was falling for this girl.

too soon!

recess free time at 10:00 am  
not down playing  
He's 16

The bell rang and we had a 20 minute recess. I thought about going to see Mr. Asher now, but I decided to wait until lunch like he'd told me. Instead, I followed Cynthia to the cafeteria. The cafeteria was huge. They sold coffee (and it was actually good), sandwiches, breakfast, lunch, even hot chocolate.

but he's going to lunch, no?

Why head to caf?

"Wow..." I said.

Cynthia giggled. "Pretty nice, huh? Probably the best thing in this whole damn school."

I led myself to the long line of students, Cynthia following close behind slightly giggling at my excitement. Waiting in line, we kept talking.

"So what's your last name?" she asked me.

Why does she ask?  
Why are last names important here?

"Montgomery. Yours?"

"Smith," she smiled.

Why ask here?

I WANT TO LIKE JASON, FOR HE'S THE PROTAGONIST, BUT I DON'T KNOW HIM WELL ENOUGH YET.  
IS IT IMPORTANT TO HAVE HIM MEET ASHLEY IN ONE CLASS AND CYNTHIA IN THE NEXT?  
INTERACTION WITH MALE CLASSMATES?  
WHY DIDN'T MR. ASHER SPEAK WITH HIM RIGHT AFTER CLASS?  
DESCRIBE HIS MORNING AT HOME FIRST DAY AT A NEW SCHOOL.  
NO ANXIETY ATTACKS BEFORE SCHOOL?  
NO ONE NOTICES THEM?  
HAVE JASON DESCRIBED PANIC ATTACK OF FIRST CLASS WITH THE CALM HE FEELS IN CYNTHIA'S PRESENCE.  
READ ALONG TO HEAR REDUNDANCY. TIGHTEN WORDING.  
DOESN'T SEEM LIKE LITERARY FICTION.



Ed

**Summary:** Jason Montgomery has never been much for socializing, he's stuck mostly to himself for most of his life. He didn't necessarily enjoy it, but he never could manage to get out of that situation. Jason now finds himself depressed and anxious. After being told he couldn't return to the school he's been in his whole life, Jason is forced into a whole new environment, one he's even less comfortable in. The opportunity for a new beginning surges, but Jason is unsure if he is able to take it or not. He reaches out to a select few he hopes he can trust, but hope can be dangerous. He compares the emotions that keep him chained to poisonous flowers blooming in his mind, fueled by loneliness, and he's afraid of what he might do when those flowers bloom.

- this character (1) has a teacher interested in his well-being (2) and has a pretty girl actively interested in him. that's like hitting the lottery twice in one day, and his problem is what?

My heart is racing, my breathing is heavy, and my chest has tightened up. I feel like I have no control, panic sets in, and I have nowhere to go, I have to sit still [What's going on, you might ask? Nothing] I'm having an anxiety attack out of nowhere. I can't really explain it. Sometimes when it happens I feel like I need to disappear for a while to just calm down. But I can't. I can close my eyes all I want, but I know that I'll open them and find myself still in the same seat, in the same classroom. Even sadder, I find that no one around me has noticed. Then it feels like I have no one, like I'm alone.

present tense

telling

why address to reader?

disappear? or calm down?

why would he think that people can notice feelings?

or positive thing

I hate feeling like I'm alone. I don't like feeling like I'm alone. The flower inside my mind blossoms in loneliness, and it brings sadness and disappointment. It drives me mad. I can't escape it. This feeling. Still, I've learned to live with it. I live with it like a man living with a wild animal that could ravage him any second. My depression isn't the only animal I live with, however. I live surrounded by animals. Animals that just happen to look like people. Hypocrites and liars disguised as friends. They're not all like that, and I know there has to be a lot more to them, but I can't have people like that beside me. I still haven't found a place for someone like

telling

the flower is depression?

[So far, I can't bear the thought of 200 pages of him]

- so, this character does nothing whatsoever to change his criteria, but only complains that others don't live up to his feelings (which is impossible) or care (why should they?) am I supposed to like this character?

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me. I keep looking, I know there has to be somewhere for me, but for now this is what I have.

Having anxiety attacks in the middle of class and no one noticing.

My name is Jason Montgomery. I'm sixteen years old. I could have a whole lot of backstory to give you but I'll keep it simple. I never had friends at my old school. I had people I talked with, some on a daily basis, I had people I hung out with during lunch, but I never had a single

real friend <sup>awkward</sup> [It kind of aches] to think about it, honestly. Still, I've just transferred schools and I've already had an anxiety attack, first period. Nice.

I didn't choose to switch schools, I didn't want to. I would have preferred to just stay there. I didn't have any friends, but at least people knew who I was. None of them really knew me, but at least they had an image when they heard my name. I guess I always wanted to have more friends. I was never content the way I was. But I could never get myself to reach out to people. I just felt uncomfortable. So here I am.

[at this point, I have zero sympathy for this character] There was one person that spoke to me when I first sat down. I didn't get her name. <sup>if nothing changes, nothing changes</sup> (It) <sup>why change to past tense?</sup> was a pale girl with dark hair. She asked me what my name was and welcomed me to the school.

She didn't drag on the conversation or expect me to say much and I was grateful for that. I was fine until my first <sup>(1)</sup> period teacher asked me to stand up and introduce myself. I did stand up, slightly trembling and dying inside. I said my name loud and clearly, but with a small crack in my voice. <sup>at</sup> I guess I didn't screw it up very badly, but in my head that wasn't how it went. See, that's not how it ever goes in my head. In my head, I always screw everything up and make a fool of myself. I can't stop myself from thinking like that, it just always happens. I screw up the simplest things in my head. As long as I know people are paying attention to me, I immediately feel like I've made a giant fool of myself. It's just how it always goes.

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So here I'm sitting literally dying, with no one around me noticing. Not that they would care, anyway. At most, they'd probably just think what the hell is wrong with him? and move on.

*actually, not*

*present tense again*

They wouldn't ask or worry. Or so I thought. I was lost in my own cynical thoughts when I heard a voice.

*wouldn't a teenager think of him as an older man*

*past tense*

"Jason, are you alright?" My English teacher, a young man in his mid-20s, asked. Only— now was everyone in the class looking at me.

*so, he's immediately lost my sympathy*

I nodded, not daring to say a word.

Mr. Asher looked at me for a moment before nodding and continuing with the class. I was a bit amazed by the whole thing. I think that was the first time a teacher, or anyone really, has asked me if I was okay. I was oddly somewhat relieved someone had noticed and at least cared enough to actually ask.

*uh*

*uh*

The rest of the class was a bit easier for me. After a few deep breaths, I managed to calm myself down a bit. The pale girl that had welcomed me, whose name I now know is Ashley, sat down and talked to me for a while after Mr. Asher was done with the class. The bell rang and cut our conversation short.

*A*

*present*

*A*

"We don't have second period together, but I'll see you later, okay?" She said as she picked up her books and waved goodbye, walking away.

I stood up to pick up my things, but Mr. Asher called my name.

"Jason, I'd like to talk to you about something," He said. "Can you come here during lunch? It's serious."

*3/1*

I got nervous, and I was wondering if it had anything to do with the fit I had in class.

*?*

*huh?*

"Yes, sir," I answered, nodding. I picked up my things and turned around.

As I started off, I heard Mr. Asher behind me. "Well, okay. Welcome to the school!"

*0*



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I forced my way down the hallway through the crowds as I looked for classroom 17. When I finally stumbled in, I saw her. She was beautiful, with pale skin and blonde long hair in a braid. She turned around and I saw her face, her delicate features, and her green eyes. I only stood there, completely captivated. She walked up to me and introduced herself.

"Hey, there," her soft voice echoed in my head, "You're Jason, right? Nice to meet you. I'm Cynthia." As she spoke, I couldn't help but notice the smile etched on her face, the small laugh she constantly lets out when she talks. "Come on, sit next to me."

She led me to the seat right next to hers. She was sitting up front. I was a bit unsure whether to sit up front again like last period, but that melted away the moment I looked behind me and saw her eyes looking back at me. I immediately set my stuff down and sat down.

"Sorry, I just get really excited about new students, and you're cute," she laughed.

I let out a small laugh, "No worries."

"So tell me. Which school did you transfer from?"

"The Academy." Ayres Academy, actually, but it's mostly called the Academy around here.

"Really? Wow. And why did you transfer here in the middle of October?"

I cleared my throat. I didn't want to talk about that, but I knew that if she kept looking at me like that, I would spill everything for the simple sake of keeping a conversation with her. Just then, however, the Geometry teacher walked in, and I was relieved. Cynthia smiled and turned to face the teacher as she set her things down at the desk.

The teacher, Mrs. Anderson, was an elderly woman with a really annoying squeaky voice and sarcasm that tops mine, and that's saying something. She was unbearable and I hated every moment that she was speaking, but it was fine because I was sitting next to Cynthia.

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Sometimes in class, I would glance at her and she was looking at me too. Then she would offer me a bright smile as she got back to work. I knew right then that I was falling for this girl.

The bell rang and we had a 20 minute recess. I thought about going to see Mr. Asher now, but I decided to wait until lunch like he'd told me. Instead, I followed Cynthia to the cafeteria. The cafeteria was huge. They sold coffee (and it was actually good), sandwiches, breakfast, lunch, even hot chocolate.

"Wow..." I said.

Cynthia giggled. "Pretty nice, huh? Probably the best thing in this whole damn school."

I led myself to the long line of students, Cynthia following close behind slightly giggling at my excitement. Waiting in line, we kept talking.

"So what's your last name?" She asked me.

"Montgomery. Yours?"

"Smith," she smiled.

*Jason and Cynthia*

*I have to make some assumptions. 1. This is the beginning of the story. 2. This was Jason's first day of his transfer from another school. None of this is stated but I have to go on these assumptions.*

*This is a fairly common situation for a teenager in a new situation: Anxiety and lack of self-assurance. The first two paragraphs describe his anxiety attack. I feel it's overdone and could be inserted in a much reduce form later on. Start so the reader understands the where and why of the story.*

*His teacher says to see him later, "It's serious." If it is serious, a teacher would never alarm a student. And, the teacher would take action immediately if it were serious. You may want to re-think this bit of drama.*

*Perfection doesn't exist. The girl, Cynthia, seems too perfect. Plus, you might not want to let Jason off the hook so soon into the story. Allow him to suffer for a while. Let the reader feel his discomfort through actions, rather than have the author tell the reader how uncomfortable he is. Let the reader experience his misery so when the misery is gone we, the reader, feels his relief.*

*The story has potential. But, you must find something new to tell us. Things here are fairly typical, both in other stories and in real life. Readers don't read to read about real life which is all around us, and is, frankly, rather dull. The reader wants to see something new and unusual. Still, it's early in the story. Keep writing.*

*Good luck with this story.*

**Summary: Jason Montgomery has never been much for socializing, he's stuck mostly to himself for most of his life. He didn't necessarily enjoy it, but he never could manage to get out of that situation. Jason now finds himself depressed and anxious. After being told he couldn't return to the school he's been in his whole life, Jason is forced into a whole new environment, one he's even less comfortable in. The opportunity for a new beginning surges, but Jason is unsure if he is able to take it or not. He reaches out to a select few he hopes he can trust, but hope can be dangerous. He compares the emotions that keep him chained to poisonous flowers blooming in his mind, fueled by loneliness, and he's afraid of what he might do when those flowers bloom.**

My heart is racing, my breathing is heavy, and my chest has tightened up. I feel like I have no control, panic sets in, and I have nowhere to go, I have to sit still. What's going on, you might ask? Nothing. I'm having an anxiety attack out of nowhere. I can't really explain it. Sometimes when it happens I feel like I need to disappear for a while to just calm down. But I can't. I can close my eyes all I want, but I know that I'll open them and find myself still in the

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same seat, in the same classroom. Even sadder, I find that no one around me has noticed. Then it feels like I have no one, like I'm alone.

I hate feeling like I'm alone. I don't like feeling like I'm alone. The flower inside my mind blossoms in loneliness, and it brings sadness and disappointment. It drives me mad. I can't escape it. This feeling. Still, I've learned to live with it. I live with it like a man living with a wild animal that could ravage him any second. My depression isn't the only animal I live with, however. I live surrounded by animals. Animals that just happen to look like people. Hypocrites and liars disguised as friends. They're not all like that, and I know there has to be a lot more to them, but I can't have people like that beside me. I still haven't found a place for someone like me. I keep looking, I know there has to be somewhere for me, but for now this is what I have. Having anxiety attacks in the middle of class and no one noticing.

*Start here. The previous paragraphs are a lot of self-indulgent whining. You can easily fit the symptoms in a sentence...*

My name is Jason Montgomery. I'm sixteen years old. I could have a whole lot of backstory to give you, but I'll keep it simple. I never had friends at my old school. I had people I talked with, some on a daily basis, I had people I hung out with during lunch, but I never had a single real friend. It kind of aches to think about it, honestly. Still, I've just transferred schools and I've already had an anxiety attack, first period. ~~Nice.~~ *here*

I didn't choose to switch schools, I didn't want to. I would have preferred to just stay there. I didn't have any friends, but at least people knew who I was. None of them really knew me, but at least they had an image when they heard my name. I guess I always wanted to have more friends. I was never content the way I was. But I could never get myself to reach out to

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people. I just felt uncomfortable. So here I am. *The point of isolation has been made several times. Try to combine the previous sentences and tighten the narrative.*

There was one person ~~that~~ *who* spoke to me when I first sat down. I didn't get her name. ~~It~~ *She* was a pale girl with dark hair. She asked me what my name was and welcomed me to the school. She didn't drag on the conversation or expect me to say much and I was grateful for that. I was fine until my first period teacher asked me to stand up and introduce myself. I did stand up, slightly trembling and dying inside. I said my name loud and clearly, but with a small crack in my voice. I guess I didn't screw it up very badly, but in my head that wasn't how it went. See, ~~that's not how it ever goes in my head. In my head, I always screw everything up and make a fool of myself. I can't stop myself from thinking like that, it just always happens. I screw up the simplest things in my head. As long as I know people are paying attention to me, I immediately feel like I've made a giant fool of myself. It's just how it always goes.~~

*but with a  
again*

So here I'm sitting --literally dying(,) -- with no one around me noticing. *(You've already said this) Not that they would care, anyway. At most, they'd probably just think what the hell is wrong with him? and move on. They wouldn't ask or worry. Or so I thought. (Please stop whining. Just tell the story. The entire story can't be that the kid is timid. What else is the problem?)* I was lost in my own cynical thoughts when I heard a voice.

"Jason, are you alright?" My English teacher, a young man in his mid-20s, asked. Only now, ~~was~~ everyone in the class *was* looking at me.

I nodded, not daring to say a word.

Mr. Asher looked at me for a moment before nodding and continuing with the class. I was a bit amazed by the whole thing. I think that was the first time a teacher, or anyone really,



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has *had* asked me if I was okay. I was, ~~oddly~~, somewhat relieved someone had noticed and *at least* cared enough to actually ask.

The rest of the class was a bit easier for me. After a few deep breaths, I managed to calm myself down a bit. The pale girl that had welcomed me, whose name I now know is Ashley, sat down and talked to me for a while after Mr. Asher was done with the class. *(Follow with the conversation) The bell rang and cut our conversation short. (Move this to the end of the conversation or delete it. It's probably unnecessary.)*

"We don't have second period together, but I'll see you later, okay?" ~~She~~ *she* said as she picked up her books and waved goodbye, walking away.

I stood up to pick up my things, but Mr. Asher called my name.

"Jason, I'd like to talk to you about something(.)," ~~He~~ *he* said. "Can you come here during lunch? *It's serious. (I don't think a teacher would alarm a student prematurely.)*"

I got nervous, and I was wondering if it had anything to do with the fit I had in class.

"Yes, sir," I answered, nodding. I picked up my things and turned around.

As I started off, I heard Mr. Asher behind me, "*Well, okay. Welcome to the school!!*" *(Huh? I don't understand the comment.)*

I forced my way down the hallway through the crowds as I looked for classroom 17. When ~~I~~ *I* finally stumbled in, I saw her *(Who? Another student? A teacher? Confusing)*. She was beautiful, with pale skin and blonde long hair in a braid. She turned around and I saw her face, her delicate features, and her green eyes. I only stood there, completely captivated. She walked up to me and introduced herself.

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"Hey, there," her soft voice echoed in my head, "You're Jason, right? Nice to meet you. I'm Cynthia." As she spoke, I couldn't help but notice the smile etched on her face, the small laugh she co(n)stantly lets out when she talks. "Come on, sit next to me."

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"Sorry, I just get really excited about new students, and you're cute," she laughed.

I let out a small laugh, "No worries."

"So tell me. Which school did you transfer from?"

"The academy." Ayres academy, actually, but it's mostly called the academy around here.

"Really? Wow. And why did you transfer here in the middle of October?"

I cleared my throat. I didn't want to talk about that, but I knew that if she kept looking at me like that, I would spill everything for the simple sake of keeping a co(n)versation with her. Just then, however, the Geometry teacher walked in, and I was relieved. Cynthia smiled and turned to face the teacher as she set her things down at the desk.

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"So what's your last name?" She asked me.

"Montgomery. Yours?"

"Smith," she smiled.

# Jason's Comments

**Summary: Jason Montgomery has never been much for socializing, he's stuck mostly to himself for most of his life. He didn't necessarily enjoy it, but he never could manage to get out of that situation. Jason now finds himself depressed and anxious. After being told he couldn't return to the school he's been in his whole life, Jason is forced into a whole new environment, one he's even less comfortable in. The opportunity for a new beginning surges, but Jason is unsure if he is able to take it or not. He reaches out to a select few he hopes he can trust, but hope can be dangerous. He compares the emotions that keep him chained to poisonous flowers blooming in his mind, fueled by loneliness, and he's afraid of what he might do when those flowers bloom.**

My heart is racing, my breathing is heavy, and my chest has tightened <sup>is ing</sup> up. I feel like I have no control, <sup>I have no escape and</sup> panic sets in, <sup>and I have nowhere to go,</sup> and I have to sit still. What's going on, you might ask? ~~Nothing.~~ <sup>They come out of nowhere.</sup> I'm having an anxiety attack, ~~out of nowhere.~~ I can't really explain it.

Sometimes when it happens I ~~feel~~ like I need to disappear for a while to ~~just~~ calm down. But I can't. I can close my eyes, <sup>but when I</sup> all I want, but I know that I'll open them, <sup>I</sup> and find myself still in the same seat, in the same classroom. ~~Even sadder, I find that no one around me has noticed. Then it~~ feels like I have no one, <sup>No one can help me.</sup> like I'm alone.

I hate feeling like I'm alone. I don't like feeling like I'm alone. The flower inside my mind blossoms in loneliness, and it brings sadness and disappointment. It drives me mad. I can't escape it. This feeling. <sup>#</sup> Still, I've learned to live with it. I live with it like a man living with a wild animal that could ravage him any second. My depression isn't the only animal I live with, however. I live surrounded by animals. Animals that ~~may~~ happen to look like people. Hypocrites and liars disguised as friends. ~~They're not all like that, and I know there has to be a lot more to them, but~~ I can't have people like that beside me. I still haven't found a place for someone like <sup>myself.</sup>

watch the word echo

People like what? Give specifics.

Without warning or provocation.

Sad about what? Disappointed about what?

Episode 35 – Literary Novel

~~me~~. I keep looking, I know there has to be somewhere for me, but for now this is ~~what I have~~.

it - which is what exactly?

Having anxiety attacks in the middle of class and no one noticing.

Should they notice? Does he think they should notice?

Should notice?

My name is Jason Montgomery. I'm sixteen years old. I could have a whole lot of backstory to give you, but I'll keep it simple. I never had friends at my old school. I had people I talked with, some on a daily basis, I had people I hung out with during lunch, but I never had a ~~single~~

real friend. It ~~kind of~~ aches to think about it, honestly. Still, I've just transferred schools and I've already had an anxiety attack, first period. Nice.

I didn't choose to switch schools. I didn't want to. I would have preferred to ~~just~~ stay there. I didn't have any friends, but at least people knew who I was. None of them ~~really~~ knew me, but at least they had an image when they heard my name. ~~I guess~~ I always wanted to have more friends. I was never content the way I was. But I could never get myself to reach out to people. I just felt uncomfortable. So here I am.

Vary Sentence Starters

was never comfortable reaching out  
(So why did he switch schools? And who forced him?)

There was one person ~~that~~ spoke to me when I first sat down. I didn't get her name. ~~It~~ <sup>She</sup> was a pale girl with dark hair. She asked me what my name was and welcomed me to the school. She didn't drag on the conversation or expect me to say much ~~and~~ <sup>ff</sup> I was grateful for that. I was fine until my first period teacher asked me to stand up and introduce myself. I did stand up, slightly trembling and dying inside. I said my name loud and clearly, but with a small crack in my voice. I guess I didn't screw it up very badly, but in my head that wasn't how it went. See, that's not how it ever goes in my head. In my head, I always screw everything up and make a fool of myself. I can't stop myself from thinking like that, it just always happens. I screw up the simplest things in my head. As long as I know people are paying attention to me, I immediately feel like I've made a giant fool of myself. It's just how it always goes.

repetative

repetative

So does he think he screwed it up or not?



Episode 35 – Literary Novel

So I sat there ~~dying~~ <sup>here</sup>   
 - you've said this multiple times

Watch your verb tenses stay consistent

So here I'm sitting ~~literally~~ dying, with no one around me noticing. Not that they would care, anyway. At most, they'd probably just think what the hell is wrong with him? and move on. They wouldn't ask or worry. Or so I thought. I was lost in my own cynical thoughts when I heard a voice.

What physical symptoms is he expressing that would make anyone notice?

"Jason, are you alright?" My English teacher, a ~~young~~ <sup>my</sup> man in his mid-~~20s~~ <sup>twenties</sup>, asked. ~~Only~~

#

Now ~~was~~ <sup>was</sup> everyone in the class looking at me.

I nodded, not daring to say a word.

Mr. Asher looked at me for a moment before nodding and continuing with the class. I was ~~am~~ <sup>was</sup> amazed by the whole thing. ~~I think~~ <sup>that</sup> that was the first time a teacher, or anyone ~~really~~ <sup>has</sup> ~~has~~ <sup>has</sup> ever asked me if I was okay. I was ~~oddy~~ <sup>oddy</sup> somewhat relieved someone had noticed and ~~at least~~ <sup>at least</sup> cared enough to actually ask.

The rest of the class was ~~but~~ <sup>was</sup> easier for me. After a few deep breaths, I managed to calm myself down ~~abit~~ <sup>abit</sup>. The pale girl that had welcomed me, whose name I ~~now know~~ <sup>remembered was</sup> is Ashley, sat down and talked to me for a while after Mr. Asher was done with the class. The bell rang and cut our conversation short.

→ Show us their conversation

"We don't have second period together, but I'll see you later, okay?" She said as she ~~picked up her books and~~ <sup>and</sup> waved goodbye, ~~walking~~ <sup>walked</sup> away.

I stood up to ~~pick up my things~~ <sup>pick up my things</sup>, but Mr. Asher called my name.

"Jason, I'd like to talk to you about something," He said. "Can you come here during lunch? It's serious."

I got nervous, and ~~I was wondering~~ <sup>wondered</sup> if it had anything to do with ~~the~~ <sup>the</sup> fit I had in class.

- was he convulsing?

"Yes, sir," I answered, ~~nodding~~ <sup>nodding</sup>. I ~~picked up my things~~ <sup>picked up my things</sup> and turned around.

As I started off, I heard Mr. Asher behind me, "Well, okay. Welcome to the school!"

Episode 35 – Literary Novel

I forced my way down the hallway through the crowds as I looked for classroom 17. When I finally stumbled in, I saw her. She was beautiful, with pale skin and blonde long hair in a braid. She turned around and I saw her face, her delicate features, and her green eyes. I only stood there, completely captivated. She walked up to me and introduced herself.

"Hey, there," her soft voice echoed in my head, "You're Jason, right? Nice to meet you. I'm Cynthia." As she spoke, I couldn't help but notice the smile etched on her face, the small laugh she costantly lets out when she talks. "Come on, sit next to me."

She led me to the seat right next to hers. She was sitting up front. I was a bit unsure whether to sit up front again like last period, but that melted away the moment I looked behind me and saw her eyes looking back at me. I immediately set my stuff down and sat down.

"Sorry, I just get really excited about new students, and you're cute," she laughed.

I let out a small laugh, "No worries."

"So tell me. Which school did you transfer from?"

"The academy." Ayres academy, actually, but it's mostly called the academy around here."

"Really? Wow. And why did you transfer here in the middle of October?"

I cleared my throat. I didn't want to talk about that, but I knew that if she kept looking at me like that, I would spill everything for the simple sake of keeping a conversation with her. Just then, however, the Geometry teacher walked in, and I was relieved. Cynthia smiled and turned to face the teacher as she set her things down at the desk.

The teacher, Mrs. Anderson, was an elderly woman with a really annoying squeaky voice and sarcasm that tops mine, and that's saying something. She was unbearable and I hated every moment that she was speaking, but it was fine because I was sitting next to Cynthia.

You haven't shown him being sarcastic yet.

bath girls have pale skin?

She had

up front.

Luckily

an

sitting next to Cynthia made it bearable.

Episode 35 – Literary Novel

*During that*

~~Sometimes~~ in class, I would glance at her, and she was looking at me, too. Then she would offer me a bright smile as she got back to work. I knew right then that I was falling for this girl.

*— that fast??*

The bell rang and we had a <sup>*twenty's*</sup> 20 minute <sup>*break*</sup> recess. I thought about going to see Mr. Asher now, but I decided to wait until lunch like he'd told me. Instead, I followed Cynthia to the cafeteria. The cafeteria was huge. They sold coffee (and it was actually good), sandwiches, breakfast, lunch, even hot chocolate.

"Wow..." I said.

*Why is this amazing? All cafeterias serve food  
what is he comparing it to?*

Cynthia giggled. "Pretty nice, huh? Probably the best thing in this whole damn school."

I led myself to the long line of students, Cynthia following close behind ~~slightly~~ giggling at my excitement. Waiting in line, we kept talking.

"So what's your last name?" She asked me.

"Montgomery. Yours?"

*lower case*

"Smith," she <sup>*said*</sup> smiled.

— Yang Adult

Susan

Alabama

*Summary: Jason Montgomery has never been much for socializing; he's stuck mostly to himself for most of his life. He didn't necessarily enjoy it, but he never could manage to get out of that situation. Jason now finds himself depressed and anxious. After being told he couldn't return to the school he's been in his whole life, Jason is forced into a whole new environment, one he's even less comfortable in. The opportunity for a new beginning surges, but Jason is unsure if he is able to take it or not. He reaches out to a select few he hopes he can trust, but hope can be dangerous. He compares the emotions that keep him chained to poisonous flowers blooming in his mind, fueled by loneliness, and he's afraid of what he might do when those flowers bloom.*

good premise

Comment [s1]: In this first paragraph, read it out loud and try to feel the rhythm of the sentences. The sentence structure should be varied so that the reader doesn't become distracted.

My heart is racing, my breathing is heavy, and my chest has tightened up. I feel like I have no control, panic sets in, and I have nowhere to go. I have to sit still. What's going on, you might ask? Nothing. I'm having an anxiety attack out of nowhere. I can't really explain it. Sometimes when it happens, I feel like I need want to disappear for a while to just calm down. Give myself a chance to calm down. But I can't. I can close my eyes all I want, but I know that I'll open them and find myself still in the same seat, in the same classroom. Even sadder, I find that no one around me has noticed. Then it feels like I have no one, like I'm alone.

sweating, nausea, chest pain, rapid heartbeat, running thoughts

Comment [s2]: Listen to these two sentences. They have the same pattern, and they are saying the same thing. You really only need one piece of one of those sentences to get your point across.

Comment [s3]: Also, "I have to sit still" seems to contradict the previous sentence. Do you want to sit still or do you want to leave?

Comment [s4]: good

Comment [s5]: good

~~I hate feeling like I'm alone. I don't like feeling like I'm alone. The flower inside my mind blossoms in loneliness, and it brings sadness and disappointment. It drives me mad. I can't escape it. This feeling. Still, I've learned to live with it. I live with it like a man living with a wild animal that could ravage him any second. My depression isn't the only animal I live with, however. I live surrounded by animals. Animals that just happen to look like people. Hypocrites and liars disguised as friends. They're not all like that, and I know there has to be a lot more to them, but I can't have people like that beside me. I still haven't found a place for someone like~~

Comment [s6]: Again, these are almost exactly the same sentences. A quick edit should take that out.

Comment [s7]: What feeling?

Comment [s8]: The next few sentences pull me out of the moment. I think you should focus on the panic attack/feeling of being alone instead of moving into a third attack.

you are telling us you're having a heart attack, but not showing us  
"Show, don't tell."



Episode 35 – Literary Novel

me. I keep looking, I know there has to be somewhere for me, but for now this is what I have.

Having anxiety attacks in the middle of class and no one noticing.

My name is Jason Montgomery. I'm sixteen years old. I could have a whole lot of backstory to give you, but I'll keep it simple. I never had friends at my old school. I had people I talked with, some on a daily basis, I had people I hung out with during lunch, but I never had a single

real friend. It kind of aches to think about it, honestly. Still, I've just transferred schools and I've already had an anxiety attack, first period. Nice.

I didn't choose to switch schools. I didn't want to. I would have preferred to just stay there. I didn't have any friends, but at least people knew who I was. None of them really knew me, but at least they had an image when they heard my name. I guess I always wanted to have more friends. I was never content the way I was. But I could never get myself to reach out to people. I just felt uncomfortable. So here I am.

There was one person that spoke to me when I first sat down. I didn't get her name. It was a pale girl with dark hair. She asked me what my name was and welcomed me to the school. She didn't drag on the conversation or expect me to say much, and I was grateful for that. I was fine until my first period teacher asked me to stand up and introduce myself. I did stand up, slightly trembling and dying inside. I said my name loud and clearly, but with a small crack in my voice. I guess I didn't screw it up very badly, but in my head that wasn't how it went. See, that's not how it ever goes in my head. In my head, I always screw everything up and make a fool of myself. I can't stop myself from thinking like that, it just always happens. I screw up the simplest things in my head. As long as I know people are paying attention to me, I immediately feel like I've made a giant fool of myself. It's just how it always goes.

**Comment [s9]:** Right here, I want to know more about what's happening during your panic attack. There is too much logical thinking here; bring on the physical and I'm guessing disjointed thoughts that accompany it. Then have the teacher interrupt, and then insert this sentence.

**Comment [s10]:** I don't think you need anything between the first paragraph and here. This is a good sentence.

**Comment [s11]:** Right now, you have a run-on sentence. Change the comma to a semi-colon, and now you are separating two complete sentences that are related. Make sure it's a complete sentence on either side of the semi-colon.

**Comment [s12]:** Save this for later

*good physical tag to indicate nervousness*

**Comment [s13]:** Instead of summarizing, turn this into a scene, with dialogue and details on how you felt. I do like the "see, that's not how it ever goes in my head, etc"-maybe you can keep that and insert it at the end of the scene.



Episode 35 – Literary Novel

So here I'm sitting, literally dying, with no one around me noticing. Not that they would care, anyway. At most, they'd probably just think what the hell is wrong with him? and move on. They wouldn't ask or worry. Or so I thought. I was lost in my own cynical thoughts when I heard a voice.

"Jason, are you alright?" My English teacher, ~~a young man in his mid-20s~~, asked. Only now was everyone in the class looking at me.

I nodded, not daring to say a word.

Mr. Asher looked at me for a moment before nodding and continuing with the class. I was a bit amazed by the whole thing. I think that was the first time a teacher, or anyone really, has asked me if I was okay. Maybe it was because he was so close to my age; I'd heard that this was only his second year teaching. I was oddly ~~somewhat~~ relieved someone had noticed and at least cared enough to actually ask.

The rest of the class was a bit easier for me. After a few deep breaths, I managed to calm myself down a bit. The pale girl that had welcomed me, whose name I now know is Ashley, sat down and talked to me for a while after Mr. Asher was done with the class. The bell rang and cut our conversation short.

"We don't have second period together, but I'll see you later, okay?" ~~She~~ she said as she picked up her books and waved goodbye, ~~walking away~~.

I stood up ~~to~~ and was about to pick up my things, but Mr. Asher called my name.

"Jason, ~~I'd like to talk to you about something.~~" He said. "Can you please come here during lunch stop by my classroom during lunch? It's serious! I'd like to catch up with you for a few minutes."

**Comment [s14]:** A teenager wouldn't think of his teacher as a "young man".

Example:

**Comment [s15]:** Okay. What you need before this paragraph is a scene. Start with the girl introducing herself, maybe, and a couple of the main character's thoughts. Then the panic attack happens, and then the teacher asks how Jason is doing. We'll learn of Jason's name through dialogue; you don't need to tell us. Remember that the panic attack is an event. Don't interrupt it with musings, too much back story, and lucid thoughts. A panic attack means panic, not thinking logically.

**Comment [s16]:** If you do what I mention above, we'll already know by this point that her name is Ashley.

**Comment [s17]:** Doesn't the class end when the bell rings? Usually there isn't much time to talk in the classroom before the bell rings.

**Comment [s18]:** If she's waving goodbye, I can picture her walking away, so you don't need to tell us.

**Comment [s19]:** Was anyone else in the classroom at this point? In any case, the teacher would keep it light. See my changes.

Episode 35 – Literary Novel

I got nervous, and I was wondering if it had anything to do with the ~~fit-episode~~ I had in class.

"Yes, sir," I answered, nodding. I picked up my things and turned around.

As I started off, ~~I heard~~ Mr. Asher ~~behind-me~~said, "Well, okay. Welcome to the school!"

I forced my way down the hallway through the crowds as I looked for classroom 17.

When ~~I~~ finally stumbled in, I saw her. She was beautiful, with pale skin and blonde long hair in a braid. She turned around and I saw her face, her delicate features, and her green eyes. I ~~only~~ stood there, completely captivated. She walked up to me and introduced herself.

Comment [s20]: If she turned, you wouldn't yet know you were beautiful.

"Hey, there," her soft voice echoed in my head, "You're Jason, right? Nice to meet you. I'm Cynthia." As she spoke, I couldn't help but notice the smile etched on her face, the small laugh she ~~co~~stantly lets out when she talks. "Come on, sit next to me."

Comment [s21]: This is a little confusing to me- you're switching between when you first meet her and looking back. Let us meet her with you.

~~She led to me the seat right next to hers. She was sitting up front- As she led the way to the front of the room, I was a bit unsure whether to sit up front- wasn't sure that I wanted to sit that close to the teacher again (tell us why)- again like last period, but that melted away I had to be near her- the moment I looked behind me and saw her eyes looking back at me. I immediately set dumped my stuff down on the desk and sat down. She did the same. I could smell her perfume/soap/shampoo.~~

Comment [s22]: Why?

"Sorry, I just get really excited about new students, and you're cute," ~~she~~ Cynthia laughed.

Comment [s23]: Bring us into the moment by using all of the senses.

I let out a small laugh. "No worries."

"So tell me. Which school did you transfer from?"

"The ~~academy~~ Academy." Ayres ~~a~~cademy Academy, actually, but it's mostly called the ~~academy~~ Academy around here.

Comment [s24]: Sounds like everyone knows about this school- capitalize it.

Episode 35 – Literary Novel

"Really? Wow. ~~And why~~ Why did you transfer here in the middle of October?"

Comment [s25]: What's the expression on her face when she learns this?

I cleared my throat. I didn't want to talk about that, but I knew that if she kept looking at me ~~like that, I would~~ I'd spill everything for the simple sake of keeping a conversation going with her. Just then, ~~however~~ though, the Geometry teacher walked in, ~~and~~ I was relieved. Cynthia smiled and turned to face the teacher as she set her things down at the desk.

Comment [s26]: How about, why did you transfer here at all? (sounds like the Academy isn't a place where people would want to leave)

The teacher, Mrs. Anderson, was an elderly woman with a really annoying squeaky voice and sarcasm that tops mine, and that's saying something. She was unbearable and I hated every moment that she was speaking, but it was fine because I was sitting ~~next to~~ near Cynthia. Sometimes in class, I would glance at her and she was looking at me too. Then she would offer me a bright smile as she got back to work. I knew right then that I was falling for this girl.

Comment [s27]: Totally relieved? Because I'm guessing she's not, since he can't keep talking to her.

Comment [s28]: She wasn't sitting already like he was?

Comment [s29]: Have the teacher say something out loud, and then have him provide commentary on her voice and on what she says. Then we'll know she's sarcastic because you're showing us, not telling us.

Comment [s30]: Awkward if she's sitting behind him. Have them sit next to each other.

The bell rang. ~~We~~ and we had a 20 minute recess. I thought about ~~going to see~~ stopping by Mr. Asher's ~~now~~, but I decided to wait until lunch like he'd told me. Instead, I followed Cynthia to the cafeteria. ~~The cafeteria~~ It was huge. They sold coffee (~~and~~ it was actually good), sandwiches, breakfast, lunch, even hot chocolate.

Comment [s31]: Tell us this after you start drinking it

"Wow..." I said.

Cynthia giggled. "Pretty nice, huh? Probably the best thing in this whole damn school."

~~I led myself to the~~ We headed for the long line of students, Cynthia following close behind slightly giggling at my excitement. ~~Waiting in line, we kept talking.~~

"So what's your last name?" ~~She~~ she asked me.

"Montgomery. Yours?"

"Smith," she smiled.

## Episode 35 – Literary Novel

I like the premise of this story, and I'm drawn in right away by the panic attack. I think you need to go step-by-step, scene-by-scene. Take out the backstory-at least most of it-bring us into the panic attack, and then have us meet these people with you in scenes. I'd be interested reading a re-write.