

Case Study: Carmen's Worst. Day. Ever.

Carmen rolled over in bed and looked at her watch. It was 7:20am! She needed to leave the house by 7:40 am in order to make the bus! She jumped up and ran downstairs.

"MOM! Why didn't you wake me up?"

Her mother was packing her little sister's lunch box. "I did," she replied, "but you just grunted and rolled over. "Were you up late last night on your tablet?"

Carmen had been. She had finally gotten off Youtube at 11:30pm when she started falling asleep while watching some video about kittens.

"No! Ugh. I'm going to be late!"

"Not if you hurry. Here, I've already packed your lunch and made some toast for you to take to the bus stop with you."

Carmen could barely hear her Mom, because she was in the laundry room looking for a clean shirt. "Doesn't anyone do laundry around here?!"

"Here's a shirt, Carmen," said a small voice from the hallway. It was her sister, Lucia. She was only five and she was holding up a shirt that Carmen knew was dirty.

"Yeah, thanks a lot," Carmen said sarcastically. "That one's dirty or I would have taken it already!"

Her mother lost her patience. "Carmen," she said, "we've all got places to be! Just because you stayed up too late last night doesn't give you the right to make the house a war zone in the morning, okay?"

Carmen muttered angrily under her breath and grabbed her lunch and her toast from the counter without a hug goodbye or a thank you to her Mom. She slammed the door on the way out, because she thought it might make her feel better.

Carmen made it to the bus on time. She felt bad for the way she had spoken to her mom, but she also didn't like what her mom had said to her when she was trying to leave the house. She sat alone on the bus, eating her toast and staring out the window. Her friends, Eloise and Jessie, tried to talk to her, but she didn't really feel like talking.

She groaned inwardly as she walked into the classroom and looked up at the whiteboard and saw what was written there: *Late assignments will lose 5% of the total grade per day that they are late.* “Noooooo,” Carmen said to herself as she slumped into her seat. She was supposed to have brought in her Social Studies assignment today, but she knew it was still sitting on her desk, where she had left it last night before getting lost in kitten videos on her tablet. She had meant to put it into her bag this morning, but forgot in the rush.

“Ugh!” she muttered, softly, but out loud. She was so annoyed at herself.

“UGH!” said Ben in a mocking voice from the seat behind her. Ben was a super popular boy in her class. Half of the girls had crushes on him, but Carmen thought he was too into himself. A couple of other guys sitting nearby snickered. Carmen felt anger rising into her head. “Shut up, Ben.”

“Maybe you should go wash your face, Carmen. It’s got toothpaste all over it!” Ben and his buddies laughed loudly this time.

Carmen felt her cheeks. No! She could feel toothpaste gunk crusted all around the corners of her mouth.

Now more people were laughing, including Eloise and Jessie. The heat in Carmen’s head turned into a roaring fire. All of a sudden, she loudly yelled “SHUT UP, BEN, YOU IDIOT!”

“What the...?” said Ben.

“Carmen!” said Mr. Collis, their teacher, loudly.

Carmen turned around and faced her teacher.

“Into the hall! Now!”

As Carmen walked with Mr. Collis to the principal’s office, she wished she could just start her day all over again.