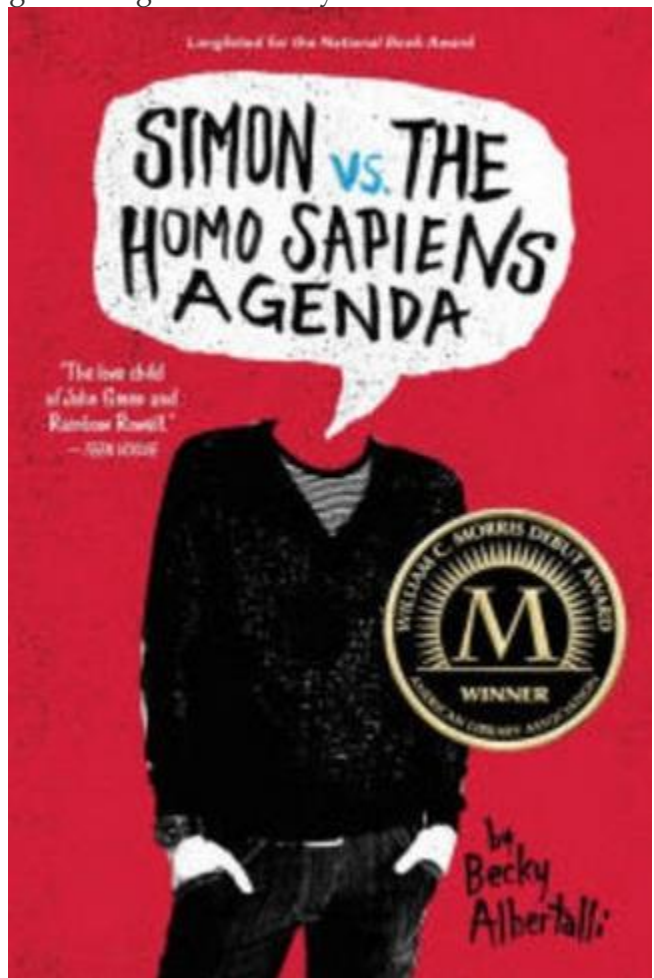


Simon vs. the Homo Sapiens Agenda by Becky Albertalli

IT'S A WEIRDLY SUBTLE CONVERSATION. I almost don't notice I'm being blackmailed. We're sitting in metal folding chairs backstage, and Martin Addison says, "I read your email." "What?" I look up. "Earlier. In the library. Not on purpose, obviously." "You read my email?" "Well, I used the computer right after you," he says, "and when I typed in Gmail, it pulled up your account. You probably should have logged out." I stare at him, dumbfounded. He taps his foot against the leg of his chair. "So, what's the point of the fake name?" he asks. Well. I'd say the point of the fake name was to keep people like Martin Addison from knowing my secret identity. So I guess that worked out brilliantly. I guess he must have seen me sitting at the computer. And I guess I'm a monumental idiot. He actually smiles. "Anyway, I thought it might interest you that my brother is gay." "Um. Not really." He looks at me. "What are you trying to say?" I ask. "Nothing. Look, Spier, I don't have a problem with it. It's just not that big of a deal." Except it's a little bit of a disaster, actually. Or possibly an epic fuckstorm of a disaster, depending on whether Martin can keep his mouth shut. "This is really awkward," Martin says. I don't even know how to reply. "Anyway," he says, "it's pretty obvious that you don't want people to know." I mean. I guess I don't. Except the whole coming out thing doesn't really scare me. I don't think it scares me. It's a giant holy box of awkwardness, and I won't pretend I'm looking forward to it. But it probably wouldn't be the end of the world. Not for me. The problem is, I don't know what it would mean for Blue. If Martin were to tell anyone. The thing about Blue is that he's kind of a private person. The kind of person who wouldn't forget to log out of his email. The kind of person who might never forgive me for being so totally careless. So I guess what I'm trying to say is that I don't know what it would mean for us. For Blue and me. But I seriously can't believe I'm having this conversation with Martin Addison. Of all the people who could have logged into Gmail after me. You have to understand that I never would have used the library computers in the first place, except they block the wireless here. And it was one of those days where I couldn't wait until I was home on my laptop. I mean, I couldn't even wait to check it on my phone in the parking lot.



Because I had written Blue from my secret account this morning. And it was sort of an important email.

I just wanted to see if he had written back.

"I actually think people would be cool about it," Martin says. "You should be who you are."

I don't even know where to begin with that. Some straight kid who barely knows me, advising me on coming out. I kind of have to roll my eyes.

"Okay, well, whatever. I'm not going to show anyone," he says.

For a minute, I'm stupidly relieved. But then it hits me. "Show anyone?" I ask.

He blushes and fidgets with the hem of his sleeve. Something about his expression makes my stomach clench.

"Did you – did you take a screenshot or something?" "Well," he says, "I wanted to talk to you about that." "Sorry – you took a fucking screenshot?"

He purses his lips together and stares over my shoulder.

"Anyway," he says, "I know you're friends with Abby Suso, so I wanted to ask –"

"Seriously? Or maybe we could go back to you telling me why you took a screenshot of my emails."

He pauses. "I mean, I guess I'm wondering if you want to help me talk to Abby."

I almost laugh. "So what – you want me to put in a good word for you?"

"Well, yeah," he says.

"And why the hell should I do that?"

He looks at me, and it suddenly clicks. This Abby thing. This is what he wants from me. This, in exchange for not broadcasting my private fucking emails.

And Blue's emails.

Jesus Christ. I mean, I guess I figured Martin was harmless. A little bit of a goobery nerd, to be honest, but it's not like that's a bad thing. And I've always thought he was kind of hilarious.

Except I'm not laughing now.

"You're actually going to make me do this," I say. "Make you? Come on. It's not like that."

"Well, what's it like?"

"It's not like anything. I mean, I like this girl. I was just thinking you would want to help me here. Invite me to stuff when she'll be there. I don't know."

"And what if I don't? You'll put the emails on Facebook? On the fucking Tumblr?"

Jesus. The creeksecrets Tumblr: ground zero for Creekwood

High School gossip. The entire school would know within a day.

We're both quiet.

Answer the questions related to the excerpt here :

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