

ELLIE
Why did you do that?!

CHARLIE
What?

ELLIE
I failed.

CHARLIE
It's. A really good essay.

ELLIE
Are you just trying to screw me over one last time? I don't care that you're dying, I don't care about you! Do you want me to fail out of high school, is that why you did this?

CHARLIE
I didn't. Write it.

ELLIE
This is the essay you gave me yesterday.

CHARLIE
You didn't. Read it.

ELLIE
I don't need to read it--!

CHARLIE
Read it.

ELLIE
This is... I know what this is.

CHARLIE
I knew you would.

ELLIE
I wrote this.

CHARLIE
You never. Forget anything.

ELLIE

I wrote this in eighth grade for English, why do you--?

CHARLIE

And I felt saddest of all. When I read the boring chapters. That were only descriptions of whales. Because I knew. That the author was just trying to save us. From his own sad story. Just for a little while.

ELLIE

Why do you have this?

CHARLIE

Your mother. She sent it to me. Four years ago. I wanted to know how you were doing in school. So she sent it. And it's the best essay. I've ever read.

ELLIE

Why are you fucking with me like this?

CHARLIE

I'm not.

(pause)

I'm sorry for leaving you. I was in love. And I left you behind. You didn't. Deserve that.

ELLIE

I don't...

CHARLIE

I don't know. How I could have done that. You're so beautiful. You're amazing.

ELLIE

Stop.

CHARLIE

You're amazing. This essay. Is amazing. This essay. Is you.

ELLIE

Stop saying that.

CHARLIE

This essay. Is you.

ELLIE

Stop saying that!

CHARLIE

You're the best thing. I've ever done.

ELLIE
What's the matter?!

CHARLIE
Ellie.

ELLIE
I can't be here right now, I have
to go, I can't--

CHARLIE
You're perfect. You'll be happy. You'll care for people.

ELLIE
The ambulance is coming, they'll help you.

CHARLIE
No. They won't.

ELLIE
You're going to the hospital.

CHARLIE
No.

ELLIE
You just need surgery or something!

CHARLIE
Read it to me.

ELLIE
What?!

CHARLIE
If you want to help. Read it to me. You can help me. If you read it.

ELLIE
You asshole. You fat fucking asshole!

CHARLIE
You'll help. If you read it.

ELLIE
Fuck you.

CHARLIE
Please.

ELLIE
Fuck you!

CHARLIE
Ellie!

ELLIE
Dad, please.

(reading)

“In the amazing book Moby Dick by the author Herman Melville, the author recounts his story of being at sea. In the first part of his book, the author, calling himself Ishmael, is in a small sea-side town and he is sharing a bed with a man named Queequeg.”

“The author and Queequeg go to church and later set out on a ship captained by the pirate named Ahab, who is missing a leg, and very much wants to kill the whale which is named Moby Dick, and which is white.”

“In the course of the book, the pirate Ahab encounters many hardships. His entire life is set around trying to kill a certain whale.”

“I think this is sad because this whale doesn't have any emotions, and doesn't know how bad Ahab wants to kill him.”

“He's just a poor big animal. And I feel bad for Ahab as well, because he thinks that his life will be better if he can kill this whale, but in reality it won't help him at all.”

“I was very saddened by this book, and I felt many emotions for the characters.”

“And I felt saddest of all when I read the boring chapters that were only descriptions of whales, because I knew that the author was just trying to save us from his own

sad story, just for a little while.”

“This book made me think about my own life, and then it made me feel glad for my--”