

MICRO MANAGING

Written by

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A biracial teen girl has to decide whether she should stick up to her cheer captains after facing micro-aggressions about her hair.

INT. JASMINE'S BATHROOM - EARLY MORNING (FLASH-FORWARD)

JASMINE (17), biracial with big curly hair, checks the time on her phone: 4 AM.

On the counter sits HEAT PROTECTANT, A STRAIGHTENER, HAIR CLIPS, A BLOW DRYER, A BRUSH, ANOTHER BRUSH, *and what do you know*, ANOTHER BRUSH.

She looks at herself in the mirror. She touches her messy, frizzy curls, then-

BEGIN MONTAGE

Jasmine puts heat protectant in her hair...Jasmine blow dries her hair...Jasmine straightens her hair...Jasmine starts to braid her hair. It's a mess. She tries again. Nope...Finally, she's got it.

END MONTAGE

Jasmine stares at herself in the mirror. -- Her hair is in two almost perfect french braids.

M I C R O M A N A G I N G

INT. LIVING ROOM - CARLY'S HOUSE - DAY (PRESENT DAY)

SUPER: 2 DAYS EARLIER

Jasmine, hair beautifully afro textured, sits in one poof on her head. She enters the living room, where three of her fellow cheerleaders sit.

JENNY (18), captain, with layered dark brown hair; OLIVIA (18), co-captain, pin-straight light brown hair; and CARLY (17), costume manager, long bouncy blonde hair.

All of these girls' hair seems to simultaneously blow in imaginary wind.

CARLY

Jasmine! Yay, you're here, come in, come in. I love your hair today. Did you do something different?

Carly reaches out and touches Jasmine's hair. Jasmine, very noticeably uncomfortable, feigns a smile.

JASMINE

Uh no.

CARLY

Really, like you didn't cut it or anything?

JASMINE

Nope.

CARLY

Hmm, interesting.

JENNY

Hey, can we get started, please? We have a lot to go over.

Carly and Jasmine join Jenny and Olivia, sitting around a coffee table.

OLIVIA

Okay, Carly, did you pick up the uniforms from coach yesterday?

CARLY

Yes, and I already sized them!

OLIVIA

Jenny and I decided on the list of cheers for the game tomorrow. I'll give them to you. Can you send them to the team, Jasmine?

JASMINE

Yeah, sure.

JENNY

Now, most importantly, we need to decide on how we're going to do our hair for the game. It's our hometown showdown game, so it's a big one.

OLIVIA

I was thinking we could do french braids for a little diversity, you know?

CARLY

Ooh that would be so cute!

They all turn towards Jasmine. Their hair, yet again, blowing backwards majestically.

Jasmine, a bit taken aback at everyone's eyes on her, stumbles over her words-

JASMINE

Oh uh, well, that's kinda hard for me to do. Um could we do our hair in like a low pony instead?

Their hair stops.

OLIVIA

Mmm, a low pony's kinda boring. We do that all the time.

JENNY

We could vote, though, you know, so it's fair. -- All in favor of french braids.

Jenny, Olivia, and Carly all raise their hands.

OLIVIA

Sorry, if French braids are too hard, you can just do whatever you can. It'll be fine if your hair's just a little different.

Jasmine nods, trying to hide her annoyance.

JENNY

Okay! Now that that's settled...

Jenny's voice fades into inaudible dialogue as we...

FADE TO:

INT. JASMINE'S BATHROOM - EARLY MORNING

Jasmine checks the time on her phone: 4 AM.

On the counter sits HEAT PROTECTANT, A STRAIGHTENER, HAIR CLIPS, A BLOW DRYER, and THREE DIFFERENT BRUSHES.

She looks at herself in the mirror. She touches her messy, frizzy curls, then-

BEGIN MONTAGE

Jasmine blow dries her hair...Jasmine straightens her hair...Jasmine starts to braid her hair.

END MONTAGE

Jasmine stares at herself in the mirror. -- Her hair is in two almost perfect french braids.

DING! -- Jasmine checks her phone. A text from WHS CHEER LEADERSHIP reads: *Meet before school in student parking lot!!*

Jasmine takes a deep breath and exits her bathroom.

INT. SCHOOL PARKING LOT - MORNING

Jasmine approaches Jenny, Olivia, and Carly who stand leaning against a very nice car, *too nice of a car for a high school student to have.*

OLIVIA

There she is. Where have you been?
We've been waiting for like thirty
minutes.

JASMINE

Sorry, it took a little longer than
usual to get ready.

CARLY

You did your hair in the braids! It
looks amazing!

Carly reaches out and touches Jasmine's braids. Jasmine hard side-eyes Carly. She tenses up.

JASMINE

Thanks.

Jasmine slightly moves her head away from Carly.

JENNY

So, Olivia and I were talking, and
since this is the last game before
senior night, we were thinking that
we'd wear our hair in the braids,
and then you two and the rest of
the team can do just a low ponytail
like we usually do.

JASMINE

What? But we told the entire team
we're doing french braids tonight.

JENNY

Yeah, but the game's not 'til 7
tonight, which gives everyone
plenty of time to do a low
ponytail.

JASMINE

I just think it's kinda messed up to change something so last minute.

OLIVIA

That's just a part of cheer life and performing. Things change at the last minute sometimes, and we *all* have to adapt.

CARLY

I think it's cute. I'm down. I can text the team now if you want...

The three girls continue talking, but Jasmine is all in her head.

Everything seems to slow down around her.

Jasmine's jaw tenses. Her lip quivers. She looks like she might cry, but instead, she says-

JASMINE

I have an idea.

The three girls direct their attention to her.

JASMINE (CONT'D)

Let's do our hair in tight curls. I think two afro puffs could be really cute.

They stare blankly at her.

JASMINE (CONT'D)

What?

OLIVIA

Uhhh, we can't do that, obviously.

JASMINE

Why not? It's *super* easy.

JENNY

Okay, this is turning a bit dramatic, it's not personal, it-

JASMINE

It sure feels personal when I tell you I can't do something with my hair, and you do it anyway, so now I'm the odd one out.

OLIVIA

I-

Olivia and Jenny are at a loss for words. Jenny lets out a heated sigh. She whispers something to Olivia. Olivia nods.

JENNY

(beat)

We'll keep the braids for this game. Olivia and I will just do half up, half down.

There's an awkward beat, everyone awaiting Jasmine's response.

JASMINE

Okay, fine.

(beat)

Are we done here?

JENNY

Yeah.

Jasmine walks away, but Carly runs up to her.

CARLY

Hey, you know, I'm actually glad we're doing the braids; your hair literally looks so perfect. I wish I could do my hair like that. Is it all your real hair?

Those last words sting. Jasmine's shoulders fall.

We sit in this moment a beat.

FADE OUT.

END.