

Chapter One

Amy

When I was twelve years old, I fell in love with rock n roll. Don't get me wrong---I like other types of music: jazz, R and B, pop, etc. But rock became my first true love. It was the winter of 1994, I had just turned twelve, and I was in the seventh grade. Now, before you try and do the math on that, let me clarify something: my mother put me in school one year early. So, I was always one year younger than the other kids in my class. This made me realize I would graduate from high school at seventeen. I wasn't a genius or anything, but apparently I was pretty damn smart. But I digress...

I had been surrounded by music since before I was born. Mom used to place a set of headphones on her belly while she was carrying me, so I was nurtured by the food she ate, and the sounds of Motown, Beethoven, and on occasion, Wham and Culture Club. After I was born, she played music around the house, and both of my older brothers played guitar. So the Edwards house was always filled with music. But it wasn't until I turned twelve that I began to gravitate mostly towards rock.

I was friends with a boy named David Sarconi, who lived in my neighborhood in Bayside, Queens. He was four years older than me, but we had been friends for years. He was the one who introduced me to rock. We'd hang out at his house, or at his cousin Nick's house in Brooklyn, and listen to The Rolling Stones or Aerosmith, or The Ramones or Radiohead. Both David and Nick could play the guitar, too. He and Nick would play, and I would be their audience. Sometimes Nick's sister Nisa would join us (Nisa and I were the same age). If we started listening to Metallica or ACDC, she'd leave, complaining that "metal was too loud." So, for awhile it was mostly the three of us.

Then Nick's friend Aidan Sirci started hanging out with us. We'd go to the city and hit up a couple of music stores (back when Warehouse Music was still around). We'd buy anything a group of sixteen year olds (and one twelve year old) could afford. Some places had four-dollar CD's and two-dollar vinyl records. You had to really search hard and dig for the good stuff. One day Nick found an Osmond Brothers record in a shop not far from Union Square. He held it up

for the rest of us to see and yelled, “What do you think? Is it worth my two dollars?”

“Put that shit down, man,” Aidan replied. I giggled, and David just shook his head.

The Winter of 1994 was special, because that’s when I heard the band that would ultimately become my favorite band of all time. My love affair with them began with my birthday present from David. He came to the little birthday party my family had put together for me. Mom made a Betty Crocker box cake: yellow with chocolate icing. My sister Lana gave me an art set, because she knew I loved to draw. My oldest brother David Richard (we called him DR) gave me a journal, because he knew I loved to write. My other brother Richard gave me a gift card to Blockbuster Video, because he just didn’t know any better. But David’s gift was awesome. It was small, and wrapped in green and yellow paper. He stood in silent excitement as I opened it. It was a Green Day CD, titled *Dookie*.

“What do you think?” David asked. The anticipation of my reaction was literally killing him.

“Cool,” I said. “I’ve been hearing a lot about Green Day lately.”

“You have to hear it,” David insisted.

We moved the party from the kitchen to the living room, where the family radio/CD player sat upon a wooden table. We ate cake and ice cream and listened to Green Day’s *Dookie*. I loved it right away. Lana and DR were into it. Richard, not so much (he was lame, anyway). My mother just smiled; she was very liberal and open-minded for a single mother.

From that day forward, I not only loved rock, I had a special interest in punk. David and Green Day had pulled me down the rabbit hole and into a whole new world, and there was no turning back.