

“Six pairs of underwear?” I ask. “Why do I need so many?”

Mom spreads the open duffel bag on the floor. “I’m not sure. Better safe than sorry?”

I don’t really see how extra underwear can make me feel safe, and I’m already sorry.

Every time I think about going to sleepaway camp, it gives me *shpilkes*. That’s a word I learned in the Yiddish class I take at my synagogue with my grandma.

Not all Jewish people speak Yiddish. Most of us don’t, but Grandma thought it would be fun. And it is. I’d rather say *shpilkes* than “nervous wiggles.”

“How many pairs of shorts do you need?” Mom asks, pulling open my dresser drawer.

I check the list. “Four. And one pair of jeans,” I say. “Also, I’m supposed to bring my own canoe so I can paddle myself home early if I really hate it.”

Mom laughs. “There’s no river between Cedar Lake, Wisconsin, and Highland Park, Illinois, Sami. Besides, you’re going to love Camp Cedar

Lake once you get there. It's completely normal to feel anxious before you go."

I fold my arms across my chest. "I'm not going to love it."

Mom gives me a look. "Sami, I don't want to fight about this again. Camp Cedar Lake is important to our family. It's where your dad and I met. Uncle Brad and Aunt Jamie went there, too. Maya was terrified her first summer and now she loves it! Plus, it's just mini-camp for now."

"I know, I know." I sigh. Cedar Lake Mini-Camp is a four-day, three-night miniature version of regular camp. But even though it's shorter, it still has all the tortures of regular camp.

Mom stands up and kisses my forehead. "I'm going to get your towels and sheets from the dryer. Will you finish loading your clothes?"

I nod to my mom as she walks out my door. "I bet when we pick you up from camp on Sunday, you'll be begging to stay," she calls back over her shoulder.