



RISE TO THE SUN

LEAH JOHNSON

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OLIVIA

FRIDAY MORNING

My best friend has always been the first person I run to when it's time to blow up my life.

The radio is cranked up as loud as it can go in Imani's SUV, and both of our heads are tilted back, shouting lyrics at the roof of the car. This feeling isn't the explosion I came to her begging for at the beginning of summer three months ago—when I was sad and frustrated and heartbroken *again*—but it feels right. It feels the way things only feel when you're with your best friend in the world, on your way to your first music festival, with the rubble of a disastrous junior year behind you.

Feels like possibility.

“I’m not saying love isn’t real! I’m just saying, statistically, there’s no way every time you claim to have been in love it actually *was love*,” she shouts during the drum solo of the song currently blasting over the speakers.

She opens her mouth for a Twizzler and leans toward me without taking her eyes off the road as she creeps forward in the line of cars. She’s wearing one of her many pairs of designer sunglasses, her only real fashion indulgence, but I can see her carefully threaded eyebrows raise expectantly behind them. I do my due diligence as an A1 passenger and feed it to her.

She chews and swallows before waving a hand around to emphasize her point.

“I read a study about it. On average, you’d have to have at least two long-term relationships, one long-distance relationship, four one-night stands, and one live-in relationship before falling in love even once. You haven’t run the necessary trials yet. The odds of any of your relationships having been real love are pretty low, given the data.”

Imani Garrett and her odds. Imani and her *data*. Sometimes her brain works too hard for her to see what I see—that there’s no way you can math your way into finding love. Like every great love song has ever taught me, it takes trial and error. And if you’re me, it takes more trials than I can count and more errors than should be humanly possible.

It’s hot outside, I can tell by the way the volunteers who wave us forward are sweating through their bright orange FARMLAND

VOLUNTEER T-shirts, but inside the car it's perfect. The air conditioner is humming and the bass is pounding and we're thrumming with anticipation—the best kind of nerves. The kind of nerves that promise a weekend big enough to change something, change *everything*. And despite the fact that Imani is trying to use her pesky logic to convince me that my heart isn't actually working overtime, this is exactly what I need right now.

The frontwoman of the band, Teela Conrad, starts belting, and for the moment, all talk of my catastrophic romantic history and my most recent failed relationship is forgotten.

I live for moments like these. As Imani shouts along to the lyrics and beats her hands against the steering wheel in time with the music, I can almost convince myself that she's as out of control as I am. That somewhere deep down in that brilliant, refined brain, is the same type of restlessness just screaming to get out that exists in mine. Those moments are always fleeting though. Because she will always turn off the radio and become herself once more.

I'm still looking for my off switch.

"Hey, Farmers!" One of the volunteers says as we pull into the check-in station. She smiles brightly at me and I beam my widest smile. I can already tell that these are my people. "You girls look ready for a good time!"

"Yeah, some of us more than others." Imani presses pause on the screen in her dash that's currently controlling the Spotify playlist, and just like that, she's cranky again. As if I could forget

that the Farmland Music and Arts Festival is most certainly not her idea of a good time.

She puts the car in park so we can hop out as the volunteers scour the car for the festival's no-no's: no pets, no weapons, no drugs. As we wait, my loose-fitting mini dress immediately starts sticking to my skin thanks to the humidity of northern Georgia in August, but I keep smiling anyway. Nothing can bring me down today, not even a reluctant best friend and a lifetime of ruined romances and a phone buzzing with text messages from a mom who thinks I'm currently at a weekend youth retreat with Imani's nonexistent church.

I can't even bring myself to feel guilty about the ridiculous, borderline-blasphemous lie I had to tell her to get here.

I'm not religious in the way my mom is, obviously. Her church is in a sanctuary with pews and ministers and a collection plate that goes around for the offering. My church is the press of bodies together in a crowd, the pulse of a bass guitar vibrating under our feet, and a lead singer preaching the gospel of rebellion and revolution and love through beautiful harmonies and perfect chord progressions. Some people find salvation in a stained-glass building, other people find it in a basement punk show.

"This is a bad idea, Liv," Imani says, leaning forward like she's going to put her elbows on the hood of the car, but deciding against it when she remembers how hot the surface of it must be. It's almost like she's reading my mind. "There are so many other things you should be worrying about this weekend. Like, I don't

know, the judicial hearing, perhaps?” Her voice takes on that exasperated and still somehow fond tone it always takes when she’s slipping into mother-hen mode. “It’s taking you forever to decide what to say—you can’t just wing something like this.”

I can’t see her eyes behind her tinted lenses, but I know she’s narrowing them. I don’t want to talk about the hearing. I don’t want to so much as think about it. And I refuse to.

“We’re not talking about that.” My voice comes out quicker and with more edge than I intend for it to. I immediately try to lighten the mood. “We should be talking about the fact that my best friend is a literal genius who is practically being handed early decision to U Chicago on a silver platter!”

I might want the attention off me, but I mean it. Imani spent all summer doing research with a doctor at the University of Chicago, and she’s got a pretty solid in there next fall. She’s brilliant, and beautiful—brown-skinned and self-assured. She’s got it all together. Too bad her big brain hasn’t figured out how to fix mine.

Imani blushes, embarrassed suddenly by my compliment, and says, “Whatever. Don’t try to change the subject. You have to—”

And because the Farmland volunteers are my people, my comrades, my buddies in arms, Imani doesn’t get to finish that statement before we’re getting the all-clear and being directed toward where our campsite is going to be. As much as I love Imani and value her opinion, I’m almost always grateful when her train of thought gets derailed.

Imani hadn't wanted to come to this festival at all. And like so many other times before, had to be persuaded by the very real, extremely dire stakes of my most recent heartbreak. It was still fall, but already my junior year had been a series of relationship-related catastrophes, the last of which rendered me both a social outcast at school and a complete shame to my mom's parentage at home.

In the immediate fallout, I'd done what any logical girl would do: I called my best friend and asked her to pick me up so we could hit the McDonald's drive thru and I could cry into an Oreo McFlurry in the parking lot as God intended. "Imani, please please *please* let's do something this summer. Something good. Something far away from here," I had begged through tears. I was already thinking months into the future. I needed something to get me through the rest of the school year, otherwise I might not survive it with my sanity intact.

"Olivia, okay, come on." Her voice took on her soothing post-breakup tone. The kind of tone people use on scared woodland creatures and, apparently, sixteen-year-old girls whose hearts have been ripped out and run over by their ex-boyfriend's stupid Dodge Charger. "You're so much better off without this one-ply toilet paper equivalent of a human being in your life."

"But, I"—hiccup—"wanted him"—hiccup—"to be"—blows nose into fancy aloe-infused tissues—"the oneeeeeeeeeee!"

"I know," she said, her eyes never leaving mine. I wiped my nose on my sleeve and she reached for her family-size hand sanitizer.

She held it out at me until I opened my palm. She squirted some and then continued. “I know you did.”

I am very good at getting my heart broken. Some might even call me an impeccable *heartbreakee*. But my real secret talent seems to be getting my heart broken while en route to ruining someone’s life. Loving me—or more often than not, having *me* love *you*—is a surefire blueprint for disaster.

Imagine me as the Fab Five from *Queer Eye*’s unknowingly evil twin. Instead of sweeping into your life and fixing your split ends, making your condo *Architectural Digest* ready, and revamping your wardrobe, I say the wrong things and do the wrong things and have been the mayor of the city of Too Much, Too Soon since the day I was born.

But not Imani. By some stroke of luck, I got the kind of best friend whose magical power is finding solutions when mine seems to be creating problems. She’s one of the few people in the universe I have yet to chase off. There are a lot of reasons to love her, obviously, but the fact that she stays by my side is right there at the top of the list. Next to her impeccable taste in music.

I hate that it always ends up like this, that *I* always end up like this. But at least I have Imani to help pull me out of every grave I dig for myself.

“Let’s just go somewhere! Anywhere, it doesn’t matter.” I could feel that telltale prickle of urgency at the base of my neck that I get sometimes when I need to do something major: cut my hair,

jump headfirst into a new relationship, try to sign up for the Peace Corps at fourteen by “borrowing” my older sister’s ID and claiming it as my own. “What about a road trip? We could see, like, monuments and stuff.”

Imani snorted. “You hate monuments.”

I leaned my forehead against the dash and groaned. Part of the problem here has always been the fact that Imani is the one with the car, so she is ultimately the decider of all heartbreak-healing excursions. This was yet another occasion where the lack of four-wheeled mobility really limited my options.

“Yeah, okay, so I think they’re mostly boring and a poor use of taxpayer dollars.” I blew my nose into the tissue. “So, we go see something else, then.”

“I think you’re forgetting a few crucial details. One: Your mom will never let you go. Two: You’re broke.”

“Counterpoint: My mom hates me anyway so another notch on that belt won’t hurt much. And I have a few hundred saved up from the car fund, remember?” It’s not like I wasn’t working on the car thing. It was just taking a while. Like my entire high school career, a while.

The radio was turned way down, but even through my tears, I could identify the low hum of Imani’s favorite band playing in the background. Kittredge was pretty much a constant staple when riding in her car. Her favorite band in part because of their music, but mostly for Davey Mack, their scraggly redheaded bassist and

Teela Conrad's more eccentric co-lead singer—the only person on the planet Imani had ever admitted any type of attraction to.

Imani opened her mouth to respond but stopped immediately when she caught the melody that was playing from the speakers. She reached for the volume and turned it up to full blast. "I'm just a girl who rose to the bait, and you're still the boy who tempted my fate!"

She belted the entire verse before relaxing back into her seat with a sigh and turning the volume back down.

"Ugh, I can't believe I'm missing their entire tour this summer."

This conversation was familiar too. Imani had missed Kittredge on their last two summer tours because of the early college program she did at the University of Chicago, and the tour before that because she said the tickets she bought ended up being fakes. Which was perfect for me because I ended up needing her to hold my hand through a heartbreak that night anyway.

And now, as soon as they finished the European leg of their tour, they were rumored to be going on hiatus.

In that moment, I thought back to poring over their tour schedule with her when it was announced months before, and like a cartoon light bulb practically appearing over my head, I suddenly knew what to do. The last date on their tour was headlining a massive music festival in Georgia at the end of August. It was a few days after Imani got back from Chicago, and a week before our senior year started. I could get my road trip, Imani could get to see the love of her life, and for one brief weekend before going

back to school and the hellscape of what that would mean for me, we could have the time of our lives.

“Music festivals are dangerous,” she hedged. “Heat stroke? Dehydration? A deranged gunman shooting up the place? Don’t look at me like that. Don’t you remember what happened at that festival in Las Vegas?”

“I think you worry too much,” I said. Imani’s always been a stickler about anything that involves even the slightest chance of danger. I blame the fact that she’s been listening to BBC World Service on NPR with her dad since before she knew how to talk. Too much news makes a person paranoid.

“Well one of us has to.”

It hadn’t been an easy sell, not even with the convincing pitch. She pushed back with statistic after statistic about everything that could go wrong, but if I know how to do anything, it’s figure out ways to make people cave. And her love of Davey Mack will always win out over her better logic. I can’t say I’m not grateful for having found her one weak point.

Before she agreed, she had one stipulation.

“You can’t do what you always do,” she said, hesitating over the order button when we were buying our tickets on our phones. The dull yellow-ish light from the McDonald’s sign streamed through the window and illuminated the inside of the car. “When we get there, you have to promise me you won’t decide to spend the weekend hooking up with someone new.”

She looked at me with the type of openness Imani only ever

allows herself when the two of us are together, and I knew what came next was going to be important. “This has to be a me-and-you thing, okay? A best friend weekend.” She held out her pinky and I linked mine through it. We kissed our thumbs to seal the promise, the same way we’d done since we became best friends. She bought her ticket, and immediately began searching the rest of the Farmland website. “And I want to ride the Ferris wheel while we’re there. According to the website they have one. So we can’t miss it.”

She ducked her head as she said it, like she was embarrassed to have such a mundane thing on her bucket list, like the only thing she was allowed to hope for was a Nobel Prize and a Fields Medal or whatever.

I thought back to all the times Imani had shown up somewhere just because I asked, and how much I loved her for that. After everything Imani had done for me, keeping this promise would be the least I could do. One epic weekend where the two of us could see our favorite bands, get heinous tan lines, and have an experience so fun it would sustain me through the miserable senior year I have ahead of me.

“Deal.” I nodded.

Because that’s what best friends do.



FRIDAY MORNING

My summer is ending the way every summer of my life that I can remember has ended: setting up camp in the relentless sun of Farmland Music and Arts Festival's seven-hundred-acre land next to a person that gets it, gets me. It's perfect. It's familiar. Until the person across from me speaks up, and I remember with startling clarity that nothing is the same as it has been in summers prior.

"Toniiiiiii," Peter whines from his seat in the grass. "This would go so much faster if you would just let me help."

Peter pulls off his worn Oakland A's hat to shake out his black curls before readjusting it, brim to the back. He's got his legs

crossed just a few feet away from where I'm setting up camp, and I'm doing my best to ignore the big, brown, imploring puppy-dog eyes he keeps shooting my way. They're almost irresistible, even for me.

I grunt instead of responding and pull the netting more securely over the top of the tent. Things are much quicker when I just do them myself. It's no offense to him, it's just a fact.

"Being an island isn't in our nature as humans, T-Bone! Just look at John Tyler. They called him the 'president without a party'—never even stood a chance at a second term. You know why? He isolated himself." He's clearly been streaming one of those documentaries they used to show us in APUSH for fun again. When the only response I offer is a stare that says *You're earnestly comparing me to a dead white man in conversation again, Peter?* he sputters, "Okay so maybe the aesthetics are a little different but the point stands!"

I wince at his volume and he adds, "Oops. Sorry, T. I get riled up about the pre-Reagan presidents." He taps on his phone screen and brightens. "Hey! Someone just posted that they saw Bonnie Harrison at the taco cart. We have to go. Right? Definitely. I know how you feel about Sonny Blue."

He's right, Sonny Blue is my favorite queer-fronted folk-soul duo of all time, but I'm too focused on the task at hand to answer. He waits a beat before speaking again. Peter has done this since the day we met at this festival six years ago. He has no problem filling in all the spaces in a conversation that should, theoretically,

be occupied by me. I try not to say more than absolutely necessary though. This, like my working best alone, is yet another brick to add to the impenetrable Toni Foster Fortress.

Peter is the only one who's ever managed to work his way past my defenses. Six years ago, our campsites were right next to each other out here—him with his Uncle Rudy and me with my dad—and I couldn't shake him the entire weekend. No matter how withdrawn or sullen I became, Peter just kept popping up, asking questions, insisting that I try his signature s'mores recipe over our shared bonfire. It was like he didn't even notice how unsociable I was. I couldn't seem to shake him. And eventually, somewhere between his forty-third fun fact about a dead president and his twelfth story about breaking a limb due to his ungainly awkwardness, I forgot that I wanted to.

He stands up and it's like watching a clown unfolding as they climb out of those tiny cars—how did he ever manage to look so small? He throws his arms around my shoulders, even though it's pushing 95 degrees under the midday sun and I'm in the middle of stomping a stake into the ground, so he just narrowly misses getting kneed in his ribs. He squeezes me hard like he's afraid I'm going to try and escape, which goes to show how well he knows me.

"I love you anyway, my platonic life partner," he whispers. And for a second, I'm tempted to return the line, out of instinct alone. *When people say they love you, you tell them you love them back*, my brain reminds me. But I don't really do that sort of thing.

I pat his arm twice, suddenly and overwhelmingly eager to get out of this embrace and onto what we came here for. This isn't a weekend for declarations of our BFF status, or time for Peter to employ his mom's "lead with love" child-rearing techniques to therapize me. We're not even here for the shows, though that's a nice added bonus. We're here so I can figure my life out. That's it.

I can breathe a little easier when Peter pulls away, and I almost feel guilty about it. But I don't let myself. If I make room for anything other than drive, I think I might just lose it. I take a deep breath and finish stomping the stake into the ground instead. And just like that, the campsite resembles the way it looked last year and the year before that and every year since I was old enough to walk.

When I feel myself drifting toward what—who—it's missing though, I shake my head as if I can physically clear it. I try to focus on the world moving around me. The crack of our neighbors opening two cans of Pabst Blue Ribbon, a feather-light laugh from a campsite across the way, the sound of the Farmland radio station playing through the speakers of my truck.

"And don't forget to sign up for the Golden Apple competition!" The emcee's voice is so boisterous and radio-artificial, it's easy to cling to. "It's a time-honored Farmland tradition, and we have reason to believe that this year is going to be extra special. Right, Carmen?"

A woman's voice chimes in, raspy yet commercial. "Definitely, Jason. This year's judges are the best lineup we've had in years.

A life-changing opportunity for these competitors for sure. And we can't forget the other exciting competition this weekend: #FoundAtFarmland . . ."

My attention begins to drift as the hosts keep talking. Farmland is famous for a lot of things—being one of the biggest music festivals in the country, essentially launching the careers of some of the biggest bands in the world—but the thing they hold in the highest esteem is the Golden Apple. A talent competition that gives amateur musicians a chance to play in front of a panel of headliners as judges, and whoever wins gets a chance to play on stage with one of the bands on the last day of the festival.

It's one of the biggest draws the festival has to offer, and it's a massive hit every year. This year, it's being held for the chance to perform with Kittredge, one of the biggest alt-rock bands in the world and coincidentally, my dad's former employers. He tour managed for them for most of my life, and before them a slew of other bands out of the Midwest, but never any that took off the way Kittredge did.

"You hear that, Toni?" Peter calls from inside the truck, where he's attempting to charge his phone in my finicky lighter outlet. "They're talking about your big break!"

He leans his entire upper body out the window and air guitars with no rhythm. I want to laugh, but the idea of a big break—of a moment on a stage that determines your entire life—is too close for comfort. I don't want to be famous. I don't want to be a star. I just want some answers.

I pull the hard case that now houses my favorite acoustic guitar—a beautiful mahogany Fender my parents gave me for my fifteenth birthday—out of the truck bed and lean it against the side of the truck. It's adorned with stickers from all over the world, designations of all the places it's gone. The limited untouched spots are reminders of where it has yet to go. Incredible big cities, dusty dive bars, and huge venues all decorate its exterior. It's a tapestry, cohesive in its narrative: a patchwork life that took my dad farther away from me than I could ever wrap my head around.

But right in the center, shiny and fresh where the rest have dulled with time and wear, is the newest addition to the bunch. A crimson and cream WELCOME HOME, HOOSIER sticker from my freshman orientation at Indiana University last month. Mom must have snuck it on there when I wasn't paying attention as I was packing last night. I'm almost surprised she didn't slap her Maurer School of Law sticker on there too just so I don't forget exactly where I'm supposed to be headed. The sight of it makes my stomach churn, just like every other reminder of where I'm supposed to be headed next week.

I know Peter doesn't quite understand why this is so important to me or why I end the conversation every time he tries to talk to me about college, though I know he'd do his best if I tried to explain it. It's just that Peter is all about big dreams and big loves. His dad is this huge mixed-media artist who sells his installations for like a billion dollars per piece, and his mom runs an Etsy shop

hawking artisanal jewelry to other white women that's designed to help them find their "soul source"—whatever that means.

Peter could tell them he wanted to major in Bowling Industry Technology and they'd be happy (he did briefly entertain this for a month in tenth grade after watching a documentary on the history of the bowling ball). The Menons are the kind of family that choose passion over logic every time. And it's worked out for them. But it's not like that for most of us.

I busy myself with arranging our air mattress inside the tent while Peter drums up conversation with our neighbors, a couple of girls in sorority tank tops and high ponytails with a UT Knoxville bumper sticker on their Jeep. As grateful as I am that he agreed to come with me this weekend, I breathe a little easier at the moment alone. I can feel myself slipping, despite my best efforts to swallow down all the anxiety that's been bubbling up in me since the moment we got to Farmland. All the memories that refuse to stay locked away, all the promises my dad made to me that are now going to go unfulfilled.

The thing is, no one could have prepared for the way we lost my dad. But that didn't change the gnawing emptiness that had taken up residence inside me over the past eight months.

I don't know if I believe in a higher power or life after death or any of the stuff the minister said at my dad's funeral. But countless summers spent at the greatest music festival in the world, on a former farm in Rattle Tail, Georgia, along with sixty thousand other music fans, watching sets from on top of his sunburnt

shoulders taught me one inalienable truth: that somewhere in the light-years of space between the spiritual and the scientific, between the known and the ineffable, there's live music.

There's Jimi Hendrix playing a two-hour set at Woodstock that revolutionizes rock and roll forever. There's Beyoncé becoming the first Black woman to ever headline Coachella and delivering a performance that redefines a culture. There's Bob Dylan going electric at Newport Folk in '65 and Queen reuniting at Live Aid twenty years later. Live music is a True Thing: It holds the keys to the universe, and all you have to do is pay attention.

If you ever have a question, my dad taught me that live music held the key. And I can't help but believe that too. Because I've never been more in need of guidance than right now.

My mom has made it clear since I was a kid that what she wants for me is stability, consistency. That she wants something more for me than the type of life my dad led. I have to do something concrete, something *real*. Which means college. Not because she'd punish me or cut me off or kick me out or any of that if I didn't go, but because it would break her heart to see me end up like my dad. Constantly running toward a dream that would never be realized.

I won't do that to her. I can't.

I want to trust my mom's belief that starting at IU will give me the direction I've been searching for, but my gut is screaming at me that my purpose isn't to sit in a classroom in Bloomington reading the Brontë sisters and trying to recover from a Kappa

party the night before. When I think about college, my hands start to shake and I can barely breathe. But when I think about not going, I draw a complete blank.

My mom has no doubts that the reason why I've been flailing so spectacularly in the past few months was a result of my grief. But the bigger part, the even scarier part, is that I'm almost eighteen—almost a bona fide adult—and I have no idea what I want to do with my life. And I know now, with stark clarity, that none of us has time to waste when it comes to figuring it out. My dad was a prime example of that.

My dad always said when people get on stage they just *know*. It's what happened to him. When he was eighteen, he picked up his guitar, and he played in front of an audience for the first time during an open mic at a coffeeshop in Bloomington. And just like that, he was sure that being a part of putting good music out into the world was how he wanted to spend the rest of his life. Even if I wasn't going to be in the music industry like him, he said, there was no lying on a stage.

Whatever you were running from, whatever you should be running toward, would reveal itself under all those lights.

This festival isn't where he found his purpose, but it could be where I find mine. It has to be.

It's too much to explain to Peter, to anyone, so I don't.

"Toni!" As usual, I hear Peter before I see him.

I run a hand over my face and duck back out of the tent to meet him. When I look at him, he's patting his stomach where

his cropped Fleetwood Mac T-shirt leaves his skinny tanned torso exposed. He's gotten really into bringing back crop tops for guys lately. According to him, *The Fresh Prince did it! Fragile masculinity shouldn't keep us from embracing the best of nineties fashion.*

I can hear his stomach growl even from a few feet away. He wiggles his eyebrows at me. "Taco stand?"

I nod. I grab my phone, even though the signal is awful out here, and start in the direction of the Core—the center of the festival where everything from food to merch to the stages reside. We make it about five minutes before a flurry of movement out of the corner of my eye stops me. My first reaction is the quick uptick of fear at the sight of anything moving this fast and unpredictably, until I realize what I'm looking at.

There's a girl tangled up in the lime green nylon of her tent. She's wearing a hot pink dress that would probably be better suited for some artsy date night at the Indianapolis Museum of Art than a music festival, jumbo box braids up in a bun that's so big I'm surprised it doesn't throw off her entire center of gravity, and a huge pair of heart-shaped sunglasses that are clearly more form than function.

I've seen a lot of stuff at Farmland in my day, but rarely someone so woefully ill-equipped to set up camp.

"Actually," I start, my voice rough from disuse, "Go on without me. I'm gonna . . ."

I jerk my head in the direction of the girl tangled up in the tent.

Peter smiles. “That’s the Farmland spirit! Say no more, *friendo*. I’ll grab you the best gluten-free option at the taco cart.”

“Wait! Can you sign me up for the Golden Apple while you’re there?” I tell him to put my first and middle name down instead of my first and last, just in case. I don’t want any chance of nepotism getting in the way of things.

We should have gotten in last night so that I could sign up earlier—they only have room for about fifty acts per day—but Peter was too tired to drive after his flight to Indianapolis to meet me, and we planned on taking off early this morning anyway. It didn’t help that we ended up getting a flat around Nashville and Peter practically broke a finger just jumping out of the car to try and help me change it.

He salutes as he practically skips away. While he leaves, I take a few steps toward the girl, who’s now so wrapped up in her tent that she looks a little bit like a mummy.

“Hey,” I call out. When she doesn’t respond, I realize it’s because my volume is too low. Sometimes I forget how to calibrate it when talking to anyone that’s not Peter or my mom—like my voice gets caught in my throat. “Hey!”

The girl’s eyes lock with mine for half a second, like she can’t figure out whether or not I’m talking to her. And she immediately faceplants into the grass.