

1 world



2 Hearts

By the Hot Dog Squad

Parameters form

Team details:

State: VIC

Division: Middle school

School: Box Hill High School

Team name: The Hot dog squad

Team ID: 917

Parameters and random words:

Primary Character 1: Golf player

Primary Character 2: Movie star

Non-human character: Bicycle

Setting: Laboratory

Issue: Lost voice

Ruby, Melts, Shiver, Tasty, Sponge

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This book is dedicated to all of those who continue to fight for love through thick and thin, our gratitude towards you has never stopped. Keep on fighting because you are our inspiration.



Thank you from, Katerina
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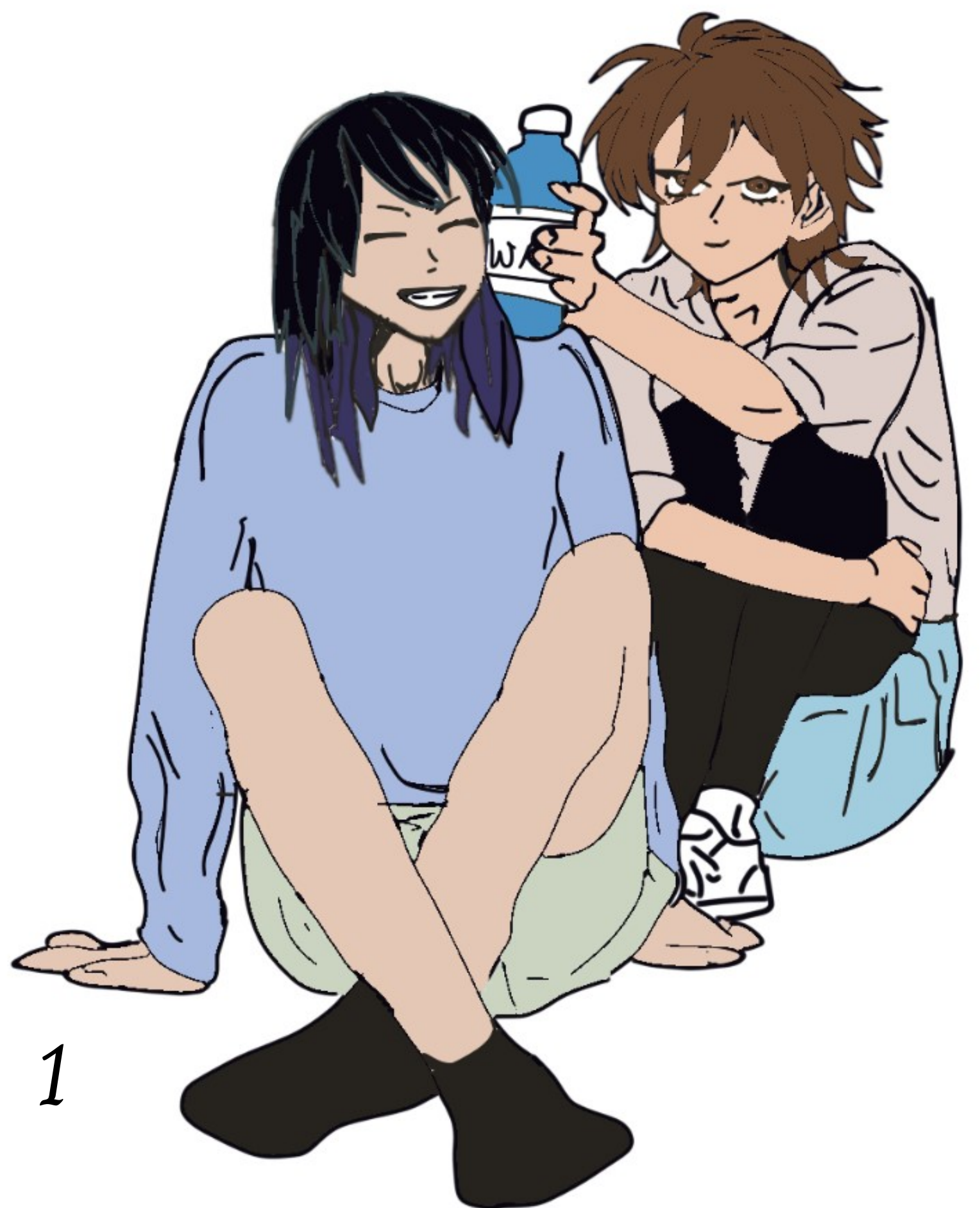
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"Prologue"

I met her in primary school. Her hair was long and dark, draped around her shoulders. I was weak, she was strong. Polar Opposites, soulmates in another life, friends forever. She was there when I needed her, in fact, that is when we met. Me getting bullied in the playground and there she appears, my knight in shining armor, the strong one ready to fight my battles... Our bond was to be never broken, best friends until she moved to Queensland, far away from Melbourne. Abandoned me to go to a different school, a different State, a different dream, another life.



Chapter 1

(Nora)

‘That’s great Nora. We’ll do one more take and then you’re all good to go.’

I breathed out a sigh of relief. Don’t get me wrong – it was my dream job, the cherry on top, the piece of cake, but sometimes the little anxious devil inside gets the best of me.

Steve, the director, looked at me and with an exasperated heave of his chest he yelled faintly ‘And... ACTION!’

‘WHAT does she have that I don’t?!’. I yelled drastically as I paced around the small set on which I stood.

Jayden held me by my shoulders and peered dramatically into my eyes.

‘It’s the way she LISTENS to me. She doesn’t yell at me, doesn’t call me stupid or get mad at me all the time. She loves me for who I am. And I’m sorry that you can’t be that for me but this...’

Jayden pointed between him and I.

‘Was never going to work out...’

Steve’s face was about as exasperated as someone could be . A radiant smile suddenly flashed across his face, elated with the fact that we had finally gotten this perfect.

‘And... CUT!’

Jayden gave me a smug smirk as he patted me on the back in his arrogant way: ‘That was all me.’

How I hated him. Sure, he might’ve had the perfect body, the smoothest hair, and the dreamiest eyes but I would never label him Prince Charming. He was about as exciting as a rock. I gave him a deadly glare and walked out of the set onto the drab sidelines of the stage.

That's when I saw her. My heart leaped out of my chest like a grasshopper. Seeing her made things real again and all the emotions I had left in Melbourne came flooding back.

"Omg , is ...is that you Quinn?"

Happiness that had been buried deep down all took hold of me and I shivered, and plummeted into her arms. Suddenly the sadness I had felt ever since I left came as well as happiness in the form of ugly fat tears and they rushed down my face. I hugged her almost so tightly that she couldn't breathe.

'Nora! BREATHE. It's just me!'

Quinn's hearty laugh filled the whole room in exactly the way that I remembered.

'Wh-what are you doing here?' I blubbered through my river of tears.

Quinn flicked her long purple hair out of her face and started to explain.

Well... remember my little sister Alyssa? She is REALLY getting into acting after seeing you in 'Sweetheart'... and I found out you were back in state , so I thought I'd surprise her so she can get a lesson from a great actress! I found out through some highschool friends that you were on set! I couldn't help but smile the most genuine smile I'd smiled in years.

'O- Of course!'

'Ok then! Let's go now, she's really eager to see you.'

We walked over to her car, our legs barely being able to keep up with our mouths as we blabbered about every detail that we could as we clambered into the seats and drove to her house.

Chapter 2

(Quinn)

Nora awkwardly stood in my house, with her hands behind her back. It was so funny to see a movie star be so nervous in my small, crowded house. I wondered if she remembers all the playdates we had together, like how we hid under my bed when my mum played hide and seek with us or when we played the floor is lava.

I can't believe I was so nervous to have her in my house that the only excuse I could come up with to see her was to help my sister. I laugh at myself, pathetic. I can't seem to see or hear Alyssa.

"Alyssa! Where are you!" I yelled out.

She emerges from the kitchen; crutches have proved a struggle for her because she of her broken leg. I reintroduce Alyssa to Nora , its been a while since they have seen each other. We sit down and I trudge into the kitchen listening intently to their conversation.

Nora's voice sends a **shiver** through my spine as the ache in my heart screams into my mind. *Tell her*, they scream, but I push them down. She's STRAIGHT I tell myself, *you can't like her*. Plus, it would ruin her reputation and I am not so sure how her friends would react. That won't happen because she is straight and there is no point in thinking about it or wondering about it anyways.

I clean up the mess Alyssa made on the bench with a **sponge** and sigh. Why is liking Nora so complicated?

“Quinn can you get some stuff from upstairs?, I would but my leg is hurting” Alyssa trails off and with a sympathetic look , Alyssa glances over and waits for me to respond.

Nora chimes in "I can do it, where is it?" “It's upstairs in my brother’s room, first door on the left of the stairs. It's a big box of props that says Alyssa's stuff.” It's super easy to spot.

By the look on her face I knew she immediately regretted it, her eyes snap up nervously, that's when it hit me , she used to like him. I watch her reluctantly walk up the stairs and the sound of a knock on his door fills my ears.

Chapter 3

(*N o r a*)

His eyes met mine as he opened the door to his room. “ Oh sorry. Wait what? Nora? Oh hey what’s up?” He asked awkwardly.

“Oh um.. your um... Sister wanted me to get the stuff she lent you.” I stuttered over my words as I felt his eyes staring so hard that it was penetrating through my body. I shivered as my heart thumped harder and harder each time my eyes met his.

“Um yeah of course, I’ll go get it for you.” I could tell that he was extremely nervous. As he turned around and opened his door wider, I saw his room for the first time. It wasn’t as messy as I thought it would've been. The only things that looked messy were his books lying scattered across his table and his bedroom floor.

“Here you go.” I could tell that he was trying to get me to stay longer as his grip on the box of props tightened.

“Thank you.” I timidly told him as I turned my back and walked down the stairs and back to the living room where Alyssa and Quinn were eagerly waiting for me. As I stood in front of them as red as a tomato from my last interaction with Ben, Quinn’s older brother.

“Let’s get started, Nora.” At this point, Alyssa was smiling brightly at me.

“I’m going to go to my room. Have fun guys!!” Quinn was now walking slowly up the stairs. I watched as she sighed and wondered what was going on in her head.

Chapter 4

(Quinn)

I've been laying on my bed for the last 10 minutes. I can hear the chatter from downstairs slowly fading in and out. I'm just numb, feeling excited to see Nora was the happiest thing I had felt in a while. It just hurt, the nothingness. The repetition of every day without her.

I started thinking of my youth, the pain from those memories was almost too much to bear. The moving every month, parents argue behind closed doors hoping I couldn't hear them. I did though, every day. Holding the weight on my shoulders all these years. They should've divorced earlier, or maybe they would have stayed together if I was never born.

I think like this a lot. I've been told it's bad, that I'm a great person, and their divorce wasn't my fault. And maybe it wasn't. But I feel horrible every time I think about it. The tears start to stream down my face and my mind starts to curse me out.

NO ONE WILL EVER LOVE YOU; YOU WILL BE SINGLE FOREVER, NO ONE COULD EVER LOVE SOMEONE LIKE YOU.

This repeats in my mind until I hit myself. This has become the worse trait of mine. I'm 20 and I still can't deal with my emotions.



“STOP BEING PATHETIC AND SUCK IT UP! WORSE THINGS HAVE HAPPENED TO OTHERS AND YOU CAN’T DEAL WITH A STUPID DIVORCE. SUCK IT UP!!! “I scream internally .”

It's better to stop feeling than to cry, to be numb rather than to let others see your pain and be weak.

My parents put so much pressure on me to get a partner, a girlfriend, just someone. I've always been reluctant with relationships due to my parents. I'm just scared I guess, that I'll never be good enough for a super star actress like her or that she won't love me. Maybe I'll just be alone forever.

A knock on my door startles me and I clamber to pull myself together.

"Yes "I whimper out , trying to sound like I haven't been crying.

"Hey I'm going to go now, it's been heaps of fun with Alyssa and I think she enjoyed it too. I have to leave because I have to be on set early tomorrow. It was great seeing you we should do this again" Nora says and I hear her footsteps retreat from the door.

Chapter 5

(Nora)

I clambered into my car and drove quietly to the set. I had always liked being alone with my thoughts and emotions, but today felt... different somehow.

Suddenly a wave of realization washed over me like a tsunami. I've been having feelings over this past few years, but now I know what to call it, I'd never felt before – and I knew what they were. They felt like an old friend that had emerged to lead me out of a dark cave.

I like...

girls, I think. Actually, more than I think. I had known this for years, more than years. But part of me also still feels something for guys as well. It was strange.

Just thinking those words made me feel like a bird that had been released out of a cage, being free gave me a whole new sense of confidence. I knew what I had to do. I charged over like a bull to cranky old Steve, who was twirling his stringy moustache and licking his thin purple lips.

‘Steve, I have a bit of an odd request.’

Steve gave me an uncomfortable look that made me want to shrivel up into a raisin.

‘Yes, my dear?’

He placed a hand a bit too low down on my waist. I glared at him and stepped backward abruptly.

‘First of all, I’m not your dear. And second, to give a bit of...’ I paused and took a breath

‘diversity... what are your thoughts on adding in an LGBTQIA+ relationship?’

Steve didn't have a good poker face. A mix of confusion and anger washed over him. His nostrils flared and his big, ugly nose twitched.

'No. That is COMPLETELY against the whole plot, Nora! No, its unnatural and a sin.'

I choked on my own breath as I looked at him in disbelief. Well, maybe I was still stuck in this hole after all.

'Alright time for the **laboratory** scene!' Steve barks, throwing a look of distain over his shoulder back at me.

I climbed onto the stage. I felt all the emotions... too many in fact. Part of me felt like this was right, the other half, begging me to stop.

‘And... action!’

‘How are we back in this darned laboratory again?!’ Jayden cries out.

‘I don’t know, ok? Please stop trying to act like everything's normal. You know I still love you.’

‘I’m sorry for doing this ... and I still love you too, I can't help myself.’

Jayden grabbed my waist and pulled me towards him. I was disgusted, even though we were acting we both knew that this felt wrong. He pressed his chapped lips on mine and slobbered all over my lips. I hoped desperately that no one could see my disgust.

‘And... CUT!’

I almost sprinted backwards away from Jayden, and darted towards my car. I raced towards the house and almost breaking down the door into Quinns room.

Quinns long purple hair was tied up into a big messy bun and she turned in shock to see me, sweaty and panting from bounding over.

‘Nora? Are you ok?’

I walked over slowly with a humongous smile planted on my face. ‘Quinn... I am so sorry this has taken me so long to realize this. I just didn’t know how I felt... or what to do, I just, I’m so sorry.’

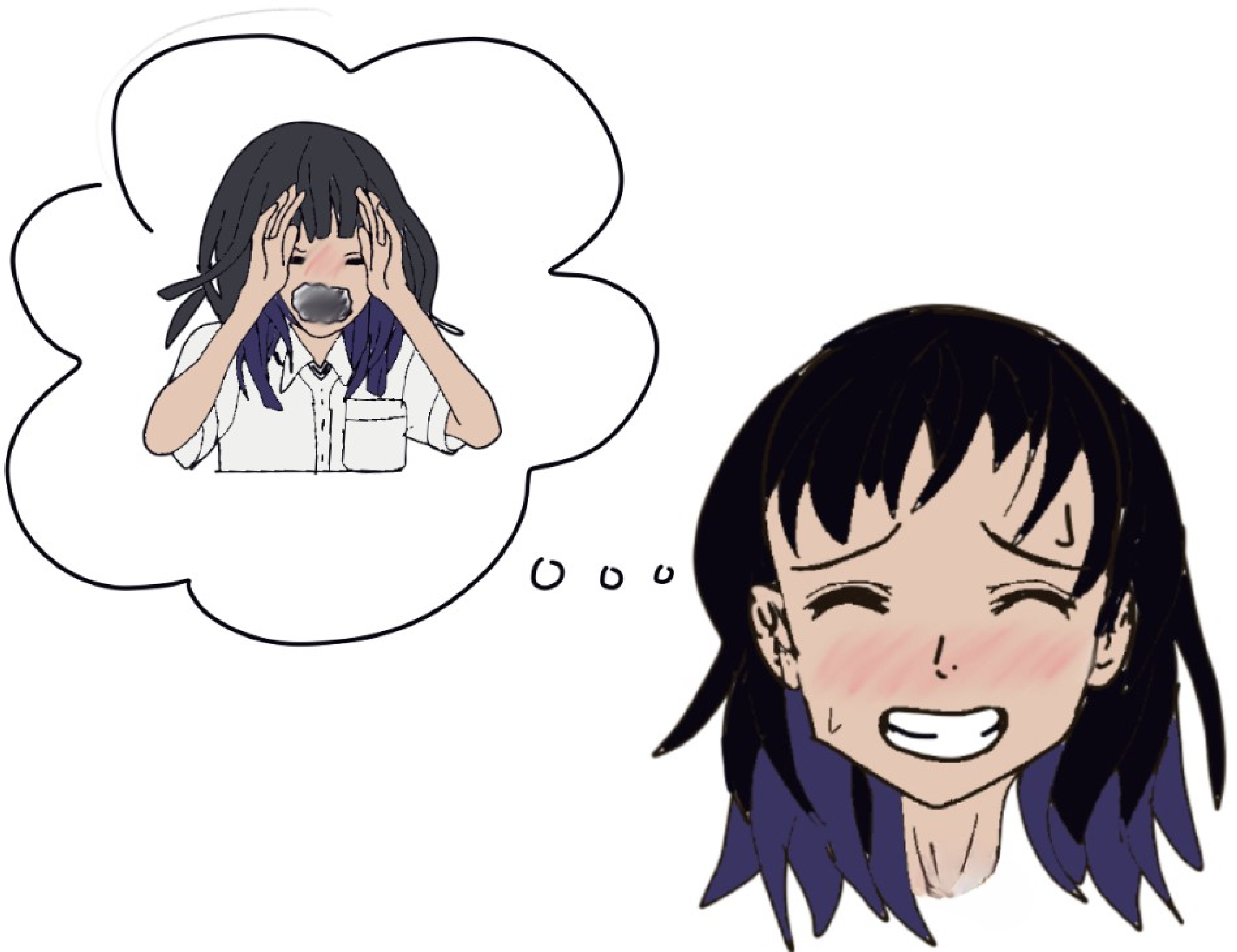
Quinn looked at me with a skeptical and confused look, her big eyes squinting.

‘What do you mean?’

‘Let me put it this way...’ I leaned closer to her and touched her face. ‘Do you... want to go to dinner with me?’

Quinn's face was a light rosy pink as she looked at me in shock.

‘Uh...’



Chapter 6

(Quinn)

I am going to meet up with Nora for dinner. My heart feels like it's going to explode! Who would've thought she was interested in me! Me of all people. Are we going out now? So many questions enter my mind as I begin to do my makeup and put on my dress. I feel happy for the first time in so long and it's nice, it feels warm.

Heading out the door I double-check that I've got my jumper and rush out, eager to arrive at the restaurant early. I sit at the table nervously waiting for her to arrive as I see her walk through the door.

"Holy sh..." my voice drops off.

She is in an absolutely gorgeous shimmery, pearl dress that glides down to her knees. Her luscious brown hair is in a half up half down that is silky against her back and her neck is adorned with gold jewelry.

Nora scans the restaurant and as soon as her eyes find mine her mouth drops open from shock. Does she really like me?

Nora rushes over and sits down, and the conversation starts to easily flow, the words roll off my tongue. We talk for what feels like hours and I discover more about her by the second.

She has been acting since she was 13 and has known that she likes girls for 2 years. She also likes guys though and thinks that she is Bisexual. I'm the first person she told, and she has my full support, when I told her that she looked as if she was about to burst into tears. She has learned stuff about me as well, that I play golf, when she realized she had seen me on the news making headlines last year she freaked out.

She learned about my parents' divorce and when talking about it, it was almost my turn to cry.

After finishing our tasty food, we kept talking outside, wanting to remain close with each other for as long as possible.

Chapter 7

(Nora)

“Are you going to be okay to walk home?” I could hear the concern in her voice as she spoke. She was an absolute angel.

“Yeah, of course, I’ll be fine, will you?” I was now genuinely worried as it was freezing outside and all Quinn was wearing was a dress that looked absolutely stunning on her, however, I had her cardigan, that she so nicely gave me at dinner, so now she had to walk home with just a thin dress.

I was going to tell her that I would be there to see her compete on the golf course tomorrow, but why don’t I just surprise her?’

“Hey... can I ask you something?” Her voice was as delicate as a petal however, it was almost as though she was nervous and awkward.

“Yeah of course. What is it?” I was now honestly concerned as she was never a very quiet person, but now she was acting all weird.

“Will you- Will you b-” She started but she couldn’t quite seem to spit out her sentence.

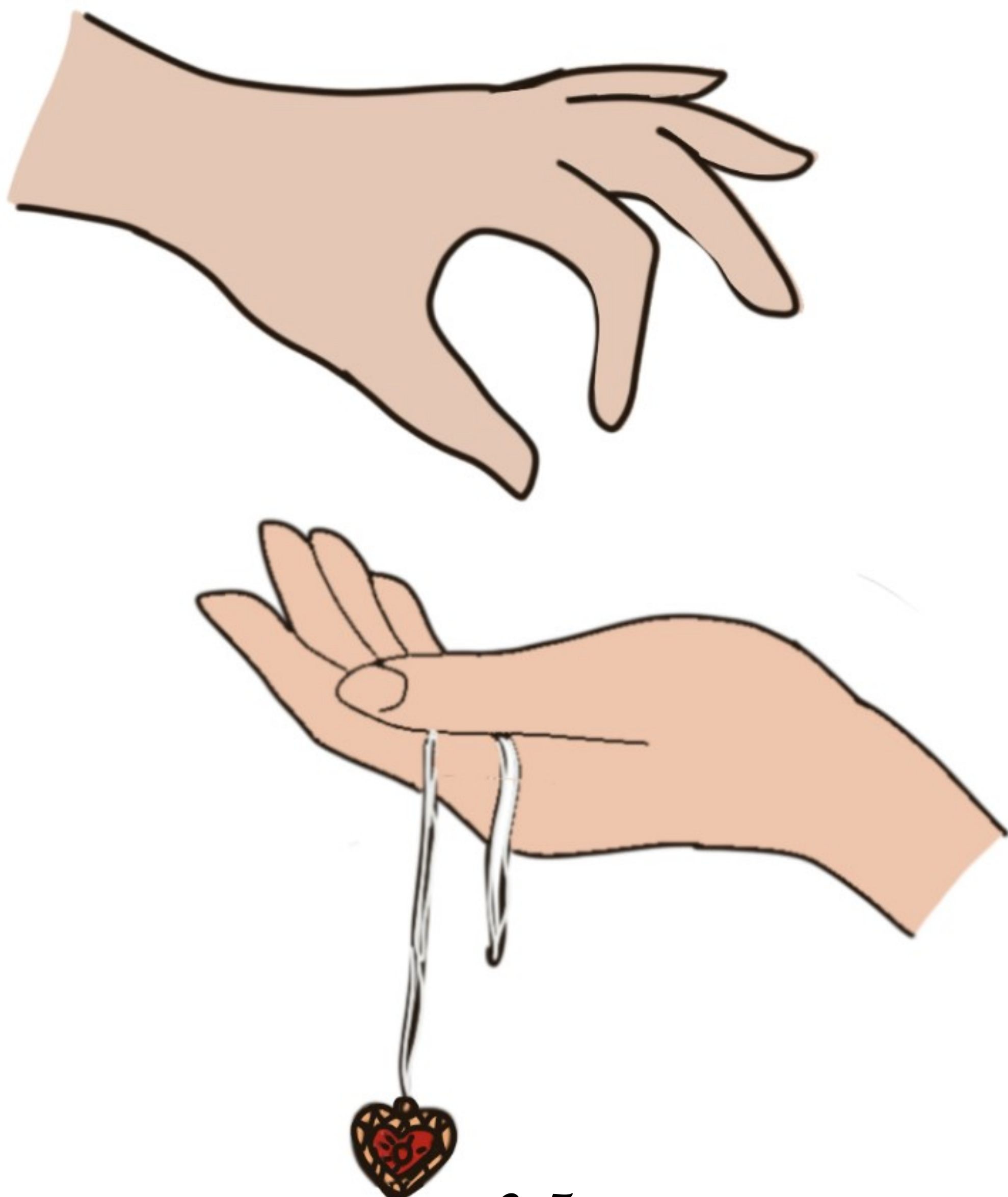
However, I was extremely patient with her as I put together what she was trying to say. “Will you be my girlfriend?” She finally spat out.

“Of course! Are you kidding me? Of course I will!” I replied

“I also have something for you” said Quinn.

She reached into her handbag and pulled out a beautiful necklace with a ruby attached to it.

I didn't say anything. I just pulled her into a bone-crushing hug. I hoped in my heart that tomorrow will be a good day when I go to surprise Quinn at her championship game.



Chapter 8

(Quinn)

Ahh, Championship Day. Why did I not invite Nora to my stupid, stupid championship, it would have been better to have her on my side, cheering me on when I win or comforting me when I lose.

“Can Quinn Harlad please come down to the golf course” The judge is calling me , ok... calm down. The crowd was anticipating my arrival but, in the distance, I see... I think I see... NORA! She came! But how did she know? It doesn't matter though, my excitement is through the roof and now all that matters is that she is here. My lucky charm has finally come. As I stare adoringly at her I notice the ruby necklace sparkaling on her neck. She wore it, she really did.

I brace with excitement for the competition, with Nora chanting my name, I have never felt more confident. Having Nora here really gave me a lucky streak or maybe all of the practice is finally paying off. I score quickly and well getting lower scores than all my other competitors. I even scored a hole-in-one! With the warmth of the sun on my back, I put the last hole and win the championship. I did it, I won, I really won! Nora comes towards me and starts running, I pick her up and swing her around until I get dizzy and assume she is too.

Chapter 9

(Nora)

One week later at the movie premiere Breathing had always been an easy task – until now. Even in a mystical, grey dress which sounds like it should make me weirdly confident like a spell, my worries still crept through like a stain through the fabric. I should've felt confident, now that I have a girlfriend, and my movie worked out, but something was missing.

Quinn.

Quinn...

QUINN!

Quinn was suddenly standing right in front of me. I dived into her arms, relief exploding in me like a volcano.

'Nora... you got this! You look – ' she choked on her own words, 'Amazing, you are amazing.'

She looked lovingly into my deep hazel eyes and took my hands in hers, and suddenly everything felt excited.

'Thank you I just- I just don't want to mess this premiere up. This is literally the most important moment of my life and I don't want to screw it up.'

'You won't. You're Nora Gatsos. I don't think there's much you can't do.'

My heart bounded out of place and suddenly I felt so giddy with love, I wanted to fall and let her catch me over and over again.

Quinn extended her arm and put my arm around hers gently.

'Shall we?'

We briskly walked up to the dazzling red carpet.

'Ready?' I thought.

The paparazzi detonated into a fury of 'Nora, Nora!' and 'Look at me!' and the flashes of the cameras almost blinded me.

A shiny blonde reporter suddenly pushed through the crowd.

'Nora, an interview?'

'Of course!'

'When did you know that you found your passion?'

I took a deep breath.

'Well... ever since I was little I knew acting was for me. But I never knew what a big show I was putting on in my everyday life. Ever since I found the love of my life,' I glance and smile over at Quinn, 'Everything has finally been clarified. I'd lost my voice which had so disappeared so long ago, but now I've found it.'

The reporter looks at me with admiration.

'Well, thank you, Nora.'

I look at Quinn, and all at once, she whisks me up in her arms and our faces are so close I could see every eyelash on her face. Suddenly she pulls me into her and... we kiss.

It feels like I am on fire and electricity pulses through me. It felt like sunshine and salted caramel and everything combined. I felt like I knew all the secrets of the universe.



Epilogue

Life was going great for Nora and Quinn . Even better as they had two adopted children - Riley and Mila- that they now look after.

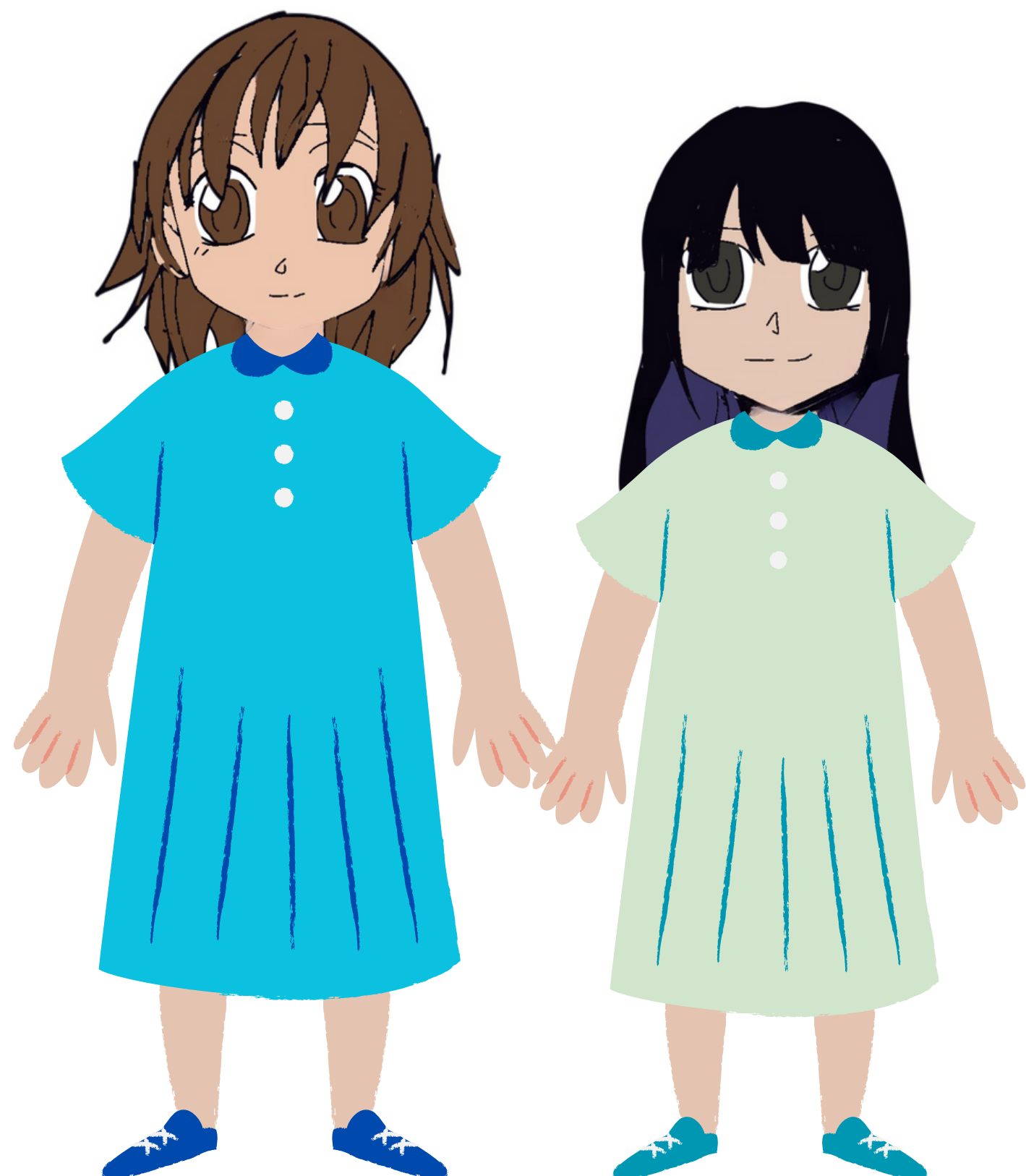
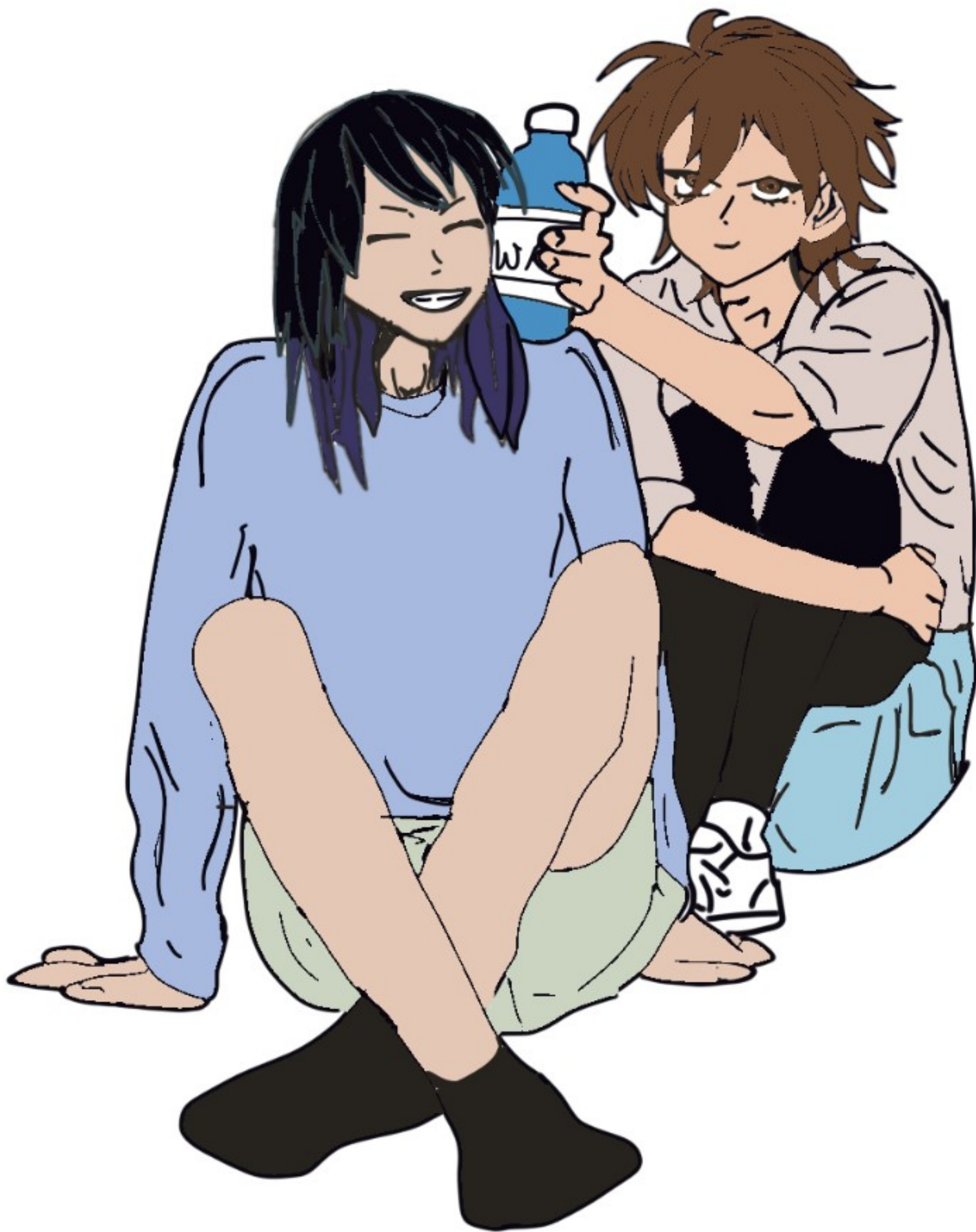
“Come on guys let’s go for a little bike ride down at the beach and have ice cream,” said Nora.

“Yay” yelled Riley.

“yay!” Mila imitated copying her older sister.

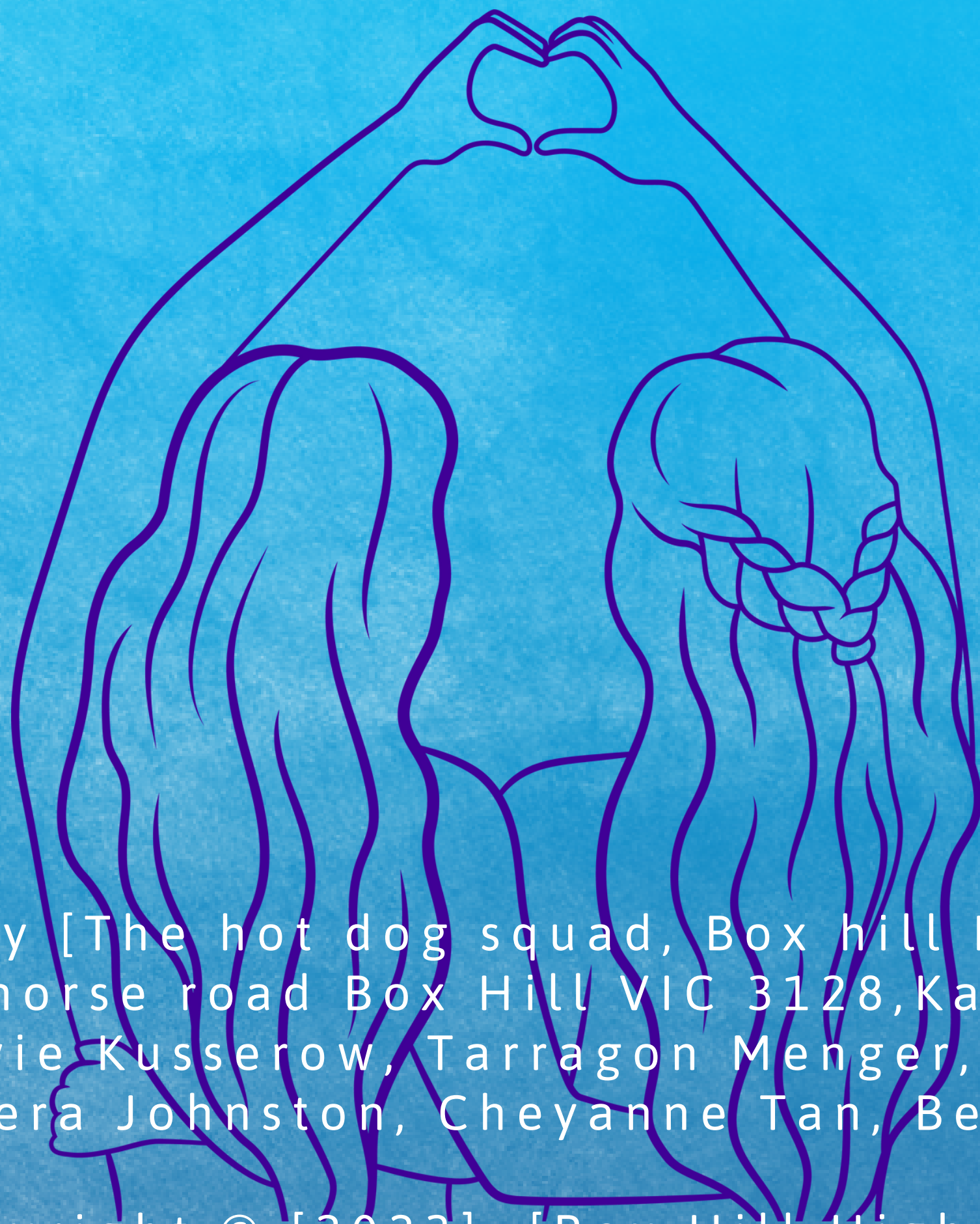
Today was Riley’s 4th birthday. We were teaching her how to ride a **bicycle**.

“eeeeeeeeeee!” she yells, going down a hill.



1 world - 2 Hearts

Nora meets her best friend from primary school whom she hasn't seen in years, her world turns upside down. She discovers new things about herself, and her life takes a turn for the better.



Published by [The hot dog squad, Box hill High School, 1180 Whitehorse road Box Hill VIC 3128, Katerina Cardassis, Ria Kant, Evie Kusserow, Tarragon Menger, Hallie Nguyen, Morgan Perera Johnston, Cheyanne Tan, Bernice Yap]

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Age recommendation: 10+

Hot Dog Squad