

Chapter One

The hot air in the portable was sickening. The only good thing about the heat was the girls. Cam stared at Ava as she unzipped her hoodie and slipped it off. She smiled at him and wiggled her bare shoulders. Her pink tank top stretched tight.

Cam grinned and looked down at the test booklet on his desk. *Focus, idiot.*

“You know the rules,” the teacher said. “No talking. No bathroom breaks. No nothing.”

“Breathing okay?” Jake yelled.

Mr. Morgan did his usual eye roll. “Go ahead. If you can find any air in here.”

Cam wondered if girls had some secret code. Like birds that turn and fly in the same direction at the same time. Because all of a sudden, every girl in the portable was playing with her hair, lifting it off her neck, shaking her head. Cam smelled the fruity, flowery shampoos and conditioners and deodorants. He moaned. There was no way he was going to get through this exam. Even if he *had* studied for it. His parents would kill him if he failed one more test.

“Everyone okay with me turning off the lights?” Mr. Morgan asked. “I think it’s bright enough.”

But before he could get to the switch, the lights went out. “That’s weird,” he said. He fumbled with the intercom. “Not working either. Adam, can you please go to the office and find out what’s happening?”

“Can we talk now?” asked Ava.

“Turn your exams over. Pens down.” Mr. Morgan glanced around the room.

A few minutes later someone from the office walked into the classroom with Adam. “Power’s out,” she said. “There’s a storm over in Midland, and the generator is down. We’re closing the school.” She smiled at the class. “Happy long weekend, everybody!”

Mr. Morgan had to shout over the cheering. “We will do the exam first thing Monday morning. Don’t forget to hand in your booklets before you leave.”

Cam dropped his test on the pile and leaped from the door of the portable to the ground.

Adam grabbed him by his shirt. “I’ve got my mom’s car. Do you want to come for burgers with us?” He had his other arm around Chrissy.

“I’m in!” Cam had three free hours until he had to get his brother, Peter, from the school bus. His parents would never know he’d taken off.

Ava leaned in close. "I'm coming too," she whispered in his ear.

"Sweet!" Cam said. "Won't your mom kill you, though, hanging out with me?"

"Who's going to tell her?" Chrissy asked with a grin.

They raced to the parking lot. The roof was down on the BMW, and Cam swung himself into the back seat.

Ava squeezed in beside him and did up her seat belt. She snuggled in close to Cam and slid one leg over his.

They hit the road and soon reached the highway. Adam shouted over his shoulder. "We're going to Harry's Burger Joint in Halton!"

Cam gave him a thumbs-up.

Adam headed south, driving fast and passing other cars. Cam leaned back, his head on the leather. *Someday I'm going to have a BMW. Two of them,*

like Adam's dad. One for me, one for my girlfriend. He looked at Ava. A piece of her long hair flew in his face, catching on his mouth. He pretended to eat it, pulling her face to his. She laughed before kissing him.

When they broke apart, Cam stared up at the blue sky. Not a cloud anywhere. *Like my life.* And it was true. A hot day in June. A freak Friday off school. Perfect car. Perfect girlfriend. Perfect summer job lined up at the marina. Cam smiled. He forgot about his dad yelling at him, calling him a loser. About his mom drinking, crying, all the time. Avoiding him. He was sixteen. Not much longer before he was out of the house. And he would never have to listen to them again.

About half an hour later, they pulled off the highway at Harry's Burger Joint. It was busy. Lots of people heading up north for the weekend, Cam figured. He noticed several cars towing boats. Some