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Sometimes I wonder if I'm really here at all. I am easily missed when people are looking for me. I'm ignored by almost everyone. To be honest, my sister Caroline is my only good friend. Just today, seven people bumped into me, and my teacher forgot my name again. Then again, that's not too bad for a Wednesday in September.

Maybe it was the lack of good sleep or the hours of staring at my boring textbooks, but when I glanced in the mirror, I found it harder to see myself.

"Come on Anabeth," Caroline chided when I told her something was wrong, "you're just tired from school."

After I finished my homework, I was summoned to dinner. Similar to any other day, my parents talked with Caroline about her swimming, and they didn't have much to say to me.

Thursday was an average day at school of going unnoticed by everyone. My American History teacher lost my assignment, and I had to redo it. Even Caroline didn't notice or look up when I came home. My mom forgot to make a snack for me, so I made myself a ham and cheese sandwich. Don't get me wrong; my parents love me, but their focus is on Caroline and her sports. Everyone's hoping she gets a scholarship for college.

After I showered, I could barely see myself in the mirror. I was more of a mirage than an actual human being.

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The next day, my teacher Mrs. Hall marked me absent when I was standing right in front of her. Later, someone even sat on me during study hall.

Racing home, I was already late for gymnastics, and that would make mom late picking Caroline up from swimming. However, when I saw a young girl from down the street sitting on her tricycle crying, I could tell she had gotten lost. I knew where she lived, so I stopped and walked with her to her house. She looked so thankful that my eyes got teary. I began to realize I wasn't completely worthless.

By the time I got home, my mom was infuriated by my making everyone late. As I attempted to explain why, she shooed me out the door to the waiting car.

After gymnastics, I decided to go to the library to get away from my house and to a lesser extent, my life. While I was lost in my thoughts, I bumped onto Drew, a popular boy from school.

"Sorry!" I blurted. "I didn't see you there."

"It's fine," Drew chuckled, "I'm not hurt or anything."

Before I continue, I want you to know that I am not used to people my age talking to me. At all. So once I gathered up all the stuff I had dropped, I mumbled, "Bye," and hurried away.

The next morning, I was completely invisible with no trace of me at all. Caroline even threw her coat on me because she didn't realize I was there. I didn't bother correcting her. What did it matter?

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After school on Monday, I went to a shop downtown for some hot chocolate. This was one of my favorite ways to escape my home. The hot chocolate was always just right and the busy shop felt comforting, but still anonymous.

I turned away from my table for two seconds, seriously, and when I looked back Drew was sitting there smiling. At me!

I couldn't believe my eyes. Nobody had seen . . . or talked to me for the last two days, and there he was. To this day, I still don't have any clue of how he saw me because I couldn't even see myself. Trying to sound much cooler than I felt, I casually said, "Hey, Drew."

"I was wondering if you might want to meet me at the library tomorrow after school?" he mumbled.

Did I want to? He's a super nice guy, and I was amazed that he was even talking to me. I said, "Sure," hoping that I didn't sound overly enthusiastic.

For the rest of the day, I tried not to scream. By the time seventh hour came the next day, I couldn't even hear what my journalism teacher was saying.

As I headed to the library, I was more nervous than I had ever been before. I was worried that Drew wouldn't see me, or, more likely, he would forget to meet me.

When I finally got there, I saw Drew at a table in the back of the library. Since my experience talking to boys my age was zip, I let Drew start the conversation. He seemed surprisingly nervous, though.

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"I need your help!" Drew explained. "I think I was adopted, but I don't want to ask my parents in case I am wrong and it makes them feel bad. I had no idea who to turn to for help, but I saw you help that little girl find her way home the other day, and you've always seemed nice, so I figured I could trust you. I was wondering if you could help me too." This was a surprise. I was expecting him to talk about school or something, but not anything like this. He smiled in such a genuine way that I forgot to be cautious.

"Of course I'll help you. Besides gymnastics and homework, I can meet you anytime. Why do you think you're adopted?"

"I don't exactly fit in with my family." He admitted.

"Well, I certainly don't fit in with my family, but that doesn't mean anything," I tried.

"It's more than that. It's more than just not fitting in. I'm not sure how to explain, it, but deep down I seem to be different. And I can tell my parents think so, too. I know you're smart, so I was thinking that we could look through old papers and try to find out the truth. You can come with me to my house tomorrow, and we'll say we're working on a project." Drew suggested.

"That sounds perfect!" And I really meant it.

School on Wednesday wasn't as bad as usual for a couple of reasons. First, because I had something to look forward to. And second, I was only bumped into twice which was a good change. My French teacher looked at me and almost called on me

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when I raised my hand. She did look a little surprised to see my hand up, but then she decided to call on Bridget. Still, it was better than nothing.

After school, Drew caught up with me near my locker and asked me to follow him. I knew my mom wouldn't notice I wasn't home until it was time for dinner, so I didn't bother texting her.

When we got to his house, his mom gave us some snacks and left for a meeting. Drew showed me to the attic, and we started looking through boxes.

After an hour or so, Drew said, "This is pointless! None of these papers mean anything. I don't know what I was thinking."

This was yet another surprise from Drew. If anyone had a reason to be confident, it was him. He was the kind of person who people looked up to and found reasons to be around. He was the one with the friends and the talents. Things were worse than usual. But I could tell he was exasperated, so I said, "Just because we didn't find anything doesn't mean it wasn't a good idea. There's only one last box to search. Then it's time for me to go anyway. Maybe we can try again tomorrow."

"Yeah, you're probably right."

In the last box, there was an interesting letter from his mother to his grandmother that mentioned his parents thinking about adopting a child. At least we had something to go on even if it wasn't an answer. Letters only give one side of the story.

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We decided that the best course of action would be to continue on Thursday at seven. This was because I had gymnastics after school.

At school, I was chosen to be an editor in journalism class, and no one bumped into me at all. Also, I saw a slight reflection in the mirror when I was getting ready to go to Drew's house. I looked . . . happy?

I arrived at Drew's house a few minutes late. He led me to his room. There were a few things scattered on the floor, but nothing big. There was only one poster on the wall, and it was of a band called Imagine Dragons. I couldn't believe it; they were my favorite band too!

"Sorry, but do you have a phone? Because I probably won't be able to find you every time we need to talk." Drew questioned.

"Yeah, of course, this is the twenty-first century." This earned a chuckle, and we traded numbers. Then he surprised me when he pulled a large bundle of letters from under his bed. "What are those?" I asked.

"It's a stack of letters from my grandmother. I found them with some photo albums downstairs. Since I knew my mom would be home this time, I brought them up here earlier for us to look at. Would you help me read through them?" He asked.

We looked through the stack of letters to find some from around the same time as the one in the attic. They were all mixed up. One of the letters was full of interesting

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information about Drew when he was little, but nothing about adopting a child. The next several letters were more of the same.

"Maybe I was wrong, and my parents really are my parents." Drew confessed.

"We don't know, though, and it doesn't hurt to keep looking for information." I said.

Drew looked at me uncertainly and asked, "Do you think I was adopted or I . . . wasn't?"

"I don't know, I wouldn't be surprised if you were. It could be either way. But does it really matter?" I asked. "At least your family doesn't forget about you like mine does. They know who you are and what you are doing, even if sometimes they don't understand you. If you told your mom you didn't feel like you fit in, she would care about that, wouldn't she?"

Drew didn't answer.

I said goodbye and jogged home because I was already late, but Drew and I had plans to meet on Saturday to keep looking at the journals or maybe go to the county courthouse and look up his birth certificate. I was looking forward to that.

As always, I was glad that tomorrow was Friday. I love Fridays because it means the week is almost over. But this Friday, I was especially glad because it felt good to have plans and something meaningful to do. I wasn't exactly visible, but I certainly didn't feel completely invisible either.

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After dinner, I was surprised when I got a text because I rarely got texts. I gingerly opened my phone and read the text: "MEET ME AT THE PARK IN 20 MINS."

At first I was nervous, and then I was excited. Finally, I remembered to reply with a simple: "OK."

It was the beginning of spring, and the park was beautiful with the buds on the trees and the birds constantly chirping. I have always loved the morning dew, but it was too late in the day for dew. Admiring the beauty of the park, I stood still for a minute before I noticed Drew. I walked over to the hickory nut tree to meet him.

"Guess what." He said. Before I had the time to answer, he said, "I decided that it doesn't matter if I was adopted or not."

"Why did you decide this?" I questioned.

"Well, I was thinking about how you asked if it mattered, and it doesn't."

An unfortunate thought dawned on me. We didn't have any reason to talk anymore once this conversation was over.

I found myself speechless.

Drew must have understood because he said, "I still want to hang out with you, even if I don't need your help on this project. Maybe I was just looking for a way to get to know you better. You're so quiet at school." He looked directly into my eyes and said, "You are a great person with a kind heart and you should know that." I was

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embarrassed that he knew I was insecure, so I didn't respond. "It's okay, I like quiet," he said, and we both laughed.