

Between the Starlight

Elaine Pinter

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To Justin and Jonas

Thank you for showing me what true love is and where it really comes from.

.....

Sometimes the curves in your path are what end up leading you in the right direction.

Chapter 1

I cranked up Adele's soulful serenade to drown out the growing squeal coming from under the hood of my little white Hyundai Tiburon. I couldn't remember when the sound first started, but my stereo volume told me that whatever it was, it was probably getting worse. I reminded myself for about the thirty-fourth time to let my dad know so that he could set up an appointment with a mechanic. After I filed my mental note, I sang along with the music like a rock star. Except when another car was right next to me, of course.

Every sixth Tuesday for the past five years had been girls' night, and I dreaded it. It wasn't my mom or the salon that I disliked. Actually, I really enjoyed listening to the ladies gossip because I always ended up giggling at the risqué paths their conversations took. What I hated was the amount of time I had to spend holding still while Dahlia forced my hair to submit to the opposite of its natural state. Just before seventh grade, my mom said it was time for me to "become a swan." That was when I traded my light brown curls for hours of blonde touch-ups and hot straightening irons. I did, however, draw the line at the stinky acrylic nails my mom raved about. Nevertheless, I knew that spending time together made her happy and that a couple hours later, I'd be trying to dig my keys out of my purse without gouging my stubby but freshly polished nails.

Right after Adele faded out and just before Beyoncé ramped up, I heard a loud thump and the shrill whine disappeared. I was ecstatic that whatever had been making all that racket had finally rattled back into place. I pulled out my mental list and crossed off calling my dad. I continued along, contemplating whether cars felt the same way about going to the mechanic as I did about going to the salon—until my car completely and utterly died. Now, Boise isn't a huge city, but there's enough traffic that you don't want to be stuck in an intersection, which was exactly where I was.

When I clicked off the music, it confirmed that not only was the screeching gone, but so were all of the normal vehicle sounds. I gripped the steering wheel and hoped that my car would roll through to the other side, but instead it came to a halt right in the middle of the intersection. I tried to restart it, but it was no use. After my wish to disappear didn't come true, the traffic began to weave around me and I realized that I'd better figure out what to do. I reached over and pulled my phone out of my purse, but it slipped out of my hand and toppled out of sight. At least I

hadn't dialed my dad's number before I dropped the phone because he never passed up a chance to remind me why he always called me by my middle name. "I couldn't have picked a more perfect name for you," he would say. But I always reminded him that Grace was Nana's name and that's why my mom had chosen it. If it was true that my mom and dad had actually agreed on what to name me, it was probably the one and only time they had agreed on anything.

I fumbled for my phone, but it was nowhere to be found. Just as I unbuckled my seatbelt to lengthen my reach, I caught a glimpse of a guy dashing through a break in the traffic. When he stopped behind my car, I knew he had come to my rescue. I should've breathed a sigh of relief, but instead, my nerves crept up. He stood there looking at me in the rearview mirror and I knew he was waiting for me to do something, but between my butterfingers and everyone slowing down to take a look, I couldn't think of what that something was. After what was probably only a moment but felt like forever, he walked up to my door. I finally got it together enough to roll my window down.

"You have to put it in neutral," he said.

"Oh, right. Right." I looked down at the gear shift and tried to fight the redness rushing to my face.

"Are you all right, Alexa?"

I recognized Gavin Phillips' voice as soon as he said my name. He was a senior, too, and we'd had classes together off and on since eighth grade. I'd changed schools that year because that's when my mom finally filed for divorce and moved us to what she called our "bachelorette pad."

I gave my cheeks a few more seconds to cool down before I looked up at Gavin. And when I did, I saw how his deep brown eyes perfectly complemented his incredible olive complexion. It wasn't the first time I'd noticed that about him. His eyes were beautiful, with such a light in them, but at the same time, they were so guarded. Ever since I sat next to him in English that first year, I'd wondered why he seemed to keep a piece of himself hidden away like that. In fact, I thought we currently had a couple of classes together, but I hadn't seen him around in a while.

"Yeah, I'm just a little flustered," I said. "Actually a lot flustered."

He folded his arms against the top of the door frame and leaned his forehead against them so that he was looking right down at me with those eyes. "It's all right. Like I said, just put it in neutral and I'll push you into that parking lot." He leaned his head toward the corner he'd come

from. “The steering and brakes’ll be a little hard, but you can do it.”

I wasn’t sure that I could, but I pressed down the brake pedal and shifted into neutral anyway. When he smiled at me, one corner of his mouth rose slightly higher than the other. For just an instant, the kindness in his smile melted away the guarded look in his eyes.

I watched in the mirror as he walked behind my car again. He gave a little nod, signaling me to lift my foot off the brake. My car inched forward and gradually began to roll. He was right: It was really hard to steer, but I managed to guide it into an empty parking spot without crashing into anything. I leaned down and rifled around until I felt my phone underneath the passenger seat. When I righted myself, Gavin was standing in front of my car.

“Pop the hood,” he said.

Unlike the “N” on my gear shift, I only had a vague idea of where the hood lever was. I peered below the steering wheel and felt proud of myself when it only took me a minute or so to find the handle with the right picture on it. When I got out of the car, I thought I caught a hint of amusement on his face.

“What?” I asked.

He didn’t respond, but his smile remained firmly in place. When he lifted the hood, a wave of steam rolled out.

“It’s overheated,” he said. “It’ll need to sit for a while, but I’ll see what I can figure out while you get some water from the gas station.”

“Water?”

His amusement came through clearly this time, along with his sense of humor. “Yes, princess, for the radiator. Do you think you can carry four of those big water bottles? You know, the one liter size.”

“Of course I can,” I responded, making it clear that I was unamused and that he was the only one who found what he said funny.

With that, I shoved my phone into my purse and set off in the outfit my mom bought me on our most recent trip to the mall. Even though the weather was a little blustery, it wasn’t bad for March. Still, I hadn’t planned on spending any time outside, so I didn’t have a jacket. Shivers ran through me by the time I slipped into the convenience store a couple blocks away. I didn’t mind the line that had formed because it gave me more time inside to warm up. I even bought an extra bottle of water just to show Gavin that I could carry all of them with no problem. The joke would

be on him. On the way back, though, I began to wish that I'd bought six to balance out the bags. Then I started to wish I'd stuck to four and wondered if the plastic handles could dig any deeper into my fingers. When I got back to the parking lot, an old, multi-colored Ford Mustang was parked next to my car. Its trunk was propped open and a toolbox lay at Gavin's feet as he worked away under the hood of my car. Once I was standing next to him, he stopped what he was doing and looked at me.

"I figured out what's wrong with your car, princess," he announced.

I wished I had a clever comeback to his "princess" remarks, but I was so happy he knew what to do that I continued to ignore them. "You did? What is it?"

"I've seen this before: Daddy forgot to schedule an oil change for you, or, by the looks of it, any type of regular maintenance."

"He scheduled them; I just might have forgotten . . ."

His grin stopped me right there. I abandoned my ridiculous statement and went back to searching for a retort, but I ended up shutting my mouth for two reasons. One: I was grateful he stopped to help me. Two: He was basically right. At that point, I couldn't help but give in. I ditched the stress and flashed him a smile. Looking at him, standing there in his off-brand jeans and no-name tennis shoes with his beat-up car in the background, made me realize why he'd come up with the whole "princess" thing.

I still wanted to come back at him with something witty, but since I couldn't conjure anything up, I proudly held out the two bags of giant water bottles I'd lugged down the street. He unzipped his gray hoodie and handed it to me with one hand while he took both grocery bags with the other. I didn't waste any time wrapping his sweatshirt around me. It was still warm and it smelled amazing—like a mix of fresh laundry and warm spices. He set the bags down on the ground and went back to work.

"It's gonna take a while longer to cool down," he said, "so I'll finish giving it the once-over and take care of a couple other things I found."

"Okay, that would be great. I'll text my mom and let her know what's going on."

He nodded and picked up a flashlight. I sat down on the low concrete barrier our cars were facing and typed the words into my phone.

Me: My car broke down, but don't worry—I'm getting it taken care of.

My mom: How fortunate that your dad is back early from his “business” trip. Be sure to thank him for taking care of it.

That made me doubly thankful that I’d dropped my phone instead of dialing my dad’s number earlier. He really was still in Italy on business, but I’d completely forgotten. I knew very well from the summers I’d spent there that the time difference would’ve made it the middle of the night for him. Teasing me about “Gracing out” would’ve been cast aside for annoyance at an unsolicited wake-up call. But Rome . . . the shopping, the food, the culture. Giddiness zinged around inside my head when I thought about how that would be my time zone when I started college there in the fall—I couldn’t wait. As far as my parents’ relationship went, I’d been the pawn in their back-and-forth jealousy plays since the first time my mom threw my dad out of the house, but it never got any less uncomfortable. He probably deserved it. Maybe she did, too, for all I knew, but I hated being in the middle of it. I went with my usual tactic: ignore the awkward comments from whichever direction they were coming.

Me: I’ll check in soon.

My mom: K.

After some more inspecting, tightening, leaning, and crouching, Gavin took a rag from the toolbox and wrapped it around a lid under the hood of my car. He twisted it and the small puff of steam that escaped paled in comparison to what had billowed out earlier. He picked up the first bag of water bottles and dumped all three of them into what I guessed was the radiator. He grabbed the second bag and that same smile appeared, only larger, when he reached the fifth bottle.

“If I’d have known you could handle it,” he said, “I would’ve told you to get six.”

“I thought about getting six.” It was true.

“Because you know it’s probably down by about six liters, but that it can get by with only four or five?”

That was not true, but oh how I wished I’d grabbed six. I decided to go with a non-answer because that was neither admitting nor denying anything.

After he replaced the lid (or the radiator cap as he called it), he waved me over. Once I was standing next to him, he pointed to a thick band of rubber in a different area under the hood.

“The belt that drives the water pump and power steering slipped,” he said. “It got wrapped up on one of the pulleys and damaged the power steering pump, but I managed to get it back on.”

“Oh,” I answered because that made just as much sense to me as the whole six-water-bottle thing did.

“A loose belt usually makes some noise.” His eyebrows pulled down. “I’m real surprised you didn’t hear something a while ago.”

“No, it was making a terrible sound.”

“It was? Why didn’t you check into it?”

“Well, the stereo covered it up and it was driving fine.”

He laughed at first, but I just looked at him and his expression went blank.

“The stereo covered it up,” he repeated as if saying it out loud himself would give him some greater understanding of what I said. I’d gotten him, but it was purely unintentional.

“That and I guess I just kept forgetting to call my dad to, you know, schedule things for me.”

“Look, I was joking about that . . . well, maybe not . . . but seriously, a little maintenance’ll go a long way. And next time, don’t ignore a sound like that—I won’t always be around to stop for you.”

“Thank you,” I blurted out because it dawned on me that I hadn’t said that yet.

“I couldn’t just leave a princess in distress, now could I?” He motioned for me to step back so that he could close the hood. “That should be good enough for now.”

“For now? Didn’t you fix it?”

“Not even close—I just made it so you can drive it to my uncle’s shop.”

The panic that faded as soon as Gavin came to my rescue flooded back through me. “You want me to drive it even though it’s not fixed?”

The amused look returned to his face once again. “It’s not very far and you can follow me. You’ll be fine.”

The part of me that wished I’d hauled six water bottles from the convenience store just to prove his preconceived notions about me wrong overrode the flustered part of me. When he held the driver’s side door of my car open, I slid right in and put on my seatbelt.

“Go ahead,” he said, “fire it up.”

My car started as soon as I turned the key, but Gavin didn’t move. He stood there listening to the engine, as if he was studying it. Once he seemed satisfied, he shut my door and got in his car. At first it hesitated when he tried to start it, but then it sputtered a couple of times. All at once, it belched out a puff of smoke and roared to life. It was so loud that I jumped. Maybe that

was partly because I was still a little on edge about the broken-down car experience, but it was mostly because I didn't know a car could make that much noise. After he rumbled by, I shifted into reverse and reminded myself to be extra careful—it was no time for a klutz attack. I was relieved that the brakes felt normal again, but steering was almost impossible. Normally, I would've given up at that point, but I still needed to prove him wrong. I put it in drive and yanked on the steering wheel. He waited for a large enough gap in the traffic before he eased out of the parking lot. I muscled my car onto the road right behind him. While I appreciated him driving slowly so I could keep up, his car was not only loud, but also incredibly smelly. It wasn't long until my car was enveloped in his exhaust cloud. I would've closed my air vents, but there was no way I could take a hand off the wheel. When he slowed down, I breathed a sigh of relief. That was short-lived, though, because we were only turning another corner. I focused on controlling my car for what felt like miles but was only a few more blocks.

I had never been so happy to see a building in my life as I was when I saw the little neighborhood repair shop up ahead on my right. Gavin pulled his Mustang into the parking lot and pointed for me to pull up in front of the far bay door. He made sure I was in place before he unlocked the front door and then disappeared inside. The flat roof made the white building look like a perfect rectangle. I imagined what it must've been like when it first opened so long ago: a neatly dressed attendant rushing out from between old-fashioned gas pumps to check your oil and wash your windows . . . a family station wagon in one bay of the shop and a classic land yacht in the other.

The rising garage door brought me back to the real world where I could not afford to slip up with a major Grace moment. I reminded myself out loud that those gigantic old cars had repeatedly pulled through the opening ahead of me without causing any damage. I tried to assure myself that I could do it, too, but for me, there was a fine line between paying close attention and getting rattled. Instead of motioning for me to drive into the shop, Gavin came to my rescue once again.

"I'll pull it onto the lift," he said after he opened my car door for me.

I felt like the weight of the world was lifted off me, but I didn't want to be too obvious about it. I shrugged nonchalantly and slid the seat back for him so that he could fit into my little car. I stood back and watched as he quickly positioned my car over the metal contraption on the floor. Once he shut off the engine, I figured it was safe for me to go in and grab my stuff. When I

walked in, he was sliding my car key off my key ring. He handed the remaining keys and my purse to me. After he closed the bay door, I followed him into the front office. He stood behind the old, wooden counter that divided the small room. A decrepit computer sat on the metal desk behind him and four chairs made up the waiting area beneath the front window. He filled out a slip of paper and put it on a clipboard along with my car key.

“You work here with your uncle, don’t you?” I asked.

“Yep. I guess I pretty much always have.”

“Really?”

“Well, yeah, this was originally my grandpa’s shop, and as far as I can remember, my Uncle Bryce always worked for him.” He paused momentarily, as if remembering things not thought of in a long time. “My little brother and I’d spend hours in the bays watching them work. We were supposed to be in here with my grandma while she did the books and stuff, but they’d give us small jobs to keep us out of the way, you know, like dumping oil or sweeping up. The more we hung around, the more we picked up. Eventually, we could handle just about anything around here, or at least be helpful.” He lined the clipboard up next to the other two on the counter. “Then one day, it was slow so we all were cleaning up around the shop. They started talking about getting rid of the old Mustang under the tarp out back because it was a project they’d never get around to. I was still a couple years away from getting my license, but I told them I’d work for parts and shop time.” He laughed. “Up until then, they hadn’t paid me anything. Plus, it took me about that long to get her running at all.” His smile faded. “Things have changed a lot since then . . . I mean, since my grandpa died.”

“I’m sorry about your grandpa.”

“Thanks, but it was a while ago.”

“So then this place belongs to your whole family.”

He shrugged. “I guess I never really thought about it that much before, but yeah.”

“So if you work here, why is your car like that?”

“Like what?” He grinned, his eyes gleaming. “Chock-full of bad-assery?”

I couldn’t tell if he was serious, so I looked his face over and waited.

His grin turned to the look of amusement he seemed to wear frequently around me. “It’s what we gearheads like to call ‘all go and no show.’”

“I have no idea what that means.”

“Of course you don’t, princess. It means that this is a repair shop, not a body shop. But my car’s got it where it counts.”

“I still don’t know what that means.”

“Under the hood. Come on; I’ll show you.”

He came out from behind the counter and locked the door behind us. I was prepared that time, but his car was even louder up close. He lifted the mismatched hood and raised his voice so that I could hear him above the roar of the engine and everything else that was spinning and shaking under there.

“First of all, it’s a ’68,” he told me. “We rebuilt this 302 and dropped it in. Threw in a hot cam and polished the heads. And it’s got 4:10s in the rear end.”

I noticed that the sound was actually a perfectly timed rhythm, not just the chaotic blare I mistook it for earlier. Nevertheless, I did not understand his car talk, so all I could do was give him a perplexed look.

He smiled. “Get in.”

The passenger door, a splotchy pea green, creaked open after he gave it a good yank. I sat down on the springy seat covered in cracked black vinyl. While I worked on the ancient seatbelt, he shoved the door closed for me. A mix of exhaust fumes and a wonderful smell just like his hoodie filled the inside of the car. It reflected exactly what I’d seen of him up to that point: clean-cut, but at the same time a natural at everything mechanical.

By the time he got in, I had my seatbelt figured out, which turned out to be a really good thing. That gleam he had in his eyes when he’d talked about his car reappeared just before he jammed on the gas pedal, sending a spray of gravel across the parking lot. The rocks were still splattering the ground when he cranked the wheel to the side. The car swung around before sliding perfectly onto the asphalt of the street. The squealing tires made the engine noise seem like a whisper. My heart skipped a beat when he tore around the corner because the back end began to fishtail. But when I looked at him, I saw that he was calculating every move, in complete control. And then, he took his foot off the gas and slowed for the red light ahead, as if nothing had happened. A split second before the light turned green, the car launched forward and pressed me back against my seat. Once we made the turn onto the main road, he slowed to a normal pace and again acted as if it were no big deal.

“So where’s your castle, princess?” he asked.

“That’s it?”

He looked at me, amused once again. “You’re enjoying this?”

I smiled and nodded. “Just so you know, it’s a regular old house. But I’m not telling you where it is until you drive me around some more.”

He responded by shrugging and heading toward the interstate. As soon as we were on the entrance ramp, he floored it again. I was curious about our flying speed, so I snuck a peak at the speedometer. The orange needle stayed lifelessly pointed at zero inside the circular gauge on the dashboard. It seemed to me that an auto repair shop *would* be able to fix a speedometer. Maybe he didn’t think it was necessary. Either way, it would remain a mystery. He deftly maneuvered in and out of the traffic, zooming past every other car on the road. The rush, however, was over all too soon because he took the next exit.

“It’s my turn, right?” I asked, not even trying to hide my excitement.

Even though he winced at me, he was still smiling. I responded with an extra sweet smile, and I thought that I might have a chance.

“I might not work at a body shop,” he said, “but I’m pretty sure I know how all the dents and scuffs got on your car. Even so, driving this is a lot different than driving your car.”

“Maybe you can teach me someday, then.”

He laughed. “Sure, princess, someday.”

“Okay. I’ll tell you where my *house* is if you promise to do the same thing again.”

“You got it.”

“Back to the Vista exit, second right.”

He looked surprised, so I jumped on it. “I told you: It’s a typical house in a run-of-the-mill neighborhood.”

“Fair enough. But you better hold on.”

We careened back onto the interstate and then across all the lanes of traffic. The tranquil view of the mountain-framed city blurred past in the background. Not only could I hear the wide-open roar of the engine, but I could feel it throughout my body. That was when I figured out what “all go and no show” really meant, and I liked it. I liked it a lot. In no time at all, though, we were slowing for the exit, and before I knew it, I was pointing to my house on the left side of the street.

“Thanks for stopping and helping me out like that,” I said. “And for the ride.”

He gave me a little nod. “At your service . . . but now you’d better hop out quick.”

“Why?”

“What’ll your friends say, princess?”

My friends? I knew lots of people and I was on friendly terms with most of them, so maybe you could call that having a bunch of friends. The person I was really close to was my mom. We’d always been that way, but even more so after my parents’ divorce. Besides that, my best friend had been Tori up until I’d changed schools. We tried to stay in touch, but our lives inevitably led in different directions. Starting at a new school was tough because everyone had already formed their cliques and I never really broke into one. Still, I didn’t get Gavin’s comment at all.

“What’s that supposed to mean?” I asked.

“I don’t think this is exactly the type of carriage you’re accustomed to.”

“It definitely isn’t.” My confusion turned to a smile, but back to confusion when the serious look stayed on his face. “It’s not like my car’s brand-new or anything. My dad gave it to me for my sixteenth birthday, but only because buying me things is his way of not having to discuss feelings.”

Instead of acknowledging what I said, he opened his door and changed the subject. “Your car’ll be ready before closing time tomorrow.”

He was on his way to open my door, but I was done with being called “princess.” “No, it’s okay, you don’t have to . . .” I pulled on the door handle to no avail.

He continued around the car and yanked my door open like he had the first time. “Actually, I do.”

“Kind of like the speedometer?”

“I don’t really need either one right now, but someday I’ll be able to start buying parts again. Then I’ll restore her from the ground up.”

“I believe that.” I was still wearing his hoodie, so I unzipped it and started to slip it off.

“You can keep it.”

I was certain there was a large possibility that it was the only jacket he owned. “Oh, no, I’m fine now. But thank you.”

He took it from me, shut the door, and walked back to the driver’s side of the car. “See you tomorrow.”

Just after my mom's sporty blue coupe zipped into the driveway, Gavin pulled away from the curb and thundered away. The look on my mom's face reminded me that I'd forgotten to check back in with her. It was almost comical watching her hold her fingers out to protect her nails while she grabbed at the strap of her purse. Gavin had done more than rescue me from being stranded in the middle of the road. Rather than watch her struggle any more, I walked over and opened the door so that I could help her.

"Who was that?" she asked in a tone of voice that I didn't recognize.

"Gavin Phillips."

She didn't move, as if waiting for some kind of explanation. It made no sense for her to be upset; she never kept close tabs on me.

"His car looks as if it shouldn't be on the road," she added in the same tone.

At that point, I easily placed her tone: distaste.

I couldn't help but be defensive. "He's the only one who cared enough to stop and help me. And he happens to be a mechanic so he's going to fix my car for me. It only makes sense that he's restoring a classic car."

"I'm not sure that could be called a 'classic.'"

"Mom."

"Sorry," she said. "I assumed your dad was taking care of it."

There was the truth. It was totally twisted because even after everything they'd dragged each other through, she'd hoped to run into him dropping me off at home.

"He's still in Italy," I said.

She nodded. "Well, then I am grateful for Gavin helping you. Where's your car now?"

"His uncle owns a repair shop." I pointed vaguely in the direction we'd come from. "It's right next to the railroad tracks off of—" I was trying to remember the exact street when she interrupted.

"I know the neighborhood you're talking about. Your dad can afford to send it to the dealership."

Suddenly we were right back where we'd started.

"Mom. He knows what he's doing."

She sighed. "Why didn't you call Logan?"

"He wouldn't know what to do."

“Yes, he’d call a tow truck.”

“Only if he felt like paying attention to me today.”

“He’s young; that’s all. You just need to work a little more on commanding his attention. You have to make yourself more interesting than sports and video games.” She looked at my hair. “Those roots aren’t helping.”

“It’s only been six weeks—they’re barely showing.” I summoned the magic words that I hoped would bring an end to the entire painful conversation. “Your highlights look great, Mom.”

Thankfully, it worked. She smiled and took a peek at herself in the rearview mirror before we headed inside.

“Do you want me to heat up some chicken casserole for you?” she asked as she pulled a dish from the refrigerator.

“No, I had some before I left.”

I brought my laptop over to the kitchen table and worked on my calc equations and government assignment while she ate and caught me up on the gossip I’d missed at the salon.

“I can’t be late for work in the morning,” she said as she loaded the dishwasher, “so you’ll have to hustle if you want a ride.”

“Okay. I’m actually really tired anyway.”

After I loaded my backpack up for the next day, I went into my bathroom and followed the bedtime routine my mom taught me at the beginning of the swan process: remove eye makeup, wash face, moisturize, brush hair. After I slipped into my pajamas, I followed my own nighttime routine, the one that I’d never missed since my Nana had given me my first diary eight years before. I pulled my worn leather journal from my purse and wrote.

Tuesday, March 19th

Dear Journal,

What a crazy day. I wish I’d been a little more prepared for that pop quiz in econ class. And then I didn’t even see Logan until I caught up with him in the parking lot after school. I couldn’t believe the way Hannah Crosby was flirting with him when I got there. How can he say he didn’t notice that? Everyone else sure did. Mom’s right—I do need to figure out how to get him to pay more attention to me. It’s pretty lame when your boyfriend isn’t the first person you call when your car breaks down. It’s also lame when

your mom can't say one nice thing about your dad, but she's secretly pining away for him while he's chasing around girls just a few years older than you. Ugh.

Breaking down in all that traffic totally freaked me out. I'm so glad Gavin happened to be driving by because he really put me at ease, even if the whole "princess" bit did get old. I've known him for a long time, but today I feel like I met him for the first time. Well, as much of him as he'd let me. Even with as relaxed as he was, he's definitely got something he keeps locked away, but I suppose he keeps it that way for a reason.

Tomorrow will be a good day—I'm on top of my homework assignments, my car will be fixed . . . I just have to figure out what to do about Logan.

I propped a pillow behind my head and thought about how I could get him to notice me more. Writing in my journal always helped me figure things out. I thought about it for a long time, but I still didn't know what to do. I started to drift off, so I laid my journal in its usual place on the nightstand next to me just in case I came up with anything in the morning or middle of the night. I didn't end up needing it, but I did dream of sailing through the sky in a very fast car.

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