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WILL  
FIND  
YOU

DAPHNE BENEDIS-GRAB

SCHOLASTIC INC.

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# CHAPTER 1

## GRACIE

The crowded school bus turned onto a dirt road, then thumped over a pothole. Thick, dark forest closed in on either side.

“We’re here!” someone shouted, and a big cheer went up around Gracie as the bus bounced its way toward the parking lot of Frost Peak Campground.

As Gracie’s best friend, Mina, clapped happily, Gracie tried to join in the excitement. Who wouldn’t be excited for the annual seventh-grade camping trip? There were the nightly campfires with s’mores, the Saturday ropes course over Coldwater Creek, and the sunset hike.

Frost Peak Campground was only thirty minutes outside town, and a twenty-minute bike ride on Kappa Path, which wound through the woods. Gracie and Mina had been there a million times, if not more—for Fourth of July fireworks, summer barbecues, and

day camp when they were little. Gracie and Mina did everything together, always.

Until now.

Gracie could feel the smile fade from her face.

“I hate that we’re not together, Gracie-cakes,” Mina said, seeming to sense Gracie’s mood and stretching up to loop an arm around Gracie’s neck. It was a challenge because Gracie had recently had a huge growth spurt, while Mina had remained petite. But it still felt good to have her friend’s arm around her. “It’s not fair they separated us.”

Gracie agreed, quite fervently. How would she enjoy the trip on her own?

“Remember, it’s just two nights,” Mina said, giving Gracie a soft squeeze, clearly knowing what Gracie was thinking. “And we’ll be together during the day—”

“But the cabin is the best part,” Gracie moaned. Just then the bus hit a particularly deep pothole, which caused Gracie’s backpack to bounce off the floor, slamming into her shins. “Staying up late and talking after the cabin chaperone goes to sleep. It’s like the world’s best sleepover.”

“Other parts are good too,” Mina said optimistically, because she was always optimistic.

“At least you got fun bunkmates,” Gracie said, knowing she was sulking but unable to help herself. Mina had an easier time talking to other people than Gracie did to begin with, and Mina’s cabin had three of the sweetest girls in the grade so she would be fine. They would have a good time together. Meanwhile, Gracie was stuck with Olivia and Jessica.

“You didn’t get the *best* people,” Mina acknowledged. “Olivia’s not bad exactly, she’s just—”

“Olivia,” Gracie finished with a sigh. Olivia wasn’t bad—she was intimidating and that was worse. Olivia was the coolest girl in seventh grade, possibly the coolest girl in the school, partly because she didn’t know it and wouldn’t care if she found out. Her parents owned Exceptional People, a comic book store, and Olivia knew all there was to know about graphic novels, superheroes (in books, on TV, and in movies), and manga. If that wasn’t cool enough, she was the fastest skater in school (that included the high school) and wore clothes that were the perfect combination of pure

fashion and pure Olivia. But what really made her intimidating was that she said whatever she felt like saying and never once worried what anyone thought.

The only thing Gracie had in common with Olivia was that they were both human beings.

“But she’s nice—or at least she’s not mean,” Mina said. “And Jessica’s not awful—she always helps me in tech class. She’s just kind of a loner.”

That was the truth. Jessica had never been hugely social—plus last spring there had been that incident with her hair—and then she had gotten super into computers, so good that Mr. Simmons, the tech teacher, often asked her to help out during their class and at lunch when kids came in to finish assignments. She was basically the aide of the computer lab and was there anytime she wasn’t in class. And while Mina was comfortable with Jessica’s blunt manner, Gracie avoided her—she had a way of explaining things that made Gracie feel dumb. Gracie was hoping to get the second bedroom to herself but it was unlikely—Olivia or Jessica would be quick to claim it.

Just then the bus pulled to a halt at the main lodge of Frost Peak Campground. The Catskill Mountains,

dappled in late-afternoon sunlight, framed the big wooden building where they would eat their meals.

All the kids stood up, grabbed their bags, and pushed toward the exit, eager to get outside and officially begin the campout. Mina stepped into the aisle, Gracie following close behind. As reluctant as she was to be separated from Mina, she was eager to get off the bus, which smelled of old ham and sour milk laced with a whiff of puke. Gracie had always had an extra-good sense of smell and at times like this it was a bit of a curse.

“Move it,” someone snapped from the back of the bus. Gracie did not need to turn to see who it was—everyone in the seventh grade knew Nicky Finley’s voice. That was what happened when you had been the longtime bully of pretty much everyone in the class.

“Jerk,” Gracie heard someone ahead of her hiss. Though not loudly enough to be heard all the way back to where Nicky was standing—no one wanted to tangle with someone that mean. Including Gracie and Mina, who hurried out.

A throng of students had gathered around their chaperones. The air out here was somehow crisper

than in town, even though it was the same wind that blew down from the peaks of the mountains. The sun was getting low in the sky, its glow a soft gold over the lodge and the big lawn behind. But the trees that surrounded them were already bathed in shadow. As Gracie gazed down the narrow path that led to the small wooden cabins where they would sleep, a crow cawed above them.

Gracie shivered, a chill going down her spine. She did *not* want to sleep in those dark woods in a cabin with people who made her uncomfortable.

“All right, folks, let’s listen up!” Ms. Becker called over the sound of more than one hundred students talking and laughing. Most teachers would have to shout at least five more times, but Ms. Becker, the new seventh-grade English teacher, was so loved that pretty much everyone quieted right down.

“First a quick rundown of the most important rules,” Ms. Becker began. “And remember, these are to keep everyone safe.”

Gracie heard someone mutter “yeah, right” behind her as Ms. Becker quickly covered the curfew and the

fact that no one could leave the cabins after lights out except with a teacher.

“The doors will be locked for your protection,” Ms. Becker said, “but if you need a midnight pit stop, just wake up your chaperone—remember, that’s what we’re here for.”

“To supervise us going to the bathroom?” Leo called out. Leo was always trying to be funny and generally failed. Still, he was basically harmless.

Most teachers would find his interruption annoying but Ms. Becker just laughed. The one thing Gracie had on her side was having Ms. Becker as chaperone.

“The entire campground is yours to explore, but always with a buddy and with one exception: We just got word that the cabin farthest from the lodge, Cobra, is being repaired, so that one’s off-limits,” Ms. Becker said. “That’s also going to change our cabin assignments, so I’m going to read off the updated groups. As soon as you hear your name, take your stuff to your cabin. Dinner’s in twenty minutes at the mess hall in the lodge, and I don’t know about you, but nothing’s going to keep me from those burgers and fries!”

Everyone cheered at that. Gracie did too—maybe with the new assignments, she'd be put with Mina!

“Sparrow Cabin is Mina, Nevaeh, Phoebe, and Hailey, supervised by the one and only Ms. Rivera,” Ms. Becker called. So much for that, Gracie thought, her shoulders slumping.

Mina gave Gracie a quick hug, hoisted up her pack, and hurried to join her cabinmates.

Gracie felt like she'd swallowed an icicle as she watched Mina leave. Ms. Becker continued calling out assignments and Gracie's classmates hurried off in clusters. As the group dwindled down, Gracie saw Olivia off to one side, brushing her hair back absently, her expression serious. She wore leggings and a sweatshirt but still managed to look put together and stylish. Gracie, in sweatpants that were a bit snug around her tummy and a fleece hoodie, suddenly felt like a toddler.

She glanced around and found Jessica at the edge of the crowd, scrolling through her phone. All the seventh graders had been permitted to bring phones—parents had insisted—but they were off-limits except at specifically designated times. Still, half the class

seemed to have their phones in their hands and the chaperones were apparently not going to make a thing of it. Gracie had heard a group of kids on the bus saying they'd snuck in laptops for gaming later, but Gracie had a feeling most of those would get confiscated. Only someone really crafty could conceal a laptop for a whole weekend.

“Okay, so the big change is to my group,” Ms. Becker said, and Gracie turned to look back at her, not liking the tone that had crept into her normally cheery voice. “Mountain Lion is going to be coed.”

Didn't that mean mixing boys and girls? Gracie looked at Ms. Becker, confused.

“With Cobra closed we have two boys without a place to sleep,” the teacher went on. “So the new Mountain Lion crew, with me supervising, will be Olivia, Gracie, Leo, and Nicky.”

Gracie drew in a breath as the icicle poked sharply into her chest. It was bad enough to have boys on the other side of the cabin wall, but *Nicky* was going to be one of them?

“Wait, what?” Olivia asked, putting a hand on her hip. “Isn't it against the rules for us to share

like that?” She sounded flustered, which was very un-*Olivia*-like.

“It’s fine,” Ms. Becker said in a flat, firm voice that Gracie had never heard before. She and *Olivia* looked at each other for a moment and it was then that Gracie realized even Ms. Becker, a teacher, and a new one at that, knew what every seventh grader had known for years:

Nicky Finley was bad news. And no one wanted to be anywhere near him.

**Snippet from the Snow Valley Police**

**Department Log**

**Missing Persons Case 3125**

**Time: 7:26 a.m.**

**Interview subject: Olivia Montgomery,  
12 years old, accompanied by stepfather,  
Jeremy Sutton  
Cabinmate of Nicholas Finley**

SERGEANT WILLIAMS:

*You and Nicholas were in the same cabin, correct?*

OLIVIA:

*Yes, that's why I'm here, I think. Or are you interviewing everyone?*

SERGEANT WILLIAMS:

*We are starting with those we know had contact with Nicholas, yes.*

OLIVIA:

*I didn't have contact with him.*

SERGEANT WILLIAMS:

*So you didn't speak with him at all yesterday?*

OLIVIA:

*No.*

SERGEANT WILLIAMS:

*But you saw him in the cabin.*

OLIVIA:

*I didn't look into the boys' side when I went in, so no, I never saw him.*

SERGEANT WILLIAMS:

*What about at dinner or the campfire—did you see him interacting with any of your classmates?*

OLIVIA:

*Nicky doesn't interact with people, he just—actually, forget it. The answer is no, I didn't see him interacting with anyone.*

SERGEANT WILLIAMS:

*Not even his friends?*

OLIVIA (SLIGHT LAUGH):

*Nicky doesn't have friends.*