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Saylor

We have about ninety minutes until lights out, and if my lovely roommate Laykin would hurry her little booty up and finish her shower, we can squeeze in at least one episode of *Love Island USA* before bed. It's not that I'm not having a blast at Cal Berkeley's summer basketball camp, but I still need my reality dating drama fix. I need it so bad, I screw up and open the app as I bounce on the edge of my bed. As soon as it loads—*boom!*—spoilers.

The Girls Sent Jessimae Packing!

THOUGHTS?!

"Oh my god," I gasp, a devious smile spreading across my face. Jessimae was nice and super pretty, but she was trying to break up my favorite couple and clearly no one wanted that. Adam and Zara belong together. I click through to the poll. It's already over fifty thousand votes, and 60 percent of the people agree with me. I glance up as someone runs by our open door, laughing. But it's still not my roommate. "Hurry up, Lay," I mutter as I switch over to my conversation with my bestie Bethany.

In the morning she's off to start her own summer -adventure at a culinary clinic for the youths in New York City. Even if she has to pack and get up early, there's no way she's not checking in to see what's popping in the villa. She's just as hooked as I am.

I haven't watched the episode yet,
but I saw spoilers. Did you watch it?
Was the dumping brutal??

Yes! I made Jacob watch it with me.
It was the messiest mess. So good.

I glance over at my tablet sitting on my pillow, and for half a second, I think about what would happen if my finger slipped and I pressed play and started without Laykin.

But forget the show.
Guess who I just saw.

I immediately do just that, forget all about the singles acting crazy in the villa as my mind flashes to the only other thing Bethany and I have been talking about since I came out to her and our other friends/besties three weeks ago. I start typing, but a picture pops up on my phone before I can hit send on the wild sequence of emojis and question marks. It's a picture of Bethany, her boyfriend Jake, and Jake's best friend, aka the love of my life, Heaven Goo-Campbell. Bethany and Jake look adorable as always; Jake sitting next to Bethany with his arm slung over her shoulder, both of them smiling. Too cute for words! But Heaven sitting beside them, a sarcastic scowl on her face? I have to swoon.

I can't explain what it is about her, and at the same time, everything about her is all I can think about. We have nothing in common—well, her mom is my dentist, but if it wasn't for Bethany and Jake bringing our friend groups together, we'd have no reason to even speak to each other. I'm downright bubbly. All smiles and hugs. My mom calls me one of her sunshine girls. I kind of live by the idea that "a stranger is just a friend you haven't met." It's the way I am, and I know it annoys some people, especially Heaven Goo-Campbell.

God, she's so cute. We're both biracial, both with Black dads, but her mom's Korean and my mom's white. We're close to the same height, but she's plus-size (whatever that means these days). She has small boobs but makes up for it with large thighs and a butt to match. Women all over the world pay for a butt like that. I have boobs a bit too big for my slender frame, but I'm coping with it as best I can. I live and breathe sports and any school function where I get to dance. Heaven's like this angry emo-goth storm cloud, all black-cat energy. She's the artsy quiet type who knows her way around any kind of canvas and only shows up in the stands for our games because Jake drags her. The kind of person who would rather chew off her own arm than have a conversation with anyone besides Jake and their other friend Axel, and I'm pretty sure I'm in love with her.

I let out a dreamy sigh as I let my gaze roam over her perfect face, her dark brown eyes with their naturally thick lashes and her full lips, and just barely stop myself from doing a truly deranged thing: taking a screenshot so I can crop Bethany and Jake out of the picture.

I'm away almost all summer. Basketball camp now, then soccer camp in New Hampshire, and then I meet up with my sisters for Joey-Ray's Junior Stunt Camp in Santa Clarita before we head back home to the west side of Los Angeles County. I'll have like a week and a half before I start my senior year at Culver City High School, and that means between then and now, I have to figure out how to get Heaven -Goo--Campbell out of my system.

Starting tomorrow.

Did she say anything about me? 🤔

No. I didn't bring you up.

She's still at Jake's. You want me to drive back over and confess your love for her? 🤔



I can just imagine how that would go over. Even if I could explain that seeing her rare smile helped me realize I had no interest in boys, at all, there's no way she'd go out with me. That grumpy/sunshine thing is cute in fics and on TV, but in real life, not so much. Heaven Goo-Campbell tolerates me for the sake of our bestie--in--law status and that's it. I have to get over her. I know it, but she's just so cute.

I'm texting Bethany again when Laykin comes flying through the door, still dripping, her robe wrapped around her. "You didn't have to rush that much?" I laugh as a few drops of water hit my knee.

"Yeah, I did! We're playing street ball tonight. Tanner just told me."

"Really?" I say, hopping up. The Cal camp street ball night is the thing of legends. A mixed-gender three-on-three scrimmage under the streetlights. It happens every session, but they never tell us what night it's gonna be. I rush over to my bag to get changed out of my pajamas just as my phone vibrates with a new text. A smile hits my face just thinking of whatever silly thing Bethany has replied with, but it fades when I unlock my phone and see the actual message our other bestie Glory has sent to me.

Hey Say.

I just want to make sure you saw this.

The smile is completely gone when I click on the link she sent. A link to my mom's BeeBop.