

The video's URL auto filled when I typed the "y" of YouTube into the address bar.

Maybe that should have been a red flag that I watched it too often, but at the time it just felt convenient. *Girls High School Volleyball: Mueller Prep vs. Lakesite West*. Mueller Prep had a fancy film crew for all of their sports, unlike any other school in our district, so by some stroke of serendipitous misfortune, I was able to rewatch the biggest mistake of my life any time I wanted.

I fastwarded the video to 1:34:28. Then I watched myself dive for a ball that wasn't mine and collide with my teammate Marissa.

The video cut away there. It didn't show Marissa's bloody nose or the coach frantically trying to get her to come to after a concussion. It didn't show my knee twisted in a way it was never meant to, and you couldn't hear my screaming that my little brother later referred to as "terror shrieks of death."

I dragged the video's progress bar back to the server before and watched it all again. And again. *Knock knock.*

"Jessica, could you get that?" I heard my dad say to my mom as I was pulled out of my trance of self hatred. I leaned over from where I sat on my bed to see the front door.

"Oh. Hello," My mom said as a figure loaded down with tote bags and Goodwill clothing let itself in.

"Aunt Aimee!" I slammed my laptop shut and threw it on my bed, practically running out of my bedroom. Aimee, still half inside the door and half out, held her arms out to me for a hug.

It was just after Thanksgiving, in that weird in-between season in the Midwest where some days it was 65 and sunny, and some days it snowed. Today it snowed, and my mom reached around us to pull in Aimee's bags, then physically pulled me inside so she could shut the door to keep the heat in. Only after all that did I let go of Aimee.

"Aims," my dad said when he walked in, "uh, to what do I owe the pleasure?"

Aimee was my dad's little sister, but you never would have guessed they were related. She was eight years his junior but seemed even younger with her carefree attitude and mischievous smile. When Aimee came around, in her flea market pants and hand-knit sweaters, she brought us exotic gifts accompanied by unbelievable stories. My dad spent his days (and many of his nights) working in a windowless office building. The contrast between their personalities confused me, and I often caught myself wishing I was her daughter instead of his.

"Oh, I was just in the area," she smiled. Her voice sounded a little more tired than usual, but I wrote it off as jetlag. Had she come from her place in New York, or straight from some adventure? "Thought I'd come see my favorite niece." She squeezed my shoulder and smiled at me like we had a secret no one knew about.

"Will you be staying here?" my dad asked.

"If you don't mind, I could always use a bed. Or a couch," she pointed to the living room with her glowing smile. "Anything soft is fine by me."

I helped Aimee carry her bags into the guest room. She had what looked like a case of oranges, but when she sat the box down and slid the lid off, it was packed full of books.

"So, where have you been?" I asked as I sat down on the bed. She was digging through the books, pulling a few to the top and rearranging. She pulled two out and set them on the bedside table: *The Best American Short Stories: 2009* and Raymond Carver's *Cathedral*.