

sent him. Was he worried about me? He's probably texted me a million times.

There's a knock at the door and Bentley rushes to answer it. It's Tyler, the boy next door. His mom is currently friends with our mom so he's on the good list. They settle in front of the TV like little child zombies and play a game that's sole purpose is to shoot and kill foreign soldiers.

Hardly seems appropriate, but whatever.

Tyler asks if I'm eighteen yet.

"No," I say.

"My brother just turned eighteen and he got a job at the movies and it's so cool." He says. He yells a profanity into his headset and then murders a dozen virtual soldiers. "He gets to see all the movies for free. You should work there, too."

"My boyfriend works there," I say. Ian's not really my boyfriend but what are technicalities when it comes to conversation with a ten-year-old? Tyler shoots a few more people and says, "I bet they're friends."

I grew up living next to Tyler and his brother

Marc. Marc is one of the biggest stoners in our school; of course he's friends with Ian. I get an incredible idea.

"Hey Tyler, if I give you a letter can you give it to your brother and tell him to give it to my boyfriend?"

He shrugs. "Yeah."

I rummage through my room, the kitchen and finally the study to find a notebook and a pen. In a two-page note I tell Ian everything that

happened with Mom, how she took away my phone and my computer. How much I like him and how I hope he will wait for me to find a way to see him. And then I ramble on about pointless things until my hand hurts from writing. I fold it and seal it inside of an envelope hoping to deter Marc from reading it.

I write IAN on both sides of it and give it to Tyler. He tosses it by his shoes at the front door and I cringe, hoping my heartfelt words make it from my hands to Tyler's to Marc's to Ian's. It is my only hope.

Mom comes home from work with a pizza.

Bentley and I dig in, eating a lot more than usual to make up for my sub-par sandwiches we had for lunch. Something is different about Mom

today. She's rigid, cold. When I had taken the pizza from her hands, I tried giving her a hug but she brushed it off. And now, one and a half slices of pizza later, she is eagerly listening to Bentley's stories and not even acknowledging me.

"Mom, are you okay?" I ask. It feels so foreign to talk to her now. Like she knows that dirty secret about me photo-texting and now we can't look at each other.

"Yes, I'm fine," she says. "But we need to talk

later."

"Later? How about now?" God, the last thing I want is to fret about this all night.

She squeezes Bentley's shoulder; he's shoving pepperonis into his mouth. "I guess it's better for everyone to hear it. Bayleigh, I've been thinking about how to handle your grounding this summer."

She says it like it's a business proposition. I think she's done a damn fine job of handling my grounding - I have no connection with the outside world thanks to her. What else does she want to do, put me behind bars?

"What do you mean?" I prepare myself for whatever she's about to say. I bet it sucks.

She looks at her cuticles. "I can't control you here. You're going to spend the summer with your grandparents. And you're still grounded while you're there."

Oh my freaking God I am not prepared for this. "When?"

Mom's lips are straight. She doesn't look me in the eye when she says it. "Tomorrow."

I freak. Grandma lives in a creepy, presumably haunted house in the middle of nowhere. Even if I had a cell phone I wouldn't get reception. Why oh why is she doing this to me? I don't say anything.

"Please don't try and fight this. I believe it's for your own good," She says. The pizza turns rancid in my stomach.