1. Summer 3

Zareen drives Quince in a golf cart the long way round to the Visitor Center, past Angels Rest, the animal cemetery filled with rainbow arches, glittering mirrors, and tinkling wind chimes. Her phone is on a dock and playing music. "How's Isa doing?"

"She's so much happier in The Fairway." Quince sounds happier too. "She even played tug-a-war with me the other day. She looks much better with some weight on her, and her bald spots are filling in nicely."

"Are you going to adopt her?"

"Me?" She shakes her head. "No, I don't think so. I did call my mother the other day and told her about her, but when she asked, *Is she the one?*, I couldn't say yes."

"That's too bad." Zee can't hold it in any longer. "I found a dog. She's the one. Wait until you meet her." She says this all in a rush.

"A dog? For who?" Quince sounds confused.

"For me, silly. To adopt. To take home."

Zareen felt immediately protective of the young stray that looked like a golden retriever with a black patch of fur shaped like a lightning bolt from eye to nose. Best Friends pulled her out of a high-kill shelter

on the day before she was to be euthanized. The shelter named her Henrietta, the female version of Harry as in Harry Potter. Of course, everyone ended up calling her *Harry* anyway.

The dog was trembling, but allowed Zareen to put her hand on her back. She wasn't asking to be petted, she didn't present her side for it, but she calmed at Zareen's touch. It was enough. Before Zee could shut it down, she imagined Harry sleeping on her bed at home.



"I thought you can't have animals at your place," Quince says.

The fantasy in her mind fractures. "I know, but she's special. I'm gonna ask Uncle Erik if she can sleep over. Then maybe he'll see that she's special too, and we can find a new place."

"Sleep over?"

"Yeah, volunteers can do that. Get the dogs out of the shelter for a night. Get them used to being around people. You could do that with Isa."

"At the hostel?" Quince laughs. "I sincerely doubt it. Plus, I'm not sure I could do that. I mean, take them out of the shelter only to take them back in? It sounds so cruel."

"No, it helps them get adopted. They're not so kennel stressed. It's a nice thing to do."