

Welcome to Camp Disaster

An Echo Shaw Mystery

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Chapter 4

Doing Injustice

Echo left the clothing lying on the cabin floor, Rayna's pants next to her wrinkled khaki shorts, the pickle juice stains marking them as twins. She hurried out of the cabin, triumph in her steps. Rayna was guilty. The pickle juice stain matched perfectly with the broken jar she and Neil had found last night, and with their running into Rayna afterward. It felt like solving one of her dad's riddles, all the pieces falling into place.

Now she just had to convince Steve.

She sprinted down the path to the cafeteria and burst through the double doors. Throughout the room, campers were scraping the last drops of syrup off their plates, while counselors collected garbage. The cooks had capped the large metal trays on the buffet, signaling the end of the meal. One of the cooks had begun to sweep around the buffet. Noise and laughter and movement filled the room.

After a moment, she spotted Steve and Neil leaning against the stage. She churned toward them like a Tasmanian devil.

"Rayna did it," she gasped.

Steve glanced at Neil. "I know you're upset –"

Echo shook her head. "No, wait, listen. I went back to our cabin and found a pair of her pants with a pickle juice stain on them." She waited for

understanding. Steve looked blank. “Well, Neil and I found a broken jar of pickles in the pantry last night.”

“Pickle juice?” he said.

“Yes.”

“Pickle juice.”

“Yes.”

“How do you even know what it is?”

“It’s green? It smells like pickles?”

He looked wary. “I hate to say it, Echo, but pickle juice isn’t evidence of a crime.”

“No, actually, it makes sense,” said Neil. “We were there around nine, right, and the broken jar looked pretty fresh. You said the break-in happened after eight-thirty?”

“And remember, Rayna caught us leaving the kitchen,” added Echo. “She wasn’t walking to the lodge – she’d just left it!”

“Maybe she came back for something,” said Neil.

“To clean up the pickle juice?”

“Hold on.” Steve closed his eyes for a moment and sighed deeply, as if trying to erase this entire conversation. “Let’s not jump to any conclusions here. The police will be here this morning, and they’ll be checking out the cabins and grounds while everyone is at class. I’ll talk to you after I know more.”

“Tell them about the pickle juice,” said Echo.

Steve glanced at the clock. “You should go to class.”

“Don’t worry about it,” said Neil quietly, just before they parted to find their campers. “It’ll work out.”

“Not if Steve doesn’t believe me,” she said darkly. Her dad always said that justice would eventually catch up to injustice, but Echo was still the one with the combination to the safe. In this game of rock-paper-scissors, she didn’t know if pickle trumped Post-It.

She and Rayna had Outdoor Games first, and the morning inched along. Rayna seemed especially cranky this morning. She didn’t speak to anyone except when asked a direct question. Every time, she flipped her red hair over her shoulder and glared before answering. Echo didn’t know if Rayna was tense because she’d seen Echo and Steve talking, or had simply forgotten her coffee.

In the middle of their second class, Steve stopped by and asked if he could “borrow” Rayna for a few minutes. Rayna’s brows furrowed, and she gave a loud huffy sigh before saying, “I guess so,” and following Steve out the door.

Echo’s heart leaped. This might be a good sign.

When Rayna didn’t come back and then didn’t show for lunch, she started feeling hopeful. This *must* be a good sign.

In the middle of their first afternoon class, Rayna finally returned. “Steve wants to see you,” she snapped.

Echo set down the paintbrush she’d been using to help Julie paint a horse. “Where?”

“His office. Where else?” Rayna stared at Echo like she’d just asked if the sun revolved around the earth.

“Keep painting,” said Echo to Julie, and got up. She whispered her excuse to the art teacher and hurried out of the building.

It took her less than five minutes to reach Steve’s office on the second floor of Kootenay Lodge. When she entered, Steve sat at his desk, a lime-

green backpack and a mess of paperwork dominating the surface. Neil sat across from Steve in a chair too small for his lanky frame. He had one foot on the chair, leg drawn up to his chest, and the other leg stretched out in front of him. He looked totally comfortable. Another good sign.

“Hi.” Echo drew up another chair.

“Thanks for coming.” Steve frowned at a piece of paper, scribbled something on it, then laid it on top of a precarious stack of file folders. “First, I want to apologize to both of you. I jumped to conclusions and accused you when I shouldn’t have.”

Neil nodded calmly, and Echo said, “No, it’s okay.”

“It’s not,” said Steve, “but thank you. Also, I wanted to let you know that you were right about Rayna.”

“I was?”

He nodded. “The police found the money in this” – he tapped the green backpack – “in her car. She admitted to stealing the money and even putting the combination to the safe in your mailbox, Echo.”

Her first thought was, *I knew it*. And her second was, *I’ll kill her*.

“Why’d she do it?” said Neil.

He shrugged. “Don’t know. She said it was for a new car, but who knows. Anyway, the good news is, the money was all accounted for, so there’s no loss to the camp.”

“That’s great,” said Echo. “So I guess I’m getting a new senior counselor then, right?”

“Yes. You’ll finish out the day together, but from now on you’ll be paired with Molly Garcia. Under the circumstances I thought it was better to separate you and Rayna.”

Echo sighed in relief. She wouldn't have to spend another minute around Rayna. No more snide remarks or stony silences. And then Steve's wording sunk in. "Wait, separate us? You mean she's being paired with someone else? As in she's staying at camp?"

"Again, under the circumstances, because she was honest about her mistake and all the money was recovered, I'm going to allow her to stay on at camp, and I'm not going to press charges. She'll be doing some serious chores around camp, though, so don't think she's getting off easy."

Echo stared at him. Camp chores? Was he kidding? Rayna was getting off incredibly easy. The girl had stolen three thousand dollars. It wasn't a "mistake," it was a crime. If it had been anyone else, Steve would have booted them immediately. Rayna was getting a slap on the wrist, and all because of who her father was. Because it would be bad publicity for Camp Kootenay if they fired one of their star counselors for stealing, and oh, by the way, don't expect that little annual donation from the mayor's office.

Because she had nothing else to say, Echo thanked Steve. When she and Neil were safely outside, she said, "I can't believe she's getting community service and that's it!"

Neil shrugged. "At least he knows we didn't do it."

"Yeah, but it's so political. You know the only reason he let her off is because her dad's the mayor."

"Again," he said. "At least we're not being sent home."

"True." Echo checked her watch and realized art class was almost over. "I better get going. See you in class or something."

"Yeah. Uh, what are you doing next Friday?"

"As in a week from now? I don't even know what my first class is on Monday."

“There’s a group of us going to Queen’s Bay. You should come.”

“Okay,” she said. “Maybe.”

“We’re making s’mores. It’ll be fun times.”

“I’ll think about it.”

He smiled. “See you later, then.”

She watched him for a moment, that confident stride as he set off toward the soccer field. Then she hurried down the path to the art building.

When she returned, the campers were lining up at the door, waiting to be dismissed. Rayna stood at the head of the line. Echo joined her, facing the line of campers. The girls waited eagerly, shifting their weight, playing with their hair. No one was permitted to leave any class until the teacher declared the area clean and tidy, and with the art room, it took a bit longer. Currently the teacher was counting scissors, making certain all pairs had been returned.

“So,” said Rayna quietly, without looking at her. “How was your little chat with Steve?”

Pasting a smile on her face, Echo spoke out of the corner of her mouth. “Great. How was yours? Are you excited about the community service?”

“Beyond thrilled.” Rayna’s voice was frigid; as she leaned closer, speaking in a near-whisper, Echo swore she saw frost coming out of the girl’s mouth. “I know what you did.”

“Don’t you mean what *you* did?”

“You arrogant little –” Rayna caught herself. “I hope you enjoy this moment, because you’re not going to enjoy anything else about camp.”

“Meaning?”

“You know that saying, ‘forgive and forget’? I don’t do either.” The art teacher waved a hand, indicating they could go. “Girls!” hollered Rayna right in Echo’s ear.

Echo waited until the last girl was out the door, then brought up the end of the line. Steve required them to escort the campers that way – one counselor in front, one behind. As she walked, she watched the back of Rayna’s head. Her copper hair swished back and forth as she booked it to their next class. The girls had to trot to keep up with her. No doubt – Rayna was pissed.

Well, whatever. Echo’s dad had been right. Justice had caught up to injustice, much more quickly than she’d hoped. Rayna got what she deserved. Actually, she got far more. She deserved to be shoved on a plane and carted off to a farm in Kansas to muck horse stalls and feed pigs, in Echo’s opinion. But she knew from experience that girls like Rayna never got what they deserved. They got what they wanted.

“I think I’m finally on the right track,” said Echo to Neil, as they drove down the highway to Queen’s Bay. She’d thought this Friday night would never come. The second week of camp had been just as insane as the first, and Steve still hadn’t found a replacement for her.

“With?”

“Dad’s riddle.”

Neil pushed a button to roll down the windows. The glass panes hummed as they slid out of sight. The buzz of tires on asphalt grew louder, and cool wind whipped into the car. He leaned one hand out the window, feeling the breeze. “Did you figure out the barking dog?”

“No, I’m over the dog thing. I asked him if someone had collected on the model’s life insurance, because I thought maybe one of her friends might be her husband or lover and he killed her for the money.”

“And?”

“Dad said her life insurance was paid out to her mother.” She’d finally gotten his response earlier today. “I don’t think her mother killed her.”

“So now?”

“Now I’m thinking she wasn’t really suicidal. Someone made it look like that to cover up the murder.”

“Ohh,” he drawled. “And the investigators somehow figured that out. Sure.”

She frowned. “Except what would make them realize she wasn’t suicidal?”

“Well, what are the usual signs of suicidal behavior?”

She ticked them off on her fingers. “Withdrawing from activities and friends. Change in sleeping habits. Change in appetite. Feeling hopeless and sad. Um, suicidal ideation. Giving away possessions.”

“You could be a counselor.”

“No, I just paid attention in health class.”

They fell silent. Echo leaned against the head rest and, like Neil, stuck one hand just outside the window. Cool air skimmed her palm and fingertips. The radio played at low volume, underneath the wind and tire noises, like an afterthought.

After a minute, Neil said, “Ask him if she’d given anything away recently.”

“Yeah, but the problem is, if he says no I’ll have to go through that whole list of symptoms and then all my questions are gone. I could just ask if she’d displayed any suicidal behaviors, though.”

“What if she did?”

“Then I’m back to square one, aren’t I?”

“Yeah, hmm.” He turned up the radio. “You should tell everyone the riddle tonight. Maybe they’ll come up with something.”

“Oh, right.” Caught up in puzzle-solving and the beautiful drive, she’d almost forgotten they had an actual destination. “Who all’s going to be there?”

Neil rattled off the names of about ten counselors, most of whom Echo recognized but didn’t personally know. “Sam’s bringing hot dogs, and Jennie’s got s’mores stuff, so we should be set. Provided one of us knows how to build a fire.”

“I can do that.”

“Seriously?” he said. “What, are you super outdoor girl?”

“Just had a dad who liked to camp. Wait, you don’t know how to build a fire?” Neil shook his head, sheepishly. “And you call yourself an Oregonian. I thought you all lived in the woods in log cabins out there.”

“Tents,” he corrected her, grinning.

They drove for another fifteen minutes. Then, abruptly, Neil pulled over onto a wide gravel shoulder with several cars lining it. He jerked to a stop behind a white truck.

Beyond the shoulder, shrubs and trees obscured what looked like a steep dropoff. Through the leaves, Kootenay Lake was visible.

“Do we have to jump?” said Echo as she got out of the car.

He laughed. “No, there’s a path, it’s just kind of hidden.”

Shouldering two camping chairs and a blanket, he led her to a little dirt path that started between two trees and followed the steep curve of the hillside. They picked their way down the trail, which emptied onto a flat, rocky beach. Lake water lapped gently at the shore, and beyond the lake, the ever-present mountains loomed, so tall they blocked out the late evening sun, as if shielding the sky itself.

They walked toward the only people on the beach – a group of ten counselors who had already set up camping chairs in a circle. They were talking and laughing. Two large coolers, tops down, were bursting with what looked like eighteen varieties of soda, and several fat grocery bags sat next to the coolers.

As they joined the circle, Echo realized that only half the group was actually chatting. The rest were alternately encouraging and cat-calling a guy in the center who was on his knees attempting to build a fire. He took a huge breath, then huffed at the pile of broken branches and twigs. Nothing caught fire. The group laughed.

“Neil, hey man,” said the guy, laughing himself. Echo recognized him as Eric, Neil’s senior counselor. The group chorused their hellos.

“Help me out here,” pleaded Eric. “Everyone’s counting on this fire and I’ve failed them.”

“I’m totally useless.” Neil dropped their chairs on the ground, and two people scooted apart to make room. As he began setting up, he nodded at Echo. “But she knows how to build a fire.”

“Seriously? Have at it.” Eric got up, dusting off his shorts. He shook her hand, and after a round of introductions by the other counselors, she knelt to assess the situation. Her dad had taught her to create a fire pit of sorts by clearing an area of debris and ringing it with rocks. Eric had simply

piled wood onto the beach. Kindling came first, followed by larger sticks and logs. He'd done that, but he'd also stuck kindling on top and been trying to light the whole mess at once.

“So?” said Eric from the comfort of his chair. “What did I do wrong?”

“Everything.” She grinned, and the group laughed.

She swept the woodpile to the side, then smoothed out a circle of sand, picking out as many stones as possible. After hemming in the circle with larger rocks, she dug through the woodpile for suitable kindling, which she formed into a neat pyramid shape. When the kindling caught fire, the group cheered.

She strategically added larger branches, and then, satisfied the fire would keep burning, dropped into her chair. Neil patted her on the back.

“Okay, I’m making you the first hot dog,” said Eric, reaching into one of the grocery bags. “You’ve earned it.”

They jammed hot dogs and marshmallows onto the ends of thin branches and charred them over the fire. As the sky deepened in color, they traded this week’s camp stories. One of the girls relayed a story about canoeing class that ended with two little girls pushing her out of the canoe. After awhile, it actually hurt to laugh.

As they had last week, Echo and Neil sat close, this time armrest-to-armrest with their shoulders almost touching. When it got colder, he spread a blanket over their bare legs. She gratefully drew it up to her chest with her left hand, leaving her right hand – the one close to Neil – on the armrest. After a minute, she felt his warm fingers touch the back of her hand under the blanket. She hesitated, then slid her hand into Neil’s.

She felt warm all over. Parties in Denver had never been like this. The few times she'd bothered to attend – or had actually been invited, which she always suspected was a memory lapse on the part of the person inviting her – the best part had always been the food. She'd stand in a corner or at the kitchen counter, hovering by the chips and salsa while the popular girls circulated the room for attention like bees searching for honey.

Once, she, Beth, and Carrie had shown up in their pajamas to Lindsay Berle's Halloween party. They hadn't even been invited, but by virtue of being neighbors with Lindsay, Beth heard about the party. Lindsay had stared at them for a minute, then gone back to flirting with one of the soccer players. So Echo, Carrie, and Beth sat on a couch in their pajamas making sarcastic comments to each other under their breath. After twenty minutes, bored out of their minds, they went back to Beth's house and ordered a pizza.

Actually, that was the most fun Echo had had at a party. But usually the people at her school made her want to scream. *Wake up, she wanted to tell them, in five years no one will care that everyone came to your parties, or that you dated the star soccer player or even that he was the star soccer player. And no one will shop at the same stores you do, or care what kind of car you drive, or that your parents set you to Italy for the summer, because we aren't celebrities, we're kids in the Denver suburbs and we live with our parents.*

Except for Carrie and Beth, this was the first time Echo had been around a group of people who seemed so real, so grounded. Nobody was drinking or puking inches from her feet (which had happened last year at a New Year's party her dad practically forced her to attend because he and Miranda had private plans and he felt guilty). Everyone seemed to be

having fun, and they joked a lot and talked about things that mattered. Echo practically fell out of her chair when Neil and Eric started debating a book on utilitarian philosophy that they'd apparently both read. And the girls, who were nothing like Rayna, asked questions about where she lived and what she did in Denver.

The sun went down, and the stars faded in, thousands of them, Swarovski crystals glittering against a cobalt gown. As the conversation lulled, Echo tossed another log on the fire and poked it with a branch, sending out sparks and smoke. When she sat down again, Neil took her hand and squeezed it. "Hey," he said. "You should tell them your dad's riddle."

"What's this?" said Eric.

"Nothing," she said quickly. "Just this tradition my dad and I have." Anyone at school would have made fun of her – she could almost hear them asking, "A riddle? What are you, the Joker?" But the group quieted and Eric told her to go on, so she explained her dad's habit of sending riddles when he traveled, then relayed the latest one. By now she could recite it word-for-word.

"Huh," said Eric. "Tricky."

"I thought the dog meant something at first," began Echo, "but then my dad –"

"Helloooo!" called a sharp voice. The beam of a flashlight swept across the group. "Where's the party?"

Echo's stomach plunged like an elevator.

Rayna sauntered toward the group, a blanket slung over one shoulder like a cape. "Sorry I'm late," she said.

"It wasn't the same without you," said one of the guys.

Rayna dropped into Eric's lap, and when he didn't push her off, Echo lost respect for him. "So what are we doing here?" She turned the flashlight on her chin, throwing her elegant features into grim shadow. "Telling ghost stories?"

"No, but Echo was giving us a riddle to solve. Tell it again so Rayna can hear it," said one of the girls.

Apparently just now realizing she was there, Rayna turned a cold stare on Echo and Neil. "Well, if it isn't my favorite junior counselor," she said, her tone perky enough that only Echo and Neil caught the sarcasm behind it. "Oh my God, are you guys holding hands under there?" She leaped off Eric's lap like a cat, ripped away the blanket they were sharing, and burst out laughing. "They're totally holding hands! That's so disgustingly cute." She dropped the blanket and re-perched herself on Eric's lap.

As Neil dropped her hand momentarily so he could rescue the blanket, Echo tried to control her urge to get up and strangle Rayna. "You didn't tell me she was coming," she whispered as Neil tucked the blanket around them.

"Didn't know," he whispered, taking her hand again. "Sorry."

"So what's this riddle?" said Rayna loudly, as Eric handed her a soda. "Oh, I don't drink that stuff." Not fazed, he switched it out for a bottled water.

Giving in, Echo recited the riddle again. "I was saying earlier that I thought the barking dog meant something, but I've ruled it out. And no one collected on the model's life insurance, which means her friends didn't kill her. So now I'm thinking she wasn't really suicidal."

"Yeah, I could totally see that," said one of the guys. "Someone shot her in the head and put the gun in her hand."

"I think we solved it," said a girl.

Echo shook her head. “Obviously someone shot her. The question is what tipped off the investigators.”

“Fingerprints on the gun?” another guy suggested.

“Don’t think so,” she said. “Dad’s riddles are more difficult than that.”

“You keep saying that,” said Neil, “but you haven’t actually asked him about fingerprints on the gun, have you? And you didn’t ask him if the dog barked when the murderer entered the house, either, right?”

“No, because I know what he’ll say, and then I’ll have wasted two of my questions.”

“Dude, a murderer isn’t going to leave fingerprints on the gun,” said Eric. “He’d use gloves.”

“Because that’s what they do on crime shows?” said another guy. “We all know crime shows are so accurate in portraying real life.”

“If the model wasn’t suicidal,” said a girl, “then why would the friends say she was if none of them killed her?”

“Maybe someone called them pretending to be her, saying she was going to kill herself,” said another girl.

“Someone could have planted evidence that she was suicidal.”

“Like what?”

“Antidepressants. Razors.”

“You think someone threw a bunch of razors around her kitchen? ‘Oh, look at that, next to the spaghetti.’”

“Dude, models don’t eat spaghetti. They eat lettuce.”

They kicked around ideas for awhile, then conceded defeat – there were too many theories, and without Echo’s dad to answer questions they couldn’t narrow them down. So they moved on to ghost stories, which they

told laughingly, with Rayna's flashlight against their faces. Echo stoked the fire again and they demolished the last of the s'mores.

Finally, someone realized it was past twelve-thirty a.m., and they would all be late for their one a.m. curfew if they didn't leave soon. Since they still had to collect their campers and endure a head count, they couldn't afford to be late.

They packed quickly, folding up their chairs and stuffing garbage into bags. As they were about to leave, Eric said, "Wait! We forgot the dare!"

"Oh, right," said one of the girls. "That would be tragic." She didn't sound sarcastic. Echo looked to Neil, confused, but he just shrugged.

"Everyone listen up," said Eric, and they gathered around him in a circle like campers waiting for instructions. "For those of you who are new to camp, last summer a group of us did Queen's Bay every Friday night. Tonight was our first time back, and we'll be here every Friday the rest of the summer, you're all invited back. And! Every Friday, to close out the evening, the group does a different dare. The whole group does it or no one does it, so I need everyone's participation. Are you all in?"

"Yeah!" cheered the group. Echo clapped warily. Did she have a choice?

"So who has an idea for tonight's dare?" Silence. "Okay, I do." They chuckled. "Tonight's dare is, we're all going to jump into the lake with our clothes on!"

"That's lame," said another guy. "We did that last year on the first Friday."

"Then it's the perfect, because it's the first Friday," said Eric. "Besides, we only have twenty minutes to get back to camp so let's go!"

Almost before Echo knew what was happening, they were all joining hands and racing down to the lake. They sloshed in, stumbling, and she held tight to Neil's hand. The water was freezing. People shrieked and splashed each other.

"Okay, let's go before Steve kills us!" called Eric, and they dashed onto dry land.

In the car, Neil cranked the heater, and Echo stripped off her sweatshirt so her t-shirt would dry faster. "That was fun," she said. "Fun and cold."

"Yeah, they're a good group." Neil squeezed her hand. "I'm glad you had fun."

Echo smiled. Neil looked at her, then leaned forward.

A long honk sounded, and Echo shrieked and jumped back. Laughing, Neil waved out the window. "Sorry. That was Eric." Taillights streamed down the highway.

He pulled a U-Turn – they were the last to leave – and they cruised toward camp. Echo kept her left hand as close to the gear shift as possible, a physical whisper to Neil to hold her hand again. But he kept both hands on the wheel and turned up the radio, so she looked out the window at scenery she couldn't see and felt awkward.

She kept thinking about that moment right before Eric had honked at them, and even though she knew if a guy wanted to kiss you he would find a way to do it, she still felt disappointed. She and Neil might have a first kiss, somewhere down the line, but they wouldn't have a first moment *before* the kiss again.

Back at camp, there was no time to talk or erase the awkwardness. They parked and ran to the cafeteria, falling into line with the other

counselors en route to collect kids. Echo met her campers at their designated table and noticed Rayna was absent. Typical.

On the way back to the cabin, the girls told Echo about the games they'd played at tonight's slumber party, and Julie explained a drawing she'd made in elaborate detail. It had a whole accompanying story, something about a flower that was friends with a bat and found treasure at the bottom of the ocean. Echo tried to pay attention, but her mind kept wandering back to Queen's Bay, and to Neil leaning toward her.

At the cabin, she reached into her right pocket for her cabin keys. Normally she wore them on a lanyard around her neck, but she'd slipped them into her pocket tonight, wanting to feel slightly more free of camp. Nothing. She checked her left pocket, but it too was empty.

"Just a second, girls," she said, and felt panic rising. She checked her pockets again. Then the front pocket of her still-damp sweatshirt, which she'd been carrying. Not there either.

Echo closed her eyes, trying to re-imagine every step she'd taken, hoping her mind would recall the picture of where she'd put her keys. At some point tonight, she'd decided that sitting on her keys was uncomfortable, and she'd taken them out of her pocket. She remembered sticking them under her camping chair. But then she clearly remembered collecting them when it was time to go, because as Neil had folded up her chair, he'd pointed to the keys and asked if they were hers. She'd picked them up and she could have sworn she'd put them back in her pocket.

No, wait. When Eric had announced they'd be running into the lake, Echo had taken her keys out of her pocket and dropped them on the ground, specifically so she wouldn't lose them in the water. And when she came back –

Had she picked them up? She'd thought so, but maybe, with all the adrenaline and the cold, she'd just run to Neil's car and forgotten about them. And if so, they were still on the beach.

Great. It was one a.m., she was freezing, and she was locked out of her cabin with a bunch of five-and-six-year-olds.

"Why aren't we going in?" said one of the girls.

"Um." Echo went for honesty. "I can't find my keys, actually."

"You can't find your keys?" The girl sounded just like a mother scolding a child.

"Are we, are we," gasped Julie, "are we stuck?"

"We're stuck!" squealed one of the girls.

"Heeeelp!" they shrieked. "We're stuck! It's cold and bears are going to eat us and we're all gonna die!"

"It's okay, quiet down," said Echo, but the girls continued to yell.

"Hey, whoa, hello there!" Steve's voice boomed in the darkness, and Echo sighed in relief. He had a master key.

He swept a flashlight over the group, and the girls quieted. "Are you girls just really excited for head count tonight?"

"We're locked out!" screamed the girls.

"I can't find my keys," said Echo.

"Doesn't Rayna have a set? Where is Rayna?"

"I don't know. She wasn't in the cafeteria."

Steve frowned. "Well, let's get this over with so you can get to bed. I'll deal with Rayna."

The head count took less than thirty seconds. Steve let them into the cabin, and Echo gratefully stripped off her damp clothes and pulled on warm, dry pajamas.

She had a little trouble getting the girls into bed, but once settled, they drifted off fairly quickly.

Echo was just falling asleep when the sound of a key in the lock startled her into full consciousness. The familiar silhouette of Rayna stepped into the cabin. “Where have you been?” said Echo.

“None of your business,” said Rayna. “You dropped these on the beach.” She flung something at Echo, which skimmed by her face and landed on the floor.

Echo reached down and picked up her lanyard and keys. “Did you take these?”

“Obviously I took them, because otherwise I wouldn’t have had them to give back. You dropped them, didn’t you hear me just say that?”

Echo looped the lanyard around one of the posts that connected their bunks. She turned over and closed her eyes, but she didn’t sleep. She had a feeling this was only the beginning of Rayna’s revenge.