**The Night Drive to Danville**

*Jamie is in the car (for stage purposes she’s miming). She’s notably stressed. We hear the sound of a phone call being made. There’s a click and an answering machine message rings out.*

Jamie: Ugh, babe.

Kate: (*Voiceover)* Hello, this is Shannon Márquez of Butler Books. I’m so sorry I missed your call. If this is an urgent matter, please feel free to text me at this number or send an email to kchadwick@butlerbooks.com. Or leave a message at the tone, and I will respond to it once I am able. Thank you!

*Jamie braces herself for the coming beep and the message she needs to leave.*

Jamie: Hey (*beat*) Listen, I am so sorry. I just- I had to go and I promise I’ll explain everything to you as soon as I can. Or at the latest when I’m back. Things are just… complicated right now. Well, they’re always complicated when it comes to Theo. I’ve talked about Theo before I don’t know if you remember. High school stuff is all it is really. The past. But seriously I promise when I’m back I’ll explain everything. I know this situation isn’t great but getting a call from Loretta like that… it’s an emergency and I just had to- need to take care of it. She hasn’t called me in a little while, but I know her, and this is not the norm. She sounded so broken over the phone, could barely get a word out. And Conway… he was too quiet even for Conway (*strained chuckle*). You remember them, right? The owners of that art shop and studio back home. They’ve come up a few times and always send a Christmas card. Wish me happy birthday. I don’t talk about them too much so I wouldn’t hold it against you if this is all confusing. But just imagine your aunt calling you late and crying. Wouldn’t you go? I know you would. You could try and tell me otherwise, but I know you Kate. (*beat*) You know high school is so weird. It feels like another lifetime but sort of like it was just last week. Theo and I were friends for so long and then- well Theo stopped being Theo. But you know all that and the whole disaster with prom. Ironically, I was never really upset about that even though I was the one who got ditched. I was always ready to let it go. (*shaky*) I didn’t realize how badly I fucked up Theo. And before you preach to me, I know, I know, it’s not my fault and I can’t take the blame for someone else’s terrible choices. But I really could have done better. I guess I just- I feel like I owe it to her. To do something right this time. God, I sound like a fucking crazy person. It’s the middle of the night and I’m driving back to my backwards hometown because the art store lady called me. I mean this is absurd! It’s absurd right? I wish you had answered the phone. High school is such a fucking mess. Everyone always says, “don’t peak in high school.” We sure flew high on the social scene but… we didn’t peak. Theo got a shit deal from the start. Not that my life was great. It’s no competition and certainly not one I’d want to win. I just wish… whoever is dealing the cards up there would ease up a bit. She was always so good. So good. I never told you, but she called a little while back. I didn’t pick up. She left this long voicemail. Kind of like what I’m doing know (*laughs*). I still haven’t listened to it.

*Jamie takes a deep breath trying to calm her emotions. They’re bubbling over.*

Jamie: Conway used to always say how similar we were. At the time we loved it. Anyway, it was sweet. I guess in a tragic way now. I thought she was dead around that time.

*Her emotions are now visibly taking hold of her. Voice shaking.*

Jamie: Fuck, I really wished you had answered. Told me to turn around. I mean what am I doing? Getting sucked back into the chaos is what I’m doing. Just- call me back when you can. I doubt I’ll be making a stop along the way so I can’t really text. (*pauses briefly*) I am on the 64 to Danville. What. The. Fuck. (*sighs*) Just call me back please. I love you so much honey. I’ll talk to you soon. Bye.

*She hangs up. She lets out a big huff and wipes her face. THE END.*