

## **Counting Cars**

Written by

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INT. ZOEY'S ROOM - DAY

ZOEY is sitting by her window, counting the cars that pass by. Outside is a typical street and the NEIGHBOR is washing her muddy car. *Linger on the neighbor*. EM lounges on ZOEY's bed, reading a magazine. EM makes sounds of excitement/shock as she flips through the pages.

EM  
(Putting down the magazine)  
Are you ignoring me?

ZOEY doesn't respond. EM gets up and tugs on her sleeve.

ZOEY  
Leave me alone.

EM  
Stop ignoring me.

ZOEY  
Stop bothering me.

They glare at each other.

EM  
I'm bored.

ZOEY  
What do you want me to do? I'm busy.

EM  
You're always busy.  
(mocking her)  
"Oh I can't go shopping, I've got church!"... What are you even doing?

ZOEY  
...Counting cars.

Pause. ZOEY sighs and turns around to face EM.

ZOEY  
What did you want?

EM  
To talk to you!

ZOEY  
About what?

EM  
I dunno... Oh! Aria broke up with Skip.

ZOEY  
So?

EM  
Didn't you like him?

ZOEY  
That was a long time ago.

EM  
Two weeks.

ZOEY  
No!

EM  
Then why did you insist on spending so much time with them?

ZOEY  
I didn't!

EM  
Yeah, you're right. You would just *happen* to bump into them every single day.

Pause.

ZOEY  
I don't like Skip. I- I never did. I just said I liked him to get you off my back.

ZOEY turns back to the window; EM perks up.

EM  
So... who've you had a crush on?

ZOEY  
This isn't important.

EM

I disagree. (Beat) Are you really counting cars?

ZOEY

(Agitated)

Yes. Why are you questioning me so much?

EM

Because you only count cars after it rains.

ZOEY

What?

EM

You only "count cars" if things are muddy.

ZOEY

So?

EM

How many cars have passed by?

(Beat)

ZOEY

Seventeen.

They stare at each other. EM raises her eyebrows.

ZOEY

I lost count.

EM

Have you ever had a crush on someone?

ZOEY looks back at the window.

ZOEY

Go away.

EM

I can't. You won't let me.

Through her reflection in the window, ZOEY watches EM change into NEIGHBOR.

NEIGHBOR

Why are you so stubborn?

ZOEY  
What do you want me to say?!

NEIGHBOR  
Did you seek out Skip and Aria?

ZOEY  
I don't want to talk about them!

NEIGHBOR  
Why? Are you scared?

ZOEY  
Why would I be scared?

NEIGHBOR  
(Shrugs) So, did you seek out Skip and Aria?

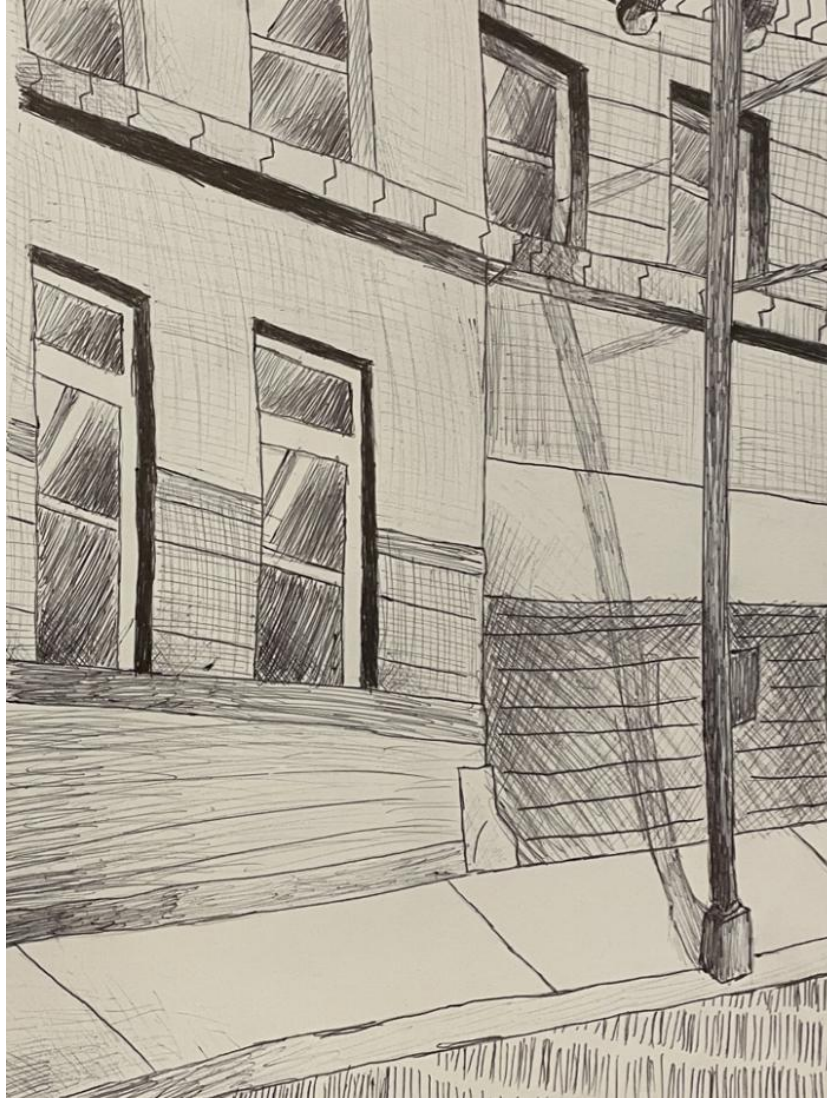
ZOEY  
...yes.

NEIGHBOR  
Why?

ZOEY's face reddens. She closes her eyes.

ZOEY  
I- (Beat.) I.. *might've*... liked her?

ZOEY looks back at the bed, EM, purpose fulfilled, is gone. ZOEY places her forehead against the window again.



Art by Will Bland