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DIG DEEP

SHANNA SILVA

CHAPTER 1

AWAKE

My eyes flutter open. Bright lights blind me. There's throbbing in my head. Everything looks fuzzy.

Monitors beep and hum. Voices surround me. It all sounds like I'm underwater.

“He's awake.” My sister, Li, leans in close. I can smell her gum. Her brow wrinkles with concern.

“Li, get the doctor,” our dad says.

Her footsteps retreat.

“Dad,” I croak. My throat feels like sandpaper.

“Feng?” He grabs my hand. “We’ve been so worried. How do you feel?”

“Tired. Sore. Where am I?”

My dad wipes his eyes. They’re red and puffy. “You’re in the hospital. There was an accident.”

His words don’t make sense to me.

The doctor enters with Li before my dad can say more.

“Hi, Feng. I’m Dr. Gold.” She shines a light in my eyes. Then she asks me to follow her finger. I take deep breaths as she listens to my lungs. My ribs are sore. It hurts to breathe.

Dr. Gold picks up her tablet. “You’re pretty banged up. But you’ll be okay.” She flashes a tight smile. “Mr. Wang, can we speak outside?”

After they leave, Li sits down. “You look terrible.”

“So do you.” I smile. But it hurts. “What happened?”

“You don’t remember?” she asks.

The details are hazy. I can recall my bike, the woods, and tumbling to the ground. But nothing fits together. “I’m not sure.”

“You had a major bike wreck. Somehow, you lost control and dove down a hill. You landed on your face!”

Shock washes over me. I sort of remember an ambulance ride. Someone cut my sweatpants open. My leg was bent in an odd way.

I struggle to lift my head and scan my body. An IV tube snakes to a vein in my bruised hand. Wires peek out of my hospital gown. They plug into a machine. My leg is encased in a cast.

“Ouch!” I wince and lie back. Everything hurts. Suddenly, my eyes droop. I want to talk more. But I’m so tired. Sleep overtakes me.

Later, I wake up. Li is dozing in the corner.

My dad is there too. Worry lines his face.

“Feng, can you hear me?”

“Yeah,” I sputter. “I’m just groggy.”

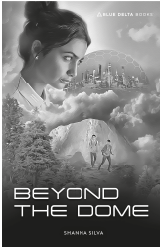
He runs a hand through his hair. “There’s someone who wants to say hi.”

“Is it Mom?” Maybe he called her.

Dad’s girlfriend, Bai, steps into view. She smiles and waves.

I scowl when I see her.

FICTION



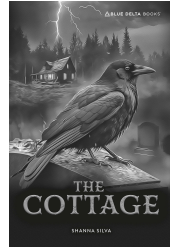
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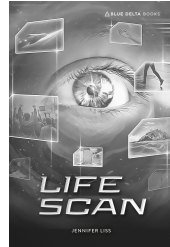
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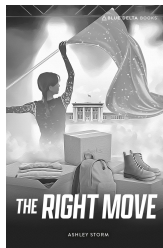
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SPORTS

DIG DEEP

Playing soccer is the only time Feng is in control. On the field, he can forget the rest of the world. When an injury puts Feng on the sidelines, he is forced to face the problems in his life head-on. Will he realize that he doesn't have to do it all alone?



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