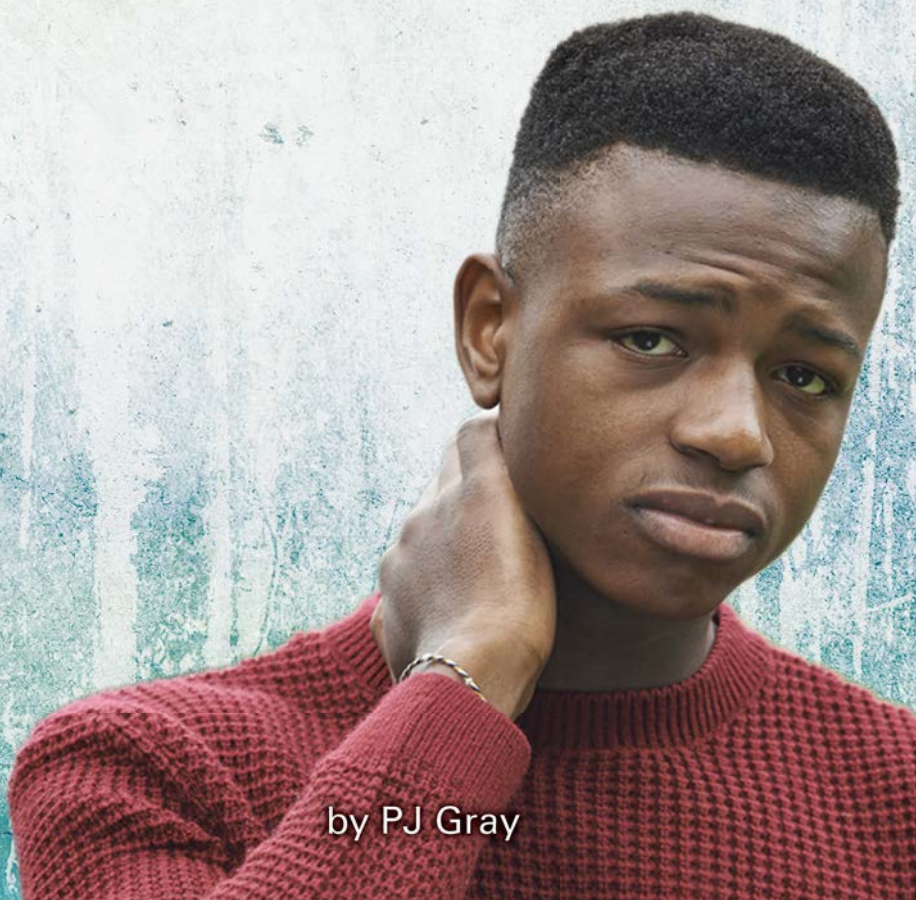


ENGAGE [2] Science

BAD DATE



by PJ Gray




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Stacy pulls out her phone.
She sends a text to Lena.
Lena is her best friend.

“How was your date? **Tell me!**”





“Where are you?” Lena texts back.

“Off from work in five,” Stacy texts.

“Okay. Meet me **next door.**”


Stacy sells clothes at a shop.

Next door is a burger place.

Lena is in a booth.

She waits for Stacy.

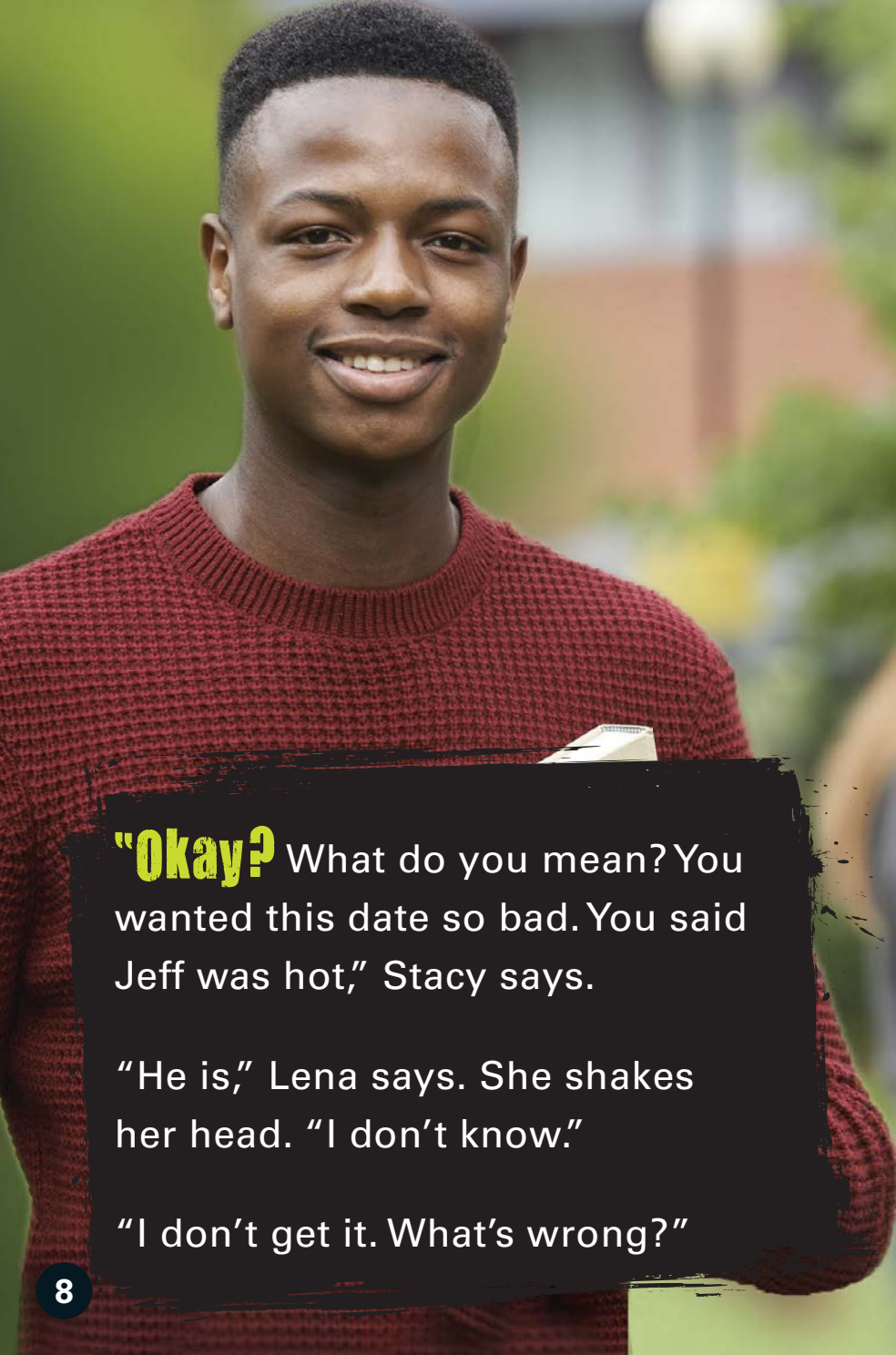




Work is done.
Stacy finds Lena.

“How was your date?” Stacy asks. **“I can’t wait!”**


Lena sits there.
She looks at her drink.
“It was okay,” Lena says.




“Okay?” What do you mean? You wanted this date so bad. You said Jeff was hot,” Stacy says.

“He is,” Lena says. She shakes her head. “I don’t know.”

“I don’t get it. What’s wrong?”



Lena had liked Jeff a long time.
They went to the same school.
They had the same friends.
He was good-looking.
He liked her too. She knew it.

A close-up photograph of a person's hands on a steering wheel of a red car. The person is wearing a red, textured sweater. The background is blurred, suggesting motion. A large black rectangular box with a rough, hand-painted edge is overlaid on the upper half of the image, containing white text.

Lena shrugs. Then she tells Stacy about the date.

“It was Saturday night. Jeff picked me up at home. We went out to eat. Then to a movie.

“I got into his car. That’s when things went **downhill.**”

