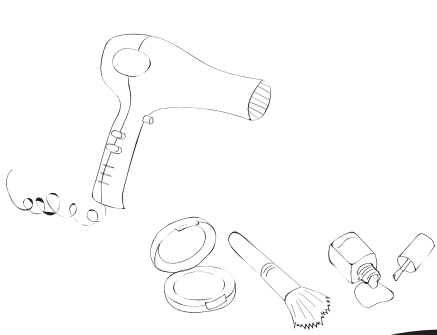


# Standing by Emma

Jeff Gattesfeld





MEET THE



Emma

**Age:** 11

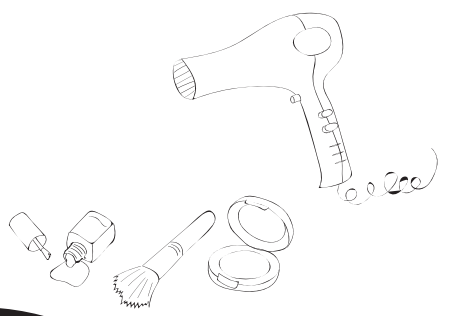
**Favorite Old TV Show:** *Gilmore Girls*

**Special Skill:** best second baseman on the school softball team

**Future Goal:** to be a movie costume designer

**Best Quality:** intelligence

# CHARACTERS



Danya

**Age:** 12 (wishes she was 16)

**Special Skill:** can text faster than any kid in school

**Secret Wish:** to spend more time with her mom

**Future Goal:** to be a movie makeup artist

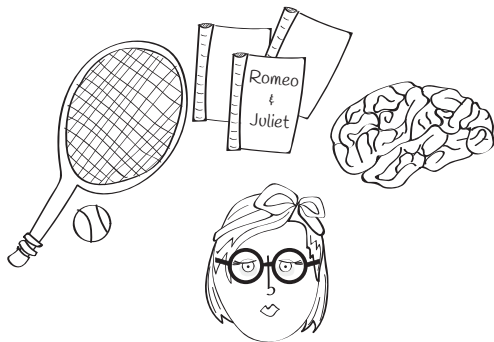
**Best Quality:** loyalty

# 1

# LOVE NOTES

Danya and Emma were best friends. They had been for a long time. The two had a lot in common. But they were also very different.

Emma was small and fit. Her short blonde hair framed her face. She loved sports and reading books. At school, she was the class brain.



Danya was tall and thin. Her red hair grew down past her shoulders. She loved her cell phone and only read if she had to. Many kids thought she was the class clown.



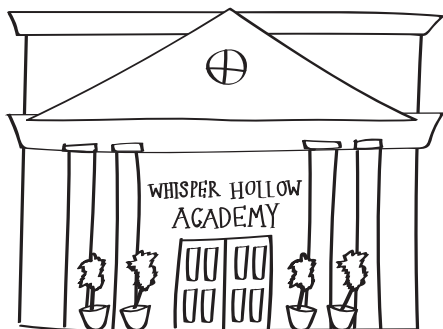
The girls were BFFs—best friends forever. It was like they could see into each other’s minds and hearts. Everyone knew it too. All the kids in sixth grade called them “Demma.” They were *that* close.

Danya liked boys. Boys liked her back. She’d even had a boyfriend once. But she



knew crushes didn't last. Emma would always be there for her.

Both girls lived too far from school to walk. It was okay though. Danya's mom worked days. She drove them in the morning. Emma's mom was on the night shift. After school, she picked the girls up.

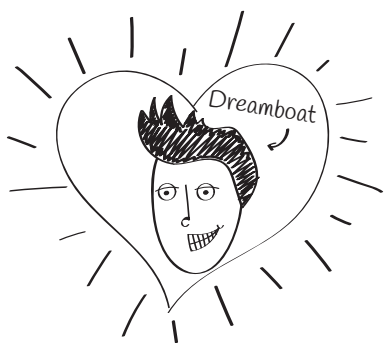


One fall Monday, Emma's mom waited outside the school in her car. Danya and Emma came right out when the bell rang. They were excited. A boy named Anton had just given Emma a note. Emma had never



had a boyfriend. But she liked Anton. He was tall and funny.

Danya knew how much Emma liked Anton. She kept telling her to talk to him. It had not happened yet though.



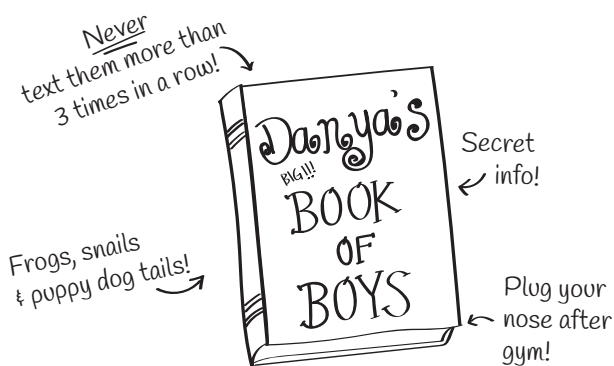
Anton had never talked to Emma before either. That all changed with the note. It was a big deal that he passed it to her. Emma was so nervous. She did not want to read it.

“What if it says he hates me?” she asked Danya.

“Boys ignore girls they don’t like. They



act like the girl isn't even there," Danya told her. She felt like she knew boys well. "Trust me. If he hated you, you'd know. There would be no note."



Emma still looked worried. "What if he saw me looking at him. Maybe he wants me to stop. That could be what the note says."

"Or maybe he's inviting you to the winter dance."

"No way! That's not for three months."

"How do you know unless you read it?"

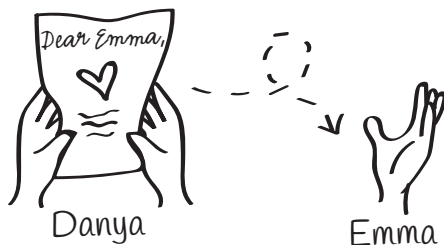
"I don't want to get hurt," Emma sighed.





They got into the car.

“Look, Emma. Give the note to me. I’ll read it,” Danya declared. “If it’s good, then you can read it yourself.”



“No!” Emma said. “What if it’s something bad? You’ll know what it says, and I won’t.”

“That’s crazy!” Danya yelled.

“No shouting!” Emma’s mom said. Her name was Rosie. That was what Danya called her.

Rosie started the car and pulled away from the curb. “What are you guys yelling about anyway?”





“We’re *talking* . . . about a book,” Danya fibbed.

“Yeah, that’s right,” Emma agreed. She was grinning now. “Danya says she’s going to read a book. For fun. Then she’s going to tell me all about it.”

All three of them laughed. Rosie knew how much Danya disliked reading.

“Write me a ten-page book report,” Rosie said. “And make it good. I am a very hard grader.” They all laughed again.

Rosie turned the car onto a busy road.



The girls stared out their windows as cars rushed by.

Five minutes later, Danya felt something pushed into her hand. She looked. It was the note.

She turned to Emma. “You want me to read it? Really?”

Emma nodded.

Danya opened the note. What she read made her eyes get big.



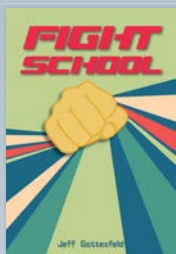
# red rhino books®



9781638891895



9781638892205



9781638891901



9781638892014



9781638892212



9781638891918



9781680213119



9781638890430



9781622509812



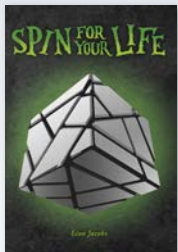
9781638890461



9781638892199



9781638891277



9781638890485



9781638891260



9781680213102



9781638892038

# Standing by Emma

Danya and I were BFFs.  
But everything changed  
after the crash.



red rhino  
books®

  
SADDLEBACK  
EDUCATIONAL PUBLISHING  
www.sdlback.com

LEXILE HL180L

ISBN: 978-1-68021-898-5

