

From the exact second her alarm went off that Wednesday, Becca knew the day was going to be special. After all, it isn't every day you meet the person whose soul matches your own perfectly.

She had had a fairly uneventful morning (her breakfast consisted of a plain bagel and a bowl of strawberries), over the course of which her older brother, Dominic, had driven her to school.

"Thanks, Dot!" she yelled on her way into the building, adjusting the straps of her backpack on her shoulders. He drove off with a wave. Becca walked up to her locker and shoved her bag inside it, grabbing her pencil case and chemistry notes before slamming it shut with a deep breath.

"You seem kinda stressed," Theo noted.

Funny, Becca hadn't noticed them walk over to her. She turned to face her friend. "You think?" She raised an eyebrow.

"Yeah. What's going on, Becca? I thought you liked chemistry."

"I love chemistry. I just don't like tests. Or sleepless nights spent pacing and studying things I'll never remember. Or pre-game panic."

"Oh, right!" they exclaimed, tugging on one of the many blue streaks in their hair. "The big game's today! Maybe you'll even get to meet your soulmate there," they grinned.

*Ah, Theo. Your ability for comic relief will never cease to amaze me. You're such a great friend.*

But enough about that! She had bigger things to think about, like the game at six-fifty, the test, and her soulmate.

*That's right!* Becca thought, nervously checking the timer on her wrist.

*11:50:09*

She still had almost twelve whole hours before her fate would force her together with someone against her own will. Twelve hours of freedom. Twelve hours to think.

*Deep breaths, Becca. Tutto bene. All good.*

"Becca! Hi!"

A loud, confident voice shook her out of her thoughts. Gwen. That meant that Lucas and Henry (Gwen's only-just-barely-younger brother) were here, too. Lukie and the Tea-Rexes, as Theo called the twins, referring to their English heritage.

Clearly, Lucas had gotten up late, or he and Becca would have crossed paths that morning on her way to Dominic's car. (Her family had taken him in after the summer.)

Becca made her way over to Gwen, who looked almost out of breath. "Hey," she laughed, noticing the blonde girl's excited smile. "What's up?"

"Well, you have a hockey game tonight, don't you?"

Becca nodded, unsure as to where the other girl was going with her statement-slash-question. "Yeah, why?"

"So, do you think that you could explain the basic rules and the position you play for Lucas and Henry and me? We're thinking of tagging along with James and Theo later, so we can see you in action."

*That would be nice*, she thought. She had a big game up ahead, it'd be nice to have some supporters along with her. "Uh, sure. I'll explain it to you guys during lunch, I guess. We do have that chemistry test right before, though."

"Right, and the new unit in history! Thanks for the reminder, Becca! I really appreciate it!"

*Speaking of reminders, thanks yourself, Gwen.* Becca checked her timer again quickly, furrowing her brow.

11:47:26

"Oh, shoot, we have history today?" A head of curly, dark-brown hair appeared just over her left shoulder, scaring her half to death.

"James, don't do that! You creep!" She smacked his arm jokingly and he faked being hurt before cracking a small smile.

"Jeez, I'm sorry! But what are we doing for history?" He frowned now, leaning on his locker with his hands in his pockets. "I hope it's a cool unit."

"Do I look like the kind of person who pays attention in class, Jamie? Be honest."

“You look like a nice jock-nerd mix, so yes,” he observed quietly, turning around to take out his history textbook. Spot-on analogy, as always.

Becca and Gwen followed his lead, hearing the warning bell chiming loudly in the hallway.

“Bye, guys!” Theo yelled on their way to math class. Poor them, that was a horrible subject to start the day with.

The three other teens waved back as one before walking into their history classroom together. As it turns out, they’d be learning about Sir Wilfrid Laurier for a while.

Also, Becca had forgotten her textbook in her locker, which she didn’t actually remember locking. But at least she didn’t need it. That was some consolation.

She emerged from her first two periods feeling like walking trash, just like any other teenager would. “Just a quarter after nine left,” she whispered to herself. “Just have to hold out till after the game. I’ll be fine. Just fine.” She slouched as if the weight of the world rested atop her young shoulders, shuffling quickly over to greet Lucas.

“How’s it going, Becca?”

“Not so good,” she rushed out, hurriedly swapping out her binder for her lunch. She made sure to lock up this time, too.

“You don’t say,” the young Scotsman replied nonchalantly, letting out a yawn at his adopted sister’s dilemma.

She shot him a glare. “This is serious, dude! I’ve spent my entire life feeling as free as the birds in the sky outside. And now that’s about to be taken from me by someone I don’t even know for sure I’ll get along with. On top of that, I have a game later, and I don’t think I’m ready.”

“What team’re you facing?” His mint-green eyes met with her earth-toned ones, a sure sign that he was listening intently.

Becca sucked in a breath. “Brantford.” She spat the word venomously, almost as if she was cussing.

Lucas, being from the UK, had no idea what that meant for her, but Becca's tone conveyed meaning well enough. "Well, whoever that is, I bet they're not half as strong as you. Now, come on, you should eat something."

Becca was calmer now. Lucas was always good at giving advice, and he had incredible people skills. "*Love to write a book about him someday,*" James had told her once.

"You're right, I should. Have to preserve my energy for later. Hey, Lucas?" she asked, holding out her arm to stop him from walking away.

"Hm?"

"What was it like?" *Deep, even breaths, Becca. Deep, even breaths.*

"What was what like?"

"When you found out that Henry was your soulmate, back in December. What was that like for the both of you?" The brunette hadn't been paying attention when it'd happened, she'd been too busy playing Becca the Vampire Slayer.

"Well, it was special. See, I knew I loved him when I first met him, but I could never be sure if he was my soulmate or not, so I left it alone, as one does when he's stupid and paranoid. Then, we had to face those vampires. When he was about to rush in for the kill, I knew just how much he meant to me. I couldn't let him run into battle, only to die. Especially since I've known his sister for a long time. I knew how bad it would feel, to lose a loved one you'd only just met. Then, it sort of slipped out, and, well, here we are."

"That's wholesome," she smiled softly. "But it's different for everybody, right?"

"Exactly. So don't take my word for it, since I don't think there are any vampires around here, but you might not have to deal with problems like those when you meet your soulmate." They both laughed at the thought, walking side-by-side into the cafeteria and taking a seat across from Gwen and Henry.

"Alright, you three, pay attention," Becca addressed the Tea-Rexes. "You're going to learn about hockey today, and you're gonna like it. James, give me your phone."

"Why me?" he asked with a frown. "You're the one explaining it in the first place."

“Because your phone has Wi-Fi and you haven’t been using it in class like I have. Hand it over, please.”

He huffed jokingly at Becca, dropping his phone into her hand with a satisfying *plop*. “You’re lucky I love you.”

“Platonically?” She raised her eyebrows.

“Isn’t it always?” he replied swiftly, digging into last night’s leftover cod.

“You’re right, it is. Anyway, the objective in hockey is to get the puck—” she showed Lucas, Henry and Gwen a highlight “—into the opposing team’s net using these sticks. Also, I don’t know how much you know about hockey, so forgive me if I treat you three like children.”

“What positions are there?” Henry asked, playing along. “And yeah, we’re all sports-stupid.”

Becca grinned, counting on her fingers. “There’s a lot of positions, but it boils down to three categories, so count yourself lucky. James’ll be running commentary for you all, so you can know what’s going on later.” The boy in question shot her a look and she stuck out her tongue. “We have goalies, who shield the nets, one per team. Then there are the forwards, three of them, who score the goals. Last but not least, there’s defense. They, well, *defend* the net from the forwards. It gets more complicated, but those are the basics. Cool?”

“Definitely.”

Gwen and Henry nodded in agreement with Lucas’s statement.

“Awesome! Are you guys excited for later, then?” Becca asked, picking nervously at the contents of her lunch as she debated her own question silently.

Henry nodded. “I mean, I’ve never liked sports, but you actually made it sound enjoyable for once.”

“Um, thank you?”

He grinned playfully, obviously messing with her.

*At least he makes Lucas happy*, Becca sighed internally.

Hours later, within the final moments of the game, Becca skated her hardest towards the net. With mere seconds to go in the third and final period and a tally of three to two for Kitchener, there was only one thing left to do. Score.

She dodged the opposing defensemen carefully, her heart beating to the rhythm of a secret drum. Her team couldn't afford another penalty. As she made her way to affront Brantford's goalie, she caught a flash of movement from the corner of her eye.

Summer was open! She winked at Becca, signaling for a feint.

Becca pretended to send her teammate the puck, using the moment of confusion to her advantage to score the final goal, just as the buzzer went off, followed by the ref's whistle and the roar of the crowd.

The two girls crushed each other in a hug, the rest of their team joining in. Becca looked around them, shedding her gloves and dropping them onto the ice. She breathed heavily, meeting Gwen's eyes as the blonde girl watched her from the stands.

"Go, Becca!" she hollered. She flashed her a thumbs-up, and Becca copied the movement.

As she did so, she noticed that her timer had run down. Her eyes widened when she realized why. *Gwen? I got lucky!*

"C'mon, Becca, we should get going. We're all tired," Summer called out.

"Agreed." She picked up her gloves, only one thing on her mind.

When she left the change room, her bag over her shoulder, an amazing sight greeted her. James, Theo, Lucas and Henry rushed up to her to congratulate her on the team's victory. The four of them engulfed her in a hug.

Next came her oldest brother and his girlfriend, with their kind words of encouragement. The latter two moved on quickly afterwards to cheer for Summer, who gave her sister a powerful high-five.

Finally, the one Becca had been waiting for. Gwen rushed into Becca's arms, crushing her in a warm and powerful embrace. "You killed it out there! That was amazing, my starlight!"

Becca stammered upon registering the last two words before returning the favour. “Thanks to you, Gwen! I mean, you’re practically my good luck charm at this point.”

Gwen laughed at her cute remark before pulling the taller girl down so they were at eye level. She then brought their lips together for a tender yet passionate kiss.

Becca’s brain short-circuited as fireworks went off in her heart. She kissed back gently, pulling away afterwards. “So,” she breathed, looking at the beautiful angel in front of her. “You and me forever, right?”

“Until the end of the world,” Gwen promised, pulling her in yet again, a troublesome grin tracing the upward curve of her lips.