

STUDY BREAK

MAGGIE KAPLAN

Illustrated by
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Bella had ninety pages left to read. She'd heard horror stories about how difficult the "Biochem" final was, and she wasn't taking any chances. It was her most important final and she simply could not afford to get a bad grade.

Just as her eyelids were beginning to flutter closed for the second time in the last twenty minutes, her roommate shoved the door open with a bang loud enough to snap Bella fully awake. Katie was always a bit loud and reckless, but Bella had come to enjoy her friend's rough edges. Katie sauntered up behind Bella and bent to peer over her shoulder at the textbook splayed out on her lap.

"Is that in English?" she asked, pulling a disgusted look.

"Of course it is," Bella answered matter of factly, "It's my Biochemistry book."



"Could've fooled me," Katie huffed as she flopped down onto her bed and laid silently for a moment.

She had moved in first at the beginning of the year, giving her the opportunity to pick which bunk she wanted. Bella hadn't minded then, and she didn't mind now, she was just hoping the peace and quiet would last so she could finish studying. It didn't.

"I'm bored," Katie whined, "Let's go on an adventure!"

"It's six in the morning," Bella said flatly, trying to concentrate.

"Right, and I'm back from Wine Night, and your exam isn't 'til tomorrow, so let's do something exciting!" she insisted.

"Katie, I can't take a break right now," Bella groaned.



Instead of responding, Katie lunged from her bed, slamming Bella's textbook closed. Bella glared at her, "This test is too important! Fun has to take a back seat for the next couple of days," Bella sighed, rubbing her sleep-deprived eyes.

"No test is important enough to make you look as miserable as you do right now," Katie replied, watching her friend with concern, "When was the last time you slept, Bell?"

"Uh, it's been almost 48 hours, I think," Bella responded through a yawn.

"So then you won't mind staying up just a little longer then!"

Katie flashed an excited grin at her roommate and grabbed her by the wrist. They were out the door and headed for the parking lot in a matter of seconds. They hopped in Katie's car and sped off down the road.

A photograph of two young women walking away from the camera towards a sunset over a lake. The woman on the left is wearing a dark jacket and has long dark hair. The woman on the right is wearing a teal jacket and has long dark hair. The sky is filled with soft, colorful clouds in shades of pink, orange, and purple. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a bright glow. The water in the lake is calm and reflects the colors of the sky.

"Where are we going?" Bella asked, only slightly nervous about her wild friend's plan.

"Out to the lake," she answered briefly.

"I'm not swimming at this hour," Bella said, warning the other girl, "I don't even have a bathing suit!"

"You won't need one," Katie quipped with a wink, "We won't be swimming."

When they reached the lake, the girls clambered out of the car, at which point Katie took Bella by the wrist once again, and dragged her to the top of a hill overlooking the blue expanse of water.

"What are we doing up here?" Bella asked groggily.

"Just wait," Katie said.

"But Kat-" Bella started.

"Wait for it!" her roommate interrupted.

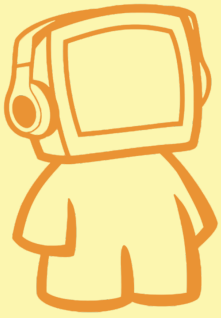
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The very tip of the sun had begun to peek over the horizon. It radiated pale yellow streaks across the surface of the water that glowed as they rippled with the light breeze. The tip of that bright ball of light had turned its corner of the sky a warm orange color that faded through various shades of pink and yellow, too, as the light spread farther across the sky, illuminating every wispy cloud it touched.

A smile spread over Bella's face. She was no longer tormented by the stress from her final exam, or worrying over how long it would take her to read another chapter. She was watching Mother Nature wake the world and loving every minute of it. Bella thought it was, quite possibly, one of the most beautiful things she had ever seen.





GOOD TO GO M E D I A

