

ONE

how freaky green eyes got her name

Later, I would think of it as crossing over. Maybe it was what my mother was doing, too. *Crossing over.* From a known territory into an unknown. From a place where people know you to a place where people only think they know you.

Like there's an actual river you swim across, an unpredictable, treacherous river, and if you make it to the farther shore, you're a different person than the one you were when you started out.

It began with me a year ago this past July. A few weeks after my fourteenth birthday. When Freaky

Green Eyes came into my heart.

The stuff between my parents hadn't started yet. Well, probably it had but I wasn't picking up signals. Wasn't wanting to.

I hooked up with this older guy at a party, and it was a bad episode or would've been except for Freaky. Where Freaky emerged from, I don't know. I've never told anyone about this, not even Twyla, who's my closest friend and what you'd call a calming influence on me. I never told Mom, though this was a time when we were still pretty close and I guess I should have told her, looking back on it.

The party was at some rich people's place on Puget Sound north of the city. My family (except for my older brother, Todd, who hadn't come with us) were house guests at the home of neighbors of these people, also very rich with a spectacular house on the Sound. The crowd was entirely made up of people I didn't know, mostly college age. A girl from my school in Seattle, Forrester Academy, invited me along with a bunch of her friends, and when we

showed up it was painfully obvious that I was like the youngest individual in the room. With my milky, freckled skin and carrot-red hair pulled back in a ponytail that sort of exploded out in frizz and static electricity halfway down my back, and a scared look, plus the skinny pink tube top and flip-flops, and no makeup, definitely I gave signals of being the youngest.

The girls I'd come with dumped me in record time.

It was a mile at least back to the house my family was staying in, and along a busy shore road with no sidewalks. Still, I wanted to turn and run out of that party the first few seconds I stepped into that scene.

Franky Pierson, climbing to the high board. Poised to dive, then freezing.

Except it was no diving event. I might have been invisible; nobody so much as glanced at me.

The music was so loud, I almost couldn't hear it. Hard heavy-metal rock? Right away my heart began beating fast with this music, the way my heart tends to do in any nerved-up situation. My dad liked to say