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## thank you

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## thank you

*Kathryn Willoughby*

It is a Thursday night and I feel as if the depression is cracking me open

I seep, drip, leak through every purposeful step in the grass

I wonder if the moon feels as alone as I do, sits in the sky and wishes for whispers of starlight

There is a lump in my throat the size of the sun and I don't want to swallow it anymore

It needs to be sobbed, needs to burst through my eyes, needs to find its way to the lonely sky

Jessica finds me waiting outside for her and ushers me in for a hug

Her smile brightens like the sun too far gone. "Let's go for a walk"

The sob escapes later: fake grass, soccer field turf, navy-black sky. The moon is our only light and we are starry shadows. I'm wearing a dress but I say I want to do a cartwheel and she screeches "Go for it!" So I do. My dress falls around my head and I don't stop to wonder if my underwear is weird or not. I am too busy flying. She laughs, a sound that could make real grass grow beneath her if she wanted.

We lay down on the grass and talk. I am struck by how easy our friendship is. How easily she can piece together my unfinished sentences to find my meaning. How easily the world can go from dark to light. *The sun also rises*, Hemingway wrote. Earnestly, I believe him. And with that, I sob into my strongest friend's shoulder. Her arms envelop me like vines with grapes just about to ripen. I cry messily. My glasses are lopsided. I ask, "Will you pray with me?" She nods. Her smile tells me I matter, and earnestly I believe her.

We sit in the exact center of the field, center of the world, and seek out the God of the universe. Hands held, hearts open, Jessica's voice warms the moonlight. She prays our way through the night, her hands anchoring mine, ready to shield me from whatever dark thing might creep on me through this fake grass.

It does, and she does, and when we open our eyes, we find that mine are dry.



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