

# Small Town

I've always kept quiet and put my head down to work. I only ask questions if I need to. I work better observing and staying quiet. That helps me a lot in middle school. I live in a small town in Florida that's not even by the beach. The funny thing in small towns is everyone knows everybody, and word spreads around quickly. A small town feels like a barrier where you can hear everything inside but nothing out, it's like we're trapped in a little container but no one would notice. I lived here my whole life but people at school think I'm new. Just because I choose not to be "popular" I find it easier to just sit in the back of the class and observe. I'm Aly Reed, a 5th grade reporter. No one knows that but that doesn't mean I'm not. I don't really have any friends but I prefer it that way. Stories are more important and colleges aren't gonna look into it if you have any friends. All my mom wants is for me to get into a good college even though I'm in fifth grade that's all she talks about. The truth is I just don't have any friends. I would kill to be in Rebecca's friend group! They have so many friendship

bracelets, you can barely see their arms! As I was dreaming of having my tan arms covered in friendship bracelets laughing with Rebecca, Emma, and Maddie, my alarm started going off. It was already time for school! I put on my favorite pair of pants and a white tee shirt and of course my yellow glasses. I barely missed the bus when I rushed to school. I went to my locker to get my science book when I saw Rebecca and her followers talking to Lexi. Except they weren't really being nice. "Nice shirt," teased Rebecca, "where did you get it? The dumpster?". Everyone near Rebecca and laughed it was a fake laugh though. Rebecca then poured her water all along Lexi's shirt. "I think it looks much better," Rebecca said, "Don't you think, Emma?" Emma paused a little bit before saying, "It's such an improvement!". How could Emma say that to her own sister! I'm pretty sure that I'm the only one that knows that they are related. After the group left I went to Lexi. Lexi is a year younger than me. "Here, take this!" I say as I give her my spare shirt. "Thank you," she mutters then runs off. I sat with Lexi on the bus once she was pretty nice. As class ends Emma and Rebecca run off together. I notice that Rebecca left her backpack on her desk. I think of this as my chance to be their friend. Then the

thought of them bullying Lexi crosses my mind but the friendship bracelets block it out. I grab the bag and hurry after them. I finally get to Rebecca's house. Wow I knew she was rich but I didn't think this rich! I try to open the door but it's locked. I hear talking through the window so I go there. I saw Emma and Rebecca talking. Emma sounds upset. "That's how you're rich," Emma yells, "Your dad is getting paid to dump toxic waste into our river?!". "I'm telling the cops!" Emma said. "Oh no, you're not," Rebecca's dad yells. I reached for my phone but I stepped on a twig. I ran for my life and dropped her backpack but my glasses fell off. There was no time for me to grab them so I ran all the way home out of breath. When I got home my knees were scraped and I had twigs from the bush I was hiding in my hair. "Where were you and what were you doing?," my mom screamed, " you're lucky that you're not late for dinner!" I sat down and ate my "chicken noodle soup" that we've had for four months. After dinner I did my homework like always and went to bed. The next day I went to school and noticed that Emma was missing. "I thought what happened yesterday was a dream!" I thought. Then I reached for my glasses and sure enough they were rose gold. I tried to ignore the

whole entire day but it was stuck in my mind like glue. I think I failed my spelling test because of it! Just as the final bell rang I felt someone grab my shoulder and pull me into the janitors closet. It was Lexi! "I know what happened to Emma wasn't an accident!" Lexi whispered. "How about this you tell me what you know and I'll tell you what I know?" I asked. "Ok but it's not safe here, they have spy's on us!" She replied. "What? Who are they?" I questioned. "Shhh!" Lexi said as she covered my mouth. Just then we heard voices walking past us. The deeper voice said this, "We looked everywhere for the description you gave us Mark we can't find her anywhere!". The voice on the phone grew more angry and loud, "That little punk overheard us! Do you know how much trouble I could be in?" Shivers went down my spine. Rebecca's dad's name was Mark. Had they been talking about me? I told Lexi everything I know and same with her. We came up with the conclusion that Emma was at Rebecca's house. We were careful to make sure we weren't followed when we went to her mansion. We went through their back door where it led to their basement, where Emma was. Emma wanted to talk but I shushed her. We needed to be quiet. When we were leaving the house Rebecca's dad followed us. I

sucker punched him while Lexi kicked his ankles. We ran through the forest to get home and called the police and yelled "**It happened near here where Emma White was kidnapped!**".