

Found

Margaret Peterson Haddix

Jonah stopped laughing and sat up. He peered up and down the street—fortunately, nobody was around to see them. He whacked Chip on the arm.

“So,” he said. “Do you have a crush on my sister?”

Chip shrugged, which might mean, “Yes,” or “Would I tell you if I did?” or “I haven’t decided yet.” Jonah wasn’t sure he wanted to know anyway. He and Chip weren’t really good friends yet, but Chip having a crush on Katherine could make everything very weird.

Jonah tried to remember if he’d seen the mail truck gliding through the neighborhood. Maybe when he and Chip were concentrating on shooting hoops? But he obediently

jumped up and went over to the mailbox, pulling out a small stack of letters and ads. He carried the mail up to Katherine.

After what he and Chip had been talking about, it was a little hard to look her in the eye. When he thought about the name Katherine, he still pictured her as she’d been a few years ago, with pudgy cheeks and those goofy-looking pigtailed. She’d slimmed down and shot up and started worrying about clothes. Her hair had gotten thicker, and turned more of a golden color. Right now she was even wearing makeup.

Weird, weird, weird.

“Hey, Jo-no-brain, can’t you read?” Katherine asked, as annoying as ever. “This one’s for you.”

She pulled a white envelope off the top of the stack of mail and shoved it back into his hands. It did indeed say

Jonah Skidmore on the address label, but it wasn’t the type of mail he usually got. Usually if he got mail, it was just postcards or brochures reminding him about school events or basketball leagues or Boy Scout camp-outs. This envelope looked very formal and official, like an important notice.

“Who’s it from?” Katherine asked.

“It doesn’t say.” That was strange too. He flipped the envelope over and ripped open the flap. He pulled out one thin sheet of paper.

“Let me see,” Katherine said, jostling against him and knocking the letter out of his hand.

The letter fluttered slowly down toward the threshold of the door, but Jonah had already read every single word on the page.

There were only six:

YOU ARE ONE OF THE MISSING.