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The Summer of Firsts and Lasts

By Terra Elan McVoy



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Now in paperback, a sweet and sexy novel about summer romance and sisterly bonds, from the author of *Pure* and *After the Kiss*.

Three sisters. One life-changing summer.

Calla loves summer because summer means Duncan. They've been best friends for years, but Calla has never worked up the nerve to tell him how she really feels. This summer, the summer before college, is Calla's last chance.

Violet isn't much of a rule breaker in real life. But this isn't real life, this is summer, and Violet is determined to make the most of it. Besides, a little sneaking out never hurt anyone. And sneaking out with James is 100% worth the risk...even though James is completely off-limits.

Daisy has never been the sister that boys notice, but when sparks fly with Joel at the first bonfire of summer, it seems so easy and right. So why is being his girlfriend so complicated?



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Editorial Review

Review

"[A] well-told story that celebrates the powerful love between sisters....[McVoy's] writing brings the summer camp setting to life." "--PW"

"This is a poignant portrayal of sisterhood, summer love, responsibility, betrayal, and forgiveness that fully captures the intensity and emotion of the fleeting days at summer camp." "-Booklist"

"An unflinchingly honest look at sisterhood, first love, and how one amazing summer can change everything. I completely lost myself in this book." -Lauren Barnholdt, author of "Two Way Street"

"Fans of Ann Brashares's "Sisterhood of the Traveling Pants" series (Delacorte) or Jodi Lynn Anderson's "Peaches" books (HarperCollins) may enjoy McVoy's novel because of the focus on the girls' close relationship and the character-centered story lines."

--"SLJ "

"Will most certainly transport readers back to the their own magical summer camp memories of first crushes, giggling friendships, and midnight ghost stories told around crackling bonfires." --"VOYA"

About the Author

Terra Elan McVoy is the oldest of three sisters. She lives and works in the same Atlanta neighborhood where her first novels, *Pure*, *After the Kiss*, and *Being Friends with Boys* are set. To learn more, visit TerraElan.com.

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Monday

DAISY

The way Calla's marching back and forth up there with her white shorts and her important-person headset, you'd think they really did name this camp after her, instead of the other way around. She was bouncy and excited when Violet and I arrived for check-in yesterday, running over to grab us in a hug before we were hardly out of the car, but this morning I can tell she's nervous. Tenser than normal, anyway. It could just be from her job working in the camp director's office, and the stress of the first gathering. Or it could mean something's already happened with Duncan.

I bend as subtly as I can to see where he's sitting with the kids in Muir cabin. He isn't watching Calla, but that doesn't say much. Duncan's seen her get uppity. He's even seen her in those starchy white shorts.

I can't look around too much though, because I know Violet's probably watching me, wanting to check if I'm okay. But I'm fine. I know Flannery from my cabin last year, and there's this girl Manon who I already really like too. The best way I can reassure my older sisters about how no-sweat I am, really, is to not even look around. Last summer, sure, I needed Calla and Violet both to help me figure out where everything was, to teach me the warm-up dances ahead of time so I wouldn't look like an idiot, to tell me to avoid the sausage links and other vital information like that. But this summer I'm going to be fine. Calla's got her job, anyway, and now this is Violet's last summer as a camper. It's better with me out of their hair.

I need to be discreet this morning for another reason, though. I still don't see that guy Joel from last night, and I'd feel better if I knew where he was sitting. But I don't want anyone (especially not him) to catch me searching, either. I'd noticed him staring at me during more games after dinner, so it wasn't so weird when he came up to congratulate me and my partner for beating them in the three-legged race. But going on to find out what cabin and concentration I was in, and where did I live and what music I was into? Let's just say last year I was on the sidelines, listening to Violet scoff at the boys who wanted to know that stuff about her.

"Finally. God," someone murmurs behind me, as the Whitman cabin comes in wearing the same color T-shirts and their hair all in pigtails. They're singing the "Whitman Yawp" (a tradition that is half football fight song, half jazz hands) and doing their *Wizard of Oz* skip into the auditorium, coordinated and cheerful as always.

"You've got to be kidding me," Manon mutters, while on my other side Jordan, a girl whose name I remember only because she has it embroidered on her pillowcase, goes, "We should've thought to do that together, coming in."

Manon rolls her eyes. Our placements are supposed to be done randomly right before we arrive, in order to encourage us to get to know girls from different hometowns, grades, and backgrounds. Though most of us end up in varying cabins every summer, somehow Whitman always houses girls who've either been in it before, or else are willing to conform to Whitman legacy. There are lots of traditions here at Camp Callanwolde—most of them emphasizing care for the environment, ourselves, and our community—but even in all this transcendentalist equality, Whitman's the sorority. You'd think Deena would have done away with it when she took over as director a couple of years ago, because it's pretty exclusionary to everyone else, but watching them come in, up there onstage, she has a small, almost proud little smile on her face.

"I'd love to get into Whitman and really sabotage those girls," Manon leans forward and hisses.

"Yeah, or just cream them in the Olympics," Jordan whispers back.

I nod my agreement, even though they aren't really talking to me.

Deena finally steps up to get our attention, and the entire formerly-squawking-with-girl-and-boy-chatter hall drops to a total silence. Deena presses an appreciative smile between her lips and says, "Good morning, campers, and welcome!" We all erupt into cheering, officially starting up our camp session.

First are warm-ups, which are basically these stupid dances to a bunch of different songs. Then there are announcements. Among other things, Deena explains the selection process of choosing a former camper to work for a summer in the main office, and Calla comes up on the stage. As Calla waves to everyone and thanks Deena, Duncan lets out this huge hoot of approval. I clap for her too, but both Violet and I know better than to make too much of a scene. Still, I'm glad Duncan made a big deal out of it.

Next the counselors are introduced. When Duncan stands up, his whole cabin jumps up and "Whoomp, whoomp, whoomps" around him while he smiles under his long honey curls. My eyes shoot to Calla, but since she's sitting now, I can't really see more than the side of her face and the same "You're amazing" smile she's been giving him since they met four summers ago.

Deena moves from the counselors to the concentration instructors, and I zone out a little, checking people out around me without moving my head too much. My favorite instructor from last year, Coach Haddock, got a new job at some college and had to be there this summer, so I'm pretty disappointed. I'd liked running

before, but I hadn't really known I could do it until I met her. I wanted to work with her again. I wanted to try to get really good. As soon as Calla got here for training before first session, she'd e-mailed and said the new coach was really nice, but I want someone who is going to give me a challenge.

Just as Deena says, "Now I'm happy to introduce to you our new track instructor . . . ," I see Joel, only four rows in front of me, unmistakable with that white-blond hair.

". . . Sterling McKensie, who coaches track at Oakwood High, just a few towns over from us."

My eyes are yanked back to the stage.

I feel the blood rush up to my face, and then rush again because I'm embarrassed that I'm blushing. I don't know if it's because of Joel's proximity (how did I miss him before?) or the new coach or both, but around me the whole room is tittering with girls, so it's more likely the latter. Coach Haddock was strong, lean, and yes, a little leathery; her hair was always in a braid and she never did makeup or anything. But the new coach up there with Deena? Calla somehow failed to mention that he is so good-looking it makes your eyes hurt.

"McKensie? She means McDreamy," says my cabinmate Olivia. She's going to be in my track concentration too. The same pink that's in my cheeks is revved up in hers.

"You can pretend you're chasing him on the track, then," I whisper back, trying to sound like I think she's immature for even noticing, the way Violet would.

"I know. Thank god I picked it, right?" Her face is actually hopeful about this. I don't say anything back. The new coach takes the mic and talks about how excited he is to be here. It is, I have to be honest, pretty incredible how gorgeous he is.

He sits back down and we meet the other instructors, then Deena goes over changes and upgrades around camp, reminders about safety, blah, blah. Next it's time for keynote—a twenty-minute devotional on the topic we're supposed to focus on each day. Today it's "Beginnings," and the presenter is the new Languages instructor, Helene. She takes a minute settling both the mic and her glasses in the right position, but then she talks about what it was like when her family moved to America from France when she was thirteen, how no one understood what she was saying, and everyone thought her clothes (very stylish in France) were funny. She hated the grocery store, she tells us, and missed the outdoor markets. Movies made no sense for years.

"I still consider myself French," she says, voice lilting on different syllables. But now the United States is home to her too, and she doesn't even mind the grocery store.

It takes us a minute to realize she has finished, but finally we're clapping. I think there was supposed to be some kind of point there, with the grocery store mention, but she hasn't really said more than, *If you stay somewhere long enough, you'll just get used to it eventually*. And maybe that's comforting to some of the new campers, who aren't positive about being marooned here, cell phone- and internet-less for three whole weeks—kids whose parents never heard of Callanwolde before, let alone spent every summer here like our mom did. Maybe last year even I would've benefited from it, if I hadn't had my sisters, but now it pretty much seems like covered territory.

To finish things up, we go over all the camp rules and say the pledge. (*I vow to be mindful and respectful of myself and others at all times. I promise to uphold the standards and traditions of Camp Callanwolde.*) We all stand up, and each cabin gets to scream a Spirit Splurge cheer to the whole room. Then all that's left is the

whole neck-craning, head-turning, body-shifting shuffle to find our instructors, who are standing in different places around the auditorium. I don't mean to check, but I watch the Water Sports instructor until Joel shows up beside him. It was weirdly a relief last night to hear he wasn't in Drama, or Vis Arts.

Around me a couple of my cabinmates who are already "best friends" hug each other good-bye, squealing, "See ya at lunch!" It's annoying how girls who were strangers a day ago pair up before we've even been here twenty-four hours, but then again, I am pretty glad I have Flannery around. I tell her I hope her concentration is good. She wiggles her eyes over at Coach McKensie and says, "Yours will be." We don't hug or anything, but she waves happily, and then I take a deep breath and head over to meet my companions for the next three weeks.

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Users Review

From reader reviews:

David Tillery:

The book *The Summer of Firsts and Lasts* make one feel enjoy for your spare time. You need to use to make your capable a lot more increase. Book can to be your best friend when you getting stress or having big problem with your subject. If you can make reading a book *The Summer of Firsts and Lasts* to be your habit, you can get a lot more advantages, like add your personal capable, increase your knowledge about a number of or all subjects. You may know everything if you like available and read a reserve *The Summer of Firsts and Lasts*. Kinds of book are a lot of. It means that, science guide or encyclopedia or some others. So , how do you think about this book?

Leslie Heidelberg:

The ability that you get from *The Summer of Firsts and Lasts* may be the more deep you looking the information that hide into the words the more you get considering reading it. It doesn't mean that this book is hard to recognise but *The Summer of Firsts and Lasts* giving you excitement feeling of reading. The article writer conveys their point in particular way that can be understood by means of anyone who read the idea because the author of this guide is well-known enough. This particular book also makes your personal vocabulary increase well. It is therefore easy to understand then can go to you, both in printed or e-book style are available. We suggest you for having this kind of *The Summer of Firsts and Lasts* instantly.

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Playing with family in a park, coming to see the coastal world or hanging out with close friends is thing that usually you might have done when you have spare time, subsequently why you don't try thing that really opposite from that. Just one activity that make you not experiencing tired but still relaxing, trilling like on roller coaster you are ride on and with addition of knowledge. Even you love *The Summer of Firsts and Lasts*, you may enjoy both. It is very good combination right, you still wish to miss it? What kind of hangout type is it? Oh occur its mind hangout fellas. What? Still don't obtain it, oh come on its named reading friends.

Stephen Phelps:

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