



HOLLY SMALE wanted to write from the age of five when she discovered that books didn't grow on trees like apples. Her passion for stories led her on a number of adventures, including modelling, teaching children in Japan, PR and backpacking across dozens of countries around the world. She has a degree in English literature and an MA in Shakespeare from Bristol University.

The Valentines series is the much anticipated follow-up to the number-one, internationally bestselling Geek Girl series, which sold over three million copies in thirty languages and won the Teen and Young Adult category of the Waterstones Children's Book Prize.

Happy Girl Lucky is the first in a brand-new series that follows the famous Valentine sisters.

This is Hope's story.

Follow Holly on Twitter and Instagram @holsmale.

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Books by Holly Smale

The Valentines series in reading order:

HAPPY GIRL LUCKY

The Geek Girl series in reading order:

GEEK GIRL

MODEL MISFIT

PICTURE PERFECT

ALL THAT GLITTERS

HEAD OVER HEELS

FOREVER GEEK

Geek Girl novellas:

ALL WRAPPED UP

SUNNY SIDE UP

THE
Valentines
HAPPY
GIRL
Lucky

HOLLY
SMALE



HarperCollins *Children's Books*

First published in Great Britain by
HarperCollins *Children's Books* in 2019
HarperCollins *Children's Books* is a division of HarperCollins *Publishers* Ltd,
HarperCollins Publishers
1 London Bridge Street
London SE1 9GF

The HarperCollins website address is
www.harpercollins.co.uk
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ISBN 978-0-00-825414-8

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Typeset in Plantin Std by
Palimpsest Book Production Ltd, Falkirk, Stirlingshire
Printed and bound in Great Britain by
CPI Group (UK) Ltd, Croydon CR0 4YY

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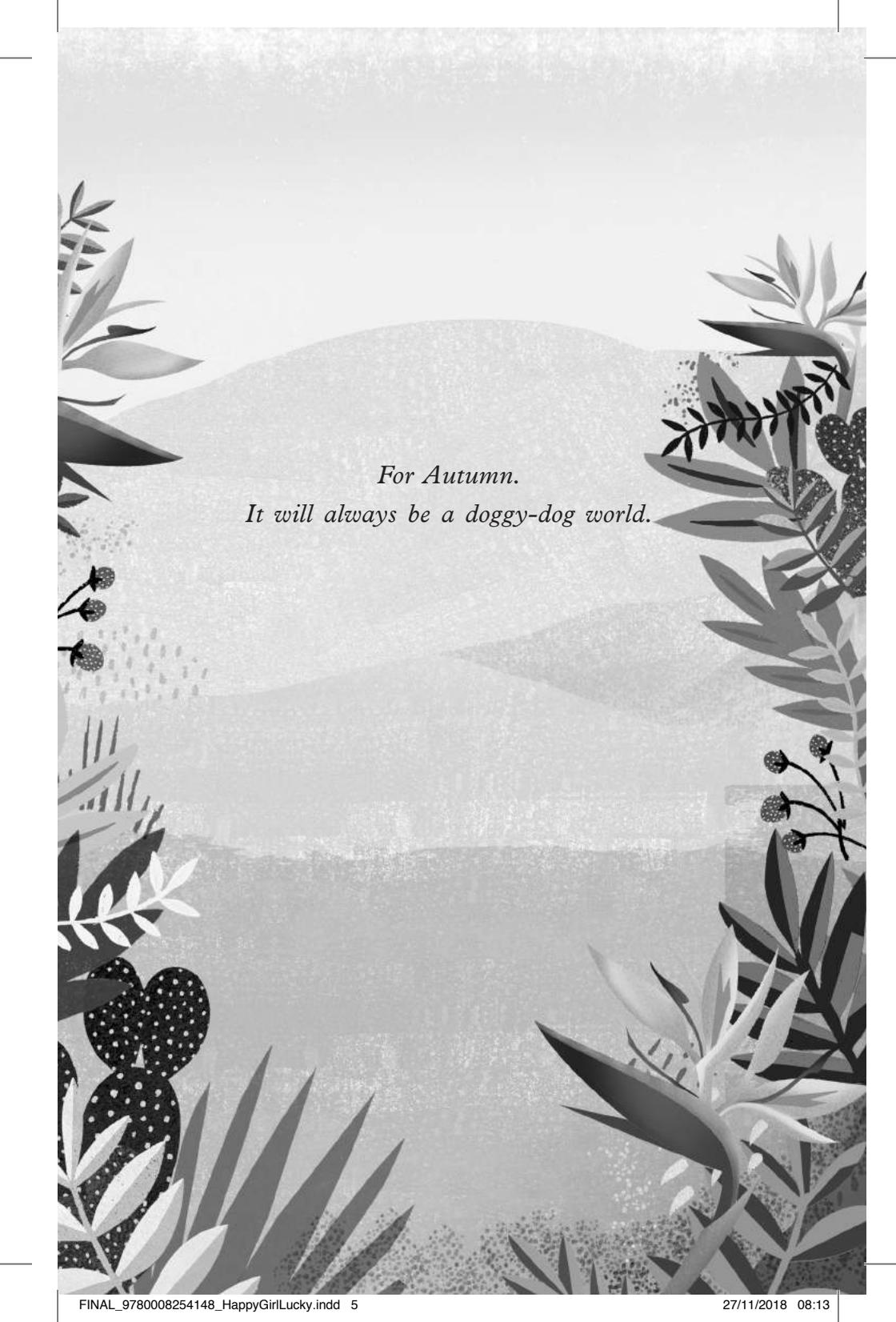
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*For Autumn.
It will always be a doggy-dog world.*



FADE IN: REGENT'S PARK, LONDON, A
SPRING MORNING

HOPE, fifteen, stands with her back to the sunshine, blue silk dress fluttering in the breeze. Her hair glistens, her posture is excellent and you can tell right away that she is the star of this film. In front of her is A HANDSOME BOY.

BOY

(entranced)

We've never met before,
but somehow it feels like we know
each other already.



HOPE

You feel instantly familiar to
me too.

BOY

(*even more entranced*)
Do you believe in fate,
beautiful stranger?

HOPE

(*shyly*)
Of course I do. Everything
happens for a reason.

BOY

Then . . . perhaps you are my
reason?

BOY holds out his hand. 'Teddy Bears'
Picnic' music starts playing.

HOPE

This is all happening so *BEEP*
fast . . .



BOY

And yet we've waited our whole
lives. Now *BEEP* take my hand
and together we will - *BEEP*
BEEP BEEP-BEEP-

BEEEEEEPPPPP

Blinking, I stare at the hand reaching towards me.

'You want toppings on this?' the BOY continues, yawning through his nostrils. 'We got chocolate sauce and chocolate sprinkles. Strawberry sauce and nuts, but that's extra. Or butterscotch sauce or toffee sauce. Chocolate flakes are extra too, so are toffee pieces and -'

I sigh. He's getting this script *all* wrong.

A few seconds ago, I was the romantic heroine poised to run away with my true soulmate - now I appear to be in a meeting with Willy Wonka's accountant. As usual, I *infinitely* prefer my version.

'Yes, please -' I smile sweetly as the car behind me starts beeping its horn again. 'Actually . . . never mind. Plain is just fine.'

'That's one pound thirty, then.'



Smiling harder so my dimples show, I hand the money across while gazing over the counter as intensely as possible, using all my advanced acting skills to communicate complex, award-winning emotions.

The BOY stares back. ‘You’re ten pence short.’

‘Whoops!’ My eyelashes must have been fluttering too fast to see properly. ‘Here you go.’

Our fingertips touch lightly and I stare at them, waiting for a flash of light, a few sparkles, maybe a bit of casual levitation. Up close, his fingernails have a thin line of black under each one, there are bright red spots marking his cheeks and his apron has melted chocolate smeared on it. Although I’m actually in black jeans and a neon cropped jumper – and it looks like it’s about to start raining – so reality isn’t exactly doing either of us a favour.

But there’s *definitely* Potential. I just need to harness this new cinematic direction – fast.

‘So,’ I say as the car horn starts blaring again, ‘what’s your star si—’

‘HOPE! WHAT ARE YOU DOING? YOU WERE SUPPOSED TO BE LOOKING FOR A



TOILET! DO YOU HAVE CONSTIPATION OR WHAT? GET IN THE CAR RIGHT NOW OR WE'RE GOING WITHOUT YOU!

OK, the word *toilet* is absolutely not going in my big opening scene; I am also editing out *constipation* immediately.

The BOY's eyes slide over my shoulder, then widen as he spots the huge luxury car parked behind me.

'Whoa,' he says, abruptly waking up. 'Is that—'

'Yep.' I take a step backwards. 'Thank you so much for this ice cream, kind stranger. I shall treasure it forever and ever, until it melts or gets eaten.'

Quickly – while he's still watching – I take my hair out of its tangled knot and give my black curls a quick, charming shake.

Then I glance adorably back over my shoulder.

HOPE

I'm afraid I must leave you here, but this moment will be engraved upon my heart for the rest of time.



‘Bye, then!’ I call brightly, waving.

BOY

Goodbye, my dream girl. I will
never serve ice cream in the
same way again.

Ice Cream Boy stares at me for a few seconds with a deep furrow between his eyebrows. ‘Bye?’

I feel an abrupt *whoosh* of pleasure.

Next time I visit, he’s going to recognise me and ask my name and declare his eternal love for me and *everything*.

This One is almost definitely The One.

‘HOPE, YOU TOTAL MUPPET!’ my sister screams helpfully. ‘GET OVER HERE RIGHT NOW!’

‘Coming!’ I call back.

Then – delighted with how the morning is going – I skip towards the car with the blue dress I’m not wearing fluttering behind me.

FADE OUT.



♋ Cancer: June 21–July 22

Your natural gift is in connecting with others, Cancer. Today Mercury and Venus are in your fourth house, which emphasises home, family, roots and parents. Use your talents to bring those bonds even closer.

I'm Hope, your new leading lady.

Nearly sixteen years ago, my parents took one look at my beaming, newborn face and thought: *There's a girl who'll embody rainbows, sunrises and the kiss at the end of a film. There's a girl who'll skip when everybody else is walking, and try to see the best in all things; who'll never need to look for a silver lining because for her there'll be no clouds.*

And you know what? It totally worked.

Hope is somehow buried inside me, planted deep



in the middle of who I am, like the pip of a cherry or the stone of an avocado. My eldest sister, on the other hand, shoved her name into the ground and then tried to get as far away from it, as fast as physically possible.

A bit like a . . . potato.

‘What is *wrong* with you?’ Mercy snaps as I climb carefully into the back of the limo, precious ice cream held reverently in front of me. (His ice cream! The Ice Cream Created By Him!) ‘Seriously. It’s not a rhetorical question, Poodle. I’m looking for a clinical diagnosis.’

Twisting, I stare longingly out of the window at the ice-cream van retreating slowly behind us, my fingertips pressed up against the glass. Saying goodbye is so hard sometimes.

HOPE

Until next time, my
chocolate-covered paramour.

Music swells.

END SCENE.



‘Don’t call me Poodle,’ I object, turning to face my sister and licking my ice cream. ‘You know I don’t like it.’

‘How about Poo, then?’ Mer sighs, propping her high-heeled boots on the seat next to me. ‘Smelly, inappropriate in public and constantly disrupting plans.’

‘I am not.’

‘Are.’

‘Am *not*.’

I stick my tongue out and she pretends not to notice. Mercy’s seventeen and permanently glamorous; today her hair is in a tight black bun, her lipstick’s red, her silk T-shirt is black, her hooded coat is black and her trousers are black leather.

The car seats are black leather too, so every time she moves there’s a loud squeaking sound. Maybe it’s the souls of the poor cows greeting each other in another format.

Without warning, I start giggling.

‘Do you have brain freeze?’ Mer snaps, picking at a perfect red nail. ‘Or are random hysterics yet another side effect of having literally nothing in your head?’



‘*Mercy*,’ Effie says, looking up from her fitness tracker. ‘Would you please leave Hope alone? Does it matter if we get there a little late?’

Because, if I grew with my name inside me, and Mercy grew without any of hers, then sixteen-year-old Faith holds hers up like a flower: always gentle, always adored, always sweet.

She’s also always beautiful.

And yes, I know that’s not a character trait, but if my middle sister was being cast in a movie that’s exactly what would be written on the script. Effie’s perfect face is always the first thing the rest of the world notices, yet somehow the last thing she does.

Which makes no sense because, when my visage eventually decides to blossom into hers some time over the next year, I’m *totally* going to make the most of it.

Broken hearts *everywhere*.

‘Yes,’ Mercy snaps, glaring at me pointedly. ‘Because I’ve got better things to do on a Sunday than watch my irritating kid sister making cow eyes yet again at the zitty ice-cream boy.’

‘First off,’ I explain patiently, ‘they were *not* cow



eyes. They were mysterious eyes designed to woo and captivate. And second off his acne is clearly healing because he has a lot of scabs, so *ha.*'

I fold my arms in triumph.

'We're coming up to the gates,' Effie says as Mercy smacks a palm against her forehead. 'Please stop squabbling for, like, forty-five seconds? Be nice. And game faces at the r—'

The car screeches to a stop.

'Yo, yo, *yo,*' Max shouts, swinging a door open and poking his close-shaved head into the back of the car with a grin. 'I see the three witches eschewed their broomsticks for the day. How's tricks, my hubble bubblers?'

All I need to say about my nineteen-year-old brother is that he takes his name *very* literally.

'For the love of—'

'*Language, Mermaid,*' Max laughs, shoving our sister over and clambering to the other side of the car, brown knees poking out of his ripped jeans. 'Aren't you happy to see me, sister-face? You are. I can tell you are. Look how *incandescent* my mere presence makes you.'

He leans forward and uses his fingers to stretch



Mercy's mouth into a scary, red-lipped, horror-film smile.

She immediately punches him. '*How* are you so annoying?'

'Dunno.' Max slumps in the seat and stretches his hands lazily over his head while he thinks about it. 'I'd like to say it was a gift from the gods, but I won't lie – I've been taking a few night classes. Really honing those skills.'

Then he yawns widely, showing all his back teeth, his tonsils and a single string of saliva, yet still managing to look handsome.

'What does *eschewed* mean?' I ask, leaning forward.

'It's a sneeze in the past tense, baby bear,' my brother grins, fluffing my curls with his hand. 'And I should warn you there are paps and journos *everywhere*. But don't fret, sibs, I got here early and gave them a few choice nuggets. How we're all being strong for each other, pulling together in our time of need and so on and so forth . . .'

He grins wickedly and Faith glances at Mercy.

That explains the mirrored sunglasses Max is wearing, even though it's now fully raining. (My hair wasn't really glistening in the sunshine earlier,

either: that was done in my brain's fully staffed Special-effects Department.)

'God, Max,' Mercy hisses, clearly livid she didn't think of this first. 'Attention-seeker much?'

'God, Mer,' he laughs brightly. 'Jealous much?'

The car turns a final bend.

Excitement starts bubbling in my stomach. It's very important to make the best out of every single situation.

With a practised hand, I quickly tidy my hair and reapply my lipstick. If only somebody had told me the paparazzi would be here today, I'd have contoured much more carefully – really made sure my bone structure can be seen through a tinted window.

The car glides to a stop. My siblings and I stare at each other, united briefly by what's waiting for us outside.

'Ready?' Faith says, biting her lip.

'Steady,' I agree, trying not to look too exhilarated. 'Rock steady. Or whatever's steadier than a rock. Stone. Cement?'

Mercy rolls her eyes, pulls up the hood of her black coat and nods in silence.

Max pops his sunglasses down. 'AND . . . GO!'



Simultaneously, we swing open the back doors of the massive black limousine.

There's a flurry of lights and clicks.

'Valentines! VALENTINES!'

Click. Flash.

'This way! Faith! Max! Mercy! Look over here!'

Flash click flash click flash.

'Talk to us! Can you tell us what happened? What's the news? How's Juliet?'

'What can you tell us, kids? This way, turn this way!'

Flash.

'Talk to us! Faith! Faith! Look sad for the cameras, ladies!'

Flash flash flash flash flash

Because there's a couple of *tiny* things I forgot to mention.

Mum's in rehab.

And we're one of the most famous families on the planet. A dynasty of movie stars stretching back four generations.

So, when I was introducing us a minute ago, it was probably our *surname* I should have started with. Aka the one name the entire world knows us by.

We are the Valentines.