



JERK, California

By Jonathan Friesen

Excerpt provided courtesy of www.JonathanFriesen.com

Please. Be. Still.

“What are you grinning about?” Naomi asks.

Words come easy now. “You. Me. Here.”

“Yeah.” She nods, and shifts in her seat. “Here.”

She looks at me for three hours straight. There’s no hiding in this truck, and as we roll into Iowa, she pops the question.

“Tell me about the moving.”

“See that sign? We’re in Iowa. Ever been here before?”

I glance at her beautiful browns. She waits.

I sigh. “The jerking—it’s called Tourette’s.”

“Why do you do it?”

“Why do you breathe?”

Naomi turns and faces the front. “You can’t, like, stop it at all?”

“For a little while. Minutes. When I really think about it.”

She makes a gentle thinking noise, but her face shows nothing. I don’t want sympathy, but I want something. A nod. A smile. All I get is a perfect face that doesn’t move a muscle. I’m an idiot for sharing. Why should a perfect person understand? Outside of the twitchy club, few do. And I hate talking to anyone who has it—hate the me I see in them.