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Maggie Vinton
1120 East C. St.
North Platte, Nebraska 69101

Dear Maureen Johnson,

People always say you can't outrun your problems. They will always follow you wherever you go and catch up to you, and when they do, you'll be worse off than before. But you know what? I disagree. Your problems may follow you wherever you go, but won't they look better in the warm Italian sunlight than in the harsh Nebraska winter? Or in one of the offices in the Empire State Building, which is supposed to be where you get your first kiss, not where you answer phones like Aunt Peg in 13 Little Blue Notes. She, just like me, longs to go away.

Going away is always something I've longed to do, not run away, because I think that means you want to escape something that's happening to you right now. The only thing you might go away from is the boredom of life as we know it. Going away means you leave with a plan, like going to Australia, but knowing where you're going and who you're staying with, unlike Peg, who just spontaneously leaves. Or maybe that is her plan. Who am I to judge someone else's life? I don't want to run away from my life right now, but rather just try something different, fulfill my dreams.

Peg and I are different, though. Most importantly, she's a worldly person who's been to London, Paris, Rome, and Amsterdam, just to name a few. Also she found true love in London. (True Love? Yeah, I'm not doing so great on that right now.) The only places I've ever been to with a population that actually registers them on most major maps are Chicago (once) and Washington, DC (twice). But most of all, Peg has someone to share it with, Ginny, her niece. I don't have anyone, be it a family member, friend, or even a guy I'm liking at whatever time, whom I feel I trust enough to share such a great adventure with.

But we're alike more than we're different. We both hang trash on our walls (But I only hang fashion ads from my mom's Vanity Fair (very cool for very cheap!) and we both like Monet. He has the most beautiful painting of water lilies. But, of course, we both want to go somewhere. When I'm bored or just tired, I think of what life would be like if I moved to somewhere else. I'd meet cool people, shop with money I somehow earn in that new place, and most of all, surf. Yeah, I've never done it before but it looks so cool!

In your book, Aunt Peg leaves Ginny a box with- what else?- 13 Little Blue Envelopes to open when the task in the previous envelope has been completed, so in a way, Aunt Peg is still alive, even though she is long gone, done in by cancer. It's hard to believe Aunt Peg would trust Ginny with a task like that, because I personally would tear into all the envelopes at first and feel bad about it later, but Aunt Peg had a way of trusting people, be it Ginny or Richard who could have dumped her off in a hospital when she went delusional from her sickness.

Right now, I may be stuck in the middle of the country, but I can't wait to start my own adventure. Even though Aunt Peg died in her 30's, she lived a fuller life than most people in retirement homes. Me? I'm just waiting for the first of my 13 Little Blue Envelopes, in whatever form, to appear on my doorstep.

Sincerely,

Maggie Vinton Maggie Vinton. 