

Checkouts

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Summary

Setting: Cincinnati, Ohio, present-day

The story is about a teenage girl whose family has just moved to Cincinnati. The move makes the girl so unhappy that she spends most of the next month shut up in her room. Finally, she leaves the house and goes to the grocery store. While standing in the checkout line, she attracts the attention of the bag boy. It is his first day at work. When she smiles at him, he nervously drops a jar of mayonnaise. At that moment, they fall in love. However, he thinks his clumsiness has made him look like a fool in her eyes, and he hates himself for it. For her part, the girl's love for the bag boy makes her life less miserable. It is another four weeks before they see each other again at the store. Yet, when they do meet again, they ignore one another and hate themselves for their silences. Months later, the girl and boy meet one more time while standing in line with their dates at a movie theater. They smile slightly at each other, but they look away, like polite strangers.