

In *The Softball Crush*, Lisa, the most popular girl in school, becomes afraid when the most popular boy in school asks her that all important question.

Donny was also the only boy in the whole school who was nice to me. He always smiled and said hi. That was, until recess yesterday, when he smiled and said, “Hi. Will you be my girlfriend?”

Butterflies had stirred in my stomach and my mouth had gone dry, like cotton. His blue eyes stared into me as he waited for an answer. I could barely speak, and the words came out in a stuttering whisper. “No, I...I...can’t.”

His smile disappeared and he threw his hands into the air. “Why not?”

Because, I wanted to say, I don’t want anyone to see my house with the boarded living room window and tiles hanging off the ceiling. The grass never gets mowed, except by the cows next door that keep coming into our yard, and next to the garage are big gray bags filled with stinky garbage. And, what if you have to go to the bathroom? The door won’t close all the way, and if Uncle Will comes home, he’ll be so drunk he won’t care if you’re using the bathroom. He won’t care if you’re my boyfriend, he’ll just tell you that you are a no-good loser. Just like he says to me and Aunt Lou.

Instead of saying this, shame seeped into my pores and I told my lies. “My mom won’t let me. Besides, I don’t want a boyfriend right now. I am very busy with school and all of my friends.”

Donny lowered his gaze and walked away, and my heart sank.

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