



Appendix

Aven's 1st & 2nd Blog

Chapter 6 p. 36

I turned and stared at the screen. I typed my first blog post.

School sucks and it's hotter outside than the dishwasher's steam cycle. But much less steamy. And it doesn't smell like soap. At least my arms aren't hot, though. Ha-ha. Yeah, that's because I don't have any.

Chapter 10 p. 59-61

On Sunday afternoon, I wrote another blog post.

When you have a malformation (yuck, I hate that word) like I do, you definitely have to deal with the usual looks. The most popular look I get is the one I like to call the "I'm so cool nothing fazes me, not even your missing arms" look. These are the people who pretend they don't notice my missing arms. You could also call this the "Sure, I'm totally used to seeing people with no arms" look or the "I have tons of armless friends" look. These people are just way too blasé about it. I mean, come on, you really don't notice my missing arms? Because I can tell you do by how you refuse to look at my torso like the whole sun is sitting on my chest. Just go ahead and look, for goodness sake. Look and ask questions if you want. These people try way too hard.

Then there's the look I like to call "Oh my gosh, I'm staring at your armless area. Just kidding, no, I'm not. Now I'm staring. No, I'm not." These are the people I can clearly see staring at me out of the corner of my eye, but as soon as I look at them, they look away. Seriously people, you're not fooling anyone. Just keep on staring-it's okay to be curious. Everyone is.

There's also the dreaded pity look-the "Oh, you poor thing with no arms" look. These people not only look at me, but they give me a pitifully sad smile when I make eye contact with them. They should save those looks for starving, homeless orphans. Being armless isn't that bad.

And then there is the worst look of all. I have to deal with it because it almost always comes from little kids who haven't learned manners yet. It's the "I can't stop staring at you because you're a freak" look. Sometimes these looks end in screams and kids running away.

Aven's 3rd Blog

Chapter 16 p. 118-121

Aven types this blog post after this moment:

*"As Connor, Zion and I walked together down the sidewalk, I heard someone do that coughing thing when they sneak a word into the cough, but they're not actually being very sneaky about it at all. And the word was **freaks**." (p 117)*

The next morning, I wrote a new blog post.

I'm sure most people who see me feel sorry for me at first. I think their first thought is probably something about how terrible it must be to not have arms. Maybe they imagine me helplessly being carried around by my mom everywhere in a giant baby backpack and my poor parents having to brush my teeth and feed me through a tube and change my diapers and whatever.

What a lot of people don't realize, though, is there are a lot of fantastic things about not having arms. Seriously, I can think of twenty right now:

1. No fistfighting. This is really a positive for other people because I would totally win in any fistfight. No really, it would be a total smackdown.
2. No rough elbows. My mom has eczema, so I know what a curse rough elbows can be.
3. No need to clean my fingernails. You can add filing, polishing, and trimming to that as well.
4. No leaving fingerprints behind at a crime scene- very helpful if I ever rob a bank.

5. No getting caught picking my nose. My shoes are usually in the way.

6. No arm wrestling.

7. No golf. Well, I suppose I could figure out a way to play golf but I'm so not gonna because golf is booooring.

8. No cheesy high fives.

9. No making that silly okay! circle shape with my fingers.

10. Fewer areas to put sunscreen on and fewer areas to sunburn. This is a good thing for me because I have super-fair skin.

11. I don't have to worry about accidentally using my hands in soccer. I guess that gives me an advantage.

12. No fighting over the arm rest at the movies. Really, no fighting over the arm rest anywhere.

13. No arm pits. How can there be pits when there are no arms? They're more like... flats.

14. I'll get the royal treatment when I start driving in a few years. That's right-it's princess-parking for this girl everywhere I go. And, yes, I will be driving an actual car. Watch out, roads!

15. Less money spent on jewelry-rings, bracelets, watches, etc.

16. No flabby flapjack arms when I get old. My great- grandma has those. Hopefully she's not reading this.

17. No push-ups.

18. I never get that floppy, numb arm thing at night from sleeping on my arms. My dad gets that just about every night.

19. No one's ever challenged me to a thumb war. Which is good. Because I don't like war.

20. Pranks that work. One day I'll pull a fantastic prank like pretending my arms get torn off in an elevator door or something. I look forward to that.

Aven's 4th Blog

Chapter 30 pg. 202-205

Aven types this blog post after her fight with Connor.

As soon as I got home, I sat down at my desk. I browsed through several of my most recent blog posts. No comments from Emily. No comments from Kayla. No comments from any of my old friends. My old world had moved on without me.

I typed my next post.

I know I totally make light of not having arms. I mean, what good does it do to complain about it all the time? This is my life. I can't change it. No arm transplant can be done. I am who I am and it's all I've known and all I'll ever know. No big deal.

I'm sure you're thinking, Yeah, but come on, not having arms must really suck at times. Yeah, not having arms does suck at times. A lot of what stinks about not having arms are little things—things most people take for granted because they have arms. So here it is—the twenty worst things about not having arms:

1. No smacking people no matter how badly I may want to. I don't think stomping their toes provides quite the same satisfaction.

2. No boxing matches. If I had arms, I think I would have been a professional boxer.

3. Doing my hair is difficult. I would love to try some styles I can't do—like a cool fishtail or a dramatic updo. I read the term dramatic updo in a magazine once.

4. Everything takes longer.

5. No basketball.

6. No shaking hands with people when I meet them. I would make sure I always had a firm handshake. Then again, I don't have to worry about sweaty palms.

7. Using large tools like chainsaws and weed whackers is likely out for me. I know the instructions say not to operate if you're under the influence of drugs or alcohol, but they should probably say not to operate if you're under the influence of drugs or alcohol or don't have arms.

8. Strappy tank tops and dresses don't look quite right. And mannequin arms don't help either.

9. Reaching things on the top shelf.

10. My back hurts because it's hard to exercise your back muscles without arms.

11. My feet get sore. I think I have arthritis already. Feet aren't meant to be used the way I use them day after day all day long. Unless you're an ape.

12. Nonhandicapped people using the handicapped stalls in the bathroom. I need the extra room, and it sucks to wait until their perfectly armed selves are all done with their luxurious, roomy bathroom visits.

13. No pushing a heavy wheelbarrow. I'm sure one day I'll be mad about this, though it hasn't happened yet.

14. Splinters are a real pain in the butt.

15. No hand or arm massages. I hear they feel super good.

16. Harder to keep my balance.

17. Harder to do... everything.

18. No wiping away a friend's tears when he's hurt.

19. No hugging him to make him feel better.

20. No reaching out for him when he walks out the door.

Aven's 5th & 6th Blog

Chapter 37 p. 244

The morning of the festival, I woke up before it was light out. I had so much to do, and I couldn't wait to get started. The first thing I did was sit down at my computer and write a blog post.

Come to Stagecoach Pass today for our festival! We'll have good food and art and fireworks! It will be the most fun you've had since the last super-fun time you had!

Chapter 38 p. 254- 258

Thanks so much to everyone who visited Stagecoach Pass for our festival yesterday. It was a wonderful day and one I know I won't ever forget.

Over the last several weeks, I've been getting more and more emails from other kids like me-kids without arms. A lot of them are looking for advice about all kinds of things, but I'd say most of the emails are about school-everything from making friends to handling homework assignments to dealing with mean comments and the "looks."

I've thought about it a lot, and I came up with a list of twenty supplies you need to survive middle school when you don't have arms. So here it is:

1. Good shoes. Ease of removal is of utmost importance here. Ease of reapplication-equally important.

2. Sense of humor. I'm being very serious here-you've got to have one. Seriously.

3. A sizeable daily breakfast. You never know when you might chicken out in the lunchroom. Get your daily fuel requirement early in the day.

4. Easy-to-eat bagged lunches. Do you really want to carry that giant tray through the cafeteria? And forget about bringing stuff like chill and clam chowder for lunch. Really. Forget. That.

5. An easy-to-carry/open/close/get-things-out-of book bag.

6. Lots of cute shirts. This really applies to both people with and without arms. And when you're ready-tank tops.

7. Bully spray. Similar to bear spray, only better. Would be great to have for those nasty little comments. I'm totally inventing this.

8. Thick skin. More like armor. Armor skin.

9. An e-reader is super helpful. And no more toe paper cuts.

10. Some kind of sport or recreational activity-soccer, dance, swimming, professional hopscotch. You can do it! I'm trying out my motivational speaking skills here.

11. Pants that button easily. Trust me, when nature calls at school, you'll be grateful you listened.

12. Your handy-dandy hook. From buttoning pants to lifting a dollar out of your pocket, a good hook is essential.

13. A wide variety of nail polishes. Boys probably don't care much about this, but when people are staring at our feet as much as they do, we want to look our best. Am I right, ladies, or am I right?

14. Nunchuks. At least until bully spray becomes available.

15. An open heart and eyes. You think you're the only one out there who feels different? What about that kid sitting alone in the library or out on the sidewalk?

16. Awesome parents. This is a must.

17. Friends who listen.

18. Friends who laugh with you.

19. Friends who are brave.

20. Friends who love you just the way you are.

These last few supplies are hard to find, but when you do find them (and I sincerely hope you do), hold on to them forever. Don't ever let go.

Name: _____

Inferences from Dialogue

Make an Inference

- Find an important or surprising dialogue or action.
- What is the character thinking and what are you thinking?

I'm thinking _____ because _____.

Dialogue (with chapter & page)	Inference
Ex. 'I scowled. "Arizona is really far away" (Chapter 2, page 9)	I think Aven is angry/upset about potentially moving to Arizona because of her reaction to her Dad's question about moving.