

# Moonpies - "The Gone"

Novi, Clovi, and Thayer wrap up another fun Moonpie meeting. None of them consider themselves official Nume Breakers despite their illicit friendship. They managed to hang out again at their secret spot on the lake and not get caught. Knowing how dangerous it is for them to be friends keeps them on their tippy toes. Making sure the coast is clear, they go home with a plan to meet up tomorrow.

The following day while waiting for the bus, Novi slips Clovi a Moonpie note and she stuffs it in her pocket. But then, the mood changes to serious as all eyes go to the infamous black car barreling down the street. Everyone knows in Nume, the black car means another child has been deemed "faulted," and one family's life is about to change forever.

On the bus, Novi observes the other children sharing the same curious, worried vibes. The bus continues down their street slowing down as it passes the same black car. Everyone's heads turn out the window. Novi witnesses Thayer being carried out of her house by a Lork, kicking and screaming with her little sister Muna trying to save her. The tears of disbelief and confusion begin roll down Novi's face. Emotions Novi must hide not to give away her secret friendship with Thayer, who has a different family gift.

Throughout the day, Novi refuses to accept that Thayer is one of "the gone." Meanwhile, with Principal Finster distracted, Novi sneaks into his office and steals Thayer's file. An impulse steal that leaves her stressing the rest of the day because she knows how much trouble she and her family would get into if caught.

After school, Novi and Clovi arrive at the Moonpie Spot and place flowers on the empty log where Thayer should be. Clovi gazes at Novi empathetically. She wipes a tear and puts her arm around Novi. Both agree they must find Thayer. Clovi looks at Novi's face, "What...tell me." Novi slowly pulls the file out of her backpack. After Clovi finishes her paranoid meltdown, she makes Novi promise never to read the file and get rid of it ASAP.

Novi shifts to her other idea to invite Thayer's sister Muna to be an honorary Moonpie member hoping Muna could provide important clues. Shockingly, Clovi gives a thumbs up, approving "Mission Muna." Excited yet incredibly anxious, they sneak off to Muna's house. Fortunately, their risky adventure ends with a celebration once back at the Moonpie Spot. Even though they can't tell anybody how they dodged the nosey neighbor and had an encounter with Novi's brother, it makes for a good story they hope to share with Thayer soon.

That night Novi locks her bedroom door and walks back to her bed, focused and intense. She grabs Thayer's file, and a tear rolls down her face. Then, all goes dark as she puts a blanket over her head. A click is heard as she turns her flashlight on, and with hesitation, she opens the file. Novi is now a full-blown one-of-a-kind like never seen before Nume Breaker (person who goes against Nume's rules). There is no turning back. #FreeTHAYER