Every day when I went to school, she went to work. “Sometimes I stop what I’m doing,” she said, “lay down my tools, and stop everything, because all I can think about is you. Wondering what you’re doing and if you need me. Now, Junie, if anyone ever bothers you—”

“I walk away, run away, come on home as fast as my feet will take me,” I recited.

“Yes. You come to me. You just bring me your trouble, because I’m here on this earth to love you and take care of you.”

I was safe with her. Still, sometimes I woke up at night and heard footsteps slowly creeping up the stairs. It wasn’t my mother, she was asleep in the bed across the room, so it was robbers, thieves, and murderers, creeping slowly . . . slowly . . . slowly toward my bed.

I stuffed my hand into my mouth. If I screamed and woke her, she’d be tired at work tomorrow. The robbers and thieves filled the warm darkness and slipped across the floor more quietly than cats. **Rigid** under the covers, I stared at the shifting dark and bit my knuckles and never knew when I fell asleep again.

This passage develops the characters of June and her mother.
- What does June’s mother tell her to do if someone bothers her?
- Why doesn’t June want to wake her mother if she is scared in the night?
- How would you describe the relationship between June and her mother?
“No we don’t. June is my name, and I don’t give you permission to use it. Your name is Fish Eyes.” She pinched me hard. “Got it, Fish Eyes?”

The next Tuesday, the Other June again stood next to me at the edge of the pool. “What’s your name?”

“June.”

“Wrong. Your—name—is—Fish—Eyes.”

“June.”

“Fish Eyes, you are really stupid.” She shoved me into the pool.

The swimming teacher looked up, frowning, from her chart. “No one in the water yet.”

Later, in the locker room, I dressed quickly and wrapped my wet suit in the towel. The Other June pulled on her jeans. “You guys see that bathing suit Fish Eyes was wearing? Her mother found it in a trash can.”

This passage introduces the major conflict: the narrator meets the Other June, who bullies her.

- What does the Other June say about June’s name?
- What happens when the Other June pushes the narrator into the pool?
- Why does June dress quickly?
- What do you think will happen next?
Monday, when the principal of Blue Hill Street School left me in Mr. Morrisey’s classroom, I knew what I’d been waiting for. In that room full of strange kids, there was one person I knew. She smiled her square smile, raised her hand, and said, “She can sit next to me, Mr. Morrisey.”

“Very nice of you, June M. OK, June T, take your seat. I’ll try not to get you two Junes mixed up.”

I sat down next to her. She pinched my arm. “Good riddance to bad trash,” she mocked.

I was back in the Tuesday swimming class, only now it was worse, because every day would be Awfulday. The pinching had already started. Soon, I knew, on the playground and in the halls, kids would pass me, grinning. “Hiya, Fish Eyes.”

This passage intensifies the conflict: the Other June is a student in the narrator’s new class.

- Is June surprised to see the Other June? Why or why not?
- What is the Other June’s reaction when she sees June?
- What will school be like for June now?
“No,” I said to the Other June. “Oh, no! No. No. No. No more.” I pushed away the hand that held the pencils.

The Other June’s eyes opened, popped wide like the eyes of somebody in a cartoon. It made me laugh. The boy on the desk laughed, and then the other kids were laughing, too.

“No,” I said again, because it felt so good to say it. “No, no, no, no.” I leaned toward the Other June, put my finger against her chest. Her cheeks turned red, she squawked something—it sounded like “Eeeraaghyou!”— and she stepped back. She stepped away from me.

The door banged, the airplanes disappeared, and Mr. Morrisey walked to his desk. “OK. OK. Let’s get back to work. Kevin Clark, how about it?” Kevin jumped off the desk and Mr. Morrisey picked up a piece of chalk. “All right, class—” He stopped and looked at me and the Other June. “You two Junes, what’s going on there?”

I tried it again. My finger against her chest. Then the words. “No—more.” And she stepped back another step. I sat down at my desk.

This passage presents the climax and resolution: the narrator fights back and the bully backs down.

- What does the narrator say and do to the Other June?
- How does the Other June react?
- Will the Other June still bully the narrator? How do you know?