The New Girl

On the day that Marina first appeared in class, something hard and solid and tight, deep inside Jonah’s gut, began to soften and unfurl. She was nothing like any other girl that Jonah had ever known. She had long, dark hair that tumbled over her eyes. While the other girls that Jonah knew made a big show of flipping their fallen hair out of their faces, this girl just peered coolly out from behind it, as if it was enough for her to see the world outside of herself in slivers. Day after day, trying not to be too obvious, and gazing intently at anything but her, he felt the quiver in his stomach whenever he knew that she was near. The quiver grew up into his throat and unfolded there so that even when she glanced his way or passed close beside him, and he might have seized the opportunity, he was unable to speak. It grew, and it grew, until eventually, every day, he could no more help but turn to look at her, then a plant can help but turn its leaves toward the sun.

1. What is the central metaphor in the passage?

2. What is “growing” inside Jonah?

3. What is the “hard and solid and tight” thing inside Jonah really? What is it metaphorically?

4. What is Marina’s role in the extended metaphor?