

DO YOU REMEMBER?

WHO DO
YOU
BELIEVE...

WHEN YOU'VE
FORGOTTEN
YOUR LIFE?



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Do You Remember?

a novel by

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To my girls

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DAY ONE

CHAPTER 1

An ice pick is jabbing me in my right temple.

It feels that way, anyway. The pain is enough to make my eyes fly open, giving me a view of the cracks on my bedroom ceiling. The intense light pouring through the window by the bed doesn't make the situation any better. But after a few seconds, the pain dulls to a mild ache behind my right eye. Bearable.

This always happens when I have too much wine at night. I haven't been able to hold my liquor since I was twenty-five. And last night, I definitely had too much wine.

But I couldn't help it. It isn't every night that I get engaged.

I roll my head to the side and gaze at the sleeping lump beside me. No, not just a sleeping lump. My fiancé. The man I'm going to marry. Harry.

It's not like it was a huge surprise. We have, after all, been living together for over a year. And after our one-bedroom apartment on the lower east side went condo six months ago, we bought a big old house in Queens together, within reasonable commuting distance of Manhattan. After we went in on the mortgage together, we were pretty much stuck with each other. Even more so than if we got married. I mean, a divorce is easy. But splitting up this house would be *such* a hassle.

As I lie in bed, I replay the events of last night in my head. I have a feeling I'm going to be telling this story a *lot*. To my father. Possibly to our future children someday. At the very least, my best friend Lucy will want to hear every juicy detail.

So we had just finished dinner and were going to watch a movie together, but I told Harry I wanted to check my email first. I was confused by the way he followed me to my laptop, tripping over his feet in his eagerness. It didn't make sense until I opened my laptop—he had replaced the keys on my keyboard. The new keys spelled out: WILL YOU MARRY ME?

And then when I turned to look at him, he was down on one knee, holding a blue velvet box, gazing up at me with his deep brown eyes. The

diamond was small, but the most beautiful thing I've ever seen in my life.

I was shocked. So shocked that I made the poor guy wait just a little too long before answering, and he looked a bit nervous. He reached out and grabbed my hand. "Please marry me, Tess," he said. "You're my whole life."

Of course, I said yes. I mean, I'm crazy about the guy.

To celebrate our engagement, Harry popped the cork on the really good bottle of Cabernet that he had stashed away in the kitchen cabinet for a special occasion. I'm pretty sure that bottle is now lying empty on our coffee table, hence my pounding headache. We spent the evening talking about what we wanted to do for a wedding, but especially where we wanted to go for our honeymoon. *Someplace hot with lots of beaches.*

After that first glass of Cabernet, the rest of the events of the evening are kind of foggy. But clearly, we made it back into bed. And I managed to change into one of the oversized T-shirts I always sleep in, even though I don't quite remember doing so. But I must have. I'm wearing it, after all.

I rest a hand gently on the blanket covering my fiancé. (Does that sound pretentious? I love saying it.) He has dark brown hair that always sticks up a bit, but somehow, in the morning light streaming in through the window, it looks much lighter. He doesn't stir at my touch. Harry could sleep through an earthquake, but especially when he's had a few drinks. Usually he snores after he drinks, but he's dead silent now.

I kick off the blankets and sit up in bed. I feel another jab of pain in my right temple, but then it eases up, replaced by a dull ache at the base of my spine. Wow, I really need to stop drinking. It's not worth it to feel so crummy in the morning. And why can't I remember anything that happened after Harry proposed?

I stumble in the direction of the bathroom in my bare feet, trying to ignore the various aches in my body. I'm not even thirty yet—it seems like I should be able to drink a little wine without feeling like a decrepit old lady the next morning. But maybe this is what happens when you get older.

I flick on the lights in the bathroom, bracing myself for the brightness. I squint into the master bathroom, waiting for my pupils to adjust. And...

What the hell happened here?

I stare at the sink, utterly confused. Okay, the events of last night are sort of fuzzy, but is it possible Harry and I went on a home repair spree after

drinking the Cabernet? Because the sink that was rusted and cracked when we bought the house—and still was as of last night—is now a flawless, gleaming white. And the toilet... when we first saw this place, Harry commented, “Hey, it’s a prison toilet!” He sounded way too excited about it, but he had a good point. Our toilet *did* look like something out of a prison bathroom.

But now it’s been replaced. By a sleek white toilet that appears to have a bidet attachment.

Did Harry and I *install a bidet* on the night of our engagement?

I shake my head, trying to dredge up the memory of having done this last night. But it’s all still a blank.

I look back at the bedroom. Harry is still asleep under the covers, which are practically covering his entire head. It’s only now that I notice the covers look different. During the winter, Harry and I bought a white down comforter. I remember going to the store together and cuddling with him under the sample comforters while the staff shot us dirty looks. We picked the white one. We have a *white* comforter.

So why is Harry covered in a brown comforter? Did we buy a new comforter last night?

I really think I would remember that.

A sudden dizzy sensation almost overtakes me. I hold onto the door frame of the bathroom, but then I end up sinking onto our beautiful toilet before my legs give out. I don’t know what’s going on here, but it’s very strange.

We have a gorgeous bathroom. This is exactly how I imagined it looking when Harry and I bought the place. But how did it happen overnight? I mean, Harry knows computers better than anyone, but he’s not great with a hammer or a screwdriver. I’ve heard of people having superhuman strength when they’ve been drinking. Did the two of us somehow get superhuman *home improvement power*? Is that a thing?

“Harry?” I call out in a shaky voice.

He still doesn’t stir.

I grab onto the sink and pull myself back to my feet. I just need to splash some cold water on my face. I’m sure it will all come back to me.

My hands are shaking as I turn on the cold water nozzle, figuring ice-cold liquid is the best thing to snap me out of this haze. I let some water run

into my hands, then I splash it on my cheeks and eyelids. And then raise my head to look into the vanity mirror.

And I scream.

CHAPTER 2

“Harry!”

To hell with waking him up. I’m going to drag that man out of bed by his ankles if he doesn’t get up in the next two seconds. I would do it right now, except my legs seem to be frozen in place.

“Harry!”

I could have dealt with the sink being different. I could deal with the toilet and the mystery bidet. Even the fact that somehow all our normal toothbrushes have been replaced by a single mechanical toothbrush with little rotating heads lined up on a plastic piece mounted to the wall.

But I can’t deal with what’s looking back at me in the mirror.

“Harry!”

Ever since I was in high school, I wore my thick, glossy cinnamon-colored hair long, running down my back. When I went to work, I would pull it back into a bun, secured with a spider clip. I have been doing that for more years than I can count.

And now my hair is chopped short. Chin length. A bob—not unattractive, but not me. Not the way it looked last night. And not just that. There are strands of gray weaved into my formerly dark hair. *Many* strands. Like, at least twenty.

Maybe I could convince myself that I gave myself a haircut last night, although it looks pretty professionally done. But that doesn’t explain my face. It doesn’t explain the fine lines around my eyes that weren’t there last night. I always thought I looked young for my age, maybe early twenties, but the woman staring back at me doesn’t even look twenty-nine. She looks... *old*.

Well, *older*.

“Harry!” The pitch of my voice is bordering on hysterical now. “Harry! Come here!”

Finally, our bed springs creak as my fiancé pulls himself into a sitting position. Thank God. I need Harry to explain what is going on here. Or at least, acknowledge that the two of us have entered some kind of crazy

parallel universe where we have a brown comforter and a bidet. I hear the covers being shoved away, his heavy feet pounding against the floor.

The hinges whine as the bathroom door swings the rest of the way open. I wrench my gaze away from the mirror and turn to my fiancé. “Harry, what—”

Oh God.

It’s not Harry.

There’s somebody else standing there. Some other man, wearing a pair of boxer shorts and an undershirt, his sand-colored hair tousled. I have never seen this man before in my life. And somehow, he’s in my bedroom—has been sleeping in my bed, *in his underwear*.

This is even more shocking than the bidet.

“Tess,” he says.

I don’t know who this man is, but this has gone from strange to terrifying. I look around wildly, searching for a weapon. Like a razor. There’s got to be a razor in here, doesn’t there? But there isn’t.

Then my eyes fall on a pair of tweezers. Not as good as a razor, but better than nothing. I snatch up the tweezers and brandish them in my right hand.

“Tess,” the stranger says again. “Put down the tweezers.”

“Where is Harry?” I say through my teeth.

A pained look passes over the man’s face. He lets out a long sigh. Admittedly, he doesn’t look dangerous. First of all, he’s in his underwear. Also, it’s hard not to notice that he’s quite attractive. Nice blue eyes, thick hair with blond undertones visible under the bathroom lights, and a solid build with firm biceps peeking out under the wrinkled undershirt. He looks to be in his mid to late thirties.

“Harry doesn’t live here anymore.” His voice is calm and slow. Like he’s talking to a crazy person. “I’m Graham.”

I squeeze the tweezers in my right hand, waiting for more of an explanation. Finally, he gives it to me: “I’m your husband.”

What?

“Tess.” He raises his hands in the air. “I’m not going to hurt you. Can we talk in the bedroom?”

I look down at my right hand—I am gripping the tweezers so hard, my fingers are bloodless. I’m also shaking like a leaf. Tweezers or not, if this

guy wanted to hurt me, he could. Easily. But he doesn't seem like he wants to hurt me.

"Tess?"

Finally, I nod. "Okay."

He looks at the tweezers. "You can hold on to those if it makes you feel better. And if you don't like what I have to say, you can... reshape my eyebrows any way you like."

He's making a joke. But there's nothing funny about this situation.

There's a pink silk bathrobe hanging on the inside of the bathroom door, and I grab it and wrap it around myself. Then I follow this man, Graham, who claims to be my husband. Obviously, he's *not* my husband. I can imagine forgetting about installing a toilet or cutting my hair, but I would never forget an entire marriage. I don't know why he's sleeping in my bed though. Or where Harry went. But I intend to get to the bottom of it.

Graham settles down on the edge of our bed. It's only now that I notice our comforter isn't the only thing that's different about the bed. It's a completely different bed. Harry and I had a metal bed with a saggy box spring, but this is a nice, firm mattress with an elaborate wooden headboard. It's probably got memory foam and everything.

Graham looks like he's going to reach for my hand, but I yank it away before he can grab it. He flinches and bows his head. I don't know what this guy's game is. Is this some kind of elaborate con? Am I missing a kidney now?

"I know this is disconcerting," he says. "I understand."

Gee, you think? "Who are you really?"

His shoulders sag. "I'm your husband, Tess. Do you remember at all?"

When I shake my head no, he points to the dresser across from us. The dresser itself is unfamiliar. Last night when I went to bed, we had a warped wooden dresser from IKEA. That old dresser has been replaced with a chestnut brown wooden chest of drawers with burnished edges. It does *not* look like it came from IKEA. But what's even more shocking is what's on top of the dresser.

Photographs.

There are about half a dozen framed photos. And each of the photos has me in it. Me and Graham, usually. The two of us bundled up on a ski

lift. Dressed up fancy, drinking champagne, our lips frozen with laughter. Lounging on a beach somewhere.

And then there's the photograph right in the middle. Me and Graham. Holding hands. Him in a tuxedo. Me in a white dress.

"No," I whisper.

I don't understand what's going on here. Last night, Harry asked me to marry him. Harry—the love of my life. He got down on one knee, for God's sake. We celebrated with Cabernet. And now... he's vanished. And somehow I have entered some other crazy life that I don't even recognize.

Tears gather in my eyes. "Harry," I whimper.

Graham drops his face into his hands and rubs his eyes. A few seconds later, he lifts his head. "I need to show you something."

"What?"

"It..." He pushes up to his feet. "It will help. It usually does."

Wordlessly, I watch Graham walk around our bed to the night table. He opens the top drawer and pulls out a piece of lined paper, folded into thirds. He hands the paper to me.

"What's this?" I ask.

"It's a letter."

"From who?"

He smiles crookedly. "From you."

I put down the tweezers, although I'm still watching Graham out of the corner of my eye. I start to unfold it, but then I look up at him. He is standing over me, watching me.

He notices my expression and rubs the back of his neck. "I'll go take a shower. Give you a little privacy."

At first, I'm worried he's going to strip right in front of me. If he is truly my husband, I suppose he would have the right to do that. But I'm grateful when he goes into the bathroom, still in his boxers and undershirt. A second later, I hear the water running in the shower. My shoulders relax—the stranger is gone.

Gingerly, I unfold the piece of paper. The creases of the letter are worn, like it's been folded and unfolded dozens of times before. The entire page is filled with writing. I recognize my own handwriting.

And I start to read.

CHAPTER 3

Dear Tess,

I know what you're thinking. I know how you're feeling. Because it's the same exact thing that I was thinking and feeling this morning. So today I am writing you a letter hoping it will help you/me in the future.

So here are the basics:

You have been in a car accident. You were the one driving, and nobody else was hurt. You swerved to avoid an animal on the road and lost control of the vehicle. You hit a tree. The animal was unharmed.

Unfortunately, you suffered a brain injury during the accident. You had a lot of bleeding in your brain and the doctors did what they could. You survived, but you have permanent memory problems. Some days are not that bad. Some days you remember more than others. Other days, you wake up and can't remember anything that happened in the last seven or eight years. I'm writing this on one of the better days. If you are reading this, it's probably because you're having one of your bad days.

If you're having a bad day, you may not remember Graham. So let me assure you, he has been a good husband to you for many years. You had a beautiful wedding that was the happiest day of your life. He has been taking care of you since the accident. This has been hard on him too, and he's been trying his best.

If this is a bad day, you are probably also wondering where Harry is. Harry is no longer a part of your life. Trust me, it's for the best. He wasn't who you thought he was. He did something unforgivable to you.

If you relax and try to have a good day, you will be much happier. Just remember that the people around you care about you very much and only want you to be safe. Do what they say.

You are in good hands. Trust me.

Love,

Tess

After I finish reading the letter, I read it a second time. And then one more time. After the third time, the stream of water shuts off in the shower. Graham will come out any second. I am seized by the almost irrepressible urge to make a run for it. Before Graham comes out, I could throw on some clothes and run out the door.

But where would I go? This is my home. And I don't even know what *year* it is.

The door to the bathroom swings open, and I've missed my chance. Graham comes out wearing a towel around his waist. At first, I look away, but then I take a peek. I can't help it. And...

Oh my God. My husband is *hot*. He must work out or something.

"Tess?" His light brown eyebrows scrunch together. "Did you read it? Are you okay?"

I nod slowly. "When did this happen? When was my accident?"

"A little over a year ago."

A year. I've been living this way for a year. Waking up every morning and not remembering my life.

He stands there, waiting for me to say something. When I don't, he goes over to the dresser and starts rifling through the closet. "I'll get dressed in the bathroom, okay?"

"Thank you."

He selects his clothing and disappears back into the bathroom as I push away a stab of guilt. I am his wife, apparently, and this is his own bedroom. He shouldn't feel forced to hide in the bathroom to get dressed. Yet I'm absurdly grateful that he did it.

I put down the letter and rise from the bed. I can't stop staring at the collection of photographs on top of the dresser. My eyes are drawn like a magnet to the wedding photo. It's right in the middle, after all.

I pick it up—it's heavy. The frame is probably expensive, like our bed and our fancy toilet. Part of me is convinced this all might be some sort of crazy dream, but the weight of this photograph feels so real.

This is no dream.

I squint down at the photograph, studying it for traces that it might be a forgery. Harry would know if it was real or not. Of course, Harry is long gone if that letter is to be believed. So it's up to me.

I look down at my image in the photo. The white dress I'm wearing is absolutely beautiful. It's a chiffon dress with a double V neck and elaborate beading all over the neckline. It's silky white and classy, just how I imagined my wedding dress. Like the frame, it appears expensive—how was I able to afford something like that? Is Graham rich too, in addition to being gorgeous?

I study my expression. I'm smiling at the camera, my dark hair swept back from my face. I look happy. And why shouldn't I be? This is supposedly my wedding day.

But there's something else there. I look happy, but there's something off. Something in my eyes.

"Tess?"

Graham's voice startles me—I hadn't even heard him come out of the bathroom. The frame slips out of my fingers and crashes to the floor. The glass shatters at my feet.

"Sorry!" I step back, mortified. "I'm so sorry. I—"

"It's okay." Graham's hand is on my arm, and his blue eyes meet mine. He's fairer than any man I've ever dated before—that was never my type. But he obviously won me over. "I'll clean it up."

"I could—"

"Don't worry about it." Graham bends down and snatches the frame from the floor. The glass has cracked, but it hasn't come loose from the frame. "There's nothing to even clean up. It's fine." He places the cracked picture frame back on the dresser with the others—it seems oddly ominous now with the shattered glass obscuring my face, but Graham doesn't seem disturbed by it. "How about this? You go take a shower and I'll make some breakfast for us."

"Okay..."

Graham has put on a pair of wire-rimmed spectacles and is dressed in a gray suit. The effect makes him look both devastatingly handsome and incredibly important. But I guess he's not in a rush to go anywhere if he's willing to make breakfast. It occurs to me he's been juggling his work obligations and taking care of me. Again, I get that stab of guilt.

"Does the toilet work just like a normal toilet?" I ask. I don't want to admit how intimidated I am by the appliances in our bathroom. I need an instruction book to relieve my bladder.

He nods eagerly. “It’s very easy to use. It has an automatic flush when you stand up. And it also has an LED nightlight and a seat warmer. It’s programmable, so if you wanted, we could make it open the lid when you approach. There’s also a tornado wash that self-cleans the bowl.”

I stare at him. “What are you—a toilet salesman?”

There’s a flash of something in his eyes, almost like irritation or anger. Of course, he has a right to be a little irritated if he has to repeat the same information to me every single morning. But it’s not like it’s my fault.

Just as quickly as it appeared, the flash vanishes from his eyes, and I’m not sure if I imagined it. He glances at the bathroom. “I know it’s all confusing. Do you need any help in there?”

My jaw tightens. Is this his smarmy way of getting to see me naked? I don’t think so. “I can manage.”

The tips of his ears color and he nods. “Okay then. I... I’ll go downstairs and make breakfast.”

I wait until Graham has left the room before I venture back into the bathroom. Now that I’m not so shaken by the situation, I can take a moment to look around the bathroom. It’s... well, it’s quite nice. Harry and I fantasized about what we would do to renovate the bathroom when we had enough time and money, and this is much nicer than what we had contemplated. It looks like we pulled up the floor tiles as well and the shower is all shiny and new.

I spy a bottle of soap on the sink counter, and it has the My Home Spa logo on it. In fact, a lot of products in this bathroom bear the logo of my business on them. It was an idea that Harry and I came up with together, back when we were in our tiny little apartment, and I was fantasizing about what it would be like to have a spa vacation but somehow do it in our own home. And Harry said, *That’s a million-dollar business idea*. It was his idea to...

But no. I need to stop thinking about Harry. I saw the note in my own handwriting. He’s not part of my life anymore, and apparently for good reason.

I just wish I knew what the reason was. What terrible thing did he do?

I can’t bear to look in the mirror again, so I strip off the silk bathrobe and my oversized T-shirt, then I step into the shower. I reach for the hot water and...

How the hell do you turn the shower on?

It doesn't have a knob, like every other shower in the known universe. It has some sort of computerized control system. There's a screen, which has the time and little animated graphics of raindrops. Then several buttons to the right, but no label saying what any of the buttons do! One has an up arrow, one has a down arrow, one has the number one on it...

Oh God, I really do need help to take a shower.

I punch a couple of the buttons, hoping something will happen. There is a disturbing whirring noise coming from the plumbing, then all of a sudden, spicules of ice-cold water rain down on me. I scream and back away, panicked.

What is wrong with this stupid shower? Why would I install something so ridiculous?

I take a breath as I cower in the dry corner of the shower, trying to figure out what to do. The computerized display now reads sixty degrees. Is that the temperature of the water? Whatever it is, it's too damn cold.

I carefully venture back into the water as goosebumps spring up on my arms. I tap on the up arrow, and to my relief, the temperature display goes up. The water warms up and my teeth stop chattering. I start to feel more comfortable when the temperature gets close to a hundred, then I crank it up higher, all the way up to one hundred ten degrees. It's pretty hot now, but it feels *good*. The tight muscles in my shoulder and back melt under the spicules of hot water. And the headache in my right temple gradually subsides.

I let the water run over my hair. It's strange for my hair to be so short. I'm used to it running all the way down my back, but I suppose it will be easier to wash this way. I already see a bottle of My Home Spa shampoo in the corner of the shower. It's vanilla scented, but not that fake vanilla you get in cheap shampoos. This is a real, rich vanilla aroma. Like in a real spa.

As I run my fingers through my hair, I freeze. There's something on my scalp.

I feel it on the right side of my skull, under the strands of my hair. There's a patch on my scalp where no hair is growing—a line of thick raised skin that feels strange when I touch it, like the skin doesn't quite belong to me. I follow the line with my fingers, noticing that it forms a C shape.

It's a scar.

You had a brain injury during the accident. You had a lot of bleeding in your brain and the doctors did what they could.

I stand there in the shower, my body shaking despite the burning hot water. It's true. What I wrote in that letter is all true. There's a scar on my scalp to prove it. I was in a terrible accident, and I had surgery, but it wasn't enough.

I drop my head, trying to control my breathing as my legs wobble beneath me. *You're okay. Trust the letter. Just accept that this is your life now and go with it.*

I blink away the droplets of water in my eyes. And that's when I notice something on my upper left thigh. It looks like a message written in black pen.

"What the...?"

I step out of the range of the water droplets, but it's too late. There was something written on my thigh, but the hot running water has already obscured the message. It looks like it was two words. I stare down at the message—I can only barely make out the first word:

Find.

That's sort of strange. Considering the location of this message, I have to assume I wrote it to myself. I wrote myself a message, maybe last night, knowing that I might not remember anything when I woke up the next morning. The message was obviously important, but it's interesting that I wrote it in a place where only I would see it. Graham clearly didn't know about it.

Find. Find *what*? What is that second word? I can't even begin to make it out.

Well, great. Whatever message I was trying to leave for myself, I was unsuccessful. Hopefully, it wasn't too important.

I finish soaping myself up, and by the time I finish my shower, I feel a lot more relaxed. I've almost forgotten about the strange message on my leg and whatever I'm supposed to find. My whole brain feels hazy, like I've just woken up from a long sleep, and as long as I don't try to fight it, the sensation is almost soothing. I recall the last words of the letter I had written to myself:

If you relax and try to have a good day, you will be much happier. Just remember that the people around you care about you very much and only want you to be safe. Do what they say.

You are in good hands. Trust me.

I suppose if there's one person I can trust, it's myself.

Can't I?

CHAPTER 4

When I come downstairs, I feel much better than I did when I woke up this morning. I still have that slight headache, but it's barely noticeable. Just a twinge. I feel like a different person now that I've had a hot shower and put on some clean clothing. My drawers and closet were filled with outfits that were unfamiliar to me. But that wasn't a bad thing. It was like getting an entirely new wardrobe.

A wardrobe of incredibly expensive clothing. I checked some of the tags—Gucci, Fendi, Louis Vuitton. How could I afford any of this stuff? Graham must be loaded.

Most of the clothing seemed ridiculously fancy for a day at home, so I picked out a pair of designer skinny jeans and a fitted T-shirt. I may be older than I remember, but thankfully, I seem to be in good physical shape. My waist is still slim, my muscles toned. The only part of me that's messed up is my brain, apparently.

As I reach the bottom of the stairwell, I see a flash of gold and brown, and then something nearly knocks me off my feet. For a split second, I'm terrified, until I hear the frantic and happy barks.

It's a dog. We have a *dog*.

"Sorry to startle you." Graham wanders out of the kitchen, wiping his hands on a dish towel. "I try to keep him out of the second floor during the night so you won't be startled when you wake up."

I notice now that there is an open gate in front of the bottom of the staircase. He must close it at night to keep the dog out. The dog looks up at me with those puppy dog brown eyes and licks my hand. Now my hand is covered in dog saliva, but I can't be mad. I just met this dog thirty seconds ago, but I'm already in love with him. My first genuine smile of the day tugs at my lips.

Then again, I didn't really meet this dog thirty seconds ago. This is *my* dog. I've probably had him for months, maybe even years. It's like my heart has a memory of loving this dog.

Except why don't I have any memory of loving Graham?

“What’s his name?” I ask.

Graham smiles. “His name is Ziggy.”

My own smile freezes on my lips. Ziggy. I named the dog Ziggy.

Harry and I always wanted a dog, but there was no room for it in our tiny apartment. And then when we moved here, the place was still such a disaster and Harry wanted to put up a fence around the backyard before we got the dog.

But we did have one pet.

Harry’s full name is Harrison Finch. So ever since he was a kid, he always owned a finch. *I’m a Finch so I’ve got a finch.* It was kind of his thing. He had a giant cage he kept on the first floor of our house, with an almost blindingly yellow finch inside. He loved that bird. When I saw the way he took care of his finch, I knew what a great dad he would be someday. It was something I loved about him.

And the bird’s name was Ziggy.

I keep the smile plastered on my face as I run my fingers through the dog’s soft fur. Ziggy pants happily. “Was I the one who named him?” I ask.

Graham nods. “You did. You said you were a fan of the comic strip.”

I never read Ziggy comics in my life.

I lied to my husband. I must have named the dog after Harry’s bird. Except why would I do that? I’m happily married to Graham, so why would I name my dog after an ex-boyfriend’s bird? It doesn’t make any sense.

But either way, Graham has no idea. And I’m not going to be the one to tell him.

Ziggy follows me to the kitchen, where the tantalizing aroma of eggs and bacon fills my nostrils. When we bought the house, all the appliances were old and rusted. I remember Harry kicking the refrigerator to get it to turn back on. But the entire kitchen has now been renovated. We have a giant stainless steel fridge with a built-in ice and water machine. There’s a gleaming black stove that has so many dials and knobs, I’m sure I will set myself on fire if I attempt to cook anything on it. And our old rickety wooden kitchen table has been replaced with a brand new marble island with padded swivel chairs surrounding it.

This could be one of the nicest kitchens I’ve ever seen. And it’s *mine*.

“Wow,” I breathe. “This is... amazing.”

Graham laughs at my expression. “It should be. You picked all the stuff out yourself.”

“I did?” I run my fingers over the flawless marble surface of the kitchen island. “Are we rich?”

He hesitates. “We’re... comfortable.”

I want to ask more questions, but I feel strange prying like that. Of course, it’s not prying if this is my own life, is it? Anyway, it’s not like we live in a giant mansion somewhere. This is the same house that Harry and I picked out together and got for a bargain. We live in Queens, New York—not Beverly Hills.

Graham grabs two white ceramic plates from a cupboard above the sink and scrapes the contents of the frying pan onto them. He sets one of the plates down in front of me and keeps the other one for himself. He also pours a cup of coffee for himself but doesn’t offer one to me.

I look down at my plate. There’s a little yellow pile of dry-looking eggs and two strips of bacon that are cooked to the point of being black. I take a nibble from one of the strips of bacon—it’s hammered. I’m sort of relieved that Graham didn’t cook the perfect breakfast. So far, my husband seems like this absolutely perfect man, so it’s good to know he has at least one flaw.

I hear whimpering at my leg. Ziggy is begging for food, his face on my lap as a glob of drool drips down onto my jeans. I look down at one of the crispy bacon strips and slip it to him. He happily gobbles it up.

Graham frowns. “You shouldn’t feed him from the table. It will make him expect it.”

“Sorry,” I say. “I didn’t know.”

He opens his mouth as if to say something else but then shuts it again. Instead, he digs into his own plate of food. He even eats the burned bacon. He doesn’t seem bothered by it. There must be something wrong with his taste buds.

I’m hungry, but I can’t seem to stop staring at this man sitting across the table from me. Graham. My husband. My freaking *husband*. Here we are, sitting at the kitchen table like a normal husband and wife, but we’re anything but normal. First, I know nothing about this man. Not even the slightest thing.

He's attractive—objectively speaking—but I don't feel anything for him. I don't feel that pull I used to feel around Harry. Even after being together for four years, Harry and I could never keep our hands off each other. But the idea of this man even touching me makes my skin crawl. I don't know why, because there's nothing objectionable about him. Maybe it's the idea that he's a stranger who is apparently sharing my life.

That's exactly what he is to me. A stranger.

“What's your last name?” I blurt out.

Graham looks from his eggs and bacon. It's such an odd question for a woman to be asking her husband, but he does not look perturbed. “Thurman.”

“Oh.” I toy with the handle of my fork. “Did I take your name?”

He nods. “Yes. You liked the alliteration.”

He certainly has my number there. I love alliteration. Tess Thurman. Although it's not quite alliteration because the first letter of both names make a different sound. But it's still pretty.

“How old am I?” I ask. My cheeks burn at the question. It's humiliating to have to ask something so basic. My age. Even a preschooler can tell you how old they are.

“You're thirty-six.”

Thirty-six. The last thing I remember before I went to bed was being twenty-nine years old. And now suddenly, I've lost seven years. Seven *years*. I'm now within throwing distance of forty. And this is not anything like the way I pictured my life at age thirty-six.

I push some of the brown eggs around my plate with my fork. “How long have we been married?”

“Four years.”

Four years. I've been married to this man for four years. Wow. Even though Graham is a stranger to me, he must know me very well. “Do we have children together?”

He sips from his coffee. “No.”

“Why not?”

“We just don't.”

He acts like it's a stupid question, but I don't think it's a stupid question. I wanted children—very much. It's something Harry and I used to talk about before we were even engaged. I want to press Graham further on

this, but he doesn't seem to want to talk about it. And it's not like there's any shortage of questions running through my head.

"What do you do for a living?" I ask.

"I'm an accountant by trade." He dabs his lips with a napkin. "But right now, I'm managing My Home Spa."

My eyebrows shoot up. "My company? You're working there?"

"Somebody had to keep it going."

He doesn't have to say the obvious: I can't do it anymore.

It makes me wonder about how successful my little company has become. It must do decently if Graham felt it was worth his time to keep it going when I couldn't. "Is there anything I can do to help?"

He smiles—it's a bit condescending. "I don't think so. But thanks for offering."

I pick up my own napkin from the table and start ripping it into little shreds. It's a nervous habit I have. Whenever I go to a restaurant, I always leave behind piles of ripped tissue. Harry always says to me, *I'll always know how to find you because of the trail of paper you leave behind*. Then he cleans it up before we leave.

Did. *Did* clean it up.

"How did we meet?" I ask.

"You were about to cross thirty-fifth street." He scoops up the last of his eggs. "And there was this car rushing at you, but you didn't see it." He pauses dramatically. "I grabbed you just before the bastard ran you down."

I cover my mouth with my hand. "Oh my God. So... you saved my life..."

He nods slowly. "The second I laid eyes on you, I just knew we were going to be together for the rest of our lives. You said the same thing. It was... fate."

That's just about the most romantic thing I've ever heard. It's like something out of a movie. I stare at Graham across the table, now seeing him in a little new light. This man *saved my life*. He's been taking care of me for the last year, since my accident. He's a good guy. And his cologne smells awful nice...

Oh my God, what am I thinking? I hardly know this man. I drop my eyes, my cheeks burning.

“So.” My throat tightens. “Do I ask you the same questions every single morning?”

“More or less.” He shrugs. “I don’t mind. I mean, how else are you supposed to know what’s going on? It’s okay. You can ask me whatever you want.”

“I...” I reach into the void of my memory, feeling a burst of frustration. He’s being so patient, but the sad truth is, I could ask him questions all morning and still feel lost. It’s better just to go about my day. “Could I have something to drink?”

A smile twitches at his lips. “A little early in the day for that, isn’t it?”

The heat in my cheeks intensifies. “I mean like some water or juice...”

“But of course.” As he gets to his feet, he does a little bow. He is awfully cute. “Your wish is my command, m’lady.”

I’d love to get my own drink, but it would be embarrassing to fumble around the kitchen, unable to find anything. I don’t even know where we keep the glasses. I’ll look around later and figure out where everything is. For now, I can only watch as Graham grabs a glass from the cupboard over the sink. He pours a blood-colored liquid into the glass, filling it to the top. As he picks up the glass, Ziggy leaves my side and growls at him, baring an impressive set of teeth. Remind me not to get on Ziggy’s bad side.

“Ziggy.” Graham’s lips set into a straight line as the dog’s growls become more menacing. “For Christ’s sake...”

“What’s wrong?”

“Your dog doesn’t like me.” As he says the words, Ziggy lets out another low growl. “He’s overprotective of you. Can you call him off, please? I don’t want him biting a hole in my suit. This is *Armani*.”

I pat my hip. “Ziggy... Come over here.” I take the other strip of bacon off my plate. “Want more bacon?”

Graham doesn’t look thrilled about me feeding the dog the rest of my bacon, but he doesn’t say anything this time. He picks up the glass of strange dark red liquid and places it on the kitchen island in front of me.

I crinkle my nose. “What is *that*?”

“Pomegranate juice. You love it.”

“I do?”

“You have a big glass of it every morning, so I would say you do, yes.”

I look down at the red drink. It's so... red. It looks like a big old glass of blood. I take a sniff of it—it smells sweet. It's probably not blood. It's probably actually pomegranate juice. Maybe it's good. If I drink it every morning, I must like it. Graham is watching me, so I tilt the glass towards me and take a sip.

Ugh!

"I like this?" I cough, tempted to wipe my tongue with one of the napkins on the table. "This is terrible!"

"Usually you do," he insists. "Honestly. You love this stuff—really love it. I have to buy a quart of it every week. Just... maybe you need another sip or two to get used to it."

I love this stuff? He can't be serious. But I guess he knows me better than I know myself.

I take another sip.

This time I outright gag. I leap out of my seat and run to the sink. I want to splash some water in my mouth, but the stupid sink has strange controls the same way as the shower did. I jab at one of the buttons and there's a crunching sound—I think I just turned on the garbage disposal.

"Graham," I gasp.

He leaps out of his seat to help me. He presses a button over the sink and cold water shoots out of the tap. He watches me with his brow furrowed as I splash water in my mouth. I feel ridiculous that I needed his help just to turn on the faucet, but it's not my fault all of the water faucets in this household require a Ph.D. to operate.

"Tess, are you okay?"

"That's the worst thing I ever tasted!" I take another handful of water and swish it around in my mouth, then spit it out. "I feel like I'm going to throw up."

"You know, that stuff is expensive." He sounds hurt by my reaction. "You usually finish the whole glass and want more. I have to make a special trip to buy it for you."

"Oh." Another flash of guilt. It must be hard for him to not know who I'm going to be and what I'm going to like on any given day. "I'm sorry."

I look up at Graham, who is watching me with a concerned expression on his handsome features. He's wringing his hands together. "You're having a bad day today," he acknowledges. "You're not yourself."

No kidding. I don't even know who *myself* is anymore. "I'm okay."

But that worried expression is still there. "Maybe we should go see the doctor. After the accident, they said that there's a possibility the blood could re-accumulate in your brain. Maybe you need to have a CAT scan or..."

"No. No." I swallow a bubble of fear in my chest. "I don't want that."

I hate doctors. So much.

When I was a kid, my mother was diagnosed with breast cancer. It was stage three when they caught it. I still remember her sitting me down on the sofa while I clutched my favorite doll, and she explained to me what cancer was. I was eight years old.

Soon after, she had surgery to remove the cancer, followed by chemotherapy and radiation. Lots of hospital visits, lots of doctors' appointments. She spent months at the hospital with tubes coming out of every part of her and oxygen prongs in her nose. Whenever I asked about it, she would explain that the doctors were making her better.

But it didn't seem like she was getting better. Every time I saw her, she was skinnier and the circles under her eyes were darker. It got to the point where I was scared to even visit her, because she didn't look like my mother anymore. I figured I would wait until she was better—until she was her old self again.

Then when I was ten years old, while I was trying to think of an excuse to get out of our daily visit to the hospital, my father told me she had died that morning.

You might say I'm scarred from the experience. I've got a terrible phobia about doctors and hospitals. And especially *tests*. Whenever I used to go for my annual OB/GYN visit, I would make Harry come with me and hold my trembling hand in the waiting room until the nurse called my name.

"Let me give your doctor a call," Graham says. "I just want to know what they think."

"Please don't. I'm okay."

"But—"

"Please, Graham!" I snap at him. He jerks his head back like I slapped him, and I feel guilty yet again. I soften my voice. "Sorry. I just don't want to go to the doctor. I'm fine, I promise."

Graham studies my face for a moment. I smile and do my best to look as perfectly healthy as possible. At least, as healthy as a woman who had a massive brain trauma could possibly look. If I say I don't want to go to the doctor, will he force me? Could he? *Has* he?

"Okay," he finally says. "But if anything changes..."

I place a hand over my heart. "I promise I'll tell you."

I definitely won't.

"Also..." Graham reaches into his pocket and pulls out a little black rectangular object. He places it down on the kitchen island, right in front of me. "This is for you."

I stare down at the object. What now?

"That's your phone," he explains.

"My... phone?" This looks about a hundred times fancier than my phone. I have a little silver flip phone. Harry and I are on the same account. We recently got unlimited texting and were super excited about it.

"It's an iPhone," he says. "You should hang onto it."

I have an iPhone? Wow, we must be pretty wealthy. "How does it work?"

One corner of Graham's lips quirks up. "You usually figure it out on your own."

I'm about to ask him what the hell he's talking about, because I'll never figure out how to use this fancy phone in a million years. It's even more confusing than the shower. But then I pick it up and almost instinctively, my thumb goes to the little button at the bottom of the screen, and the screen jumps to life. I don't know how, but it's like I already know how to use this phone, even though I've never seen it before. Obviously, I learned how to use it at some point and the memory never left me. Sort of like riding a bike.

I bring up the list of phone numbers programmed into the phone. Graham's name is listed first. Then there's a listing for "Dad"—thank God it seems like my father is still alive and well. And then there's Lucy. I feel a rush of relief at the sight of her name. Lucy has been my best friend since the first day of college, even before I knew Harry. It's a comfort to know that with just one click, I can hear her voice. I'm tempted to call her now, but with Graham right next to me, it seems rude.

There's only one other name on the favorites list. And it's one I don't recognize.

"Who is Camila?" I ask.

Before Graham can answer me, the doorbell rings. He swivels his head in the direction of the sound. "Actually," he says, "you're about to meet her."

CHAPTER 5

Graham disappears into the living room to open the door and greet Camila. I stay behind, pushing the eggs around my plate. They don't taste much better than the overcooked bacon, but at least they're edible. Barely.

Ziggy has gone to the back door, and he's yapping at it, eager to go outside. I wonder if I could take him out into the backyard. I assume the backyard must be fenced in. I'd love to sit outside with him while he plays. It will be nice to get some fresh air.

But then when I go to the back door and try to open the lock, I realize there's a problem. You can't simply turn the lock to open the door. There's a keyhole.

The back door requires a key to open it from the inside.

A sick feeling washes over me as I jiggle the door knob, wondering if this is some kind of mistake. I'm not locked inside here, am I? Why would the door lock this way? What's going on?

"Tess?"

I whirl around, my heart pounding. Graham is standing in the kitchen, and next to him is a woman in her mid-twenties. The woman is gorgeous. She has black hair pulled into a stylishly messy bun behind her head, falling in sexy tendrils around her face, a perfectly pert nose, and plump lips. She doesn't have one scrap of makeup on her flawless light brown skin. She blinks her big brown eyes at me, probably having witnessed my struggle with the back door.

"Hello, Tess." The woman's voice is gentle and has a bit of a rasp to it, like the voice of someone far older than her twenty-something years. "I'm Camila."

Considering her number is programmed into my phone, I suspect I have met this woman dozens if not hundreds of times before. It's embarrassing that she has to introduce herself to me. It wasn't quite as bad when it was just me and Graham, but I'm starting to feel like a mental patient.

"Hi," I say. "Um. Sorry to be rude but... who are you?"

“Camila keeps the house clean for us,” Graham says.

So... she is the cleaning woman? That doesn't seem quite right. First of all, why would I have her number programmed into my phone? Also, how come she doesn't have any cleaning supplies?

“Also,” he adds, “if you want to go anywhere during the day, Camila will help you get there. She'll keep you company. And drive you wherever you want to go.”

I look over at the beautiful Camila, who is staring intently back at me. “I can handle driving,” I say.

Graham and Camila exchange looks. “I don't think that's a good idea, Tess,” he says.

I fold my arms across my chest. “Why not? I'm an excellent driver. And I know this neighborhood. Why can't I drive?”

Graham's eyes evade mine. “You have seizures from your head injury. Legally, you can't drive.”

Graham is looking away, but Camila is looking straight at me, her gaze unwavering. She doesn't seem even the slightest bit uncomfortable about this conversation. “I'll take you wherever you want to go, Tess,” she says. This time I notice a trace of an accent in her raspy voice.

I stare straight back at her, trying to get her to look away or at least blink. But if this is a blinking contest, she is clearly the master.

“The back door is locked from the inside,” I say. “Where's the key?”

“I've got a key,” Camila says.

A lump forms in my throat. “Where is *my* key?”

“Listen, Tess.” Graham comes around the side of the kitchen island to stand closer to me. “Like I said, if you want to go anywhere, just let us know.”

My pulse starts to jump. The letter I wrote to myself said to relax and trust my husband, but I don't like any of this. This woman is not here to clean—she clearly has been hired to watch me all day. I'm a prisoner in my own home and she's my warden. There's something off about this entire situation.

“This is for your own safety, Tess.” Camila's voice has softened. “I know it seems weird, but you and I are friends. We're going to have a good day together. I promise you.”

I close my eyes and take a deep breath. *Just remember that the people around you care about you very much and only want you to be safe. Do what they say.*

Those were my own words. In my own handwriting. My wisdom to myself.

“Okay,” I say softly.

“That’s my girl.” Graham grins at me. God, he is very handsome. I can see how I fell for him, even if he’s not my type. Especially after he saved my life. “Anyway, I’ve got to get to work. But I’m going to leave you in Camila’s capable hands.” He winks at me. “So be good—both of you.”

He stands there for a moment as he pushes his glasses up his nose. He’s about to leave for work, and I realize this is the sort of moment when a normal wife who had *not* forgotten most of the last decade of her life might give her husband a peck on the lips. But I don’t know this guy. Am I really supposed to *kiss* him?

It feels like it should all come back to me. In the same way I knew exactly what to do with my phone, even though I didn’t remember having owned one. Or the way I looked down at Ziggy and instantly loved him. But when I look at Graham, he still seems like a stranger.

I can see in his eyes that he knows what I’m thinking. “It’s okay,” he mumbles. “I’ll see you later, Tess. All right?”

I bite down on my lower lip. “Okay.”

He offers me a tiny smile. He’s disappointed, but he’s trying not to let on. I might not know this guy, but he’s been so nice to me today. He comforted me when I was freaking out in the bathroom. He made me breakfast, even though it was very slightly charred black. He’s been patiently answering my stupid questions all morning. Maybe I still can’t remember him, but I can tell my letter was correct: he’s a good man.

So as he turns to leave the kitchen, I reach out and grab his arm. He looks back at me, blinking in surprise. And before I can overthink it, I lean forward and brush my lips against his.

I meant it just to be a quick peck, but Graham holds me there for an extra beat. When our lips part, that tiny smile is broadening across his lips. He looks the happiest I’ve seen him since I woke him up by screaming my ex-boyfriend’s name.

“Have a good day at work,” I murmur. “And thanks for taking care of my company.”

He envelopes my hand in his larger one and gives it a squeeze. “Anything for you, Tess.”

It isn’t until Graham has left the kitchen that I realize Camila has been glaring at us the whole time.

CHAPTER 6

Camila...

I'm not sure what to make of that woman. I've only known her for about five minutes—at least, five minutes that I remember. She claims we're *friends*. I find it a little hard to believe.

“What?” I finally say, because she is still staring at me. “What is it?”

“You don't usually kiss him.” She lifts her shoulders. “I was just surprised. That's all.”

“Well, he is my husband, isn't he? Why can't I kiss him?” I'm trying not to sound belligerent, but it's hard. Everyone is treating me like I'm a child.

She peers at me with her big, doe-like eyes. She's not wearing any mascara, but she has unfairly beautiful eyelashes. “Do you remember him?”

“I... a little.”

It's a lie. I still can't remember a damn thing about Graham, aside from what I learned this morning. But I married him, so I must have loved him. And he's been amazing to me this morning—even after I spit out the pomegranate juice he went to so much trouble to buy for me.

Camila flashes me a skeptical look. It irritates me that this woman knows more about my life than I do. I wish I could ask her some of the questions I was afraid to ask Graham. But there's no way. I can't have a heart-to-heart with a girl I just met. I'll have to give Lucy a call later.

Camila looks down at my plate, where the eggs Graham made me are nearly untouched. In addition to being dry, they lacked any sort of seasoning. She smirks. “Your husband is not a good cook.”

“No,” I admit. “He isn't.”

“I'll make you some breakfast,” she says. “What would you like? More eggs?”

The thought of a big heaping plate of scrambled eggs makes my stomach turn. “Just some toast would be fine. Thank you.”

She winks at me. “Coming right up.”

I watch Camila rifle through the refrigerator for a loaf of bread. I don't think she's done it intentionally, but she looks incredibly sexy in her casual outfit. She's wearing the same skinny jeans that I am, but they show off the sensual curves of her bottom and her shapely legs.

I can't help but think of the way Camila and Graham were sharing those knowing looks. They see each other every day, sharing the experience of dealing with me and my memory issues. And Camila is at least a decade younger than I am and far more attractive. Is it possible that they...?

No. I can't think that way. I'll drive myself crazy. God knows, I have enough to think about today.

Ziggy was whimpering at the back door, but when he notices Camila, he trots over to her and nuzzles her leg. She smiles down at him, then she grabs a treat from the cabinet over the sink. She holds it in her palm and he laps it up happily.

"How long have you worked here?" I ask her.

She runs her fingers under the faucet to wash off the dog's saliva. "About a year. Since you came home from the hospital."

"Do you like it?"

"It's not bad."

"That sounds enthusiastic."

She laughs. It's a throaty sound, like the laugh of a sixty-year-old lounge singer, and it makes me like her better. "I've worked for some horrible people. You—you're not so bad."

"Wow, thanks." But I'm smiling now as well.

The bread pops out of the toaster. Before I can tell her how I like it, Camila is already spreading butter and honey on top of the bread. That's how my mother used to make me toast. She used to let me do most of it though. Ever since I was about three years old, she would step back and let me press down the lever for the toaster. Then I would take a pat of butter and let it melt onto the warm bread. Then a little smear of honey. *Not too much, Tess!*

Camila is making me toast the way I like it. She's using the exact right amount of butter and honey. But instead of that uneasy feeling I've had most of the morning, it's comforting. I don't have to explain every little thing to Camila. She already seems to know me. It makes me feel taken care of, like when I was a little girl.

She deposits the toast in front of me with a glass of water. She flashes me a warm smile. “I’m going to clean up the bedrooms. Unless by any chance you made the bed?”

“I don’t think I’ve ever made a bed in my life.” I vaguely remember my mother asking me to do it when I was young, but after she got cancer, it was the least of her concerns. And Harry never cared—if I ever made the bed, he would think I had lost my mind. “Do I usually make the bed?”

She laughs again, that same engagingly throaty sound. “Not even once the whole year. But Graham likes them made up.”

“Can I help?”

She shakes her head. “I’m sure you’ve had a difficult enough morning. You just stay here and enjoy your breakfast. Later we’ll go shopping and take Ziggy for a walk.”

As Camila wipes her hands on her jeans and leaves the kitchen to go upstairs, my shoulders relax. Shopping and taking my dog for a walk. It doesn’t seem like a terrible day. Ziggy returns to me and rests his head on my lap, panting happily as I run my fingers over his fur.

This is going to be okay. Yes, my memory is patchy. But I feel taken care of. I can still enjoy the simple pleasures. Yes, I liked my life before. I miss Harry and I miss running my company. But this is okay too. And Camila did a good job with the toast. I’m going to take the advice in that letter I wrote to myself and just try to enjoy the day.

And then my phone buzzes on the table.

It’s the same sound my old phone used to make when I had a text message. Did somebody send me a message? Maybe it’s Lucy or my father. Or maybe it’s Graham. Maybe he’s the sort of doting husband who likes to check in on me at regular intervals. He seems like that sort of a sweet guy.

I pick up my phone—there’s a text message on the screen. But it isn’t from Graham or Lucy or my father. It’s from an unknown number. And as I read the message, my mouth falls open.

Don’t trust the man who calls himself your husband.

CHAPTER 7

Don't trust the man who calls himself your husband.

I stare at the text message on the screen, as I grip the phone in my right hand. I read it and reread it, hoping maybe it will say something different the second time. I do have a brain injury, after all.

But no. It still says the same thing.

My fingers are shaking as I type a reply:

Who is this?

Three little bubbles appear on the screen, flashing over and over. I sit there, frozen, waiting for the response.

Meet me.

I should say no to this stranger. The logical part of me is screaming out that this is extremely fishy. Somebody is texting me, trying to scare me, taking advantage of the fact that I have memory problems. Maybe they want to weasel some money out of me. Who knows what they want. I should block the number, ignore these text messages, and get on with my day.

Then I think of the message I saw scribbled on my thigh this morning before the shower washed it away. I wrote it in a place that I knew Graham wouldn't see. It was a message to myself. Something more personal than that letter I wrote.

Find...

Find what?

I have no idea what I had been trying to communicate to myself. But I have a gut feeling this text message might be the answer.

Meet you where?

The reply comes after several seconds:

Do you know the dog park on seventh?

I know where that is. There's a park on Seventh Street, and within the park, there is an enclosed area where people can take their dogs and let them roam free. I never had a dog before, but I've passed it several times. It's about five blocks away from here. After a hesitation, I type:

Yes. When?

More bubbles flashing on the screen. I squeeze my left hand into a fist, hard enough that my fingernails dig into my palm.

We can meet this afternoon. Tell Camila you want to take Ziggy to the park before you go grocery shopping.

I stare at the message, shocked by the number of details this mystery person knows about my life. They know about Camila—they know the name of my *dog*, for God's sake. And they somehow know Camila is going to want to go grocery shopping later.

I should tell them to forget it. This is too creepy.

But instead of deleting the text messages like I should, all I can think is that I can't wait for the afternoon. I need more information. I can't just sit here, twiddling my thumbs, wondering if the man I woke up next to in bed this morning is some sort of imposter.

Can we meet now?

More bubbles on the screen. God, why does it take this person so long to type a simple response? But when the reply appears on the screen, my stomach drops.

No. You can't leave the house.

I stare at the words. *You can't leave the house.* I look over at the back door, with the lock that requires a key to open. But that's not the only door in the house. There's also the front door. I can go out that way.

My heart is pounding as I grab the phone and march into the living room, Ziggy excitedly bounding after me. He wants to leave as much as I do.

But when I get to the front door, the lock on the front is identical to the one on the back. I fumble with the deadbolt, unlocking it and trying the doorknob. But no luck. The stranger is correct. I can't leave this house.

I'm trapped.

I look down at the screen again. The stranger has written to me again:
Tess?

You're right. I can't leave.

I know.

That feeling of contentment I had only a few minutes earlier has vanished. My head spins, a panicked sensation rising in my chest. For a moment, I'm scared my legs are going to give out from under me. But I make it over to the sofa. I can't help but notice it's a brand new black leather sofa that's a far cry from the ratty futon that I remember sitting in just yesterday.

But it wasn't yesterday. It was a long time ago. Years.

My hands are shaking almost too badly to type, but I manage to get out three words:

What's going on?

Those bubbles again on the screen. Goddamn it. Why can't this person just tell me what's going on?

Meet me this afternoon. Text me when you're leaving. I'll be there.

I shake my head, staring down at the screen. **OK.**

Write my number on your arm where nobody can see it. Then delete all these text messages. Don't tell anyone about it.

I don't question these instructions. I locate a pen in a little cup on the kitchen island. I yank up the sleeve of my sweater and carefully transcribe the ten digits of the phone number. I check and double-check to make sure I've got all the numbers copied correctly.

Even though I would've sworn I didn't know how to delete text messages, I swipe my finger on the screen, and almost instinctively, I hit the delete button. I've done this before. My fingers remember how.

I wonder if I've gotten these text messages before.

I bring up the list of contacts on my phone. Graham, Dad, Camila, and Lucy. The mystery texter is not listed. Obviously, Graham knows how to get into my phone since he was the one who handed it to me this morning, and this person does not want him to know they have contacted me.

I study my list of contacts. Camila and Graham are both strangers to me. I can't trust them. But I've known Lucy since college, and I've known my father all my life. Dad and I have never been close though. My mother was the love of his life, and he never quite recovered after she got sick and died. That said, he's my father and I trust him.

I tap on Lucy's name first. I grip the phone, pressing it against my ear so hard that it almost hurts. After several rings, Lucy's chipper voice comes on the recording: "Hey, it's Lucy. Leave a message!"

"Lucy," I manage. "It's Tess. I... I'm having the craziest day. I just... I need to hear your voice. Please call me when you get this. I'm sorry if I sound weird. I just... I need to talk to you. Please." I add, "*Please. As soon as you can.*"

Well, she'll get the idea to call me.

I call my father next. Like Lucy's number, it goes immediately to voicemail. I leave another desperate message, hoping he'll find time to call me back sooner rather than later. All I want is to hear a familiar voice to confirm everything the strangers in my house have been telling me.

When I'm done making my two calls, I lay the phone down on the coffee table. I stare at it, willing it to ring. But it doesn't.

I need to know the truth.

I've got to make sure I get to that dog park this afternoon.

CHAPTER 8

I watch TV while I wait for Camila to be done cleaning upstairs. I make it through an entire episode of *The Price is Right*. That used to be Harry's favorite game show, and we watched it together whenever we were home on a weekday. He was obscenely good at guessing the prices of the items.

I don't get it, I would say to him. How on earth do you know what a sewing machine costs?

He would grin at me. *The real question is, why don't you know what a sewing machine costs? I feel like public education may have failed you, Tess.*

He never quite explained his uncanny ability to know exactly what the retail price of every item was. Was he up late at night, studying online sales websites?

I'll never know now.

While I'm waiting, I browse the Internet on my phone. I find myself googling My Home Spa. And... it turns out my little company has gotten quite large over the last decade. I had just gotten a few key endorsements right before Harry and I were engaged, and it looks like they paid off. Before my accident last year, I was kind of a big deal. I even discover an article about myself, talking about how I turned a simple idea for luxury spa items you can use at home into a multi-million dollar company.

No wonder we had the money to turn this house into a palace. And no wonder Graham had to rush off to meetings to keep things going.

After I google my company, I type my name into the search engine. Followed by the words "car accident."

There are no hits. No mention of an accident.

In fact, after a slew of articles about me and my company, my name essentially vanished from the Internet about a year ago. It's like I just...

Disappeared.

I feel a twinge of panic. I bring up the saved numbers on my phone, wishing Harry's name were on the screen. After our first date, I saved his

number in my phone. So even after all the years we were together, I never bothered to memorize it. It never seemed important. But now I wish I had.

Of course, it's seven years later. Who knows if he even has the same phone number?

My phone lingers over "Dad." I already called him and left a message. He hasn't called back. Wouldn't he want to get in touch with me—his only daughter—after I've been in a devastating car accident? But then again, this information is only new to me. Everybody else has been living with the consequences of my accident for an entire year.

I click on his number. I wait as the call connects, and I hear ringing on the other line. One, two, three rings. And then a click.

Hello, you've reached Douglas Strebel. Please leave a message.

My father sounds stiff in his message, but that's no surprise. My father is the kind of guy who manages maybe five smiles the whole year. And two hugs—one on Christmas and one on my birthday. He wasn't always that way. When I was a kid, he used to smile all the time. Maybe every single day. That's what losing the love of your life does to you.

"Dad." I try not to sound like a complete wreck in my message, although I'm sure he'll surmise I'm having a bad day based on the fact that I've left two of them and it's not even lunchtime yet. "I... I really need to talk to you. So if you can call me back, I... please call me back, Dad."

And I put the phone on my lap and stare down at it, willing it to ring. I don't care if it's Lucy or my father who calls—I just need to hear one familiar voice. *Call, dammit!*

As I stare down at the screen, I feel a jab of pain on the right side of my skull. I reach out and touch the C-shaped scar. I lift my eyes from my phone, overcome by a surge of dizziness. The phone slides from my fingers as my vision grows cloudy. The entire living room seems to fade away to white and...

I'm in a large office. I'm sitting behind a desk, and I hear a rap at the door. "Come in!" I call out.

The door cracks open, and a man enters the office. It takes me a moment to recognize that it's Graham. A little younger, but with the same hair the color of sand and the same blue eyes behind a pair of wire-rimmed frames. His face splits in a smile. "Hello, Ms. Strebel."

"Please, Mr. Thurman," I say. "Call me Tess."

“Graham,” he says, as his hand fits into mine. He gives me a solid squeeze—not too hard and not like a limp fish—and very warm and dry. “It’s so nice to meet you, Tess.”

“Likewise,” I say. “Your references are amazing. I’d love to have you aboard.”

His eyes make steady contact with mine. “I’d love to work here. I read about your company in Entrepreneur magazine, and what you’ve done is amazing.”

It’s hard not to notice how attractive this man is. Obviously, I’m already engaged to Harry, but I’m not interested for myself. Maybe he’s someone I could set up with Lucy. He is smart and handsome and well-liked, if his references are to be believed. He’s a catch.

I gesture at the chair in front of my desk. “Please have a seat. Let’s talk more about your future here.”

“I’d love to.”

He maintains eye contact as he takes a seat. He’s good at that. I always look at the other person’s forehead, but Graham seems like the sort of man who wouldn’t have any trouble looking straight into somebody’s eyes.

“So could you tell me a little about yourself, Graham?”

He smiles at me now, and I can’t help but notice that his teeth are straight and flawlessly white. If I ask him what his biggest weakness is, he’ll probably be able to answer honestly that he’s just too perfect.

“I’m originally from upstate New York,” he says. “I got my bachelor’s degree in accounting from Ithaca. I’m CPA certified, and I’ve been working at a firm in the city for the last five years.”

“Are you still with that firm?”

He hesitates for a beat. “Unfortunately, they had to make some cutbacks recently, so now I’m looking for something new.”

And he didn’t make the cut.

But Graham doesn’t seem the least bit ashamed or apologetic about the fact that he was laid off. He still maintains that steady eye contact. I can’t help but think to myself that this man doesn’t look like an accountant. He’s too confident, too personable, to spend his days crunching numbers.

“So what made you go into accounting?”

Just as Graham opens his mouth to answer my question, the office fades away again to white. And then I'm back in my living room, sitting on my leather sofa. Except the difference is that Camila is standing over me, a worried expression on her face.

"Tess?"

I rub my right temple. I feel dazed, like I just woke up. "What... what happened?"

There's a deep crease between Camila's eyebrows. "I think you had a seizure."

I suck in a breath. Graham had mentioned the possibility of my having seizures earlier, when he said I couldn't drive, but I thought he was exaggerating. "A *seizure*?"

"You have them occasionally." She looks worried, but not that worried, considering I just had a big old seizure. "They are like mini seizures. Graham calls them absence seizures. You zone out for a few seconds, sometimes right in the middle of a sentence."

I've never had a seizure before, at least none that I remember. I didn't enjoy it. But the scene that played out before my eyes felt so real. It felt like something that must've really happened to me—like I was living it all over again.

But that doesn't make any sense. Because in that scenario, I was meeting Graham for the first time while he was applying for a job at my company. But that's not how we met at all. So obviously, my damaged brain is playing tricks on me.

"I need some fresh air," I manage. "Do... do you think I could take Ziggy for a walk outside?"

Camila cocks her head thoughtfully—I'm relieved she hasn't immediately rejected my request right off the bat. "Maybe in a bit. I'll let him out into the backyard. It's fenced in."

Ziggy clearly understands the word "backyard" because he is nearly levitating with excitement. He follows her to the back door, and so do I, although my legs are unsteady after what was apparently a seizure. I watch as she pulls a key from a chain around her neck. She fits the key into the lock on the back door and turns it. Ziggy bounds outside.

"I'll go sit with him," I say.

At first, I think she's going to slam the door shut and lock it again, but instead, she steps back. "Go ahead."

I feel a rush of relief as I step out into the fresh air for the first time today. I feel almost as happy as Ziggy looks. The locked door was so claustrophobic, but maybe that's just something they do at night. Obviously, I'm not a prisoner in the house.

I pick up a stick from the ground and I toss it into the air. Ziggy goes wild with excitement.

While Ziggy retrieves the stick, I survey the backyard, which is different than it was when Harry and I bought the place. It was mostly dirt back then with a few scattered blades of grass, possibly weeds, sprouting every few feet. But Harry loved it. He grew up in an apartment in Brooklyn and we lived in a shoebox in Manhattan for the entire time we'd been together. This was his first house. His first backyard.

We should put a hot tub out here, he said with a glint in his eyes.

And now I see it. The hot tub we dreamed about, surrounded by purple shrubs, at the far end of the yard. It's empty now, but I can imagine it filled with piping hot water. I can imagine sitting in a hot tub with Harry, him grinning at me with that suggestive look that never fails to turn me on.

But no. I've probably never shared this hot tub with Harry. I've only been in it with *Graham*. But the thought of sitting in this tub naked with that man makes me sick to my stomach.

Don't trust the man who calls himself your husband.

Ziggy is looking up at me, the stick in his jaw, nudging my hand so that I'll take it from him. He wants to play. At least I know my dog isn't lying to me. Dogs aren't deceptive the way people are.

I've got to meet the stranger who's been texting me. Maybe I can go now.

I take the stick from Ziggy and I toss it one more time, all the way across the backyard. While he runs to get it, I go around the side of the house, to the fence out of the backyard. There wasn't a fence here when Harry and I first moved in. But now it's around the entire backyard, and it goes up higher than my head.

And on the gate to get out of the backyard, there's a big thick padlock.

They have *got* to be kidding me.

I can't leave the backyard. I'm trapped here.

A sob forms at the base of my throat. What's going on with my life? Yes, my memory isn't what it used to be. And I had that strange episode this morning, which, okay, I'm going to admit might've really been a seizure. But I'm not so bad that they need to keep me locked away like a prisoner. I should be allowed to walk around the neighborhood.

My phone vibrates inside my pocket. At first, I think it's another text message, but the vibrating doesn't stop. Somebody's calling me.

Maybe it's Lucy. Or my father.

But then when I pull my phone out, Graham's name is on the screen. My stomach sinks. I'm not sure I want to talk to him. But what can I do? He's my husband. So I jab at the green button to take the call.

"Tess!" His voice is upbeat. "How are you doing? How is your day going?"

A tear escapes from my right eye and I wipe it away with the back of my hand. "You locked me in the backyard."

There's a long silence on the other line. "Tess..."

"Why are you doing this to me?"

"Christ," he mutters under his breath. "I'm coming home."

In the background, he's telling somebody to cancel a meeting. I feel a sting of panic in my chest. I don't want him to come home. If he comes home, I will have no chance of getting to the dog park on my own. I swallow the lump in my throat.

"You don't have to come home," I say to him.

"You're upset though."

"I... I'm okay." I take a breath. "Camila will take me out later, right?"

"Of course she will." Graham's voice is gentle. He doesn't sound like an evil person. He sounds like he's genuinely worried about me—his wife of four years. "Are you sure you're okay though? If you need me—"

"I'm fine."

He's quiet on the other line as he considers this. "I'm sorry this is scary for you, Tess. I wish I could be there for you all the time. I *hate* that we have to lock up the backyard. I really do. But last month you—"

"It's okay," I say.

"You swear?"

"Yes."

He sighs. "Okay. I'll try to get home early."

“Okay...”

I squeeze the phone as I stare at the padlock on the door to the backyard. I take a deep breath, trying to push back the panicked feeling. It’s okay. I’ll get out of here soon. I just have to wait until the afternoon. I can’t do anything to jeopardize that meeting.

“Tess,” Graham says.

“Mmm?”

“I... Listen, I...” He coughs. “I love you.”

I blink at the phone. I’m not sure what to say to that. It’s the last thing I expected him to say.

“I’m sorry,” he says quickly. “I know it’s weird to hear me say that. And you don’t have to say it back—I don’t expect that at all. I know you feel like you don’t even know me. But I know *you*. And... I just want you to know that... I love you. You’re my wife and I just want you to be safe.”

His voice breaks on the last few words of his little speech. He sounds like he means it. He doesn’t sound like some psychopath who is holding me hostage in my own home. He sounds like a man who is just worried about his memory-impaired wife.

“Tess? Are you still there?”

“I... yes. I am.”

“Okay, good.” He clears his throat. “Just hang in there. I know you’re having a rough day, but I’ll be home early and we’ll have a nice dinner together. Then we can watch *The Princess Bride*.” He laughs. “For the jillionth time.”

The Princess Bride—my comfort movie. The one my mother and I always used to watch together. He knows my comfort movie. And he’s willing to sit and watch it with me for the jillionth time. My husband is a good guy.

“As you wish,” I say.

There’s silence on the other line. “Um, okay,” he finally says. “Anyway, I better go. But I’ll see you later, Tess.”

That was strange. He has apparently watched this movie with me many many times, yet he didn’t seem to recognize the famous line from it that I just quoted. *As you wish*. Is that strange? I don’t know. Graham certainly doesn’t seem like any kind of monster from what I can tell. He sounds like

he genuinely thinks he's doing this for my own safety. And maybe he really does.

But either way, I intend to find out the truth.

CHAPTER 9

Camila makes us a lunch of turkey sandwiches.

I wait at the large wooden table that seats eight in our dining room, feeling slightly preposterous to be sitting here all alone. I thought Camila would make me a sandwich and leave, but instead, she makes two sandwiches and puts her plate down next to mine. She brushes a stray lock of her glossy dark hair behind one ear as she joins me at the dining table.

“This is turkey a la Camila,” she says. “You’ll love it.”

I look down at the fairly ordinary appearing turkey sandwich on the table. It’s cut in half diagonally, the same way my mother used to cut sandwiches when she was still alive. I pick up the half and take a nibble.

“Wow,” I say. “This is delicious. What’s your secret?”

Camila gives another of her throaty laughs. “Actually, it’s this spread that Graham introduced me to. It’s like this crazy pesto guacamole sun-dried tomato thing. It’s amazing. Your husband has excellent taste. Even if he’s a crap cook.”

There’s an affectionate look on her face when she says his name. Even though I only really met Graham this morning, Camila has known him for an entire year. They know each other well.

And Camila is really beautiful.

I watch her chewing on her turkey sandwich out of the corner of my eye. I wonder if something ever happened between her and my husband. After all, I’m not exactly an ideal wife right now. Nobody would blame him if he had a moment of weakness...

No. I need to stop. I’ve got enough to worry about.

“Could we take Ziggy to the dog park after lunch?” I ask.

“Sure,” Camila says. “He loves it there.”

“Great.” I have to suppress my excitement. I certainly can’t tell Camila about the text messages I got this morning or give her any inkling that I’m meeting someone. “Thanks for taking us.”

“Hey, it’s my job.”

I take a nibble of my sandwich. “Can I ask you a question?”

“Of course.”

“Do I... ever remember Graham?”

Camila considers my question as she takes another bite of her turkey sandwich. She chews for what seems like an eternity. “Honestly? Almost never. Usually, you wake up thinking it’s about seven years ago.”

“Oh... That must be hard on him.”

She runs her tongue over her teeth. “The hardest part is when you talk about that guy Harry a lot.”

“He... Harry was my fiancé. I mean, before...”

“Yeah. I know.”

I look into her big, brown eyes. What is the deal with those eyelashes? Does she have eyelash implants? “Do you know why we broke up?”

“I don’t know.” For the first time since I met her, Camila averts her eyes from mine. “Sorry, Tess.”

I can’t ignore the feeling that she’s lying to me. But there’s not much I can do. “It’s okay.”

“I know how hard this is.” She reaches out and places her hand on mine. Her palm is rough, which is a contrast with the silky smooth appearance of her skin. “I can’t imagine what it’s like to wake up and not know anyone around you. I mean, you must wonder if you can trust us.”

“A little,” I admit.

Camila thinks about it for a second, then she reaches for her purse, which is lying on the back of her chair. She rifles around until she comes up with her cell phone. It looks identical to mine, even though I am apparently very rich and Camila can’t be nearly as affluent. Maybe these iPhones are more common than they used to be.

She messes with her phone for a few seconds, then she slides it across the table to me. The screen features a color photograph—a picture of me and Camila, which looks like she took it while holding the phone in the air. Her arm is slung around my shoulders, and we’re both smiling. And I look...

Happy. Actually happy. I can see it in my eyes.

“I took that a few months ago,” she tells me. “Just so you know I’m not lying about knowing you for a year.” Her plump lips twitch. “And so you believe that you don’t hate me usually.”

“I believe you.”

“Sure.”

I do believe Camila. But that doesn't change the fact that I need to shake her at the dog park.

I finish the last bites of my sandwich just as Camila finishes hers. She stands up to take our plates to the kitchen, but I beat her to it. I grab her plate and mine and bring them over to the sink. At least I can feel useful by clearing the table and loading the dishes in the dishwasher.

And while I'm at the sink, I reach into my pocket. I check the numbers written on my arm, then type them into my phone. I send off a quick text message:

Leaving soon for the dog park.

The reply comes almost instantly:

I'll be there.

CHAPTER 10

Ziggy is almost deliriously happy to be going to the dog park. Like “backyard,” he seems to recognize the words, and he pants happily at the idea of it. I guess he’s a social dog. Although just about everything seems to excite him. I wish I had a tenth of his happiness.

We’re taking the car to the supermarket, and we’re going to stop at the dog park on the way. It seems crazy to take the car five blocks, but we’ll need it to get all the groceries home.

It’s frustrating that I can’t drive. I always liked to drive. I love the feeling of the steering wheel under my fingers and my foot on the gas pedal as music blasts on the radio. I wonder if there’s any chance I’ll be able to drive again in the future. It doesn’t seem likely. The thought of it would probably make me depressed, but it’s hard to feel too sad when Ziggy is bouncing around and licking me.

Camila attaches Ziggy’s leash to his collar, and we’re about to head out the door when she stops short. She reaches into her purse and pulls out her phone. She stands there, reading a message off the screen.

“Oh,” she says. “Graham’s going to be home early.”

I force a smile. “Great.”

By the time I see him, I’ll have sorted out what’s going on here. I’ll have met the mysterious stranger at the dog park and I’ll finally have some answers. For better or worse.

“So we better just go straight to the supermarket then,” Camila says. “You can take Ziggy to the dog park later with Graham.”

My heart sinks. “But... Ziggy is ready to go...”

She shrugs. “I’m sorry. You’ll have to go later with Graham.”

With *Graham*? No, that definitely won’t work.

“Can’t you drop me off at the dog park while you go shopping?”

She shakes her head. “I can’t do that. It’s not safe.”

A muscle twitches in my jaw. “It’s not *safe*? I’m a grown woman. What do you think I’m going to do?”

Camila's pretty brown eyes darken. "It's my job to stay with you today. We're going shopping together, then you'll go to the dog park later. Got it?"

I open my mouth to protest, but then I realize it's pointless. I won't convince Camila of anything. But once she unlocks that door, there's not much she can do. She can't tackle me to keep me from walking away from her. I'll pretend to go shopping with her, but then when I'm at the supermarket, I'll just leave.

"Fine," I say.

Camila rubs her chin, studying my face. Finally, she nods. "All right, then. Let's get going."

I never asked what season it is, but I surmised from all the leaves in our backyard that it must be early fall. Camila opens up the hall closet and hands me a gray zip-up sweater. The feel of the sweater is so soft in my hands, I want to wrap my whole body in it. I want to *bathe* in this sweater. I check the label.

"Cashmere!"

Camila snorts. "It sure is."

I look at the sweater, almost too intimidated to put it on. "I can't afford cashmere."

"Of course you can. You guys are rich."

I think back to all of those articles I read about my company. About how well it was doing. I still can't quite wrap my head around it. It feels like it must be some sort of mistake.

Either way, I already own this sweater. So I may as well put it on.

Ziggy seems heartbroken that we're not taking him with us on our trip. I'm not sure who feels worse about it—him or me. Camila unlocks the front door with the key around her neck, and I observe her carefully, noticing the shape of the key. There's got to be a spare key around here somewhere. They wouldn't risk being trapped here if there were a fire or something.

Camila drives a rusty green Nissan that's parked out in front of the house. As we walk out to her car, I wonder what she would do if I took off running. Would she chase me? Call the police? In any case, I don't think it would be a great idea to make a scene in my own neighborhood. I'll get away from her at the supermarket, which is only a short walk from the dog park.

“So how does it usually work when we go shopping?” I ask as I buckle myself in. “Do I have to follow you around?”

Camila starts up the car, which makes a strange crunching noise. It doesn’t instill a lot of confidence in me. But I’m already brain damaged—what’s the worst that could happen? “You usually grab a basket and do your own shopping.”

“Except I won’t remember what I bought by tomorrow.”

“True.” She winks at me. “But isn’t the shopping part the most fun?”

Camila slides a pair of sunglasses onto her nose, then she takes off down the block, the wheels of the car screeching in protest. As she drives far too fast, she fiddles with the radio controls using her right hand. She hits on an R&B station and turns the volume all the way up. I want to text the stranger to let them know I won’t make it to meet them, but I can’t let Camila see me doing it. If this person truly wants to help me, I can’t risk it.

The dog park is on the way to the supermarket. It’s about the halfway point. I look out the window as we approach the park, my heart accelerating.

The dog park is a large enclosed space at the far end of the park—fenced in so the dogs can roam free without fear of them running away. Camila skids to a stop at a red light, so I get a closer look at the dog park. There are three people inside. Two of them are women, who are animatedly chatting with each other. That leaves the other occupant of the dog park.

It’s a man. I can tell that much. But it’s hard to tell much else. He’s wearing a dark baseball cap low on his forehead, a pair of sunglasses concealing his eyes, and a beard covers the lower half of his face. He’s wearing a pair of baggy jeans and a dark brown jacket, his hands shoved deep into the jacket pockets.

I stare at this man. Is this the person who’s been texting me? Is that possible?

The man looks up at the Nissan. Even though he’s got on his sunglasses, I can feel his eyes on me. He’s staring right at me. And then he takes his sunglasses off.

Holy crap. Is that...

Harry?

My mouth falls open. I want to roll down the window and call to him, but I’m not even sure it’s him, and anyway, the light has turned green and

Camila is speeding away. I sit back in my seat, gripping my knees with frustration.

It's him. I'm sure of it. I *knew* he would never have abandoned me. We loved each other too much.

"Camila, could I wait at the park while you're shopping?" I ask desperately.

"Wait at the park?" She frowns at me. "What are you talking about? We're just going to be at the supermarket for fifteen minutes. Then we'll head back."

"Yes, but—" I can't tell her why I want to go to the park without giving it away. "I just think it would be nice to have some fresh air."

"Graham will take you there later. Don't worry about it."

I'm not going to change her mind, but it doesn't matter. As soon as we get to the supermarket and I'm out of her sight, I'm going to the dog park myself. I'll text Harry to wait for me.

The parking lot for the supermarket is nearly empty. I had been hoping it would be more crowded so it would be easier to slip away, but it's the early afternoon on a weekday, so that was unrealistic. Camila tosses her sunglasses in the car and we get out together. As she stretches from the drive, a man in the parking lot lets out a low whistle. She snorts and rolls her eyes.

"You wish," she remarks.

It's hard not to notice all the appreciative looks Camila gets as we walk to the supermarket together. From men *and* women. She's beautiful, like a sculpture. Even I can't help but admire her. Graham probably...

No. I need to stop thinking about that. Anyway, I don't care. It wouldn't bother me in the slightest if the two of them were having an affair. They're both strangers to me, after all.

When we get inside the supermarket, Camila grabs a shopping cart and hands me a basket. She looks me straight in the eyes. "Fifteen minutes, then we meet at check out, okay?" When I don't respond, she says, "You got me, *chica*?"

"Uh-huh." I bob my head. "Is there anything in particular that we need? Anything I should look for?"

"You let me take care of that," she says. "You get whatever you want. Something to help you enjoy the rest of the day."

I get the subtext of what she's saying. Whatever I buy, it should be something I can use today. Because by tomorrow, I likely won't even remember I have it.

Camila takes off for the dairy aisle. I watch her disappear into the distance while I head to the display of soaps. It always amazed Harry that there could be an entire aisle just filled with soaps. *Why do you need a separate soap for your face and your hands? Aren't they all basically the same thing—soap?*

I pick up a bottle of watermelon soap. I pretend to consider buying it, in case Camila is watching me. But then with my other hand, I pull out my phone. I punch in a message to the same number that texted me this morning:

I'm at the supermarket. I just need to get away from Camila then I'll come to the dog park. I'll be there in 15 minutes.

The reply comes almost instantly:

No, you won't. Delete these messages.

What is he talking about? I'm a ten-minute walk away. Camila is nowhere in sight. Does he think I don't know how to get to the dog park?

I'll be there. 15 minutes.

Don't try it. Delete these messages.

I frown. Before I can stop myself, I type: **Harry?**

Three bubbles flash on the screen repeatedly as I wait for his reply. My legs feel almost weak as the message pops up on the screen:

Delete these messages. Now.

Damn it.

I do what he says. I delete the messages on my phone. But I have not aborted the plan. I can make it to the dog park. I just hope he waits for me.

I drop the basket I've been carrying on my elbow onto the ground. I peek along the edge of the aisle, making sure Camila isn't in sight. We're supposed to meet in about fifteen minutes. So that's how long I have until she notices I'm gone. It's plenty of time.

I tuck my hair behind my ears—I still can't quite get used to how short it is. Why did I cut it? I had assumed it had something to do with the surgery I had after my head injury, but I don't know what to believe anymore. I miss my hair.

I stride purposefully in the direction of the exit. Once I'm outside, I'll turn left, and then it's a five-block straight shot to the park. It's funny how I remember it so well. I know how to get to the dog park, but somehow I can't remember the man I am supposedly married to. There's something seriously wrong with that.

I reach the sliding door, prepared to break into a sprint the second I step outside. But just as the automatic doors slide open, a large hand closes around my arm like a vise. And then a deep male voice booms in my ear:

“Where do you think *you're* going?”

CHAPTER 11

I freeze at the exit to the supermarket. The pressure of the hand grabbing my arm is intense enough to hurt—I may have a bruise tonight. There’s no chance of getting away. That’s for certain.

I turn around to figure out who grabbed me. A middle aged man is standing behind me, dressed in a gray uniform. He has a mustache and close-cropped gray hair, and muscles are popping out of the short sleeves of his uniform. His hand is still on my arm.

“I...” My mouth feels too dry to swallow. “I didn’t steal anything.”

I put that watermelon soap back. I’m sure I did.

“I never said you stole anything.” There is a gold ID badge pinned to the breast pocket of his uniform, emblazoned with the name Pete. “But are you supposed to be leaving here yourself?”

My mouth falls open. “Why can’t I leave?”

Instead of answering my question, he drags me by my arm over to the customer service counter by the back door. It feels like he’s about to rip my arm out of the socket. He grabs the microphone sitting on the counter, hits a button, and his deep voice booms out through the entire supermarket: “Camila Mendes to the front entrance. Camila Mendes to the front entrance.”

I suck in a breath, panic rising in my chest. My plan is disintegrating before my eyes. “What are you doing? Let me go!”

His hard, beady eyes look straight into mine. “If I let go of your arm, are you going to try to run?”

I want to run, but I’m not kidding myself that I’m going anywhere with this guy blocking the entrance. So I shake my head. The pressure on my arm eases up as he releases me. Christ, this guy is strong.

A few seconds later, Camila is racing to the front with her shopping cart. She’s frowning and there’s color in her cheeks. She abandons the shopping cart by one of the checkout lines and runs over to me, her dark eyes flashing.

“What do you think you’re doing, Tess?” she snaps at me.

“Nothing.” I raise my hands in the air. “I was just... I was shopping and this guy grabbed me.”

The burly guy, Pete, scoffs at me. “She was making a run for it. I stopped her before she got out the door.”

Camila nods. “Thanks so much, Pete. I appreciate it.”

He grins at her, obviously pleased that the beautiful Camila is grateful to him. She’s got him wrapped around her finger. “My pleasure.”

I jut out my chin. “Fine. I was trying to leave. What’s so awful about that?”

Camila shakes her head. “You can’t do that.”

“Actually, I *can*. I’m an *adult*. I’m allowed to go out on my own. I wasn’t going to take the car.”

Camila and Pete exchange knowing looks. I am getting so sick of everybody exchanging those looks. Like they’re all in on some secret that only I don’t know. And I find it even more interesting that Harry knew I wouldn’t make it out of here successfully.

“I want to leave,” I say through my teeth. “I’ll call the police if I have to.”

“Lady, *I’m* security,” Pete says.

I snatch my phone out of my pocket, glad I took the time to delete Harry’s text messages. “I’m calling 911. You can’t keep me prisoner here.”

“Tess, please.” Camila rests a hand on my arm before Pete can react. Her touch is gentle, at least. “Can we talk? Privately?”

I look between Camila and Pete, weighing my options. I want to try to make a run for it, but I don’t think I’ll make it. My best chance is to talk to Camila about it and explain how crazy this is. That I’m not some sort of dangerous mental patient who’s going to get myself killed if I’m alone for two seconds.

“Fine,” I agree.

Camila looks over at Pete. “You can go. I’ll handle it from here.”

His eyebrows shoot up to his hairline. “You sure?”

“I’m sure.”

Camila gently nudges me past customer service, down the hallway that leads to the bathroom. I follow her, my heart pounding so hard that I’m feeling dizzy. She stops and turns to face me, and all of a sudden, I’m not sure if I want to hear what she has to say to me.

“Tess.” Her voice is gentle but firm. Like a mother speaking to a naughty child. “Graham hired me to look after you today and every day. You’re not supposed to go off on your own. It’s not safe.”

“I just wanted to take a walk.” My voice has taken on a whiny tone, like I *am* that disobedient child. “I know where we are. I’ll be fine.”

“No.” Her dark eyebrows knit together. “You *won’t* be fine. You’ve wandered off before and haven’t been able to find your way back. Graham was worried sick about you. That’s why I’m here, Tess.”

Of course, I can’t contradict her. It’s hard to make an argument based on things I’ve done or haven’t done in the past when I can’t remember a thing before this morning. That alone is troubling. Okay, maybe I’ve had bad days when I got lost or confused—I can accept that. But today is *not* a bad day. And I desperately want to get to the dog park. Harry won’t stay there forever. He may have left already.

“I’m not going to get lost,” I say as calmly as I can. “And honestly, it’s not your decision to make. Like I said, I’m an adult. You can’t stop me from leaving.”

Camila’s plump lips set into a straight line. “Actually, I can.”

“*Excuse me?*”

“Graham is your legal guardian.” She stares at me, unblinking. “We have the court documents to prove it. If you try to leave here, I’ll call the police and they’ll bring you back to the house.”

My breath catches in my throat. “You’re lying.”

“We’ve had to do it before.” She purses her lips. “Several times. It wasn’t pleasant—trust me. I hope we don’t have to do it today, but I will if I have to.”

“How...” I can barely choke out the words. “How could you do that to me?”

Her eyes soften. “It’s for your own safety, Tess. You’re not competent to—”

“Bullshit!”

A few people in the grocery store turn to stare at us, but I don’t care. Camila is lying to me. I am an adult. I could walk out of here anytime I want and there’s nothing she could do to stop me. The police won’t stop me. If I called them, she would be the one who ended up in jail.

But Camila doesn't seem perturbed by my outburst. She looks like she expected it. There's a weariness in her expression, like she's had this conversation with me dozens of times before. The crease between her eyebrows grows deeper.

"You think you're okay," she says, "but you're not, Tess. Your memory is badly impaired. You get confused easily."

"I'm not confused..."

"And you imagine things that aren't there," she goes on. "Like, sometimes you imagine your ex-boyfriend Harry has been texting you and asking you to meet him."

I freeze. "What?"

"You say Harry is texting you. Telling you Graham is evil. That he's not really your husband." She sighs. "That's one reason you've wandered away."

My mouth hangs open. For a moment, I am speechless. "Maybe he really was texting me..."

She slowly shakes her head. "But he wasn't. We checked your phone and there was no sign of the messages. And we would go to the place he told you to meet him, and he was never there."

"Maybe he left..."

"Tess, Harry doesn't even live in New York anymore. He moved out west years ago. He... he's married to someone else now." She rests a hand on my shoulder. "Oh Tess, is that where you were trying to go? To meet Harry?"

I feel dizzy. I need to lean against the wall to keep from passing out. My brain is suddenly fuzzy. What she's telling me... it can't be true. I *did* get a text from Harry today. He told me to meet him at the dog park. I saw him there. He looked right at me. I didn't imagine that.

Did I?

I reach into my pocket for my phone. But of course, I have deleted all the text messages he sent me. If only he hadn't told me to delete them. Then I would have proof.

Camila is frowning at me. "Tess? Are you okay?"

I pull up my sleeve to reveal the number I scribbled there earlier. Camila's eyes widen when she sees it, but I don't even care anymore. I type the number into my phone and send off a text message:

Where are you?

I stare at my phone, waiting. Camila says nothing, just stands there with me. But nothing happens. No bubbles appear on the screen. Nobody is replying to my text message.

Oh God...

“Where did he say you should meet?” she asks.

I hang my head. “The dog park.”

She nods in understanding. The look of pity in her eyes is too much for me. My own eyes fill with tears. I don’t understand what’s happening. It all felt so real.

“I miss Harry a lot,” I murmur. “I... I wish he were here.”

Camila strokes my hair gently. “I know, sweetie.”

I close my eyes for a moment, remembering the day I met Harry Finch. I was only two years out of college and I was at Best Buy, looking at computers, intending to purchase a laptop. I was talking to the salesman, but this boy about my age with dark hair and eyes, wearing jeans and a T-shirt, was listening in. After a couple of minutes, he started correcting the salesman, who clearly didn’t know what he was talking about.

The salesman became more and more flustered until he finally burst out, “Do you want to take over here?”

The boy blinked a few times and finally smiled. “Yeah. That would be great.”

When the salesman was gone, we just stood there for a minute, smiling nervously at each other. “I’m Tess,” I finally said.

He jabbed a thumb at his chest. “Harry.”

“Nice to meet you, Harry.” I pointed at his shirt. “What does that mean?”

Harry looked down at the writing on his T-shirt. *There’s no place like 127.0.0.1*. I didn’t know at the time it was one of his favorite shirts. “127.0.0.1 is the local host IP address,” he explained. “It’s the home network on a PC. So...”

“There’s no place like home.”

“Exactly.”

I laughed, and he rewarded me with a smile that made his entire face light up. “Listen, Tess, I’m happy to help you pick out a computer if you’d like. But what I’d *really* like to do is take you to dinner tonight.” He ran a hand through his dark hair and I still remember how he was shaking a bit. “So... what do you say?”

I will never forget how happy he looked when I said yes. His expression will stay with me forever. Or the way he looked into my eyes when he asked me to marry him. It’s all so vivid.

Yet I can’t seem to remember my freaking *wedding day*. How is that possible?

“Tess?” Camila squeezes my shoulder, bringing me back to the present. “Are you okay?”

“No.” I swallow down a lump in my throat. “Please take me to the dog park. Now.”

CHAPTER 12

I don't say one word to Camila as we're driving to the dog park.

She left all the groceries behind at the supermarket. I was too upset to wait for her to finish shopping and go through check out. I needed to get to the dog park immediately. I needed to know the truth.

While I'm sitting in the car, I shoot off more text messages to the number scribbled on my arm:

I'm on my way to the dog park.

Don't leave.

I'm almost there. Please don't leave.

The entire day, every time I sent a text, a reply came almost instantly. But there's no reply to any of these text messages. It's like there's nobody on the other line at all.

I don't understand it.

I google the name Harrison Finch. I brace myself for a Facebook page featuring a picture of Harry with his arm around some beautiful woman. But nothing comes up. There's no mention of Harrison Finch anywhere. It gives me hope. Some.

Camila pulls into a spot next to the dog park. I've got my phone gripped in my right hand and I'm afraid to look up. Because in my heart, I know what I'm going to see.

"Tess?" Camila says.

I raise my eyes. The dog park is a stone's throw away from the car. All the people I saw at the park earlier have left. It's empty.

But Harry was there earlier. I *know* it.

I unbuckle my seatbelt and leap out of the car. I sprint over to the gate enclosing the dog park. My fingers wrap around the cool metal wires, which dig into my skin. I stare into the empty space. Harry isn't there.

Was he ever there?

I don't know anymore.

Is Camila right? Is Harry really gone from my life? Has he already left the state? Is he married to another woman, his time with me a distant memory?

"Tess..."

I turn around. It wasn't Camila who said my name this time. It was *Graham*. My husband, apparently. He's standing in front of me, still wearing the expensive gray suit that fits him like a glove, holding Ziggy's leash, the locks of his sand-colored hair tousled by the wind. He offers me a hopeful smile.

"Camila texted me to come here with Ziggy," he explains.

Ziggy is straining at his leash. He licks my hand excitedly. I run my hand over his fur, and instantly, I feel better. Dogs are magical. I don't know what I would've done today without him.

"I thought we could let Ziggy play in the dog park a bit," he says. "I'll let Camila go home early and we could spend some time here."

I look over at Camila, who is watching us from the car. I wonder how many times in the last year Graham has driven home early to make sure I was okay. I wonder how many times I've freaked out at the supermarket.

I wonder how many text messages I've imagined from Harry.

"Tess?" Graham furrows his brow. "What do you say?"

I run my hand over Ziggy's head. "Yes. That sounds nice."

CHAPTER 13

Graham and I end up having a great afternoon at the dog park.

He brought a rubber ball for Ziggy. The two of us take turns throwing it, and Ziggy brings it back for us. Although it's hard not to notice that my dog is not a fan of Graham. No matter which one of us throws the ball, he always brings it back to me.

"He doesn't like men," Graham explains.

I laugh. "Really? Why not?"

"Well," he says thoughtfully, "I think he wants to be the only man in your life. I can't blame him."

Ziggy trots back to me with the now sopping wet ball. I toss it underhanded across the enclosed area. "Tell me something interesting about yourself," I say to Graham.

"Hmm. Let's see." He taps his chin, and I'm pleased he has to think about it. Maybe this isn't something I ask him every single day. "I'm ambidextrous. Is that interesting?"

"A little. What else?"

"Um... I can do a superb French accent."

I raise my eyebrows at him. "Really?"

"*Oui, mademoiselle.* This iz the true."

I allow myself to laugh at Graham's truly terrible French accent. "Do you speak French?"

"No. Just English. I'm not cultured."

"Me too. Just English."

"I know."

My smile slips. "Oh. Yeah, I guess you know most things about me." Ziggy runs up to me and deposits the moist ball in my hand. I give it to Graham so he can have a turn throwing it. My fingers briefly brush against his, and I can't tell if he notices. "What was our wedding like?"

His blue eyes grow distant. "It was nice. Not too big. We did it in a church, and your dad gave you away. Lucy was your maid of honor. The guests got a choice of lobster or steak at the reception."

“Did we write our own vows or something cheesy like that?”

“No.” He laughs. He has a nice laugh that makes little lines crinkle around his eyes. I can see why I might have fallen in love with this man. “You were emphatic about that. No writing our own vows, no reading of poetry, nothing cheesy like that.”

“Did anybody object during the ceremony?”

He snorts. “You mean like *Harry*?”

I flinch. “Sorry. I just...”

He pushes his glasses at the bridge of his nose. “It’s okay, Tess. I get it. The last thing you remember is being engaged to Harry Finch. But you need to know... He wasn’t good to you. You had a good reason for breaking up with him.”

So I ended it. I’m the one who broke up with Harry. I want to ask Graham what happened, but it’s too weird. He’s my husband—we’ve been married for four whole years. I can’t ask him about my ex-boyfriend.

Even though I can’t stop thinking about him.

Ziggy returns the ball to me again, panting excitedly. I nearly throw it, but instead, I hold it out to Graham to take from me. He reaches for it, and once again, his fingers brush against mine. This time he definitely notices. His eyes lock with mine for a moment, then he looks away.

“Graham?” I say.

“Yes?”

“Do we ever have sex?”

He coughs into his hand. Maybe I shouldn’t have asked that. But I’m *curious*. We’ve been living like this for a year. I wake up most mornings not even knowing who he is, thinking I’m engaged to another man. It’s hard to imagine we’re making passionate love every night.

“Tess.” His cheeks turn pink. It’s very cute. “That’s... a complicated question.”

“I kind of think it’s a yes/no question.”

Graham tugs on his tie, loosening it a few notches. “We don’t have to do anything you don’t want to do. I would never ask that of you.”

“But do we? I mean, sometimes?”

“Sometimes,” he says quietly. “On your better days. When you remember me.”

I want to ask him how often that happens, but from what Camila has told me, it seems pretty rare. I look at my husband in his expensive gray suit that enhances his muscular build. There's nothing distasteful about him—most women would find him attractive. But I've never been the kind of person who did one-night stands. I can't imagine making love to this man tonight.

At the very least, it would require quite a lot of wine.

Graham doesn't say anything else on the topic, and I'm grateful. Instead, he tells me about our honeymoon in Aruba. (Apparently, I got my wish of going someplace hot with lots of beaches.) He tells me about how when we got home from our honeymoon, our luggage was lost and the basement of the house was flooded. I assume he must've told me these stories at least a dozen times in the last year, but he doesn't seem to mind.

After another hour, he glances down at his watch. "We better get back home. I still have work to do, but I can do it from my office upstairs."

"Oh. Sorry to keep you from your work."

He grins at me. "Well, it's your company. I'm just stepping in until..."

Until my brain injury heals. Which—let's face it—will be never. I'm just glad I've got Graham to keep my company from falling apart. I might not remember my husband, but it's pretty clear I'm lucky to have him.

CHAPTER 14

We walk Ziggy back to the house. I'm holding Ziggy's leash with one hand, and part of me wonders if I should reach out and take Graham's hand with my other one. It would make him happy, but I just can't make myself do it. Graham seems like a nice enough guy, but I still can't quite think of him as my husband. Even though I'm trying.

When we get home, a buzzing noise startles me. It takes me a second to realize my phone is ringing.

Could it be Harry?

No, it couldn't be. That whole thing with Harry this morning was just a delusion manufactured by my damaged brain. That phone number scrawled on my arm didn't work. And according to Camila, he doesn't even live in the area anymore. He's got a whole new family now. Why would he be sending me text messages?

Graham turns to look at me. "Is that your phone buzzing?"

"Um..." I put my hand on my pocket, nervous to take my phone out in front of him. "Is it?"

He cocks an eyebrow. "Aren't you going to answer it?"

"Should I?"

"Yes? I would imagine so?"

I take my phone out of my pocket, fully expecting to see that same number flashing on the screen. But instead, there's a name on the screen. "It's Lucy!"

Graham grins at me. "Great. I'm going to go upstairs and get some work done. Why don't you talk to Lucy?"

As my husband mounts the staircase, I click the green button to accept the call. A second later, a familiar worried voice comes on the other line: "Tess? Are you okay?"

It's the first familiar voice I've heard the entire day. It's an effort to keep from bursting into tears. "Lucy!" I sink onto our extravagant leather sofa. "It's you!"

There's a pause on the other line and then laughter. "Yes, of course it's me. Who else would it be?"

“I have no idea.” I squeeze my eyes shut. “It’s been a rough day, Lucy.”

“I know, sweetie. I could tell you were having a rough morning. I was trying to find a free minute to talk to you.”

“Are you at work?” I ask. Lucy was always bouncing from job to job, never quite able to find the right fit. Most recently, she had been trying her hand at being a pharmaceutical rep.

“Unfortunately, yes. Your husband is quite the slave driver!” Then she giggles. “I’m joking! Obviously.”

My mouth falls open. “You work for My Home Spa?”

“That’s right.” Her voice grows softer. “You don’t remember?”

I don’t remember Lucy taking a job at my company. To be honest, I don’t remember her being particularly supportive of the entire venture. When I talked about starting the company, she shook her head at me. *What do you know about starting a business?* When I explained Harry was going to be helping me, she was even less enthusiastic—Lucy was not the biggest fan of Harry Finch. *It just seems like this might end up being a big mistake, Tess.*

“I guess not,” I mumble.

“Oh, Tess,” she sighs. “You really are having a rough day.”

“I’m sorry I bothered you at work...”

“It’s no bother! You sounded so upset on the phone! I just wanted to make sure you’re okay. And I knew it would be a comfort for you to hear my voice.”

She’s right. Lucy and I were roommates in college, then again for several years after college until I moved in with Harry. She is my closest friend in the entire world. I’m even closer to her than I am to my father, who still hasn’t returned my phone calls. Getting to talk to somebody I remember from my old life feels like a return to sanity.

“I can’t believe you work for My Home Spa.” I shake my head, thinking of all the years that have gone by since my last retrievable memory. “Lucy, are you... are you married? Do you have children?”

It feels strange to ask my best friend those questions, especially since I probably spoke to her yesterday. But I’m dying to know the answer.

“No, haven’t taken the plunge yet,” Lucy says in that flippant way of hers. “Men are just... You know how it is. Nice guys are too intimidated to

approach me—they assume they don't have a chance. So the only guys who hit on me are the smarmy jerks... or the married guys.”

She has a point. Lucy is gorgeous, but she never seems to have a boyfriend. Although Harry used to say about her, *She's not as pretty as she seems to think she is. Nobody could be.*

“So what's going on, Tess?” Lucy asks. “I'm assuming Graham filled you in on everything. You read the letter, right?”

“You know about the letter?”

“Of course I do. We thought it was better if you heard about the accident in your own words. It was an idea we came up with to help you feel more comfortable when you first woke up. Did it work?”

I chew on my lower lip. “Sort of.”

“So what was rough about the day then?”

I debate if I should tell Lucy about the text messages. I hear the words in my head and it makes me sound so crazy. I can't even bring myself to say it.

“Did you have to go to a doctor's appointment?” she asks in a low voice.

“No, nothing like that.” Lucy knows all about my phobia about doctors and hospitals, stemming from my mother's terminal cancer. She knows I have a panic attack every time I need to visit the doctor. “I'm fine. It was just so strange to wake up next to Graham when...”

“You couldn't remember him?”

“Yes...”

“I can't even imagine...” Lucy lets out a long sigh. “But you should know, Tess... Graham is a good guy. He loves you a lot.”

“I guess...”

“And he's *hot*, right?”

“Yes...” I can't deny Graham is hot.

“Honestly, Tess, he's so much better than Harry.”

A tear cascades from my right eye at the mention of Harry Finch, and I brush it away. “Lucy, where is Harry?”

There's a sharp inhale of breath on the other line. “Tess...”

“Please tell me. *Please.*”

“I... I don't know. Before your accident, you hadn't mentioned him in years. But now...”

“Why did I break up with him?”

She’s quiet on the other line. “You just grew apart.”

“Grew apart? Lucy, we were *engaged!*”

“I don’t know.” There’s a vagueness to her voice that makes me think she’s lying to me. “You called it off.”

“When?”

“Maybe six months after you got engaged? I can’t remember. You just said you were glad you decided not to marry him before the wedding invitations went out.”

“But *why?*”

“I don’t know, sweetie. He was just sort of a loser, you know? And you were so much better off without him. You were *way* too good for Harry Finch.”

I wince at her comment. Harry and Lucy didn’t particularly like each other, but they both tried to be civil around each other for my sake. And Lucy promised to keep the negative comments to a minimum. This isn’t the first time she’s informed me I was too good for Harry.

“And then you started seeing Graham...” she adds.

“Yeah...”

“And he’s great. An all-around wonderful guy.”

“He seems nice.” I chew on my thumbnail. “He’s been so kind to me today. And it’s such a great story about how we met. The way he saved my life...”

Lucy laughs. “Saved your life? What are you talking about?”

I frown. “The story of how we met. Hadn’t I told you before?”

“Well, yes...”

“It’s... romantic.” I squeeze my eyes shut, wishing I could remember the day it happened. “A car was going to hit me and he pulled me out of traffic...”

“Pulled you out of traffic!” Lucy cackles with laughter. “Who told you *that?*”

My fingers freeze on my phone. “Graham told me. This morning.”

The laughter instantly dies. “Oh.”

“What are you saying?” I press her. “How did Graham and I really meet?”

“Well, he...” I can hear her swallow. “He was an accountant you hired for your company. I... I thought that’s how you met. But maybe he also saved your life. Or... is it possible that you misunderstood?”

That scar on my right scalp throbs dully, and I press my fingers against it. Graham told me this morning that we met when he saved my life. I’m *sure* of it. I may not remember what happened yesterday, but the conversation with him is so clear in my mind. He told me he pulled me out of traffic just before a car was about to hit me.

Didn’t he?

I pull up the sleeve of my shirt. I stare down at the number that I apparently fabricated completely. It felt so real, but it wasn’t. I can’t trust myself.

“I have to go,” I manage.

“Tess?”

“I’m sorry, I...” I gulp for air. “I need to talk to Graham about something. I... let’s talk later.”

“Are you okay?”

“Yes. I promise.”

I hang up the phone before Lucy can ask any other questions. My head is throbbing again. Maybe Graham was right. Maybe I do need to see a doctor and get another scan of my head. Maybe my brain started bleeding again. All I know is I can’t trust any of my memories anymore.

I close my eyes and remember that snippet I had imagined when Camila said I was having a seizure. The one that felt so real, where Graham was coming into my office to interview for a job at My Home Spa. I had thought it was a figment of my imagination, but it seems consistent with what Lucy just told me. Maybe it was an actual memory.

I shove my phone back into my pocket and run up the stairs to the second floor. I start to go to the bedroom, then I notice another door is ajar, and the light is on inside.

It’s the bedroom right next to the master bedroom. When we bought the place, Harry joked, *That’s where our firstborn will sleep*. Even then, we assumed we would end up together for the rest of our lives. We both wanted children. Two or three—we couldn’t decide.

But Graham and I don’t have any children. So what is in this room?

Before I can second guess it, I reach for the doorknob. I'm tired of my entire life being a mystery. I want answers.

CHAPTER 15

I nudge the door the rest of the way open. It's an office. Graham's office. He's got a mahogany desk set up with a black leather chair, and a bookcase pushed up against the wall, stuffed to the brim with books and papers. He's got a laptop on the desk, and next to it is a picture frame containing a photograph of me and Graham.

I pick up the frame. It's the two of us on a beach somewhere. My hair is long and thick in the photograph, and my skin is several shades darker than it is now. And I look... happy. Graham's arm is around me and we're both grinning for the camera.

I replace the frame on the desk where I found it. The next item I pick up is a pen. I twirl it around and notice there's gold lettering on it. *My Home Spa*. I test the pen on a blank piece of paper on the desk. It writes nicely—good quality.

There's a large drawer below the desk. On an impulse, I reach for the handle of the drawer and try to pull it open. It doesn't budge.

It's locked.

"Tess? What are you doing?"

I jump away from the desk at the sound of Graham's voice. He's standing in the doorway to his office, his light brown eyebrows bunched together, staring at me.

"I..." I wipe my hands self-consciously on my jeans. "I was just... curious."

Graham's blue eyes are still on me. It's making me uncomfortable. Despite what Lucy said about him being "a good guy," I don't know him at all. I don't know what he's like. And if Lucy never lived with him, she doesn't know either. Not really.

"It's not your concern," he says. "It's work papers. Contracts."

"Why is the drawer locked?"

He shrugs. "I don't want anybody stealing it. There are some sensitive documents in there. Work related."

I meet his gaze. Is he telling the truth? What's in this drawer that he felt the need to lock it? But I have something much more pressing to ask him:

“Were you lying when you told me we met when you saved my life?”

Graham blinks at me. For a moment, I am certain he's going to deny it, and if that happens, I don't know what to think anymore. But then he hangs his head. “I'm sorry.”

I let out a breath. The conversation we had this morning was real. “So you lied?”

“Yes.” He pulls off his glasses and rubs his eyes. “I'm sorry. I shouldn't have. But...” He looks back up at me. Without his glasses on, the purple circles under his eyes look darker. “You don't know what it feels like to wake up every morning and your wife is sobbing for some guy who treated her like shit.”

“Graham...”

“I'm not the hero type.” He puts his glasses back on. “I'm all Clark Kent—no Superman. But I thought there was no harm in telling you I did something heroic for you. Something that might...” A flush fills his cheeks. “Something that would make you like me better.”

When I came up the stairs, intending to confront him, I felt a mixture of anger and fear. Anger that he might have lied to me. And afraid that I imagined the whole thing. But now that he's admitted the truth, my heart goes out to him. He looks so guilty about the whole thing. And I can't even blame him. My life is ruined because of the accident, but his life isn't any picnic either.

“Anyway.” He heaves a sigh. “I'm sorry. I should never have told you that. It seemed like a harmless white lie, but I shouldn't have done it.”

“No,” I agree. “You shouldn't have. I need to be able to trust the things you tell me. You can't lie to me.”

“I know. I'm so sorry.”

“*Ever.*”

He lays his right hand on his chest. “I swear to you, Tess. I won't do it again.”

Our eyes meet again, and a little tingle goes through me. I almost feel like... maybe I remember something about him. Some little moment between us. The first time he smiled at me. The way his glasses always

slide down his nose and he has to push them back up. Tying his tie for him in the morning, then pulling him close for a kiss.

“You don’t have to make up any stories,” I say. “I mean, look at what you do for me every day. You could have dumped me in a nursing home somewhere. But instead, you do everything you can to make me happy. You *are* my hero.”

A smile creeps across Graham’s face. “Of course I do everything to make you happy. You’re my wife. And... I love you.” He wrings his hands together. “Christ, I really want to kiss you right now. But I don’t want to make you feel like—”

“Kiss me,” I breathe.

Graham bridges the space between us. He cups my cheeks and brings my face close to his. He presses his lips onto mine and my body melts into his. The kiss we had this morning was just a quick peck, but this is something so much more. When our lips separate, I’m trembling.

“That was nice,” I gasp.

“It sure was...”

He leans in to kiss me again, but then I hear a ringtone. He pulls away from me and curses under his breath. “Shit. I’ve got a meeting I need to call into now.” He hesitates like he’s thinking of blowing it off, then he shakes his head. “Busy afternoon. I’m sorry.”

“No problem.” I’m not sure whether to feel disappointed or relieved. If not for his phone going off, I have a feeling this would have progressed to the bedroom. And despite this sudden surge of attraction I feel for Graham, I’m not sure I want that. I still barely know who he is. And despite whatever Harry did to me, it still feels like he’s my fiancé, and being with another man would be cheating. “I’ll go downstairs.”

He nods and gives me a quick kiss on the lips before taking the call.

CHAPTER 16

Graham orders takeout for dinner, which is a relief because it's obvious from breakfast this morning that he's not any kind of gourmet chef.

We decide on an order of pad thai, pad see ew, and dumplings as an appetizer. When the food arrives in a giant paper sack, the smell of it makes my stomach rumble. It's hard to know what to eat when I can't remember what happened yesterday. How do I know if I indulged myself the day before and need to eat like a bird today? Or maybe I've been eating healthy and deserve a treat? How would I know?

Don't think about that. Just enjoy the food.

Graham carries the paper sack with our food in it to the black marble dining table. He drops the bag onto the table and rips it open. But before he unpacks it, he hesitates.

"You better give me your phone," he says.

I stare at him. "What?"

"Your phone," he repeats. "Let me have it."

"But... why?"

"It's almost eight o'clock. Why do you need it, anyway?" He holds his hand out and wiggles his fingers. "Just give it to me so I can keep it safe."

I pat my pocket, with my phone nestled inside. "It's safe here."

He drums his fingers on the table. "Right. But tomorrow morning, you're going to have no idea where you left it. If you give it to me, I'll put it somewhere safe. And I'll give it to you first thing in the morning like I did today."

What he's saying makes sense, but I am reluctant to give up my phone. Considering I'm locked in here, the phone feels like a lifeline. "Can't I keep it until it's time for bed?"

He presses his lips together. "You tend to get more confused as the evening goes on. Once you put your phone in the freezer and it was wrecked."

Is that true? I don't feel at all confused right now. And like he said, it's almost eight o'clock. "What if my father calls?"

“He’s on a cruise right now. He’s probably not going to be answering your calls.”

“My father is on a cruise?” That doesn’t sound like him. I don’t think he’s been on one date since my mother died. “Why would he go on a cruise?”

Graham shrugs. “Why not? Isn’t he entitled to have some fun?”

There’s a subtext there. That other people in the world are out there having fun, while we’re stuck in this horrible situation. For an entire year. And maybe for the rest of our lives.

“Tess, will you just give me the phone?” He shoots me a look. “If I don’t take it now, I’m going to spend half the morning searching for it. Let me put it someplace safe, okay?”

I know I should just hand it over, but I’m reluctant. I’m not even sure why. Everything Graham has said makes sense. There’s no reason why I shouldn’t hand over my phone. But I also don’t quite understand why I have to do it right this minute.

“Listen, Tess.” He folds his arms across his chest. “If we’re going to have an argument every night about your phone, then maybe it’s a mistake for you to have a phone.”

I jerk my head back. “Are you *threatening* me?”

“I’m not threatening you.” His voice is maddeningly calm. “But I hope you can see my situation. It’s an expensive phone, and you get confused easily. The doctor you saw after your head injury didn’t think you should even have a phone, but I wanted you to have it so we could contact each other during the day when I’m away. Was I wrong?”

I don’t say anything to that. I just stare back at him.

He lets out a sigh. “I know this is hard to wrap your head around, Tess, but you don’t always know what’s best for yourself. I have to make some decisions for you, and if you don’t like it, then I’m sorry. But that’s just the way it is.”

He’s talking to me like he’s my father. But it hits me that if what Camila said earlier is true, this man is my guardian. Because of my head injury, he has the power to make all my decisions for me. And if he doesn’t want me to have a phone, that’s his prerogative.

The thought of it makes me ill. But he’s right. This is the way it is. And if I let myself get upset over it, I’m going to be miserable.

I dig into my pocket and fish out my phone. I drop it into his waiting hand. “Fine.”

He nods at me. “Why don’t you unpack the food, and I’ll go plug this into the charger. I’ll also grab us some plates and water. Unless you want pomegranate juice?”

I gag at the thought of pomegranate juice. “Just water is fine.”

Graham disappears into the kitchen, and I’m tempted to follow him in there and see where he hides the phone. But I don’t know why I am being so paranoid. It’s not like anybody is going to call me tonight. I already spoke to Lucy, my father is apparently on an exciting singles cruise, and it’s not like my company is going to be reaching out to me anytime soon. Graham has that under control.

He’s gone for several minutes—long enough for me to have started eating some of the pad thai noodles straight from the container with the plastic fork they provided. Ziggy appears next to me at the table, nuzzling my knee and begging for food. I take a little piece of beef out of the container and hold it out to him. He laps it up.

“I told you not to feed him from the table.”

Graham has finally re-emerged from the kitchen, carrying two glasses of water and two ceramic white plates. When Ziggy sees him, he barks loudly. He bounds over and starts growling at Graham.

“For Christ’s sake!” Graham’s face turns pink. “Tess, can you get your goddamn dog away from me? I’m going to drop everything.”

I leap out of my seat and grab a hold of Ziggy’s collar. I stroke the smooth golden fur on his head, but he won’t stop growling at Graham. Maybe it is a jealousy thing, like Graham said, but boy, Ziggy *really* does not like him.

“Put him outside while we eat,” Graham says.

I frown. “It’s cold out.”

“It’s not that cold. And he’s got his fur. And there’s a doghouse out there. He’ll be fine.”

I just stare at Graham.

“Seriously, Tess?” He drops the glasses of water and plates onto the dining table with a loud thump. “Do we have to argue about every little thing?”

Before I can answer, Graham seizes Ziggy's collar and almost drags the poor dog into the kitchen. Ziggy's paws make a scraping sound as he attempts to keep his footing on the ground. I don't follow them because I can't even watch. Graham's sharp voice echoes from the other room. "Go! Get out!"

The next sound I hear is the back door slamming shut. And a key turning in a lock.

Graham has now locked the back door.

When Graham returns to the dining room, his face is still pink. He distributes the plates and glasses he brought to the dining table—one plate and glass for me, the other for him. Then he drops into his seat, a scowl on his face.

"Sorry," he mutters. "That dog is always begging at the table for food. I'm so sick of it. He never listens to what we tell him to do."

"Maybe he needs obedience lessons?" I suggest. But I don't really think that. From what I could see today, Ziggy is an incredibly well-behaved dog, save for the last few minutes.

"Maybe..."

"I could call and make an appointment for lessons?"

He scoffs. "Yeah, when exactly would you do that?"

"Tomorrow morning," I start to say. But then I realize his point. I'm not going to remember to do anything tomorrow morning. When I wake up in the morning, God knows what my last memory will be. I probably won't even know who Ziggy is, same as this morning.

But maybe I will. Maybe I'll remember. It seems impossible I could forget this crazy day.

Graham takes a long swig from his water glass. "Let's eat."

I pile a stack of noodles onto my plate and Graham does the same. For fifteen minutes, we eat in complete silence. I wonder if that's what we usually do, or if the conversation flows readily. What can I talk about? Current events? The latest movies? Music? All those topics are difficult for me.

I suppose we could talk about stuff from the past. But I can't remember any of our shared past. And I can't remember what conversations we've had before. I'm scared anything I say to him will be something I've already said dozens of times before. It's awkward.

So instead, I decide to opt for some small talk. I wrack my brain, trying to think of some mundane topic that will be at least a little interesting.

“The food is pretty good at this place,” I finally say.

Graham nods. “It’s your favorite Thai restaurant.”

“I have good taste then.”

I had hoped he’d laugh at my little attempt at levity, but instead, he furrows his brow. “Tess, I’m sorry I had to take your phone.”

“It’s fine. You’re right. I probably would lose it during the night.”

“Yes but...” He looks troubled. “I’m your husband, not your father. I shouldn’t be telling you what to do. But... you *do* lose your phone whenever I let you keep it. I’m just trying to do the right thing.”

“I understand.”

“Do you?”

“Yes.” And I do. Sort of. “But... you say I usually get confused at night...”

He nods. “Very confused. Sometimes you even forget your own name.”

A little shiver goes down my spine. “But that’s the thing. I don’t feel...”

I had been about to tell him that I don’t feel confused. But just as the words are coming out of my mouth, I realize that my tongue feels heavy. A wave of dizziness washes over me, and for a moment, I almost feel too tired to pick up my fork and take another bite.

“Tess?”

“I’m okay.” I shake my head and my right temple throbs. “I just feel a little tired.”

And that’s when I realize my words have started to slur like I’ve had a few too many drinks. If I didn’t feel so tired, I might panic. Despite my memory loss, I’ve felt fairly normal today. But suddenly, my brain feels like it’s in a complete fog.

“Graham...” My mouth feels like it’s full of cotton. “There’s something wrong with me.”

Graham’s eyes soften. “I told you—this happens every night. You get more confused as the evening goes on. That’s why I wanted to put your phone away.”

My eyelids feel almost leaden. I don't know how I got so *tired*. Twenty minutes ago, I felt *fine*. Is this my brain shutting down for the night? And resetting, getting rid of all the memories I acquired today...

I don't want that. I don't want to forget today. I don't want to forget Graham and Ziggy. But I already feel it slipping away from me.

I take another gulp of water, hoping the cold liquid will clear my head. It doesn't help.

"Do you still want to watch a movie?" he asks gently. "Or we can go straight to sleep if you'd like..."

"I..."

I don't want to go to bed. No, no, no. I need to remember. There's something I need to remember.

I take another sip of water. The last drops of liquid from the cup slide down my throat. It's almost becoming hard to swallow. Does this happen every night?

"I'm tired," I manage.

"I know, Tess." Graham reaches across the table and takes my hand in his. His hand is soft and warm. I'm lucky to have him. What would I do otherwise? I'd have to be in an institution. Thank God for Graham. Thank God. "Let's get you to bed."

I stare down at my water glass in front of me. I consumed nearly every drop of the water, but the glass isn't quite empty. Instead, there's a little white film in the bottom of the glass. Like a fine white powder.

Oh my God.

Something was in my drink.

CHAPTER 17

It's at the tip of my tongue. Some memory that I can almost grasp but not quite. I can almost hear the words coming out of my mouth. It's something I said before. To somebody else. In the past.

I think Graham is secretly drugging me.

That white film at the bottom of my glass. Why is there a white film in my glass? It was just water. Wasn't it?

Graham is drugging me, Harry. Every night. You've got to help me. Please.

"Tess?"

Graham is staring across the table at me. There's concern in his blue eyes, but there's also something else. Something menacing.

I think of the digits scribbled on my arm. The person who contacted me this morning to warn me about him. *Harry*. It wasn't just my imagination. Those messages were real. Now I understand why Graham took my phone away.

"I'm going to get more water," I blurt out.

Before he can protest, I jump out of my seat and stumble to the kitchen. I nearly trip over my right foot, but I make it there. Graham disappeared into the kitchen with my phone. It's got to be in here somewhere. And once I find it, I can call for help.

I open drawers haphazardly. I'm not even attempting to close them again. What's the difference? He's going to know what I've been doing. He's going to know it when he sees the phone. My only chance is to find it before he comes looking for me. And I've got to call the number on my arm. And hope Harry picks up.

Or maybe I should just call 911.

"For God's sake, Tess, what the hell are you doing?"

Graham is standing at the entrance to the kitchen, his eyes wide behind his glasses. I yank open the drawer in front of me and look down, hoping my phone is inside. But it's mostly just rubber bands and pens.

"Tess?"

Ziggy is scraping at the back door. But he can't get in, and I can't get out, because the door is locked from the inside.

"I asked you a question, Tess." He arches an eyebrow. "What are you doing?"

"Nothing." My words are so slurred, it surprises me. Even if I found my phone and called for help, anyone would think I had a severe brain injury. And Graham has the paperwork to prove it. Nobody would believe my story. "I was just..."

"Time for bed," he says firmly. "You need to go to bed right now."

My eyes dart around the kitchen, trying to figure out my next move. My options are limited. I have no phone. No way to escape this house. What can I do?

"I... I need the bathroom," I say.

Graham grunts. "Fine. Go."

I turn away from the kitchen counter. But before I do, I grab a pen from the drawer and stuff it into my pocket.

Once I'm inside the bathroom, I consider locking myself in here. But I'm not sure what that would accomplish, and anyway, it looks like Graham has had the foresight to remove the lock. He could come in here anytime he wants. Which means I don't have much time.

I pull up the sleeve of my sweater. The number I scrawled on it has partially been rubbed off so that I can no longer make out the digits. Even though it kills me, I have to wash the rest of it off with soap and water. If I put on a T-shirt to sleep in, the numbers will be visible. I can't let Graham see it.

If I leave myself a message, it has to be somewhere he won't see.

I remember the word I found on myself this morning, on my upper thigh above where my oversized T-shirt ended. *Find*. I hadn't had a chance to see it before the shower washed it away. But clearly, Graham hadn't seen it—leaving a message for myself there may be my best shot. I'll have to keep it short. And I'll have to hope that tomorrow morning I see the message before I wash it away.

My hands are shaking. Writing on my skin is difficult, especially since whatever Graham laced my water with is hitting me hard. I can hardly even keep my eyes open, much less write legibly. But I've got to try. Everything depends on this.

There's a knock on the door. "Tess? Are you okay?"

"Just a second!" I call back.

I finish writing what I need to say. The words are small, but I can read them. I can only hope that I'll see them before they wash away in the shower tomorrow. I toss the pen in the garbage and yank my pants up just before Graham bursts through the door.

DAY TWO

CHAPTER 18

If you relax and try to have a good day, you will be much happier. Just remember that the people around you care about you very much and only want you to be safe. Do what they say.

You are in good hands. Trust me.

Love,

Tess

I look up from the letter in my shaking hands. *That man* is still standing in front of me. Graham, he says his name is. My *husband*, apparently. And if this letter is to be believed, we're happily married. He's been taking care of me since this horrible accident took my whole life away one year earlier.

"Tess?" he says.

I look up at his face. This stranger is attractive—I can't say he isn't. Especially dressed in that expensive dark suit. But my *husband*? How can I be married to this man? Harry Finch is the love of my life. Harry and I are going to get married. He popped the question on my computer keys, and we're going on a honeymoon somewhere warm with lots of beaches.

I look down at my left hand, expecting to see the ring Harry gave me. The modest little diamond that he saved up for over several months. But it's not there. Instead, there's a much bigger diamond—almost embarrassingly large.

"I know this is hard to accept." Graham settles down on the edge of the bed next to me. His hair is still damp from the shower, a few water droplets glistening in the short strands of his hair, which is darkened by moisture. "But after the initial shock, you're usually okay. You usually have a nice day."

I run my fingers through my dark hair. I can't get used to how short it is. And then when my fingertips touch my scalp, I feel something strange. A scar. A jolt of electricity goes through my skull and I jerk my hand away.

Graham pushes his glasses up his nose. “They did surgery. To remove some of the blood from your brain. That’s why we had to cut your hair, but it’s mostly grown back.”

Gingerly, I reach for my scalp again. I trace the raised skin, where the hair will never grow again. There’s a long scar in the shape of a C on the right side of my skull.

“God,” I murmur.

Graham attempts to reach for my hand, but I pluck it away. I’m not ready to let this stranger touch me. Not yet.

I look over at the fancy dresser across from the bed—at all the photos of me and Graham in our previously happy life. The pictures span our lives until a year ago, when I apparently was in a horrible accident that permanently damaged my brain. I look at the center photo, of me in a gorgeous white wedding dress and Graham standing next to me, looking devastatingly handsome in a tuxedo.

“How come the glass is broken on our wedding photo?” I ask.

He looks up sharply, following my gaze to the wedding photo. “Oh. You dropped it yesterday. I haven’t had a chance to get it replaced.”

I stare at the broken glass in the photo, the scar on my head aching dully. Our wedding photo is broken—smashed to pieces. My face is a spider web of cracks. There’s something unsettling about it. Why wouldn’t he put the photo away until he could replace the frame?

“Why don’t you go take a shower?” Graham suggests. “I’ll go downstairs and make us some breakfast before I have to leave for work.”

I don’t want to say this to him, because he’s being so nice to me, but I’m deeply relieved that Graham is going to leave the room, and even more relieved that he’s going to work and will be out of the house all day. I don’t want to be anywhere near this stranger.

I return to the bathroom and shut the door behind me. I reach for the doorknob to lock the door, but that’s when I realize there’s no lock on it. When Harry and I bought this house, there was a lock on the bathroom door. I remember it distinctly.

Where did the lock go?

I suppose it was removed at some point. Maybe Graham felt it wasn’t safe for me to be locked in the bathroom, given my situation. But I hate the idea that anybody could burst into this room at any moment.

I force myself to look at my reflection in the vanity mirror. It's so strange. It's me, but not me. But also definitely me. The short hair is the most jarring part of all, but my face looks different in subtle ways. Ways that maybe only I would notice. A few creases around my eyes. My cheeks aren't quite as full.

And there are dark purple circles under my eyes.

I pull off my night shirt and drop it on our shiny new toilet. I run my fingers over the bare skin of my chest. It's not that different from what I remember. But if I continue to have these memory problems over years and decades, that will change. Someday, I'm going to walk over to the mirror and see an old lady staring back at me.

The thought of it brings on a wave of nausea. I double over, clutching my stomach. I need to calm down. It's like that letter I wrote said—if I relax and accept it, I'll be fine.

And then I notice something on my thigh. Black ink.

Somebody scrawled a sentence on my thigh, above where my nightshirt ends. It looks like my own handwriting, but it's hard to tell. I squint at the words, and a chill goes through me when I realize what they say.

Graham is drugging you.

Oh my God.

I'm shaking so badly that I barely make it to the toilet before my legs give out beneath me. I sit there, staring at the message scribbled on my leg. I'm obviously the one who wrote it there. It's upside down, the way it would be if I were writing it. Nobody else could have written that. And I wrote it in a place where I didn't think Graham would see.

My husband is drugging me. I don't know whether I have a head injury, but either way, something is going on. He's doing this to me.

I've got to get out of here. I've got to call the police.

I peek outside the bathroom—Graham has gone downstairs. I forget about showering and slip outside the bathroom. I fumble through the drawers, looking for something to wear. I find piles of women's clothing, but none of it looks familiar to me. All my old stuff is gone. My Weezer T-shirt. My fuzzy green sweater I always wore on St. Patrick's Day. My favorite pair of blue jeans with the giant hole in the right knee that Harry used to joke made me look like I was in a grunge band. Everything is gone.

But I don't have time to care about any of that. I select a sweater and a pair of jeans, then slide my feet into a pair of blindingly white sneakers, so new that they still feel stiff. I look around for a wallet or any kind of money—I usually keep my wallet on the clothing dresser.

But there's nothing. And my phone is MIA as well.

It doesn't matter. I'll leave here with no money and I'll find the nearest police station. I'll tell them what I know about Graham. I'm sure they can do some blood or urine tests to find out if he's been drugging me or not.

I try to be as quiet as possible as I walk down the stairs. I don't know Graham, and I don't know what he's capable of. Well, I know he's capable of poisoning me. But I don't know if he's the sort of person who would attack me if I tried to leave. Better not to find out.

The living room is quiet. It looks so different from the way it used to look when Harry and I lived here. It looks like the living room out of a magazine about the lifestyles of the rich and famous. Where did the money come from to buy all this stuff?

I smell bread toasting in the kitchen. The sizzle of a frying pan. Graham is occupied at the stove. Now is the perfect time to slip away.

I reach the front door, my legs wobbling underneath me. I feel so lost. I don't even know how I'm going to get to the police station. I wish Harry were here. I need to find him. Wherever he is, I'm sure he'll help me. I don't believe what that letter said about him having done bad things.

As soon as I get out of here, I'm going straight to the police and I'm going to find Harry.

I reach for the lock on the front door. But then my hand stops, inches short. There's a lock, but not one that you turn from the inside. Instead, there's a keyhole.

Oh God, this door is locked *from the inside*. I can't get out.

I turn the knob, hoping this is some sort of mistake. It's not. I can't get out of this house without the key to the lock on the door.

I'm trapped here.

"Tess?"

I whirl around. Graham is standing there, holding a spatula in his right hand. He raises his eyebrows at me. "What are you doing, Tess?"

I wipe my sweaty hands on my jeans. "I... I need some fresh air. Could I go out?"

“Maybe after breakfast.” He nods in the direction of the kitchen. “Come on. Let’s eat.”

I could scream. I could try to attack him. But what good would that do? I saw him without his shirt on—he’s a muscular guy and he would have absolutely no problem fending off any attacks from the likes of me. And even if I momentarily disabled him, I can’t leave this house without a key.

Maybe it’s better for him to think I trust him. For now.

“Okay,” I say.

When I get into the kitchen, I have to blink a few times. Like the living room, the old skeletal kitchen that used to be falling apart at the seams has now been replaced with... well, my dream kitchen. Not that I’m the sort of person who has a dream kitchen, but God, this kitchen is gorgeous. I sit down at the kitchen island on one of the barstools. There’s a flat rectangular device on the table.

“What’s that?” I ask.

Graham’s lips twitch. “It’s your phone.”

A phone! And not just a phone—it’s one of those iPhones. I always wanted one of those, but it was so far out of our budget. But now, not only do I have my dream kitchen, but I have my dream phone.

But none of that matters. All that matters is that I can call 911 with this phone. I can let the police know that this crazy man is holding me hostage and drugging me and making me live in this house that is... well, gorgeous, but that’s beside the point. I’m *trapped* here.

And now I can call for help. But I have to wait for the right moment to do it.

There’s a scratching noise coming from the back door, which looks like it also has a keyhole the same as the front door. Graham walks over to the door and reaches into his pocket for the keys. He unlocks the door and a beautiful golden retriever bounds into the kitchen. The dog makes a beeline for me, and for a second, I’m frightened, until the dog licks my hand.

“What...” I manage. “What’s this?”

Graham smiles at me. Despite the words scribbled on my leg, he doesn’t *seem* evil. He seems like a nice guy. I mean, he’s making me breakfast. And if he were keeping me hostage, why would he give me a phone? This doesn’t quite make sense. But then again, nothing about this situation makes sense.

“This is Ziggy,” he says. “He’s our dog. *Your* dog. We got him after your accident last year.”

Ziggy. I freeze at the mention of his name. Does Graham realize that’s the same name as Harry’s pet bird? I’m sure he doesn’t. It seems like another secret message I’ve given to myself.

I run my hand over the dog’s fur. The effect is instantly calming. I once read that petting an animal can be a form of therapy. Ziggy pants up at me, his expression almost like a smile. I love him instantly.

Graham scrapes three slices of bacon onto two plates, then gives me a piece of toast that’s mostly black. I watched him cook our breakfast, but there’s no chance I’m eating it. After all, I have no idea what he put in it before I came into the kitchen. Of course, if he’s making himself a plate, it’s unlikely there’s poison in it. But maybe he’s not going to eat it—he’s just going to pretend to eat it. Or maybe he’s been building up immunity to the poison by gradually ingesting trace doses over time.

A ring tone echoes in the kitchen. At first, I think I’ve got a call, but when I look at my phone, the screen is still black. It’s Graham’s phone that’s ringing.

“Sorry, Tess.” He swipes on the screen. “I’ve got to take this one.”

Graham wanders into the living room with the phone at his ear. His deep voice floats out of the room—it sounds like it’s a call related to business. I wonder what he does. He’s my husband, and I know nothing about him. I don’t even know his last name.

All I know is he’s done something terrible to me.

I look at the two plates of black toast and burnt bacon. They don’t look appealing, but even less so with the knowledge that they could be tainted. Or at least, *mine* could be tainted. I glance in the direction of the living room to make sure Graham’s back is turned. Then I quickly swap the two plates.

The next thing I do is pick up my cell phone. I’ve never used an iPhone before, but it’s strange the way my fingers somehow know what to do. The phone unlocks under my thumb, and I know exactly which button to press to bring up the screen to make a phone call. And I know exactly who to call.

I dial 911.

“911 Operator. What’s your emergency?”

I lower my voice several notches. “My husband is holding me hostage in our home. Please help me.” In the other room, it sounds like Graham is ending his own call. I don’t have much time. “This is my address.”

I recite my address, and before the operator can say anything, I hang up.

Graham strides back into the room, his phone still gripped in his palm. He adjusts his blue tie that matches the color of his eyes. I wonder how long the police will take to get here. I imagine them bursting into our house, and Graham attempting to charm them... or maybe stammering excuses for what he’s done. But the police won’t buy it. I mean, the lock on the door clearly shows imprisonment. He can’t hide that.

“Everything okay, Tess?” he asks.

“Yes, of course.” I force a smile. I have to pretend everything is fine, or else God knows what he’ll do. What if it becomes a hostage situation?

He looks pointedly at my plate. “You’re not eating.”

I stare down at the toast and bacon. The toast is charred to a crisp, and the bacon is black. I’d have to scrape off most of the toast to make it edible. And I’m nervous to eat it. Until Graham sits down across from me and starts digging into his food. It’s not the plate he thought he’d be eating from, and he obviously thinks it’s safe, so that means my own food must be safe.

But I still have no appetite.

Ziggy whimpers at my side. He licks my hand and looks up at me hopefully. I take a piece of bacon off my plate and offer it to him. He gobbles it up.

Graham’s jaw clenches. “I wish you wouldn’t feed him off the table.”

“Sorry,” I say, even as I’m passing Ziggy a second piece of bacon. “I didn’t know.”

“Right, but... common sense, Tess.”

“Of course, you’re right,” I say. And I pass Ziggy another piece of bacon.

Graham watches me, his eyes narrowed. “Aren’t you hungry?”

“Just taking my time.” I glanced down at the clock display on my phone. It’s only been a few minutes since I called 911. How long do they take to get here? I assume they would use sirens in a situation like this. Or maybe not. “So, um, how did we meet?”

The right corner of Graham's lips quirks up. "Actually, I saved your life."

"Really?"

He nods. "We were in this restaurant, and you were a few tables away from me. And I heard you making a sound like you were choking. I turned around and your entire face was turning blue. So I came over and did the Heimlich."

I scrape a bit of the black off the toast with my fork. "I thought when people are choking, they don't make any sound."

"Well, you did." He glances at his watch. "Let me get you something to drink."

I watch as he gets up out of his chair and grabs a container out of the refrigerator. He pulls a glass from the cabinet above the sink and pours a big heaping glass of blood-red liquid. What in the hell is that?

"What's that?" I ask.

"Pomegranate juice." He brings the glass over to the kitchen island and drops it down in front of me. "It's your favorite."

I crinkle my nose. "My *favorite*?"

"Oh yes." He sits down and takes another bite of his bacon. "You love that stuff. Yesterday you had a *second* glass. I thought I was going to have to go out and buy more of it."

Is he serious? That can't possibly be true. I would feel like a vampire drinking that stuff. And either way, I'm not drinking anything he gives me. I want to be coherent when the police arrive.

He arches an eyebrow. "You're not even going to try it?"

"I'm not thirsty."

"Are you sure you're okay, Tess?" He tilts his head to the side. "You don't seem like yourself. Maybe we should go to the doctor."

At even the mention of seeing my doctor, a fist clenches in my chest. I hate going to the doctor. I've hated doctors ever since my mother's breast cancer diagnosis when I was a child. Just walking into a hospital makes me ill.

"No," I say. "I'm fine. Really."

"Are you sure?" His blue eyes fill with what genuinely looks like concern. Apparently, he's an excellent actor. "Because if you're not feeling well, we should see the doctor."

I open my mouth to protest again, but before I can get the words out, the doorbell rings, followed by a loud rap on the door.

It's the police.

CHAPTER 19

My breath catches in my throat. I watch Graham's expression, which barely changes. He doesn't seem at all worried. Does he realize the police are at the door? Does he recognize he's about to get led out of here in handcuffs?

He rises from his seat, dabbing his lips with a napkin from the table. "I wonder who that could be. Camila isn't coming for half an hour..."

I have no idea who Camila is, but my heart is pounding as I follow Graham to the front door. The lights of the police car are flashing through the front windows, and he stops short at the sight of it. "Shit," he mutters under his breath.

Damn straight. That bastard is going to get nailed.

He reaches into his pocket and pulls out the key to unlock the front door. A single officer is standing there in a blue uniform. My shoulders sag with relief. Thank God. This nightmare is about to be over.

"Hi, Mr. Thurman," the officer says. I don't know who he is talking to, but then I realize Thurman must be Graham's last name. "Sorry to bother you, but we got a 911 call from this house..."

I grit my teeth. I don't understand what's going on here. Why is the officer so chummy with my husband? And why is he *apologizing* for responding to a 911 call that I'm being imprisoned? Why isn't he handcuffing Graham as we speak?

Graham shoots a look in my direction. "Christ, Tess, did you call 911 again?"

My mouth falls open but I can't get any words out.

"I tried to disable it on her phone," Graham says to the officer. "But I couldn't figure out how. I'll have to give it another try. I'm sorry about bothering you."

The cop tips his head. "No worries, Mr. Thurman. I just wanted to make sure everything is okay."

With those words, I finally find my voice. "Everything is not okay!" I burst out. "Look at the door to our house! This man is holding me hostage here! He's drugging me!"

The officer exchanges a look with my husband. “Mr. Thurman...”

“It’s okay, Frank,” Graham says. “I’ll deal with this...”

“Deal with this!” Tears jump into my eyes. “You locked me into this house!” I run over to the front door and point to the lock. “Look at this! What kind of psychopath would do this to his wife?”

“Tess.” Graham’s voice is gentle. “I’m not keeping you prisoner. The lock is for your own protection. You... you have a tendency to wander away. It’s not safe...”

“Not safe!” A tear escapes from my eye and I swipe at it helplessly. “I’m an adult. If I want to leave the house, that’s my right!”

“Mrs. Thurman,” the policeman says. I bristle at that label. *Mrs. Thurman*. I’m *not* Mrs. Thurman. I’m Tess Strebel. And by now, I’m supposed to be Tess *Finch*. “Your husband here is just trying to keep you safe. He’s your legal guardian because of the memory problems from your accident. He’s got the paperwork to prove it.”

My hands ball into fists. “You’ve *seen* that paperwork?”

“Yes, ma’am. I have.”

My cheeks burn. There’s blatant pity on the officer’s smooth face. I look over at Graham, and he just looks tired. It hits me that we have probably played out this exact situation many times before. Maybe dozens of times.

Graham doesn’t look scared. He just looks like he wants this to be over so he can get on with his day.

“Camila will be here soon,” Graham says to the officer. “I’ll make sure she takes Tess outside to get some fresh air. We’ll be fine.”

The policeman nods, and just like that, he takes off. He just *leaves*. Like Graham did absolutely nothing wrong, and I’m just some crazy woman who doesn’t know what’s going on.

And the worst part is, I’m worried maybe that’s the truth.

As soon as he’s gone, Graham turns to face me. His eyebrows are bunched together. “Tess, you can’t keep calling 911. It’s not right. They have better things to do.”

I start to accuse him of trying to poison me, but the words die on my lips. He doesn’t look like somebody who wants to poison me or keep me hostage. He looks like a man who is struggling to juggle work and a wife

who has lost her memory. Maybe the message I left myself was wrong. Maybe I was just confused when I wrote it.

After all, my husband drugging me? That's pretty crazy thinking.

My whole body deflates. "I'm sorry. I thought..."

"Aw, Tess." He comes over to me and almost looks like he's about to hug me, but then at the last second, he drops a hand onto my shoulder. His is large and warm. Despite everything, it's comforting. "I know how hard this must be for you. Come on. Let's go back to the kitchen and finish breakfast."

Mutely, I nod and follow him back into our kitchen.

CHAPTER 20

I'm sitting on the sofa, watching television on our wide-screen high definition television, while *Camila* cleans upstairs. Camila is my babysitter. They don't say it like that—she's the housekeeper—but it's obvious what her job really is. I'm not allowed to leave the house without her. Only she has the key that opens the front and back door.

But you know what? I'm okay. I took the advice I gave myself in my letter and I'm trying to relax. I still don't understand why I wrote what I did on my leg, but it can't possibly be true. Graham is doing the best job he can. He's not trying to drug me. I don't believe that anymore.

Ziggy is lying on the couch next to me, his head on my lap. I stroke his fur absently as I watch television. At first, I put on the news, curious at what events had taken place over the past decade. But almost immediately, it started to feel like a bad idea. The news was an onslaught of unfamiliar names of politicians and terrifying revelations about the state of the world. It was so unsettling, I changed the channel. Anyway, there was no point in upsetting myself with the news when I was going to forget it all by tomorrow, anyway.

So instead, I'm watching *The Price is Right*. I used to love to watch this show with Harry because he was insanely good at guessing all the prices. Even though the letter assured me Harry isn't a part of my life anymore, that's one thing I still can't wrap my head around. But watching this show makes me miss him a little less.

The contestants are bidding on the price of an air fryer, whatever that is. It seems like something ridiculously extravagant, but it wouldn't surprise me one bit to find out there's an air fryer sitting in our own kitchen. But I have no idea what it costs. I can't even ballpark it. A thousand dollars? Fifty bucks? Nothing would surprise me.

My phone is sitting on the coffee table and it lets out a little buzz. My heart speeds up. Is that Lucy or my father? I found both of their numbers on my phone, and I left anxious, rambling messages for each of them to call me. I'm desperate to speak to somebody from my old life.

But when I pick up the phone, there's a text message from an unknown number:

\$121.

I frown at my phone. I type in a response:

Who is this?

Maybe it's a telemarketer. Do telemarketers send text messages? I don't remember anything like that, but things are different now. Any message involving money has to be a scam.

\$121 for the air fryer.

My eyes snap up. What is going on? Why is somebody texting me bids for an air fryer?

Then the host announces to the audience, "The actual price of the air fryer is one hundred and twenty-four dollars."

I write again: **Harry?**

It couldn't be, could it? Harry is gone. That's what the letter said. That's what Graham said.

I wait for a reply. Three little bubbles flash repeatedly on the screen. After a minute, it finally comes:

Meet me.

It's entirely possible this is somebody who's messing with me. But for me and Harry, watching *The Price is Right* was kind of our thing when we had a weekday morning free together. Nobody else knows that.

And if it's him, what does he want?

But it doesn't matter. If this is really Harry—if there's even a chance of it—I'm meeting him. There's no way I'm not.

Camila said that after she was done upstairs, we could walk Ziggy to the dog park together. I look down at my watch—it's ten-thirty. She's probably almost done up there. So I compose my response:

Meet at dog park at 11.

The reply comes almost instantly:

I'll be there.

And then a few seconds later: **Delete these messages.**

I do as he tells me.

CHAPTER 21

At five minutes till eleven, Camila and I set off in the direction of the dog park.

I put Ziggy on a leash, and he is almost deliriously happy to be going out with us. I wish I could feel as much happiness over *anything* as my dog feels over going to the park. You would have thought having memory problems might help me to live in the moment, but it doesn't.

Although to be fair, I was a lot happier a minute before I got that text with the price of the air fryer.

"How long have you been working at our house?" I ask Camila as we fall into step together on the sidewalk.

Camila blinks up at me. She is beautiful—the kind of woman men write poetry about. She has these big brown eyes with the longest eyelashes I've ever seen, and big pouty lips. She was obviously born with these features—no fake lashes or lip filler. And the worst part is she doesn't even seem aware of how gorgeous she is. "About a year. Since your accident."

"So you probably know just about everything about me, huh?"

She flashes me a smile that shows just a bit too many teeth, but it's strangely endearing. "Try me."

I bite on my thumbnail, trying to think of a fact about myself that could not have changed in the last seven years. "When is my birthday?"

"Easy! February fourteenth—Valentine's Day. You said you always get shafted on presents."

That's true. Before I met Harry, every guy I ever dated combined my birthday gift and my Valentine's gift into one uber-gift. But Harry made a thing out of insisting both occasions needed to be celebrated separately. So he would give me my birthday present at one minute after midnight on my birthday, then a Valentine's Day present the next evening.

I wonder what Graham does.

"What's my favorite movie?" I ask.

She tuts. "You don't think much of me, do you? It's *The Princess Bride*. Obviously!"

“Favorite song?”

“Trick question.” She flashes that toothy grin again. “It’s a tie. Between ‘Unchained Melody’ and ‘Hey Jude.’”

At some point, I must have shared all these little tidbits with Camila. But it’s strange that even though I’ve only met her this morning, she knows everything there is to know about me. It also seems a bit unfair.

“Now it’s your turn,” I say, as Ziggy bounds forward, causing my body to jerk. “I want to know about you.”

She shoves her hands into her jacket pockets. “My favorite movie is *Do the Right Thing*. My birthday is March second. Don’t worry—I programmed it into your phone since I know you won’t remember.”

I shake my head. “No, not that stuff. I want to know something about you that nobody else knows.”

Her eyebrows shoot up. “That’s a little personal, isn’t it? Especially considering that in your head, you only just met me this morning.”

“That’s true,” I acknowledge. “But you’ve been with me day in and day out for an entire year. And also, who is the better person to tell your secrets to than somebody who won’t remember it tomorrow?”

She puts her hands on her hips. “You’re very persuasive, aren’t you?”

“I’ve been told I’m a successful businesswoman.”

Her expression is amused. “Okay, I’ve got one. This is something I’ve never told anyone before. Ever.”

I clutch my free hand to my chest. “Your secret is safe with me.”

“So when I was in kindergarten, my teacher took off her wedding ring to go wash her hands at the sink in the back of the classroom. And while she was washing her hands, I took her wedding ring and…” She takes a deep breath. “I ate it.”

It’s the last thing I expected her to say. Despite everything, I burst out laughing.

“It’s not funny!” Camila cries, although she’s laughing too. “I’ve been carrying this burden around for twenty years! I felt terrible about it! She was looking everywhere for it. She left school crying!”

“Why did you eat it then?”

“I don’t know! I was *five!*”

I’m laughing so hard now, tears are running down my face. Through my chuckles, I manage to say, “I’ll take it to my grave. I promise.”

She nods solemnly. “Thank you.”

Camila’s confession has defused some of the tension between us. As I grip Ziggy’s leash and Camila adjusts her purse string on her shoulder, we could be two girlfriends hanging out together. Rather than what we are. Now that I know her a little better, I finally feel brave enough to ask the question that’s been going through my head since I woke up this morning:

“What do you think of Graham?”

She stops walking for a beat and looks at me curiously. “Graham is nice,” she says carefully. “Why do you ask?”

“Why wouldn’t I ask?” I point out. “I mean, I just met him this morning, but apparently I’ve been married to him for the last four years.”

Camila laughs. “Yeah, I’ll bet that’s weird for you.”

“You think?”

She kicks at a crack in the sidewalk with her sneaker. “Don’t worry. He won’t make you do anything you don’t want to do. I mean, *tonight*.”

It takes me a second to catch on to what she is saying. Graham is my husband. And tonight he might expect me to...

“Oh God, I can’t do that!” My fingers tighten around Ziggy’s leash. “I don’t even *know* him!”

“Relax. I just told you, he won’t ask you.”

“How do you know?”

She lifts a shoulder. “I’ve stuck around a few times in the evening. You usually get pretty groggy around dinner time. You almost always go right to bed.”

I think of the words scribbled on my thigh. *Graham is drugging you*. If he were drugging me in the evening, it would make sense that I would suddenly get groggy around dinner time. I had shrugged off those words as some sort of paranoid delusion, but I’m not so sure anymore. Something is going on. I need to know what it is.

I look over at Camila. Now that I feel closer to her, I desperately want to tell her about the text message I got, but how can I trust her? She works for Graham, not me. The last text was so insistent that I delete everything. It makes me think I ought to keep my mouth shut.

Of course, Camila is coming with me to the dog park. How am I going to talk to anybody there without her hearing?

My chest is feeling tight by the time we get to the dog park. There are quite a lot of people with their dogs in there, especially for mid-morning, which I suppose is a good thing. I scan the crowd, looking for a familiar face. There's a couple holding hands. A tall man wearing jeans that are a couple of inches too short, like he had a growth spurt recently, even though he's got to be at least forty. A college-age girl talking loudly on her phone. And another man with a baseball cap, thick beard, and sunglasses.

"You can go in with Ziggy," Camila says. She pats her purse. "I'll sit outside and read."

I blink at her. "You're not going in?"

She scoffs. "Sit in that crowded dog park with all the dogs barking in my ear, surrounded by dog poop? No thanks." She points out a bench about twenty feet from the entrance to the dog park. "I'll be right here if you need me."

I can't imagine what I would need her for. I know how to get home after all. But given the lock situation in our house, I'm guessing she's not allowed to leave me alone. The bench she picked gives an excellent visualization of the only way out of the dog park. I'm just hoping that whatever she's reading is very absorbing.

Ziggy nearly breaks down the door to the park in his eagerness. I throw open the latch and we enter the enclosure. I unhook his leash, and now he's free. He races around the park, finding a place to dig. Meanwhile, I plop down on a bench in the dog park as I scan the occupants of the park.

I immediately rule out the couple. They are way too into each other. At one point, the woman sticks her hand in the man's pocket—ew. The college-age girl is popping gum and having an enthusiastic conversation on her phone. She could not have cared less that I entered the park.

That leaves the two men.

I stare at the tall man. Does he look familiar? I watch as he bends down to pet the fur of a large bulldog. As he straightens up, our eyes meet across the dog park. He winks at me.

"It's not him."

I swivel my head to the side. While I was studying the tall man, the other man—the one with the sunglasses and beard and Mets cap—sat down next to me. Ziggy notices too and trots over to him. The man reaches into his pocket, pulls out a treat, and Ziggy happily eats it right out of his hand.

“Excuse me,” I say. “Please don’t feed my dog without asking.”

The man lifts his face to look at me. He pulls off his sunglasses so that I can see his eyes and...

Oh my God. It’s *Harry*.

CHAPTER 22

It's Harry. It's really him. I can't even believe it.

"Harry!" I can't help myself. I throw my arms around him and get the hug that I've been wanting and needing the whole day since I woke up this morning and my whole life was turned upside down. Harry hugs me back like he needed it just as badly, and for a moment, we are both clinging to each other. He still has that same familiar smell. Dial soap and that shampoo he uses that has the woodsman in the picture on the front.

I lift my face and bring my lips to his, but he gently pushes me away. There's a pained expression on his face. Although it's nothing compared to the ache I'm feeling inside.

"Harry..."

"We can't." He shoves his sunglasses back up his nose to hide his eyes. With those shades and the beard and the cap, he was hard to recognize—he looks *very* different. "Camila is right there. She'll see."

"But—"

"Please, Tess. Don't make this harder."

The frustration in his voice mirrors what I'm feeling inside. This man is my fiancé. Why can't I kiss him? There's something wrong with the world if I can't do that.

But instead of the passionate kiss that I badly want, he instead shifts down the bench so there's a good two feet between us. I look over at Camila, who is reading on her Kindle. She doesn't even seem to notice us.

"The last thing I remember," I say, "is being engaged to you. We were living in that house together, and we were planning our wedding. And our honeymoon..."

"Someplace hot with lots of beaches," Harry finishes for me with a crooked smile.

"We never got married though." My voice breaks on the words. "And now I'm married to some guy named Graham Thurman. How did that happen?"

Above the rim of his sunglasses, Harry's eyebrows are bunched together. "I don't know, Tess. It's not what I wanted. That's for sure."

"Are... are you married to someone else?"

"No." He shakes his head. "There's never been anyone else but you."

I drop my eyes. I can't keep talking about this, or else I'm going to cry. "I found a note to myself this morning. I wrote it on my leg, where nobody but me would see it. It said... it said that Graham has been drugging me."

"Yeah. That's what you've been telling me."

"I... I have?"

Harry adjusts the baseball cap on his head. I miss his hair—the way it always sort of stuck up a little on top, no matter what he did. I want to be with him so much, it's physically painful. Especially since he's so close, I could reach out and touch him. "You contacted me about a month ago. You tracked me down and we met. You told me about your accident and your suspicions about Graham, and you asked me to help you."

"And...?"

"Of course I tried to help. But it's been challenging." He glances over at Camila. "It's hard to get you alone. And of course, every morning you've forgotten everything that happened the day before so we have to start from scratch and you don't always believe me."

I drop my eyes. "I... I'm sorry. It's hard to know what to believe. Graham told me I lose my memory every night."

"Right, and that's strange." Harry is looking at me, but his expression is hard to read with those sunglasses concealing his eyes. "I spoke to some doctors, and they said that losing your memory every night like that... It's not what you would expect with a brain injury. It's more like what you might expect with a drug, although they couldn't name any drugs that would do something like that."

Self-consciously, I reach for the scar on the right side of my skull. "But there was an accident. I have a scar."

"I'm not disagreeing that you were in an accident. I'm just wondering if it was the accident that did this to you."

"So..." I bite down on my lip hard enough that I'm worried I've drawn blood. "You think it's true. You think Graham is drugging me."

"I..." He pinches the bridge of his nose. "Yes. That's exactly what I think."

I sit there, staring down at my hands, absorbing this piece of information. I was happier thinking that it was all just a delusion. But this is real. Graham is really doing this to me.

“Now that I know,” I say, “I’ll be careful around him. I won’t drink or eat anything he gives me unless he’s eating it or drinking it himself.”

“Yeah...” Harry shifts on the bench. “The thing is, you have said those exact words to me multiple times now. You knew he was drugging you. You tried to avoid it. And... the next day, nothing has changed. You’ve still lost your memory.”

“So... maybe that means it’s not a drug?”

He pulls the brim of his baseball cap down lower. “Maybe. I don’t know.”

Ziggy trots over to me, carrying a stick in his mouth. He places it on my lap and looks up at me expectantly. I take the stick and throw it across the length of the park. He goes nuts chasing after it.

“What if we take off?” I say. “You and me. What if we just leave right now? We can take Ziggy with us.”

Harry flashes a sad smile. “It’s not that simple.”

“Why not?”

“Because he’s your husband.” He ticks it off on his fingers. “Also, he’s your legal guardian. You go with me and I’m kidnapping you, whether or not you came willingly.”

My chest tightens as I absorb his words. I want to believe that can’t be true, but I have a feeling he’s right. When the police showed up this morning, they didn’t even listen to what I had to say. They assumed I was too impaired to know what was going on. Even if Harry told them otherwise, they wouldn’t believe it.

“Graham has a desk upstairs,” Harry says. “That’s what you told me. There’s a drawer that’s always locked, and you said you think that’s where he’s keeping whatever he’s giving you. But as far as I know, you haven’t been able to find the key. He must keep it on him.”

“Oh...”

Ziggy trots back with the stick, but this time he gives it to Harry. Harry rubs him on his head and the dog pants happily. Then Harry tosses the stick again.

“I’m sorry.” Harry is looking off to where Ziggy is searching for the stick. “I wish I could tell you more. I wish I could *do* more. All I can do is tell you the things you already knew days ago that didn’t help at all. This is... frustrating.”

“Yeah.” My throat feels tight. “What about Lucy?”

“Lucy?”

“You remember Lucy.” I study his expression—I wish he would take off those sunglasses again so I could see his eyes. “My best friend from college. We used to hang out.”

His lips curl in disgust. “Yes, I remember Lucy.”

Well, I don’t need to see his eyes to recognize his feelings about Lucy. I’m shocked by the amount of venom in his voice. When Harry first met Lucy, they seemed to get along well enough, but over the years, he became less and less enthusiastic whenever I mentioned her name. I finally confronted him about it.

She’s kind of toxic, isn’t she? he had said. *She never passes up an opportunity to put you down.*

But he was wrong. Okay, Lucy had her flaws. But she wasn’t a toxic friend. And she might be the only person who I trust right now.

“Maybe Lucy could help.” I dig my phone out of my pocket. “Her number is on my phone. We must still be in contact. I could call her and—”

“No. No.” Harry flinches. “Don’t tell Lucy about this. You can’t tell anybody about this.”

“I can trust Lucy.”

“Don’t tell Lucy anything.” His jaw tightens under his beard. I’ve never seen Harry with a beard before—I can’t decide if I like it. “You can’t trust anyone.”

“How about you?”

He slides off his shades for a minute to stare at me. The sight of his brown eyes makes me want to reach out and throw my arms around him again. “You can trust me.”

“But you just said—”

“Right, but...” He leans in slightly. “Fine. Maybe you can’t trust me. But you’re the one who came to me, and I’ve been trying to help you. And it would be hard for me to be responsible for any of this, considering before last month, we hadn’t seen each other in six years.”

That last revelation hits me like a punch in the gut. “Six years? We haven’t seen each other in six years?”

“Well, we broke up. What—were we supposed to stay best friends?”

“Why did we break up?”

He just shakes his head.

“Harry...”

“You want to know why we broke up?” There’s more than a twinge of bitterness in his voice. “Because you believed a bunch of lies about me. And then Graham was ready and waiting to swoop in five seconds later. Ready to tell you what a shit I am. And you believed it. Although to be fair, I’m sure he was very convincing.”

“Graham told me...” I think back to my conversation this morning. “He said he met me when he saved my life. He gave me the Heimlich maneuver when I was choking.”

Harry bursts out laughing. “Seriously? He told you that? No. That’s not what happened. He worked for you. As a freaking *accountant*. Except he wanted more. He wanted *you* and he wanted your company.”

“Why would he want my company?”

“You know your company is a pretty big deal now, right? I mean, you’re huge. And now that you’re out of the game, Graham is in charge. Just like he wanted.”

I didn’t know my company was a big deal. The last thing I remember, yes, we were doing okay—starting to turn a small profit. We were on our way up, but nothing that amazing. But Graham had on that expensive suit, and he looked like a successful businessman. I had no idea the business he was successful at was my own.

“I... I don’t know what to say,” I murmur.

Harry adjusts the Mets cap on his head. Even with the sunglasses off, I still can’t quite read his expression. Much like the face that stared back at me in the mirror this morning, Harry looks older too. He’s three years older than I am, so he must be pushing forty now—and he looks it. His beard is peppered with gray. When he laughed, there were more lines than there used to be.

But he is still the same guy. The same cute guy who talked circles around the employee at the store where I was trying to buy a computer that first day we met. The same guy who got down on one knee and begged me

to spend my life with him. And I said yes because I couldn't imagine ever being with anyone else.

"I don't want to go back to him," I say in a small voice. "I want to stay with you. *Please.*"

His brows knit together. "I know. I want to be with you too. You have no idea how much."

"I have some idea."

"I thought I'd get over it when you broke it off. And sometimes I thought I almost did, but then you called me and..." His Adam's apple bobs. "I wish we could leave together. I really do."

"So let's go! Come on!"

He glances at Camila, still absorbed in her book. He almost seems to consider it, but then Camila looks up. Fast as lightning, Harry has his sunglasses back on. "We can't do this. You have to go."

"But—"

"Don't take anything he gives you." His voice is firm, leaving no room for discussion. "See if you can get into that drawer in his desk. And if you need me..." He glances at Camila again, then reaches out for my arm. He pushes up the sleeve of my sweater, then brandishes a pen from his jacket pocket. He writes ten digits on my forearm. "That's my number. Call me if you need me. But don't let anyone else see it."

His fingers linger on my arm just a moment longer than they need to. A tingle goes through my skin. He's about to leave, and I can't bear it. I reach out and grab the sleeve of his jacket.

"Don't go, Harry..."

He lowers his head. "Don't make this harder."

He stands up and lets out a low whistle. A brown mutt sprints across the dog park and comes right to Harry. He pulls a leash out of his pocket and attaches it to the dog's collar. He gives me one last look, then he and his dog leave the dog park without me.

My eyes stray from Harry, back to where Camila is sitting at the bench right outside the dog park. She wasn't looking at us a minute ago, but now her gaze is directed right at me. Like a laser beam.

I get a prickling sensation in the back of my neck. Did she see me talking to him? Harry was sitting all the way across the bench from me, but if she had been watching us, I'm sure she would've noticed we were

talking. It seemed like she was absorbed in her book the entire time, but now I'm not so sure. Maybe she saw everything.

I allow my eyes to meet hers. On the way to the dog park, Camila told me one of her secrets. I don't know whether she knows my secret or not. But I'm hoping if she does, she'll keep it for me.

CHAPTER 23

When I get home, I'm itching to go upstairs and have a look in Graham's office. But Camila won't leave me alone. We have lunch together, then she plops down next to me on the sofa and picks up the remote control.

"What do you feel like watching?" she asks.

I frown at the TV. I didn't bring up to Camila the possibility that she saw me talking to Harry, and neither did she. But it's all I can think about. "What are my options?"

"Basically, anything. We can rent any movie you want. And most TV shows are available streaming."

"Really?" It's an interesting concept but slightly overwhelming. How can you decide on anything if your options are *everything*? "So say I wanted to watch *The Princess Bride*? I could just do it?"

Camila snickers. "Unfortunately, yes. We have watched that movie five billion times. Ballpark estimate."

When I was a kid, my mother and I used to watch *The Princess Bride* at least once a month. It was our favorite movie to watch together. My father started teasingly calling me Princess Buttercup (or Princess for short). My greatest fear used to be of six-fingered men—until I found out my mother had cancer, and I found out there were a lot of things to be afraid of beyond men with the wrong number of fingers. After she was gone, my father never called me Princess again.

But I still love the movie. It always makes me think of the before time with my mother. It's my favorite way to remember her.

"Five billion is a lot," I say. "I'm sorry I did that to you."

"Liar," Camila says.

"Fine. Let me make it up to you. What do you want to watch?"

She lifts a shoulder. "I'm not much of a TV person."

"Even when you were a kid?" I think back to my childhood. When I was little, my mother would only let me watch *Sesame Street*. As I got to be older, I was allowed more television privileges, but she was still pretty strict about my screen time. Of course, after she was gone, my father let me

watch whatever I wanted. “I spent most of my non-school hours in front of the television when I was a teenager.”

She taps a finger against her chin. “After school every day, I would go to my grandmother’s house and we would watch *telenovelas*. She had two of them she was really into, and I would get into them too. I couldn’t wait to get home and see if, like, Luisa would go through with killing Alberto.”

I raise an eyebrow. “Did she?”

“Of course she did. It’s a *telenovela*!” Camila gives that throaty laugh. “God, I haven’t thought about that in years. I used to go to my grandmother’s house every day. And then I remember one day my mother said I couldn’t go anymore. She said Abuelita wasn’t feeling well. She didn’t tell me until two months later that she had died.”

“Oh no! They didn’t tell you for two months?”

“I know, can you imagine?” She scowls. “I don’t know what they thought would happen. Maybe I would forget her and stop asking? I even missed the funeral because of them. They should have just told me the truth. I... I’ll never forgive them for that.”

Camila is looking down at her hands. I’m not sure what to say. I want to comfort her, but at the same time, I hardly know her. Even though she knows me very well.

“I’m sorry,” I finally say.

She takes a moment to respond. “It’s fine. Like I said, it was many years ago. I haven’t thought about it in so long.” She lifts her eyes. “So what would you like to watch? A movie? A TV show?”

Somehow, I have lost all my enthusiasm for television. “Actually,” I say, “I’d sort of like to read. Where are my books?”

She nods at the corner of the room, where there’s a five-shelf wooden bookcase overflowing with paperbacks. “Over there. But you don’t read often. I mean, usually.”

I used to like to read, so that sounds strange. “How come?”

“You said it’s frustrating. If you don’t finish the book in one day, you’ve forgotten everything that happened and you have to start all over again. For a while, you would write yourself notes on what had already happened in the book, but then you stopped doing it.”

“Oh.” It makes sense. And it’s a depressing thought. “I don’t feel like watching any TV right now though.”

Camila gives me a long look. Finally, she gets to her feet. “I’m going to go to the kitchen. Give me a yell if you need anything.”

Camila disappears into the kitchen, but I don’t want to go snooping around the house quite yet. Instead, I reach for my phone and make sure I don’t have any missed calls. Namely, from my father or Lucy. But no. Neither of them has returned my messages.

I suppose I’m not surprised that Lucy hasn’t called back, considering she’s probably busy at work. But why isn’t my father calling back? He was getting close to retiring seven years ago, so he’s surely retired by now. Meaning all he’s got to do is sit around all day.

Is it possible he has a girlfriend? Maybe that’s what’s taking up all his time. Of course, it’s hard to imagine. I’m fairly sure there have been no other women in my father’s life since my mother died.

At first, I was glad he was honoring her memory. That he wouldn’t find somebody to replace my beloved mother. But then after I finished high school and went to college, I worried about him. He was all alone, and it didn’t seem to bother him one bit. When dating websites became more popular, I encouraged him to put up an ad.

I’m not interested, Tess, he would always insist. I’m fine. Don’t worry so much.

But I did worry. He said he was fine, but he never seemed happy. The happiest I ever saw him was when I brought Harry home with me for the first time—we had been dating for about six months and things were getting pretty serious. *He’s a good man, my father told me the next time we talked. He’s going to be there for you for the rest of your life.*

Well, he was wrong about that one.

I grit my teeth as I stare down at my father’s number on my phone. Why isn’t he calling me back? I don’t understand it.

But I’m not going to make him call by staring at the screen. So instead, I bring up an internet browser so I can google the name of my company.

Harry was right. My Home Spa is a big deal now. It seems like pretty soon after Harry and I got engaged, the company took off. People went crazy for the high-end spa products you could use in your own home. No wonder we had the money to make our house look like something out of a magazine. And no wonder we have the money to pay for Camila to babysit me all day.

Is that Graham's motivation? Did he want to take over the company so badly, he turned me into a zombie just so he could be the CEO? Would I marry somebody so ridiculously diabolical?

My fingers trace the scar on my scalp. *Something* happened to me. There was an accident. I just wish I knew what happened next. I only see one small mention of me in the last year, saying that Tess Thurman asks for privacy as she recovers from a car accident.

After I'm done looking up myself, I google the name Harrison Finch. But while my name is all over the Internet, he's a ghost. I see nothing about him. It's like after we broke up, he just... vanished. It makes me wonder how I found him in the first place.

I wish he had let me go with him this morning. I don't want to be back here anymore. I wanted to leave with him. I don't understand why he was so resistant.

I search my phone for the messages he sent me, but then remember he told me to delete them. I roll up the sleeve of my shirt—the digits Harry scribbled are still there, a reminder of our brief meeting. I close my eyes and feel that little tingle in my arm, remembering the way his fingers felt on my skin. Before I can overthink it, I type the number into my phone and send off a text message:

I miss you.

There's no response. I stare at the screen of my phone, for five minutes, ten minutes, but still nothing. Did I imagine the entire encounter with Harry? Is that possible? No, it couldn't be. He wrote his number on my arm—that's proof! He was there. I know it. I'm not crazy.

Then the reply pops up:

I miss you too, Tess. You have no idea.

And then:

Delete these messages.

I do as he tells me. After all, he has a good point. If someone is drugging me, they don't need to see these messages.

Camila is still in the kitchen, out of sight. If I'm going to go upstairs and check Graham's office, now is the time. She'll never even know I'm up there.

I shove my phone into my pocket and creep over to the staircase. The house has three bedrooms on the second floor. *One for us and one for each of our future children*, Harry told me when we were looking at the house. We weren't engaged back then, but we knew it was coming. We used to joke about the children we might have.

Two boys, Harry would say.

No, I would argue, *a boy and a girl*.

Fine. A boy and a girl. But I get to name them both.

And then we would compete to come up with the most psychologically damaging names for a child we could think of. At last count, the leading contender for our first child was Purple Monkey Dishwasher Finch. We had almost gotten to the point where we could say it without laughing.

God, I really miss Harry.

I try the doorknob to the room next to our bedroom. The knob turns easily, revealing a guest bedroom. The bed is neatly made, the navy blue bedspread neatly folded, and the pillow perfectly plumped. I wonder if Graham and I used to entertain overnight guests a lot before my accident.

It occurs to me that Graham and I have been married four years, but we don't have children. Both of us are already in our late thirties, so it's unlikely that we were waiting to conceive in the future. I've always wanted children, and it surprises me that at this point in my life, I still don't have any. Did Graham want children? Did he talk me out of it? Or did we try and fail to conceive?

I consider asking him later, but the answer would probably be depressing. Anyway, it's the least of my problems right now. This situation would be so much more complicated if I had a small child to take care of right now. Or if I woke up six months pregnant. I clutch my abdomen protectively at the thought of it.

I try the doorknob to the next room over. Again, it turns easily in my hand. I push the door open, revealing a room containing a small loveseat, a

tall bookcase littered with hard covers and loose papers, and as promised, there's a mahogany desk in the corner of the room.

I have found Graham's office.

I approach the desk. Right next to his laptop is a framed photo of the two of us. We're on vacation, on the beach, looking tanned and happy. It's... sweet. He wants to be reminded of our relationship while he's working. The whole thing doesn't quite make sense. I'm not in love with Graham because I just met the guy this morning, but he genuinely does not seem like an evil person. He seems *nice*. He's stepped up and kept my company afloat when I obviously can't. He's been taking care of me when he would be justified shutting me away in some sort of nursing home. He even made me breakfast this morning, even though it was horribly burned, and also, I was too scared to eat it.

Is it possible that Graham isn't drugging me? That somehow I got it all wrong, and I dragged Harry into my delusion?

I look down at the desk drawers. I pull them open one by one. They all open easily and are filled with papers related to my company. Until I get to the last drawer, which is locked.

I rattle the drawer, listening for the sound of pills shaking. I don't hear anything like that.

I wonder what made me think there was something important in this drawer. Was it just the fact that it's locked?

I go through the other drawers again, this time looking for a key. I'm sure Graham keeps the key on his key ring, but I bet he's got a spare. Graham seems like the sort of guy who always has a spare key.

When my phone rings, I nearly jump out of my skin. I fumble to pull it out of my pocket, terrified it's Graham, and he knows what I'm doing. But it's not Graham.

It's *Lucy*.

CHAPTER 24

“Lucy!” I squeal into the phone. “Oh, thank God!”

“Tess.” The sound of her familiar voice brings tears to my eyes. “What’s going on? Are you okay?”

Am I *okay*? Is she seriously asking me that? “Well I can’t remember anything that happened before yesterday, so not really...”

Lucy sighs—a long, sad exhalation of breath. “I know. I... I’m so sorry.”

I squeeze my eyes shut. “It’s horrible, Lucy. I feel like I’m stuck in a nightmare.”

“Honestly, you’re not usually like this.” She sounds genuinely perplexed. “You used to be a little scared in the morning, but by the afternoon, you always seemed okay. It’s just this last month you seem to freak out every day.”

A month. That’s when Harry said I first contacted him. What happened one month ago that prompted this?

“Did anything happen to you today?” she presses me. “Something that upset you?”

I chew on my lip. I desperately want to tell her everything that happened to me today. About the note I left for myself on my thigh. About meeting Harry at the dog park. Lucy is my best friend, and if I can’t trust her, who can I trust? Apart from her, there are apparently only three other people regularly in my life. And my father hasn’t returned my call.

But Harry warned me. He was emphatic. *Don’t tell Lucy.*

“Nothing happened today,” I finally say. “It’s just hard to wrap my head around... everything.”

“I know. I don’t know how you do it every day. I don’t think I could. I would, like, have killed myself or something.”

That doesn’t make me feel any better. “It’s not like I have much of a choice.”

“I know,” she says. “But God, it must be so hard for you. Not recognizing Graham all the time. Not being able to go anywhere without

Camila having to tag along. Not being able to work or be a productive member of society. You are honestly a superstar for getting through it.”

I don’t feel like a superstar, that’s for sure. And everything Lucy is saying is only making me feel worse. “Listen, can I ask you something?”

“Of course! Anything.”

“Why did I break up with Harry?”

Lucy is quiet on the other line. She said I could ask her anything, but it’s clear she wishes I hadn’t asked her that. “I don’t know.”

“Lucy…”

She lets out a huff. “Tess, it happened ages ago. Why do you even want to know?”

“Because the last thing I remember is being engaged to Harry. I miss him.” Against my will, my eyes fill with tears. God, I miss him. If only he were here with me, I could deal with this memory loss. “Please tell me what happened. If you care about me at all, you have to tell me. *Please*. I have to know.”

“Are… are you sure you want to know this?”

“Yes,” I say, even though I’m not sure I do. I don’t want to know, but I *need* to know. I need to know if I can trust Harry Finch. I need to know what awful thing he did that made me return the ring to the man I loved.

She lowers her voice several notches. “Harry… he… he grabbed me and tried to kiss me.”

I almost drop the phone. What is she talking about? Harry would *never* do that. He never even looked at other women—and especially not *Lucy*. He didn’t even *like* Lucy! How could he do something like that?

“He tried to kiss you?” I repeat incredulously. “Are you sure you have that right?”

“I’m so sorry, Tess.” Her voice cracks. “I feel awful about it. You… you saw the whole thing. He did it in the living room and you walked in right as I pushed him away and slapped him across the face.”

“But he didn’t even *like* you!” I burst out. “I mean, he was always saying that you…”

I don’t want to repeat any of the negative comments Harry made about Lucy over the years, all of which contained a small grain of truth.

“Exactly.” She snorts. “He was always trying to hit on me when you weren’t around, and he *hated* me for not playing along. I tried to tell you so

many times, but I thought it was harmless until the day he grabbed me like that...”

“He... he grabbed you...?”

I’m having a hard time even imagining it. Harry was always so shy when it came to that sort of stuff. I still remember the first time he kissed me. We had just had dinner together, then he walked me back to my apartment building. We stood by the entrance to the building for well over an hour, talking to each other, until finally the doorman came out and yelled, *Kiss her already! She wants you to!* Harry’s face had turned bright red. *Do you?* he asked nervously. And I nodded, because the doorman was absolutely right. I had been wanting him to kiss me all night, and when he did, every part of me down to my toenails tingled.

“You saw the whole thing, Tess,” Lucy says. “He grabbed me. Stuck his tongue down my throat. It was awful. He—”

“Stop.” I choke out the word. “Please stop. I... I get it.”

“I was scared you might not forgive me,” she says in a small voice. “But at least you saw I pushed him away and slapped him. I mean, as if I would ever be interested in *Harry...*”

I rub my aching right skull. Do I believe this? I guess I have to. Lucy isn’t a stranger like Graham—she’s my best friend. She wouldn’t lie to me. And anyway, it makes sense. Harry would have had to do something awful for me to end our engagement. I broke up with him. That’s a fact.

He kissed my best friend.

That bastard *kissed my best friend.*

My father was wrong. He was *not* a good man.

“Tess?”

“I’m here...”

“Look,” Lucy says, “I know it all seems fresh right now, but believe me when I say you were totally over it. You’re better off without him. Graham is great. Like, a million times better. And he doesn’t hit on me.”

I still feel sick at the thought of Harry trying to kiss Lucy. How could he do something like that to me? It turns out I didn’t know him as well as I thought I did.

A disturbing thought occurs to me. What if it wasn’t me who found Harry? What if *he* found out about my accident and decided it was a perfect opportunity to worm his way back into my life? And every day now he

throws doubt into my head about whether my brain injury is real or not. He's manipulating me. Torturing me. Either because he wants me back, or maybe to punish me for breaking up with him.

No, it couldn't be. Harry wouldn't do something like that. He's not capable of it.

Then again, I would've said he wasn't capable of cheating.

"Are you okay?" Lucy's voice sounds far away. "Tess?"

"I'm fine," I manage. I slide into the leather chair in front of Graham's desk. It's very comfortable. Like everything else in our house, it probably cost a fortune. "Lucy, is there any chance you could come here? I really want to see you."

"I wish I could!" She groans. "Work is insane right now and I don't know when I'm getting out of here. But tomorrow should be better. How about if I come for dinner tomorrow?"

Tomorrow. By tomorrow, I won't even remember I invited her. But what can I do? "Sure, that sounds fine."

"Hang in there. I promise everything is going to be okay."

I almost laugh out loud. Everything is going to be okay? Is she joking? Nothing is okay. And I'm beginning to think nothing will ever be okay ever again.

CHAPTER 25

Camila cooks chicken and rice for dinner. The smell of garlic and wine sauce floats out of the kitchen until my stomach starts growling. But she says we can't eat until Graham gets home.

It's seven-thirty when I finally hear the front door unlock—Graham is home. I'm sitting on the couch watching television, having given up on the idea of trying to read a whole book in a single day. Maybe tomorrow.

Graham's face breaks out in a smile when he sees me. He uses his thumb to loosen the knot of the dark blue tie that makes his eyes look so blue, even behind his glasses.

"Hey," he says. "Have a good day?"

I look up at this man. My husband. Who may or may not be trying to drug me. "Yes."

"Glad to hear it."

He plops down next to me on the sofa. Ziggy has his head on my lap, and when he sees Graham, he lets out a low growl. I have to stroke his head to get him to calm down. I don't know why my dog seems to dislike Graham so much.

"I wish you could come back to work," Graham sighs. "It's hard doing it alone. I'm exhausted."

I pick at a loose thread on the seam of my jeans. "Is there anything I could do to help?"

"Oh, Tess." He smiles and shakes his head. "I wish you could. But just coming home to you at the end of a hard day makes it worth it."

A little bullshit detector is going off in the back of my head. Coming home to me makes it worth it? How could that possibly be true? I haven't even let Graham kiss me today. I've been searching his office behind his back. I called 911 on him, for God's sake. What on earth about me makes it all worthwhile?

"Anyway." He pats me on the shoulder. "The food smells fantastic. I'm starving."

As if on cue, Camila emerges from the kitchen holding two heaping plates of food. Graham leaps off the couch to help her. He rescues the plates from her hands and lowers them onto the dining table. One plate for me and one plate for Graham.

“You’re not joining us?” Graham asks her.

My stomach churns at the thought of this beautiful girl joining my husband and me for dinner. Not that I feel jealous, exactly. It’s hard to feel jealous when I have no attraction whatsoever for Graham. But I don’t like the idea of him messing around behind my back.

Although it’s hard to imagine that he and I have sex much anymore. It’s not going to happen tonight, that’s for sure.

“That’s okay,” Camila says. “I’ll just get going.”

Graham’s eyes hold hers. “Come on, Camila. You should join us. Right, Tess?”

“Yes, join us,” I say tonelessly.

“No, you two should have your privacy.” Camila wipes her hands on her jeans. Her fingernails are bitten to the quick. “I have to get going anyway. But enjoy your dinner.”

At first, I think Graham is going to protest again, but he decides against it. I do notice him watching her as she makes her way to the front door and tugs on her jacket. But I can’t blame the guy. She is incredibly beautiful. I’d say there’s a sixty percent chance they’re sleeping together.

Camila exits through the front door, and right after she shuts the door behind her, Graham marches over to the door and locks it from the inside with the key in his pocket. I spent another hour searching after I hung up with Lucy and I couldn’t find any extra keys—either for the desk drawer or the front door. If they exist, they’re very well hidden.

In any case, I’m not going anywhere tonight.

“Let’s eat,” Graham says.

Graham disappears back into the kitchen while I walk to the dining table like it’s my last meal—in a sense, it is. The chicken Camila cooked is juicy and glistening, with bits of rosemary sprinkled on top. The rice is yellow with flecks of red. Camila set the table with a napkin for each of us, as well as a fork and a knife. I pick up my knife—it’s a butter knife.

Ziggy joins me at the table and looks up at me hopefully with those irresistible brown eyes. Before Graham returns and can scold me for it, I

break off a little chunk of my chicken and let Ziggy gobble it out of my hand.

“Got us drinks!” Graham announces. He’s holding one glass of water, presumably for me, and a bottle of beer, presumably for him. “Now let’s eat!”

I hold up the butter knife. “How am I supposed to cut a piece of meat with this thing?”

Graham nods at his own place setting. “I’ve got the same thing. It works well enough. Do the best you can.”

“You mean you don’t trust me to have a real knife?”

He’s quiet for a moment. “It’s better this way. Trust me.”

Ziggy had jerked his head up at the sound of Graham’s voice and turned to look at him. Now he snarls at my husband, who takes a step back and lowers the drinks onto the table.

Graham raises his hands. “Whoa, Ziggy.”

Ziggy barks loud enough to wake up everybody in the neighborhood. He takes another step toward Graham, who takes another step back. I’ve never seen Ziggy like this. Granted, I only met him this morning. But he seems like such a happy, friendly dog. He was even licking Harry’s hand at the dog park, and he must know Graham better than Harry.

“Ziggy.” I pat the leg of my pants. “Leave Graham alone. Come to mama.”

But Ziggy doesn’t hear me. He’s a dog with a mission. He snarls at Graham one more time, and before I can stop him, his sharp teeth have sunk into Graham’s leg.

“Goddamn it!” Graham shouts as I grab Ziggy’s collar to restrain him. The fabric of Graham’s expensive pants is ripped wide open. “He *bit* me! Your dog *bit* me!”

“Bad Ziggy!” I snap at him.

I keep my hands on Ziggy’s collar because I’m genuinely afraid he’s going to do it again. I don’t know what the hell got into him. He seemed like the gentlest dog. Why would he bite Graham?

Graham is pulling up the leg of his pants to assess the damage. Thankfully, I don’t see any blood gushing from his leg. The skin doesn’t even seem to be broken.

“He just bit the fabric,” I say. “You’re not hurt, are you?”

He lifts his eyes, which are rimmed with fury. “Get that fucking dog outside, Tess.”

“Graham, I’m sorry. I’m sure he didn’t mean to—”

“He didn’t mean to *bite* me?” he hisses. “Obviously, he did. Put him outside. From now on, he doesn’t come into the house. I’m so sick of this shit.”

“I’m sorry,” I say again. I’m desperate for him to forgive Ziggy. After all, he could get rid of Ziggy tonight, and by tomorrow, I wouldn’t even remember he existed. But this dog is the best part of my life right now. I don’t want Graham to take him away from me. Even though I have to admit I couldn’t entirely blame him. “I’ll take him outside now.”

“Good,” Graham snaps. He props his leg up on the chair to examine it further. I’m almost certain the skin isn’t broken. “I’m going to go change. I want him out of the house by the time I’m back. Got it?”

Without waiting for a reply, he storms upstairs.

I don’t have much of a choice—Ziggy is going outside. It’ll be fine now. He’s got a dog house out there. The weather is nice. He might be happier in our backyard than he’d be in the house.

I lead Ziggy to the back door. The lock hasn’t been turned and I’m able to open the door. Earlier this morning, I went out in the backyard and thought I’d be able to just leave, but then I discovered the padlock on the fence around the yard. This place is locked up tighter than Alcatraz.

When I took Ziggy into the yard earlier, he seemed happy to play there. But now he looks up at me and whimpers.

“I’m sorry, boy.” I stroke his soft head. “I’ll come for you in the morning and we’ll do something fun.”

Not that I can promise that. I can’t promise anything about tomorrow.

Ziggy whimpers again—his expression breaks my heart. I still can’t figure out why he bit Graham. It doesn’t make any sense. But then again, nothing about this day makes any sense.

I feel terrible about leaving Ziggy in the backyard, but he’ll be fine out there. As for me, I’m not so sure.

When I get back into the dining room, Graham is still upstairs. I look down at the beer bottle and glass of water he dropped on the table before he left. I think of the words I found written on my thigh. *Graham is drugging you*. Is it possible that he put something in my water glass?

I lift the glass of water. I hold it up to the light of the ornate chandelier above our heads and peer at the clear liquid. But it's not *entirely* clear. When I squint, I can just make out little particles of a white substance swirling in the water.

Graham's footsteps on the stairs startle me and I nearly drop the water. He's coming downstairs. *Now*. What am I going to do?

I can't think of anything else to do, so I toss the contents of the water glass into a nearby plant. I'll tell him I drank it all. Hopefully, the plant will be okay, but that's the least of my concerns.

"Tess?" Graham is at the entrance to the dining room, now dressed in a T-shirt and jeans. He looks handsome in his casual attire, but there's something in his eyes that makes me uneasy. "What are you doing?"

I force a smile. "I was just thirsty and gulped down all my water while I was waiting for you. I'll just grab some more water from the kitchen."

Graham narrows his eyes at me. He takes a step closer to me and I instinctively take a step back.

"No," he says. "You're lying."

CHAPTER 26

I hold onto the edge of the table because my legs have turned to jello. Graham's blue eyes look almost black as he glares at me.

"You're lying," he says.

"What... what do you mean?" I plaster an innocent expression on my face. It's hard to believe it looks even remotely realistic.

"You didn't drink that water," he hisses at me.

"Yes, I did."

"No, you didn't. You poured the water into the plant. I saw you do it."

Crap.

I think back to the conversation I had with Harry at the dog park. *You have said those exact words to me multiple times now. You knew he was drugging you. You tried to avoid it. And the next day, nothing has changed. You've still lost your memory.*

Is this what happened all those other nights? I tried to get rid of the tainted water and Graham caught me? And now what will he do?

"Why did you do that?" he presses me. "Why did you dump out your water?"

I tug on the sleeve of my sweater. "It... it looked cloudy. I don't know... like, maybe something was floating in it..."

He narrows his eyes. "Did somebody tell you I was putting something in your water?"

"No," I say quickly. Maybe too quickly.

Graham is looking down at something. I follow his gaze and realize he's staring at my arm. I was fiddling with the sleeve of my sweater, and I had inadvertently tugged it up several inches. And now Graham can see the last several digits of a phone number.

Oh no.

He crosses the distance between us and seizes my left arm in his hand hard enough to leave behind bruises. He wrenches up my sleeve, revealing the digits Harry scribbled on my arm. Graham's eyes widen behind his spectacles. "Really? Are you *kidding* me with this, Tess?"

I open my mouth to say something, but no words come out. I'm starting to see why Camila was only allowed to set the table with butter knives.

He releases my arm and glares at me. "Whose number is that? Who have you been talking to?" Before I can answer, he says, "Is it Harry?"

I shake my head as vigorously as I can, but it's clear Graham doesn't believe me. He marches into the living room, and after a second, I can see what he's going for. My phone. He picks it up and unlocks it with his thumb. I hold my breath as he scrolls through my messages and phone calls. Thank God I deleted those text messages from Harry. He was right when he instructed me to do that.

Graham shakes the phone at me. "Did you delete the messages from him?"

"No!" I cry. "I didn't."

He grunts. "Yeah, right."

Holding the phone in one hand, he grabs my left arm again to look at Harry's number. I squirm, trying to get loose, but his grip is like a vise. With his thumb, he types the number into the phone then hits the button to make the call. I watch him, my heart pounding. He waits long enough that I'm certain the call has gone to voicemail.

"Hey, *Harry*?" Graham shoots me a look as he says my ex-fiancé's name. "I found your phone number written on Tess's arm. I'd really appreciate it if you would leave her the fuck alone from now on. *Or else*. We don't need you in our lives. And I swear to God, if you bother her again, you are going to live to regret it. You get me?"

He ends the call, his eyes still locked with mine. At first, it looks like he's going to toss my phone back on the table, but instead, he puts it in his pocket. "You're not getting this back. *Ever*. I'm sick of this shit."

"Okay," I say in a small voice.

His shoulders rise and fall as he takes a breath. "I'm sorry I yelled at you. I shouldn't have lost my temper."

I don't know what to say to that. Losing his temper isn't the worst thing he has done tonight. He tried to *drug* me, for God's sake.

"Listen." His voice is calmer now. He pushes his glasses up the bridge of his nose. "I have no clue what Harry has been saying to you. I can only imagine. But whatever it is, it's not true. He doesn't know what's going on."

“Right,” I mumble. All I can think of is that I escaped drinking that water. By tomorrow, I’ll remember everything. And I can work on getting free from this monster.

“Tess, look at me.”

I lift my eyes to meet his. All the anger from a moment ago has vanished. “What?”

“I’m not trying to drug you. You have to believe me. I would never do anything to hurt you.”

I shake my head. “So what was in that drink? I saw *something*.”

He rubs at the back of his neck. “You’re right. There *was* something dissolved in that drink. But it wasn’t anything bad. It was your *medications*, Tess. Prescribed by the doctor you see for your head injury.”

“What medications?”

“For your seizures.” He tugs at the hem of his T-shirt. “You were getting horrible seizures after your accident. Your whole body would shake, and you hit your head twice when it happened. One of the times you hit your head, the bleeding in your brain got worse. You need to be on your seizure medications.” He frowns. “But lately, you’ve been refusing to take them because you think I’m drugging you for some reason. So I started putting them in your drink. I’m sorry. I didn’t do it to upset you. I just thought it would be easier this way.”

I think of the ominous message I found scribbled on my thigh this morning. “I don’t believe you.”

“Fine. Do you want me to show you?”

Before I can answer, Graham gestures at me to follow him, and he leads me down the hallway to the downstairs bathroom. If this is a game of chicken, he’s playing it *very* well. He opens the medicine cabinet and pulls out two orange pill bottles.

“These are your seizure medications,” he says. “We have you on once-a-day medications because getting you to take them in the morning was impossible. I mean, I don’t blame you. You usually have no idea what’s going on in the morning, and you’re not eager to swallow a bunch of pills.”

I take the bottle of pills from him. My name and the name of the drug are written on the bottle and underneath in smaller letters, “FOR SEIZURES.” There’s a doctor’s name and prescribing number.

“You can call the pharmacy if you want,” he says. “I’m telling you the truth. And here...” He takes his phone out of his pocket, types something in, then hands it to me. It’s the website from Mt. Sinai with a photograph of the doctor whose name is on my prescription bottle. Dr. Leonard Sawinski. “That’s your neurologist. He’s not a quack. He’s the chairman of the whole department.”

I look in the bottle of pills. It’s about half full of large capsules. They would be easy to break open and pour into a glass of water.

“They make you pretty groggy though,” he says apologetically. “Usually you just want to go straight to sleep after you’ve had them. But sometimes you realize I slipped you something and freak out.”

Is that what happened last night? I thought he slipped me something and wrote the note to myself?

“I don’t know why Harry keeps bothering you,” he sighs. “Maybe... I don’t know, maybe he believes he’s doing the right thing. Or he’s still in love with you. But *I’m* the one taking care of you. I’m your husband. I’m just trying to do what’s right. It’s... hard.”

Graham’s head drops down. He almost looks like he’s going to start crying. And I realize at this moment that I believe him. These are real medications. Prescribed by a respected physician.

“Tess?” There’s a groove between his eyebrows. “Say something.”

“I...” I look into the bottle of pills again. “I don’t know. I’m not sure.”

He squeezes his hands together. “I’m not going to force you, okay? But I want you to take these pills. I’m scared about you having another seizure. Dr. Sawinski said if you have another bleed in your brain, it might affect your ability to walk... or speak.”

I close my eyes. I remember how panicked I was this morning when I woke up and realized nothing was the way I remembered it. What if I woke up and couldn’t speak? What if I woke up and one side of my body didn’t work anymore? This is bad, but it could be worse.

When I open my eyes again, Graham is still standing there. Patiently. Waiting to see what I’ll decide.

“Okay,” I say. “I’ll take the pills.”

DAY THREE

CHAPTER 27

If you relax and try to have a good day, you will be much happier. Just remember that the people around you care about you very much, and only want you to be safe. Do what they say. You are in good hands. Trust me.

I repeat my own words to myself like a mantra as I sit in my palace of a kitchen, watching my handsome husband who I've never met before make me breakfast. This kitchen is *unbelievable*. I just wish I could remember how my kitchen got this way. And how *I* got this way.

I smell something burning on the stove while Graham takes a call on his phone. He obviously smells it too, because he rushes over to turn off the stove. I'm worried it's too late though.

"It's just a tiny bit burned," Graham assures me as he ends his call and tosses his phone on the counter. "It still tastes good."

That's yet to be seen. "Do I have a phone?"

Graham hesitates a beat. "No. I'm sorry. You couldn't figure out how to use it and you kept losing it."

"Oh." I've had a phone since college and it feels weird not to have one. Although it was nowhere near as fancy as Graham's phone. "So what do I do if I want to call someone?"

He blinks at me through his wire-rimmed spectacles. "Who do you want to call?"

There is something in Graham's voice that makes me uneasy. Something between patronizing and suspicious. But that might be unfair. He's been nothing but kind to me since I woke up screaming when I saw him in my bed. I'm sure that's got to be hard for him. "Um... I'd like to talk to my father. Is he...?"

"He's still alive," Graham tells me.

I let out a sigh of relief. My father is the only family I have left since breast cancer took my mother when I was a kid.

"He's on a cruise though," he adds. "So he's pretty hard to reach by phone. We can try him later if you want."

My father is on a *cruise*? That's atypical behavior for him. But it's been a while. Maybe in the last decade, he's turned into a cruise kind of person.

"What about Lucy?" I ask.

"You're still in touch."

I clutch my knees under the table. "Can I talk to her?"

"Maybe later," he says vaguely.

Graham puts down two plates of food on the kitchen island where I'm sitting. As I'm staring down at the blackened hash browns and sausage, a scraping noise comes from the back door. I've heard it several times now, but the sound is clearer since the stove is off. "What's that?"

He hesitates. "That's your dog. But we keep him outside most of the day. He chews up the whole house."

"My dog?" Harry and I always wanted a dog. I take a bite of the crispy hash browns—they taste bitter. "What's his name?"

"Ziggy."

I almost choke on the burnt shredded potato. In my defense, it's easy to do that because they are super dry. But that's not why I was choking. Ziggy was Harry's bird. Why did I name my dog after my ex-fiancé's bird? That is a very, very strange thing to do.

Maybe I shouldn't read too much into this. Maybe it's just a coincidence.

"Graham?" I say.

He looks up from his plate. "Yes?"

"We don't... I mean, do we... have children?"

"Do you *see* any children in this house?"

"No, but..." I attempt to stab a piece of sausage with my fork—it's been overcooked so badly, it's shriveled. "I always wanted kids. I would've thought... I mean, if we're married..."

He chews on a bite of his sausage. "We tried to have kids. But the doctor said you were infertile."

I suck in a breath. "Oh... but... aren't there treatments for infertility?"

He lifts a shoulder. "You know how you are. You were always scared of going to the doctor because of what happened with your mom. And you're terrified of needles. So we decided not to do IVF. You said it was fine just the two of us."

“Oh...”

Of course, I knew we didn't have children. It was fairly obvious. But to find out that we couldn't, that we would never...

But what does it matter? It's not like I'm in any shape to take care of a child like I am now. It's a blessing we never ended up having kids.

Graham goes to the refrigerator and opens up the door. He pulls out a container of blood-red liquid. I watch in fascination as he pours a heaping glass of it.

“What's *that*?” I ask.

“Pomegranate juice.” He deposits the glass on the table. “You love this stuff. You drink like two glasses of it every morning.”

“I do?” The drink in front of me looks utterly unappealing. “Are you sure?”

He winks at me. “Which one of us has memory loss? Trust me. This is your favorite thing in the whole world.”

“No, thanks. I'd just like a cup of coffee.”

“Come on. You don't want your favorite drink?”

I press my fingertips against the glass, pushing it several inches away from me. “Just coffee. Please.”

“Fine,” he grumbles.

Graham stomps across the kitchen to the fancy coffee machine that has more control buttons than our shower. He gets the coffee brewing, and I make a point of pushing that awful drink he poured me a few more inches away from me. That looks *awful*—I don't even want it near me.

Graham returns to the kitchen island. His eyes stray down to the glass of red liquid. “You really don't want it?”

“No thanks.”

“It's expensive, you know.”

I don't know what to say. Based on the appearance of this house, we can afford to waste a glass of juice. “You can have it if you want.”

Graham grumbles to himself as he swipes the full glass of pomegranate juice off the table and pours the contents into the sink, staining the bottom of the sink a deep red color. My stomach turns at the sight of it. Then he slams the glass down on the kitchen counter.

I don't know why he's acting this way. I didn't do anything that horrible—I just refused a glass of juice. Why is he throwing a tantrum?

This doesn't seem like normal behavior.

The letter I wrote to myself says he's a good guy. He's my *husband*.
But I don't trust him.

CHAPTER 28

All morning, I've been sitting on the sofa, flipping through the channels on the television, feeling increasingly claustrophobic. I would love to go outside and take a walk, but Graham made it clear this morning that I couldn't go outside alone. He said it wasn't safe.

That woman Camila is upstairs, doing God knows what. Supposedly, she's cleaning, but I haven't heard any vacuum noises or running water. Something about Camila makes me uneasy. I don't quite trust anyone. It's obvious from the scar on my head that there's some grain of truth to the car accident story, but it feels like there's something I am missing. A missing piece of the puzzle.

To hell with Graham's warnings. I'm going to go take a walk.

I'm already wearing a pair of sneakers I found in the closet, so I head straight for the front door. I'll just walk around the block. Nothing bad is going to happen if I do that. I'll probably be back home before Camila even notices I'm gone.

I reach out to turn the lock, the same way I did when I left the house yesterday to go to work. Well, it wasn't really yesterday. It was *seven years ago*. But it feels like yesterday. In any case, the lock looks different than it did the last time I remember. Instead of the dial that I used to turn to unlock the door, now there's a keyhole.

Oh my God.

The door is locked from the *inside*.

Pushing back a surge of panic, I make a beeline for the back door. I can hear my dog, Ziggy, barking from the backyard, but I can't get to him. Because there is a lock on the back door as well.

I slam my palm against the back door in frustration. Are they kidding me? How could they lock me in here? I mean, yes, I *was* trying to leave without permission, but for God's sake, I'm an adult. I wasn't going to do anything dangerous. I was just going to take a walk around the block!

And I still can. There are other ways to get out of this house. They can't keep me prisoner here.

I return to the front door, my hands shaking. There are two picture windows on either side of the door. I might not be quite as nimble now that I'm thirty-six instead of twenty-nine, but I think I can climb out of a first-story window. I have to try, anyway.

I grab onto the grooves at the bottom of one of the two windows. I yank upwards, but the window doesn't budge. Not even a centimeter—even when I throw all my weight into it. That's when I notice there's a switch at the base of this window as well, keeping it locked. I try to turn it, and that's when I discover that the window lock has a keyhole on it also.

The blood is rushing in my ears as I go from window to window, confirming that each and every window has an identical keyhole in the lock. It takes me less than five minutes to verify that all the windows and doors on the first floor of this house are locked from the inside.

I'm trapped here.

I stand in the middle of the living room, the panic rising in my chest. I feel almost dizzy. It wasn't so bad when I was just sitting on the couch and watching television, but now that I know I can't leave even if I wanted...

This can't be legal. You can't keep a person hostage in their own home. I don't care if I have a brain injury. This isn't right.

But who can I tell? I've been through the entire house and I can't find a working phone. No wonder Graham refused to give me a phone this morning. And Camila won't be sympathetic to my plight. He's paid her to be here.

A noise at the front door gets my attention. I swivel my head in the direction of the door, just as a few letters slide through the mail slot. As the letters clatter onto the welcome mat, my heart leaps. The mailman!

I race to one of the picture windows, just in time to see a middle-aged man wearing a postal worker uniform with a blue baseball cap on his head trudging down our front walk, dragging along his mail cart behind him. It's not Sid—the mailman who used to deliver our mail when it was me and Harry living here—it's a new guy I don't recognize. But that's okay. He's a government employee—he has to help me.

The mailman isn't looking my way, so I bang a fist against the window as hard as I can. He still doesn't turn. So I bang both fists against the window, trying desperately to get his attention.

The mailman stops. He tilts his head to the side, then he turns around. He spots me standing there and I wave both hands over my head. He waves back, then turns around and continues on his way.

No. *No!*

I bang my hands against the window again, but the mailman doesn't turn again. What is wrong with this guy? Can't he see I'm in distress?

I slam my fists against the window so hard, the frame rattles. "Help!" I scream, knowing it's unlikely he'll hear me through the thick window pane. "Help me please!"

But he doesn't turn. He continues on his way, moving farther and farther away from my house. Wrecking any chance that he'll be able to save me.

"Help!" I scream one more time. "Please!"

How did this happen to me? The last thing I remember, I was living in this house, engaged to the man I loved, and running a successful business. And now... *this*. Something has gone horribly wrong. I need to figure out a way to get out of here. Maybe if I make a sign, I can get the attention of someone on the street and—

"Tess?"

Camila is standing by the sofa, staring at me. That's when I realize tears are streaking down my face and my shoulders are shaking with sobs. I'm crying so hard, I can hardly catch my breath.

"Please help me," I gasp. "Please... I... I need my life back..."

Camila is quiet for a moment. I can see the pity on her face. I wonder how much she gets paid to babysit me. She's so beautiful. She could be a movie star if she wanted. Or a pop star. I'm sure my husband notices how beautiful she is. I wonder if that's how she got the job.

I want to tell Camila to stay away from me, but it's obvious she has other ideas in her head. After a beat of hesitation, she crosses the room to the window and comes right up to me. And before I can stop her, she wraps her arms around me.

For a moment, I am completely rigid, but gradually, I feel myself melt. I can't help it. Even though she is a stranger, there is something comforting about the way she holds me. Something familiar. I sob into her shoulder and her hand rubs my back.

“It’s okay, Tess,” she murmurs. “You’re going to be okay. I promise. I’m here. It’s okay.”

“It’s not!” Snot from my nose stains her shirt, and she doesn’t seem to be the slightest bit bothered. “It’s not okay! I miss my life. I miss Harry. Please...”

Her hand moves in wide circles on my back. My mother used to do that when I was a kid and I was upset about something. She used to hold me and rub circles on my back with her palm. After she died, I never quite felt that anyone could comfort me the way she could, even Harry. But as Camila holds me and rubs my back, it’s like I’m a child again... and maybe everything is going to be okay.

“You’re going to be okay,” she says again. “I know it can be scary not to remember anything, but I promise you, you’re going to calm down. And also, I have a surprise for you.”

I pull away from her, wiping my swollen eyes with the back of my hands. “A surprise?”

She smiles at me. “Lucy is visiting this afternoon.”

For the first time since I woke up this morning, I feel a seed of happiness. Lucy is coming. My best friend it’s going to visit me. And I might not trust my husband, but I can trust Lucy. She would never do anything to hurt me.

CHAPTER 29

At just after three, the doorbell rings.

I've been sitting on the couch most of the afternoon with Ziggy. After my meltdown this morning, Camila took me and Ziggy on a walk around the neighborhood. I was already feeling better after finding out that Lucy would be visiting, but the fresh air did wonders. After a walk around the block with my dog, I didn't feel as much like a prisoner anymore.

And now Ziggy is sitting next to me on the couch, his chin on my lap as I stroke his head absently. I don't feel like doing much. After all, what can I do? I can't start reading a book because if I don't finish it by the end of the evening, I'll have forgotten everything about it. I mentioned to Camila that I might want to try cooking something for dinner, but she acted like I might burn the whole house down if I tried to do it alone. The only way she would consent to it is if she were with me the whole time.

And that brings me back to the issue of the doorbell. I can't open the door because of that pesky lock. Even though I know my best friend is on the other side of the door, and I desperately want to see her.

"Camila!" I call out.

Camila sprints down the stairs, wiping her hands on her skin-tight blue jeans. "What's up, Tess?"

"Can you open the door?" I ask her.

Camila digs around in the pocket of her jeans for a set of keys. She fits them in the lock to the front door. When I see Lucy's familiar face, I almost burst into tears. I run over to her and throw my arms around her. I can't stop hugging her. And then I really am crying. I'm quite the waterfall today.

"Lucy!" I sob. "It's been the worst day ever!"

I take a step back to look at my gorgeous best friend. Like her eponymous namesake in *I Love Lucy*, Lucy has shockingly red hair—it's her signature color. She had more freckles in college, but she's careful about staying out of the sun, so they've faded. But if you squint at her face, you can still see the pale dots all over her skin. And if she goes in the sun, forget it. Freckle city.

Lucy and I met on our first day of college. I had been nervous about leaving home for the first time, and my father's lack of emotion over this momentous event didn't make me feel any better.

But Lucy was the opposite. The second I walked into the room we were assigned to share, with the matching beds and dressers at either side, she ran over to me and enveloped me in a big hug. *I'm so excited we're roommates!* And I was excited too. It was wonderful to live with somebody who I could laugh with, have fun with, and even occasionally study with. (Very occasionally—neither of us were stellar students.)

Okay, Lucy isn't perfect. Like if you meet her for lunch or coffee, she's guaranteed to be anywhere from fifteen to thirty minutes late. And occasionally, forty-five minutes to an hour late. And she never believed in me when I mentioned starting up my company. But in her defense, she was just trying to protect me from what she believed was a bad business venture. It's not her fault she was dead wrong.

Lucy looks fantastic today. Her red hair is glossy, she has maintained her trim figure, and the eyeliner she's wearing makes her eyes pop. Harry used to sometimes make comments about the amount of makeup she always wore, which always stood out in comparison to my bare face. *D'you think she owns stock in a cosmetics company?* he'd say, just before I would elbow him in the ribs.

The fact that Lucy looks like somebody who came right out of the pages of the fashion magazine makes me feel all the more self-conscious about my own appearance. I smooth out my too-short hair and my fingers linger on the scar, as I wonder if it's visible to her.

"Tess, sweetie." She grabs my shoulders tightly. "You look so pale. What's going on?"

"I..." I wipe my eyes with the back of my hand, gulping for air. "Can we sit down?"

Ziggy has vacated the sofa to make room for Lucy. I don't understand what Graham was talking about when he said Ziggy chews up the furniture. Ziggy is like the most well-behaved dog ever. Sometimes I feel like he knows me better than anyone else in this house. He certainly wouldn't have offered me *pomegranate juice* to drink. Lucy ruffles Ziggy's fur, and he licks her hand.

“I just don’t understand how this happened to me.” I touch the scar on my scalp again—it feels so strange, like it’s not quite my skin. “I know there was a car accident...”

Lucy crosses her legs and I notice her shoes—Manolo Blahnik. She’s always wanted a pair of those. “Yes, last year. And ever since then, you’ve been having so much trouble with your memory. Graham has had to take over at My Home Spa. And I’ve been stepping up as much as I can.”

“So it’s like this every morning? I’ve forgotten everything from the day before?”

“Usually.” She picks at a thread on her designer slacks. “You have better days sometimes. But the last month has been rough. Before that, you seemed happy most of the time when I saw you. But now you’re always crying. And you seem...”

I lift my eyebrows. “I seem what?”

“Scared. You always seem scared of something.”

She isn’t wrong. But who wouldn’t be scared in this situation? Every morning, I wake up next to a stranger. In my own bed! In his *underwear*!

“Lucy,” I say, “what happened to Harry?”

She frowns. “That’s another thing. Every time we talk, you ask me about Harry. You used to just occasionally ask about him. But now, it’s like you’re desperate to see him every day.”

My eyes fill with tears again. “The last thing I remember is him getting down on one knee and proposing to me...”

A smile twitches at Lucy’s lips. “Right. The keyboard proposal. That was... um, cute.”

“It was so romantic!”

“It was signature dorky Harry.” She rolls her eyes. “If that’s what you like...”

“Harry and I are supposed to be married by now.” I sniffle loudly. “If I woke up next to *him* every morning, I could deal with all this. But Graham...”

“Graham is nice.” She sounds almost exasperated. I wonder how many times she’s had this conversation with me. “He’s a good guy. So much better for you than Harry.”

“Maybe...” But as she says those words, something flashes in my head. Something about Graham. But I can’t quite grab onto it. My memory

has become so frustrating.

“He cares about you a lot, Tess.” She lowers her voice a notch. “Also, he’s really handsome, don’t you think so?”

“I... I guess so.” Yes, Graham is attractive. But when I look at him, I feel nothing. “In my head, I’m engaged to someone else. Someone I love. So even though Graham is nice and he’s handsome...”

“He’s not Harry.”

I nod miserably.

Lucy crosses her legs. “Has Harry tried to contact you at all? Like, on your phone?”

“What do you mean?”

She glances around, as if checking to see if somebody is listening in. “Like, has he sent you any text messages? Or tried to call you?”

“I don’t have a phone, so...”

Lucy frowns. “You don’t?”

“Graham pointed out that I would probably lose it. And he let me use his. He gave me my father’s number this morning and I tried to call him.”

“Yes, but—” Lucy starts to say something, but abruptly stops. She chews on her lip, looking across the sofa at me. “Graham didn’t give you a phone to use this morning?”

“No...” My stomach sinks. “Are you saying that he usually gives me a phone?”

She hesitates. “No, not at all. That’s not what I’m saying.”

But Lucy is a terrible liar. Whenever she’s lying, her whole face turns as red as her hair. I’m beginning to think that I did have a phone. And for whatever reason, Graham decided he didn’t want me to have it anymore.

And then that memory comes back to me. A little tiny snippet of Harry’s voice whispering in my ear.

Graham has a desk upstairs. There’s a drawer that’s always locked, and you said you think that’s where he’s keeping whatever he’s giving you.

My head snaps back, shaken by the memory that just came back to me. Is that real? Or is it a figment of the imagination of my damaged brain? After all, the letter I wrote to myself claimed I hadn’t seen Harry in years.

But it felt like a real memory. It’s the first memory I’ve had today that has felt real. That has to mean something.

“Lucy, does Graham have an office upstairs?” I ask.

“Uh, yeah. He does.”

I lean back against the couch, not sure what to think. Is there something upstairs locked in Graham’s desk drawer that I should know about? If so, *what?*

Is there a reason I keep losing my memory every night, beyond my head injury?

No. It can’t be. My husband isn’t drugging me. I can’t believe that could be true.

Could it?

CHAPTER 30

The weather is beautiful so Lucy and I decide to walk Ziggy around the neighborhood. I feel a bit self-conscious in my jeans and sweater next to Lucy in her creamy silk blouse and pencil skirt that's just a bit too short, but it's not like anybody is going to be staring at us. Anyway, I would feel ridiculous walking the dog in what she's wearing.

"Ziggy is such a good dog," Lucy comments as he bounds ahead of us, overjoyed to be outside. I feel the same way. That house is so stifling. "He's so good for you."

"When did I get him?" I love Ziggy so much, it feels hard to believe that I haven't owned him my whole life.

"About a year ago—around when you got hurt." She pats her red hair. "Ziggy. Interesting name for a dog."

I keep my eyes ahead of me, avoiding Lucy's gaze. Did she know the name of Harry's bird? I have no idea. "I love the comic strip."

"Do you?" There's a note of skepticism in her voice, and my stomach flips. But then she laughs. "I suppose comic strips are the easiest thing for you to read these days, since they're so short!"

"Mmm."

We walk in silence after that, only broken by Ziggy panting and Lucy's heels clacking against the sidewalk. My sneakers don't make a sound. We reach the park a few blocks from my house and start doing a lap around it.

"Honestly," Lucy says, "this isn't so bad, Tess. You have a good life, despite everything."

I bite the inside of my cheek. I don't know how she could say something like that. Nobody would want to trade places with me. I do *not* have a good life. Not anymore.

"I mean, look at you," she goes on. "You get to hang out all day in a pair of comfy jeans and a sweater, Graham takes care of you, you don't have to work or do anything besides watch a little TV and walk your dog." She looks pointedly at my midsection. "You don't have to worry about your weight or working out."

I clutch my belly self-consciously. I didn't think I had gained much weight in the last decade. Although I certainly don't look as toned as Lucy does. Suddenly, I remember a comment Harry once made about Lucy:

She never passes up an opportunity to put you down.

Even at the time, I knew it wasn't entirely untrue. But I always shrugged it off.

"I'm just saying." Lucy's smile stretches the corners of her lips. "Things could be way worse. You have it pretty good."

"Lucy," I say, "I don't think..."

Before I can get the words out, my lips freeze. My mind goes blank. Everything around me fades and goes white, like I've fallen into a trance. And instead of being on the street outside my house, I'm somewhere completely different.

I'm in a small room, sitting on a stool, staring at my reflection in a vanity mirror. My hair is pulled back from my face except for small tendrils that fall around my cheeks, and I'm wearing a white lacy dress.

"Just think, Tess..." It's Lucy's voice. I look up and she's next to me, wearing a puffy lavender frock. "In a few minutes, you're going to be walking down the aisle. You're going to be Mrs. Graham Thurman."

"Yeah..." I stare back at my reflection. My lips are a straight line. I don't look like a woman who is overjoyed that she's about to get married. "I just... I wonder if this is a mistake."

"A mistake!" Lucy bursts out. "How could you say that? Graham is wonderful! If I knew what a great guy he was, believe me, I wouldn't have turned him down when he asked me out!"

I grimace. This isn't the first time Lucy has reminded me that she was Graham's first choice. Of course, I was with Harry back then. Engaged. I had thought Harry would be the one I'd be joining hands with after walking down the aisle. The thought of it being anyone but him fills me with overwhelming panic. I know I told him I never wanted to see him again, but I'm worried I've made a horrible mistake.

"I want to call Harry," I blurt out. "Right now."

Lucy's eyes fly wide open. "You're joking. You're really still having feelings for him after what he did to me? After the way he betrayed you?"

"Lucy, where's my phone?" My fingers fly over the vanity table, reaching for it. "I need to talk to him."

Before I can reach my phone, Lucy snatches it up, holding it out of my reach. "No. I'm not going to let you mess this up for yourself. You can't call Harry. I won't let you make the biggest mistake of your life."

Before I can hear my reply, the dressing room fades away to white, and suddenly, I'm back on the street again, my fingers wrapped around Ziggy's leash. Lucy is next to me, back in her work clothes rather than the purple frock, and she's shaking my shoulder.

"Tess!" Her green eyes are wide. "Tess, are you okay?"

I blink at her. I open my mouth but it takes another few seconds for me to get out any words. "What happened?"

"You... you just..." Lucy chews on her lower lip. "You zoned out for like ten seconds. I think it was a seizure."

I almost drop Ziggy's leash. "A seizure?"

"You have them sometimes." She shrugs like me having a seizure is no big deal. "I would have thought you just zoned out a bit, but you had one once while Graham was around and he told me that's what it was."

"Does this happen to me a lot?"

She nods. "A fair amount. But I've never seen it happen to you while we were walking. Are you okay?"

I feel dizzy, but otherwise not too bad. But then I attempt to take a step and my knees wobble. "Maybe we should head home."

"Of course." She rubs my shoulder. "Let's get you home right away."

As we continue our circle around the park in the direction of my house, I noticed that the park has a dog park inside of it. As I look at the dog park, I get this strange feeling, like a snapshot of a memory.

Did something happen inside that dog park?

"Lucy," I say. "Do I ever take Ziggy to the dog park?"

Her brow wrinkles. "I think so. Why?"

I stare at that dog park, imagining Ziggy bounding through the dirt on the ground. Something happened in this dog park. But I can't quite retrieve the memory. It's so frustrating.

The last thing I remember before this morning was going to sleep next to Harry, but that was years ago. Nearly a decade of memories have somehow just vanished. But have they vanished? Or are they just below the surface, waiting to be retrieved?

CHAPTER 31

Lucy decides to stay for dinner. Camila has made us steaks with a side of mashed potatoes and asparagus. Graham and I are seated across from each other, and Lucy is between us, at the head of the table.

“Graham,” Lucy says, “did you have a chance to see *The Ivory Castle*?”

Graham’s eyes light up. “I did. It was great, wasn’t it? A haunting performance by Higgins.”

I slice into the filet mignon Camila has placed on my plate. She said that they were cooked medium rare, but as the butter knife slices through the meat, it looks much closer to rare. It’s outright bloody. But Lucy and Graham don’t seem bothered by it. Maybe Graham likes his steak rare. How would I know—this morning, I couldn’t have even told you his name.

“I thought Charlie Devine was amazing as Roger,” Lucy says. “He is such a great actor.”

“It’s a shame about his personal life,” Graham says.

Lucy giggles. “Do you believe those rumors?”

“Hard not to...”

The two of them chatter on about this actor Charlie Devine, who I never even heard of, and some rumor about him and some other actress I also never heard of. I don’t have any hope of participating in this conversation. So I mostly focus on eating my mashed potatoes and asparagus. And also, eating the part of my steak that isn’t still mooing. Mostly the edges.

“Camila is a gem,” Lucy comments as she nibbles on a stalk of asparagus. “Every time I’ve eaten here, I feel like I’m at a Michelin star restaurant.”

“I know.” Graham sips from the glass of wine he poured for himself. He’s the only one drinking alcohol—Lucy and I are just having water. “She’s worth her weight in gold. Don’t you think so, Tess?”

Those are the first words he said to me since I sat down. And he’s only including me to be nice. How would I know how good Camila is? I just met

her this morning. “Yes...”

“If not for her,” Graham continues, “Tess probably would have set the house on fire by now.”

Lucy laughs, but I don’t appreciate the joke. “No, I wouldn’t,” I protest.

Graham chuckles. “Come *on*.”

“What is that supposed to mean?” I shoot back. “I would be fine by myself here all day. I wouldn’t set fire to anything. I would be *fine*.”

“Right. Sure. You’d be fine.”

I don’t appreciate the sarcasm in his voice. “What do you think I’m going to do? I might not remember yesterday, but I know how to work a stove. I know how to walk Ziggy around the block. You really think I can’t be by myself?”

“No,” Graham says patiently. “I don’t *think* that you can’t be by yourself. I *know* you can’t be by yourself.”

I look over at Lucy for help. She has made herself busy spearing one of the chunks of steak that has been shredded by the butter knife. Presumably, I am not to be trusted around steak knives.

“Lucy,” I say. “You spent the entire afternoon with me. Do you think I would do something dangerous?”

Lucy sighs and puts down her fork. She reaches for my hand across the table. “Tess,” she says. “What’s the difference, really? Camila is amazing. Is it so horrible to have her around?”

I think about the locks on the front and back doors. The ones trapping me inside my own house. Then I think about the ten seconds when I was walking Ziggy, and my brain shut down and went to a completely different place. A “seizure.” My skin starts to crawl and I snatch my hand out from underneath Lucy’s.

“This wine is unbelievable.” Graham swishes the red wine around in his glass, apparently done with this line of conversation. “I got it at Martha’s Vineyard.”

I think of the Cabernet, which was the last wine I remember drinking before this happened to me. It was the most expensive bottle of wine I’d ever had, but I suspect it was far cheaper than whatever Graham is drinking now.

“It has an earthy aroma, almost smoky,” he says. “And it has a soft, smooth mouth feel.”

What the hell is a *mouth feel*? Doesn't all wine feel the same in your mouth? I mean, they are *liquids*.

I wish Harry were here. He would be poking me and whispering jokes about Graham in my ear. And laughing about “mouth feel.”

“It's delicious,” Graham says.

Lucy reaches over and picks up his glass of wine. She takes a sip. “It is a bit smoky. Not bad.”

They share a look, and my stomach turns cold. That whole exchange was strange. She just picked up his glass of wine and drank from it like *nothing*. You don't do that with somebody unless you know them very, very well.

Is it possible something is going on between Lucy and Graham?

No. Not possible. I have no idea what Graham is capable of, but Lucy would never do that to me.

I try to push my suspicions out of my head. I reach for Graham's wine glass. “Let me try.”

Before I can wrap my fingers around it, he snatches the glass away from me. “Sorry, Tess. No alcohol for you with your brain injury. Could be dangerous.”

“What's it going to do?” I say. “Wipe out my memory? Oh, wait.”

I look over at Graham, who is raising his eyebrows at me. That's when I notice that my speech has become slurred. I reach for my water glass and take a gulp of the liquid. My head is starting to feel foggy. Much worse than earlier in the day.

“Tess?” His eyebrows knit together. “You getting tired? Time for bed?”

“I'm fine,” I try to say, but my words are still slurred. Oh God, what is happening to me? “Just... a little... tired.”

Lucy's chair scrapes back against the floor. “I should get going anyway. It's getting late.” She reaches for my hand again and gives it a squeeze. “It was so good seeing you today, Tess.”

I still have about half of my steak left on my plate, but I'm too tired to even contemplate the effort of trying to slice and chew that bloody thing. Graham helps me out of my chair, and he leads me in the direction of the

stairwell. I try to lift my leg to climb the stairs, but it feels impossible. My legs feel like they weigh a thousand pounds.

“Come on, Tess,” Graham says. “Up you go...”

I don't know if I was able to do it last night, but I can't do it tonight. After a few tries, Graham puts his arm under my legs and hefts me in his strong arms. He carries me up the stairs and down the hall to our bedroom. He deposits me gently on our queen size bed. It's almost sweet and romantic until he comments:

“So you really think you're totally independent, huh?”

He's being a smart ass, but I don't have the energy to reply. He rummages around in my drawer and pulls out a night shirt. He helps me take off my sweater and put on the night shirt. Then I shimmy out of my jeans. The effort it takes me is almost superhuman. I end up needing Graham to pull them off my feet because I can't do it on my own.

“*Thank you, Graham,*” he says.

I try to mumble thanks, but it probably doesn't even resemble a real word. I lie down in the bed and pull the covers over me. And then I pass out.

CHAPTER 32

I thought the next time I woke up, my world would be a blank slate. Like it had been this morning.

But when I wake up, the right side of my head is pounding, the clock by my bed reads eleven, and the room is pitch black. And most importantly, my memory is still intact. I remember everything that happened today, from the second I woke up.

I don't understand how this works. Does my memory get erased at midnight? That doesn't seem like something that could happen outside of a movie.

My head still feels incredibly foggy, but something must have jolted me awake. That memory that had been tugging at me all day today. A memory of Harry speaking to me.

Graham has a desk upstairs. There's a drawer that's always locked, and you said you think that's where he's keeping whatever he's giving you.

I sit up straight in bed. The right side of my head is still throbbing dully, and my bladder feels painfully full. I stumble out of bed to the bathroom to at least take care of one of my two discomforts. But even though I'm tired and my brain is still foggy, my thoughts won't stop racing.

Graham does have an office upstairs. I passed it when I went up to grab something from my bedroom earlier. Is it possible he's keeping something from me in there?

I don't know where Graham is. He wasn't in bed with me. Maybe he went out. Or maybe he's in his office right now, working.

I'm never going to be able to sleep until I investigate, so I creep out of the bedroom into the hallway, which is also very dark. I can just barely make out a dim light from downstairs. Graham is downstairs, which means his office is empty.

I keep one hand on the wall, feeling my way down the hallway. I stop when I get to Graham's office. I try the doorknob and it turns under my hand. I'm about to enter the office when I hear a sound from downstairs. A crash.

And then a woman giggling.

What is *that*?

I forget all about Graham's office and the stupid desk drawer. Instead, I turn around and head for the stairwell. It's still dimly lit, so I hang onto the railing. I don't want to fall and give myself another head injury. Of course, isn't there that theory that a second head bonk can be curative? Is that a thing?

As I get to the bottom of the stairs, I hear it more clearly. Giggling. Two people talking softly.

My husband and somebody else.

Oh my God. Is it Camila?

Just like when I was out walking Ziggy earlier, I get that strange sensation in my head—it must be another seizure coming on. My knees tremble as everything fades to white, and suddenly, I'm not in my living room anymore.

I'm outside the front door to my house. I'm getting the key into the lock for the front door and turning the knob to push it open. Except it's not the living room I have right now, with the fancy entertainment system and the leather sofa. It's my old living room with the ratty futon and the coffee table with one short leg. But that's not what my eyes focus on.

Right in the middle of the room, Lucy and Harry are together. And to my horror, my best friend's lips are pressed against my fiancé's. As the house keys slip out of my fingers, clattering to the ground, Lucy shoves Harry off of her, hard enough that he stumbles. I can't believe my own eyes. Worse, I wouldn't have seen it if I had come home just five minutes later.

"Harry!" I cry.

Lucy's hand is a blur as she reaches out and slaps Harry right across the stubble on his face. "You asshole!" she hisses at him. "How dare you?"

I glare at Harry, who has a bewildered expression on his face. "Lucy, what the hell—"

"He grabbed me!" Lucy backs away from him, her eyes wild, her hand clasped over her mouth. "I'm so sorry, Tess." She shoots Harry a seething look. "You bastard."

Harry turns to appeal to me. "Tess, I didn't... I would never..."

"You would never?" I shout. "I just saw you do it!"

I spin on my heels and march out of the house, even though the keys are still on the floor of the living room. I can't even think straight. I just have to get out of here, before Harry sees me burst into tears. I barely make it out the front door before a strong hand wraps around my arm.

"Tess!"

I try to shrug him off, but he's holding on tight. Finally, I whip my head around to face him. "What? What do you have to say for yourself?"

Harry is standing there, a crevice between his eyebrows. "I didn't do anything. You have to believe me."

I almost laugh out loud. "You didn't do anything? Are you joking? I just saw you kiss her!"

"I wasn't kissing her!"

"Harry, I saw it!"

"I..." He glances back at the house, then back at me. "I don't even like Lucy. You know that! Why would I kiss her?"

I stick out my chin. "I guess you were pretending to hate her to hide your wild attraction for her."

His mouth falls open. "No. That is not even... come on! Tess..."

"So explain it to me. Explain to me what I just saw."

"She grabbed me. I was so shocked, I didn't even have a second to pull away."

This time I really do laugh out loud. "Right. I believe that. You're saying Lucy was overcome with passion for you and tried to kiss you?"

His eyes cloud. He knows how everything must look. Lucy is gorgeous and men are always hitting on her. And while I find Harry incredibly attractive, he's more of an acquired taste. And so not Lucy's type.

"I don't know why she did it," he finally says. "I'm just telling you what happened."

Lucy materializes behind Harry, limping slightly in her always too-high heels. Her eyes look swollen and her red hair is disheveled. "That bastard grabbed me, Tess. I'm so sorry you had to see that."

"I'm sorry too," I say.

I reach from my left hand, to the engagement ring that I had only taken off to shower since the night he gave it to me. Harry realizes what I'm trying to do, and his eyes fly open. "Tess, no..."

But there's nothing he can say. I know what I saw, despite his protests. How can I marry him after he kissed my best friend? I'll never be able to trust him again.

"Tess, please..." I thought I'd be the one crying, but it's Harry's eyes that are filling with tears. "Don't do this. I love you. Let's talk about it..."

I keep tugging on the ring, the one I thought I'd be wearing for the rest of my life, eventually accompanied by a plain gold band. Now I just want to get it off me. I keep pulling it, trying to work it loose, but it's stuck. It won't come free, no matter what I do.

As I pull harder, the living room fades away. It goes white, and when the white is gone, I'm back in my brand new living room again.

But even though all the furnishings are different and it's many years later, I'm seeing the same thing. In the moonlight pouring through the windows, I can make out my husband on top of another woman on our sofa, thrusting into her.

"What's going on here?" I cry.

"Tess!" It's the woman who calls out my name as she tries to scramble out from underneath Graham's body. "I... you were asleep!"

It's Lucy. My best friend. This is the second time I have caught her with my significant other, except this time she wasn't pushing him away and slapping him across the face. She was *having sex with him*. Right on my own couch.

Graham doesn't seem as frazzled as Lucy. He looks like he probably would have finished off if she hadn't pushed him away from her. He still has his pants on, albeit at his knees, and he takes his time pulling them up and securing them.

"I'm so sorry!" Lucy has leaped off the couch, smoothing out her skirt. She rakes a shaking hand through her red hair, which is tangled and wild around her face. "This... this isn't what it looks like."

Graham lets out a barking laugh. For once, I have to agree with him.

"Okay." Lucy lowers her eyes. "Yes. It is what it looks like. But you have to understand, I didn't mean for this to happen. And... I'm so sorry. You have no idea how sorry."

"I'm sure," I snap. "My best friend is sleeping with my husband. I'm sure you've got a great excuse for that one."

Lucy's eyes fill with tears. "There's no excuse. But you have to know how hard this has been on us. On me. And Graham. And then when we were commiserating, it just... happened."

"It just happened," I repeat. "And you were powerless to stop it."

She wipes her eyes with the back of her hand. "It's not like that. I was just trying to help by being around for you. We both were. And then..."

She looks over at Graham for support. He rolls his eyes. "Why are you bothering to explain this to her, Lucy? She'll have forgotten it in the morning anyway."

She stomps her foot on the ground like a little kid. "That's not the point! The point is..."

"Yes," I say through my teeth. "What is the point, Lucy?"

"The point is..." She drops her head. "I'm sorry. I love you, Tess. You know that. I never wanted to hurt you. And..." She looks over at Graham again. "We will never do this again. I swear to you."

"You kissed Harry too." I point at the sofa. "I saw you doing it. Right in my own living room."

Lucy jerks her head up. She didn't expect me to remember that. "Oh. I... well, yes, but... Tess, he grabbed me. That was *completely* different."

Graham snorts again, louder this time. Lucy whips her head around to glare at him. "Will you shut up?"

There's a smirk on his lips. "What—she's not going to remember it in the morning, like I said. You may as well 'fess up that the Boy Scout never really tried to kiss you."

Her eyes widen. "Shut up, Graham."

"What are you whining about? You got the raise you wanted, didn't you? The private corner office?"

I stare at the two of them, my heart pounding. What is he talking about? Is it possible that the scene I had walked in on in my living room all those years ago was all a setup? I shut my eyes for a moment and I can see the bewildered expression on Harry's face. I never even gave him a chance. I just kept picturing him kissing Lucy, and I couldn't forgive him.

I have made a horrible mistake.

"Tess." Lucy flashes me a helpless look. "I don't know what he's talking about. I swear to you..."

Graham gets to his feet with a grunt. He ambles over to me and puts his hand on my shoulder. “Come on, Tess. Let’s get you back to bed. You’re probably exhausted.”

He’s right. Even with the adrenaline rush and the anger coursing through my veins, I’m almost too tired to stand. I was already feeling out of it, and the seizure has decimated me. If not for my pounding heart, I would probably collapse into a sleeping pile right on the carpet beneath me. And my bare legs feel cold from some sort of draft in the living room. I shiver.

I allow Graham to lead me away, powerless to stop him. Lucy stays behind, and I wonder if they’re going to finish what they started when Graham comes back downstairs. The crazy part is I don’t even care. Yes, Lucy was sleeping with my husband. But I don’t even *know* my husband. I don’t love him. It’s like discovering she was sleeping with a stranger.

No, that’s not the part I care about. What I care about is that day I caught her kissing Harry. I can’t stop thinking about the possibility that it might not have been real. If I hadn’t seen him kiss her, I would be married to him right now. Instead of *Graham*.

Unlike when Graham carried me up the stairs earlier, I’m able to make it up on my own two feet this time. But he keeps his arm on me, ready to catch me if I fall. I suppose that’s worth something.

“Listen, Tess.” Graham watches me as I climb into bed. “I’m sorry you had to see that. But you can understand, can’t you?”

I blink at him through the darkness. “I can?”

He shrugs. “You don’t even know me. It’s not like we have any sort of a real relationship anymore.”

“What was Lucy talking about downstairs?” I ask him, although it’s hard to form words. My tongue feels like a big lump in my mouth. “About when Harry kissed her.”

“Oh. Right.” I can see him grinning in the darkness, his teeth glowing in the dim moonlight. “Well, it’s pretty simple. I had a thing for you, so I asked Lucy if she could help me out. She never liked Harry much anyway, so it didn’t take much to persuade her.”

My head is spinning. Now that I’ve retrieved that memory of walking in on Harry and Lucy, the whole argument I had with Harry after comes rushing back to me. The way he pleaded with me. Swore up and down that Lucy had been the one who grabbed him. I called him a liar. Managed to

wrench the ring from my finger and threw it at him. Slammed the front door in his face even as he was blinking back tears.

“You bastard,” I manage.

“*I’m* the bastard?” His eyes fly open wide behind his wire-rimmed glasses. “That’s rich. I can’t believe *you* would say that to *me* after you...” He grits his teeth then shakes his head. “Forget it. There’s no point in talking about this.”

My eyelids are so heavy, I can barely keep them open. But I can’t let this go. “What? What horrible thing did I do to you? Because I don’t remember it.”

“What horrible thing did you do to me?” He licks his lips. “Do you have an hour or two? No, you don’t. You’ll probably be asleep in the next sixty seconds. So I’ll skip to the best part.” He lowers his voice. “Before this happened to you, you were going to leave me. You hired a lawyer and everything. You said you couldn’t stand the sight of me. You couldn’t *wait* to get me out of your life and cut me out of your company. That’s what I get for signing a goddamn prenup.”

My mouth drops open. “What?”

“That’s right.” He smirks at me. “You had this whole plan about leaving me high and dry. And now you’re stuck with me. For the rest of your life. And *I* get to be the one in control for a change. I get to decide what you eat, what clothing you get to wear, whether you get to have a phone or not. I could even get rid of that dog of yours and you would never even know it.” He winks at me. “Hey, maybe I will... if you don’t learn to behave yourself...”

I want to reach out and scratch his eyes out. But the fatigue I’m feeling is almost overwhelming, especially combined with the darkness of the room. When I lift my arm, it’s like I’m moving through molasses. I don’t know why I’m so tired. I don’t think I’ve ever felt this tired in my life. Graham is standing over me, watching me struggle to keep my eyes open.

And then it occurs to me. Maybe the whole reason I’m tired is that Graham has already given me a dose of whatever he’s been keeping in his desk drawer. After all, he’s the one who poured me that glass of water at dinner. It would’ve been so easy for him.

I’ve got to do something. I’ve got to send myself a message with a warning. I’ve got to...

DAY FOUR

CHAPTER 33

If you relax and try to have a good day, you will be much happier. Just remember that the people around you care about you very much, and only want you to be safe. Do what they say. You are in good hands. Trust me.

“Oh God, this is horrible!”

I scoop water into my mouth, trying to get out the taste of pomegranate juice. This is the most awful thing I’ve ever tasted. It’s making me sick. I want to pick up the bottle of soap and squirt it into my mouth. Because even *soap* would taste better than this awful juice.

“I don’t get it.” Graham is standing next to me, frowning. “Usually you love the stuff. Yesterday you drank two heaping glasses of it. And then you asked for a third glass.”

Is he joking? He has to be. There’s no chance I really like this stuff, do I? But his blue eyes are wide behind his spectacles. Graham doesn’t seem like a joker.

“I make a special trip every week to buy it for you.” He looks hurt now. “Maybe I shouldn’t anymore.”

“Yeah, you shouldn’t.” I back away from the sink, wiping the back of my mouth with my hand. “Sorry. I... I don’t know why I didn’t like it. Maybe tomorrow will be different.”

“You seem off today.” He cocks his head to the side. “Maybe we should go see the doctor. They might need to do another scan of your brain. I mean, what if you need surgery again?”

My hand flies to the scar on the right side of my scalp. “No, please don’t. I’m fine.”

My head swivels at the sound of scraping at the back door. Graham explained to me earlier that my dog is out in the backyard. Apparently, I have a dog. Ziggy.

“Can I let him in?” I ask Graham. “Please?”

Graham shakes his head. “No. He’ll trash the furniture. But you can go out in the backyard if you want.”

Of course, then I have to wait for him to unlock the back door. I can't be trusted not to wander off.

When I step out into our spacious backyard, a beautiful golden retriever immediately bounds over to me. I've never believed in love at first sight—it took me months to say the L-word to even Harry—but now I'm a convert. I *love* this dog. He licks my hand and when I bend down, he starts licking my face. I would've thought it would gross me out, but I love it. Just being near this dog makes the low-level feeling of dread I've had since I woke up this morning subside slightly.

"You're a good boy," I tell Ziggy.

He licks my face. I don't know what to think about everything that's happened since I woke up next to a stranger this morning. But I can tell this dog loves me.

Ziggy picks up a rubber ball with his mouth. I hold out my hand and he drops the ball into it. He wants to play. I straighten up and toss the ball across the yard. Ziggy goes crazy, running after the ball. His happiness is almost infectious.

"Tess!"

My ears perk up. Somebody is calling my name. Or is that a hallucination?

"Tess! Over here!"

It's a male voice, coming from behind me. I'm not hallucinating. Somebody is calling for me.

I turn around, but there's nobody there. Nothing but the fence surrounding the backyard.

"Tess!" The door to the fence rattles, and that's when I see the thick padlock holding the door closed. "Over here."

My stomach flip-flops as I approach the fence. When I get close enough, I can see through the gaps in the fence that a man is standing there. He's wearing a dark jacket, has a thick beard, and he's wearing a Mets cap low on his head. A pair of sunglasses conceal his eyes.

"Tess," he says. And then he takes off his sunglasses.

I clasp a hand over my mouth. "Harry!"

I grip the metal fence, wishing the gaps were big enough that I could reach my hand through and touch him. As it is, I can barely even see him. I have to put my face so close to the fence, my nose is nearly touching it.

Harry. The guy I am supposed to be married to right now. The love of my life. I don't know what the hell happened.

"I needed to see if you were all right," he says in a low voice. "You didn't answer any of my text messages yesterday."

I frown. "How could I? I don't have a phone."

Harry is silent on the other side of the fence. It's hard to read his expression. It's hard to see through the fence, and the beard and baseball cap obscure a lot of his face. All I want to do is burst through the gate and wrap my arms around him.

"Graham must have taken your phone away," he finally says. "Because of me."

"No, I never..." I start to tell him I never had a phone, but then I realize I don't know if that's true. I can't remember what happened yesterday or the day before that or a year before that. If Harry says I had a phone, I probably did.

So why don't I have one anymore?

"I used to get in touch with you through your phone," Harry explains. "Graham got mad about it so I guess he took the phone away. He's a manipulative bastard."

I flinch at this description of the man who introduced himself to me as my husband. He seemed nice enough. And the letter I wrote to myself about him was complimentary. And not nearly so complimentary about Harry.

"You... you know Graham?" I ask.

He laughs bitterly. "Yes. I know Graham."

"Oh."

He lets out a long sigh. "I'm sorry. I wish I could tell you he's a great guy. I wish he *were* a great guy. But he isn't."

"Harry, you've got to get me out of here."

"I... I can't."

"Why not? Just come to the door and tell him that I'm leaving with you..."

"It's not that easy. I wish it were."

Ziggy comes up beside me and nuzzles my hand. Tears gather in my eyes. "I don't like being here. I want to leave. Please help me."

Harry is quiet. I want him to tell me everything is okay, and that he's going to get me out of here. But with every passing second, I'm realizing

that's never going to happen.

"I wanted to see if you were okay," he says. "But I think I should leave you alone. I'm not helping you. I thought I could help you—I wanted to so badly—but I'm not. I... I'm just making things worse. I'm making Graham angry at you."

"No!" I grip the fence with my fingers. "Don't leave. I need you."

He stands there. Not leaving, but not saying anything either.

"Please, Harry!" The tears start rolling down my cheeks. "I love you. I thought we were going to spend our lives together. Please help me. *Please.*"

He shakes his head on the other side of the fence. He slides his sunglasses back on. He's leaving. Oh God, he's leaving me here.

"Harry," I whimper. "Please..."

He heaves a deep sigh. "One time when we met," he says, "you told me where you think he hides your phone at night—in the ottoman next to the recliner. There's a charger in there."

I nod. "I'll call you when I get my phone."

"No." His voice is sad. "You shouldn't. Don't call me. But... you should have your phone. It's not fair that he took it because of me."

"Harry..."

"Bye, Tess."

I cling to the gate as I watch him walk away, suppressing the urge to scream out his name. I loved Harry Finch. I wanted to marry him and spend my life with him. I wanted to have children with him. And now I have a terrible feeling I will never see him again.

CHAPTER 34

I can't search for the phone while Graham is still around.

I have to wait for him to go to work. It's another agonizing half-hour of bringing me back into the living room to introduce me to a woman named Camila. Camila is absolutely beautiful, and it's also clear that she is going to be my jailor today. Because nobody trusts me to be alone.

After Graham leaves, I'm left alone with Camila. She smiles brightly at me, which makes me want to hit her. "Is there anything you'd like to do today?"

"I'd like to go to work and be a productive member of society," I say.

The smile drops off her face. "Tess..."

"Don't worry, I'm just going to watch some television." I glance at our almost ludicrously large television screen. "I'll stay out of your way."

I'm hoping Camila will go in the kitchen or upstairs, but instead, she just stands there, looking at me. "Listen, Tess..."

I shouldn't have made that sarcastic remark. Now she feels sorry for me. I should have pretended I was happy with my situation. "I'm fine. Don't worry about me."

"We'll have a nice time today," she says. "I promise. We can take Ziggy for a walk. Go shopping for whatever you want. Maybe some clothing?"

I don't say what I'm thinking, which is that why would I enjoy buying clothing? The fun of buying outfits is looking forward to wearing them. But when there's no tomorrow, the fun is lost.

But I don't say any of that. Instead, I force a smile. "That sounds great."

She frowns, still lingering in the living room. "Was Graham a jerk to you this morning?"

I shake my head. "No. I mean, he was fine. He made me breakfast, although it was a little burned. And he gave me that pomegranate juice that I apparently like so much."

Camila gives me a funny look. "You hate that pomegranate juice."

“I do?”

“I once poured you a glass of it and you acted like you were drinking cyanide. I mean, I think it’s pretty gross too, but you *really* hated it. Did you like it this morning?”

I remember how Graham set the glass of juice down in front of me. I took a sip and immediately ran to the sink—he followed me there and watched me decontaminate my mouth. At the time, I thought he just seemed worried about me. But in retrospect, he had this little smile lingering on his lips. Like he was amused by the whole thing.

My stomach turns. I’m beginning to think that letter wasn’t right. I’m not sure my husband is such a great guy.

But I can’t let on to Camila that I know the truth. And I definitely can’t tell her about the cell phone. So I just shrug. “It was okay.”

Finally, she goes upstairs to work on “cleaning.” And she leaves me alone in the living room to “watch television.” But I have no intention of watching television. I’m finding that goddamn phone.

There’s a leather recliner next to the sofa. In front of it is a brown ottoman. I bend down beside it, feeling the edges. That’s when I realize that the top comes loose. I slide it off and peer inside.

There’s a phone inside, identical to the one I saw Graham talking on this morning. It’s plugged into some sort of charger, but I pull it loose. I’ve never used a phone like this before, but my fingers weirdly know what to do. I press a button and the phone comes to life.

The first thing I see is all the text messages filling the screen. There’s a couple from Lucy, my best friend, but most of them are from an unknown number. I start scrolling.

The ones from Lucy are very strange:

I’m so sorry.

I hope you can forgive me someday. It will never happen again.

I can’t even imagine what she’s talking about. In my memory, she has never done anything to be sorry for. But for all I know, she could have betrayed me yesterday. That’s when the text messages came.

I put that mystery aside for a moment and start looking at the other text messages. They all come from an unknown number, but I assume it must be Harry. I start reading through them, a lump rising in my throat.

Tess, we need to talk.

I think you're in danger.

Let me know you got this. I'll meet you anywhere.

Are you OK?

I don't know if you're getting these messages or if he took your phone. But you need to know I love you. Please message me. It's Harry.

If he did anything to hurt you, I'll kill him.

I wonder how long he's been trying to contact me. How many days has he met with me covertly and warned me about this situation? I wish I could remember. It's so frustrating that I can't.

I type a message into the phone, praying that he gets it:

I have my phone. Thank you for telling me where it was. Can we meet?

Three bubbles appear on the screen. He has to say yes.

We shouldn't. It never helps. And he's punishing you for it.

Please meet me. Please.

Three more bubbles appear on the screen. I don't know what he's writing to me, but it seems to take an eternity. By the time the message appears, I half expect it to fill the entire screen. But instead, it's one line.

Better we don't. Trust me.

And then:

Delete these messages.

I almost hurl my phone across the room in frustration. I write him half a dozen more messages, begging him to meet with me. But he never responds again.

CHAPTER 35

Graham comes home from work at five o'clock. Camila opens the door for him, and he's carrying a bouquet of a dozen roses and a box of Godiva chocolates.

"Wow," Camila comments. "Someone is in a romantic mood today."

Graham's blue eyes lock with mine. "It's been a hard week, and I wanted to do something nice for Tess."

I rise from the sofa, thinking of my phone stuffed under one of the cushions. It's on silent, so it won't ring or buzz to give me away. I was careful who I called today. I didn't contact Lucy. But I found my father's number programmed into the phone, and I tried calling him. There was no answer, but I left a message.

"Thank you," I say stiffly. "The roses are beautiful."

"If you'd like," he says, "we can go out to dinner. Anywhere you want."

The thought of going out to a restaurant with this man makes me physically ill, but I can't let on. "Maybe."

He looks me up and down in my jeans and sweatshirt. "You'd have to change though. Obviously." He squints at my face. "And put on some makeup."

I turn my head so I don't have to look at him. "Maybe tomorrow."

"I'll put those beautiful roses in some water," Camila says helpfully.

She takes the roses out of Graham's hands, but he is still staring at me. "Don't you want the chocolates?"

I take them from him. I open the box and it's filled with white chocolate truffles. My favorite.

"Your favorite, right?" He pushes his glasses up his nose. "Did I do good?"

I nod slowly. "Thank you. It's very nice of you."

"Well, you are my wife." One corner of his lips quirks up. "I wanted to do something nice for you."

He has a nice smile. He's attractive. It would be easy to believe his lies if I hadn't found that phone this morning.

"Listen." He leans closer to me so that I catch a whiff of his expensive cologne. "I've got to get a little more work done in my office upstairs. But let's plan on going out tonight, okay? We'll have a nice time. Anywhere you want to go."

"Okay," I hear myself saying. "That sounds great."

Graham leans in and gives me a peck on the cheek. It's all I can do to keep from jerking away from him.

I watch my husband disappear up the stairs. My shoulders don't relax until the door to his office slams shut.

"Well, that was nice of him, wasn't it?" Camila returns to the room carrying a large glass vase containing the roses. "I wish I had a man coming home for me with flowers and candy."

"You don't wish you had my life," I snort. It came out more bitterly than I intended.

Camila stops, just looking at me. It almost seems like she wants to tell me something, but she's not sure if she should.

"What?" I finally say.

"Nothing." She clears her throat. "I have to head out now. But I hope you two have a nice time at dinner."

"Thanks."

She hesitates. "And make sure to put Ziggy outside before Graham comes back down. You know how he feels about the dog."

That's right. For reasons I don't understand, Graham doesn't seem to like Ziggy much. I have a horrible feeling that one of these days, Ziggy might simply disappear during the night and I'll never know he even existed. Much like my phone.

Camila heads out, leaving me behind. I don't know much about her, but unlike me, she has a life outside of this house. I envy her that more than I envy her incredible beauty. I miss being able to leave the house on my own. I miss driving. I miss going to work every day. And I'm beginning to be scared I will never experience any of these things ever again.

Graham has disappeared into his office and the door is closed. I plop down on the sofa, trying to figure out what to do next. Before I can figure it out, I get this strange sensation in my head. A fuzzy sensation, almost like

I'm drifting off to sleep. The entire room melts away to white. And when I blink again, I'm outside the door to a room, my hand hovering over the doorknob.

My hand drops onto the doorknob and I twist the knob. The room is an office at My Home Spa, with large windows in the back, a mahogany desk, and a leather chair. Sitting in the leather chair is my husband Graham. And sitting on Graham is his secretary. At the sound of the door being yanked open, she scrambles off his lap. But it's too late.

"Tess," Graham gasps, as he attempts to wipe Taylor's lipstick off his mouth. If she's going to be making out with my husband, she should wear lipstick that doesn't rub off on him so easily. "Christ, Tess, I didn't realize you were—"

I arch an eyebrow at him. "You didn't realize I work here? At my own company?"

"I'm so sorry, Mrs. Thurman." Taylor anxiously tugs at the hem of her skirt, which has ridden way up during whatever it was she was doing with Graham. "I... I didn't mean to..."

"Don't worry about it." I wave a hand at her. "Also, you're fired, Taylor. Clean out your desk right now."

Immediately, Graham's twenty-two-year-old secretary's eyes fill with tears. "But, Mrs. Thurman—"

"Get out now." I give her a look that is not to be argued with. "You've got twenty minutes and then I call security."

I hear the words come out of my mouth, but it's like I'm not in control of them. It's like this scene playing out before me has already happened, and I'm simply reliving it. Which makes me impressed by how badass I am.

Taylor hurries out of the office, tears streaming down her cheeks. Once she's gone, I set my gaze back on Graham, who looks distinctly pale. He is redoing the top button on his shirt and straightening out his tie. It occurs to me that if I had to come to this office just a few minutes later, I could have ended up getting quite the show.

"It isn't how it looked, Tess," he says. "I swear to you."

A jab of pain hits me in the right temple. "You mean you making out with your secretary in your office?"

"Um..."

"Don't worry, Graham. I don't care about that."

His brow crinkles. "You..."

I shrug. "We haven't had sex in six months. It's not like it's a huge shock that you're messing around behind my back."

Now he looks perplexed. And for a moment, I enjoy it. I enjoy the split second of anticipation before I drop the bomb on him. He thought he could pull one over on me. Does he think I'm stupid?

"I found the bank account," I tell him. "The Caribbean one. I found out what you've been up to, Graham. You piece of shit."

His mouth falls open. "Tess..."

"I want you out of here." I put my hands on my hips. "I want you to pack up your desk and get out of my company."

"Come on, Tess." He holds his hands out to me. "You don't want to do that. I've been with this company for over six years. You're never going to find a better accountant than me."

A better accountant than him? Is he joking? Anyone would be better! At least, anyone who isn't stealing money from me. I get another jab of pain in my temple—time to wrap this up.

"I've locked you out of all the computers," I say briskly. "I alerted security, and if you're not gone in the next half hour, they're throwing you out."

It finally hits him that I'm serious. "Tess. Please..."

"I also want you out of my house." I feel the sneer on my lips. "I had Jeanne pack up your bags and I left them on the front porch."

He sucks in a breath. "Tess..."

"Don't." I shake my head. "You're lucky I didn't burn your crap. I never want to look at you ever again. You're going to hear from my lawyers shortly. If you don't sign the divorce papers immediately, I'm calling the police and pressing charges."

All the color has drained from Graham's face. "Please don't do this, Tess. Look, this was all a misunderstanding."

It takes all my self-restraint not to laugh in his face. "I've got a meeting downtown right now. When I get back, you better be gone."

I don't wait for a response. I've said everything I have to say. It feels awful enough to know that my own husband did this to me. And if I hadn't hired a second accountant, I might never have known. He might have kept siphoning money out of the company as my punishment for making him sign

that prenup. And when he got enough money in the account, then what? Would he have saved it as a nest egg just in case, or would he have up and left me for somebody like Taylor?

Luckily, I'll never get to know.

I'm already running late for my meeting. I take the elevator down to the parking garage, and the valet brings me my Toyota. I was never interested in getting a sports car like Graham has. But maybe now I'll treat myself to something better. Something fast and cute.

Although the Toyota goes plenty fast.

The streets are relatively empty, so I accelerate as much as I dare. That nagging pain in my temple flares up one more time, and I remind myself that pretty soon, Graham will be out of my life forever. One headache out of the way.

I press my foot down on the gas and the car leaps forward. Vaguely, I'm aware that I should slow down. But I don't want to. I press the button to lower the windows and it feels so good to have the wind whipping at my face as the scenery zips by. Graham is going to be gone. That asshole will be out of my life. Thank God.

As my foot descends onto the gas, the windshield disappears from my view. And then everything turns white again. A second later, I'm back in my living room again. Sitting on my sofa.

For a moment, I just sit there shaking. I don't know what that was, but something tells me that what I just experienced was the memory of something that really happened to me. I discovered Graham had been stealing money from my company (and not to mention cheating on me). And then I tried to leave him. Except...

Was that when it happened? Was that when I got in the car accident that destroyed my brain?

As quietly as I can, I dig my phone out from underneath the couch cushion and stare at the screen. I need to talk to Harry. I need to tell him what I remember. Except there are no other replies from Harry. He has truly decided to leave me alone.

Tomorrow, I won't remember any of this. I won't remember my flashback about what Graham did to me before my accident. I won't remember what a liar he is. I won't even remember that Harry contacted me. I'll wake up in the morning next to Graham, and it will be like this day

never happened. I'll read that letter I wrote to myself and think this is my life. Maybe Graham will let me have my phone or maybe he won't. But there will be nothing else.

The thought of it is like a hand squeezing my heart.

I've got to do something.

I run into the kitchen and grab the pen on the kitchen island. I don't know how much time I have before Graham comes back downstairs. I take the pen with me into the downstairs bathroom and close the door behind me. There's no lock.

I pull down my pants. On the inside of my right thigh, as high up as I can manage, I write the words:

Find Harry.

Then I write the phone number I have for him underneath.

I'm taking a chance. It's possible Graham could spy the words I wrote on myself. Or the writing could wash away before I have a chance to see it. But I'm hoping it won't. I'm hoping this will be a way to help me remember.

I pull up my pants and come out of the bathroom. Ziggy is waiting for me outside, panting excitedly. At least he's happy.

I rub his head. "What's up, boy?"

And then I see what's in his mouth. It's a set of keys.

Graham's keys. The car keys and the keys to open the front door.

I can get out of here.

CHAPTER 36

I don't have much time. Graham is upstairs in his office, and I'm sure it won't be long before he discovers his keys are missing. If I'm going to leave, it has to be right now.

And I'm not sure I can do it alone.

I slide my phone out of my pocket. I bring up the text messages from Harry, which I never deleted. Hell, I'll be in enough trouble if Graham discovers the phone—the text messages are the least of my problems. I quickly type in a message to Harry:

I found Graham's keys. I'm leaving this place and I'm never coming back. Meet me at the McDonald's we always used to go to.

He'll know what I mean by that. Back when we first bought the house and were feeling broke from the huge mortgage we signed, we tried to save money by eating at McDonald's. A *lot*. I would order six chicken nuggets and a small french fries with a Diet Coke. Harry would get a quarter pounder with a Sprite and large fries. We always used to sit in the far corner, at the same table if we could snag it.

If I still remember, I'm sure he still remembers too.

I grab the sneakers that I abandoned at the front door. I have to be quick. Graham could come out of his office at any moment. After I tie the laces, I check my phone again. This time, Harry has responded:

This is a mistake. Don't do this. I can't meet you.

I type my answer:

I'm going anyway. Whether you meet me or not. But I have no money and no driver's license. I could use your help.

The three bubbles appear at the bottom of the screen. I can't wait for him to make up his mind. I have to leave. If I don't go now, I'll have missed my opportunity. And I don't know if I'll ever get another one.

I imagine waking up tomorrow and remembering today. That would be nice.

I shove my phone back in my pocket and grab my jacket. As I'm unlocking the front door, I hear whimpering next to me. I look down and Ziggy is by my side.

Shit. I can't leave him behind. Graham *hates* Ziggy. God knows what he'll do.

"We're going on a little trip, Ziggy," I tell him.

Hopefully, Ziggy is good during car rides.

I've got my fingers and my toes crossed that Graham does not drive a stick shift, because I have no idea how to operate one of those. He's exactly the kind of guy who would drive a stick shift. But thank God, his BMW seems to have automatic transmission.

This morning, Graham told me something about how I couldn't drive because of having seizures. But truthfully, I don't believe a word he says anymore. I don't know if I have seizures or not. But I know how to operate a car. And I know how to get to that McDonald's. And despite what he said, I think Harry will be there, waiting for me. I'm counting on it.

I herd my dog into the backseat of the car, then I slide into the driver seat. The seats are leather, and there are so many controls, at first I'm scared I can't drive this car. But it's got an ignition and a gearshift to put the car in the drive. There's a gas pedal and a brake. That's all I need to know.

The roads are crowded as I make my way down the familiar twenty-minute route to McDonald's. It's rush hour, after all. But that might work to my advantage. Nobody will notice me. Harry and I can take off from here and nobody will even remember us.

I hope he shows up. I think he will.

Maybe.

By the time I reach McDonald's, my hands are shaking. I don't know what to expect anymore. Maybe Harry was right. Maybe this was a mistake. I spent the day being suspicious of Graham, but it's obvious I did have a head injury. There's a giant scar on the right side of my skull. Maybe I've got this all wrong.

I pull into the parking lot of the McDonald's. Ziggy lets out a yelp from the backseat. I crane my neck to look at him. "Listen, you've got to stay back there. I promise I'll be back soon."

He whimpers again like he's trying to tell me something. Unlike me, Ziggy remembers yesterday. If only he could talk—that would be *such* a big help.

I crack the window open a bit for him, then I lock the doors and head into the McDonald's. The restaurant is appropriately crowded for the dinner time rush, and the smell of grease permeates every corner of the fast-food restaurant. There's a low thrum of activity throughout the room—families eating, orders being taken, fries being salted. I scan the room, my heart thumping in my chest. There must be at least thirty people in this restaurant.

But no Harry.

He didn't come. Dammit.

Even though he said he wasn't coming, it's still a blow. But it's fine. I can do this myself. Okay, I don't have any money. That part isn't good. But I bet Graham has a twenty stashed away somewhere in the car. Or I could sell the car and trade it in for something much cheaper. Although I'm not sure how easy that will be if I don't have the title. But at least, I could try to —

"Tess?"

I turn around. Oh my God. It's him. It's *Harry*.

He came.

This morning, when I saw him through the gate, I couldn't touch him. But now he's here in the flesh. Inches away from me. And I can't help myself. I propel myself at him.

And then we're kissing. And it's not a church kiss, that's for sure. I melt against him like it's been a decade since we've kissed, which it almost has been. He pulls me closer, his fingers strong and warm. This morning, I wasn't sure if this would ever happen again for the rest of my life. And now here he is. And we're going to leave here together.

When we finally separate, we're both breathing hard. I rub my chin with my finger and it feels tender. "Your beard is scratchy," I whisper.

He manages to smile, but there's a worried crease between his eyebrows. "Tess," he says. "Did you get my last message?"

I nod. "About not coming? Yes. But you came anyway. Thank you."

There's a panicked look on his face. "No, not that message. The one after."

I reach into my pocket and pull out my phone. There's one final message from Harry on the screen, which I never saw before I left the house:

Leave your phone behind.

Harry's face falls. "You've got your phone."

"I had to bring it. So I could be in contact with you..."

He tugs on the collar of his shirt. "But he can track you through your phone. That's the only reason he ever let you have it in the first place."

I get a sinking feeling in my stomach. "Oh..."

"It'll be okay." His Adam's apple bobs. "But we need to get out of here *right now*. We'll ditch your phone."

"He may not have even noticed I'm gone yet..."

"I think he has." Harry shakes his head. "I think he gets an alert if you leave the house. But we've got a head start. And you took his car. But we have to go right now."

Harry leads me to the exit of the McDonald's. We've got time. Even if we just have ten minutes, we can take off in Harry's car and he'll never know where we went. This will be fine.

Except the second we get out of McDonald's, I see him. Graham. Standing there, a dark look in his eyes.

And in the distance, I can hear the police sirens.

CHAPTER 37

“Harrison Finch.”

Graham has his arms folded across his chest. There’s a smile curling his lips, and I want to punch him in his smug face. He thinks I’m going to come with him, but I’m not. No way. He can’t make me. Not while Harry is here.

“That was a beautiful kiss you gave my wife,” Graham continues. “Very passionate. I enjoyed watching that. Thank you.” He adds, “It’ll give you something to remember when you’re sitting in prison, Harry.”

I look up at Harry, who has turned pale. I try to reach for his hand, but he won’t take it.

“He’s not going to prison,” I speak up. “I came here willingly. And I want to go with him.”

Graham scoffs. “Right. I’m sure you do. But here’s the thing, Tess. It’s not up to you. You have *severe* cognitive deficits. I am your guardian. And *Harry* here is breaking the law. Aren’t you, Harry?”

“No, he’s not,” I shoot back. I look over at Harry, who still has not said a word. “He didn’t do anything wrong.”

“He did plenty wrong.” Graham bares his teeth like a feral animal. “First off, he cheated on you with your best friend—”

“That’s total bullshit!” Harry breaks his silence to shout. “You and Lucy set me up, you asshole! You made her believe—”

“The truth,” Graham finishes. “And she doesn’t know the truth now either, does she?” He lifts an eyebrow. “Do you want to tell her, Harry, or should I?”

The sirens are getting louder. Harry looks like he’s going to be sick.

“It’s not what you think, Tess.” His brown eyes are darting around the parking lot. “I swear. I didn’t—”

“Tess, you have a *restraining order* against Mr. Finch here.” Graham folds his arms across his chest. “Because he wouldn’t leave you alone, even when we told him he was harassing you. He was putting all these crazy ideas in your head and taking advantage of the fact that you have memory

problems. I had to go to court.” Graham flashes Harry a seething look. “And the court saw it my way.”

My jaw drops open. “Harry? Is that true?”

He opens his mouth, but before he can get out any words, a police car pulls into the McDonald’s parking lot. An officer comes out of the vehicle, and Graham waves him over. I can’t believe this is happening. I want to tell Harry to run for it, but it’s probably not a good idea.

The officer approaches Harry, a stern expression on his face. “Harrison Finch?”

Harry nods, his eyes on the ground.

“Mr. Finch, you’re under arrest for a violation of a restraining order.”

Harry doesn’t protest as the officer handcuffs him and leads him to his police car. Graham watches the whole thing with barely disguised glee. I can’t believe it. There was a restraining order against Harry. No wonder he didn’t want to come here and meet me. But he came anyway.

God, I don’t know what to think anymore.

“Good riddance,” Graham says to me as the police car speeds off to take Harry to jail. His eyes soften as he turns to face me. “I’m sorry he tricked you that way. I didn’t want you to know he’d been harassing you.”

“He wasn’t harassing me,” I mumble.

He shakes his head. “All you know is what he did today. I had to take him to *court*, Tess. He was stalking you. It was scary and very inappropriate. But now you’re safe.”

Except somehow, I don’t feel safe.

Graham holds out his hand and waggles his fingers. “Give me my keys.”

For a moment, I consider refusing. But what good would that do me? There’s no chance of me making a run for it to the car and taking off. He would catch me in half a second. So I fish the keys out of my pocket and hand them over to him.

“Where’s my car?” he asks. “I hope it’s still in one piece. You weren’t a great driver, even *before*.”

I point to the far end of the parking lot. I tried to park in the corner so nobody would see it. An expensive car stands out like a sore thumb.

We trudge back to the car. Ziggy sees us when we’re about ten feet away and starts barking like crazy. Graham stops short and glares at me.

“Are you serious, Tess? You put that mutt in my car? On my leather upholstery?”

“Yes.”

“Fine. You sit in the back with the dog. He better not chew up my car or I’m going to be really pissed.”

Ziggy growls at Graham when he gets into the car, but I stroke his fur until he calms down. As we start driving back home, he rests his head on my lap. He looks as dejected as I feel. I didn’t think I would ever be going back to that house. Certainly not within half an hour of leaving.

I had a chance to escape and I blew it.

“I know you’re feeling upset about this whole thing,” Graham tells me as he halts at a red light. “But try not to think about it.”

I grumble something under my breath.

“I’ll delete all the messages from him on your phone,” he continues, “and tomorrow it will be like it never happened. I’ll block the number. You’ll probably never see or hear from him again.”

I squeeze my knees with my fists. He’s right. All he has to do is delete those messages, and I won’t know they ever existed.

“And I’ll let you have your phone back,” he adds. “It’s good for you. And it helps me know exactly where you are. I never would have found you so quickly if you hadn’t brought it with you.”

I squeeze my eyes shut, trying not to cry. I don’t know what to think about what happened. Graham was telling the truth about the restraining order, considering Harry just got arrested. But I’m not sure what to believe. I don’t think Harry was using me or manipulating me. After all, I was the one who made him come out tonight.

When we get back home, Graham makes me put Ziggy out in the backyard. I don’t know if Ziggy is used to sleeping in the house, but he doesn’t seem to want to go out there. When I shut the door, he starts whimpering. It’s a nice night, so I don’t feel that bad about it, but I wonder what we do when it’s cold or raining. We don’t still make him sleep in the backyard when it rains, do we?

I wish I had left my phone behind before I went to McDonald’s. If I had, we would be on our way somewhere far away right now. Graham would probably still be working in his office, oblivious to the fact that I was even gone.

After I shut the back door, Graham digs out his keys to lock it. I'm now officially trapped in the house again. Just like I was when I woke up this morning. I have accomplished nothing, except to get Harry thrown in jail.

"I don't know if I'm in the mood to go out to dinner anymore," he says. "What do you feel like eating?"

My stomach turns at the thought of eating any food prepared by this man. "Don't worry about it. I'll make myself a sandwich or something."

"I don't mind making it for you."

"I said don't worry about it."

He hesitates by the refrigerator door. "There are some pills you're supposed to take at night. To prevent seizures. I should..."

"Forget it."

"A doctor prescribed these for you. I can show you the bottle..."

"I said forget it, Graham. I'm not taking anything you want to give me."

He turns his blue eyes on me. "You still believe that asshole was trying to help you, don't you?"

I don't know what to say. The answer is yes, and that isn't the answer he wants to hear.

"You caught him with another woman." A muscle twitches under his eye. "Your best friend. He betrayed you in the worst possible way, and I was there for you when you were heartbroken. He blew it, and he despised you for refusing to take him back. And then you got in this accident, and here I am, doing everything I can to take care of you. But Harry..." He sucks in a breath. "He saw what happened to you, and he figured this was an opportunity to mess with you. To make you hate me."

I just stand there, staring at him.

"I am so sick of this bullshit," he growls.

With those words, he storms off. It's a relief that he's gone, and I take the opportunity to dig around in the refrigerator for some food. I find a loaf of bread and some cold cuts, and I make myself a quick sandwich. And I grab one of the glasses above the sink and pour myself some water.

Ziggy is barking his head off outside the door—I can't believe our neighbors don't complain. I wish I could let him inside. I'd rather sleep with my dog than with my husband. But I can't open the door anymore—I

don't have the key. I just have to try to ignore him, even though every bark is a jab at my heart.

I'm about five bites into my sandwich when Graham returns to the kitchen. But this time, he's holding a sheet of paper and a pen. He slams the paper down in front of me.

"We are going to nip this in the bud," he says. "Once and for all."

I look down at the piece of blank paper. "I don't understand."

He holds out the pen to me. "It's time for you to write another letter to yourself. We took it too easy on Harry in the last letter. You need to let yourself know what a bad guy he is, and that you need to stay far away from him from now on."

I remember reading that letter first thing this morning. I found it comforting because it was in my own handwriting. I didn't know who I could trust, but I knew I could trust myself.

Now I have a bad feeling about how the letter came about.

"I'm not doing it," I say.

"Yes," Graham says. "You are. It's for your own good."

Ziggy's barking has gotten louder. I push the piece of paper away and take another bite of my sandwich. "Forget it. Maybe you can lock me in this house but you can't make me write a letter to myself."

"You really don't believe me, do you?" He adjusts his spectacles on his nose. "You saw the police take Harry away. And you still trust him over me?"

I lift my chin. "Yes. I absolutely do."

Two spots of pink appear on Graham's cheeks. "Well, that's too damn bad. You're writing the letter, anyway."

"No. I won't." I take a sip of water, peering at him over the rim of my glass. "You can't make me."

"Can't I?" There's something in Graham's voice that makes me feel uneasy. "Because I think I can."

I stare at Graham, my heart pounding. Ziggy sounds almost hysterical outside the door. Graham turns around, walks to the back door, and slams on it with the palm of his hand, loud enough to make me jump. "Shut the fuck up, you goddamn stupid dog!"

I cringe, but it works. Ziggy's barks subside back to a whimper. Graham turns around and strides back over to me. "Here's the thing, Tess. I

have total control over every aspect of your life. If you don't write the letter, first thing tomorrow, Ziggy and I are taking a little drive down to the local pound. The one where if you don't get adopted in a week, then..."

The pieces of the sandwich in my stomach churn. I'm going to be sick. "You wouldn't..."

"Oh, I definitely would." He smiles at me. "And in the morning, you won't even know Ziggy existed. Except he'll remember you. He'll remember you when he is in a cage, wondering where you are, why you let this happen to him. Maybe you'll be his last thought when they give him the injection..."

I feel like I'm going to choke. I look into Graham's eyes, and I realize he means it. He will absolutely do what he's threatening.

"Fine," I manage. "I'll write the letter."

He lifts his eyebrows. "Now was that so hard?"

I glare at him.

He slides the paper toward me again. "I'll make this easy for you, Tess. I'm going to tell you exactly what to say..."

CHAPTER 38

I don't know where Graham ended up putting the letter I wrote.

I feel sick at the thought of the words I wrote in the letter. I said horrible things about Harry. In the morning, I'm going to read that letter and I'm going to believe Harry Finch is a terrible person.

But I have one safety net.

Graham confiscated my phone, but I've still got Harry's number written on my thigh. In the morning, I'll see it there. I'll know he was trying to help me. And maybe I'll be able to find him.

Unless he is still in jail.

I climb into bed at around ten o'clock. At first, I'm worried Graham is going to climb into bed next to me, but he doesn't make any movement to take off his clothing. "I've still got work to do," he tells me.

"You mean for *my* company."

He sneers at me. "If not for me, your company would be bankrupt by now."

I'm not so sure about that.

"Anyway," he says, "go to sleep. I'll come in later. And in the morning, you won't remember any of this. You'll believe me when I tell you what a piece of shit Harry Finch is."

Maybe. Maybe not.

Graham shuts the light as he leaves the room, and I lie in bed alone, staring at the ceiling. I wonder where Harry is right now. I assume he's in a jail cell somewhere. Maybe sleeping on a cot.

I hope he is still thinking about me the way I'm thinking about him.

He's my last thought as my eyes drift closed.

It's much later in the night when I get woken up by a sharp sensation.

At first, I think it must be morning. And it's a miracle because I still remember everything about the day before. But no, it's still pitch black

outside. It's the middle of the night. And I hear movement within the bedroom.

I rub my right buttock, which feels sore to the touch. I don't know what that was. That pricking sensation just came out of nowhere.

I roll over in bed, blinking through the darkness as my eyes adjust. Graham is standing at the foot of the bed.

"Graham?" My voice is slurred by sleep. "What... what are you doing?"

He doesn't answer me right away. I squint through the darkness and I can just barely make him out. There's something in his hand.

Oh my God. It's a *syringe*.

"This is so much easier to administer when you take the other medications that knock you out." He slides the cap back onto the syringe. "That way we don't have to have a conversation about it. You mostly sleep through it."

I don't know what it was he gave me, but my brain feels fuzzy. I don't know if it's from sleep or whatever was in that syringe. "What did you do?"

"The same thing I do every night."

It's true then. I'm not losing my memory because of a brain injury. Graham is *drugging* me. He's doing this to me. And I don't even know *why*. Could he really be this evil?

"Go back to sleep," he says.

"You... you drugged me!" I choke out the words.

He gives me an exasperated look. "Go to sleep."

"I'm not going to sleep!" I try to sit up in bed, but it's impossible. My body feels almost paralyzed. "You just injected something into me! Why would you do that?"

"Just go to sleep. It'll be easier that way. Stop trying to fight it."

"You took my whole life!" I scream at him. But I'm not actually screaming. My voice is a whisper. "You're a monster. You won't get away with this."

Graham doesn't even answer me. He shoves the capped syringe into his pocket and walks out of the room. I try to get up, but my body won't obey me. Sleep is tugging me under. Suffocating me. I open my mouth to shout for help, but nothing comes out. In another few seconds, I'll be unconscious. I can't fight it anymore.

I can't...

DAY FIVE

CHAPTER 39

Dear Tess,

This is a hard letter to write to you, but you need to know the truth about Harrison Finch.

Many years ago, you were engaged to be married. But you called off the engagement two months before the wedding when you caught him kissing another woman. It was a massive betrayal.

Of course, he begged you to forgive him. You were very successful at that point, and he had become accustomed to living a certain lifestyle. He didn't want to lose you or your money. But you held strong. You should be proud of yourself.

Throughout this tragedy, Graham was there for you. He was a friend, and then later he became more than a friend. Your wedding was the happiest day of your life. And after you were in a terrible car accident and lost your memory, he gave up his life as he knew it to take care of you and save your business.

Unfortunately, Harry Finch saw your accident as an opportunity.

Harry found you and convinced you that Graham didn't have your best interests at heart. He took advantage of your memory problems and the fact that you couldn't remember the terrible things he did to you. He told you lies, constructing a world in which he was the good guy. Fortunately, you were able to go to court and get a restraining order to keep him from bothering you ever again.

At the time I am writing this letter, Harry is in jail for attempting to kidnap you. That's where he belongs.

Stay far away from this man. He only means you harm.

Love,

Tess

Graham, who is apparently my husband, emerges from the bathroom just as I finish reading the letter I wrote to myself. It's the second letter from myself—the first just explained about my accident, but this second

one has a more ominous tone. He stands over me, waiting to hear what I have to say. But I don't know what to say. Last night, I fell asleep next to Harry Finch, happy in the knowledge that I was going to spend the rest of my life with him.

Now I'm reading a letter to myself, talking about all the ways he betrayed me.

"I'm sorry." Graham sits beside me. He looks casually handsome in a pair of slacks and a checkered shirt. Maybe more handsome than Harry was—it's hard to compare the two because they look so different. "I know the last thing you remember is being happy with him. I hate to show you this, but you need to know. I don't want him to fool you again."

The paper crumbles in my hands. "Right..."

"It's Saturday," he says. That's comforting, because the night Harry proposed to me was Friday. So it doesn't feel like I've lost more than one night. One night and seven years. "I have some work to do in my office here, but maybe we can spend some time together later. We can go see a movie or take your dog to the park."

"I have a dog?"

He smiles at me. Graham has a nice smile. He seems like a kind man—I'm lucky I have him. "Yes. I bought him for you after your accident."

A lump forms in my throat. Graham and I obviously had a good life together before my accident. My fingers go to the right side of my skull, where I felt a dull ache when I woke up. Under the strands of my hair, I feel a thick scar running over the skin in the shape of a C.

"They had to do surgery," he explains, watching me. "They had to drain the blood."

At his explanation, I feel mildly ill the way I do when anything medical is discussed. I almost want to put my fingers in my ears and start singing to shut out anything else he needs to say.

"Why don't you go take a shower?" Graham suggests. "It always makes you feel better."

I nod, glad he doesn't want to share more details about my horrible accident. I remain on the bed for another minute, watching the man who claims to be my husband leave the room. I don't understand it. I would've thought even if I lost my memory, I would still remember my own husband.

Why don't I remember him? He's obviously telling the truth. There are pictures of the two of us all over the dresser. There's even a wedding photo.

I rise from the bed and pick up the wedding photo. The frame is heavy and feels expensive. I look at the couple in the photograph—they look so young and happy, with so many good years ahead of them. I run my fingers over the glass, tracing the array of cracks, distorting the image. I suppose it must have fallen at some point and we never got around to replacing it.

In the scheme of things, it's trivial. But there's something ominous about the effect: Graham and I, holding hands, me in a wedding dress and him in a tuxedo, with a giant crack slashing our faces in two.

I replace the photo on the dresser and make my way to our beautifully renovated bathroom. Harry and I had such grand plans for that bathroom, and it's gorgeous, but nothing like the way we would have done it. I can't imagine us installing a *bidet*, for starters. Harry would have laughed if I even suggested it.

Not that there's anything wrong with a bidet. I've heard they're quite nice. We just weren't bidet kind of people. Maybe Graham is though.

I close the door to the bathroom behind me. I start to turn the lock, but then realize the lock is gone. We did have a lock—that part I remember. Why would I have gotten it removed?

Well, it doesn't matter. I don't need a lock on the bathroom door.

I remember the words in the first of the two letters I read—the one that explained about my accident. Some previous version of myself warned me not to panic. Just accept my situation and try to make the best of it. I suppose that's all I can do in this situation. I live in a beautiful house and I have a husband who cares about me. It could be much worse.

I pull my nightshirt over my head. I drop it on the lid of the toilet, then I pull down my underwear. But as I look down, I notice something on my upper thigh. Something written in pen. My eyes widen as I read the words placed there for me alone to read.

Find Harry.

And then a phone number.

CHAPTER 40

I have very little privacy.

When Graham told me he would work most of the day, I assumed I would be alone on the first floor of the house. I was wrong. A woman named Camila showed up at breakfast time, and after the meal was over, she cheerily started cleaning the living room. She is the “cleaning woman,” but it’s increasingly obvious her actual job is to keep an eye on me.

Which means it’s not easy to reach out to the phone number I found scribbled on my leg.

After I saw that message on my leg, I didn’t know who to trust. There was an entire letter I wrote to myself, in my own handwriting, warning me about Harry Finch. But the message on my own skin superseded that. The message on my leg was meant for my eyes only.

And what it comes down to is that I know I can trust Harry. I don’t believe he did anything terrible to me. He would never.

I just need to find a time to call him. When nobody will overhear.

Besides Camila and Graham, there are two other numbers on the favorites list on my phone. Lucy and my father. Two more people I would trust with my life. I’m desperate to talk to either one of them, hoping they can shed light on what’s going on, but neither one of them picks up. I leave them both rambling messages, begging them to call me back as soon as they can.

Camila spritzes our coffee table with a lemon-scented cleaning fluid and wipes it down with a paper towel. Everything in our house smells vaguely of lemons. I feel guilty that I’m not helping her, but at the same time, I’m not even sure why she’s cleaning the coffee table. It’s spotless. The paper towel comes away clean.

“Is this your only job?” I ask Camila.

“Oh yes.” She bends down over the coffee table to give me an eyeful of cleavage. “This is a full-time job.”

I watch her furiously scrubbing the clean table, working at an invisible coffee ring. “Do you enjoy working here?”

She laughs throatily. "Sure. Why not?"

I shrug. "I don't know. It seems like it would be kind of boring."

"Every job has its boring moments, doesn't it?"

I remember when I started up My Home Spa. I had always wanted to own my own business, and I loved every minute of it. I looked up the company on my phone and discovered that it took off in a big way. I wonder if I still loved it when it got huge. I hope I did.

My phone rings on the sofa next to me. My heart leaps in my chest and for a moment, I'm sure it's got to be Harry. But no. The name flashing on the screen is Lucy. That's almost as good. I snatch up the phone and click on the green button to take the call. It's amazing how easy it is for me to work this phone even though I don't remember having one before today.

"Lucy?" I say breathlessly.

"Tess..." It's Lucy's voice, but there's something strange about her tone. I can't quite put my finger on it. "Hey, sweetie. How are you doing?"

"I've been better." My voice cracks on the words.

"I know," Lucy says before I can explain further. "I'm sure it's so weird for you. But I just want you to know that I have your back. I promise you that."

"Thank you." I squeeze the phone in my hand, but there's an uneasy feeling in my stomach. I didn't write Lucy's name on my leg. I instructed myself to find *Harry*. "I appreciate that."

"Of course." There's ruffling of papers in the background. "I'm busy at the moment, but maybe I'll come by later in the afternoon and we can do something girly together. Like we can go to the mall and have a makeover."

Why not? My face is already unfamiliar to me. May as well make it over. "That would be great."

"Perfect!" Lucy squeals. "I know how you must feel right now, but we're going to have so much fun together."

I think about spending an afternoon with Lucy, and the sick feeling in my stomach dissipates just a little bit. "Thank you. I don't know what I would do without you, Lucy. You're my best friend."

"Oh." She laughs, and once again, I can't help but notice there's something off about her voice. "You've managed just fine without me. But I'm happy to help."

"Can I ask you a question?"

“Of course! Anything.”

I glance over at Camila, who is vacuuming on the other side of the room. I don’t know if she can hear me, but I’m willing to risk it. “Is Graham good to me?”

She hesitates. It’s a split second and if anyone else had done it, I might not have even noticed. But I know Lucy so well. “He’s a great husband to you, Tess.”

There’s something else. There’s something she’s not telling me. I want to grill her further, but I can’t do it in front of Camila. I’ll have to talk to her later, when we leave the house together. “Okay. Thank you. I... I’ll see you later.”

I almost hang up the phone, but before I do, Lucy’s voice stops me: “Tess?”

“Yes?”

“You’re my best friend too. And... I meant it when I said I have your back.”

She sounds so sincere. I’ve known Lucy forever. I’ve known her even longer than I’ve known Harry. And certainly longer than Graham, who I hardly know at all. I wish I could talk to my father, but the truth is, I’m closer to Lucy than I am to him.

Maybe I should tell her about the phone number on my thigh. Maybe she could give me advice on how to handle this. Or maybe she can stop me from making a mistake. After all, how can I trust random scribbling on my leg? How do I even know for sure I was the one who wrote it?

I open my mouth to tell her everything, but before the words can come out, I clamp it shut.

Those words written on my leg were for my eyes only. I feel it in my gut.

“I’ll see you later, Lucy,” I croak.

“See you later, Tess. Hang in there.”

After I end the call, I notice Camila has turned off the vacuum and is looking at me from across the room. But as soon as she notices me noticing, she averts her eyes and gets busy with the mop. At this rate, our house is going to be the cleanest one on the block.

“That was my best friend, Lucy,” I say. I’m not sure why I need to explain myself to her.

She nods vaguely, like she wasn't eavesdropping on my conversation.
"Oh, that's nice..."

"Have you met Lucy?"

"I have. A few times."

"Is she around a lot?"

Camila frowns as she pushes her mop across the floor. "She's here a good amount. But..."

"But what?"

She stares down at the splash of water created by the mop. If I'm not mistaken, she doesn't seem like she likes Lucy much. I don't know why I care though. I've known Lucy since college whereas I met Camila this morning. It's not much of a contest who I trust more.

Yet there's something about Camila that I like. Something about her throaty laugh. She seems like an honest person. Someone I could imagine being friends with in another life. But there's no way she's going to tell me the truth about Lucy or Harry or Graham or any of that. She is our employee, after all. Not my friend.

"Are you married?" I blurt out.

Camila looks up at me in surprise, as if she was expecting another question, but then her lips twist into a grin. "Getting a little personal, aren't we?"

"If it would help, you can ask me if I'm married."

She lifts the mop off the floor. "No. I'm not married."

"Children?"

"No. No brothers or sisters. My parents are gone. I have nobody."

"Oh." I shift on the sofa. "I'm sorry."

"No reason to be sorry. In some ways, it's easier not to have anybody. I have less to lose."

I grope for my phone, now nestled in my pocket. Talking to Lucy just now didn't help at all with all my questions. It's just created new questions. As soon as Camila goes upstairs to clean, I'm going to call that number. I can't do it in front of her. Maybe she looks like an honest person, but looks are deceiving. I don't know what she's going to report back to my supposed husband.

"Have you ever been in love?" I ask her.

"In love?" She crinkles her nose. "No. Definitely not."

“You’re acting like it’s a bad thing.”

“I wouldn’t know either way.”

“I was in love once.” My voice cracks on the words. I don’t want her to know who I’m talking about, but I can’t help myself. It’s all I can think about. “I recommend it.”

“Mmm. Do you?”

“Yes. It was... nice. But I know what you mean about having something to lose.” I swipe at my right eye to prevent tears from falling. “Because once it’s gone, it’s all you can think about. It’s hard to be happy after that.”

Camila shoves the mop into a bucket in the corner of the room. She looks at me, her brow crinkling. “I’m done down here. I’m going to clean upstairs.”

Our eyes meet, and my hands break out in a sweat. Does she know what I’m planning to do? Somehow, I feel like she might know. Something about the way she’s looking at me. And if that’s the case, will she tell Graham? Maybe the second she gets upstairs, she’ll go right to him and tell him what she suspects.

I hope she doesn’t. But I have to take the chance.

Once she’s gone upstairs, I take out the little piece of paper where I transcribed the number written on my leg. I’m not sure what to expect. The letter I wrote to myself said Harry is in jail. What if I can’t reach him?

But I know the answer. If I don’t reach him today, I’ll leave another note for myself. I’ll keep trying until I find him.

My hands are shaking as I type the number into my phone. I hold it to my ear, looking up the stairwell to make sure nobody is within earshot. The phone rings and rings.

And rings.

Damn it.

He’s not going to pick up. I should have known. Who knows if that note I wrote to myself was even real. Maybe I was just delusional. The ten digits are probably just made-up numbers.

I was kidding myself to think I was ever going to see Harry again.

“Tess? Is that you?”

“Harry!” I grip the phone with both hands, immediately regretting the volume of my voice. I clear my throat and lower it several notches. “It’s

you...”

“It’s me,” he confirms.

My eyes fill with tears. It’s really him. I can’t believe it. “I didn’t think you would pick up. I found this letter I wrote to myself saying that you... that you were in *jail*.”

There’s a long silence on the other line. “Tess, don’t make me lie to you. I don’t want to talk about myself. I want to help you. And today I’m going to do it. Once and for all.”

“Okay...”

“So here’s the thing.” He sounds almost breathless, like I caught him in the middle of something. “Every time I see you, you tell me you called your father, and he never returned the call. And I got to thinking how strange it was that in a whole month, he never once called back his only daughter. I mean, he wasn’t the warmest person in the world, but he *loved* you. He would never ghost you for an entire month.”

He’s right. Lucy returned my call, but my father never did. “So what are you saying?”

“I’m saying, *that’s not your father’s number.*”

I frown at the phone. I never memorized my father’s phone number. But the voicemail had his voice on it.

“Graham must have gotten a burner phone and recorded your father’s voicemail message onto it,” Harry explains. “So when you leave the messages, he never gets them. But I found your dad, Tess.” He pauses. “He never got any of your messages. Not a single one. And I’m driving to his house right now.”

“My dad...”

“Right. Your father.” There’s a loud honk on the other line. “When I tell him what’s going on with you and that asshole Graham, he’s going to want to get involved and help you. Your dad’s a good guy. And he’s *family*. No court is going to listen to me, but they’ll listen to him. He’s going to help you—I’m sure of it.”

“Oh,” I say.

It sounds almost too good to be true. Harry will tell my father what’s going on in this house, and my father will intercede and come save me. I can go live with him in a house where the doors don’t lock from the inside.

Where I don't have to write secret messages on my thigh to find the man I love.

Like I said, it sounds too good to be true. Nothing can be that simple, can it?

"Anyway, I'm almost there." Another loud honk and Harry swears under his breath. "I'll call you after I'm done talking to him. Okay?"

"Don't hang up," I start to say, but my words get cut off by the blast of a loud horn. And a second later, the line is dead.

I put down the phone, my stomach churning. This should be a good thing. My dad and I aren't close, but he loves me. If he thinks I'm in danger, he'll come to save me. I know he will.

But somehow I sense that Harry going to see my father is a horrible mistake.

CHAPTER 41

Graham spends the entire morning up in his office, but he finally emerges when it's time for lunch.

Camila is making soup for lunch. I helped her out by chopping various root vegetables, but now everything is in the pot, and every couple of minutes, she stirs it, tastes the broth, and makes some sort of seasoning adjustment. The aroma of garlic, rosemary, and thyme fills the kitchen.

It reminds me of when I was a kid, and I used to cook in the kitchen with my mother. She used to give me a few little tasks to do, so I could feel like I contributed in a useful way to the meal. She was a really skilled cook. As an adult, I was never a good cook, and I always felt like if she had lived longer, she could've taught me more of her secrets. I would have loved that.

I also always felt sad that she never got to meet Harry. She would have adored him—I'm sure of it.

"It smells incredible in here," Graham comments. "I could smell it all the way up the stairs."

"Tess helped chop the vegetables," Camila says.

Graham is silent for a beat. "You gave her a knife?"

I remember the moment of hesitation before Camila handed me the blade I used to chop vegetables. The drawer with the knife was locked with a key.

"It was fine," Camila says.

"No, it's not fine. You shouldn't have given it to her."

I shift in my seat at the kitchen island. "I'm capable of chopping a few vegetables, Graham. I'm not going to hurt myself."

His lips part and he looks like he's going to say something, but then he shakes his head. "We'll talk about this later."

Of course, I'm sure Camila will be the one he talks to about it. He'll scold her for letting me help chop the vegetables, and she has to do what he says since he's the boss. Next time she makes soup, I'll just have to watch.

Graham lingers in the kitchen while Camila finishes cooking our lunch. I don't love the way he turns to watch Camila at the stove, smiling

appreciatively at the curve of her legs in her skin-tight jeans. Harry never used to leer at women that way. But when Graham notices me looking, he looks away. At least he's embarrassed about it.

"So what have you been up to all day?" Graham asks me as he sits down beside me at the kitchen island.

I shrug. "Not much. Just playing in the backyard with Ziggy a bit. That's all."

"That's all?" There's an edge to his voice like he doesn't quite believe me.

"That's all."

I wonder if he knows I've been in contact with Harry today. He must suspect something. There was that letter, after all. He's studying my face, and I squirm under his gaze. I've got to change the subject.

"So, um..." I say. "How did we meet?"

Graham drums his fingers on the table, his eyes distant. "You were at the beach. Your scarf blew into the water and I jumped into the ocean to rescue it for you."

"Oh, like how Christine and Raoul first met in *Phantom of the Opera*!"

He snaps his head back, blinking at me. "What... I don't know what you're talking about."

"I used to love *Phantom of the Opera*. And we have a copy of it in our DVD collection and I was watching it this morning, so..." I stop talking, noticing the scowl on Graham's face. "That was nice of you. Thank you for rescuing my scarf."

"You're welcome."

I bite on the tip of my thumbnail. "Why did I have a scarf at the beach anyway?"

He frowns. "Well, it wasn't a *wool* scarf. It was one of those silk things."

"Oh."

Graham rips his eyes away from mine and cranes his neck to look at the stove. "Camila, is that soup almost ready? Don't make this your life's work."

"Just a moment!" Camila calls out. "I'm almost done."

She shuts off the stove and retrieves two bowls from the cupboard. I watch as she carefully ladles the contents of the pot into the bowls. Little

clouds of steam waft out of each bowl. My stomach growls at the smell.

“Let me help you.” I jump out of my seat to join Camila by the stove. “What should I do?”

She nods at the bowl on the right. “You take yours and I’ll bring Graham his soup.”

I carry my bowl of piping hot soup to the table, being careful not to spill. Camila does the same thing with Graham’s bowl. I set mine gently on the table, and as Camila does the same, her hand spasms. I watch in horror as the bowl tips over. Right onto Graham’s lap.

“Jesus Christ!” he cries out. He jumps up from the table, revealing jeans soaked with steaming hot broth. “What the hell is wrong with you, Camila?”

She clasps a hand over her mouth. “I’m so sorry!”

She grabs a paper towel to help him, but he shoves her away, hard enough to make her stumble. His face is bright pink. “That was boiling hot! You could’ve scalded me! I swear to God, Camila, sometimes I think you’re just as dumb as Tess!”

Camila clasps a hand to her chest and takes a step back. “I apologize. It was an accident.”

“Yeah, whatever,” he grumbles. “I’ve got to go change.”

He pushes past her and heads for the stairwell. I watch him sprint up the steps, feeling mortified by my husband’s behavior. How did I end up marrying a man like that? I don’t understand. And now it feels like I’m stuck with him forever. All because I got into a stupid car accident.

Unless my father can help me. I hope Harry is successful...

“I’m so sorry he spoke to you that way,” I say to Camila.

There’s a crease between her eyebrows. “Tess, did I ever tell you about my Abuelita? And about when she died?”

I shake my head. “I don’t know. If you did, I wouldn’t remember, would I?”

“No,” she concedes. “But *I* remember.”

I have no idea what she’s talking about. I grab a stack of napkins off the kitchen counter. “We should get all the soup cleaned up...”

“Tess.” She grabs my arm to stop me, her fingernails biting into my skin. “Listen, I’m sorry Graham makes up those bullshit stories about the way the two of you met.”

The scarf story. I knew it was a fake. “Oh...”

“You don’t deserve that.” Camila’s eyes are on mine. “You don’t deserve any of his lies. You deserve the truth. Everyone deserves to know the truth.”

The truth? What is the truth? I can’t even begin to grasp it. Even if I figure out how my life became this way, all my revelations have vanished by tomorrow. Maybe I discovered the truth last week or the week before. And I’ve just forgotten it. And if I discover it today, I’ll just forget it again. It’s like I’m in some sort of repeating hell.

“Tess.” Camila’s voice pulls me out of my thoughts. “I have something for you.”

I realize she’s holding out her hand. And in her palm is a small key.

“This opens the top drawer of the desk in Graham’s office.” She places the key down on the kitchen island in front of me. “Everything you need to know is in there. Go now. Quickly—while he’s changing.”

My mouth falls open. It hits me that the spilled soup wasn’t an accident at all. She did it on purpose so I would have a clear shot at Graham’s office while he’s changing.

“Camila...”

“Go,” she says. “I’m sick of these lies. You deserve the truth.”

I pick up the key from the table. I close my fingers around it. I don’t know what she’s talking about. I don’t know what is in his desk drawer. But she’s right. I’ve been searching for the truth. And this woman has literally handed me the key to everything I’ve been wanting to know.

I leave my bowl of soup behind and follow Graham’s footsteps up the stairs. But instead of going to the bedroom where he’s getting cleaned up and changed, I stop at the room before it. His office.

The door is ajar. He had been working there before lunch and probably planned to come back. I tap it open, taking in the sight of his large bookcase, the leather loveseat, and the mahogany desk.

I close the door behind me.

Graham’s desk is in the corner of the room. There are several drawers, all closed. I try them, one by one. They’re all filled with papers, probably related to the company. When I finally get to the top right drawer, it doesn’t open.

Then I notice it has a keyhole the same size as my little key.

Before I can fit my key into the lock, my phone rings in my pocket. I pull it out—the number I dialed this morning is flashing on the screen. It's Harry. I don't have much time, but I take the call anyway.

"Tess," he gasps. "I... I just saw your father..."

"Hang on—there's something I need to tell you." I look down at the key in my sweaty hand. "Harry, Camila gave me the key to Graham's desk drawer. She said there's something in there I need to see. So I'm up in his office while he's changing."

"Tess..." His voice is shaky and quiet. "Don't open that drawer."

"What?" Did I hear him correctly? "You don't understand. Whatever he's been keeping from me, it's in this drawer. If he's been drugging me or... look, I've got the key in my hand. I'm going to open it right now."

"No. No. Look, can you just..." He sounds almost frantic now. "I'm driving over to your house right now. Can you wait? I'll be there in less than ten minutes. Don't open the drawer."

"In ten minutes, he'll have figured out I'm in here!" I hiss into the phone. "This is my only chance. What's *wrong* with you?"

"Tess, please... I'm begging you... just wait..."

I let out a huff. "Forget it, Harry."

Before he can protest again, I hang up the phone. I sense now that this is what I've been waiting for. For weeks—maybe months. The answer to my questions. The *truth*, like Camila said. Why is this happening to me? Why is Graham doing this to me? How do I get out of here? I'm going to get the answer, and this time I'm not going to forget it so easily. Never again.

I fit the small key into the lock of the drawer on Graham's desk. But just before I can turn it, my hand trembles. I get a strange buzzing sensation in the back of my head, and all of a sudden, Graham's office fades away to white. Then, gradually, another room comes into focus. It's like I've been transported to somewhere different. Back down to the living room of my house.

Graham is at the front door, talking to somebody. He's keeping his voice down, but the other person isn't. The other person is shouting. As I step closer, I recognize the voice of the person standing outside our front door.

It's my father.

“Let me in, Graham!” my father snaps at my husband. “This isn’t right!”

“I’m afraid this is a bad time,” Graham says in a maddeningly calm voice. “Tess is resting.”

“Bullshit!” I’ve never heard my father swear before—it’s shocking. “I can see her back there. Let me talk to her!”

“Douglas, you need to keep your voice down.”

I can just barely see my father’s face over Graham’s shoulder, through the crack in the open front door. His face is bright pink like he’s furious. “I want to see my daughter. Right. Now.”

“I’m afraid not.”

“This isn’t right!” My father’s voice is hoarse now. “Tess deserves to hear the truth. You can’t do this! You can’t keep her prisoner here like this!”

“I’m Tess’s husband and guardian,” Graham says calmly. “So I get to decide what I think is right for her. That’s not your job.”

“Tess!” My name sounds like an anguished cry on my father’s lips. “Tess! I need to talk to you!”

“I’m sorry, Douglas. I’m afraid I’m going to have to ask you to leave.”

I open my mouth, wanting to yell out to my father that I’m here, that I want to talk to him. But no words come out. I feel frozen—paralyzed. My father is a stone’s throw away, and there’s nothing I can do. Graham is preparing to lock the door to our house, shutting me inside and...

The living room fades away to white again, and now I’m back in Graham’s office. I look down and realize that I’m still gripping the key to the drawer in Graham’s desk. My fingers are trembling and sweaty, but they still work. They don’t even have to put the key in the lock. It’s already in there. All I have to do is turn it.

There’s something in this drawer that I need to see. My father knows the truth and Graham will do anything to keep him from telling me. And now, for reasons I can’t understand, Harry didn’t want me to look in the drawer. I can’t even imagine why. Like Camila said, I deserve to know the truth. Once and for all.

So I turn the key.

CHAPTER 42

I don't know what I expected to find when I opened the drawer. Bottles of some hallucinogenic? A signed confession from Graham? None of that is in the drawer.

What's in the drawer is paper. A huge stack of paper.

And the first page has my name on it.

I glance behind me. I'm still alone in Graham's office. So I pull the stack of papers out of the drawer and rest them on his desk. I turn the first page and I start to read. And I keep reading. Page after page after page.

Oh God.

Oh no. I can't believe this. No wonder Harry didn't want me to open the drawer.

No no no no no...

"Tess?"

I was so absorbed in what I was reading that I didn't even see Graham enter the room. He's standing behind me in a clean shirt and slacks. His blue eyes behind his glasses look incredibly sad.

"I never wanted you to read that," he says.

I drop into the leather chair in front of his desk because my knees can't support me anymore. I find myself gasping for air.

"I'm so sorry," he says.

"How..." I croak. "How did it happen?"

He exhales loudly. "It started over a year ago. Every morning when you woke up, you would complain about terrible headaches, always on the right side. I kept telling you to go to the doctor, but... well, you know how you are about doctors." A corner of his mouth quirks up, even though there's nothing funny about what I just read. "The headaches kept getting worse, and then one day while you were driving, you crashed your car. The accident was minor, but it turns out it happened because you had a seizure while driving."

I cover my mouth, barely able to listen to this. But nothing he's telling me is a surprise after what I just read in the stacks of my medical records from Mount Sinai.

“When they took you to the hospital after the accident, they found a large tumor in the right side of your brain,” Graham says. “They did surgery to try to remove it, but they couldn’t get it all. The pathology came back saying it was a malignant tumor. Stage four. Glioblastoma.”

Those are the words written on every doctor’s note in the stack. From neurosurgeons to neuro-oncologists to neurologists.

Stage four cancer.

Glioblastoma.

Poor prognosis.

Terminal.

“They tried doing chemotherapy treatment for a short time,” he goes on, even though I wish he would stop. “But you *hated* it. You hated going to the doctor so often. You hated the side effects of the medication. And it wasn’t working. So you decided to stop treatment.”

And then a memory comes back to me. Sitting in front of the desk of a doctor. The doctor has a white beard and a grave expression on his face. *There’s nothing more we can do, Mrs. Thurman. I’m so sorry.*

The realization that I was going to die. The same way my mother did.

Graham takes off his glasses and rubs his eyes with his fingers. “I thought you might be at peace after we decided to stop treatment, but you weren’t. You were miserable. You woke up every day, acting like you were already dead. You couldn’t stand the idea of wasting away like your mother did. We tried anti-depressants, therapy... but nothing worked. You had so little time left, and it felt like you were going to spend that time wishing you were already dead. So that’s when your psychiatrist got the idea...”

I lift my eyes. I already know what he’s going to say—I almost remember it—but I want to hear him say it.

“It was an injectable drug in a clinical trial to treat victims of trauma.” He slides his glasses back on his nose. “It affects recent short-term memory. The idea was that I would give you an injection every night, and you would forget your diagnosis. And you could be happy for the remaining time you had left.” He shakes his head. “And it *worked*. Really well. I mean, yes, there were gaps in your memory and you couldn’t work anymore, but you couldn’t work anymore anyway because of the tumor. You were happy again. We explained the scar on your head by telling you that you were in an accident, and generally, you enjoyed your days.”

Distantly, I can hear the doorbell ringing on the first floor.

“But then it all changed.” He lowers his voice. “I don’t know if it was too much of the medication accumulating in your bloodstream or maybe just the progression of the tumor. Your psychiatrist wasn’t sure. But the gaps in your memory became worse. You would wake up, unable to remember most of the last decade. You couldn’t even remember *me* anymore.” He takes a shaky breath. “Do you know what that’s like? To wake up every morning next to a woman who has no idea who you are and accuses you of being an intruder in your own bed?”

“I don’t know,” I shoot back. “Is it worse than finding out you’re dying of terminal cancer?”

The doorbell rings again downstairs. Someone is pounding on the door.

Graham hangs his head. “I’m sorry. I’m so sorry, Tess. This is why I didn’t want you to know. I kept hoping to make it work...”

There are footsteps on the stairs. The footsteps grow louder, and a second later, an elderly man bursts into the study. I stare at the slightly hunched figure with the white hair and deep grooves in his cheeks. It takes me a second to place him.

“Dad,” I whisper.

“Princess,” he says.

He looks so old. I hadn’t seen him in a long time, even before my engagement to Harry, and it shocks me now that my father has become an old man. I wonder how many of the creases in his face are my fault. He aged ten years in the months leading to my mother’s death. And I bet in the last year, he’s aged another ten years.

“Are you okay?” The wrinkles on my father’s forehead deepen. “Did Graham tell you...?”

“Yes,” I manage. “He told me everything.”

“I thought you deserved to know the truth,” he says softly. “Your mom... as much as it hurt her to leave you, she always said how grateful she was for those last few months the three of us had together. I didn’t want you to miss out on that.” He shoots Graham a hard look. “He disagreed.”

“You don’t know what she was like,” Graham says through his teeth. “You didn’t see how miserable it was making her.”

A tear escapes my right eye and I swipe at it. I can't believe this is happening. I can't believe I'm dying, just like my mother was. My father sees the look on my face, and his Adam's apple bobs. "I'm so sorry, Princess."

It hits me that my father hasn't called me "princess" since my mother passed. This is the first time I've heard him say that word. A lump forms in my throat, and then a second later, the tears are flowing freely. I fall into my father's arms and sob on his shoulder.

"Maybe Graham was right," my father murmurs as he strokes my short hair. "You're not the same as your mother. I think maybe you're happier not knowing."

"No." I pull away from his chest and wipe my eyes. "I wanted to know. I'm *glad* I know."

At that moment, a man with dark hair and a beard bursts into the study. His brown eyes widen at my swollen eyes and puffy red face. It takes me a second to realize who I'm looking at.

It's Harry.

And by the look on his face, I can tell he knows everything.

"Camila let me in," he says. Our eyes meet across the room. "You know..."

Graham whirls around. He shoots Harry a dirty look. "What the hell are you doing here? Aren't you supposed to be in *jail*?"

Harry returns the dirty look. "They released me this morning." He looks back at me. "Are you okay?"

I squeeze my hands into fists. "Did you know about any of this... before?"

"No." He looks as sick as I feel. "I thought you had been in a car accident, same as you did." He glances at my father. "But then I talked to your dad, and he told me..."

It all makes sense now. I don't remember doing it, but according to Harry, I called my father every day. And he never returned my calls. Because apparently, I was never calling him in the first place. Graham was keeping me from reaching him so he wouldn't tell me I was dying.

I look over at Graham. The man who engineered this daily deception for my own good. I still feel like I don't know who he is. I don't remember

him. I don't remember falling in love with him. I don't remember marrying him. The drug he gave me took all of that from me.

And I'm glad.

I turn to my husband. "How much time do I have left?"

He shakes his head. "Hard to say. The last time I took you to the doctor a month ago, he said six or seven months."

My body goes cold. Six months. Six months left on this earth.

If that's all I have, I'm damn well going to enjoy it.

"Graham," I say. "Thank you for running my business while I've been sick. You've done a good job and... I want you to keep doing it. Keep it going. Please."

He nods slowly, his brow wrinkled.

"But I don't want to live here with you anymore." I shake my head. "I don't even know who you are. And I'm sorry, but I don't love you. This arrangement needs to end."

Graham drops his eyes. "I love you, Tess. Maybe you don't remember me, but I remember you. I want you to be happy. I'll do whatever it takes..."

"I'm not happy here. And there's nothing you can do except let me leave."

His eyes widen. "But where will you...?" He stops mid-sentence and turns to look at Harry. "Oh."

"I'm sorry," I say quietly.

Graham looks down at his loafers. His chest rises and falls. "I just want you to be happy, Tess. So whatever you need to do..."

I thought he would put up more of a fight. But he isn't. He's letting me go.

For a moment, I wonder if I've got it all wrong. Maybe Graham is The One. I married him, after all. He's the one I had planned to spend my life with. When I thought I had a whole life to spend.

But then I look over at Harry, wringing his hands together. There was always only one person for me. I somehow got lost along the way, but having terminal cancer can show you what's important.

"Harry," I say. "Will you let me spend these six months with you?"

His eyes light up. Even though I've lost my memory, I know it's the first time I've felt happy in a very, very long time.

CHAPTER 43

Graham and I come up with an arrangement. We're going to have a contract drawn up by a lawyer to make it all official, but we hashed out most of the details:

Graham will keep the house. I don't want to stay in one place anymore, anyway.

Graham will make sure the restraining order against Harry is dropped, as well as the current charges against him from last night.

Graham will remain CEO of My Home Spa and keep it running while I'm gone. As much as I loved it, I'm not capable of running it anymore. And that's not how I want to spend my last months. When I'm gone for good, the company will be his.

Camila will get a generous severance package.

Ziggy will stay with me.

As soon as I'm done packing, I will leave with Harry and never return.

Graham is on his phone with his lawyer right now, eager to get the papers drawn up today. He says that his attorney can email him the documents and we can take care of it right away, although I feel like it can wait till tomorrow—now that tomorrow will exist. But I also feel like it will be good to get it done with. I want to leave this house and start living the rest of my life. Now that I know how little is left, I don't want to waste any time.

While Graham is in his office, my father kisses me goodbye while Harry and I relocate to the kitchen. I get some coffee brewing, then we go to sit at the kitchen island, waiting for it to be done. While we wait, Harry holds onto my hand like I'm his life preserver.

"Hey," I say. "What's with the beard?"

He rubs the stubble on his chin. "Do you like it?"

"I can't decide. When did you decide to grow it?"

"Right after you contacted me." He grins at me. "It's kind of my *disguise*."

I laugh. "It's a good one. I almost didn't recognize you."

“Yeah, I was considering an eyepatch too. And a fake scar. But then I was like, maybe too much.”

“I prefer being able to see your face.”

He rubs the beard again. “I’ll get rid of it then.”

“Just like that?”

“Sure. Why not?”

I raise my eyebrows. “Is this what it’s going to be like? Anything I ask, you’re going to do it without question?”

He smiles at me, but a bob of his Adam’s apple betrays his true feelings. Everyone else has had a long time to deal with the reality that I’m dying. Harry found out today, just like me. For a moment, it looks like he’s fighting back tears. He wins the battle and his eyes stay dry. “What can I say? I’m crazy about you. I always have been.”

“Always?”

He squeezes my hand. “I don’t know if I ever told you this, because I thought you might find it weird. But the second I saw you at that computer store, I thought to myself, ‘This is the woman I’m going to spend the rest of my life with.’ I’m glad I was right.”

“Well,” I say, “the rest of *my* life.”

And now it’s my turn to be blinking back tears. I never wanted to end up like my mother. I never wanted to have that feeling like the end is in sight—at least not for another forty or fifty years, when I’m old with a pile of grandchildren and maybe great-grandchildren. But that’s not my fate. Yes, I’m back with the love of my life. But my time with him is limited. Just a few short months.

The smell of freshly brewed coffee fills the kitchen. I glance at the stairwell and drum my fingers against the table. “I wonder how long it will take to get that contract drawn up.”

The sadness vanishes from Harry’s face and is replaced by a sneer. “I can’t believe you’re agreeing to this. I can’t believe you’re letting that asshole run your company.”

I lift a shoulder. “The company isn’t what’s important. I don’t want to waste another second on it.”

“But Graham is *not* a good guy.”

“He was just trying to protect me,” I remind him. “He knew I couldn’t handle my diagnosis back then. He wasn’t doing anything to hurt me. He’s

been taking care of me all this time.”

“No.” Harry shakes his head. “I don’t buy that. Graham doesn’t have your best interests in mind. Do you really want him to get your company and everything you’ve worked so hard for?”

I frown. “If this is about the money, I can change my will to leave some of it to Dad and to you...”

“I don’t want your money, Tess!” Harry bursts out. His face is pink. “Is that what you think? Jesus Christ...”

I don’t think he wants my money. But it’s not like I have any children I need to make sure are taken care of. I want my dad to get something to have in his old age, but I don’t care what happens to the rest of it. Maybe I’ll donate it to charity. And I don’t mind if Graham keeps running the company. It seems like he’s doing a good job.

“This is what I want.” I look into Harry’s eyes so he knows I mean it. “I don’t want to fight with him about the company. I want to sign the papers and be done with it.”

He opens his mouth but shuts it again at the sound of footsteps on the stairs. It must be Graham. That was quicker than I thought—we haven’t even been down here an hour yet. Despite everything, I appreciate Graham is hurrying this process along. I just want to get out of here with Harry.

Graham comes into the kitchen, brandishing a sheaf of papers in one hand and a ballpoint pen in the other. Harry’s brown eyes darken at the sight of him, but all I feel is relief. This contract will let me sever ties with Graham—I won’t have to deal with this stranger anymore and my company will be taken care of.

“I got done as quickly as I could.” He places the stack of about a dozen pages on the kitchen island and slides them across to me. “Feel free to look through it, but everything we discussed is covered in here.”

“Thanks for getting it done fast, Graham,” I murmur. The typewritten lines swim before my eyes.

He places the ballpoint pen on top of the papers. “I know you don’t have much time left.”

The reminder stings—it’s still all so fresh. I wonder how I’ll feel about it tomorrow. It will get easier each day—I’m sure of that much. I don’t want to go back to forgetting again. I’ve lost so much, and I don’t want to lose my mind too.

I flip through the pages, skimming the legal jargon. On the last page, there's an X next to the line where I'm supposed to sign. I pick up the pen.

"Aren't you going to get your own lawyer to look it over?" Harry speaks up. He shoots Graham an accusatory look. "You don't expect her to sign it right now, do you?"

He shrugs. "You can bring it to a lawyer if you want, Tess. But it's going to take weeks to sort through it all if you want to make changes." He pushes his glasses up the bridge of his nose. "I'm your husband. I've been taking care of you this last year. I'm not trying to cheat you. I wouldn't do that."

Harry lets out a loud snort. "You're so full of it, Graham. Tess, you need a lawyer to look at that."

I grip the pen so tightly, my fingers tingle. "It looks okay to me. I just want this to be done with."

"Tess..."

I raise my eyes to meet Harry's. "Please. If I sign this today, we can leave now. We can get on a plane tomorrow."

Harry just shakes his head.

"Graham is right," I remind him. "I don't have much time. A few weeks... That's a big chunk of what I have left. I need this to be done. Please understand."

Harry's shoulders sag. "I'm just trying to look out for you."

"I know. And I'm okay now." I add, "Really."

He looks miserable, but he nods. "Fine, Tess. Do what you need to do."

I start to scribble my name on the contract just as the doorbell goes off. At first, I assume it must be my father, having forgotten something at our house. But then I remember. Lucy was coming to visit. We were going to have a girls' afternoon at the mall. We were going to have a makeover.

That was before. Before I knew the truth.

"It's Lucy," I say.

Maybe I'm imagining it, but Harry's eyes seem to darken again. Graham nods in understanding. "I'm sure you want to talk to her. Why don't you sign the contract, and I'll give you some privacy so the two of you can chat?"

But I'm not in the mood for Lucy. It's strange because she's my best friend, but she's not who I want to be around right now. In fact, the thought of seeing her gives me a foul taste in my mouth. I can't remember ever feeling anything but warmly toward Lucy, but now I feel a flash of anger.

Lucy did something to me. Something bad.

Did she do something to hurt me? Or has my tumor-ridden brain manufactured this memory?

I abandon the contract on the kitchen island, and without another word, I sprint over to the door and fling it open. I hardly even notice that Graham has been following at my heels. Or that he picked up the contract from the table and he's got it in his hands again.

The woman standing at my front door is very recognizably my best friend. Harry looks older and scruffier and more tired than he did the last time I remember, but Lucy looks *great*. Even better than my last memory of her. Her red hair is glossy and her figure is perfectly trim, like she's been working out. The only thing that isn't perfect about her are the light purple circles under her eyes.

"Tess." She squeezes her red purse in her fists. "It's so good to see you. Are you okay?"

Graham's hand drops onto my shoulder. Harry hung behind in the kitchen, but Graham is hovering over me protectively. "She's okay. We had a long talk this morning. She knows about her diagnosis."

"Oh." Lucy's face falls. "Tess, I'm so sorry..."

"It's fine." It's not true, but I hope it eventually will be. "I'm fine. I... I appreciate you being there for me over the last year. You're a good friend."

Lucy's eyebrows bunch together. Graham gives her a look.

"Lucy works at the company too," Graham says in a strangely slow voice. "She's a big part of the company. When you're traveling with Harry, she's going to be helping me out a lot to run the company. I'll probably have to *promote* her."

Lucy and Graham running my company. Huh. She never even thought the company would get off the ground. She *warned* me about starting it. The whole thing makes me sick to my stomach, but I don't want to think about it.

"Tess..." Lucy says.

“I’m okay,” I say for what feels like the hundredth time. “I promise. I’m fine.”

Lucy is still squeezing her purse for dear life, her fingers digging into the expensive material. I watch as her eyes fill with tears. “Tess...”

“Lucy,” Graham says firmly. “Don’t you think it would be better for Tess to be with family right now? Maybe you should go, and the two of you can talk another time. And later we can discuss what your role in the company is going to be.”

Lucy bows her head. “Okay.”

She starts to turn around. Graham has his hand on the door, ready to close it behind her. But then, quick as lightning, Lucy’s hand shoots out, stopping the door before it can swing closed. “I can’t do this, Tess,” she says.

“Lucy,” Graham growls.

“Graham was stealing from you.” Her chest heaves with the confession. “That’s what you told me before you got sick. You said he was filtering money into foreign accounts, and you were going to confront him and kick him out. But then the next day, I heard you had a seizure while you were driving. And then they found the tumor and...”

“Lucy!” Graham says sharply.

Lucy’s eyes fill with tears. “When you got sick, you forgave him. And after you started getting those shots, you also forgot everything he did to you. But you deserve to know what he did before you make any decisions about the company.” She pauses. “I want you to know.”

I stare at her, stunned by the revelation. Graham was *stealing* from me. He was embezzling money from my company.

“You’re out of your mind, Lucy.” Graham’s blue eyes are bulging out of their sockets. “I would never do that to Tess. Why would you lie like that?”

Lucy ignores him and turns her gaze on me. “He gave me a job at the company so I wouldn’t say anything to you.” She drops her eyes. “I’m so sorry. You’re my best friend. I’ll never forgive myself.”

I turn away from her, my head pounding. Harry has come out of the kitchen and is standing behind me. He looks as stunned as I feel. He never trusted Graham, but he didn’t know about this.

“You asshole.” Harry’s right hand balls into a fist. “What have you done to her?”

“Go to hell.” Graham lifts his chin, folding his arms across his chest. “You act so goddamn self-righteous, but you don’t know what this last year was like. Every morning, Tess wakes up and she doesn’t know what the hell is going on. She wakes me up *screaming*. I’ve been taking care of her—doing everything for her like she’s a *child*. Before that, I took her to every goddamn doctor’s appointment. I was there through chemotherapy treatment. I cleaned up the vomit. I *deserve* the company after what I’ve been through.”

Now Graham turns to me. He reaches out for my hand, but I wrench it away. “Tess, you know what I’ve done for you. You wouldn’t even be *alive* right now if not for me. And I kept your secret, because I know how much it scared you to end up like your mother.”

I blink at him. Of all the things he’s said, this is the only one that gets through. He knows my biggest fear. And he did try to help me.

“This is bullshit,” Harry spits at him. “She’s not going to give you her company after what you’ve done. Right, Tess?”

I open my mouth to answer him, but my throat is too dry to get any words out. Maybe it’s a side effect of the medication. Harry and Lucy are both watching me with equally worried expressions on their faces.

“I’ll take care of your company, Tess,” Graham pleads with me. “Just sign those papers and I’ll keep it going for you. And then you can do whatever you want with your boyfriend here for the last few months of your life. You don’t ever have to hear from me again.” There’s a mildly threatening edge to his voice as he adds, “You don’t want to drag this out in court, do you?”

He knows I don’t want that. I don’t want to spend my remaining time fighting this man. If I sign the papers now, it will be done. *You don’t ever have to hear from me again.*

Graham holds out the papers to me. I could sign those papers. I don’t want to give him my company, but I also don’t want to spend the last months of my life fighting him. And I can tell from the look in his eyes that he will fight me until I’m dead. What’s the difference if he gets the company? I won’t be around to see it, anyway.

“Don’t do this, Tess,” Harry says.

I take the contract from Graham's hand. It's still open to the page that has the X, waiting for my signature. He holds out the pen and I take it from him.

"You're doing the right thing," Graham says.

"I know I am," I say.

I take the contract and I rip it in half. I let the pieces flutter to the floor.

CHAPTER 44

ONE WEEK LATER

Harry is helping me pack.

I don't recognize most of the stuff in the closet—it's all designer outfits that don't feel like me. My inclination is to leave it all behind. We've got plenty of money in my bank account. I can buy clothing and anything I need when we arrive at our destination.

We're leaving tomorrow morning. I can't wait.

"You should bring a *few* things," Harry points out. "I mean, you don't want to wake up tomorrow and have nothing to wear."

I don't care if I wake up tomorrow and have nothing to wear. As long as I remember yesterday. This morning when I woke up next to Harry, I could still remember the day before. And the day before that. My memories are still patchy, but they're all coming back to me little by little, like a jigsaw puzzle falling into place.

"I'm not worried," I say.

I rifle through the top drawer of my dresser. I tossed that cracked photograph of me and Graham on our wedding day into the garbage a week ago. I never want to look at his smug face again.

Of course, it's unlikely I'll get my wish. Graham might not be inheriting my company, but I will definitely see him again since I'm pressing charges against him for embezzlement. He's out on bail right now. And obviously, I have filed for divorce. All of this means we may have to cut our trip short. But that's okay. It's worth it to make sure he gets what he deserves.

In the meantime, Harry and I are going to enjoy ourselves. Tomorrow morning, we're hopping on a plane to someplace warm. With lots of beaches.

Harry grins at me and holds up a flowered bikini top to his chest. "This one is great."

I return the grin. “That would look so sexy on you.”

“I was thinking exactly the same thing.”

I yank the bikini top away from him and he grabs my hand. He pulls me closer until his lips press against mine. For the last week, we haven’t been able to keep our hands off each other—we are making up for lost time. I cling to him, feeling the heat of his body, not wanting to let go. Even to finish packing.

When the memory of catching Lucy with Harry came back to me, Lucy confessed Graham had put her up to it. There was no affair. Harry never came on to her. It was all staged so I would break off my engagement with Harry, and Graham would have a shot with me. I will never forgive Lucy for that one. But she’s trying. She’s even going to be testifying against Graham. And she’s offered to look after Ziggy for a few weeks until I get back from my trip with Harry.

All those years I was with the wrong guy—I was with a man who lied and cheated and stole from me. I’m so stupid. How could I have believed Harry would ever cheat on me? He has been nothing but devoted.

So much wasted time—I’m filled with regret. It makes me even more determined not to waste another moment of the time I have left.

When our lips finally separate, I’m almost floating. But then out of nowhere, a wave of sadness hits me. Despite the anti-depressant pills I started taking again, it’s been difficult to accept my situation. I’m not going to have the happy ending I dreamed of. It’s off the table for me.

“You know,” I say, “I saw what happened to my mother. I might have six months left, but it doesn’t mean those six months are all going to be good.”

The smile drops off Harry’s face. “Look, you know I think we should try to get another opinion. Maybe there’s a doctor who could—”

“No.” I give him a sharp look. “I don’t want that.”

If I only have six months left, I want to enjoy the six months. I don’t want to spend it getting chemotherapy. I don’t want to spend it throwing up with my hair falling out. And I definitely don’t want to spend it in the hospital with needles sticking out of my arm.

I want to enjoy it on a beach with the love of my life, sipping margaritas. As long as I can.

“It’s your decision, Tess,” Harry says quietly. “Whatever you want, I’ll support you.”

“Right, but...” I shake my head. “You need to know what’s coming. The end... It could get bad.”

“I know.”

“*Really* bad.”

“I *know*. And I’ll be there.”

“I don’t think you really know...”

Harry grabs my shoulders and looks me straight in the eyes. “I never thought I was going to get you back. Whatever happens from now on, I’m going to be there. I’m going to make the time we have together the best time of your life. No matter what.”

He kisses me again. At this moment, I don’t feel like I’m dying. I feel *happy*. I’m so glad I get to spend this time with him. I’m so glad I found him a month ago.

When he pulls away, I trace my finger along the curve of his collarbone. “I wonder why I did it.”

“Did what?”

“Why I found you.” I raise my eyes to meet his. “After all that time, why did I suddenly start looking for you a month ago?”

A lot of my memories have come back to me, but not that one. There was a reason I started looking for him. I had been living this way for over a year, but all of a sudden, one day I decided to find Harry. Why?

The memory is there. Just beneath the surface. Sometimes I almost feel like I could catch it, but then it escapes me.

“Does it matter?” he asks. “We found each other again. That asshole Graham is out of your life. That’s all that’s important.”

He’s right, of course. But it still bothers me. There must’ve been a reason I tried to find Harry. It’s there, buried somewhere in the recesses of my tumor-ridden brain. Will I ever remember? I don’t know. As I get sicker, the memories may fade altogether.

I may never know why I decided to reach out to Harry.

But I’m glad I did.

EPILOGUE

ONE MONTH EARLIER

I can't believe what I'm hearing. This can't be right.

"Are you serious?" I ask.

Dr. Wang nods. He is a middle-aged Asian man with white threading through his black hair, wearing a royal blue tie. I just met him today. No, actually, I've met him many times before. He's my neuro-oncologist—a doctor who deals with brain cancer. But considering I woke up this morning unable to remember much of the last several years, it feels like I just met him today.

"I'm very serious, Mrs. Thurman." He folds his arms in front of him. "The MRI of your brain not only showed no growth of the tumor, but the tumor burden was *significantly* reduced following the chemotherapy. We thought you weren't responding, but apparently, we were wrong."

Graham told me my diagnosis this morning. It was hard to hear. He said he only told me because we had to go to this appointment together, but after today, I wouldn't have to remember ever again.

And then we hear *this*.

I look over at Graham, who is sitting in this chair beside me. His jaw looks like it's about to become unhinged. "How can that be?" he asks. "You said this was *terminal*. You told me when we got the diagnosis that she had a year to live."

Dr. Wang spreads his hands apart. "We were wrong. She's had a remarkable response to the chemotherapy."

My head is buzzing. I reach out to touch the scar on the right side of my scalp. My souvenir. "So what does this mean?" I ask.

"It means," Dr. Wang says, "your cancer is currently in remission."

Everything he says after that is a blur. He's going to have the pathologist review the slides to see if they over-called my diagnosis. Maybe

I was never stage four after all. If that's true, I could have a major lawsuit on my hands. But I don't care about any of that. I only care about one thing.

I'm not dying. I'm okay.

I can finally get my life back.

We had already given Camila the evening off, so I cook dinner tonight. Nothing too fancy—just some spaghetti with tomato sauce. But while I've got it on the stove, Graham comes down to the kitchen and frets over me. He looks down at the burner and frowns.

“Are you sure it's safe for you to do that?” he asks.

I stick out my tongue at him. “I can handle boiling some pasta, Graham.”

But he still looks worried. “I better stick around.”

I keep the spaghetti in the boiling water for ten minutes. As I stir it with a spoon, I hum softly to myself. I can't believe what Dr. Wang told me today. *I'm not dying*. It's like I've been given a gift.

Maybe I should take a cooking class. I've always wanted to become a better cook. There would have been no point if I only had six months left to live, but now...

The options are mind-blowing. I could do anything.

Except for some reason, all I can think about is Harry Finch. Even though he's long gone from my life. It somehow doesn't feel that way. Now that I've got a new lease on life, he's the one I want to spend it with. But that's crazy. I haven't seen Harry in years. He's almost certainly moved on.

After ten minutes, I remove a single strand of spaghetti from the water. I throw it against the wall to see if it sticks. That's a trick my mother taught me before she got sick. I'm going to use her spaghetti trick, but I'm not going to end up like her after all. Thank God.

“Two plates of spaghetti, coming right up!” I announce.

Graham smiles at me. “It looks delicious. I'll get us drinks.”

I douse the spaghetti in a healthy amount of red sauce with big clumps of tomato. Okay, I'm not exactly Julia Child. But there's time to learn. There's time for everything now.

I bring the two plates of food out to the dining table. Graham follows a minute later with two glasses of water. After the doctor's appointment, he

changed into jeans and a T-shirt, and I can't help but think that my husband is pretty attractive. I can see why I might have fallen in love with him, even though I can't technically remember it.

And now we get to spend the rest of our lives together like a real couple. I can make up for all the time he had to spend taking care of me and dealing with my business.

"How about candles?" I suggest.

Graham laughs. "Wow, you are in a really good mood."

But he indulges me by getting out a pair of candlesticks from one of the drawers. We light them and then dim the overhead chandelier in the dining area. I love the atmosphere and the way Graham's handsome face looks flickering in the candlelight.

"So what do you think of the spaghetti?" I ask him.

He twirls a few strands around on his fork and pops them in his mouth. "Delicious. Like in a restaurant."

I giggle. It's a sound I haven't made in a long time. "I was thinking maybe I could take some cooking lessons."

"Sounds good. I approve."

I take a gulp of my water, then stuff more spaghetti in my mouth. I don't know what it is, but this is the best meal I've had in years. Graham looks across the table at me, an unreadable expression on his face.

"Maybe we should do some traveling now?" I say.

He twirls more spaghetti around his fork. "It would be hard to get away. You know, My Home Spa is very busy right now."

"Right... You're probably overwhelmed..." I take another gulp of water. "I should probably think about coming back."

Graham puts down his fork, which is packed with spaghetti. "What? Why would you do that?"

I snort. "Well, it's *my* company."

"Yeah, but..." The candles flicker. "You still have a lot of memory problems. I don't think it's a great idea for you to come back. You don't want to screw up the business."

I raise my eyebrows. "Excuse me, but it's *my* business." I clear my throat and take another sip of water. "Anyway, I'm not saying I'll come back today or tomorrow. But maybe in a month or two..."

"Maybe..."

I peer at Graham over the rim of my water glass. I don't know why he's acting so weird about this. Why can't I come back to work? I'm capable of it. Look what a great job I did on the spaghetti.

Okay, running a big business is a little different from cooking a plate of spaghetti. And to be fair, the spaghetti is a little more al dente than I would've liked. But still.

"Anyway," I say, "we can talk about when I'm coming back some other time. Let's just enjoy the meal."

"Right. Sure."

Except I notice Graham isn't eating his spaghetti anymore. He's just watching me across the table. It's making me uneasy. But I keep eating. If he doesn't want his food, that's his loss. He can go to bed hungry if he wants.

By the time I finish my food, Graham has barely touched his. I glance pointedly at his plate. "Are you done?"

"Looks like it," he mutters.

I get up out of my seat and start gathering up the plates to bring to the kitchen. But before I can do it, a wave of dizziness washes over me. It's so bad that I sink back down into my seat.

"Tess?" Graham raises his eyebrows. "Are you okay?"

I wait for the dizziness to pass. What was that? I haven't felt like that all day. And it's not like the tumor is getting worse. Dr. Wang just told me I was getting better. So why do I feel so awful?

I look down at the glass in front of me that held my water. At the bottom of the glass, there are little remnants of white powder.

"Graham," I breathe. "What did you do?"

He shakes his head slowly. "Things were perfect the way they were. You've been the perfect wife since you've been sick. You stay home all day and you let me manage the business. I don't know why you want to ruin all that."

"Because I'm better." My tongue feels heavy and my words are slurring. "I'm not sick anymore. I want things to go back to the way they were before my diagnosis."

Graham grits his teeth. "You mean when you told me you were going to leave me? That you were cutting me out of the business?"

I flinch. "I... I don't remember that."

“Of course you don’t.” Graham’s eyes appear to glow in the light of the candle. “And you never will.”

The dizziness is being replaced by fatigue. I feel so tired I can barely keep my eyes open. But I have to. I can’t lose consciousness. Because if I go to sleep, that’s it. Graham will inject me with that medication the psychiatrist gave him, and I’ll forget everything that happened today. Yes, I won’t remember my cancer diagnosis. But I also won’t remember I’m in remission.

Only Graham will know the truth. And he’ll do anything to keep me from finding out.

I use every ounce of strength to get out of my chair. I want to run for the door, but then I remember it locks from the inside. I won’t be able to leave the house.

Ziggy is barking up a storm outside the back door. If only he could understand what was going on. Maybe he could help me. But I’m not sure anyone can help me at this point.

“Tess.” Graham’s voice is gentle. “Just relax. Look, this isn’t so bad. You’ve been happy until now.”

“Go to hell!” I spit at him.

I nearly trip over my feet as I stumble in the direction of the bathroom. There’s no lock on the door, but I close it behind me and lean all my weight against it. Of course, as soon as I pass out, Graham will easily be able to get inside.

“Tess...” His voice floats under the door. “Let me in, Tess. Come on. This will be so much easier if you cooperate.”

I search the room for a weapon. There’s got to be *something* in here... a razor, some scissors... even a goddamn tweezer would be great. But there’s nothing. The only thing I see is a tube of dark red lipstick. And what the hell am I supposed to do with lipstick?

And then it hits me.

Graham bangs on the door. “Come on, let me in. You can’t keep me out of there forever. In about five minutes, you’re going to be sound asleep, anyway.”

That means I have five minutes to do this.

I pull down my jeans and let them hang down around my knees. Then I grab the tube of lipstick. I pull off the cap, and with my shaking hand, I

write the words on my thigh as legibly as I can possibly manage. There's only one person I can think of who will move heaven and earth to help me. I hope to God that I see this message in the morning:

FIND HARRY.

THE END

Did you enjoy reading *Do You Remember*? [Click here to check out other unputdownable psychological thrillers by Freida McFadden](#), now available on Amazon!

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I know what you're thinking.

You're yet again reading the acknowledgments in a book and preparing yourself for the utter disappointment of realizing that it didn't mention you. And you're thinking, *how hard is it?* There are fewer than eight billion people in the world—how difficult is it to just include *everyone*? This is even worse than when you didn't get invited to Billy Foster's birthday party in third grade.

So for that reason, I want to start out by thanking my readers. You guys *rock*. Really. I especially want to highlight Carrie, Nancy, Urvi, and Jackie for feedback on the cover and blurb, and also for promotion help! But to all of you readers, I want to say a sincere *thank you thank you thank you*. This book would not exist without you. And if you are *not* a reader, then... I don't know, you probably have to ask yourself exactly what you're doing right now looking at this acknowledgment—maybe reevaluate your life a bit.

As always, thank you to my mother, for the encouraging feedback, and for helping me catch all those pesky typos. Thanks to my husband, for being like, "WTF Freida, that ending sucks, you can come up with something better." Thanks to Kate for the great suggestions. Thanks to Liz for the advice on the ending. Thanks to Nelle and Amanda for the excellent feedback. Thanks to Val for the eagle eye typo correction. Thank you to Mel and Rhona for looking at endless covers (like it or not). And thanks as always to my writing group!

And thank you to the rest of my family. Without your encouragement, none of this would be possible.

Did you enjoy reading *Do You Remember*?

If so, please send me an email at fizziatrist@gmail.com. I would love to hear from you—and don't be shocked when I answer! Or please consider leaving a review on Amazon!

Check out my website at:

<http://www.freidamcfadden.com/>

To get updates about new releases, please [follow me on Amazon!](#) You can also [follow me on Bookbub!](#)

Also, even though I have my books combed for typos multiple times by multiple people, there are some superhuman strains of mutant typos that always seem to survive. If you find any typos and point them out to me so I can fix them, I would eternal grateful.

(The above typo was supposed to be amusing.)

And now please enjoy a short excerpt of my new book, *Do Not Disturb...*

Do Not Disturb

While I'm washing the blood off my hands in the kitchen sink, the doorbell rings.

I freeze, my hands full of pink suds, the steaming hot water causing my fingers to burn and tingle. There's somebody at the door. Somebody waiting patiently on the front porch for me to answer. The timing couldn't be worse.

Could it be a package delivery? Maybe they'll drop the package at the door and go away. Or else leave me a note. *Sorry we missed you! We'll be back tomorrow!*

And then: three hard raps on the front door.

"Coming!" I call out in a strangled voice, even though it's unlikely they'll hear me. I scrub furiously at my fingers, and then at my fingernails, where the blood seems to have settled into the cracks. Who knew it was so hard to get blood off your hands? "Just a minute!"

I shut off the hot water and examine my palms, flipping them this way and that. Good enough? It'll have to be. I wipe them dry on a light green dish towel, leaving a smear of red behind. Damn, I didn't get it all—I'll have to wash my hands again.

As soon as I get rid of whoever is at the front door.

My heels clack against the linoleum floor of the kitchen, then go soft when they hit the plush carpeting in the living room. Derek and I pored over carpet swatches for hours before settling on the charcoal-colored carpet that now goes wall-to-wall across our vast living room. The carpet feels lovely when I'm in my bare feet, and I'm glad I held out for a darker color instead of a pale shade that would show every fleck of dirt. Our carpet can easily hide dust and debris.

Bloodstains too, apparently.

As I hurry to the front door, I glimpse bright lights through the windows. Red and blue flashing simultaneously. That can mean only one thing.

There's a cop at my door.

Oh God. No no no no no...

I take a split second to compose myself. *Keep it together, Quinn.* I take a deep breath, trying to get my hands to stop shaking. It doesn't work. So I go ahead and open the door.

I was right. It's a police officer at my door. Not just a police officer, but it's Scotty Dwyer, although he goes by Scott now, or else Deputy Dwyer. About a million years ago, when we were in high school, Scott and I used to date. I remember how awkwardly cute I thought he was, with his red-brown hair that always stuck up straight and all the freckles on his face. But then high school ended, I went off to college, and he went to work for his father's grocery store. I don't even remember breaking up with him, but the long-distance phone calls became less frequent, and one day during my freshman year, I realized we weren't together anymore.

Now Scotty is a policeman with a uniform and a real badge and everything. He used to be skinny as a rail, but now he fills out his dark blue uniform rather nicely. The freckles have faded, and he's tamed his hair, although he still looks boyishly handsome.

That's the problem with moving back to the town where I grew up. Everyone I run into is the boy I went out with in high school or the kid who saw me throw up in the locker room or the girl who didn't invite me to her birthday party. It's exhausting.

But sometimes it can work to my advantage.

"Hey, Quinn." Scott smiles at me, but his face is serious. This isn't a social call—not that I would have expected it, since I have barely spoken to Scott in the last ten years. "Is everything okay?"

I wipe my hands self-consciously on my gray pencil skirt. "Sure. Of course. Why?"

"Well..." Scott's light brown eyes dart behind me, scanning my living room. The buttery leather sofa, the matching loveseat and ottoman, the wide screen television with surround sound, the photographs on our mantle of our recent skiing trip to Vale. "We got a phone call. One of your neighbors said they heard screaming coming from your house."

"Screaming?" I paste what I think is a very realistic looking smile on my face. "That's so strange! Are they sure it was coming from here?"

His eyes lock with mine. "That's what they said, yes."

I screw up my face, pretending to think about it. Finally, I snap my fingers. "Oh! You know what it was? I was watching a movie on TV, and

then I went out to the kitchen and I turned the volume way up. So they probably heard the movie.”

He nods, considering this. Everyone says Scott is a good policeman—kind but thorough. I squeeze my hands into fists, waiting to see if he buys my story. I look down at my trembling hands again, scared they might give me away. And that’s when I notice it.

A crimson dot on my gray skirt.

Oh God, how did I miss it? How did I let myself answer the door with a drop of blood on my skirt? I quickly avert my eyes, trying not to draw attention to it. If he sees it, he’ll insist on coming inside. And if he does, I’m finished.

“What movie?” he finally asks.

“Well,” I say, “it was *Scream*. You know, with Neve Campbell and Courteney Cox?”

He clears his throat. “The one with the masks, right?”

“Right. So obviously, there was, you know, *screaming*.” I smile apologetically. “I’m sorry if somebody got worried. But you can see there’s no disturbance here.”

“Uh huh…”

I hold my breath, keeping my eyes pointed straight ahead. I send Scott a subliminal message: *Don’t look down. Please don’t look down.*

Scott tilts his head to the side. “Are you alone here?”

I play with my hair, trying for casual and flirty. Easy, breezy. *Nothing to see here, Officer.* “Yep. Just little ol’ me. Derek is still at work.”

Don’t look down. Please…

Finally, he nods his head. “Okay. Sorry to bother you. I just wanted to make sure everything was all right.”

“Of course!” I laugh, hoping it doesn’t sound as weird to him as it does to me. “I’m glad you came. It makes me feel safe to know you’re out there protecting me.”

Scott’s cheekbones turn just the slightest bit pink. When we were in high school and he was embarrassed, his whole face would turn scarlet. “Just doing my job.”

“I appreciate it. And next time, I promise I’ll keep the volume down. Especially when I’m watching scary movies!”

He wags a finger at me. “You do that.”

“And we should catch up sometime,” I add. “Derek and I would love to have you over for dinner.”

“Sounds great, Quinn.”

Scott doesn’t want to have dinner with me and Derek. But that’s fine, since it wasn’t a genuine invitation, anyway.

He ambles down my front steps, and then down my driveway to his parked police car with the flashing red and blue lights. I never quite meant to break up with Scotty Dwyer, but now, for the first time, I wonder what my life would have been like if I hadn’t. If I had married a good, honorable man of the law instead of Derek, the man that I chose. I wouldn’t be standing here with blood on my skirt and on the soles of my shoes. That much is for sure.

I shut the door, but I keep watching Scott through the front window. I watch as he starts up the engine and pulls onto the road, and I don’t look away until his car is out of sight.

He’s gone. Thank God.

Now that he’s out of sight, I inspect my skirt. The drop of blood is about half a centimeter in diameter. I’ve never attempted to get blood out of my clothing before, but I have a bad feeling my best work skirt is ruined. Then again, that’s the least of my problems.

I walk back out to the kitchen, examining the carpet for signs of bloody footprints. The kitchen looks about the same as how I left it a few minutes ago. The sink faucet is dripping like it always does. There’s still that crimson smear on the green dish towel. The three plates I left in the drying rack are still lined up in a row. The refrigerator has that note taped up that I wrote to myself to remember to buy more paper towels.

And also, my husband is still lying dead on the kitchen floor in a pool of blood.

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