

Untitled
Chapter One

By
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“WHAT?” My parents, my adoptive parents, were making me mad.

“Get a hold of yourself, Tracey. Don’t be ridiculous, you are almost seventeen. We’re technically your parents,” Paul said.

I glared at Renee, my “mother,” who was passed out on the kitchen floor with an empty bottle of Hennessy in her small pale hands. “If I’m being ridiculous, then I’m just going to leave. I don’t want to deal with this... this lie!” I shot back at Paul.

“But,” he said in a soft tone.

I grabbed the gold cold handle of the thick Maplewood door. I was in the doorway when he tried to continue his sentence.

“We thought it was going to be easier for you to understand when you got older, but I realized it would’ve been ten times better if we just told you when you were younger.”

My face softened, but my tone was still flat. “I don’t care; you’re just as responsible as the drunk.” I made a head gesture towards Renee.

I knew that Paul felt bad and that he wanted to go back in time. He also knew that Renee wasn’t a great mother. Paul’s poor crystal blue eyes were yearning for me not to leave, but he knew I was right. I glanced at Paul, even though he was sad, he was still handsome, and mouthed, “Thank you.”

I knew I wouldn’t get another chance to thank him for saving me countless times from Renee. Paul didn’t mean any harm to Renee, but he understood everything that she did was wrong. A tear escaped my eye and slid down my cheek as I lightly shut the door behind me. I sighed in relief; a weight was lifted from my shoulders.

As I opened the car door, I caught my reflection in the tinted window. I paused and looked at myself and how much I had changed and that’s when my past came to me all in a flash.

It all started when I was five, I just came home from my first day of the first grade. I walked inside the large Sage Colonial house, looking the same as I left at eight o'clock in the morning. The only exception was the quarter-sized grass stain on the knee of my light pink velvet pants, which got me in trouble later on.

I told Father what Mother did the next morning as he was brushing my hair into pig tails, like he would do every morning when I sat in front of my vanity mirror. As soon as I told him that she smacked me a couple of times in the face, he dropped the brush and hugged me tightly. In a soft-hearted tone, Father whispered, "I'm sorry Mom was being me, but she still loves you." I never thought it was anything serious. It was just some smacks on the face.

I was getting older and my body was changing. From the moment I turned thirteen, I noticed how rapidly my hair was changing. Within a week I had dark hair that met my shoulders and from my shoulders to my mid-back, my hair was strawberry-blonde. It was a month before I noticed that my eyes changed from a dark brown to a deep emerald. The fast and mystical change brought fear to my mother. Fear that I didn't understand.

I was old enough to realize my mother was a drunk and was drinking more. I was delighted because I didn't have to see her as much. I didn't hate her; I would say I disliked her. There were numerous nights when my mother needed a ride home from the city bar. My father was upset with her increased alcohol consumption and confronted her about it, but she flipped out, yelling about some note that was found on me.

"Oh my gosh, the note!" I said in a low whisper.

I dropped my keys and ran urgently back towards the house to ask Paul countless questions about the note. I was so anxious that I slammed the door open and stumbled inside. The house was empty. The long burgundy curtains, the cream leather sofas, the dark wood coffee tables filled with family pictures, mostly of Paul and me, were gone. The full moon shone through the bare bay window, lighting up the living room.

"Paul?! Are you here?" I yelped in a quiver.

I felt like a stranger in my own house that I lived in for almost seventeen years. Even though the moon was shining in, there were still dark corners in my living room. I was afraid that something was going to grab me, so I was hesitant walking through the

doorway. I took a deep breath and said, "I hate the dark..." I took a step into the living room and felt a light tug on my ponytail.

I never believed in the paranormal, myths, or legends, but something in my gut told me I was wrong. I thought to myself, "It's just the wind, it will stop." I had an urge to turn around. I half-expected it to be my neighbor, but truly, I knew that I couldn't believe it. I mean, anyway, what would my neighbor be doing here at quarter-past eleven at night? Then I heard a sound like car keys rattling.

"Are those my car keys?" My voice barely slipped past my moist pink lips. My heart was racing. Adrenaline pumped through me. The keys dropped on the hard wood floor.

I didn't want to turn around. I was really nervous. Was this some stalker who knew where Paul and Renee went? How long has this person been watching me?

Questions were running through my head. "Why would this person waste time watching me?"

Whoever was behind me obviously wanted me to turn around. I balled my hands into fists. "What can I do?" I thought to myself.

A thick Scottish voice behind me said, "Do you speak to yourself aloud most times?"

My heart was beating so fast, I couldn't focus. I had to support myself against the wall to breathe.

"Are you okay? Did I frighten you?" the voice asked with concern.

"Breathe," I told myself. "Breathe."
