

Chapter 18

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That night, I wake up to the sound of shouting.

The attic is incredibly well insulated, so I can't hear anything being said. But there are loud voices coming from below my room. A male voice and a female voice. Andrew and Nina.

Then I hear a crash.

Instinctively, I roll out of bed. Maybe it's none of my business, but something is going on down there. I have to at least make sure everything is okay.

I put my hand on the doorknob to my room, and it doesn't turn. Most of the time, I'm used to the fact that the door sticks. But every once in a while, I get a jab of panic. But then the knob shifts under my hand. And I'm out.

I descend the creaky steps to the second floor. Now that I'm out of the attic, the shouting is much louder. It's coming from the master bedroom. Nina's voice, yelling at Andrew. She sounds almost hysterical.

"It's not fair!" she cries. "I did everything I could and—"

"Nina," he says. "It's not your fault."

"It is my fault! If you were with a younger woman, you could have a baby like you want! It's my fault!"

"Nina..."

"You'd be better off without me!"

“Come on, don’t say that...”

“It’s true!” But she doesn’t sound sad. She sounds angry. “You wish I were gone!”

“Nina, stop it!”

There’s another loud crash from inside the room. Followed by a third crash. I take a step back, torn between knocking on the door to make sure everything is okay and wanting to scurry back to my room and hide. I stand there several seconds, paralyzed by my indecision. Then the door is yanked open.

Nina is standing there in the same lily-white nightgown she was wearing the night she caught me and Andrew in the living room. But now I notice a streak of crimson on the pale material, starting at the side of her hip and running down the length of the skirt.

“Millie.” Her eyes bore into me. “What are you doing here?”

I look down at her hands and see the same crimson is all over her right palm. “I...”

“Are you spying on us?” She arches an eyebrow. “Are you listening to our conversation?”

“No!” I take a step back. “I just heard a crash and I was worried that... I wanted to make sure everything is okay.”

She notices my gaze directed at what I’m almost sure is a blood stain on her gown. She looks almost amused by it. “I just cut my hand a bit. Nothing to worry about. I don’t need your help.”

But what was going on in there? Is that really why there’s blood all over her nightgown? And where is Andrew?

What if she killed him? What if he’s lying dead in the middle of the bedroom? Or worse, what if he’s bleeding to death right now, and I have a chance to save him? I can’t just walk away. I may have done some bad things in my life, but I’m not going to let Nina get away with murder.

“Where’s Andrew?” I say.

Pink circles form on her cheeks. “Excuse me?”

“I just...” I shift between my bare feet. “I heard a crash. Is he okay?”

Nina stares at me. “How dare you! What are you accusing me of?”

It occurs to me that Andrew is a big, strong man. If Nina made short work of him, what chance would I stand against her? But I can’t move. I have to make sure he’s okay.



“Go back to your room,” she orders me.

I swallow a lump in my throat. “No.”

“Go back to your room or else you’re fired.”

She means it. I can see it in her eyes. But I can’t move. I start to protest again, but then I hear something. Something that makes my shoulders sag...