

33. The Scar

The Scar, set during the winter of 1968, introduces a transformative moment in Kya's life when she is startled by the unexpected arrival of a man in a military uniform at her isolated shack. Upon closer inspection, the man is revealed to be Jodie, her long-lost brother, though he is only recognizable by the prominent scar on his face. The scar, a tangible mark of their traumatic past, triggers a whirlwind of emotions and memories for Kya as she is confronted with the reality of their family's disintegration. Their reunion, filled with tension, is tempered by both sorrow and joy, as Jodie shares the devastating news of their mother's passing, revealing that she had led a life far different from the one Kya had imagined. Kya listens intently, absorbing the news about her mother's death, the reasons behind her departure, and the memories that Jodie brings with him of their earlier, happier family days. Through this painful conversation, Kya is forced to confront the raw emotions of abandonment, but she also begins to see a more complete picture of her family's history. As Jodie recounts his own life, the time spent in the military, and his search for Kya, the painful distance between them starts to dissolve, allowing for the tentative rekindling of their sibling bond.

As Jodie and Kya reconnect, he shares stories of their other siblings, and Kya begins to piece together fragments of memories she had long suppressed. The details of their mother's life and death, combined with the painful realization that their mother had chosen silence and abandonment, bring a new sense of sorrow and disillusionment for Kya. Yet, as Jodie recounts the family's happier moments, particularly through the paintings of their mother, Kya begins to experience a bittersweet reflection on the past. These paintings, which depict their family in better times, serve as a visual bridge to a time long gone, offering Kya a deeper understanding of the dynamics of her childhood and the people she once loved. This newfound clarity about her family's

complicated history brings both healing and grief, but it also encourages Kya to reconsider the feelings of betrayal she had long held, allowing her to confront her past with more compassion. The conversation, filled with raw emotion and the uncovering of old wounds, offers Kya a chance to understand her family in ways she had never been able to before, and through this, she begins to form a more balanced view of her past.



During this emotional visit, the conversation takes a turn toward love, betrayal, and the intricacies of human relationships, inevitably bringing Tate, Kya's first love, back into focus. Jodie, sensing Kya's unresolved feelings toward Tate, encourages her to open her heart and reconsider the possibilities of reconnecting with him. Although Kya remains guarded, unsure of whether she can fully trust Tate again after the pain of their past, Jodie's gentle urging stirs something deep inside her. The conversation, though filled with complexity and tenderness, leaves Kya reflecting on the potential for forgiveness and emotional healing in her relationships. As Jodie helps her hang their mother's paintings, the weight of the past begins to feel less burdensome, and Kya starts to embrace a new understanding of love, family, and forgiveness. This act of restoring the family's history by hanging the paintings is a symbolic step for Kya, as she begins to allow herself to feel hope for the future—hope that has long been stifled by her fears of abandonment and betrayal. The chapter marks the beginning of Kya's tentative journey toward reconnecting with others, particularly Tate, as she opens her heart to the possibility of healing and reconciliation. Her emotional transformation, from solitude to reconnection, is a slow and delicate process, but Jodie's presence and support offer a crucial turning point in Kya's understanding of love and family. Through this powerful encounter, Kya finds herself on the cusp of a new chapter, one that is filled with both vulnerability and the possibility of a restored connection with the people who once meant the most to her.