

Prologue

New York City, New York
December
Ten Years Ago

"I want a divorce."

Tanner Thornburg tested the words aloud for the first time. He had carried them inside two years too long. Tonight he would end it here in their favorite restaurant, Donnelly's.

It was where he had proposed marriage.

It was where he would end it.

But could he do it? He lifted a hand, loosening the tie that had suddenly become too tight. Would he really go through with it this time? He had tried three times before but could never quite get the words out. How do you tell someone you don't love them anymore?

In four simple words, he realized.

At the sound of shattering glass, Tanner snapped his head up and looked across the restaurant for the source of the sound. His wife stood outside the restroom, hands on hips, the door still swinging behind her. A waitress was hunched at Andra's feet, picking up what looked like broken wine glasses and setting the pieces back on a tray. Glass shards were scattered around Andra's feet, shimmering red, green, blue and yellow from the lights entwined through the decorated Christmas tree outside the restrooms.

Holiday lights blinked from strings of garland criss-crossed on the restaurant's ceiling. The scent of pine from the Christmas tree and the smell of baking bread permeated the room. Flames hissed and popped from the fireplace at the back of the room and music filtered through the restaurant's overhead speakers. Handel's *Hallelujah Chorus*.

It was a time for joy and forgiveness but as the red stain spread across the white cashmere sweater his wife had bought just for this evening, she didn't look particularly forgiving. Her face rivaled the color of the stain. A manager approached and handed her a washcloth as a peace offering.

Andra's eyes narrowed as she said something to make the waitress burst into tears, push past the manager and race inside the bathroom. Tanner stood to walk over and make amends but Andra turned, stepped over the pool of wine soaking into the white carpet, and walked toward him, her head bent as she furiously scrubbed at the stain.

Tanner sank into his chair. "Is everything all right?"

"Does everything look all right?" Dipping the corner of the washcloth in her glass of water, she leaned her hip against the table and concentrated on her stain. "Merlot. This is never coming out!"

"We'll take it to the dry cleaners. They'll be able to get it out."

"And management here is going to pay the bill. I made sure of that!"

"I'm sure you did." Tanner grabbed his glass of water and brought it to his lips. "Why don't you sit down and we can order."

"What do you mean 'order'? We can't stay now. I'm covered with wine!"

"Sit, Andra." It was suddenly quiet, as if the restaurant's volume had just been muted. Utensils stopped clicking against dinner plates. Hushed conversations ceased. Even the classical music playing in the background didn't seem as loud.

Tanner calmly folded his napkin and placed it on his plate as faces turned toward him. "We'll handle it later."

Andra yanked the chair out and sat down, crossing her legs to reveal a small raspberry-shaped birthmark on her ankle before scooting closer to the table.

Tanner pushed the menu toward her and she picked it up and began reading it. With her head bent, the soft yellow glow from a hurricane lamp in the center of the table played off brown hair shielding her face. She looked younger than twenty-four and sometimes acted like it—tonight being a prime example.

Christmas. He suddenly realized the bad timing. This was supposed to be the happiest time of the year. Maybe he should wait. But then he tried to think ... when was the last time he had been happy, really happy? It had been... He lowered his head and stared at his plate. He couldn't even remember.

Which was why he needed to do this now. Tonight.

"The menu hasn't changed since you left five minutes ago." He was almost spoiling for a fight. That way it wouldn't be so hard to say the four words that would end his marriage. And maybe more. His reputation? His political career?

Her green eyes flashed as fiercely cold as the diamonds in her ears. An anniversary present this year, to which she had responded, *This is a matching set. Where's the necklace that goes with it?*

Tanner fisted his fingers underneath the table. Now. Do it now before you lose your courage. *I want a divorce.*

Just say it, he thought, as he caught the eye of their waiter.

I. Want. A. Divorce.

Now before—

A waiter appeared at his side. "Mr. Thornburg." His smile disappeared as he looked at Andra. "Mrs. Thornburg."

"Evening, Pierre." Tanner tried to contain the sigh that rose to his lips. He swallowed it, and around the knot in his throat, said, "How are you tonight?"

Pierre glanced at Andra. "I must apologize for Clarissa, madam. This is her first night—"

"It's no problem," Tanner said before Andra could respond. "It happens to everyone. Now I think we're ready to order, aren't we, Andra?"

Andra snapped her menu shut and pushed it at the waiter. "I'm not very hungry."

Tanner forced a smile. "Well, I'm starving. I think I'll have the roast duck."

"Tonight's dinner is on Mr. Donnelly to show how terrible he feels for what happened tonight."

"Thank Mr. Donnelly but tell him it's not necessary," Tanner said.

"If you insist, sir."

"I do."

Andra straightened but Tanner squeezed her knee under the table and she remained silent as the waiter walked away.

"I don't believe you!" Andra said. "They should do *something* to make up for what happened!"

"It was an accident, now drop it." Tanner took a sip of water. Noticed his hands shaking. He set his glass down and smeared the condensation collecting on the side of the glass. Was this the

right place to do this? Shouldn't this be done in private? Maybe he should wait. Just until...no. He had waited long enough.

He cleared his throat. "I—I have something I need to say."

"You haven't changed your mind about running for mayor, have you? Dad's pulled every string to help you make it this far. How many twenty-eight-year-olds do you know running for mayor?"

Tanner glanced up at the red and white poinsettias lining the fireplace mantle. Watched snow whip people's coats as they shuffled past the front window. Anywhere but at her. "I want a divorce."

There. He said it. He held his breath. How would she react? What would she say?

Andra leaned forward, placing her elbows on the red linen tablecloth. "What?"

"I..." Tanner glanced down at the tent-like folded Christmas green napkin perched on his plate. He grabbed it and smoothed it open. Anything to keep his hands busy. "I—I want a divorce." He traced the restaurant's white initials embroidered on the red cloth.

Andra reached over and yanked the napkin away. "What is this really about, Tanner? Is this to get back at me for asking Ron Schultz to work with you? I just thought that he might be a good advisor someday if you should be elected mayor. Dad said he was the best—"

"This isn't about going behind my back to hire Ron."

His face must have revealed the gravity of his words because she whispered, "You...you're not serious, are you?"

"You've changed. I feel like I don't know you anymore."

"But—"

"I haven't been happy. Neither have you."

Andra covered his hand with hers, circling his knuckle with her thumb. It was the first time she had touched him in weeks. "I'm sure it's just the stress of the election coming up, darling. You're so young to run for mayor, you know, and I'm sure it's quite a load to carry around. It'll all be over come election next year."

Almost a year away. How would he last that long? Reporters were already following him; he didn't have a moment of privacy.

Had it been a mistake to accept her father's help? Fresh out of Harvard, Tanner had used his law degree for only one year as an attorney for Smith Bradley and McCoy Associates before turning his eye to the political arena.

"It's not stress and it's not the upcoming election, Andra. It's you. It's us."

"There's counseling—"

"We've tried that." He withdrew his hand from hers. "It didn't work."

"But you—you can't divorce me!"

"You can have whatever you want. I'm not going to fight about this."

"I want you! I want our marriage to work."

"You want what our marriage can bring you, but you don't want me."

"You can't divorce me, Tanner!" She pounded her fist on the table, rattling the silverware. "I've made you what you are today. I've groomed you for mayor of New York City. You would be *nothing* without me and my family!" Andra spoke through clenched teeth.

He bowed his head. She was right. Perhaps he had been too willing to go along with her plans. Like pieces on a chessboard, Andra arranged the people around her to suit her needs.

"You won't ever become mayor if you divorce me." She leaned across the table, her face glowing from the lamp. "I'll see to it!"

"I'm sorry, Andra."

"No, you aren't." She glanced down at her red and white checkered placemat. He knew she wouldn't cry in public. She never had before.

"I'll do anything I can to make this easy on you."

She looked up and he was shocked to see tears in her eyes. "I love you. Don't do this."

It had been a long time since he had heard those words.

"You love my money and what I can bring you, but you don't love me."

She was just like her mother. She would rather live a life of fame and fortune than love and happiness. Her mother, Deena, had taught her that when she'd married New York's senator, Roderick Livingston, thirty years ago. The same man who had helped Tanner's rise to power.

Andra had wined and dined him in the beginning, using her charm to work her way into his arms. Into his bed. Into his heart.

He had loved her in the beginning but she'd changed after the wedding ring was on. She was no longer the woman he'd once fallen in love with. Why had it taken Tanner so long to realize this?

Andra shoved her chair back, stood, and with head held high, walked away without saying anything.

Brian Phelps, a security guard Tanner had recently hired, materialized at Andra's side. He'd been only a few feet away, watching the restaurant carefully. A month ago, Andra had been involved in an attempted kidnapping while shopping downtown. While walking out to her car, she had been loading bags in the trunk when she was grabbed from behind. The man attempted to push her into another car but sheer stubbornness prevented him from doing so. She had fought and kicked until she gained the attention of two college students. The man had shoved her away, climbed in his car, and peeled out of the parking lot. They never found him or his vehicle.

Brian's fingers curled around her elbow as he steered her out of Donnelly's. Outside, the Thornburg's Mercedes Benz waited, running. He opened the door. Climbing inside, Andra sank into the heated leather seats as Brian circled the car. He scanned the back parking lot, his brown eyes stopping on the restaurant door. Andra studied his tense expression and stiff shoulders. He seemed edgy tonight. Scared maybe? Definitely nervous. Very rare. Security was usually unflappable at all times.

He climbed in beside her and shut the door with a soft *snick*. Andra looked back at the restaurant door, expecting to see Tanner come through it, pleading for forgiveness.

Divorce. Tanner wanted a divorce. What if he actually went through with it? What would she do? How would she survive?

She felt tears prick to life but she quickly turned her head away. "Let's go, Brian."

Instead of turning right out of the parking lot, he turned left, toward the highway.

Andra raised her manicured hand and jerked her thumb in the opposite direction. "Brian, you're going the wrong way. The apartment's that way."

When he didn't reply, she looked over and saw an intense scowl on his face as his concentration wavered between the road and rearview mirror. She noticed a small scar above his forehead for the first time, enhanced because of his scowl. Maybe he was circling the block a few times to make sure nobody was following them, she thought, but he continued on until the city lights disappeared.

They must be taking preventive measures and going the long way home, she thought. They rode in silence for ten minutes before she finally spoke up.

"Where are we going?"

"Shut up."

Andra looked over at him. "What did you say?" Nobody had ever talked to her that way. And nobody would start. Especially the hired help.

He glanced over and her breath caught when she saw the coldness in his eyes. "I said *shut up*."

"What are you doing, Brian? Stop the car right now!"

No response.

"I demand you stop this car!"

She didn't see his fist in the darkness but felt it as it made contact with her jaw. Her head popped back, jolting against the window. She cried out and massaged her head.

"What are you doing? Where are you taking me?" Andra opened the flap of her purse and rummaged through it for her cell phone. Lipstick. Comb. Wallet. Come on, *where was her cell?*

Brian ripped her purse off her lap. The window whined as it was lowered. He chucked her purse out of the car.

"What do you want?" she whispered, edging closer to her door. "Money?"

"You aren't worth what's on the bottom of my shoe, lady. But I'll take whatever they'll give me for you."

"It was you, wasn't it? You were the one who tried to grab me at the mall that day."

Brian rubbed his thigh. "You nearly put a hole in my leg with those damn heels you were wearing. And I'll make you pay for it before the night is through."

Andra leaned away, huddling against the door. "Brian, please stop this. Let me go and I won't say anything to Tanner. I promise."

"Another empty promise, Andie? Like the ones you give to Thornburg?"

"Tanner threatened to divorce me, so if you think you're going to get ransom—"

"Oh, he'll pay. He has to, because what will his beloved city think of him if he doesn't? What will that bastard of a father you have think of his only son-in-law if he doesn't?"

The Pennsylvania state line came and went. My God, where was he taking her? What would he do with her? The paved road suddenly gave way to dirt as they went through road construction. Large, orange-flashing barrels forced the road from two lanes to one, causing them to slow. The Mercedes' tires churned up loose gravel which snap-popped as it hit the wheel wells.

Andra grabbed the door handle, ready to spring out. She would suffer some cuts and bruises, maybe a few broken bones, but she would be—

Brian reached out and attempted to grab her elbow but she moved and he swiped at empty air. The sudden movement caused him to lose control of the steering wheel. She felt the car sliding to the left. He tried to correct it but saw another barrel coming up too fast, too close. He swung the steering wheel in the other direction, trying to avoid the collision—and did—but sent them into a fishtail on the loose gravel.

Brian did the wrong thing—he slammed on the brakes—making her wonder if he had really been trained in defensive driving like his records claimed.

It was like trying to stop on ice. A cloud of gravel dust enveloped the car from the sudden brakes and she cried out when she felt the car pitch to the side. Her head slammed against the window as the car began rolling through the brush like a mad bull set loose from the chutes. She saw the world spinning crazily, heard the airbags engage, felt her head pop back from the sudden blow—the material scraped her face—before she felt nothing.

Chapter One

Detroit, Michigan
November, Present Day

She stumbled up to the front desk of the emergency room and sagged against the counter, legs shaking from the effort it took to cross the room.

"I...I need to see a doctor. Please, it—it's an emergency."

The woman behind the counter glanced up. "What's wrong this time, Andie?"

"I—I can barely breathe, Joyce." Andie lowered her head and coughed deeply into her hand, her body shaking violently from the sound. "And my chest...my chest really hurts."

The woman glanced briefly at a sign posted on the wall: *If You Are Experiencing Chest Pain, Please Notify the Front Desk Immediately.*

Andie bowed her head, rubbing the pain flaring between her eyes. She was achy all over; even her bones ached. "Look, I know what you're thinking, but I'm for real this time, Joyce," knowing she had said that same thing two weeks ago when she had come in for a slight fever.

Joyce pushed a clipboard and form over the counter. "Name, address, social security number."

"Come on, Joyce. You know I don't have some of those."

Joyce turned away and started flipping through paperwork stacked in her in-box. "Bring it up front when you're done."

Andie slapped her hand against the bullet-proof glass that shielded Joyce. "Please, Joyce, something is seriously wrong!"

The sudden outburst made Joyce jump in her seat and glare up at her. "Andie, there are a lot of people who have been waiting longer and are in more serious need of medical attention than you."

Andie looked over her shoulder at the people sitting in the waiting room. At this time of night, on a cold one like this, the room was packed with vagrants like herself. She saw Jon, who had been kicked out of his apartment when he couldn't afford the thirty dollar increase his landlord had demanded. Not with his diabetes and not on his SSI check. He had been homeless ever since.

She saw a homeless family she knew, the Brown's or the Braun's, something like that. Their kid was sick, leaning against his dad. His cheeks were ruddy and red, his eyes watery. Probably an allergy. The kid kept her awake in the shelters some nights with his chronic sneezing and sniffing.

Andie coughed again and winced as sharp pain bit her ribs. "How--how long do you think it'll be?"

"Some of these people have been waiting over two hours."

"Two hours! I can't wait two hours." Andie leaned against the counter, using it to support her weight. She looked across the room and tried to judge the distance to the nearest chair. She didn't know if she could make it.

"I'm sorry, but you'll have to either wait your turn or you can go down to the nearest Walgreen's and get something for that cold of yours."

"It's not a cold this time."

The Weather Channel murmured from a TV mounted in the corner of the waiting room. A meteorologist predicted another chilly November night.

Andie lowered her head and coughed again. Oh God, not another one. She had barely survived the cold last night, after spending two hours trying to find a place to sleep. Helping Hands Ministry down the road had been full. The overcrowded First Presbyterian Church had closed its doors early.

Forced to walk along the Detroit River, she looked for a doorway nook, a park bench, a freeway overpass, anywhere to rest her head and try to recover. She had finally bunked down in the corner of an alley.

She was tired, sick and not in the mood to be given the run-around tonight.

Andie pressed her elbows on the counter. "Is this because I don't have insurance?"

"Andie, if you please sit down the doctor —"

She swept her hand toward the waiting room. "You make these people wait for hours and then when they're lucky enough to get in back, the doctor barely looks at them before sending them on their way! This is no way to treat people!"

"I'll call Security if you don't calm down!"

"This is discrimination!"

Joyce picked up the phone and punched the one key she was familiar with: Security.

"Bob, this is Joyce in Emergency. We need someone down here immediately."

Andie whirled around and used the wall for support as she made her way toward the doors. She heard shouts behind her but didn't stop until she was outside.

The donated jacket she wore was not enough to contain the chills wracking her body. She clutched it closer and lurched away from the brick wall, stumbling toward the street.

The bitter night pierced her lungs, making it painful to breathe. Once around the corner of the building she hesitated, leaning against the wall to catch her breath before making her way around the hospital and down the street.

People passing her on the cracked sidewalk edged closer to the street as she stumbled by. She must look like a crazy woman - or a drunk - with her breath coming in short gasps, her shoulders hunched from the constant throbbing between her shoulder blades.

Walgreen's was ahead, about two blocks.

She hoped she could make it that far.

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"Ma'am, may I help you find something?"

Andie looked up as a store employee approached her, a price gun clutched against his leg. She could tell by his baby-smooth face that he was young, probably still in high school.

Youth. Innocence. A life not even fully experienced yet. What she wouldn't give to have that. Have the security of knowing that you had somebody to take care of you, a warm meal every night, a roof over your head. A warm bed.

"No, thanks. Just looking." Andie narrowed her eyes at his name tag. "Josh."

"Okay, let me know if I can help."

But he didn't leave. She stiffened as his eyes trailed slowly down her jacket. Was he looking at her in attraction or revulsion? She had run into both in the ten years she had been living on the streets.

Then his lips twitched in a half-smile, half-grimace. She had her answer.

"Thanks though." A verbal hint to leave. And when that didn't work, she began coughing again, which did the trick.

"No problem." He hurried away, returning to a box that sat at the other end of the aisle. He stopped, stooped over and reached inside, grabbed a box of Band-Aids and started pricing them. She caught him looking at her again before he returned his attention to the box.

She didn't care what he or anyone else thought of her. She hadn't had a chance to wash before being kicked out of the shelter three nights ago after pulling a knife on a man who had slipped into the woman's bathroom to sneak a peek—and maybe something more—while she was using the restroom.

*"We don't want any trouble here, Andie."* She was escorted out the door. Emily's Place maintained a "three-strikes-you're-out" rule. Andie stayed there when it wasn't over capacity. The two earlier warnings included stealing and drug possession. The stealing was true, the drugs were a set-up. Three weeks ago, the employees were notified that someone staying there was involved with drugs so they searched everyone's belongings. Stan needed somewhere to stash his drugs. She saw him put them in her backpack, setting her up for the fall. She fled before the cops could get there.

Andie trailed her hand over the products on the shelf. Robitussin, Sudafed, Benadryl. She returned each one to the shelf when she saw the prices. Too expensive. She couldn't afford them.

Her legs shook again so she dropped to one knee to rest and continued looking at the dozens of over-the-counter drugs. There were some for sinuses and some for colds, some for allergies and others for the flu. Which one did she want?

She reached for a bottle of generic cold medicine and looked at the price. It was still too expensive. Sticking her hand in her pocket, she gathered the loose change she had been tossed while sitting outside Emily's Place last night. Eighty cents. It was all she had left after buying some underwear yesterday.

She sighed, dropped the change back in her pocket, and stood, looking left and right. Nobody around.

Tucking the medicine in a coat pocket, she waited a minute before heading toward the front of the store. She was four, three, two steps from the door. Almost there.

One more step and she'd be free. She breathed a sigh of relief as she passed through the doors.

"Ma'am?"

"Shit."

Chapter Two

Andie winced as the handcuffs tightened around her wrists.

Officer Tyler Mason finished reading her Miranda rights and said, "Do you understand your rights, Andie?"

"Yes, but I—I didn't do anything, Mason!" Andie closed her eyes as chills crawled over her skin. She had never been arrested before. Tickets and warnings, yes, but not an arrest. Maybe it wouldn't be so bad. It would mean a roof over her head. A night without worrying about being attacked while she slept. A visit from a nurse?

"Get in back." He nudged her toward the open back door of a black and white police cruiser. "And watch your head."

"I forgot I had that stuff in my pocket," Andie insisted again as she ducked into the back seat. "I was going to pay for it."

"Sure you were."

"I didn't steal it!"

"Like I don't hear that every day. Now watch your feet."

Andie tucked her feet inside as he shut the door. She watched through the window as Mason turned to the store manager leaning against the brick building, shook his hand and walked around the cruiser.

Collapsing against the worn seat, she pulled her legs up to her chest to try to stay warm in the rapidly cooling car. It smelled of old urine and vomit.

She closed her eyes and concentrated on taking deep breaths but erupted into another fit of coughing. Andie hung her head, dark hair shielding her face.

Mason opened the door and sank behind the wheel, adjusting the rearview mirror, revealing hooded blue eyes and eyebrows already turning gray. He was only in his late thirties but the wrinkles creasing his forehead and cheeks made him appear much older, as if he scowled too much. She suspected there were very few smiles in a job like his.

"You don't look so good, Petersen. You have a rough night?"

Andie closed her eyes. "I—I'm sick."

Slipping his hands into leather gloves, he cranked up the heat. "Better?"

"It—it'd be—be better if you take these—these cuffs off." Damn cold. She couldn't stop shaking.

"I can't this time, Andie. I'm sorry." Mason started to shift his car in gear but stopped, glancing back at her again. "Ah, hell," he said before putting the car in Park again. He opened his door and walked to the back of the cruiser.

The back door popped open and he leaned in, settling a blanket around her shoulders. It was old and faded but clean-smelling.

"Thanks Mason."

She knew Mason well by now. He worked the night shift and responded to many calls involving her either being victim or victimizer. Unfortunately, it was usually the latter, like the times she'd been caught for pickpocketing, loitering or shoplifting. But there was one time when she was attacked in an alley and almost raped before Mason arrived, scaring away her attacker.

He'd never officially arrested her, letting her off with a warning each time with the excuse that the jails were already too overcrowded. After responding today to the shoplifting call, he

took one look at her and simply shook his head, and strangely, she'd felt guilty at disappointing him.

Unlike other officers who had harassed her in the past, Mason was nothing but kind to her, offering her names, addresses and phone numbers of shelters where she could stay. "Just until you get on your feet," he'd told her. "And get out of this city before it kills you."

Andie looked out the window as the city blocks passed. "I can't believe you arrested me for taking some medicine. Don't you have any compassion?"

"It must be your lucky day because the manager decided not to press charges."

"Then why am I being arrested?"

"There's a warrant out for your arrest."

"What—" she coughed "—for?"

"You never showed up for your hearing on your drug charges at Emily's Place."

"Because the drugs weren't mine! That frickin' idiot—"

"You still have to show. It's not like you're too busy, you know. I thought we had this discussion before."

"What discussion?" The blanket started to slip off her shoulders but she couldn't stop it with her hands cuffed. It pooled at her feet. The chills returned in full force.

"About you getting off the streets. Finding a job. Making a life for yourself."

"Who's going to hire someone like me? It's not like I have references or a work history. No computer to even *do* a resume."

"There's the library."

"Even if I had computer access, I don't have any work history."

*Not that I can remember*, she wanted to say but didn't.

"You must have somewhere you can go. There must be someone back home, someone who loves you."

Home. He didn't know how much she wished that to be true. But where was home? Her life as she had known it started ten years ago when she awoke in a hospital outside Milford, Pennsylvania. Her mind and memory were as muddy as the clothing in which she'd been found. Her husband, Brian Petersen, had been standing attentively at her side. But it didn't seem to be concern that made him refuse to leave her alone. He'd seemed nervous every time the doctors or nurses came in, every time they asked questions about her.

*What is her name? Date of birth? Address? What is her medical background? Is she allergic to anything?*

He seemed more concerned about getting her out of the hospital than with her recovery. Brian turned down the nurses' offers to bring her the daily newspaper and refused her requests to watch the nightly news, claiming that the daily drudge of news would only heighten her agitated state.

Despite doctor's protests, he signed the discharge papers only four days after she'd awakened from a coma caused by the automobile accident. The accident had almost claimed her life. After leaving the hospital, they'd traveled west all day and stopped for the night in Detroit.

She should not have left with him. From the beginning, her instincts screamed that something was wrong with him. Her intuition proved right the fourth night out of the hospital when he tried to force himself on her. She'd managed to escape, still bruised and battered.

Her life before that day was as blank as the street beggars' faces. How old was she? Where was she from? Did she have family who missed her? What had life been like before that fateful day ten years ago?

Answers eluded her.

Detroit had been her only home since. She survived by pickpocketing wallets from unsuspecting men. Shoplifting food, medical supplies and other necessities. Living every day wondering if it would be her last. Never trusting anyone or establishing friendships for fear that she'd be betrayed and turned into the authorities.

Or killed.

Don't trust anybody; it was Andie's rule after the incident with Brian. *Because if she couldn't trust her own husband, who could she trust?* Always stay alert and don't sleep too deeply. And never carry money for more than a day. Money should be spent immediately. If it wasn't, you were a target.

Police were suspicious of her story; how she wished she were lying.

"We're here." Mason swung the steering wheel and turned into the parking lot of the police station.

Andie eyed the station for the first time. "What's gonna happen?"

"You'll be processed and brought before a judge to explain your side of the story."

"I was set up. Stan put those drugs in my bag."

"Tell that to the judge."

"Come on, Mason. Don't do this. Please!"

"I've been too lenient on you, girl. Maybe being arrested will wake you up." He climbed out and helped Andie from the back seat. His gloved hand curled around her elbow as he steered her inside. They rode the elevator downstairs. Mason guided her to an orange vinyl-covered chair, cracked from decades of use, oozing white-gray stuffing.

"Here, sit."

Andie sank into the chair and winced. "Can you loosen the cuffs?"

"Soon. Would you like to make a phone call in a few minutes?"

Andie glared up at him. "Who would I call?"

Mason shrugged. "Can I trust you to stay here while I talk to Officer Jones?"

Andie refused to look at him.

"Andie?"

She heard him sigh and looked up once he turned his back. He walked up to a female officer who sat on a stool behind the desk, clenching a steaming coffee mug in one hand, a newspaper in the other.

A large, yellowed city map was tacked to the mint-green wall behind her. A collage of newspaper clippings were taped on the other wall. Andie's eyes skimmed the headlines that announced decreases in murders, increases in identity theft, and budget cuts within the police department.

The room smelled like old coffee that had sat untouched for too long.

"Evening, Jan. How are you?" Mason pressed his hip against the desk, his hand resting on the butt of his gun.

She lifted her head from the article she was reading. "Okay, Ty, you?"

"Good as can be expected, I guess." Mason jerked a thumb toward Andie. "Got an Andie Petersen here on a warrant."

"Full name?"

"Unknown."

"Age?"

"Unknown."

"Birthday?"

Mason cleared his throat. "Uh, unknown."

Jones lifted an eyebrow. "What *do* you know about her, Mason?"

He looked over his shoulder and caught Andie looking at him. "She claims she suffered from amnesia ten years ago after a bad car accident. Doesn't remember anything before then."

"If we had a nickel for every time we heard that." She closed the newspaper. "What's she here for?"

"Has a warrant for drug charges."

Jones stepped over to the computer and pulled the keyboard closer. "Name again?"

"Petersen, Andie. Petersen with an `e'."

Jones punched a few buttons on the computer. "Looks like she's had a number of tickets and run-ins with the law. But no arrests."

"This is her first."

"You'll need to take off the cuffs so I can fingerprint her." Jones began filling out paperwork as Mason leaned against the desk and filled her in on the details of her arrest.

He pulled the newspaper closer as the paperwork wrapped up. Open to page three, the bottom of the *Detroit Free Press* had a headline that read, "NY Governor's Wife Still Missing After Ten Years – Police No Closer to Solving Andra Thornburg's Mysterious Disappearance."

Mason started the article but stopped when his eyes drifted to the head and shoulders shot of Governor Tanner Thornburg's wife. He leaned closer. The woman looked familiar. Dark hair. Almond-shaped eyes. A beautiful woman except for her eyes. They were cold, filled with secrecy and suspicion.

It looked like...

It couldn't be. He studied the name.

Andra Thornburg. Andra.

Andie?

Just a coincidence? It had to be.

Mason picked up the paper, studying the picture. The woman had much shorter hair. The picture was grainy.

His eyes drifted to Andie, who sat slumped in the chair. Her eyes were closed; she looked to be asleep. Her head bobbed once before she jerked upright, her eyes opening in alarm as she battled slumber.

He was imagining things but he had to be sure.

"Jan?"

"Yeah?"

Mason pushed the newspaper across the desk. "Can you call the New York PD and ask for Andra Thornburg's case file, photograph and fingerprints? This photo is a bit grainy."

"Sure. What do you want me to do once I have them?"

"I want you to compare Andra's fingerprints with Andie's."