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Inheritance

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“Mia,” he called her name softly. “Where are you?”

Swallowing hard she tried not to breathe, closing her eyes she willed her body to calm down and not breathe any air. He was going to kill her; he was going to kill her one of these days. It could be now.

“Mia! There you are silly,” he reached down and grabbed her bruised arm. She bit back the urge to protest. Hot tears slid down her cold cheeks.

Waking up she was soaking wet from sweat and tears. Gripping the sheets she tried to ground herself. Picking out the door that was partially open, did she leave it open? She couldn't remember, the light from the bathroom across the hall shone through on the pink fuzzy carpet in front of her bed. It was light pink, like cotton candy and made of fake fur soft and fuzzy. Easing her grip on the sheets she swung her legs over and sat on the side of her bed, flicking on the lamp beside her. Inhaling deeply, she held it for a few seconds and then let it out slowly. She repeated a couple more times. Then focused on the wall in front of her and the picture display she had set up for herself when she had moved in.

It's been months since she had a nightmare. She wondered what brought it on. Going over her day, work was fine, no one really bothered her. Mia kept mostly to herself. Looking down at her arms there were no bruises. There haven't been any going on 15 years.

She had divorced her husband and moved away. She moved a few times because he kept showing up and trying to worm his way back into her life.

“My marriage wasn’t a good one, my husband Jim was abusive. He used to, used to emotionally, mentally and physically abuse me. He was not a good man,” her voice caught in her throat as she closed her eyes and let the tears flow. Wiping them away she sniffed, “I don’t have to feel bad for speaking the truth.”

Getting up she stretched and headed down to the kitchen and made herself a cup of tea. Sitting quietly at her kitchen table she pulled out her journal and wrote in it. ***I had a bad dream about Jimmy, he was hitting me, and I had hidden in the closet to get away from him, but he found me.*** Then in big bold letters she wrote, ***WHY?*** Sipping her tea, she stared at the word WHY? Then wrote ***I don’t know***, underneath it. Closing her journal, she looked around at her kitchen, small, clean, tidy but it was hers. She didn’t answer to anyone. After her last move she decided she didn’t want to keep moving. Maybe Jimmy finally got the message and decided to leave her alone. She hadn’t seen him in six years.

Moving to Northfork, she bought herself a small house. Her sister gave her the money for that. Her sister wanted to come see her, but Mia couldn’t take the chance. They talked online for a few minutes once a week. Mia couldn’t take the chance that Jimmy would find her again.

This small town she found was friendly and inviting. Everyone knew each other. It was like those romance movies. She wasn’t interested in romance, just living a peaceful quiet life. After the last fight they had while married, she had ended up in the hospital and nearly died. Jimmy said she had been in a snowmobile accident, and no one batted an eyelash. Her sister stayed by her side and when she was released, she went to stay with her sister Stacy. With Stacy’s help Mia filed for a divorce and when Jimmy protested, Stacy’s lawyer showed the judge the pictures of the bruises from a few trips to the hospital. Jimmy claimed Stacy was brainwashing Mia into getting a divorce because she didn’t want to see Mia happy. The judge

eventually granted Mia her divorce, but Jimmy wouldn't let up. He followed her around whenever she moved. Until Northfork.

Mia wasn't sure why, but she really fell in love with this small town. The people were a bit overprotective of each other, including herself because she was one of them. Would they still feel the same if they knew what kind of human she was?

Stacy called her and told her over the phone that they weren't regular humans, it seems when they get a certain age, they inherited a family trait. Not the ability to fly or read minds, nope, extra sensitive sense of smell and sometimes foretelling the future with dreams. Staring at her journal. Was the dream she had going to come true? Was Jimmy going to find her and kill her?

She shook her head. No, it was just a normal dream. She felt like she was smelling lilacs, getting up she washed out her teacup and walked through the living room. A strong aroma of lilacs. Lilacs were good right? She was still trying to get the hang of this new talent.

Mia found herself back in her bedroom, yawning, she stretched and crawled back into bed. Closing her eyes she thought about Mark from work, she knew he was coming before he got there because the air smelled of peaches, she didn't know why but before he arrived it was peaches. Christine smelled like apple pie, Kenny smelled like burnt toast, she wasn't sure why on that one either. Everyone she knew had a distinctive smell that was associated with them. Mia knew this was what Stacy had been talking about. Stacy was three years older than Mia, and was going through perimenopause, at least that's what Stacy thought brought on this newfound gift that was passed down from our mother and her mother. Mia was only 12 when her mother died, her father had strangled her because a guy sent her flowers. Her mother didn't cheat, didn't look at other men, but a coworker had liked her and sent her flower for her birthday. It was on a

Saturday; the courier came just before noon. Her father was there, and her mother was taken away in an ambulance by two. Stacy and Mia went to live with their aunt. Their aunt was older and didn't have kids, didn't want kids of her own, but she did try to be a good stand in mom to them. Her aunt wasn't all there, claimed to be a witch with powers, strange powers, that she could open doorways to other worlds. She also could smell people coming, and she would have dreams that would later come true. Mia always thought the woman was strange but looked the other way with her eccentric behaviour.

Mia drifted off to sleep and didn't have any more dreams that she could remember when she woke up to her alarm beeping. Getting up and dressing quickly as she was on her fifth alarm and was now forty minutes late. Grabbing some toast and keys heading out the door she could smell that strong odor of lilacs again. Catching her in her steps she paused momentarily as she looked around her empty living room. Empty.

Work was slow, but she had a few customers she chatted with as she helped them pick out a couple of articles of clothing. At one point in the afternoon, she felt like someone was watching her, burning holes through her with their eyes. Lilacs again. Searching the store she worked at, no one stood out.

Mark had texted her to see if she still wanted to do movie night? She replied yes. He said he'd be over after work.

She got home and showered to freshen up before Mark got there. Standing in the middle of her bedroom, she felt dizzy with the smell of lilacs. Grabbing the handle of her closet door, to steady herself. Her heart almost stopped as a pair of familiar eyes watched her from the darkness of her closet. She was standing naked, nowhere to run, and she held nothing to protect herself with.

“Mia,” when he said her name, it sent chills down her spine. Jimmy, this couldn’t be happening.

He stood in front of her, grabbing her throat tightly. “My little Mia,” he whispered in her ear.

Biting back the tears, her hands pressed against his chest. She closed her eyes and with every cell in her body she wished he wasn’t here. She shoved as hard as she could, she heard him yelp. Opening her eyes she watched as he fell backwards sucked into closet by an unseen force. Falling backwards she sat on her floor naked, staring wide eyed at her closet. It was just her closet, with her clothes hanging on the hangers and a couple pairs of shoes knocked over on the floor.

Wide-eyed she reached up to her neck. It was sore. He was there a minute ago, now he was gone. Quickly she got up and dressed quickly. Searching her house from top to bottom, it was just her there, alone.

Mark texted her he was running late but he was picking up the pizza. Did she want cheesecake? She replied yes.

Fixing her hair she had just applied a bit of makeup. Even though she wasn’t looking for romance, he was bringing cheesecake. Her neck looked a little bruised, finding a soft scarf she wrapped it around her neck and wore her hair down loose.

Standing in front of her bedroom closet, she wondered if that happened. There was a hint of lilacs in her closet. It was slowly fading away. Mark knocking on her door, brought her back to reality. Movie night, who was up for pizza, cheesecake and good company? She was.