

DO YOU REMEMBER?

WHO DO
YOU
BELIEVE...



WHEN YOU'VE
FORGOTTEN
YOUR LIFE?

#1 BESTSELLING AUTHOR
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Do You Remember?

a novel by

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To my girls

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DAY ONE

CHAPTER 1

An ice pick is jabbing me in my right temple.

It feels that way, anyway. The pain is enough to make my eyes fly open, giving me a view of the cracks on my bedroom ceiling. The intense light pouring through the window by the bed doesn't make the situation any better. But after a few seconds, the pain dulls to a mild ache behind my right eye. Bearable.

This always happens when I have too much wine at night. I haven't been able to hold my liquor since I was twenty-five. And last night, I definitely had too much wine.

But I couldn't help it. It isn't every night that I get engaged.

I roll my head to the side and gaze at the sleeping lump beside me. No, not just a sleeping lump. My fiancé. The man I'm going to marry. Harry.

It's not like it was a huge surprise. We have, after all, been living together for over a year. And after our one-bedroom apartment on the lower east side went condo six months ago, we bought a big old house in Queens together, within reasonable commuting distance of Manhattan. After we went in on the mortgage together, we were pretty much stuck with each other. Even more so than if we got married. I mean, a divorce is easy. But splitting up this house would be *such* a hassle.

As I lie in bed, I replay the events of last night in my head. I have a feeling I'm going to be telling this story a *lot*. To my father. Possibly to our future children someday. At the very least, my best friend Lucy will want to hear every juicy detail.

So we had just finished dinner and were going to watch a movie together, but I told Harry I wanted to check my email first. I was confused by the way he followed me to my laptop, tripping over his feet in his eagerness. It didn't make sense until I opened my laptop—he had replaced the keys on my keyboard. The new keys spelled out: WILL YOU MARRY ME?

And then when I turned to look at him, he was down on one knee, holding a blue velvet box, gazing up at me with his deep brown eyes. The diamond was small, but the most beautiful thing I've ever seen in my life.

I was shocked. So shocked that I made the poor guy wait just a little too long before answering, and he looked a bit nervous. He reached out and grabbed my hand. "Please marry me, Tess," he said. "You're my whole life."

Of course, I said yes. I mean, I'm crazy about the guy.

To celebrate our engagement, Harry popped the cork on the really good bottle of Cabernet that he had stashed away in the kitchen cabinet for a special occasion. I'm pretty sure that bottle is now lying empty on our coffee table, hence my pounding headache. We spent the evening talking about what we wanted to do for a wedding, but especially where we wanted to go for our honeymoon. *Someplace hot with lots of beaches.*

After that first glass of Cabernet, the rest of the events of the evening are kind of foggy. But

clearly, we made it back into bed. And I managed to change into one of the oversized T-shirts I always sleep in, even though I don't quite remember doing so. But I must have. I'm wearing it, after all.

I rest a hand gently on the blanket covering my fiancé. (Does that sound pretentious? I love saying it.) He has dark brown hair that always sticks up a bit, but somehow, in the morning light streaming in through the window, it looks much lighter. He doesn't stir at my touch. Harry could sleep through an earthquake, but especially when he's had a few drinks. Usually he snores after he drinks, but he's dead silent now.

I kick off the blankets and sit up in bed. I feel another jab of pain in my right temple, but then it eases up, replaced by a dull ache at the base of my spine. Wow, I really need to stop drinking. It's not worth it to feel so crummy in the morning. And why can't I remember anything that happened after Harry proposed?

I stumble in the direction of the bathroom in my bare feet, trying to ignore the various aches in my body. I'm not even thirty yet—it seems like I should be able to drink a little wine without feeling like a decrepit old lady the next morning. But maybe this is what happens when you get older.

I flick on the lights in the bathroom, bracing myself for the brightness. I squint into the master bathroom, waiting for my pupils to adjust. And...

What the hell happened here?

I stare at the sink, utterly confused. Okay, the events of last night are sort of fuzzy, but is it possible Harry and I went on a home repair spree after drinking the Cabernet? Because the sink that was rusted and cracked when we bought the house—and still was as of last night—is now a flawless, gleaming white. And the toilet... when we first saw this place, Harry commented, "Hey, it's a prison toilet!" He sounded way too excited about it, but he had a good point. Our toilet *did* look like something out of a prison bathroom.

But now it's been replaced. By a sleek white toilet that appears to have a bidet attachment.

Did Harry and I *install a bidet* on the night of our engagement?

I shake my head, trying to dredge up the memory of having done this last night. But it's all still a blank.

I look back at the bedroom. Harry is still asleep under the covers, which are practically covering his entire head. It's only now that I notice the covers look different. During the winter, Harry and I bought a white down comforter. I remember going to the store together and cuddling with him under the sample comforters while the staff shot us dirty looks. We picked the white one. We have a *white* comforter.

So why is Harry covered in a brown comforter? Did we buy a new comforter last night?

I really think I would remember that.

A sudden dizzy sensation almost overtakes me. I hold onto the door frame of the bathroom, but then I end up sinking onto our beautiful toilet before my legs give out. I don't know what's going on here, but it's very strange.

We have a gorgeous bathroom. This is exactly how I imagined it looking when Harry and I bought the place. But how did it happen overnight? I mean, Harry knows computers better than anyone, but he's not great with a hammer or a screwdriver. I've heard of people having superhuman strength when they've been drinking. Did the two of us somehow get superhuman *home improvement power*? Is that a thing?

"Harry?" I call out in a shaky voice.

He still doesn't stir.

I grab onto the sink and pull myself back to my feet. I just need to splash some cold water on my face. I'm sure it will all come back to me.

My hands are shaking as I turn on the cold water nozzle, figuring ice-cold liquid is the best thing to snap me out of this haze. I let some water run into my hands, then I splash it on my cheeks and eyelids. And then raise my head to look into the vanity mirror.

And I scream.

CHAPTER 2

“Harry!”

To hell with waking him up. I’m going to drag that man out of bed by his ankles if he doesn’t get up in the next two seconds. I would do it right now, except my legs seem to be frozen in place.

“Harry!”

I could have dealt with the sink being different. I could deal with the toilet and the mystery bidet. Even the fact that somehow all our normal toothbrushes have been replaced by a single mechanical toothbrush with little rotating heads lined up on a plastic piece mounted to the wall.

But I can’t deal with what’s looking back at me in the mirror.

“Harry!”

Ever since I was in high school, I wore my thick, glossy cinnamon-colored hair long, running down my back. When I went to work, I would pull it back into a bun, secured with a spider clip. I have been doing that for more years than I can count.

And now my hair is chopped short. Chin length. A bob—not unattractive, but not me. Not the way it looked last night. And not just that. There are strands of gray weaved into my formerly dark hair. *Many* strands. Like, at least twenty.

Maybe I could convince myself that I gave myself a haircut last night, although it looks pretty professionally done. But that doesn’t explain my face. It doesn’t explain the fine lines around my eyes that weren’t there last night. I always thought I looked young for my age, maybe early twenties, but the woman staring back at me doesn’t even look twenty-nine. She looks... *old*.

Well, older.

“Harry!” The pitch of my voice is bordering on hysterical now. “Harry! Come here!”

Finally, our bed springs creak as my fiancé pulls himself into a sitting position. Thank God. I need Harry to explain what is going on here. Or at least, acknowledge that the two of us have entered some kind of crazy parallel universe where we have a brown comforter and a bidet. I hear the covers being shoved away, his heavy feet pounding against the floor.

The hinges whine as the bathroom door swings the rest of the way open. I wrench my gaze away from the mirror and turn to my fiancé. “Harry, what—”

Oh God.

It’s not Harry.

There’s somebody else standing there. Some other man, wearing a pair of boxer shorts and an undershirt, his sand-colored hair tousled. I have never seen this man before in my life. And somehow, he’s in my bedroom—has been sleeping in my bed, *in his underwear*.

This is even more shocking than the bidet.

“Tess,” he says.

I don't know who this man is, but this has gone from strange to terrifying. I look around wildly, searching for a weapon. Like a razor. There's got to be a razor in here, doesn't there? But there isn't.

Then my eyes fall on a pair of tweezers. Not as good as a razor, but better than nothing. I snatch up the tweezers and brandish them in my right hand.

"Tess," the stranger says again. "Put down the tweezers."

"Where is Harry?" I say through my teeth.

A pained look passes over the man's face. He lets out a long sigh. Admittedly, he doesn't look dangerous. First of all, he's in his underwear. Also, it's hard not to notice that he's quite attractive. Nice blue eyes, thick hair with blond undertones visible under the bathroom lights, and a solid build with firm biceps peeking out under the wrinkled undershirt. He looks to be in his mid to late thirties.

"Harry doesn't live here anymore." His voice is calm and slow. Like he's talking to a crazy person. "I'm Graham."

I squeeze the tweezers in my right hand, waiting for more of an explanation. Finally, he gives it to me: "I'm your husband."

What?

"Tess." He raises his hands in the air. "I'm not going to hurt you. Can we talk in the bedroom?"

I look down at my right hand—I am gripping the tweezers so hard, my fingers are bloodless. I'm also shaking like a leaf. Tweezers or not, if this guy wanted to hurt me, he could. Easily. But he doesn't seem like he wants to hurt me.

"Tess?"

Finally, I nod. "Okay."

He looks at the tweezers. "You can hold on to those if it makes you feel better. And if you don't like what I have to say, you can... reshape my eyebrows any way you like."

He's making a joke. But there's nothing funny about this situation.

There's a pink silk bathrobe hanging on the inside of the bathroom door, and I grab it and wrap it around myself. Then I follow this man, Graham, who claims to be my husband. Obviously, he's *not* my husband. I can imagine forgetting about installing a toilet or cutting my hair, but I would never forget an entire marriage. I don't know why he's sleeping in my bed though. Or where Harry went. But I intend to get to the bottom of it.

Graham settles down on the edge of our bed. It's only now that I notice our comforter isn't the only thing that's different about the bed. It's a completely different bed. Harry and I had a metal bed with a saggy box spring, but this is a nice, firm mattress with an elaborate wooden headboard. It's probably got memory foam and everything.

Graham looks like he's going to reach for my hand, but I yank it away before he can grab it. He flinches and bows his head. I don't know what this guy's game is. Is this some kind of elaborate con? Am I missing a kidney now?

"I know this is disconcerting," he says. "I understand."

Gee, you think? "Who are you really?"

His shoulders sag. "I'm your husband, Tess. Do you remember at all?"

When I shake my head no, he points to the dresser across from us. The dresser itself is unfamiliar. Last night when I went to bed, we had a warped wooden dresser from IKEA. That old dresser has been replaced with a chestnut brown wooden chest of drawers with burnished

edges. It does *not* look like it came from IKEA. But what's even more shocking is what's on top of the dresser.

Photographs.

There are about half a dozen framed photos. And each of the photos has me in it. Me and Graham, usually. The two of us bundled up on a ski lift. Dressed up fancy, drinking champagne, our lips frozen with laughter. Lounging on a beach somewhere.

And then there's the photograph right in the middle. Me and Graham. Holding hands. Him in a tuxedo. Me in a white dress.

"No," I whisper.

I don't understand what's going on here. Last night, Harry asked me to marry him. Harry—the love of my life. He got down on one knee, for God's sake. We celebrated with Cabernet. And now... he's vanished. And somehow I have entered some other crazy life that I don't even recognize.

Tears gather in my eyes. "Harry," I whimper.

Graham drops his face into his hands and rubs his eyes. A few seconds later, he lifts his head. "I need to show you something."

"What?"

"It..." He pushes up to his feet. "It will help. It usually does."

Wordlessly, I watch Graham walk around our bed to the night table. He opens the top drawer and pulls out a piece of lined paper, folded into thirds. He hands the paper to me.

"What's this?" I ask.

"It's a letter."

"From who?"

He smiles crookedly. "From you."

I put down the tweezers, although I'm still watching Graham out of the corner of my eye. I start to unfold it, but then I look up at him. He is standing over me, watching me.

He notices my expression and rubs the back of his neck. "I'll go take a shower. Give you a little privacy."

At first, I'm worried he's going to strip right in front of me. If he is truly my husband, I suppose he would have the right to do that. But I'm grateful when he goes into the bathroom, still in his boxers and undershirt. A second later, I hear the water running in the shower. My shoulders relax—the stranger is gone.

Gingerly, I unfold the piece of paper. The creases of the letter are worn, like it's been folded and unfolded dozens of times before. The entire page is filled with writing. I recognize my own handwriting.

And I start to read.

CHAPTER 3

Dear Tess,

I know what you're thinking. I know how you're feeling. Because it's the same exact thing that I was thinking and feeling this morning. So today I am writing you a letter hoping it will help you/me in the future.

So here are the basics:

You have been in a car accident. You were the one driving, and nobody else was hurt. You swerved to avoid an animal on the road and lost control of the vehicle. You hit a tree. The animal was unharmed.

Unfortunately, you suffered a brain injury during the accident. You had a lot of bleeding in your brain and the doctors did what they could. You survived, but you have permanent memory problems. Some days are not that bad. Some days you remember more than others. Other days, you wake up and can't remember anything that happened in the last seven or eight years. I'm writing this on one of the better days. If you are reading this, it's probably because you're having one of your bad days.

If you're having a bad day, you may not remember Graham. So let me assure you, he has been a good husband to you for many years. You had a beautiful wedding that was the happiest day of your life. He has been taking care of you since the accident. This has been hard on him too, and he's been trying his best.

If this is a bad day, you are probably also wondering where Harry is. Harry is no longer a part of your life. Trust me, it's for the best. He wasn't who you thought he was. He did something unforgivable to you.

If you relax and try to have a good day, you will be much happier. Just remember that the people around you care about you very much and only want you to be safe. Do what they say.

You are in good hands. Trust me.

Love,

Tess

After I finish reading the letter, I read it a second time. And then one more time. After the third time, the stream of water shuts off in the shower. Graham will come out any second. I am seized by the almost irrepressible urge to make a run for it. Before Graham comes out, I could throw on some clothes and run out the door.

But where would I go? This is my home. And I don't even know what *year* it is.

The door to the bathroom swings open, and I've missed my chance. Graham comes out wearing a towel around his waist. At first, I look away, but then I take a peek. I can't help it. And...

Oh my God. My husband is *hot*. He must work out or something.

“Tess?” His light brown eyebrows scrunch together. “Did you read it? Are you okay?”

I nod slowly. “When did this happen? When was my accident?”

“A little over a year ago.”

A year. I’ve been living this way for a year. Waking up every morning and not remembering my life.

He stands there, waiting for me to say something. When I don’t, he goes over to the dresser and starts rifling through the closet. “I’ll get dressed in the bathroom, okay?”

“Thank you.”

He selects his clothing and disappears back into the bathroom as I push away a stab of guilt. I am his wife, apparently, and this is his own bedroom. He shouldn’t feel forced to hide in the bathroom to get dressed. Yet I’m absurdly grateful that he did it.

I put down the letter and rise from the bed. I can’t stop staring at the collection of photographs on top of the dresser. My eyes are drawn like a magnet to the wedding photo. It’s right in the middle, after all.

I pick it up—it’s heavy. The frame is probably expensive, like our bed and our fancy toilet. Part of me is convinced this all might be some sort of crazy dream, but the weight of this photograph feels so real.

This is no dream.

I squint down at the photograph, studying it for traces that it might be a forgery. Harry would know if it was real or not. Of course, Harry is long gone if that letter is to be believed. So it’s up to me.

I look down at my image in the photo. The white dress I’m wearing is absolutely beautiful. It’s a chiffon dress with a double V neck and elaborate beading all over the neckline. It’s silky white and classy, just how I imagined my wedding dress. Like the frame, it appears expensive—how was I able to afford something like that? Is Graham rich too, in addition to being gorgeous?

I study my expression. I’m smiling at the camera, my dark hair swept back from my face. I look happy. And why shouldn’t I be? This is supposedly my wedding day.

But there’s something else there. I look happy, but there’s something off. Something in my eyes.

“Tess?”

Graham’s voice startles me—I hadn’t even heard him come out of the bathroom. The frame slips out of my fingers and crashes to the floor. The glass shatters at my feet.

“Sorry!” I step back, mortified. “I’m so sorry. I—”

“It’s okay.” Graham’s hand is on my arm, and his blue eyes meet mine. He’s fairer than any man I’ve ever dated before—that was never my type. But he obviously won me over. “I’ll clean it up.”

“I could—”

“Don’t worry about it.” Graham bends down and snatches the frame from the floor. The glass has cracked, but it hasn’t come loose from the frame. “There’s nothing to even clean up. It’s fine.” He places the cracked picture frame back on the dresser with the others—it seems oddly ominous now with the shattered glass obscuring my face, but Graham doesn’t seem disturbed by it. “How about this? You go take a shower and I’ll make some breakfast for us.”

“Okay...”

Graham has put on a pair of wire-rimmed spectacles and is dressed in a gray suit. The effect makes him look both devastatingly handsome and incredibly important. But I guess he’s not in a

rush to go anywhere if he's willing to make breakfast. It occurs to me he's been juggling his work obligations and taking care of me. Again, I get that stab of guilt.

"Does the toilet work just like a normal toilet?" I ask. I don't want to admit how intimidated I am by the appliances in our bathroom. I need an instruction book to relieve my bladder.

He nods eagerly. "It's very easy to use. It has an automatic flush when you stand up. And it also has an LED nightlight and a seat warmer. It's programmable, so if you wanted, we could make it open the lid when you approach. There's also a tornado wash that self-cleans the bowl."

I stare at him. "What are you—a toilet salesman?"

There's a flash of something in his eyes, almost like irritation or anger. Of course, he has a right to be a little irritated if he has to repeat the same information to me every single morning. But it's not like it's my fault.

Just as quickly as it appeared, the flash vanishes from his eyes, and I'm not sure if I imagined it. He glances at the bathroom. "I know it's all confusing. Do you need any help in there?"

My jaw tightens. Is this his smarmy way of getting to see me naked? I don't think so. "I can manage."

The tips of his ears color and he nods. "Okay then. I... I'll go downstairs and make breakfast."

I wait until Graham has left the room before I venture back into the bathroom. Now that I'm not so shaken by the situation, I can take a moment to look around the bathroom. It's... well, it's quite nice. Harry and I fantasized about what we would do to renovate the bathroom when we had enough time and money, and this is much nicer than what we had contemplated. It looks like we pulled up the floor tiles as well and the shower is all shiny and new.

I spy a bottle of soap on the sink counter, and it has the My Home Spa logo on it. In fact, a lot of products in this bathroom bear the logo of my business on them. It was an idea that Harry and I came up with together, back when we were in our tiny little apartment, and I was fantasizing about what it would be like to have a spa vacation but somehow do it in our own home. And Harry said, *That's a million-dollar business idea*. It was his idea to...

But no. I need to stop thinking about Harry. I saw the note in my own handwriting. He's not part of my life anymore, and apparently for good reason.

I just wish I knew what the reason was. What terrible thing did he do?

I can't bear to look in the mirror again, so I strip off the silk bathrobe and my oversized T-shirt, then I step into the shower. I reach for the hot water and...

How the hell do you turn the shower on?

It doesn't have a knob, like every other shower in the known universe. It has some sort of computerized control system. There's a screen, which has the time and little animated graphics of raindrops. Then several buttons to the right, but no label saying what any of the buttons do! One has an up arrow, one has a down arrow, one has the number one on it...

Oh God, I really do need help to take a shower.

I punch a couple of the buttons, hoping something will happen. There is a disturbing whirring noise coming from the plumbing, then all of a sudden, spicules of ice-cold water rain down on me. I scream and back away, panicked.

What is wrong with this stupid shower? Why would I install something so ridiculous?

I take a breath as I cower in the dry corner of the shower, trying to figure out what to do. The computerized display now reads sixty degrees. Is that the temperature of the water?

Whatever it is, it's too damn cold.

I carefully venture back into the water as goosebumps spring up on my arms. I tap on the up arrow, and to my relief, the temperature display goes up. The water warms up and my teeth stop chattering. I start to feel more comfortable when the temperature gets close to a hundred, then I crank it up higher, all the way up to one hundred ten degrees. It's pretty hot now, but it feels *good*. The tight muscles in my shoulder and back melt under the spicules of hot water. And the headache in my right temple gradually subsides.

I let the water run over my hair. It's strange for my hair to be so short. I'm used to it running all the way down my back, but I suppose it will be easier to wash this way. I already see a bottle of My Home Spa shampoo in the corner of the shower. It's vanilla scented, but not that fake vanilla you get in cheap shampoos. This is a real, rich vanilla aroma. Like in a real spa.

As I run my fingers through my hair, I freeze. There's something on my scalp.

I feel it on the right side of my skull, under the strands of my hair. There's a patch on my scalp where no hair is growing—a line of thick raised skin that feels strange when I touch it, like the skin doesn't quite belong to me. I follow the line with my fingers, noticing that it forms a C shape.

It's a scar.

You had a brain injury during the accident. You had a lot of bleeding in your brain and the doctors did what they could.

I stand there in the shower, my body shaking despite the burning hot water. It's true. What I wrote in that letter is all true. There's a scar on my scalp to prove it. I was in a terrible accident, and I had surgery, but it wasn't enough.

I drop my head, trying to control my breathing as my legs wobble beneath me. *You're okay. Trust the letter. Just accept that this is your life now and go with it.*

I blink away the droplets of water in my eyes. And that's when I notice something on my upper left thigh. It looks like a message written in black pen.

"What the...?"

I step out of the range of the water droplets, but it's too late. There was something written on my thigh, but the hot running water has already obscured the message. It looks like it was two words. I stare down at the message—I can only barely make out the first word:

Find.

That's sort of strange. Considering the location of this message, I have to assume I wrote it to myself. I wrote myself a message, maybe last night, knowing that I might not remember anything when I woke up the next morning. The message was obviously important, but it's interesting that I wrote it in a place where only I would see it. Graham clearly didn't know about it.

Find. Find *what*? What is that second word? I can't even begin to make it out.

Well, great. Whatever message I was trying to leave for myself, I was unsuccessful. Hopefully, it wasn't too important.

I finish soaping myself up, and by the time I finish my shower, I feel a lot more relaxed. I've almost forgotten about the strange message on my leg and whatever I'm supposed to find. My whole brain feels hazy, like I've just woken up from a long sleep, and as long as I don't try to fight it, the sensation is almost soothing. I recall the last words of the letter I had written to myself:

If you relax and try to have a good day, you will be much happier. Just remember that the

people around you care about you very much and only want you to be safe. Do what they say.

You are in good hands. Trust me.

I suppose if there's one person I can trust, it's myself.

Can't I?

CHAPTER 4

When I come downstairs, I feel much better than I did when I woke up this morning. I still have that slight headache, but it's barely noticeable. Just a twinge. I feel like a different person now that I've had a hot shower and put on some clean clothing. My drawers and closet were filled with outfits that were unfamiliar to me. But that wasn't a bad thing. It was like getting an entirely new wardrobe.

A wardrobe of incredibly expensive clothing. I checked some of the tags—Gucci, Fendi, Louis Vuitton. How could I afford any of this stuff? Graham must be loaded.

Most of the clothing seemed ridiculously fancy for a day at home, so I picked out a pair of designer skinny jeans and a fitted T-shirt. I may be older than I remember, but thankfully, I seem to be in good physical shape. My waist is still slim, my muscles toned. The only part of me that's messed up is my brain, apparently.

As I reach the bottom of the stairwell, I see a flash of gold and brown, and then something nearly knocks me off my feet. For a split second, I'm terrified, until I hear the frantic and happy barks.

It's a dog. We have a *dog*.

"Sorry to startle you." Graham wanders out of the kitchen, wiping his hands on a dish towel. "I try to keep him out of the second floor during the night so you won't be startled when you wake up."

I notice now that there is an open gate in front of the bottom of the staircase. He must close it at night to keep the dog out. The dog looks up at me with those puppy dog brown eyes and licks my hand. Now my hand is covered in dog saliva, but I can't be mad. I just met this dog thirty seconds ago, but I'm already in love with him. My first genuine smile of the day tugs at my lips.

Then again, I didn't really meet this dog thirty seconds ago. This is *my* dog. I've probably had him for months, maybe even years. It's like my heart has a memory of loving this dog.

Except why don't I have any memory of loving Graham?

"What's his name?" I ask.

Graham smiles. "His name is Ziggy."

My own smile freezes on my lips. Ziggy. I named the dog Ziggy.

Harry and I always wanted a dog, but there was no room for it in our tiny apartment. And then when we moved here, the place was still such a disaster and Harry wanted to put up a fence around the backyard before we got the dog.

But we did have one pet.

Harry's full name is Harrison Finch. So ever since he was a kid, he always owned a finch. *I'm a Finch so I've got a finch*. It was kind of his thing. He had a giant cage he kept on the first floor of our house, with an almost blindingly yellow finch inside. He loved that bird. When I saw

the way he took care of his finch, I knew what a great dad he would be someday. It was something I loved about him.

And the bird's name was Ziggy.

I keep the smile plastered on my face as I run my fingers through the dog's soft fur. Ziggy pants happily. "Was I the one who named him?" I ask.

Graham nods. "You did. You said you were a fan of the comic strip."

I never read Ziggy comics in my life.

I lied to my husband. I must have named the dog after Harry's bird. Except why would I do that? I'm happily married to Graham, so why would I name my dog after an ex-boyfriend's bird? It doesn't make any sense.

But either way, Graham has no idea. And I'm not going to be the one to tell him.

Ziggy follows me to the kitchen, where the tantalizing aroma of eggs and bacon fills my nostrils. When we bought the house, all the appliances were old and rusted. I remember Harry kicking the refrigerator to get it to turn back on. But the entire kitchen has now been renovated. We have a giant stainless steel fridge with a built-in ice and water machine. There's a gleaming black stove that has so many dials and knobs, I'm sure I will set myself on fire if I attempt to cook anything on it. And our old rickety wooden kitchen table has been replaced with a brand new marble island with padded swivel chairs surrounding it.

This could be one of the nicest kitchens I've ever seen. And it's *mine*.

"Wow," I breathe. "This is... amazing."

Graham laughs at my expression. "It should be. You picked all the stuff out yourself."

"I did?" I run my fingers over the flawless marble surface of the kitchen island. "Are we rich?"

He hesitates. "We're... comfortable."

I want to ask more questions, but I feel strange prying like that. Of course, it's not prying if this is my own life, is it? Anyway, it's not like we live in a giant mansion somewhere. This is the same house that Harry and I picked out together and got for a bargain. We live in Queens, New York—not Beverly Hills.

Graham grabs two white ceramic plates from a cupboard above the sink and scrapes the contents of the frying pan onto them. He sets one of the plates down in front of me and keeps the other one for himself. He also pours a cup of coffee for himself but doesn't offer one to me.

I look down at my plate. There's a little yellow pile of dry-looking eggs and two strips of bacon that are cooked to the point of being black. I take a nibble from one of the strips of bacon—it's hammered. I'm sort of relieved that Graham didn't cook the perfect breakfast. So far, my husband seems like this absolutely perfect man, so it's good to know he has at least one flaw.

I hear whimpering at my leg. Ziggy is begging for food, his face on my lap as a glob of drool drips down onto my jeans. I look down at one of the crispy bacon strips and slip it to him. He happily gobbles it up.

Graham frowns. "You shouldn't feed him from the table. It will make him expect it."

"Sorry," I say. "I didn't know."

He opens his mouth as if to say something else but then shuts it again. Instead, he digs into his own plate of food. He even eats the burned bacon. He doesn't seem bothered by it. There must be something wrong with his taste buds.

I'm hungry, but I can't seem to stop staring at this man sitting across the table from me. Graham. My husband. My freaking *husband*. Here we are, sitting at the kitchen table like a