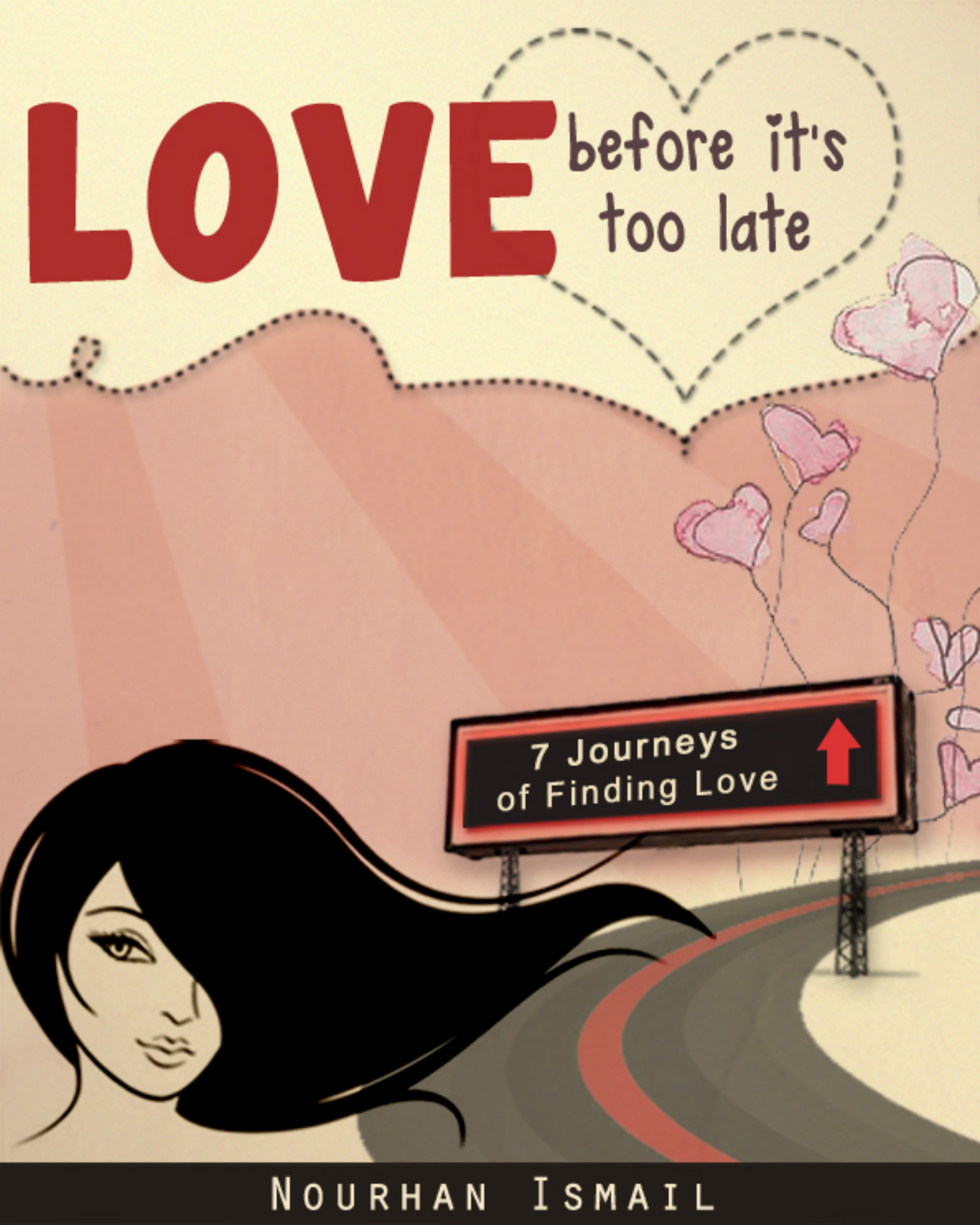


LOVE

before it's
too late

The book cover features a stylized illustration. In the foreground, a woman with long, flowing black hair is shown in profile, looking towards the right. Behind her, a winding road with a red center line leads towards a signpost. The signpost has a black rectangular sign with a red border that reads "7 Journeys of Finding Love" in white text, followed by a large red upward-pointing arrow. The background consists of soft, pinkish-red hills and a large, dashed heart shape in the sky. To the right, there are some pink, heart-shaped flowers on thin stems.

7 Journeys
of Finding Love

NOURHAN ISMAIL

Whenever I felt down, I wrote a story that could be a reason for me to hold on through my journey of finding my love. And since it is not an easy thing to understand what is in my head, I realized that all women are the same, it is just so hard to understand them. This is why I decided to tell some stories that could be a guideline for men to know how women think or feel.

Whether the woman is stubborn, silent, strong, stressed, scared, sincere, or even sinful, all her actions are built through her life journey, just like any person. A woman has a history full of events that controls her present and future, but in the end, any woman is seeking one thing, it is not love, it is not money, and it is not lust, women think differently, and to know what they are seeking, men should go through hell, and not all of them can pass such a test for getting his woman, this is why they give up in the middle of the journey.

Love, before it is too late, is my message for all women and men, because love makes your journey complete, if you love someone, you will definitely try to get into their minds and know for sure that this person is the person you want to have the journey of your life with.

*The journey has just started... Please make sure that your seat belt is securely fastened. **Enjoy!***

Nourhan Ismail

14- 04- 2012

Dedications

*I have to thank **Allah** for all his blessings, and for giving me the best father in the world. I feel grateful for my **mother** and my beloved **sisters** for their help to let me be the way I am. Thanks for everyone who inspired me one day, especially **Ahmed Fawzy**, who had been my library, my inspiration and my friend.*

*I need to thank an old man, that one day sat by me in a bus, who became later a hero in my story, and I still believe he was sent by Allah to inspire me.
For all my friends and relatives who supported me in my hard times in life, and for the best gift sent to me from **Allah**, I write this dedication for all my beloved ones, who know for sure that they are the reason I survived and will survive my journey.*

Special thanks to:

*My Inspiration: **Ahmed Fawzy***

*My editors: **Heba Abdel Wahab, Manal Mandour, Fatma said and Ayah Reyad.***

*My designer: **Moataz Galal El –Din***

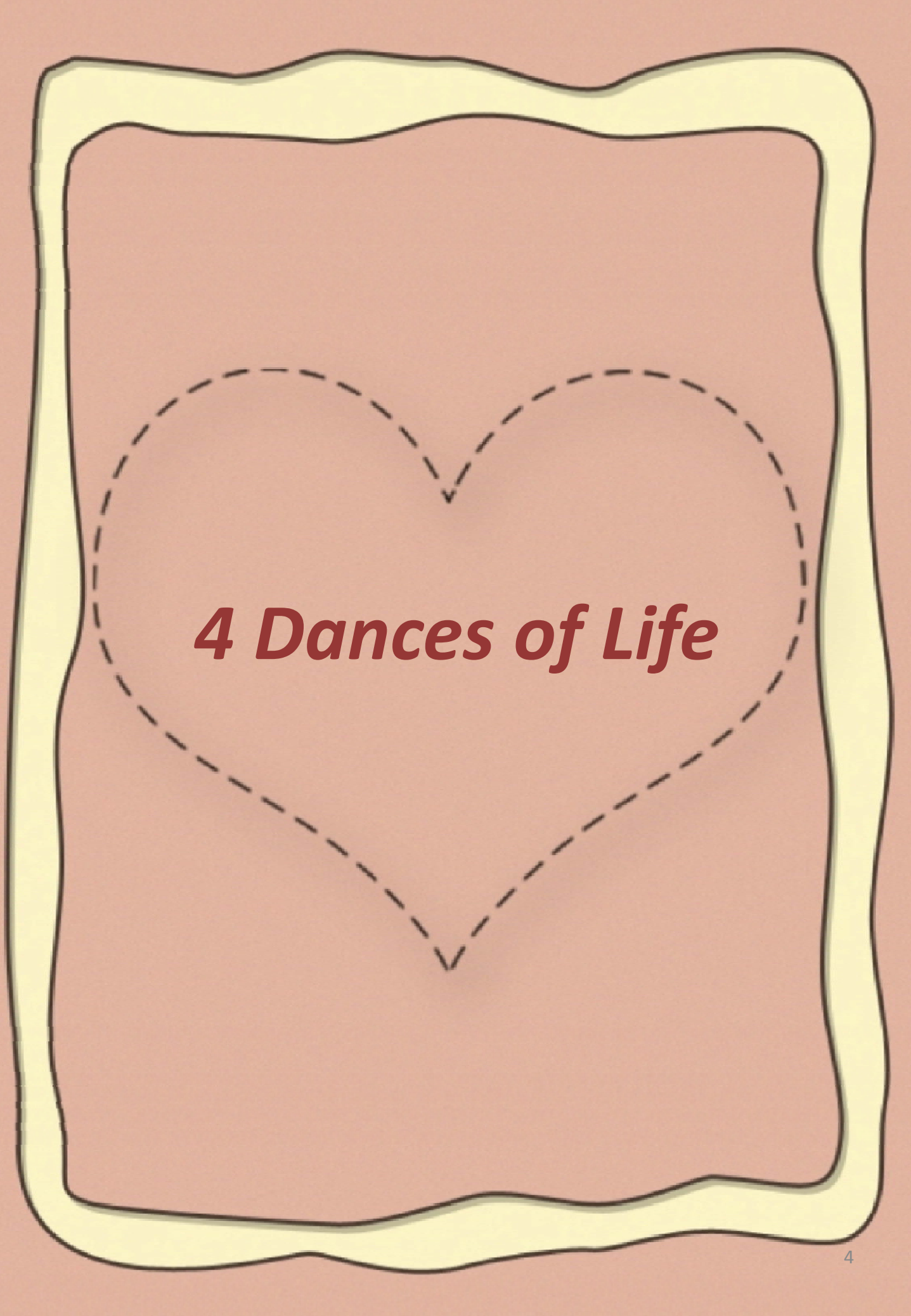
*My support: **Marwa Rakha***

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4 Dances of Life

Chapter1: the first dance: WALTZ

Not far away from Central Park, is where Gabriella lives. Gabriella is a single young lady who lives alone by herself; she has left her home for more than 8 years now. She is well known of her confidence, and how she is a successful marketing research analyst, in one of the most famous firms in the country. Not only this, she is so independent but also friendly to everyone around her, especially men. Anyone can actually tell how beautiful and smart she is, but yet everyone had their wonders of why a girl like her, is still single till now. Her emotional life is in a total mess, so that would actually answer all the wonders, if only people know!

Gabriella usually starts her day at 7 am. As an everyday occurrence at 7 am the radio is on with a different music. One morning, Gabriella wakes up on Waltz music on the radio, she goes to the bathroom, and has a nice warm shower; she wears her clothes, and leaves her place. Since she is living in the 5th floor, Gabriella usually waits for few seconds for the elevator; she usually looks at the levels counting up or down, till the elevator comes. She owns a black Toyota, and usually she parks it in front of her building or few blocks away. Once Gabriella stands in front of the building, she wears her sunglasses, since this spot is usually sunny in the morning.

Anyone can know Gabriella from a distance, as she is usually wearing a short dress, in different colors with fancy high heels, this morning it is a pink dress. As she walks to the car, she is walking in an elegant and confident way, that usually a guy or two checks her body as she walks, some guys may whistle, but usually they just look at her fancy outfit. As she is driving on the high way, she opens the radio and she still can hear Waltz music, she tried to change the channel but the music seems to be taking control over all the channels, she looks at the mirror and has a flash back of her first time meeting Rick.

"During her little chat, while drinking coffee, with Sandy, her best friend, there is a handsome guy with his blue eyes; approached them, telling her how amazing he thinks she is. Out of nowhere that guy showed up, introducing himself as Rick Adams. It was a normal reaction, actually normal reaction for Gabriella, to like that guy and tell him how amazing she thinks he is too. And that's when they started dating; it was like a love story from the first sight. The next day Gabriella and Rick

met in a very elegant restaurant, and while drinking wine, they had that romantic conversation of how a man and a woman can fall in love from the first sight. Rick is a determined man, and even though he had the guts to ask her for a date they way he did, he is not such a straight forward character after all. However Gabriella, as usual, is frank and direct, that's her nature, told him a lot about herself, and how she attends dancing classes in one of the most professional dancing schools in New York. She told him how she likes to dance for fun, as a hobby, and that she usually spends all her free time dancing. And since all men like dancers, Rick fell into her deeply. Yes, Rick is a romantic person, but yet he is so unclear.

Rick, while taking her home after one of their dates, told her about a lot of his love experiences, and though they were many, most of them were not serious, except one. He told her all the details of that one time, and how they arranged to be married and how everything was over just few weeks before their marriage. Gabriella, as usual, was smart and she didn't show that she was jealous, but yet she understood his feelings, and that was the thing which actually helped Rick to fall into her so quickly. One night, as they were dancing in a classic restaurant, and after few glasses of wine, Gabriella told Rick of her desire to teach him how to dance Waltz, and since he didn't have a choice, as she insisted, he accepted. Gabriella agreed with the Maestro of the little orchestra to play a piece of Waltz and slowly they started to dance. Gabriella looked so relaxed and she was dancing smoothly, she chose a music, that she knew wouldn't be so hard for Rick to follow. Astonishingly, after her dance with him, and people clapping for them, and as they walked to their table, Gabriella noticed that Rick had an eye contact with another girl. She didn't take any action or even talked about this simple incident, though she should have, as this incident didn't stay simple forever.

Gabriella told her friend Sandy many times how she thinks that Rick is slowing down their relation, and how he always runs away of going back with her to her place after a romantic date. But Sandy always defends Rick, though she never met him, and she thinks that maybe he doesn't want to blow all what they both had of amazingly romantic relation. Sandy always says "It is maybe that he doesn't want to be like all other guys seeking for nothing but getting into your pants" that are the words that usually Sandy uses while defending Rick. And on the contrary, He, for more than 2 weeks, used being busy with work as an excuse to keep himself away from Gabriella. Until one night, he showed up at her front door, asking if they

could talk. Gabriella was worried; since it was either he would breakup with her or would actually come out and confess he is gay. She could never predicted that he would actually confess that he loves her but that he is afraid to get really involved as he doesn't want to repeat his tragedy about marriage. And right after a kiss that lasted for few minutes, he left."

Chapter2: The Second dance: SALSA

Another morning, Gabriella wakes up and there was a Salsa music is on the radio, she gets up in a hurry, since the music is so loud. She usually takes her morning bath and leaves the place. She drives fast; her brown hair is flying as the fresh air gets into the car and she parks her car in the parking beneath the building. She usually says hello to everyone starting from the security in the parking till the guy who is assisting her, Edward, he is not such a nice guy, but yet he assists her with the research. As she is waiting for the elevator at her work, two guys and one man are waiting behind her, as she looks up to see the numbers, then one of the men's mobile starts ringing, it is a Salsa music, and for sure she smiles, as the music is so sexy, but yet he doesn't answer, so all the piece is played. Once the music stops, the elevator's door opened, Gabriella steps in and she looks at herself while smiling in the mirror in the elevator, and suddenly she has a flash back:

"Gabriella was in a meeting room, standing at the head of the table, and explaining some charts on the projector, a handsome man was sitting by the end of the table, and he was listening carefully to what she said. The smile was on his face as long as she is talking. Another man was sitting near her, and looked as worried as if he was waiting for the result of such important meeting. Once she is done talking, the man, at the other head of the table, stood and laughed, laughed loud, and then he said: "This is a pure work of Gabriella Robertson, Felipe, you have the deal". Felipe is Gabriella's boss, and he is usually a worried man, he was then pleased for having that deal. Gabriella left the office, while she was smiling to him; he excused from Felipe and followed her. As she walked into her office and slammed the door right after her, he came in a rush and slammed the door too. So she turned and looked at him while laughing, and told him how he should never do that again, with that she meant, how he usually makes a reason for meeting her, yes, he makes good profit of her marketing researches, but he always makes an excuse to come and meet her. That handsome guy is Antony Michelle or Tony as she calls him, the Italian billionaire, he is well known of his relations with every attractive girl in the country, and back in his home town; and although Gabriella knew that, she dated him, but since he is not such a stable man, it was not an exclusive relationship. As if they had a secret pact that they will always be dating other people at the same time. Tony approached Gabriella, and kissed her, and she didn't stop him, he told her how he missed her, and how he wanted her to accompany him to Italy for Christmas. And

so was it, she spent the Christmas with him in Rome. They celebrated the New Year's Eve together, in a great party where a lot of celebrities gathered.

That night, Gabriella, as elegant as usual, was wearing a black dress with golden accessories, gets into a Limousine, which was also black and has been waiting for her right in front of her house. The Limousine parked in front a huge palace, and Tony was waiting at the front door, as she walked out of the car, he kissed her hand and led her to the palace. There, in the lobby, they could find a lot of people, mostly celebrities. Though pretty ladies were all over the place, Tony was interested only in being with Gabriella, and they walked holding hands all around. Then he asked her to wait for him for one second, and kissed her as he left. Gabriella looked relaxed, as if she was home, on the contrary of any other girl that could have been in her shoes. This is the life Gabriella likes, she is rich, she is famous, and she is the most important person for Tony, who was then on stage, welcoming the audience to his party for the anniversary of his foundation, and then he asked them to make a space on the dancing floor; for sure Tony's palace has a dancing floor, since he is famous of his amazing performance while dancing Salsa. So he got down the stage, walked to the dancing floor and waved for Gabriella to come closer to him. In a very attractive way, Gabriella started walking slowly to him; showing a few Salsa steps and all the people were staring at her in the eye, and then the music started. With a very hot performance of this Salsa, Tony and Gabriella amazed all the attendees. Tony always loved that Gabriella knows how to dance, he even pays for some of her classes as a way to encourage her to continue learning how to dance all the ball room dances."

Chapter 3: The third dance: TANGO

It is a new day in New York, this time Gabriella wakes up on Tango music; she is always having hard time understanding why she can't hear anything during the day but the music she wakes up on. Like this day, when she drives her car, and she stops in a very crowded crossroad, she doesn't want to turn on the radio, but while she is standing still, not driving, she sees a little baby in the car next to her, she opens the window, and waves to the baby and smiled. All of a sudden, a motorcycle comes and parks next to her car, and since he had covered all this face, she can't tell anything about him except that he decided to put on Tango music! All Gabriella can think of is that she is being haunted by music. She closes the window, and out of curiosity she opens the radio, and she can hear Tango still, she insists to change the music, but apparently she can't, so she closed the radio again. She has an idea on mind; maybe if she changed her way to work, the music could change. Once the traffic light turned green, she drove away, and yes, she takes another lane, and suddenly she left the road through another exit, not the same exit she takes every day, she turns the radio and for her surprise it is still Tango. As she drives in the new road, she has again a flash back:

"In a dark hot smoky casino called BAILA CONMIGO, Gabriella had just arrived, and she was wearing a black coat, not revealing any of her clothes, but she had her hair done in a different way, much different way, with a red rose holding half of her hair up, and she was wearing a lot of glittery make up and red lipstick. As she stood there, a little away from the bar, she noticed a man, who was waving to her. He was standing by the bar, and then he pulled another guy closer and whispered in his ears, so the other guy turned to look at her too and waved to her to come. Both guys were looking incredibly handsome, like sexy Mexicans or Latin Americans. So she walked to them, and actually she approached one of them, the one who was not sitting next to the bar. These guys are: Manuel Mayor and Alejandro Cruz. They are her classmates in the dancing class, but they are in an advanced level, since for sure, they were born to dance. So they are almost going to finish the class, but she is a little behind. Any man can see the chemistry between Manuel and Gabriella, and any man also can see that Alejandro always looked at her, wanted her, so as she was standing very close to Manuel, Alejandro pulled her and kept her closer to him instead. This was a pure action of jealousy, but even though both guys are jealous, they are AMIGOS, they won't let a girl like Gabriella come between them.

Manuel suddenly decided to pull her again, but this time he took off her coat, Gabriella was apparently wearing a very sexy short dress, it was a red glittery little dress, just as sexy as Tango dancers, she even wore the Tango shoes. As Manuel was already standing, he was closer to the dance floor, so he grabbed her, and started to dance with her; one hot Tango dance, Alejandro was sitting there watching them as Manuel was touching her all around and putting her leg and hands all over his body, and this is what made Alejandro ran and took her hands off Manuel's body and started to dance with her. And the three of them performed the famous THREE TO TANGO dance. Gabriella was actually flirting with the two guys while dancing, even the dance ended while Manuel is holding her legs around his body, while she was laying her head on Alejandro's chest. BAILA CONMIGO always had such amazing performances, but the THREE TO TANGO by Manuel, Alejandro and Gabriella which was very famous and popular, that all the dancers clapped and screamed by the end of the dance."

Chapter 4: The Forth Dance: SWING

Gabriella wakes up this morning on Swing music and she is feeling dizzy, as she has just spent a wild night. And it is not such an easy decision to wake up at 7 am this day. As she gets into the bathroom, she feels so tired and sleepy as well, she notices that there is a message written on the mirror with her lip glass "Good morning Gabriella, Manuel". She smiles, and dries her hair and then starts to get dressed. Gabriella never had breakfast, even coffee; she drinks it in the office. Usually she asks Edward to make sure that her coffee is in her office just as she walks in. As she leaves her place, she is waiting for the elevator like usual, while looking up to the numbers, once the door opens, she smiles and she gets in, she is standing alone in the elevator but with a wide smile on her face. She remembers something:

"One morning, she was not feeling fine while going to her work, and she waited for the elevator and when the door opened, she found a man standing inside, she said Good morning with a smile, but she looked as exhausted as ever. The man introduced himself as Andrew Gilbert, as a neighbor who had been living in the building for 3 years, and how he noticed her many time. Gabriella was so tired that she didn't react in a good way, he invited her though to a little party at his place to meet other neighbors and some friends, and he insisted that she should go.

Gabriella on her way to work was so tired that she didn't open the radio, and she didn't listen to music for the whole day at work, she had meetings and calls all the time. As she was parking her car in the garage of her building, she was suddenly scared by a sound right behind her, she turned to find Andrew, who apologized many times for that and insisted that she should drop by in his party, she agreed but she assured that she would leave early. During that party, Andrew was looking at her most of the time; he is such a friendly man with everyone, and he is always popular and funny, even his place was pretty nice, he had added the friendly touch even on his furniture. She already was ok to the music of the party, since it was Swing music. She had noticed that he is a Swing fan for all the records, she found in his place. Gabriella stood with him and some other people who were talking about how it is hard to find a mentality that understands the needs of the person. And that was when all men started mocking about their wives, and how it is hard to be married and they actually envied Andrew for being single. Though Andrew looks young, he has always such a reasonable man, and his answer to their envy was

simple: "I would like one day to marry that woman who will make me feel complete, even if she doesn't understand my needs, because life is practical, we have to be practical, no one actually understands you, even your own mother" these words hit Gabriella, who looked with a sparkling eyes to Andrew.

That night, Gabriella didn't leave early, on the contrary, she mingled with everyone and she was the last one to leave. Andrew thanked her for coming and offered her a cup of coffee, after all that wine they had been drinking. He stood in the kitchen making her coffee as she sits on the kitchen's chair, and she watched him, she didn't believe how a man can look so comfortable in the kitchen. Andrew is actually what any woman would like in a man, handsome, humble, and as she knew during the party, dentist, who likes calm life. He appreciates the reality and thinks wise."

Chapter 5: It was such a QUICK STEP day!

Gabriella arrives to her office and starts her morning with few phone calls with other colleagues asking about the delivery of some reports, and asks Edward to start arranging for a meeting at 3 after the lunch break. At her lunch break, Gabriella is running to a little restaurant and as she enters, she looks everywhere until she saw Rick, who actually stood once he saw her stepping in the restaurant, and she hugs him, then she sits and orders salad and orange juice from the waiter. Rick seems pretty calm but yet he was smiling. As Gabriella talks, Rick was listening and then he asked her to shut up for a second, and that is when he puts on the table a big red box, and says: "Happy Valentine's day, Gabriella".

As Rick puts the red box on the table, Gabriella realized she didn't remember it is Valentine's day, specially that she didn't consider any of these guys her love or even her Valentine. It is hard to tell this to Rick in the face, so she kept silent. Rick stands and sits next to her, and asked her what she feels. She has to tell him the truth, that she didn't remember it is Valentine's Day. Rick's reaction is: "I knew you don't love me that much that you would consider me your valentine, but I do love you" Gabriella deep inside her she doesn't feel that, she is confused and feels that there is something wrong. Anyways she has to leave because the lunch time is over, so she kissed him and left.

As soon as she arrived to the office, Felipe asked her to meet him in the meeting room in 15 minutes, after she checked her emails and made few phone calls, she goes to the meeting room to find Tony there, who smiles to Felipe, who accordingly leaves the meeting room and closes the door. As she stands near the door, and Tony is standing by the projector, he asked her to sit, and he started a presentation on the projector just for her. It is a collection of their photos together, in Rome's party, and others of them while dancing, in Paris, since they had visited Paris together before. And then he ended the presentation with walking slowly to her and he took her hand and kissed it. And then he put it on his heart and asked her if she can move to Rome with him, as he will stay there for the next year. Gabriella looks astonished and she wonders why he is asking her to do that, why her? Tony says: "because you make me happy, and I like you so much" she makes then a sarcastic comment that she prefers a Valentine's gift instead, and to her surprise, he got out of his pocket a key, and he told her; that he bought her a red little car

parking now in front of her place. She smiles, since she is already used to Tony, this rich guy who enjoys having her around, because she is active and she wants to live. So she kissed him as a thank you for the gift but yet she apologizes for not giving him one. So he told her that her acceptance for his offer would be the greatest gift a man can have, then he whispered in her ears as a way of seduction that they may learn more dances together. After a promise that she will give it a thought, Tony left her, and she went to her office to finish her work. And as she is sitting by the computer, she looks at her mobile phone, and she grabs it and dials Manuel.

On Valentine's night, Gabriella sneaks from her place, as if she is trying to hide herself and not to be seen by anyone. She knocks a door of an apartment number 99, Manuel opens the door, and grabbed her in, took off her coat, and gave her a glass of Champaign, and as she started to drink, he started kissing her in her neck, then cheeks, then lips. Gabriella doesn't resist as she apparently wants him; that is why she called him. As Gabriella and Manuel are kissing, he starts to push her to the wall, it didn't last few minutes and all of a sudden, the door is opened and Alejandro came! He can't see who is Manuel kissing, so he apologizes in a loud voice, and told them that he is leaving, this is when both Gabriella and Manuel get shocked and suddenly stopped kissing, Alejandro saw that it is Gabriella, so he started swearing in Spanish and cursing them, then he translated some of the words to make sure that Gabriella understands. And Manuel replied back and then turned to her and asked her to leave. So she got her coat, and left, while she can still hear both guys yelling at each other.

Gabriella doesn't have a clue of what she feels, confused, and how she hates that none of these guys were quite suitable to be her valentine. As she arrived at her home, she didn't stay except for 1 minute after she took off her coat, and then she left the place, waiting for the elevator, and yet looking up, then she entered and pushed the 7 button, this is the floor where Andrew lives, she knocked Andrew's door. He opened and smiles, so she clarified that she is in terrible shape and that she needed to talk, as he let her in, and made her coffee and they sit on the sofa to talk, she talks and talks and talks of how she is frustrated, but yet she didn't tell him anything about other guys, he suddenly stopped her, and asked her to relax, that life is not that complicated, we just need to think more than we feel. Gabriella is not fully convinced but he offered her to stay and maybe eat pop corn while watching a match or a movie. And this is how Gabriella spent her Valentine. This day was long, but all the things happened all of a sudden, it was such a quick step day!

Chapter 6: Remix number 1

No one can ever imagine a girl like Gabriella spending the Valentine's Day all alone, true she has a new red Jaguar, and a Makeup set, which Rick bought her, and she spent the night eating pop corn with Andrew, but she slept all alone that night. This Valentine's Day actually made her think, as she spent almost a week after the valentine's, not meeting any of the guys, and not thinking about anything but her work.

One morning, she woke up, and it is Waltz music on the radio, now she knows that she will be meeting Rick that day, she is feeling down, the music accompanied her all day, since she has left her place, till she left work. And though she heard the music all day, she didn't meet Rick still. So she drove after work to her dancing class, she is wearing short black skirt and green shirt, and the dancing shoes; she entered the class, while she is not in a good mode still; and all of a sudden, she heard a loud voice asking all dancers to gather and find for themselves partners to start dancing, as couples start to gather, she now can see who was talking, it was Manuel, actually they were Manuel and Alejandro, and they were the instructors. She stands there, and she can't find for herself a partner, she is pretty confused though, Waltz music with Manuel and Alejandro! She notices that Alejandro is approaching her, and then with no words; he offered to be her partner. They were holding each other's hands and here's when Manuel told all couples to start dancing Tango. Alejandro and Gabriella are dancing together very professionally, Gabriella deep inside her, feels that something must have gone wrong, and Alejandro is still staring at her, and he doesn't look upset, but he is silent, as she was dancing and revolving, she was trying to have sneak peak on Manuel, who was busy watching and helping other couples. Then while she was dancing one of the hottest steps with Alejandro, he pushed her away, and as she tried to pull herself all together, but Manuel caught her before she falls, they are for somehow are hugging each other. And he starts to lead her through the dance. Gabriella and Manuel always had this kind of chemistry in the air, but some sudden sparks usually happen, and this is when he stopped and pushed her away again, but this time she is standing in the middle between of the two guys, who walked with her and then Alejandro carried her, and yet Manuel still holding her hand. The dance is over, and all the dancers had already been watching, since both instructors were busy dancing with her. These dancers were not qualified yet to dance such

complicated dance between the two guys and Gabriella. Silence is all over the class, and Gabriella can hear nothing but her heart beats after such strong dance, and weird situation, she has been through, so she pushed Alejandro, and pull her hand away from Manuel, and she ran quickly to leave the class.

As she was driving away, she started crying once she entered the car in the parking, and the first thing she did, she opened the radio, the music is not clear now, all types of music are being played in the same time, she can't recognize any. She drove away, as it was raining, the road was very slippery, and while she was crying, her mobile started to ringing, it was Rick, who asked her to meet him in a party in a bar. She was few blocks away from this bar, so she agreed, she drove slowly and then she left her car to the usher to park it. As she entered, it was a loud party, and as she stepped in, the music wasn't so clear still, she couldn't tell what it is, people were talking loud and some girls were screaming while dancing, and suddenly Rick appeared in front of her and pulled her to one of the rooms near the bar, it is pretty calm there, then he told her that he wants to be honest with her, she can't easily hear what he is saying though it is more calm now. Rick then all of a sudden, he got on his knees and as he is doing so, Gabriella was astonished, and can't focus, and then he got a little box of his pocket, and opened it and as he said: "will you marry me?" Gabriella can clearly now hear the music, it is not Waltz, but it is Salsa music.

Chapter 7: Remix Number 2

The music that was playing at that time was, Tango. Gabriella opened her eyes after she has been sleeping, and now she can realize that everything is mixed up, just before she left the bed, she heard the door knocking, so she got up and walked to the door, and opened it, to find Andrew standing right in front of her, he pushed the door and entered, and she was standing there not really understanding what is happening, so she closed the door. As she turned, Andrew was actually sitting on her sofa, and he asked her to get ready as he wants to ask her for a little favor, and though it was strange that he is asking her out this early, Gabriella went to her room and started getting dressed.

As they arrive to a mall, Andrew didn't say a word, not even a word, all the way to the mall. Since everything was already mixed up to her, Gabriella didn't even ask where they are going. As they were walking in the mall, which was already empty, as not a lot of people go shopping early in the morning, she noticed how happy he was. He is holding her hands and didn't want to let go of her hands all the way long. Then he suddenly stopped and turned to her, and told her that they arrived to the right place in the right time, and he asked her to look at the store they are just standing in front of, as she turned to see what's there, she discovered it is a shop for wedding dresses, true it is closed, but it is full of wedding dresses. Silence controlled the place, as she looked to the window of the store and she can find herself in the mirror standing next to Andrew who was smiling, where a very beautiful white dress is displayed right in front of her eyes. But this silence can't last forever, so she turned and told him how it is so unreasonable that he asks her that fast, and that he knows nothing about her or even her needs!

True, what she said, she was wondering that they even never danced together before, and that, even though he likes her, and maybe she likes him too, but still it's not enough to marry each other. Andrew, while she was talking in a very aggressive way like this, he was just standing listening to what she was saying carefully. And once she stopped talking, he smiled and asked her if they can just leave. As he was driving his car, she was so silent and looking at the window, she didn't turn her head or look at him. He opened the radio just to try to forget what just happened in the mall. Tango music was playing, so she just closed her eyes and wondered what is wrong. And since they had already been late for work, Andrew was driving the

car very fast, and Gabriella was sitting there in silence. But this silence, suddenly interrupted by Andrew laughing hilariously, and then he turned and told her "you didn't understand me".

She is for sure not in a good mode to go to work, and this is why she decided to ask him to drop her in the street near her office, as she had decided to walk in the city, and not going to the office. As she was walking, like lost people in the street, Gabriella didn't want to stop walking, till she found herself stepping into the palace of Tony, and since she is well known to the guards, they let her in. As she took the stairs from the garden to the palace, she can hear loud music, not Salsa though, it is like a party by the pool and the music played is Swing, it made sense now that everything is confused. But maybe as she walked in will find Tony fooling around with other girls. But apparently as she walked in to the pool, she can't see Tony, but she can surely see all the people, not in Bikini for sure, it is winter still. The pool is covered by a white tent and there is a sign that says: "Good bye Tony" and she can see him among the crowd, standing while drinking Whisky with 2 other guys, the 3 of them are smoking cigars as well. Though there are a lot of girls, Tony is standing with 2 guys, what a surprise!

As she approached where he stands, she noticed how she is not wearing that formal for the event, the feeling that she hates the most. Gabriella, who is always relaxed to attend events like this, is now walking towards Tony while feeling a little shy of what she is wearing. She is wearing a yellow short dress with black coat, as she was going to work. Tony now sees her while she is walking towards him, so he excuses himself from the other guys and walked towards her too. Tony for the first time in his life is not smiling, he looked so serious, and the thing that made Gabriella not feeling so relaxed neither. He suddenly held her hands without talking and pulls her and walks to the palace. Once they get into the hall, he asked her for the real reason that brings her in this time, he didn't invite her to this party, since actually seems that she ignored him for long time with no reply. Gabriella feels sorry and shy, as she didn't find the right words to say, she, herself, doesn't know the real reason, why she came to his palace. Is it because she missed him? Or she just wanted to know the real reason of the confusion of the music. She stands there right in front of him, almost speechless. As she was standing like this, Tony can't find any other way to make her talk except pulling her again, they went upstairs, and she followed him with no resistance. He opened the door of one of the rooms,

and as they entered, Gabriella was standing there by the door, but he walked till he reached a huge ivory cupboard and opened it, and he got out a dress, formal dress, it is brown with some bronze accessories, and he approached her, put it on her body and then he kissed her on her forehead, and left the room.

Once he closed the door, she stood there, in front of a tall mirror, staring at herself while holding the dress. And then she turned and looked all around this beautiful ivory room, which was decorated by pink covers, curtains and cushions. She walked to the window and looked at the garden, she saw Tony walking out of the palace heading to the pool, and some women are passing beside him, saying hello but he walked away, without even looking at them.

Chapter8: The real meaning of FOXTRUT

A girl, that has so many guys like this, should actually be happy, or should have gone crazy long time ago. It is similar to the situation when you have to choose between the 4 things you really need, regardless to the fact that you are a man, or a woman! It doesn't make any difference, choosing between the 4 pleasures of life: Love, or innocent love, adventure, or being rich and sexy, Passion, or having lust with 2 handsome men, one wanting you and you are in love with the other, or last but not least, Stability, living a real life with a real family. These are the dances that Gabriella learnt in the dancing classes, WALTZ, SALSA, TANGO and SWING. No man can actually understand how a girl can go crazy if she is being loved or wanted by men just like those. No wonder why Gabriella walked all over the streets every day, even in the rainy days, just to think, she has to choose between offers like that, no one can actually resist. Even Edward, felt petty on her, she is totally silent and not as active as before, she even doesn't go to the dancing classes anymore as she was trying to avoid meeting Alejandro and Manuel, oh, Manuel. If it is up to her, she would have chosen Manuel all her life, but he doesn't love her, though Alejandro does. But Alejandro, she doesn't feel, and never felt, that this could be her prince charming, her real valentine. What about Rick, he loves her, he says he does, but does he really do? Why did he look at other girls, like how he did when they went dancing? Why he offered to marry her? Though he had been avoiding her most of the time. And Tony, why he just likes her? Why? Why can't he love her? Though the chemistry is quite strong between the 2 of them, but it is like he is looking for a mistress and not a lover. Andrew, he is a man of principles, and always direct and to the point, but Gabriella never felt that chemistry anyway. How hard it is to really understand what women want. After disappearing for few weeks, Gabriella after giving it a good thought decides to come out to the world. And she finally now can set the alarm again, after closing it for many weeks.

She wakes up one day, how strange it is that the alarm rings normal, it doesn't open the radio, just a normal ring of a normal alarm and though she had set it the night before, it just keeps ringing. She wakes up, has her shower, and gets dressed but this time she decides to take the stairs instead of the elevator. She planned last night that she is not going to the work today, she walks to her car, it is a bit windy, and all the leaves of the trees are falling. She drives her car away. Next thing is that she is knocking a door, and the door is opened. It is Rick; he is standing right in

front of her, half naked. He stands still, shocked, surprised and silent. She stares at him, because it is easy to recognize what is happening. And true it is, a girl comes from behind, she is wearing only his shirt, and is looking for him. Gabriella then leaves the place with a cold smile. No regrets or anger, no sadness or tears. It is not that she loves him, so what is the big deal if he is sleeping with another girl. The only thing that really makes Gabriella confused is why did he propose to her? He just made her feel she was so special that he would marry her, but he preferred to flirt with other girls!!!

Days pass by, and Gabriella knew already that Tony had already gone to Rome, since his office in Rome is always in contact with Felipe. Until this day, as she is in her office, Edward comes in with a file leaving it on her office and runs out of the office, when she opens it, she finds the collection of her pictures with Tony, who is in the same time calling on her mobile, he insists that he wants her to travel to Rome to live with him, and that is when she tells him, it was a great adventure, and maybe it is time for him to look for an Italian model to date instead. As she can't just leave her life behind for just an adventure with a guy who just likes her!

At night, and running away from reality, Gabriella can think of no one but Manuel still, at least she can be with a man she loves and feels she is needed by another. So she wears one of her favorite dresses, it is a dark green dress, with a golden coat, golden shoes, and even a golden rose in her hair, and decides to drop by BAILA CONMIGO. This night is really crowded, but yet she can find her way, and as she walks to the bar, she says hello to some people who already know her either from this bar or from the dancing class, then while ordering a drink from the barman, she notices in the mirror behind him, the dance floor, and she just notices Manuel's face, as she turns in a hurry to check what he is doing, she realizes that he is having a THREE TO TANGO with Alejandro and another girl. She suddenly felt terrified at the same time by the voice of the barman whispering in her ears: "sorry it was late". She can't figure out what he really means, is it because she came too late to the bar searching for them? Or is it because he was late making her drink? Though she actually didn't feel how many minutes passed while she was watching this Tango of her guys with another girl.

No one can be more desperate than a woman ending 3 relations in less than a week. As she enters her building, after the shock she had in BAILA CONMIGO, she

takes the elevator, which was already there waiting her, and then she gets out of the elevator, she finds a letter by her door. As she opens it, she discovers it is a wedding invitation. Andrew is getting married, to a girl called Chelsea. Now it makes more sense, he is a friend, and he took her to that mall that day to ask her, not to marry him, but to make her help him take a decision whether to marry his girl or not. Yes, this is a mind of a rational man, and he already wrote a nice note with the invitation of how he was shy to correct her when she thought he is purposing to her.

Any woman in her shoes would preferably have chosen never to set the alarm the next morning, 4 relations are screwed. But that night she slept like a baby, and wakes up this morning, and still the radio doesn't work, just the normal alarm rings. As she leaves her place, drives her car, goes to her work, everything is pretty the same but there is no music this time. Silence is all over the place again, those days of dating many guys, are over. This could easily be the end of the game; she is now a free lady, with no strings attached, as if there were any strings. None of the guys actually cared about her that much, or loved her as one of them had pretended. Gabriella felt like those days are gone, no more chases, no more wonders, Foxes are no longer hopping around her, yes, she learnt that dance before Foxtrot but she never understood the real meaning of it, hopping, foxes hop. The dancing classes may actually teach a girl how to understand the world, how to see and feel all the dancing steps but in real life, how she can feel love as WALTZ, live the adventure like SALSA, have real passion like TANGO, and be rational like SWING. This is why, this night Gabriella enters the dance class, specially that she already knew that both Alejandro and Manuel are no longer students there, and walks smiling till she takes her position, and this is when the teacher says: "Dancers, Today, we will learn how to dance RUMBA".

The Mud Lover

Chapter 1

The day I decided to open this place was the happiest day in my life; it is where everything I ever wanted came true. I have always enjoyed the feeling of walking down the street every morning to my gallery, knowing that all people on the road know where I am going. I was famous to the entire neighborhood, because each and every house in that street has something I made for them. It is like I became a part of every family, this German couple, the Henderson Family, Lenny the Musician, Frank and Amy the mother and son who own the furniture shop by the end of the street. What I liked about this town, was the weather. It has this amazing weather, sunny but not hot, Chilly but not cold. It was not a small town; I was famous to the neighborhood, but not all across the town. I never thought I can live in a smaller town, or even bigger city. This is my home, where I lived with my family, and loved my boyfriend. I have moved to live with Kenny last year. Kenny is a journalist who I met by chance one night at the bar. Our relation is based on a very rational vision, but yet is romantic. He liked me, we dated and then he asked me to move into his place, which was not that far from my gallery.

I used to walk every morning from Kenny's place to my gallery, and I have always met so many people on the road after grabbing my coffee from a place called the coffee shop. And then once I go to my gallery I meet John, who helps me in the shop and we open the doors together. How I love this feeling of pushing the door and entering that small gallery I had, with the sun lights getting in. I stand there every morning, taking a deep breath, and I smell that smell of the clay... for some people, it is not the best thing, but for me, it was my life. I look at the shelves and I see my work, my art, sculptured statues that have many memories to me or to the people who ask for it. I was asked by the Henderson family to make them statues of horses, since Mr. Henderson has that beautiful stable that he invited me once to go check it. Lenny, asked me to make him a statue for Bob Marley, and another for a guitar. What I always preferred was that red earthenware clay, how it runs in between my fingers, as I spin it. It is like, you sit there and you put all your imaginations right in front of your eyes. It takes you to wherever you want to be, with whoever you want.

My place had white walls, and white shelves, with a framed window to the street. I insisted that everything should be white because it is where I found peace, with the sun rays coming over every morning, making it very shiny. I have assigned John to always change the tracks of music; I chose beautiful masterpieces of different types of music. I

remember once that one of the customers gave me a comment on the music I chose, as she described "you make me feel like I am in heaven", also John had to water the plants and roses I put almost in every corner in the place. I had a lot of visitors especially that every week I make special morning for the children, I always supported how we can make children discover their early talents, and I arrange sometimes like exhibitions for handmade products made by the ladies in town. This is why exactly I had many people, coming in and out of my place.

Kenny insisted many times to visit me at his lunch time, and ask me to grab a bite from that little place "Toni's" just few blocks away. I am used to sitting on my wooden stool, and work on the music, but I sit where I can see the door, the window, and the street. I always preferred to see who is coming in and out, so I used to know when Kenny comes just as I see his car parking right in front of my door. Whenever I am out to lunch, John also goes for lunch leaving the sign "Lunch time" on the door. Whenever I ran to Kenny's car, and I kiss him, I always tease him by asking him where we would be having lunch, as if I don't know. I am the happiest woman on earth, when it is a sunny day, with my Kenny by my side, and I am sitting by him in the car, looking at my gallery, with the white framed window and red letters on it "Sculptured art of Catharine" it feels like I own the world, and I keep watching the gallery as the car starts to go away.

One afternoon, after Kenny dropped me in front of the gallery, I found John waiting me by the door, and seemed like he waited for a while. He said that he received a phone call from his mother saying that his dad was really ill and that he has to fly back home for a while. I never minded that for sure, and I asked him to contact me if he needs anything. John has always been a great support for me, and he worked in the gallery since he was a student and needed money for his studies. He stayed around 2 weeks over there, so I had to open the gallery every morning on my own. Everything was normal in the first two days but one night, I was working on a new piece, this is when everything was no longer the same. I then found a man, who came in, but I was so tired that day, so I didn't notice when he came into the place, I was alone, no one was there. He wore a coat, and brown hat. I couldn't tell his age until he took off his hat, I noticed his hair is grey. There was nothing special about him, but the point is that I didn't notice him while coming in, so I was shocked when I saw him. It was at night, and I had put on the spot lights only, so the lighting was not that good. Just as I saw him, I asked him how could I help him, but he didn't answer me, the music that was playing then was a classic symphony, I remember, and all he did was walking approaching me, that I had to stop the wheel, but I kept my hands on the piece,

as it was not that clean with all the clay that covered it, he grabbed another stool which was by my side, and he sat, looking not at me, but at my hands with the clay covering it. I was making a vase, he looked at my hands which were really wet, and then he looked me in the eyes and said in a very low voice "you are so talented, Catharine" so I smiled but I didn't feel really fine though and I said "thank you" so he smiled.

And he said "no one ever appreciated how it is to sit on a stool, forming something, a statue, or even a vase " he seemed to talk very deep from the heart", so I nodded. And that was when he surprised me "I envy you, every day I look at you, and envy you" I looked at him and wondered "why?" It didn't take him long to reply me back "you can create things" he looked tremendously sad, the music changed to another symphony as he talked, and I took a breath and said "I have a talent, a lot of people have talents, why do you envy me, I can teach you if you want", he nodded his head as if I didn't get what he meant, and suddenly he stood and walked to one of the shelves and then turned to me, I could easily recognize tears in his eyes, and harshness in his voice "I can't, I just can't, I wish but I can't " I felt confused, but yet I really needed to help him, so I asked him to come sit back again, and then I stood and walked till I am at his back, and I found myself pulling his hands with my muddy hands and as I pulled them slowly to the vase, he seemed like resisting, but yet I insisted, he folded his fingers, but yet I pulled them, and I put them on the vase, which was still not done, and though he kept his fingers folded, I whispered in his ears "don't fear it, just close your eyes" and just as his fingers were no longer folded and he touched the vase, my body shivered and the music was suddenly stopped, the lights went out . And I couldn't feel anything but his body shivering and then the lights came back again and so did the music, but what my eyes didn't believe was that the vase turned into dry mud, like dust. So he moved his back and looked up to me and said "I told you, I just can't".

Chapter2

I sat there almost in a shock, and my heart was beating really hard, the music was as angry as I was. I was angry, not because he ruined my art, but because I knew his truth... he was doomed, he must have done something wrong, it is a spell, what I had just seen was some sort of magic, not a good one, maybe a black magic, though I never believed it could happen. I could hardly breathe but all I wanted to know was the truth. What was it about him that made him looking that sad? He looked sad, it was very clear he was not that happy person since he stepped into my place. I kept staring at him; with a very angry look on my face, the angry music we were hearing was doing all the talk on my behalf, then he stood and he walked till that time.

He was the one standing behind me and he held my hands, I couldn't resist, but they were shaking just as he held them, and he whispered in my ears "you try, this time". And just as I started to turn the wheel with my legs, the mud turned into wet clay again, and as I moved my hands, with his hands over mine, I started to make a new vase, and with every turn I made it taller, it was like magical touches in my hands, he whispered in my ears "turn it, faster, turn it, you own the world". These words made my body shiver and I even closed my eyes. How I felt then I was under a spell of a magician, and then I felt his hands were taken off mine, and he kept whispering "I envy you" and just as I opened my eyes. When the music stopped, I found him leaving the gallery. I wanted to follow him, but I was afraid, confused, my legs wouldn't have helped me to chase him. I stood there, with another music playing, and I convinced myself that what I had seen was magic, and that I was just visited by the angel of ... the angel of ... mud, he was the angel of mud as I called him that night, he turned my art to mud, and then from mud to art.

That night, when I went home, I found Kenny who had just came back home too offering me a glass of red wine and a massage, since he knew I always suffered pain in my back, I welcomed the idea so much. He felt that I was different, but I didn't tell him what happened. Who would believe what I had seen, plus Kenny, would have gone crazy if I told him about that man, I am sure he would have asked me to come with me every day to the gallery, he was so worried about me most of the time. I do remember when I first told him about my intension of opening the gallery, and all he thought of hiring me a security man to guard the place. The next morning when I woke up, I was still shocked, I was so silent too, Kenny was sleeping that morning, so I got up and made

him breakfast, and woke him up too. And just as I sat on the bed next to him after he was awake, he said something that reminded me why I loved him. He said "Cathy, how can I one day live without you? How I love your enthusiastic spirit? How you make me move forward... just yesterday I wrote a great article you should read ". And just as I got the newspaper from the door, I didn't want to open it, and I ran to him in the bed, and told him "show me", this is how Kenny loves to read articles for me. He wrote about our town. I certainly knew what he meant, when he said I make him move forward, Kenny is that kind of men, a woman should always give him a push as a recharge, and when I opened my gallery he considered this as a way I tell him to move forward and do more. As he finished reading the article, he smiled, and looked at me and said "what can I do more? Isn't this your favorite quote, madam?" so I smiled and kissed him and told him "nothing for now, sir".

That morning he insisted he should drive me to the gallery, he even stopped by the coffee shop and got me my coffee to go, and he helped me open the door. Then he kissed me and left wishing me to have a great day, and a promise that he would try to come home a little early that night. Just as I entered the gallery and I started to mix up clay and water, after turning on the music for sure, I found a bird standing by the window so I walked to the window to look at it from closer, after few seconds it flew away, and I turned back to what I was doing. And suddenly I heard him saying "I am sorry for what happened yesterday". It was him again, and I didn't notice him coming in again, so I turned to him, but that time I had the guts to stand and ask him "who are you, seriously?" He took off his hat, and he said "it is a long story. I can tell you, if only you have the time, you are the only person who can understand ". And out of curiosity, I totally agree, I even put the "closed" sign on the door, and we sat in the little office I have, and I asked him to tell me the full story.

This is what he said "my name is Maxim, everyone calls me Max, and I used to work as an accountant in a company but not anymore. The story starts when I accidentally met a girl, it was back in the 70s, in one of my relatives' wedding, she had that golden hair that made me fall in love with her, we danced together in that wedding, and she was really a delicate girl. She danced, talked, walked in a very soft way, the thing which made me feel that I have met an angel from heaven." All I know is that I stopped him, and said "Max, you are saying you are in your sixties?" So he smiled and said "yes, I am 67 years old now, I look much younger I know, this is because I used to do sports, why

don't you just let me complete and you will know everything?". I smiled and said "it is just that you look really young"!!!

Anyway I will shut up now, you were saying that she was an angel from heaven... so he completed, "I had hard time expressing to her how I feel for so long". And since I asked my cousin about her, he told me that she is a hard to reach girl, and that she is very classic. He even said that she was not my type. For everyone who knew Max in the past, I was that guy who could get any girl he wanted and I used to have fun any time, I used to live in an adventure, I loved dancing, I loved night life, I was one of the most handsome men in my town. I was famous by reputation, but I was glad she didn't know all that, since she lived in another city, where I used to work. She knew nothing about me when she accepted to dance with me. She was that little shy girl, with golden hair, who took my breath away whenever she just talked; even her hand was very tiny when I held it to dance. This cousin warned me, and he stressed on that "don't mess with her Max, she is a good girl". Maybe his words pushed me to insist of making her my own, I loved how tiny she was, and it happened, one day, we met again in the baby shower of these relatives few months later, apparently they got married because she was pregnant. Anyway, we talked and I told her how I like her so much, and this was our start for our dating."

Just as he was sighing, I looked at his eyes, Max, he was talking of her as if she was an angel, but I still didn't know what could happen to her that made him doomed, my wonders were rushing in my head. But then he resumed "I dated her, I used to meet her during my lunch hours, she didn't work, but she used to go to the club or for a walk with her friends. She was as soft as a feather, pure as a fresh morning. I got so busy meeting her and taking her out. And once, in a family gathering, I bowed on my knees for her right in front of everyone and she said "yes". My problem was that I didn't have enough money; this is why we planned to postpone marriage a little."

I interrupted him as he talked, I couldn't hold it any longer "where is the problem, Max?? I don't mean I want you to summarize, but I really am curious to know how come all this can make you a doomed man?" He smiled and he said "do you love yourself, Catharine?" I stared at him trying to understand what he meant, but then I realized I couldn't answer him. I just thought a little and said "I like what I do, the way it makes me feel", so he smiled and said "this is enough answer, because I didn't. I always loved myself, I felt like I am a hero, a handsome man, strong man, I used to

work out very hard to keep body so fit, so that I can attract any girl I wanted, I didn't even smoke because I didn't want to ruin what I had. The secret is that, I have always asked for something that I couldn't find with Rita, her name was Rita. She was so pure, I loved how pure she was, but maybe when I am with her, I just felt fragile, I had to be as soft as she was, to follow her lead, and I hated that. Someone like me is not a fragile person, I felt weak, in front of her power, or maybe I assumed that she is stronger than me because her eyes never lied, and I never was able to resist her eyes. I just realized I hate myself when I am with her, she was better than me, stronger than me... But I loved myself more when I was without her, I had doubts, how come I feel so small compared to her when I am with her. I missed nightlife, when I was famous and popular, and all girls were looking my way. I loved her, but I felt that something was missing still.

She wouldn't have accepted moving to my place, she used to live with her family, and she was quiet strict about that, I was glad for this, because I didn't want to move out from my home, and go live in her city. I invited her to spend the day at my place many times, but never the night. And whenever anyone visited me, or even her, I never showed them the second floor; I always said that I never use it except for saving old things. The secret I had hidden from all people was that I liked to make sculptured statues, and if I had said that to anyone, he would have laughed till he died. No one could ever imagine how someone like me could be able to be a sensitive person, an artist. This is why I always refused to let anyone to the second floor, where I kept all my tools and pieces that I had made; I loved to sculpture statues of women, I know, it is a typical thinking of a man who adores the females. But there was always this face I used for the statues, a face of the perfect woman for Maxim Sanders; I have always talked to the statues whenever I used to make it, I tried to change this face many times, especially after I got engaged to Rita, but I couldn't. I, even tried to sculpture Rita once, but there was always something wrong that I never finished her statue."

Chapter 3

As Max talked, I could tell that the mystery was there, a man who loves women, would always sculpture women, but he never was able to finish a statue of the one girl who he decided to marry... this is the real mystery. And he resumed "I spent my mornings at work for few months, meeting Rita in the lunch break, or we spent the weekend together. One Saturday night, I asked her to have dinner with me and then I told her I am bored and offered to go dancing, she said ok. And as I drove to a disco, I was just parking the car and she noticed it was a disco, she refused to go in; she said that she thought that we would go dancing in a nice place, not a disco. And after my insistance, she came along, but I noticed how she held my hand tight as we entered the door. And just as we walked in, I was so happy, took a deep breath as if it was nice being in a disco again, she told me to go sit on a table, but I insisted to dance first, I was so excited. What really made me shocked that day is that I discovered she can't dance. I used to dance on classic music with her whenever we went to any classic restaurant, but she used to follow gently, but that night, I realized that she can't dance. I stood there trying to make her sway with me, but it was such a hard mission. For the first time in my life, I stand there in a disco feeling embarrassed. I didn't want to hurt her feelings, and I leaned on her and whispered in her ears that I love her, and then I grabbed her and we left the disco for good. I drove her home, after telling her that it was a good night, and how beautiful she looked, and I kissed her. We never talked about that disco incident at all, though at the beginning she was tensed, but I just didn't want to talk about it.

On the way home, with all that driving I have to do to go back home, I dropped by a supermarket and bought a glass of wine. And on the way home, there was a rainy storm, I parked the car, and I sat there in the car, looking at the window as the windscreen wiper was removing the rain drops, it was raining really heavy that night. I thought what had I got myself into? I lost my identity! I am no longer that fun person who used to party, I love her, yes, but I feel like I miss being myself. With her, I am someone different than myself. Then I drove home, went upstairs, threw my jacket away while holding the bottle of wine, I entered the clay room and I put on the music, opened my wine. I sat there on the sofa, with my legs on the table, drinking wine, and staring at the statues, and I started to mumble things of how I used to be that play boy, and now I am just a man who apologizes for his girl because she can't dance and she doesn't love to go to discos. I was almost drunk, and I stood there describing myself as a wimp, softy, and a man who ran out of manhood, just being around his delicate soft

girl. I stood by the window after I had noticed there was thunder, strong thunder and the sound of the trees was even louder than the music.

Suddenly I felt a strike, the thunder made the sky went all white, I was shocked, my heart almost stopped as I didn't expect it that hard and then I laughed and said "thank god, I am home". And I took a sip of the bottle of wine that I was still holding, and while drinking I just heard a female voice from behind ... "yes, thank god you are home". I couldn't believe my ears, but yet I saw in the window a shadow, so I turned in a rush but I couldn't believe what I saw; it was her "

I stopped him saying "Rita? How come she came all that after you in this rainy storm?", so he nodded "no" with his head and he smiled "it wasn't Rita, it was her, Eve. The girl that I had always sculptured" I laughed a little and said "you were drunk; you thought the statue was a girl?" He smiled and said "I was drunk, but she was no longer a statue, she walked closer instead, and I was standing there stunned. But yet she walked closer saying "I couldn't bear leaving you alone in a night like that, thank god you are here, Max". So I told her "How come?" she smiled and said "you asked for me, I am her, I am your Eve." I smiled as she was really close to me and she was extremely beautiful, with her black hair and round white face, brown eyes. "Who are you, Eve? I didn't ask for anyone". So, she smiled and she took the bottle from my hand and said "you are drunk, Max. Why don't you sit down and I can explain". She took my hand, how delicate and cold her hand was, she was real, she was not made of clay, her hand felt like real skin. And once I sat, she got a blanket which was there, and she covered me. What was more surprising is that she sat next to me and she got herself covered as well. Her face was really beautiful, just like how my hands sculptured her, but she was even more beautiful. She was wearing that white dress with colorful flowers, and her hair was the only accessories she put. She said "you made your wish, of how you want someone to understand the real man you are, you don't have to pretend to be someone you are not, I know who you are and I am here for you. My name is Eve; this is what you called me, the day when you said: she is made of earthenware clay, just like Eve, and let me be her Adam. You remember?" I nodded my head, but what she said was long time ago, like 15 years earlier or something. I said that once as I was so affected by the story of Adam and Eve and how I always thought that Adam had loved Eve so much. Anyway I was so drunk, so all I did was telling her "I am Adam, Eve" and just before I reach her lips to kiss her, I fell asleep."

As he was talking, I sighed, he was such a charming man, even in this age, he knew how to make a woman listen without talking but yet I commented "you were drunk? That is it?" So he smiled "Guess what Catharine, I woke up the next morning in my bed, and just as I opened my eyes I realized that she was sitting next to me and she had been watching me while I was sleeping. I smiled just as I looked at her with my head still on the pillow, she smiled back". Then I said "I am still drunk, Eve?", so she laughed and she stood and got a tray with the breakfast and she put it as I sat and said "don't ask too much Max, this is magic. I made you the breakfast you always liked" so I smiled and joked "as if you know what I like" and just as I looked at the tray, I was again stunned, she had made me Pan cakes with honey and a cup of milk. So she whispered in my ears "just like how mum used to make it for you" I took a bite and I knew for sure I wasn't dreaming; she really knows everything. Just as I was eating in silence and she was watching me, the telephone rang. I answered, it was Rita and she was asking me if I drove safe home, as she had just knew from the radio there was a strong storm, I told her yes, and then she asked me to meet her as planned to go to the lunch of her family. I hang up with her, while telling Eve that I really needed to go, and with no resistance, she helped me get up of the bed, and told me to take a shower. Just as I stepped out of the bathroom, I found her standing there and she had ironed my suit and she insisted to help me get dressed. She even got me the brush and the perfume. I left home, and I was acting weird, I didn't even say good bye to her, Though she was really helpful, but I couldn't resist looking at her as she helped me get ready, but I just left her with no good bye.

That afternoon, I spent it with Rita's family, with all her cousins, uncles and aunts. I smoked a cigar with her dad in the balcony and everything was fine for a normal Sunday at Rita's place. I kissed Rita and left after she wished me a safe trip home. I didn't think of Eve all that day, except on the way home whether I will still find her or not. I parked the car, and I walked through the garden in front of the place, but the lights of the house were off. So I didn't imagine that I might find her there, I opened the door and out of my surprise I stood still."

Chapter 4

"She was there, but this time dressed in a very sexy purple dress, she had turned the music on and two candles only. And before I even speak, she walked to me, took my coat and hung it and then held my hands and before I knew it, we were dancing together on a classic song. I could only see her face on the candle light, was really beautiful, I kept touching her face to make sure she is real, every line, everything I sculptured was there. Her smile was as amazing as her look, as the dance ended; she said "don't you miss a night out? I want to go out". Her wishes were like all the things I ever wanted, I couldn't say "No", and few minutes later we were in Groove Disco, and we were both dancing on disco music, she danced very well though she was not a professional, but she knew how to get along with me, she was so sexy as well. She knew how I move, and she even led me in some moves. I never felt that free for long time, everyone was checking us out.

Back then, I didn't have a lot of friends, not even now, only one friend, but he travelled 2 years before that. So I wasn't that friendly to anyone, no one in my town actually knew that I was engaged, or knew anything about me, even for the many girls who I used to date, none of them knew me that much, as I didn't spend long time with any of them. But Eve, oh, Eve, she had her way to know what I want to do or say with just a look. And Catharine, this was the start of my legend with Eve. The only problem Eve and I had was that I only could meet her at night, after I go home from work, and after meeting Rita. I never changed my way with Rita though, but I always wanted the night to come to run away back home to Eve. We used to go to discos, cinemas, theatres, bars, and even motels. She loved everything I do, and I loved how I saw happiness in her eyes all the time. Every night, for 6 months, she was with me. I sleep only when she is next to me, and I keep playing with her black hair."

"6 months.... Long time I think, how come this didn't really affect your relation with Rita?" I asked. So he stood up and walked around a little, and turned to me and said "I never wanted to hurt Rita. Rita was special, but who can dare to send a woman like Eve away? I used to meet Rita only in lunch breaks and weekends, but Eve had all my nights. I remember we used to talk on candle lights, and how she laughed whenever I told her about my old days, about my adventures with girls, discos and gym. I told her the real reason why sculpture was my hobby, because it was the last thing I remember mum was doing before she died. I was as talented as she was, as she used to teach me even

when she was very sick and how she insisted to make me have a hobby besides being the most handsome man in town as she used to describe me. I thought Eve didn't have stories, but she kept telling me what she sees from the window during the day about other women in the neighborhood. One night, as we were having dinner together in a restaurant, a woman who was sitting in the next table kept staring at us, the thing which made me really angry, and I expressed this to Eve, of how I hate old women staring at us, the thing about Eve is that she was full of surprises and spontaneous, no one could ever make this old woman take her eyes off us except Eve. As she grabbed the chair even closer, and we were sitting so tight and she started whispering things in my ears and even kissed my ears, the old lady had just gone crazy that she finally decided not to look anymore.

One weekend, as Rita travelled with her mum to visit an uncle of hers who was sick, I was available at home. I sat there in the bedroom all day refusing even to have lunch, I didn't want Eve to be busy by anything but me. She insisted she wants to cook lunch for me, but I didn't let her. What was really different that day is that Eve was more silent than usual. I wondered and I asked her, all she said was "I am a little tired" she refused to go out in the morning, so we spent it watching TV, and then by sunset she asked me if there is any place that maybe I want to take her. I gave it a good thought and said "why don't we have a long drive?" and without even thinking, she was ready to leave. I drove the car to the highway and the sun was gone, and I drove very fast, she sat there, next to me, not looking at the road, but watching me, while smiling. And I took her hand and held it while driving, her hair was flying in the dark, I could see it only when we cross the light, and she was singing along with the music on the radio. Suddenly she said "drive faster, Max, faster, faster" I put my legs on the gas, and we were almost flying, she didn't fear the speed, though I was laughing out of how fast we really were. But then she laughed and said "why don't you pull over now? We need to talk" I was astonished but yet I pulled over by the side, and she stepped out of the car, and she stood there by the road, it was a desert road. I walked to her, and it was a bit windy and I asked her "don't you feel cold?" she said "No, don't you just love the night, Max?" as she talked the wind was strong, her hair went all over her face, she stood where the lights of the car was showing her face to me, so I smiled, and helped her take her hair off her face and I said "I love you even more, Eve". Once her hair was off her face, I found her smile beneath, and we definitely kissed. Then I told her "it is really cold, let's go home now" so we got into the car, and she sat next to me almost all the way home, in silence, while putting her head on my shoulder and I was holding her hand.

The next morning, she woke me up since the phone was ringing, it was Rita, who told me that her dad was really ill, and they had that call from her brother, she asked me to run to the hospital and that she would be on the way with her mum. I ran to the hospital, and just I stepped in, I found Frank, Rita's brother crying, telling me that his dad had just died. I stood there, very sad, didn't know what to do, or could think what to say to Rita, or even how I would tell her that, thinking of Rita losing her dad, was killing me. And just 1 hour later, she was there, collapsing after she knew the terrible news. I spent 3 days with them, at their place; I couldn't leave my Rita alone. And god, I felt how much I missed her, when I first saw her. Back at her place, she refused to sleep except if I am sleeping next to her, and she was crying all day and night. I didn't leave her at all, except for the fourth day I had to excuse myself to go to work and to home to get some clothes; I realized that day that I had totally forgotten Eve. And I worried about her, and I thought to call her, but just as I arrived back home that morning, I couldn't find her, she wasn't anywhere, even in the second floor, there were only the other statues of her, but she wasn't there!"

Chapter 5

As we both sat in my office, and we were drinking coffee, I couldn't hide how upset I am of him, and so I told him "Max, if I were in her shoes, I would kill you. I know you were with your fiancée who had just lost her dad, but for god's sake, you forgot all about her". He looked terribly sad and then he said "this was the beginning! I went to work that day, and I couldn't help thinking where she went. I wanted to go home, but I couldn't because I had promised Rita that I would be back, I tried to call home, but no one answered. I spent the night at Rita's, hugging her in her bed while crying in my arms almost all night. But I couldn't help driving back to my home the next morning; I didn't even go to work. I went there, but she wasn't, so I decided to get myself a good sleep because I was really tired of not sleeping all night, as Rita cried. So I took a shower, and I jumped to the bed after closing all curtains. I don't know how many hours I slept, until I heard very classic music, and I felt like I was being kissed. Just as I opened my eyes, it was her, Eve. I was about to ask her, but she put her hands on my mouth and she insisted that we just lay there in the bed listening to music while she was hugging me and holding my hand, moving it with music. She whispered in my ears "close your eyes and fly" it was very relaxing feeling, and I felt her other hand moving on my face, then with her thumb on my lips as I started to sing along with the music.

Just as the song ended, I felt suddenly how much I missed being with her, so I decided to flip her and I was over her, she lied beneath me, with her black hair spread on the white pillow, and looking to me as if her eyes were telling me how much she missed me. I missed her too, this is why I stood on the bed and I started shouting at her "where have you been for God's sake?" She didn't reply, and she looked upset that I spoiled the good time, so she left the bed and she yelled "where have you been for god's sake? You left me? You didn't even bother to ask". I was mistaken, I couldn't reply, but I noticed something, she was wearing a baby blue dress and it was very nice. I looked all around the room, and I told her "where do you get these dresses? Where do you go if you are not here? I never saw you sleeping". I was quite angry, maybe this is why she didn't look fine with all my screaming at her. She shouted back "do you care?? You said you love me, but you think you do?? What am I to you? Ha, Max. Tell me, who am I?" I looked into her eyes and I saw tears, my mind was going to stop, I said "I don't know, you are everything I ever wanted, you make me the person I am, and you don't ask me to change. When I am with you, I know who you are. You are the one, who makes me happy, and I see happiness in your eyes, and I love you, I don't want you to go away

again, do you hear this? Don't you ever think of disappearing like this again". I walked to her and I held her arm very strong, and I assured "never leave this place like this ever again". She nodded her head, with tears dropping from her eyes. I couldn't take seeing tears, I had seen enough with Rita, so I told her "go wash your face, and get ready, we are going out", so she said "it is ok, why don't you get ready, I am fine." And she left the room. For the first time she didn't help me get dressed which made me feel a little weird.

I discovered that it was dark outside, as we stepped of the house, I drove the car and I parked in front of the cinema. And then I turned to her and told her that I don't feel like seeing a movie, so she said I am free to change whatever I want. I told her I want to go dancing, because I was so down the last few days. As we entered the disco, we started to dance, but I wasn't excited, and I felt something strange. She told me that I don't look good, and that I act weird, she tried to make me dance more by trying to dance closer to me, as if she was trying to seduce me to dance, but I didn't respond, so she didn't find anything to do but moving as slow as I was moving. I was looking to her, but I felt something different, sudden feeling of danger is coming or I was too worried. Few seconds later, approached a guy, and he told me "you don't look in the mode of dancing, why don't you let me dance with her?" I don't know what was wrong with me, and he took her. And I was pushed away as people were dancing, I stood there, looking at her, she was taken away from me, but she didn't look happy of my attitude, she kept looking at me, but I stood there watching the guy who was dancing with her. Her eyes told me that she was angry I didn't stop him from taking her from me, and my eyes told her there is something going on, so she looked and I knew very well what she meant. She started to dance with the guy, and she was really good, that the guy himself was amazed by her moves, and before I knew it, and before she knew it, I hit the guy hard.

I drove the car very fast, after that fight that didn't last a lot since he was drunk, which helped me to win and take her and leave. As I drove, the weather was stormy and rainy, and I was really angry, she sat there silent, and was looking at the window. The rain was stronger, that I had to pull over. But she didn't even blink; she kept looking at the window. I yelled "why are you doing this to me?" and she started to laugh "I did that!! You did that!!" Then she looked back at the window and said "I want to go home". I drove slowly till we reached home, she refused to go out of the car as it was still raining, so we had to stay in the car, in silence with rain hitting the window, and we were too silent till I dropped asleep. And though we were angry, I slept on her shoulder, as she

looked at the window still. The next morning, I woke up in a miserable shape, and she wasn't there. I ran to the house, she wasn't there too. I was late for work, so I changed my clothes and left".

Before he continued, I had to make my comment "she was angry you left her all that days, and she wanted to make you feel how angry she was, it is that simple, women.. They all think the same". So he smiled and told me "I know, but she would never understand that Rita needed me". So I smiled and said "you forgot about her, while you were busy with Rita, she knew that, she felt that". So he nodded and added... "It wasn't only that, when I visited Rita again, I had to stay there 2 more days, and of course calling home was meaningless, as I knew that Eve wouldn't be there. After work, I drove home, and I couldn't find her again, and as I went upstairs, I opened the door of my clay, and she wasn't there. So I decided to sit and work a little, and just as I sat on the stool, I couldn't work; I was looking all over the room, as if I was sitting just to tell her to come back. I hated home without her, and I felt lonely, I decided to look at her statues, I even put my hand on one of them, as if I was trying to touch her face. The statue was cold, frozen, and not as beautiful as she was. Suddenly, I heard her whispering in my ears "you missed me?" So I turned to find her, in her red dress. And I hugged her without even thinking, she hugged me closer, that I felt her heart beating so hard, and I could hear her sigh. Then I pushed her a little away and told her "I am sorry, I was out of control". So she held my hand and she kissed it and put it on her face, and she smiled and said "ever told you that your hands give me power, energy, strength? Your smile makes my heart jumps of joy? The sparkle in your eyes whenever you see me makes me understand what you say? Did I ever tell you how much I love you? Your life? You? Max... I love you just the way you are! When you smile, laugh, yell or even scream?" I smiled like an eight- year- old kid, and I hugged her again, then we started kissing. We laid there on the sofa in the clay room, listening to music, while drinking wine; I smelled her hair, and held her hands. How I loved her comment when she said while playing with my fingers of how she loved holding my thumb, then she put her head in my chest while smiling and said "when I touch you, I know how you touch my heart". Then she turned and said "what do you feel when you touch my hand?" as she turned, the spot light was focused on her face, I was shocked when she sat like that, and I couldn't even answer her, What I have seen made me feel how idiot I was.

I have noticed that when she cried, the tears left like scar on her face. I put my finger on it, I was starring at her, and she asked me" what is wrong? Why don't you answer

me?" I didn't want to tell her, that there was a scar on her beautiful face, so I smiled and I told her" I was touching you to know, how a touch on your skin, touches my heart". So she smiled and kissed me saying "I love you my Adam"

Chapter 6

"At lunch break, the next day, Rita came and met me in front of my work, she didn't wait me in the restaurant like usual, but she was standing by a car parking in front of the building. She was wearing black with sunglasses. I walked to her, and I took off her sunglasses, so she looked at me and smiled. For the first time in her life, Rita decided to hug me, in public, and she threw herself on me, I hugged her very close, I was happy that she did that, and though I really felt that she did that just because she felt lonely without me, I was glad she did that to show me how she really needs me. We had lunch that day, and I kept looking at her, as she was chewing the food. We were very silent, and I didn't find anything to say, but I was glad by just watching her while she was eating. Later, I drove her to the bus station, and I went back to work. On my way home, as I drove, I couldn't think clear of what I was doing, I long for the mornings to see Rita, and be with her, while I run at night to be with Eve.

I went home, and Eve noticed that I didn't look fine; she tried to know what was wrong, but I was silent. That night I felt that Eve didn't sleep, as she was watching me all night. When I woke up, I went to the kitchen and she had prepared me a great breakfast, and she looked so dressed up, I looked at her wondering why she was dressed up like that. She handled me a cup of tea and she told me that she needed to talk with me; I felt something was going on but I couldn't guess. She took my hand and she said that it was the right time that I should make up my mind. I wondered "make up my mind about what, Eve?" she said "I love you, and you love me". So I nodded "so?" She smiled and said "you can't sleep the night if I am not there, you are not happy without me". I didn't like what she said and I explained "it is not true". She refused that "you and I know very well that this is not the truth, why do you think I am here for, if you are a happy person?" I really didn't like what she was saying, and I felt that she meant that Rita doesn't make me happy, I was furious because I felt that she is trying to prove to me that Rita is not the one for me, and I never thought of leaving Rita.

My silence was like the answer to her, she saw it in my eyes "you prefer Rita, but how come you don't sleep at night when you are with her? Have you ever thought how I wished I can go out with you in the mornings? You never gave me the chance; you never cared to make me spend a morning with you outside this place. I am here to rescue you, and yet you choose to suffer". I was so angry of her words and I shouted at her "I am not suffering, and you are not here to rescue me". She walked away from me and

turned "then why do you think I am here for?" I don't know what I felt then, but I was shouting at her as if I blamed her for everything in my life, even Rita's father death. And I said "you are here, because I made your face, I created you, I created that thing that ruined my life, and I no longer know who runs this life, but I am sure it is not me" my words were like gunshots to her, and she said "you didn't create me" and she was furious and angry that she shouted that many times.

"You didn't create me, you know nothing about me". I walked to her and I grabbed her hand hard, she tried to resist, but I pulled her even harder, and I pushed her to look at the mirror. She stood there in full silence, while I was holding her tight, and yelling at her "you see, I know who you are, you are something I created to escape from this world, I created you and I taught you everything, and you never resisted, why you are resisting now? Why are you pushing me to do this to you?" Eve stood there, and she put her finger on the scar on her face, and her tears started to fall more, and she knew that with every tear, a new scar was graved on her face. I held her arm strong, and I made her look at me, and I screamed at her "I created you" and before I even recognize it, she pushed me away, and she stood by the door, as we were standing by the mirror in the entrance. She kept repeating that while shouting "you didn't create me, you know nothing, you prefer to suffer than admitting that you love me and not her. You didn't create me, and I wish you suffer because you chose her, I love you Max, but you have to know that I love the sun even more. And if you think the morning is hers, and the night is mine, now you will know the reality, that you will no longer enjoy the mornings, or the nights. And you will suffer, because you thought you created me. And though I hate to see you suffer, but I know for sure, that I love the sun, and I will be out in the sun, I will enjoy my mornings, and you will suffer your whole life." I was standing there shocked of her words, she was angry and she was yelling. Eve was never like that, and it shocked me, I couldn't understand what she meant, I thought she will leave me forever as she opened the door, but I never imagined that once she opened the door that she will vanish forever."

"Vanish?" I wondered, so he nodded and said "she turned into dust, just like the vase last night", I sighed and I looked to him since I understood the story. He looked at me as if he wondered of what I was thinking of, so I gave him a pat on the shoulder, and said "Maxim, you are one great selfish man on earth, you wanted to have everything. Rita's purity and Eve's everything. You thought that a playboy like you can fall in love with a

pure and innocent girl like Rita, like fantasy love stories, of how an innocent girl can turn a playboy into a gentleman in the end, but in the same time, you wanted to live the life you always dreamt of with Eve. Eve was everything you ever wanted, you made her statue, but she wasn't made by you. She made you live, you didn't make her live. And I guess, her spell is even stronger, you are a man that doesn't sleep, not in the night, or even in the mornings. You are not enjoying your life, and you still suffer." He stood up, he looked angry, but yet seemed like I understood what he was trying to say, and he stood by one of the statues and stared at it and he in quite voice said "Few month later, I married Rita, and the first thing she did when I decided to live as a family in my place, was that she went to the second floor and said that I have to get rid of all that mess. She hated the smell; she always thought that these things belonged to mum and not me. We had 2 girls later, but since the day Eve vanished I never sleep, and I am not a happy person. Though Rita is such a fabulous woman, and my girls, how much I love them, but though all this, I never felt I am myself when I am with her, or them and I miss myself. I always cheated Rita, but was very careful not to let her notice. I always thought of Eve with every woman I slept with, I sometimes drive on the highway very fast, just to feel her sitting next to me watching me, I pull over in the desert at night, and I sit there wishing if I can ever see her face again."

I walked to him and held the statue that he was staring at, and said "and since then you can't touch sculptures?" He nodded, yes. I put the statue back in place and I told him "why did you decide to tell me this story? Why me?" He laughed and looked at my tools, and said "I thought you were smarter than that, Catharine" I didn't get what he meant, until he dragged a file from his coat, and he handled it to me, and asked me not to open it until he leaves, and he left.

Once I opened the file, I was surprised, it was sketches of a woman, a face of a woman, and he drew her from all sides. Max was a smart man; he knew very well that I would stay up all night sculpturing her. I don't know how he knew I would be acting like this, but that was what happened, I spent all night in the gallery after I called Kenny and told him that I had a very important project and that I will be working on it, he refused that I stay over in the gallery but I insisted. So he came after his work and he decided to lock me inside the gallery, after describing me of being "the crazy girl I got myself into" and kissing me.

Chapter 7

By 8 am, the next morning, the statue was ready and she was really such a beautiful woman. I was so sleepy, but all of a sudden I realized I forgot it was the children's day, so I ran to prepare the room for the children as they are used to come at 10 am. Kenny passed earlier and opened the door for me; I started receiving children at 10 am, with their mums telling them that they would come back later to pick them up. Just one boy came in, I remember him, and his name was Joe, his dad used to drop him every week. That day, Joe's dad told me that he wouldn't be able to pick him up and that his mum would come instead. I took all the kids, and I showed them how to color statues, that I used to save for them to color every week. I was sitting with them, while drinking coffee to wake up and help them as they try to color. I was almost falling asleep, but I was surprised later by Kenny. He came and he got me breakfast, and he was so nice offering me a little massage, while eating. And he asked me to show him the masterpiece I worked on. I took him to my office where I kept it hidden from the kids, and he said "this is a very beautiful face, what is the story?" And before I answer him, saw Max standing by the door, so I asked him to come in. I introduced him to Kenny who was standing in a way that didn't make Max able to see the statue. So I told him "Max, she is ready" he said "really?", so Kenny made space so that Max could see the statue, he walked to her, and he was staring at her, he turned to see every single detail, even her hair, and then he looked at me and said "I knew you could make it, but did you tell Kenny the story?". Kenny smiled and looked at me, I knew what he meant, and he was asking me by this smile to say that I share everything with him, so I didn't want to let him down. So I told Max "Yes, sure" so Max walked to Kenny and said "you think I am crazy?" so Kenny couldn't help it, but to say "No" and just as Max looked at the statue of Eve, he told her "I wish I could only see you once, so that I can sleep, I am suffering, does this make you happy? I now know the truth; I didn't create you, Eve. Look at you; I didn't make you this time, can't you just let me see your face one more time or even forgive me?"

As Max was talking to Eve, Kenny looked at me in a way to say how he thinks Max is crazy. And I waved to him "No"... Max stood few seconds staring at her, but the statue didn't seem to react, which drove Max to get really upset, and then he turned to me "she is not coming, she wants me to suffer". So I looked to him with sad eyes, and I couldn't find anything to say and just as he looked at me, his hands were moving towards the statue. And then he said "I am sorry" while he was looking at me, Kenny

didn't know what was going on, but he certainly guessed after Max touched the statue and it turned to dust. Kenny was more surprised than me, I expected that the statue would turn to dust, but I was looking to Max because I was happy to see that look in his eyes. Kenny turned to me and said "I need an explanation from both of you, how come did this happen? How did you do that? It turned into dust!!" We both looked at him, as we didn't know what to say, I tried to calm him down by telling him that I would be telling him the whole story later, and Max was yelling at me because I lied to him, about telling Kenny.

As the 3 of us were fighting, Joe walked in, so I asked them to be quite. Joe apologized for walking in, but he said his mum was here and wanted to tell me something, I apologized to him, and told him "sure, sure, let her in, I am sorry about the loud voice, we were discussing some business, where is your mum?" So he walked out, and then the door was opened full, by her entrance. Max, Kenny and I were almost paralyzed seeing her, it was Eve. She walked in, and she introduced herself as "Mary Ann Carlos, Joe's mother" while shaking hands with me and then she added "I have heard a lot about you Catharine, too shame it is that late that I meet you". So I said "it is ok, nice meeting you Mrs. Carlos" so she smiled and clarified "call me, Mary Ann, you know Catharine, I know why Joe is sad leaving town, he kept saying because he enjoyed his days in this place with all the kids, but really I need to tell you, you have such a beautiful place." So I smiled and felt terribly sorry for Max, but I wanted to know more "you are leaving town?" so she smiled and said "I hate this town, since we moved here last year, I don't know why I hate it, but I think because I loved living in California, with all the sun out there". So I laughed, and I turned to Max, and I told her "I am sorry, Mary Ann, let me introduce you, this is Kenny my fiancé". So Kenny smiled to her, and then I looked to Max and I told her "this is Maxim Sanders, one of my best friends" so she smiled to him. And she decided to shake hands with him, while she didn't do that with Kenny, as she approached Max. I was surprised of his words to her "I am sorry", so she smiled and walked back and said "thank you". So he continued, "I am sorry you are leaving". She was nice enough to thank him again, and then she approached me, and she shakes my hands too, and said "Good bye Catharine". And as she was just one step away from me, I noticed something weird; she did have a scar, a small scar under her eye. I couldn't believe my eyes, but yet I replied "Good bye Marry Ann." And then I bend over to Joe and said "Thank you Joe for coming over, I will miss you"... I hugged him and they both left.

Max, Kenny and I were still in shock, and I turned to Max and said "she has a scar" so he said "I told you" so Kenny added "she is even more beautiful than the statue, were you stalking her, old man?" So I punched him in his stomach and said "No". And then I looked at the dust of the statue, and I told Max "let's do it again" so he smiled and said "it is over, Catharine, no one can make her, she is gone". I didn't believe him and I insisted that I try, but he insisted that he would leave even before I try. And he walked away, leaving me and Kenny totally silent. I tried to hold the dust, but it didn't turn again into statue.

Few days later, Kenny and I, accidentally met Max in the park, and he was sitting in the sun, on a deck. And I asked him "you still think of her, Max?" So he smiled and said "why do you think I am sitting in the sun? But at least now, I can sleep at night". Kenny sat next to him, and he grabbed me too to sit next to them. The three of us sat there enjoying the sun, which was very strong that morning. What surprised me really was what Kenny decided to say, as a way to condolence Max, but yet like giving me a relief of mind. He said "After I heard your story, I gave it a thought, what I would do if I was in your shoes? And the only answer that kept running in my head over and over again was choosing Eve. Not because I knew how you suffer now, but because if you give up the person you are, you end up lost, and angry of those who made you change yourself into the man, that is not you!" That morning, I knew for sure, why Kenny always loved me, because I never asked him to change; on the contrary I always supported him and gave him a push forward and deep inside him. He knew he has to please me, and maybe this is why he always asked me what more can he do to please me, and how I loved him when he said that. Staying there in the sun was the nicest thing I ever did in many years, I leaned on Kenny's shoulder and I was so happy, I felt how Kenny was happy too. But all that changed just few minutes later, we both discovered that Max died, as he was laying there with his legs stretched, his head looking up to the sun and with his eyes shut and smiling. Though we were sorry that he died, Kenny and I were not sad, we knew how he suffered of how he madly loved Eve and could no longer have her. He became like a mad lover, or in this case a mud lover, that couldn't live without her. All he wished for was seeing her face again, and he saw it, but he should have wished to be with her and not only to see her face, anyway Max had his last wish come true, so it was the right moment for him to finally rest in peace.

***The Magic
Of Walking***

Chapter 1: The daily date

That morning, when I opened my eyes because the sun lights were so strong in the room, I was quite astonished, as it is never that sunny in March. I remembered when I was young, sleeping in my tiny bed, with the bears and bunnies all over the blankets, I could recognize the voice of my mum, yelling from down stairs, "It is breakfast time". I never was a morning guy, never imagined I could be. Why did I wake up that morning? That exact morning, this early? Why? It was what believers call, my destiny.

As I woke up, I felt no sense of anything, not my hands, legs or even head. Where am I? This is my normal feeling every morning, maybe it is not normal for other people but it is for me. Once I got aware that I was lying in my bed, rolled my body with blankets, but this time, no bunnies, I was feeling my hair had gone fizzy, and suddenly heard a voice, a bird, yes, it was a bird. I closed my eyes; I could hear it much clear, a sunny morning with birds singing on the tree, and it is not just a tree. I do remember when I was moving out from my ex- girlfriend's place and I kept looking for a new place to move into and I stood right in front of this house and I said: "this is home". It was a great choice, even if I had a great offer, this is why I bought it- how smart I was- a lot of my relatives envied me for choosing to live in such a neighborhood. I opened my eyes, and finally decided to get up, as I sat, and moved my legs slowly till they hit the floor, removed that blanket, and stood up. I walked slowly to the bathroom, and as I walked, I could easily recognize how filthy it is to be a bachelor. My room was such a mess, my clothes all over the place- I even can't tell when was the last time I have done my laundry- I felt that it is getting colder, I forgot to wear the god damn robe, and I am walking only in my boxer, half naked with fizzy hair, how sexier can I be?

I remember I stood that day in front of the mirror in the bathroom, right after I washed my face, shaved my beard, looking so white, with my brushed black hair, and white teeth, as I just got them brushed. And I, then, could finally feel my hands, legs and head functioning, but just I gave it a thought of how it will be just fine to drink a cup of hot coffee. I walked to the kitchen, and as I walked, it is quite clear I am a bachelor; maybe I should have called Mrs. Stuttgart to come and clean the place as usual. This woman always had a magnificent analysis of my place, as I do recall that day she was yelling at me with her strange accent telling me how to put glasses in the tub right after I drink my coffee, and how she hates coffee. It was quiet funny that day when I asked her which is better to her: coffee or beer. She replied innocently and assured me, "nothing is

better than a beer". Even though I considered her advice, as no one can know drinks more than maids, as she used to serve drinks in a bar back in her country. I made my coffee, black as usual and I walked to the balcony, to enjoy the beauty of the house I bought and check the neighborhood like my usual habit.

That day, everything was pretty different, the houses, cars, roads, little kids were even playing in Mr. Huffman's garden, I didn't know that this guy has kids! , Mrs. Pierce, oh, this woman couldn't be any prettier while she is taking care of the red flowers in her amazingly planted garden. That was the life I miss every day. I had a look on the tree, how I wish this tree was in the backyard at mum's home, how I always dreamt of having a tree house, to play there with my little friend Jack, this jerk called Jerky Jack, my little buddy. The weather was a little windy, and I was feeling cold; since the bathroom was a bit hot after my steamy shower, I didn't wear my shirt, just my dark blue bath robe, I had forgotten to wear the shirt since I was too busy drawing a cat on the steamy mirror in the bathroom. I tried to hold the cup of coffee closer, and was almost going to take a sip; I blew it first, and then sipped. I closed my eyes because the smell of the coffee was pretty strong, and I enjoyed every single drop of it, my hands were getting warm, when out of a sudden my heart almost stopped. The moment I opened my eyes, I captured in my sight, a girl, I couldn't describe her, she was very far away, but the wind was a bit strong pushing her to walk slowly, her black scarf was almost flying, she was wearing a red coat and a black scarf matching her black hair, the wind was not so kind, though the sun was. I couldn't tell if it was a heart attack, or a new seizure of not feeling my hands, legs and head. I couldn't hear the bird no more, the sound of the leaves on the amazing tree, nor Mr. Huffman's kids. I can only recognize one thing, just one thing: The footsteps of her shoes.

She was walking in the middle of the street, a confident woman, she was sure there will be no car passing by. She didn't choose to walk on either sides of the road, she walked in the middle of the street, she walked with her high heels that were ticking, and so was my heart. She was carrying something, I couldn't tell if it was a laptop or a book, I can smell the coffee, it was fresh coffee mixed with the fresh air, I tried to take another smell, maybe I can smell this beauty's perfume from far away, but the coffee was taking control. As she came closer, and closer, I felt like I should take my eyes off her, so that she wouldn't think that I am staring at her from my balcony on the first floor, it would have been so obvious that I was staring at her. As she walked closer, the voice was becoming stronger, tick, tick, tick, and so were my heart beats ticking inside. For my

great shock, she suddenly stood right in front of the building next to mine. It seemed like she was carrying something heavy, oh, yes, it was clear then that she carried books, many books, and maybe she stopped as they were slipping from her hands, and that was when she glimpsed me, and I was staring at her, she looked back at me, then she just walked. As she was looking at me, I felt like having a heart attack, I held my breath believing that she might smile, but she didn't, how fool I was believing a girl walking in the American streets would actually smile to a stranger staring at her. I felt sad as she walked away like she took my heart with her. I kept watching her as she walked, until she faded by the end of the street. Though my hands were getting warm because of the coffee, I felt that all my body was now warm too. I stood for a minute, took another breath then left the balcony.

I do remember that day very well, as it started different and ended different. It ended when I was shutting down my computer in the office, and smiling as I decided that I was not going anywhere that night but home, I left the office, and drove my car in the rainy weather, I went home and decided to sleep as soon as I could, just to wake up early the next morning. And so was it, I slept, and woke up the next morning, smiling, staring at the ceiling of my bed room, then turned while sleeping and looked at the clock, it was 8, just like yesterday. I, immediately, got up, and went to the bathroom for my shower, and then I stood there that time, not drawing on the steamy mirror, but I wiped the steam away and looked at myself as if I was checking how I looked right before I go on a date. Then I made my coffee, and I still could see the mess in the place, I forgot to call Mrs. Stuttgart as I decided the day before.

I took the coffee and ran in to the balcony, but just as I stood by the window I recognized, it was not sunny, it is dark and raining, not heavily, but it was raining, I was confused, and what shall I do? I ran in to get a scarf from the bedroom, I couldn't find one easily; I threw most of the scarves on the floor while searching for the black one, just to fit my black trousers and baby blue shirt. And I opened the balcony, it was calmer, no kids playing in the garden, even Mrs. Pierce was not checking her red roses, which were strikingly red that day after being washed by the rain. I looked right, and I hoped I can see my girl, so I closed my eyes, smelled the coffee, then I opened my eyes but didn't find her, I was so disappointed, so hating the rainy weather, the silence in the street, I took a sip of the coffee, and I was just leaving the balcony, as my shirt was almost wet by the rain, and then I stood still, I can hear ticking, I stared, my heart beats were harder, and I turned, yes, it was her, yes, yes, it was her. She was walking again in

the middle of the street, but today she was wearing a black coat and a pink scarf, she was covering her hair with the scarf, it was not windy that day, and she was not carrying anything. She walked closer, I could still hear the ticking of the high heels, and as she walked closer, she looked up, our eyes met, she looked at me, yaaay, and she looked at me ... Halleluia! but she didn't stop that time, and I was too confused that I didn't even smile, she didn't stop, on the contrary she walked, I watched her again till she faded. Then in a sudden I heard the thunder, and the rains were getting stronger. I ran into my place, drank another sip of the coffee, and left it on the table, and I went to the bedroom. I opened the cupboard, I was looking for the umbrella, as I couldn't leave the place without it, I found it, and grabbed the coat too. I left the bedroom, and was wearing the coat, I finally decided to pick up the phone and call Mrs. Stuttgart to come clean the place the next day. I should have done it long time ago, that call.

It took me three successive days watching this girl, every morning at the exact time, everyday with a different coat and a different scarf, but the same walk. Every day she looked my way, and every day I just couldn't even smile, and I, who thought I know how to deal with women, impressively, stood there like a statue every morning, no wonder why she never smiled; no woman will even consider smiling to a statue. With every sip of the coffee, I felt I became an addict to coffee in the balcony, but at least, thank god, I called Mrs. Stuttgart to come clean the mess, and all that cups of coffee everywhere. But how fool I am, to stand there in the balcony every morning! The weather didn't rain during these 3 days, just pure sunny days, a little cold, but fresh, and I was never able to smell her fragrance, how sure I was that she smells as fresh as Mrs. Pierce's flowers.

The next morning, I stood there in the balcony, but she didn't show up, I was angry, almost frustrated, how come she disappointed me like that? I stood there staring at the end of the road; she didn't show up, that was it?? I wondered. That day, was the day I decided to spend all the night in the bar with my best friend: Jerky Jack and 2 other chicks he said he will bring along. That night as far as I remember, was loud; the DJ man was playing this loud collection of hip hop music. Jerky Jack danced with one of the girls, she was a red head in black leather pants and a red shirt, she had her nose pierced, and she was much louder than the music itself, she was drinking Whisky as a drunk, she kept laughing loud and she was damn crazy. My girl was silent, but she kept touching me all around. As we were on the dance floor I was swaying with the music, she kept turning around me, like a snake, and dancing up and down, I couldn't deny that she was sexy, but I wasn't in a good mood. All I was thinking was my bed; I wanted to run to it and

sleep until the next morning. Jerky Jack, with his girl were enjoying their time, but the girl with me, was upset that I was not even responding to her amazing seduction. When we sat, Jerky Jack was sitting right next to me, he took a sip of his beer and asked me: "Cuantine, the girl is dying for you, can't you see how hot she is". I felt like I am disappointing him, we were the two handsome guys hitting on girls, since very long ago, how come I disappoint him like that. I drank my whisky, all in a sudden, and that was when I found that girl was hitting on me, kissing me and whispering in my ears if she could come with me to my place, she was wondering if I was living far from the bar. I looked at her, I remember this very well, and I felt my heart was going to explode. Then Jack stood with his loud girl and said they were leaving. They were so drunk, and could hardly walk, but they were flirting as they walked away. I was so drunk myself, and I could feel the hands of the girl moving on my chest, she was whispering things I can't remember, while kissing me on my cheek and neck.

The next morning, I opened my eyes, staring at the ceiling, I could barely open my eyes, and I was awake out of a sudden when I realized that it was the time I should run to the balcony. I was about to get up, and that was when I realized that the girl was sleeping next to me, her hand was on my chest, she was hugging me. I looked at her face, she was sleeping tight out of the alcohol effect, with her black eye shadow that melt and her messy brown hair on the pillow next to mine, I pulled myself slowly and I looked at the watch, I could make it. I grabbed the shirt I was wearing the night before, and the pants, put them on and ran to the balcony, it was at the exact time, as if my biological watch just woke me up. I stood there for a minute, I could not see anything. Nothing was there, no one was there. But I suddenly heard Mr. Huffman's kids running out their house, to the garden, and I could see Mr. Huffman and his wife, they were all dressed up, Mrs. Huffman was wearing a dress, and a hat. I stared at her, and then I laughed, I was so happy, never could have been happier "it is Sunday". They were going to church, all dressed up for church, yes, Sunday, it is weekend, and Saturday was weekend, how silly I was not to remember it was the weekend.

Chapter 2: Finally getting engaged!

For sure, that night, Sunday's night, I couldn't sleep. Weird how a girl, just a walking girl, wearing high heels can make Cuantine Riege's head over heels like that. I woke up at 5 am, and I was not sleepy. I took a shower, and worked for a while on my laptop in the living room, I wanted to be as close as I can to the balcony. All I could hear was the ticking off the clock, I wasn't distracted as I never had hard time to do what I do for work, I am a web developer, always loved computers, so nothing encouraged me to create more than such a motive: A ticking girl. That is what I decided to call her! I recognized that the word "ticking" was the core of my life in that period, ticking girl, ticking clock! I sat there till 8, and I was thinking, as the clock was ticking, I will hear her shoes ticking, what if she was not going to show up this time? I had fear, I was worried, and yet I was totally astonished of my attitude, If only jerky Jack knew his friend turned to be a fool!! Cuantine Reige, the Vampire, hell what, I was never a womanizer; we just kept calling ourselves names like that as motives not to fear girls. "Fear girls" why did I remember that word? I fear her? I fear talking to her? No, I am not, if I want, I will talk to her, I don't fear her. Wait, maybe I should!

I knew that day I wore my brown coat, looking all handsome, with a yellow shirt and a brown scarf, I needed to be as elegant as she was. I think I finished a bottle of Dolce and Gabbana: The One; I needed to throw my spell on her. I ran down the stairs, fearing I might miss seeing her coming from the end of the street, I wouldn't miss this chance of seeing her coming from far away, as the sun rises, shinning the world. It was a good choice I wore that coat, as it was so cold. But just like a cowboy, as proud as a man can be, I stood there, right in front of the tree, hoping it was a lucky thing, I looked up fearing I might be unlucky if a bird decided to say hello and mess all my incredible outfit. There weren't any birds up there, and as I looked down, I smiled, here she came, My ticking girl, and for sure my heart couldn't stop, I was standing on the side of the road, under the tree, and I could, from there, hear the ticking.

I hesitated first, and I felt so cold, I shivered, and I could see the smoke of my breath in the cold weather. I am a strong man; I am a strong man that was my internal encouragement. I walked slowly and stood right in the middle of the street, she was approaching, and deep inside I was praying it is never like unlucky movies when the man loses his girl, as a car might show up of nowhere killing any of us. But no, no cars, but for sure Mr. Huffman's kids were playing their silly games, and they were singing

Jingles, come on kids, Christmas jingles in March, grow up! Come on Cuantine, focus; she is coming. How I noticed her from that small distance, she was more beautiful than I imagined her to be. She was approaching and she was looking at me, I couldn't tell was she looking because I blocked her way or because she wanted to say something, that girl was really hard to predict. I thought that she would change her lane of walking as I was blocking her way and she was so close, but she didn't, instead she stood right in front of me, and she didn't take her eyes off me, and I couldn't take my eyes off her. And I was thinking to myself: "say something, say something, smile, wink, anything" and I was just about to talk, when she just looked down, and then I noticed her eyes getting away, and then looking back to me, then she was almost going to leave, I yelled inside myself: "she is leaving, she is leaving, do something". Her shoulder was already next to mine, she was almost leaving, and that is when I whispered but not in her ears, I whispered while closing my eyes, and taking a deep breath: "Don't leave".

No one believed me when I told them what I did, not even Jerky Jack. As if I told kids that Santa Clause doesn't exist. But yet, I did it, in March of the following year, I officially announced to everyone: Cuantine Reige is getting engaged to the beautiful ticking girl: Ms. Saja Alain. As I drove my Jaguar to the place we rented for our engagement, in the country side, the weather was as fresh as it was when I first met her; it has been an amazing year with Saja, even though Jerky Jack thought it was not enough time to get married to a girl. He spent the whole day before the engagement, almost 3 hours, convincing me of leaving all this behind and going to Vegas with him and his red head girl, what was her name?? Ah, Velvet!! What a name, Jerky! I won't deny I got a little hesitated back then since I didn't know a lot about Saja. But I knew enough to be sure that I wanted to spend the rest of my life with this amazing ticking girl.

All the way to the village, we were getting engaged in, was great, no cars, and no traffic; just green trees and hills all the way. As I was approaching the place, as my GPRS started to mention that, I was driving down a ramp, and then oh my god, what was that! It was a palace with great garden, caterer cars, VIP limousines, and Press!! And as I approached slowly, I could notice a lot of people running to my car, move people, move; I stopped the car instead of hitting someone. And one of the press people actually asked me with the microphone: "are you ready, groom, to marry the beautiful Saja?" "Who?" what are these people talking about? One of the security people came and made a space for me to drive while I was looking to the press people, and I moved

the car, parked in front of the palace, and I saw beautiful decorations all around, and in the entrance there was a sign made of roses: "Magic of walking... Saja Alain... finally is getting engaged!"

Chapter 3: John Smith and the wizard of Oz

I couldn't feel my hands, legs or head again, it is like seizures I have or maybe when I get worried or confused I feel like that. I ran into the palace, and everyone kept stopping me by saying: Congratulations. I swear I knew nobody there, I ran and ran and ran up the stairs, till I hit my mum, thank god, someone I knew, even mum was looking relaxed wearing purple like every single balloon or flower in the palace, she was not worried like I was, I knew from her that Saja was waiting for me in a room as she needed to talk with me before we start the party, but she didn't want to tell me anything or answer my wonder of why the press was there. I walked in a path, full of rooms, and then I felt like I was lost, all the rooms looked the same, and out of a sudden I heard a whisper in my ears: "Don't leave" I couldn't be any happier because I heard the voice that I wanted to hear, and I turned to find my beautiful Saja wearing also a purple dress but she was as beautiful as a diamond, and she asked me not to panic, and not to leave. I knew she would understand what I was going through, and she helped me relax, just like how I asked her not to leave a year before. she grabbed my hands and pulled me behind her to a room, a very fancy room, like the rest of the palace, and she made me sit, and slowly she sat on the floor, and put her hands on my knees, I was very amazed by her look, and the beauty of the place and more than all this, the press outside.

With a beautiful smile, she finally came up confessing, "Cuantine, I am a famous writer". I never imagined a writer actually can be famous except if when they win an award. But she continued saying: " my book, Magic of walking, won best seller awards 5 times, for the 5 editions, honey, I am a famous person and I always worked hard to keep you away out of this" I wasn't upset at the beginning, it is awesome that a man found himself a famous sexy celebrity, though all her words were new to me, I always noticed that her clothes were fancy, her perfumes, oh, her perfumes, and her bags, and the necklaces, oh my god, I , for 1 year, I didn't notice that my love is a celebrity, she didn't hide it, but it is me who was blinded by her love. But she kissed me, and maybe that was the reason I survived in this world for. "I will make you read the five editions of the book after the engagement" regardless to the fact that she had a Porsche and always wore diamonds which I never figured out how she gets them, I loved this girl and will always do.

In the garden, we made an entrance, and I bowed on my knees, and I opened the box, of the diamond ring I bought her, how silly I was, as if she needs another diamond ring. But I could see how happy she was, whenever I looked at her, I knew I made the perfect choice. I don't mind if she is a writer, I knew that she is a writer, but I thought like a humble writer. How stupid a man can be when he involves himself with work and girls, and not even consider knowing the names of the bestselling books! Or writers!!! Due to the fact that all the press was out of the garden; people were more relaxed, we danced a classic dance that we didn't even practice, and it was a perfect dance. And we started to mingle with people, and I saw my little family, I was more relaxed then.

But as I walked with her, we noticed jerky Jack, with his drunken Velvet, and she was standing right next to the bar puking, he left her and ran to us and congratulated us, and he politely, like a gentleman, kissed my Saja's hand, as if he was King Luis the fifteenth. Jerky!! He asked her if he can have me for a minute, and pulled me saying that he knew the secret behind all the press. I told him I already knew that she is a writer, but jerky jack called me jerky! He said something I never forgot, he lowered his voice and said: "it is the book, you have to read the book" and I made fun of how creepy he was. Jerky is talking like creep, like the wizard of Oz telling me to watch out of something. I turned around and I couldn't find Saja, and then I left Jerky to look for her. As I walked I noticed something weird, all the people are looking at me as if I was John Smith, and I even noticed a girl winking to me. So I moved faster like John Smith looking for his Pocahontas. I couldn't find her, and I felt no sense again of my hands, legs or head.

I turned my eyes all over the place, but I kept seeing people I don't know. Then I heard a new song playing, it was our song, and I found all the people making space just for me to walk, and I, then was able to find my Saja, she was as beautiful as sun shine. As I walked to her, I still can feel all eyes hunting me, but I held her hands and we danced, and danced, we were so happy, I can see her innocent smile, I used to tell her you have an innocent smile when you are happy, it reminded me of the smile that she smiled when we were standing in the middle of that street right in front of my house, when I asked her not to leave. Back then, she smiled, and looked at me, and I said something, I finally was able then to say something: "whoever you are, I will be glad to have a cup of coffee with you". When she nodded yes, I was happy that I never listened to Mrs. Stuttgart asking me to quit drinking coffee.

Chapter4: Walk and talk

It was after our engagement party by few days, when I started to get over this kisses effect between Saja and me. She refused to let me go, we were hanging in her place all the time. I never saw a girl as happy as she was. We loved each other endlessly, but whenever she is not around, she is in the bathroom maybe, I doubt, I have doubts, what is in the book?? I am missing something, I need to know. And it is not from her, I need to know on my own, what is in the book. Jerky Jack was not such a suspicious person, but to warn me, I am sure there is something weird. It didn't take much time alone, and Saja came asking me to get ready to go to the opera house as we were going to attend a ballet show of the Swan Lake. In a golden dress, and her amazing simple makeup, with golden accessories, Saja was waiting for me to finish wearing the suit, she wouldn't let me leave without making sure my golden tie was just in shape, she was 1 cm away from me, her fragrance was so strong that I asked her not to go to the opera and we can stay together better. But she made a point, we spent around 5 days in her place without going out, plus she would like to wear this amazing golden dress matching my golden tie and appear together as an official couple in the street. So we agreed to leave. I drove her Porsche, she was so elegant in her fur and I really felt like I was fine, that was Saja the girl I spent one year with and loved. As we parked the car, we met another couple by the entrance, she introduced me to the Cooper's, Mrs. Cooper was a hot blonde making use of the money of old Mr. Cooper, anyone can tell this! As we entered Mr. Cooper was talking with Saja, so I was left behind with Blondie Barbie, this is what I called her deep inside me. As we were standing together, Blondie Barbie asked me how many miles I walked with Saja, and she winked. I couldn't tell if she was asking something dirty in a good way, or she was just trying to cheat on Mr. Cooper. When I was silent out of my ignorance, she thought I was silent out of my love to Saja, so she added: "you know I tried to walk, but I just can't see what she means" the more this Barbie talked, the more I got confused, I was curious to know but what the hell she was talking about.

That ballet show was a nightmare for me, I was sitting on my chair not seeing the show, I was thinking, and I couldn't imagine what the people might be talking about. But the way she held my hand during the show confused me more. I just don't want to ask her, I need to find it out myself.

I knocked the door, of the apartment number 23, and I found Velvet opening the door, she looked like a drug addict, but she just let me in, I don't remember that I had a conversation with Velvet before or even then. Anyway, I found Jack sitting on the chair watching TV, I asked him to put on his clothes and meet me downstairs. Jack and I entered one of the most famous libraries in town, as we were walking by the shelves, Jack told me that he overheard the people in the party talking about the miles we walked together, and when he asked, he knew that Saja writes coaching books called: Magic of walking. The book says a lot of her experiences, love life experiences, and how people can make use of it. No wonder why people were staring at me. Jack thought we will find dirty stuff written in the book and that was actually why he was excited to read with me. We sat in the library, after we bought the five editions and we started reading, I read few sentences from every page:

"The definition of walking: only one foot at a time leaves contact with the ground and there is a period of double-support. Chapter 1: Walking speeds: can vary greatly depending on factors such as height, weight, age, load, culture, effort, and fitness. Chapter 2: Walking and diseases: Walking reduces health risks and has various overall health benefits, such as reducing the chances of cancer, diabetes, heart disease and depression. Chapter 3: Walk and talk: My dates were usually walking me home, whenever I needed to know a man well, I asked him to walk me home. Walking encourages men to talk, so he walks, then he talks. Out of breaking the ice, guys start talking while walking as to relieve themselves of the burdens of life. Chapter4: Walking and History: You can know more about your man's ex- lovers as he walks with you. Always ask him to accompany you even if you are walking a few blocks away from home. Make chance, lose weight and make him lose weight. Have better life with your husband as you walk. Chapter 5: walking techniques: Just get out there and walk. I call this the plain old walking technique, one step in front of the other! You've been doing it your entire life, and whether it's for exercise, or walking the dog, there are lots of benefits to be gained from it. I encourage you to continue to know your man more. Chapter6: Footwear: Wear your Nike, Adidas or even Gucci, Just hit the road."

Jerky Jack and I, read the books just like that, titles of the chapters and a story with every chapter. I recognized that my Saja, my ticking girl, walked with around 25 guys. And she is advising people to get to know about the benefits of walking with their guys. Not only this, according to the newspapers, many walking campaigns were held on the honor of this book, to support causes. Saja was a hit, the book was pretty fine and

useful, but 25 ex- boyfriends!! Is what I only thought about? I realized why people were staring at me? 25 ex boyfriends and she chose me. Jack was fascinated about the idea that my cute Saja appeared to have quite a number of relations with guys. I suddenly had my seizure, and I ran away from the library, Jack was supportive but he didn't know the real reason of my anger: She never walked with me!

Chapter 5: The collapse

How can I resist her cute smile? I have never seen a girl as innocent as she was. She was funny, active and very social. Everyone just liked her, and I, poor me, have fallen so deep in this angel. She was sleeping next to me, a perfect face, she was all covered, how she grabbed the quilt and covered herself with, I could see nothing but her face, her cheeks were so attracting. I stared at her as I felt I am losing her, and how I don't want to lose her. She never walked with me, why? Why? I was going crazy out of suspicion, and I was never a suspicious person. My pride just held me back of asking her, I loved her, and she will always be my ticking girl. How happy she was to be with me, but how was she with the other 25 guys? I am jealous, but why would I be jealous, I am around her all the time for a year now. True I didn't try once to read what she wrote, but I trusted that she is talented, and I always asked her to write more, but how stupid I was not asking her what her book was about.

One day we went to the club, where all her friends were there. And again I saw Mr. & Mrs. Cooper. Barbie was wearing just like Barbie; she had her tennis dress and was so sexy that all the waiters were always staring at her legs. We were sitting with all of her friends at a very large table, but we were sitting right next to each other that Saja held my hand all the time, though she was busy talking with the people about her last TV interview with David Letterman and how funny he was with her. Saja never talked about her book or discussed it with them. Barbie was sitting in front of me, and while Mr. Cooper was busy talking with another old lady sitting next to him, who I was sure that she was his mistress, fool old men!! I suddenly felt something hitting me. I was shocked and I stared at the table, with the white elegant covers and blue decorations, I felt that thing hitting me again. I was confused but yet I realized what is happening, it is Mrs. Cooper. She was staring at me, and I felt that she decided to hit on me one more time, that is when I sat still and I looked at Saja, who was pretty busy talking with people, while still holding my hands. I wanted to run away from that place, so I pulled Saja's hand and so she leaned to me, I whispered in her ears that I want to go for a walk, so she smiled and said: "Sure, Dear, you may go". "You may go" the woman who wrote the magic of walking asked me to go for a walk on my own! Again!

I stood and left the table in a rush, and I suddenly ran to the men's room to avoid the chase of Barbie, as I knew she would come right behind me. I stood in front of the mirror that moment and I stared at myself. BANG, "I have an idea". I opened the door

and went out, and how smart I was, Barbie was standing there. So I made a crazy move and pushed her to the wall and approached as if I was going to kiss her, and then I stopped "tell me one name of Saja's ex boyfriends and his number and I will kiss you right away". I knew that Barbie was hot, so she replied at once: Albert Hackman, 555 982 349.

I didn't realize what I did; all I remember was that I left the place driving my car, leaving everything behind. For sure I kissed Barbie, but on her cheeks, I am a man who always keeps his words and I ran. I even forgot to tell Saja that am leaving. I memorized the number as if it was my password to the world of Saja. I held my mobile, and dialed. I introduced myself and asked him to meet me urgently, how weird he accepted to meet me in his office. When I hung up I realized that it was Saturday, how come a man is working! Anyway it didn't take me long, I found myself entering an office, which the secretary opened the door for me asking me to go in. For my amazing surprise, this Albert was as handsome as Tom Cruise, but much taller. He welcomed me in a way that I was more confused. And then I was frank enough to ask him what the kind of relation he had with Saja. This word, this exact word he said was the reason I collapsed "she was my everything".

I never told anyone I had that meeting with Albert, neither Jerky Jack who called me few days later telling me he broke up with Velvet as according to his word "I discovered she is a drug dealer". No wonder why I used to call him Jerky, anyone could tell that this girl was a drug dealer. It was not only Albert's meeting; I met 2 other guys I stole their numbers from Saja's mobile whenever she was in the bathroom or getting ready. And I heard quiet similar answers.

That night when I was affirmative about the 3 guys, Saja and I were visiting my mum. Then Saja decided to check my old room, as she was looking for a theme for our wedding, when she stood there watching the little photos of me and Jerky together. She turned and said: "no wonders why you always dreamt of having the tree house" I knew what she meant, and I smiled. She meant that my room was so tiny and all the posters on the wall were of trees. Saja approached me and whispered: "I know you are confused, but I am here for you". She was about to kiss me and that was when I stopped her, pushed her away and walked to the balcony. I said a lot of words that day, how I wished I never said. All my words were about how furious I am, how come she lied to me about the 25 guys, how she lied about her book, that she just lied to me, I said

something , I really regretted “ I Hate you for turning me to the person I am now”. I was yelling while staring to a picture of a tree, the tree I always dreamt of having my tree house on, that tree looked so similar to the tree in front of my house, and as I turned to know her reply, she was gone!

Chapter 6: The truth remains.. She was gone!

When I first asked Saja to drink coffee with me, she agreed and I gave her a date that night in a coffee shop near my place. And as we talked almost all night, I felt the chemistry in the air. I told her how curious I was to follow her every morning. She smiled innocently and we kept talking almost about everything, I was so excited, that I talked and talked and talked. She was a good listener. I remember her eyes that night. They were as blue as the sky, and they were smiling whenever she smiled. She told me she was a writer, and I told her about my amazing love for web development, and how creative we both are, she laughed loud when I said that. Our dates were always in coffee shops, cinemas, theaters and bars. I introduced her to Jerky Jack, who was always hitting on her when he was drunk one night in the bar. We used to dance whenever we went to this bar that I and Jerky always used to go. We had this amazing chemistry while dancing; it was so magical knowing her.

One day, she woke me up, as she stayed the night in my place. And she got me a cup of hot coffee and asked me to follow her, I was so sleepy that I wasn't aware what she was doing, she opened the balcony and she stood there in my arms, as I hugged her from behind, and she leaned her head on my chest. I, then, was feeling my hands, legs, head and heart. I could smell strong coffee and her fragrance. I could see Mr. Huffman's kids playing and Mrs. Pierce flowers. Weird, how the flowers were not red that day, though the weather was pure. The flowers looked pale and Mrs. Pierce was crying and cutting them. And I noticed Mr. Pierce leaving the house rushing drove his car fast and left. I was distracted by the noise of the car as he drove very fast. And that was when my ticking girl, Saja turned and said "do you think I will be crazy enough to ask you to move in with me". Saja was unpredictable since I first saw her, no girl can easily ask a man a question like that, and though it was very early for such a move, I accepted. She hugged me, kissed me, and then she said how cold she was, we ran inside the place to find Mrs. Stuttgart, who had just arrived, looking so furious, Only god knows why she is always furious, and she was in the kitchen already, we laughed as we felt that she was cursing us in her language because we left like 12 cups of coffee all over the place, since Saja and I were working from home the day before.

The truth remains, she was gone that night. I went to her place after that when I felt guilty of what I said, it was raining, and I stood there outside her place, as I couldn't find her inside losing all the hope in the world. I drove my car and I couldn't think of

anywhere else to go but Jerky Jack's place. Jerky was not home, so I called him and told him I would stay in his place, he agreed as he said he met a new girl and he thought he would spend the night out with her.

The next morning, I tried to call Saja, she didn't reply. I left Jack's place, and went to my office. When I was working, my secretary told me that there is a guy who asked to meet me, I asked her to let him in, and there he was an old man I didn't know. When I asked him to sit, he refused and he told me that Ms. Saja Alain was waiting for me in the car in the garage. I ran, I couldn't recall that I knew that man, and I even forgot to ask who he was. In the garage, I found her, she was in her Porsche, and she looked so pale. I freaked out, and I kept asking her if she was ok. She asked me to get in the car, and she drove fast. She was never that silent. I tried to apologize but she didn't even show that she heard what I said. She drove to a highway, and she drove fast. I was worried, confused and kept asking her to slow down, but she just didn't, she took one of the exits, after like 20 minutes of driving in total silence. And then I found ourselves going up a rocky mountain, and that was when she finally decided to pull over. I couldn't predict her as usual; all my thoughts were about how crazy she must be. She looked so weird, and then out of a sudden she yelled: Get off the damn car, Cuantine!

Chapter 7: The real meaning of the magic of walking

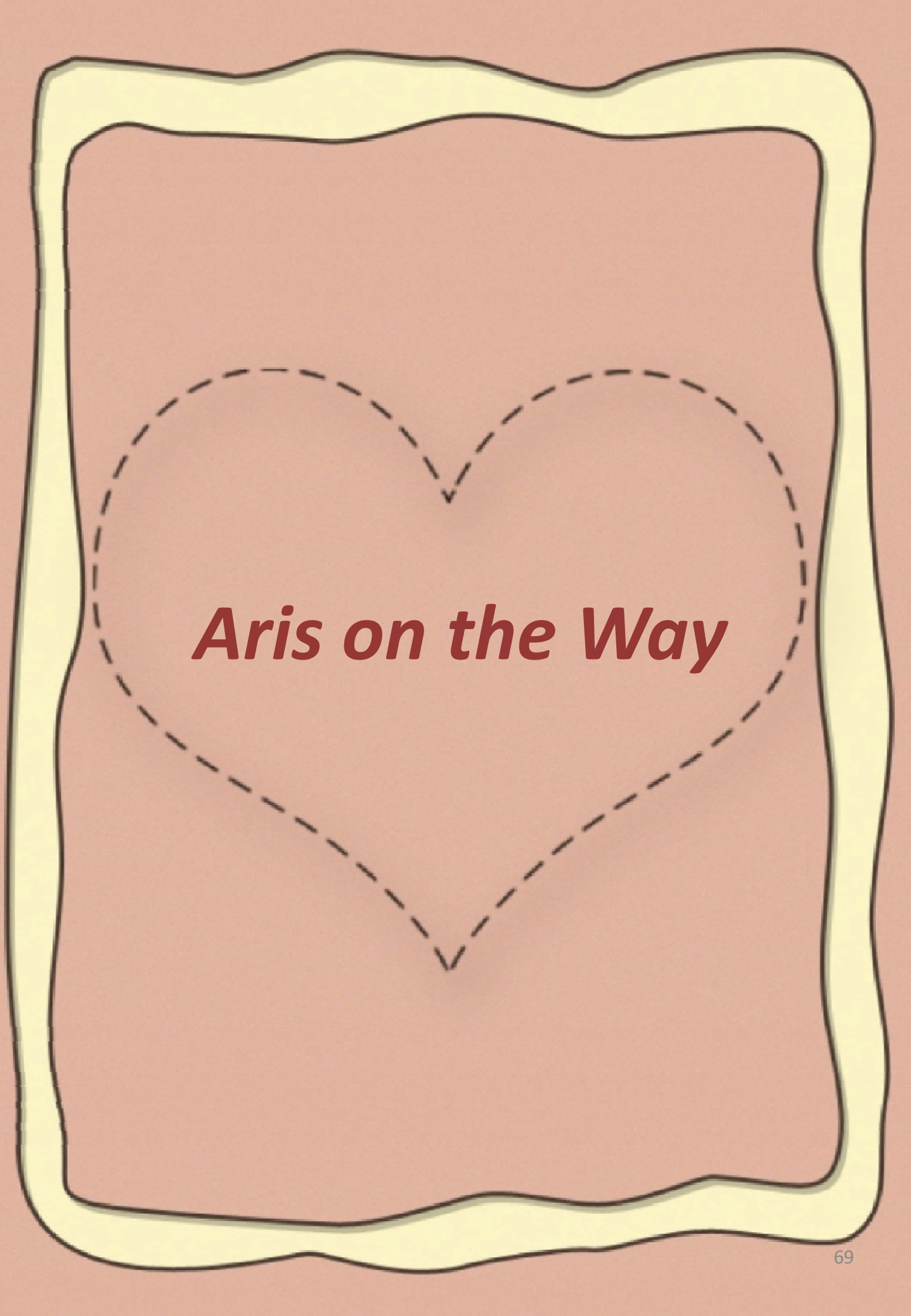
I thought my Saja had gone crazy, I didn't want to leave the car, and I was talking to her to calm her down, but she looked pretty angry. So she jumped out of the car and stood right in front of it and kept waving for me to come, so I had to do what she asked me. she stood there in the sun wearing a little white dress, and how tiny she looked, and then I knew why she looked like that, my ticking girl, for the first time in her life was wearing sneakers, White sneakers, with pink Nike logo on the sides. "Don't you want to walk with me, come, walk with me" she yelled in a crazy way that I walked to her, she started walking down the cliff. The road was really slippery so she walked slowly, I walked with her.

We were silent at the beginning and then out of nowhere, in that amazing silence, she talked loud: "you know why I lied; you know why I didn't tell you, you want to know the secret of the magic of walking. It is that I am sick of it. I am sick of walking, I am sick of listening" she suddenly stood in front of me and took a deep breath and continued: "I want to talk, I want to talk, I want to talk" she said it in a crazy lunatic way, then she turned and walked faster: "all these years, I have been listening to men talking, I wrote to advise women to make their men talk, and to talk with their men to know them more, but no one, no one ever heard me. I wanted to talk, all the 25 men were talkers, walkers talkers" she waved her hands in a strong way. "But you, you heard me, even if I didn't say a lot". She said it in a calm voice and I so felt that she was sad, my heart was almost broken to see her like that. I blamed myself for that, she turned again and stood in front of me, she put her hands on my chest and she whispered: "you heard even my ticking shoes" then she moved her hands away and I could see her tears, but she didn't start crying: "I was something to men, but no one was ever something to me, but you, you changed my world. I love you, Cuantine Reiges" I couldn't hold myself, as her tears dropped, I suddenly hugged her strong, I could feel her body shivering while she started to cry. I whispered in her ears: "I love you more, Saja Alain".

She slowly pulled her body away from me, but yet she was standing right in front of me. she smiled a little, and then she said: "no, I love you more than you can imagine, the first time I saw you in the balcony, was the day I was carrying my books that were left over in the library at the end of your road because I needed extra books for my fans, and I had parked my car far away, few blocks from your place. And I glimpsed you by chance, I saw you and this is when I knew I want to spend the rest of my life with you.

When you looked at me, I knew it, I knew you liked me. This is why I woke up early every morning, parked my car by the end of your road at 8 am, and walked to the library, just before you come to that balcony. Every morning I did that, just to see you. I didn't come on weekends because I thought you wouldn't wake up early. Call me crazy, I know I am. But I knew it was you, the one for me!"

No one can ever feel what I felt that day, that moment; I spent all that time, feeling suspicious, confused, and crazy. I doubted her; I was jealous, I even called Albert Hackman and kissed Barbie on her cheeks, just for her. I, then finally knew the truth, I was able to figure out the image: she walked in the middle of the street because she knew that the tree would block me of seeing her, she wore that high heels for me to alert me, she changed her coats every day, because she is actually rich, she waited me when I asked her not to leave and finally she accepted that easy, to meet me at the coffee shop that night. No matter how cold it was, she parked her Porsche by the end of the street, walked that entire road twice, just for me. I couldn't tell who is crazier, she or myself? But all I knew was that this woman standing right there in her tiny white Nike was my wife to be, and then and only then, I knew how many miles I walked with her, Just few steps away from her Porsche, now I can answer Barbie's question. And now I confess I knew the real meaning of the magic of walking.



Aris on the Way

Chapter 1

The day my mum met Aris, was the story she kept telling whenever the whole family gathered for any occasion, that story was very exciting that mum used to play most of the roles in it very well. I, every Christmas, Thanksgiving or even on the 4th of July, insisted to hear it over and over again. That story was a mix of reality and imagination for any one, but for me it was real, I knew how to make it real, and I believed it, not just because my mum used to tell it to me, but I have been there, I lived with this family since ever, and I know for sure that this is the way it happened. I never cared if some people might not believe it, but I know I will keep telling it to my kids and my grandsons one day.

Any story usually starts with Once Upon a Time, but mum's story was different, she usually starts hers as follows:

"Anger, rage, failure, was the main reason they both met, that beautiful young girl who had golden hair as gold as the sun and eyes as green as our garden after one rainy morning. Sarah was her name, after finishing her studies in Law School, she didn't have a real chance to prove how good she was, and she was turned down by any man she knew. A girl like Sarah deserves to be with a respectable, intelligent but yet caring man, but all the guys in the Law school cared about nothing but finishing their studies and working in one of the biggest law firms in New York. Sarah lived there during her studies, but she could no longer be there, she never felt she belonged, always was seeking something that never existed.

After a failure in joining many of the biggest firms in the country, as they always looked for hiring the sons and daughters of the rich American celebrities or lawyers, and a great failure in her love story, Sarah decided to go back home to her Mammy and Daddy. She could no longer live in New York away from them, but she needed to come up with a plan before she goes home. She was angry of the closed doors of big firms and the closed hearts of New York guys, not all of them for sure, but the ones she met. Her anger drove her to take a break and think, how can she move on, never look back at the things she had seen, how can she go back home, and start a new life. On the same day Aris, who was an old but yet cute man, with his white hair and wrinkled face and hands, decided to go back home, so it was not just anger, rage and failure that introduced them to each other, but they both were going back home."

I always remember my mum's face whenever she remembered Aris's face and the other smile on her face whenever she said "back home". It is not only about her smile, her eyes sparkled, and I could easily feel that sigh she sighed, the breath she took that made some of my family cried, usually it was me and my cousin Anna, we used to cry whenever this story was told. Nothing touched our hearts the most like that story, I remember my mum's amazing performance while telling the story, she was always happy whenever we gathered to hear her but nothing made her happier but this sentence she said later "Sarah met Aris on the way".

And then she continues "As Sarah decided to take the bus back home, she was aware of crossing almost 5 states till she goes back to her mummy, she knew that a trip like that would actually take around two days, which was quiet enough time for Sarah to think. She packed her bags, and then got into the bus, and as she walked in, she found many families sitting together, so she couldn't find an empty place, she stood there and she felt like there were no places left for her, not even in that bus! Then she looked back, and she found a place next to an old man, who she later knew that his name is Aris. He was sitting by the window, two rows behind the driver, who wasn't in the bus yet. As she walked and then stopped in the aisle putting her hand bag on the shelf, Aris turned and looked at her, and that was the first time they both looked at each other.

Sarah said "Good morning", and then she sat; she didn't even wait to hear the reply, but Aris replied with a smile, "Good morning Young lady". As Sarah sat she felt a bit weird of how he just called her young girl, and the only thing she would think about was that the old man just was acting like old people trying to break the ice. And how she for a minute thought that it was no use of having a conversation with a stranger as she just needed that time of the trip to think and be by herself instead of talking with some old stranger sitting next to her. As she sat, she got a magazine out of her small back pack which she put on her legs, and as she started reading the magazine, the driver just arrived and yelled "All on board? Let's go back home people"

The bus started to leave the station heading to Denver, it was a sunny day in the summer, and Sarah was wearing a white shirt and jeans with her blue snickers and dark blue framed sun glasses, she wore the sunglasses even while reading the magazine. Next to her sat Aris, who did nothing but looking at the window, the bus was a bit slow as it didn't reach the highway yet, so Aris turned to her and asked her what the time was. Since Sarah expected that he would be making any excuse to talk to her, she didn't

really feel glad by his question but yet she told him it was 8 am, so he made a comment of how he liked to be on time, and that the bus was just on time! She smiled and then she continued reading the magazine, and then he started to mumble with music, it was clear though that he was singing "The way you look tonight" and then he turned to her again, she automatically turned to him, as she already knew he will be talking, he smiled and said "I am Aris, Aris Thomson." And he introduced his hands with a cute smile, so she smiled back and then shook hands with him "Sarah, Sarah Lesley" and she smiled back. He then said "what have you been doing in New York", so it took her few seconds and then she replied "I used to study law".

Though it wasn't her plan to continue the conversation, no one could ever have resisted his cute smile. He didn't look that happy though, he was looking so down and a bit in despair. So she asked me, "and you, what have you been doing there too?" he sighed and then said "I lived there for 3 years, but now it is the right time to go home" and then he looked at the window again. Sarah could feel something was wrong, so she just wanted to make him at ease. "I am going home because New York just turned me down, yes... Maybe for some people New York is the place that will make all their dreams come true, but for me, it was just a failure" so he turned and true it was, there was something wrong with him, his tears were locked in his eyes, and then he said in a quiet voice "same here, such a failure" Sarah looked like knowing how he felt and she looked so sorry. She just smiled a sorry smile, and then she closed her magazine, took off her glasses and added "me too, and I knew it was the right time to go home"

It was not normal that a girl in her age would understand the feelings of such an old man; but they had something in common, both of them were angry, not angry because of someone, but angry of life. Aris agreed that it was the right time to go home, as New York was no longer his home, after his beautiful Lara died. He then continued describing how beautiful Lara was, she was a French girl who moved to Denver, he met her in a casino that he used to sing in, and he added that he was a singer back in the past, he was like a Piano bar singer, and how he loved to sing Frank Sinatra's songs. He said "one night, while I was singing, my eyes met a girl sitting on a table with another girl and a man, and that girl was Lara, she sat there with her black and white dress, black hair, and red lip stick, She was wearing a diamond necklace that kept reflecting the light, and took my breath away". As he talked, Sarah and Aris closed their eyes, and they both could see themselves in a smoky dark bar, Sarah was sitting by the bar, and she can see Young Aris sitting by the piano singing "the way you look tonight" and there

was Lara sitting in her black and white dress, she was singing along with him with her smile, and brown rounded eyes that chased every little move he made. As Aris finished the song, her applause was pretty loud, and he left the stage and walked to the bar, so did she, they were standing right next to Sarah, who watched them with a smile. Lara was such a bold girl, she just came to Aris telling him how she liked him, and it didn't take Aris so much for him to tell her that he had been looking at her many times before, but he never thought that a girl like her would actually consider looking at someone like him. Sarah was there witnessing how Lara looked, and how Aris looked at her, it was love in the air, and they both were smiling and then he took her hand and asked her to walk her home.

Suddenly Sarah opened her eyes in the bus, to find herself in the bus sitting next to Aris. She looked around to check where she was, and then Aris put his hand on hers and said "it is ok" they both stared at each other. Her green eyes were sparkling as the sun was quiet strong in the bus, and his eyes was brown but framed by grey, with his silver shiny hair in the sun. "When Lara died, I ran away to New York, believing that I might forget her leaving me in this world, that day I met Lara in the bar, was the day she taught me how to be happy" Sarah then looked so sad, and she just put her hand on his hand, and said "I am sorry for that".

As the bus ran on the high way, Aris was looking at the beauty of the nature surrounding them, Sarah also was looking by the window and she could see Aris's back, and how he looked so focused, she then smiled and asked him "what did you do in New York as to forget Lara?" he turned slowly and then looked at her and said "I lived there with an old friend of mine, called Adam, he was a musician who worked with me in the past, he plays Saxophone, he is very nice black fellow who always made me laugh" Sarah suddenly found herself in a Casino sitting near Aris, just like how she was sitting near him in the bus, watching a little band playing music, she could recognize a black Saxophone player, who was in a middle of Jazz performance, then Aris stood and walked away, she at first tried to follow where he was going and then she stood and followed him while keeping distance, and she had passed some dancers who were dancing on the Jazz music, she could see Aris leaving the casino, which had a beautiful view of a river, Aris stood there bending over looking to the river while taking a deep breath, so she approached him and stood right next to him and asked "you did nothing in New York?" so he turned to her and said "I couldn't get her off my head for 3 years, I missed her more than ever" as she stood there looking to the sky of that dark night, the

bus just stopped. And the driver yelled "you have only 15 minutes then we will go" so she turned to look at Aris, who just smiled at her and asked her if she wanted to have a drink, and he stood, so she stood to make him space to get off the bus, and as he was passing her, he whispered " why don't you get me coffee, I will go to empty my tank" and as he whispered she felt him handing her 10\$ and he slowly walked to the bus steps, so she called him " Aris, are you coming back?" so he smiled and said " you bet I would do"

Chapter 2

Once Aris stepped out of the bus and walked to the bathrooms, Sarah stood there watching him as he walked away, and then she entered and ordered one coffee tall and de-café and another regular. As she stood there waiting for the coffee, she was looking at the machine of the coffee, and suddenly she heard gunshot and 3 men entering the shop wearing masks and holding guns, and they asked everyone to stay silent or that they would shoot them. She stood there in silence and looked astonished, and she could recognize Aris walking by the window and would enter the shop, and once he opened the door, one of the men shot him, and she screamed "No" and then Aris fell on the floor, as she ran to him, the man kept yelling at her but she didn't care and she sat on the floor and held him and then he looked at her and said "your Coffee is ready", she didn't believe what he said so she said "what?" and that is when she recognized that she was still standing waiting for the coffee and that she had been imagining that while staring at the coffee machine. And that the waiter was telling her "your coffee is ready" she took the coffee, and left the shop and as she was heading back to the bus, she kept turning around looking for Aris, and as she walked she hear a man saying "hello sexy!" so she turned, it was a bit sunny and she wasn't wearing her glasses as she held her hair by it, so she tried to see who it was, she found one huge man approaching her, and he had tattooed all his body, and wearing black shirt with skeleton and Danger written right beneath it. So she just walked to the bus, as if she didn't hear that. And she met Aris right in front of the bus, and she handed him the coffee and was just going up the steps, and then she heard that guy yelling "you like old men, ha?" so she smiled to Aris and they both got into the bus.

As they sat near each other drinking coffee, he asked her "why didn't you stay in New York after studying law?" so she told him "because I was unable to get a recommendation letter from one of the partners of any of the law firms, You know Aris, even the only one time I was able to have a good interview, I didn't have the chance to be accepted" he looked astonished and as he was drinking a sip of the coffee, he looked down and just as he was looking up, he found himself sitting in one fancy office on a sofa, brown leather sofa, and she was sitting next to him, while being interviewed by a handsome man, who was about to stand while saying "Your résumé is pretty interesting Ms. Lesley, can I call you Sarah?" so she nodded ok. Aris looked at her and she was wearing a beautiful grey dress with black jacket and black boots, and she was putting make up and looked very elegant just as elegant as the office. And as he was

looking at her, the man said "but I am sorry to tell you that your colleague Jack Fernandez had the last available vacancy this morning" Aris looked at Sarah's face, and she looked pretty disappointed, and she stood quietly and grabbed her bag and coat and walked to the man and then said "Thank you" and left the office. As she closed the door, Sarah whispered in Aris's ear in the bus saying "Jack Fernandez is the son of one of the senators, I am sure you know him Abram Fernandez?" so Aris nodded his head yes. So he told her "what are you planning to do then?" she smiled and sipped one sip of coffee and then said "I don't know"

It took Aris all the cup of coffee till he came up with a plan of how Sarah should plan for her life, he put the cup away and then told her "if I were your age, your beauty, I would have planned to have a beautiful family, one girl and one boy, a very supporting husband playing with these two angels in the backyard of my beautiful house" as he talked, he was sitting next to young man on a wooden coach who was wearing a brown suit while reading the news paper and the two kids playing in the garden, and then Sarah walked in carrying a tray of breakfast, as she approached the kids ran to her and the girl just walked near her trying to imitate her walk. The young man looked exactly like young Aris, he looked at her and then threw the newspaper and walked to her and helped her to put the tray on the table, and then hugged her while she was wearing such beautiful suit and he whispered to her "Good morning Mrs. Attorney" just as she sat, Sarah said to Aris "are you planning for my life?" he smiled and said "better than you just sit still next to an old man on a bus" she laughed, then she put on her sun glasses and said "you know nothing about my life" so he laughed and said "I just knew what I need to know". Sarah and Aris argued, as she insisted that he knew nothing, so he told her "I knew that the one you thought that he loved you, took your position, your post, just because he is the son of a senator", she took off the sunglasses and looked at him and said "how did you know that?" he smiled and didn't answer.

As he sat back and leaned his head on the back of the chair, she sat back too and told him "you know what would be great?" it took him a minute to reply, and he guessed "a trip in the Caribbean?" she smiled and said "no, though it is a good idea" so he said "then what?" she smiled and said "I always dreamt of a romantic dance in front of Eiffel tower", he smiled and said "Mmm, France!! Then let it be, are you a good dancer?" so she laughed loud and said "No" so he stood and asked her to make space for him, then he walked to the aisle and asked her to dance with him, so she laughed and didn't want to stand, so he just introduced his hand, and kept asking her to dance

with him, so as she stood, they were suddenly in front of Eiffel tower in the morning, and the music of "La vie en Rose" was played, and as they started to dance together, he took the lead and made her follow his steps. And suddenly she stopped dancing and said "but I wanted it to be at night" so as she smiled and looked up to the tower, it was lightened and it was night, so she looked at Aris and smiled, then he said "let it snow too" so snow started to fall and they danced, he made her turn in her beautiful red dress, and as the dance just ended, they suddenly heard the applause of everyone on the bus.

Just as the people clapped, a little baby cried, seemed like she was terrified of the sudden loud, so Sarah walked to the mum of the baby and asked if she could carry her, so the mum welcomed the idea, since she already looked exhausted of such long trip. As she carried the baby, the baby was silent and everyone on the bus was relieved, since the baby's cry was quiet loud. Aris sat back in his place, and few minutes later, Sarah walked and sat next to him, then she said "you are not hungry?" he nodded no, she pulled her back pack, she got sandwiches out of it, handed him one, and said "I insist" so he took it, then started to eat and so did she. As he was eating he just made a voice of how he liked the taste, so she smiled and said "I am famous of my sandwiches" so he laughed and said that he felt like he tasted it somewhere before, so she laughed and said "it is just Tuna with Mayonnaise" so he said "I tasted it before, you know one of my vacations with Lara, we decided to go to Miami" and as he started talking, Sarah found herself sitting on a chase lounge on a beach during sunset, wearing brown Bikini and right near her there were Lara wearing black and white Bikini with her red lipstick , black hair and sunglasses. Young Aris wearing his swimming suit and putting cream on Lara's back, just as he finished putting cream, Lara got a sandwich and made him take a bite, Sarah smiled once she saw them enjoying their time, she put on her sunglasses and decided to sleep. As Sarah slept, Aris got a book out of his little bag that he had, and started reading it. It was night then and most of the people on the bus had closed the lights and started to sleep too, eventually Aris slept while holding the book.

Chapter 3

As the bus stopped, Aris opened his eyes to find that they had parked in a new station and the driver saying they could order dinner. He found that Sarah was still sleeping and that she didn't even hear what the driver said, so he wondered how he could wake her up. He looked around, all people were out of the bus, so he started to sing in low voice near her ears "fly me to the moon, make me play among the stars, let me see what life is like on.... Jupiter and Mars" she opened her eyes just as he started singing "in other words" so she smiled "please be true, in other words... I love you" so she kept smiling till he was done. He stood and said "now after you woke up on a song, you deserve to have a romantic dinner" so she stood, and just before he left the bus, he stood by the door and said "it is getting cold, grab a jacket or something" so she nodded, opened her bag and got a jacket out of it, wore it and followed him to the restaurant.

It was a small restaurant in an inn on the way, was crowded by all the passengers of the bus, who started to have their orders served. Most of the people had ordered Steak, potatoes and pasta, as she walked she could recognize it. As they found an empty table in the end, they both walked and sat, and the waitress who was dressed in a blue uniform with her yellow hair and chewing gum came and asked them of their order. They both pulled the menus of the table and then Sarah asked her if there were chicken plates available, so the waitress said "all fried babe, fried chicken with fried potatoes, and rice, what do you think?" so she looked at the menu and smiled saying Ok. Aris closed the menu and then asked the waitress about her name, so she replied "Amy, how can I help you grandpa?" He smiled and Sarah was not looking good, so he said "Amy, get me grilled chicken, mashed potatoes and Pasta, and I think my granddaughter can have the same?" and he looked at Sarah, so she said "I am not your granddaughter, but ok!" So Amy just looked to them in a weird look and then said "any drinks?" so Sarah said "Soda" Aris nodded the same. So Amy just left while she was still chewing her gum. "Why did you say I am your granddaughter?" Sarah asked Aris in a way as if she still didn't like that. "Because you are at the age of my grandchildren" so she wondered "Do you have kids back home?" he nodded no. "Then I am not your granddaughter, I am your friend" so he smiled and said "you are such a stubborn girl, so how come you didn't find your way back in New York of getting the job you wanted". "I think I told you I didn't feel I belong, and after that thing with Jack, I didn't feel like I want to live there anymore" Aris looked as if he felt cold, so Sarah suggested to give him her jacket, but he

refused and insisted that he was fine. So she excused him and decided to go to the toilet until the food was served, as she walked to the toilet, Aris was having a look around, and he had noticed how all the families who were with them on board were busy eating and talking together, and the two kids were playing around.

Amy then approached him carrying their orders and started to put it on the table, so he asked her if they had juke box, she pointed at the other side of the restaurant and then left, so he walked slowly and then chose a song for Frank Sinatra, Fly me to the moon, as it started, he turned to walk to the table and then he found Sarah who had just arrived to the table and was looking for him, she stood there smiling to him, as he walked to her, he found her wearing a black and white long dress, black long gloves and red lip stick , and she waved to him to come closer, so Young Aris walked to her and they started to dance between the tables of the restaurant on the music, he ended the dance with holding her hand and waving to the people. Sarah was smiling as everyone in the restaurant was eating and no one was actually watching them, so he pulled her to him and said "great dance" so she smiled and said "I think we should eat, just like other people" they sat and ate their plates, when Amy came and Sarah insisted that she would be paying for his plate, he resisted for a while, but as Amy didn't look so welcoming, Sarah paid. Just as Amy was leaving, she smiled to them and said "you are too weird people, but great dance though" and she left.

As the driver drove the bus away in the night, a lot of people started to sleep again. Sarah and Aris were sitting there after they just opened the light over their heads. Sarah looked so relaxed and she decided to tell Aris "I am angry, frustrated ... I have planned for so many things in my life, but it seems that none of my plans is to succeed. My love life, my career, even being independent! True I have finished my studies in the law school, but I always thought that I and Jack will be working together to have our own life together, not that he would steal my position and leave me behind. I was the chosen one to work in this firm, how come someone does that to his love? And he is not the first, all my experience with men just ended pretty much the same" Aris was listening, and he was so understanding to what she said, then he told her "you might find it weird to admit it, but men sometimes prefer to be the stronger in the relations. A man would go for a girl who he loves the most, but as long as she is always depending on him, maybe these days things are different, since women are much independent than how they were in the past, but, you know even I, I was selfish, I always asked Lara to be with me, though she had pretty strong voice and performance, she was offered to make a

show in my casino, and a lot of people thought that I might accept that my wife will be performing in my casino, but I said No. Weird how she never asked me why I refused, she thought that maybe I did that because I don't want her to be singing in front of other men and have fans, but the real reason I refused was that because I knew she would actually compete me, if not that she will be more famous than me. Selfishness could be the reason you feel like that, because you felt that Jack was selfish by choosing his career and not yours, but all guys can't be the same, Plus, I don't think that you will have a problem finding the One. I am sure God has just saved you one gentleman, trust me, wait and you will see".

Sarah thought of what he said, and then she said "Why are you taking the bus back home?" so he said "I have my reasons" so she laughed loud and then said "this is not the fastest way to go home" so he laughed and then whispered in her ears "I fear flights", so she nodded her head, then laughed and said "I thought you are a man who doesn't fear anything" Aris looked shy and said "I am not a superman, I am just a man who loved a woman and lost her, and I thought that life ended, I am not a superman, trust me" then both of them laughed, that a red head woman sitting right behind him just made a voice to make them shut up.

Chapter 4

Sarah and Aris stayed up all the night talking, until they both saw the sunrise. It was such an incredible scene, that both of them took a deep breath and then smiled to each other. Once the sun rays started to get into the bus, the rest of the passengers started to wake up one right after the other. It was not that long distance and then the bus parked again in front of another Inn. Since Aris and Sarah were awake, they were the most active people in the bus and they decided to go first. Right in front of the bathrooms area, Aris smiled to Sarah and told her "meet me here after you are done". As Aris pushed the door of the bathroom, he found himself standing in a huge garden full of roses and butterflies; the sun was so shiny that he barely saw. He was able to recognize someone coming from distance, it was not clear who it was, but he started to be sure as it walked closer that it was a woman, but he still couldn't recognize whom. He calmly said "Lara?" but no one answered. It was quiet windy, that he couldn't hear who was there until suddenly the wind was stopped, and he realized then it was Sarah. She was wearing a pink dress, and a diamond tiara in her golden hair, and then she approached him and smiled then said "follow me, you must see this" and she took his hand and walked in a faster steps in the garden, and they went up a hill till they found a wooden hut, surrounded by beautiful flowers. Suddenly he stood there and took a deep breath and said "I smell baked cake, just like the ones Lara used to bake me". She smiled and then said "why don't you try it?" so they both got into the hut, where Lara was standing wearing also pink dress and a pink and white apron and she had been carrying a beautiful hot cake and then she approached him and said "take a bite".

Just as Aris smiled at her face, touched her hand and took a bite, it was so delicious that he closed his eyes as he tasted it. When he opened his eyes, it wasn't Lara, it was Sarah, she had changed her clothes, and she was wearing a pink blouse and had white sunglasses on, she was smiling, he realized then that he was eating a cake and that he was still holding it in his hand, he put it slowly and she didn't take the smile off her face still. "What?" he said. "Nothing, but seems you are enjoying every bite of this cake, it reminds me of mum's; it is really tasty" and she took a bite. He then took a sip of the coffee they had, and asked "Seems your mum is a wonderful woman". Sarah took a sip of the coffee too and then said "I have a wonderful family, who always had hopes that I will be one day a great person, they supported me whenever I was down, and they were extremely happy whenever I was having my good times, maybe this is why it is the right time to go home"

Just as they were talking, a police officer suddenly entered the Inn in such a dramatic way, that everyone in the place was silent and looking at the door, that was slammed pretty strong after he came in. He walked slowly just as if he owned the place, and then he headed to their table, Sarah and Aris had two extra chairs with them, and then he asked Aris "is this seat taken?" so Aris just nodded no and said "you can have it, if you need it" so he smiled and said "no, actually I will share the table with you" and he grabbed the chair hard, then sat with them, and winked for the waitress who came running to the table "your typical breakfast, sergeant?" He just nodded, took his sunglasses away, looked at Sarah and said "you are one of the passengers of the bus waiting outside?" So Sarah said "Yes". He looked at Aris and said "this is your grandpa, or what?" So she said "I don't see a reason why I should reply to such a question!" he turned out of a sudden to her and looked pretty furious, that was when the waitress came running serving him his breakfast and cup of coffee. "Are you a lawyer or what?" So Aris laughed and said "Yes!" so the policeman turned to him and said "Seriously?!" he still looked furious, so Sarah looked very upset of the way he was talking to them, so she said "why don't you eat your breakfast? We don't want to be late for the bus; we still need to hit the road for one more day, Aris".

The police man, who then started eating then, stopped and looked pretty amazed of her attitude but then he leaned on her, that everyone in the inn looked concerned of what he would do to her, so he just pointed at her and came closer to her and said "do you handle divorce cases?" so Aris laughed tremendously that the policeman looked at him in a very angry way, and then hit the table with his strong hands, so Sarah, quietly grabbed something out of her bag, then stood up and said "Aris, let's go" all the people were watching them as if they feared of how that violent policeman would do to Sarah, and as Aris stood while still smiling, Sarah whispered in the ears of the policeman "this is my card, with my mobile number and address in Denver, why don't you give me a call tomorrow?" and she passed the card on the table, he then put his hand on the card at once, and then stood, while still no one knows the conversation going on between them, and he put on his sunglasses, and then told her "this way, Madam" Sarah then winked to Aris, and they both followed the policeman who guided them to the bus. He helped Aris to go up and then she smiled at him "Bill, stop your foolish games, you freaked everyone in there" so he smiled a very silly smile and then greeted her just like policemen do, and said "I will be having lunch with you tomorrow Sarah Lesley" and she went into the bus.

Funny how everyone in the bus then looked at Sarah and Aris as if they were two powerful people, even the bus driver kept checking them in the mirror. Aris was smiling for no reason, that even Sarah felt that it was weird, his smile. "What? What? What? Why are you smiling at me like that?" Aris laughed instead and then he decided to talk "you just got yourself a date and a client" so she laughed loud that even the red head woman would have commented, but instead she smiled to Sarah, who was checking if she bothered her with her laugh. "Bill is my best friend, he knows I took the bus and he told me he will be checking on me if he is on the road" now everything looked clear to Aris, but she kept laughing, and then she decided to tell Aris a little secret, so she just talked in low voice "he was my best friend since Junior High, and when we were in High School, he didn't have a date for the dance, so he dated one of the nerdy girls in the class, who later became his wife" Aris then told her "where is the secret?" so Sarah said "he once decided to tell me he loved me, as we were too close, even mum used to ask him to have dinner with us every night, I do remember this night very well. We were in his car and he had driven me home after all of us had been to the movies, and as he parked the car in front my house".

Aris then found himself sitting in the backseat of an old car, and Sarah sitting next to Bill, and then Bill said "I love you Sarah Lesley" he looked at Sarah who was sitting there looking totally surprised, and then she just turned to Bill and told him "you are my brother, my best friend, my shelter.. But I don't think we can be more" Aris felt like she just broke Bill's heart but he turned to see Bill looking so dull, as if he wasn't hurt. And then he said "You silly, you think I would like a girl like you, I was just acting like that movie we had been seeing, go home you Silly" so she laughed and got off the car. As Aris sat there in the car watching Sarah walking across the garden in the front door of her house, he then heard something, so he turned to find that Bill was crying, and had been hitting the wheel hard, after he checked that Sarah got inside her house, he cried harder and hit the wheel even harder, that he accidentally hit the horn, which went out loud. It was so loud that Aris closed his eyes and put his hands on his ears, and after it was silenced.

He opened his eyes to find himself in the bus again next to Sarah. He realized that the bus driver was trying to pass in front of a huge truck on the highway, so he turned to Sarah and yelled at her "You broke his heart?, did you know that?" she nodded yes, while looking sad "I knew many years later, he was drunk and he told me. I never

considered him the one for me, and this is why we both passed this, or maybe I did" he then looked at the window and said while starrng at the sky "sometimes Cupid just get things confused, it made Bill loves you, and you loved Jack. But you know, I believe still in Cupid's choices. He matched me with Lara, my love life; this is why I trust it"

The bus driver announced at two pm that the bus will be reaching Denver station after 15 minutes, as they had just passed "Welcome to Denver" sign. Aris looked at Sarah and told her "I know you will be having lunch with Bill tomorrow, but can you have Dinner with me?" Sarah was not expecting such an invitation, and she looked pretty confused at the beginning, Aris tried to calm her down by saying "I know a very nice place, why don't you meet me tomorrow at 7 pm in front of Penny's Lounge, you know it?" and he smiled in a cute way, that Sarah couldn't resist and she nodded yes. They were silent all the way until the bus parked, and the people started to get off the bus. Sarah stood after passing most of the families at the back, and she started to grab her bag off the shelf, she saw Aris as he stood already and then smiled at her and said "don't forget anything" she was grabbing the bag and then she realized that Aris was no longer on the bus. She walked in a hurry out of the bus, but she couldn't find him anywhere. She stood there in front of the bus looking pretty confused and turned just like a crazy woman looking for him, but he had just disappeared.

Chapter 5

In front of Penny's lounge, at exact 06:55 pm, there stood Sarah looking at her silver watch, she had wore a black dress with red jacket, and holding a little purse, and she looked not so comfortable as many people passed her getting into the restaurant, she kept walking back and forth few steps by the window of the restaurant. And out of a sudden as she walked few steps backward, she stepped over something, she turned to see what she stepped on, she found a very handsome man who looked very familiar but she couldn't realize who was that, and he was fully dressed in a very elegant black suit, so she looked like a 7 years old girl who wanted to apologize to her dad. She looked up, as he was a little taller than her and said "I am really sorry" and she smiled like a little cute girl; he was standing there still, not giving any expression, that she couldn't tell if she hurt him or what. Then he just took a little breath and started to mumble something "just thinking of you, and the way you look tonight" so she stopped him "What? Who are you?" so he just touched his nose with his hands, and thought for a while and said "Ok, Ok... Fly me to the moon, make me" and then he looked at her and winked "is it the right part?" so she looked astonished "who are you?" she said. He then looked sad, like he screwed everything up and then said "Aris sent me, are you Sarah? Yes, you are her, I know it is you" she looked at him as if she didn't believe what he was saying, and then asked "where is Aris? Why did he send you? Is he ok?" She looked concerned as she worried about Aris. So he smiled "Yes, he is fine, don't worry, he just needs you to come with me, I will take you to him... He is few blocks away from here" so she laughed loud "what are you talking about? I am no 7 years old kid that you are fooling" so he smiled "My God, I told him you won't believe me, this is why he asked me to sing you the song, but I can't remember the god damn lyrics. Tell you what, I will walk, you follow me, don't walk with me, you will understand everything" and he started walking away.

As he walked, she didn't follow and she stood there thinking. He crossed the road, and then waved to her to come, as if he didn't want her to lose him. Anyway, she walked but she kept distance, until she realized that he stopped in front of a dark place, he opened the door and got in. she stood there starring at the door, the place looked very dark and she had a shiver that she didn't want to follow him any longer, so she decided to leave. She turned and walked many steps away, in quick steps, she then felt like she had to stop and know where Aris was, so she stood there still starring at the door and then looked at the sky and said "Oh, God" Just as she was looking down, she saw something,

it was a sign of the name of the place, right at the top of the 3 floors building, it was dark but she still can recognize the name of the place, it was "Aris's place" so she decided to cross the road again and enter the same door that guy had just passed"

At first the place was pretty dark, and dusty, then she found herself in a long passage with red curtains falling down, but they were also covered by dust. She heard some moves, she was afraid but yet she insisted to go inside, and then she stood still once she passed one of the curtains which led her to the main whole, she stood still out of surprise. The lights were all over the place, there was a stage by the end of the hall, and she could see Aris sitting by a piano, along with an orchestra of 6 persons, if not more. The music started with the music of "The way you look tonight", then the orchestra stopped and Aris took a microphone, stood there talking to her, there was light pointing at her, and she stood there looking all surprised, so he smiled and said "Welcome to Aris's place, two days ago, I met a woman who gave me hope, and I knew from the minute I first talked to her that she has something special, Sarah Lesley, I am proud to tell you that I have decided to open Aris's place, the best music place in town again! Not only this, I am going to sing this special song for you, but I need you to dance by the escort of William. William ..." and he pointed to someone, when the lights showed him, it was the same person she met him, so he walked closer and offered his hand for her to dance with him, then the music started and Aris started to sing, she didn't accept to dance except after few seconds of thinking, then she started to dance with William.

She was not following the steps at the beginning as she kept looking around, but then by the middle of the song, she danced very well. William was quiet a good dancer who danced just like a prince. As they danced William was looking at her with a wonderful smile, even when he made her turn, he kept looking at her. She could feel him looking, and she was turning, she finally stopped; not because he was looking, but because she saw something, she saw what made her stop. She walked slowly to one of the side walls of the place, and that was when the music stopped. As she approached some photos hanging on the wall, she said in loud voice "in God's name, what is that??" she starred at the picture, as there were three black and white pictures of William and a brunette woman wearing black and white dress, and seemed like her lipstick was really red, though the picture was still black and white. As she stood there looking around the pictures, Aris walked to her, stood right behind her and said "this is Lara, my wife" so she pointed at William in the picture and said "this is you?" "Yes" he said. So she turned and looked at William, stared at him and then said "then who is William? I don't

understand anything!" they both smiled and looked at her, then William approached her and said in a calm way "Aris is the brother of my grandmother, he is like my grandpa... maybe this is why I look like him" so she moved few steps back while looking at them, and looking upset to Aris "I can't believe you!! You just made me really upset, Aris" so William just walked few steps to her and then said "I, for all my life, heard the love story of Aris and Lara, and always told him I wish I would have one just like him. When he came yesterday, he said that he will make my wish come true, if I escorted you. We didn't mean anything, if you want to go, you are free to go... but if you go, you have to know very well ... that you are playing against Cupid, and for somehow I know that Aris was the real Cupid in this case, so you are free to go ... we won't stop you, but for your knowledge, I really liked Sarah Lesley, the one Aris kept talking about all night"

Sarah stood still in front of the two men, doing nothing but thinking and staring at them, she didn't know if she should leave or stay, she couldn't think of anything. she then turned to the picture of Aris and Lara, which they both looked incredibly happy in, and then she turned to look at Aris, who were incredibly looking happy, on the contrary of his look at the first time she saw him in the bus, and then she looked at William, as he stood there just like prince charming, and then she said "I was really angry, I felt I lost everything this is why I got into this bus, and I was so angry of everything, just before I met you Aris, I was angry, I felt like I failed in everything I ever planned for, I was really, really angry! And here you are, offering me the chance to be happy but yet I stand here thinking, I am thinking if I want to have the happiness you had one day!! How come? How come life can be this easy...? I am back home with my family, I am back home after learning the life's greatest lessons, I am back home to have an offer of happiness and love, you know Aris, I am even back home to find out that my resume was accepted, I am, starting from this morning, a lawyer in Edmond's brothers office for legal aids. How come? How can life be so good after all this anger, and now, I am really angry because you, you, you manipulated me!! You got me involved in your life, and now you want me to love your grandson!! How come I am still angry, why am I still feeling angry, if life is going just perfect now??"

Sarah, though talked just like crazy people, found out that Aris cried. He cried, and he couldn't hold his tears, and he walked to her, and then said "Anger can create hope, do you believe in that? I was angry too, I was angry because I lost Lara, I was angry for 3 years, and maybe more angry than you are now, but when I saw you ... I had hope! Life doesn't stop ... it goes on, and it can be even better... just look at this place, I killed it, I

killed the happiness that was always in this place, because I was angry. I was angry just like you, but I received an invitation for happiness, to come back home, to attend William's sister, Allis, wedding. She is getting married after two days; I was afraid to come here not finding Lara, and I hoped to die on this bus, I preferred to die rather than coming back here not finding her, but instead, I met you... you angry little girl, who make the perfect match for this dreaming boy... look at him, the guy always prayed God that he meets a girl like you, and here you were, sitting right next to me, and I met you on the way back home. Can't we have a chance to let go of the anger, both of us?? Can we be happy? Can we give up our anger??"

Sarah couldn't hold her tears too, and she kept looking to Aris with a smile while he was talking, then she approached him, and hugged him. She closed her eyes once she hugged him, and as she opened it, she found herself holding a baby instead, sitting in a room surrounded by Aris, William and all her family, even Allis, William's sister with her husband and kid. But this time, it was not an imagination."

Mum usually ends her story with tears, when she says "Aris was right ... Anger can create hope, this is the reason we called you, my beautiful little girl: Hope William Aris Lesley. And because of you, I believe in hope, and in the end I would like to say: I would never ever forget the day I met Aris on the way" and then she walks to Aris and she hugs him very tight, specially that he was crying too, and then they both start singing "the way you look tonight" and my dad, William, as usual struggles while trying to catch up with them. This is the story in short, the story that my mum tells the best every time, and all my family gathers living the hope that Sarah had always waited for, but all she had to do to get it was to meet Aris on the way!

The Inappropriate

Chapter 1

This is a story of what people might consider as inappropriate. A story that made all the country went upside down because that one word that was said: "it was inappropriate". Everyone was frustrated, and felt discrimination. Accusations of racism, anger and up rage were all aiming one single lady, Jennifer Crane. The academy award winner for 3 times as best director, also she was honored by the nomination for 5 times for the Oscars. But that had nothing to do with that fact that she just turned all the country against her.

All that started when Richard Sawyer's plays in Broadway almost failed; it was not such a good time for Richard to play the Jan role anymore. He was getting old and boring; that is why all Hollywood producers just turned their backs on him. Richard Sawyer and Jennifer Crane had celebrated their 5th wedding anniversary right after her last Oscar, and though she was booming in Hollywood, his star was falling. Jennifer always supported Richard even in his last performance in his play "The Shinning Moon". But apparently nothing a wife can do, that can make a falling star to survive. Richard was pretty rough, pushing his Jenny away, but yet she defended him whenever asked by the Paparazzi about their marriage. All Hollywood talked about their love story that began in one of the movie premiers for one of their star friends, that love story that lasted during the 5 years marriage, or at least that is what the Paparazzi knew!

Jennifer Crane is well known of her tragedy movies, all actors and actresses who worked with her describe her as the Genius, and it is well said. They all won Oscars as best leading actor and best leading actress because of her. The only thing Jennifer Crane ever wanted was to direct one movie, a comedy movie; it was like her mission impossible. But she always dreamt to have one with Martin Lawrence, and they already signed a contract with the production company to make that film, it was such a challenge that everyone in Hollywood talked about, David Letterman, Larry King and even John Stuart. One morning, and out of a sudden, all the newspapers were talking about the Divorce of Richard Sawyer and Jennifer Crane; No one ever knew what happened between them. Even when they were asked many times, "no comment" was always the answer. All people knew was that they signed the divorce papers, and that she even agreed to give up the beach house, though Richard insisted to give her more than she really took out of their divorce. The day Jennifer decided to sign the divorce papers was the day she

decided to stay silent forever. No one knew that better than Richard, he always knew that it was a typical Jennifer Crane behavior, keeping everything looking so perfect, even her divorce.

But that silence didn't stay forever, it was one early morning; when Jennifer was shopping her grocery from a super market, in her jeans, grey sweatshirt and sunglasses, when tens of Paparazzi attacked her with their microphones and cameras, she couldn't realize why they were acting like that until one of them asked her: "Did you know about Richard and Sophie?" She didn't even bother to reply, and she left all her grocery behind and walked to her car.

Back at her home, and as she called her best friend the academy award winner George Macay, as best script writer, and asked him to meet her at her place. They both sat in her office and they were totally silent, didn't even blink when Juanita, Jennifer's maid, came in with the tea and cake. George was always very close to Jennifer, he was almost her age and they had worked a lot before, and they both won Oscars for the same movies. They sat there and each one of them was reading a magazine that had a cover of both Richard and Sophie kissing on the beach, while Sophie was wearing Bikini. It wasn't just one magazine that had that cover, but around 10 or more magazines.

In a studio, where everything was set and ready, Jennifer was finally shooting her movie with Martin Lawrence, when all in a sudden, there were voices all around, loud voices, and camera men came in running, that even the security couldn't stop them. It didn't take more than one minute and Jennifer was surrounded by tens of Paparazzi again asking her about Richard and Sophie. And as they were surrounding her, one of them hit a lamp of the decoration and it fell on the floor, got broken, that was when silence took over the place. Jennifer didn't look fine, as they were screwing her shooting of her comedy, which was not a good sign; it was like it is becoming a jinx, that comedy! Then one of them just asked: "what do you think of Richard and Sophie getting together? Is it the real reason you got divorced?" and as flashes of cameras were lighting, she was totally upset, and she yelled and said: "that was so inappropriate, all of you, get out of my god damn studio".

The next morning, as she was sleeping in her room, she was terrified as there was a hand touching her, and once she woke up, she realized it was George, who sadly informed her that the Press didn't feel sorry for her divorce, or for the fact that Richard

was dating Sophie, but the one thing they wrote in the papers was: "Jennifer Crane: it was inappropriate ... is it because she is jealous, or because Sophie is black?!"

Chapter2

George, who was totally astonished of Jennifer's reaction, couldn't convince his best friend to defend herself. Jennifer had decided to take the risk and stay silent without replying to the accusations; the thing which actually drove George crazy, as she insisted that she would keep the real reason as a secret, and that she would never reply to an accusation of being a racist!

During the time Jennifer was in her silence phase, Richard was being followed by Paparazzi and Hollywood producers. He had three scripts to read and decide which he likes. Richard Sawyer, whose star was falling, was offered three scripts, and the cameras of the press were chasing him everywhere. They took a statement of him, that was later published in all magazines and TV shows: "I am sure Jennifer didn't mean that". That was the only thing he said commenting on what Jennifer said. George used that sentence over and over while convincing Jennifer to come out the world telling them what she really meant by the word "inappropriate". But Jennifer was not convinced still and yet preferred to be silent, even if her ex-husband was acting as a jerk by making use of his relation with Sophie, as he was then offered movies, and was no longer a falling star.

It was one day that everything suddenly turned against her, once Sophie was interviewed in one of the TV shows, and was asked about Jennifer Crane, she cried and said that she lived all her life while being judged, as some accused her of being stupid. And since she is a fashion model, who cares only about her appearance and look, or that she always felt that she was being sorted out as an African model and not all of the famous designers preferred to hire her for their defiles. And after she stopped crying, she said she forgave Jennifer for anything she meant. These few words and the river of tears turned everything against Jennifer, as all magazines and TV shows talked about Sophie's statement and described that attitude as Racism, that even Oprah Winfery made a speech about racial discrimination in one of her episodes.

Jennifer knew all that, but she ignored it and even if by chance she saw a show talking about her and Sophie, she muted the TV and ran on her walking machine, while turning the music loud. She ignored the queen of drama Ms. Le Manc, who was crying in all shows and magazines. And even if being accused of racism, Jennifer insisted and fought of having her comedy, so she went to the studio few days after the chaos. And for her

great disappointment, she knew that Martin Lawrence walked away and chose to terminate his contract, and that all the African Americans working in the staff decided to quit too. After a huge fight with the producer, who was frustrated of her silence, and accusing her of being irresponsible, he decided to cancel the shooting and announced in public that he decided to terminate his contract with her. Jennifer didn't collapse when he did that; on the contrary, she actually for the first time of her life, yelled at a producer and accused him of ignorance. Jennifer was well known of her intelligence and decency, but that day, she didn't find another solution to answer that ignorant producer except the way she did.

No one understood the sophisticated mind and the complicated vision of Jennifer Crane's mind, not even George, though he was her best friend and he knew a lot about her. She was such a mysterious stubborn woman, that George always supported, even if he never knew what exactly was on her mind. Like that time, five years earlier, when she decided to marry Richard, and insisted that her name will never be Jennifer Sawyer. She was Jennifer Crane, the academy winner director, and she never was Jennifer Sawyer and never was going to be. He didn't understand that back then, but he finally realized how his best friend was right; maybe she had a feeling that she would be divorced one day. He guessed that, but she never really explained to him the secret behind all that. That was the significance of their relation, they always surprised each other with new ideas, they shared a lot of secrets, but yet they supported each other. George was a single man, one of Hollywood's bachelors who stole the heart of most the actresses, and was even chosen as one of the sexiest men alive few years before.

One night Jennifer called him and asked him a little favor. And after sneaking into her house, they both talked for a while, he left the place and drove her car out of her garage with all the windows closed, while wearing a hat and sunglasses, so the press people, who were waiting outside, followed him. And after one hour of driving, he finally parked the car, so all of the cameramen ran to the car; he opened the window with a smile and said: "She is gone".

Chapter 3

After exactly one week of that situation, George was in the airport checking in, and apparently he was going to travel to Seoul, South Korea. Just as the flight arrived, he walked to the arrival terminal, then he smiled, as he found Jennifer standing there waiting for him, he walked to her and hugged each other quiet strong. Jennifer was wearing very heavy clothes and a colorful scarf, it was snowing outside the airport, they took a taxi and George checked himself in the hotel that Jennifer herself had checked herself in one week before. After he settled in his room, he went to hers, where they sat drinking hot coffee and staring at the window, which was having an over view of Seoul. Both George and Jennifer looked pretty relaxed, and then she turned to him and asked him if he was ready.

Both George and Jennifer met next morning in the restaurant of the hotel and had breakfast together, then left, while being totally dressed up and wearing heavy coats. They hired a limousine that dropped them in front of a huge building. As they walked in, they asked about Kim Lee Sung. And they entered a huge beautiful living room and as they sat on a sofa right next to each other, they looked very relaxed, and then out of a sudden a handsome Korean man entered wearing semi formal, a dark grey suit with white shirt, as he approached, he suddenly paused and expressed how he was delighted of the visit of the best director Ms. Jennifer Crane and the best script writer Mr. George Macay, so she stood and he bowed like a real gentleman and kissed her hand, George looked a little surprised, but then Kim turned and said hello to him, and sat on the chair right in front of them.

The conversation started with whether that was the first time for them in Korea, and then Jennifer told him the real reason they were visiting Korea, as they, George and she, decided to produce a new movie, and they need him to be the leading actor. They had been in contact with his agent, Mr. Sol. Back then, It was not such a familiar thing that Hollywood produces a movie for a Korean actor, who is asked to act in English. He was surprised, but he was pretty calm and decided to listen till the end. Jennifer was doing all the talk, as she will be the producer and director of the movie. Kim sat there listening carefully and then he stood up, walked to the window which was having an overview of the city as well, he took a deep breath and then he turned and asked whether that would require that he goes with them to USA. For sure they confirmed, he was

surprised, and then he asked why him. Jennifer looked to George, in a way to ask him to answer Kim, so George told him "we need a super star that is not American". So Kim smiled and then said "you were rejected by other American actors?" Jennifer didn't accept his comment; as it was clear that he meant that she was accused of being racist. So she stood up and said she was leaving, he tried to stop her, and then he looked her in the eyes and told her, maybe if he reads the script, he would then agree to act in her movie. She smiled and then she said "good bye" and left. As he turned to George, George told him he would call him later, and he left right after her.

Another morning, George and Kim met in a hotel, Kim told George that he read the script that he sent him, and that he would like to be "Shang" (the name of the hero of the new movie). George was delighted but he warned Kim of how he had to change his attitude with Jennifer; as she is a very strict woman, and genius director and how all actors, even the Oscar winners, respect her and follow all her instructions. He even warned him that he is not allowed to publish even in Korean magazines that he will start shooting that movie with them. Kim Lee Sung was well known of being Korea's super star, that actor who takes away all the hearts of the Korean girls, he had been dating before Korea's super star Moy Hong San, and that he is a very talented but yet a smart actor. A challenge like that movie was such a temptation to him, even if he was Korea's superstar, he would then invade Hollywood. He agreed, and he asked George if he could set a meeting for him with Jennifer. George told him that she just flew back to L.A. and that if he wanted to talk to her, he would actually go to L.A as soon as he could, in order to start the shooting of the movie. Kim accepted and said that he wanted to take that chance, and not going to let go of it, but he was curious still why Jennifer acted like that with him, and the one thing that actually worried him was whether working with Jennifer would cause him any problems regarding the racism accusations she was accused of, but just Jennifer acted, George stood and told Kim "if you don't want this movie, just don't accept it".

Juanita opened the door one afternoon, it was Kim, as she let him in, he sat in the office waiting for Jennifer, who came in few minutes later, and she was wearing sports clothes and looked as if she had been working out. He stood and smiled to her, so she smiled to him, and she sat, so accordingly he sat too. Kim was a real gentleman, he always dealt with women in such a gentle way, and he was Korea's super star for a reason! The first thing he said to her, after few seconds of silence was "I need to apologize for my behavior back in Seoul". Jennifer was not such a tough woman as people thought, she

told him that there was no need for him to apologize, but yet he insisted, and then he offered her a gift, and handed her a box and asked her to open it, so she took it, opened it, and it was a Kimono. It was red and black Kimono, which made her smile, it was not because Korea's super star was in her home, apologizing, giving her a gift, but actually because she loved the Kimono, that she was sure made of pure silk.

Chapter 4

Jennifer Crane, after her divorce, decided to escape away from her place, and since the Press wouldn't leave her alone, she made another plan with George and convinced everyone that she was living in a palace she had in France. While actually she decided to disguise and travelled to New York, she rented a big place, it was going to be the workshop. That day, she entered the workshop and she found George waiting her, he had everything ready, a very long table, chairs, cups of coffee, papers, cameras, white sheet hanging on the wall. Then he told her that they would be expecting all the people soon. It didn't take long and everyone was there, almost twenty persons, they sat around the table even George sat next to her, then she stood up and said: "I chose you, because you are the best, I chose you, because you understood, and I chose you because you will keep the secret", that speech didn't last long, but she told them that the scripts were printed and that they have to read it just before they give her their final answers.

One of the people sitting there was a very beautiful calm girl, she was a red head girl, but she sat there listening to her as if her life depended on what Jennifer was saying, that girl was Lydia Jonathon, she was a young actress discovered by Jennifer Crane and introduced her in one of her movies. She was young talented actress and to Jennifer, that girl was the right girl for that new movie. Then as they were all focused like that, suddenly the door was opened slowly, and they all turned to see who just arrived. It was Kim, so Jennifer smiled and waved to him to come closer. Everyone looked astonished, as they were wondering who he was. Kim is Korea's superstar, but even USA stars didn't know who he was. As he approached Jennifer, she introduced him to them, and informed them that he would be the leading actor, and she pointed at Lydia and told him that that girl was going to be his partner in that film. She gave them one week, and said she would be sitting in the same place at the same time, waiting for those who would like to join her in that crazy idea.

During the week, Jennifer stayed in a two floors apartment, in a Skyscraper. Kim, as he came to USA not in a formal way, wanted to act just normal, so he rented another apartment in the same building. Kim always told George how it was hard to deal with her, as he didn't understand how she thinks, and George always told him that by time, he would get to know her more. That night, he went out to one of the bars near the place, and as he walked to the bar, he found Jennifer sitting there. Any man could tell that she was sitting there, with all eyes in the room looking at her, not because she was

Jennifer Crane, but because she was so beautiful with her new black wig she was wearing. Yes, no one knew her, but he did. She got used to wearing that wig whenever she was out. She was drinking wine, and he approached to talk to her. And suddenly, a handsome guy appeared accusing him of bothering the beautiful lady, that could have changed to a bar fight, ugly bar fight, if it wasn't up to what she did, she just pulled Kim to her and kissed him and then turned to the guy and told him to back off as he was her boy friend. And then she decided to leave, as they were just walking out, that man, who apparently was drunk and was a fan of her look, said some bad stuff, that Jennifer dragged Kim out of the bar. Kim could have made a big fight, but apparently he was pretty astonished by Jennifer's attitude; she was such a strong woman, who defended him!

Once they were out of the bar, Jennifer was walking slowly but still in such confident way, no wonder why all the people in the bar were staring at her, she was wearing a very sexy dress, blue one. Even Kim was quite amazed of how she looked, as they walked silent for a little; she turned to him and told him something he never believed Jennifer Crane could say "I want you to love me". Kim thought that she was drunk when he first heard these words, and he stood frozen and couldn't even comment. Then he realized that she was not over yet, "I want you to love me the way you are going to love Lydia in the movie, we are going to have a training, you and I, and do everything you and Lydia would do during the shooting, I want you to be American, what do you say?". Jennifer was not drunk, she was thinking of the movie, Kim was pretty astonished and a bit worried though. But yet he told her that he came to USA because he trusted her, and that he trusted that a movie like that would make her win another Oscar, he even said a joke of how he thought he might win an Oscar himself! He suddenly felt at ease, and sighed and she looked at him and started laughing, so he laughed in return.

The next morning, Kim and Jennifer decided to go to one of the Greek churches; they were planning to have a little sneak peak to a wedding, just like wedding crashers. It was not Kim's idea, for sure, it was totally hers, so they just got well dressed and though Kim thought that was a bad idea and that they would be kicked out of the wedding, they were welcomed. That wedding in the church was a pure Greek wedding, just like "My Big Fat Greek Wedding" the movie. During the ceremony, Kim and Jennifer were talking in very low voice as she was describing to him what she would want him to do in the movie. They had seen the happiness and the celebration of both families of the newlyweds. Once they left the wedding, Jennifer asked the driver of the car, who was

already aware of her plan, to drop them to one of the neighborhoods; Kim never knew what she told the driver secretly, even if he knew, he didn't know anything about the city, so he just got along .

As Kim was sitting next to Jennifer, looking at the window watching the beautiful streets, and all the Skyscrapers, he just found out they parked in front of one of the most famous hotels. It was lunch time, so they just walked to the restaurant, where Jennifer smiled to one of the waiters there who welcomed her in French, and led them to their table. That restaurant was one of the most famous French restaurants in town; they had a very classic meal, while drinking Champaign. Kim and Jennifer talked a lot about their lives, but even though that; she never brought up the Richard issue. Kim told her how he was born as a son of rich family in Korea, and how he fought his family, to be an actor. His family was not welcoming the idea, since they thought that it was not ethical, Kim was a son of a very conservative family but yet, he insisted to be a super star.

He told her how he loved all her films, and that he was glad to hear about her comedy, but he respected her films, the tragedy ones, and how he cried once in one of her movies. That lunch Kim and Jennifer had, was a turning point for Kim's point of view about Jennifer. She always respected him and his work, she clarified and how she thought how good and strong actor he was in Korea, and can be in the United States, and how she always saw something different about the actors she chose to play the roles in her movies. Even Lydia, she told him how that girl was to be one of Hollywood best actresses in the following years. Just after her last sip of Champaign, she winked to the waiter who walked to her and whispered in her ears, she asked then Kim to follow her with no words.

They walked through the lobby of the hotel, and then they took the elevator and Kim just followed while smiling, Kim walked like superstars, but unfortunately none of the Americans recognized him, but yet he kept the attitude. As the elevator was going up, she pushed him to the wall of the elevator, and she kissed him, but he stopped her and so she just stood there as if nothing happened. He stood there looking at her and was really confused, how come he questions her attitude, specially that he just liked her kiss, it was Jennifer Crane after all, but how come she kisses him whenever she wanted, and he chose to be silent, since it might be something for the movie.

He stood there looking so hesitated that he even touched his hair while thinking, until he realized that they reached level number ten. They walked out, went to a room, Kim stood there refusing to come in, so she told him that they would just change their clothes as they couldn't go to the place they were heading to with that fancy clothes they were wearing. No one could ever imagine what was going in her head, even if Kim was not agreeing on many things, he just followed her. They came out of the room wearing very casual, that even Kim was wearing a long diamond necklace, for sure it was accessories, and a cap, and he just looked like backstreet guys.

They stood there in the elevator, and they started to laugh as he kept trying to act like Funky, and as they got out of the hotel, they found the driver waiting for them. He drove away, and then stopped the car, and Jennifer asked Kim to follow her, as they can no longer go through with the car. They walked a little in the street which was so dark and they could see a lot of black and white men wearing necklaces, ice caps and smoking, and on the other side of the street, a lot of girls wearing glittery clothes. As they were walking, Jennifer got closer to Kim and she held his hand tight, and then she whispered in his ears, then he smiled and walked just like he acted in the elevator, and they both walked like a gangster and his girl, they entered a bar called: Lindsey's Place, they passed the gate after being checked by the two enormously huge body guards, they entered that smoky disco, where everybody had been dancing. The music was loud and as they walked, they started dancing, Jennifer was very active or hyper, and even Kim was feeling weird at the beginning, and he just moved slowly, but as the place was crowded, music was very loud so they got along later with the loud music.

Jennifer and Kim danced together very hot on that techno music playing, the place was full of sexy people, white, black, Latin, Asians, Jennifer was so excited that she kept jumping while dancing, and moving her hair, the thing which made Kim laugh at the beginning and then she pulled his hands put it on her body and started to dance, so he just got a long later. Jennifer was dancing hot, so he had to interact eventually.

That night ended in Jennifer's place, both of them were not drunk, but they were very loud, after dancing all night, and as he sat on a chair, she said she was hungry and she dialed a restaurant and ordered Chinese food. And after she hung up the phone, she threw herself on the sofa, and told him how exhausted she was. Kim took a deep breath and then he stood and walked to the sofa, and he was just standing silent that she felt weird so she sat facing him, and she looked up to him, he was very silent and in a calm

way he asked her "why are you doing this?". She then took a deeper breath and said "because this is what you will do in the movie".

"And why am I doing it with you?" he asked, she stood and walked to the mirror, she fixed her hair while answering "because I want you to be pure American, you need to talk like American, walk like American, and even eat like one". She walked slowly to him while saying this, "I want you even to love like one".

Kim then asked her a question that was quiet aggressive but yet she answered it "does this have something to do with your divorce?" she walked few steps away, and then she sat on the chair saying "my divorce is none of your business" as she started lighting her cigarette, the door was knocking, so she walked till she opened it, she took the bag from the delivery guy and paid him, and then he left. She put the bag on the table and sat, and started to open the boxes of food, and asked him to come and eat. He walked to her and sat next to her, but she stood and went to the kitchen and came back holding a fork, so he smiled and watched her in silence as he saw her eating with fork. As she turned to ask him why he was laughing, he told her because it was not the right way to eat it, so she laughed and blushed and then she told him she would confess she couldn't use the sticks, so he told her that he would teach her, and he handled her the sticks and they both started to try eating, and laughed whenever she failed to catch the food.

Chapter 5

Jennifer was driving a red car on a high way, and her hair was flying in the air as she drove very fast while wearing sun glasses and singing a Shakira's song, Kim was sitting there wearing sunglasses too and was watching the road, then she took an exit and parked after five minutes driving in the parking of a stadium. As they walked in, she stood there buying Yankee's shirts, caps and Fingers. She asked Kim to wear them, so did she, and they walked together into the stadium where they watched a game of baseball. Jennifer was a Yankee's fan, and she was being happy or nervous most of the game, she bought Kim Sausage sandwiches and Pepsi, and Kim spent the match watching her while standing up supporting her team or swearing and yelling.

On their way out, and after an amazing victory of the Yankee's, she stood in front of the car and asked Kim what else he needed to do in America. He smiled and said "I am not American; you are, so take me wherever you want to go". And he smiled and got into the car, so she got into the car too and drove away till she parked her car in front of a building and asked him to get out of the car after taking off the yankee's shirt that he was wearing over his clothes. They took the elevator and she knocked the door of apartment number 34, where there was a small party that Kim realized later, it was the wedding anniversary of a couple whom she introduced to him as her best friends. As she was talking to some of her friends there, that man, who appeared to be Indian, approached him and handed him a glass of wine, and told him how he felt sorry for her, Jennifer, for her divorce. Kim nodded, and then the guy introduced himself as Lucky Rahul. And pointed to his wife whom was standing with Jennifer and the other friends and told him "this is my sunshine, Lara, she is not Indian, she is actually from Philippines, I am the one who is Indian", and he started telling him how they met each other and how it ended up getting married.

Apparently Lara was a photographer who worked with Jennifer long time ago, and that she had to leave L.A. when they decided to get married. After two hours, Kim and Jennifer were leaving the party, and he told her that needed to eat something as he didn't eat up there, so she asked him why he didn't eat, he said it was because he doesn't eat Indian food because it is very spicy, so she smiled and asked him to hop into the car as she knew a good place. They ate that night in a Moroccan restaurant where they sat on the floor eating couscous and meat, while listening to Moroccan music.

Next day, was full of fun as well, they spent the morning walking in New York streets, gardens, and the Chinese town in queens, for sure they were hiding their identity with wearing caps and sunglasses, and even Jennifer had put her wig on. They spent the afternoon attending a party in Madison square garden, Jennifer had made all plans to move all around New York during the week, she rented a car, helicopter, and even a boat in the Hudson River. She even invited him one night in her place to eat Turkey and told him all her memories about the thanks giving. And after few glasses of wine, she was slightly drunk, and he sat there in the dining table with Ray Charles songs being played, he just stood and asked her to come with him as she needed to sleep. She was really drunk, singing with Ray Charles, and as he held her and walked her to her bedroom, she kept singing and saying words that he couldn't recognize, as he pushed her to bed slowly, she held his hands and said "thank you" and then she slept in less than a minute. He sat there all night, on a chair next to her, and then he woke up when there was sunlight hitting his eye, and he walked to look if she was breathing fine, and just as he checked on her, he sat on the bed and slept.

Once she heard the telephone ringing, Jennifer woke up and she was totally in a mess, she answered and it was George who told her that she had to be ready for the meeting with the staff of the movie in an hour and that he couldn't find Kim, she looked to find Kim sleeping next to her, but yet she told George that she didn't know where he was. As she hang up, she tried to wake Kim up who woke up terrified, and then he realized that it was her. She told him that he needed to be ready for the meeting and that he had to call George and tell him that he was sleeping or anything and don't tell him that he was with her. After he left, she took a shower and got fully dressed and met him and George in the lobby of the building, and George drove the car to the workshop where everyone was waiting them.

Few months later, In front of one of the movie theatres where there was a lot of cameramen and TV people, waiting in front of the theatre which was playing a movie called: "The American Magazine", there stood one of the TV girls announcing that day as the day Hollywood was celebrating the Korean invasion, with Kim Lee Sung playing the lead role in the movie the American Magazine, with the American star Lydia Jonathon, and a movie written by George Macay and directed by Jennifer Crane, she said that all the American press was waiting for the actors to attend the movie premier. As she finished her word, a black limousine approached and the door was opened and all the staff came out of the car, except Jennifer who didn't come, as the cameras

started capturing the event, all the press was asking about Jennifer, and they stopped George who said that she was not going to attend, and when asked about the reason why she didn't come, he just walked saying no comment while smiling. Kim and Lydia walked together, and stopped for some photos and signing few autographs and then everyone entered the cinema.

Kim tried to reach Jennifer after the movie premier but he couldn't, he called George to ask him about her, George told him that it was her will that they leave her alone. All the critics and most of the talk shows were talking about the movie, and how it was a pure message from Jennifer Crane to all the people, all the American of how she was not a racist, that movie got reviews calling it as a Genius approach to the real America, and even Richard appeared in one of the TV shows saying how he loved the movie and that he never believed that Jennifer could be a racist.

Jennifer was sitting in her bedroom back in her home, and she was sitting in the bed, and had used like two boxes of tissues as she was crying, and watching TV. Suddenly and out of nowhere George entered the room and they both looked at each other, but they didn't talk. He sat next to her, and he was so relaxed leaning his head on the pillow. George met Kim the next morning as requested by Kim, and he asked George that he wanted to meet Jennifer; George said that she refused that. Kim kept arguing with George and then he reached the level of anger that he said "are you the real reason of her divorce?" After a sip of the coffee, George talked sharp "you know nothing, Kim". So, Kim was more angry and said "where is she? Why she meets you? Only you? How come she didn't attend her movie premier? How she talks only to you?" George just refused to answer him, and he said nothing but "you know nothing" and he repeated it until he decided to leave.

Chapter 6

Juanita opened the door one morning to find Kim, and out of politeness she let him in, though she knew that Jennifer wouldn't meet him, but he insisted that he would stay till she would show up. And suddenly he heard something; it was footsteps of George coming down the stairs. George didn't know he was sitting there, so Kim saw him, so he stood and smiled. George walked to him and smiled "what are you doing here, Kim?", so Kim said "see, I was right". George smiled to him and said "you still know nothing" as the two men were standing, the door bell rang, and Juanita opened the door. And Lydia came in, she walked to George, but she didn't realize Kim was there, she walked to George and they kissed each other. So Kim stood there surprised, and as George stopped kissing her and then said "Kim, I am dating Lydia... but Jennifer is my best friend". So, Kim smiled and bowed his head to Lydia, who smiled and looked at George as she was happy he finally announced that. So George walked one step closer to Kim and said "you have to leave, Jennifer hates it when someone tries to be curious. Just leave, Kim". So, Kim smiled desperately, and then George called Juanita and asked her to tell Jacob, the driver to drive Kim wherever he wanted. As Kim got in the car, Jacob started to talk as he drove; he told Kim that he is married to Juanita and that they had served Jennifer since ever. And that he loved her as his daughter, she had always been a good woman. Kim was sitting there looking at the window, as Jacob kept talking, he was so confused, especially that it had been so long since he last saw her, and he actually thought that he missed her, and these words of Jacob made him feel like missing her more.

The phone rang one night at Jennifer's place, so she replied and immediately she opened the TV as she answered. It was George, who told her that Kim was meeting Oprah Winfrey, and she had to see him. And that he just knew that the movie was nominated to the Golden Globes and she personally was nominated for best director and Kim for best lead actor, and that Lydia didn't make it, but he did! And asked her if he could come over, she told him that she wasn't in the mode and asked him to come over her place the next morning. As she hung up, Oprah announced Korea's sweetheart and America's new Jan: Kim Lee Sung and all ladies in the studio clapped and screamed, he walked in to the stage, walked to Oprah, kissed her hand, then turned to the ladies, blew them a kiss, stood there smiling and winking to them. And then Oprah laughed, hugged him and asked the ladies "don't you just love Korea?" They all laughed, she asked him to sit, and she sat too.

Then she started her conversation "did you know your movie was number one in the American box office for six weeks? And did you know that today you were nominated as best leading actor for the Golden globe award?" He just nodded his head and smiled, so a lady in the studio just screamed, so Oprah laughed, he smiled to the audience and she continued "we want to know more about your experience in America?" The camera zoomed in his face as he smiled and said "I was chosen because I was different, a message that Jennifer Crane wanted to send to the world, I believed in what she wants, and I wanted to support her, she chose me because she wanted me to live the American life, but in her way, the way she saw America. You know that love story in the movie between the two reporters who had to make a magazine telling the story of the American people, if it wasn't because of Jennifer Crane, I wouldn't have convinced the people, the American people of me as an American guy. Lydia was pretty supporting and I loved her in the movie like hell, and George, oh, Macay. He was the best, the scenario was just AWESOME". When he said Awesome, he said it just like African Americans said it, so all the audience just laughed and clapped too. "it was a tragedy in the end, that such a love story ended by gunshot, I was killed because I was Asian American, dating a Polish American girl, and the world just refused us for who we were, this magazine we have made it in the end, was published and introduced to the world, to prove that we will always stand up for who we really are!!".

Oprah then asked him a question which she described it as hard one "you came from Korea and you risked having this chance to be introduced to America, and you didn't fear that risk acting with the director Jennifer Crane?" Kim just took a deep breath, looked to the audience, then back to Oprah and said "she came to me, she offered me something I couldn't say No to, I respected her more as I got to know her more, Jennifer Crane was attacked by rumors, just rumors, and no one really understood her ". As he was talking, Jennifer jumped from the bed, walked closer to the TV and she stared at his face that the camera was focusing on. And then he resumed "when I first came I thought she was such an arrogant woman, but that week I spent with her while she was introducing me to my character in the movie, I realized that no one could ever imagine how this woman thinks. And that she was totally insulted when accused of being a racist, Jennifer Crane was divorced for whatever reason, and if she thinks it is inappropriate, then it is ... and the last thing she can be is to be a racist, she was insulted, she replied to this insult with a creative movie, that made us realize the real meaning of us, and that we are who we are.". Oprah then looked to him, smiled, then she turned to the camera and said "we are a mixture of more than one culture, The

American Magazine had pictures of Greek weddings, classic food in French restaurant, a dance in a disco that is full of life, and full of guys and girls from many racial backgrounds, watching a movie while eating Chinese, having the pleasure of enjoying New York at night, and in Madison square, partying with your Indian friends, eating Couscous in the Moroccan restaurant, or even Nachos in a Mexican one, driving your car while singing Shakira's song, and maybe in the end you just have a little dance on the music of Ray Charles". And then she looked at Kim and said: "I think we, Americans, owe her an apology" and as the camera zoomed into Oprah's face, Jennifer closed the TV.

As George stepped in Jennifer's home after Juanita let him in, Jacob was standing in the lobby and they both smiled to him, he wondered what was going on, so Juanita told him that Jennifer left the place that morning and told them to tell him that she couldn't make it to meet anyone and that she decided to be gone for few weeks, and she asked them to deliver him a message. As he opened it in a rush he read "George, I didn't want anyone to defend me, I am who I am, I didn't need Kim to defend me, to the world I am a weak person, But I am not that weak, I stood for what I believed, and I didn't want anyone to make excuses on my behalf. Anyway I am sure I got you a new award my friend, I got Kim one too, I know that the Oscar's will be his too, but I just can't face the world now. George I missed you already, and I will miss you more, but I need to stay away, am sick of the cameras, and betrayals, please tell Kim that he didn't have to defend me. Kiss Lydia for me, and tell her ... she might win the Oscars. Kisses, Jenny". When George showed Kim this message, Kim was paused, he looked at George and asked him if he knew where she was, George said no, Kim looked very shocked and he told George how he never meant to hurt her, that he just needed to dedicate his success to her, and how he knew she suffered because of the accusations, that she just needed an apology that he worked hard to get it back to her, he told George that he wanted to talk to her like crazy , but George told him that he knew nothing about her since that night they talked over the phone.

After few weeks, Kim was staying in a hotel in L.A and he had contacted his agent back in Korea, Sol and asked him to come over and stay with him. Sol he had managed to get him few offers for Modeling for a perfume and another for a brand of clothes, but he had no idea of why Kim refused to talk during the TV shows about Jennifer, he made sure to advise all the TV shows, even the Korean ones, that he would never talk about Jennifer during the shows or that he would refuse appearing in it. Kim and George used

to meet, but they had no idea whether Jennifer would make it the next day to the Golden Globe's or not. George told Kim how worried he was, and how he asked all their mutual friends, even Lucky and Lara in New York, and that no one saw her.

That night after George left, Kim asked Sol to go to his room as he was going to have a shower then sleep, it was around two a.m. and they had to be ready for the amazing event the next morning. Just as he was having hot shower, he heard the door knocking, he got out and put on a towel on his body and then he opened the door, to stand there in total surprise, it was her, Jennifer, but she was wearing the Kimono he bought her, and even dyed her hair black and she even wore red lipstick, true she added her American touch, but yet she was standing there wearing the Kimono. He just smiled after a minute pausing checking her out, then she just said "sarang hae" which is I love you in Korean. He smiled a little cute smile and then he pulled her in and closed the door.

The next day, as they were sitting in the limousine and Jennifer was wearing the Kimono again. And just as they were few blocks away from their final destination, Jennifer told Kim " you know what is inappropriate, that one day, my driver Jacob, told me how he was having hard time to lie to me; The truth was that Master Richard, as he used to call him, was staying in the beach house after the hard critic about his last play, and he insisted that I should go there, I didn't know the real reason Jacob insisted that I should go with him, until I arrived and saw my husband, cheating me with the famous Model, the fashion super star Ms. Sophie Le Manc."

As Jennifer ended her words, he smiled and said "I know! I knew that even before I met Oprah, Jacob told me, and this is why I tried to reach you like crazy, you didn't have to run away anymore. But you know Jennifer Crane, you are who you are, you don't need to say excuses to anyone for your behaviors, even me, I knew you loved me when we sat in that restaurant, and how you wanted to make me hate you less, Jennifer Crane, you don't have to say anything, All you have to do is just imagine, believe and create.. Your movie was the strongest reply; you answered to the world through your creation." And then he stopped for a while and said "You did a perfect job, girl ... you are AWESOME" he said it in the African American slang, while smiling.

That Golden Globe's was different, not because it was the first time for a Korean Actor to win, and the movie won six awards, and not because the stars like Richard and Sophie walked on that red carpet, not having full attention as they thought they would

have, but because Kim Lee Sung, walked on the red carpet holding hands with Jennifer Crane, who was wearing the Korean outfit and displaying it to everyone, they stood there right in the middle of the way, he held her back, made her bend, then kissed her, turned to the cameras and winked while saying "was it inappropriate enough?"

Invisible Love

Chapter1

I woke up today, and I feel how I miss the old days, not because I am not happy these days, but because I miss my best friend. True, he lives in the same city, and we are still in contact, and I am not living alone anymore, but there was nothing better than two single men enjoying their lives. We were best friends, business partners and what is most important is that we shared a great secret. It is no longer a secret now; maybe this is why I miss the old days, since we first lived here, we always sat on that brown leather couch we have, and we used to stare at something, that secret that both of us shared for a year, but now, it is not that fun anymore, true I still sit and stare, but it is not as fun as when it was a secret. We used to stare at that window, now it is not the same faces, the same furniture, curtains not even the paintings, but it is the same place, the place where Julia lived.

When we first saw Julia a year ago, she had just moved in to her new place in building number 67 in the 6th avenue, New York, Floor number 8. The first thing anyone can recognize in Julia's apartment, was the curtains, they were white curtains with colorful stains, red, orange, yellow, green...Etc. It was like a small carnival, and in the middle of the living room, a red couch, bright red, and I remember there was that black leather lazy boy. Both the couch and the lazy boy were facing the window, that window that gave us access to her world. On the right, my right... Maybe this is her left, I don't know, there was the kitchen, a very small kitchen with modern stools in red too, we could only see 2 stools from over here. It was really hard seeing the entire kitchen, but we could see her back when she was standing there cooking anything, that kitchen had the same colorful curtains. I was never good remembering furniture, but I do remember the colors, because we did realize one thing, that whoever was living in this place, should be an artist. And just like we guessed, there lived Julia Olsen. Yes, the brand new famous artist, Julia Olsen, "The artist that touched the hearts of every person in New York with her colors" like New York Times had described her.

When she moved in, she wasn't that famous yet, just a girl who kept drawing pictures we couldn't see, we saw the back of the paintings, a white sheet, and she sat facing the window drawing, while sitting on a stool. I remember how we used to sit, both of us

Kevin and I, watching her while working on our laptops. We have established this company of making hotel reservations online, so we barely left home. All what we knew about her, was that she lived alone and she sometimes received phone calls from her family, which usually ended up with a fight and she storms out of her place. Julia's best friend was Sally, she always called her Sall, who visited her a lot and tried to fix her some dates. Kevin hated Sall so much, as he actually was so into Julia since he first laid his eyes on her, and he hated Sall for getting Julia to think about dating other guys. Since we were aware that these windows were our access to her world, we refused that anyone can have the same access to ours, especially me when I used to get some girls back home, when Kevin was not around, or whenever I asked him to come home late. We insisted to have a special window that can't show us to the outer world, but yet, we could have access to it. Also one day, we have noticed that there was a regular check up for our buildings, as the two buildings we both live in are identical, so we just made friends with this jerk called Reds, and we gave him 100 \$ every month, as he was blackmailing us to tell Julie that we have asked him to put a little microphone in her place. So it wasn't only that we see her, we also heard everything happening inside. I know, I know, it is not ethical, but as if no one did this before, plus, I don't do this any more. Though we kept watching Julia for more than a year, we have never seen anyone except Sall visiting her, not even a guy! She was not in any relation with any guy during that year, regardless to the failure dates Sall tried to arrange her.

One morning, I woke up on that usual human alarm called Thia, our maid, I never understood where she comes from, anyway, she is Asian, and she used to come and wake me up by punching me in my stomach by the broom, and saying "Dave, Dave, Dave,..". and she doesn't stop until I wake up and tell her "Good morning Thia", and after I get up she keeps talking nonstop of words I never recognized, but she usually points at the door, and that is when I realize that she just wants me out so that she can clean the room. As I walked out to the living room, there I found Kevin sitting drinking coffee in front of the window, just like usual, I made my coffee too and sat next to him asking him if she was awake or not. And apparently she wasn't awake yet, everything was still and calm in the place, and as we both got busy reading papers, we could still

hear Thia banging stuff in the room, she woke up. There was beautiful Julia walking in her place. Julia had that significant brown hair, that was shinning whenever she stood there drinking coffee and standing by the window. The sun had made everything shiny in her place, the colorful curtains and her beautiful hair. That day was one of the turning points for all of us, and especially Julia, as Sall visited her in the very early morning, telling her that she had arranged her a date at night, a double date, and that she would pass by her at 7. Just like every time, Julia asked Sall if she would ever stop dating guys aimlessly, and in the same time, if she would ever stop trying to fix her a date with any guy. Sall, as usual, told her how a girl should fight to find her way in this world, and that they should see all the idiots, to find that special idiot in the end. Kevin shivered every time Sall was there, and he hated how she calls men idiots, he even threw a cup cake at the window, while saying "Booo" expressing how he hates her.

Julia was a different girl, she never made any special arrangements if she was having a date at night, she never ran in the house trying to know what she would be wearing on the date, we never felt that she cared. There was something about Julia, we never knew. What made that day quite different was that in the night, Julia didn't come home alone. We were sitting like usual, and suddenly we heard voices, she wasn't alone, it was dark and we couldn't realize what happened, but Kevin just ran to the window and stood there trying to see anything. And out of a sudden, once the light was opened, we both realized what was happening, she came home with a guy, who apparently was drunk and he was not having control of anything, so Julia was trying to pull him to the couch, and as she put him there, she turned over to get the phone from her bag, but the guy just tried to catch her, and just as his hand was moving toward her, Kevin ran to the door, so I followed him. I don't know how Kevin got all that energy running to our elevator, then out of it and then getting into her building, to the elevator. Once that elevator stopped, we just stood there astonished, that guy was standing waiting for it, and Julia's door was closed. It seemed like Julia knew how to handle the situation, we were both glad, but apparently we had to stand there with that guy in the same elevator for a few seconds as we were going down again. Kevin was really upset, that I felt he would kick the guy from behind, as he was standing right in front of Kevin, leaning on the side of the elevator, and humming some words we couldn't realize. Just

as we walked out of the elevator, we moved faster than him, and Kevin insisted to hold the door and hit that guy with the door on his way out.

I never realized it was serious what Kevin had for Julia, except that day. I always thought that he is just a fan of her looks, her attitude, her passion about art, anything except that he really was so into her. We went back that night, to find Julia lying on the couch and crying until she fell asleep, Kevin was so sad to see her cry, and he just stood there by the window, telling me how he wishes he could help her. I am sure it wasn't such a good night for her; I went to sleep once she slept, but I left Kevin there, sitting by the window watching her sleeping.

The next morning, was even more exciting, I woke up on a loud voice, and I even jumped out of my bed, it was Julia fighting with Sall, and I recognized the voices from my room, so I walked out to the living room, where I found Kevin who had made his coffee and was sitting there still watching her as she was fighting, and he told me that she called Sall once she woke up and asked her to come to her immediately. I entered the kitchen to make my coffee and then I realized that Thia was not there, and I asked him if she called, he said No. I wondered that day why Thia didn't come, oh my god, I just remembered that little woman took the money for that day!! Anyway, what made that day different was that, the door knocked, Sall opened, and stood still. We both couldn't see the door entrance from our place, but we saw Julia standing there asking Sall who it was by the door, but silence was all over the place, and as she walked a few steps to the door, we suddenly heard a scream!

Chapter2

I said "scream" right; this is usually how I like things, exciting. The scream was actually a cheer; we didn't know what was going though. Until we suddenly found Sall walking toward the couch and looking fascinated by something, or shall I say someone! We then saw Julia, coming to the center and pulling a hand, a man's hand, and then there he was. A very handsome man I have to admit. He had that light beard, wearing a casual leather jacket in light brown, and Julia looked so happy, but Sall was standing there amazed. And then he smiled and hugged Julia tight, that even Kevin stood, and then they kissed each other. No one was happier than Julia that morning; actually no one was happy with what was going on except her and that mysterious guy. Even Sall was shocked and speechless.

And just as both of them ended their romance, Julia stood there in front of him, and he hugged her from behind, and then she said " Sall, I want to introduce you to Joe" Sall stood there for a minute in total silence, and Kevin turned to me and asked me " who is Joe??" and he was so frustrated. We didn't know the answer, so didn't Sall. As he walked to her, she looked extremely confused and blushed, then he introduced his hands and said " Hello Sall, I am Joe" and as shy as she was, Sall shook hands with him too and said " Hello Joe, I am Sall, I am Julia's best friend" he nodded and smiled, and said " I know Sall" then he turned and walked to the window, we both could definitely see the reason Sall was so amazed, the guy is handsome! Joe is such a handsome man, we have to confess. He smiled and turned to Julia, we couldn't see his face any longer and said "a small place, but yet colorful, with a view of another window, and you can't even see the alley between the two buildings, nice home, sis " I, myself, even stood up when he said it "Sis" and Kevin turned to me yelling in a happy tune "he said sis??" I nodded yes. Sall was astonished, and looked extremely delighted, and said "Sis" so Julia just ran to him, hugged him hard, then turned to Sall and said "yes, this is Joe, my brother who lives in Paris".

Kevin kept jumping off his place saying "brother, her brother" he was so happy. Sall also smiled once she knew, that girl was for somehow planning to get him, since he is no longer a boyfriend of her best friend, Sall was really a hard chick looking for any handsome man. We then knew the reason Joe was in town, he decided to go home,

since he was bored of washing dishes in Paris. Kevin was relaxed, that he even decided to sit and open the laptop. Sall was sitting there listening to his words carefully, as if she was hearing a song for Celine Dion. He said that he tried hard to join any fashion design place, as a model, but he failed to convince them with his talents. As he was talking, Julie walked to the kitchen and started making him breakfast, and just as he smelled the delicious scrambled eggs as he described it, he walked to the kitchen, sniffing, as if he is inhaling the smell.

He was so funny, that Sall was laughing loud. Sall walked a few steps behind him, till she stood there, again astonished, as Joe walked to Julia as she was putting the plates on the table, between the two stools he stood right behind her, and started kissing her neck. We both were working, and nothing got our attention but the silence, after the loud laughs of Sall, we both just looked up to see what was happening, and we saw why Sall was silent, he was kissing her neck, and she was smiling and enjoying it, then she turned, hugged him, played with his hair, asked him to sit and start eating before the food gets cold. He sat eating nonstop, while we sat there confused and astonished.

Sall left a few minutes later, and she was still not looking so fine, as if she still didn't understand what was happening, but she didn't express that to Julia, she just said she had to leave as she had work to do. Kevin and I, sat there expressing how weird it is the relation between Julia and Joe, while both of them started to talk about his life in Paris, and how she sold 14 paintings to one of the galleries in New York, and how she got an offer to have an exhibition in this gallery on the 24th of October. She walked, sat in front of her unfinished drawing, he came and stood right behind her again, which made us focus more, though we couldn't see very well, since the painting was blocking our vision. He just expressed how beautiful it was, then she told him, that he can go and sleep in her room if he was tired of the flight, he said he would sleep for a few hours and then when he wakes up they would talk about their plans, then he walked to the bedroom, we could no longer see him, and she spent a few hours painting and humming on the music she played on her CD player. She used to like Bob Marley and all type of music, we never closed the audio, but on the contrary we used to work on it, except when we had to make phone calls with the hotels.

When Joe woke up, Julia wasn't home, we didn't know where she went until she came back telling him that she went out to buy some grocery to cook him dinner. He made a phone call before she came home, to their family telling them he was just back and he would be staying with Julia for a while, the phone call went peacefully on the contrary of Julia's phone calls with them. I remember Kevin commented on that saying that he would really want to know why her family treated her badly, especially that it seemed like she was never a bad girl. She cooked him dinner that night, while he was watching TV, and the night just passed peacefully.

Next morning, I woke up like usual on the human alert, Thia, and just like everyday we had our conversation that I should leave the room, but Kevin was not awake that morning, and just as I made my coffee and was about to read the papers, I noticed something worthy waking Kevin for. I ran to his bedroom shouting and yelling till he woke up, I couldn't tell him what I saw, and that he had to come and see by himself. Just as we stood there, we both were tremendously shocked. It was Joe, and he was half naked, doing exercises, and just as Julia woke up, she had been wearing a short sleeping gown, and was making coffee in the kitchen she was making fun of Joe of how he looked athletic and healthy, just as she said that, he walked to her in a very sexy way, and then he kissed her, it was not a brother sister kiss, he kissed her on her lips, that was actually what made me run calling for Kevin, what shocked me more was that they kept kissing until we both came back. We both felt disgusted and I am sure Kevin was almost going to have a heart attack, until she said "Stop it Joe, why are you back now?" and she pushed him away, she was about to take her coffee and leave the kitchen but he held her hand and then pulled her to him and said "because I couldn't leave you here alone anymore, it had been a year now, Julia"

We both stood there feeling so stupid and I swear Kevin was standing just like an iceberg. What one year, aren't they a brother and sister like what they told Sall? Why are they kissing each other? Does he love his sister? These were the questions running in my mind, but it didn't take long until we knew what was going there. Joe clarified that he was back from Paris because he could no longer keep the secret, and that it was the time she had to go back home and confront everyone there. Kevin kept asking me

like a maniac "with what?? Confront them with what??" And we didn't have an answer to that question, instead she said she couldn't do that now, it was hard for her going back home after she had found her freedom here in New York. How she hated the lies, and the manipulation they had been through in their terrible home. She was so sincere; that I was really sad for her, though I had no clue what she was talking about. Joe, then approached her, hugged her really hard, and that was when we all realized that she started crying. We could hear her, since they were in the kitchen where the microphone was built in, that sad moment didn't last long, as the door bell rang and she said it had to be Sall, so she wiped her tears and opened the door, but just before she opened it, she had asked Joe to put on a t-shirt, and she winked him.

Sall had breakfast with them, she was very flirty back then, and I can tell you, she still is. Anyway she was sitting all that breakfast time trying to flirt with Joe, she even had showed up wearing a very short dress, and high heels, as she said she would be going to a meeting later. I never knew what Sall worked except when Joe asked her that morning, she said she worked for sales, and that she helped a woman selling her homemade makeup to ladies. Joe tried to show he was nice to her, by acting like a gentleman, but yet, she was almost going to eat him live instead of the breakfast. We both noticed how Joe was looking at Julia all the morning, he was trying to glimpse her every now and then, but yet, we didn't understand what was going on; the thing which made Kevin decided to take the day off and he left the place all day. That day, nothing special happened specially that Joe went out too, as he said he would be searching for a job, since Julia refused to go back home. Once Kevin came back home that night, I told him that updates, but he looked desperate and he went to sleep directly.

Chapter 3

Kevin seemed really silent for the next few days, everything was just becoming normal, Joe lived with Julia, and he went out most of the mornings searching for a job. One morning, while she was drawing a painting, she suddenly stood up and kept searching for something, it seemed like she ran out of one of her drawing tools, so she decided to grab her jacket and bag and went out, just as she went out, Kevin told me that it was the right time. I didn't know what he meant, except that he just went out running, I had no clue of what he was thinking of, specially that he had been really silent the last few days. Anyway, I knew he would take time out, so I made my calls with one of the girls I knew back then, but not anymore!!

I didn't know when he came, but once I went out of my room at around 8 pm, I found Kevin and he was sitting drinking beer and listening to music which appeared that Julia was listening to, as I got juice from the kitchen and walked to the living room, I realized that Julia's doorbell was ringing. Just as I sat, Julia let Sall in, and grabbed her hand, Sall asked if Joe was there, that was her first question, for sure, but Julia said that he went out, and started grabbing her and asked her to sit as she had something important that she wanted to tell her, so Sall sat, and wondered what was new that made Julia look very happy, and true she looked really happy and excited. So Julia said "I ran into a guy" so I was quite astonished so did Sall, just as I was going to look at Kevin to see his reaction, Julia continued "his name is Kevin" so I found him smiling and looking so happy too. So I asked "what?" so he pointed at the window, meaning that I should listen to the story as Julia tells it to Sall. So she continued "I was just going out to get some colors and tools from the store, as I was running out of colors, and then I found him standing there in the shop, and he said he noticed I go there a lot, and he helped me getting a sketch from one of the high shelves, and then he asked me if we can have coffee tomorrow" Sall looked happy, and told her how she likes the idea that she finally decided to meet an idiot on her own, so Kevin, for sure, stood and yelled "you are the idiot, not me, you idiot". So I turned to him and told him why now he decided to tell her, he said he felt there was something going on, and that time was different, there was a threaten, from Joe. I didn't argue with him, I was sure he had a plan. And seeing right

cross the window the light in Julia's face was quite tempting for him to go on and finally have a relation with someone he liked.

We knew few days later that Joe found a job in a hotel, as a waiter, and things were finally being fine for all of us, Kevin kept meeting Julia and told me how nice she was, but she never talked to him about her family, he told her about me, and that we have a company together. One day, Julia told Joe who was still trying to flirt with her, but she was still treating him like a brother, as we assumed that he is. Anyway, she told him that she would go every day for a walk as she needed a new idea for a new painting. Kevin, who already had her number, made his move and told her that he would like her to join him in his daily walks by the river if she was interested, and for sure, she found it a very good chance, and accepted. These were amazing days for Kevin, and I have to admit to myself, because he went out more than often, he gave me some space, and for the first time during a year, I really saw Julia happy, true, she was supported by her brother, who she loves, regardless to these kisses and touches sometimes that we didn't understand, but it was the time when everyone was happy, until that morning!

We, as usual, woke up and sat watching her and drinking coffee on our laptops, and Julia was having breakfast with Joe and telling him that she was still trying to reach a new idea for the new painting, and how she was working to finish some old paintings for that exhibition that she agreed with the gallery about, then the door bell rang. We, the four of us, assumed it will be Sall like every morning, but instead, when Joe opened that door, everything was not like we all expected. Joe said "Oh, Hello, I didn't think you will come" and just as we heard that and we couldn't then see who was at the door, Julia walked from the kitchen to the living room, and we could then see her standing still, she was like a statue out of surprise. And out of nowhere, we heard loud voices, it wasn't just one person, they were an old man with white hair, an old woman who dyed her head red, and wearing a long dress with an ugly blue jacket, a chubby girl, who was real ugly, with ugly golden curled hair, and last and definitely was the least, a chubby guy with an ugly moustache who entered and carelessly threw himself hard on the lazy boy and raised his leg, just like a pig. I remember how none of them said hello even to her, though they all kissed Joe, the only one who actually was nice was the old man,

who hugged her, kissed her and even told her something we couldn't hear. But that woman, she was really creepy, she walked around checking the place, and she even stood there staring at the window as if she wanted to see us, I really shivered that day, I felt like she spotted us. She just looked like the witch, my god; she makes me shiver whenever I remember her look. As she was standing by the window, she said a very aggressive comment "is this where you live, city girl? You prefer here than being with your family?" and as she was turning to face them, Kevin and I were having hard time believing that, they are her family! We both looked at each other and we finally realized why that girl was never happy. But she continued "and look at you, you look miserable, you look like a dead girl, don't you eat in here young lady?" and as Kevin was just describing that lady as "Cinderella's step mom", that fat girl made a voice that sounded like a real pig, and apparently that was her laugh. We both were astonished, not only because of the amazing family, but because Julia and Joe stood there totally silent. So she didn't stop talking, and she added "I can see you have colors everywhere, do you still believe you are talented and that you are going to be the famous artist?" and that, with all our silence out of astonishment of the way she talked like crap to her daughter, pushed Joe suddenly to explode like dynamite sticks "Linda, that is it, don't go there!" and though adults were talking, that silly chubby girl made the voice "oh, oh" announcing that troubles were to come. And true it was, Linda, the mother I supposed, started lecturing them of how she spent years taking care of them, growing them to be adults, those two adults who preferred to leave home once they grew up instead of staying supporting their parents and their sister Mary, and she turned to look at her and pointed at her and said "you left her alone, feeling lonely, and if it wasn't because of cousin Finn" and she turned and pointed on that creature sitting on the lazy boy "she would have felt like she is a lonely child, you, two, broke our hearts, your daddy's and mine" and just as she finished this dramatic speech, Joe started to talk telling her how he was planning to go visiting them, but that he had just found a new job, it was hard for him to take a few days off, and that woman with her very loud voice kept arguing with him, and the two fat twins, as we decided to call them "Godzilla and its twin brother" were also part of the argument, that carnival lasted for few minutes and ended by the sound of the door getting slammed, after Julia had decided to leave the place.

Chapter 4

We thought silence will be over the place after she left, but apparently Joe was really furious still and decided to do the dirty work on behalf of his sister, that was when we knew the truth as Joe said " Why Linda, why do you always treat her like that, why you always treated me like that, we know Linda, Mary is your only daughter, and how you hate us, and that dad just put us in your family, we know that .. but let me be clear enough, I hate to be your son, and so does she, and I wouldn't be surprised if she came back announcing that she will break up that adoption paper, won't that just blow your plan??" we thought Linda would shut up after that speech of Joe, Kevin kept jumping saying "adoption paper, what plan?"

I wouldn't deny that I wondered the same too, but she just answered us what plan that Joe was talking about, as Joe looked at his dad and said "we know, dad, we know everything, this is why we both decided to leave home last year" so the old man just looked at Linda and said "what can you do now ,Linda?" so she looked really hesitated and furious, she walked like a witch with anger in her eyes, and stood there looking at the window, we really felt awkward since we felt she could see us that time. And then she said "you know I always hated her, her mum pushed hard to make Thomas adopt her, and then that wicked woman died leaving Thomas as a father of a child that is not his, and then Thomas died leaving her to his poor brother. She is not part of the family and never will be" so Joe just walked approaching her "is this how you feel for me too? That I am not a part of your family?" she closed her eyes and took a deep breath and said "you are Henry's son, this makes you part of the family" and she looked really upset still, and there was standing Joe looking desperate "you hated dad for cheating on you with my mum, now you hate me instead of him?" so she just turned to him and said" I don't hate you, but I hate her"

Joe stood there looking like he would never believe her, and he asked her if she ever wondered that she killed him when she adopted her. We didn't understand what he meant by that, but Henry, the dad, drove us crazy of how he looked like a naive man following the instructions of his devil wife. How could she kill Joe by adopting Julia? When I was wondering like this, Kevin just turned around to me looking so sad, and said " Joe loves Julia, Joe is not her brother, and he loves her" it took almost an hour they

talked like this, accusing each other of things which drove us mad , and more confused. Then Joe blew out of the place too, leaving them behind. Both Mary and Finn decided they would go for a walk in New York, as these two pigs wanted to enjoy their times since they were in New York, we both felt disgusted because I swear to god I felt that those two were doing it, and it was ugly imagining it. Since our precious Thia was done cleaning the bedrooms, she came to us yelling that we shall leave the living room for her to clean it, it was already boring watching the witch and her husband just eating in the kitchen. So we went to the bedroom and we both sat on the bed in silence. We weren't hearing anything since we closed the door as we were aware of how much noise that little woman called Thia do while cleaning. Few minutes later, she knocked the door and she said few words we couldn't recognize that easy, she said" beautiful lady, in the window, is here, I say to she, wait" we couldn't understand the last part, until then we both just stormed out of the room finding Julia standing in our living room, and she had walked to the couch and was watching and hearing both Linda and Henry while they were still in the kitchen in her place.

Kevin walked to her slowly saying that she shouldn't misunderstand what was happening, she stood still looking at the window, watching her place and acted as if she didn't hear him. I was quite embarrassed and I didn't have any defense so I just stood there silent. Kevin walked closer to her, told her that he truly loved her, and that he meant no harm by that. But yet, she was as silent as snowman, she slowly turned with tears in her eyes, looked at us and said nothing. Kevin asked her to stop crying as he really hates seeing her cry, but just as he kept talking, tears started to drop from her eyes, then she heard the door opened at her place, and then slammed, that slam of the door was like a gunshot to her body, she closed her eyes, and turned to see, it was Joe, who walked in rush to the kitchen asking them what the hell they were still doing there. His voice was quite loud, since he was in the kitchen yelling, which made us look terrible, then as Joe started yelling at them more, asking them to go home leaving them alone, she walked slowly to Kevin, stared at his eyes and finally she decided to say something "I ran out looking for you, because you were my shelter, I decided to call you, but I blew out of my place without the mobile, I couldn't remember your number, and I so wanted to be with you" as she stopped, her tears were flooding not enabling her to

talk, Kevin told her "how did you know I live here?" so she took a deep breath and opened her bag, and got out a card, and as she was handing it to him, she said "you did a mistake, you gave me your business card, which I never looked at till today" and as he had it in his hands, he walked that step closer to her, and then said " I loved you since the day you have moved to this place, please let me explain" then she sucked up her anger, wiped her tears and talked in a very aggressive way "you lied to me, you are spying over me, I could get you arrested for that, you pervert! I loved you, because I felt like I know you, now I really know how you found your way to my heart" and just as she decided to leave, Kevin tried to stop her, but he failed, since she asked him to "Back off" and she left.

Kevin and I stood there totally muted for few minutes, even Thia was silent for the first time in her life and then she said "ops" and she entered the kitchen. I couldn't explain how Kevin felt then, no one could envy him, he has no defense to say, what we do is a crime, we could really be arrested for it, but his punishment was much harder than being arrested. As we heard the door slamming at her place, and she entered to her bedroom, Joe, who was still fighting with his parents, noticed her and tried to follow her, but she came out of the bedroom just before he entered, and then she walked to the kitchen holding a file in her hands, and stood there while looking to Linda and Henry and said " these are the adoption papers, you can have no control on me, or my money, I know dad left me 25 millions that I would have when I get married, and guess what Linda, your plan is over. I am not marrying your relative, and you will get nothing of the god damn money, because it is mine. And guess what???" she started to cut the papers in pieces as she yelled " I am marrying Joe" and then she walked to Joe who was standing in the living room side, grabbed him and kissed him real strong, then she turned to them and said "we will be married on the 25th of October after my exhibition, back home in Virginia, because you know why Linda, I am a part of this family, and oh, you know why I am having an exhibition, it is because I am an artist, and guess what, you are invited!! Now you two, get the hell out of my place" and she walked to the door, opened it and stood there asking them to leave. Linda was shocked, seemed like she didn't know that Julia was aware of everything, the adoption, Joe, the money!

Anyway, they both left the place, but Henry looked sorry yet happy, and he said "congratulations" and left.

Chapter 5

It wasn't easy for all of us to realize what just happened, I mean the four of us: Julia, Joe, Kevin and I. Joe was surprised that finally he will be with Julia and that they are no longer brother and sister. Julia was really upset we could tell from our place, and she decided to torture Kevin, by keeping these curtains opened as both of Joe and her spent the night together in that living room. Kevin couldn't take it for sure and he closed the speakers, and decided to go out, I won't lie, I didn't leave, I stayed and watched everything!

It didn't take Julia much time till she found where the microphone was, and for sure she closed all the curtains even before that. With the beginning of October, all Kevin did was just staying in his room, or go to bars and come back drunk every night, I couldn't do anything but handle his work, how I hated him for that. I tried to stop him many times of going to the bar but it was worthless. He was going insane, and I couldn't take it any longer, so I decided to play the "Cupid" role. I tried to convince him to go to the exhibition, maybe we have a chance to meet her, but he certainly refused. The 24th of October has passed terribly, until I woke up on the 25th and as usual I sat there reading the papers and that was when I ran to Kevin's room and pulled him out of bed, he was drunk, but I didn't care, I just pulled him as he had slept with his clothes on, and before he knew it, we were standing in front of New York Gallery, buying ourselves a ticket to get inside, he rejected to go inside, but I got all my power to push him in. And just as we entered, he knew why I insisted, and he finally became less aggressive, he stood there watching that amazing portraits of hers, the ones we always were looking forward to see, they were really beautiful, but what I insisted that he should follow me to find was a portrait called "the Invisible love" and as we walked all around the place, someone stopped us asking us if we were interested at any of the portraits, and I screamed at him saying "invisible love" he said "oh, it is already sold" I was so angry and I kept saying "no, no we have to see it, it can't be sold" and as he looked at Kevin while trying to explain to us that it was getting ready to be shipped, he was shocked and then said "please, follow me".

Kevin was not following what was happening, but he followed the man to another room, like an office, suddenly, he got the portrait for us, turned it slowly, that was when Kevin understood what was going on. She drew a picture of a wall and a window that had reflection, and behind that window, the shadow of Kevin. The man just told us this painting was sold for a man, a famous man, from the critics who said this picture is genius since no one could draw the reflection like her. For sure I don't remember the name of the man, but he is the same man who described Julia as: "The artist that touched the hearts of every person in New York with her brush"

Even before we know it, we decided to fly to Virginia; we knew where she lives as she told Sall before, she lives in a city called "Norfolk", true we didn't know where exactly, but we ran to get a taxi, and we hit a man on our way out, and as we stood to apologize, he talked in a French accent, and he was wearing a nice suit, and carrying a gift, while dragging his luggage behind him, I don't know why but suddenly I asked him "are you going to Joe Olsen's wedding??" he said "oui" so I told him we are friends with Julia from New York, so he was really glad and we decided to share a cab together, we wanted to comfort him and I kept telling him about how the exhibition of Julia's in New York was really successful, and how he missed being there! It was such a happy incident, and I really felt that Cupid has been playing its role very well. Kevin, who had washed his face and brushed his hair in the plane, was sitting next to me, totally worried and he kept telling me that he could never imagine what he could say as a defense.

Few minutes later, we arrived to Olsen's place; it appeared to be a very big place, on the contrary to what I had imagined. We noticed that there were no people there, and so the French guy, whose name appeared to be Antoine, said "Hurry up, the ceremony has begun without us" so we walked very quickly into the house, and just as we pushed the door to the reception, we recognized that Julia and Joe were standing by the priest, Kevin couldn't control himself and he shouted "No" the astonishing thing that no one looked back, and then we found Antoine who had sat, asking us to come sit next to him, I sat but left Kevin walking in the aisle, and as he walked I realized why everyone was silent, it appeared that even before the priest asks the question, Linda, Henry, Finn,

Mary, even Joe and Julia had said no, so Kevin was not the first one to say No. Julia and Joe looked very beautiful, though they were really silent and not that happy, Julia with her amazing wedding dress and Joe with his suit, looked like "cute couple" as Antoine described them once we sat.

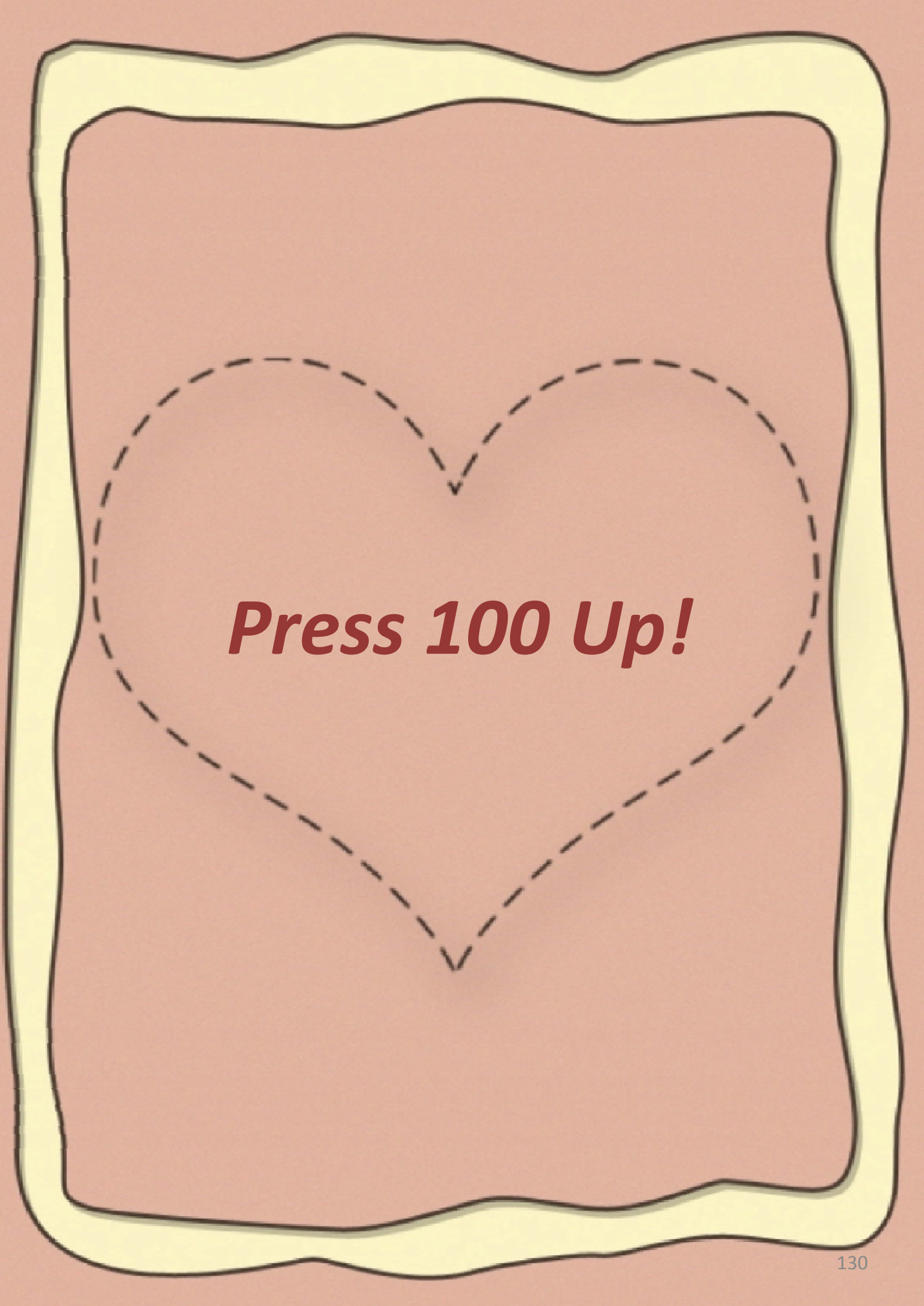
The priest didn't seem to be astonished, as if he for some how expected how crazy this family is, and then he asked "lets begin to know what is happening, Linda??" and so everyone in the hall looked at her, so she stood up and said "I just don't accept that this girl as a part of my family, not the wife of my son, No way" and even before she finished her words, Joe turned to her "your son, I am not your son!! Don't you ever call me that! " so Henry just stood up and said "everyone just listen to what I have to say" but before he completed his sentence, Mary just threw the flower bouquet which she had been carrying since she was supposed to be one of the bride maids, so did Sall, who was standing next to her, anyway, Mary said "I don't want her a part of my family too, mum, you always wanted her to marry Finn, but Finn is mine" and then she pointed at Julia and screamed "you, Finn is mine, you thin snake" and out of nowhere we found Finn who ran to her like an enormous Godzilla and they kissed each other, with the total disgust of everyone, or maybe it was only me! Then just before anyone else talked, Joe held Julia's hands and said "I swear to god in front of all those people, that I loved no one but you, but I can't marry a woman I know that she is in love with someone else" and just as he said that I found Kevin who had been sitting on a chair by the aisle, walking towards them and then Julia noticed him, she looked to Joe, then back to Kevin, finally to the priest and said "forgive me father, I can't marry Joe, I had always loved Joe, he always looked after me, but now I am in love with someone else, someone who looked after me for a whole year" and then she took one step down the stage walking to Kevin, just as she was going to hold his hand, we found Henry shouting very loud and saying "that is it, it is time I have to talk loud" he walked to Julia and told her "there is no money, I lied to you and everyone else" so Julia said "what?" he said "I thought Linda will be treating you good then, I never knew she would plan to make you marry Finn to have control over the money, she adopted Joe so that she makes sure that her enemies won't gather and leave her with nothing in the end" so Linda just screamed "What?? Henry?? No, No" she noticed that all the people were looking at

her, she said " No, Henry, why did you think so dear?" so Joe just got down the stage and stood in front of Henry trying to protect him from her "step back of my dad, you!" and just before he ended what he said, he looked to the priest and said " forgive me, father" and he pushed her hard that she fell on the floor. Kevin and Julia were trying to walk away, Joe just shouted "wait here, both of you!" and he pointed at Kevin and said "if you ever tried to hurt her, I will smash you into pieces" and then he grabbed Julia and kissed her on her cheek, then whispered her something no one ever heard.

Funny thing about that day is that after these miserable vows, we all went to the reception and Julia insisted to celebrate. Everyone was dancing on the dance floor except for Linda, who disappeared totally. Mary danced with Finn, Kevin danced with Julia, and Joe was standing there dancing with like 3 girls, but Sall couldn't be flirting with him, because I ran to her and told her the whole story, and how I really liked her since ever, so she said she would be glad to have an exciting love story just like Julia's. So anyway, I was dancing with her on the dancing floor too, even Henry started to dance with Joe and the girls.

One day, I asked Joe when he went to visit Julia and Kevin in their new place in New York, how come he left Julia that easy when he felt she is in love with someone else, his answer was very simple " when you love a girl and protect her all your life, and want her to be just happy, you see her face smiling for almost one month drawing a picture that touched the heart of many people, this picture of a man who is not you, and you know that the name of the portrait the invisible love, you would choose her happiness, plus, being a girls magnet has always been my thing". I also knew from Kevin, that Joe told Julia that he will always love her and look after her, just like he always did.

Today, I am sitting here like usual, looking at that place which was just rented few weeks ago for an old man, and that was something I really didn't like a lot, it was no fun watching an old man living alone with his cat, almost no one visiting him. The place was not as shiny as it used to be, and not colorful anymore. And the secret is no longer a secret, but at least I know for sure, that I am that idiot that Sall finally found, and decided to move in with him, and Kevin was Julia's invisible love, but for sure, Julia insisted that they should move out of her place, but we go there sometimes for breakfast, just like Sall was used to, and sometimes we meet Joe there too, but Sall was no longer flirting with him, that just proves how handsome Dave is! Didn't I say before I love to make things exciting? This girl, for sure never took her eyes off Joe, but at least I know that Joe is not interested!



Press 100 Up!

Chapter 1

The day I decided to stand there, saying No, was the first time in years I said No that clear to anything. I was not a coward person, but I preferred to stay silent, I had my way out of everything except just standing there saying No. So that day was special, that particular Thursday, when I stood right in front the elevators in the building where my office is and said No out loud. I had a belief that I would be the only one there who was going to say it; but I was supported for the first time in my life when I just heard a calm voice, a male voice, coming from the left, he said No too. As I turned to see who he was, he was a guy wearing casual clothes and was standing there leaning on a wall while listening to his iPod, and he had removed one of the headsets and he started to walk to us. We both approached the security man and argued for like few minutes that we couldn't just stand there, and that we really need to get an access to the emergency door, and since he was such a nervous chubby man, he looked upset and furious only at me, but after this guy talked a little with him, he just said we were free to go. Though I didn't know that guy well, we smiled to each other as if we won the war, and we walked in quick steps, victory steps, to the emergency door, we opened it, and got in, that was the moment I met him, Mark Stevenson.

Every morning for around 8 years, I wake up and take the subway to my work; I work there as the Marketing Manager of G.R.H. This company I started in as a junior had succeeded to make me grow up and be a manager. G.R.H is for Garner, Roland and Heathway, they were 3 partners running the world dealing with all kinds of coffee beans in the US. Every American knows the real meaning of G.R.H, since the moment they wake up and till they sleep, it is like an addiction, we just run in their bodies, and even all executives in this company are addicts. I was responsible for the marketing of this coffee, not only in the US but also in Europe. I can't tell I am the smartest, but yet I am 32 and I am the Marketing manager of this company.

Garner and Heathway were such open minded people who always appreciated me, and my ideas, they trusted every little word I said, even if they don't know what I was talking about. They were 2 men in their 50s and they were great business men who do nothing but attending meetings and travelling to make sure that their coffee would invade the world, they gave me the upper hand to do anything I needed, just because I run their business very well, we never talked about private issues and we were just practical people discussing business and nothing but business.

When it comes to Roland, if he was asked who he hated the most in this world he would say: George Bush and Isabel Norman, he always blamed Bush for the economic crisis, and he blamed me for each and every single thing I did, he would say my name with no hesitation. I used to be his enemy; he hated how I talked and even how I think. He was used to stopping me while I was walking by his office, and turn my life to hell. Every time he tried to make a move on me, I just shut him down; I refused the idea of being around him, he is one of the most arrogant men who act as if they own the world. He was a handsome man, I admit, I never talked about this or the fact that he is one of the richest in the US, but I always knew how he thinks girls should act girly, and not to be as smart as I was! I always wondered how come he never gives up, he insisted to stop me every time he sees me to have any kind of conversation, which ends with us either fighting or just telling him "back off", but yet he insisted. He was that kind of celebrities, who appear on TV shows and usually date models or actresses. I never understood why he would consider even talking to me.

I was so serious that I preferred to act serious at work, I didn't have time for anything else but work. That would actually explain my amazing history of dating. Like one night, after a huge fight with my ex-boyfriend, Luis, we had decided to break up, and I couldn't sleep all night, I didn't blame him, for how he acted, I wasn't there for him the way he wanted me to be. Luis was such a great boyfriend, but he kept dragging me back, away from my career, and he blamed me for being a selfish girlfriend, or even he took that word back "girlfriend" he said I was not even considering our relation or even doing any effort to prove to him that we were both involved together, he kept yelling that night as if he just wanted to let go of all the words that were stuck in his heart.

The next morning after he decided to leave, I took the subway to work; though all people thought a girl like me would rather have a car than take the subway, I didn't consider that idea, I couldn't handle driving in the city, that would push me really crazy, and will require me to focus on any other thing rather than work, and I didn't find it was worthy. I usually am a bit late, so I usually run that street from my home to the station, I usually carry my laptop and a cup of coffee, and since I am used to running, I always preferred to wear very comfortable shoes, with my suit, I always left high heels at the office in case I have a meeting with any of the rabbits, the rabbits are the idiots I convince them to buy our coffee and sell it to customers, they are rabbits because they are very coward in front of the magic of Isabel Norman. But that morning something different just happened, as I was rushing in the subway station, I had that little incident

by hitting a guy on my way, for my rush I didn't even turn to apologize, all I cared about was getting into that subway, because I was so late, and I hate breaking the rules. So I just ran there until I made it in. Though the subway was crowded each day, I never ever had any contact with any one, except for saying excuse me when I want to make way.

Every morning I enter the building and stand there waiting for the elevator with around 8 people, the average is usually 8 people. And as I am not such a morning person, I can barely recognize any face, just when I enter the elevator, that silver creature with a mirror in the back, and how I hate that elevator, I usually say: press 100 up, G.R.H was in the floor number 100 as Heathway always dreamt of being over the world, so he had to make us all suffer, and maybe that was the real reason why I hated the elevator, I usually wear the sunglasses because I for somehow sleep while standing, I don't sleep, but I just relax and close my eyes, since 100 floors are too much, and I am usually tired. So I lean my back on the mirror and close my eyes. I never acted girly and looked at the mirror once I get in, I prefer wearing my sunglasses and sleep. How I loved to hear that ring, when I arrive to the 100th floor, usually around 2 people are left with me, I never knew who they were, but definitely they were G.R.H employees as well.

Once I get out of the elevator, I walk usually looking down to the blue carpet all the way to my office. I know that all my employees didn't like me, to them, I was too determined, barely joke, or even smile. I knew once that my secretary Frank told everyone how I only smile when it comes to rabbits, and that he advised all people not to even try to joke with me, as I wouldn't accept it, he was right; I never accepted jokes, it was such a waste of time. My technique was not clear to a lot of people, but my employees always did what I said. They don't argue any more, except new comers at the beginning, they start their talk with me that they like what I said but they think that And this is when I usually stop them saying "look new kid, I am the one who G.R.H hired to take the decisions, not you". Most of them usually look at me as if I crashed all their dreams, and left. But after the job is done my way, they just know that I was right all the way. They hate me because they can't read me; they can't even predict how I think or what I would say. They just know that I am a bitchy manager, and they just have to swallow my shit.

Chapter 2

One afternoon as I was having a meeting with the 3 partners we were discussing our plan to market for the beans in Russia, and I had worked hard on that, Garner and Heathway were reading the charts very well and were discussing it together, as we were sitting by the meeting table, Roland was sitting by my left, and he didn't even bother to open the file and read it. He, instead, stood up, walked a little till he was standing by the window, and then he said he was not convinced, he felt something was missing, but Heathway turned to him and told him that everything was in the papers, he just needs to read it. But he insisted, then he walked to me, leaned over, and he talked in my ears, not whispering, but he was saying that "you can do more", I looked him in the eye, and I gave it a thought, I turned to Garner and Heathway and said I need one more day and would give them a final report. Roland was hard to satisfy, and he used to criticize me in a way that no one can actually bare. He stood there looking at me as if he broke me, how we used to stare to each other, as if we were enemies, and how I felt we were enemies, and how I hated him for that criticism.

The real reason I consider that morning when I said No as a day that changed my life forever, was because that day was special, I discovered many things because of that day. It started when I reached the elevator, I put my sun glasses on; as to get ready for my 100 floors trip, and that was when I found a huge number of people surrounding the place. not just 8, but tens of persons, if not hundreds, as I walked in the crowd, I just realized that the security was telling them that there was a problem with the elevators which will require around 2 hours to be fixed, he was asking people to calm down, and for those who work in the first 10 floors to approach for him to sign in and pass the emergency door and go to their offices. And after few minutes, I just noticed that people started to leave, and around 30 persons were standing, so I walked to the security man and asked him if he can let me pass, he asked me which company I work for, and as I told him G.R.H, he almost yelled at me telling me that it was not a good time for joking, but I assured him that I was not joking and insisted, and kept telling him I needed to go to my office urgently, so he turned to all the people waiting around and said that he would never let anyone go up, and that was when I said No. Though I was a tough woman, and I used to shut a lot of people down, and take hard decisions sometimes, I never used the word No a lot, I consider that No I said to that security man, Eddy, I recall his name now which was written on his name tag on the uniform, was the first No I said in years. But I never imagined that any of the people would

support my decision, but he did, he approached Ed slowly as he was standing leaning on one of the walls, he walked to Ed, in his converse sneakers, light green T shirt and white converse jacket, and Calvin Klein jeans, listening to music on his black iPod, and said No. We were the only people in that lobby saying No, as we wanted Ed to open the god damn door for us. I was astonished why Ed didn't ask that man which company he worked for, but I could tell later when Ed walked slowly and opened the door for us after few words with that man, that he already knew him. And apparently I was the only one in the building not knowing Mark Stevenson.

Once we walked together to the emergency door, it was like we started the race or war, I felt that he was being aggressive, and he was not that friendly at the beginning, he even started climbing the stairs in a little rush, I tried to warn him that this was not such a good strategy as he will be facing problems by level 7 or something, I took the stairs much slower than him. He was going up and up and didn't even care where I was or what I was doing, he was still listening to his iPod, and so I decided not to care.

Just when I arrived at level 7, I started feeling my heart, I wasn't tired, but it is normal to feel tired after 7 floors. I found him bending, relaxing, so I smiled and I passed him, I looked him in his green eyes and I smiled as a way to say "I told you so" just as I took few steps, he called my name "Isabel", I turned and I looked pretty astonished, I never knew he knew my name!! I was standing 5 steps away, so he looked at me and smiled, asked me to wait, he walked slowly to me and then he introduced himself: Mark Stevenson, we shook hands but I didn't introduce myself, then he nodded his head as if it was ok to go on and resume my journey, he walked with me in silence for a few minutes, till we reached the 10th floor, then he told me that he knows I work for G.R.H and how he was used to seeing me every morning in the subway, and he even laughed of how I never look his way, he said that he lived two stations away from my station and how he liked to wander around in the subway, he even asked me if I ever noticed that old lady who usually sat next to an old man every morning though they didn't know each other, and how he liked the idea of getting to know more about people by just watching them every morning.

He kept talking for 3 floors, then I took 4 steps faster than our normal speed and I stood right in front of him, Mark is taller than me, so when I was 4 steps higher, how I was frustrated of his attitude, how he criticized and judged me, and how he knew my name, I had to tell him something, so I looked him in the eye , He had such amazing green

eyes, I never noticed it but I could then know why he was wearing a green shirt, it matches his eyes. However I asked him how did he know my name, or was it just another idea of getting to know people by just watching them. He smiled and he said that he was sure I was going to ask, and then he smiled a little and said that I was a famous woman that everyone knows. He decided to continue climbing the stairs leaving me few steps behind, I paused for a while because I didn't believe him, he frustrated me even more, but yet I turned and I continued too.

On the 15th floor, I was few steps behind him, I asked him which company he worked for, he said he worked on the 98th floor in a company called Fond, the real estate company, he was the manager of the sales team, at the beginning I didn't believe how come a manager in Fond can be wearing such casual outfits, compared to my Grey suit and blue shirt, I looked like a VIP, and he was like a high school kid. Fond was a pretty famous company for real estate, so why would they choose such a guy to be in charge of such an important department! I wondered but I didn't ask him. As we were going up the 16th and 17th floor I asked him if he was working out, because it was a hard mission for people to go 100 floors up like we did, he said that he worked out 3 days a week, and that he walked a lot in the streets, as jogging is one of his hobbies, then he turned and told me that he was sure I worked out, so he was not going to ask, I laughed at the way he said it as if he was really sure I work out, I confirmed it and told him the name of the Gym I go to. We were relatively close, 2 steps higher or lower, but we were so near all the way up.

Once we reached the 20th floor, heart beats were for sure beating hard specially that we talked a little, so he suggested that we rest for exactly 3 minutes, I remember his white watch with green edges all around, even his sneakers had green drawings, as I sat on one of the steps, he stood leaned his back to the wall again, I told him to sit but he said maybe later, while I was sitting like this I felt like I judged him, he was neat, even if he was wearing casual, his hair was not messy, it was brushed with Gel and it looked nice, as I was looking like that, he got out of his backpack, which was also green, but green and black, a bottle of water and told me to take a small sip only, so was it, then I passed it back to him and thanked him, he took a sip himself, then he put it back and said: "let's go".

It didn't take me except 4 floors and then I asked him, that even if I was a famous person, how come he knew it was me Isabel, he smiled and said that he used to meet

me a lot, and that he heard rumors that he refused to mention for the next 3 floors, and then he confessed, that he knew how harsh I was from the employees talking about me in the elevator and others whom he met in the coffee shop near the office, since they sometimes have lunch together, he felt shy to say that to me, so I smiled and told him that would be the least he can hear about me, he made a joke of how I talk normal like that, so I told him that when someone works for G.R.H as a marketing manager and have nothing to do in life but work, would actually be exactly like me, so he climbed few steps faster, stood by the handrail, looked me down, smiled and then said loud "so you are single!" which was so loud that I felt that all the building just heard it and then he took one step back that I can no longer see him as he was one floor over me, so I yelled "I guess you too".

Chapter 3

We stayed silent, till we reached floor number 30, and then I walked to him, I rushed to reach him, and then I asked him as a way of wondering whether he hated me after he felt my employees talking about me the way they did, he said he just didn't like the idea of managing people the way I did. He said we have to be friendly and motivating people. I didn't feel guilty though, it was clear that we both have different visions about management, but we just kept climbing the stairs, he started to be slower by the 35th floor and I was few steps ahead of him, he was left behind, so I stopped once I noticed him, he leaned by the handrail and he was having a little problem breathing, he was sighing hard, but not that hard, so I stood there laughing, making fun of him of how he was becoming old. He then stood there, looking me in the eyes and said how I just acted as a typical manager, then he climbed the steps slowly till he reached me and whispered "I want to know you more Isabel, there is something I need to know" I was astonished, and I wasn't feeling very comfortable as he was staring and he was very close to me, so I just turned slowly as if I was going to ignore him but then I realized it was a bad choice, I felt that during turning around that my body touched his, I don't know why I felt the way I did that day, I knew my heart beat harder and I closed my eyes, I knew then what kind of fragrance he used, I could feel him there and he was smelling my hair and I was sure he closed his eyes too, it was like in movies, and suddenly I decided to take one step higher, but he just held my hands from behind, I never knew a man like that could influence me that much, I was sighing not only because of the floors we climbed, but I felt how tempting it was being around him, I had to turn and look back to him, so I did, he did nothing but looking into my eyes, he didn't even smile, I got butterflies in my stomach, and then all I remember was that he was so close and as it was only one step and the level was over, he moved his body closer to mine, I was between his arms and I couldn't do anything but take the step up, and once I took it, he pushed me to the wall and he put his hands on the wall, not leaving me a space to run away, I couldn't tell if he was planning to kiss me or what.

I was not thinking, I just looked in his green eyes, and then we both slowly dropped our laptops on the floor, and he just said "how different it is to meet a woman who is as complicated as Isabel Norman, and how tempting it is to be standing with a woman who has too many feelings locked inside, you need to think not about work, Isabel, think about yourself, stop running away" and slowly he pulled his hands and I noticed that

he held mine and we took the next 4 floors holding hands while saying nothing. I was surprised of how a man like him can finally feel what I am locking inside.

As we walked up, I heard my mobile ringing, so I slowly slipped my hand off his, I opened my bag and got the mobile out, it was Heathway, who called to say how silly the idea was that I take the 100 floors up, and that I should have waited the elevator as there was no use of such a silly step, and he asked me in which floor I was then, I didn't realize at the beginning in which floor we were and then I looked at the sign, I knew it was 39, so I told him I was about to go to the 40th. He asked me to stop foolishness and stay until the elevator would work, I hung up and as I was putting the mobile back in the bag, I realized that Mark was standing there looking at me, he smiled and said "you have something with G.R.H I need to understand" I didn't know what he meant, so he asked me to keep walking and kept asking questions about the 3 partners, few questions about how I started my career with them, and how they treat me, I told him all about Garner and Heathway, so he asked me about Roland, I didn't know what to say, so I got a little confused and then I told him that it was well known that Roland was acting like Hollywood celebrities and how he appeared on TV shows, and how he is fancy, dating models. He stopped me saying that all what I said about Roland was about Roland the celebrity and not Roland the partner, and not about my work relation with him.

I remember I tried to skip that part by climbing faster, I left him behind and then I looked to him when I was one level higher and said "who are you?" his reply was pretty convincing, he replied while climbing the steps between us, he said he knows how I feel because he had been there too, but he just wanted to know how a strong woman like me actually escape and run away from her life and how hard he thought I was, but then he realized that I am not as strong as people say, he said "you just need to stop running away" I was feeling furious with his answer, I felt like he just got deep inside me and knew how I think, and just before he finished his words, I started walking alone again.

He kept chasing me while ordering me to stop for 5 more floors, it was floor 49, when he knew how to catch me, he said "stop, I am sorry, but you just proved you won't stop running away", I was never a tolerant woman, I even said that I would actually deduct it from his salary if he was an employee in G.R.H, and he laughed saying thank god he wasn't, I wasn't upset, I was confused, I didn't know how he said all that stuff to me, I felt like someone is just trying to prove me wrong and had just discovered all my flaws and knew all my plans, though he didn't say anything wrong, I was frustrated, not from him, but it was me, I yelled at him saying "I am frustrated, yes, but it is not about you, it is me, it is me, is it ok to you now?!!!"

Chapter 4

I couldn't look him in the eyes, I kept looking on the sign which was right above his shoulder which was floor number 50, we were half way up and I was standing there telling him why I acted like that "I am a woman who knows nothing but her career, it took me years to prove myself in G.R.H, I spent every single moment trying to prove myself, I was underestimated at the beginning but nothing can hurt me now, I am not strong, yes, you just knew that, I am not strong, this is why I am avoiding people, I prefer to be left alone. I am fair and firm when it comes to work, I don't motivate because it is just a waste of time, if you don't work, leave it for those who care about it. I am yelling now because it is true what you said, and how come you are that simple, so simple, and I am so hard, it is hard to convince me, it is hard to have me, and I am lonely, I am afraid, to be left alone in the end, I failed in everything in my life, everything, but work. I decided to succeed, and I am not letting anyone, not you, not Roland take this away from me, I am not letting anyone drag me back, I have to move up, and FYI, I just love how green your eyes are, and that Hugo you are wearing" once I finished my speech, I knew tears had covered my face, and I was smiling because I ended it in a funny way though, he smiled and he said nothing but "you need to let things out every now and then, Isabel" and then he held my hand again, kissed it, and said "I am sorry", then he got tissues out of his back pack and asked me to drink some water, as we still have half way to go.

It was sweet how I felt for the next 20 floors, it was like having a challenging race with your kinder-garden friend, he told me he was a single man, and that he liked a girl working with him and how she was in love with another friend of his, all his stories were proving to me how simple he is, he doesn't have problems, he knows life is full of surprises, he is such an enthusiastic man. He said he believes that the sky is blue all the time, and that sun won't let us down. He wasn't feeling lonely, he talked about his family, friends, and even colleagues, and how he calls his office, the sales department, his Camelot, as he believed in democracy and that all the team has the right to participate with no orders, he made jokes of how he always dreamt to be as King Arthur and maybe marry Julia Ormond but he would be killing Richard Gere at the beginning of the movie. When we both reached floor number 70, we were damn exhausted, and we sat on the floor like refugees, leaning our heads on each other, I was almost going to cry out of pain, when out of a sudden I had my mobile phone ringing again, it was Garner, who informed me that it will take 5 minutes and they will be up, and was wondering in

which floor I was in order to open the door for me, as I was talking to him, Mark's mobile rang too, and I have heard him telling someone that he would make it to the office soon, and he hung up, then he looked me in the eye, and asked me to hang up if they are asking me to tell them which floor I was in. I hung up the phone without even telling Garner.

Mark then told me that "it is the right time to show the world that we are two managers to be like perfect models for them forever, we started a way we both chose and we have to finish it till the end. It is ok that the elevator is working now, but we didn't choose to climb the stairs for this reason, we decided to choose this way because we are different, we look for heroic actions, we are leaders, we could have waited for the elevator, but we chose to run away of the strings, we decided to free our souls and breathe at ease, true, we are not breathing at ease, and we are almost choking and our hearts would stop, but we are leaders!!".

Mark and I decided to finish what we both started, we climbed around 9 floors in 5 minutes, and suddenly in floor number 70 someone opened the door, it was a janitor, who asked us to come in, that people were then in their offices, but we just refused, and we left him, we climbed 6 more floors, to find some employees showing up by the door, and they were smiling and once we passed them they clapped hands for us, I didn't know then what was being said about Mark and I, between the employees, I couldn't predict the reaction of anyone except for Garner as I hung up with him without even telling him anything, he would be yelling hard at my face once he sees me.

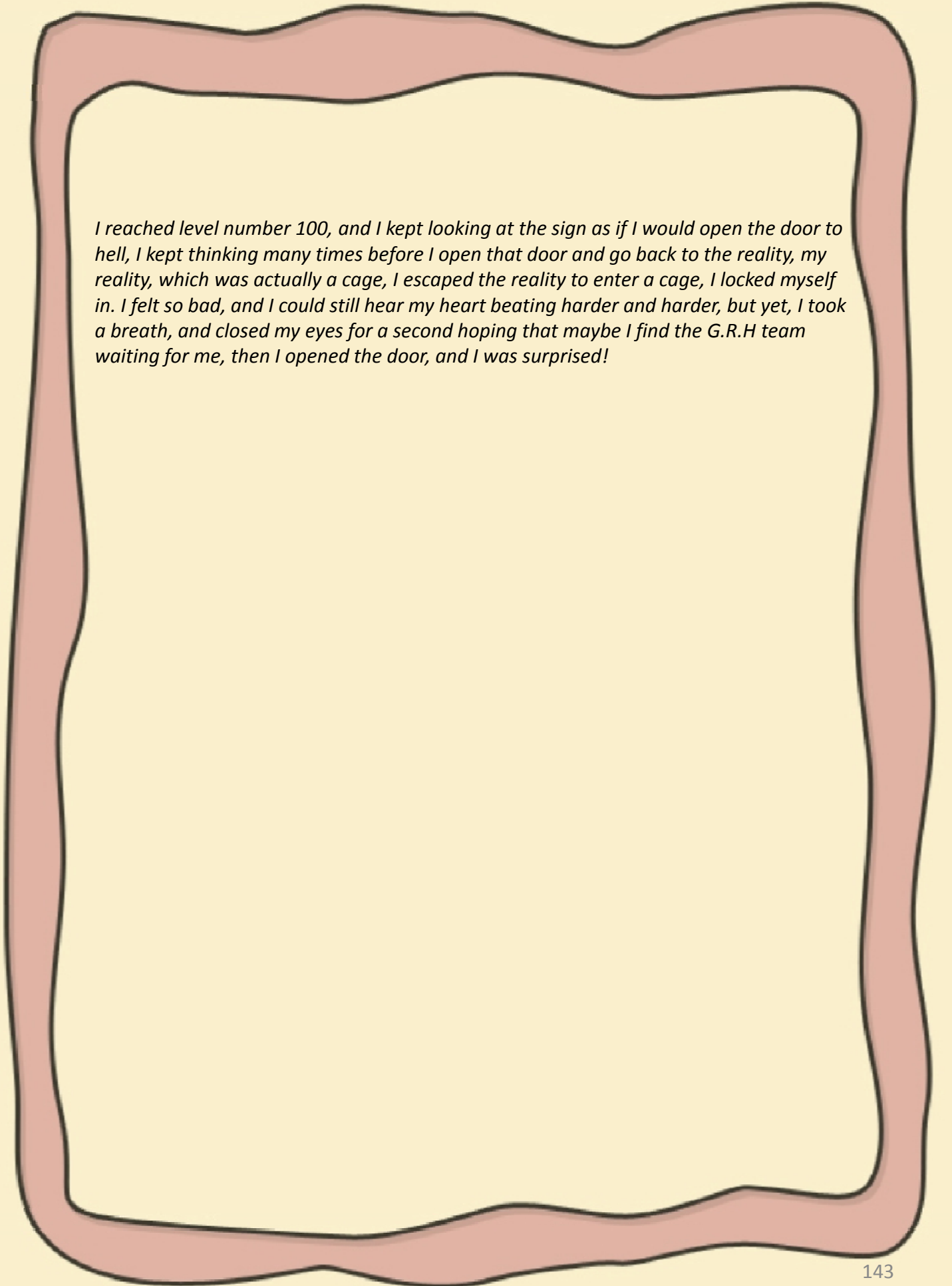
In floor number 82, I was very tired, and I kept holding the handrail as I walked up, but I didn't stop, but suddenly Mark stopped by the 84th floor, and he looked me in the eyes as if he was going to tell me that he would quit, I just nodded my head No, and I told him that he was not going to act like heroes in movies and tell me to go on my own and run for my life, so he started to sit on a step, I stood there and I said that I was not going anywhere without him, I even took few steps back till I reached him and I whispered "you inspired me, I am not leaving you behind, even if I have to carry you", though I was so damn tired, I helped him rise, and we climbed the floors slowly, 85, 86, 87 and until we reached floor number 90, I couldn't take it myself, I was not feeling my heart, it ached like hell, and my legs were killing me, we both were finding it hard to breathe, until we suddenly heard some noise coming from above, we kept guessing who would be coming for us, we heard the footsteps, and suddenly a man and a woman

called Mark, and they appeared to us, three guys and a girl, who came to find us sitting on the step, they rushed to us asking if everything was fine, we said yes, and they kept saying it is just 8 floors left, and they started encouraging us to complete what we had started, they said they were ready to help us, so Mark, though looked tired, looked at me, and then smiled, so I asked them to carry our laptops and Mark's backpack.

I helped him to stand, and then we started to walk, they walked in front of us, and kept turning to check on us, we looked tired but we were glad, so we started to walk faster, as we passed every floor, the employees in this floor opened the door and clapped for us, until it was the 97th floor, and this is when Mark asked his team to go to their office, but before they leave he asked them to give him my laptop, then he gave it to me and said "Isabel Norman, was pleasure serving with you in this war, I am glad I met you, and I am sure we will be meeting a lot, but please let it be in the elevator" I smiled and I told him "now I think I have a better idea of what I shall do, we have to fight in real wars, and win real races" we shook hands and we reached the 98th floor, and that was where his team was standing waiting for him, and they clapped and whistled and they wished me luck, they wanted to stand to make sure I reached my office, but Mark told them to leave me alone, they entered the office and closed the door.

Once the door was closed, the silence was all over the place, I took the steps up, slowly, and with every step I took, I felt pain in my heart that almost killed me, I was left all alone, my team didn't come to support me, and I felt like I would go back to my real life, the life I live every day, how I wanted to change many things starting from the way I dressed, the way I worked, the way I talked, the way of living that left me lonely like that in the end.

I dragged myself to reach the floor number 100, not because I was tired, though I was really tired, but I was mentally exhausted and sad. I ran all my life away from the real life by choosing my career, I used my career to escape the reality, I closed the cage around me, I isolated myself, all this, because I fear life, I fear to lose what I have lived all my life building it, but how I envied Mark that at least his team cared, they encouraged him to go on, but look at me, even Garner called because he thought it was a silly thing, and that I should have quitted it, he wanted me to be a quitter, which is something that has nothing to do with my reality. I thought Garner was one of the few who understood me, but apparently he cared about nothing all that time except his work, and his money, which he will be gaining out of my creation.



I reached level number 100, and I kept looking at the sign as if I would open the door to hell, I kept thinking many times before I open that door and go back to the reality, my reality, which was actually a cage, I escaped the reality to enter a cage, I locked myself in. I felt so bad, and I could still hear my heart beating harder and harder, but yet, I took a breath, and closed my eyes for a second hoping that maybe I find the G.R.H team waiting for me, then I opened the door, and I was surprised!

Chapter 5

I stood there surprised, I couldn't give any reaction, and I couldn't smile, cry or even look surprised. I was like a statue, I couldn't move a muscle, and I was damn exhausted but yet I couldn't express that, or even ask for a chair. And as I was standing like this, he approached me, and the more he approached, the more my heart beat faster. He walked closer and closer till he was one step away from me, I couldn't focus on anything else, though I felt like people around in their offices were looking at us. He was Roland, and he was as shiny as sunshine, he was wearing a beautiful blue tie that matches his blue eyes, which were staring at me, how I felt I look messy, but yet I didn't move a muscle, then he handed me a bottle of juice, orange juice and he whispered "I knew you would make it". Out of a sudden, I found myself not holding the bottle, but I felt like I threw myself on him, and I kissed him passionately, he kissed me back as strong as I was, if not more. Silence was all over the place, and then when we stopped kissing he didn't move himself away, he was still close and he hugged me and whispered in my ears "I love you for who you are Isabel, please give me the chance".

That day, as I do recall it was the day I said No, for the first time in my life, the day I learnt how to quit running away from the real life, how I should deal with people, my team, how I should take any challenge, regardless to whether it will hurt or benefit my work. That day, I realized I loved Roland for so many years, and that he loved me back all that time, and that I was afraid to lose my position if I got involved with him, I used to hate him because I was jealous, I always wanted to be with him, but I felt that he was underestimating me, but no, he wasn't, this was Roland's way of encouraging me, he criticized me all the time, just to push me forward, and I, who thought he hated me, how foolish I was.

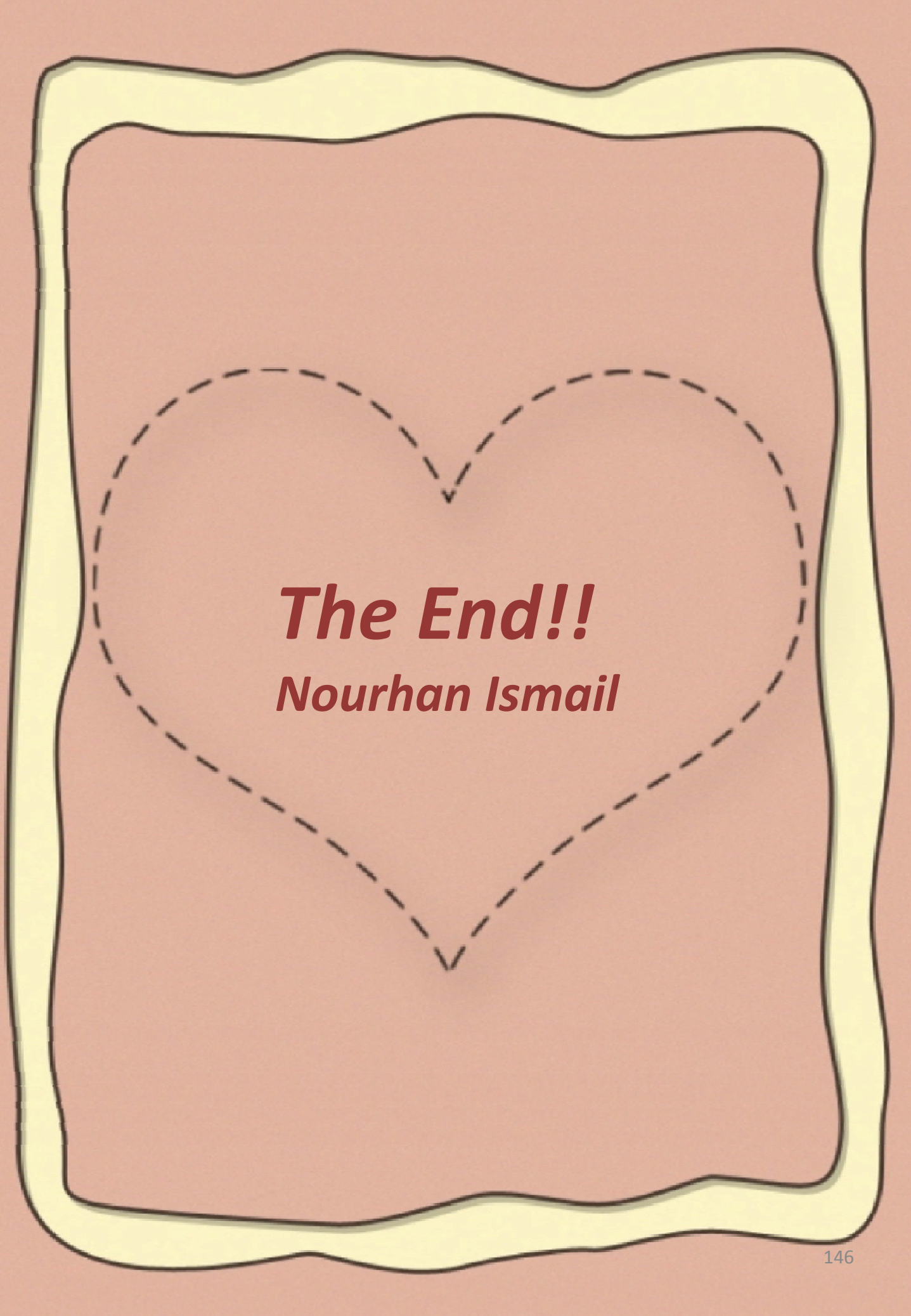
Just as we hugged each other, I told Roland that he has all the chances to show me how much he loves me just because I love him too. We walked through this corridor, and he was holding me as I was having terrible pain in my feet, and as we walked, all employees of G.R.H looked totally astonished. And then once I entered the passage to my office, I found my secretary, Frank, standing still as if he was paralyzed, he saw Roland holding me, and that was the last thing anyone can imagine, he opened the door to my office and Roland helped me to sit on the sofa and he sat on the floor took my shoes off, and then asked Frank to get him ice, Frank stood still as he couldn't believe Roland was sitting on the floor and holding my shoes, so Roland yelled at him

and asked him to move. I laid there on the sofa closing my eyes while smiling, he played with his hands in my hair, kissed my forehead and then while smiling he whispered in my ears "you really are a hard woman; it took me all these years to let you be mine". I smiled, I even opened my eyes and looked in his and said "I want to take the risk".

On Monday, but that morning, I didn't take the subway to work, Roland and I arrived to the company in his car, that morning, I entered the building holding hands with Roland, that morning, I said good morning to Ed, and I didn't put on my sunglasses while waiting for the elevator, actually I was making out with Roland, and as we stepped in, and the door was almost going to close, someone stopped it and came in rushing, it was Mark, who said hello to all of us, so Roland and I stopped kissing, and we smiled, then out of a sudden Roland shook hands with him, and then introduced me to him as his girl friend.

Mark smiled and said "Good for you" and he looked so happy, I was astonished and I asked them how do they know each other, so Roland answered me "this is the most humble man in the world, Mark Stevenson, the future owner of Fond, the son of Hanna Mayers, the owner of Fond" and then Mark added "I usually meet Roland a lot in the elevator and some times in the coffee shop" so I smiled and I was astonished so I said "this is your resource, the one who hates me". Roland laughed and tried to relieve me by saying "Mark studies psychology as a hobby, and I thought he might help" so Mark laughed and said "I couldn't help it, I had to take the 100 floors up, just to have the chance to talk to you". It was totally by chance, the two guys didn't plan for this, and I was not upset, I just loved Roland more and more, true, he is still a smartass who acts like Hollywood superstars, but yet he is dating me, Isabel Norman, and not a fashion model.

Since then I promised myself never to judge people by appearance, after I knew Mark is the real owner of Fond, but still I was glad that Roland was dating me for who I am. And I finally realized how hard it was to deal with me, and how I have to change myself, just to make an access to people to get to know me more, and to say something different in the elevator, not just "Press 100 up".



The End!!
Nourhan Ismail