

Chapter 3

Saturday evening, June 11
Gram's Hotel

When they finished jitterbugging Lindsay walked hand in hand with Clark to their table.

Clink!

Lindsay looked to her left. She saw Mark Brown and his date, Callie Northrop. They were sitting at the table next to Lindsay and Clark. Out of the corner of her eye Lindsay saw a coffee cup fall on the floor and break. Then she saw Mark Brown fall to the floor.

“Mark!” yelled Wilbur.

Wilbur Varghese and his date, Nora Whitworth, were also sitting at the table with Mark and Callie.

Mark began to make strange noises.

At first Lindsay thought he was drunk.

“Clark!” she yelled.

“What?”

“I think Mark needs a Heimlich maneuver.”

Clark rushed to Mark.

Jim joined Clark. They tried to get Mark back in his seat.

Mark slumped.

Callie screamed.

“Clark?” questioned Lindsay.

“He’s dying,” said Clark.

“Call 911, Heather,” said Lindsay as she stepped close to Mark. She pushed his left eyelid open, then the right one.

“He’s alive! I think he’s having trouble breathing. Put him on the floor and elevate his head.”

Clark and Jim laid Mark on the floor. They removed their jackets and used them to elevate his head as Lindsay suggested.

As the seconds ticked away Lindsay prayed.

Heather noticed everyone was gathering close.

“Jim, can you get the people back some?”

“Sure.”

“Mark needs air, everybody. Please move back.”

The ambulance people arrived. Four policemen filed in a few minutes later.

“What happened here?” asked Sergeant Stern.

“I’m Lindsay Britton. I’m a Junior Crime Stopper.”

They shook hands.

Lindsay led Sergeant Stern to Mark and told him what she knew.

The ambulance crew fixed an IV in Mark's arm and they attempted to figure out what happened to him.

"Sergeant?" asked Lindsay.

"Yes."

"Should we preserve the pieces of the broken cup that fell on the floor?"

"Do so," he answered. "I'm going to call a detective. Keep everyone that was near the victim for questioning."

"Okay."

Lindsay looked around. She was disappointed to see that Wilbur had vanished.

"Do you have a baggie, sergeant?"

"No."

Lindsay walked to Heather.

"Be sure no one corrupts the broken coffee cup and the spilled coffee," Lindsay directed.

"Do you think it was an attempted murder?" asked Heather.

"Maybe," said Lindsay.

"Okay."

Lindsay hurried to the kitchen.

"Hello," she said to a cook. "Could I borrow a baggie, a clean napkin and a small glass?"

"Gloria!" yelled the cook.

A woman with red hair turned her head.

“I’m busy,” said Gloria. “What is it?”

Lindsay saw that the cook was eyeing her legs.

“It’s very important,” said Lindsay.

“It’s very important, Gloria!” echoed the cook.

Gloria put a tray down on a table and walked to Lindsay.

Lindsay noted that Gloria was in her forties.

“What’s so important?” she asked.

“A man may be dying out there,” Lindsay explained. “I’m with the police department.”

The cook muttered something.

“What do you need?” asked Gloria with concern.

“A baggie, a clean napkin and a small glass.”

Gloria gathered the items.

“You’re not really a cop are you?” she asked as she cracked a smile. “Here are the items.”

Lindsay took the things from Gloria.

“My name is Lindsay Britton. I’m eighteen and I’m a Junior Crime Stopper.”

She extended her right hand to Gloria.

They shook hands.

“Thank you.”

“You’re welcome, Lindsay.”

Lindsay hurried back to the crime scene.

Heather was glad to see her.

“Let’s push the spilled coffee into this glass,” Lindsay instructed.

“What with? Our hands?”

“This clean linen napkin.”

Heather pulled her dress up a little and hunkered down.

Lindsay pulled her dress up some and knelt on the floor.

While Lindsay picked up wet pieces of the ceramic cup Heather pushed coffee into the small glass.

“What are you ladies doing?”

I looked up. It was Detective Denise Scott.

“I’m Lindsay Britton. Heather Petersen and I are preserving evidence in case you need it. We’re Junior Crime Stoppers.”

“Well, good work. Will you talk into my tape recorder and tell me what happened?”

Lindsay filled her in via a tape recoding.

“How is Mark, detective?” Lindsay asked

“Very near death.”

“We have preserved the pieces of the coffee cup Mark was using and we have collected spilt coffee,” said Lindsay. “Do you have someone who can take these items?”

“Luke! Come here please.”

“What?”

“These young women have collected some possible evidence for you.”

“Suicide? Homicide?”

“I don’t know,” said Denise.

Heather filled Luke in.

“Can we leave, Detective?” asked Lindsay.

“I want both of you ladies to talk into my recorder,” said Luke. “Give me your addresses and phone numbers.”

Heather and Lindsay complied.

“Where are our dates?” Heather asked.

“I guess they went with the ambulance,” said Lindsay disappointedly. “Most people have left.”

“What shall we do?” asked Heather.

“Let’s go to my house,” suggested Lindsay.

Lindsay checked her watch. It was midnight.

Heather and Lindsay walked outside.

“Oh shit,” said Heather softly. “The commotion has attracted some unsavory characters.”

Lindsay’s heart skipped a beat when she saw a man with a greasy face and goatee staring at her.

“Are you ladies looking for a good time?” he said.

“Lauf!” Lindsay yelled as she pulled her dress up and removed her pumps.¹

The young women fled north on 27th street barefoot.

When they reached the Wells Fargo Bank Lindsay stopped and looked back.

“Oh no!” Lindsay exclaimed as she saw about four young men and two girls running after her and Heather.

“That’s Alexis and Gretchen,” said Heather. “I never did like them.”

“Me either.”

“Let’s hide our shoes her,” said Lindsay.

After they hid their pumps they ran nonstop to 6th avenue.

“Let’s go in Albertsons,” Lindsay suggested.

Heather nodded.

Lindsay led Heather through the entry on the west side, past the hired help and out the back door.

“Come on,” Lindsay voiced as she began to climb up a drainpipe.

“He there!” yelled a homely man. “Can I help?”

Lindsay noticed he was looking up their dresses.

“Aiee!” Lindsay yelled in dissatisfaction.

When they were on the roof Lindsay and Heather squatted down near the south edge of the roof.

“They’re coming this way,” said Lindsay nervously.

“Maybe they saw my red hair.”

¹ Lauf is German for run.

“Maybe it was my blonde hair,” added Lindsay.

Alexis and Gretchen stood and looked up at Lindsay and Heather.

Gretchen has dark blue eyes and bleached hair. She’s probably one sixteenth German. Gretchen took one year of German in high school. Her mom is nice and pleasant. Her dad was mean. I heard he hooked up with Gretchen and her sister often. Her dad abandoned the family in Gretchen’s sophomore year and went to Florida.

“We want to watch you get it,” said Gretchen hoarsely.

Lindsay knew what Gretchen meant.

We could have taken the guys on. Maybe we would have been victorious. However they fight dirty. If we lost the battle we would have been gang raped.

“I never liked you,” said Alexis.

Then Alexis used the F-word.

Gretchen repeated the F-word in German.

Alexis is damaged property. She got into gangs in grade school. She used to be attractive. Alexis has brown hair. Her eyes are brown. Alexis has pierced eyebrows. She has scars on her face and body that attest to her gang life. She did time for shoplifting. Fear and terror make strange bed partners. Alexis and Gretchen are bisexual lovers.

Heather found a can of water soluble white paint and a screwdriver.

Lindsay pried off the lid.

“I’m not proud of what I’m about to do,” Heather admitted.

“Skanks²,” yelled Gretchen and Alexis in unison.

Heather poured paint on Alexis and Gretchen.

Alexis and Gretchen were fighting mad. They screamed and turned around in circles, but in due time all they could do was set out for home crying.

“I have a feeling our mother’s will hear from their mother’s,” Lindsay said.

“Probably. We shouldn’t walk anywhere alone,” said Heather.

“You’re right. We’ll be dog meat if we do.”

“The men are coming up the drain pipe!” Heather yelled in fear.

“Oh no, come on,” Lindsay said. “There’s a pipe on the north side.”

As the boys reached the top of the store Heather and Lindsay pulled up their dresses and slid down a pipe to the ground.

“What now?” asked Heather.

“Let’s run west on 6th Avenue.”

“And go to your house?”

“Yes.”

Lindsay and Heather ran across 27th Street with a green light and stopped on the corner.

Heather watched the mean looking men slide down the pipe.

“There they are. Get them!” shouted the man with a Mohawk haircut.

“Your asses are mine,” yelled a bald fellow with red afro hair.

Lindsay screamed.

² High school students across the country know that skank is slang for slut.

“Thank goodness they have to wait for the light,” said Heather.

“Let’s get moving,” requested Lindsay.

“Okay.”

They gathered speed and ran west.

Heather and I can run a mile in 3 minutes or less. I can run 100 meters in 12.2 seconds. Heather can run it in 12.5 seconds. Olympic women can run 100 meters in 10.25 seconds or less. Heather and I can outrun most of the boys and when we do, it screws up their egos. Once, the football coach asked us to come on the field after the team was through scrimmaging.³

The girls followed 6th avenue as it changed direction slightly and turned into Grand Avenue.

They didn’t look back.

“Stop here,” said Lindsay when she reached 3rd Street west.

“They’re still coming,” whispered Heather.”

“Follow me,” said Lindsay.

They ran north on 3rd street and passed Daylis stadium on their left.

Our team played home football games there.

They forged on.

“This way,” Lindsay said as she pointed.

They ran east on Avenue C.

³ The coach told his team that the individuals who could outrun Heather and me around the eighth of a mile track could go in and shower. Otherwise, they would have to keep running. The quarterback, Mark, Brown, Clark, Jim and two ends nosed us out on the first lap. From then on we led. After 4-laps the other boys were so mad at us that we became scared. Heather and I scaled the fence and jogged home.

“Through here.”

Lindsay led Heather through the back yard of a house that was behind her house.

A dog began to bark. Soon the dog gave chase.

“Who’s there?” voiced a woman.

Suddenly two flood lights illuminated the yard. Just before the German shepherd could bite into their smooth, meaty calves Lindsay and Heather noisily climbed over the high wood fence.

The dog barked and whined in disappointment and seemed to dare the girls to try it again.

Lindsay and Heather slipped through the gate into Lindsay’s backyard.

“My bedroom window is open.”

Lindsay helped Heather get through the opening. Lindsay was right behind her.

“It’s dark in here,” said Heather.

She giggled.

Lindsay closed the hall door so her mom wouldn’t hear them. She stepped to her bed and took her British doll with blonde hair off the pillow and set it on the dresser.

Lindsay and Heather collapsed on the bed and fell asleep.

Lindsay awoke with a start when she heard the front door close. She got up and closed the window.

“I would like to shower,” said Heather.

“We shouldn’t turn the light on,” whispered Lindsay.

“Why are you whispering?”

“Sorry.”

“Can I turn the light on in the bathroom?”

“No,” answered Lindsay. “I’ll light a candle.”

They giggled.

Heather removed her dress and checked it over.

“I think its okay.”

Lindsay took her dress off.

“How does it look, Heather?”

“Fine.”

As Heather removed her undergarments Lindsay tried on the green dress.

“It looks good on you,” said Heather. She stepped close to Lindsay and traced her exposed breasts via the neckline.

“Oh, that tickles!”

“I’m going to shower.”

Heather took the candle with her.