

Chapter 4

Saturday evening, June 11
Lindsay's bedroom

After she removed Heather's dress and hung it up, Lindsay took off her bra and panties. She lay down on the bedspread and traced out her body's curves. Lindsay remembered how Heidi used to do the same thing.

Heidi was my sister. She was two years older than I was. She had blonde hair and blue eyes too. Heidi was extremely popular — more popular than Madison. I loved to hang out in her room, across the hall. Girls and boys streamed in and out of here daily. In Heidi's sophomore year, mom found out she was doing drugs. It was too late.

A week later, on a cold and still January night, I heard a commotion. I got up and went to the living room. Mom was crying. Dad was too. Neighbors stopped by and brought food and snacks. That was when dad told me that Heidi had jumped off a building downtown. I felt unbelievably empty. He said she lived several minutes afterward in intense pain. I cried for weeks. Without Heidi, the house became deafeningly quiet. Heather and I played a piano duet at the funeral. It was a melody Heidi and mom loved. When we finished many of the ivory keys were wet with my tears.

The loss of Heidi took something out of the family. Because of Heidi's drug problem, mom and dad have been extra observant of me and Heather too, when she's around. We are drug free. Youth has a way of causing us to feel indestructible. When something happens close to home kids usually realize drugs are bad. I know mom is trying to get pregnant again. She knows she'll never replace Heidi, but she and dad would like another child.

When Heidi departed and she took everything she might have been with her. Some day it may be possible to use DNA to bring a likeness of a person back to life, but a clone would never be the same as Heidi. So what would be the point? Too many young men and women are lost to drugs every year. Our country needs another genius like Einstein. We need someone to figure out how to visit other planets. People like that are rare. It would be a tragedy if they too were lost to drugs.

“Can I wear something of yours,” said Heather as she returned.

“Help yourself. I'm going to shower now.”

Lindsay got up and walked to the shower. Light from the candle was ample. She adjusted the water. Then she stepped into the shower and rinsed off. Lindsay shampooed her hair. She used the external cable spray and washed off. Then she turned the knob to a pulsating stream of water and held it close to her ham string muscles. It felt good.

When Lindsay finished she dried off and returned to the bedroom.

All of a sudden the door opened and the light was on.

“Mom!” exclaimed Lindsay.

“Oh!” mom exclaimed as she saw Heather. She let out a higher note of surprise when she saw Lindsay, naked no less.

Heather looked at Lindsay for lack of words.

“We came in through the window,” explained Lindsay. “Heather showered. I just finished.”

Lindsay went to the top chest of drawers and picked out some under things.

“My,” mom sounded. “Some boys were looking for you at the front door.”

“Was there a man with a goatee?”

“No.”

“We were chased home by some gang members,” said Heather.

“Goodness?”

“We have a lot to explain, mom” Lindsay said as she put on black shorts and an artic blue tank.

Lindsay led her mother to the living room.

Allison sat on the sofa.

Lindsay began to tell her how the wonderful evening unraveled.

Allison was expressionless, but the wrinkles on her forehead deepened and her warm blue eyes cooled as Lindsay told her how and why she and Heather ran home.

“We hid our shoes in front of Wells Fargo,” explained Heather.

Lindsay told her mom about Alexis and Gretchen and how bad they were.

Heather admitted that she emptied a can of paint on them.

“Both of you must go clean up the paint on Albertsons property.”

“We will,” said Lindsay.

“Mark Brown fell to the floor,” said Heather.

“Heather and I saved evidence in case it was needed,” said Lindsay.

“Is Mark all right?”

“I don’t know.”

Ding.

“Who could that be at this time of the night?” asked Allison.

“Maybe it’s Clark,” voiced Lindsay.

Allison went to the door.

“Keep the chain on the door just in case!” Lindsay warned.

Allison returned with an important looking man with a trim moustache.

“I’m detective John Williams with the Billings Police Department.”

Oh Lord, what have we done?

He looked at Lindsay.

“You are Miss Britton, I presume?”

“Yes.”

Mom went to the phone.

Before Heather and Lindsay could finish telling Detective Williams about their hobbies and that they were accepted at the University of Colorado this August, the family attorney walked in.

“I’m sorry Detective Williams, but I thought perhaps the girls should have an attorney present,” said Allison. “This is Mr. Carl Green, Attorney at Law.”

“How do you do,” the detective said as they shook hands. “It’s always a good idea,” he added.

“Could you fill me in?” asked the attorney.

“Can I use a tape recorder?” asked the detective.

“Have they been charged with something?” asked the attorney.

“No.”

“Then I would rather you didn’t.”

“Very well.”

“Why are you here?” asked the attorney.

“First, there’s a matter of a distraught mother. She reported that her daughter was raped in the women’s powder room at Gram’s Hotel.”

Mother looked at me.

“Melissa told us that Max Palmer raped her,” continued the detective. “She recommended I talk to Lindsay and Heather.”

“Madison, Lindsay and I went to the powder room,” Heather explained. “We found Melissa. She’s only seventeen.”

“She appeared to be intoxicated and unable to defend herself,” Lindsay added.

“Madison and Jody took Melissa to the Deaconess ER to be checked,” voiced Heather.

“There’s a young man at the morgue,” announced the detective. “A Mark Brown.”

“I didn’t know he died,” Lindsay said in a flood of tears.

Mom got up and sat on the arm of the chair by Lindsay.

“He was our quarterback,” voiced Heather softly.

Heather started to cry.

“I’m sorry,” said the detective.

He looked at the attorney.

“I have all I need for now. If I need additional information I’ll contact you.”

The attorney gave his business card to the detective.

“Are you leaving?” asked mom. “I have fresh chocolate chip cookies and milk.”

“Thanks, Mrs. Britton, but I have to run.”

The detective came back in the room and shook Allison’s hand. Then he left.

“I’m going home,” said the attorney.

“Thanks for coming, Carl.

The attorney left and closed the door securely.

“Would you like to stay the night, Heather?” asked Allison.

“Yes, thank you.”

“I think you should get some sleep,” continued mom. “We’ll talk more of these things in the morning.”

“Where’s dad?” asked Lindsay.

“Your dad had to engineer a freight train to Washington. He won’t be back until Thursday or Friday.”

“Goodnight, mom.”

“Goodnight, Lindsay. Goodnight Heather.”

“Night, Allison.”

“Do you need to call your mom?”

“I’ll leave a note on the answering machine,” said Heather.

While Heather went to the phone Lindsay closed the bedroom door and turned the light on. Then she went to the bathroom and blew out the candle.

“Shall we?” asked Heather.

“I guess so.”

Because they sleep nude, Heather and Lindsay stripped.

Lindsay began to dance.

Heather turned the light off. Then she began to dance, but she stumbled and fell onto the bed.

The phone rang.

“Hello,” said Heather.

“It’s Clark!”

Lindsay tripped and fell on Heather.

Heather emitted a high note of surprise.

Heather gave Lindsay the phone and moved out of the way.

“Hello,” said Lindsay.

Heather leaned on Lindsay so she could hear.

“I’m sorry about Mark,” Lindsay said...Oh...Yes...Well, let me tell you that some bad men chased Heather and I all the way home....No, they didn’t We were too fast for them...She’s with me...Oh, I’d love to play tennis tomorrow...We can go to Pioneer park...Good, I’ll tell her.”

Lindsay kissed the mouthpiece.

“Is Jim there?” asked Heather.

Lindsay hung up.

“Jim called you at your home phone.”

“Oh, no.”

“I think we’ll play tennis at Pioneer Park tomorrow,” said Lindsay.

“All of us?”

“Yes. In a few minutes Clark is going to meet me ay the window.”

Lindsay turned to face Heather.

“You don’t intend to have sex do you?” asked Heather with curiosity on high.

“You surely wouldn’t do it in front of me.”

“We’ll lock you in the bathroom. What do you think?”

“I think you’re pulling my leg,” said Heather calmly.

Lindsay playfully reached down and pulled at Heather’s left leg.

“This leg?”

Lindsay reached for Heather’s shoulder. Then she began tickling the skin in Heather’s left armpit.

Heather screamed. Then she began kicking and laughing.

“Ladies?”

It was Allison’s voice.

Heather and Lindsay giggled.

“If you have trouble sleeping, I’ll fix you hot tea.”

“No thanks,” said Heather.

“We’re fine, mom.”

Lindsay slid under the sheets.

Heather did the same.

When Lindsay turned on her left side, she heard Heather turn the other way.

Soon afterward they fell fast asleep.