

Running was all that was on my mind. Breathing hard, tripping over my own feet, forcing myself to run. I pushed my legs to keep going faster, but I only felt like I was going slower. The only thing I heard was the sound of my feet thumping on the ground. I felt someone's arms around me, throwing me down to the hard ground. Then, darkness.

I woke up later but I couldn't open my eyes. My feet ached, my head throbbed and I could recognize the faint taste of blood in my mouth.

I finally opened my eyes and I was momentarily blinded by the light. Everything around me was white. I tried to rub my eyes to see if they were tricking me but I discovered that my hands were tied up.

"Help me!" I yelled. My throat was dry and sore and I was in desperate need of water. I tried screaming louder.

I closed my eyes hoping this was just a dream but I woke up to the same scene. I felt horrible. I knew I looked horrible, as well. I didn't need to look in a mirror to know that my honey brown hair was matted and that my brown eyes were bloodshot.

I tried recalling what had happened. I went to the beach to relax. I was wearing a purple top and jean capris. My halter straps were bumping up and down against my back as I jogged along the shore. The beach was crowded since it was Saturday afternoon. I saw beach towels all over the place, beach balls drifting in the wind and colorful umbrellas. I could hear the rush of the waves. I smelled beef on a grill nearby. Then I saw him, a pale man with hair as black as the night sky and icy blue eyes. He was staring at me, a cold look in his eye. Then he started running towards me. I ran as fast as I could in the little forest on the side of the beach. My first instinct was run. I didn't know what he wanted or who he was. But the way he looked at me, like I was the most horrible thing that had every set foot on the Earth, I knew I did something even though I didn't know what.

I wondered what I did to get into this mess. My parents taught me at a young age to be polite and courteous. I stay out of trouble, get good grades and keep good company.

I sighed and closed my eyes, a single tear trickling down my cheek. I felt like I was in a horror movie.

Then I heard voices outside the door. I strained to hear what they were saying but all I could hear was muffled voices. Suddenly, the door slammed open, thudding against the wall. Standing in the doorway, was the man that had been chasing me.

He stood there staring at me. He was looking at me like he had before. He slowly walked towards me, assessing me, it seemed. Abruptly, he stopped in front of me, looking me straight in the eye. I got a better look at him. He seemed young, maybe mid-twenties. He was thin and lanky but he had some muscle. If I wasn't so scared, I'd actually think of him as good-looking.

What could he want from me? I thought. Maybe he wanted money. Or maybe he thought I was pretty. I was used to guys chasing after me but if he was interested, this wasn't a good way to show it.

I waited for him to speak but he didn't say a word.

"Excuse me, but-" I rasped.

"SILENCE!" He exclaimed.

I shrunk down in the chair and lowered my eyes.

He looked at me, disgusted.

"Can I at least get some water?" I asked. I was getting annoyed. "What do you want from me? You ambush me and all you do is stand here and stare at me? I never did anything to you! And if this is some kind of flirting method, then you need to find a new one."

He stared at me for a second then he chuckled. "How immature." He muttered.

"I'm immature? Wow, you need to get yourself straight!" I was angry. I never argued or fought with anyone but he was pushing my buttons.

"Listen, you know what you did to me. You ruined me! You ruined my life. You should be ashamed." He said through his teeth.

"First of all, what did I ever do to you? I have never seen you in my life! And I should be ashamed? Ha! **You** should be ashamed. Doing this to an innocent girl!"

"You are not innocent," he said firmly. "Since you're being such an idiot, I'll remind you of what you did. You killed Jenna."

My eyes widened and my mouth dropped. Was he really accusing me of murder? "I-I-I would never do that. Kill someone? That's evil. I don't know even know who Jenna is."

"Jenna was my fiancé, the love of my life. You did it! I know you did!" He yelled.

“NO! I didn’t! I would never, ever do that! You don’t have any proof.”

“BACKUP, NOW! He yelled out into the hallway. Suddenly, three men walked through the door. They walked over to me and untied me.

“Oh my gosh, thank you! I told you I didn’t do it!” I said happily. I stretched and finger combed my hair, trying to make myself look a little better.

The man chuckled. “You aren’t going anywhere.” He sneered.

“Oh yeah?” I pointed into space and when they looked, I bolted. I ran through door after door and finally, I reached the exit. It wasn’t the escape I imagined. In the books and movies, the heroine would be running as fast as she could, her golden hair blowing in the wind. Helicopters would be flying after her, men in black cars would be chasing after her but she’d still escape. But my escape was quite the opposite. It was quiet, and the sun was setting. I looked behind me and surprisingly, no one was following me. I slowed down. I didn’t know where I was.

I spun around, looking in every direction. *Where should I go?* I thought. I racked my brain. I remembered a quote, “When nothing goes right, go left.” I turned left and ran. I ran as fast as I could. Then I saw the blue water in the distance and I knew where I was. I slowed down and caught my breath. I sat down in the sand.

“I need to dye my hair! And get some colored contacts...” I thought aloud. I didn’t want that man to track me down again. That was something I definitely didn’t want to experience again.

2 MONTHS LATER...

I stretched my legs and laid down on my striped beach towel. My newly dyed black hair fanned around my head. I blinked my green eyes, which used to be brown. The feeling of the sand between my toes and the sun beating down on my already tan skin felt great.

Then I saw a familiar face. *Oh no*, I thought. It was the man I met a while back. I'll never forget what he did.

He walked passed me but then back-tracked. "You look familiar...do I know you?" He asked.

"Oh, uh...no. Maybe you saw me here before or at the mall or something." I said nervously.

"No. I know you from somewhere."

"No, you don't! Bye, nice to meet you." I said quickly. I packed up my stuff and walked back home.

"That was close," I thought aloud. If he remembered who I was...who knows what he would've done. I was glad I was graduating soon. I'd go to college in New York or something, all the way across the country. Then I wouldn't have to worry about running into him again. That was definitely a good plan.

But somehow I knew that I'd run into him again.