

Chapter 85 - There Will be Lies

Shimmering snowflakes dance their way to the ground. Soaring mountains pierce the sea, blue sky. Colour spills down the mountainside, giving life to the dull, grey, rocky fortress. Impregnable mountains of rocks stand still in front of me; they intimidate me and make me wonder how big a force it would have taken for this to surge out of the ground. A sparkling lake runs adjacent to me; the pure, fresh mountain water rushes along as if it's racing to get out of this precarious landscape.

The knife in my pocket starts burning. The agonising pain becomes unbearable. I reach for the knife and throw it as far as I can, watching it sail through the air until it lands in the stream. I smile to myself as the thought crosses my mind; what a great baseball pitcher I would make. Suddenly a cold chill passes through me and I shiver involuntarily. I turn to leave, uncomfortable now. I reach for my phone to call a taxi but my hands grasp onto something else. I take it out. The knife is in my pocket again now. Panic is erupting in my head. It's happening again. My breath becomes shallow, my throat constricts and I gasp for air. Fear has me within its jaws. "Step through. Step through to the dreaming world." says a familiar voice but I can't picture it. Without comprehending what I'm doing, I step through.

Stars fill my vision.

Eagle swoops above my head. That's who it was! "About time," he says as he glides majestically to the ground. "Quick jump on my back." I leap onto the elegant, silky, comforting plumage. "I'll tell you the rest on the way," he adds. We soar through the sky, a bit too high for my liking though. The sun come to rest on the horizon as the sky goes from light to dark as you look away from the sun set. I feel drawn to it and try to reach out and touch it. "So much has happened since you have been away. Coyote, Mark, whatever you call him has flooded the grasslands so the Elks cannot eat and the wolves are defending the high ground. You are the only one who can stop him."

"There he is, just in front of the forest," I shout. "Good spot," replies Eagle. Coyote is in deep conversation with a pack of hungry wolves and doesn't notice me approaching. Eagle lands and the Wolves scatter. "What a nice surprise!" says Coyote whilst changing back into human form. "Why?" I ask him, "why are you doing this? The Elks are dying because you're killing them. I helped you kill the crone and save the child. I risked my life for you." I say stifling a sob in the back of my throat as the emotion takes hold of me. "And so did I." he responds.

A deafening silence descends. Time passes. "You did not kill the crone" Coyote whispers "you only weakened her. She has gone into hiding in the forest. She must be stopped. I will kill everyone in the forest including her by drowning them or starving them, whichever one happens first." I recoil in horror at his words. "All so you be in control. You're going to kill everyone so you can be the most powerful thing in the Universe. Can you not hear the insanity of this plan? You can gain more power and respect by showing kindness instead of making everyone afraid of you. Surely you, Coyote can think of something to banish her

forever." And at once the thunder and the rain ceases, and the grass drinks all the water so the plants can grow freely once again. Coyote hangs his head. "You are wise Shelby and that will take you far."

The mountains re-appear before my eyes as the world comes into focus. I miss my Mom; she means everything to me and silently I vow not to put her name in brackets again. I long for that sense of belonging once again.

A frisbee whizzes past me. I'm not the only one here, I peer round the side of the rocks and see a family having a picnic. Suddenly I am crippled by loneliness, emptiness, desperation to belong, to be loved. An overwhelming surge of jealousy rises through me as I imagined what it would be like to be part of a family. I make my move I don't know what I'm doing I lurch towards the toddler waddling towards me to retrieve his frisbee. Like a snake catching its prey, I snatch the child and run. I don't know how long for, but I stop when the child starts to cry. "I want my mummy," the toddler says in a muffled voice, as the tears drip down his face. What have I done? I've turned into the monster that is my mother. It's too late now. My brain is whizzing around like a swarm of angry bees. What have I to lose I think to myself.

Behind me I hear a rumbling and then a crashing, as an avalanche cascades down the mountain destroying anything in its path. It looks like it's ripping a hole through the Earth. And then nothing; all I see is black and darkness. I'm falling; it feels like it will never end and that I have jumped into a bottomless pit.

I wake up. I'm sweating, my vision is blurry but it eventually comes into focus and I see the plain white walls of a hospital room. I make a move to get up but I have this searing pain in my head. I fall back onto my pillow. Soon after a nurse comes in with some breakfast and the Scottish Sun newspaper resting on the side table. "You had quite a knock to the head," she says, "you were lucky we found you when we did. Any later and you would have died! Have a look at the newspaper," The headline read 'Toddler saved after 18 year old girl runs him to safety.' "The toddler was unharmed and the family are eternally grateful," added the nurse.

A few days later I am discharged hospital and on my way. Only I would know the real reason why I had saved that toddler. And that is how it would stay.