

Chapter 51

“Hi, Aimee—how’ve you been?” asked Dr. Bentley.

“I’m okay.”

“Have you been sleeping any better?” *I know you see my bags—my bloodshot eyes.*

I shook my head. “Not really.”

“What do you do when you can’t sleep?”

“I lay there and watch the clock. Every hour that passes...”

“You shouldn’t do that—you need to get up and read a book. Watch TV. Do something you enjoy. But not in bed—go to another room.”

“I thought that would just stimulate me more.”
Especially when wanting to write to Rob all night.

“No, because you’re not focused on sleep. Give it a try.”

“I will.” I couldn’t see how that would help, but he was the specialist. I’m sure there have been others in my situation. Although, I’ve never met anybody who had this much trouble. I thought this was only in my world.

“How’s it going with your mom?”

“I am with her every day. She looks for me. She still remembers me—even calls me by my name.”

“Do you take a break when you need to?”

“Sometimes. She’s afraid to be alone there.”

“Are you afraid to be alone, Aimee?”

I looked at him. My eyes welled up. “Yeah, sometimes. I always liked being alone when I was a kid.” *Being with just me. Until...* “It used to be so comforting.”

“What happens when you’re alone?”

“Depends.

“On what?”

“Where I am.”

“Where you are?”

“You know. Like places that are unfamiliar; I’ve never been before. Out of my comfort zone. Sometimes it even feels like I’m in a foreign place. And I don’t know what’s going to happen.”

“What do you mean? What do you think is going to happen?”

“That’s the thing—I don’t know. But my fears seem to know and become pinnacle. It’s like I have no control over them. The harder I try to shake them, the worse they get. It’s as though they have a mind of their own.”

“What do you think about when they come?”

“Crazy thoughts. The worst... That I’m going to die.”
The way I felt that day when I was thirteen.

“You’re not going to die. It’s called irrational thinking.”

“I know. But my thoughts don’t get it. They are wired in this dark, seamless pattern. And sometimes I feel like I’m going crazy.” Normalcy and sleep seemed uncertain. Like never again. Just in my visions.

“Have you tried meditation?”

“I have. But I can’t stay focused on anything for long.”

“When these thoughts come, don’t fight them. They are just thoughts—they can’t hurt you.”

I nodded.

His face told me that he had a real challenge. But in a good way—a hopeful way. He wanted to fix me: *You have a lot of work ahead of you and maybe a lot of disappointment. It won’t be me disappointing you.*