

Chapter Two



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The next day, John B and I stared in disbelief at the TV as the reporter broke the news.

"Hurricane Agatha continues its steady march towards Kildare Island on the Outer Banks of North Carolina."

"Holy shit," John B mutters next to me, pulling his phone out.

"Who are you calling?"

"DCS."

"And why would you willingly call them?"

He just shushed me and held the phone to his ear.

"Yeah, uh, I think we're probably gonna have to reschedule," he said into the phone just as the sirens started going o .

He hung up and motioned for me to follow him to the van. I rolled my eyes but followed a er him. He pulled out of the marina parking lot and onto the road. I frowned.

"This isn't the way home."

"Nope."

"Care to enlighten me with where we are going?"

He smirked at the road in front of us.

"The beach."

"Dude, the storm surge is going to be really bad."

"That's the point."

"Oh."

We met Pope there just as the rain went from a nice drizzle to a torrential downpour. I struggled to pull my sopping wet hair into something resembling a ponytail and follow a er John B and Pope, surfboard in hand.

"It's a double overhead out there, bro," Pop said, causing John B to pause.

"Double overhead?"

We stood on a small overhang, looking over the beach and the water. There was a sign making a poor attempt to block the path to the sand with a closed due to hurricane sign barely hanging on in the wind. The surge was definitely as bad as I thought it would be.

"Those aren't surfable waves, bro," Pope says, making one last e ort to dissuade us.

I smirked as I looked at him.

"Challenge accepted."

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I jogged down to the water, paddling out and ducking under the breaking waves. I threw up a hang loose sign as I pass John B who ducked under the wave I was riding.

An hour passed before I was exhausted from being thrown o my board and paddling against the strong current. John B and I rested next to each other, both straddling our boards as we try to catch our breathes, when I suggested heading home.

"Do you see that?"

I rolled my eyes at being ignored but entertained his question.

"See what?"

I followed my brother's pointed finger to see a boat struggling against the waves.

"Holy shit," I breathed out, noticing the expensive Grady White get pummeled by wave a er wave before disappearing behind a giant one.

A crash of thunder caused me to jump, and John B finally agreed to head home.

We got to the beach to see Pope had already le , no surprise there. We drove back to the Chateau, JJ already asleep on the pull out bed.

John B said good night before disappearing into his room, but I couldn't go to sleep yet, the adrenaline from surfing was still keeping me twitchy. I changed and towel dried my hair as best as I could and began making my way towards the small kitchen when the power suddenly goes out, throwing me into complete darkness.

"Shit," I whispered, abandoned somewhere between the living room and my wishful destination. I knew I could try just going back to my room, dodging all the shit that littered the small hallway, but my stomach growled, making the decision for me.

I tried to feel for tripping hazards with my toes before moving forward too much but was unsuccessful when my hip rammed into the corner of the wall.

"Fuck," I whisper-shouted, trying to be quiet for the sleeping JJ, but I obviously failed as I heard him gasp awake.

"Am I blind?"

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"No, dumbass, the power's out."

"You know, you're not a nice person."

"Shut up and go back to sleep, JJ."

"I could hearthat eye roll."

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I didn't say anything.

"And that one, too."

"You're an idiot."

A flash of lightning briefly filled the room with light, and I had just enough time to see the fridge a few feet to my right before I was covered by darkness again .

I began to shu le towards the general direction of the fridge, this time using my hands to feel around. I wrap my hand around the handle just as someone wrapped their arms around my waist.

I shrieked in terror, kicking wildly with my legs as I was li ed into the air.

"God, shut up."

I was set back down on my feet, and I punched out with my first, hitting JJ in the chest area.

"You are such an asshole!"

He started to laugh before a light appears under his chin.

"May I o er you some assistance?"

I rolled my eyes at his 'sinister' tone of voice before turning back towards the fridge. Just as I opened the fridge, the light disappears.

"JJ, I swear," I said, closing the fridge, and the flashlight lit up the room again.

"You rang?"

This time he spoke with a fake, horrible British accent and raised his eyebrows as high on his forehead as he could.

"I want a snack, so could you please keep the light on?" I asked, faking the sweetness in my voice as I fluttered my eyelashes at the blond.

"It would be my pleasure."

I opened the fridge again and quickly grabbed a thing of string cheese before shutting it again. Don't want to let too much of the cold out.

"Thank you kind, sir," I said, following the accent theme as I peel open the cheese.

I put the first piece in my mouth and watched JJ watch me.

I raised my eyebrows at him.

"Flashlight fee," he quipped, holding out his hand, but I had another idea.

I peeled o a piece and held it up to his mouth. He quickly opened his mouth before closing it around the piece of cheese along with the ends of my fingers.

I squealed and wiped his saliva on his shirt before pulling my hand away.

"You're gross."

"Only for you, baby."

I rolled my eyes for the hundredth time during this interaction and shoved him lightly in the chest.

Another flash of lightning lit up the room, but this time it was followed by a huge crash of thunder.

I couldn't keep in the small scream as I jumped at the loud sound, ending up closer to JJ.

"Still don't like thunder?"

"Well, it hasn't changed since the last storm that blew through, has it?"

My tone was sarcastic as my heart continued to pound inside of my chest.

JJ threw an arm over my shoulder and guided me towards the pull out bed.

"I'll protect you," he stated, pu ing out his chest before laying down on the bed.

"JJ, I should probably just sleep in my own bed," I began saying, but another clap of thunder had me sitting down on the lumpy mattress before JJ or I could say another word.

We both settled under the covers, both on our backs, staring up at the ceiling, and JJ turned o the flashlight.

It wasn't unusual for JJ and I to share a bed, but it was normally when Kie and Pope were sleeping over too, or whenever a bad storm raged on.

Ever since I was a small child, I have hated storms. The stories my dad would tell me about sailors getting lost at sea in the middle of a storm and never to return always had me crying and sleeping in my brother's room. When I got old enough for it to be weird for us to sleep in the same bed, John B would always come and sleep on the floor of my room. Somehow, the duty got passed onto JJ whenever he spent the night.

"What are you thinking about?"

JJ's whispered question broke the silence in the room.

"My dad," I whispered back.

"What about your dad?"

"Just about his stories that freaked me out so bad when I was a kid."

I began fiddling with my fingers as I continued to stare at nothing.

"And?"

JJ always seemed to know when I was hiding something or lying.

"And how he might be like one of those sailors in the stories."

I pursed my lips as my voice cracked. I felt JJ move around next to me.

"Li your head up for a sec."

Confused, I did as told.

"Okay, you can lay back down."

I did so and felt his arm under my neck.

JJ pulled me into his side, rolling me slightly onto mine. His lips pressed into my forehead. I felt my chin wobble and tears build in my eyes.

"I miss him."

"I know."

He pressed another kiss into my hair.

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"I don't want to go into foster care."

"You won't. I won't let them take you."

"Promise?"

There was a pause, and I found myself growing embarrassed at the desperation in my voice.

"I promise."

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Continue reading next part