



## Chapter 1

Lee's POV:

"You know I was thinking maybe we could take a trip next month," mom said casually as we were on our weekly late night drive to get ice cream after cheer practice.

"Where? And can we afford it?" I replied slightly intrigued and a little confused because of this random statement.

"I was thinking Washington, to see the Space Needle. I have always wanted to go. As for money I have been saving, and considering that next month will be the last month of summer before you go back to school as a big ol' Junior! We should go soon before you grow up too much!" She cooed while pinching my left cheek.

I swatted her hand away and said, "Mommm stop, please." Practically begging her.

She laughed a little and replied, "Ok. Ok. Fine. But how do you feel about the trip?"

"I think that sounds fun, we haven't been anywhere in awhile. It would be nice to get away."

"Awesome, because I already bought the tickets and booked the hotel" she says as a matter of fact.

I gasped. "Mom! What if I didn't want to go, or I HATED Seattle?"

"Then I would tell you that you could stay here or to suck it up!"

She says back with the biggest smile.

I frowned. "Ugh! Whatever. I want to go."

Happily she says, "Yay! Now I don't have to go alone or deal with a grumpy teenager the whole time."

I look over at her and smile a little, she smiles back.

Then, headlights.

I see a car fishtail in front of ours and mom slams on the brakes. The tires screech and I feel us hit something... hard.

Suddenly everything is weightless. Its peaceful, until we come down. I hear metal being crushed and I scream. When we roll again, I hit my head the window and it breaks. I can barely see because I think there is blood in my eye, my ears are ringing, and my head hurts.

We roll again. And again. And again.

After we roll a few more times I feel a sharp pain in my side and my leg. Much to my dismay there is several pops and I know I broke something. My entire body hurts and I can feel blood on me.

Then we stop. Everything stops. It is so loud because of the ringing, but at the same time I hear nothing. I know that I have to look at my mom, to make sure she's ok, so I slightly turn my head to look at my mom, but a shooting pain in my neck stops me.

"Ahh" I groan.

I look over slowly and try my best to push through the pain.

I gasp.

I can't see very well, but I know she is bloody. There is so much blood. Her arm looks broken, her head is bleeding, and so is her ear. I can't see her face, so I try to get her attention.

"Mom?" I croak. She doesn't move. So I try again.

"Mom?" I try to reach out, but I can't. It hurts too much. I feel my eyes drooping and I fight to keep them open. I can't though. I see stars and my vision spotty. The last thing I see is my mother bleeding out.

I think to myself, Nobody loses that much blood and lives. There's just no way.

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I have talked about that moment a thousand times over, even though it's not true. I didn't pass out. I wish I did, but I didn't. I saw more, things I don't want anyone to know. Bloody, gory, horrifying things.

In therapy I spent most of my time talking about the accident and my mom. My brother and my therapist both thought it would help me grieve and process. I also talked about my life, and the abusive and traumatic relationship I was in.

I am taken out of my train of thought and jump slightly, "Take the next exit for Sun Valley Road." That creepy map voice says to me. I look to the right slightly and see the exit I am supposed to take, so I put on my signal and I take the exit. Everything looks just as I remember. I turn the map off because I know where I am now.

"Home sweet home." I say to myself.

I turn my music up so its blasting and roll my windows down. The sun shines on me and I immediately feel better. More relaxed and free. I start to sing the song that is playing, which is also my favorite song, Serotonin by girl in red. As I drive a little further down the main road, I see the worn down, "Now Entering the town of Sun Valley" sign I missed so much.

When I was ten I moved from Sun Valley to a city about eight hours away because my mom got a great offer at the hospital. She was a nurse at the hospital in Sun Valley, but the pay was better in the city. It was a hard move and honestly, I regret it. I had to leave my home, my brother, and the rest of the community that I loved.

As I drive down the road filled with trees and the smell of pine, I see all the houses, restaurants, and buildings I grew up seeing. After a few more miles I turn onto Oak Street. My brothers' house comes into view and I can't help but smile slightly. Although, it is kind of creepy because since it is a newer house, its surrounded by the forest and the closest house is about a 1/2 a mile up the road.

"Who the fuck buys a house surrounded by trees? My dumbass brother, thats who. That bitch is just asking to be murdered." I mutter to myself as I pull into the driveway. I turn off the car and grab my purse, phone, and keys. As I get out of my car I hear someone say, "Ohhhh damn looks like I need to call pest control because now my house has roaches."

What the fuck.

I gasp and point towards Luca. His smile drops and he looks behind him scared.

"Luca! Oh my God! There is a big ass... oh wait never mind thats just your big ass head." I smirk and laugh a little.

He has always been self conscious about how big his head is. In all honesty, his head is normal sized. However, if he thinks its big then who am I to disagree.

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