

REFLECTIONS OF PROMISES

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First and foremost I would like to thank my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ for blessing me with so many wonderful gifts and my wonderful family. Also, I would like to dedicate this book to my best friend and number 1 fan, my husband. He believed in me from the start when he found the first box, and he told me that I could do it when I didn't believe that I could. I love you sweetheart with all that is within me. Also to my beautiful, 3 zany children, who put up with their mom during the "wonder years," I love you with all my heart.

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LOVE HURTS

Patricia laid her lime green Gucci bag on the table. Sitting her car keys next to the bag on the table in the foyer, Patricia began to riffle through the stack of letters that she had gotten out of the mailbox. The fourth letter drew her interest and immediate attention. Written in a rushed and somehow distantly familiar handwriting, was her name and address and at the top where the return address should have been it was blank. However, she saw that the postmark was from Atlanta. She never received any mail from Atlanta here at the house, it was always sent to her Post Office Box, so her curiosity was aroused. Tossing the other letters down next to her purse, she sat on the chair next to the table and slipped one Orange Opal manicured fingernail under the envelope's seal to begin opening it.

Trisha,

It's been so long and I hate to disturb your new life, but there is a crisis at home and we can no longer manage without you. I have been able to do this for a while but I can't keep on. The Lord is calling me home with Kim and I am tired and anxious to be there. I tried to think of other alternatives, but you were my only choice. I hope this situation doesn't bring you grief in your new life but we desperately need you here. Not more money, but we need you. I'm tired baby.

Your Loving Mama

No!!!!!! This couldn't be happening, not now. Jared's and her marriage was already strained and she had been contemplating a separation. However, she did not want a divorce but she knew that their marriage could not endure this. The lies that she had told, the affairs that he had had and coldness she had exerted towards him had done enough devastation. There was no way that they would endure under this new pressure. She would call Mama from a phone booth. Mama didn't have her number and she didn't know how she had gotten her address. Everything to do with home was sent to her P.O. Box that Jared didn't know about. If she called home from the house or her cell phone, he would surely see it on the phone bills. He was under the illusion that she no longer had any ties to Atlanta after the death of her grandparents.

Picking up her keys from the table, she stuffed the letter in her handbag and began heading out the door just as Jared pulled up. Oh God, not now, she thought to herself. He didn't bother pulling into the garage but he parked in the driveway and climbed out of his Crème colored Mercedes CLK. Jared

pulled his briefcase out of the trunk and came around the car. As he headed up the flagstone steps, Patricia tried to conjure up an excuse for where she was headed to. He gave her a brief look of curiosity as he passed her on the steps.

“Where are you off to?”

“Umm...I need to run some errands real quick. I’ll be right back.” Jared grabbed her by the arm and turned her around back towards the house. Patricia’s whole body stiffened as she knew what was coming next. He slammed the door behind them.

“Pat ...where...are...you...going?” Jared asked in a stiff and controlled voice.

“I told you...” was all that she could get out of her mouth before he backhanded her. She fell to the floor and he stepped over her body curled in a fetal position as he headed upstairs to the bedroom. She lay on the floor crying as she wondered where they had gone wrong.

Patricia and Jared had met while she was in college. Patricia had attempted to start her life over after going to the University of Cincinnati on a full academic scholarship. Her high school grades had awarded her a full scholarship and she began to work as a stripper to have an income to live off during those hard years. The money that she got from her job dancing nights over in Kentucky, she brought an old BMW as soon as it was possible, and the most beautiful and what appeared to be expensive clothes that she could afford at the time from a consignment shop. That was when her alter identity began.

She led everyone to believe that her parents had been killed when she was only 3 in a plane crash and that she had been raised by her elderly maternal grandparents in Atlanta, GA. She spun the web of deceit even further stating that they had both died within the past 1 ½ years before she went to college. She told everyone that her grandmother had died of breast cancer and her grandfather had died 6 months before she left for college and one year after her grandmother of a broken heart. She had told the tale that she had lived the past 6 months on her trust fund and that her college education was already paid for.

She first met Jared at a Fundraiser for orphaned children during her senior year in college. He was a social worker at the orphanage that they were raising funds for. He was 8 years older than she. She was so excited when they first met. Nothing like the other guys she had dated, he was a sophisticated and educated man. He had already purchased his first home in Brentwood and drove a 1995 Mercedes S 420. He knew how to dress and Lord the way that man smelled. His cologne alone sent her into frenzies. He often gave lectures at the college on Psychology, one of which she was required to attend, and although she was a business major, she often found herself hanging around

the areas he frequented just to be near him. Then she would invent an excuse to run into him.

Jared finally asked her out after about 4 months and the man took her to Church of all places! She didn't know if she was going to be able to deal with him after all. She had been raised in the church and wasn't trying to go that route again. She needed fun and she wanted to be able to afford nice things in life and not have to struggle. And from all that she could see you had to be poor to be holy. No thank you, but that wasn't the life she wanted to live. She had had a lifetime of that holiness stuff and she couldn't endure anymore.

But the next time he asked her out she went against her friends' advice and dated him anyway. He went from one extreme to the next. Some of their dates consisted of going to the most expensive restaurants in town and then they would alternate with a night at the local coffee shop for poetry reading. After dating for 5 months he took her to Aruba for a vacation. They spent 4 days and 3 nights on the island. She enjoyed life in a whole new light, snorkeling, windsurfing, and even hiking. She had never been the outdoor type, but everything with Jared was fun. So after days of adventure and nights filled with romance when he proposed to her on their last night there, she didn't hesitate to shout yes when he asked her to marry him.

They went back to the states and she informed all of her friends that she was getting married and had a wedding to plan. He had told her that although she had a lot of money still in her trust fund, he wanted to help plan and pay for the wedding. Patricia mildly protested, but was quietly relieved when he insisted. She knew that she would have less time with him, because she now had to work at the club more nights. It was going to take every penny that she could scrape together to pull off a beautiful wedding. And in the end they decided on a quiet ceremony on the Cayman Islands, 1 month after her graduation.

Two of her friends were able to make it because they actually did have money. Jared's father, mother, brother, his maternal grandparents, an aunt and uncle from his dad's side and his mother's sister along with 2 of his close friends were in attendance. The day was beautiful, the groom handsome and Patricia made a beautiful bride. Her gown was ivory colored with glass bead and seed pearl. The gown was strapless, low cut in the back and swirled around her feet at the floor. Ivory English netting covered chiffon. The sandals that adorned her feet were ivory colored Boca Sandals with seeded pearls also. A pair of pearl drop earrings and a pearl necklace loaned to her by her friend Tiffany adorned her neck and ears. A pearl tiara bought for her by her friend Amber adorned her auburn shoulder length hair which she wore twisted upon her head, with curls cascading down the back of her neck. Her bouquet was a cascade of yellow and white roses. Her bridesmaid dresses were the exact

yellow of her roses. A part of her wished that she could have family here to share the day with; however, she knew that was a risk that she could not take.

She had not shared with her family that she was engaged, let alone married. She had already used the distance of being away at college to limit the contact between her and the family. She would later tell them she had been married at the justice of the peace.

Jared's Cousin Martin, sung Ginuwine's "Differences" as she walked down the beach layered with flower petals for her to walk on to her future husband. As her height of 5'7" was increased to 5'10" in her heels, she was almost eye level to Jared. When her almond shaped hazel eyes met his bedroom, soft brown ones, she knew that she had married well and made the right decision to leave her past in the past. And on that summer day in 1996 the last remnant of Trishawna Jones died and became Patricia Allen-Coles joined as one with Jared Antonio Coles under a floral arch with a few friends and his family as their witness.

Their honeymoon was spent in a flurry of activity and lovemaking. They went kayaking, scuba diving, horseback riding, parasailing, and Patricia even learned a little something about golfing from her new husband who appeared to be a pro at it to her untrained eye. But with all that they did participate in there was also plenty of time for relaxation when they spent time in the spa receiving deep tissue massage, seaweed body wraps and papaya body scrubs and also just lying on the beach. They visited the Cayman Island National Museum and George Town for some shopping.

Lying on the cold foyer floor of their 3 story home, she knew that now the time had come to make another life changing decision. She could continue to walk on in the life that they had established for themselves or change her destiny forever by confronting the truth head on and healing the hurts of the past. But to do that would ultimately mean to lose the man that she loved. The man that she loved was no longer the man that she had married. Or rather, not the man that she thought she married.

The first time that he had ever placed his hands on her was about 6 months into the marriage. They had gone to one of Jared's colleagues homes for dinner. It was an intimate dinner party of 8 and the host began flirting with Pat no sooner than she stepped in the door. All of the people there were in their late 30's and early 40's, and Jared and Pat were the youngest. Jared at 31 was a very handsome man and a serious flirt. He stood 6'2", dark skinned, soft brown bedroom eyes that could captivate you so deeply that you would forget about everything and everyone around you. Especially when he smiled that sexy half smile of his and his one dimple in his left cheek would deepen. He was a very muscular man and he still dressed in the finest clothes.

Of course his wife, (who was quickly becoming a trophy), was not to be outdone. Pat, 23 years old at 5'7, was slim, and had a honey brown skin tone, with the most beautiful hazel eyes that you had ever seen. She knew how to wear clothes that were elegant and sexy at the same time. She often showed a lot of cleavage and so it was no surprise that she was always the most attractive woman in the room. Pat in the beginning ignored David, their host's attempts to flirt with her. She noticed that Jared was very openly, unlike their host's covert attempts at flirtation, flirting with a blonde woman of about 36. He was touching her very intimately and the woman's husband was so caught up in sulking off to the side and nursing his 5th drink of the evening that he didn't notice or didn't care.

Pat went up to Jared and the woman and asked him if she could speak with him a moment. He told her that he would be with her in a moment and when she insisted, he scolded her in front of the woman, like a little child, and told her to stop being rude and childish. Pat stormed off but not before noticing the smirk on the woman's face.

She retreated to the kitchen to calm down and was cornered by their host David.

"My...my...my, what have we here? Beautiful, don't look so down...is there anything that I can help with?" he asked as he came to stand next to her.

"No, I'm fine really. I just needed a moment alone I'm feeling a little bit tired," she stated, hoping he would get the picture and leave.

"Sweetheart you don't have to try to pretend with me. You're upset because Jared is flirting with Lauren and just chastised you, his new bride, like a child. You don't have anything to worry about. It's all fun and games with Lauren. It's her little way of breaking in new wives into our group. She really means you no harm, it's just her way," he explained as he swirled his wine in his glass.

"NO HARM?" "No...no harm, I don't know what you consider no harm, but my husband was caressing this woman's arm and she began stroking his leg, and whispering in his ear in a very intimate manner. If that's the way that you have to be initiated into this group, I want no parts."

David pulled her back towards him and into his arms to console her just before she began to walk out of the kitchen and rubbed her back. As she began pulling away Jared walked in.

"Well isn't this interesting...I see that you've taken to the group mighty well Pat."

"J...J...Jared it isn't what you think honey?"

“What was I thinking Pat...my wife is getting to know my friends better. I don't have a problem with that. Let's go back out to the living room with everyone else, they'll think we are being rude,” Jared stated as he ushered his wife to the door and gave a backward glance at David. Jared made a mental note to watch his wife around David from that day on.

The rest of the evening passed uneventfully and except for a brief excursion to the restroom Jared stayed by Pat's side the entire time that they were there. The fall out didn't occur until long after they had reached home that evening. Pat never saw it coming. Jared made small talk in the car on the way home about the dinner party and after getting home he went to his study. Pat sat up in their bed reading and waiting on him for an hour before falling asleep.

It was approximately 2 in the morning when she felt a shooting pain in her head and neck waking her from her sleep. It wasn't until after she landed hard on her back onto the floor that she realized that Jared had pulled her hair, yanking her onto the floor. Before she could get a word out, he sat on top of her and started pounding her head against the floor. Pat grabbed his hands and tried to pry them out of her hair unsuccessfully. Pat's screams pierced through the house for no one to hear except Jared and Pat. He got up and began kicking her in the ribs and cursing at her. Pat couldn't understand what had happened and every time she attempted to roll away and miss the blows of his kicks he would catch her from the other side. She finally curled up in a little ball and did not move. She didn't know if he thought he had killed her or just hurt her real bad. But as she didn't move anymore he finally got in bed. Pat continued to lie on the floor and quietly cry. She was scared to move because she didn't know what had brought on this attack, but she didn't want to draw more attention to herself. She lay on the floor crying through the night.

Patricia awoke in bed with a cold compress under her head. Her ribs and back were so very sore that she could barely move. She realized at that moment that the previous night's activities were not just a dream. Jared was sitting opposite the bed in his burgundy recliner. As she turned to look at him, he had the saddest look on his face. He appeared so hurt and she couldn't understand why. Jared jumped from his chair to rush to her in the bed as soon as he noticed that she was awake.

“Baby, I am so sorry. I have just never loved someone so much...” he began crying. He held Pat in his arms and rocked her back and forth.

“I'm sorry...please will you forgive me...I swear I will never put my hands on you again.”

Pat began crying with him. She didn't understand what had happened and needed answers and she wanted to ask, but was scared. Although, she had

never been so scared in all of her life, she still needed to believe that he loved her. She gently pulled away and stared into his eyes.

“Baby. . . I love you,” Jared stated kissing her gently on her eyes and lips.

“But why...Jared...what did I do?” Pat asked in a scratchy and hoarse voice.

“Nothing baby...it’s me and my jealousy. You drive me crazy. When I saw David in there with you...I almost lost my mind,” Jared explained.

“But why, Jared, you know I love you. I am not interested in that man at all. You hurt me real bad; I would never expect anything like this from you...why Jared, why did you do it?” Pat asked through the tears.

“I have known David for a long time. I have seen the effect that he has had on marriages. He comes in and charms wives who feel their husbands haven’t been attentive for one reason or another. He makes them feel so special and ends up in affairs with them. Then they start making demands on him and then leave their husbands just to find out that he won’t leave his wife for them or their husbands find out and leave them. Regardless a marriage is destroyed and two lives are devastated. Because of course he won’t take responsibility for it. I thought that’s what was happening with you last night. I know David and he was trying to seduce you. He had been watching you and flirting with you all night and then he saw the perfect opportunity. I couldn’t bear the thought of losing you. So when we came home, I went into my study to pray. But I ended up drinking instead and the devil began playing tricks with my mind and I lost it and snapped on you. I wasn’t me baby. That wasn’t your husband last night that you were dealing with. I will never do that again. Please... just... don’t... leave... me. I couldn’t live if you left me. There would be no point of me going on.”

“Jared...you hurt me. Not only physically, but emotionally as well....I never would have thought that you were capable of something like that.”

“I’m not baby...but...”

“Jared...you said that you were jealous. How do you think I felt when I saw you all over Lauren? I was hurting inside especially after you brushed me off like a little child. I AM YOUR WIFE JARED! Doesn’t that supposed to mean something to you” she asked, shaking her head in confusion.

“And it does baby. I didn’t see it the same. I know that Lauren is a big flirt and she acts like that with all the men. But it never comes to anything with her. I think Lauren is fun and cool, but I am in no way attracted to her. David on the other hand can cause devastation.”

“And you don’t think that your actions with her could create devastation?”

“You don’t know these people Pat, I do.”

“Jared you can’t make that your excuse...”

“I’m not trying to baby...I’m just saying that I was out of my mind. I have NEVER *done* and will NEVER *do* anything like that again. Please forgive me?” he asked as he continued to kiss her gently on the lips and stroke her hair.

Pat ignored the little tiny voice crying on the inside, telling her to say no and said yes. She said yes to loving him, yes to the money, yes to the house, yes to the clothes, yes to the jewelry, yes to the cars and yes to more beatings. She just didn’t know she was saying yes to the last part at the time. Or maybe she did but didn’t want to deal with it yet.

As time wore on Pat got used to Jared’s incessant mood swings. But then he began to beat her as well. He hit Pat when he was too tired, when he was stressed out, when she talked back (as if she were a child), and whenever he just felt like it sometimes. And then there were times that he was just wonderful. After their 3rd year of marriage, Jared wanted to have a baby. They tried for just over a year when he came up with the idea of having a baby through a surrogate mom.

Pat was uncomfortable with the idea because she wanted a child that had been created by her and her husband. Jared explained to her that they had what was called “gestational surrogacy” and that she could donate the eggs along with his donated sperm in order to create a child that would be genetically both of theirs.

“Jared, I know that science can do all of these wonderful things, but...I want a baby that I can carry in my womb; a baby that I can bond with while he or she is in there. I want to feel that baby kicking and poking me in places that I didn’t know existed. When that baby comes out, I want to be the one pushing it out of my womb. I want to experience the labor and delivery pains. I don’t want to feel like some 3rd wheel in a show between you and another woman.”

“Oh...so this is what this is all about. You don’t really want my baby...you just don’t want to share my attention with another woman.”

“Jared...please...can’t you see it isn’t that. I know that you love me and I don’t feel like I would have to share you...”

“Then what is it Pat?”

“I told you, I want to bond with that baby...I want to feel it growing inside of ME.”

“Me...me...me. That’s all I’ve been hearing since we first started talking about a baby. What about me Patricia. Don’t my feelings count in this at all? Or because I’m just the father I don’t have rights?”

“No baby, that’s not what I’m trying to express,” she said crawling to the other side of the bed to caress his back where he lay on his side away from her. Why did the simplest conversations have to turn into arguments with the two of them?

“I think it’s very important that we stand in agreement on this, I want you to be happy Jared...I”,

“There you go again!” he shouted sitting up in the bed and pulling away from her. “I...I...or me. WOMAN CAN’T YOU GET PAST YOUR OWN SELFISH DESIRES?!”

Jared got up from the bed and walked into his closet and grabbed a pair of jeans from a hanger.

“Baby...what are you doing?” Pat called out to him.

“What do you mean what am I doing?” he sarcastically asked walking out of his closet, “What does it look like? I’m getting dressed so I can get away from you!”

“Jared please don’t leave...where are you going to go at this time of night?”

“Don’t worry about me...I’m sure that you have enough to do worrying about Patricia.”

Jared grabbed his coat and began to walk out of the room towards the stairwell. Patricia grabbed the crook of his arm, just before he cleared the doorway.

“Please come back...we can talk about it...Jared...” Patricia whined, just as she felt a stinging blow to her face.

He had struck her so hard that she landed hard on the floor, bumping her head on the edge of a cherry wood table to the right of the doorway. Jared turned away from Patricia to keep going down the hall to the stairwell. Patricia lay on the floor crying, curled up in a ball and shaking. All she had to do was go along with his plan and he would still be lying in the bed next to her. She didn’t know when she would ever learn to keep her mouth shut.

TWO'S COMPANY

Patricia did not go to sleep that night, a light snow had been falling all evening and had gotten heavier through the night and now the roads were icy. Each time she tried to call his cell phone it went directly to his voice mail. She had called and left several messages on his cell and she had even tried his office number thinking that maybe he had gone to the office to crash for the night. At approximately 9:30 a.m. that Saturday morning, she decided that she would get dressed and go to his office and talk with him. Patricia threw on some jeans, a worn UC sweatshirt, and some dingy Nikes. Finding her coat, purse and car keys she hurriedly ran to the car.

She was in an anxious state of mind and couldn't wait to reassure herself that her husband was okay. She had called UC, Good Sam, Mercy, Drake and Bethesda. He wasn't at any of those hospitals. She had called the police station and he hadn't been booked either. All of this had led her to making the decision to go to his office. Driving through the freshly snow plowed streets of the city; she fiddled with the radio station dial. Turning to Q102 she only found commercials, 104.3 was interviewing a guest, and a few other stations were playing music she didn't much care for. Finally she found something she had not heard in a long time when she tuned in to 100.9 the Wiz. She began bobbing her head side to side to Brandy's "I Wanna Be Down."

Getting caught up in the music; Patricia started snapping her fingers to the beat and after a moment, hit a patch of black ice partially obscured. She slowly but firmly applied the brakes to regain control of the vehicle and struggled to remain calm in the midst of her rapidly beating heart. Her car had begun to slide and another car was quickly passing through a stop sign that she had been approaching. She was able to regain control before causing a collision, and stopped just past the stop sign. She began to proceed with caution through the stop sign and refocus on driving. After regaining control of the vehicle she maintained both hands on the wheel and listened to Brandy with a little less interest than before.

Patricia pulled up to All Haven, the outpatient medical center where her husband was Director of Youth & Teen Behavioral and Counseling Services. As she pulled her 2000 Magma red Mercedes SLK 230 convertible into the back parking lot, she noticed that his Mercedes was parked in the spot that was reserved for him. He still drove the same Mercedes that he had just purchased when they first met. She could honestly say about her husband, although he liked having the money, he didn't get carried away as she did. He liked to get good quality things that he could use for a while. However, she liked to get the latest style of everything. She had gone without enough in her previous life that she never wanted to want for anything again. Jared did not know about

that previous life. He only knew that his wife liked flashy things but to his knowledge that was what her grandparents had always provided her with.

Climbing out of her car and setting the alarm, she threw her coat on, but not before tucking her ponytail down into her sweatshirt and pulling the hood on her hair. She had her own set of keys to enter the clinic, and decided to do so from the rear entrance. She would not want anyone to see her looking the way that she did today. Although she didn't think she would run into anyone on a Saturday she knew that once a month they had group sessions, but that was at the first of the month. And sometimes some of the therapists held appointments on Saturdays but not often. After unlocking the door and locking it back behind her, she noticed that the alarm on the building had not been set. Jared must have been very upset to not reset it after coming in last night. That was always a precaution that he took whenever he was working late evenings or weekends.

Patricia walked down the marble tiled floors to the bank of elevators and passed Mamie one of the housekeeping personnel on her way. Ms. Mamie had on a set of earphones and was bopping her head side to side as she mopped back and forth swishing her wide hips down the hall. Pat began making stomping noises to make sure the elderly lady heard her. She didn't want to scare her when she passed by. Sure enough Ms. Mamie turned around just before Pat came upon her.

Putting her left hand to her ample bosom, and holding onto the mop with the right hand, she shook her head. She then removed her headset and looked sternly at Pat.

"Lord 'a mercy chile, you bout' don' scared me half to death," she said behind a little giggle.

"I'm sorry Ms. Mamie, that's why I started stomping so that you would hear me coming. I saw that you had on your headphones and were dancing your heart out. I didn't want to disturb you, but I didn't want to scare you either," Pat replied laughing with the elderly lady.

"Honey, I'm okay, just praising the Lord that's all, just praising the Lord. Whachu' doing out here this early in the morning Mrs. C?"

"Coming to pick up a little paperwork that I promised my husband I would help him with," she replied thinking quick, "you take care and keep on praising Him for me and you both, Ms. Mamie, okay?"

"Alright baby, tell that husband of yours I said hi," Ms. Mamie replied.

Pat took the elevator to the 3rd floor where Jared's office was located in the rear. Her steps were muffled by the thick, grey carpeting. She began to worry in her head that Jared would still be in an argumentative mood as she approached his office door. But it was too late to have second thoughts now, besides Ms. Mamie had seen her, and she would surely mention it to Jared if she were to see him soon.

She had driven all the way from Indian Hills to Clifton and she wasn't about to turn around now. Patricia inserted the key, turned the lock and pushed the door open to her husband's office. She saw him before he saw her. He was stripped of clothing, lying on his couch and a blonde's head was lying on his chest. She was still covered under the blanket that failed to cover Jared completely. As Jared made a sudden move, the blonde sat up and looked at Patricia in the face. It was Lauren, the one everyone told her she wouldn't have to worry about.

Jared was unable to catch up with Patricia as she ran down the hall. He had to scramble to get back into his clothes and make Lauren get dressed as well. He couldn't leave her around to cause a scene if anyone else had shown up. And even if he had gone after Patricia right away he wouldn't be able to catch up with her anyway. What he did not know was that his wife had run track in high school and also in college for the first 2 years. So she could really outrun Jared any day if she wanted to.

When he finally made it downstairs to the parking lot, Pat's car was nowhere to be seen. Heading back into the building, he was still trying to button his shirt when he saw Ms. Mamie coming out of the ladies' room with a roll of paper towels.

"Hey Mr..." she didn't finish her sentence because Jared stormed past her to the back hallway and climbed the stairs. He didn't want to stand waiting for the elevator while the nosy old lady tried to make small talk and figure out why his clothes were in such disarray.

But Ms. Mamie didn't need to talk with Jared about it, she had seen Mrs. C come running out of the elevator and tears were streaking her face. When Ms. Mamie tried to stop her she was having none of it. Seeing Mr. C in the state he was in, she figured out what was going on. She had already seen that Lauren's car in the lower parking lot on her way in. The way those two acted when they were around each other there was no confusion about what was going on. She knew it in her heart before Mrs. C went up that elevator, but she decided not to interfere, she felt it was time that she knew what everyone else already did. 'Served that pompous ass, Mr. C right,' Ms. Mamie thought.

Jared had decided to go back to finishing what he and Lauren had started. After he was done with her, he headed home to make amends with Pat. He

knew that she would be there; she didn't have family or anyone to go to. She didn't even have friends except for a few co-workers that she socialized with every now and then.

Patricia was so full of pretense and always wanting to set the right image for someone that she didn't have the time or the inclination to cultivate friendships. She had never let anyone in because she was always scared that they would find out her truth. She had even held Jared off to a certain extent, before and during the marriage. She was too afraid of getting close to anyone and getting hurt again in her life. She could not take the pain that would bring; the pain she had already endured as a result of losses and walls she had built to protect herself and others. She had already experienced that once in life and didn't want to go through that again. But she couldn't take anymore of Jared's mess. She had to make a stand eventually or he would continue to walk all over her. He had been beating her for a long time and now, he was messing around too. And with that bitch Lauren of all people! Hmm! Sure she didn't mean any harm.

Patricia struggled to keep the tears from blurring her eyesight. She knew despite the hurt and pain she was feeling she had to be careful driving on these slick and icy roads. She had almost had an accident on the way over. But seeing Jared with another woman was more than she could bear. She had to pull over to the side of the road to regain her composure. The memories came flooding back.