

Also by Jack A. Ori

Mama's Illness
Reinventing Hannah (Free Sample)

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Note for Readers



I wrote this book to help empower readers who are dealing with the aftermath of sexual assault and/or relationship violence.

Within these pages, you will meet a 16-year-old rape survivor. The story also involves domestic violence, bullying, and suicide.

Some of these issues may be uncomfortable to read about, especially if you've experienced them in real life. It's okay to take breaks from reading, talk to someone if this book upsets you, or even stop reading altogether. If you are in the United States, you can also call these hotlines if you need to talk to someone.

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1-866-331-8453 (TTY)

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TREVOR PROJECT CRISIS LINE (LGBT/YOUTH)

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**REINVENTING HANNAH
(SAMPLE CHAPTERS)
Jack A. Ori**

This novel is entirely a work of fiction. The names, characters and incidents portrayed in it are the product of the author's imagination. Any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, or events or localities is entirely coincidental.

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1732 1st Avenue #20990

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1 - A Fateful Decision



“SO, WHICH IS it going to be, Hannah?” Molly asked. “Trunk or Treat or the crazy party in Eastwood?”

Hannah twisted a bead on her Friends for Life bracelet, looking around the section of the library where after-school tutoring took place. The tutoring center was dead except for her and her two friends. Molly had creamy white skin, green eyes, and red hair that was always tied back into a loose ponytail, while Sierra had eyes the same shade of light brown as her skin, framed perfectly by silver-rimmed glasses, and her hair was done up in millions of tight braids that were bunched together.

No matter how hard Hannah looked, there were no other faces in the whole library except for theirs, and Mr. Collins’, of course. He sat at a desk at the front, grading papers. Since no one else was there, Hannah’s choices were to keep talking with her friends or stare at the childish Halloween decorations on the wall:

Brightly colored ghosts and tombstones that they should have outgrown in third grade.

A skeleton in the corner that was sort of scary looking.

And a chain made of construction paper she and Molly had hung from the ceiling along with a wall sign reminding people to avoid alcohol and drugs this Halloween.

The sign didn’t look like it fit with everything else, and Hannah was sure no one was looking at it.

“I don’t know,” she said, staring down at her hands. Her fingers were too long and her nails were uneven. She didn’t like looking at them. “Maybe neither.”

"I do know," Sierra interjected from the other side of the table. "You're going to come with me and have an awesome time instead of wasting the night away giving out candy to a bunch of snot-nosed kids and pretending to smile at their lame costumes."

"Sierra!" Molly said.

"I'm just saying," Sierra pulled on Hannah's sleeve. "Come on, Mouse, don't you want to live a little for once? Jake said I could invite anyone I want. And I bet there'll be a ton of hot guys there. This is your chance to meet someone amazing."

"I doubt that," Hannah said weakly, leaving out that she wasn't too happy to hear that Jake was involved. Jake was Sierra's boyfriend, sort of. More than once Hannah and Molly had to stay up all night listening to Sierra cry her heart out after one of their fights, but within a few days Sierra always took him back and gushed about how sweet he was and how stupid she was to ever let him go.

"You won't know until you try." Sierra turned to Molly. "Give her one good reason why she should go to your stupid babysitting party instead."

"Um, because she just put up this thing," Molly said, gesturing toward the sign, "and all week long she's been putting red ribbons on people's lockers to encourage them to stay sober."

Hannah looked away. Molly was right. It didn't look good for the Vice-President of Students Against Destructive Decisions to go to a party where everyone would be drinking, especially not during Red Ribbon Week. "I'm not going to drink," she said. "So, it'll be fine."

"Yeah," Sierra said. "Hannah doesn't give in to peer pressure. You're just jealous because she's not afraid to live a little, unlike some people."

"I'm not afraid to live," Molly said. "I just actually have common sense. Don't do this, Mouse. Come. . ."

"Do what?" a voice said, and Hannah knew before she looked up that it was Brad's voice. It was a little higher than most boys' voices, but still deep enough to be masculine, and he had a stronger New York accent than she did.

"Oh," Hannah said, ignoring how much faster her heart had started beating when she looked up at Brad's oval face. He was tall, which was fine with her because she was too, and had sandy brown hair that looked blond when the light hit it right.

Hannah fidgeted with her hands, twisting them together and drawing way too much attention to them. They felt too big to her suddenly, and she was sure Brad thought so too. "I'm going to a party tonight, but Molly doesn't like it."

"Wow." Brad's eyes widened and Hannah couldn't tell if he was impressed or worried. "I didn't think you were the partying type."

"Oh, I'm not. Usually, I mean. I'm more the kind of girl who discourages it." Good going, Hannah. Make yourself sound like some stuck-up goody-two-shoes, why don't you? "But Sierra's going, and I want to make sure she's okay."

"Really?" Brad tried to raise one eyebrow but only succeeded in scrunching up his entire face, making Hannah's heart do flip flops again. "Hey, you got the math homework? I lost where I wrote it down."

Oh. That was all Brad wanted. Of course he didn't want to talk to Hannah just to talk to her. Her heart sank while she felt stupid for hoping. "Of course," she said, keeping her feelings firmly in check. "I put it in my phone right away. You should do that too, so you don't lose it again." Her fingertips brushed Brad's as she handed him the phone. Had she done that on purpose? Not that it mattered, because she was sure he didn't like it. . . or did he?

"Thanks." Brad grabbed a pen off the table without asking and wrote the assignment on his hand. The black ink stood out against his white skin, and Hannah wondered if he had any tattoos. He seemed like the kind of boy who might.

"Brad!" Hannah said as he gave her back her phone. "Use paper!"

"I'll lose it again. Can't lose my hand, right?"

"That's a shame," Sierra said, prompting Hannah to glare at her. "Now if you're done wasting Hannah's time, do you mind moving out of the way?"

"Sierra," Hannah said, but her voice wasn't as forceful as she wanted it to be. It never was. That was why her friends called her Mouse, a nickname she secretly hated but pretended not to.

"Not 'til I do this." Brad took a step forward, looking Hannah in the eye, and for one terrible, wonderful second, she thought he was going to try to kiss her. "You sure you want to go to this party tonight?" he asked, and her heart sank again. "Cause my friend Mark's doing this thing, and you'd be welcome. If you want, I mean."

Whoa. He was asking her out. Hannah hadn't expected THAT. "A thing?" she asked, trying to play it cool, but she couldn't help smiling a little anyway.

"Nothing big," Brad said, looking away from her. "We're just gonna chill and watch a couple cheesy horror movies and laugh at how dumb they are. Costume optional."

"She's not interested," Sierra said. "Trust me, Mouse, you're not. Chill's code for 'get stoned out of your mind,' and he's going to be pushing you to do it too. You don't want that."

Hannah didn't like the way Sierra was talking, and anyway, there was going to be worse than weed at Jake's party, from what Molly said. "I hope Sierra's wrong about the weed," she said to Brad, feeling she had to do her duty as Vice-President of SADD and encourage him to stay sober. "It's not good for you." Brad's eyes narrowed and she realized too late how judgmental that sounded. "Anyway, it sounds great and I'd like to come, but I already made plans with Sierra, so. . ."

"Right." Brad played with the pen, flicking the button to open and close it over and over. "Sure you don't want me to write my digits on your hand in case you change your mind?"

"She's positive," Sierra said before Hannah could answer. "And give us our pen back."

Brad's eyes flashed. "Whatever," he said, throwing the pen down. "Have fun watching this one's back," he told Hannah. "Hope she gets someday that you're a way better friend to her than she deserves."

"Brad. . ." Hannah began, but Brad turned and walked away, his feet hitting the floor hard enough that she was sure they could hear it down in the cafeteria. She slumped down in her seat. "Sierra! You just ruined the only chance I'm ever going to have with him!"

"I just saved you, you mean," Sierra said. "You can do way better than him, trust me." She pulled her purse over her shoulder. "Let's get out of here. He and his lame excuses for talking to you are the only ones who have been here all afternoon and the sooner we go, the sooner you can meet Mr. Right instead."

Hannah felt like shoving the table hard enough to knock it over, but of course, she didn't do that. "Fine, whatever. Let's go have fun."

"YAY!" Sierra said, loudly enough that Mr. Collins looked up from the papers he was marking. "Come on, bestie," she added, lowering her voice slightly. "Tonight's the night we really start to live."

What have I got myself into? Hannah picked up her backpack and followed Sierra out of the tutoring center.



2 - Mouse Girl



ABOUT TWO HOURS later, the girls finally made it to the party. Hannah was wearing a blue dress that was way too see-through and way too low-cut for her liking, but it was the only thing in Sierra's closet that was anything close to what Hannah thought Estella Havershim from *Great Expectations* would wear, so she'd borrowed it anyway. Sierra had also lent her a tiara and a pair of glasses with no lenses in them and put a French braid in her hair for her.

Sierra was dressed as Cleopatra, or so she said. She had tucked her hair into a short wig and was wearing a dress that was much too revealing for Hannah's liking: all white with a top that looked like a bra, nothing covering her belly, and a skirt so short that Sierra would have been sent home if she'd worn it to school.

"Here we are," Sierra said, parking halfway down the block. "It's the last house on the right. Number 1917."

Hannah laughed, nervously. "Last chance to turn around so we don't both get grounded for a month."

Sierra rolled her eyes. "Don't chicken out on me now."

"I'm not," Hannah said, shouting to be heard over the loud music coming from the end of the block. "This music's tearing the block apart. I can feel it as we walk."

Sierra said nothing, and Hannah was sure she was pretending not to have heard her. She felt like the neighbors were all watching her from their darkened windows as she hurried down the block, trying to ignore the goosebumps growing on her legs and anxious to get out of this cold

weather. The house they wanted was at the end of the block; it was the only one that had any lights on at all.

They walked up a driveway to an open door.

“Here goes,” Sierra said, and Hannah got the sense she was as nervous as Hannah was. She smiled at Hannah and said, “You look gorgeous. There’s nothing to worry about.” Then she turned the doorknob and gestured to Hannah to go first. It reminded Hannah of that time they’d gone to a haunted house and neither one of them had wanted to be the first one to walk in, but Hannah had decided to be brave and push her way through.

She took a deep breath and let it out slowly as she walked through the door of the party house.

There were people everywhere, and most of them had plastic cups or cans of beer in their hands. A couple of guys, obviously stoned, were sitting on a couch playing video games. Some people were dancing. Everyone else’s costumes, if you could call them that, were even more revealing than Sierra’s.

“Where’s Jake?” Hannah asked, yelling over the too-loud music.

Sierra shrugged. “He’s here somewhere. It’s his house.”

Some guy with a realistic-looking grizzly bear costume came out of nowhere, jumping in front of Hannah and growling. She flinched. The guy laughed and took off the bear head. He was a white guy with curly, dark hair that had got all messed up by the bear costume. He hadn’t shaved, or at least, was wearing one of those awful beards that looked like stubble.

“You made it!” he said, and Hannah could smell the beer on his breath. Sierra scrunched up her nose as he leaned in to kiss her. But she kissed him back, so Hannah guessed she wasn’t too disgusted. “Who’s your friend?”

“This is Hannah,” Sierra said. “Don’t ask who she’s dressed as. She’s one of a kind.”

“Cool. Cool.” Jake looked Hannah up and down. “I didn’t know she was gonna be so hot. Hot Hannah.” He giggled.

Hannah stiffened. Sierra, oblivious, said, “Where’s the beer? We need to loosen up some.”

“Beer’s in the cooler. There’s other stuff in the kitchen too if you’re more of a wine girl or whatever, Hannah.”

“I’ll just have water, thanks,” Hannah said.

“Whatever floats your boat. Kitchen’s that way.” Jake bounced off after gesturing vaguely over his shoulder.

Sierra grabbed Hannah’s hand. “I’m so glad you finally met Jake. Come on, let’s go get drinks so you can start mingling.”

Since when was Sierra into drinking? Hannah didn’t ask, just let her lead her to the kitchen. Sierra opened a cooler that was under the table and grabbed two cans of beer.

“Seriously?” Hannah said as Sierra tried to hand her one of the cans. “I told you I wasn’t drinking, and you shouldn’t either.”

“Don’t be so uptight. It’s a party, isn’t it?” Sierra pressed the can into Hannah’s hand. “Look, I know at school you’re like, the queen of sobriety or whatever, but we’re not at school now. We’re at a party full of cool people who really ought to get to know how awesome you are, and you’re not going to meet anyone standing there scowling and refusing to even try to fit in.”

Maybe I don’t want to fit in. Hannah slammed the can down on the table and turned her back on Sierra so she could open the fridge. It was full of six-packs and wine coolers. No water anywhere except the sink, and Hannah doubted Jake had a filter.

“You should try one of those,” Sierra said, gesturing toward the wine coolers. “They’re like lemonade. You’ll like them.”

“Yeah, whatever.” Hannah took a peach-flavored wine cooler out of the fridge and went back into the living room.

She didn’t know where to go or what to do. She looked around for a spot where there weren’t too many people and decided on the couch

where the guys were playing video games. One of the guys kind of reminded her of Brad. He didn't look like him, at least not up close. He was rounder and shorter, but he had the same hairstyle and face shape.

Hannah watched the not-Brad-but-close-enough guy play a racing game. She wished there was a potted plant or something she could pour the wine cooler down. The more she stood there, the more she felt like taking a sip to see what it was like, and she didn't want to break the contract she'd signed as a SADD officer promising to be a positive, sober role model. She leaned against a wall saying nothing and wondering if Not-Brad even knew she was there.

He looked up. "I thought someone was watching me, but I didn't think I had such a beautiful stalker."

"I... I wasn't stalking you," Hannah stammered. "Honest. I just wanted to see what you were playing."

Not-Brad laughed. "Relax. I was complimenting you. Here, let me get your drink for you." He took it and opened it before Hannah could tell him she didn't want him to.

"Thanks," Hannah said. "But I don't actually want it. I was just holding it so no one would offer me a drink."

Not-Brad giggled. "That's different. But hey, it's cool. If you don't want it, I'll take it." He took a sip. "You sure you don't want any? It's just a wine cooler. It won't get you all that fucked up."

Hannah did. She wanted it more than anything. "I can't," she said. "I'm sort of the designated driver." It wasn't a total lie. Since Sierra was drinking, she wasn't going to be able to drive them back. This guy didn't need to know that that meant ordering a Lyft because Hannah only had a learner's permit.

"Look at you being all responsible," Not-Brad said, smiling the same relaxed smile Brad did when he was fooling around in class. God, he was cute! "You got a name, responsible girl?"

"Hannah, but my friends call me Mouse."

“Mouse.” Not-Brad took a sip of the wine cooler. “Like in that kids’ story about the lion.” He took another sip. “What’d you say your other name was?”

“Hannah. What’s yours?”

“Uh uh uh.” Not-Brad pointed the wine cooler toward Hannah. “If you want to know, you have to take a sip of this.”

Hannah took a step back. “Then I guess you’ll stay anonymous.”

Not-Brad nearly doubled over laughing. “You’re hilarious. Hilarious Hannah Mouse.” He threw his head back and downed the rest of the wine cooler. Hannah was sure that was not what you were supposed to do with it, but she didn’t care. Better it was in him than in her. “Come sit next to me,” he said, “and let’s see if you can beat me at racing.” Hannah did and he said, his voice slurred a little, “You know what I like about you? You’re the kind of girl who knows exactly what you want. That’s awesome. Too many girls just go along with whatever anyone tells them to do, and it’s like, don’t be so weak, you know?”

“You’re hanging around the wrong kind of girls, then.” Hannah picked up the video game controller. “I want to know your name. If I win, which I will because you’re too drunk to play properly, you have to tell me.”

“Okay. But if I win, you have to kiss me.”

Hannah wasn’t sure she wanted her first kiss ever to be with some guy who had beer on his breath, but it probably didn’t matter because it wasn’t going to happen.

She focused intently on the controller, playing hard so that she would win and get the guy’s name out of him, and almost forgot she was at the kind of party she wasn’t supposed to be caught dead at. This wasn’t so bad. What had Molly been so worried about?

They played three rounds. Hannah learned the guy’s name was Jamie and that he went to Cedarwood Community College. That made him too old for her, but she didn’t care. It wasn’t like she was ever going to see him again after tonight anyway.

After the third round, Jamie said, “This is no fair. Are you sure you don’t want to get just a little fucked up, so I have a chance?”

Hannah shook her head. “I’m having too much fun sober. Why ruin a good thing?”

Jamie laughed. “So funny,” he said. “Does that mean I have a chance to kiss you even though I lost?”

“I’ll think about it.” Hannah’s heart pounded. She knew if she sat here any longer, she’d give in, and that scared her even though there was nothing to be scared of. Jamie was nice even if he had had way too much to drink, so what was the big deal? “Tell you what,” she said. “Let me just get something to drink and then we’ll try again.”

“I’m corrupting you already.” Jamie smiled. “Go ahead, Mouse Girl.”

Hannah went into the kitchen and looked around, not sure how long she could stay in here before Jamie realized she was hiding from him and came looking for her. She grabbed a wine cooler from the fridge without knowing why she was doing it. There were some red cups on the counter next to the sink that she hadn’t noticed before and a pitcher of something that looked like iced tea. “Is this actually tea?” she asked Jake, who had come into the kitchen. “Like, not alcoholic?”

“Oh yeah,” Jake said. “It’s for mixing, but if you want just tea, go for it. I won’t tell anyone.” He winked.

Hannah hurried to put ice in her cup and put the tea in it. Her best friend’s boyfriend shouldn’t have winked at her, and she didn’t like the vibe she got from him.

She went back out into the living room. “There you are,” Jamie said. He glanced at the guy next to him, a skinny-as-a-pencil dude whose skin was super pale and who was wearing alien antennas on top of his head. “Told you she hadn’t gone for good.”

“Go ahead and play,” Pencil Boy said. “I play winners. And when I play, the winner has to kiss the loser.” His eyes sparkled. “I’m Ty, by the way.”

Hannah put her cup down on the table and picked up her controller. “Well, Ty, maybe I’ll let Jamie win.”

Ty scowled. “Shut up and play, bitch.”

Hannah leaned forward, determined to block out her awareness of this asshole who was ruining her fun. Ty got up but she was barely aware of him walking behind her. She could feel people watching as she made her race car go faster and faster. She made it go so fast that she lost control and couldn’t get into the other lane fast enough when a car was in her way.

“You lose,” Jamie said happily. “Now you have to kiss me.”

Hannah’s heart pounded. “Let me just. . .” She picked up her cup. “Dry mouth.”

She drained the cup before she turned toward Jamie. She could smell the beer on his breath, and it turned her off as much as it had before. So, when he leaned in, she turned and kissed his cheek.

“Hey!” Jamie said.

“I said a kiss. I didn’t say where.” Hannah fidgeted, feeling bad. “I just don’t like the taste of beer on your breath. Maybe some time when you’re more sober, I’ll give you a real kiss.”

“It’s cool,” Jamie said, laughing slightly, but Hannah could tell he was upset. “Like I said, you’re a girl who knows what she wants. But I want another beer, so that’s what I’m going to have.” He walked away.

“Jamie, wait! I didn’t mean. . .” But Jamie was already gone.

“Don’t look so sad,” Ty said. “How about. . .”

Hannah walked away before he could finish, wishing she knew where Sierra was so she could get her to take her home. She felt like the biggest loser in the world. Going to this party was stupid. She didn’t belong here. She didn’t fit in. And she’d ruined things with the only cool guy she’d met.

Suddenly, she was dizzy, and her hands and feet wouldn’t move the way she wanted them to. “What the fuck?” she mumbled. She wanted to find Sierra and tell her something was wrong, she was sick or some-

thing, but she couldn't remember how to get from the living room to the kitchen to see if she was there. She began pushing through the crowd anyway as fast as she could, stumbling and trying not to fall.

"Whoa," someone said. "Talk about wasted."

"I'm not," Hannah mumbled. Her voice sounded slurred like she'd had a stroke or something.

She needed Sierra. NOW.

She pulled her phone out and stared at it. There were buttons to press to put letters on the screen and make them into words, but she'd forgotten how to make it work. She stumbled around the living room instead, going in circles because she couldn't find the way out.

"It's okay," a guy said, putting his hand on her shoulder. It was the pencil guy from before. Hannah wished it was the other one, the one she liked a lot, but she couldn't remember what you were supposed to do if you didn't want someone to touch you, so she let him. "It's just your first time drunk, that's all. Come sit with me. I'll help you relax."

"Okay." Hannah leaned on Pencil Guy and let him lead her to the couch. He sat down first, smiling slightly. "Put your head on my lap. Lying down'll help."

That seemed like a good idea to Hannah, so she did.

He stroked her hair, laughing to himself as he leaned over and kissed the top of her head. Then he put his hand over her breasts and squeezed them through the fabric while he kissed her for real. Hannah lay there frozen, her panic growing because she couldn't move, while the guy pulled her arms up over her head and began unbuttoning her dress. . . .



3 - The Morning After



PURPLE BUTTERFLIES ON the curtains. Glow-in-the-dark stars stuck to the ceiling here and there. A heavy blue comforter wrapped around her.

This was Sierra's room, not Hannah's.

Hannah sat up, blinking hard and trying to remember how she'd got here. But no matter how hard she tried, she couldn't remember leaving the party last night. She remembered playing video games with Jamie, pulling away when he tried to kiss her, getting some iced tea from the kitchen. . . and then waking up here, her mouth dry and her body aching like the last time she had the flu.

"Sierra?" she whispered, but Sierra was fast asleep and didn't respond. Hannah got up, slowly. She was sore in weird places, like between her legs, as she tiptoed toward the bathroom.

Had she packed a toothbrush? she wondered as she took a Dixie cup from the dispenser on the side of the sink. Her mouth was so dry that she didn't care she was drinking tap water, from the bathroom no less, as she filled the cup and gulped gratefully. But then she caught sight of herself in the mirror.

It wasn't that her hair was limp and uncombed or that she looked extra tired. It was early in the morning and she doubted she'd got much sleep last night. But there were bruises on her neck, three of them, and the nightgown she didn't remember changing into was cut low enough that she could see another one on the top of one of her breasts. She put her hand under the nightgown, feeling gingerly.

There were tiny indentations all over her breasts. She pulled the collar of her nightgown down as far as it would go without ripping the fabric so she could see better. The indentations looked like teeth marks, like someone had bitten her over and over.

What the hell???

Hannah glared at herself in the mirror, trying to remember what she'd done to herself and getting mad because she couldn't. The bathroom door, which she'd left open a crack, creaked open more and she hurried to pull her nightgown on properly.

Dylan, Sierra's older brother, started to come in. Hannah could see him in the mirror: a tall black guy the same age as the boys she'd met last night. Dylan's ears stuck out a little too much from his skull, or maybe she noticed it more because he'd shaved his head recently.

"Oh!" he said, jumping back a little. "Sorry, Hannah. I didn't know you were in here." He frowned. "You okay?"

"Yeah. Just really confused. I don't remember coming back last night."

"I'm not surprised. You and Sierra were both totally wasted, you worse than her. You tore your dress a little, by the way, but nothing major. It just needs a couple stitches."

Hannah nodded, trying to process all that. She rubbed her head and said, "Wait. You're not making sense. I . . . I couldn't have been drunk."

Dylan shrugged. "It's okay. It happens. I told Sierra I'd cover for you guys this time, but no more parties like this, okay?"

"I won't, believe me. I feel awful. And I have all sorts of bruises and stuff that I don't remember getting." Hannah's heart pounded as she saw Dylan's eyes narrow. He pressed his head forward, slightly, and looked her in the eye. Hannah had a feeling he was putting on his EMT face. She made herself go on, "I don't remember drinking at all. The only thing I remember having is a cup of iced tea."

"Iced tea? You're sure it didn't have alcohol in it?"

"Positive."

“Okay.” Dylan ran his hands through what little hair he had on top of his head. “Okay. Come out of the bathroom, and let’s talk more about this.”

“About what?” Hannah was confused.

Dylan let his breath out slowly. “This isn’t easy to say and it’s not gonna be easy to hear.” He put his hand on Hannah’s shoulder. “Anyone ever talk to you about date rape drugs?”

“Date rape. . . ? What?” Hannah’s eyes widened. It kind of made sense. “You’re saying someone. . . no.”

“It fits.” Dylan’s voice was gentle. “Look at the evidence, Hannah. You were totally out of it without touching alcohol, you have bruises everywhere, your dress was torn. Someone

. . . ”

Hannah turned away from him. “I’m not talking about this anymore!” She blinked back tears. “It didn’t happen. You’re wrong.”

“Let’s see what the doctors say.” Dylan’s voice was calm, too calm, pissing Hannah off. “That’ll tell the story.”

“No. I’m not going to the hospital. They’ll call my parents and I’ll get grounded for going to the stupid party that I wish I’d never gone to.”

“They can’t call your parents without your permission.” Dylan’s voice was still soft. “Hannah, listen to me. I’m not trying to boss you around, but if I’m right, there’s stuff you need to take care of. You could get an infection or get pregnant, and the only way to make sure that doesn’t happen is if you go to the hospital. So if you won’t let me take you, I have to tell your parents what I think happened to you so that they can take care of you.”

“That’s blackmail!” Hannah glared at Dylan, but he didn’t back down, just looked her in the eye like she hadn’t said anything. “Okay, fine, I’ll go to the hospital. Can I at least get dressed first?”

“Of course.”

Hannah ran down the hall. She was madder at Dylan than she’d ever been at anyone in her entire life, and she didn’t like feeling that way. She’d

always thought Dylan was cool. He treated her like she was as much his sister as Sierra was and he never made her feel embarrassed, not even the time he overheard her telling Sierra she had a crush on him. He let her down gently and then six months later, she was the first person he ever told he was gay.

And now he knew she and Sierra had gone to the wrong kind of party and that instead of watching Sierra's back like she was supposed to, Hannah got all messed up. And worse, he wasn't totally on her side like he was supposed to be.

Hannah came back into Sierra's room and threw herself onto her comforter, then made herself get up and look for some clothes to wear. Obviously, she wasn't wearing her torn dress, wherever it had ended up. She found the pair of jeans and sweater she'd worn to school under the desk; Sierra had kicked them there after they had changed because she was in such a rush to get to the party.

"What's going on?" Sierra mumbled sleepily, rolling over onto her back.

"Nothing. Go back to sleep." Hannah squeezed the sweater, liking the feeling of the fabric under her fingers. "D-dylan thinks. . ." she began but didn't go on. She couldn't tell Sierra that Dylan thought she'd been date raped. Sierra would understand better than Molly would, but she still would be shocked. Plus, she might not believe it.

"Dylan thinks what?" Sierra sat up. She groaned and rubbed her head. "I way overdid it but tell me anyway."

Hannah swallowed hard, thinking, trying to figure out what she could say that wasn't the whole truth. "He doesn't think I was drunk. He thinks someone put pills in my iced tea. Crazy, right?"

Sierra's mouth dropped open. "I don't know. You were so adamant about not drinking, and then you were so messed up. You were saying things that didn't make sense, and you did whatever Dylan told you, no questions asked. It was like you were a robot. Your answer to everything was 'Okay.'"

“I was? I don’t remember any of that.” Hannah turned her back on Sierra so she could put her shirt on. “Don’t look,” she said, feeling Sierra staring at her. “I don’t like it.”

“My glasses aren’t even on. I can barely see you.”

“Just look the other way, will you?” Hannah hurried to get dressed. Putting her jeans on kind of hurt but she ignored it. “There. Now Dylan can take me to the hospital so they can tell me he’s wrong.”

“Wait up,” Sierra said. “I’m coming too.”

“You don’t have to. . .”

“Yes, I do. I’m your best friend, and it’s my fault you were at the stupid party in the first place. Besides, afterward, I can make him take us out for pancakes so that the note I leave for Mom and Dad won’t be a total lie.”

Pancakes were the furthest thing from Hannah’s mind. Getting dressed exhausted her and her stomach hurt a little. “Whatever,” she said. “Get dressed before he loses his patience. I don’t want him calling my parents.”

“He’d better not,” Sierra said. “And I don’t have to get dressed. I was too drunk to get changed last night and slept in my clothes.” She went over to the vanity and pulled a brush through her hair. “There. I’m presentable. Comb your hair so we can go.”

Hannah didn’t feel like combing her hair, but she took her comb out of her purse and did it anyway so that Sierra would have nothing to say.

Don't miss out!

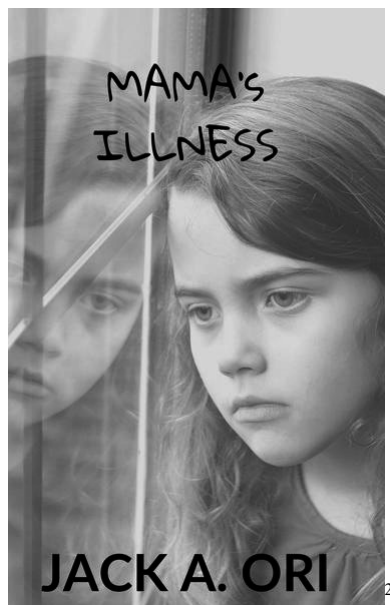
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