

CHAPTER ONE: THE MORNING AFTER

START

The winter is colder than usual. We haven't had snow in years, but now it envelops everything in sight. The birds are long gone, and even the rats that swarmed the street in summer are either in hiding or dead. Webs of ice have gathered on the windows and I can barely make out the shapes of cars under snowy rubble. I'm tired, but I know it must be done today.

1. **DELAY IT - GO TO SCENE 1 OPTION 1**
2. **DO IT - GO TO SCENE 1 OPTION 2**

SCENE 1 OPTION 1 - DELAY IT

I make a cup of tea. I can't put this off much longer...

1. **DO IT - GO TO SCENE 1 OPTION 2**

SCENE 1 OPTION 2 - DO IT

I slowly climb the stairs, my hand slipping as I try to hold onto the rail. I tighten my grip and continue upwards. As I turn to the bedroom, I take a deep breath. Standing in the doorway, I look at him. I look at the mess I've made.

1. **TRY TO WAKE HIM - GO TO SCENE 2 OPTION 1**
2. **CLEAN UP - GO TO SCENE 2 OPTION 2**

SCENE 2 OPTION 1 - TRY TO WAKE HIM

At this point, it seems pointless to try to wake him up.

1. **CLEAN UP - GO TO SCENE 2 OPTION 2**

SCENE 2 OPTION 2 - CLEAN UP

I start by clearing the area around the bed, kicking clothes to the side to clear a path to the bed. I'll need something to clear up the glass.

1. **GET A MOP - GO TO SCENE 3 OPTION 1**
2. **GET A DUSTPAN AND BRUSH - GO TO SCENE 3 OPTION 2**

SCENE 3 OPTION 1 - GET A MOP

I don't think a mop is the best choice here.

1. **GET A DUSTPAN AND BRUSH - GO TO SCENE 3 OPTION 2**

SCENE 3 OPTION 2 - GET A DUSTPAN AND BRUSH

I retrieve the dustpan and brush from the cupboard under the kitchen sink and begin to clear up the glass.

Now that's done, I need to get rid of all this blood.

1. **GET TISSUES - GO TO SCENE 4 OPTION 1**
2. **GET TOWELS - GO TO SCENE 4 OPTION 2**

SCENE 4 OPTION 1 - GET TISSUES

Tissues aren't going to be enough...

1. GET TOWELS - GO TO SCENE 4 OPTION 2

SCENE 4 OPTION 2 - GET TOWELS

It takes a few towels, but they soak up most of the blood. I'll have to use a mop for the rest.

1. GET A MOP - GO TO SCENE 5 OPTION 1

SCENE 5 OPTION 1 - GET A MOP

As I make my way downstairs, I hear a barrage of heavy bangs on the front door. I look down at my clothes. I can't see any stains. Should I open the door?

1. IGNORE IT - GO TO SCENE 6 OPTION 1
2. OPEN THE DOOR - GO TO SCENE 6 OPTION 2

SCENE 6 OPTION 1 - IGNORE IT

I continue downstairs, quickly and quietly. As I go to open the storage cupboard under the stairs, I notice blood on my hands. I rush back to the stairs and check the bannister. Long streaks of blood have stained the white-painted wood. That's why my hand slipped earlier...

I hear the squeak of metal and look at the door. The letterbox is open and dark eyes glare at me.

1. ESCAPE - GO TO SCENE 9

SCENE 6 OPTION 2 - OPEN THE DOOR

Are you sure?

1. LOOK FOR STAINS - GO TO SCENE 7 OPTION 1
2. OPEN IT - GO TO SCENE 7 OPTION 2

SCENE 7 OPTION 1 - LOOK FOR STAINS

I check my clothes again and see some splashes of blood on my slippers. As I pull my gown towards me to get a better look, the fabric sticks to my hands. I pry them away and see that they are still wet with blood.

I hear the squeak of metal and look at the door. The letterbox is open and dark eyes glare at me as I stand on the stairs. "We're responding to a call. Open the door, ma'am," the man says.

1. ESCAPE - GO TO SCENE 9

SCENE 7 OPTION 2 - OPEN IT

I try to compose myself and open the door with a soft smile. In front of me are two police officers.

"Ma'am?" The older man says, his brows furrowed.

The younger officer is staring at my hands. I look down at them and see that they are still wet with blood.

"Can we come in?" The older man asks.

I try to think of a response, but my mind is blank. I feel as though my heart has stopped. The older man steps towards me.

1. THINK OF AN EXCUSE - GO TO SCENE 8 OPTION 1

SCENE 8 OPTION 1 - THINK OF AN EXCUSE

"I... I'm sorry, I'm just about to go out," I say.

"You're wearing a dressing gown, Ma'am," the older man says.

I slam the door shut.

1. **ESCAPE - GO TO SCENE 9**

SCENE 9 - ESCAPE

I rush to the kitchen to escape out the back door. As I trudge through the thick snow, my slippers drenched and my feet freezing, I reach the back alley. I hear men shouting something at me.

1. **SURRENDER - GO TO SCENE 10 OPTION 1**
2. **KEEP RUNNING - GO TO SCENE 10 OPTION 2**

SCENE 10 - OPTION 1 - SURRENDER

I look to my left at the end of the alley and see the officer rushing towards me.

"Stop!" he yells. I glance to my right. I know I can't outrun him. I raise my hands and he approaches me.

"Let's have a talk," he says.

END OF CHAPTER

SCENE 10 OPTION 2 - KEEP RUNNING

I kick off my slippers and my feet are raw. I head right and follow the alley as it winds between houses. I glance behind me briefly and see the two officers.

"Stop!" one of the men yells. I have to outrun them.

As I turn a corner, something sharp cuts into my foot. I scream and feel myself falling forwards. I hear a crack as my knee hits the ground. The men stand over me. I'm done.

END OF CHAPTER

CHAPTER 2: THE INTERVIEW

START

The officer dropped the file onto the desk and leant over to turn on the recorder.

"Interview with suspect, Lydia Simmons, 14:28, August 7 2023. Officers present are Smith, badge 247800, and Anderson, badge 310010."

"Lydia, is this information correct?" The officer opened his file at the first page and pointed to the information.

PRINT SUSPECT DATA TO CONSOLE

I nod.

"Any idea why you're here?"

1. YES - GO TO SCENE 1 OPTION 1
2. NO - GO TO SCENE 1 OPTION 2

SCENE 1 OPTION 1 - YES

I nod slightly.

"Enlighten me," he says.

"My husband," I say.

The officer turns to the next page in the file and spins it around to show me.

PRINT VICTIM DATA TO CONSOLE - inc cause of death, toxicology report, previous conviction

"Is this your husband, Lydia?" the officer asks.

"Yes," I say.

"What's happened with your husband?" he asks.

1. EXPLAIN - GO TO SCENE 2 OPTION 1
2. SAY NOTHING - GO TO SCENE 2 OPTION 2

SCENE 1 OPTION 2 - NO

I curl my lip, raise my eyebrows and stare at the table.

"Care to explain why you were covered in blood when we found you, or why you tried to flee?"

Perhaps you'd like to explain the situation in your bedroom?"

1. EXPLAIN - GO TO SCENE 2 OPTION 1
2. SAY NOTHING - GO TO SCENE 2 OPTION 2

SCENE 2 OPTION 1 - EXPLAIN

"I found out that he was having an affair," I say.

"So you killed him?" the officer asks.

"No," I say.

1. IT WAS AN ACCIDENT - GO TO SCENE 3 OPTION 1
2. IT WAS SELF-DEFENCE - GO TO SCENE 3 OPTION 2

SCENE 2 OPTION 2 - SAY NOTHING

"Given that we found your husband's body, which had several stab wounds, in *your* bedroom, and *you* were covered in blood and *you* were running away, I'd say you're in for a pretty rough time. It would make things a lot easier for all of us, especially you, if you'd clear a few things up," the officer says.

1. IT WAS AN ACCIDENT - GO TO SCENE 3 OPTION 1
2. IT WAS SELF-DEFENCE - GO TO SCENE 3 OPTION 2

SCENE 3 OPTION 1 - IT WAS AN ACCIDENT

"I was trying to hurt myself. He just...got in the way," I say.

"And how many times did he get in the way?" the officer asks. "See, his body had multiple stab wounds. It doesn't seem likely that you'd manage that by accident, say, six or seven times?"

1. HE WAS DRUNK - GO TO SCENE 4 OPTION 2

SCENE 3 OPTION 2 - IT WAS SELF-DEFENCE

"I told him that I knew he was having an affair," I say. "He was angry."

"Why would he be angry at you for that?" the officer asks.

1. HE WAS AGGRESSIVE - GO TO SCENE 4 OPTION 1
2. HE WAS DRUNK - GO TO SCENE 4 OPTION 2

SCENE 4 OPTION 1 - HE WAS AGGRESSIVE

"He could be aggressive," I say.

"He could be, or he was?" the officer asks.

"He was. He was controlling and he didn't like not having control," I say.

"Was he drunk?" he asks.

1. HE WAS DRUNK - GO TO SCENE 4 OPTION 2
2. HE MIGHT NOT HAVE BEEN DRUNK - GO TO SCENE 5 OPTION 1

SCENE 4 OPTION 2 - HE WAS DRUNK

"He seemed to be inebriated," I say.

"He was drunk?" the officer asks.

I nod. "He's a different person when he's drunk," I say.

"In what way?" he asks.

"He's unpredictable. He's scary," I say.

"I see... It's interesting you say that, Lydia, because the toxicology report found no trace of alcohol. In fact, it found nothing at all," he says.

1. QUESTION THE FINDINGS - GO TO SCENE 5 OPTION 2

SCENE 5 OPTION 1 - HE MIGHT NOT HAVE BEEN DRUNK

"Why would you confront a man who you say is aggressive towards you?" the officer asks.

"I didn't know it would be this bad," I say.

The officer sighs. "Let's get to the point," he says.

1. WE ARGUED - GO TO SCENE 6 OPTION 1

SCENE 5 OPTION 2 - QUESTION THE FINDINGS

"He certainly seemed drunk to me," I say.

"So the report is incorrect?" the officer asks.

"It could be," I say.

The officer smiles. "Then what happened?"

1. **HE ATTACKED ME - GO TO SCENE 6 OPTION 2**

SCENE 6 OPTION 1 - WE ARGUED

"I was having a drink and packing my bag when he came home. I was just going to stay with my sister for a while. He came home and found me upstairs. I told him what I knew and we argued," I say.

"And then? The officer asks.

"He got mad. I got scared. He lunged at me and I dropped the wine glass. It smashed," I say.

"I stepped back when he got close to me and I tripped on something. I saw the broken glass and I just... I thought he was going to hurt me. I've never seen him look like that before."

1. **LISTEN TO THE OFFICER 1 - GO TO SCENE 7 OPTION 1**

SCENE 6 OPTION 2 - HE ATTACKED ME

"He smashed the wine glass and threatened me with a large piece," I say.

"I tried to leave, but he stood between me and the door. I begged him to let me go and he just... attacked me," I say.

"And then?" the officer asks.

"He overpowered me and I was on the ground. He said he was going to kill me. The next thing I know, I have glass in my hand. I just... I couldn't breathe, I couldn't think. It just happened."

2. **LISTEN TO THE OFFICER 2 - GO TO SCENE 7 OPTION 2**

SCENE 7 OPTION 1 - LISTEN TO THE OFFICER

"Look, Lydia," the officer says. "Charges are going to be made here, okay?"

I nod, close to tears.

"Interview closing at 15:08. Suspect is detained and awaiting charges," the officer says.

1. **VIEW CHARGES 1**

SCENE 7 OPTION 2 - LISTEN TO THE OFFICER

"Lydia, what you've shared with us today has been nothing short of preposterous," the officer says.

"First you said you were trying to hurt yourself, then you said he was drunk, even questioning the toxicology report. Next, your husband was attacking you with a broken wine glass, despite the fact that you were the one drinking from it," he continues. "Charges are going to be made and you've made things much worse for yourself. Officer Anderson will return you to your cell."

"Interview closing at 15:08. Suspect is detained and awaiting charges," the officer says.

1. **VIEW CHARGES 2**

NAME: SIMON SIMMONS

AGE: 43

STATUS: MARRIED

PROFESSION: IT SUPPORT

PREVIOUS CONVICTIONS: DRINK DRIVING

CAUSE OF DEATH: STABBING

TOXICOLOGY REPORT: NO TOXINS FOUND

NAME: LYDIA SIMMONS

AGE: 39

STATUS: MARRIED

PROFESSION: SALES ASSISTANT

PREVIOUS CONVICTIONS: NONE

ARRESTED ON SUSPICION OF: MURDER

CHARGED WITH: MURDER/MANSLAUGHTER