



I Can Do This

Mallory has lost her savior. She needs to move on but she won't be able to until she moves past all her demons. With help from an old friend, as well as a surprise, Mallory and her mom find a way to move on.



Copyright © 2019 by CAA

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author's imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



Mallory has spent the entire day feeling sad, her heart hurts and her head is dizzy. Her uncle died yesterday, this morning the funeral took place and since then, everyone has been at her aunt’s house visiting, telling stories and offering support to the family and friends.

Mallory had been very close to her uncle, he had stepped in when her own father was hauled off to jail for being abusive to everyone in the house, charged with attempted murder when her mother ended up in a coma for two days. Uncle Thomas was her mother’s brother. He made sure they were taken care of after her father left. Made sure they had all they needed. Her brothers enjoyed going to movies and sporting events with their uncle too. Mallory enjoyed being with him in a different way. He used to sit and talk to Mallory about everything and anything she wanted to discuss. Anything on her mind or in her heart. He guided her to the right profession and then told her to get out when he saw her first job was killing her.

He has been everything to her. Today, watching them lower the coffin into the ground, Mallory felt her heart break a little more. He had been sick the past six months, part of her is happy knowing the pain and suffering is over, at least there

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



is that. But now she has had enough of being around all these people, she needs to go back to her apartment and let herself mourn in peace for a few minutes, while no one else is around, no one else is telling her things that are hurtful to remember.

She walks to where her mom is sitting by her aunt. “Hey Mom. I’m going to head home now,” she says.

“Ok Baby, you doing all right?” she asks.

“Same as anyone else in this house, I suppose. How are you doing Aunt Philly?” Mallory asks.

“I’m doing well. Sometimes these things come as a mixed blessing, you know. I saw you with your cousins earlier, that was nice to see,” she says hesitantly.

Mallory looks down at her hands. Her aunt saw hugs but they were all telling her to get out of their lives. Before she can respond to her, Aunt Philly grabs Mallory’s hands and holds them in her own tightly, “Mal, what did they say? The truth this time,” she asks. She knows her boys hated the time her husband spent with Mallory. They told her often times that she is not a sister and shouldn’t be at family functions. No other cousins were invited.

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



They would go on and on some days. She is not denying their behavior.

“Nothing. You take care of Mom tonight. I have work to do tomorrow. I’ll call during the day to see how you’re doing,” Mallory says.

“Mallory Elizabeth, you tell me the truth and you tell me now,” her aunt instructs.

“Fine. You want to know about that lovely moment you saw? Your eldest pulled me in for a hug and whispered in my ear that since his father is not here anymore, I shouldn’t be either. Then your middle son hugged me, well more like squeezed the stuffing out of my arms and pulled me in to him so he could whisper that anything left to me in the Will is going to be contested and that I may owe them money because of the time and money his father spent on me. Oh wait, then there is your youngest who wouldn’t even touch me when he said, through his gritted teeth, that if I try and take anything from the house he will know because he will be watching me all day. So, now you know. Does it make you feel any happier? Listen Aunt Philly. I know they hate me, they always have, ever since my father was taken away. They’ve told me this often enough. It is no surprise to me. I stayed in the house today because I knew from the outside everyone would expect me to.

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



I know I’m not wanted here. I’m an invader. I understand my place, always have. So, if you’ll excuse me my dear aunt, Mom, I’m going to go to work tomorrow and probably every day after that and work myself crazy to get my head over his death. I will call once in a while but please don’t call me a lot and ask how I am doing,” she looks from her mom to her aunt half in tears and half in anger at being forced to tell them what she didn’t want to say.

Her aunt looks up at Mallory, still holding her hands. “Mal. I was hoping. Hoping that after his death they would recognize that you’ve lost two fathers in your life. I don’t know where we went wrong with them. Your brothers don’t bother them, only you. My own sons would say how much they love their father but would treat me, their own mother, with the respect that some do for hired help or even less. With superiority around them at all times.

Once, your uncle witnessed them behaving like that, he had come home early that day to surprise me and take me out before I had started to make dinner. When he heard them make demands at me and not ask me what they needed, he barged into the kitchen and gave them a tongue lashing I never knew he had in him.

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



They stood there dumbfounded. He told them I would not be cooking for them any longer until they figured out how to treat me with respect. That either they learn how to cook for themselves or go hungry. For six months I only made two pieces of chicken for dinner or two measured out portions of pasta. I only set two place settings on the dinner table. After your cousin’s birthday, your uncle asked them if they figured out how to treat a woman properly. They swore they did, but only when he was home,” she bows her head.

“I don’t know where this view of women came from. I think it’s that stupid private school we sent them to as youngsters. So, I suppose I can only blame myself,” Philly looks to her sister in law. “I loved your brother with all my heart, and he did me. I know he did. But we went wrong somewhere with our boys. You lost your husband and did better with your boys than I did with my own, having two parents. Something doesn’t make sense.” Tears falling from her eyes now.

Mallory kneels down to be in front of her aunt and mother. “I knew about the food thing. They blamed that on me too. At one point they called me and said it was my duty to come cook for them. I laughed on the phone and said read a book

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



it will tell you how to cook. I think they bought their food for all of those months. They probably asked for a larger allowance at that time claiming it was for school supplies or something and then laughed at you when you gave it to them.

Your eldest also blames me for his girlfriend walking away. He said I was the only new person at the party they were at, and it is because of me that she decided to walk away. I told him that maybe he needs to learn how to treat a person like more than a servant. He slapped me across the face. I spit on his shoes and left.”

“His shoes? His fancy, I have to have these to look professional, shoes?” Philly asks, holding her hand to her mouth.

“Those very ones,” Mallory answers. “But we shouldn’t continue this conversation Aunt Philly. I love you. I loved Uncle Thomas. I love you too Mom but I only answered you now because you asked and I know you would continue to ask. They are who they are. I am who I am. Maybe I deserve their treatment. Who knows Aunt Philly. We will always be friends, you and me. We will meet for lunch, just not here or in front of them, ok?” Mallory asks. She wants to leave, she wants to run away from this house actually.

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



“Ok dear. I’m sorry. I don’t know what else to say. Thomas loved you so very much. He loved his sister too and your brothers. But you had a special place in his heart. Who knows why, it happens. Ok. I’ll stop. But Mal,” she pauses. “forget it, I said I’d stop and I will. Take care Mal, don’t work too hard. Try and have a social life. I love you,” Philly stands now to give her niece a proper hug and kiss. Softly.

Mallory hugs her mother and heads out the front door. She passes a couple of other relatives and says goodbye to them as well. She walks down the block to where her car is parked. She sees her oldest cousin standing by her car with his arms crossed. She immediately calls her aunt’s phone, she wants someone to hear this. “Hi, your eldest is at my car with his arms crossed. I need a witness to what he is about to say,” she says quickly.

“I’m listening, put the phone in your shirt pocket so he doesn’t think you’re recording, oh, and press the record button too,” she says.

Mallory approaches the car. “I’m about to leave. You can call off the guards,” she says.

“Don’t be flip with me bitch. No one is around to protect you anymore. What do you say about that?” he asks.

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



“I have mace spray in my pocket, you touch me and you’ll be sorry. Step away from my car and get back to your mourning family,” Mallory says. “That’s what normal people do when a parent dies, they mourn the loss.”

“I’ll do what I want to do. You are not going to tell me what to do. I listen to no woman. *You* listen to *me*. My father is dead now and you must disappear. You hear me?” he says in a menacing voice.

“I have to get in my car, move out of the way so I can go home,” she says, not reacting to his words.

“I already told you, I don’t listen to women,” he says again.

“And I told you I have a can of mace spray that I’m not afraid to use, on anyone. In fact, I’m rather quick so you’ll never know what hit you until you feel the burn. Now move,” she says again, a bit more stern this time.

Her cousin takes a swing at her face, she screams and jumps back. “You’re going to hit a woman? In broad daylight, are you out of your mind?”

“You’re right, you’re not worthy of being touched by me. Get the hell out of here and learn

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



your place in this family. That would be nowhere. I know where you live as well as where you work. I’ll be watching you. If you are near the family at all. You’ll be sorry,” he says.

“You’re threatening me now? You are scum,” Mallory, quickly opens her door and gets in. She puts the car in reverse and moves away quickly. She pulls out her phone. “I’m sorry Aunt Philly.”

Mallory hears tears. “Call a lawyer Mal. As soon as you get home. Call someone in another town. Run the name by me first so I can make sure the boys don’t know them. Find a woman, they definitely don’t know any of those. That sounded like a threat on your life. Call them. Please, before morning, make the call,” Aunt Philly hangs up, crying. “Oh Thomas how did we go so wrong?” she whispers to herself. Her sister in law heard the conversation too.

“Did she record it?” Mallory’s mom asks.

“I told her to,” Philly says.

~ ~ ~

Mallory has spent three days at home since her uncle’s funeral. She knew she wasn’t going to go to work. She didn’t want her mother or aunt bothering her, asking her every few hours how she was doing.

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



She left her aunt’s house feeling worse than she did when she woke up that day. What could have happened that made them hate her so much. She never did anything with their family. Her uncle would only invite her over after he had finished doing whatever it was his boys wanted to do. She wasn’t second, she was in addition to his daily schedule. That is how he always described his visits with her.

When his sons were younger, they would snicker at her every time she came over, but they were never quite as cruel as they have been as adults. These past couple of years have been much worse. Mallory decides to take her aunt’s advice and find a woman lawyer who can see if she is in any real danger from her own cousins.

She calls an old college buddy. “Hey Cara, its Mallory. Any chance you reached your goal and became a lawyer for women’s rights?” she asks
“That’s funny you should ask that first. As soon as I heard your name, I was going to ask you if you ever became the world’s first nude, woman computer programmer,” she jokes.

“I can’t believe you remember that joke. Oh wow, thanks for the laugh Cara. I know I haven’t spoken to you in a long while but I have kind of an

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



issue I’m hoping you can help with and if not you, someone you know maybe has the time?” Mallory says seriously.

“You always made me laugh Mal. No one else could consistently make me laugh. Even though you never tried, it was always some sly statement you made about the class we were in or the people around us. What’s got you all charged up though?” Cara asks.

Mallory describes her life with her cousins, since her father was taken away. Then she plays the recorded conversation. “Well, he did threaten you in that conversation and you have it recorded, so we can use it to possibly get a restraining order against him. Or we can simply start a file with the police each time he or his brothers say anything to you. Each one added to an official report. At some point these statements will become harassment. I’d have to check how much we need. Have they ever sent you anything in writing? Email or text?” Cara asks.

“Probably. But how do I check that now?” she asks.

“Wow, you are flustered Mal, for a programmer you should know that all phone records can be searched with your permission, but then again, I think we need to do this through the legal

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



system. I have a guy in the police department who can help us check your entire phone history. I’m sorry that this became so ugly. I remember your uncle fondly. Remember that time I came home with you during spring break? I didn’t want to go with my parents on their usual vacation. Your uncle made sure we both had a great time. I’m sorry for your loss Mal, really I am,” Cara says.

“Thanks Cara, that means a lot to me. The funeral was hard, being in the house was worse. All those family members who stared at me funny. I wonder what my cousins have been saying all these years to them behind my back?” she questions.

“Easily investigated if you want me to,” Cara says.

“I’m going back to work tomorrow Cara, I took off a couple of days to mourn by myself. I don’t have time or money to do all of this. I called you because I was hoping you’d accept a payment plan,” she says.

“Mal, first off, of course I will. Second, let me see what I can find out with the phone records and such. It will show us all voice messages as well as text messages they have sent you in the past couple of years. The full history isn’t necessary. Two years is long enough to show history. Unless we find

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



something specific earlier. Will you let me check? Nothing you have to do except send me their phone numbers so we can search the right ones on your record,” Cara says.

“Yeah, in the meantime, do you think I’m being paranoid if I buy myself a new phone number?” Mallory asks.

“No, go ahead honey, but get a second line, not a new one. Let them continue to be able to contact you. Otherwise they will show up at your apartment or your work, you don’t want that. Give your mom your new number, me and anyone else who doesn’t know them. We will see if there is a leak as soon as one of them uses your new number. Do you want to spend some time with me and Rocky?” Cara asks.

“If I did that, I would feel that I’m definitely being paranoid. I’m going to go out and get some dinner at my favorite deli now, and then do some grocery shopping. I’ll speak to you tomorrow. Thanks a lot Cara. For always being a friend, it means a lot right now,” Mallory says quietly.

“Anything for you Mal. Without you, I’d be still sitting in Professor Michael’s class trying to figure out why he won’t pass me,” she tries to joke. Poor Mal, she must really be rattled to be calling her

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



professionally. She will have to do more than her best for her old friend in need. “I’ll call you tomorrow when I know something.”

“Thanks,” Mallory hangs up the phone and grabs her purse to leave her place and buy some real food for dinner. At the deli she walks up to her favorite worker. “Hey, how’s the turkey today?” she asks.

“Delicious, how ya doin darlin?” he asks with concern.

“I’m ok. Headed back to work tomorrow,” Mallory tells him.

“Good, moving on helps. You sure you want turkey though? I have some really great brisket today. Gravy came out especially tasty today,” he smiles at her.

“Give me enough to have for tomorrow too then. Make it a platter not a sandwich though,” she calls to him.

He looks back at Mallory, “Always dear, but only for you,” he responds smiling as he always does to his favorite patrons.

“You’re so predictable,” her cousin says from behind her. Mallory turns quickly to see the same cousin who threatened her the other day. She grabs

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



her phone and hits redial, she knows her last call was to Cara.

“Everyone has to eat. I happen to like this place,” she says.

“Sure, you do. I suppose I’m also to believe that you actually ordered food too. We all know what you’re doing here Mallory. Which one is he? The deli man or the counter help? Or maybe it’s the guy in the back who makes all the salads,” he grins at her, his eyes looking menacing again.

Mallory doesn’t want to answer him, but she also knows she has to show restraint, that she isn’t saying or doing anything wrong. “Remember what I said about that mace? I am carrying it again today. I never leave the house without some form of protection. I’m not sure why you care where I am. You told me to walk away, I did.”

“No, you went home. You’ve been there for a couple of days now and the one time you come out, you come to the deli. It’s Tuesday, you always come on Tuesdays to this place. So, who is it this week Mal?” he asks grinning.

“Brisket and gravy,” she says.

“Listen bitch, don’t give me this crap. We all know who you are and what you used to do with my father, so now that he is gone, you have no gravy

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



train anymore. How much did he pay you to meet him at his favorite deli? How much?” he says louder.

Behind her, Mallory hears, “This brat bothering you Mallory?” the deli man asks.

“As a matter of fact, he is,” she says as calmly as possible.

“I don’t take kindly to people bothering my patrons. I heard what you said. Her uncle was a fine man and it is very distasteful to talk about someone who has died, especially when they haven’t been in the ground for a week yet. I have a lot of regular people who come in, if you intend to bother any of them. I will personally and physically throw you out. Your face will be posted in the back of my establishment, should we see you come in again, you will be kicked out and the police will be called. Now, get out and don’t come back,” he says with gusto.

“Don’t let her con you, she is a no-good tramp. Trying to steal from everyone she meets,” he calls back as he walks out.

“Who is that Mallory?” he asks her firmly.

“Would you believe my cousin? Uncle Thomas’s oldest son,” she says. “Oh, hold on,” she takes out her phone. “Did you hear that?” she asks Cara.

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



“Every word. I believe, if he knew you were home, that means either he or someone he is paying is watching you. I think we have enough already for harassment. I’m moving forward with this, are you going to be ok with this?” Cara asks.

“I don’t know. Maybe I’ll ask my boss if he still wants me to go out of town to work with a client for a few days,” Mallory exhales.

“Sounds like a good idea. In the meantime, don’t go home. Come here first. Rocky will go back with you to your place and you will pack for a week. Then come back here and we will talk this all out. I’m sorry Mal, but this looks like things can get even uglier faster than we want or expected,” Cara says.

“Ok. I’ll see you soon,” she says.

She turns around to see the deli man still standing behind her. “If he ever comes in here, I’ll kick him out personally, I promise you that. Whether you are here or not. My whole place is recorded. I’ll turn this recording over to the police the minute you ask me to,” he looks to her for understanding.

“Thanks. I’m going to spend the night with a friend that is who I was talking to. Maybe I should take another order or two of that brisket,” she tries to smile.

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



He walks behind the counter and prepares enough food for three people. “Tonight, on the house. Go Mallory. You’ve got us in your corner. Let me know which precinct to send the recording to. I’m saving tonight’s recording.”

“Thanks. It’s good to know people care,” Mallory takes her food and leaves for Cara’s place.

~ ~ ~

Mallory sits at her desk today working hard on her most recent project. She has poured her whole head into the design to keep thoughts of her life out of her mind.

“Mallory,” her boss says.

Mallory turns around, “Yes sir. I’m sorry how long have you been standing there, you look frustrated.”

“Only a moment, don’t let the look fool you,” he pauses a moment, “Follow me please,” he says. Then he turns and says, “Leave your purse here, take only your new phone,” she had given him her new number.

Mallory nervously follows him. They go outside the office and walk straight to a limousine standing in front of the office. He opens the door for her, “Get in please.”

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



Mallory reluctantly slides into the limo. Her boss slides in afterwards, closes the door and knocks on the window between them and the driver to signal to get going. The car pulls away.

He takes a cleansing breath before speaking, “I’m going to come clean here on a couple of counts. First thing is, Cara is an old friend of mine too. She called me to tell me to look out for your cousins, all of them. She sent me pictures, the security of our building has them as well. Right now, I have my security team scanning everything in your office. I have a feeling your phone is bugged or something, otherwise there is no way he would know you were home for three days without you being watched and he doesn’t strike me as the kind with enough patients to sit outside in a car and watch you. Nor would he part with enough money to pay someone to do that kind of work.

Now, please don’t be upset at Cara, I love that girl. We’ve known each other since long before you guys even met. We grew up three houses away from each other. She told me all about you and your friendship when we were in college. I was ready to hire you before you even took the exam. But then you did and I was blown away by your talents,” he stops to wait for a reaction.

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



“Why are we in a car? Where are we going?” she asks.

“Nowhere. The driver has a route to take that drives us around while we are in this meeting. I’ve done this before. Mallory, we need time for your everything to be scanned. They are doing your car too. I don’t know why or what he is looking for from you, but keeping tabs on you seems like high priority for him.

You want to talk about anything? Cara called me to explain what is going on because she is afraid you may run away, you mentioned to her about asking me to go visit some clients. Mallory, you are one of the most talented programmers I have. You see exactly what the client wants and you end up giving them more than they thought they needed.

Please, talk to me. Tell me something that may have seemed insignificant at the time but may be something important now. I’m here to help, I promise you that,” he looks to her for a reaction. So far, she has been sitting there trying to melt into the seat and be as far away from him as possible.

There is part of him that wants to scream out the second reason they are in this enclosed area, he has been attracted to Mallory for a long time now. Almost since she started working for him three years

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



ago. Now that she is in real trouble, he wants to protect her and show her life can be wonderful with a man in her life. But touching her, even her hand, right now looks as if she will scream and jump out of the car while they are still moving. “Mallory?” he asks cautiously.

She looks at him, looks right through him, then her eyes begin to soften. “This is so messed up. I never did anything. Never said anything. He thinks I slept with my uncle, how sick is that? They think I’ve stolen something from them. That I tried to get into their father’s pockets to compensate for my father being in jail. Oh Ray, what do you do when your own family is your worst enemy?” a large tear slides down her cheek.

Ray doesn’t know what to do, he slides closer to her, wipes the tear off of her cheek, and before his rational brain can stop him, he leans over and kisses her right on the lips. A soft kiss, a kiss of support and yet passion. “I’ll never let you have enemies, family or otherwise,” he says staring into her eyes, “that’s the other thing I wanted to talk to you about.” His voice soft and sincere.

Mallory reaches up and touches his cheek, “Are you for real?” she asks.

“Yeah,” he says softly.

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



“All this time, I thought I was crazy, thinking no way the boss has any interest in me, he likes my work. Praises my work. But this?” she says as she touches his lips. He kisses her finger as it touches his lips.

“I don’t want you to be angry with Cara, please tell me you’re not.” he says

“I’m not. She is great. I slept by her and Rocky last night. She wouldn’t let me go home, but your paranoia explains the text I received this morning,” she tells him.

“On which phone Mallory?” he asks.

“My old number,” she says.

“What did it say?” he asks.

“Something about wanting to know who I was sleeping with now and how can I be mourning in some stranger’s bed,” she says.

Ray takes a moment to send a message on his phone. He watches his phone a moment, looks up at her, “Ok, they found that one. There is a second one asking why you never answered him,” he doesn’t tell her about the third one though, he did, however, have them send that one over to Cara directly. The man is making threats and insults that will end him up with a restraining order immediately and possible

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



harassment charges and jail time before his father’s body is even cold.

“This is bad isn’t it?” Mallory asks. “You’re not telling me something. But I’m ok with that. I don’t want to know all that is going on. I want this to be over. We buried Uncle Thomas. I get that they don’t want me around, I heard them, I haven’t even called my aunt at home since then. I’ve spoken to her on her cell phone only once and told her that I will get back to her in a week because I am going on a business trip,” Mallory bows her head for the lie, she hated lying to her aunt.

“Mallory, I have a theory, do you want to hear what I’m thinking?” Ray asks.

“Ok,” she whispers.

“I think he is jealous. I think he has had a crush on you for a long time and once he got it into his head that you and his father were doing more than talking, he couldn’t stop. I think he wants to prove you are sleeping around. But if you aren’t, he is going to want to be the one to save your reputation. I’ve seen this happen before. My brother talks about some of the cases they’ve seen, he is a police investigator. He says sometimes you can’t make this stuff up. Your cousin’s behaviors fit this

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



type of personality he has told me about, perfectly,” he speaks softly and reaches over to hold her hand.

Mallory looks up at Ray, “Ray, I had one boyfriend in high school. I had another in college that lasted only one semester. That is my full relationship history. I don’t know why he would think I’m sleeping around. He must have poisoned his brother’s minds and other family members. They already hate me, if he is arrested, my family life is only going to get worse.

I think I’d rather move away, I’ll take my mom with me and we will recreate a life for ourselves. There are three of them. If I press all these charges against him, while founded, my life will be hell for many years to come. I would like you to take me back to the office, let me collect my personal things in the office, head over to my mom’s place. I have some savings, we will leave tonight and only be in touch with Cara, and you. I’d like to stay in touch with you,” she tells him softly, covering his hand with hers.

“Mallory, he could be dangerous. Please reconsider,” he says.

“No Ray, the only danger is me causing my whole family to choose sides. He asked me to leave,

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



so I’m going to,” she says. “Really, this is probably the only way to make this end.”

~ ~ ~

Mallory left her old phone with Cara, she packs up all of her belongings and her mom’s. They rented a moving van and head west. At the moment, they don’t know where they will land but between the two of them, they have enough money for a few months before they have to really worry. Mallory’s mom gave over the sale of her house to one of her sons. He will take care of things and deposit the check for his mom when the sale goes through. There is a lot of interest in her house because her mom lives in a good neighborhood. They always kept the house up to date on everything electrical and plumbing. The sale will give her mom a much longer financial cushion.

Mallory talked to her landlord and told him it was a family emergency, she paid him for two more months and with that, he allowed her to leave her lease early. Now they are on the road to nowhere. Neither one of them is talking. Mallory is driving the van they rented. Her brother has her mother’s car and Ray has Mallory’s. He is now having the underneath and the engine checked for being

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



bugged. He will drive the car to her as soon as they land somewhere.

The first hotel they pull into is the first time Mallory speaks to her mom. “We can do this Mom. I know you will miss Aunt Philly but what was I to do? Do you want to go back? I’ll fly you home first class. But can it wait until morning? I’m kind of tired and would love to rest a bit.”

“I spoke to Philly last night, we went out, we left our phones at home. Ray had his people check her phone and they found hers is tagged with a tracker. He is buying her a new phone and she will be keeping the new one with her at all times. Not letting her sons have anything to do with adding new features or anything they feel she can’t do. Not even to look at photos unless she is standing over them. The reading of the Will is next week. The lawyer called to say that the Will is to be read after the first thirty days. She is going to have me in on a conference call. We will have to find a lawyer’s office to be sitting in during this reading,” she tells Mallory.

“No need for me to be there Mom, but we will find someone. I’m sure Cara knows someone, she knows people everywhere.”

“Mallory, you *are* in the Will,” her mom tells her.

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



“Please Mom, I don’t want problems. I’m assuming all three of my cousins will be in the room. I don’t want to hear what they have to say. Let’s go in and get a room. I don’t want to talk about this,” Mallory says. Ever, she thinks to herself.

~ ~ ~

“Cara, I’m sitting in her car. The boys found a tracking device and a microphone with a wireless feed. They are trying to find where the other end is. I’m sure they won’t take long. What is going on Cara, what has them paranoid? Is this a case where he is jealous or simply evil?” Ray asks his old friend.

“So far, we can’t tell. But before they left, her mom told me when the reading of the Will is. They are required to be sitting in a lawyer’s office during the proceedings. I have to find someone where they are to do me this favor.

My gut is telling me is that this is a mixture of jealous and longing. However, the three of them certainly don’t treat their own mother with very much respect either. Her phone has been tapped actually both phones, cellular and home. She bought a new cellular and I put her up in a hotel that night so my guys can make a thorough sweep of her home. Especially of Thomas’s office. I think that maybe

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



their father was keeping secrets from them, financial ones. But at the same time, I think they have been keeping some financial secrets from their father, only he knew about them because somehow, they think they are smarter than both of their parents. Snot nosed kids. Their mom is very upset by this,” Cara says. “She feels a failure.”

“Money and family don’t always mix, but all this spyware is scary. You might be on to something as far as them having secrets is concerned. But that isn’t going to bring Mallory back here, right?” he asks.

“Oh Ray, I know you like her, maybe more than you want to admit to yourself. But think of it this way for a moment. You can always open a second branch out where she lands. She can do everything from there. You can slowly move your main branch over there, although I’ll miss you both, but we can do this, we can get past all of this nonsense,” Cara tries to stay professional but with Mallory’s situation, staying unemotional is hard.

“I sure hope so. I can’t bring myself to leave this car right now,” Roy admits.

“Come to dinner Ray, Rocky is making steak tonight,” she tells him.

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



“Maybe I will,” he says and hangs up. Ray rubs his hand across the seats of Mallory’s car. The car still smells like her, for now.

~ ~ ~

“Mallory, we have to go together. Come on, wake up. We have to be at the lawyer by 10:00 this morning. Why are you being so lazy today?” her mom asks annoyed. “We’ve been living in this hotel for a week now and we are no closer to figuring out what we are going to do than when we left. Maybe this will give us some clarity. Now get up,” her mom says stronger.

“I’m up Mom,” she throws her covers over to the side, “See, I’m even dressed. But very unmotivated. I’m ready. Let’s go.” Mallory slowly gets out of bed and heads to the open room of their suite, she grabs her purse and keys.

This ride, like so many they have taken together since leaving, is a quiet one. The tension between the two of them has increased more than they have ever experienced. Mallory is thinking her mother really didn’t want to come, so after today’s meeting, she is going to offer to send her home to her brothers. They will take care of her, find her a place to live or add on to their places. Mallory will

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



find the strength to do this alone, because it looks like that is where she will be from now on.

Being on the run, is not a place for her mother. She needs calm and safety. She needs her sister in law to help her grieve the loss of her only brother. She needs her boys. Mallory and her mom should have been closer, but when her father was taken away, it also took away some of the relationship she had with her mom. He had abused both of them, but instead of it bringing them closer, his absence did the opposite. When Mallory moved out, things became better. But now, it appears as if they are falling back into that old relationship.

“We’re here Mom, let’s get this over with,” Mallory says.

The two women walk into the lawyer’s office and introduce themselves. They are walked into a conference room where there is a large computer screen set up for video conferencing. Mallory sits in the seat that looks as if it is the hardest to view her from the computer screen. She doesn’t want them to see her, she doesn’t want to see them, meaning her cousins. “Ladies, the conference will begin in two minutes, please have a seat over here,” the lawyer shows the two seats directly in front of the screen.

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



“I’m going to stay here, thank you,” Mallory tells the lawyer.

“Suit yourself. But they may ask you to move, just know that, ok?” he says.

“yeah,” she answers softly.

The call comes in as soon as the lawyer comes back to the room. As soon as Mallory sees her cousins, she begins to fear what they will do. She looks at her aunt and sees a beaten woman. She is emotionally spent. That much is easy to see, her sons are all sitting there with an air of entitlement about them.

Uncle Thomas’s lawyer begins to speak, “I’m glad we could do this all in one day. It makes the whole thing much better. Instead of the traditional reading of the Will, Thomas had wanted to do a video to be able to address each and every one of you personally. It is from his heart, all of his words. Took us several times to write down what he wanted so he could read the exact thing he wanted to say. You will be given a copy of the written document at the end of the meeting,” he presses play for everyone to watch.

“Hello everyone. I met with my lawyer the day after I was diagnosed with a fatal disease. I met him with my lovely wife Philly. We’ve always made

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



decisions together. That is what real men do. They involve their wives in every important decision in their lives. They value them for all the wonderful things they do for them, all that they don’t have time for. A real man appreciates the food on his table at the end of the day knowing how hard it must have been for his working wife to make the food delicious every time. She was there when I was diagnosed and she was there all through the disease, at least I’m sure she was, will be. Whichever way I’m supposed to say it today.

My financial advisor will be meeting with you Philly a week after this video is played. He will show you what is accessible now and what is going to be there for you later. All of our assets will be gone over with you Philly and you alone. But you can take my sister with you, she has a good head for math and will help you understand. Do *not* take any of our children, any of them at all, no matter what they say. *You* are still here, *you* have a good head on your shoulders, and *you* are the only one I trust to manage my businesses. My sister will help you with things you don’t feel comfortable with. She will be your perfect business partner. Oh yeah, sis, you’re going to be Philly’s business partner. 50/50 all the way,” he smiled.

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



“To my boys? Nothing, not one business will be turned over to you, not now and possibly not ever. I worked hard to build myself up to what I have. You can too, if you learn to apply yourselves to something that is not about you. I tried for years and years to show you and teach you how you are to treat your mother, and any other woman in your life, but you refuse to listen. I can’t imagine why, it hurts me in ways I can’t even describe to you. You had better get your heads on straight or you will receive nothing in the end as well, there are stipulations in your mother’s Will about that.

There is a check for each of you with a contingency. You are to go to sensitivity training; my lawyer has the name and place of where you are to go. You are free to choose what you want to do. However, without this class, your check is null in void. Easy as that. You have only one year to complete this task, otherwise the money stays with your mother, who earned every penny there is.

I’m sure my boys are sitting there squirming right now and frankly I don’t care. You are all adults at this point. Two of you still live at home. Why? Happy to partake of whatever your mom gives you; and yet you think it is beneath you to thank her? Appreciate her? Not anymore. The second part of

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



your contingency is that you must move out. Leave your mother alone, she has taken care of you long enough. Since you don’t respect anything she has done for you, well, now you’re done. There will be someone at the house at the end of this viewing to make sure you move out now, today. Go to a hotel if you have to, but you are required to leave. In answer to your question, yes, I can legally kick you out of *my* home. *My* home, the one *I* had built with your mother and I in mind.

She is not your servant, she is not your maid, she does *not* owe you a thing by virtue of her being a woman, no, my sons, it is you who owe her your lives. *She* is the one who took care of you, through sicknesses, and in health. *She* is the one who kept your homelife good, while I was too busy working. You *owe* your life *and* your lifestyle to her. Swallow that pride for a while and learn respect.

Now, to my sister, well. Besides my love and respect, as I said before, you will be Philly’s partner in all things. My advisor will be meeting with you two as soon as you are available to learn everything there is to learn. Oh, and you can have my blue truck too. I know you’ve always liked how that beauty drives.

I’m sorry about your husband, all those years ago when he overstepped his boundaries as a man.

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



You never deserved what he gave you, I hope I helped out in my small way. I love your boys and how dedicated they are to their studies, to you and to their sister. They will go far, I’m sure they will make us all proud,” he paused again.

This time he is having a hard time continuing. He looks up at the screen, then back down again. Thomas wipes his eye with a tissue. He finally gets his strength, through a strained voice he says, “To my sunshine, Mallory. I will miss you terribly. But I will be watching you, taking care of you from wherever I am. No one will ever hurt you again, I will do what I can to make that a truth. Not *ever* again,” Thomas wiped his eyes again.

Mallory is watching her uncle make promises to her she knows he can’t do. His own son has shown her that. Her tears are falling as she watches him struggle to talk to her. She is surprised her cousins haven’t spoken out yet. She knows they will, she is waiting. Part of her sees that they keep looking down, probably at their phones, Cara has her phone, and it is probably going off every three seconds during this meeting.

“Mallory, my dear sweet niece. You told me what happened during those dark times in your home, it is time you tell your mother. She deserves

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



to know, so do your brothers. Tell them. Please. Mallory, find your happiness, he is out there. I promise you. I think you may already know him.

I have something special for you that is put away for your thirtieth birthday. Think about our talks, you may know what I’ve set aside already. I love you Mallory, take care of your mother.”

Thomas stood up and walked around the seat he was sitting on. Then he puts his hands on the back of his chair and stares into the screen, “Again, to my boys, wake up, grow up and change or you’re going to be very, angry, lonely and very unsuccessful adults, no one owes you anything. No one.

Thank you again Philly, for being in my life, for being my better half, you made my adult life worth living. You’ll always be my queen,” he blew her a kiss and the screen goes off.

No sooner does the screen shut off then Mallory’s oldest cousin begins to rant about how unfair all of this is. He screams that he wants to know what Mallory is getting, why his mother is getting multiple businesses that she knows nothing about and then he begins to rant about how unworthy she is to have anything at all. Then he turns to the video screen and starts yelling at Mallory about how worthless she is.

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



The lawyer lets him go on his rant for almost three whole minutes. Mallory is sinking into her chair, the words he is saying are a big reminder of things that were said to her a long time ago, in an era of her life she thought she was beyond. Who taught him those words? Who told him about any of that?

Mallory looks in time to see her youngest cousin pull his brother back and punch him directly in the nose. It immediately starts to bleed and her cousin looks to his older brother with steam coming from his ears and his eyes popping out. “You are the reason for all of this? You?” he starts to stomp around the room. He looks to his mother.

“For years he has been telling us things about our father, things that involve Mallory and her family. Things about how Mallory’s father was wrongly accused of abuse when he was the only one to keep order in the house. The only one who kept everyone in line. He, your own son, told us that you allowed their relationship to go on as he said it did,” he falls to his knees.

“Please Momma, my dear aunt, please forgive me. I will go to class, I will go to a hundred classes. You have to understand I was never told the truth of those years ago. I never knew my uncle abused you, I never knew,” he runs to the screen.

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



“Mallory, I know you don’t like me and I don’t deserve your respect but I’m going to work hard to earn back your trust, even if it takes me the rest of my life. I swear to you, I will spend the rest of my life doing what my father has asked of me.

Come home Mallory, don’t run from him. He isn’t worthy,” he says of his own brother who is now running to him with arms swinging. The lawyer grabs him from behind and wrestles him easily to the ground.

“Don’t even think about starting a fight in my office. With that rant you earned yourself an arrest of harassment as well as an accessory to the abuse they endured. You are probably the other person they never found. I know all about what took place in that house. The police will be here soon to take some DNA and get the proof I know is there. No more, you hear me? No more!” He looks up from the floor.

“I’m sorry Philly. I spoke out of turn. You may not understand what he said, but I do. He sealed his own fate, and that is straight to jail to join his uncle,” the lawyer says.

The room is silent. Mallory watches as her youngest cousin is still crying on his mother’s lap. The middle son is sitting quietly, it doesn’t look like

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



he knows what to do with himself. Those words, they hit her as if they were brand new.

Mallory’s mom looks at her. “Oh Mal. You don’t have to explain anything, I think I understand now. I’ll ask a question you only have to nod,” she whispers. “You were blindfolded and he brought in people when I wasn’t home. You were tied to the bed in the basement, he spent some time in, how did he used to say it? Oh yeah, to educate his friends. He had to have been there Mal, your own cousin. I’m going to be sick,” Mallory’s mom runs to the trash can nearby and tries to get herself under control. She knew her husband was evil, she thought it was only to her. He would drug her and do the same thing, bring her downstairs, she has no idea who was in the room with her. It is only because a neighbor heard her screaming one night that he was caught in the act. He hadn’t drugged her that night because he told her he wanted her more responsive. The children were locked into their rooms from the outside. She sits down on the floor next to the garbage can.

They hear someone calling in the video, “Ladies, thank you for participating, we will be in touch when you get back,” Uncle Thomas’s lawyer says.

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



Mallory looks over to the video screen, her aunt is crying, Philly’s baby is crying and her oldest cousin is being dragged away by the police. “Turn this off please,” she tells the lawyer in the room with them. He obliges.

Mallory sits down with her mom. “Do you want to go back there? I mean, you will need to be closer to help run the business I assume. I can fly you back tomorrow, but Mom. I can’t go. Now, more than any other time. I can’t go back. You understand, right?” she asks.

She looks into her daughter’s eyes. “There is something else isn’t there?” she asks.

Mallory calls her brothers on her phone using video chat. “Hi,” she pauses, “sit down, I need to tell you something and I’m only going to say this once.”

“Ok sis. We’re both here. Listening, no talking,” her brother says.

“I was tortured by many when our father was home. As soon as I hit puberty, he assumed the role of master of my body. He would send you on sleepovers to your friends when Mom worked late. He would blindfold me, probably drug me, and then as I lay on the bed down in the basement, he would give hands on instructions to boys as to how to treat a

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



woman and keep her in her place. The boys never spoke but they sure weren’t shy about touching me. Then, there was the time I was sixteen and it became an all-night affair. All night, for hours and hours. I’m surprised I could walk the day after.

A few months later, Uncle Thomas took me out and then took me to a doctor. I wasn’t at a sleep away camp. Mom, I had a baby. Uncle Thomas helped me find a couple who was having a hard time conceiving a baby, he also set up a college fund account for him. That’s why I came home looking like I lost a lot of weight. I had. I lost more weight than the pregnancy. Mostly from stress. He told me I had to tell you guys now, so, now you know.

I think I’m going to send Mom home on the next flight home. You guys need to take care of her. She is going to be working with Aunt Philly as a business partner. We just heard the Will from Uncle Thomas himself. She doesn’t belong running with me. I need to get my life together. I need to find my self-worth. I have a college education, it will get me a good job. But the rest of this? Not conducive for successful adulthood,” Mallory holds her mom’s hands.

“Oh Mal. I’m a failure,” her mom says.

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



“No Mom, it is us. We never listened when Mal said not to go, we thought she was being silly. Why would she want us home, I mean, it isn’t as if we played together when we were home. Mal, we owe you profound apologies. Oh my, I can’t even speak anymore,” her brother holds his hand over his mouth to prevent himself from screaming. The second brother puts his arms around his brother and looks into the phone. “Mallory, I’ve said this before and now I mean it more than ever, I have the utmost respect for you. That will never end. Don’t send Mom home. We will come to you and pick her up. I don’t want her traveling alone. I’ll pay, just tell us where you are.”

Mallory is looking at her mother, she hasn’t moved, she isn’t even sure she has taken a breath in the past few minutes. “Mallory, boys. You can come pick me up. I appreciate that. I think you’re right, I’m not sure I can travel alone. But we will meet you at the airport. No need to go further. While we are all talking here, let me say that I don’t think I can ever apologize to Mallory or even you boys. We are going to stop apologizing and start supporting. Whatever Mal wants, we will support her. If Philly doesn’t want to work with me, I’ll understand that

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



too. We get along well, but spending each day together we could end up hating each other.

Boys, we will text you where we will meet you, for now. Go back to work. Can we go back to the hotel now?” she asks Mallory.

“Yeah.”
~ ~ ~

Mallory calls Cara after her mom leaves with her brothers. They came over to her and hugged her, then took her mom and walked away fast. It’s too hard. Mallory feels as if she said goodbye to her family and she doesn’t know when she will see them again. “I need to go far away so far that the culture is different. Weather is different, everything is different. I never want to run into anyone I know. Oh Cara, my life is a mess,” she begins to cry as she sits down on a park bench near the hotel.

“Mal, oh darling. I read your e-mail with tears in my eyes. I knew you then. The fact that you trusted to tell me this is both humbling and joyous at the same time. You trust me as a lawyer to hear all I need to hear, but that you trust me as a friend to not hold back. I want to return the favor but I don’t know how,” she says.

“Cara, my cousin, the oldest, the one who has been harassing me, he was repeating the words of

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



my father, Cara, he must have been there. My own cousin. He was there, during one or more of those evenings. It explains a lot but, at the same time, it makes it hurt all that much more. How many more people do I know that were in that room, how many more?” Mallory cries.

Cara keeps thinking of Ray, the man who is smitten with her closest friend. Now what can she do? She wants him to go out to her but she wants nothing of this community. Nothing of this world here. “Mal. Would you like me to come out and sit with you? I would do that in a heartbeat. Wherever you are. I’ll come. The case against your cousin is big enough that they don’t need me now. Uncle Thomas’s lawyer is taking over. He already called for all of my information. I have the time. I want to come. Please, Mal, let me help you this time,” Cara begins to cry too.

“I need to go to bed,” Mallory hangs up and walks back into the hotel. She gets to her room and showers. When she comes out, she sees her phone on the bed is blinking. She checks it, “please Mal,” is all it says.

Mallory sends her the name and address of the hotel and then she falls asleep.

~ ~ ~

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



The knock on the door wakes Mallory. She slowly walks to the door of her hotel room. She looks through the peephole and is astonished, she sees Cara standing there but what is more surprising, she sees Ray standing with his hand on Cara’s shoulders with tears in his eyes.

Why him? Why her? She opens the door and Cara jumps into her arms. Mallory is pushed back into her room. Ray walks in and closes the door behind him. Cara showed him more than he was supposed to know. But somehow, she felt he needed to know the truth otherwise he won’t understand Mal or how to get through to her. Cara will apologize to Mallory later.

After being pushed all the way into her room to the couch, Mallory sits down with Cara still in her arms. “You told him, didn’t you?” she whispers to Cara. Cara jolts her head up and looks straight into Mallory’s eyes. She doesn’t hate her. She nods. “Thank you, there is no way I would have ever told him, and I think he deserves the truth. But I’m too afraid Cara. Too afraid.” Mallory begins to cry into her friend’s arms. Her body shaking, her breathing becoming irregular, Mallory lets out all of her fears. Cara holds on tight and supports her friend during this time of need. She cries with her now and again.

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



Mallory doesn’t know how much time she spent crying, but right now she feels snuggled under a blanket. When did that happen? She opens one eye and sees the sun looks like it is setting. Did she sleep all day? Mallory jumps up and looks around. Cara is at her side a moment later. “Whoa, Mal, you’re ok. We showed up around noon, you and I had a good cry and you fell asleep. I don’t know the last time you slept, so we let you sleep this off. No drugs, only exhaustive sleep. Ray and I ordered dinner to be delivered, it will be coming soon. Are you up for company now or do you want time to yourself?” Cara’s voice is soft and calming.

Mallory looks at her friend. “I’m not worthy of your friendship but I certainly appreciate having you around. What did you order for dinner?”

“Soup, sandwiches and four different desserts,” Cara smiles.

“You know me so well,” Mallory hugs Cara. She notices movement in the corner of her eye and jumps, then she relaxes when she sees Ray. He is standing at the table smiling a very small smile but one that is very endearing to Mallory.

“Hi Ray. What brings you out here?” she tries to joke.

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



“Well, I heard I had a friend of mine was in trouble, and decided to stop by to see if I could be of any help,” he grins.

“Room service!” a voice calls out.

“You can start by answering the door,”

Mallory says.

Ray opens the door and watches as the bellboy pushes in the food and sets it out on the table they have. Ray hands him a tip and closes the door. “Dinner is served ladies,” he says. Ray wants to smile but watching Mallory sleep so fitfully these past few hours has not been easy. He wants to grab her cousins and beat them senseless. Although it does seem that at least one of them is less of a culprit than the other two, but still he doesn’t get a free pass according to Ray.

After Cara showed him the email, he went for a five-mile run and when he got back to his apartment, he used his punching bag for a full half an hour. He has enough anger for the whole neighborhood inside of him but he has to keep himself under control. For Mallory, everything is for her right now, his life is now all about keeping her safe.

Dinner is quiet, everyone is busy in their own minds. Mallory keeps looking over at Ray. She never

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



thought she would actually feel attraction to a man. Uncle Thomas wanted her to go through therapy to help her through everything, which is why he sent her to be in a home for pregnant teens. They helped her through the months of pregnancy as well as the delivery. But you can’t forget, no one can remove those pictures from your memories.

“I don’t know how far I can run to be far enough away,” Mallory finally says more to her food than her friends.

Cara reaches over and holds her friend’s hand. She has no words to share. She flew six hundred miles to come to her rescue and will do six thousand, if she has to. Ray clears his throat and the women look up at him. “If I may,” he says softly. Mallory nods.

“Mal, you’ve worked for me for the past couple of years. But since day one, I have had a personal crush on you. Deal with that. I am not interested in you running away any further than my arm’s length. Our business is building personalized computer programs for our clients. It can be done from anywhere. If you want to stay out here, then I am too. We will find a place to be together so I can always keep you safe. We will find a new office so we can work with clients in person, no reason I can’t

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



have a second office. This can be my new home office. Cara can keep an eye on the other one.

So, after breakfast tomorrow, we will begin to look for a place. Any questions? Comments?” he looks from Cara to Mallory.

Mallory is caught off guard, this is something she never expected. Never in her life. Someone other than her uncle to protect her? Unheard of. Unfathomable. “Why?” is all she can say.

Cara looks at her friend, “Mal, because Uncle Thomas would have said yes. He loved Ray, and you know that. On your one year anniversary working with Ray what did Uncle Thomas say to you?” she looks at her for the positive memory.

“He told me that with my computer knowledge and Ray’s creativity there are no boundaries,” she looks to Ray.

“He said that? About me?” Ray finds himself feeling very emotional at the recognition of a man he admired.

“Yes. He liked you Ray. I did too,” Mallory says.

“Did?” Ray asks.

“I mean, then, when he said it. No, I mean now, but ugh, I can’t think straight, my words aren’t coming out right,” she says.

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



“One word Mallory. I only want one word,” Ray says.

“Yes, to tomorrow,” she says.

Ray looks across the table at Mallory. Will he ever be able to hold her? Will they ever get close enough to even hold hands? He will wait, he thinks to himself. Cara watches her two favorite people, she is nervous for them but happy that Mallory won’t be alone.

Mallory looks at Cara and then at Ray, “Is it ok if I’m scared to death though?”

“Yes, and we will overcome our fears together. Can we do together?” Ray asks.

“I can only say that I will try. Can you settle for me trying?” she asks.

“As long as we try, together,” he smiles.

~ ~ ~

For the past week and a half Ray and Mallory have been staying in a long term rental hotel. They have yet to find a place to live on a more permanent basis. They each have their own room here, but Mallory is getting tired of hotel food and she wants to cook her own meals.

Cara sent her a message yesterday that her cousin is in jail, she won’t tell her the charges. The middle brother has left town and no one has heard

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



from him since. Not even his own mother. Cara told her that Uncle Thomas’s lawyer is on top of everything but said he is keeping Mallory out of all that is going on, he promised Cara that he is doing all he can so that Mallory will never have to be in court. Cara is certain that this lawyer knows where the middle brother is and isn’t telling anyone, she is fine with that.

Mallory has been walking around the park today thinking and thinking about the project that Ray has put her on. “You lost or something?” a voice says from behind her. Mallory turns quickly and freezes. The face looks familiar and right now she doesn’t want to know why. She had told Ray where she was going, now she quickly takes her phone out and sends him their code message.

“I’m fine,” she says as strongly as she can.

“Really? Because you look lost to me. Maybe I can help you find your way to where you belong,” he grins at her.

“I think you’d better stay where you are. I’m going to leave and you aren’t going to follow me or I will scream,” she says trying to walk backwards from him.

“I can match you step for step even if you’re walking backwards. But that wouldn’t be any fun, I

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



can easily catch up to you, you know. As a man, I’m bigger, stronger and definitely faster,” he says grinning again and taking a step forward towards Mallory.

Mallory hears a whistle. She knows Ray is here now but she can’t seem to calm down. She doesn’t see him, but that is his signal. Until she sees him, she won’t be able to calm down. She takes another step back, quickly looking over her shoulder to make sure no one else is there. He takes two steps towards her. His grin never leaving his face. “You will lose this game little one.”

“I’m not playing a game,” she says.

“Ah but this is a game, a game of tag and I’m it. You will soon be my capture. That is how the game is played.”

Bam!! The man is on the floor. Mallory looks up and sees Ray standing over the man. He quickly has the man’s hands tied behind him using his own tie he must have taken off as he came to her. The movements are so quick Mallory didn’t even see anything happen.

“I’m sorry Mal, I had to get a recording of what he said to you. The police will be here soon. Do you know him?” he asks.

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



“He is one of my father’s old business people. I don’t know what the relationship is between them. I think his name is Denise,” she says.

“Sir, step away from the man on the floor with your hands up,” the policeman says.

“Oh, he isn’t the one after me, he is the one who saved me. He recorded what the man on the ground said to me. He has ties to someone who is already in prison, for sexual abuse,” Mallory finds that watching Ray has given her the strength to say what she needs to say.

Ray walks over to Mallory, the officer takes their statements as well as the recording of what was said. “The person in jail is there for what reason?” the policeman asks.

“Rape and child sexual abuse,” she says again.

Ray puts his hand on Mallory’s shoulder for the first time. “Mal, this will end, you can do this.”

She turns around to see Ray’s face. “With you, I think I can only do this only with you.”

“Then I’m not going to leave, ever,” he says. He takes her hand and leads her away from today’s fiasco. Then he thinks that maybe if she changes her name, no one will find her. Maybe someday soon,

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



she will share his last name. He will call Cara and Mallory’s mom tonight.

~ ~ ~

“Hello?” Mallory’s mom answers her phone.

“Hey, it’s me Philly. I think I found our retirement fund. If you want to talk about this, let’s meet in person,” she laughs.

“Sure. Ladies only I assume,” she says.

“You bet. See you at the café. My treat,”

Philly hangs up the phone and begins to giggle like a small child.

“Are you sure this is going to work?” she asks her late husband’s lawyer.

“I’ve never lied to you and I’ve never lied to Thomas. I know you two don’t want to run his businesses and he knew that too. What he was trying to say is now that you are in charge you can do what you want. He has had six offers in the past four years. If you two sell his whole empire, you split the money as equal partners and you can sit on this for the rest of your lives. Philly, had you been working with him all of these years, I’d think it was advisable to keep the business, but with all due respect. It’s a little late to be learning all there is to do to remain successful,” he looks at her with concern.

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



“I’m not insulted with what you’ve said. We spent three weeks already visiting the financial guy for hours at a time and we still don’t know what is going on. How does this work with the Will? I mean as far as my boys are concerned. Won’t they want their portion?” she asks.

“Thomas put aside all that he wants to give them. So far, only your youngest is doing anything about receiving his money. I believe the other two think that the real money will come to them eventually because they are assuming they will receive the business and be able to run each one better than their father did. Even the one in jail keeps telling everyone how much money he is worth. However, they’ve never shown interest in the business, and don’t know how any of the businesses run any more than you do.

Your oldest will be behind bars for the next fifteen years at least, before he is even eligible for parole. There were a few other charges that I never mentioned to you. I’m sorry. How are you doing with all of that?” he asks.

“First of all, you’re right, my youngest is working his tail off to become the person his father wanted him to be. He is taking the classes you sent him to. He is volunteering at a school for children

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



with disabilities and he broke up with the woman he was seeing because he doesn’t think he can give her what she deserves yet. Time will tell on that, I guess. He lives only a few blocks from me and we have met for lunch a couple of times.

I told him he can’t have Mallory’s number but he wrote her a letter. I am supposed to give the letter to her, but I’m not sure I want to. I read what he had to say. I think he wrote words before he had a chance to actually think before putting the words down. I’m going to give you a chance to read this. You can do what you want with the contents.

My middle son? I haven’t heard from him since the day he moved out. I have Mallory in my life and her brothers. I have my sister in law, and if we work this out, I’ll have a way to travel and enjoy my life from here on out. I can help Mallory and anyone else I want to. This sounds good to me. I’ll give you an answer by end of day,” she smiles at him and shakes his hand.

“Ok. I’ll get things started here and be ready to move on your word.”

Philly walks into the café to see a smiling sister in law. She sits down and tells her the numbers that Thomas’s lawyer explained to her. “A third of

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



that is more than we need to retire on, what do you think? It can all be done in the next two weeks.”

“Oh Philly, no more burdens, nor more stress. We can run out and visit Mallory any time she needs us. We can have a home near her and one near my boys, our boys,” she smiles.

“With me? You would do this *with* me?”

Philly asks her sister in law, overwhelmed with emotion. She misses her Thomas so much, she never wanted to ruin all his hard work, now she learns this was his plan all along. To take care of her and her sister in law.

“We both miss him Philly. You can do this, I can do this. We can help Mallory overcome all of she has had to endure,” she pauses, “together.”

“I can do this.” Philly sends a message to Thomas’s lawyer. ‘go’.

I Can Do This

Mallory has lost her savior. She needs to move on but she won’t be able to until she moves past all her demons. With help from an old friend,

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



as well as a surprise, Mallory and her mom find a way to move on.



Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



Mallory has spent the entire day feeling sad, her heart hurts and her head is dizzy. Her uncle died yesterday, this morning the funeral took place and since then, everyone has been at her aunt’s house visiting, telling stories and offering support to the family and friends.

Mallory had been very close to her uncle, he had stepped in when her own father was hauled off to jail for being abusive to everyone in the house, charged with attempted murder when her mother ended up in a coma for two days. Uncle Thomas was her mother’s brother. He made sure they were taken care of after her father left. Made sure they had all they needed. Her brothers enjoyed going to movies and sporting events with their uncle too. Mallory enjoyed being with him in a different way. He used to sit and talk to Mallory about everything and anything she wanted to discuss. Anything on her mind or in her heart. He guided her to the right profession and then told her to get out when he saw her first job was killing her.

He has been everything to her. Today, watching them lower the coffin into the ground, Mallory felt her heart break a little more. He had been sick the past six months, part of her is happy knowing the pain and suffering is over, at least there

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



is that. But now she has had enough of being around all these people, she needs to go back to her apartment and let herself mourn in peace for a few minutes, while no one else is around, no one else is telling her things that are hurtful to remember.

She walks to where her mom is sitting by her aunt. “Hey Mom. I’m going to head home now,” she says.

“Ok Baby, you doing all right?” she asks.

“Same as anyone else in this house, I suppose. How are you doing Aunt Philly?” Mallory asks.

“I’m doing well. Sometimes these things come as a mixed blessing, you know. I saw you with your cousins earlier, that was nice to see,” she says hesitantly.

Mallory looks down at her hands. Her aunt saw hugs but they were all telling her to get out of their lives. Before she can respond to her, Aunt Philly grabs Mallory’s hands and holds them in her own tightly, “Mal, what did they say? The truth this time,” she asks. She knows her boys hated the time her husband spent with Mallory. They told her often times that she is not a sister and shouldn’t be at family functions. No other cousins were invited.

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



They would go on and on some days. She is not denying their behavior.

“Nothing. You take care of Mom tonight. I have work to do tomorrow. I’ll call during the day to see how you’re doing,” Mallory says.

“Mallory Elizabeth, you tell me the truth and you tell me now,” her aunt instructs.

“Fine. You want to know about that lovely moment you saw? Your eldest pulled me in for a hug and whispered in my ear that since his father is not here anymore, I shouldn’t be either. Then your middle son hugged me, well more like squeezed the stuffing out of my arms and pulled me in to him so he could whisper that anything left to me in the Will is going to be contested and that I may owe them money because of the time and money his father spent on me. Oh wait, then there is your youngest who wouldn’t even touch me when he said, through his gritted teeth, that if I try and take anything from the house he will know because he will be watching me all day. So, now you know. Does it make you feel any happier? Listen Aunt Philly. I know they hate me, they always have, ever since my father was taken away. They’ve told me this often enough. It is no surprise to me. I stayed in the house today because I knew from the outside everyone would expect me to.

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



I know I’m not wanted here. I’m an invader. I understand my place, always have. So, if you’ll excuse me my dear aunt, Mom, I’m going to go to work tomorrow and probably every day after that and work myself crazy to get my head over his death. I will call once in a while but please don’t call me a lot and ask how I am doing,” she looks from her mom to her aunt half in tears and half in anger at being forced to tell them what she didn’t want to say.

Her aunt looks up at Mallory, still holding her hands. “Mal. I was hoping. Hoping that after his death they would recognize that you’ve lost two fathers in your life. I don’t know where we went wrong with them. Your brothers don’t bother them, only you. My own sons would say how much they love their father but would treat me, their own mother, with the respect that some do for hired help or even less. With superiority around them at all times.

Once, your uncle witnessed them behaving like that, he had come home early that day to surprise me and take me out before I had started to make dinner. When he heard them make demands at me and not ask me what they needed, he barged into the kitchen and gave them a tongue lashing I never knew he had in him.

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



They stood there dumbfounded. He told them I would not be cooking for them any longer until they figured out how to treat me with respect. That either they learn how to cook for themselves or go hungry. For six months I only made two pieces of chicken for dinner or two measured out portions of pasta. I only set two place settings on the dinner table. After your cousin’s birthday, your uncle asked them if they figured out how to treat a woman properly. They swore they did, but only when he was home,” she bows her head.

“I don’t know where this view of women came from. I think it’s that stupid private school we sent them to as youngsters. So, I suppose I can only blame myself,” Philly looks to her sister in law. “I loved your brother with all my heart, and he did me. I know he did. But we went wrong somewhere with our boys. You lost your husband and did better with your boys than I did with my own, having two parents. Something doesn’t make sense.” Tears falling from her eyes now.

Mallory kneels down to be in front of her aunt and mother. “I knew about the food thing. They blamed that on me too. At one point they called me and said it was my duty to come cook for them. I laughed on the phone and said read a book

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



it will tell you how to cook. I think they bought their food for all of those months. They probably asked for a larger allowance at that time claiming it was for school supplies or something and then laughed at you when you gave it to them.

Your eldest also blames me for his girlfriend walking away. He said I was the only new person at the party they were at, and it is because of me that she decided to walk away. I told him that maybe he needs to learn how to treat a person like more than a servant. He slapped me across the face. I spit on his shoes and left.”

“His shoes? His fancy, I have to have these to look professional, shoes?” Philly asks, holding her hand to her mouth.

“Those very ones,” Mallory answers. “But we shouldn’t continue this conversation Aunt Philly. I love you. I loved Uncle Thomas. I love you too Mom but I only answered you now because you asked and I know you would continue to ask. They are who they are. I am who I am. Maybe I deserve their treatment. Who knows Aunt Philly. We will always be friends, you and me. We will meet for lunch, just not here or in front of them, ok?” Mallory asks. She wants to leave, she wants to run away from this house actually.

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



“Ok dear. I’m sorry. I don’t know what else to say. Thomas loved you so very much. He loved his sister too and your brothers. But you had a special place in his heart. Who knows why, it happens. Ok. I’ll stop. But Mal,” she pauses. “forget it, I said I’d stop and I will. Take care Mal, don’t work too hard. Try and have a social life. I love you,” Philly stands now to give her niece a proper hug and kiss. Softly.

Mallory hugs her mother and heads out the front door. She passes a couple of other relatives and says goodbye to them as well. She walks down the block to where her car is parked. She sees her oldest cousin standing by her car with his arms crossed. She immediately calls her aunt’s phone, she wants someone to hear this. “Hi, your eldest is at my car with his arms crossed. I need a witness to what he is about to say,” she says quickly.

“I’m listening, put the phone in your shirt pocket so he doesn’t think you’re recording, oh, and press the record button too,” she says.

Mallory approaches the car. “I’m about to leave. You can call off the guards,” she says.

“Don’t be flip with me bitch. No one is around to protect you anymore. What do you say about that?” he asks.

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



“I have mace spray in my pocket, you touch me and you’ll be sorry. Step away from my car and get back to your mourning family,” Mallory says. “That’s what normal people do when a parent dies, they mourn the loss.”

“I’ll do what I want to do. You are not going to tell me what to do. I listen to no woman. *You* listen to *me*. My father is dead now and you must disappear. You hear me?” he says in a menacing voice.

“I have to get in my car, move out of the way so I can go home,” she says, not reacting to his words.

“I already told you, I don’t listen to women,” he says again.

“And I told you I have a can of mace spray that I’m not afraid to use, on anyone. In fact, I’m rather quick so you’ll never know what hit you until you feel the burn. Now move,” she says again, a bit more stern this time.

Her cousin takes a swing at her face, she screams and jumps back. “You’re going to hit a woman? In broad daylight, are you out of your mind?”

“You’re right, you’re not worthy of being touched by me. Get the hell out of here and learn

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



your place in this family. That would be nowhere. I know where you live as well as where you work. I’ll be watching you. If you are near the family at all. You’ll be sorry,” he says.

“You’re threatening me now? You are scum,” Mallory, quickly opens her door and gets in. She puts the car in reverse and moves away quickly. She pulls out her phone. “I’m sorry Aunt Philly.”

Mallory hears tears. “Call a lawyer Mal. As soon as you get home. Call someone in another town. Run the name by me first so I can make sure the boys don’t know them. Find a woman, they definitely don’t know any of those. That sounded like a threat on your life. Call them. Please, before morning, make the call,” Aunt Philly hangs up, crying. “Oh Thomas how did we go so wrong?” she whispers to herself. Her sister in law heard the conversation too.

“Did she record it?” Mallory’s mom asks.
“I told her to,” Philly says.

~ ~ ~

Mallory has spent three days at home since her uncle’s funeral. She knew she wasn’t going to go to work. She didn’t want her mother or aunt bothering her, asking her every few hours how she was doing.

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



She left her aunt’s house feeling worse than she did when she woke up that day. What could have happened that made them hate her so much. She never did anything with their family. Her uncle would only invite her over after he had finished doing whatever it was his boys wanted to do. She wasn’t second, she was in addition to his daily schedule. That is how he always described his visits with her.

When his sons were younger, they would snicker at her every time she came over, but they were never quite as cruel as they have been as adults. These past couple of years have been much worse. Mallory decides to take her aunt’s advice and find a woman lawyer who can see if she is in any real danger from her own cousins.

She calls an old college buddy. “Hey Cara, its Mallory. Any chance you reached your goal and became a lawyer for women’s rights?” she asks

“That’s funny you should ask that first. As soon as I heard your name, I was going to ask you if you ever became the world’s first nude, woman computer programmer,” she jokes.

“I can’t believe you remember that joke. Oh wow, thanks for the laugh Cara. I know I haven’t spoken to you in a long while but I have kind of an

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



issue I’m hoping you can help with and if not you, someone you know maybe has the time?” Mallory says seriously.

“You always made me laugh Mal. No one else could consistently make me laugh. Even though you never tried, it was always some sly statement you made about the class we were in or the people around us. What’s got you all charged up though?” Cara asks.

Mallory describes her life with her cousins, since her father was taken away. Then she plays the recorded conversation. “Well, he did threaten you in that conversation and you have it recorded, so we can use it to possibly get a restraining order against him. Or we can simply start a file with the police each time he or his brothers say anything to you. Each one added to an official report. At some point these statements will become harassment. I’d have to check how much we need. Have they ever sent you anything in writing? Email or text?” Cara asks.

“Probably. But how do I check that now?” she asks.

“Wow, you are flustered Mal, for a programmer you should know that all phone records can be searched with your permission, but then again, I think we need to do this through the legal

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



system. I have a guy in the police department who can help us check your entire phone history. I’m sorry that this became so ugly. I remember your uncle fondly. Remember that time I came home with you during spring break? I didn’t want to go with my parents on their usual vacation. Your uncle made sure we both had a great time. I’m sorry for your loss Mal, really I am,” Cara says.

“Thanks Cara, that means a lot to me. The funeral was hard, being in the house was worse. All those family members who stared at me funny. I wonder what my cousins have been saying all these years to them behind my back?” she questions.

“Easily investigated if you want me to,” Cara says.

“I’m going back to work tomorrow Cara, I took off a couple of days to mourn by myself. I don’t have time or money to do all of this. I called you because I was hoping you’d accept a payment plan,” she says.

“Mal, first off, of course I will. Second, let me see what I can find out with the phone records and such. It will show us all voice messages as well as text messages they have sent you in the past couple of years. The full history isn’t necessary. Two years is long enough to show history. Unless we find

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



something specific earlier. Will you let me check? Nothing you have to do except send me their phone numbers so we can search the right ones on your record,” Cara says.

“Yeah, in the meantime, do you think I’m being paranoid if I buy myself a new phone number?” Mallory asks.

“No, go ahead honey, but get a second line, not a new one. Let them continue to be able to contact you. Otherwise they will show up at your apartment or your work, you don’t want that. Give your mom your new number, me and anyone else who doesn’t know them. We will see if there is a leak as soon as one of them uses your new number. Do you want to spend some time with me and Rocky?” Cara asks.

“If I did that, I would feel that I’m definitely being paranoid. I’m going to go out and get some dinner at my favorite deli now, and then do some grocery shopping. I’ll speak to you tomorrow. Thanks a lot Cara. For always being a friend, it means a lot right now,” Mallory says quietly.

“Anything for you Mal. Without you, I’d be still sitting in Professor Michael’s class trying to figure out why he won’t pass me,” she tries to joke. Poor Mal, she must really be rattled to be calling her

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



professionally. She will have to do more than her best for her old friend in need. “I’ll call you tomorrow when I know something.”

“Thanks,” Mallory hangs up the phone and grabs her purse to leave her place and buy some real food for dinner. At the deli she walks up to her favorite worker. “Hey, how’s the turkey today?” she asks.

“Delicious, how ya doin darlin?” he asks with concern.

“I’m ok. Headed back to work tomorrow,” Mallory tells him.

“Good, moving on helps. You sure you want turkey though? I have some really great brisket today. Gravy came out especially tasty today,” he smiles at her.

“Give me enough to have for tomorrow too then. Make it a platter not a sandwich though,” she calls to him.

He looks back at Mallory, “Always dear, but only for you,” he responds smiling as he always does to his favorite patrons.

“You’re so predictable,” her cousin says from behind her. Mallory turns quickly to see the same cousin who threatened her the other day. She grabs

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



her phone and hits redial, she knows her last call was to Cara.

“Everyone has to eat. I happen to like this place,” she says.

“Sure, you do. I suppose I’m also to believe that you actually ordered food too. We all know what you’re doing here Mallory. Which one is he? The deli man or the counter help? Or maybe it’s the guy in the back who makes all the salads,” he grins at her, his eyes looking menacing again.

Mallory doesn’t want to answer him, but she also knows she has to show restraint, that she isn’t saying or doing anything wrong. “Remember what I said about that mace? I am carrying it again today. I never leave the house without some form of protection. I’m not sure why you care where I am. You told me to walk away, I did.”

“No, you went home. You’ve been there for a couple of days now and the one time you come out, you come to the deli. It’s Tuesday, you always come on Tuesdays to this place. So, who is it this week Mal?” he asks grinning.

“Brisket and gravy,” she says.

“Listen bitch, don’t give me this crap. We all know who you are and what you used to do with my father, so now that he is gone, you have no gravy

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



train anymore. How much did he pay you to meet him at his favorite deli? How much?” he says louder.

Behind her, Mallory hears, “This brat bothering you Mallory?” the deli man asks.

“As a matter of fact, he is,” she says as calmly as possible.

“I don’t take kindly to people bothering my patrons. I heard what you said. Her uncle was a fine man and it is very distasteful to talk about someone who has died, especially when they haven’t been in the ground for a week yet. I have a lot of regular people who come in, if you intend to bother any of them. I will personally and physically throw you out. Your face will be posted in the back of my establishment, should we see you come in again, you will be kicked out and the police will be called. Now, get out and don’t come back,” he says with gusto.

“Don’t let her con you, she is a no-good tramp. Trying to steal from everyone she meets,” he calls back as he walks out.

“Who is that Mallory?” he asks her firmly.

“Would you believe my cousin? Uncle Thomas’s oldest son,” she says. “Oh, hold on,” she takes out her phone. “Did you hear that?” she asks Cara.

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



“Every word. I believe, if he knew you were home, that means either he or someone he is paying is watching you. I think we have enough already for harassment. I’m moving forward with this, are you going to be ok with this?” Cara asks.

“I don’t know. Maybe I’ll ask my boss if he still wants me to go out of town to work with a client for a few days,” Mallory exhales.

“Sounds like a good idea. In the meantime, don’t go home. Come here first. Rocky will go back with you to your place and you will pack for a week. Then come back here and we will talk this all out. I’m sorry Mal, but this looks like things can get even uglier faster than we want or expected,” Cara says.

“Ok. I’ll see you soon,” she says.

She turns around to see the deli man still standing behind her. “If he ever comes in here, I’ll kick him out personally, I promise you that. Whether you are here or not. My whole place is recorded. I’ll turn this recording over to the police the minute you ask me to,” he looks to her for understanding.

“Thanks. I’m going to spend the night with a friend that is who I was talking to. Maybe I should take another order or two of that brisket,” she tries to smile.

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



He walks behind the counter and prepares enough food for three people. “Tonight, on the house. Go Mallory. You’ve got us in your corner. Let me know which precinct to send the recording to. I’m saving tonight’s recording.”

“Thanks. It’s good to know people care,” Mallory takes her food and leaves for Cara’s place.

~ ~ ~

Mallory sits at her desk today working hard on her most recent project. She has poured her whole head into the design to keep thoughts of her life out of her mind.

“Mallory,” her boss says.

Mallory turns around, “Yes sir. I’m sorry how long have you been standing there, you look frustrated.”

“Only a moment, don’t let the look fool you,” he pauses a moment, “Follow me please,” he says. Then he turns and says, “Leave your purse here, take only your new phone,” she had given him her new number.

Mallory nervously follows him. They go outside the office and walk straight to a limousine standing in front of the office. He opens the door for her, “Get in please.”

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



Mallory reluctantly slides into the limo. Her boss slides in afterwards, closes the door and knocks on the window between them and the driver to signal to get going. The car pulls away.

He takes a cleansing breath before speaking, “I’m going to come clean here on a couple of counts. First thing is, Cara is an old friend of mine too. She called me to tell me to look out for your cousins, all of them. She sent me pictures, the security of our building has them as well. Right now, I have my security team scanning everything in your office. I have a feeling your phone is bugged or something, otherwise there is no way he would know you were home for three days without you being watched and he doesn’t strike me as the kind with enough patients to sit outside in a car and watch you. Nor would he part with enough money to pay someone to do that kind of work.

Now, please don’t be upset at Cara, I love that girl. We’ve known each other since long before you guys even met. We grew up three houses away from each other. She told me all about you and your friendship when we were in college. I was ready to hire you before you even took the exam. But then you did and I was blown away by your talents,” he stops to wait for a reaction.

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



“Why are we in a car? Where are we going?” she asks.

“Nowhere. The driver has a route to take that drives us around while we are in this meeting. I’ve done this before. Mallory, we need time for your everything to be scanned. They are doing your car too. I don’t know why or what he is looking for from you, but keeping tabs on you seems like high priority for him.

You want to talk about anything? Cara called me to explain what is going on because she is afraid you may run away, you mentioned to her about asking me to go visit some clients. Mallory, you are one of the most talented programmers I have. You see exactly what the client wants and you end up giving them more than they thought they needed.

Please, talk to me. Tell me something that may have seemed insignificant at the time but may be something important now. I’m here to help, I promise you that,” he looks to her for a reaction. So far, she has been sitting there trying to melt into the seat and be as far away from him as possible.

There is part of him that wants to scream out the second reason they are in this enclosed area, he has been attracted to Mallory for a long time now. Almost since she started working for him three years

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



ago. Now that she is in real trouble, he wants to protect her and show her life can be wonderful with a man in her life. But touching her, even her hand, right now looks as if she will scream and jump out of the car while they are still moving. “Mallory?” he asks cautiously.

She looks at him, looks right through him, then her eyes begin to soften. “This is so messed up. I never did anything. Never said anything. He thinks I slept with my uncle, how sick is that? They think I’ve stolen something from them. That I tried to get into their father’s pockets to compensate for my father being in jail. Oh Ray, what do you do when your own family is your worst enemy?” a large tear slides down her cheek.

Ray doesn’t know what to do, he slides closer to her, wipes the tear off of her cheek, and before his rational brain can stop him, he leans over and kisses her right on the lips. A soft kiss, a kiss of support and yet passion. “I’ll never let you have enemies, family or otherwise,” he says staring into her eyes, “that’s the other thing I wanted to talk to you about.” His voice soft and sincere.

Mallory reaches up and touches his cheek, “Are you for real?” she asks.

“Yeah,” he says softly.

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



“All this time, I thought I was crazy, thinking no way the boss has any interest in me, he likes my work. Praises my work. But this?” she says as she touches his lips. He kisses her finger as it touches his lips.

“I don’t want you to be angry with Cara, please tell me you’re not.” he says

“I’m not. She is great. I slept by her and Rocky last night. She wouldn’t let me go home, but your paranoia explains the text I received this morning,” she tells him.

“On which phone Mallory?” he asks.

“My old number,” she says.

“What did it say?” he asks.

“Something about wanting to know who I was sleeping with now and how can I be mourning in some stranger’s bed,” she says.

Ray takes a moment to send a message on his phone. He watches his phone a moment, looks up at her, “Ok, they found that one. There is a second one asking why you never answered him,” he doesn’t tell her about the third one though, he did, however, have them send that one over to Cara directly. The man is making threats and insults that will end him up with a restraining order immediately and possible

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



harassment charges and jail time before his father’s body is even cold.

“This is bad isn’t it?” Mallory asks. “You’re not telling me something. But I’m ok with that. I don’t want to know all that is going on. I want this to be over. We buried Uncle Thomas. I get that they don’t want me around, I heard them, I haven’t even called my aunt at home since then. I’ve spoken to her on her cell phone only once and told her that I will get back to her in a week because I am going on a business trip,” Mallory bows her head for the lie, she hated lying to her aunt.

“Mallory, I have a theory, do you want to hear what I’m thinking?” Ray asks.

“Ok,” she whispers.

“I think he is jealous. I think he has had a crush on you for a long time and once he got it into his head that you and his father were doing more than talking, he couldn’t stop. I think he wants to prove you are sleeping around. But if you aren’t, he is going to want to be the one to save your reputation. I’ve seen this happen before. My brother talks about some of the cases they’ve seen, he is a police investigator. He says sometimes you can’t make this stuff up. Your cousin’s behaviors fit this

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



type of personality he has told me about, perfectly,” he speaks softly and reaches over to hold her hand.

Mallory looks up at Ray, “Ray, I had one boyfriend in high school. I had another in college that lasted only one semester. That is my full relationship history. I don’t know why he would think I’m sleeping around. He must have poisoned his brother’s minds and other family members. They already hate me, if he is arrested, my family life is only going to get worse.

I think I’d rather move away, I’ll take my mom with me and we will recreate a life for ourselves. There are three of them. If I press all these charges against him, while founded, my life will be hell for many years to come. I would like you to take me back to the office, let me collect my personal things in the office, head over to my mom’s place. I have some savings, we will leave tonight and only be in touch with Cara, and you. I’d like to stay in touch with you,” she tells him softly, covering his hand with hers.

“Mallory, he could be dangerous. Please reconsider,” he says.

“No Ray, the only danger is me causing my whole family to choose sides. He asked me to leave,

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



so I’m going to,” she says. “Really, this is probably the only way to make this end.”

~ ~ ~

Mallory left her old phone with Cara, she packs up all of her belongings and her mom’s. They rented a moving van and head west. At the moment, they don’t know where they will land but between the two of them, they have enough money for a few months before they have to really worry. Mallory’s mom gave over the sale of her house to one of her sons. He will take care of things and deposit the check for his mom when the sale goes through. There is a lot of interest in her house because her mom lives in a good neighborhood. They always kept the house up to date on everything electrical and plumbing. The sale will give her mom a much longer financial cushion.

Mallory talked to her landlord and told him it was a family emergency, she paid him for two more months and with that, he allowed her to leave her lease early. Now they are on the road to nowhere. Neither one of them is talking. Mallory is driving the van they rented. Her brother has her mother’s car and Ray has Mallory’s. He is now having the underneath and the engine checked for being

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



bugged. He will drive the car to her as soon as they land somewhere.

The first hotel they pull into is the first time Mallory speaks to her mom. “We can do this Mom. I know you will miss Aunt Philly but what was I to do? Do you want to go back? I’ll fly you home first class. But can it wait until morning? I’m kind of tired and would love to rest a bit.”

“I spoke to Philly last night, we went out, we left our phones at home. Ray had his people check her phone and they found hers is tagged with a tracker. He is buying her a new phone and she will be keeping the new one with her at all times. Not letting her sons have anything to do with adding new features or anything they feel she can’t do. Not even to look at photos unless she is standing over them. The reading of the Will is next week. The lawyer called to say that the Will is to be read after the first thirty days. She is going to have me in on a conference call. We will have to find a lawyer’s office to be sitting in during this reading,” she tells Mallory.

“No need for me to be there Mom, but we will find someone. I’m sure Cara knows someone, she knows people everywhere.”

“Mallory, you *are* in the Will,” her mom tells her.

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



“Please Mom, I don’t want problems. I’m assuming all three of my cousins will be in the room. I don’t want to hear what they have to say. Let’s go in and get a room. I don’t want to talk about this,” Mallory says. Ever, she thinks to herself.

~ ~ ~

“Cara, I’m sitting in her car. The boys found a tracking device and a microphone with a wireless feed. They are trying to find where the other end is. I’m sure they won’t take long. What is going on Cara, what has them paranoid? Is this a case where he is jealous or simply evil?” Ray asks his old friend.

“So far, we can’t tell. But before they left, her mom told me when the reading of the Will is. They are required to be sitting in a lawyer’s office during the proceedings. I have to find someone where they are to do me this favor.

My gut is telling me is that this is a mixture of jealous and longing. However, the three of them certainly don’t treat their own mother with very much respect either. Her phone has been tapped actually both phones, cellular and home. She bought a new cellular and I put her up in a hotel that night so my guys can make a thorough sweep of her home. Especially of Thomas’s office. I think that maybe

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



their father was keeping secrets from them, financial ones. But at the same time, I think they have been keeping some financial secrets from their father, only he knew about them because somehow, they think they are smarter than both of their parents. Snott nosed kids. Their mom is very upset by this,” Cara says. “She feels a failure.”

“Money and family don’t always mix, but all this spyware is scary. You might be on to something as far as them having secrets is concerned. But that isn’t going to bring Mallory back here, right?” he asks.

“Oh Ray, I know you like her, maybe more than you want to admit to yourself. But think of it this way for a moment. You can always open a second branch out where she lands. She can do everything from there. You can slowly move your main branch over there, although I’ll miss you both, but we can do this, we can get past all of this nonsense,” Cara tries to stay professional but with Mallory’s situation, staying unemotional is hard.

“I sure hope so. I can’t bring myself to leave this car right now,” Roy admits.

“Come to dinner Ray, Rocky is making steak tonight,” she tells him.

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



“Maybe I will,” he says and hangs up. Ray rubs his hand across the seats of Mallory’s car. The car still smells like her, for now.

~ ~ ~

“Mallory, we have to go together. Come on, wake up. We have to be at the lawyer by 10:00 this morning. Why are you being so lazy today?” her mom asks annoyed. “We’ve been living in this hotel for a week now and we are no closer to figuring out what we are going to do than when we left. Maybe this will give us some clarity. Now get up,” her mom says stronger.

“I’m up Mom,” she throws her covers over to the side, “See, I’m even dressed. But very unmotivated. I’m ready. Let’s go.” Mallory slowly gets out of bed and heads to the open room of their suite, she grabs her purse and keys.

This ride, like so many they have taken together since leaving, is a quiet one. The tension between the two of them has increased more than they have ever experienced. Mallory is thinking her mother really didn’t want to come, so after today’s meeting, she is going to offer to send her home to her brothers. They will take care of her, find her a place to live or add on to their places. Mallory will

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



find the strength to do this alone, because it looks like that is where she will be from now on.

Being on the run, is not a place for her mother. She needs calm and safety. She needs her sister in law to help her grieve the loss of her only brother. She needs her boys. Mallory and her mom should have been closer, but when her father was taken away, it also took away some of the relationship she had with her mom. He had abused both of them, but instead of it bringing them closer, his absence did the opposite. When Mallory moved out, things became better. But now, it appears as if they are falling back into that old relationship.

“We’re here Mom, let’s get this over with,” Mallory says.

The two women walk into the lawyer’s office and introduce themselves. They are walked into a conference room where there is a large computer screen set up for video conferencing. Mallory sits in the seat that looks as if it is the hardest to view her from the computer screen. She doesn’t want them to see her, she doesn’t want to see them, meaning her cousins. “Ladies, the conference will begin in two minutes, please have a seat over here,” the lawyer shows the two seats directly in front of the screen.

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



“I’m going to stay here, thank you,” Mallory tells the lawyer.

“Suit yourself. But they may ask you to move, just know that, ok?” he says.

“yeah,” she answers softly.

The call comes in as soon as the lawyer comes back to the room. As soon as Mallory sees her cousins, she begins to fear what they will do. She looks at her aunt and sees a beaten woman. She is emotionally spent. That much is easy to see, her sons are all sitting there with an air of entitlement about them.

Uncle Thomas’s lawyer begins to speak, “I’m glad we could do this all in one day. It makes the whole thing much better. Instead of the traditional reading of the Will, Thomas had wanted to do a video to be able to address each and every one of you personally. It is from his heart, all of his words. Took us several times to write down what he wanted so he could read the exact thing he wanted to say. You will be given a copy of the written document at the end of the meeting,” he presses play for everyone to watch.

“Hello everyone. I met with my lawyer the day after I was diagnosed with a fatal disease. I met him with my lovely wife Philly. We’ve always made

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



decisions together. That is what real men do. They involve their wives in every important decision in their lives. They value them for all the wonderful things they do for them, all that they don’t have time for. A real man appreciates the food on his table at the end of the day knowing how hard it must have been for his working wife to make the food delicious every time. She was there when I was diagnosed and she was there all through the disease, at least I’m sure she was, will be. Whichever way I’m supposed to say it today.

My financial advisor will be meeting with you Philly a week after this video is played. He will show you what is accessible now and what is going to be there for you later. All of our assets will be gone over with you Philly and you alone. But you can take my sister with you, she has a good head for math and will help you understand. Do *not* take any of our children, any of them at all, no matter what they say. *You* are still here, *you* have a good head on your shoulders, and *you* are the only one I trust to manage my businesses. My sister will help you with things you don’t feel comfortable with. She will be your perfect business partner. Oh yeah, sis, you’re going to be Philly’s business partner. 50/50 all the way,” he smiled.

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



“To my boys? Nothing, not one business will be turned over to you, not now and possibly not ever. I worked hard to build myself up to what I have. You can too, if you learn to apply yourselves to something that is not about you. I tried for years and years to show you and teach you how you are to treat your mother, and any other woman in your life, but you refuse to listen. I can’t imagine why, it hurts me in ways I can’t even describe to you. You had better get your heads on straight or you will receive nothing in the end as well, there are stipulations in your mother’s Will about that.

There is a check for each of you with a contingency. You are to go to sensitivity training; my lawyer has the name and place of where you are to go. You are free to choose what you want to do. However, without this class, your check is null in void. Easy as that. You have only one year to complete this task, otherwise the money stays with your mother, who earned every penny there is.

I’m sure my boys are sitting there squirming right now and frankly I don’t care. You are all adults at this point. Two of you still live at home. Why? Happy to partake of whatever your mom gives you; and yet you think it is beneath you to thank her? Appreciate her? Not anymore. The second part of

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



your contingency is that you must move out. Leave your mother alone, she has taken care of you long enough. Since you don’t respect anything she has done for you, well, now you’re done. There will be someone at the house at the end of this viewing to make sure you move out now, today. Go to a hotel if you have to, but you are required to leave. In answer to your question, yes, I can legally kick you out of *my* home. *My* home, the one *I* had built with your mother and I in mind.

She is not your servant, she is not your maid, she does *not* owe you a thing by virtue of her being a woman, no, my sons, it is you who owe her your lives. *She* is the one who took care of you, through sicknesses, and in health. *She* is the one who kept your homelife good, while I was too busy working. You *owe* your life *and* your lifestyle to her. Swallow that pride for a while and learn respect.

Now, to my sister, well. Besides my love and respect, as I said before, you will be Philly’s partner in all things. My advisor will be meeting with you two as soon as you are available to learn everything there is to learn. Oh, and you can have my blue truck too. I know you’ve always liked how that beauty drives.

I’m sorry about your husband, all those years ago when he overstepped his boundaries as a man.

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



You never deserved what he gave you, I hope I helped out in my small way. I love your boys and how dedicated they are to their studies, to you and to their sister. They will go far, I’m sure they will make us all proud,” he paused again.

This time he is having a hard time continuing. He looks up at the screen, then back down again. Thomas wipes his eye with a tissue. He finally gets his strength, through a strained voice he says, “To my sunshine, Mallory. I will miss you terribly. But I will be watching you, taking care of you from wherever I am. No one will ever hurt you again, I will do what I can to make that a truth. Not *ever* again,” Thomas wiped his eyes again.

Mallory is watching her uncle make promises to her she knows he can’t do. His own son has shown her that. Her tears are falling as she watches him struggle to talk to her. She is surprised her cousins haven’t spoken out yet. She knows they will, she is waiting. Part of her sees that they keep looking down, probably at their phones, Cara has her phone, and it is probably going off every three seconds during this meeting.

“Mallory, my dear sweet niece. You told me what happened during those dark times in your home, it is time you tell your mother. She deserves

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



to know, so do your brothers. Tell them. Please. Mallory, find your happiness, he is out there. I promise you. I think you may already know him.

I have something special for you that is put away for your thirtieth birthday. Think about our talks, you may know what I’ve set aside already. I love you Mallory, take care of your mother.”

Thomas stood up and walked around the seat he was sitting on. Then he puts his hands on the back of his chair and stares into the screen, “Again, to my boys, wake up, grow up and change or you’re going to be very, angry, lonely and very unsuccessful adults, no one owes you anything. No one.

Thank you again Philly, for being in my life, for being my better half, you made my adult life worth living. You’ll always be my queen,” he blew her a kiss and the screen goes off.

No sooner does the screen shut off then Mallory’s oldest cousin begins to rant about how unfair all of this is. He screams that he wants to know what Mallory is getting, why his mother is getting multiple businesses that she knows nothing about and then he begins to rant about how unworthy she is to have anything at all. Then he turns to the video screen and starts yelling at Mallory about how worthless she is.

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



The lawyer lets him go on his rant for almost three whole minutes. Mallory is sinking into her chair, the words he is saying are a big reminder of things that were said to her a long time ago, in an era of her life she thought she was beyond. Who taught him those words? Who told him about any of that?

Mallory looks in time to see her youngest cousin pull his brother back and punch him directly in the nose. It immediately starts to bleed and her cousin looks to his older brother with steam coming from his ears and his eyes popping out. “You are the reason for all of this? You?” he starts to stomp around the room. He looks to his mother.

“For years he has been telling us things about our father, things that involve Mallory and her family. Things about how Mallory’s father was wrongly accused of abuse when he was the only one to keep order in the house. The only one who kept everyone in line. He, your own son, told us that you allowed their relationship to go on as he said it did,” he falls to his knees.

“Please Momma, my dear aunt, please forgive me. I will go to class, I will go to a hundred classes. You have to understand I was never told the truth of those years ago. I never knew my uncle abused you, I never knew,” he runs to the screen.

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



“Mallory, I know you don’t like me and I don’t deserve your respect but I’m going to work hard to earn back your trust, even if it takes me the rest of my life. I swear to you, I will spend the rest of my life doing what my father has asked of me.

Come home Mallory, don’t run from him. He isn’t worthy,” he says of his own brother who is now running to him with arms swinging. The lawyer grabs him from behind and wrestles him easily to the ground.

“Don’t even think about starting a fight in my office. With that rant you earned yourself an arrest of harassment as well as an accessory to the abuse they endured. You are probably the other person they never found. I know all about what took place in that house. The police will be here soon to take some DNA and get the proof I know is there. No more, you hear me? No more!” He looks up from the floor.

“I’m sorry Philly. I spoke out of turn. You may not understand what he said, but I do. He sealed his own fate, and that is straight to jail to join his uncle,” the lawyer says.

The room is silent. Mallory watches as her youngest cousin is still crying on his mother’s lap. The middle son is sitting quietly, it doesn’t look like

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



he knows what to do with himself. Those words, they hit her as if they were brand new.

Mallory’s mom looks at her. “Oh Mal. You don’t have to explain anything, I think I understand now. I’ll ask a question you only have to nod,” she whispers. “You were blindfolded and he brought in people when I wasn’t home. You were tied to the bed in the basement, he spent some time in, how did he used to say it? Oh yeah, to educate his friends. He had to have been there Mal, your own cousin. I’m going to be sick,” Mallory’s mom runs to the trash can nearby and tries to get herself under control. She knew her husband was evil, she thought it was only to her. He would drug her and do the same thing, bring her downstairs, she has no idea who was in the room with her. It is only because a neighbor heard her screaming one night that he was caught in the act. He hadn’t drugged her that night because he told her he wanted her more responsive. The children were locked into their rooms from the outside. She sits down on the floor next to the garbage can.

They hear someone calling in the video, “Ladies, thank you for participating, we will be in touch when you get back,” Uncle Thomas’s lawyer says.

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



Mallory looks over to the video screen, her aunt is crying, Philly’s baby is crying and her oldest cousin is being dragged away by the police. “Turn this off please,” she tells the lawyer in the room with them. He obliges.

Mallory sits down with her mom. “Do you want to go back there? I mean, you will need to be closer to help run the business I assume. I can fly you back tomorrow, but Mom. I can’t go. Now, more than any other time. I can’t go back. You understand, right?” she asks.

She looks into her daughter’s eyes. “There is something else isn’t there?” she asks.

Mallory calls her brothers on her phone using video chat. “Hi,” she pauses, “sit down, I need to tell you something and I’m only going to say this once.”

“Ok sis. We’re both here. Listening, no talking,” her brother says.

“I was tortured by many when our father was home. As soon as I hit puberty, he assumed the role of master of my body. He would send you on sleepovers to your friends when Mom worked late. He would blindfold me, probably drug me, and then as I lay on the bed down in the basement, he would give hands on instructions to boys as to how to treat a

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



woman and keep her in her place. The boys never spoke but they sure weren’t shy about touching me. Then, there was the time I was sixteen and it became an all-night affair. All night, for hours and hours. I’m surprised I could walk the day after.

A few months later, Uncle Thomas took me out and then took me to a doctor. I wasn’t at a sleep away camp. Mom, I had a baby. Uncle Thomas helped me find a couple who was having a hard time conceiving a baby, he also set up a college fund account for him. That’s why I came home looking like I lost a lot of weight. I had. I lost more weight than the pregnancy. Mostly from stress. He told me I had to tell you guys now, so, now you know.

I think I’m going to send Mom home on the next flight home. You guys need to take care of her. She is going to be working with Aunt Philly as a business partner. We just heard the Will from Uncle Thomas himself. She doesn’t belong running with me. I need to get my life together. I need to find my self-worth. I have a college education, it will get me a good job. But the rest of this? Not conducive for successful adulthood,” Mallory holds her mom’s hands.

“Oh Mal. I’m a failure,” her mom says.

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



“No Mom, it is us. We never listened when Mal said not to go, we thought she was being silly. Why would she want us home, I mean, it isn’t as if we played together when we were home. Mal, we owe you profound apologies. Oh my, I can’t even speak anymore,” her brother holds his hand over his mouth to prevent himself from screaming. The second brother puts his arms around his brother and looks into the phone. “Mallory, I’ve said this before and now I mean it more than ever, I have the utmost respect for you. That will never end. Don’t send Mom home. We will come to you and pick her up. I don’t want her traveling alone. I’ll pay, just tell us where you are.”

Mallory is looking at her mother, she hasn’t moved, she isn’t even sure she has taken a breath in the past few minutes. “Mallory, boys. You can come pick me up. I appreciate that. I think you’re right, I’m not sure I can travel alone. But we will meet you at the airport. No need to go further. While we are all talking here, let me say that I don’t think I can ever apologize to Mallory or even you boys. We are going to stop apologizing and start supporting. Whatever Mal wants, we will support her. If Philly doesn’t want to work with me, I’ll understand that

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



too. We get along well, but spending each day together we could end up hating each other.

Boys, we will text you where we will meet you, for now. Go back to work. Can we go back to the hotel now?” she asks Mallory.

“Yeah.”
~ ~ ~

Mallory calls Cara after her mom leaves with her brothers. They came over to her and hugged her, then took her mom and walked away fast. It’s too hard. Mallory feels as if she said goodbye to her family and she doesn’t know when she will see them again. “I need to go far away so far that the culture is different. Weather is different, everything is different. I never want to run into anyone I know. Oh Cara, my life is a mess,” she begins to cry as she sits down on a park bench near the hotel.

“Mal, oh darling. I read your e-mail with tears in my eyes. I knew you then. The fact that you trusted to tell me this is both humbling and joyous at the same time. You trust me as a lawyer to hear all I need to hear, but that you trust me as a friend to not hold back. I want to return the favor but I don’t know how,” she says.

“Cara, my cousin, the oldest, the one who has been harassing me, he was repeating the words of

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



my father, Cara, he must have been there. My own cousin. He was there, during one or more of those evenings. It explains a lot but, at the same time, it makes it hurt all that much more. How many more people do I know that were in that room, how many more?” Mallory cries.

Cara keeps thinking of Ray, the man who is smitten with her closest friend. Now what can she do? She wants him to go out to her but she wants nothing of this community. Nothing of this world here. “Mal. Would you like me to come out and sit with you? I would do that in a heartbeat. Wherever you are. I’ll come. The case against your cousin is big enough that they don’t need me now. Uncle Thomas’s lawyer is taking over. He already called for all of my information. I have the time. I want to come. Please, Mal, let me help you this time,” Cara begins to cry too.

“I need to go to bed,” Mallory hangs up and walks back into the hotel. She gets to her room and showers. When she comes out, she sees her phone on the bed is blinking. She checks it, “please Mal,” is all it says.

Mallory sends her the name and address of the hotel and then she falls asleep.

~ ~ ~

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



The knock on the door wakes Mallory. She slowly walks to the door of her hotel room. She looks through the peephole and is astonished, she sees Cara standing there but what is more surprising, she sees Ray standing with his hand on Cara’s shoulders with tears in his eyes.

Why him? Why her? She opens the door and Cara jumps into her arms. Mallory is pushed back into her room. Ray walks in and closes the door behind him. Cara showed him more than he was supposed to know. But somehow, she felt he needed to know the truth otherwise he won’t understand Mal or how to get through to her. Cara will apologize to Mallory later.

After being pushed all the way into her room to the couch, Mallory sits down with Cara still in her arms. “You told him, didn’t you?” she whispers to Cara. Cara jolts her head up and looks straight into Mallory’s eyes. She doesn’t hate her. She nods. “Thank you, there is no way I would have ever told him, and I think he deserves the truth. But I’m too afraid Cara. Too afraid.” Mallory begins to cry into her friend’s arms. Her body shaking, her breathing becoming irregular, Mallory lets out all of her fears. Cara holds on tight and supports her friend during this time of need. She cries with her now and again.

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



Mallory doesn’t know how much time she spent crying, but right now she feels snuggled under a blanket. When did that happen? She opens one eye and sees the sun looks like it is setting. Did she sleep all day? Mallory jumps up and looks around. Cara is at her side a moment later. “Whoa, Mal, you’re ok. We showed up around noon, you and I had a good cry and you fell asleep. I don’t know the last time you slept, so we let you sleep this off. No drugs, only exhaustive sleep. Ray and I ordered dinner to be delivered, it will be coming soon. Are you up for company now or do you want time to yourself?” Cara’s voice is soft and calming.

Mallory looks at her friend. “I’m not worthy of your friendship but I certainly appreciate having you around. What did you order for dinner?”

“Soup, sandwiches and four different desserts,” Cara smiles.

“You know me so well,” Mallory hugs Cara. She notices movement in the corner of her eye and jumps, then she relaxes when she sees Ray. He is standing at the table smiling a very small smile but one that is very endearing to Mallory.

“Hi Ray. What brings you out here?” she tries to joke.

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



“Well, I heard I had a friend of mine was in trouble, and decided to stop by to see if I could be of any help,” he grins.

“Room service!” a voice calls out.

“You can start by answering the door,”

Mallory says.

Ray opens the door and watches as the bellboy pushes in the food and sets it out on the table they have. Ray hands him a tip and closes the door. “Dinner is served ladies,” he says. Ray wants to smile but watching Mallory sleep so fitfully these past few hours has not been easy. He wants to grab her cousins and beat them senseless. Although it does seem that at least one of them is less of a culprit than the other two, but still he doesn’t get a free pass according to Ray.

After Cara showed him the email, he went for a five-mile run and when he got back to his apartment, he used his punching bag for a full half an hour. He has enough anger for the whole neighborhood inside of him but he has to keep himself under control. For Mallory, everything is for her right now, his life is now all about keeping her safe.

Dinner is quiet, everyone is busy in their own minds. Mallory keeps looking over at Ray. She never

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



thought she would actually feel attraction to a man. Uncle Thomas wanted her to go through therapy to help her through everything, which is why he sent her to be in a home for pregnant teens. They helped her through the months of pregnancy as well as the delivery. But you can’t forget, no one can remove those pictures from your memories.

“I don’t know how far I can run to be far enough away,” Mallory finally says more to her food than her friends.

Cara reaches over and holds her friend’s hand. She has no words to share. She flew six hundred miles to come to her rescue and will do six thousand, if she has to. Ray clears his throat and the women look up at him. “If I may,” he says softly. Mallory nods.

“Mal, you’ve worked for me for the past couple of years. But since day one, I have had a personal crush on you. Deal with that. I am not interested in you running away any further than my arm’s length. Our business is building personalized computer programs for our clients. It can be done from anywhere. If you want to stay out here, then I am too. We will find a place to be together so I can always keep you safe. We will find a new office so we can work with clients in person, no reason I can’t

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



have a second office. This can be my new home office. Cara can keep an eye on the other one.

So, after breakfast tomorrow, we will begin to look for a place. Any questions? Comments?” he looks from Cara to Mallory.

Mallory is caught off guard, this is something she never expected. Never in her life. Someone other than her uncle to protect her? Unheard of. Unfathomable. “Why?” is all she can say.

Cara looks at her friend, “Mal, because Uncle Thomas would have said yes. He loved Ray, and you know that. On your one year anniversary working with Ray what did Uncle Thomas say to you?” she looks at her for the positive memory.

“He told me that with my computer knowledge and Ray’s creativity there are no boundaries,” she looks to Ray.

“He said that? About me?” Ray finds himself feeling very emotional at the recognition of a man he admired.

“Yes. He liked you Ray. I did too,” Mallory says.

“Did?” Ray asks.

“I mean, then, when he said it. No, I mean now, but ugh, I can’t think straight, my words aren’t coming out right,” she says.

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



“One word Mallory. I only want one word,” Ray says.

“Yes, to tomorrow,” she says.

Ray looks across the table at Mallory. Will he ever be able to hold her? Will they ever get close enough to even hold hands? He will wait, he thinks to himself. Cara watches her two favorite people, she is nervous for them but happy that Mallory won’t be alone.

Mallory looks at Cara and then at Ray, “Is it ok if I’m scared to death though?”

“Yes, and we will overcome our fears together. Can we do together?” Ray asks.

“I can only say that I will try. Can you settle for me trying?” she asks.

“As long as we try, together,” he smiles.

~ ~ ~

For the past week and a half Ray and Mallory have been staying in a long term rental hotel. They have yet to find a place to live on a more permanent basis. They each have their own room here, but Mallory is getting tired of hotel food and she wants to cook her own meals.

Cara sent her a message yesterday that her cousin is in jail, she won’t tell her the charges. The middle brother has left town and no one has heard

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



from him since. Not even his own mother. Cara told her that Uncle Thomas’s lawyer is on top of everything but said he is keeping Mallory out of all that is going on, he promised Cara that he is doing all he can so that Mallory will never have to be in court. Cara is certain that this lawyer knows where the middle brother is and isn’t telling anyone, she is fine with that.

Mallory has been walking around the park today thinking and thinking about the project that Ray has put her on. “You lost or something?” a voice says from behind her. Mallory turns quickly and freezes. The face looks familiar and right now she doesn’t want to know why. She had told Ray where she was going, now she quickly takes her phone out and sends him their code message.

“I’m fine,” she says as strongly as she can.

“Really? Because you look lost to me. Maybe I can help you find your way to where you belong,” he grins at her.

“I think you’d better stay where you are. I’m going to leave and you aren’t going to follow me or I will scream,” she says trying to walk backwards from him.

“I can match you step for step even if you’re walking backwards. But that wouldn’t be any fun, I

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



can easily catch up to you, you know. As a man, I’m bigger, stronger and definitely faster,” he says grinning again and taking a step forward towards Mallory.

Mallory hears a whistle. She knows Ray is here now but she can’t seem to calm down. She doesn’t see him, but that is his signal. Until she sees him, she won’t be able to calm down. She takes another step back, quickly looking over her shoulder to make sure no one else is there. He takes two steps towards her. His grin never leaving his face. “You will lose this game little one.”

“I’m not playing a game,” she says.

“Ah but this is a game, a game of tag and I’m it. You will soon be my capture. That is how the game is played.”

Bam!! The man is on the floor. Mallory looks up and sees Ray standing over the man. He quickly has the man’s hands tied behind him using his own tie he must have taken off as he came to her. The movements are so quick Mallory didn’t even see anything happen.

“I’m sorry Mal, I had to get a recording of what he said to you. The police will be here soon. Do you know him?” he asks.

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



“He is one of my father’s old business people. I don’t know what the relationship is between them. I think his name is Denise,” she says.

“Sir, step away from the man on the floor with your hands up,” the policeman says.

“Oh, he isn’t the one after me, he is the one who saved me. He recorded what the man on the ground said to me. He has ties to someone who is already in prison, for sexual abuse,” Mallory finds that watching Ray has given her the strength to say what she needs to say.

Ray walks over to Mallory, the officer takes their statements as well as the recording of what was said. “The person in jail is there for what reason?” the policeman asks.

“Rape and child sexual abuse,” she says again.

Ray puts his hand on Mallory’s shoulder for the first time. “Mal, this will end, you can do this.”

She turns around to see Ray’s face. “With you, I think I can only do this only with you.”

“Then I’m not going to leave, ever,” he says. He takes her hand and leads her away from today’s fiasco. Then he thinks that maybe if she changes her name, no one will find her. Maybe someday soon,

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



she will share his last name. He will call Cara and Mallory’s mom tonight.

~ ~ ~

“Hello?” Mallory’s mom answers her phone.

“Hey, it’s me Philly. I think I found our retirement fund. If you want to talk about this, let’s meet in person,” she laughs.

“Sure. Ladies only I assume,” she says.

“You bet. See you at the café. My treat,”

Philly hangs up the phone and begins to giggle like a small child.

“Are you sure this is going to work?” she asks her late husband’s lawyer.

“I’ve never lied to you and I’ve never lied to Thomas. I know you two don’t want to run his businesses and he knew that too. What he was trying to say is now that you are in charge you can do what you want. He has had six offers in the past four years. If you two sell his whole empire, you split the money as equal partners and you can sit on this for the rest of your lives. Philly, had you been working with him all of these years, I’d think it was advisable to keep the business, but with all due respect. It’s a little late to be learning all there is to do to remain successful,” he looks at her with concern.

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



“I’m not insulted with what you’ve said. We spent three weeks already visiting the financial guy for hours at a time and we still don’t know what is going on. How does this work with the Will? I mean as far as my boys are concerned. Won’t they want their portion?” she asks.

“Thomas put aside all that he wants to give them. So far, only your youngest is doing anything about receiving his money. I believe the other two think that the real money will come to them eventually because they are assuming they will receive the business and be able to run each one better than their father did. Even the one in jail keeps telling everyone how much money he is worth. However, they’ve never shown interest in the business, and don’t know how any of the businesses run any more than you do.

Your oldest will be behind bars for the next fifteen years at least, before he is even eligible for parole. There were a few other charges that I never mentioned to you. I’m sorry. How are you doing with all of that?” he asks.

“First of all, you’re right, my youngest is working his tail off to become the person his father wanted him to be. He is taking the classes you sent him to. He is volunteering at a school for children

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



with disabilities and he broke up with the woman he was seeing because he doesn’t think he can give her what she deserves yet. Time will tell on that, I guess. He lives only a few blocks from me and we have met for lunch a couple of times.

I told him he can’t have Mallory’s number but he wrote her a letter. I am supposed to give the letter to her, but I’m not sure I want to. I read what he had to say. I think he wrote words before he had a chance to actually think before putting the words down. I’m going to give you a chance to read this. You can do what you want with the contents.

My middle son? I haven’t heard from him since the day he moved out. I have Mallory in my life and her brothers. I have my sister in law, and if we work this out, I’ll have a way to travel and enjoy my life from here on out. I can help Mallory and anyone else I want to. This sounds good to me. I’ll give you an answer by end of day,” she smiles at him and shakes his hand.

“Ok. I’ll get things started here and be ready to move on your word.”

Philly walks into the café to see a smiling sister in law. She sits down and tells her the numbers that Thomas’s lawyer explained to her. “A third of

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA)

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com



that is more than we need to retire on, what do you think? It can all be done in the next two weeks.”

“Oh Philly, no more burdens, nor more stress. We can run out and visit Mallory any time she needs us. We can have a home near her and one near my boys, our boys,” she smiles.

“With me? You would do this *with* me?”

Philly asks her sister in law, overwhelmed with emotion. She misses her Thomas so much, she never wanted to ruin all his hard work, now she learns this was his plan all along. To take care of her and her sister in law.

“We both miss him Philly. You can do this, I can do this. We can help Mallory overcome all of she has had to endure,” she pauses, “together.”

“I can do this.” Philly sends a message to Thomas’s lawyer. ‘go’.

Copyright © 2020 by (CAA

All rights reserved. Except for the use in any review, the reproduction or utilization of this work in whole or in part in any form by any electronic, mechanical or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including xerography, photocopying and recording, or in any information storage or retrieval system, is forbidden without the written permission of the author or illustrator directly.

This is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places and incidents are either the product of the author’s imagination or are used fictitiously, and any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, business establishments, events or locales is entirely coincidental.

For questions and comments about the quality of this book, please contact us at dailyreader.caa@gmail.com