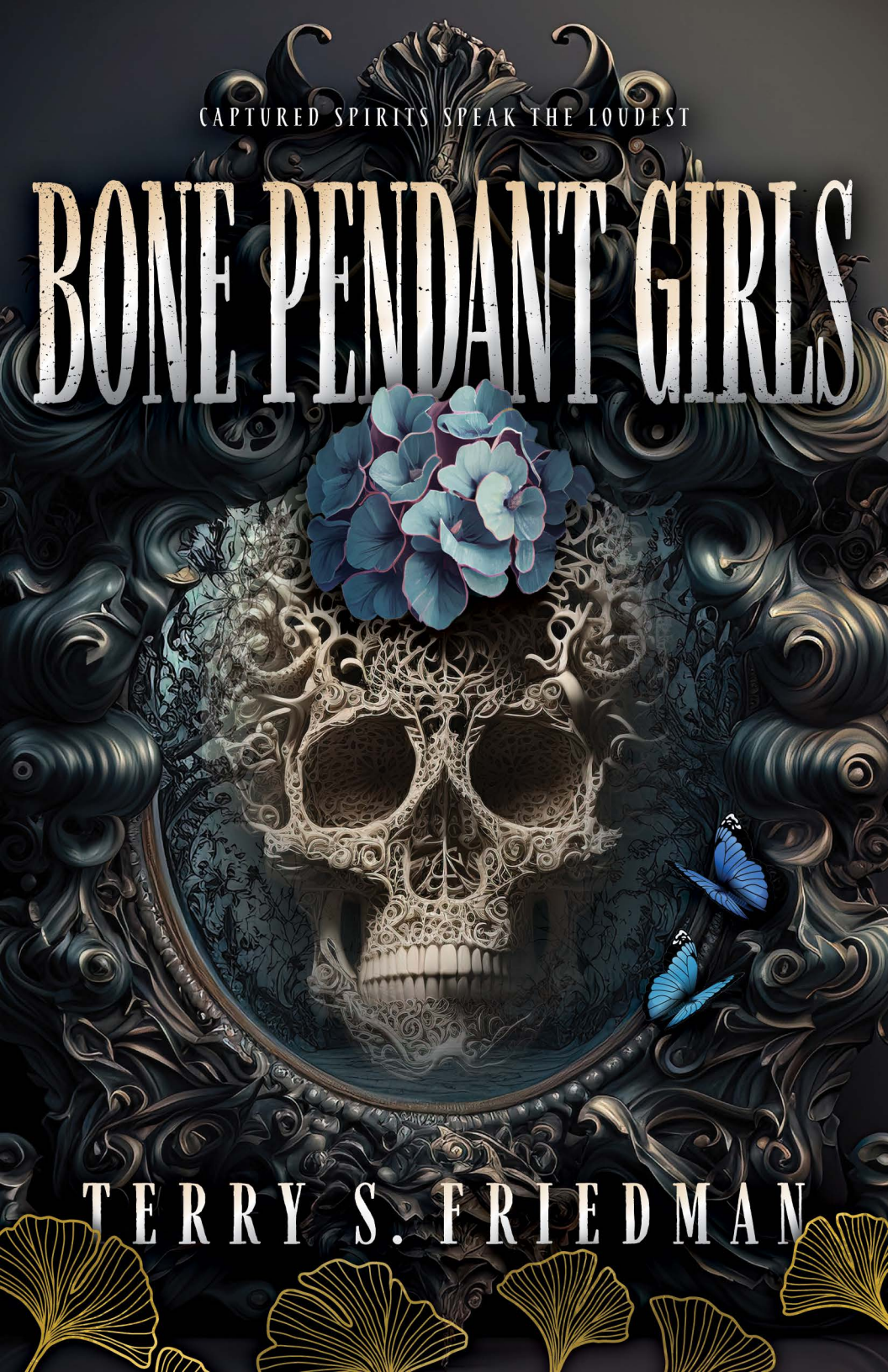


CAPTURED SPIRITS SPEAK THE LOUDEST

BONE PENDANT GIRLS



TERRY S. FRIEDMAN

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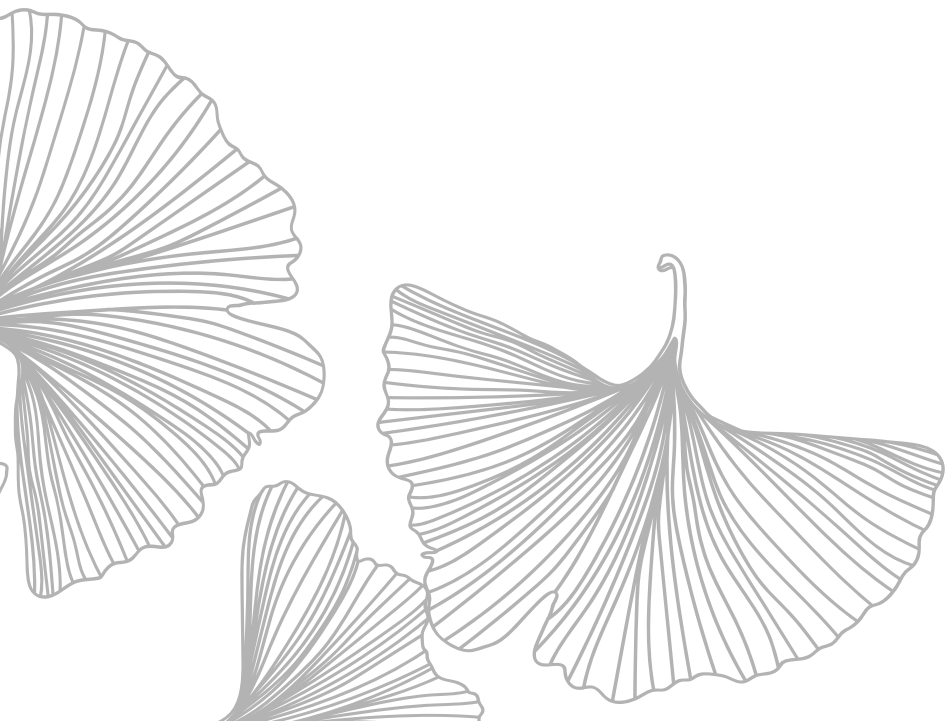
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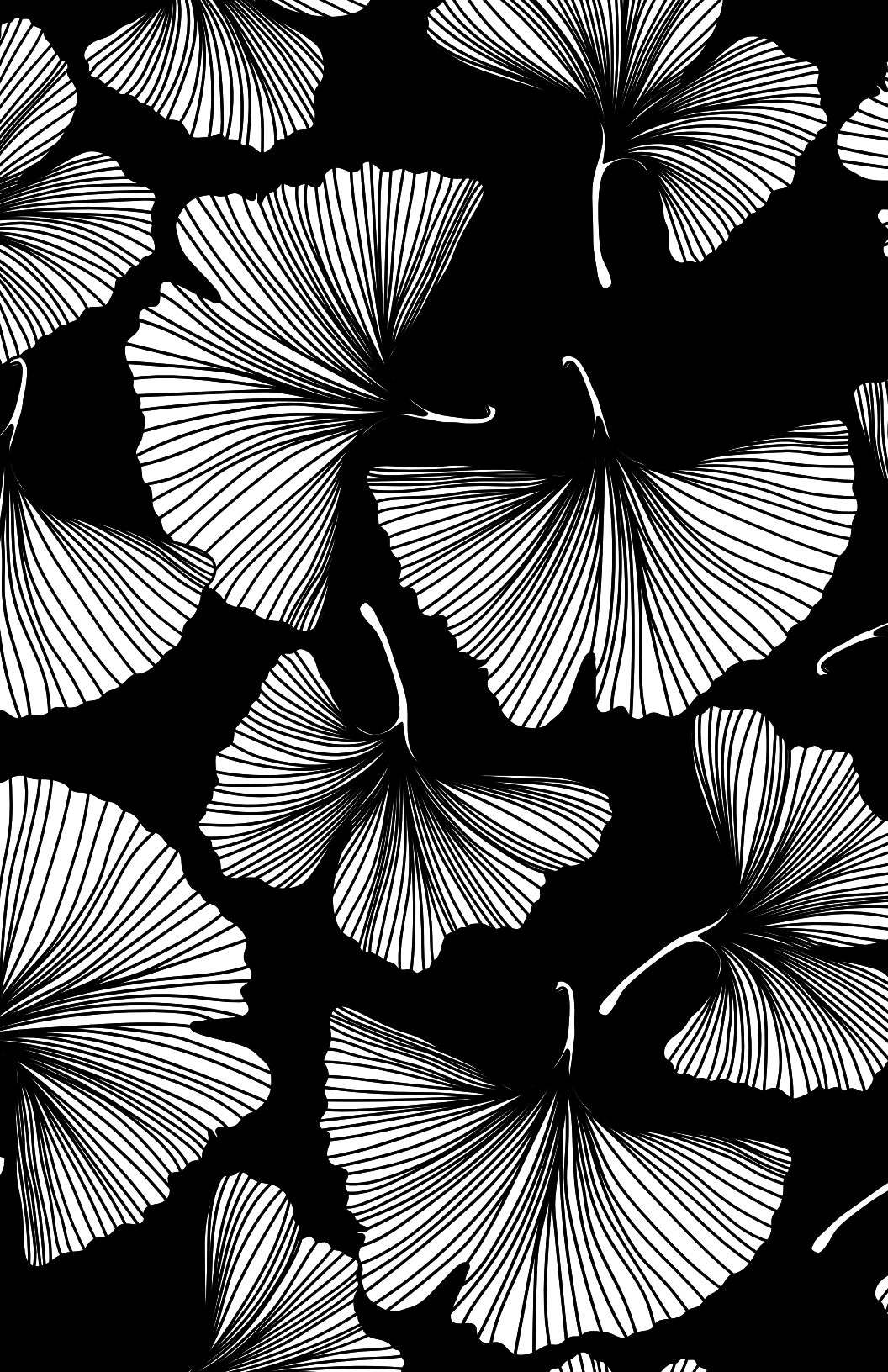


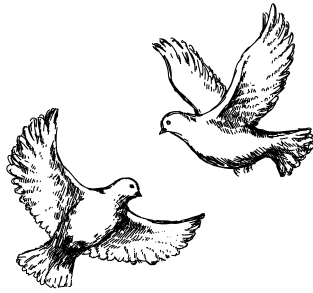
*For my mom, who gifted me a love of words and
to my father, who showed me his humor.*

*For Jessica and Chelie,
who taught me everything I know about mothers and daughters.*

*For the faithful companions at my side during
this writing journey:
Ollie, Babyface, Tiggy, and Fiona.*







CHAPTER ONE

ANDI

November 5, 2022

GINKGO LEAVES DRIFTED DOWN like butterfly wings outside the gem show. They made a yellow carpet on the walkway to the boarding school's gymnasium. Within the swirling leaves, Andi heard a voice. Hollow metallic vowels rustled like leaves in gutters. Consonants scratched and thumped like animals trapped in heating ducts. When the frantic skittering of syllables merged into words, a ghostly plea slipped into her consciousness. *Trapped . . . help.*

"You'll find your way to the Other Side," Andi whispered.

Some days, the spirits refused to leave her in peace. Turning off their voices was like trying to keep a snake in a bird cage. The Shadows had been with her since she was four. Her mother had sent those spirits to watch over her.

But the voice she heard today was not the Shadows. They rarely spoke.

Please . . . help.

Andi opened the door. "I'm not the one to help you," she told the young voice. "I attract bad men."

The ticket ladies took her money and stamped her hand. She scanned the gymnasium from one end to the other. So many vendors. Where to start? Left, past the fossils, to a station called P and S Lapidary. They always had unique pieces.

Please . . . ma'am. The whisper had a faint Southern lilt.

“Aw, come on. Hijack someone else’s head. Go talk to my ex-husband. Convince him to give me all his money.” Andi looked left and right to make sure no one had heard. No need to worry. Odds were good that at least one other person in the crowd talked to herself.

Andi made her way past thirty stations. Past bargain-bound women rummaging in bins of clearance beads, vendors taking orders to set stones, miles of bead strands. She searched for the perfect, happy, shiny piece. Twice around the gym, and that whispering voice drilled its way into her conscience again.

Please . . . buy . . . me.

Cripes! The urgency of that sweet, young voice. She heaved a sigh. “Hope you’re not expensive. Where are you?” Her feet ached and the place was stifling. “Where?”

Over here!

She couldn’t see a damn thing through the shoppers lined up two deep at the stations. Up on her toes, down, from foot to foot sideways. A tiring, annoying dance. Andi shivered despite the stuffy atmosphere.

Here!

Easing her way through the shoppers, she peered into a glass display case. Malachite beads, a red coral branch necklace, two strands of ringed freshwater pearls, and one pendant with a cameo-style face etched in bone.

The vendor with a bolo tie looked like her ninth-grade geography teacher. “Let me open that for you. The face pendants are going fast. Only two left.” He lifted the hinged glass cover.

Me! A loud whisper from the carved pendant with a girl’s face.

Andi looked intently at it. Like most cameos, the face was a side profile. Tendrils of the girl's curly hair escaped an upswept hairdo, framing her face. At first she appeared to be asleep. Then the girl's face turned and studied her too, eyes blinking as if she'd just awakened.

Andi shivered. In the spirit world she'd inherited from her mother, voices whispered. Images in jewelry didn't move.

What now? Andi communicated silently. Subconscious to subconscious.

Hurry, ma'am! Buy . . .

A woman who reeked of Chanel No. 5 snatched the face pendant from the case.

"Excuse me," Andi said. "I came here to buy that piece. It called to me." There now, she'd admitted she was crazy. She gave a lopsided grin and a shrug. "Please, could I have it?"

"Sorry, hon. I got here first." A condescending glance at Andi, and the lady wrapped her bratwurst fingers around the pendant.

"Not to worry, ladies," the seller told them. "I have another like this." He pushed the tablecloth aside, reached under the table, and pulled out a second pendant. "It's stunning, with Namibian Pietersite accents. I could let you have it for the same price."

No . . . me. An adamant voice.

"I don't want the other pendant," Andi said. "I came here for the one in her hand." At the next booth, a woman holding a jade jar stopped talking and stared at her. Andi blushed, knowing she sounded like a petulant child.

Suddenly the woman gasped. "Ouch! Awful thing cut me. It has sharp edges." A thin line of blood welled on Chanel Lady's finger, and she dropped the pendant as if it had bitten her.

Andi caught it before it hit the floor. The silver bezel felt ice cold. Slowly, the face turned, and a young girl's eyes gazed up at her and blinked. *Thanks, ma'am.*

She stared at the pendant. Her mother had warned about spirits attaching to people. If spirits attached, she'd said, terrible things could happen.

Chanel Lady cradled the darker pendant. Not a word was uttered from it. Maybe the tea-stained piece believed in being seen and not heard. Its bone face was younger. Pietersite in the top bezel had chatoyancy, a luminous quality. Thin wavy splotches of browns, blacks, reds, and yellows swirled through dark stone like tiny ice crystals in frozen latte.

"Yes, I like this one better. Excellent quality Pietersite," Chanel Lady said.

"If you don't mind, I'll take her payment first." The seller gave Andi a conspiratorial wink, probably hoping to send the woman to another station before she started a fight with his customers.

"No problem. Is this ivory?" Andi asked. Whether vendors called it mammoth bone or not, elephants didn't deserve to be slaughtered for jewelry.

"Absolutely not. Wouldn't sell it if it was. Cow bone," he assured her.

With a triumphant smirk aimed at Andi, Chanel Lady turned and made her way through the crowd. Subduing an impulse to give her the middle finger, Andi turned back to the pendant. She studied the heart-shaped face, turned it over, and winced at the tiny price sticker. Was she insane? Andi couldn't afford that; she'd lost her teaching job.

"I'll need your address and email." The seller handed her a clipboard.

She'd fought over it and won—no changing her mind now. While he charged her credit card, Andi filled out the form for his mailing list. Then she weaved through shoppers to find a quiet corner by the concessions stand.

What the hell.

The pendant was a dose of credit card therapy. Unzipping the plastic sleeve, she lifted the piece by the bail. Two bezels set in silver. One disk held labradorite, a luminous blue stone with black veins, and in the second bezel, a face carved in bone. She shifted it in her palm, studying the details.

Had light played with the image, making it look like the girl moved? That sweet, innocent face seemed at peace now. It would warm at the touch of her skin.

Once more around the gym, and she left the show, slogging through the field toward her car, wondering how a whispering girl had convinced her to buy a pricey pendant. Yet, she had a sense that something other than her credit-card bill had changed.

An arctic gust tried to snatch her cap. One hand on her hat, the other holding a bag with her purchase, Andi shook off a chill. She remembered the invisible friend who had first spoken to her when she was four and stayed her best friend until middle school.

“You can’t go around talking to yourself,” her father had scolded. A teacher later suggested Andi might be autistic. Infuriated, her father took her to a psychologist. The tests had shown nothing worse than a high IQ. On the way home from the doctor’s office, her mother admitted: “Hearing beyond is sometimes more a nuisance than a gift, really.” Her father gave her a disapproving look.

Andi brushed back unruly strand of caramel brown ringlets and tugged her cap down over her ears.

After crunching through dead grass, she tossed her handbag and the pendant onto the passenger seat and cranked up the CD player. *Come Away With Me*, Norah Jones crooned.

... to ... park, ma’am.

She glanced sideways at the small bag. Sleep deprivation, her father would say, but he’d never been invited to tea parties with ghosts. That was a secret she’d shared with her mother. “The voices will always be there,” she’d told Andi. “You must learn when to turn

them off.” Over the years, Andi had discovered stress and lack of sleep made the “off switch” harder to control.

Cheer up, she told herself. Maybe hallucinations would come next, and some cartoon character would show up at the Wawa and buy her a cup of coffee.

Please . . . park, the plaintive voice whispered.

“It’s winter in Pennsylvania. You are obviously not—why am I talking to a bag?” But the girl was so polite, and Andi was curious about why the pendant had chosen her. Okay, it might not be so cold in the park. Yeah, and maybe gas prices would plummet to a dollar fifty-nine overnight. Not likely, but fresh air might clear her head. She bought decaf at a convenience store, glad that she didn’t see any cartoon characters, and drove to Franklin Township Park.

Finding a parking space was no problem. Andi shared the lot with a white plastic bag that blew from empty space to space like a kite loose from its owner, spiraling, then tumbling down, then lifting again. Like a wisp of memory, nagging, then burying itself for a while.

“Talking pendants,” she muttered, staring out the windshield. Frost had washed the green from the grass, turning the blades to bristly stubbles like a blond buzz cut. Sepia November. Fifteen days to her thirty-fifth birthday. Crusty brown mud puddles. Empty asphalt paths. Purple-gray trees with branches like bony arms reaching for the clouds. Not even a die-hard runner around. Here was a great place for answers to mysteries of the universe. One foot out of the warm car, and she wondered if her sanity had flown south for the winter. She slammed the door and stuffed the small brown parcel into her pocket. “A nice Southern girl with manners wouldn’t bring me out here to freeze to death.”

No voices now. Maybe Southern spirits had a freezing point.

Andi found a bench under some pine trees and sipped steaming coffee, warming her hands on the cup. Two playground swings

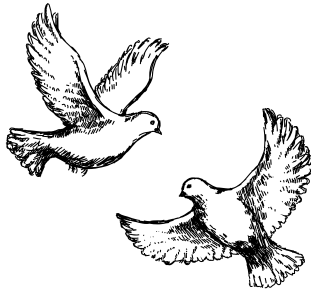
squeaked out a seesawing harmony on their metal chains. It reminded her of winter in a beach town and metal store signs tossed by the wind, of a foghorn wailing in the night, of Lewes, Delaware, her hometown. She hadn't been home in years. Guilt and blame had festered like a wound that wouldn't heal between her mother and father. If only she hadn't been so eager to get into a stranger's car.

All this damn solitude must have turned her brain to scapple. Andi stamped the numbness from her feet. "We're at the park like you wanted. So, why'd you choose me?"

Wind rattled the treetops. A single ginkgo leaf landed on the toe of her sneaker. No ginkgo trees in sight. This time of the year, she'd know if a ginkgo tree was nearby because the fruit smelled like vomit.

"Why the silent treatment?" she asked.

No answer. Angry gray clouds slid across the sun. "Okay, I give up." She got up, pitched the cup into a trash bin, and started back to her car. When she slipped the pendant from its protective sleeve, a raindrop fell on it. Then another drop. And another. The rain tapped out a slow rhythm on the concrete trail, at first like the cadence of drums in a funeral march, later like fingernails slowly drumming on a table, increasing the tempo as if they were impatient. Over the pattering rain, Andi heard whispering, and the pendant girl's lips moved. *Please . . . help.*



CHAPTER TWO

ANDI

ANDI WOKE WITH A START, chest heaving, hair pasted to her neck. Tiny ticking noises against the glass. Sleet mixed with wind. The numbers on her alarm clock glowed big and red: two fifteen. She exhaled.

The nightmare had begun with the slow, rhythmic scrape of a saw.

Back and forth. Back and forth. So real it seemed to be in her room.

“No, please don’t hurt me!” a young girl’s voice pleaded.

Two girls in a place with no furniture, probably a parlor once, grand at one time, she imagined, but dilapidated now with warped wood floors and peeling wallpaper. Embers in an old marble fireplace burned red and smoked, casting eerie shadows. Aluminum foil, candle, lighter, straw, rolling papers, and cigarettes next to a ragged sleeping bag. A girl of no more than fourteen lay on it, twitching. One girl, a junkie. The other held her hand. Her eyes made a circuit between a man with hair that sprouted like weeds and the

junkie in withdrawal. Heart still drumming in her ears, Andi rubbed her eyes. Damn, she hated nightmares. Her father had said she'd outgrow them. When? she wondered, as she plodded downstairs toward the kitchen.

The house felt so empty. Of course, Lance hadn't filled it much when he was there. He'd either been golfing or cheating with some young chick who thought he'd give her a lifetime of happy memories. She'd been that naive girl once, his trophy wife. The happiness drained out of the marriage about as fast as his Jack Daniels bottles emptied. Lance plus Jack equaled a bully. Andi had a lifetime of memories all right, but they weren't happy ones.

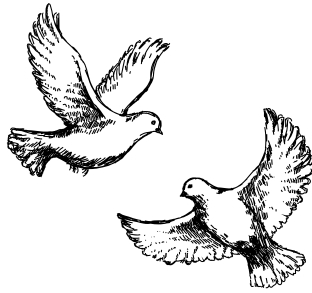
Whispering.

She rubbed her temples. Just a holly branch scratching against the window. In the kitchen, she banged through the pots until she found a kettle. Then she dug the remote from under a sofa cushion and tuned in QVC for company. The host was selling cameos, faces in shell, a helluva lot more expensive than the one she'd bought.

Run away.

Andi eyed the pendant on the table. The girl's spirit seemed attached to her. Her mother never told her what to do if that happened.

The teakettle whistled and she jumped. What the hell was wrong with her? Being alone in the house had never bothered her before. She'd go back to the gem show first thing tomorrow morning and find out where the pendant came from. Maybe then she could turn off the voice or figure out how to help the girl cross over.



CHAPTER THREE

ANDI

“WE’RE GOING FOR A ride,” Andi said as she stuffed the pendant into her pocket. “Back to the gem show. Cripes. Stop talking to jewelry, or you’ll end up in a psych ward.” If that smelly Chanel Lady showed up again, Andi would give her a swift kick with her hiking boots. A glance at the thermometer, and she grabbed a down jacket and headed for the car. Her ten-year-old Pathfinder powered up, trailing happy clouds of exhaust: fossil fuel glory.

Traffic was light for a Sunday morning. People had either gone to church, or they were sleeping in. The white Gem Show sign came up on the right. She turned and drove past the building. Boys in neon safety jackets waved her into the parking lot. Her tires bumped over the field, past orange pylons and into a space next to cattails.

After last night’s hard frost, the grass reminded her of a stale Krispy Kreme donut. It crunched under her boots. She took a shortcut across a small stream. A lace of ice covered the rocks, but Andi managed to get across without slipping. When the doors opened, she found the vendor with a bolo tie at his station. Big smile.

Apparently he liked repeat business.

“Interested in that darker pendant from yesterday? Lady returned it. Said it gave her a headache.” He laughed. “First time anyone returned my jewelry for that reason. More likely, it was that perfume of hers that triggered the migraine.”

“She did leave a trail of Chanel.” Andi wrinkled her nose. “Is that the only face pendant you have?”

“Sold two the first day. This is the last one,” he said. “You like turquoise?” He took a concha necklace from the case and handed it to her. “Sleeping Beauty turquoise. That mine’s closed now.”

“Pretty, but I’ll take the face pendant.” The quiet one, she thought, but didn’t add. Andi returned the concha and handed him her credit card. Now the cost would equal her car-insurance bill. “Do you have the artist’s business card? I’d like to commission some pieces,” she lied.

He passed the credit-card reader over the counter. “Wish I did. I could sell a lot more of these. Bought it from a fellow who sells his pieces on E-market.com. Site doesn’t allow any sharing of personal information about sellers or buyers.”

“Was the E-market person selling other things?” Andi asked. “What’s his online name?”

“Items to go dot net,” he said, handing her the package. “Hate to give away my trade secrets, but I find some pretty unique pieces online. Mostly, I buy from the Tucson show.”

“Someday, maybe I’ll make it to the Tucson Show. Thanks.” She hurried toward the door, past the man in a red jacket who took tickets, the ladies with the cash box at the front tables, then outside. Andi hopped from stone to stone across the stream and back onto the field.

If an artist crafted beautiful jewelry that took hours to carve, he’d make damn sure people knew where to buy it. Something wasn’t right.

Andi started the car and sped down Route 30, eyes peeled for cops. Recently, she'd gotten a three-point moving violation for running a light that went from yellow to red entirely too fast. Her best friend, Fiona, called it an orange light. Fortunately, no sign of a police officer today. No sign of terrible things happening except for her next credit-card bill. The new pendant was quiet.

Next stop, the Warehouse Club, for Fiona's favorite, Hostess cupcakes. An hour later, cart full of paper towels, cupcakes, and frozen foods, Andi passed the checkout and wheeled through the first set of doors. Pinned to a bulletin board were missing persons' posters. Mostly young girls. Jennifer, Kristen, Mariah. She pushed the cart closer and squinted. Mariah looked familiar. A former student? Maybe. Andi had taught English for five years before enrollment at the private school dropped and she was laid off. Outside, she unloaded her goods and returned the cart. Where had she seen that girl? Brain churning like a computer stuck on a command, she slid into the driver's seat, started the engine, and backed out.

Our mamas . . . sad, the Southern voice whispered.

"My mother is—holy shit! The pendant!" She pulled forward and parked. Fishing out her membership card, she headed for the bulletin board inside the building. Andi held the pendant next to Mariah's photo. Hell of a coincidence, that resemblance. A bitter wind roared like a train through the doors. Andi shivered and wrapped her fingers protectively around the carved bone face.

If anybody could find the truth about the girl, Fiona would. She was the diva of internet diving. Andi hurried back to the car and put her cell on speakerphone. When Fiona answered, she explained about the pendants and their resemblance to the missing persons posters and asked her to find out what she could about a Mariah Culverton.

"Of all the people in the world," Fiona mumbled, "somehow I got a friend who hears dead people. Why is that?"

Andi made her voice sound sultry. “Because you and I are beautiful and desirable women and other women don’t like us.”

Fiona laughed. “Yeah, right. We’re crazy, is more like it.”

“You might be crazy, but I’m not.”

“I’m too tired to argue.” She yawned to make her point. “Look, my boyfriend Doug has this friend who graduated from the FBI Academy. He’s a private eye now. If I set something up between you two, will you let me sleep?”

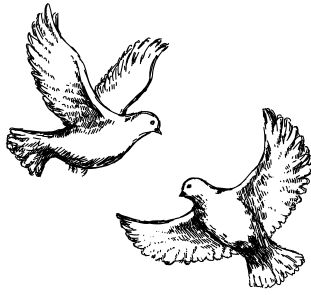
“Okay, but no matchmaking,” Andi added.

“Good. Now you and your whispering pendant drive home and stay away from orange lights.” She disconnected, and Andi tapped the red icon.

How nerdy could a former FBI agent be? She grunted, remembering Fiona’s last match for her, a classical guitarist. If he’d been a house—and he was six-foot-nine—the man would’ve been listed as a fixer upper. She never did figure out how anyone who wore glasses that thick could see tiny notes on a music sheet.

She pulled into her driveway and gasped. Computer components, clothes, and jewelry littered the front lawn like a flea market on Black Friday. “Son of a bitch!” Andi slid out of the car and looked around. The upstairs bedroom window was wide open, with the curtain flapping in the wind. “What the hell?” Several cloth bags of groceries in one hand, she rushed toward the house and turned the key in the lock. “Lance?” she called.

No answer. She listened intently for movement. No sign of an intruder. Andi set her handbag and the grocery bags down in the office and was ready to get the rest of the groceries from her car when she heard something moving in the house. Grabbing her field-hockey stick from the closet, she hid behind the office door.



CHAPTER FOUR

ANDI

SOFT, SLOW FOOTSTEPS IN the foyer. Heart pounding in her ears, Andi propped the hockey stick against the office wall and dug through her purse for the sharpened credit card her mother had taught her how to use. No, that would require close contact. Maybe keys to his eyes. Still too close if he had a gun. All she had was a stupid can of mace that had probably dried up two years ago, and she'd left her phone in the car. A break-in during daylight hours. What kind of brazen nutjob would do that? She grabbed the hockey stick and held her breath, waiting.

A tentative female voice called, "Andi? Everything all right?"

"I'm in the office." Andi exhaled, recognizing the South Philly accent of her nosy neighbor. She stuffed the mace in her pocket and propped the hockey stick against a bookcase. "Gladys! You scared the crap out of me!" Andi shouted.

The fiftysomething woman wasn't competing for super model in her puffer coat, baggy Flyers jersey, frayed Keds, and capris that might have fit twenty pounds ago. She glanced from the hockey

stick to Andi. Eyes recording like a video camera, Gladys was probably cataloging items for her next gossip. “I was just concerned, hon, because computers and clothes and even your jewelry case came flying out the window. I would’ve called the police, except I thought it might be Lance, maybe a little drunk.”

“Was it Lance?” Andi asked.

“Didn’t see his car, didn’t really see anyone,” Gladys said. “Couldn’t find my glasses.”

God almighty, give me patience with this woman, Andi thought. “Call the cops if anything looks suspicious!” It didn’t hurt to have a neighbor keeping an eye on her house even if she was mining for fresh gossip. “Ah, divorce.” Andi raised her hands in a gesture of despair. “It makes people stupid. You really scared me. Will you help bring my stuff inside?”

“Well.” She licked her lips. Gladys’s pointed nose twitched like a dog on a good scent. Finally, she nodded. “Of course. A woman needs female company at a time like this. Right, hon?” They walked outside together.

Gladys headed straight for the jewelry armoire. When Andi caught up with her, she closed the armoire door. Mouth gaping, the gossip snatched Andi’s engagement ring off the lawn and was giving it an appraisal.

“VVS1. Platinum. Point eight seven of a carat.” Andi filled in for her.

Gladys looked up. “Cheap son of a gun couldn’t go for a full carat.” She sniffed.

Andi picked up one end of the armoire. Gladys lifted the other. Panting, they lugged it inside, then tramped from the yard to the house, stacking Andi’s looted possessions in a pitiful pile in the living room.

With each new trip, Andi was more annoyed. Now she understood what people meant when they said a break-in made them feel

violated. Anything small enough to fit through her window had been on display in her front yard.

On the third trip, Gladys put a hand on her hip. “Take Lance to the cleaners, hon. You let me know if he gives you any more trouble. I got a twenty-two that’ll set him straight.”

Andi grinned. “By the time I’m finished with him, he’ll be living on a steam vent under a cardboard box.”

“That’s the spirit.” Gladys’s slap on the back nearly toppled her.

She talked Gladys into helping her get the rest of the groceries from her car, and they headed inside. Now Gladys could add Andi’s breakfast choices to her gossip. In return for a cup of coffee and fodder for juicy gossip, her neighbor vowed she’d keep an eye on the house. “Sorry I didn’t see anybody. Musta parked his car around the corner like Lance used to do when he had another woman in the car.” Gladys clasped a hand over her mouth. “Sorry, you didn’t need to hear that.”

Her neighbor probably kept an eye on many homes and her fingers on a cell phone keypad in case a good scandal arose. No doubt Andi had provided a scandal a few times.

When Gladys finally decided to go home and check her roast, Andi escorted her to the front door and frowned at the pile of belongings.

She returned to the office and dug a tablet out of her handbag. The NamUs website had just come up when she heard a car stop outside. Seconds later, the doorbell rang. An older man on her porch was wearing a white shirt, black tie, shiny loafers, and a squeaky-clean smile.

Just what she needed—someone who wanted to save her soul. Andi gritted her teeth, mentally fortified herself against an evangelical pitch, and cracked open the door.

“Look. I’m druid. We worship trees. Don’t plan to convert me unless you grow leaves and sway with the wind. Have a nice day.”

Then she noticed the telltale bulge of a gun holster under his jacket. Since when did missionaries start packing guns and smelling like cigars? Cripes. If you didn't repent, they'd shoot hellfire and brimstone into you? "I'm closing the door now. Bye."

He'd wedged a foot against the doorjamb. "Mrs. Wyndham, your husband owes me money, and he ain't answering the phone." He looked over her shoulder into the house. "Is he home?"

Her phone played the *Jurassic Park* theme. She held up a finger and answered it. "Hey, Andi. You need to come on over. Got a surprise for you. Wear something decent, woman. No. Forget that. Wear something your mama wouldn't approve of."

"Fiona!" she protested, but she'd disconnected, which left Andi to deal with the man at her door.

The squeaky-clean smile was gone. He stood in her doorway, patient as a turkey buzzard waiting to land on roadkill. She studied him sideways.

"I'm on my way." She hung up. "Gotta go. Best friend needs me. She's ready to deliver the twins."

"Mrs. Wyndham, your husband owes me *a lot* of money," he said. "Where is he?"

"He doesn't live here anymore." Anything to get rid of the guy. Andi recited a number where she said Lance could be reached, and he doggedly jotted it down on a crumpled receipt from his jacket pocket.

"And you are?"

"Joe Clark. You tell Lance if I don't get my money, somebody's gonna get hurt."

Andi narrowed her eyes and put all the steel she could into her voice. "I'm not responsible for Lance's debts. Get off my property." She slammed the door and watched behind a curtain until he'd pulled away in his black Taurus. Andi was a lot of things, but not stupid enough to invite some pistol-packing old fart into her house.

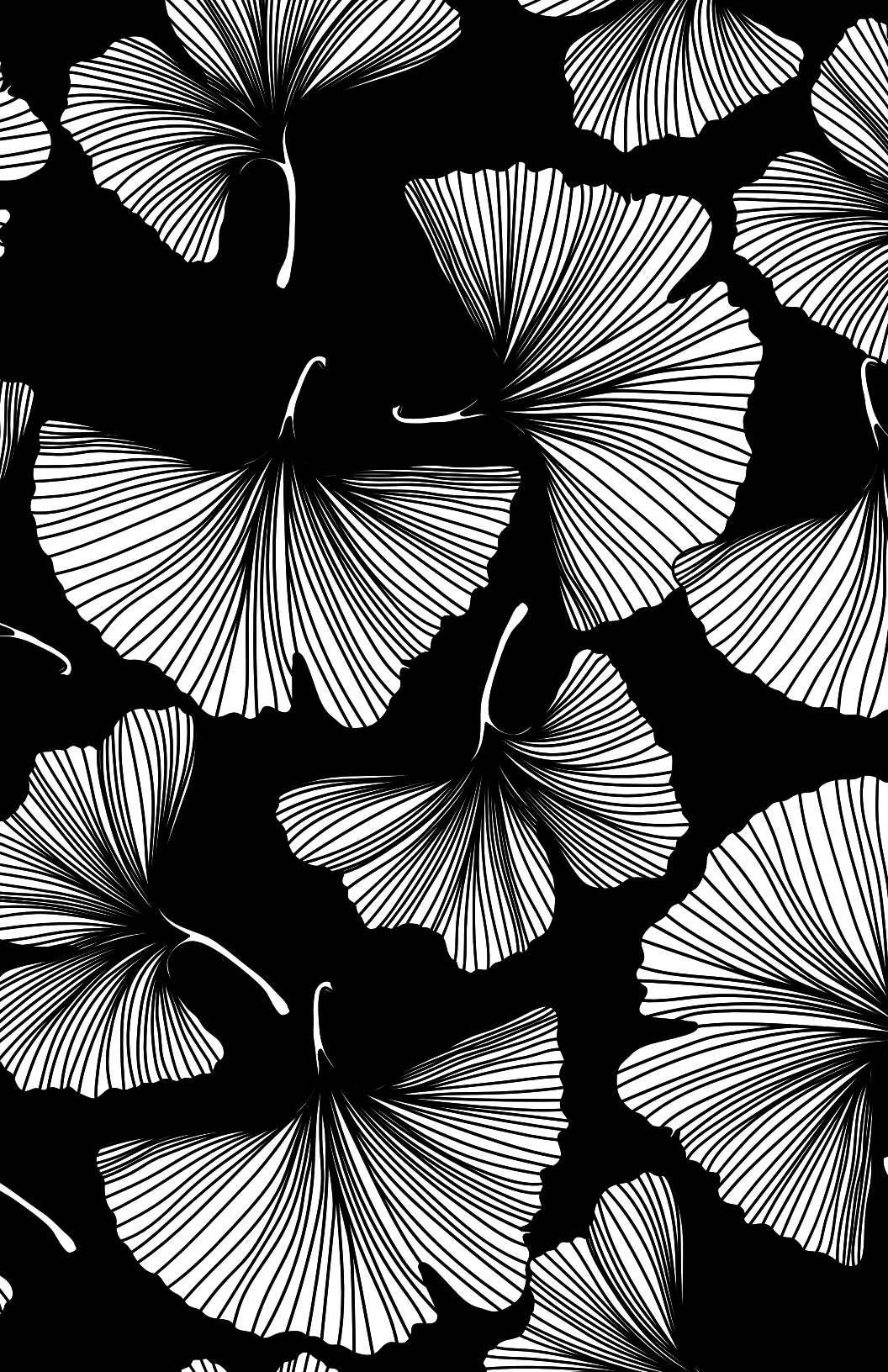
Eyes glued to the street, she keyed in the police number and reported Joe Clark.

Up the stairs and toward her closet she went. Wear something your mother wouldn't approve of. If she showed up in a little black dress, Andi would look like a complete idiot. Or a slut. No, maybe a low-cut sweater. To show off what? Why didn't her heart stop pounding? The prospect of some blind date at Fiona's? Not likely.

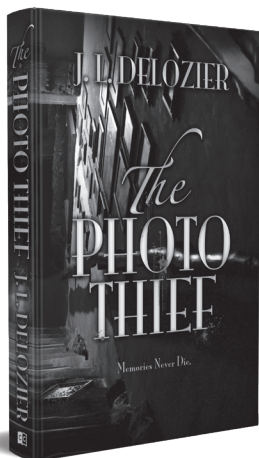
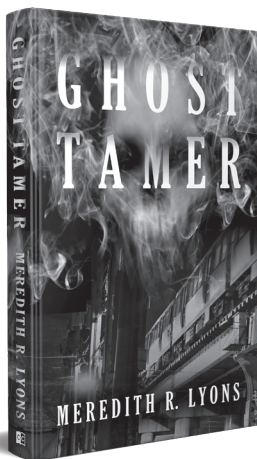
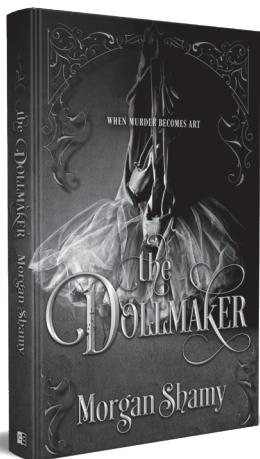
Wait! Dammit! A stranger had threatened her, said somebody was gonna get hurt. What if she'd pissed him off and he came back? What if he broke in tonight and—the hell with dress to impress whomever Fiona had dug up. She grabbed her car keys, went outside, and locked the house. Fiona had guns at her place.

Andi climbed into her SUV. She'd blown off that man successfully, learned to be single just fine. And she didn't need Fiona to arrange a mercy date.

Two streets from Fiona's house, a back tire started thumping, and the car listed. Cursing, she got out, glared at the tire, then kicked it. Mastered single life, yes. Changing tires, no. Andi checked her reflection in the side mirror. Long, caramel brown ringlets of hair, disheveled. She finger-combed the coils so she didn't look like a Portuguese water dog. Blue eyes, bluer than usual due to the polarized mirror. Andi looked down at the paint-stained jeans underneath her coat. Oh, who the hell cared? She ran the rest of the way to Fiona's place.



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BEWARE THE FISHERMAN

Andi Wyndham has communicated with spirits since she was a kid. When a bone pendant carved into the likeness of a girl's face calls to her at a gem show in Pennsylvania, she can't resist buying it and a sister piece. When she discovers the girls are missing runaways and the pendants are made of human bone, Andi is drawn into a mystery that will force her to confront her gifts, her guilt, and the ghosts haunting her.

Pendant Girls Mariah and Bennie urge Andi to find a man they call "Fisherman," a master of disguise. Teaming up with a handsome private eye and a South Carolina sheriff, Andi must find the girls' bodies and put their souls to rest, before the Fisherman casts his deadly net to trap Andi.



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