

The deep endearment of a woman can alter your direction in a split second. She has the power to change how you view the world and how you want her to view the world. When she captures your heart, it is her and only her you live and would die for.

My want for a woman was only to satisfy my own sexual needs and desires. Love was never an option. Love to me was as an addiction, and I had no desire to be addicted to anything. Relationships were a form of slavery, a way of saying ‘I am chained to this person.’

Shallow, arrogant and completely self-centered, I never thought I was capable of acquiring any real feelings for a woman. That is, until I met her—Jenna Kramer.

The front door bursts open and Detective Mason rushes in, followed by an army of police officers.

He immediately sees Ben Kramer lying on the floor, bloody and bruised. He smirks as he walks over to Ben, placing his hand on his arm and helping him up.

“What happened to you? You look like a truck hit you,” Detective Mason says to Ben with a sarcastic chuckle. Ben yanks his arm from Detective Mason.

“Take your hands off of me,” Ben sneers.

Detective Mason seems humored by Ben’s reaction and grabs hold of his arm again, yanking it with force.

“You ain’t going nowhere,” Detective Mason says sternly. Ben exhales as he looks down.

Eric and Matt release their holds on me and I instantly rush over to Jenna. I place my hands on her arms, examining her from head to toe, checking for bruises, cuts—belt marks.

“Are you okay?” I stare into her eyes as I await her answer. She stares back at me with that sweet, innocent half-lipped smile, the smile I adore so much, giving me instant relief.

I bend to kiss her and as my lips almost touch hers, a look of fear encompasses her face—something behind me has her complete attention. I turn my head slightly to see what her eyes are gazing upon.

“She is mine! Forever—forever!” Ben screams. Before I can react, I feel Jenna’s hands around my arms as she twirls me around so quickly, my head spins.

Everything is so quick, but yet so slow. I hear a popping sound and then feel Jenna’s body fall on mine. I quickly gaze over at Ben and can see the pistol still pointed towards Jenna and smoke billowing from the end of it.

Detective Mason knocks the pistol from Ben’s hand and slams him to the ground.

I look down at Jenna. Her eyes stare out aimlessly as her breath quickens. My legs begin to weaken as her body slumps helplessly into my arms. I slowly slide to the ground, cradling her close to me.

“Jenna—Jenna!” I yell frantically. She gasps as she struggles to speak. I stroke her head gently as tears fill my eyes.

“I love you,” she whispers. I gently raise her face to mine, holding her close.

Everything is instantly still, silent. So silent I can hear the whisper of her breath and the slowing beat of her heart. My hands twitch as they tremble and every nerve and muscle in my body is frozen—numb. The reality is still fiction in my mind, even though I can see the trickle of blood creeping down my arm that flows freely from her back. Her eyes close and I panic.

“No...please, Jenna, open your eyes.” I shake her lightly, my mind now alert to the reality of what has occurred.

“Please—please, baby, wake up,” I plead with heartfelt desperation. But she does not respond. She lies limp in my arms.

Detective Mason cuffs Ben as he lies on the ground. Then, grabbing him by his cuffed wrists, he lifts him up, handing him to two officers. He rushes over to me and kneels down. He reaches his arm out to touch Jenna and I pull her back protectively.

“No. Don’t touch her,” I snap. He withdraws his hand and stands. Two more officers walk over, standing next to Detective Mason.

I force myself to my feet with her still cradled in my arms. I am so distraught I push through Detective Mason and the officers, not wanting anyone to touch her. I run out of the house and out to the road, screaming, without destination.

I can hear the sirens and see them flashing as the ambulance races up to us. Two EMS workers step out of the ambulance and over to me. They reach for Jenna and I back away, clutching her close to me like a newborn baby.

Detective Mason rushes outside with two officers. One of the EMS workers holds his hands up, stopping them in their tracks. He slowly walks up to me. I bury my face in Jenna's shoulder, not wanting to look at him. As he walks closer, I start to back away and he holds his hands up.

"It's okay—it's okay. I know you're scared. I would be scared too. But all we want to do is help her." Scared? I am petrified, paranoid. Witnessing the woman you love being shot by a crazed lunatic will do that to you. I don't trust anyone; I feel the only way I can keep Jenna safe is to keep her with me.

"No. I won't let her go."

Eric rushes to the side of the EMS worker, whispering into his ear. The EMS worker faces me.

"Andrew. I know you want to protect Jenna, but she is hurt really bad and needs our help. I'm going to walk to the back of the ambulance and open the doors. I need you to bring her to us, so

we can get her the help she needs.” I don’t know what to do. I am confused, afraid. I look down at Jenna; she is so eerily still. I could never forgive myself if I lost her because I didn’t get her the help she needed.

The EMS workers turn and walk to the back of the ambulance, opening the doors. One of them glances over at me. I exhale and slowly walk towards them. I stand near the open doors.

“Please, Andrew—hand her to us,” the EMS worker says to me. I hesitate for a moment, holding her close to me.

“Andrew,” the EMS worker says to me softly.

I kiss her forehead and hand her to the EMS workers.

They lay her gently on the gurney inside. I jump into the ambulance and one of the workers closes the door.

I sit near the back, helplessly watching as they attempt to stabilize Jenna. One of the EMS workers starts an IV on her as the other places an oxygen mask across her face.

One of the EMS workers moves from her right side. I scurry over, sitting beside her, placing my hand on hers. The other EMS worker sits silently, checking her pulse. I move closer to her face.

“I’m here, baby,” I whisper to her. I feel so helpless as she lies there so still, a mask across her face, helping her to breathe. I would give anything to switch places with her right at this moment.

The drive to the hospital in the ambulance seems like an eternity. I stare down at Jenna, pleading for a glimmer of hope, a flutter of an eyelash, a move of her hand, but nothing; she just lies there, so deathly still. The ambulance pulls into the hospital and they rush Jenna out of the ambulance and through the outside doors. They run with urgency, pushing the gurney quickly, with me trailing behind. As we reach the two big metal doors to the emergency department, a nurse stops me.

“You can’t go in there, sir,” the nurse says to me.

“She needs me,” I tell her with desperation.

“Please, sir. Have a seat in the waiting room. I promise as soon as I know what’s going on, I will tell you,” the nurse states softly. My mind says ignore the nurse go through those doors. Jenna needs me. But before I even have a chance, two security guards walk up and stand in front of the metal doors, preventing me from going through them.

Hesitantly, I walk over to the waiting area and sit. I run my hands through my hair frantically, as the one horrific thought rushes through my mind. What if I lose her? I shake my head, attempting to free my mind: the very thought of living without Jenna is not a thought I can have. A life without her would be death to my heart. An existence I could never live.

I pace the floors of the waiting room frantically, attempting to clear my mind and think positively. I stop near the window, standing as I

stare out of it. It's at that moment when a memory flashes through my mind, of the first time I ever saw Jenna Kramer.

Dressed in a gray skirt suit, she walks timidly into my office. She is curvy but thin, with beautiful hazel eyes and dark brown hair piled neatly on top of her head. I am instantly drawn to her. She sits shyly on the chair in front of my desk and smiles nervously at me. She holds a stack of papers in her hands.

"Are those for me?" I ask her, pointing to the papers in her hand. She nods her head.

"Yes." She hands the papers to me. I can feel her stare on me as I gaze through the papers. I tilt my eyes up, looking at her. She looks barely 20 years old, far too young to be married to a senator.

"You don't look old enough to be a senator's wife," I blurt out. She looks at me, a little shocked by my statement.

"Excuse me?" she murmurs softly. Her innocent eyes bring a chuckle to my lips and I can't help but continue.

"I don't believe I was speaking in a foreign tongue," I respond with sarcasm. She seems even more astounded by my comment and leans forward.

"Your comment is very offensive, Mr. Carington," she tells me abruptly. I truly regret my comment instantly.

"My apologies, Mrs. Kramer, if I offended you. It was not meant to be offensive, just an honest opinion," I say, attempting to ease her

mind. She sits back on the chair. I gaze down at the paperwork again. I hear a light exhale from her mouth and I tilt my eyes up again, looking at her. She is frowning.

“I have really upset you, haven’t I?”

“No, I’m fine.”

I place my pen and the papers down on the desk.

“I think I have everything I need.” I fold my hands and sit forward.

“Good,” Jenna says as she stands up quickly. Why is she in such a rush?

“Mrs. Kramer, do you have ants in your pants?” I ask her with a chuckle.

“Mr. Carington, why is it that you find it necessary to be so bold with me?” Her blazing eyes bring out a sensuality that arouses me instantly.

“Bold? Well I don’t believe I was being bold, Mrs. Kramer. I was just having a conversation.” She nods her head and her innocent expression returns.

“Mr. Carington, I am in a rush. If you need nothing further from me, I would like to go.”

“You are free to go, after you tell me how old you are,” I say with a smile.

“Why is my age so important to you?” she asks me with irritation.

“Why is hiding your age so important to you?” I tap my pen on the desk, awaiting an answer, never letting my eyes leave hers. I lift my leg, placing it over my knee. I can see I make her nervous. So I purposely slide my pen across my lip slowly. She swallows hard and I smile, as I can see she is just as attracted to me as I am to her.

“I’m 22.” She sits back down on the chair.

“I was right: you are far too young to be a senator’s wife. You had to be quite young when you married. How old were you when you married?”

“More questions. What does my age or marriage have to do with the paperwork I have given you?”

“Absolutely nothing. I am just making conversation.” She exhales and sits back.

“I was 18.”

“I am correct again. You were barely out of high school when you married... way too young.”

“Actually, I was a senior in high school. I married Ben in March, and graduated that June,” she retorts. I shake my head.

“Why would your parents allow you to marry so young?”

“I was raised by my sister and brother-in-law. Ben and I eloped, marrying without their knowledge.”

“They must have been quite upset by your decision. I know that I would not have been too happy if my sister had run off and married so young.”

“They were not happy about it.”

“Senator Kramer has to be in his 30s at least.”

“He is 39.”

“That is quite an age difference.”

“Love has no age limitations, Mr. Carington.”

“Touché, Mrs. Kramer,” I say with a grin. She gazes at me and I lightly bite my bottom lip, and happily smile as she reacts with a light gasp.

“Do you have any siblings, Mr. Carington?”

“No. I am an only child.”

“Oh, that explains why you are the way you are.”

“The way I am? I don’t quite understand, Mrs. Kramer.”

“You are the most judgmental man I have ever met.” Her angry comment brings a chuckle out of me. Does she not realize how unbelievably alluring she is when she’s angry?

“You have been able to come to that conclusion in just this short conversation we have had?”

“Yes.”

“Well, Mrs. Kramer, I am also very self-centered and selfish,” I respond proudly. She shakes her head.

I’d had my fair share of women, but never had I had a want as deep as I had for Jenna Kramer. There was something different about her.

As I gaze at her, questions pop in my mind, questions I had never wanted to know about a woman before. Did she work? Go to school? How did she spend her free time?

Don’t misunderstand my intentions. I desired her, and thoughts of her body wrapped around mine brought a smile to my face. But my interest in her was a little deeper and a little more than just one night of pleasure.

I need to make sure I will see her again. So I do what any man would do in that situation. I reach to my business-card holder, situated in the corner of my desk, retrieving one from it.

“Here is my card; call me if you have any questions,” I say to her as I place it in front of her. She picks up the card and places it in her purse.

“Thank you.”

“It has my personal cell-phone number on it. Please use it if you need it. I make myself available 24/7 to all my clients,” I say with a grin. I can tell by her expression she will call.

She stands once again.

“Thank you for your time, but I really must go,” she states firmly.

“Of course. Please inform your husband that I will have the paperwork ready for him by the earlier part of next week.” I bend my head, and again start reading through the papers in front of me. As she reaches the door, this strange nervousness fills me.

“Mrs. Kramer,” I shout. She turns around and walks back over to my desk. Not knowing what to do now that she is standing before me, I smile at her and say the first thing that comes to my mind.

“You have a wonderful day,” I say with a smile. She exhales with frustration and stomps away.

A hand touching my shoulder interrupts the memory. I turn, and Eric is standing with Matt behind me.

“What’s going on?” Eric asks me.

“I don’t know. They took her in the back, and the nurse told me that she would let me know when she heard something,” I tell him. I look down at my hands, and it’s when I first notice they are covered in Jenna’s blood. I gaze at the bottom of my shirt and notice it is also blood-soaked.

I walk to the bathroom; Eric and Matt follow. I place my hands under the bathroom faucet and watch the blood run down the drain as the water washes it away.

My head begins to spin as my mind flashes back to the shooting. My breath quickens as I see Ben Kramer's face. I place my hands on the sink for support.

"I'm going to kill him. I'm going to kill Ben Kramer," I murmur aloud.

"You don't mean that," Matt says as he walks closer to me. I regain my composure and shake the excess water off. I grasp a few paper towels from the dispenser and dry my hands.

"I mean it," I say with disgust.

"Andrew, you are just very angry right now," Eric chimes in. I turn towards Eric.

"I am past angry," I answer calmly. I discard the used paper towels in the garbage and walk towards the bathroom door.

I walk to the front and to the nurse, to get an update on Jenna's condition. The nurse informs me of what she can. Jenna is still alive, but has lost an extreme amount of blood and they are currently giving her bags of donated blood to help stabilize her.

I thank the nurse and walk down the hall towards the exit door.

"Where are you going?" Eric yells to me worriedly.

"I need to be alone right now," I tell him. I exit out the door.

I walk to a small wrought-iron bench situated against the front of the building. I sit down and run my hands through my hair frantically, attempting to calm myself down.

I don't smoke often, only when I am extremely stressed, which is right now. I take a cigarette and a lighter from my shirt pocket and light up. I take a puff and close my eyes as I exhale the smoke.

I stare up at the clear sky and my mind drifts back to another memory of Jenna.

I am sitting at the dining room table, finishing my dinner, when my cell rings. I look at the caller ID and see it's Jenna. I answer it immediately.

"Andrew Carington?" I answer.

"Mr. Carington, I believe I want a divorce," Jenna says slurring. It is obvious to me immediately that she has been drinking.

"Mrs. Kramer, I am not married to you," I respond with a chuckle.

"I meant Ben, I want to divorce Ben." She snuffles sadly. There is silence as she sobs with grief, and her sadness tugs at my heart strings.

"Jenna, where are you?" I whisper with concern.

"The cliff by my house," she whispers back. I instantly think of Ben.

"Where is your husband?"

“I don’t know,” she murmurs sadly. She clears her throat.

“Mr. Carington, are you going to help me get a divorce or not?” she says sternly. I laugh at her stern tone.

“I will do whatever you want me to do,” I respond quickly. I wait for a response, then I hear a busy sound. I hang up my cell and call hers again. It goes straight to voicemail. I do this three more times, each time the same thing: I get her voicemail.

This uneasy feeling overwhelms me, this worry I have never felt before. It is not in my nature to care about the welfare of a woman, much less a married woman, but with Jenna it was always different.

I grasp my car keys and drive to the cliff.

I pull in next to her car and step out. The night is hovering about but I can still see her lying on the grass. I walk up to her and she sits up smiling, a bottle of Tequila firmly in her hands. I sit down next to her.

“Hey, are you okay?” I ask her softly.

“I’m great,” she responds with a giggle. She takes a swig out of her bottle then lies back on the grass. I lean over her.

“I think you might want to stop drinking,” I tell her with concern. She sits up and her face is so close to mine, I can smell the aroma of the Tequila as she breathes.

“You’re so beautiful, Andrew,” she whispers. I feel myself being drawn to her, but I resist and pull my face away, looking down.

“You are so drunk, Jenna,” I respond to her. She places her hand under my chin, lifting my eyes to hers.

“No,” she says with seriousness. Before I can react, her lips are on mine. The kiss is more than I imagined, gentle yet fiery, lustful yet tender. Our lips part and I softly caress her tongue with mine. The desire burns so deep within me, it leaves me breathless. But my conscience interrupts. Not wanting to take advantage of her in her drunken state, I gently push her away and turn to face the cliff.

“Jenna, you don’t want to do this,” I say to her, distraught.

“I have never wanted to do something so badly in my life, Andrew,” she says. I turn to face her. “Take me home with you—please.” She stares at me with a sad, innocent need. I can’t resist. I stand up and extend my hand to her. She gladly takes it and we walk to my car.

I can’t help but stare at her as we drive towards my house; she’s so beautiful.

I pull into my driveway and walk over to her side of the car, opening the door. She steps out and I close the door, then I walk up to my house as she follows.

I open the front door and she walks in. She stands staring at me for direction. I walk towards my bedroom and she follows.

I place my keys on the nightstand and turn to face her, and she is standing close—so close. She stares into my eyes and then places her hands on each side of my t-shirt, carefully sliding it off.

My hands feel clammy as I begin to sweat profusely. I am nervous—really nervous. She places her hands on the button of my jeans, slowly unbuttoning them. She bends as she yanks on the sides of my jeans, pulling them down, along with my boxers. I step out of my pants and boxers and stand before her, naked. She smiles slightly as she stares at my erection, then slides her dress off.

I stare at her clad only in a corset. The corset accents her perfect curves and lifts her flawless breasts. Her skin shimmers as the light gleams down on it, so delicate, soft and beautiful. She walks closer to me and I can't help but want to touch her. I place my hands on her shoulders and slide them down her arms. Then I bend my head slightly, placing tender kisses on her shoulders. She moans as she clutches my back, inviting my lips. I slide my lips across her neck and nibble on her ear.

“Oh, Andrew,” she moans. My name from her lips and her moaning is more than I can take. I want her—I need her. I scoop her into my arms and place her on the bed, sliding on top of her. I lightly flip her so she is on top of me. I sit up and unlatch her corset as I place light kisses on her neck. I throw the corset to the side and slide my hands down her naked body, wanting to touch every part of her. She kisses my neck softly and whispers in my ear.

“Do you have protection?”

“Yes. In the drawer,” I respond, gesturing to the nightstand.

She reaches to the drawer and retrieves a condom. She cups the back of my head, bringing my lips to hers, and kisses with me with a deep desire. I can hear the tear of the packet and then feel her hand touching me as she slowly slides the condom on.

She positions herself perfectly on top of me, never letting her lips leave mine, then takes me in her hand and places me inside of her. I wrap my arms around her, kissing her softly as she slowly moves up and down on top of me. She entangles her hands in my hair as she moans loudly, as she begins to move faster.

She clutches my back, moaning louder. I clutch her hips with my hands, helping her along.

I begin to moan and my breath quickens, and I find myself close to the edge.

“Oh, Jenna,” I grunt. She places her hands on my shoulders, using them for balance, then slams down on me. I am way too close. I need her to find her release before I lose control. I nuzzle my face in her hair, whispering in her ear.

“Jenna— I’m—” Before I can finish my words she slams down on me again and just like that I find my release, leaving her unsatisfied. I fall back on the pillow, attempting to catch my breath. I am disappointed in myself instantly, at my quick release. Jenna slides from on top of me and walks to the bathroom. I pull the condom

off and throw it into the garbage can next to my bed, then lie back, frowning.

I pride myself in my capability of control when making love to a woman, lasting way longer than the few minutes I did with Jenna. I am embarrassed, ashamed and literally dumbfounded. This has never happened to me before. Never have I left a woman unpleased. I am a man, not a boy. How could this happen to me?

The bathroom door opens and I look up. Jenna glides effortlessly across the room, to the bed, sliding under the covers.

I look at her, expecting a snide comment or complaint for my failure. But instead she smiles this amazing half-lipped smile that places me at ease instantly.

“Thank you.” She slides her body closer to me, burying her head in my chest, cuddling me close. I am a bit taken back. I have made love to many women, but never have they expected affection afterwards. I stare down at her and her eyes are closed; she looks so innocent and peaceful. It brings an instant smile to my face. I kiss her gently on the forehead and wrap my arms around her, cuddling her close.

As I finish the last of my cigarette, the memory leaves me. I stand and walk over to the ashtray, extinguishing it. I take a deep inhale and let out a loud exhale and walk back into the hospital.

I venture straight up to the nurse’s desk, asking about Jenna. The nurse informs me there is no new information. Eric and Matt are

standing by the vending machines, talking. They seem to be in a deep conversation, so I stroll to a chair in the waiting room and sit down.

The longer I sit the more impatient I become. Patience is not one of my best attributes. The waiting and the unknown fester within me, bringing on an uncontrollable irritability and paranoia. The horrific thoughts that rattle my head are beginning to overwhelm my hope of a positive outcome.

As the paranoia begins to swell through my mind and I am at the edge of completely losing all control, Manny walks into the waiting room. I stand up as he approaches me, and he hugs me instantly.

“How are you doing, man?” he asks me worriedly as he pats my back.

“I’m okay,” I tell him, nodding my head. I sit back down and he sits next to me.

“That son of a bitch,” Manny murmurs. Christie walks up and sits down next to Manny.

Manny is Jenna’s brother-in-law and is married to her sister, Christie. He is extremely protective of Jenna and despises Ben Kramer as much as I, if not more.

“I can’t believe Ben shot her,” Christie says tearfully.

The mention of Ben’s name sends Manny soaring into a manic rage, as it often does, and he stands up, pacing the floors. Christie

and I sit silently as Manny goes into his violent screaming fit, degrading everything about Ben Kramer.

As Manny rages about Ben, Christie taps my shoulder, pointing towards the entrance of the waiting room. A doctor is standing there, clutching a clipboard.

I stand up, walking up to Manny, patting him on the shoulder, attempting to calm him. I point towards the entrance of the waiting room. Manny sees the doctor and we all walk over to him.

“Family for Jenna Kramer?” the doctor asks as we approach him.

“We are Jenna’s family,” Christie responds. The doctor directs us to the corner of the waiting room and we all walk over to it, forming a small, tight circle.

The doctor informs us that Jenna is out of surgery and stable. They were unable to remove the bullet from her back, because it is lodged into her bone too deep, and the risks of taking it out are far greater than just leaving it in.

I shake my head and laugh, but it’s not a laugh of happiness, more of disgust, as Ben has left Jenna yet another permanent reminder of his abusive ways.

“What happens now?” Christie asks with wonder.

“She will be in the hospital for a few days and if everything is okay we will release her.”

“Is she awake?” I ask him.

“She’s a little groggy and weak from the anesthesia, but she is awake.”

“Can we see her?” I ask him frantically. I need to see her. I need to make sure she is okay.

“How about you give us an hour to work on getting her more awake, then I will have a nurse come out and get you.”

Disappointment fills me instantly. I don’t want to go one more second without seeing Jenna. I look down and hesitantly nod my head.

The doctor leaves and I am definitely in need of a cigarette. I tell Manny I am taking a walk outside and to come get me when the nurse comes. He nods and I walk towards the exit.

I pace down the sidewalk, smoking my cigarette; a pick-up truck drives past the front of the hospital, catching my attention. I look up and can see the bed of the truck is stacked high with hay. It brings a smile to my face and my mind travels back in time to another memory of Jenna.

There was a golf outing that our company had donated an extreme amount of money to. I never like to attend these kinds of events, because to be honest, I just don’t care for golf.

My parents keep a condo in Michigan. My father feels it is necessary, since he travels back and forth so much from the firm in

New York to the firm here. I am over at their condo, visiting them, when I overhear my father speaking to my mother about the golf outing, telling her that Ben Kramer will be there with his wife. This strange excitement fills me. I felt like a juvenile, giddy and happy. It has been three months since I have seen Jenna and I miss her terribly.

I walk into the room and casually inform my father I would like to attend the golf outing. He is a little surprised by my request, but is happy that I would be attending.

After my mother finishes getting ready, we leave for the golf outing.

It is a brisk, windy summer day and I stroll with my mother, her arm in mine, with my father trailing close behind us. The golf outing is at a large country club on the west side of the state. There are people scattered everywhere. The land is covered in green grass and large trees with many dirt walkways. It was originally a large horse farm, so I am not surprised to see stables about the property.

We walk towards the golfers and I see her—Jenna Kramer. She is chasing a hat that is blowing across the grass. I walk towards her and as I stand behind her, she places the hat on her head.

“Jenna,” I say simply. She turns to me, smiling that half-lipped smile I adore. She is dressed in a strapless, form-fitting white summer dress, with a large white-brimmed hat and matching high-heeled sandals. She is beautiful, absolutely beautiful. I want to

embrace her tightly, hold her close to me, but between my parents standing behind me and Ben walking up, I have no choice but to refrain.

“You look like you’re getting around pretty good,” I tell her.

“Yeah. My leg feels so much lighter without that big cast,” she answers.

Ben walks up and I back away slightly from Jenna. He extends his hand to my father.

“William, old buddy, how are you?” Ben asks him.

“I’m great. It is so good to see you, Ben,” my father tells him.

“Hi, Jenna,” my father says to her sweetly.

“Hi, William,” Jenna responds. My mother approaches us.

“Wendy,” Ben says as he kisses her on the cheek. Ben drapes his arm around Jenna and this strange feeling overwhelms me. I shake my head, attempting to brush it off. “Wendy, this is my wife, Jenna,” he says to my mother.

“Jenna, it is so nice to meet you,” my mother responds as she shakes her hand.

“It’s very nice to meet you too,” Jenna says to my mother with a smile. Ben and my father walk away, talking. My mother approaches Jenna.

“They are so rude,” My mother says to Jenna. She places her arm in Jenna’s. “Let’s take a walk, dear,” my mother says to her. Jenna nods.

My mother and Jenna spark up a conversation as they casually stroll down the dirt path. I follow close behind. I can’t take my eyes off of Jenna. I look her up and down, watching her dress move to the sway of her hips, and I am instantly aroused.

My mother asks the normal nosey questions any mother asks and Jenna answers sweetly the best she can.

Ben walks up to us with my father. My mother and Jenna stop immediately.

“Can I have my wife back, Wendy?” Ben asks with a grin.

“I suppose,” my mother responds jokingly. Ben places his hand in Jenna’s and that strange feeling fills me again. I stare down at Jenna’s hand in Ben’s and can see his thumb sliding across her hand; this angers me. Then it hits me: I am jealous! I can’t be jealous—that’s her husband. I begin to scold myself in my head.

“Come on, darling; let’s go finish watching grown men get excited about hitting small balls in small holes,” Ben states with a chuckle. My father approaches them.

“Do you mind if I accompany the both of you?” my father asks them.

“It would be our pleasure,” Ben responds nicely. They all walk away. I don’t realize I am staring at Jenna until my mother interrupts my gaze, placing her arm in mine. I smile at her and she pulls on my arm and we stroll down the dirt path.

“Andrew, what is your relationship with Jenna?” my mother asks.

“We are friends,” I tell her. She stops and stares into my eyes. My mother is an eye contact kind of person. She tells me that you see the truth in a person’s eyes, no matter how hard they try to hide it.

“Friends? I see the way you look at her and the way she looks at you; you are way more than friends,” she says to me worriedly.

“We spend time together.”

“Spend time together?”

“It’s no big deal, Mother.”

“Ben Kramer is a very powerful and dangerous man, not a man you want on your bad side.”

“I know what I’m doing, Mother.”

“All I’m asking you to do is to be careful.”

“I promise you I will be careful.” She smiles at me and we begin to walk again. My mother always gives me room to make my own decisions and mistakes, which I love about her. She doesn’t hover over me like most mothers do.

Two wives of the attorneys we employ at our firm stop my mother and me. I gaze around the golf outing and see Jenna standing alone. I look at my mother and she is already engulfed in a conversation with one of the women. I decide this is the perfect opportunity to talk to Jenna alone, so I walk over to her.

“I missed you,” I whisper in her ear as I walk up behind her. She turns and smiles.

“I missed you too,” she responds.

“You look very pretty today.”

“Thank you.” My eyes gaze quickly down her beautiful body. I place my hand on her thigh and slowly slide it to her garter, tugging lightly on it.

“Always sexy underneath.” She taps my hand.

“Stop,” she says nervously. I chuckle at her. She tucks a stray strand of hair behind her ear, bringing attention to her beautiful face. She slides her tongue across her lipstick-stained lips and I find myself panting. My want for her deepens; I need to be with her—now. I stare around the grounds and notice a horse stable.

“There is a horse stable to the right of us. Meet me there in fifteen minutes,” I say with seriousness.

“I can’t. I’m with Ben.” As selfish as this may sound, I don’t really care much about Ben Kramer. I want to be with Jenna and I intend to have my way.

“Find a way. I will be there waiting for you.” I smile and walk away. My mother is still talking with the attorneys’ wives, so I am able to slip away unnoticed. I rush to the stable. I gaze around it for a place that is away from the eyes of others. I see a loft with stacks of hay and scurry over to it. A ladder is leaned against an opening. I climb up the ladder. I stare around and see loose hay scattered about. I arrange a makeshift bed with the hay and then sit down on it, testing it for comfort. Perfect.

I turn towards the stable door, waiting patiently for Jenna.

When I see her walk in, excitement fills me.

“I’m up here,” I yell to her. She looks up at me, waving her hand and smiling, and walks over to the ladder. I stand at the end of it, waiting for her. As she reaches the last step, I grasp her in my arms, embracing her tightly. An overwhelming feeling of comfort fills me as I hold her in my arms.

“I knew you would come.” I take her hat from atop her head, throwing it to the ground, wanting to touch her beautiful long dark hair. I remove the pins from it and it falls softly to the middle of her back. This sappy feeling hits me and I place my hands on her face, staring into her beautiful hazel eyes.

“I missed you so much, Jenna.” I can hear the endearment in my own voice.

I place my lips to hers and she embraces me tightly. I missed her soft, gentle lips, the smell of her hair, the touch of her skin—I missed everything about Jenna Kramer.

I unzip her dress and push it from her shoulders. I slide my hands down her arms as I kiss her shoulder softly. I scoop her into my arms, and place her gently down on the bed of hay. I lie down beside her and gaze at her body.

“You’re so beautiful,” I say to her. I bend my head, kissing her stomach, sliding my hand to her back, unclasping her bra. I slide her bra off then cup her breast in my hand. I twirl my tongue around her nipple and suckle it lightly.

“Oh, Andrew,” she moans. My name from her lips sends a shiver throughout my body, my want for her deepening by the second.

As always, I am too aroused. Making love to her at this moment is not a good idea, as I will find my release too quickly, and leaving her unsatisfied is not what I want to do. I kneel in front of her, sliding her panties off. I slide my hands up her thighs, then slowly slide two fingers inside of her. She moans with pleasure as I circle my fingers, pulling and stretching at her.

As my fingers work their magic inside of her, she begins to circle her hips and I know she is right there. I slide my head down between her legs, placing my arms under her knees. I twirl my tongue inside of her and she screams out.

“Oh God—Andrew!” Her body convulses as she finds her release. I take a piece of gum out of my pocket, unwrap it, and place it in my mouth. I undress and then move atop of her; she smiles up at me, still panting. I slowly enter inside of her and she gasps as she clutches my back.

“I missed you—oh how I missed you,” she says breathlessly. She wraps her legs tightly around me. I close my eyes, wanting to savor every moment, making love to her.

After we make love, she lies on my chest as I run my hand softly up and down her bare back. I feel a serenity lying there with Jenna, a complete peace. I gaze over at her and notice a new necklace around her neck. It must be a present from her husband, Ben.

An insecure feeling overwhelms me as I think of Ben, and a question instantly burns through my mind. I turn to face her, wrapping my arms around her in an embrace.

“Can I ask you a very personal question?”

“Of course.”

“It’s been over three months. Have you been intimate with Ben?” As the words leave my mouth a devastating feeling overwhelms me. I am nervous, really nervous what her answer will be. She strokes my head gently as if she knows what I am thinking.

“No.” I smile with relief. She kisses me softly on the lips and then stands.

I watch her as she dresses. She pins her hair back up and then turns to me.

“I have to go. Ben will be back any minute.”

“Okay.” She walks over to the ladder and anxiety fills me. I don’t want her to go.

“Jenna,” I blurt out. She stops and turns to face me.

“Yes.” I stare at her silently as confused thoughts rush through my head. How can I ask her to stay? What excuse or reason do I have? I have no excuse, no reason. Our relationship is based on sex and we have already taken care of that. I smile at her.

“Nothing. I’ll see you in a little bit.”

“Okay.”

The memory leaves me and I walk over to the bench, sitting down. Manny runs up to me.

“The nurse is ready to take us to Jenna’s room,” he says. I stand up and walk over to the ashtray, extinguishing my cigarette.