

Deceptions Prologue

I scanned the cramped quarters of the van until my gaze landed on the flat monitor screens hanging against the sides. Below them, a narrow table housed a computer and various electronics. An agent, Bill Larkin, sat in front of one monitor typing information into the computer. My mouth dried, and I forced myself to swallow. This was real.

“Remember, we need that confession,” Detective Tanner said.

I focused my attention back toward Tanner and nodded.

Peering directly at me, his mouth flattened into a thin line. “Heather, be careful. I would never intentionally put you in danger, but it’s the only way.” Tanner’s shoulders dropped as he sighed.

He had promised my mom he would keep me safe and not put me in danger. This assignment bordered on breaking that promise, but my safety wasn’t actually being jeopardized. Right?

“Don’t worry, we’ll get him,” I said, running my sweaty palms along the side of my jeans. “I’ll be fine.”

My head jerked to the left from the rattle of the van door sliding open. My eyes widened as another agent stepped inside. He nodded at me and Tanner and strolled to the empty chair in front of the monitors. Once settled next to his partner, he placed the headset on and adjusted a few dials.

“Okay, we’re set,” Agent Larkin said.

I took that as my cue and stood, glancing one more time at Tanner.

“Remember, we’re only two blocks away,” he said.

I stepped out of the van and brought my hand up to shield my eyes from the bright sunshine. I felt exposed with the sunrays shining down like a spotlight. Here I am, come and get me. I quickly scanned the area and let out my breath. Other than a white-haired gentleman with a slightly crooked back, the sidewalks were empty.

I walked past the glass doors of the corner pharmacy and turned left, immediately sidestepping an approaching couple. “Excuse me,” I said with a polite smile. I waited for them to pass before continuing down the sidewalk. A few steps and I halted again. My destination, The Mole Hole, was straight ahead of me, separated only by a single highway. I sucked my breath in and my pulse spiked. It all came down to this moment—a make-it or break-it point for bringing the man down. And oh, how I wanted to bring him down.

My fingers wiggled back and forth in an attempt to release the nervous energy flowing through me. Was I really going through with this? I fought the urge to look behind me. A simple thumbs-up

from Tanner would've helped calm me down, but he was hidden inside the unmarked creeper van. Regardless of my fear, this needed to happen. I had to make this work, somehow.

I tugged the bottom of my shirt and peeked down to make sure the camera-button was in place. Satisfied, I clutched my purse and resumed walking. The only thing left to do was go inside and finagle a confession out of the creep. Everything up until now had led to this point and backing out wasn't an option. This guy ruined too many lives, including mine, through his greed, and he was not getting away with it.

I looked to the left and let a car pass before stepping into the street. A few more feet and I would finally have my answer.