

Rain pattered loudly on the metal awning over the entry way of her townhouse. Lindi Thomson stood in the doorway watching the sheets of mist off the lake blow down her street. Tightly wrapping herself in her bright red raincoat, she darted towards her car parked in the driveway. It was rather balmy for this pre-dawn Monday morning in mid-March, hence the rain instead of snow. Faint streaks of a soon-to-rise sun hidden behind thick clouds began their slow spread across the horizon. Safely inside her car, she started the engine and leaned her head on the back rest mentally reviewing her to-do list for the day as the interior warmed up a bit. Two special orders of rolls were on her list for that afternoon, one to the nursing home and another to the high school. Later that morning, she would have to make the weekly trip to the local business and restaurant supplier for the flour and yeast pick-up and update standing supply orders for the coming tourist season.

She closed her eyes. She hadn't slept well. Her phone conversation with her mother the previous evening hadn't ended on a high note. Her mother's incessant talk about other people and events of which Lindi had no knowledge was beyond annoying. Her lamenting about the divorce from her father, the constant nagging about men, and the repeated reminders of what happened to Lindi after she broke up her last relationship, was enough to make Lindi finally snap at her. "Don't you talk to me that way," her mother had responded sounding mortally wounded before hanging up on her.

Lindi still felt guilty for hurting her feelings and wished she would've just kept her mouth shut. She'd tried calling her back, but her mother wouldn't pick up. So, her sleep had been fitful, filled with feelings of guilt and recurrent thoughts of that ex-boyfriend, Nick, who had left her broken just over a year ago. The coldness in his eyes as he repeatedly slammed her head against the wall still haunted her, branded into her memory. Thinking about what he took from her

caused her to shudder. Though he was serving time, she worried he would get out soon and return.

She opened her eyes and sighed. Putting her car into reverse, she backed down her driveway and turned down the street to make the relatively short drive to Thomson's Bakery and Café, her bakery and café. Despite her struggles growing up and the trouble with Nick, she had achieved her goal of owning a bakery.

She turned onto Sullivan Bay Road heading north along the shoreline. The wind picked up as it blew in from across the bay whipping raindrops at her windshield. It was shortly before six and the lakeside town was just stirring to life with commuters making an early start towards the city of Green Bay, about a one-hour drive on a good day. Sullivan Bay, Wisconsin lay just north of Green Bay and though a vibrant community year-round, it boomed and bustled in the late Spring through early Fall with tourists from all over the state and neighboring states looking to experience life on the "sea" without the hassle of travelling to the east or west coasts.

Thomson's Bakery and Café was located near the town center along Sullivan Bay Road with its storefront facing a small park across the street separating it from the beach. On clear days, one could sit inside the café, look out across the park and through the trees and see the blue waters of Green Bay stretch out to the horizon.

"But not today, no sunshine today," Lindi muttered as she neared her bakery. Suddenly, the beam of her headlights illuminated a man standing in the park across the street. Startled, she tightened her grip on the steering wheel. "What the heck? What is anyone doing out at the park this early on such a nasty morning?" she exclaimed to herself. The man stood frozen staring back at her, like a deer caught in the middle of the road. Despite the rain whipping at her windshield,

she was close enough to see the tired shadows under his eyes before he bolted off into the darkness towards the deserted beach.

She slowed her car and turned down the side street next to her bakery and noticed a second man running in the same direction. “What the hell,” she let out again as a small lump of fear developed deep in her gut. She quickly turned into the parking lot behind her bakery, cut the engine, snapped off the headlights and locked all the doors.

Sinking down in her seat as if to avoid detection, her eyes darted around the lot behind her locked shop. Memories of that terrible night just over a year ago bubbled to the surface putting all her senses on high alert. She had to make sure no one was lurking. Tires slicing through puddles of water caused a small scream to rise in her throat. It was about to escape when she saw the sheriff’s cruiser pass by on the side street, patrolling the area just like every other morning as shop owners arrived.