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Prologue

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Remember.
The words were on her tongue as her eyes sprang open. Automatically, she jolted herself upwards. The room was white, bleached white. There were no windows, or open cracks that suggested that there was a door. The smell that accompanied it was nauseating. It smelled as if the room was scrubbed clean with disinfectant, as if to erase any sign of human life. Turning her head to the left, a sharp pain hiked up her jaw. Her eyes watered at the sudden pain. It felt as if she had become someone’s personal punching bag. She didn’t know why.

Remember. There was that word again. She moved her hand to the sweat that moistened her forehead. “Remember what?” she thought to herself. She searched her memory to figure out what that could possibly mean, but it felt as if she had been emptied out. She had no recollection of the past twenty-four hours, or even her first and last name.

As panic rose to her throat, so did an unsettling wave of fear. Something wasn’t right. Just then, the doors open. A blast of cool air followed a woman as she walked in. She was dressed in a black suit. Her dark hair was drawn back in a tight bun that looked so painful that it was ready to cave in on itself. She walked with confidence.

“Hello,” The woman said with a tight smile that resembled her bun. “I’m Dr. Willows.”

At the mention of a doctor, she calmed down a little, but that still didn’t shake the impending fear that sat in the pit of her stomach. She didn’t know why she was here, or where she was. And why it required a doctor.

Something that sounded like her voice spoke, “Where am I?” “Somewhere safe,” Dr. Willows answered, before sitting beside her. “Don’t worry, you’re safe here,” she went on to say.

Her first instinct was to put some distance between herself and Dr. Willows. But for some reason she didn’t move. Now looking into the woman’s eyes, she saw everything but confidence. The doctor’s eyes were wide, inhumanly wide. Like she had to fight with herself to keep them open. One side of her face was caked with too much makeup.

“Do you know who I am?” she found herself asking.

“You don’t know who you are,” Dr. Willows said, sounding surprised. “Is there anything else you don’t remember?”

“I don’t know,” she answered, trying to search for something, anything. “I don’t know why I’m here.”

“Well let’s try to figure that out,” Dr. Willows said with a smile.

Something about this woman felt off. She watched as Dr. Willows rested a notepad along with a pen on her lap.

“Do you remember anything from yesterday?” Dr. Willows asked.

“No.”

“Do you have parents?”

“Yes,” She answered automatically, then said, “No.” Then finally, “I don’t know.”

“Everyone has parents.”
“I’m sure I do,” she concluded. “I just don’t know who they are.”
“How old are you?”
For some reason she knew the answer to that. “Sixteen.”
Dr. Willows nodded before writing something down in her notepad. “See progress,” the woman said with a smile.
Remember. That word again. She swallowed back a lump.
“Are you okay?” Dr. Willows asked.
She nodded.
“Did you remember something?”
“No,” she lied, even though she had no reason to. Or maybe she did. So far she had woken up in a room with no recollection of who she was besides her age. And this woman wasn’t exactly offering an explanation for why she was here.
“Okay,” Dr. Willows said. “Do you have any siblings?”
At the question, her heart suddenly clenched. Remember. For the first time, she realized she was trying to tell herself something, but she didn’t know what. She knew for certain that she had a sibling, but the identity of her sibling was a mystery. All she knew was that she wanted to protect him or her.
“Well?” Dr. Willows pressed.
“Why are you asking me all these questions?” The words were out of her mouth before she could stop them. “I have been answering all these questions, but not once since you came in here did you offer me an explanation of what is going on.” She watched as the older woman’s eye twitched. “Are you even a doctor?”
“Of course I am!” Dr. Willows retorted. “How dare you suggest that I am not who I say I am.”
“Then tell me why I’m in here,” she said, on the edge of losing patience. “I answered your questions.”
“You will get your answers in time,” was all Dr. Willows could say.
“Tell me now!” Her anger flared. Remember. Remember. Remember. The words were chants now. She fought to remember. Instead, she got vague memories of people she didn’t recognize. She saw a lady in the kitchen baking cookies, then a guy tucking a little girl in bed. That little girl was her.
She felt as if she had just swallowed stone.
Those were her parents. Just then, a little boy came to her mind. He ran happily towards her, his arms stretched open. She could feel him as he ran into her arms. Her brother.
A tear rolled down her cheek as a breath paused in her throat.
She looked at the woman across from her.
“She remembers!” Dr. Willows yelled.
Anger surged through her.
“What did you do to them?” she screamed. Dr. Willows was ready to jump to her feet when she reached for her arm and pulled her back down. “Tell me!” Her throat began to burn as she dug her nails deeper into Dr. Willows’ arm.
“They are no longer your problem,” Dr. Willows sneered, trying to shake her off.

The next, she drew her arm back and aimed for Dr. Willows jaw. The doctor’s face snapped to the side. The action quickly resulted in a backhand to her already flaming jaw.

“We will keep doing this until you don’t remember!” Dr. Willows spat. The doors opened and a group of people dressed in white suits charged towards her, as more memories came rushing back.

“You won’t get away with this!” she cried out, as a lady took a hold of her arm.

“Someone shut her up,” Dr. Willows now walked out. She thrashed, as another person took her other arm. Soon, pain spread throughout her arm, as the lady on her right injected her with a needle. Instantly, the room started to spin. She felt herself losing conscious. Remember, remember, remember, she repeated over and over again, before everything went black.

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Remember.

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