

The lights of New York dazzled.

Katherine Sullivan paused for a last look around Columbus Circle before stepping into Robert, the restaurant. The sun wasn't down yet, so the lights were not at their brightest, but she wanted to eat before she went to a concert on Carnegie Hall.

*I hate doing this all on my own. Joseph should be here.*

As the hostess showed her to a table, she tried to remind herself that Joseph had promised ... *promised* ... to be here tomorrow night. He was doing a good fatherly thing in taking their daughter to the doctor tomorrow morning. It had been a miserable three months for Allison stuck in a brace and Joseph did not want her to have to wait longer. That they had planned this trip six months ago did not mean he was choosing their daughter over his wife. Katherine *knew*, but it was hard to reconcile her solitariness with her knowledge.

She ordered the watercress soup and duck breast with snow peas and a single glass of Pinot Grigio, feeling quite decedent to be drinking before the sun was down. She reasoned that it would be dark before she left. There was a delicious pleasure in knowing that tongues would be wagging in Emmaus if she drank wine in public before 5 o'clock.

Sirens swept by the corner. Hardly anyone in the restaurant seemed to notice at first. Katherine remembered what it had been like when she lived in a big city. The sirens were background noise, like birdsong in Emmaus. Few noticed and fewer cared.

*If Joseph is here on Friday, maybe he'd agree to the Roof Garden at the Met. Oh, I do hope Ren hasn't delayed him. What does Ren care that Joseph had plans? We're all just serfs to the great Ren Sullivan.*

Her phone beeped.

*I'm thinking of you. Have some bomboloni. J*

She had planned to finish the pasta, but Joseph was right. She deserved a treat for being a good sport. Katherine waved the waiter down and asked for a coffee to go and bomboloni.

*Great idea. I did it. Miss you.*

When she hit SEND, the phone spun for a few seconds and then announced "No Signal."

*That's odd. Well, probably just a glitch. I'll try again in a few minutes.*

Katherine thanked the waiter for the check, gave him a generous tip and gathered her things to set out for Carnegie. The lights from the sirens were still flickering over by the park. There seemed to be a lot of them.

*Hopefully, it won't affect the concert.*

She stepped out of the entrance. From the corner of her eye, she saw a blue uniform move abruptly in her direction. A gun barrel filled her view and a loud male voice ordered her to the pavement. Terrified, she obeyed, but apparently not quick enough because rough hands shoved her face forward into the coffee-splashed concrete.

"Don't move. Stay down." She turned her head so she could breathe and saw that people all up and down the sidewalk lay prone with uniformed cops pointing guns at their heads.

*My god, what is happening?*

Above her, the lights of New York were in full brightness, but Katherine no longer noticed.