

TOMORROW THINGS MIGHT BE DIFFERENT

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David was walking home up the long sloping hill from the train station. He checked his watch and reminded himself that, yes, he had called his wife to tell her he would be late. He had gone out for a few drinks with a colleague, an old friend of his father's, the man who had given him his first job, straight out of college, in the investment house where he still worked.

The street lamps were on, yet they did not fully illuminate the sidewalk. He walked carefully, looking at his feet, stepping over chunks of concrete heaved up in places by the roots of the mature, spreading trees that formed a dense canopy over his head. He watched the tassels bounce on the top of his ox-blood loafers, the cuff of his dark blue pants bob one half inch above the burnished leather.

When he was halfway between the train station and his house, he glanced up and saw something moving toward him, as if a sliver of a shadow had disengaged itself from the darkness beneath a large oak. He tried to swallow, but a bubble had formed in his throat and saliva pooled in his mouth. He stepped to the side to let the person pass, and tripped on a piece of concrete that had lifted from its place. He struggled to keep his balance, and heard his name spoken.

"David."

The woman had stopped and was looking at him. She was wearing a long dark cloak, too heavy for this time of year, with a hood that cast a shadow over her face. He tried to see her face, but the cool, late summer breeze was blowing thin strands of hair the color of a paper bag over her thin cheeks and sunken features.

"David." She said it again.

"Excuse me?" he said. "Can I help you?"

"David."

"Look, do I know you?" He controlled his voice, and began again. "I'm sorry, but I can't seem to place you just now. Have we met before?"

"You don't remember me," she said.

David searched the face in front of him, looking between the wisps of hair blowing in the wind, and caught a glimpse of light bluish grey eyes, the color of a sky getting ready to snow. Her lips were two thin, hard lines, her nose a small swelling between the jutting edges of her cheekbones. Her skin was a pale glow, like the lamp across the street. David felt the firm concrete under his toes, but the heels of his shoes were sinking into the soft lawn edging the sidewalk. He wanted to step forward, to stand fully on the hard ground, but didn't want to close the space between them. He shifted his weight to his toes.

"A few years ago, at that concert," she said. "Up in Saratoga."

A different woman flashed in David's mind, similar to the one in front of him, but with brighter, shinier hair, darker colored eyes, and fuller cheeks, the bones touched with a slight sunburn. He and a few of his buddies from college had taken a long weekend off from jobs given them by their fathers' friends or their friends' fathers, from planning weddings with their fiancées, and from looking for houses, to go together to an enormous concert in Saratoga Springs.

David had left his friends encamped on the lawn and gone to get a few beers. While standing in line, he had noticed a pretty woman behind him; pretty even, he had thought, without makeup or a hairstyle. He had started talking to her and watched her thin lips part into a full smile and her eyes, an odd shade of grayish blue, shift almost imperceptibly with some emotion that was

different, more complex, than the one she outwardly expressed.

He and she had wandered the grounds of the park together before settling in a small patch of lawn, away from the crowds. They had shared his beers and half a joint she had pulled from the pocket of her long, gauzy skirt. He remembered the unfamiliar, fuzzy, happy feeling the pot had given him. It was a drug he rarely consumed, confining himself, like his friends, to beer and whiskey.

"Chloe?"

Her head moved up and down in a slow rhythm.

"What are you doing here?"

"I had to get away," she said, "from my mother." Her eyes neither moved nor blinked. "I've been living with her for awhile, just until I get some stuff straightened out. She was trying . . . It's difficult to explain." She paused, then went on in a fast rush of words. "The bus dropped me off here. I was going to the city. Didn't quite make it." She smiled, a sudden flash that quickly dissolved. "Hey, do you know if there is a cheap hotel, a motel or something, nearby?"

David saw a motel sign in his mind: it moved by him outside the train window every day he went to work. It was a sign, he thought, not just of the motel, but of the decay that was starting to eat at the edges of his town.

"There's one just outside town," he told her. "You go down the hill to the main street, take a right--I mean a left. It's about a mile or two down the road. It's on the left--no, I'm sorry--I mean the right side of the street. I guess you could get a bus in town."

David wasn't sure. He never rode in buses. Only in trains and cabs or his own car.

Her eyes moved from his face for the first time, down to the sidewalk and then up, away, toward town.

"Do you think I could borrow some money," she said, her voice a vague sound without weight. "I'll pay you back. Just something for the motel room for a night. For a bus ticket for tomorrow."

David's hand went to the breast pocket of his coat. His chest felt hard and smooth underneath his palm. He suddenly remembered seeing her breasts at the concert. She had been lying on the lawn, watching him as he talked, listening closely, laughing at things he was not sure were funny, peppering her responses with swear words. He remembered thinking that she found him more interesting than he had thought himself to be. She had moved—shifted her weight from one elbow to the

other, rolled onto her back to stare up at the sky—and as she did, the top button of her blouse pulled loose. He remembered seeing the curve along the top of her breast and the darker hardness of her nipple.

He had decided he should get back to his friends, that they would be wondering about him. When he had told her he had to leave, her eyes had gone completely still, like they were tonight. He had surprised himself by leaning over and pressing his lips to hers. Her mouth had opened, soft and wet like a child's, but her kiss had been that of a woman. She had clung to him, kept kissing him, even as he started to pull away. But then she had smiled, grinned really, as she let him go, and waved to him as he walked off. Standing there now with his hand at his breast pocket, his body remembered the feeling of her chest pressed against his, her mouth warm and moist like the center of a small candy. His loins jumped unexpectedly.

"Hey, is everything all right?" he asked her. "Are you OK? Do you need a place to stay or something?"

"No, no," she said, and shifted her weight from one foot to the other. "I'm OK. I just need to get away from my mother for awhile. I'm a little short, is all."

David's hand was still at his chest. I could just give her some money, he thought, then turn away and walk home to Karen, and that would be that. He wondered if he moved his coat to reach for his wallet, if there would be a protrusion at the front of his pants. Then he remembered, and felt his face flush with embarrassment. He had spent all his cash at the bar, buying his colleague drinks.

"Look, why don't you just come with me," he said. "My house is just up the street. I've got lots of room. You can stay there while you get things sorted out."

She hesitated, and David hoped for a moment that she would say no, she couldn't. He thought of Karen and wished that there was somewhere else he could take Chloe. She dropped her chin to her chest, her eyes to the ground, and took a step in the direction he had indicated. He stepped in front of her, and she followed him up the hill.

Karen smiled stiffly at Chloe when introduced and rolled her eyes at David behind Chloe's back. David tried to give her a look filled with stern disapproval, but Karen merely rolled her eyes again. She showed Chloe to the living room and mixed her a drink without asking her what she wanted. When Chloe reached out to accept

the glass, David saw that her nails were chewed down, the tips of her fingers a ragged line of mingling nail and flesh. Karen announced with practiced buoyancy that she was going upstairs to prepare the guest room.

"I'll help," David said to her departing figure, and then, to Chloe, "We'll be right back. Make yourself comfortable."

David followed Karen's trim figure, clad in tan, dry-cleaned jeans, a startlingly white turtleneck and flat, brown shoes, up the stairs. He watched the bones of her shoulders jutting out just below the crisply turned-under line of her hair. He wondered how her hairdresser got so many shades of blonde into hair that was naturally dull brown. For the first time, he wondered what such a blend of colors cost.

At the top of the stairs, Karen turned on him.

"Why did you bring her here?" she hissed. "There's laundry unfolded in the guest room, the maid hasn't cleaned there for three weeks, and I don't have anything but a leftover casserole for dinner! Why didn't you just give her some money, and send her to a hotel?"

"I don't know, Karen. It just happened." David tapped his forehead with his fingertips. "I'm sorry for springing it on you like this. She just seemed to be in some kind of trouble. Like something strange has happened to her."

Karen let out something between a sigh and a whine. Again, her eyes rolled in her head.

David started to follow her into the guest room, but she closed the door behind her, not quite a slam, but hard. He stood there for a moment, the door a few inches from his nose, and then turned and walked back to the living room.

Chloe was looking at a collection of photographs lining the mantelpiece. There were wedding pictures, photos of him and Karen and their friends in Nantucket and at the Jersey Shore, some of him and his father trout fishing in Canada, and a few of a family vacation in the Caribbean. She had not taken off her cloak, although the room was warm.

"Can I take your coat?" he said, his voice coming out too loud.

She turned, startled.

"No, no. I'm a little cold."

"Is your drink okay? Can I freshen it for you?"

"Freshen it?" She looked at him, confused.

He gestured towards her drink which was sitting, still full, on the coffee table. It was sweating, forming

a wet ring on the dark wood. A pile of needlepointed coasters, a housewarming present from one of his mother's friends, sat unused a few inches away.

"No," she said. "Thank you. I don't drink."

David looked at the floor, then stepped to the coffee table, and lifted her drink. The wet ring stared at him accusingly. He looked around for something with which to wipe it up. He heard Karen upstairs, her movements louder than necessary. He pushed a magazine over the spot and took a slug of the drink. Although he had never before smoked, he suddenly wished he had a cigarette.

"Your wife is mad, isn't she?" Chloe said.

"No, no she's fine," David said. "Just a little surprised. She wants everything to be perfect when we have guests. You know how it is."

He dropped himself to the sofa and took another long swallow.

"Everything looks beautiful to me," Chloe said softly. "You're lucky to have such a beautiful home."

David looked up. Chloe's small dark form was like a stain in the middle of the yellow walls of the room, the flowered chintzes on the chairs, the sunlit reds and blues of the photographs behind her head, the white rug beneath her feet. Luck? he thought. What does luck have to do with it?

"Sit, please sit," he said, throwing his hand into the air.

Chloe perched on the edge of a chair. David fumbled with the coasters, neatening the edges of the pile as if they were a deck of cards.

"So, where are you living now? Tell me again what brings you to New Jersey."

"Poughkeepsie. With my mother." Chloe's voice was light and hollow, like air being blown through a thin reed. "But she does not know where I am now."

"Would you like to call her? I mean, to at least let her know you're here."

"No." The syllable was hard and sudden. But her tone changed again to a whispery sing-song. "Well, maybe later. Maybe tomorrow. Tomorrow things might be different."

The next morning, Karen rose early and left for work half an hour earlier than usual. David fumbled in the kitchen, making toast and coffee. Chloe was still asleep. He sat at the kitchen table and looked out on the lawn and dark yews that surrounded his house like an inverted moat. He reminded himself to call the lawn

care service and ask them to trim the shrubs. He looked at his watch, checked the clock on the kitchen wall, listened to the sound of the refrigerator humming, considered catching a later train or calling in to work sick, stood up, took a sip of coffee, then sat back down again. He opened his briefcase and ripped off a sheet of yellow paper from a legal pad. He pulled a dark and heavy pen from a strap in the case and wrote, in his loose, scrawling hand: "Chloe: help yourself to breakfast, coffee, etc. My number at work is 212-555-6654, I'll try to get out a little early. See you later. David."

He left the note on the kitchen counter, rushed out the door, and drove to the station so he wouldn't miss his train.

On the train ride he tried to remember Chloe's last name. It was something average, he kept telling himself. He replayed over and over in his mind the first time he met her, talking in the line waiting for beer, asking her what she thought of the concert, noticing how pretty she was, how her eyes kind of worked at two different levels, the surface expression and then something else, something deeper down and inscrutable. He remembered handing her a beer, introducing himself, reaching out to shake her hand, watching her switch her beer from one hand to the other so she could take his, feeling awkward until she smiled and laughed. She had put her hand—it was very small and cold—into his, and she had said her name: Chloe. Chloe what?

It was something almost common, something that started with a D, a name that got lost in her laughter. Chloe D . . . D . . . He tapped his tongue against the back of his top teeth, making a quiet "D" sound over and over.

He remembered being struck by the unusualness of the first name coupled with the common last name. When he had remarked on it, she had told him that her mother wanted to name her something she had never heard of in Poughkeepsie. She hoped, Chloe had told him, that if she gave her daughter a fancy name, it would lead her to a fancy life.

David got to his office and worked vaguely for a couple of hours, wondering how to reach Chloe's mother. Karen usually called around 10:00 just to say hello, chat for a few minutes. The call was usually a minor irritation. Today, it did not come. At 11:00 he called information and asked for the number of the Poughkeepsie Police Department. He fumbled with some papers on his desk for almost an hour, and then shut the door to his office before calling.

"Poughkeepsie Police," a woman said.

"Hi, yeah, I'm calling from New York. New York City," David said. "I was hoping you guys could help me out. I ran into this woman last night. I met her once a long time ago, and she's from Poughkeepsie, and I think she may be in trouble, have run away or something. I thought maybe you guys might know something about her. Her name is Chloe. I don't know her last name. I'm sorry. I wish I could be more clear. She's in her mid-twenties, I'd guess . . ."

The woman cut him off. "Yes, we know her. Hold on." The line was quiet. Then she came back. "I'm going to give you Mrs. Davies' phone number."

"Has she done anything? Is there anything I should know about her?"

The woman told him he'd have to call Chloe's mother. David dialed the number.

"Ma'am," David said to the woman who answered the phone, "I'm calling about your daughter. I met her years ago, and then bumped into her last night. She is out at my house. She said she ran away or something. I wanted to let you know."

"Oh, thank God," the woman said, her voice like an old door opening.

"Where are you calling from, how far did she go this time?"

David told her where he lived and offered to put Chloe on a train or a bus back to Poughkeepsie.

"No, no," the woman said. "She'd just get on the bus and get off at some other stop. She might not come home at all. I need to come get her. My brother will drive me down."

"Mrs. Davies," David said, slowly enunciating each word. "Is there anything I should know about Chloe?"

David heard Mrs. Davies take a deep breath. She didn't know, she said. She didn't understand Chloe anymore. She was depressed and moody and wouldn't let her mother help her. She kept running away.

"Excuse me, Mrs. Davies," David said. "But, I mean, is there anything I should be concerned about?"

There was a long moment of silence. If he would just give her directions, Mrs. Davies said, she would come right down.

David hung up the phone and left work. The day was darkly overcast. The train was empty, but the ride was long. When he finally pulled into his driveway, turned off the car, and looked up at the house, the light

was on in the upstairs bathroom window. The curtain, which Karen always kept closed, was pulled aside. Chloe stood, her naked body framed perfectly from head to knee in the window. She was rubbing her hands all over her skin.

"Good, Lord," David said out loud. "What the hell is she doing?"

He watched her, small slender hands, long fingers, gently moving in swirls and circles over her body, not pausing or flinching as they passed over her breasts or buttocks. She was very thin—her skin looked like an article of clothing one size too large for her. But even in her thinness, she had small, beautiful round breasts, and a lovely curve to her hips and backside. Her hair hung in dark, wet strands around her shoulders and in her face.

David's loins roused him again with an unfamiliar ache. He saw Chloe lift a bottle and pour something into the palm of her hand. Karen's skin lotion, he thought. Karen put it on, in the bathroom, alone, before she came to bed each night. He hated the smell of that lotion, the sweet, fake floweriness of it, and the way it lingered on their bedsheets. His hands were resting in his lap, and he felt a vague stirring there. A strong desire to masturbate, right there in the car, came to him. The feeling was instantly replaced with embarrassed censure. I haven't masturbated since I was a teenager, he reminded himself.

"Besides," he said out loud. "What if she looks out the window and sees me?"

He got out of the car and slammed the door, hoping Chloe would hear. He did not look up to the window again. He slammed the house door, stepped into the kitchen, and froze. Each chair at the kitchen table was draped with a wet piece of clothing: a thin, floral-print dress with puffy sleeves, a pair of pink cotton underpants, a set of stretched-out-knee-high socks. The clothes dripped onto the floor steadily. The white kitchen counter was littered with spilled coffee grounds, a piece of half-eaten toast, a mug lying on its side in a small dark pool of liquid. His note was there, splashed with water, the black words bleeding into one another. David set down the mail in a neat pile on a dry spot on the counter, put his briefcase on the floor, went to the refrigerator and took out a bottle of beer. Chloe appeared, standing in the doorway. He half expected her to be naked. Instead, she was wrapped in his bathrobe.

"I wanted to wash out my things," she said, her voice a small, light vibration in the air. "I forgot to bring a change with me. And I found this in the bathroom. I

hope you don't mind." She fingered the thick terry cuff at the end of the sleeve. "It's very lovely."

"Why the hell didn't you use the washer and dryer?" David said.

Chloe's eyes went flat and her face hardened over like drying clay.

"I don't know," she said.

"I'm sorry. Nevermind. Look, Chloe, you've got to tell me what's going on here. Why did you run away? Where are you going? Why are you living with your mother? You're a little old for that, aren't you?"

"I'm twenty-seven," she said, evenly.

"So what's going on, here? What are your plans?" David tried to soften his tone. "Why did you leave your mother? You can tell me. You can trust me."

"My mother is a very nice person," Chloe said. "I will leave soon. As soon as my clothes are dry."

"No, no. That's not what I meant," David looked at his watch, then at the clock on the kitchen wall. Chloe's mother would arrive in less than an hour. He didn't want Chloe leaving before she got here. "I just want to know what's going on. That's all. You can stay here. Please don't leave yet."

"Here, let me clean up," Chloe said, suddenly stepping across the room to his side. A flume of scented air came with her. The familiar, false sweetness of the lotion mixed with other smells: something more like the bitter fragrance that sometimes wafts up from between a woman's legs, and something more musty, more like the smell of his own body. He closed his eyes, lifted his brows and turned his face away from her.

He heard a door slam. He looked back and saw Karen getting out of her car, her image broken into several pieces by the tiny windows in the top half of the back door.

"Shit, Karen's here," he said under his breath. He turned to Chloe. They stared at each other. David wanted her to say something. Chloe stood absolutely still, her eyes steady in their pressure against his. He slammed his beer onto the counter, harder than he meant to. He watched it foam up and over the top of the bottle and bleed into a spray of coffee grounds.

"I'm going to take a shower," he said, and left the kitchen before his wife came in the door.

He kept the shower water cool and closed his eyes. A picture of Chloe's naked body floated on the inside of his eyelids. He thought of Karen coming into the kitchen, and imagined Chloe standing there, wiping

the counter, naked. He had read about that somewhere, about women who cleaned house in the nude. David felt his loins fill with pressure, and touched himself experimentally. He found his own body unfamiliar. He made the water warmer, and picked up a bar of soap. There were a few pubic hairs clinging to it. He knew they were Chloe's; Karen always used a wash cloth. He lathered his hand and then touched himself again. His own sudden and complete hardness surprised him. He leaned into the shower wall, using one arm for support and tugged at himself awkwardly. The water beat hot needles onto his back and he was afraid he might slip. But the pressure in his body heightened, rose and spread though his chest and legs. He began to tremble. He tugged harder. Then he heard the bathroom door open and slam shut.

"David?" Karen's voice came through the shower curtain, a nagging plea. He slowly stood upright. His arms hung at his sides, aching. His legs felt weak. He watched his hardness fade, as if it was being swallowed up inside him.

"David?! Did you see what that woman did? Did you see the mess she made? And she's wearing your robe! David, you've got to get her out of here. I can't take this.

David turned the hot water down and washed himself in a cold spray, his hands trembling.

"I still can't believe you brought her here, David," Karen continued. "Give her some money and send her to the motel downtown. She's not spending another night in this house."

There was a pause and then a squeal.

"Look! She used my lotion. Can you imagine? Using someone's toiletries without asking? That bitch." David heard a bottle crash into the trash can.

He turned off the shower, pushed the curtain aside, and stood naked and dripping wet in front of his wife. She looked startled, quickly turned her head away and passed a towel through the blind and empty space between them. He snapped it from her hand. She stepped across the room to the window, grabbed the curtain, and flung it shut.

"Did you open this, David?" she said to the curtain. "It must have been Chloe. How gross. God, I just hope none of the neighbors saw her."

David stared at her back. "Shut up, Karen. Just shut up." He wrapped himself in the towel and left the room.

David tried to tell Chloe that her mother was coming. He sat with her at the kitchen table—Karen had gone out again—and told her that perhaps she needed some kind of help. He said that she was not like him and Karen, that she played a different game by a different set of rules. Chloe said nothing, only looking at him, her eyes shifting focus, showing shadows of emotion that changed from wariness to fear to confusion then back to wariness. David did not know what to say. He searched his mind for a different vocabulary, a different way of speaking, but eventually gave up and started cleaning the kitchen. Chloe stayed at the table, watching him like a dog watching a stranger approach.

Chloe's mother drove up in an old, nondescript American car, the color of split pea soup. David watched Chloe watch the car through the kitchen window. She showed no emotion and said nothing. She knew, he thought. She knew her mother was coming. God, what an ass I am.

He wiped his hands on a towel and went outside to meet Chloe's mother. She was as wide as she was tall, her round legs and stomach stuffed into a pair of polyester pants. She wore no makeup and had a cap of dark grey, tightly curled hair that reminded David of steel wool. Her brother, a massive mound of flesh, stayed in the car and only inclined his balding head slightly in David's direction. David led Mrs. Davies into the house.

"Why Chloe!" her mother said. "You're all cleaned up and showered and ready to go!"

Mrs. Davies knelt in front of Chloe and began pulling clothes from a brown paper bag she had brought with her. Chloe did not move or speak.

"See, darling, I brought your favorite things to wear!" She held up a cheap pink sweatshirt with a blue puppy and kitten printed on the front, and then a matching pair of sweat pants. She began untying the belt of the robe Chloe was wearing. "Stand up dear, so we can get you dressed. C'mon honey, help Mommy out."

Chloe's mother pushed the robe off her shoulders, folded it neatly, and set it on a chair. Chloe stood naked in front of David, her eyes steady, unflinching.

Mrs. Davies' false sing-song voice was like an irritating tickle in the back of his throat. The beer rose up from his stomach and he struggled against a belch.

"Let me get her coat," he said, and ran from the room.

When he came back, Mrs. Davies handed him the

brown paper bag. It was stuffed with Chloe's wet clothes. She asked him if he would be so kind as to throw these things away. He traded the coat for the paper bag, then set the bag on the floor and followed Chloe and her mother to the car. He watched Mrs. Davies guide her daughter into the back seat, throw her cloak in after her, and then shut the door.

"Thank you so much, sir, for all you've done," she said to him. "I know we've put you out terribly, and I am very sorry for that. I'd like to reimburse you for your long-distance calls and any other troubles that her visit has caused you."

David stared at her, stunned, while she fumbled in her black, vinyl pocketbook. His eyes jumped from Chloe's profile in the car to the old woman in front of him. He suddenly remembered that he had meant to stop at the bank on the way home, to get some cash, to give Chloe some money.

"No!" he barked at Mrs. Davies. And then more quietly. "No, thank you. Don't be silly." He paused. "Look, if there's anything I can do, anything you need. I mean . . . wait here, let me get my checkbook."

Chloe's mother stopped him with her hand on his arm. "Now sir, don't you be silly. You've done enough. I'm sorry I didn't get the chance to meet your wife. Please thank her for me."

As the car drove away, Chloe turned in her seat and stared at David out the back window. He watched and waited for her to do something—cry, wave, stick her tongue out, shake her fist, give him the finger. But her eyes remained empty and still, like two holes in a cloud. David stood in the driveway long after the car was out of sight.

He went back in the house, poured himself a drink and went to the living room. He leaned against the mantelpiece and looked at the pictures there. He saw one of himself in college, kneeling, his arms wrapped around the neck of a big, black Labrador Retriever. He remembered the day he had taken the old dog to the vet

and laid him on the table. He was almost blind, had several tumors, and his bladder control had become sporadic. His dog had watched him, his eyes steady against his own, even as the vet stuck him with the needle that put him to sleep.

David looked at the other photos, on his wedding day, vacationing with his family, his mother and father and wife and brother, all of them slightly different shades of blond and tan against the white sand and blue sky of a Caribbean island. He turned and looked around the room, his eyes scanning the brilliant shapes and colors of the flowers that upholstered the chairs, the crisp mauve and green pattern on the sofa, with its down pillows puffed up like some woman's buttocks. He and Karen had once had sex in here, on the floor, on this rug. It seemed an impossibly long time ago, and it occurred to him that it would never happen again. He tried to count the number of cocktail parties that had taken place in here, the quantity of hours filled with the sound of voices and ice tinkling in glasses. He thought of the dark ring on the coffee table, hiding underneath last month's issue of *Town and Country*. He left the room and went through the darkened house to the kitchen.

He picked up the brown paper bag, went to the basement, put the clothes in the dryer, and sat on a stool, sipping another drink, while they spun. Then, he removed each article and folded it carefully, considering where the creases would fall and rest. He took the small stack of clothing up the basement stairs—such a light bundle, he thought, no wonder she was so cold—and then up the next flight of stairs, to his bedroom. He opened the lowest drawer in his bureau, moved aside a pile of cotton tennis sweaters, and nestled Chloe's clothes there, in the bottom and at the back of his drawer. Then he placed a few of his own sweaters on top, covering her things like a blanket.

I'll keep them, he thought. I'll hold onto these for her. Someday, she may need them.

