

Chapter Two

Not a prank, Eve thought as she took out a flashlight.

“Human remains, one female. I can confirm that without DeWinter. DeWinter to establish approximate age, race, height, weight. Second remains, a fetus or very small infant. No more than a foot and a half in length.”

She played her light over the adult skull. “Some damage, cracks in the adult female skull, and a broken left arm—possibly from the fall. It looks like the left shoulder—if she hit the way we found her, she hit on the left side. There’s something . . .

“Gold ring, wedding band? Third finger, left hand. Still on there.”

She took tweezers out of her field kit, used them to slide the ring off the curled finger bone. “No engraving. Plain yellow gold ring.”

She bagged it.

“I see splintering, second and third ribs, left side.” She leaned closer. “Heart shots. Those are going to be from bullets. Plenty of guns around thirty-five to forty years ago if that’s when she went in. We need to locate the slugs when we bring up the remains. I see something.”

She shifted her light, then used the tweezers again. “Earring.” She used a brush to carefully clean it off. “Post style, yellow gold circle with a silver or maybe white gold triangle inside. I can’t look for the second if it’s a pair or I’d disturb the remains. Recovery team needs to locate. Got a gold necklace, too, still attached, so I’m leaving it in place. Gold chain maybe ten inches long holding a what do you call it—swans, a pair of swans twined together at the neck to form a heart.

“Got an old watch, gold watch.” Girlie, Eve thought. Expensive. “One shoe. Ladies shoe, probably leather because it hasn’t fully decomposed. No sign of a link or ID. Recovery team should do a thorough search. Maybe a mugging, maybe, but wouldn’t you want the jewelry? Is she going to refuse when she’s pregnant or has a baby with her? I don’t think so. Shoot her after you have the valuables, okay, but before? No point.”

Eve shifted, and focused on the second remains.

So small, she thought as pity rose up. Hell, her cat was bigger.

“Probability on second remains is fetus given the positioning with female. That’s not a damn coincidence. Indeterminate gender. I’m not sure I could tell even if it wasn’t curled up. The top of the skull . . .” She remembered Mavis talking about Bella’s soft spot. How the skull didn’t knit hard for weeks after birth.

“Soft spot,” she murmured. “No visible injuries.”

Because it died in there, died inside its mother before it took its first breath.

Some sort of exterior wall, she noted. Concrete blocks. And brick, a brick wall on the other side of the hollow. About three feet in from the exterior wall.

Walled you in, didn’t they? Fuckers.

“Dallas? You good?”

“Yeah.” She held up a hand to verify to Peabody, and slowly, carefully eased off the beam to balance on some rubble.

Something shifted; she held her breath.

When the world didn't fall in around her, she played her light closer to the remains.

"I've got slugs here. Bullets. I see two bullets. I can't safely retrieve them without disturbing the remains or, you know, burying us in here."

"You should come up," Peabody called out, and the nerves in her voice sounded clearly. "You've got enough on record."

"Probable COD on unidentified female, two gunshot wounds to the chest. Probable COD on second remains . . . it comes to the same, doesn't it? Dr. DeWinter and ME to confirm."

She secured the evidence bags, put on the gloves.

"Bring me up."

When she came up again, she unhooked her field kit, passed it to Peabody. "We need sweepers who can get down there once the remains are removed. Call it in, set it up."

She pulled off the gloves as Mackie unclipped her.

"I gotta shut you down, Mackie."

"The whole project? Building One—the one we got going up? It's a half block away from this projected green space."

"The projected green space is a crime scene."