

The Engagement Ring  
by Molly Weinfurter

“Hailey, you better open up the goddamn door right this second or I swear I will break it down myself!” I said as I pounded my fists against the front door. My eyes burned with tears. I paused, pressing my ear against the wood. I heard shuffling on the other side just before the doorknob slowly turned. I took a deep breath.

The door opened just a crack so she could peek through, but I forced it open the rest of the way. Hailey, my true love’s best friend, was standing on the other side, her eyes puffy as if she had just finished crying. “Bryce... what are you doing here? Now is not a good time.”

I didn’t care, I needed this girl to answer my questions right here, right now. I reached into my pocket and pulled out an envelope that had been addressed to me, but oddly had no return address. I reached inside and pulled out an engagement ring and dangled it right in front of her face. “Hailey, can you please explain to me why May’s ring was in my mailbox even though you specifically told me she was dead last year?”

She rubbed her eyes and then squinted at it. “I... I have no idea...”

“Bullshit!” I grabbed her wrist and pulled her close to me. “Hailey, listen to me. After I proposed to May, she wore this engagement ring every day, correct? So she had to have been wearing it the day she mysteriously drowned in that lake, right?”

Hailey glanced at the ground and blushed. “Um, yeah, I guess so.”

“You guess so? May is the girl I was in love with. The girl I was going to spend the rest of my life with. But she just disappeared and you said her body was never found. You’re hiding something, so you better start talking. I think I deserve to know what happened to the love of my life.”

She bit her lip, not meeting my gaze.

“Where is she?”

“She’s dead.”

I narrowed my eyes. I needed answers and this was the only person I knew that could provide them. “Don’t play dumb. Where. Is. May?”

Hailey shook her head furiously and closed her eyes tightly, holding back tears. “I’m sorry, Bryce, I don’t know!”

Headlights shined on us as a small blue car pulled into the driveway. The same blue car May had drove. The car came to a quick stop in the driveway and as the car door opened, my heart froze and I immediately let go of Hailey.

There she was. May. She stepped out of her ridiculous little car, looking more alive than ever. She looked behind her briefly before heading up toward the front door. But the moment she laid her eyes on me, she stopped dead in her tracks.

“Well, May, you’re looking awfully great, considering you drowned last year...” She bit her lip and took a step backwards. “I’m just here to see Hailey. Her dog died and she needs someone to help her through it!”

I stormed toward her. She reached for her car door, but I grabbed her arm, digging my nails into her skin. I pulled her close to me and whispered in her ear: "So you really have nothing to say to me? Where have you been all this time?"

She squirmed, trying to escape my grasp. Tears filled in her eyes. "Please let me go! I was just trying to protect myself... I only returned the engagement ring because I felt bad... I'm so sorry... I just couldn't have it with me anymore and I had to let it go. Please don't hurt me."

I couldn't believe she was playing innocent. She was the one that made my life a lie.

She gave one last weak attempt to pull away from me. "Bryce, please leave me alone!"

I pushed her against the pavement, causing her to fall on her hands and knees. I kicked her in the side as hard as I could. "Why should I leave you alone? You faked your own death to get rid of me! Who the hell do you think you are? You haven't changed a bit. You still won't listen to a word I say. Maybe this will teach you not to treat me like a fool!" I kicked her one last time as she screamed, tears poured out of her eyes. She deserved it after all she had put me through.

Sirens blared in the distance. I turned to see police cars pull up to the driveway. The officers raced out of their vehicles and straight toward me. I glanced back at the front door where Hailey was standing in the doorway, phone in hand, shaking.

"Let go of me! I was just protecting myself. That girl is insane!" I said as the officers shoved me against their police car, handcuffing me. The ring fell out of my hand and into a puddle, but when I tried to reach for it, they shoved me down harder, causing pain to surge through my body.

As I was pushed into a police car, May was being carried into an ambulance, scars covered her body and she was trembling from head to toe.

This time, she was away from me for good.