

DELETED SCENE 1

Gabe

I learned very early in life that emotions got you nowhere. Being tired was no excuse. Wanting to go out with your friends was no excuse. Wanting to do anything other than my father wanted, was no excuse. He wanted the best from me. Nothing less would do.

I had a vivid memory of a bright red pedal car, given to me as a small child. I raced around the garden, squealing in delight, my chubby hands gripping the wheel, my feet pumping to make me go faster, faster, almost flying. So excited with my new toy that I failed to see the wheelbarrow standing in my way. At five years old, wheelbarrows were huge. I lay on the grass, the pedal car upended on me, bawling with shock and pain. Father righted the car, hauled me up with his hands under my armpits and set me back in the drivers seat.

“No crying. Only babies cry.” It was a sharp reminder and I tried to heed it, biting my lip to hold back my sobs. A long moment passed, his eyes sharp as they pierced me, waiting to be sure I’d obey him. And finally, a smile. “Good boy.” A nod, and an affectionate ruffle of my hair. “Now let’s time you round the garden.”

I raced around the grass until my feet had blisters and my legs were shaking too hard to be able to pedal any more. Every lap was timed and recorded in a notebook. Finally, exhausted, he carried me straight to bed. I was allowed ice cream that night, a huge reward; Mother came into my room and read me a story, I was treated like a prince. And all because I refused to give in.