

*The Fine Print*

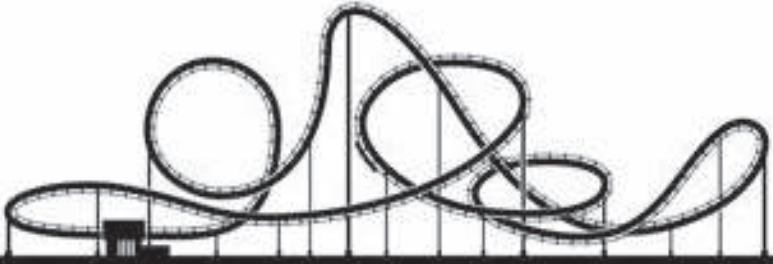
# Playlist



- Ain't No Rest for the Wicked** – Cage The Elephant ♥
- Oh, What a World** – Kacey Musgraves ♥
- My Own Monster** – X Ambassadors ♥
- Cloudy Day** – Tones And I ♥
- Flaws** – Bastille ♥
- Rare Bird** – Caitlyn Smith ♥
- Lasso** – Phoenix ♥
- Bubbly** – Colbie Caillat ♥
- Believe** – Mumford & Sons ♥
- Take a Chance On Me** – ABBA ♥
- From Eden** – Hozier ♥
- Could Be Good** – Kat Cunning ♥
- R U Mine?** – Arctic Monkeys ♥
- 34+35** – Ariana Grande ♥
- Ho Hey** – The Lumineers ♥
- Can't Help Falling in Love** – Haley Reinhart ♥
- Wildfire** – Cautious Clay ♥
- White Horse (Taylor's Version)** – Taylor Swift ♥
- Need the Sun to Break** – James Bay ♥
- Landslide (Remastered)** – Fleetwood Mac ♥
- Missing Piece** – Vance Joy ♥
- Dreams** – The Cranberries ♥

## CHAPTER ONE

Rowan



The last time I attended a funeral, I ended up with a broken arm. The story made headlines after I threw myself into my mother's open grave. It's been over two decades since that day, and while I've completely changed as a person, my aversion to mourning hasn't. But due to my responsibilities as my late grandfather's youngest relative, I'm expected to stand tall and unbothered during his wake. It's nearly impossible, with my skin itching like I'm wearing a cheap polyester suit.

My patience wanes as the hours go on, with hundreds of Kane employees and business partners offering their condolences. If there's anything I hate more than funerals, it's talking to people. There are only a few individuals I tolerate, and my grandfather was one of them.

*And now he's gone.*

The burning sensation in my chest intensifies. I don't know why it bothers me as much as it does. I've had time to prepare

while he was in a coma yet the strange sensation above my rib cage returns with a vengeance whenever I think of him.

I run a hand through my dark hair to give myself something to do.

“I’m sorry for your loss, son.” A nameless attendee interrupts my thoughts.

“Son?” The one word leaves my mouth with enough venom to make the man wince.

The gentleman centers his tie across his chest with fumbling hands. “I’m—well—uh.”

“Excuse my brother. He’s struggling with his grief.” Cal places a hand on my shoulder and gives it a squeeze. His vodka-and-mint-coated breath hits my face, making me scowl. My middle brother might look dressed to the nines in a pressed suit and perfectly styled blond hair, but his red-rimmed eyes tell a completely different story.

The man mumbles a few words I don’t bother listening to before heading for the nearest exit.

“Struggling with my grief?” Although I don’t like the idea of my grandfather’s passing, I’m not *struggling* with anything but uncomfortable heartburn today.

“Relax. That’s the kind of thing people say at funerals.” Two blond brows pull together as Cal stares me down.

“I don’t need an excuse for my behavior.”

“No, but you need a reason for scaring off our biggest Shanghai hotel investor.”

“Fuck.” There’s a reason I prefer solitude. Small talk requires far too much effort and diplomacy for my taste.

“Can you *try* to be nicer for one more hour? At least until all the important people leave?”

“This *is* me trying.” My left eye twitches as I press my lips together.

# *Terms and Conditions*

# Playlist



- The Man** – The Killers ♥
- I am not a woman, I'm a god** – Halsey ♥
- If I Ever Feel Better** – Phoenix ♥
- Glitter** – BENEE ♥
- Enemy** – Imagine Dragons, JID, & League of Legends ♥
- Wicked Games** – Kiana Ledé ♥
- Fallen Star** – The Neighborhood ♥
- Altar** – Kehlani ♥
- Slow Dancing in a Burning Room** – John Mayer ♥
- Trip** – Ella Mai ♥
- Shivers** – Ed Sheeran ♥
- Angels Like You** – Miley Cyrus ♥
- Animal** – Neon Trees ♥
- Unlearn** – benny blanco & Gracie Abrams ♥
- Earned It** – The Weeknd ♥
- safety net** – Ariana Grande ft. Ty Dolla \$ign ♥
- Iris** – The Goo Goo Dolls ♥
- Daylight** – Taylor Swift ♥
- Someone To Stay** – Vancouver Sleep Clinic ♥
- Great Ones** – Maren Morris ♥
- Marry Me** – Train ♥
- Paper Rings** – Taylor Swift ♥

## CHAPTER ONE

# Iris



“It’s a crime to celebrate a day like today all by yourself.” Cal, my best friend and boss’s brother, interrupts me. Despite the rumpled state of his suit and dirty blond hair, he steals the attention of multiple waitresses who pass by our table.

I lock my phone and muster up a smile. “I’m not the one getting married.”

His eyes flicker over my face. “No, but you’re the puppet master who accomplished the impossible.”

“It wasn’t that bad.”

“Now I know something is wrong with you. Are you...sad Declan is getting married?” His voice drops lower than usual.

A laugh bursts out of me. “What? *No.*”

“Then what’s wrong?”

My head hangs, and a few spiral curls fall in front of my eyes.

I run a hand down my dress to smooth out a few nonexistent wrinkles. The cheery lavender fabric stands out against my brown skin, making me seem far happier than I feel. “I just got an email telling me I didn’t get the job.”

“Shit. I’m sorry to hear that. I know how hard you worked on the interview presentation.”

After the months I spent working on a presentation for the Kane Company’s human resources department, they rejected my job transfer. It stings more than it should. While I wasn’t exactly shooting for the stars, with an entry-level HR position, I had a good idea with a promising future. One that could benefit countless dyslexics stuck in a corporate rut. My plan could take the company to the next level, if only they’d give me a chance.

*You can try again next time.*

My smile wobbles. “I guess it wasn’t meant to be.”

“That’s some bullshit if you ask me.”

I laugh. “It’s true. At least Declan never found out. Could you imagine if I told him and then I didn’t even get the job? He would’ve never let me live it down.”

“He does tend to gloat.”

“Hence the party.” I point at the ginormous balloon arch with a massive grin.

Cal raises a brow at the flickering neon *She Said Yes* sign. “Understated. He’ll love it.”

I bat my lashes with faux sweetness. “I simply planned a party like he asked me to. He should have specified what kind of event he wanted.”

“Remind me to never piss you off.”

“I have a whole plan for the day that happens.”

Cal fake shudders. “Where is the wife-to-be?”



*Final Offer*

# Playlist



- in my head** – Ariana Grande ♥
- Hate Myself** – NF ♥
- Forever Winter (Taylor's Version)** – Taylor Swift ♥
- Bad Habits (Acoustic Version)** – Ed Sheeran ♥
- justified** – Kacey Musgraves ♥
- If I Ever Feel Better** – Phoenix ♥
- Unmiss You** – Clara Mae ♥
- Broken (Acoustic)** – Jonah Kagen ♥
- Wishful Thinking** – Gracie Abrams ♥
- Brown Eyes Baby** – Keith Urban ♥
- favorite crime** – Olivia Rodrigo ♥
- Clarity** – Vance Joy ♥
- Break My Heart Again** – Danielle Bradbery ♥
- This Time Is Right** – CVBZ & American Authors ♥
- Labyrinth** – Taylor Swift ♥
- One Life** – James Bay ♥
- You Let Me Down** – Alessia Cara ♥
- No Se Va** – Morat ♥
- Goodbye** – Mimi Webb ♥
- Time** – NF ♥
- When We Were Young** – Adele ♥
- I Won't Give Up** – Jason Mraz ♥
- ADMV** – Maluma ♥



## CHAPTER ONE

# Alana

If I had known I was going to die tonight, I would have worn sexier underwear. Or at the very least, I would have dressed in something far nicer than mismatched pajamas riddled with holes and bleach stains.

My mother is probably lecturing me from heaven right now, wondering where she went wrong with raising me.

*Perdona me, Mami. Debería haberle escuchado.*

I do a quick sign of the cross before I aim my handgun at the shadow standing in the open doorway. My heart pounds furiously in my chest, the duration between beats growing smaller by the second. “I’m giving you until the count of five to get out of my house before I shoot. One...two...”

“Fuck.” Something heavy smacks against the wall before a switch flips, flooding the entryway of the house with light.

My hold on the gun tightens as I come face-to-face with the one person I never thought I’d see again. Our gazes collide. His blue eyes trace the shape of my face like an invisible caress, sending a rush of warmth through my body.

Despite the blaring alarm in my head warning me to run far away from him, I can't resist taking in all six-foot-four-inches of Callahan Kane. Everything about him feels familiar, all the way down to the ache in my chest that never left, even after he did.

His easygoing smile.

His unruly dirty blond hair, always unkept and begging to be tamed.

His blue eyes the color of the clearest sky, sparkling like the surface of the lake under the noon sun.

It's been over six years since I last saw him. Six long years that have hardened me enough to spot his allure for exactly what it is.

*A trap.*

If I look carefully, I can spot the cracks in his façade that he tries to hide behind his beauty and charm. He was always careful about letting people look too closely at the broken person beneath his mask. It was what captured my attention in the first place and what resulted in my downfall.

I was twenty-three when he broke my heart, yet the pain feels like it happened just yesterday. Rather than ignore it, I lean into the hurt and use it to fuel my rage.

"What the hell are you doing here?" I snap.

His smile falters before sliding back into place. "Excited to see me?"

I motion him forward with my free hand. "Thrilled. Why don't you come a little closer so I can get a better shot? I'd hate to miss an important organ."

His eyes flicker from my face to the gun in my hand. "Do you even know how to shoot that thing?"

My eyes narrow. "Want to find out?"

"Where did you get that?"

"A gift from my mom." My chest swells.