



SHOWER

IN THE

by Seenaire

CHAPTER 1.

In the shower, Sheryl lathered her thick blonde hair. The dried ketchup stain was more difficult to wash out than she thought. 15 minutes later, she was out of the shower, a white cotton towel tied around her chest. She reached out to the hanger to get her face towel when the bathroom door slid open.

“Oh, you startled me. Do you need something?”

“Not at all, Cher. I just came to apologize again for spilling ketchup on you. I’m so clumsy, it’s embarrassing.”

Sheryl smiled. “I’ll admit it took some time to come off but it is completely fine. The burger slipped from your hands.” She arched her brow as she brought the face towel over her face. “Couldn’t the apology wait, though?”

“No. I need to make things right.”

“As I said, you don’t need to apolo....”

Suddenly, Sheryl’s head was thrust hard into the bathroom wall. She lost her balance and plunged onto the floor. Her vision immediately blurred and she whispered, “What.. are you.... do....ing?”

“Getting payment that you owe.” The eyes of the person in front of her were no longer those of someone she called a ‘friend.’

Payment? She tried to scream but a large amount of blood oozing from her nose spilt into her mouth.

All I wanted was a 2-week break from life. I didn’t sign up for this.

Those were Sheryl’s last thoughts as the person smirked and approached her slowly with a knife.

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“Aarrgh! Why is Sheryl taking forever?” Andre lashed out. “And how’s it 8:25 pm already?” He adjusted his right arm on the large sofa where Olivia had been leaning on.

“Let’s give her five more minutes.” Josh replied from across the room.

Sheryl, Josh, Andre and Olivia met in College and remained close friends. Olivia and Andre relocated to another state after they got married 2 years ago. Sheryl and Josh had been on and off, but they all knew where the relationship was headed.

They planned a 2-week couple’s trip in Iowa to catch up on old times. This plan was ongoing for over a month, and it was perfect when one of Josh’s buddies, Bob offered his 6 bedroom mansion in LeClaire. He was filthy rich, travelled often and was fond of Josh.

It was 7:45pm that Thursday and Game Night ended in the living room when Ketchup spilt on Sheryl. She rushed upstairs for a quick shower while the rest waited for her return to watch a movie at 8pm.

“She isn’t back yet?” Danielle emerged from the kitchen with a bag of chocolate chip cookies. When Mark shook his head from his novel, she groaned. “Hold this, babe.” Handing over the cookies to Mark, she headed upstairs to go get Sheryl.

Danielle was Sheryl’s friend and colleague from H & H Consults. Mark her fiancé had quickly become friends with Sheryl and encouraged Danielle to join in on the trip. It was exactly eight days ago the 6 friends arrived Bob’s Mansion. So far, the trip was filled with beautiful, memorable moments, until Danielle went upstairs at 8:26pm that fateful Thursday to get Sheryl for movie night.

A scream from upstairs sent everyone in the living room into panic mode. They followed the voice to the bathroom and found Sheryl in a pool of blood. Neck cracked, a hole in her heart and a towel over her naked body. Olivia collapsed into Andre’s arms. Josh rushed to Sheryl’s pale body. He called out to her softly and shook her firmly, hoping for some form of life. Mark covered his mouth with both hands, eyes wide open. Danielle started wailing uncontrollably.

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At 1:30am on Friday, the entire house was barricaded by the police. Word had spread like wildfire and the headline was on every TV station; “POPULAR TOP MARKETER MURDERED IN SECRET MANSION.” Bob took the next flight back to town.

Bob’s super-secret mansion is all over the news and I never got to marry the girl of my dreams. What happens to my surprise proposal on Saturday? Josh couldn’t believe the sudden turn of events as he sat close to the Ambulance outside the house.

Sighting Bob when he arrived, he hugged him. “I am so sorry, Bob. This was supposed to be a beautiful holiday with my friends as we discussed. I didn’t mean to create any mess for you. I am deeply sorry.”

“Its fine, Josh. I’m relieved that you are safe and I’m sorry about Sheryl. I know how much she meant to you.”

“Thanks, man.” He finally let himself cry.

The police took Bob’s statement and “The Five Housemates” as they were now called, were questioned in the police station for a few days. Their story remained the same, however,

“Game Night ended at 7:45pm. Sheryl had to go take a shower because ketchup was spilt on her accidentally. We all sat in the living room waiting for her so we could start our Movie at 8pm. No one left except Danielle who went to the Kitchen at 8:20pm briefly to get some cookies. She then went upstairs to check on Sheryl and found her dead.”

So, who killed Sheryl Allen? That was the question on everyone’s lips.

“It’s just sick that someone could sneak into the house while we were all waiting for Movie Night and murder Cher.” Mark lamented, comforting Danielle who couldn’t stop sobbing as they gave their statement.

Olivia and Andre were not allowed out of the city until after the investigation. They stayed with Josh, who needed the company.

CHAPTER 2.

Two weeks after the incident, a funeral service was held for Sheryl Allen in her hometown in Oklahoma.

“Sheryl was a pure joy to everyone around her. She was kind, hardworking and a go-getter. She missed her way like most teens, but got back on track very quickly and righted her wrongs. We may never understand why this happened or why anyone would want to hurt our Sheryl.” Mrs Allen paused for some minutes, letting her tears flow freely. She looked across the church at her husband who held their 8-year old daughter’s hand. He slowly nodded for her to continue. “I will forever be grateful that although Cher left this world at only 24 years old, she had a good heart and touched many lives.”

Mr Carpenter, Sheryl’s Manager had a few words to say. “From the first day I sighted Sheryl in the interview room, there was something about her that stood out. She proved that by completely transforming our marketing department into a profitable one, and brought so much warmth that everyone felt alive and hopeful whenever she was in the office. I encouraged her to take a 2-week holiday when I noticed she was getting really worked up. Now, I wish I didn’t.”

More eulogies poured in at the funeral service.

Why are they such hypocrites? Sheryl died and suddenly she’s an Angel? Oh, please! No one remembers poor 14-year old Andy Hoofman who committed suicide because that cold-hearted bitch, Cher constantly bullied him in school. Andy couldn’t stand being bullied by a girl. He eventually believed something was wrong with him and shortly after, my only brother and sibling took his own life. Well, now Cher is reunited with Satan.

While the choir ministered ‘Amazing Grace,’ Olivia sobbed. Andre held her hands warmly in his as he fought back tears. Josh stared blankly at the white casket in the middle of the church. Danielle leaned on Mark’s shoulders as they sat quietly.

I can’t wait for this entire charade to be over so I can get on with my life.

“Mark?” Danielle noticed Mark’s face had a weird look and he was deep in thought. “Are you okay?”

“Yes, darling.” Mark replied genuinely with a grin. “And I got Cher pink Roses instead of the regular ones.”

Danielle offered a weak smile. Mark could guess her thoughts. *He loved Cher after knowing her for a short time.* He wished he could tell Danielle the truth; the truth that gladdened his heart but he couldn’t show. Yet.

Oh, it’s been 7 years! 7 painful years plotting my revenge. Getting close to Cher through you a year ago was easy with your low self-esteem. I convinced you to join in on the 2-week trip because it was a better plan than visiting Cher’s house. And to make things more appealing, I proposed to you. One week in the mansion was plenty of time to study everyone and “Game Night” was a perfect alibi for me. Of course, none of you remembers when I went upstairs and came down. Or when I returned the knife to the kitchen and stuck my gloves into my back pocket. You were all seated there like statues and watched me sit down and pretend to be reading a book on the sofa. It’s not your fault though. You all thought the game “What do you see?” I introduced to end Game Night, was just some ‘weird’ game. You had no clue it was a Hypnosis session by a professional psychologist. The last thing you all remember was Cher leaving for a shower. Of course she had to be exempted because I wanted to watch the fear in her eyes as I killed her. The large burger with extra filling came in handy. And sweet Danielle, your sudden crave for cookies was as a result of the strange void you felt inside of you. You only assumed it was hunger. Just like the many times at home. Now, Sheryl has paid her dues and boy! does this feel good!

The funeral service ended and everyone filed out of the church solemnly. The five friends held hands and sobbed quietly as they prepared to say goodbye to their friend forever. One of them was happy.