

CATHERINE LANE

TREAD
LIGHTLY



CHAPTER 1

Present

THE SUN REFLECTED OFF THE window, obscuring the view of the shop inside. Still, Claire was hyperaware of the products on display. She shuffled her feet and coughed but didn't move toward the door. In the window, she caught the reflection of Tamiel's easy smile, as if she frequented sex toy stores all the time.

"You're kidding. Right?" The guardian angel shimmered in the sunlight as she chuckled. "It's in there?"

"The magic calls to you. You don't get to choose." Claire bit her bottom lip.

"It has a very interesting sense of humor," Tamiel said.

"I'll say."

Tamiel rubbed her hands. "Okay. So let's go get it."

As if it were that easy. Claire closed her eyes, blocking out the mannequins dressed in leather teddies. A powerful force churned around her. It reached out from the store like a tidal wave, swirling around her body and then yanking her forward. She had to dig her heels into the sidewalk to stay upright.

The magic was raw, not filtered and refined the way the Fairy Godmother Council delivered it. Another surge tugged

at her, and immense power coursed around her again, almost pulling her under. Panic flared. She had been around magic all her life, but it had never been this demanding or potent.

She reached out for Tamiel, and the angel's hand was instantly under her arm, steadying her.

"Can you do this?" Tamiel asked softly, no longer teasing.

"I don't know," Claire said. "I... I'm not sure I can control it."

As if sensing her hesitation, the magic yanked her forward, smashing her shin into the bottom edge of the display window. Metal cracked against bone, and for the second time in three days, a sharp pain shot up her leg.

"Son of a..."

CHAPTER 2

Three Days Earlier

“...BANSHEE!” CLAIRE CRIED.

The coffee table had come out of nowhere and slammed into her shin. She hopped around the small living room, howling like a cat in heat and holding her leg. A glance down told her what she already knew. Blood trickled down her lower leg and pooled in the tip of her blue slipper.

What an idiot. No, worse. She had been so concerned about closing this case fast that she had rushed her entry. And now Claire—fairy godmother: level-one-plus, the golden child of the Fairy Godmother Council—looked like a newbie.

The young woman, her client, had been reading a magazine on the couch but had leaped up when Claire materialized right in front of her. Her eyes, first round with surprise, had narrowed into a hard glare almost immediately.

“Who the hell are you?” She rolled the magazine into a stiff tube and waved it in Claire’s direction. “How did you get in here?”

“Relax, Jenna.” Shit, that wasn’t right. Jenna was last week’s case. This girl pulsating with hostility was named... Claire

brought the top sheet of case number 69317 into focus in her mind. That's right. It was Abigail—Abby for short?

“Relax, Abby.” She took a shot.

Neither Abigail nor Abby backed down. Instead, she danced on the balls of her feet and jabbed the magazine across the coffee table. “Get the hell out of here. I took a self-defense course. I know how to use this.”

“Yes. I'm sure you do. But put it down and listen to me.” Claire dropped her foot to the ground. She held it there even as a sharp pain shot up her leg. She needed to look the part and, frankly, put a little magic back into the moment.

She forced a smile to her lips and hoped the incarnation she had chosen—a short, plump woman dressed in blue silks and a pointy cap—would do the trick. At the moment, she was a carbon copy of the fairy godmother from the live-action remake of *Sleeping Beauty* currently streaming online. Of course, this frumpy version didn't resemble what she'd looked like when she had actually appeared to Princess Aurora back when she'd been an apprentice, level-ten-minus, but this day and age left no room for subtlety.

“Guess what?” Claire threw her hands in the air. “I'm your fairy godmother!”

“Don't come any closer, you crazy-ass freak.” Again, the girl jabbed the magazine at her. “Are you looking for Todd? He's selling whatever your DOC is in two-twelve. This is two-ten.”

“DOC?”

“Drug of choice.”

“No. I'm not looking for drugs.” Claire shook her head. It had been such an easy case on paper. That happy scenario had disintegrated the minute she slammed into the coffee table. She took a deep breath, tamped down the pain still shooting up

her leg, and studied the girl in front of her. Shoulder-length, brown hair framed an angular face. Metal piercings ran all the way down her left ear and jumped over to her nose and eyebrow. Abby stood frozen, her brown eyes two tiny pinpoints of resentment and anger.

Yep, things had definitely changed over the centuries. Sleeping Beauty and this young woman were barely the same species.

“Get out, or I’m calling the cops.” Abby’s hand darted for her cell phone on the coffee table.

Claire pulled her wand, Carothann, from the invisible pocket of magic that always rode at her hip. One flick and the cell phone ricocheted across the glass top before Abby’s fingers could get there.

“What the hell?” She looked up at Claire for an explanation.

Claire waved the slender rowan branch with a theatrical flourish and sent her intentions straight to its core. The wand, trembling in her hand, strained ever so slightly, and magic filled the room.

Invisible trumpets blew a soft fanfare, and a gentle wind lifted her blue cape. Golden dust shot up into the air.

As the golden shimmer settled over them both, the hardened look faded from Abby’s eyes. Claire couldn’t suppress her grin. The power of magic worked every time. She had her now. Thank goodness.

Abby laughed with a loud hoot. “Oh my God! I’m on *Punk Me*. Right?” She dropped the magazine on the coffee table with a clunk and spun about the room. “Where’s the camera? Is Van Woods here? Oh my God, he is so cute.”

“Abby, concentrate.” She snapped her wand against the air. “Fairy. God. Mother.” Golden sparks like tiny fireworks shot out of Carothann’s tip with every word.

Abby pursed her lips as she watched the sparklers fall to the ground. “I’m not being punked?”

“No.”

“And you are?”

“Your fairy godmother. Level-one-plus.”

Claire rocked back on her heels, in part to take weight off her still-aching leg, but mostly to give Abby time to let her unbelievable good fortune sink in. She waited for the tears of happiness, the squeals of delight, the—

“No thanks.” Abby shook her head. “I don’t need a fairy godmother. I’m okay.”

“Seriously?” Claire glanced around the squalid studio apartment. Cockroaches skittered along the wall of the kitchenette. The furniture could have easily been found on a curb the day before.

The hardened look was back. “Yep.”

“Listen to me. There’re lots of different kinds of okay. I can offer you the happily-ever-after kind.”

“Whatever.” Abby threw up a hand in dismissal.

Claire forced another smile. Abby was pushing all her buttons. All her cases, lately, were about managing attitude first and creating new destinies second. She took a deep breath. “First step is to get you ready for the party. I’m afraid you’re already very late.”

“Party? What party?”

Claire clenched her teeth to keep the smile intact. “The annual sales party? At your company?”

“Oh yeah. That. I’m not going.”

“But your Prince Charming is there. That’s where you need to go if you’re going to find a life that’s more than just...okay.” She waved Carothann around the room, pointing out a dark

stain on the carpet and then the oven door, which hung off one hinge.

“Office parties are lame. Especially on a Friday night.” Abby rolled her eyes, as if just having to explain this fact was the largest imposition imaginable. “Besides, I have nothing to wear.”

“I’m your fairy godmother, for goodness’s sake.”

“Yeah. I got that,” she shot back. “And that’s, like, relevant how?”

Crazy. If there wasn’t a vampire or zombie involved, kids these days had no reference point.

Claire tightened her hold on Carothann. The wand felt warm and familiar in her hand, the only right thing in what was quickly becoming a difficult case. With a swift flick, she and the branch pulsed with power. She visualized what she wanted and the wand jumped to life. Golden tendrils of magic streaked to the far side of the room. A pile of paper napkins leaped to life in Abby’s makeshift kitchen. They exploded into the air with a soft poof and floated back together to stitch an exact copy of the high-end dress on the cover of the magazine the girl had been reading.

“Oh my God!” Abby rushed to grab the masterpiece before it hit the floor. Her grin almost touched her eyes. Give her an expensive designer label, and she was all-in. Claire should have led with the dress.

“Shoes. I need shoes. Can they be Jimmy Choos?” Abby stroked the dress lovingly. “And, like, one of those cool, triple-choker necklaces all the rich girls have. I got to have one of those too.”

Claire bit her lip and tried to push her annoyance back down into a place where she could ignore it. In the olden days,

the makeover had been her absolute favorite part. Now it was a shopping frenzy, where the girls were like piranhas on steroids.

Still, Administration just wanted the case closed. A tick on the tally to show the magical world the FGC was still relevant in the twenty-first century.

Another flick of her wand and two *People* magazines hopped to attention on the coffee table. Rustling filled the air as their pages folded in on themselves and grew into metallic silver pumps. A second flick, and a used piece of dental floss in an ashtray squirmed into a sparkly necklace.

Abby scooped up her bounty. “Oh my God. I have Jimmy Choos.”

“You know, it all vanishes at midnight.”

“It does?”

“Yeah. You don’t get to keep it.”

“I don’t?” Abby’s face fell. “Not even the necklace?”

“Have you read even one fairy tale?”

Abby just stared at her.

“Those are the Council’s rules. I didn’t make them up.”

“That totally sucks.” Abby plopped onto the couch. “Seriously, I think—”

“All right, my dear. You’d better put it all on and get going.”

Abby opened her mouth to start up again, but Claire jumped in first. “Chop-chop. Your ride is outside.”

Claire pointed Carothann at a cockroach darting around the fridge. It instantly straightened up into a lanky man decked out in a chauffeur’s hat and coat. Normally she would have chosen the more reliable spider in the opposite corner, but roaches were incredibly fast drivers, and Abby was getting later by the second.

The girl took forever to get ready, adjusting the straps on her dress and shoes again and again and putting product in her

hair almost one strand at a time. So long that the chauffeur had dropped to the ground and tried to scuttle behind the couch. Claire was shooing the man back out into the open when her impatience boiled over.

“Abby! I can only put things in motion. You have to take it home yourself.”

“Just a second,” she said as she reached for her cell, still on the far side of the coffee table. Abby had snapped a selfie and was pulling up Snapchat.

“You’ve got to be kidding me.” Carothann jumped in her hand, and the pictures winked out of existence.

Abby tapped the screen with a finger. “What’d you do?”

“Nothing permanent. It’s frozen until after midnight. Just go to the party.”

“I can’t go without my phone.” Huffing, she stamped her foot and held out her cell. “Fix it. I want a selfie.”

How old was this girl? The file had said twenty-two, but with all this whining she was acting more like four. And that was being generous.

“No pictures. No exceptions.” The Cottingley disaster of 1917 jumped to mind—when her idiot cousin Heloise had unbelievably popped up in photographs taken by two English girls. The FGC had moved heaven and earth to make the pictures read like fakes. And now, thanks to Heloise’s indiscretion, a refresher workshop on photos and all social media was required once a year.

Claire plucked the phone from Abby’s outstretched fingers and dropped it on the coffee table with a clatter and no comment. She then steered Abby to the chauffeur. His big ears twitched like the antennae they once were.

“Get her to the party.” Claire patted the cockroach on the back and turned to Abby with one last warning. “And you must

be home by midnight. Or all this—the dress, the shoes, the really nice Tesla outside—will disappear, and you will be the crazy woman walking around in napkins and *People* magazines and wearing dental floss around her neck.”

Abby gave her a hard glare.

“Got it?”

“Give me my cell back. I’m not going until you do.”

A tiny knot pulled tight in Claire’s stomach. She needed to change tactics. Fast.

“Suit yourself.” She shrugged and disappeared in a cloud of golden dust.

“Wait! Don’t go.” Panic rose in Abby’s voice. “I’m sorry.” Plaintive cries followed Claire all the way across town.

* * *

Celebrating a banner year, the employees of the Bluestone Paper Company were doing it up right. Streamers, balloons, and cut-out decorations had transformed the warehouse into a first-class party zone. A live band jammed on the loading dock, several barmen handed out free booze by the printing machines, and chefs with tall, puffy hats manned buffet tables in every corner. The longest line snaked out from the one where two men in kimonos were hand-rolling sushi.

Claire stood hidden from sight behind one of the industrial bookshelves in the back. She winced as her injured shin hit a heavy stack of paper on the shelf and wished she were brazen or stupid enough to dip into the magic stream to heal her leg. The FGC was very clear: no magic for personal use. Sure, everyone cheated a little, like taking a pen home from the office. But healing her leg would be like taking home the whole office. And somehow Upper Administration always knew.

Instead, her gaze zeroed in on the only human in the room who mattered—Bluestone’s handsome star salesman. Abby’s Prince Charming stood in line at the sushi table. He shifted his weight casually from foot to foot as he chatted happily with another male partygoer. He didn’t seem to be in a hurry, but more tight knots formed in Claire’s stomach. The hour hand of the big clock above the metal rolling doors was approaching ten. Just over two hours away from her firm midnight deadline. She knew Abby was on her way—the alarm in the girl’s final plea told her that. She just needed to keep Charming out of trouble until she arrived.

The prince of Bluestone Paper stepped up to the table just as the sushi master slid a long caterpillar roll onto the serving plate. A step beyond an excellent appetizer, it was a work of art. Green avocado and bright red *masago* played like real scales on top of the roll, and two round pieces of octopus peered out like bug eyes on one end.

“Bravo,” Charming said and led a round of applause. The sushi master bowed and waved an open hand over his creation. Charming, as well as everyone behind him, crowded the table to grab a piece.

Across the room, Claire gasped. Charming’s fingers had not clasped eel and cucumber but a shapely hand that had snuck under his at the last instant. His gaze softened the moment it met the warm brown eyes that belonged to the hand’s owner.

“Mother Chimera!” Claire drew out Carothann in a flash and pointed it at the pair, ready to flick Charming’s sushi to the floor or push the woman back into the crowd—anything to break their connection and save him for Abby.

The wand was at its apex when she froze. A gentle smile played on the girl’s lips as she stared back at the handsome

man in front of her. The girl wasn't just pretty; sweetness and kindness, attributes that were undeniably absent in Abby, radiated off her.

Carothann dropped almost of its own accord. This was the true magic—love at first sight. No woman had looked at Claire like that for a very long time, but she hadn't forgotten how special it could be.

Mother of a manticore. Was she really thinking of letting them connect? It would break every rule in the FGC handbook. For sure, she would have to meet with Administration, and who knew what other punishments would follow?

But the pair clearly had the spark of true love. The whole room was staring at them. Abby, in all her petulance, would never generate anything close. True, he wasn't her client...but this happy ending would at least give the case some meaning it was sorely lacking. It might even put some purpose back in her own life. Besides, what could they do to her? She was a level-one-plus.

When Prince of Sales took Sushi Princess by the hand and led her onto the dance floor, Claire didn't strike him lame. When he leaned in and whispered in her ear, she didn't raise the volume of the band. Instead, she held Carothann tightly against her thigh. Already, a bright and shiny future was opening up around them. The edges of a new life were plainly visible to Claire, as if all the colors of the aurora borealis had drifted over them.

A perfect storybook ending. Except in this tale, Abby didn't make even one appearance, and Claire would, for the first time in her career, have an open case past her deadline.

The knots in her stomach tightened into one big heap. What the hell was she thinking? Yep, she would have a lot

of explaining to do, and what was worse, she had brought it on herself.

* * *

Claire hesitated, her hand on the front door of the Fairy Godmother Council's Los Angeles branch. In the olden days, the offices had been called *keeps* and had been more about fun than work. Rooms in castles or great halls had been covered in rich tapestries, flowed with wine and food, and hosted all-day parties. But now, with the FGC on the verge of becoming obsolete, the Los Angeles office had been reduced to a small storefront in an abandoned mini-mall. A simple magic wash had made the outside so bare and uninviting that no unsuspecting human would dare drop in. Claire, hand still on the door, wished that she, too, could just walk past like the humans did. That knot in her stomach yanked even tighter. Asking for the first extension of her career was going to kill her.

When she finally opened the door, she did a double take. The desk in the reception room was empty, the chair overturned, and a buzz of animated conversation came at her from the staff room behind. She limped quickly down the attached hallway and peered through the door. Godmothers and godfathers, crowded in a tight circle in the middle of the room, were talking in hushed tones.

"What's going on?" The Claire who stood in the entrance was her true self. Long, golden hair tumbled down her back, and a shiny platinum band designating her level-one rank crowned her head. Her gown, deep forest green and a little old school in its cut, matched the color of her eyes exactly. Other godmothers dressed in more modern clothes, but Claire was proud of her job and wasn't afraid to show it.

“Holy Succubus, Claire.” A level-two-minus waved her over. “Did you hear what Pierre did?”

“No, what happened?” A chill ran down her neck. Office gossip was severely frowned upon in the FGC—a punishable offense, even. What could Pierre have done that would have everyone breaking the rule?

“He marched into Juliette’s office this morning and handed in his wand. He quit.”

“What?” Claire’s mouth dropped open. Holy Succubus was right. In all her centuries on the job, she had never heard of such a thing.

“No joke.” The level-two-minus shook her head. “He said he was never any good as a godfather, and he might as well take his chances in the human world.”

“Seriously? How will he access the magic?” Claire asked.

“He can’t!” A young male apprentice shuddered.

“Apparently,” the level-two-minus said in a mock whisper, “Pierre told Juliette it wouldn’t really be any different; he never could get much magic out of his wand. Except now the FGC couldn’t track him. He came out here and announced to all of us that the FGC has us in a chokehold and he was going to be his own man.”

“Wow.” Claire’s mouth went dry. No one had ever left the FGC of his or her own accord. That was unbelievably stupid... and maybe the bravest thing she had ever heard.

“I don’t know why we’re all so surprised.” A wizened old godmother put in her two cents. “I’m not sure why it hasn’t happened sooner.” She waved a hand at the digital clock on one bare wall. Large red numbers ticked upward to document all deadlines to the millisecond. “Look at the conditions we’re working under.”

“What will he do?” Claire still couldn’t get her head around someone willingly giving up his wand. Carothann was a part of her. It would be like cutting off a hand.

“Maybe he’s just rediscovering his roots,” the level-two-minus said. “You know we’re supposed to be part human.”

“It’s the other part he should be discovering,” the old godmother said. “We don’t even know what it is.”

“You don’t think he’s going to work for the GA, do you?” the apprentice asked.

“Oh, don’t be stupid.” The old godmother turned to face the young man. “What would the Guardian Angels want with a godfather? They hate us.”

“Think of all the intel he could give them. All they’d have to do is look in his eyes and he would be their slave,” the apprentice said with certainty.

“No. It doesn’t work that way.” The level-two-minus pulled them back on track. “Administration was on Pierre’s ass constantly. It couldn’t have been much fun for him. He hadn’t closed a case in a long time.”

A shiver ran through Claire at the thought of Abby turning up at the party only to go home alone and possibly naked. Letting the salesman dance the night away with a woman who wasn’t her client didn’t sound like such a good idea in the harsh light of the FGC office and this conversation. “It’s getting really hard to close a case these days.”

“Oh, honey, you don’t have to worry,” the old godmother said. “You’re fairy godmother royalty. Cinderella, Sleeping Beauty, that Middleton girl. You—”

Her last word echoed around her. Everyone had gone completely silent. Claire twisted her head and gasped.

Her boss—tall, imposing, and sexy as hell—stood at the back of the room. She wore a shimmering gown whose panels

fell straight and snug, calling all sorts of attention to her tight breasts and long waist. Her auburn hair was swept into a simple bun so as not to compete with her stellar body. She would have been really something, if not for the imperious glare she threw out into the room.

“Dragon balls,” the apprentice said quietly.

The level-two-minus took in a quick breath. Fear flashed in her eyes.

“Don’t worry,” Claire said grimly. “I’m pretty sure she’s here for me.” She swung toward the woman at the door. Their gazes met.

Juliette inclined her head to the windowed office in the back, and Claire carefully threaded her way through the frozen operatives to join her.

Juliette shook her head disapprovingly as they entered the office. A list of open cases, like a whiteboard in a hospital nurses’ station, magically hovered against the back wall. Most of the cases glittered with golden letters. Only two names flashed in red. Pierre’s and hers.

Juliette pointed to the board. “So you want to tell me about that?”

Claire stalled with a deep breath. She would have to play this one very carefully. “I made a game-time decision. He wasn’t right for Abby.”

“What were you thinking, Claire?” Juliette’s eyes flashed. “You know protocol better than anyone. You always need to clear any deviations with us first. We just can’t have godmothers going off on their own.”

“Yes. I know, Juliette, but he was too easily diverted.” That much was true, but a shiver of fear ran through her. What had she been thinking? “And Abby wasn’t into—”

“Claire,” Juliette raised her hands. “Please tell me you aren’t in here to ask for an extension.”

Claire swallowed and nodded as if she were a schoolgirl being called into the principal’s office. “Sorry.” And when Juliette didn’t answer, she added, “It happens to everyone.”

“Not to you. Usually, you can close this kind of case in your sleep.” Juliette made a show of pressing one hand to her temple.

It was true, so Claire said nothing.

“Look. This isn’t the time for a slump,” Juliette said. “The FGC is under a lot of scrutiny right now. First, the Guardian Angels start stealing our clients, and now Pierre...” She sighed deeply. “We need to show results, not problems. You do know they just shut down the Santa Barbara office, right?”

Claire nodded.

“And now you’re coming in here with problems you’ve created and making a bad day even worse.”

A bad day. That was an understatement. Upper Administration had to be crawling all over Juliette. It was plain poor luck that Pierre had been under her jurisdiction. He was a terrible godfather, always had been. But Juliette was also the worst kind of middle management. Unengaged and inefficient until something went wrong, and then it was all about covering her own ass.

“Let me be clear.” Juliette’s voice cut into her thoughts. “You’re in here not because of one silly girl who dreams of being more than a receptionist at a dog food company—”

“Paper,” Claire said, not quite under her breath.

“Paper. Dog food. No matter. This is about our way of life. No one wants a fairy godmother anymore. Girls these days want to find their own path. And some of them don’t even want men. And I’m not talking about the way you don’t want males. Love

is love. The FGC has always been up to handling that. No, I'm talking about financial independence and feminist causes. Where true soul mates don't even make an appearance."

Claire rubbed her chin. Women these days might have a point. After all, she had risen to the top of her game without a soul mate. It had worked for her.

"We need to find a way to reinvent ourselves to fit into these new values." Juliette's voice had risen a whole octave as she spoke. She caught herself and smoothed back a curl that had escaped the bun. "If we're going to survive, we need to be the force of the future, not the force of the past."

For half a second, Claire had thought about pulling a pom-pom out of the air and waving it with her every word. Juliette ate up any kind of butt-kissing, and she was right. The FGC did need to reinvent itself. The name alone needed to be more gender-fluid for starters. But for now, Claire just had to get through this meeting and figure out a better solution for Abby. Let Upper Administration figure out the big issues. Maybe, though, it was the same issue.

"Of course, Juliette," she said.

"Good. I have to know that you're all-in. That I can trust you. To do what I say, when I say it."

Now Claire flinched. What the hell was going on? This conversation was all over the place. Abby, the Guardian Angels, and now... Was Juliette really rescinding the one thing that made this job palatable? Her autonomy in the field.

Juliette stared down her nose, waiting for an answer.

Claire resisted the impulse to tell her boss where to shove it and said instead, "You can, Juliette. I'm here for the FGC." When Juliette still didn't answer, she added, "And for you too, of course."

“Excellent. I’ll extend the deadline on case number 69317.” Juliette flicked her own wand, Baltine, a lovely red Manzanita branch. Claire’s name and case on the board flickered back into gold. “But no more pussyfooting around. I’m going out on a limb for you. Close it as soon as possible.”

“Right.” Claire started toward the door, carefully favoring her hurt shin. Thankfully, this whole horrible conversation seemed to be drawing to a close.

“Oh, and one more thing. I need to ask for your help with another case.” Juliette’s voice turned sultry.

Claire groaned inwardly. Everyone knew that Juliette only trotted out this voice when the stakes were high.

She turned back. “What case?”

“This one.” The thickest folder that Claire had ever seen appeared out of nowhere and hovered magically in the dead space between them. Juliette gracefully plucked the file out of the air with her long fingers and handed it to Claire.

“Read the whole thing. We can do a meet and greet with the girl first thing in the morning, and then we’ll sit down and strategize how we’ll run the case.”

“We?” Surely Juliette had misspoken.

“Yes, we. This is one of those cases that will make the FGC relevant again. I believe it came straight from the director’s office in Paris. And I thought...we could work it together.”

Claire’s mind spun. Administration never worked the field. “I normally work solo.”

“I know, and maybe partnering up is one of the policies we need to look into as we reinvent the Fairy Godmother Council for the twenty-first century.”

Claire said nothing. Wrapping her mind around having Juliette as a partner, or even just having a partner in general, made her head spin. “Juliette. Look, I—”

“Do you want to end up like that?” Juliette pointed to the board behind her. Pierre’s name flashed red once and then went black. He was no longer an FGC operative.

Claire flinched. Juliette, inept as she was, was the queen of low blows. Who would Claire be without her job?

“Okay. We can work it together.”

“Perfect. Contact me first thing in the morning.”

Claire limped out of the office. Her night wasn’t over. Medical always took forever. A long session would give her time to think, though. How on earth was she going to work two cases at once? Especially when one of those cases involved a new *partner*?

No good deed ever went unpunished.

The next couple of days were going to be living proof.

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PLEASE PURCHASE

TREAD LIGHTLY

BY CATHERINE LANE

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