

SNEAK PEEK OF *ONE WRONG MOVE*



# PROLOGUE

“Wait here,” Cyrus ordered.

“Why?” Casey asked—though *pawn* suited him better. Cyrus needed him for now, irritating as it was. But when they were done, so was he.

“Why?” he asked again.

Cyrus grunted out an exhale. Always full of questions. Only a handful of locations to go and the questions would cease. *He* would cease. “It doesn’t take two of us to get the fob,” he said, hoping Casey would accept the answer and let it drop, but he doubted it. “I’ve got this. Two of us will only draw more attention.”

“Fine,” Casey said, slumping back against the van’s passenger seat.

The imbecile was pouting like a little girl. His knee bounced in that annoying, jittery way, the seat squeaking with the motion. So impetuous. If he didn’t settle, their plans could be blown, and Cyrus wouldn’t allow that to happen. Far too much was at stake. His own neck was on the line.

“I won’t be long,” Cyrus said, taking one more look around before opening the van door. The lot behind them was dead, the building still. He climbed out and glanced back at their van parked in the nearly pitch-black alleyway, his breath a vapor in the cold night air.

Shockingly, his partner remained in the passenger seat, his knee bouncing high, his fingers fidgeting with his jacket’s zipper. Eagerness coursed through them both. The thrill and rush of the score.

Cyrus slipped his gloved hands into his pockets. A deeper rush nestled hot inside him, adrenaline searing his limbs. His fervency was for the kill.

Shutting the van door, he moved toward the rear of the restaurant, where the rental rooms’ entrance sat. His gloved fingers brushed the garrote in his right pocket, and he shifted his other hand to rest on the hilt of his gun. Which way would it go? Garrote or gun? Anticipation shot through him. Rounding the back of the building, he hung in the shadows and then stepped to the door and picked the lock—so simple a child could have done it. But what had he expected of a rent-by-the-hour-or-day establishment?

Opening the door, he stepped inside the minuscule foyer, studied the two doors on the ground level. Nothing but silence. He found the light switch and flipped off the ceiling bulb illuminating the stairwell, crept up the stairs, pausing as one creaked. He held still, his back flush with the wall, once again shadowed in darkness. Nothing stirred.

Reaching her room, he effortlessly picked the lock, stepped inside, and shut the door.

She was asleep on the shoddy sofa, a ratty blanket draped across her. Getting rid of her now might be easier, but what fun was it killing someone while they slept? And he needed to make sure she had the fob.

He knocked her feet with his elbow, and her eyes flashed open as she lurched to a seated position.

She rubbed her eyes. “You’re late.”

*Less chance of witnesses.*

“You have it?”

She nodded.

“Get it. We’re in a hurry.”

She got to her feet and headed for the bedroom.

He followed.

To his surprise, she climbed up on the dresser and reached for the heating vent.

*Huh.* She was smarter than he’d expected, yet not bright enough to know what was coming.

Pulling the dingy grate back, she retrieved a black velvet pouch.

“Hand it over,” he said.

She hopped down and hesitated. “I get my cut, right?” She clutched the bag to her chest.

“You’ll get your cut,” he said, wrapping his hands around the garrote while he took the pouch from her with his free hand, sliding it into his upper jacket pocket. “Good job.”

She brushed a strand of hair behind her ear, revealing her creamy neck. “Thanks.”

Restless energy pulsed through him.

“Are we done here?” she asked, shifting her stance, her arms wrapped around her slender waist.

“Just about.”

“What’s left to do?” she asked, her head cocked, and then she stilled. She took a step back. So she’d finally figured it out.

“No.” She shook her head, backing into the paneled wall. She opened her mouth to scream, but he seized her throat, squeezing the sound away. He lifted her higher on the wall, his fingers digging into her fair throat. She squirmed and kicked her dangling legs, nailing him in the shin.

He gripped her throat tighter still. He’d intended to give her the option—the easy way with a gunshot to the head or the hard way with the garrote. But the hard way was far more pleasurable, giving him the best elated high.

Her gaze bounced frantically about the room, but there was no escape. No one to help her.

Keeping a firm grip on her throat with one hand, he pulled the garrote from his pocket.

Tears streamed down her face.

It really was a shame. She was a pretty thing.

Five minutes later, he was back in the van, leaving the body behind.

“You got it?” Casey asked as they pulled onto the street, their headlights off.

Cyrus smiled and handed it to him. They were a go. The appetite for what was to come gnawed at his gut, but in a good way. It was time to feed the anticipation that had been growing in him for nigh on a year. It was time to scratch that itch.

# ONE

Christian's hands gripped the rock face. Granules abraded the tender flesh beneath his nails, leaving them raw. Pushing up on the ball of his foot, he strained, his fingers searching for the crag. Finally, his hand landed on the cold surface—only three inches deep. On a steady inhale and slow exhale, he lunged upward—only the slightest hold kept him from the hundred-foot drop to the forest below. His foot landed on the next hold, and he settled, his muscles hot in the brisk dawn air. Blood throbbing through his fingers, he shifted the weight onto the balls of his feet.

Mapping the next route in his head, he leapt for the next hold. Air replaced the solid rock for the breath of a second and searing adrenaline crashed through him as the hold slipped away. His pulse whooshing in his ears, he slid down, finally grabbing hold of a crag on his rapid descent. His fingers gripped hard—the only thing holding his body weight and keeping him from the ground far below.

He examined the rock face, looking for a foothold. Something. Adrenaline raked through him, quivering his arms. *Not good.* Time held motionless until he anchored his foot on a narrow ledge, small rocks shifting under the soles of his climbing shoes. He gripped the handhold while scanning for a new route up. He exhaled as he found it, but it was going to require another leap of faith.

Releasing his hold, he lunged for a more solid handhold. Gripping it, blood pulsed through his fingers. He centered his feet on a narrow ledge.

His breathing rapid and shallow, he turned and pressed his back against the volcanic rock—cool against his heated and perspiring skin—and exhaled in a whoosh. Talk about a close one. He smiled. One more adventure down, the light of dawn illuminating his path.

He held for a moment, taking in its light spreading across what seemed an endless sky. Man, he loved this view. Narrow shafts of light streamed down through the early morning fog, alighting the yellow-and-orange foliage ablaze. Everyone talked about the beautiful fall colors in New England, but for him, nothing beat fall in New Mexico, and it was peak season.

He sank into the silence. Only the occasional chirping of birds in the trees below rushed by his ears on the stiff, mounting breeze.

The orange sun rose above the horizon, its rays glinting off the rushing water of the swift creek at the bottom of the valley—chasing away the fading chill of night and replacing it with renewed warmth of the coming day.

Who knew this spot was even better for viewing the sunrise than the top of the ridge?

“Ain't Worried About It” broke the silence with its melody. Who on earth was calling so early? He prayed nothing was wrong. It was the only

reason he kept his cell on him while climbing—in case there was an emergency and his family needed him.

He shimmied the phone from the Velcro pocket on his right thigh and maneuvered it to his ear without bothering to look at who was calling.

“O’Brady.”

“I need you here now!” Tad Gaiman’s voice quivered with rage.

Why on earth was Tad calling him at sunrise? Why was he calling him, period?

“There’s been a heist at my gallery,” Tad’s heated words tumbled out.

“What?” Christian blinked. There was no way. The security system upgrades he installed made it impenetrable, or so he’d thought.

“Do you hear me? My gallery has been robbed!”

“I do.” He kept his voice level. Tad was frantic enough for the both of them. “Which gallery?” The man owned three.

“Jeopardy Falls.”

The one in their hometown? Crime was nearly nonexistent in their small town of nearly six hundred. “Take a deep breath and calm down so you can focus. Think clearly.” He shifted his weight to lean more fully on the rock face behind him, his positioning precarious while trying to have a phone conversation.

“Calm down?” Tad shrieked, and Christian held the phone away from his ear. Even his sister Riley couldn’t hit that high of a pitch. “Did you not hear me? My gallery’s been robbed.”

“I hear you. Let me call you back.”

“Call me back? You cannot be serious!”

“I’m halfway up Manzano rock face.”

“Of course you are.” Contempt hung heavy in Tad’s tone.

“I’ll call you when I’m on the road.”

“And how long will it take you to get here? This is a DEFCON 1 situation.”

Christian shook his head. Clearly, Tad had no idea what he was talking about. He doubted any kind of threat was present, just a case to be solved. It had been over a year since he’d investigated a heist, and they were his specialty. Though how the thief or thieves beat his system ruffled him.

“Christian! How soon?”

“I need to climb down and make the drive back to town. I’ll see you in an hour.”

“An hour!”

“We’ll talk through it on my way in.”

Scaling down the rock face as fast as he could, Christian reached his vintage Bronco.

Climbing inside, he clicked on the Bluetooth he’d installed. It’d cost a hefty penny, but in his line of work, he needed to be able to talk while on the road chasing down a case. He shook his head, still baffled that anyone had beat the Jeopardy Falls gallery’s security system.

He dialed Tad.

Normally his drive along the winding dirt roads through the mountains was calming, but not today.

Tad picked up on the third ring.

“Okay,” Christian said, swiping the chalk from his hands onto his pants—the climbing towel too far to reach. “Walk me through it. Did the alarm go off?”

“The one on the security system you said couldn’t be beat? No!”

Christian took a stiff inhale. How on earth had someone gotten through the door without the key fob. *The fob* . . . “Tad, do you have your key fob?”

Silence hung thick in the air as Christian’s Bronco bumped over the ruts in the dirt road, the drop-off only inches from his tires. He rounded the bend, and the road—if it could be deemed one—widened. “Tad?” he pressed.

“Okay, fine. I don’t have it.”

“Where is it?” Christian asked as he headed for the main road that would lead him back to Jeopardy Falls.

Tad swallowed, the slippery, gulping sound echoing over the line. “I think the woman I spent last night with after the gala took it.”

“That’s right. Riley mentioned she might attend the gala, but she couldn’t make it.”

“It was well attended.”

“And the woman you mentioned?”

“I met her at the gala.”

“She’s not local?”

“I’ve never seen her before last night.”

“So, she just strolled into the gala?”

“Yes. It was a semi-private affair. I sent out invites but welcomed anyone given it was Friday Night on the Town.”

Their small town had instituted Night on the Town for one Friday a month about a year ago and it had really drummed up business for the eclectic downtown shops.

“Okay. Let’s shift to the gallery. I’m assuming you used Alex’s fob to get into the building?”

“No. I can’t get in.”

“Why not?” Christian pulled out onto the paved road.

“I can’t reach Alex, despite the fact she’s supposed to open this morning.”

“Okay . . . so walk me through what happened with the fob.”

“I woke up and that . . . woman was gone, and the fob wasn’t where I’d left it. I searched my place, but it’s not there, so I rushed to the gallery. I stopped at Alex’s place on the way, but no answer. She is so—”

“Settle down, Tad. Let’s think this through. Do you think Martha would let you into Alex’s place if you explained the situation?” Maybe the landlady would understand. Jeopardy Falls was a small enough town where everyone knew everyone, which was still taking time for him to get used to. To be known. Well, known at what he was willing to show, which wasn’t much.

“I’m not leaving my gallery. Not until I get inside and see what damage is done. You get the fob from Martha.”

Christian furrowed his brows. “If you can’t get in the gallery and the alarm didn’t go off, how do you know it’s been robbed?”

“Because I can see the three front cases through the porthole windows in the door. They’re open and empty.” A sob escaped Tad’s throat, though he tried to cover it with a cough.

Christian exhaled. “All right. I’ll call Martha and ask, but she might not feel comfortable letting us in.” It was a lot to ask. “Actually, I think in this case, it’s best to ask Sheriff Brunswick to reach out to Martha.”

“That’s a good idea,” Tad said. “Give him a call.”

“Wait?” Christian tapped the wheel. “He’s not there yet?”

“No.”

“Did he give you an ETA?” Maybe Joel was on another call. Their county was large, and with only him and one deputy, they had a lot of ground to cover.

“I haven’t called him yet.”

Christian’s brows hiked. “You called me before the sheriff?” Where was the sense in that?

“You put the supposedly impenetrable system in. I want to know what went wrong. And I need you to get me inside if we can’t get Alex’s fob.”

“Me?” Christian tapped the wheel.

“You installed the system, so surely you know how to beat it. And, regardless, you’re who the sheriff calls when they need a locksmith or safecracker on a case. Though you’re quite more than a simple locksmith, aren’t you?”

Christian stiffened. “Meaning?”

“Whoever did this, obviously had knowledge of the system.”

“And. . .?” Christian tightened his grip on the wheel, his knuckles turning white.

“As far as I’m concerned, you’re to blame.”

Christian swallowed the sharp retort ready to fly and took a settling breath instead. Tad couldn’t possibly know about his past. He was just upset and pointing fingers. “I’ll be there in twenty.”

He disconnected the call before Tad could throw another barb in his direction. He knew all too well how those stinging barbs felt, but this time he was innocent.

## TWO

The thrill of working another heist surged through Andi's limbs as she raced down her dirt drive, heading for Jeopardy Falls.

Her boss said he'd call to apprise her of the details he'd received once she was on the way to the quaint town situated in the Sangre de Cristo Mountains roughly halfway between Santa Fe and Taos. He'd also informed her that Tad Gaiman's catalog of his collections was already being shipped Next Day delivery from Fed Ex.

As she quickly accelerated, a coyote raced into the road, his eyes glistening in the rays of the rising sun. She slammed her brakes, and dust clouds swirled and billowed as her truck rocked to a halt—her heart pounding in her chest.

The animal froze, its kill dangling from its mouth.

Her cell trilled, jolting her just as the animal shook out of its stupor and took off on gangly legs, vanishing into the tumbleweeds and brush.

The trilling continued. She fished her phone out of her purse. "Hi, boss." Her breathing came in tight, short spurts as she switched it to Bluetooth.

"You sound spooked. Is something wrong?"

"No. A coyote in the road just startled me."

"You good now?"

Regaining her composure, she once again pressed her foot on the accelerator, only not quite as fast this time. "Yep. Ready to fill me in?" She pulled onto the road leading her north toward Jeopardy Falls. It was a cool, artsy town with several galleries, cute restaurants, and shops with beautiful Native American jewelry and arts. But it was also a ranching town, which made for an interesting dichotomy, but she liked dichotomy. At least when it didn't bite her in the butt.

"I just got more details from Mr. Gaiman."

"Are the cops on site yet?"

"No. The sheriff and his deputy were on a call up by someplace called Truchas, but they're on the way now."

"Okay." She wasn't looking forward to dealing with law enforcement. They rarely viewed what she did as an investigation. But that's what separated her from the adjusters. She worked the case just like a detective would. "So what do we know?" she asked, tapping the toe of her left foot on the floorboard.

"Only that Mr. Gaiman can see three cases are open and empty."

"Can see?"

"Apparently, he's stuck outside the gallery, but the lock technician is on the way. Sounds like you'll all arrive about the same time."



All of them at the same time . . . *great*. She swallowed a deep inhale, her nerves already frayed at what was supposed to have happened last night, but that deserved no place in her mind. *He* deserved no place in her mind. While she felt bad that Mr. Gaiman had been robbed, the case would be a nice distraction for her. Even if it meant dealing with law enforcement.

“Gaiman says the jewels in those three cases are worth close to a million.”

Andi’s mouth slackened. “A million in three cases? In a Jeopardy Falls gallery?” The town held several high-end galleries, but she hadn’t expected that high-end.

Papers ruffled on the other end, followed by the tapping of fingers on a keyboard. “Tad Gaiman is insured for ten million dollars.”

“Seriously?”

“Yes, but that includes his Albuquerque and Taos galleries,” Grant said.

She increased her speed after the car in front of her turned off and the road ahead opened up. “I’ll call you with all the details when I wrap up the initial assessment.”

“Or you could debrief me in person. Say . . . tonight in Albuquerque?” Grant said.

*Please, no.* She gripped the steering wheel tighter. *Not this again.*

“Natalie really wants you home for the balloon fiesta. We’re all going to be there through the weekend. It’s less than a two-hour ride down, Bells.”

She couldn’t help but smile at the nickname he’d given her when she had to have been no more than five, wearing little bells on her shiny red shoes. But . . . “It really weirds me out when you call my mom Natalie.” Despite Grant basically being family—her big brother’s best friend as far back as she could recall.

“I’m thirty-two, I think it’s okay to drop the *Miss* part. But back on topic, your mom practically insisted you come home.”

Her mom could insist all she liked, but she wasn’t going home. It stopped being a safe haven the minute her life fell apart.

## THREE

Andi slowed as she entered Jeopardy Falls and the speed limit on Juan Tabo dropped to thirty. She cruised along the two-lane road running through the center of town. Last time she'd been here, it was with her bestie, Harper. After a day of perusing the fun and quirky shops, they'd shared dinner on the outdoor patio of a cozy restaurant with white twinkly lights strung overhead. Good memories. At least she had a few post-devastation, and that was one of them.

Shifting her gaze down a half dozen or so blocks, she kept an eye out for Gaiman's business. If she recalled correctly, the four art galleries in town each straddled a different corner at the intersection of Juan Tabo and Comanche Street, which the locals had dubbed "gallery corner."

Passing the feed store, she spotted cowboys heading in and out. She halted at the crosswalk, letting one broad, handsome cowboy pass by. He thanked her with a tip of his hat and a wink. She smiled despite herself. Continuing on, she passed the lone Italian restaurant in town, along with a slew of Mexican restaurants serving New Mexican-style cuisine. Sadie's was her favorite, and their green chile stew was to die for.

Her stomach grumbled just thinking about it. She'd rushed out without breakfast, but food would have to wait. She had a job to do, thanks to Grant's pity or compassion. Either way, she owed him everything. He'd given her purpose when hers had died.

Banking right at "gallery corner," she noted the steady stream of folks heading into Frannie's Diner. Rumor had it she made the best biscuits west of Charleston.

Andi spotted the Gaiman Gallery, but how could she not? It had the most ostentatious exterior. The building was painted a textured cobalt blue, but it was the mirrors in random shapes plastered about the gallery that gave it that "blingy" feeling. Not to mention the risqué murals—granted all done in an artistic manner in a Picasso-esque style. The vibrant colors didn't show anything too revealing, but they all skirted the line. For housing such an expensive gallery collection, it was quite the odd exterior.

Pulling into the parking lot, she spotted a silver Porsche Panamera and a sheriff's vehicle.

Taking what she hoped would be a calming breath, she whispered a prayer and stepped outside. The warmth of the rising sun swarmed around her, enveloping her in its beautiful heat after such a chilly night.

Halfway across the lot, she paused, the hair on the nape of her neck tingling. *Odd*. She ignored it and continued across the newly paved lot, but within a handful of steps forward, a shiver brushed across her skin. She stopped and surveyed her surroundings. The only people visible were those heading in or out of Frannie's, and none seemed particularly interested in

her. Chalking it up to nerves, she strode toward the building, rounded a brick wall . . . and nearly plowed into the sheriff.

“Oops. Sorry. I wasn’t expecting . . .”

The sheriff tipped his hat. “All good.”

Her gaze darted to the other man present, outfitted in genie-style striped pants and a purple satin shirt smattered with colorful geometric shapes. He paced the terracotta-tile entryway patio much like a coyote did when searching for its next kill.

The sun glinted off the man’s bleached-blond hair feathered back in ’70s style. Or was it the ’80s? Whichever it was, it certainly wasn’t this century. She’d place him in his early to mid-forties, so it seemed a fitting style for his growing up years.

“Sheriff Brunswick.” The six-foot-tall man with blue eyes, weathered skin, and a crinkly smile extended his hand.

“Andi Forester. It’s a pleasure.” At least she hoped it would be. Law enforcement either treated her with professional courtesy or they ridiculed her, but she had a good feeling about Brunswick—though that odd uneasiness of being watched burrowed deep in her gut and wouldn’t let go. She tried to shake it off but to no avail. She turned to the other man. “Mr. Gaiman, I presume.”

He stared at her, green eyes blinking.

“I’m the insurance investigator with Ambrose Global.”

“Investigator?” His brow furrowed. “I thought they were sending an adjuster.”

“Not in these types of cases.”

His brows hiked. “*These* types?”

“Heists. I work like a detective to get to the bottom of the case. To find the perpetrators.”

“I thought that was my job,” Sheriff Brunswick said.

“It is, but it’s also mine,” she said, bracing herself for the sheriff’s reaction. But none came, so she continued. “It’s my job to determine who pulled off the heist.” She turned back to Sheriff Brunswick. “I hope we can keep each other in the loop.”

The man lifted his Stetson off his head and raked a hand through his dark hair. “I don’t see why that would be a problem, as long as boundaries are kept.”

She released her pent-up breath. “Of course.” Then going for broke said, “I’d love a copy of the police report when it’s ready, and I’m more than happy to share any of my notes.” Her words rushed out in a harried fashion, hoping to get the last point in before he had a chance to say no to her request.

Brunswick settled his hat back in place. “I don’t see that being a problem.” He looked up at the sound of a car engine.

“Finally,” Tad said, his tight shoulders drooping.

Brunswick moved for the lot. Andi stuck her head around the entrance wall to see a green Bronco pulling into a parking spot.

“Who’s that?” Andi asked.

“The man who’s going to get us in the building,” Tad said. “He installed the system, so only he can beat it to get in.”

Prime suspect number two. Installation guy. Tad was number one. The gallery owner always was. It was crazy how many robbed their own gallery, or had it robbed, to collect on the insurance money—at least based on Grant’s worldwide cases. One had even been stupid enough to hide the “stolen” pieces in his home.

She shook her thoughts back to the present. “So why aren’t you able to get into your own gallery?”

“Well, I . . .” He broke off as Sheriff Brunswick rounded the wall followed by another man.

“There’s the responsible party,” Tad said.

“I’d hardly say I’m responsible.” Sunlight continued to stream down, and it took a moment for the installation man to step out of the bright beams far enough for her to lay eyes on him. When she did . . . wow! Rugged build, at least six-three . . . maybe six-four, with brown hair cresting his broad shoulders. He was decked out in hiking—no, climbing—clothes, given the chalk swipes on his pants. An embarrassing heat rushed her cheeks.

“Who’s this?” the man asked Tad, lifting his chin in her direction.

“Andi . . . something or other,” Tad said. “She’s with the insurance agency.”

“Ah. The adjuster.” He stretched his muscular right arm and extended his hand, still dabbed with a hint of chalk. “Christian O’Brady.”

“Andi Forester,” she replied. “And I’m not an adjuster.”

Christian arched a dark brown brow. “No?”

“I’m an insurance investigator.”

“Investigator. Really?”

“Yep.”

He smiled. “That’s very cool.”

“Yes. Yes,” Tad said, waving his arm, his shirt sleeve billowing in the breeze. “It’s cool. Now can you let us into my gallery so I can see what else was taken?” He shook his head, bewilderment flashing across his tan face.

“You okay there?” Brunswick asked.

“Just hoping that nothing else was taken.”

“I doubt that’s the case,” Christian said.

“Why not?” Andi asked.

“They beat a nearly unbeatable system. I’m sorry to say, they probably had all the time they needed to take whatever they wanted.”

“Wonderful!” Tad snorted. “Now, can you please get us in?”

Christian looked at Brunswick. “Were you able to talk to Martha about letting us into Alex’s place?”

“She said she would after she tried to get ahold of Alex—but only if it’s just me in a law-enforcement capacity.”

Tad rested his hands on his hips, bangles jingling on both wrists. “Then why were we waiting on him?” He practically sneered in Christian’s direction.

“Because Martha’s on her way down to Albuquerque for some medical appointment. She said she’d let me know when she’s back in town and I can go take a look. So for now, we need you”—he looked at Christian—“to work your magic.”

“I don’t understand,” Andi said. “Who is Alex, and what does he have to do with getting in the building?”

“Alex is a she,” Brunswick said. “And she has the other fob.”

She furrowed her brow. “Fob?”

“It’s how you enter the building.” Tad gestured to Christian. “He can fill you in later, but for now, can we please just get in my gallery.”

“I have my kit in the Bronco,” Christian said.

Andi’s attention locked in as he strode to and from the car and dropped his kit in front of the door. Sheriff Brunswick and Tad took several steps back to let him work, but she stayed in place. The man was either extremely cocky or exceedingly good—or maybe both. She no longer trusted her gut, but if she did, she’d have wagered he was going to pull this off.

He knelt in front of the door and pulled out what looked to be two intricate skeleton keys. “I have to insert them into both sides of the slot simultaneously without pressing anything else down accidentally.” He did so. “Now . . . I push up with equal force until they disconnect from each other, and . . .” A click sounded. “Voilà!”

“That’s it?”

He stood and brushed off his hands. “That’s one piece of the map.”

“Excuse me?”

“There are several actions necessary to get in.” Christian placed his hand on the knob. “Get ready for a shrill alarm.” He looked to the sheriff. “I called the alarm company to let them know it’s going to go off.”

“Wait,” Andi said. “The alarm never went off?”

“Apparently not,” Christian said. “Which means they somehow avoided triggering the motion sensors and made it to the keypad in time.”

“The keypad?” she asked.

“You have two minutes from the time you use the fob to get to Tad’s office at the back of the gallery, open the safe, and key in the code before the alarm goes off.”

“You put the keypad in a safe?” she asked.

He nodded.

*Ingenious.* “And the chances that someone without prior knowledge could figure out all the steps of the map, as you called it, are what?”

“One in a million,” Christian said.

“Right.” So it had to be someone on the inside or someone with contacts on the inside. She looked between him and Tad, wondering who the guilty party was.

Order now to read the rest of the story in  
February 2024!