PROLOGUE

What happened at Gratitude was not in my plans.

You see, in my world, we planned things very carefully. Everything we did, every move, every smile, every word out of our mouths—it was crafted. We showed you only what we wanted you to see. And, okay, a few things leaked recently that surprised you. But it was fine. I don't know about everyone else, but *I* had my life under control.

Or did I?

Gratitude Prom took place on a clear, warm evening in late June, and it started perfectly. All of you watched the stories and the live feeds and the update videos of me as I got ready (after having everything already done professionally off camera, of course). I posted updates as I piled into the limo that had been secured for free in exchange for a simple mention online. I posted more updates as I paraded down the red carpet. You, my dear fans, circulated my pictures all over the world as I posed with "friends." You shared

and re-shared, you posted and re-posted, you made fan edits and comments. You gossiped. Sometimes you were even nasty about me. But I pretended not to notice. I stayed on message, on-brand.

But as I headed to the after-party, which took place in the lavish apartment complex where many of us lived, I started to feel . . . nervous. I told myself to get a grip. Everything was going to be okay in the end—I had it covered. But so many people were angry with me. So many were *disappointed.* Some of you were over me, or thought I didn't deserve to be where I was and *what* I was: famous. And maybe I was right to worry, because look what happened at the end of the night. I barely remembered those blurry, messy hours. The arguments. The betrayal. The pain. The sheer surprise of it all. I barely remembered screaming, and then storming off, and then spinning, and then yelling, and then closing my eyes.

And then . . . *nothing.*

But here's the thing: Don't hate me for filling up your feeds. Don't hate me for the brands I convinced you to buy, the movies I goaded you to see. Don't resent me for the gossip I dropped, breadcrumb-like, for you to devour, obsess over, *believe.* I was what you needed. I was your guiding light, people. That was why they called me an influencer—I had influence over millions of you. But that perfect little world you thought you were witnessing? It was mostly lies. My smiles and sweetness, my big hugs and happy hashtags: it was all a juicy, duplicitous trick for you to share and discuss and gobble up. And those lies were what destroyed me, plain and simple.

But maybe you don't want to hear that. Maybe you'd rather believe I was exactly who you saw on your screens: a girl who was beautiful, unflappable, and untouchable.

And, most importantly, still alive.

One month earlier

DELILAH

Delilah Rollins was going to a very, very important party.

She sat in the back of her family's nondescript SUV—as though her mom, Bethany, was an Uber driver and she was the passenger—biting her nails in excitement and terror. Her mom clutched the steering wheel and fitfully murmured about the chaos of LA traffic, a city the family was brand-new to as of six days earlier, when they'd moved there from Minneapolis. To say they were having culture shock was a major understatement.

"So tell me again what this thing is?" Bethany asked warily, cursing under her breath as another driver cut her off.

Delilah shifted. "It's for Wellness Beauty. It should be great. A lot of influencers and celebrities will be there, there will be tons of photo ops, free stuff . . ."

Delilah's sister, Ava, who was also sitting in the backseat, turned, eyes gleaming. "Ooh, can you get me an eyeshadow palette?"

Bethany frowned. "You're too young for makeup, Ava."

Ava pouted. "Fourteen isn't too young!"

Bethany ignored this, glancing at Delilah again in the rearview mirror. "Who invited you?"

Delilah felt the same thrill that she had when she'd first gotten the invitation. *Only one of the most famous people on the planet invited me, actually.* But she couldn't tell her mom that. It might freak her out. Her mom was wary of famous people, especially *influencers.* "Just some people I know online," she said casually.

"In other words, *strangers.*" Bethany shook her head. "Maybe I should come in with you."

"No!" Delilah begged. "You can't! I'll be fine!"

The argument was curtailed because Delilah's mom had to make a scary merge onto an eight-lane highway. Delilah swallowed hard, then looked at her phone. On the screen was pretty much the most amazing thing that had ever happened to Delilah in her life: a direct Instagram message from @LuluJasmine, aka Jasmine Walters-Diaz, aka Lulu C from *That's Hot!,* Delilah's favorite dance show on Lemonade, which was the Netflix for tweens and teens. Delilah had the message memorized: *Hey, Delilah! I'm a huge fan, and I live in LA, too! I'd love to invite you to a party for Wellness Beauty on Tuesday afternoon at the Evensong Hotel on the Strip! Let me know if you can make it!*

She still wasn't sure it was real.

Twenty million people followed Jasmine's account on Instagram. The posts where Jasmine wore the rainbow skirt and lace leotard, the iconic outfit Lulu C was known for, practically broke the internet. Delilah had no idea how Jasmine found *her* page. Could it really have been from her *Hey, I just moved to LA and*

I'm freaking out! she'd put on her Story a few days back? Delilah was suspicious of Jasmine's message, but her account had the "I'm verified and you're not" blue checkmark . . . so maybe it was true.

As if on cue, Delilah's friend Busy, the only person Delilah *did* tell about her brand-new, über-delicate, maybe-celebrity-friendship, texted. *YOU HAVE TO TELL ME EVERYTHING ABOUT JASMINE,* she wrote. *She's going to replace me as your BFF because I'll be marooned in France on a digital diet.* Busy's family was leaving for a five-week European vacation tomorrow, and her parents had decided that Busy and her younger brother, Brock, would be leaving their phones at home. Which sounded like a particularly torturous circle of hell.

You're going to forget all about me! a new bubble from Busy read.

Oh stop, Delilah wrote back. *No one can replace you.*

She was just as heartbroken as Busy was that a) Busy wouldn't be able to talk all summer, and b) they now no longer lived in the same city, thanks to Delilah's father's internal transfer at his environmental sustainability firm. Delilah and Busy had been friends since first grade, when they both carried matching One Direction backpacks. Busy introduced her to Instagram. They explored Snapchat together. They filmed videos on YouTube about how to make fluffy slime and how to apply Technicolor hair dye without it getting on the carpet. They did normal, non-internet things, too: volleyball tournaments, nights out for pizza, sleepovers, avoiding their pesky little siblings . . . but they weren't as *good* at those things. As time went on, Delilah and Busy became masters at creating stylized, online versions of themselves—kids sought

them out for advice on how to craft posts or light pictures or curate daily stories.

And then, just this past March, it happened. Delilah's account went from a meager few thousand followers to hundreds of thousands. And from there, things just . . . *exploded.* Hence Jasmine's DM . . . maybe. Hence Delilah's jittery feeling like she was on the precipice of something . . . *huge.*

Soon, they pulled up to a concrete-colored hotel building flanked by guitar stores. Delilah had a very limited knowledge of Los Angeles, but she was pretty sure this wasn't the coolest part of the Sunset Strip. Her mother wrinkled her nose as though the music shops were drug dens.

"Electric guitars are very high-end!" Delilah chirped brightly.

"I think it looks awesome!" Ava piped up. "You're so lucky, Lila."

Delilah glanced at her sister. Ava was small for her age; today, she was wearing a striped romper from Gap Kids. But her booties were fashionable, as was her black leather crossbody. Back in Minneapolis, Ava hung out with a sweet, well-behaved crowd of girls, but the first day they arrived in California, Delilah received a follow request on her Instagram from @AvaBLove, and there was a tiny thumbnail image of Ava's face as the profile picture.

Bethany pulled into a parking spot and shifted into park. "I'm staying here, by the way. You can go in by yourself, but if you don't send me an A-OK text every thirty minutes, I will assume someone is trying to abduct you into either child slavery or a rock band."

"What about me?" Ava piped up. "Can I peek inside?"

"*You're* not going anywhere. I'm conflicted enough about this

as it is." Bethany pointed to Delilah. "Have you tested your glucose recently?"

"God, Mom, *yes.*" Delilah had been given a diagnosis of Type 1 diabetes when she was nine—in other words, a zillion years ago, so she had the whole regular-testing-and-insulin-shots down cold. "I have all my stuff." She patted her bag full of supplies. "Don't worry."

"I always worry!" Bethany cried.

Delilah darted out of the car, but then she circled back, leaned through her mom's open window, and gave her mom and sister a grateful smile. "Love you guys."

There were butterflies in her stomach as she entered the Evensong Hotel. The lobby smelled like peppermint gum. To the left was a sign announcing the Wellness Beauty party in the event space. Two polished, pretty girls in low-cut sweaters Delilah would be grounded for wearing sat behind a long table, checking names off a guest list. Delilah felt a pull in her chest when they eyed her. *You're out of your league.*

Then she peered into the event itself. It buzzed with influencers and photo ops and who's-whos. Online stars Delilah recognized smushed together for pictures. A famous beauty influencer was speaking onstage to a group of adoring fans. Every time someone new walked into the room, heads turned to see if it was someone they should know.

Oh God. This felt like too much. Maybe she should—

"Excuse me?" A tall, skinny girl with long, fake eyelashes looked at Delilah. "Did I just see you on *Ellen*?"

"*Jimmy Fallon,* actually," Delilah admitted, astonished someone was speaking to her. "Last month."

"Right, I remember you." The skinny girl smiled. "What's your handle again?"

"Lila D," Delilah answered. Fake Eyelashes looked blank, so she added: "Puppy Girl."

Fake Eyelashes brightened, then tugged another girl's sleeve. "Gigi, it's *Puppy Girl*! You know, the one who rescued that adorable golden retriever puppy from that fire?"

And suddenly, people were swarming around Delilah. *Just like that.* It was astonishing how one video could change your life. For Delilah, it was a shaky clip Busy shot of Delilah running into a neighbor's burning shed and coming out, moments later, with a golden retriever puppy in her arms. The whole thing was a foolish, split-second decision—her mother grounded her for it, actually, because what idiot besides a firefighter *runs into a burning building*?

But then the video caught on. Went viral. Delilah was suddenly a hero. The clip appeared on a local news show and then, two days later, the *Today* show. Delilah received a flood of new followers and endless phone calls for interviews and, finally, she was asked to make a guest appearance on *Jimmy Fallon*—yes, *the* Jimmy Fallon. During the taping, Fallon kept calling Delilah "the Animal Angel."

"Delilah?" another voice rang out.

Delilah swung around. A gorgeous, dark-haired girl with blown-out hair and a colorful dress hurried up to her. Delilah tried not to gasp. Was that really *Jasmine*? In person?

"So happy you made it!" Jasmine cried in her signature husky Lulu C voice, throwing her arms around Delilah's shoulders. "I am such a big fan!"

"Me too," Delilah spluttered. She felt people watching. It made her feel important . . . but also really, *really* humble.

Jasmine gestured to a willowy girl with caramel skin and gorgeous, flowing red hair next to her. "I want to introduce you to—"

"—Fiona Jacobs," Delilah gushed, starstruck. "I watch your *Sizzle or Drizzle* videos all the time!" She couldn't wait to tell Busy. The two of them binged on Fiona Jacobs's award-show fashion critiques like the episodes were cherry Twizzlers. They loved how *normal* Fiona seemed, despite her otherworldly beauty. And today, Fiona lived up to that: she was dressed more casually than Jasmine, in almost weekend/athleisure attire, but the skinny jeans she had on seemed cut specifically for her body, and her T-shirt fit differently than Delilah's rotating cast of tees from Old Navy, which stretched out after the first wash. Jasmine and Fiona were both carrying identical, U-shaped handbags in buttery beiges and grays. They had to be a name brand—but *what* name? Delilah doubted they were Kate Spade or Rebecca Minkoff, the "it" bags at her old high school. These bags looked like Kate Spade's worldlier cousins.

"Your posts are so cute," Fiona told Delilah. "Whenever I need my puppy fix, I'm like, *Lila D's my jam*. And that puppy rescue! That was, like, amazing."

"I cried," Jasmine volunteered. "After I watched it, I cradled my own puppy and was like, *Oh my God, I will keep you safe* forever."

"Were you scared, running into that shed like that?" Fiona's eyes went wide.

Delilah fiddled with a string on her jumpsuit. "Yeah, of course.

But I had no choice, you know?" After the puppy rescue, people assumed she was really brave, when the reality was she barely had the confidence to speak up in class.

"Well, listen." Jasmine touched Delilah's shoulder. "Consider me and Fiona your welcoming committee. Anything you need, we're here to help."

"We love normal, grounded people on social," Fiona added. "And we try to be, too!"

Jasmine nudged her. "You're *so* not normal. You're lost without a personal assistant!"

"Oh my God, it's been *four days,*" Fiona moaned dramatically. "And I'm losing my mind." She looked at Delilah. "Do you know a good personal assistant?"

"Ha!" Delilah laughed. She wasn't really sure what a personal assistant *did*. "So where do you go to school?" Maybe they'd be going to the same place. She was pretty sure Fiona was under eighteen.

It took Fiona a moment to process Delilah's question. "Oh, I don't go to normal school anymore. I do online." She giggled bemusedly. "Are you planning to go to regular school? Five days a week and all that?"

Delilah felt her cheeks flush. "Uh . . . yeah? My parents enrolled me somewhere called Ventura Prep."

Jasmine gave her a knowing look. "Let's see if that actually happens by the time fall rolls around."

She was about to say something else when the sound of clicking heels echoed across the marble floors. The ions in the lobby rearranged as a new group stalked past. All faces turned to view the passing crowd—and who was at its center, a tall girl with

glowing skin; bouncy, white-blond hair; and a curvy, flawless body. The dress she wore had cutouts just below the boobs and along her thighs, leaving little to the imagination.

The girl's gaze flitted to Jasmine and Fiona. "Hey, guys," she said in a blasé voice.

Jasmine's and Fiona's smiles didn't reach their eyes. "Hi, Scarlet."

Her identity came to Delilah like a bolt: *Scarlet Leigh,* aka @ScarletLetter. Delilah didn't stalk Scarlet Leigh's account religiously, but she was practically a Kardashian. She was on every Sexiest Girl Alive list, she'd received sponsorship deals for everything ranging from a small-batch whiskey maker to an airline that likely gave her free tickets to fly anywhere on their roster as long as she featured them in a post. Delilah even heard a rumor that Scarlet was auditioning for a comedy pilot.

Scarlet breezed into the ballroom. Jasmine turned to Fiona, making a face. "You okay, Fee?"

"I'm fine," Fiona mumbled. "Scarlet and I aren't, like, enemies or whatever."

"In what universe?" Jasmine whispered. "That girl has it in for you! And it's not even your fault!"

"What's not your fault?" Delilah asked, feeling lost.

Fiona tapped her perfectly done acrylic nails on her phone three times. It seemed to be an unconscious habit. "Scarlet and I both went to Harvard-Westlake in tenth grade . . . and she claims I stole her boyfriend away."

"That girl hates losing," Jasmine muttered. Then her phone beeped. She glanced at it, then squeezed Delilah's arm. "Listen, I have to run. I have a shoot in thirty minutes."

"You're . . . leaving?" Delilah hated the desperate tone of her voice.

"Yeah, but let's hang out soon. And you should totally check out the stuff inside!" Jasmine gestured to the ballroom. "There's awesome merch. And get your pictures with some other influencers! That's the whole point of these things. Pics build your following."

"It's a lot of fun," Fiona said—she had to leave, too. "Let me get your number. Let's keep in touch. Any questions, *please* text me. Okay?" And the girls were gone.

Delilah was suddenly alone in the bustling Evensong lobby. The conversation she'd just had was overwhelming. Did she really just chat with Jasmine Walters-Diaz and Fiona Jacobs? Days ago, she was sitting on Busy's carpet, making vision boards about being a famous influencer . . . and now she was in the middle of that world?

She peered into the big ballroom of famous people and felt massive stage fright. She couldn't do this alone. She wanted to hide in a booth at the restaurant next to the lobby, order fries and a Coke, and scroll on her phone until an hour passed and she could find her mom.

Which was exactly what she did.

It felt like heaven to sink down into a booth. She gave the waiter a huge smile when he came around to take her order. "Would you like the wine list?" he asked, barely looking at her.

"Um, *what*?" Did he not notice how young she was? "I—I mean . . . no. I'll have . . ."

"*I* think she needs a purple punch."

Delilah turned sharply to the right. On the other side of the banquette, half-concealed in shadows, was a guy with pale green eyes and soft, floppy chestnut hair. He sat up and smiled. There was a dimple on his left cheek, and his front tooth was rakishly, almost intentionally crooked, like he had it fixed to slant that way.

Delilah shot to her feet. "Oh my gosh. I didn't see you there. I-I'll move."

"It's cool. I don't mind sharing the booth."

"Oh." Was he an influencer? He was certainly cute enough. Or maybe an agent? She'd heard a lot of influencers had those.

She glanced toward the lobby. "I'm only here for a second. I just got . . . hungry." It was a lame thing to say, considering the ballroom was likely full of snacks.

A new batch of screams rose up from the lobby; it seemed another internet celebrity had arrived. The guy broke his gaze for a beat, then turned back to her, his grin even wider. "Is this your first one of these?" he asked.

She ducked her head. "Is it that obvious?"

"That's not a bad thing." He leaned back. "What sort of world are we living in where random people are über-famous? People who just . . . make videos, or take photos, or are . . . *a personality*?" He gave her a baffled smile. "What's happened to humanity?"

Delilah chuckled. "You sound like my mom."

He pointed at her. "You're *lucky* she's like that. Most influencer parents are the ones steering the plane. Total Momagers."

"So I guess you aren't on social, then?"

"Oh no, I am." He held up his hands in surrender. "Guilty as charged. YouTube."

Delilah's mouth dropped. She didn't follow guys on YouTube in the same way she followed girls. Watching a guy online didn't feel very intimate. She'd rather get to know one in person.

A drink appeared. She'd forgotten that this guy had ordered her a purple punch. She sniffed it, trying to determine whether it contained alcohol, but she only smelled blueberries.

The guy crossed his arms. "I'm probably supposed to know who you are, too, right?"

"Oh, I'm no one," Delilah said quickly.

"I doubt that." A coy look came over his features. "I know. How about you *guess* what my deal might be online. And I'll guess yours."

It felt like a trick question. Delilah worried she'd say something to offend him. Some sort of niche he absolutely, categorically hated. Or maybe she shouldn't overthink it. Maybe she could just be silly, the way she used to be with guys back home.

The guy's hair was carefully tousled. His T-shirt pulled against his chest and abs but wasn't skintight. Someone might pass him on the street and think nothing of him, only to turn back and think, *Wait, that guy was gorgeous.*

She cleared her throat, going for silly. "Tide Pods. You've gotten famous by eating Tide Pods." She smacked her forehead. "I can't *believe* I didn't recognize you."

He burst out laughing. "Hit the nail on the head! I love eat-

ing Tide Pods, girl! Give me more of that toxic grittiness!" He pretended to pop one in his mouth, chew, and then gag and spit it out. Delilah applauded his acting skills—and maybe *this* was why she didn't watch guys online, because they all seemed to do stupid things like eat laundry detergent or put their dogs' shock collars on their necks.

He crossed his arms. "My turn."

She felt his eyes wash over her, first looking at her hair and then her body. His gaze wasn't predatory, but it was interested. Her heart thudded. *Please don't guess Puppy Girl.* Delilah didn't want to be thought of as *just* Puppy Girl. She posted about animal activism and safe pet ownership, and adopting pets versus buying from puppy mills. And she wanted to post about other issues, too. Body acceptance. Anti-bullying. Diabetes awareness. She wanted to inspire. It was a huge reason why the move to LA felt so exciting. Maybe she could break into this universe for real—and help people.

"My Little Pony," he decided. "You adore My Little Pony toys, and you make videos that act out their adventures. You have over twenty-one million followers on YouTube. Your favorite pony to be is Fluttershy, because she's shy but really damn cute."

Delilah's mouth dropped. "Look at *you* dropping My Little Pony knowledge."

"I've got a little sister who's into the show. And maybe I watch it sometimes, too. You know there's a whole subset of us guys who watch it, right? *Bronies?*"

"I definitely need to have you on my channel. You can be my special Brony guest, if you play your cards right . . ." She trailed off. "What's your name?"

"Jack," he answered. "For real. And yours?"

"Delilah."

"Delilah," he repeated. "Pretty."

Chills traveled up her arms. He hitched forward until their knees touched. He was so close she could see the gold flecks in his eyes. *Oh my God,* she thought. *Are we going to kiss?*

There was a noise behind them, and Jack bolted up. No one was there, but he seemed unruffled. He checked the time on his phone. "Man. I have to be somewhere." He reached into his pocket and dropped a few twenties on the table. "I'm sorry to cut this short."

"Oh . . . can I follow you . . . I mean . . . on YouTube . . . not . . . ?" Delilah heard her voice wobble. *Mortifying.*

"Definitely." He blinked his long lashes. "I'll find you, okay? I promise."

He hurried out the revolving door to the street. Maybe he was just a guest at the hotel? Maybe he was on YouTube but had a teensy account?

But then she heard whispers. *"Did you see who that just was?"* And *"I wish I'd gotten a picture."* A girl chased him out the revolving door. "Jack Dono! Love you!"

The guy Delilah had been talking to saluted the girl. It felt like someone had poured a bucket of cold water over Delilah's head. *Jack Dono?* As in *the* comedy YouTuber? Busy adored him. He mostly filmed silly pranks, like driving his parents' beat-up Honda into a big pond in his backyard, or rigging a giant chariot for his two Greater Swiss Mountain Dogs to pull him on in the snow. . . .

He was the most famous guy around.

Except there was something else Delilah was pretty sure she should've known about him. Over the years, Jack's posts changed. Many were still a mix of adrenaline sports goofs, but they were also about his girlfriend. There was a whole fan base about their ship. Rabid fans created accounts re-posting adorable photos of them, images of what their babies might look like, and any scrap of couple gossip they could find. They even had a ship nickname. It was . . .

Delilah gasped. It was *Jacklet*. Jack plus Scarlet, aka Scarlet Leigh from Scarlet Letter—the intimidating girl Delilah had seen in the lobby. They were the most famous ship around.

She needed to get out of here.

Ducking her head, she ran into the lobby and out the front door. "Whoa, that was quick," Bethany said as Delilah threw herself into the backseat and exclaimed, as though she'd just robbed a bank, "Drive, drive, drive!"

Thank goodness she did. Because just as they pulled out of the lot, Delilah's phone began to buzz. *Breaking news.* She noticed Jack's name. And the caption: *IS JACKLET OVER?*—and a blurry picture of Jack sitting on a very familiar banquette . . . smiling at someone across from him. The girl's face wasn't pictured, but Delilah knew exactly who it was.

Her.