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“Savannah Stone, I have something for you,” said my personal nurse.

“Not again,” I whispered. In the corner, I sat with my head bowed, pressing my toes into the padded, white floor. Just when I thought I could get some peace and quiet, someone had to ruin it.

The nurse’s name was Connie, but I called her Nurse Doom because she only brought bad news. She expected me to respond, but I did nothing. I kept waiting for the day she’d tell me I could go. Each day that passed made me more restless.

A year ago, my life changed forever. I had awakened in a beige jumpsuit and quirky wristband. It was a patient identifier for Cladcliffe Psychiatric Hospital located on the outskirts of Maryland. I didn’t know what I did that landed

*Roxanne Ridge*

me in a hospital, and whenever I tried to think about it, my head started to hurt. Slowly, it hit me that my memories were gone. I didn't remember anything and now I had to accept my new life. In this world, my life revolved around four, white padded walls in patient room 302. To help me transition, staff assigned Nurse Doom, and her methods involved drugs, drugs, and more drugs. I was sick of it.

“This is getting old,” I grumbled.

It may not have been the best habit, but I'd been talking to myself since I got here. It relaxed me. Besides my name, I had no idea who I was or how I got here. My eardrums rang with Nurse Doom's singsong tone and the tick-tock of the clock on the wall. I wanted to make it stop.

“Shut up!” I yelled, covering my ears. I still heard Nurse Doom and her footsteps moving closer. Squeezing my eyes closed, I tried to block her from my mind.

“Is something wrong, dear?” she asked. Never had I despised the word “dear” so much. I didn't move as I continued to keep my head down. I thought about the wristband staff gave me when I came here. On my first day,

## *Savannah*

I ripped it to shreds in Nurse Doom's face, but she never replaced it. She simply looked at me, as if I were a waste.

Nurse Doom and I went through the same routine. She told me I was ill, but she never disclosed my condition. When I asked her about my release date, she refused to answer. Her secretive manner irritated me, so I lashed out.

"Can I leave?" I asked. I already knew the answer, but it was worth a shot.

"Savannah," she said with her annoying, penetrating voice, "try to think of Cladcliffe as your personal safety room."

"This place is torture."

I didn't expect Nurse Doom to understand because she was part of the problem. She drugged me. I used to bang on the wall, hoping someone would hear my cry. Sadly, Nurse Doom was the only one who came and she always brought my meds with her.

"Are you ready for your first treatment today?"

"No," I mumbled into my lap.

I hated my treatments and I remembered my first one vividly. First, I felt woozy. Then, the nausea kicked in. Something was happening to my brain. I couldn't remember

why I was here or who I was. Nurse Doom had tricked me. The meds were making me forget my memories.

I had tossed and turned on the floor wildly, screaming as I jerked back and forth. My eyes twitched and I couldn't breathe. I thought I was going to die and there was nothing I could do. My only option seemed to be sleep, so I gave up. I'd fallen asleep for what felt like an eternity, and Nurse Doom was by my side to wake me. I'd asked about the time, but she told me not to worry.

Nurse Doom had explained the first treatment was a pill and I had two more shots to go daily that would help cure me. "*You did great,*" was what she told me. I didn't buy it, but I played along. I gave her my arm where she inserted the shot in my inner elbow. She rambled about the benefits of the treatment as the medicine plunged into my veins. Whenever she smiled during her speech, I imagined knocking her out. I wanted to punch her crooked teeth and make her nose bleed for confining me to this stupid place. Just when I was about to land the killer blow to her face, I felt like somebody knocked me out.