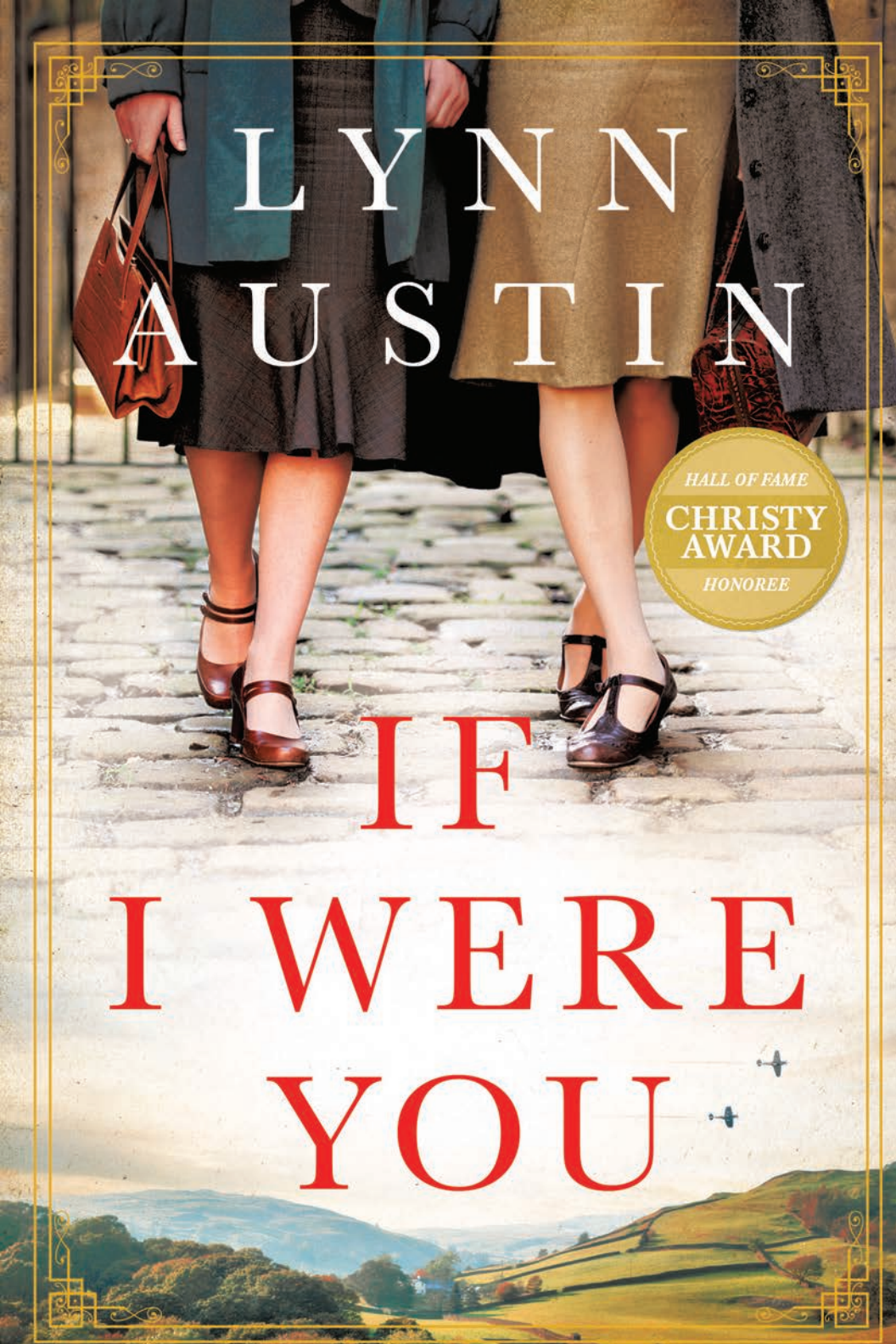




LYNN
AUSTIN

HALL OF FAME
**CHRISTY
AWARD**
HONOREE

IF
I WERE
YOU



Praise for *If I Were You*

“Lynn Austin is a master at exploring the depths of human relationships. Set against the backdrop of war and its aftermath, *If I Were You* is a beautifully woven page-turner.”

SUSAN MEISSNER, bestselling author of *Secrets of a Charmed Life* and *The Last Year of the War*

“I have long enjoyed Lynn Austin’s novels, but *If I Were You* resonates above all others. Austin weaves the plot and characters together with sheer perfection, and the ending—oh, pure delight to a reader’s heart!”

TAMERA ALEXANDER, bestselling author of *With This Pledge* and *A Note Yet Unsung*

“*If I Were You* is a page-turning, nail-biting, heart-stopping gem of a story. Once again, Lynn Austin has done her homework. Each detail rings true, pulling us into Audrey and Eve’s differing worlds of privilege and poverty, while we watch their friendship and their faith in God struggle to survive. I loved traveling along on their journey, with all its unexpected twists and turns, and sighed with satisfaction when I reached the final page. *So good.*”

LIZ CURTIS HIGGS, *New York Times* bestselling author of *Mine Is the Night*

“Lynn Austin has long been one of my favorite authors. With an intriguing premise and excellent writing, *If I Were You* is sure to garner accolades and appeal to fans of novels like *The Alice Network* and *The Nightingale*.”

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“*If I Were You* is an immersive experience, not only into the dangers and deprivations of wartime England, but into the psychological complexities of characters desperate to survive. . . . With her signature attention to detail and unvarnished portrayal of the human heart,

Lynn Austin weaves a tale of redemption that bears witness to Christ's power to make all things new."

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"Lynn Austin's *If I Were You* is a powerful story of heart-wrenching loss, our desperate need to be understood, to forgive and be forgiven, and the loving sacrifice found in true friendship. A compelling read, beautifully written, celebrating the strength of faith and the power of sisterhood."

CATHY GOHLKE, Christy Award-winning author of *The Medallion*

"A master at inviting readers onto a journey and sweeping them away with her elegant prose, Lynn Austin once again transports readers back in time to England. *If I Were You* is a beautiful story about courage, relentless love, and the transforming power of forgiveness."

MELANIE DOBSON, award-winning author of *Memories of Glass*

"Lynn Austin's tradition of masterful historical fiction continues in *If I Were You*, an impeccably researched look into the lives of two remarkable women. Her unparalleled skill at evoking the past . . . will appeal to fans of Ariel Lawhon and Lisa Wingate. While longtime fans will appreciate this introspective tale from a writer who deeply feels the nuances of human nature, those uninitiated will immediately recognize why her talented pen has led her to near-legendary status in the realm of inspirational fiction. An unforgettable read."

RACHEL McMILLAN, author of *The London Restoration*

"Lynn Austin knows how to create conflict with her characters. *Par excellence*. Her latest novel is no exception. *If I Were You* tells the story of a *Downton Abbey*-like friendship between Audrey, from the nobility, and Eve, a servant at Audrey's manor house. . . . Bold and brilliant and clever, *If I Were You* will delight Lynn's multitude of fans and garner many new ones."

ELIZABETH MUSSER, author of *When I Close My Eyes*

Also by Lynn Austin

*Sightings: Discovering God's Presence
in Our Everyday Moments*

Legacy of Mercy

Where We Belong

Waves of Mercy

On This Foundation

Keepers of the Covenant

Return to Me

*Pilgrimage: My Journey to a Deeper Faith
in the Land Where Jesus Walked*

All Things New

Wonderland Creek

While We're Far Apart

Though Waters Roar

Until We Reach Home

A Proper Pursuit

A Woman's Place

All She Ever Wanted

Among the Gods

Faith of My Fathers

The Strength of His Hand

Song of Redemption

Gods and Kings

Candle in the Darkness

A Light to My Path

Fire by Night

Hidden Places

Wings of Refuge

Eve's Daughters

Fly Away



IF I WERE YOU

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If I Were You is a work of fiction. Where real people, events, establishments, organizations, or locales appear, they are used fictitiously. All other elements of the novel are drawn from the author's imagination.

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For Ken, always

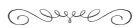
And for our family:

Joshua, Benjamin, Maya, and Snir

And our two newest blessings:

Lyla Rose and Ayla Rain

With love and gratitude



Prologue



LONDON, NOVEMBER 1945

Eve Dawson bolted upright in bed. Someone was pounding on her door. Sirens wailed outside, growing louder. Approaching. She leaped up, her instincts screaming for her to run to the air-raid shelter. But no. The war was over.

The pounding grew frantic. She shoved her arms into her dressing gown, her limbs clumsy after being jolted awake. Her flatmate, Audrey, sat up in the narrow bed beside hers. “What’s going on?”

“I don’t know.” Eve wove through the jumble of mismatched furniture in their tiny flat and opened the door.

A police constable. Breathless, as if he’d just run a race. “You need to get out. Straightaway! They found an unexploded bomb in the rubble across the street. Come on, come on!” He waved his hand in frenzied circles, gesturing for them to follow him into the hallway and down the stairs.

“I’m not dressed,” Audrey said from behind Eve. She would say that. Always the proper lady.

“There isn’t time!” the constable said. “If that thing explodes, it will take out the entire block. You girls need to get out! Now!” He left them standing in the doorway in their pajamas and pounded on their neighbors’ door with the same urgent message.

Eve grabbed her coat, shoved her feet into the first pair of shoes she could find. Audrey moved in her slow, deliberate way, picking through the pile of shoes by the door as if deciding which pair matched her pajamas. “Come *on!*” Eve said. She pushed Audrey’s coat into her arms. “I don’t want to die today, do you?” She towed her down the hall toward the stairs.

They were almost to the bottom floor when Audrey halted. “Wait! My purse! It has my ID badge and ration coupons.” She turned back.

Eve yanked her forward. “Forget it. Not worth dying for. I, for one, would like to live!” She remembered the tiny baby, growing in secret inside her, and for the first time she wanted her child to live, too.

A blast of cold air struck Eve when she opened the front door, blowing through her unbuttoned coat and thin pajama pants, making her shiver. The dawning sun peeked below the clouds, offering no warmth. Across the street, a team of soldiers moved through the rubble of stones and bricks as if walking on eggshells. Workers had been clearing it for the past week, starting early every morning. Eve shivered again. The UXB could have exploded anytime.

“This way . . . this way,” the constables urged. “Quickly, now. Keep moving.” They herded everyone down the street, away from the bomb site. Bewildered people poured from neighboring buildings to flee alongside them. Eve recalled those terrible months of the Blitz. The panicked sprints to air-raid shelters while sirens wailed. Stumbling along in the dark of the blackout. But the war had ended three months ago.

“I thought we’d never have to run from bombs again,” Audrey said. “I thought we didn’t have to fear for our lives anymore.” She was winded, slowing down.

Eve slowed her pace to match, even though she longed to sprint. She had always run faster than Audrey. “Well, it seems we were wrong.”

“The Nazis destroyed this block a year ago. I can’t believe that bomb has been lying there all this time, just waiting to explode.”

“Shows how fragile life can be.” It was one of the many lessons Eve had learned during the war. Loved ones could be alive one moment and gone the next. And didn’t this fragile child inside her deserve a chance to live, too? As soon as they allowed her to go home, she would throw away the address for the back-lane doctor willing to do the procedure. Or maybe the UXB would incinerate his name along with everything else. Maybe this was a sign from God—or whoever directed things—that this was what she should do.

They reached the end of their block. Another constable pointed across the street to a church that had served as a shelter during the Blitz. They scrambled down the stone stairs, huddling inside the crypt with hundreds of other people in pajamas and dressing gowns, waiting for experts to defuse the bomb. Eve had plenty of time to think of all the things she wished she’d rescued. Audrey was right about needing her purse. It was going to be a huge bother replacing all her ID cards and ration books.

“What time is it?” Audrey asked. “We’ll be late for work. Do you think the church will let us use the telephone so we can call and explain?”

Eve looked at her watch, a present from Alfie. “It’s too early to call. Not even seven yet. Honestly, Audrey, you worry about the dumbest things.” Eve wore the watch all the time, even to bed at night. If the UXB did go off, at least she had one thing to remember him by.

Audrey inched closer, leaning in, lowering her voice. “Eve, listen. I need to tell you a secret.”

Eve hid a smile. It was so like Audrey to be so serious, so dramatic.

“Should I cross my heart and swear on my life not to tell?” Eve asked.

Audrey didn’t smile. “I think I’m pregnant.”

Eve barely stopped herself from saying, *I’m pregnant, too*. They had done everything else together these past six years, so of course, why not have babies together? Except that Audrey had a husband and Eve didn’t. “Congratulations,” she managed to say, hugging her.

“I haven’t written to tell Robert yet. I’m afraid to. It was an accident. We took precautions . . .”

“He’ll be happy, just the same,” she said, squeezing Audrey’s hands. “Especially if it’s a boy. Doesn’t every man want a son?” She remembered, too late, how Audrey’s father doted on his son, ignoring his daughter all these years. She wished she had bitten her tongue.

Audrey didn’t seem to hear her as she continued on. “This morning, with this bomb—I realized how badly I want to stay safe from now on. We risked our lives so many times during the war, and it didn’t seem to matter because nobody knew what tomorrow would bring, whether we would live or die, or if the Nazis would pour across the channel and murder us. But the war is over and Robert is safe, and I want to stay safe, too, until it’s time to move to America to be with him. I want our baby to be safe.”

“So what are you saying?”

“I’m leaving London. I’m going home to Wellingford Hall.”

Eve took a moment to respond. “What about your job? And our flat?”

“I’ll give them my notice. Today, even. You won’t have any problem finding a new flatmate.”

It would happen, eventually. Eve knew that once the mountains of paperwork were sorted, Audrey would leave England and follow her GI husband to his home in America. This bomb that had dropped into their lives was an omen of change. For both of them.

"I'm going to miss you, Eve," Audrey said.

"Me, too." Eve would be alone again. Alone to cope with all the decisions and changes that a fatherless baby would bring. Why had she dared to believe that Audrey would always be by her side? That Audrey would always need her?

Three long hours later, they climbed the stairs from the crypt, the UXB safely defused, the area searched for more hidden dangers. "I feel like a fool wearing only pajamas," Audrey said as they emerged onto the street.

"We aren't the only ones." Eve gestured to the other shivering people scurrying home beneath gray November skies.

Audrey hurried inside their building as soon as they reached the front door, but Eve paused for a moment to stare across the street at the familiar pile of rubble. The police and soldiers were leaving, and workmen climbed among the bricks again with their shovels and barrows. It chilled her to think that something so deadly lay hidden while she went about her everyday life. The UXB might have exploded any second, obliterating her and everything she owned. How many more hidden dangers lay ahead in her path?

Audrey would go home to Wellingford Hall and then make a new home in America with her husband and child. But where was home for Eve? If she kept her child, where would they live? How would they survive? Eve knew what it was like to grow up without a father.

One day at a time, she told herself. She had survived the war that way. One day at a time.

1



USA, 1950

She lay in a lounge chair beside her mother-in-law's swimming pool, reveling in the warmth of the summer sun. The clear water reflected blue sky and cottony clouds—until four-year-old Robbie leaped into it with a shout, shattering the tranquil surface and splashing her with icy droplets. “Come in, Mommy. The water is warm!”

“Not right now, love. Maybe later.” She wiped her sunglasses and opened her *Life* magazine, content to lounge in the sun's drowsy heat.

Someone called her name. “Miss Audrey?” She swiveled to see her mother-in-law's maid hurrying from the house. “Miss Audrey? Sorry to bother you, ma'am, but you better come on inside.”

“What's wrong, Nell?”

Robbie leaped into the pool again with another resounding splash, showering them both. The maid didn't seem to feel the cold spray.

"There's a woman at the door, says she's you. Even talks like you. Has a little boy and a whole pile of suitcases with her."

"What?" She scrambled up from the lounge chair, wrapping a towel around herself as if it could shield her.

"Yes, ma'am. She says she's Audrey Barrett and the little boy is the missus's grandson. Says we're expecting her."

Oh no! No, no, no! Fear tingled down her spine and raised the hair on her arms. The same stunned feeling that came seconds after a bomb detonated. She opened her mouth but nothing came out.

"Didn't know what to do," Nell said, "so I say for her and the boy to come inside and wait."

Her heart hammered against her ribs. She swallowed and finally found her voice. "I'll talk to her, Nell. Will you get Robbie out of the pool and bring him inside?"

"Yes, ma'am."

She hurried into the house barefoot, a fist of dread punching her stomach. *It can't be. Please, God . . . this can't be happening.* She halted in the hallway and peered into the foyer—and there she stood. Her best friend. Her worst fear. She held a small, dark-haired boy by the hand. She had been peeking into the home's formal living room, where Nell had been vacuuming, but turned and saw her. Her friend's eyes widened with shock. "Eve! What in the world are you doing in America?" She took a step forward as if they might embrace, then halted.

It shook Eve to hear her real name spoken again. Her heart thudded. How she wished she could shove this intruder out the door and return to a quiet afternoon beside the pool, to the life she had lived for nearly four years. Instead, she planted her hands on her hips, pretending to be brave as she had so many times before. "What are you doing here?"

"I brought my son to America to meet his father's family. . . . They live here, don't they?" She looked at the envelope in her hand as if to be sure. "This . . . this is their address . . ."

The back door slammed. A moment later, the maid came in with Robbie, still wearing his plastic floating ring, dripping water on the parquet floor. "Everything all right, ma'am?" Nell asked, looking from one to the other.

"Everything's fine." She led Nell toward the living room, speaking quietly. "We were flatmates during the war."

"Why she saying she's you?"

"I think you may have misunderstood. I'll fix my friend a glass of iced tea and then she'll be leaving."

"What about all them suitcases? You want Ollie to fetch them inside for her?"

"Never mind about the luggage. Please, continue with your vacuuming, Nell." She waited for her to go, then turned to her son. "Robbie, please take this little boy to your playroom for a few minutes."

"But I wasn't done swimming."

"We'll go back in the pool after these people leave." And they had to leave. She watched him trudge off to the first-floor playroom, battling to control her panic, then gestured for her former friend to follow her into the kitchen. The boy clung to his mother as if they were glued together. Eve fetched two glasses from the cupboard, pulled an aluminum ice cube tray from the freezer, and yanked on the lever to release the cubes. Her damp fingers stuck to the cold metal. She remembered the day the workmen found an unexploded bomb across the street from their London flat, how it had lain there in secret for months, waiting. That was the power of secrets. Even the most carefully hidden one could explode when you least expected, demolishing the wall of lies you'd constructed

around it. But she would find a way to defuse this bombshell. She wouldn't let it destroy the life she'd rebuilt, the home she had found for her son.

She poured tea into the glasses and sat down at the kitchen table, studying her friend for a moment. She was still pretty at age thirty-one with porcelain skin and amber hair, still trim and shapely. Her friend had been born with a silver spoon in her mouth, as they said, but the war had tarnished all those spoons. What mattered now was how to get rid of her. She had barely taken a sip of her iced tea or calmed her fears enough to devise a plan when Robbie slouched into the kitchen again, his baggy, wet swimsuit still dripping.

"I'm hot, Mommy. Can we go back in the pool now?"

"I'd like you to play with your new friend for a few minutes."

"He won't come with me." Eve took a good look at the boy's thick, dark hair, his coal-black eyes, and the tiny cleft in his little chin, and her heart raced faster. Anyone with two eyes would be able to see how much he resembled his father. She needed to get him and his mother out of this house before Mrs. Barrett returned. Eve pushed back her chair and stood.

"I have ice cream in my freezer at home. Would you boys like some?"

"No, I want to swim in Nana's pool!" Robbie stomped his bare foot for emphasis.

"Later. We'll swim later. After we have ice cream. Come on, let's all go to our house." Maybe if Audrey saw how happy and settled they were here in America, she would go back to England and leave them alone. "Put on your shirt, Robbie. And your shoes. Give me a minute to get dressed, too." She ducked into the powder room where her clothes hung and struggled into them, hampered by her sweaty skin.

Once dressed, she opened the front door to lead the way outside and nearly tripped over the mound of suitcases piled on the front step. "Are all of these yours?" she asked. How long was Audrey planning to stay? It looked like forever, judging by the amount of luggage. Eve hefted two suitcases and hauled them to her car. "Let's hope everything fits in the boot. Get in the car, Robbie."

"Wait . . . why . . . ? What are you doing?" Audrey sputtered. "I'm here to visit Mr. and Mrs. Barrett."

Eve didn't reply as she shoved in the rest of the suitcases. They had to leave before Mrs. Barrett returned from her tennis match at the country club and the world Eve had created began to implode. "Just get in the car, Audrey. I'll explain later."

"But they're expecting me."

Eve squared her shoulders and willed the fear from her voice. "No. They're not expecting you. Get in the car." She held the passenger door open.

"But . . . I still don't understand what you're doing here in America. When you left Wellingford Hall, you vanished into thin air. I had no idea where you went or what became of you. And now you're here in my mother-in-law's home? You owe me an explanation, Eve."

"I saved your life, remember? You would be dead right now if it weren't for me, so please, just get in. I'll explain on the way."

Eve could see that her words had shaken Audrey.

Audrey climbed into the front seat and settled her son on her lap. Tears slipped down her face. "We used to be friends, remember? We looked out for each other. What happened?"

"The war happened, Audrey. It changed us. And we're never going to be the same again."

Eve backed her car into the street, then sped away. They drove in silence for several minutes before Audrey spoke again. "What's

going on, Eve? I want to know what you're doing here with Robert's family."

Eve's heart thudded faster. "You decided not to come to America, remember? You made up your mind to stay in England. You said Wellingford Hall was your home and you didn't want to leave it. Ever."

"Well . . . things changed. . . . But that doesn't explain why—"

"How did you get here? Boat, airplane?" Eve floored the accelerator, driving as if racing through London in her ambulance again, delivering casualties to the hospital. She barely paid attention to traffic as panic fueled her, and nearly drove past a stop sign. She slammed on the brakes so hard that Robbie tumbled onto the backseat floor. Audrey, still holding Bobby on her lap, had to brace against the dashboard. "Sorry . . .," Eve mumbled. "You were saying . . .?"

"We came by ship to New York City, then by train, then taxi—the same way you did, I presume. What does it matter how we—?"

"How is Wellingford Hall? I want to hear all about Mrs. Smith and Tildy and Robbins and George . . ."

"They're gone. All the servants are gone. Father sold Wellingford Hall. It's no longer our home."

Wellingford Hall—sold? Eve slowed the car. She needed a moment to absorb that bombshell. She had always imagined that she and Robbie would return for a visit one day, and it would be exactly as she remembered it. She would gather around the table in the basement with her fellow servants and talk about the past. And Mum.

Sold.

The London town house was also gone, so where would Audrey live? *Not here. Please, not here!* Eve downshifted, glancing around at the traffic, barely aware of what she was doing.

"So you decided to come to America? But surely you . . . I mean, it's very different here. Not at all like home . . ."

"The Barretts are the only family I have left. I'm moving here with Bobby."

This can't be happening.

"I wrote and told them I was coming. I don't understand why they weren't expecting me."

The letter. Eve had intercepted a letter from Audrey a month ago. She often fetched the mail for Mrs. Barrett whenever she visited because Robbie liked to chat with the postman. When she'd seen the return address, Eve had slipped the letter into her purse. She hadn't bothered to read it before tossing it into her rubbish bin at home. Now she wished she had. She could have told Audrey not to come, that the Barretts were getting on with their lives and didn't want a war bride they'd never met barging in.

Eve's panic subsided a bit as she steered her car into her neighborhood, passing rows and rows of identical bungalows. She'd thought the community looked very American when she'd first seen it, with its tidy green lawns and white picket fences. Now the neighborhood seemed stark and boring. The land had been a cow pasture before the war and the streets still looked naked with only a few spindly trees, struggling to grow. She had a fleeting image of the lush, formal gardens at Wellingford Hall, remembering the rainbow of colors, the gravel walkways, the comforting *clip-snip* of George's pruning shears.

Before the war. Before everything changed.

Audrey leaned forward to stare through the windshield as they turned in to her driveway. "This house . . . it looks like the one Robert was going to build for me."

Eve couldn't reply. She remembered the brochures and floor

plans Robert had sent, remembered Audrey's anxiety and uncertainty. *"The house seems so small . . . only two bedrooms!"*

"Fewer rooms for you to clean," Eve had told her. Eve parked beneath the carport and was just opening her kitchen door for everyone when a familiar pickup truck pulled up and tooted the horn. *Tom.* He called to Eve from his open window. "Hey, Audrey!"

Eve and Audrey both turned and answered at the same time. "Yes?" Could this get any more complicated? Eve hurried to the truck, where Tom sat with his arm on the windowsill. "Hi, Tom. What brings you here?"

"I stopped by to see if you and Robbie wanted to come out to the farm with me. We're bottle-feeding a new baby lamb."

"Thanks, but we have company," she said, gesturing to them. "Maybe another time—"

"Uncle Tom! Uncle Tom!" Robbie called as he scampered down the driveway. "Can I go out to the farm with you?"

"Not today," Eve said, catching him before he reached the truck. "We're going to have ice cream, remember?" She lifted Robbie into her arms and turned to say goodbye to Tom, but Tom wasn't looking at her. He was staring at Audrey and her son, studying them. "An old friend of mine from London stopped by for a visit," Eve said, backing away from him, inching toward the house. "We have a lot of catching up to do. Cheers, Tom! Toodle-oo!"

"Yeah, bye." He didn't move his truck. He was still staring at Bobby and Audrey.

Eve hurried back to the carport and herded everyone into the house. She pulled Popsicles from the freezer and tried to send the boys into the back garden to eat them, but Audrey's son refused to leave his mum's side. "Would you like one?" she asked Audrey. "Everyone in America eats these when it's hot outside. There's a month's worth of sugar rations in each one."

Audrey didn't seem to hear her. "Wait! Was that Tom?" she suddenly blurted. "Robert's friend, Tom? One of the Famous Four?"

Eve could have lied and said no, but the pieces of her life were quickly slipping from her grasp like a fistful of marbles and she couldn't seem to catch them fast enough. She nodded.

"I would have loved to meet him." Audrey peered through the window in the kitchen door as if she might run down the driveway to stop him. Thankfully, Tom had driven away. "The last we heard he'd been wounded . . . somewhere in Italy, wasn't it?" Audrey asked.

"Yes. He survived, though."

"The four friends . . .," Audrey mused. "Robert, Louis, Tom, and . . . who was the fourth?"

"Arnie."

"That's right. Robert was so distraught when he learned that Arnie had a nervous breakdown. He used to tell me stories about how the four of them grew up together and played on the same sports teams."

"Mostly basketball. It's very popular over here. Do you want one of these Popsicles?"

"How did Tom know who I was? Or . . . was he talking to you? Was he calling *you* by my name?"

"Well, I . . . He . . ."

"What's going on, Eve?" She looked puzzled, but Eve could tell the pieces were starting to fall into place. "He called you Audrey—and you answered him!"

Eve couldn't draw enough air to speak.

"You stole my place, didn't you? That's why you were at the Barretts' house!"

"Listen, Audrey—"

"You're posing as me and saying that Harry is Robert's son. You keep calling him Robbie, but his name is Harry."

"I can explain—"

"You're even living in my house—Robert's house!"

Eve stared at the floor. She didn't reply.

"How could you deceive all these people, Eve? Why would you do such a terrible thing?" Audrey looked as shell-shocked as she did after the V-1 rocket attack.

At last, Eve's fear exploded in a burst of anger. "You didn't want this life, Audrey! You were too scared and too stupid to take it after Robert died. You tossed it into the rubbish bin, so I grabbed it! This is the only home my son has ever known. I won't let you waltz in here now and steal it away from him."

"Steal it away from him? *You're* the one who has stolen *my* son's family! Bobby has a right to his grandparents' support. He has a right to know his father's family."

"It's too late to change your mind. They're my family now. This is my home, my son's home—not yours. You can't take it back." Eve didn't care how shocked or angry Audrey was. It was too late to change things now.

"But we have no other place to go!" Audrey cried.

"Neither do we!" Eve struggled to breathe as they stared at each other in silence. Their sons gazed in wide-eyed confusion at the drama taking place, the Popsicles forgotten. "Listen, Audrey. For as long as we've known each other, you've had all the advantages and I've had none. You're Audrey Clarkson—the spoiled rich girl, the aristocrat! You went to a fancy school to learn how to marry a wealthy husband, so surely you can find a man in London who'd be willing to marry Alfred Clarkson's rich little daughter. A man who could buy you a house twice as big as this one—twice as big as Wellingford Hall!"

Audrey closed her eyes as if trying to shut out Eve's words. Then she bent forward and covered her face as she began to weep. Great, heartbreaking sobs shook her slender body. Eve remembered how those cries had moved her to pity when they were children. She had crept upstairs to the forbidden part of Wellingford Hall to offer Audrey strawberries and sympathy. And friendship. But not this time. No, not this time.