

## The Stained White Gloves

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I slipped on my white gloves, having no idea what was in store for me. Steve had already left our room for the party downstairs, and sappy classical music was faintly playing in the background. Our hotel room was on the fourth floor, but music still found it's way to my ears.

When Steve proposed, I was surprised. We had only been dating for 18 months. Even though I had my doubts, I said yes. I trusted him.

BING! BING! BING! Messages from my sister, Mum, and Nana lit up my phone:

*'Where are you?'*, *'Sage, the party has already started!'*

Finally, I was ready to go down, my hair was perfect to every strand and my dress fit on me just right. On my way out, I checked myself in the mirror and fixed my gloves one last time. *Perfect.*

I walked down the corridor into the elevator. I pushed G. After the elevator began to move, my eyes drifted to a sticker – 'DO NOT USE IN THE CASE OF FIRE'. *Don't panic. Don't panic. Don't panic.* Sweat started to slowly drip down my flawlessly made up face. Ever since I was little, I was afraid of fire, even the mention of it. Without thinking, I pushed the level 2 button. I needed to get off or my makeup would be ruined, and my hair would become all frizzy.

DING! I practically fell out the doors. My heart began to slow down from the race it was running as I made my way towards the stairwell. I turned the corner to the stairs. *Steve. Who was he with?* Suddenly, my dress felt like it was strangling me, and my hair was too tight. Quickly, I stepped back around the corner out of sight. I trusted him. I suppose you are meant to feel sad when you see your fiancé with another woman, but I went straight to the anger part. I guess to him trust meant nothing. *And who was the girl?* My body was still stuck to the wall.

*'Until next time,'* her voice was like melting chocolate.

Footsteps echoed down the stairs. Next, she was walking around the corner. Steve must have gone back to the party. If he even went at all. The woman was wearing a slim emerald dress with heels. BANG! The lights went out. The aircon buzzing died. The woman looked up at

the lights and turned around back towards the stairs. She didn't seem to notice me or at least wasn't bothered. Stealthily, I stalked her. Like a cat choosing a mouse to hunt. On the opposite side of the hallway was a kitchen trolley. *Now's my chance.* I grasped onto a large metal pepper grinder. I waited until we were both around the corner. I swiped her viciously. Instant regret fell over me. Not because of what I just did, but the fact that now people are going to start using the stairs and there's a dead mouse in the way. I picked up her Versace purse. Her name was Peppa Scott. I couldn't help but laugh at the irony.

'Well, *Peppa*, I guess you're coming home with me.'

I stuffed her wallet in my bag and tucked her purse under her arm. The security camera heads were down and sleeping. I dragged Peppa by her feet across the carpet. Her head lolled to one side like an unstrung marionette. I was relieved to see there was no blood, only a slight swelling to her left temple and a bruised ankle. It was starting to colour with the blood she was keeping contained. Lifting Peppa up by her hands, placing her head on my shoulder and an arm around my neck, we transformed into a pair of best friends.

I dragged her by the arms—letting her body drag—most of the trip up the stairs, only becoming friendly when voices emerged.

'Afternoon ladies,' a guard said.

'Afternoon,' I replied.

He moved his eyes to Peppa.

'You know how it is with the drinks. She just had one too many today.'

*Would he believe me?* His eyes travelled to her feet. Her heels were scratched, and you could see the bruising. A glimpse of something shadowed his eyes. Concern? He moved closer to Peppa, straining to see. His hand was about to move her hair from her face...

'All guards to reception. Repeat, all guards to reception.'

The guard glanced over his shoulder as he hurried away. I waited until he was well out of sight to drag her again. Once we reached the fourth floor, I looked to make sure the cameras were still sleeping before pulling Peppa up to my shoulder. I pushed part of her hair away from the back of her head, checking if she had bled at all.

'If you get blood on my dress, I will kill you,' I paused. 'Oh wait, I already did.' A chuckle escaped me.

Once we reached my room, I pulled her in and threw her on the bed. *Crap, DNA.* Next to the bed was a coffee table with a phonebook on top. I skimmed through until I found Room Service.

‘Hi, Room Service? There’s been an accident, and it seems my bed sheets need changing in room 305,’ I said dragging Peppa over to the bathroom. The bath suited someone like her. I turned towards the knock at door. *That was quick.* Before going to answer the door, I quickly took a towel and covered Peppa closing the door on my way out. I checked myself in the mirror as I passed and fixed my gloves. I turned the handle. Everything in me froze: my voice, my breath, my thoughts, my body.

‘Steve,’ I said trying not to sound surprised, ‘What are you doing here?’

‘I could ask you the same,’ he replied, stepping passed me into the room. I shut the door behind him.

‘I thought I was meeting you at the party.’

‘Well, you never came down and then the power went out. I came to check on you, I was worried.’

*He was lying. He wasn’t worried about me; he probably was getting paranoid that I found Peppa.*

‘Well, here I am,’ I said lightly. ‘I was about to text you.’ I walked closer to him picking up a candle stick.

‘You could have-’

I struck.

‘You could have not cheated on me.’

I went over to the bathroom thinking I finished him. Until I heard groaning. I turned to see Steve.

‘What the hell Sage,’ he said rubbing his head sitting up.

‘Seriously,’ I walk over to the kitchen and grab my next weapon, ‘You always have to make things difficult for me don’t you Steve.’ Now he was trying to fully stand without falling. I rushed over to him and pushed him straight back down.

‘Why are you doing this, you psycho!’

I was standing on top of him. I went to stab him, but he turned and kicked me in the stomach knocking me back. He ran to the kitchen, but I pounced and stabbed him in the leg, making him fall. At this point blood was spread on the floor from the living space to the kitchen. He kicked me in the face, reminding me for the first time since this morning I could still feel something.

‘You got blood on my dress, Steve!’

He changed directions and started crawling to the bathroom. Now we were both on the floor; blood escaping us both. He made it to the door and used all his upper strength to open it. His

body fell with the door moving. I caught up to him. My hands stuck to his feet and pulled him closer to me. I suddenly felt his body freeze. I followed his stare to her emerald dress and elegant hands.

‘Peppa,’ he said out of breath.

‘Oh, yeah say hi. You didn’t think I wouldn’t have found out, did you?’

Steve started crawling over to her. He ripped the towel off to discover her dead body. Tears started to fall. I stood up and slowly started walking over to him, step by step, the knife still in my grip.

‘Why are *you* crying? I should be the one crying. I *trusted* you. Then today I found out my fiancé has been cheating on me with someone named Peppa. I had to act like we were besties just to get her body up here and now there is blood on my dress and my hair is all messy and my make-up is ruined.’

I took a deep breath. He was still crying, looking at her expecting something to happen.

‘Look at me!’ the anger was filling my body, ‘Hey, look at me!’

Gradually, he turned his head to look at me.

‘Just do it. End it.’

‘Okay,’ I replied instantly without thought.

I couldn’t tell if he had relief or surprise in his eyes. Either way, I ended it. I don’t need to say how, just that I did. I checked myself in the mirror and took off my now red gloves. *Perfect.*