# R

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## \*Chapter 1\*: R

As much as I hate author's notes, I keep making them. Whatever.  
The point is, this is the last thing you'll probably see from me in awhile. I've recently started attending the Dallas Art Institute, and it's probably going to consume my entire existence for a good while.  
So, don't expect to see much more anytime soon. But, like all things I say, I probably won't live up to it, so you just might. But fuck, it's not like I put out much before this.  
Ah well. Sorry it sucks, and whatever.

"We'll always be together.""Really?""I promise, my love. I'll always keep you safe. I'll watch over you. No matter what.""I love you.""I love you, too."

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You're crying.  
Please stop...  
You're crying into old photographs.  
Photographs of which I can't see.

I've never seen you like this before....

Your sobbing form draped over a pile of old mementos.  
I wish I could remember.  
Wish I could get through to her...

It will be okay. I promise.

Our house a mess.  
Untended to for god knows how long.  
She liked to keep things tidy. I remember that. I think I was the messy one.

Please stop crying, Amy...

I try to reach out for you, and just phase right through her.

Oh... right...

Feel like crying, but I can't. Tried. No such luck. Can't really feel anything anymore...

Before long, you're asleep.  
Your crumpled form resting where you lay.

If only I could touch you.  
If only I could really be there for you.

But I can't.

If only....

It's like watching old home movies.  
You're there, you're so beautiful.

My everything, animated, standing right in front of me.

But I can't touch you.

I can't feel you.

I can't smell you.

I can't hold you.

It's like you're here, but you're not.

Not really...

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You're drinking coffee in the kitchen in your fluffy pink robe.  
Used to go on about how comfortable it was.  
Sipping away, stirring your spoon and staring into the half empty mug.  
Bags under your bloodshot eyes.

I worry about you..

Noticed you've been sleeping on the couch lately.  
Why is that?

You don't answer. You never do.

Fingers slowly unzip your purse and fish out a pack of cigarettes. I wish you wouldn't smoke. When did you pick that habit up?  
I can't say I approve.

Where's that smile I miss so much?  
Could you give me just one?  
Please?  
..No?

Vague snippets of memory occasionally tease me.  
Pictures, sounds, emotions.  
The ghosts of our past are haunting me.  
Perhaps you, too.  
Hard to think.

Are you okay?

Am I okay?

You finish your coffee and pile the cup in the sink, on top of the various other unwashed dishes.

I'm sorry, Amy...

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You're not here.  
Nowhere to be found. You've been gone for quite some time now.

I miss you tremendously.

Wish I could have been stronger for you. Wish I could have been there for you when you needed me most..

Drifting through this empty house like a scared little child lost at the mall.  
My home, and yet, it feels so unfamiliar to me.  
Empty.  
Falling apart. All of us are.

Cold. Always cold.  
It's all I ever feel anymore.

Old photographs hanging on the wall. They feel so familiar, but if only I could place the context in which they had been taken. We look happy. I feel a yearning when I look at them. It almost hurts to do so.

I want to remember.

Do you?

Where are you?

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The knob on the front door begins to turn, and I'm already there.

You're home.

The door opens. You're wearing all black.  
Strange..  
Behind you is a familiar face. Someone close. For the life of me, I can't remember his name.

A fox. Also wearing black. A suit, tailored for accessibility of an extra tail.

My....

"Remember," he says, "if you need anything, please don't hesitate to call me."

"Thank you, Miles," you say, as you close the door.

Miles, that was it. But didn't we call him something else?

You turn the lock.  
Fix the chain.  
Lose it.  
As you turn, your makeup is already running down your cheeks.  
Teardrops leaving black streaks in a path behind them.  
Your back meets the door, and you slide down to the floor, sobbing loudly.  
Arms wrapped around your knees, you bury your face in between them.  
Muffled crying, each sob like a figurative punch to the gut.

Oh, Amy...

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You're taking down our pictures...

Why?

Please stop.

I want to remember.

Don't you?

You're taking down all of our pictures, and throwing them into a box.

And you won't stop crying...

Please, Amy, listen.

I need you to be strong for me, okay?

What happened to us?

Please don't forget me...

I could never forget you..

-

Box tucked under your bed.  
Our bed.  
The bed we shared in the room you rarely step foot in anymore.

You close the door behind you, and make your way to the den.

You sit down in your old chair. Try and read for a bit. You can't concentrate.

Fetch an old bottle of wine, and a glass for yourself. Fill it up to the top, and bring the crystal to your lips.  
Set down a glass half empty.

What are you thinking about, my love?

The phone rings. At first you don't respond. After a few moments you look over at the telephone sitting just behind your drink, to your right.

Pick it up.

"Hello? ... Yeah, I.. I'll be okay... No, really, that's unnecessary. Are you sure? I really don't want to put you out. ... Okay, then. I suppose I could use the company."

You hang up the phone, and light up another cigarette.

Finish your glass and pour another.

Before too long, the doorbell rings.

You drain the glass for the second time and get up. Make your way towards the door. Stop by the mirror on your way, to make sure everything looks perfect. You check your makeup, make sure your quills are in order. Straighten your skirt. I've seen you do this a million times, at least. you always wanted to look your best.

The doorbell rings again.

"Coming!" you say loudly, prying yourself from your own reflection.

You open the door.

It's him.

And I still can't remember his name..

He's dressed up nice, as if this was some sort of date. Carrying take-out bags of food. Looks like Italian. Your favorite.

"Hey," he says, scratching his head, looking down at your feet. "You doing okay?"

"I don't know," you say, looking down, as well. "Come on in."

You move to the side, so he can pass on through. Close the door behind him.

He makes his way to the dining room, you following closely behind him. He sets out the food on opposite ends of the table.

"Would you care for a glass of wine?" you ask him, as he throws the bags into the trash.

"Sure," he says. "That would be lovely."

You fetch the crystal wine glasses from the top cupboard, and a bottle of aged fine red wine from the locked case. You had gotten one with a lock, you had said, for when we had kids.

A chance we had but never took.

I'm so stupid..

Maybe things would have turned out differently if I would have just obliged.

You pour his glass first, and yours second. Set the bottle on the table.

In silence, the two of you eat.

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"He was always looking out for me," you say, on the brink of tears. "I feel so lonely and scared without him, you know?"

He doesn't know what to say. He shifts uncomfortably on the opposite end of the couch and takes a long hit of wine before setting his glass back down on the table next to him, between himself and the lamp.

You scoot closer to him. He doesn't notice.

"It's almost like I can feel him here, sometimes. Like he never left me. Like he never left us. Like he's just stepped out, and at any moment, he'll come back. He can't be dead, he just can't be." Your voice cracking, as the tears start flowing. "He was supposed to be fucking invincible. He was supposed to outlast us all."

"I know what you mean," he says.

You sniffle, wipe your cheeks with your forearm, smearing wet streaks of mascara across your face.

"You do?"

"He was my best friend. My only real friend, really. I always looked up to him. I kinda always thought he would be here. Never once did I even imagine he'd buy it before me. He was my hero. Something I always strived to be."

Your as close as you can get to him now. He's looking down at his hands, clasped tightly in his lap. A moment of silence as you stare at his face, an expression of longing buried deep within yours. He looks up at you, making eye contact. You lean in, eyes closing, and kiss him.

No....

He pulls away, surprised.

A shocked expression on your face. Confused.

"I.. I'm sorry, you're just.. You're Sonic's wife... This is his house.."

You don't say anything. You just bury your face in your hands and start sobbing uncontrollably.

Acting on instinct, thinking quickly, he pulls your hands away and kisses you again. The sobbing dies down, and the kisses get more passionate.

Please, stop this.

I can't watch, but I can't leave.

Please do this somewhere else.

I feel... pain.

You're unbuttoning his shirt. His kisses make a trail from your mouth, across your cheek and down to your neck. Your head turns towards me, eyes closed, moaning.

Your eyes open..

And you're looking right at me...

And you start to scream.

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"What's wrong?"

"I saw him, I fucking saw him!"

"Who?!"

"Sonic, I saw Sonic!"

Your crying and clinging tightly to him.

Me...?

"Sonic's dead, Amy..."

You bury your face in his chest, muffled sobs escaping the thin space between. He holds you patting you on the back.

Confusion.

Fear.

Sadness..

"It's okay," he says, trying to comfort you.

"No. No, it isn't."

And you're right.

-

He left shortly after.

You asked him to.

Apologizing over and over again.

He says he understands. I'm sure he does.

He was always a nice person. He would have taken care of you. I suppose I could be okay with that, so long as I didn't have to watch.

I feel something familiar...

Guilt.

I wish I could say I'm sorry.

-

You're in our room.

First time you've been in here since burying our memories.

How long has it been?

Days?

Weeks?

Months?

Years?

I can no longer gauge time. It's as if I have no concept of it.

You look different. Like I can't put my finger on it.

Set the bottle of wine in your hand on the nightstand on my side of the bed. Your purse next to it.

Make your way to the end of the bed. Bend down, and drag the box of memories out from underneath. The hammer and nails.

You spend what seems like ages to hang all our old memories on the wall adjacent to the bed. Memories of us laughing. Memories of us smiling.

Genuine smiles.

The pictures of me alone, I always bear a false smile. A mask. Smiling because I have to. But with her, it was different. I was smiling because I was happy.

Always found that interesting.

When you finish , you fetch a pen and a piece of paper from my old desk. Quickly scrawl something, and make your way over to the nightstand. Toss the paper and it floats across, over to your side of the bed. Dig up a bottle of pills.

What are those?

Set it next to the bottle, and pull the cork out.

What are you doing, Amy?

Open the bottle and dump what looks like the whole bottle into your whole hand.

No, Amy, please stop.

Dump the handful into your mouth, and chase it with three or four gulps of red wine.

Please don't do this, Amy.

Call the hospital.

Call Tails..

Call someone, just stop this from happening, please.

You lay down face first, burying your face in my pillow, and inhaling deep. You roll over, face wet with tears. The pillow the same. You lean over and pull the pack of cigarettes out of your purse.

You can stop this, Amy.

Please...

You don't have to do this.

You light a cigarette and smile and close your eyes.

The paper on the bed next to you reads;

See you soon, my love....

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You've stopped moving. The lit cigarette falls from your lips and onto the bed next to you. Burning through the comforter, the silk sheets beneath. Flame crawling from the end of the cigarette and across the bed.

In what seems like a lifetime, ours burns down.

A lifetime of memories.

A lifetime of happiness.

Our lifetime.

It burns down, and it takes you with it.

And I can't do a thing to stop it from happening.

-

You're gone...

So it our home.

Nothing left of either.

The sun rises off in the distance, shedding light on our charred, destroyed remains.

Yet...

I can feel your presence..

And now, just now, the loneliness, the longing, the suffering...

It all melts away.