

I FIRST SAW HER DURING A SEMESTER BREAK IN MY FRESHMAN YEAR AT MED SCHOOL. I WAS HIKING IN THE CONNECTICUT WOODS SURROUNDING THE INSTITUTE WHERE MY FATHER HAD WORKED SINCE BEFORE I WAS BORN. QUITE BY ACCIDENT, I NOTICED HER SITTING ALONE BESIDE THE TRAIL, HEAD BOWED AS IF IN PRAYER OR MEDITATION. SHE WAS DESTINED TO BECOME THE OBSESSION OF MY LIFE. HER NAME WAS...

OH! EXCUSE ME- I DIDN'T SEE YOU THERE. MY NAME'S ALAN COBURN. I--

# Ada

SHE WAS STARTLED BY MY SUDDEN APPEARANCE. WITHOUT A WORD, SHE JUMPED TO HER FEET AND DISAPPEARED INTO THE SURROUNDING TREES.



WHAT WAS THAT ALL ABOUT? SHE MUST BE FIFTY YEARS OLD, BUT RUNS LIKE A DEER!

CURIOUS, I RETURNED SEVERAL TIMES, BUT DID NOT SEE HER THAT SUMMER. IT WAS FIVE YEARS BEFORE I MET ADA AGAIN...

WAIT! YOU CAN'T RUN AWAY FROM ME THIS TIME!

SHE'S NOT AS OLD AS I THOUGHT SHE WAS...



SHE WAS THE MOST TIMID WOMAN I'D EVER MET, AND HAD A STRANGE GIRLISH PERSONALITY THAT WAS CURIOUSLY APPEALING...

YOU'RE REALLY THE SON OF DOCTOR COBURN? I'M... WAS... ONE OF HIS PATIENTS.

HE NEVER TOLD ME... BUT THEN, WHY SHOULD HE?





SHE SEEMED SAD... TROUBLED... AND I WAS ATTRACTED TO HER IMMEDIATELY.

... BUT I NEVER LEAVE THE GROUNDS OF THE INSTITUTE.

YOU FORGET... I'M A DOCTOR, TOO. AND MY PRESCRIPTION FOR YOU IS TO HAVE DINNER WITH ME TONIGHT IN THE CITY.



IN RETROSPECT, I'LL NEVER FORGIVE MYSELF FOR INSISTING... BUT I WAS YOUNG AND SHE SEEMED SO LONELY. SOMEHOW, DURING THE TWENTY MILE RIPE TO BRIDGEPORT, I FELL IN LOVE WITH ADA.

YOUR FATHER WOULD NOT APPROVE OF THIS, YOUNG DOCTOR COBURN, BUT I'M ENJOYING IT VERY MUCH.

I'M GLAD.



SHE WAS PLEASANT AND CASUAL UNTIL I BEGAN ASKING PERSONAL QUESTIONS, SO I LEARNED LITTLE ABOUT HER AND TALKED MUCH ABOUT MYSELF...

... AND I AM VERY PROUD OF MY FATHER'S ACHIEVEMENTS AT THE INSTITUTE.

WHAT?! YOU'VE NEVER SEEN GRETA GARBO? WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN? WE'LL GO RIGHT--

BUT WHY HAVEN'T I SEEN HER THERE?



SHE INTRIGUED ME... FASCINATED ME AS NO WOMAN I HAD BEFORE! WHATEVER HER TRUE AGE, SHE WAS AS INNOCENT AS A CHILD, AND I WANTED TO SHOW HER EVERY MARVEL THE WORLD HAD TO OFFER.

NO! NO, ALAN! THOSE PEOPLE... THEY FRIGHTEN ME!



THEY'RE ONLY A BUNCH OF KIDS HORSING AROUND. COME ON!

ALAN... THE LITTLE ONE! IT'S--



ADA, STOP! WHERE ARE YOU GOING? WHAT DID YOU SEE?

Aiiiiieeee!

SCREEEEECH!

I NEEDED HELP TO RETURN HER TO THE INSTITUTE. SHE WAS HYSTERICAL UNTIL SEDATED. AND MY FATHER, AFTER THE CRISIS HAD PASSED, WAS ALMOST IN A STATE OF HYSTERIA HIMSELF.



YOU HAD NO RIGHT TO TAKE HER ANYWHERE WITHOUT CHECKING WITH ME FIRST!

WHO IS SHE, FATHER? WHAT'S HER HISTORY?

HE USHERED ME INTO HIS STUDY AND CLOSED THE DOOR. HE SAT BEHIND HIS DESK WITH A HEAVY SIGH, AND I KNEW IT WAS GOING TO BE A PROFOUND AND COMPLEX STORY.



ADA'S FATHER, DR. FRANKLIN, WAS THE FOUNDER AND MOTIVATING FORCE OF THIS INSTITUTION.

HE WAS A REMARKABLE SCIENTIST WHO GATHERED MANY LOYAL YOUNG MEDICAL STUDENTS, INCLUDING MYSELF, INTO A CLOSE-KNIT ORGANIZATION DEVOTED EXCLUSIVELY TO GENETIC RESEARCH.



UNKNOWN EVEN TO US, HE DEVELOPED A FORMULA TO PROMOTE CELLULAR REGENERATION, AND TREATED HIS SERIOUSLY ILL WIFE BEFORE A SINGLE LABORATORY TEST WAS MADE.




YOUR BABY WILL LIVE, DEAREST ... I SWEAR IT!

SHE NOT ONLY RECOVERED, BUT SOON SEEMED TO RADIATE VITALITY IN THE OPINION OF ALL OF US WHO SAW HER BEFORE THE BIRTH...


BUT IT WAS A DIFFICULT CESARIAN DELIVERY, AND ADA'S MOTHER DID NOT SURVIVE THE OPERATION.



OH MY GOD! IT... IT CAN'T BE! SHE'S... OLD!



WE ALL HAVE BAD DREAMS, KIDDOS! THAT'S NOTHING TO BE AFRAID OF BUT SOME NIGHTMARES MAY NEVER LEAVE YOU. RUN WHILE YOU CAN! HA HA! JUST KIDDING--THERE IS NO RUNNING.



ANNA MAE, LISTEN. MY BROTHER AND I, AS KIDS, WE BOTH STARTED HAVING THOSE NIGHTMARES.

IT WAS BACK IN...



# BROOKLYN

# 1950

GENTRY/NIXEY



NO JOKE, VERNON, THAT THING WAS CALLIN' OUT TO ME. IT KNEW MY NAME, AND IT'S WEIRD, BUT I WANTED TO GO TO IT.

YOU SAID YOU HAD THE SAME BAD DREAM?



YEH, BUT IT DIDN'T CALL ME. IT WAS JUST WATCHIN', PEEKIN' OUT THE SHADOWS, ALL FREAKY AND GROSS AND--



LOOK OUT!

SSRRREEECCHH



HEY! WHY DON'T YOU WATCH...



UH...



WEIRD OLD JERK!



THAT'S STUPID, VERNON. NO MOVIE STAR'S GONNA BE RIDIN' AROUND BROOKLYN IN NO CAR LIKE THAT. THEY ALL RIDE IN LIMOUSINES.

I BET HE'S A RETIRED SECRET-AGENT SUPERSPY WHO WON'T LET GO OF HIS JOB, STILL HUNTING COMMIES ON EVERY STREET.



WHAT ARE COMMIES?

SHUT UP!

I RECKON A COMMIE IS A LITTLE TROUBLEMAKER LIKE YOU.



YOU HEAR THE KIDS AT SCHOOL TALKIN' 'BOUT SANDY'S POP? FOUND HIM DEAD IN AN ALLEY THIS MORNING!

I BET HE WAS A COMMIE FER SURE! SUPERSPY MUSTA GOT 'IM.



MOM SAID YOU BETTER STOP CURSIN'!

OH REALLY?!



ACK!

GO ON AND TELL MOM, THEN.

MOTHER + FATHER CREEPY (in)  
**REMINISCING**



