

## Praise for *The Huntress*

“With magnificently audacious heroines who will haunt you long after the final page, *The Huntress* is a powerful and groundbreaking story of sisterhood that puts women back into history where they belong. Without a doubt, the best book I’ve read this year.”

—Stephanie Dray, *New York Times* bestselling author

“Quinn deftly braids the stories of a female Russian bomber pilot, Nazi hunters, and a young Bostonian girl staring down evil in the most unthinkable of places. The result is a searing tale of predator and prey, transgression and redemption, and the immutable power of the truth. An utter triumph!”

—Pam Jenoff, *New York Times* bestselling author of  
*The Orphan’s Tale*

“Prepare to be spellbound! *The Huntress* masterfully draws you in and doesn’t let you go. Another brilliant work of historical fiction by the incomparable Kate Quinn.”

—Susan Meissner, *USA Today* bestselling author of  
*As Bright as Heaven*

“*The Huntress* left me breathless with delight. . . . Kate Quinn has created nothing less than a masterpiece of historical fiction.”

—Jennifer Robson, bestselling author of  
*Goodnight from London*

“*The Huntress* is a triumph of a novel! Nina Markova is a veritable force of nature who would have had the Night Witches themselves cackling with glee at her wild daring in this tale of revenge and justice, truth and secrets during the aftermath of the world’s most devastating war.”

—Stephanie Thornton, author of  
*American Princess*

“A thoroughly immersive page-turner, *The Huntress* captures readers from the first page, leading them on an explosive journey that shines a spotlight on the horrors of war and the legacy it leaves for those who survive. Impeccably written, richly detailed, tautly paced, and filled with compelling and intricate characters, Quinn’s novel is both poignant and thrilling. This book will take hold of you and stay with you long after you have finished. You don’t just read a Kate Quinn novel, you live it.”

—Chanel Cleeton, author of *Next Year in Havana*

“An impressive historical novel sure to harness WWII-fiction fans’ attention. . . . Laced with Russian folklore allusions and deliciously witty banter, Quinn’s tale refreshingly avoids contrived situations while portraying three touching, unpredictable love stories; the suspenseful quest for justice; and the courage involved in confronting one’s greatest fears.”

—*Booklist* (starred review)

“Well-researched and vivid segments are interspersed detailing Nina’s backstory as one of Russia’s sizable force of female combat pilots (dubbed The Night Witches by the Germans), establishing her as a fierce yet vulnerable antecedent to Lisbeth Salander. Quinn’s language is evocative of the period, and her characters are good literary company. With any luck, the Nazi hunting will go on for a sequel or two.”

—*Kirkus Reviews*

“Quinn delivers a suspenseful WWII tale of murder and revenge. This exciting thriller vividly reveals how people face adversity and sacrifice while chasing justice and retribution.”

—*Publishers Weekly*

## The Huntress

**Kate Quinn** is a *New York Times* bestselling author of historical fiction. A lifelong history buff, she has written seven historical novels, including the bestselling *The Alice Network*, the Empress of Rome Saga, and the Borgia Chronicles. All have been translated into multiple languages. Kate and her husband now live in San Diego with two black dogs named Caesar and Calpurnia.

Also by Kate Quinn

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# THE HUNTRESS

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*For my father—  
How I miss you!*



## Prologue

Autumn 1945

Altaussee, Austria

She was not used to being hunted.

The lake stretched slate blue, glittering. The woman gazed over it, hands lying loose in her lap. A folded newspaper sat beside her on the bench. The headlines all trumpeted arrests, deaths, forthcoming trials. The trials would be held in Nuremberg, it seemed. She had never been to Nuremberg, but she knew the men who would be tried there. Some she knew by name only, others had touched champagne flutes to hers in friendship. They were all doomed. Crimes against peace. Crimes against humanity. War crimes.

*By what law?* she wanted to scream, beating her fists against the injustice of it. *By what right?* But the war was over, and the victors had won the right to decide what was a crime and what was not. What was humanity, and what was not.

*It was humanity,* she thought, *what I did. It was mercy.* But the victors would never accept that. They would pass judgment at Nuremberg and forever after, decreeing what acts committed in a lawful past would put a man's head in a noose.

Or a woman's.

She touched her own throat.

*Run,* she thought. *If they find you, if they realize what you've done, they will lay a rope around your neck.*

But where was there to go in this world that had taken everything she loved? This world of hunting wolves. She used to be the hunter, and now she was the prey.

*So hide, she thought. Hide in the shadows until they pass you by.*

She rose, walking aimlessly along the lake. It reminded her painfully of Lake Rusalka, her haven in Poland, now ruined and lost to her. She made herself keep moving, putting one foot after the other. She did not know where she was going, only that she refused to huddle here paralyzed by fear until she was scooped onto the scales of their false justice. Step by step the resolve hardened inside her.

Run.

Hide.

Or die.

## THE HUNTRESS

BY IAN GRAHAM

APRIL 1946

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SIX SHOTS.

She fired six times on the shore of Lake Rusalka, not attempting to hide what she did. Why would she? Hitler's dream of empire had yet to crumble and send her fleeing for the shadows. That night under a Polish moon, she could do whatever she wanted—and she murdered six souls in cold blood.

Six shots, six bullets, six bodies falling into the dark water of the lake.

They had been hiding by the water, shivering, eyes huge with fear—escapees from one of the eastbound trains, perhaps, or survivors fleeing one of the region's periodic purges. The dark-haired woman found them, comforted them, told them they were safe. She took them into her house by the lake and fed them a meal, smiling.

Then she led them back outside—and killed them.

Perhaps she lingered there,

admiring the moon on the water, smelling gun smoke.

That nighttime slaughter of six at the height of the war was only one of her crimes. There were others. The hunting of Polish laborers through dense woods as a party game. The murder, near the war's end, of a young English prisoner of war escaped from his stalag. Who knows what other crimes lie on her conscience?

They called her *die Jägerin*—the Huntress. She was the young mistress of an SS officer in German-occupied Poland, the hostess of grand parties on the lake, a keen shot. Perhaps she was the *rusalka* the lake was named for—a lethal, malevolent water spirit.

I think of her as I sit among the ranks of journalists in the Palace of Justice in Nuremberg, watching the war crimes trials grind on. The wheel of justice turns;

## KATE QUINN

the gray-faced men in the defendants' box will fall beneath it. But what about the smaller fish, who escape into the shadows as we aim our brilliant lights on this courtroom? What about the Huntress? She vanished at the war's end. She was not worth pursuing—a woman

with the blood of only a dozen or so on her hands, when there were the murderers of millions to be found. There were many like her—small fish, not worth catching.

Where will they go?

Where did *she* go?

And will anyone take up the hunt?

# PART I



## Chapter 1

# JORDAN

April 1946

Selkie Lake, three hours west of Boston

Who is she, Dad?”

Jordan McBride had timed the question perfectly: her father jerked in surprise midcast, sending his fishing line flying not into the lake, but into the branch of the overhanging maple. Jordan’s camera went *click* as his face settled into comic dismay. She laughed as her father said three or four words he then told her to forget.

“Yes, sir.” She’d heard all his curse words before, of course. You did, when you were the only daughter of a widowed father who took you fishing on fine spring weekends instead of the son he didn’t have. Jordan’s father rose from the end of the little dock and tugged his fishing line free. Jordan raised the Leica for another shot of his dark silhouette, framed against the feathery movement of trees and water. She’d play with the image in the darkroom later, see if she could get a blurred effect on the leaves so they seemed like they were still *moving* in the photograph . . .

“Come on, Dad,” she prompted. “Let’s hear about the mystery woman.”

He adjusted his faded Red Sox cap. “What mystery woman?”

“The one your clerk tells me you’ve been taking out to dinner, those nights you said you were working late.” Jordan held her breath, hoping. She couldn’t remember the last time her father had been on a date. Ladies were always fluttering their gloved fingers at him after Mass on the rare occasions he and Jordan went to church, but to Jordan’s disappointment he never seemed interested.

“It’s nothing, really . . .” He hemmed and hawed, but Jordan wasn’t fooled for a minute. She and her father looked alike; she’d taken enough photographs to see the resemblance: straight noses, level brows, dark blond hair cut close under her father’s cap and spilling out under Jordan’s in a careless ponytail. They were even the same height now that she was nearly eighteen; medium for him and tall for a girl—but far beyond physical resemblance, Jordan *knew* her father. It had just been the two of them since she was seven years old and her mother died, and she knew when Dan McBride was working up to tell her something important.

“Dad,” she broke in sternly. “*Spill.*”

“She’s a widow,” her father said at last. To Jordan’s delight, he was blushing. “Mrs. Weber first came to the shop three months ago.” During the week her father stood three-piece-suited and knowledgeable behind the counter of McBride’s Antiques off Newbury Street. “She’d just come to Boston, selling her jewelry to get by. A few gold chains and locket, nothing unusual, but she had a string of gray pearls, a beautiful piece. She held herself together until then, but she started crying when it came time to part with the pearls.”

“Let me guess. You gave them back, very gallantly, then padded your price on her other pieces so she still walked out with the same amount.”

He reeled in his fishing line. “She also walked out with an invitation for dinner.”

“Look at you, Errol Flynn! Go on—”

“She’s Austrian, but studied English at school so she speaks it almost perfectly. Her husband died in ’43, fighting—”

“Which side?”

“That kind of thing shouldn’t matter anymore, Jordan. The war’s

over.” He fixed a new lure. “She got papers to come to Boston, but times have been hard. She has a little girl—”

“She *does*?”

“Ruth. Four years old, hardly says a word. Sweet little thing.” Giving a tweak of Jordan’s cap. “You’ll love her.”

“So it’s already serious, then,” Jordan said, startled. Her father wouldn’t have met this woman’s child if he wasn’t serious. But *how* serious . . . ?

“Mrs. Weber’s a fine woman.” He cast his line out. “I want her to come to supper at the house next week, her and Ruth. All four of us.”

He gave her a wary look, as if waiting for her to bristle. And part of her did just a tiny bit, Jordan admitted. Ten years of having it be just her and her dad, being *pals* with him the way so few of her girlfriends were with their fathers . . . But against that reflexive twinge of possessiveness was relief. He needed a woman in his life; Jordan had known that for years. Someone to talk to; someone to scold him into eating his spinach. Someone else to lean on.

*If he has someone else in his life, maybe he won’t be so stubborn about not letting you go to college,* the thought whispered, but Jordan shoved it back. This was the moment to be happy for her father, not hoping things might change for her own benefit. Besides, she *was* happy for him. She’d been taking photographs of him for years, and no matter how wide he smiled at the lens, the lines of his face when they came up ghostlike out of the developing fluid said *lonely, lonely, lonely*.

“I can’t wait to meet her,” Jordan said sincerely.

“She’ll bring Ruth next Wednesday, six o’clock.” He looked innocent. “Invite Garrett, if you want. He’s family too, or he could be—”

“Subtle as a train wreck, Dad.”

“He’s a fine boy. And his parents adore you.”

“He’s looking ahead toward college now. He might not have much time for high school girlfriends. Though you could send me to BU with him,” Jordan began. “Their photography courses—”

“Nice try, missy.” Her father looked out over the lake. “The fish aren’t biting.” And neither was he.

Taro, Jordan's black Labrador, raised her muzzle from where she'd been sunning on the dock as Jordan and her dad walked back to shore. Jordan snapped a shot of their side-by-side silhouettes thrown across the water-warped wood, wondering what *four* silhouettes would look like. *Please*, Jordan prayed, thinking of the unknown Mrs. Weber, *please let me like you*.

**A SLIM HAND** extended as blue eyes smiled. "How lovely to meet you at last."

Jordan shook hands with the woman her father had just ushered into the sitting room. Anneliese Weber was small and slender, dark hair swept into a glossy knot at her nape, a string of gray pearls her only jewelry. A dark floral dress, darned but spotless gloves, quiet elegance with touches of wear and tear. Her face was young—she was twenty-eight, according to Jordan's dad—but her eyes looked older. Of course they did; she was a war widow with a young child, starting over in a new country.

"Very pleased to meet you," Jordan said sincerely. "This must be Ruth!" The child at Anneliese Weber's side was darling; blond pigtails and a blue coat and a grave expression. Jordan extended a hand, but Ruth shrank back.

"She's shy," Anneliese apologized. Her voice was clear and low, almost no trace of a German accent. Just a little softness on the V's. "Ruth's world has been very unsettled."

"I didn't like strangers at your age either," Jordan told Ruth. Not true, really, but something about Ruth's wary little face made Jordan long to put her at ease. She also longed to take Ruth's picture—those round cheeks and blond braids would just eat up the lens. Jordan's father took the coats, and Jordan dashed into the kitchen to check the meatloaf. By the time she came out, whipping off the towel she'd tucked around her waist to protect her green Sunday taffeta, her father had poured drinks. Ruth sat on the couch with a glass of milk, as Anneliese Weber sipped sherry and surveyed the room. "A lovely home. You're young to keep house for your father, Jordan, but you do it very well."

*Nice of her to lie*, Jordan approved. The McBride house always looked mussed: a narrow brownstone three stories up and down on the lace-curtain side of South Boston; the stairs steep, the couches worn and comfortable, the rugs always skidding askew. Anneliese Weber did not seem like the type who approved of anything being askew, with her spine ramrod straight and every hair in place, but she looked around the room with approval. “Did you take this?” She gestured to a photograph of the Boston Common, mist wrapped and tilted at an angle that made everything look otherworldly, a dream landscape. “Your father tells me you are quite a . . . What is the word? A snapper?”

“Yes.” Jordan grinned. “Can I take your picture later?”

“Don’t encourage her.” Jordan’s dad guided Anneliese to the couch with a reverent touch to the small of her back, smiling. “Jordan already spends too much time staring through a lens.”

“Better than staring at a mirror or at a film screen,” Anneliese replied unexpectedly. “Young girls should have more on their minds than lipstick and giggling, or they will grow from silly girls to sillier women. You take classes for it—picture-taking?”

“Wherever I can.” Since Jordan was fourteen she’d been signing up for whatever photography classes she could pay for out of her allowance, and sneaking into college courses wherever she could find a professor willing to wink at the presence of a knock-kneed junior high schooler lurking in the back row. “I take classes, I study on my own, I practice—”

“One has to be serious about something in order to be good at it,” Anneliese said, approving. A warm glow started in Jordan’s chest. *Serious. Good.* Her father never saw Jordan’s photography that way. “Messing about with a camera,” he’d say, shaking his head. “Well, you’ll grow out of it.” *I’m not going to grow out of it*, Jordan had replied at fifteen. *I’m going to be the next Margaret Bourke-White.*

*Margaret who?* he’d responded, laughing. He laughed nicely, indulgently—but he’d still laughed.

Anneliese didn’t laugh. She looked at Jordan’s photograph and

nodded approval. For the first time Jordan allowed herself to think the word: *Stepmother* . . . ?

At the dining room table Jordan had set with the Sunday china, Anneliese asked questions about the antiques shop as Jordan's father heaped her plate with the choicest cuts of everything. "I know an excellent treatment to make colored glass shine," she said as he talked about a set of Tiffany lamps acquired at an estate sale. She quietly corrected Ruth's grip on her fork as she listened to Jordan talk about her school's forthcoming dance. "Surely you have a date, a pretty girl like you."

"Garrett Byrne," Jordan's father said, forestalling her. "A nice young man, joined up to be a pilot at the end of the war. He never saw combat, though. Got a medical discharge when he broke his leg during training. You'll meet him Sunday, if you'd care to accompany us to Mass."

"I would like that. I've been trying so hard to make friends in Boston. You go every week?"

"Of course."

Jordan coughed into her napkin. She and her father hardly went to Mass more than twice a year, Easter and Christmas, but now he sat there at the head of the table positively radiating piety. Anneliese smiled, also radiating piety, and Jordan mused about courting couples on their best behavior. She saw it every day in the halls at school, and apparently the older generation was no different. Maybe there was a photo-essay in that: a series of comparison photographs, courting couples of all ages, highlighting the similarities that transcended age. With the right titles and captions, it might make a piece strong enough to submit to a magazine or newspaper . . .

Plates were cleared, coffee brought out. Jordan cut the Boston cream pie Anneliese had brought. "Though I don't know why you call it pie," she said, blue eyes sparkling. "It's cake, and don't tell an Austrian any differently. We know cake, in Austria."

"You speak such good English," Jordan ventured. She couldn't tell yet about Ruth, who hadn't spoken a word.

“I studied it at school. And my husband spoke it for business, so I practiced with him.”

Jordan wanted to ask how Anneliese had lost her husband, but her father shot her a warning glance. He’d already given clear instructions: “You’re not to ask Mrs. Weber about the war, or her husband. She’s made it quite clear it was a painful time.”

“But don’t we want to know everything about her?” Much as Jordan wanted her father to have someone special in his life, it still had to be the *right* someone. “Why is that wrong?”

“Because people aren’t obliged to drag out their old hurts or dirty laundry just because of your need to know,” he answered. “No one wants to talk about a war after they’ve lived through it, Jordan McBride. So don’t go prying where you’ll be hurting feelings, and no wild stories either.”

Jordan had flushed then. *Wild stories*—that was a bad habit going back ten years. When her barely remembered mother had gone into the hospital, seven-year-old Jordan had been packed off to stay with some well-meaning dimwit of an aunt who told her, *Your mother’s gone away*, and then wouldn’t say where. So Jordan made up a different story every day: *She’s gone to get milk*. *She’s gone to get her hair done*. Then when her mother still didn’t come back, more fanciful stories: *She’s gone to a ball like Cinderella*. *She’s gone to California to be a movie star*. Until her father came home weeping to say, *Your mother’s gone to the angels*, and Jordan didn’t understand why his story got to be the real one, so she kept making up her own. “Jordan and her wild stories,” her teacher had joked. “Why *does* she do it?”

Jordan could have said, *Because no one told me the truth*. *Because no one told me “She’s sick and you can’t see her because you might catch it” so I made up something better to fill the gap*.

Maybe that was why she’d latched so eagerly onto her first Kodak at age nine. There weren’t *gaps* in photographs; there wasn’t any need to fill them up with stories. If she had a camera, she didn’t need to tell stories; she could tell the truth.

Taro lolloped into the dining room, breaking Jordan's thoughts. For the first time, she saw little Ruth grow animated. "*Hund!*"

"English, Ruth," her mother said, but Ruth was already on the floor holding out shy hands.

"*Hund,*" she whispered, stroking Taro's ears. Jordan's heart melted completely. "I'm getting a picture," she said, slipping out of her own chair and going for the Leica on the hall table. When she came back in and started clicking, Ruth had Taro piled over her lap as Anneliese spoke softly. "If Ruth seems very quiet to you, or flinches, or acts odd—well, you should know that in Altaussee before we left Austria, we had a very upsetting encounter by the lake. A refugee woman who tried to rob us . . . It's made Ruth wary and strange around new people." That seemed to be all Anneliese was going to say. Jordan stamped down her questions before her dad could shoot her another glance. He was perfectly correct, after all, when he pointed out that Anneliese Weber wasn't the only person who didn't care to discuss the war—no one did now. First everyone had celebrated, and now all anyone wanted to do was forget. Jordan found it hard to believe that at this time last year there had still been wartime news and stars hanging in windows; victory gardens and boys at school talking about whether it would all be over before they got old enough to join up.

Anneliese smiled down at her daughter. "The dog likes you, Ruth."

"Her name is Taro," said Jordan, clicking away: the little girl with her small freckled nose against the dog's damp one.

"Taro." Anneliese tasted the word. "What kind of name is that?"

"After Gerda Taro—the first female photographer to cover the front lines of a war."

"And she died doing it, so that's enough about women taking pictures in war zones," Jordan's father said.

"Let me get a few shots of you two—"

"Please don't." Anneliese turned her face away with a camera-shy frown. "I hate having my picture taken."

"Just family snaps," Jordan reassured. She liked close-camera candids over formal shots. Tripods and lighting equipment made

camera-shy people even more self-conscious; they put a mask on and then the photograph wasn't *real*. She preferred to hover unobtrusively until people forgot she was there, until they forgot the mask and relaxed into who they really were. There was no hiding the real you from a camera.

Anneliese rose to clear the table, Jordan's father assisting with the heavy dishes as Jordan quietly moved and snapped. Ruth was coaxed away from Taro to carry the butter dish, and Dad was soon describing their hunting cabin. "It's a lovely spot; my father built it. Jordan likes to snap the lake; I go for the fishing and the odd bit of shooting."

Anneliese half turned away from the sink. "You hunt?"

Jordan's father looked anxious. "Some women hate the noise and the mess—"

"Not at all . . ."

Jordan put down her camera and went to help with the washing up. Anneliese offered to dry, but Jordan turned her down so she'd have the chance to admire Daniel McBride's deftness with a dish towel. No woman could possibly fail to be charmed by a man who could properly dry Spode.

Anneliese said good-bye soon after. Jordan's father gave her a chaste kiss on the cheek, but his arm stole around her waist for just an instant, making Jordan smile. Anneliese then squeezed Jordan's hand warmly, and Ruth offered her fingers this time, well slimed by Taro's affectionate tongue. They descended the steep brownstone steps to the cool spring night, and Jordan's father shut the door. Before he could ask, Jordan came and kissed his cheek. "I like her, Dad. I really do."

#### **BUT SHE COULDN'T SLEEP.**

The tall narrow brownstone had a small basement with its own private entrance to the street. Jordan had to walk outside the house and then down the very steep outer stairs to the tiny door set below ground level under the stoop, but the privacy and the lack of light made it perfect for her purposes. When she was fourteen and

learning to print her own negatives, her dad had allowed her to sweep out the rubbish and make herself a proper darkroom.

Jordan paused on the threshold, inhaling the familiar scents of chemicals and equipment. This was *her* room, much more than the cozy bedroom upstairs with its narrow bed and the desk for homework. This room was where she ceased being Jordan McBride with her messy ponytail and bag of schoolbooks, and became J. Bryde, professional photographer. J. Bryde was going to be her byline someday, when she became a professional like her idols whose faces looked down from the darkroom wall: Margaret Bourke-White kneeling with her camera on a massive decorative eagle's head sixty-one floors up on the Chrysler Building, impervious to the height; Gerda Taro crouched behind a Spanish soldier against a heap of rubble, peering for the best angle.

Normally Jordan would have taken a moment to salute her heroines, but something was gnawing at her. She wasn't sure what, so she just started laying out trays and chemicals with the speed of long practice.

She loaded the negatives for the pictures she'd taken at dinner, running the images onto the paper one at a time. Sliding them through the developer under the red glow of the safelight, Jordan watched the images come up through the fluid one by one, like ghosts. Ruth playing with the dog; Anneliese Weber turning away from the camera; Anneliese from behind, doing dishes . . . Jordan rotated the sheets through the stop bath, the fixer bath, gently agitating the liquids in their trays, transferring the prints to the little sink for washing, then clipping them up on the clothesline to dry. She walked down the line one by one.

"What are you looking for?" Jordan wondered aloud. She had a habit of talking to herself down here all alone; she wished she had a fellow photographer to share darkroom conversation with, ideally some smoldering Hungarian war correspondent. She walked the line of prints again. "What caught your eye, J. Bryde?" It wasn't the first time she'd had this niggling feeling about a shot before it had even been printed. It was like the camera saw something she

didn't, nagging her until she saw it with her own eyes and not just through the lens.

Half the time, of course, that feeling was completely off base.

"That one," Jordan heard herself saying. The one of Anneliese Weber by the sink, half turned toward the lens. Jordan squinted, but the image was too small. She ran it again, enlarging it. Midnight. She didn't care, working away until the enlarged print hung on the line.

Jordan stood back, hands on hips, staring at it. "Objectively," she said aloud, "that is one of the best shots you've ever taken." The *click* of the Leica had captured Anneliese as she stood framed by the arch of the kitchen window, half turned toward the camera for once rather than away from it, the contrast between her dark hair and pale face beautifully rendered. But . . .

"Subjectively," Jordan continued, "that shot is goddamn spooky." She didn't often swear—her father didn't tolerate bad language—but if there was ever an occasion for a *goddamn*, this was it.

It was the expression on the Austrian woman's face. Jordan had sat across from that face all evening, and she'd seen nothing but pleasant interest and calm dignity, but in the photograph a different woman emerged. She wore a smile, but not a pleasant one. The eyes were narrowed, and her hands around the dish towel suddenly clenched in some reflexive death grip. All evening Anneliese had looked gentle and frail and ladylike, but she didn't look like that here. Here, she looked lovely and unsettling and—

"Cruel." The word popped out of Jordan's mouth before she knew she was thinking it, and she shook her head. Because *anyone* could take an unflattering photo: unlucky timing or lighting caught you midblink and you looked sly, caught you with your mouth open and you looked half-witted. Shoot Hedy Lamarr the wrong way, and she turned from Snow White to the Wicked Queen. Cameras didn't lie, but they could certainly mislead.

Jordan reached for the clothespins clipping the print, meeting that razor-edged gaze. "What were you saying, right at this minute?" Her father had been talking about the cabin . . .

*You hunt?*

*Some women hate the noise and the mess—*

*Not at all . . .*

Jordan shook her head again, moving to throw the print away. Her dad wouldn't like it; he'd think she was twisting the image to see something that wasn't there. *Jordan and her wild stories.*

*But I didn't twist it, Jordan thought. That's how she looked.*

She hesitated, then slipped the photograph into a drawer. Even if it was misleading, it was still one of the best pictures she'd ever taken. She couldn't quite bring herself to throw it away.