

# The Bed She Made

## *Epilogue*

Journey was working on her laptop in the kitchen, sipping a glass of wine, when she heard gravel shifting under the tires of a car in the driveway. She glanced up at the time. It was six o'clock on the dot. A moment later, the front door flew open and her husband jogged into the house, sliding to a stop when he saw her seated at the table.

"Did I miss anything?" David asked, trying to catch his breath.

She smiled over the rim of her glass. "No. He should be here any minute."

His eyes were wide as he pointed up the stairs. "Is she ready?"

Journey used her foot to push the chair across from her out from under the table. "Sit down, sweetheart, before you have a coronary."

David loosened his gray necktie and dropped down into the chair. His cheeks were flushed from running up the driveway and the stairs in the Georgia heat. His hair had a dusting of silver around the tops of his ears and there were a few more creases around the corners of his eyes, but he still looked like a Ken Doll. He caught her grinning at him.

"What?" he asked.

She sipped her wine. "I'm just glad you made it home."

He looked down at his watch. "Is Marcus home? I told him to be home by six."

Journey shook her head. "He called and said practice ran late and that he's on his way."

David rolled his eyes. "Practice ran late on prom night? You and I both know better." He sighed and pointed at his wife. "He's *your* son when he pulls crap like this."

She chuckled but kept her mouth shut.

"Well?" Genna's voice from the steps made them both turn and look.

At the top of the staircase, Genna did a full turn in her bright blue ball gown. Her dark hair was curled over her shoulder, and it bounced gently as she descended the stairs. David and Journey met her in the living room. Journey felt tears prickle the corners of her eyes. "You look amazing, Genna," she said.

David's head bobbed up and down, but he didn't say a word. Journey knew if he did, it would probably come out as a blubbering mess. He sniffled quietly, affirming her assumption.

Genna's blue eyes were sparkling like sapphires. "You really like it?" she asked.

Journey nodded and straightened her silver necklace. "I love it."

"Well, I hate it!" David blurted out. He pointed up the stairs. "Go change into something uglier."

Journey laughed and rolled her eyes. "Ignore your dad. Proms make him a little bit crazy."

Genna leaned up on her toes and kissed his cheek. "You paid for the dress, Daddy."

"Shut up," he grumbled.

A car honked its horn in the driveway, and Genna's eyes doubled in size. "That's him," she said with a soft squeal.

Journey saw David stiffen out of the corner of her eye when they all turned toward the front door. She smiled up at him as he straightened the Detective badge on his belt and pulled his holster further toward the front of his hip. "Don't you think that's a bit much?" she asked as Genna pulled the front door open.

David jerked his thumb toward the hallway to their bedroom. "I could go get my assault rifle."

She chuckled and looped her arm through his.

Genna pointed at him. "Behave, Dad."

He held up his hands in defense, and his mouth dropped open. "I will if he does!"

A handsome, young man named Bryson stepped through the front door in a tux with a vest that matched Genna's dress. He was visibly shaking as he stretched out his hand toward David. "Hello, Mr. Britton."

David cleared his throat, his face stern and unyielding. "Bryson," he answered by way of a greeting.

Journey clasped her hands over her mouth as the boy slipped a white rose corsage over her daughter's wrist. "Oh, I forgot the camera!" She jerked her phone out of her back pocket to snap some pictures. "Look at me and smile!"

The two kids turned and smiled for the camera.

Bryson nodded toward the driveway. "You ready to go?"

Genna was beaming as she nodded. "Yes!"

David pointed at the boy. "I expect her back here by midnight."

Journey elbowed him in the ribs. "Be home by two."

David scowled down at her, but she just winked at him.

Genna smiled back over her shoulder as she picked up the hem of her dress. "Thanks,

Mom.”

“Thanks Mom,” David mimicked in a snarky tone as he slipped an arm around Journey’s waist.

Smiling, Journey hugged her arms and leaned her head against his chest. Bryson opened Genna’s door, and she waved again before getting into his car. David raised his finger toward Bryson again, but Journey pushed it down before he could make any more threats. “Oh, leave him alone. At least *he showed up* for her senior prom.”

David gasped as he looked down at her. “You’re really going to bring that up, Mrs. Britton?”

She turned her palms up. “I’m just saying, maybe you’re not the best example for eighteen-year-old boys to follow.”

David laughed, and in one fluid motion, bent, grabbed her around her hips, and slung her over his shoulder. He turned toward the door. “Take it back.”

“No!”

He slapped her on the backside. “Take it back, Journey!”

She laughed as he carried her inside. “Never!”

Behind them, David kicked the front door closed and carried his wife to their bedroom.