

## SIDE 1: Annie and Paul

**PAUL.** Ms. Wilkes. Ms. Wilkes!

*Annie enters.*

**ANNIE.** Well you don't have to scream your head off, you know I'm on the other side of the door.

**PAUL.** Could I please have my pills now? My legs, very painful...

**ANNIE.** Oh poor dear, it's like clockwork how your pain comes. I have your pills right here.

Could I ask you a favor? I took the liberty of peeking inside your leather case. You don't mind, do you?

**PAUL.** Ms. Wilkes ...

**ANNIE.** Please, call me Annie. All my friends do.

**PAUL.** Annie. Please.

**ANNIE.** Anyway, I see there's a manuscript in there.

**PAUL.** And you want to read it?

**ANNIE.** You don't mind, do you? You wouldn't mind if I read it? I wouldn't presume to do such a thing without your permission. I respect you too much.

**PAUL.** Sorry, but I have a hard and fast rule about who can read my work at the early stage. Only my agent, my editor, and anyone who saves me from freezing to death in a car crash.

**ANNIE.** Oh my, you'll never know what a rare treat you're giving me.

Heavens! Forgive me for prattling away and making you feel all oogy.

There you go. You'll feel better in a few minutes. I just can't believe that my hero is recovering in my very own home. The man who gave the world Misery Chastain. And here he is: Paul Sheldon himself!

**PAUL.** *(To her offstage.)* I guess it was kind of a miracle ... you finding me.

**ANNIE.** *(From off)* Not a miracle at all — in a way, I was following you.

**PAUL.** Following me?

**ANNIE.** Well, seeing as how I'm your number one fan and all, it wasn't any secret to me you were staying at the Silver Creek Lodge these past five weeks. You finish all your new books there, any good fan knows that. So some nights, I'd just tool on down there and look up at the light in your cabin. And I'd try to imagine what was going on in the room of the world's greatest writer.

**PAUL.** Say that last part again — I couldn't quite hear you.

**ANNIE.** The world's greatest writer. Well, the other afternoon I was on my way home from town, racing 'cause I'd heard that the storm was coming in hard, and there you were leaving the Lodge. And I wondered why in the world would a literary genius go for a drive when there was this monster storm coming?

**PAUL.** The literary genius didn't know there was a storm coming.

**ANNIE.** Lucky for you I did. Lucky for me too, because now you're alive and you can write more books. Because the world needs more Misery books.