

Закр́тый клуб

# Читаем вместе по-английски

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## 'Always' by Sarah Jio

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# Lesson 11

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Always

*Chapter 8, Part 2,*

*Chapter 9, Part 1*

# Chapter 8, Part 2

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# Always

## Chapter 8

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- Twenty minutes later, we're **seated at** a corner table at Jai Thai, two blocks away, both sinking our forks into pad Thai.
- "Do you ever wonder what your parents would think of you now, **all grown up?**" Cade asks.
- "Yeah," I say, **twisting** an **uncooperative noodle around** my fork **for the third time.** "I wonder if they'd be **proud of** me, I guess."

# Always

## Chapter 8

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- “Me too,” he says. “I mean, I’m almost thirty, and yet **in some ways** I still **feel like** the kid who’s **looking for his parents’ approval.**”
- I nod. “I still feel like a kid.”
- **“Do you think we always will?”**
- “I don’t know,” I say. “Maybe. Maybe some people always remain **young at heart.**”

# Always

## Chapter 8

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- "I hope I'm one."
- "I think you are," I say, **watching a pair of teenagers saunter by** on the sidewalk outside the window. The girl stops so her boyfriend can **light her cigarette**. She **takes a long drag**, then **flips** her hair behind her shoulder **the way every girl does** when she is sixteen.

# Always

## Chapter 8

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- **“Did you ever smoke?”** I ask.
- “Nah,” he says. “But I tried. **Didn’t we all?”**
- I grin. “My first cigarette was a—”
- He holds out his hand. “Wait, **let me guess,** a—”
- **“Clove,”** we both say in unison before laughing.

# Always

## Chapter 8

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- He **reaches for another spring roll**, and the **humor** in his eyes **drifts away**. "It's funny to think that our parents did all **the same things** we did. **Smoked cloves. Got in trouble. Felt lost.**"
- "Yeah," I say. "Isn't that the great realization of **adulthood?**"
- He nods. "Exactly, that our parents **didn't have it figured out, nor do we**. Maybe no one does."

# Always

## Chapter 8

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- Exactly," I say. "I still can't believe my **byline's** in the newspaper."
- He grins. "And how could a kid who **refused to take piano lessons** and **could barely pick out a few notes on the bass** end up running a record label?"
- "Your parents **would be proud,**" I say with confidence. "So proud."

# Always

## Chapter 8

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- He **looks away**, and **I wonder if** my comment **has found a pathway straight to his heart**. He **purses his lips** for a moment, then **turns back to** me. "How did your parents meet?"
- "In Big Sur," I say.
- "Big Sur?"

# Always

## Chapter 8

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- “Yeah, they were hippies. Mom and her best friend **were driving up** Highway One in a Volkswagen bus, and my dad and his friend **were hitchhiking on the road.**”
- **“No way,”** he says, smiling.

# Always

## Chapter 8

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- “They **hit it off** immediately, and **ended up spending** a weekend in Big Sur at some **campground overlooking the ocean**. It always sounded magical to me, **at least in the way** my grandmother described it.”
- **“I’ve never been,”** Cade says.

# Always

## Chapter 8

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- **"I've always wanted to go,"** I say, "to **retrace the steps** of my **parents' love story.**" I pause for a moment, remembering the stories my grandmother **would tell** of that **dreamy time** in **my parents' lives.** Mom was beautiful, with **golden hair, olive skin,** and eyes the color of the sea. Dad was **handsome** for any decade, but **particularly** in 1971, with **strong arms,** a warm smile, and dark hair **tied back in a ponytail.**

# Always

## Chapter 8

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- He **wooned** Mom with **his passion for life**, his dreams for the future, and his skill with the guitar (**apparently** he played her favorite Joan Baez song **upon request** and knew all the words). "They were **soulmates**," I continue a little **wistfully**. "If you believe **in that sort of thing**."

# Always

## Chapter 8

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- Cade shrugs. "I don't know **if I do,**" he says. "I mean, I want to believe that each person **gets to have one true love,** someone who **completes them.**" He shakes his head. "But **is that really the case?**"
- "**Have you ever had your heart broken?**" I ask, **instead of giving him an answer.**
- "Yes," he says simply.

# Always

## Chapter 8

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- I **don't press** him **for details**, but I **wonder about** this girl who broke his heart. Was she beautiful? A musician? Someone who's still in his life? And while I **mourned** a college **breakup** for longer than I **care to admit**, I don't know that I can say whether I've ever had my heart broken **in the true sense of the term**. My heart **has hurt**, yes. But it hasn't broken, not really.

# Always

## Chapter 8

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- "What **are you keeping close to your heart?**" he asks, pointing at my locket as a waitress **refills** our water glasses.
- I immediately raise my hand to my neck and look down at the little locket I **'ve worn all these years.** I so rarely open it and, **frankly,** can't even remember the last time I did.

# Always

## Chapter 8

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- But it feels natural somehow to open it now, and so I **finger the clasp until it releases;** the **tiny** shell fragment, still the color of **milk jade,** falls into my palm, which I **hold out** to Cade.
- “My grandfather found this shell on a beach in Normandy during the war,” I explain. “It broke, but I’ve **always kept** a little piece of it with me, **for luck.**”

# Always

## Chapter 8

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- "I love that," Cade says, his eyes **flashing**. "I've been to Normandy."
- "Really?"
- He nods. "My mom always wanted to see the north of France. She **never got to go**, so my aunt **took me for her**."

# Always

## Chapter 8

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- Even though she **couldn't afford it**, she put the whole thing on her credit card and we flew to Paris." He pauses for a long moment. "Seeing my aunt cry one day at the beach." He sighs. "It was something else."

# Always

## Chapter 8

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- “Wow,” I say. **“Have you been back?”**
- “No,” he says. “Not **since then. But I’d like to.**” He grins.  
“Maybe we could go back together and get you another one of those shells.”

# Always

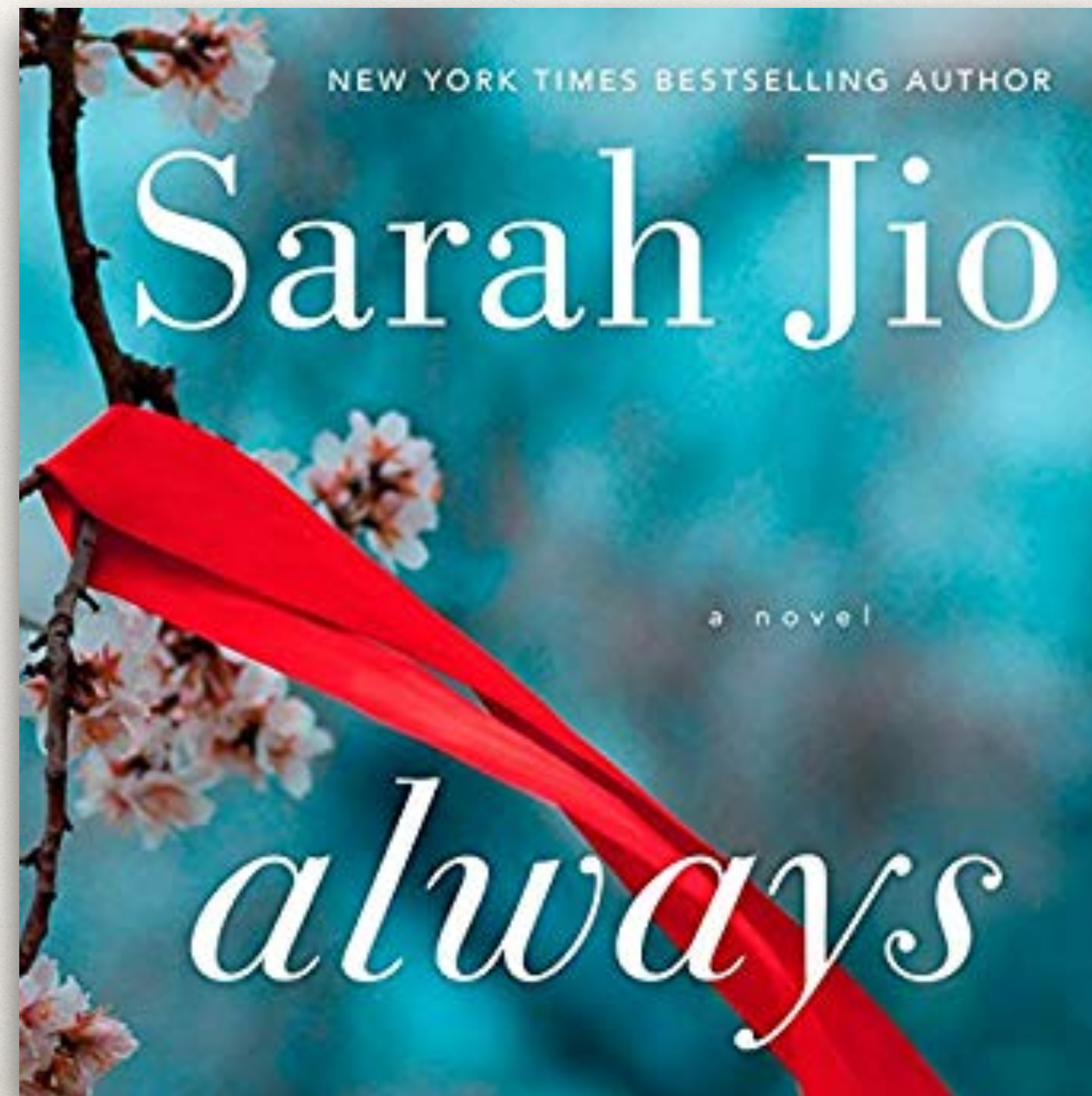
## Chapter 8

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- I feel **warm all over.**
- **"How about this," he continues.** "Let's make a pact that we'll go there together, for the memories." He touches my arm **lightly. "What do you say?"**
- "I say yes."

# Chapter 9, Part 1

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# Always

## Chapter 9

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- NOVEMBER 16, 2008
- “Hi,” I say to Ryan, **setting my keys down** on the kitchen counter.
- “Hi,” he says, leaning in to place a kiss on my cheek. “How **did the research go?**”
- “Good,” I say **distractedly.**

# Always

## Chapter 9

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- “Educate me. Tell me something about our city that **I don’t already know.** That will surprise me.”
- “Over dinner, I promise. **My thoughts are scattered** now,” I say, **sidestepping the truth**—the surprise I got at Westlake Center.
- He looks at me **for a long moment.** I **avoid his gaze.**
- “I hope our children **get your nose,**” he says. “It’s so **darn cute.**”

# Always

## Chapter 9

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- I **bite my lip**. “Ryan, I’m not sure if I—”
- “I know, I know,” he continues, his grin **melting away**. “You don’t know **if you’re ready for a family. I get it**. I’ll be patient. I promise.”
- I nod, grateful to **tuck the subject away once again**, not ready to discuss it. Not yet.

# Always

## Chapter 9

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- **"Is there something bothering you, baby?" he asks like a mind reader, tucking his hand in mine.**
- "No, no," I lie.
- "You and Trace **didn't get into a fight or anything**, did you?"
- "No," I say.

# Always

## Chapter 9

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- “You’re **stressed,**” he says. “**I can tell.** Is it the **feature?** Are you getting any **interview resistance?** Because I can help. I can **make some calls—**”
- “No, it’s not that,” I say. “**I’m just overwhelmed, that’s all.**”
- “All right,” he says, **nestling in closer to** me. “**You just say the word,** and I’ll do what you need.”

# Always

## Chapter 9

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- “You’re wonderful, you know,” I say as he kisses my cheek lightly. And he is, this man I’m going to marry this summer. He’s wonderful **in every way; I feel a pang of guilt rise** in my chest.
- “Hey,” he says, reaching for an old Converse shoebox beside the bar. “My parents **are coming** to visit **next weekend**, so I thought I’d **better get** the **guest room in shape**. Anyway, I found this.”

# Always

## Chapter 9

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- I reach for the box filled with old postcards and letters I've **saved over the years**. I **intend to sort through** and **dispose of** them, **the same way** I **mean to spend quality time** with those **bridal magazines**. **Buried at the bottom** is a black-and-white photo I thought was lost **ages ago**. I **lift it out**, and the hair on my arms **stand on end**.

# Always

## Chapter 9

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- “Wow,” Ryan says, **leaning over** my shoulders. “I know you’re **camera-shy**, but I **wish I had more pictures of you**. You look **gorgeous**. We should **have it blown up** and **frame it**. Maybe hang it over there by the—”
- “No,” I say quickly, turning the photo over. “No, **I’d rather not.**”
- “Oh,” Ryan says, a bit **injured**. “**Why not?** It’s a great picture **from a composition standpoint.**”

# Always

## Chapter 9

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- I **blink** hard, remembering how I stood on the edge of the ferry, leaning up against that **kelly-green railing**, wind blowing sideways against my cheek, **whipping** my hair **this way and that**. Still, I was smiling. I didn't feel the cold. I wasn't bothered by the wind. Cade was in front of me, his camera clicking. I look at Ryan again, his face **expectant**, eyes filled with love.

# Always

## Chapter 9

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- He **tucks** a **wayward strand** of my hair behind my left ear.  
“**Was this taken** in Seattle?”
- I nod.
- “You’re **so quiet** about that time in your past,” he says.
- “**It feels like a lifetime ago,**” I say with an **exaggerated** shrug.

# Always

## Chapter 9

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- “Kailey,” Ryan says, **locking** his eyes to mine. “I want to believe that. I really do. But sometimes, **in moments like this, I feel like** there’s a part of your heart that I **haven’t yet been given access to.**” He **squeezes my hand.** “Tell me you’ll **let me in.** Because I—”
- “I **have let** you **in,**” I say quickly.

# Always

## Chapter 9

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- **"Someday I want to meet** the girl in that photo," he says with a **sigh**, returning to the kitchen, where he **pulls the dishwasher open** and begins **unloading** the glasses into the **upper cabinet** by the window.

# Always

## Chapter 9

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- “You know that Ryan is a **rare specimen,**” Tracy told me after I **started dating** him four years ago. “An anomaly in the sea of men.” And she was, and is, right. Of every woman I know, none of their husbands or boyfriends **helps out around the house,** and yet Ryan **insists on changing the sheets, folding laundry,** and **keeping the sink free of** dishes.

# Always

## Chapter 9

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- “So, I thought that when my parents are here next weekend, we could take them to the Fairmont, show them the **ballroom** where the **reception** will be.”
- “Sure,” I say **absentmindedly**.
- “My mom would love that,” Ryan continues. “She asked me the **color** of the walls.” He gives me a knowing grin. “You know how she loves to color-coordinate.”

# Always

## Chapter 9

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- I **force a smile**. "Then **let's do it**."
- Part of me **is envious of** Ryan, with his loving parents who **are interested in their children's lives**. And yet, I suppose I'm **ultimately jealous of** anyone who has parents. As much as I've **always been eager to gain a set of parents** when I say "I do," from day one there's **been** something **forced about** the relationship with my **soon-to-be in-laws**.

# Always

## Chapter 9

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- Ryan's dad, Bennett, a banker who **spends almost all of his free time** at the **country club, is nice enough**, but I **struggle to connect** with him on any real level. Ryan's mom, Melinda, is **perpetually** manicured and **coiffed, clad** in **overpriced designer outfits** she'll wear only once to the lunches and **galas** that **litter** her **schedule. High-maintenance, with the emphasis on high.**

# Always

## Chapter 9

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- “I know my parents can be **a little much,**” he says, closing the dishwasher door. “But it’s just for a few days.”
- “They’re **always welcome in our home,**” I **reassure** him.
- “They love you, you know,” he continues. “They’ve **always wanted to have** a daughter, and now they’re getting the very best one.”

# Always

## Chapter 9

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- I smile as I reach for a **pan** from the **pot rack**. "I promised you risotto. Are you hungry?"
- He shrugs. "Not very. Are you?"
- "Not starving, but you should eat something."
- "**I won't argue,**" he says. "You know there's nothing you could make that I wouldn't **devour.**"

# Always

## Chapter 9

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- **“Just as long as** it’s not spicy,” I say with a smile, noticing a bottle of Tabasco as I open the refrigerator. Although I might **normally have enjoyed** the challenge of **putting together** a last-minute meal, **I don’t feel like cooking** tonight. “You know,” I say, **“I’m pretty tired. How would you feel about just getting some takeout?”**

# Always

## Chapter 9

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- "Sure," he says. "Indian? Thai? Something else?"
- "Thai sounds great," I say quietly.
- Ryan nods and **picks up** his phone. "**I'll call it in.**"
- As I stand in my kitchen, my heart **churns**. I love this man I'm **about to marry**.

# Always

## Chapter 9

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- I love how he places the water glasses **rim-side** down in the cabinet and thinks I **look like a goddess** with my hair up, even though I've never felt I **had the face for it.** I love how he kisses me in the morning and at night. Mostly I love how he loves me, so freely, so **all-encompassingly.**

# Always

## Chapter 9

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- **In a burst of inspiration, I turn on the oven. Cinnamon.** The scent of a happy home. I can bake Ryan some **breakfast rolls** for a **fresh start** tomorrow, to show him how much I **adore** him every day.
- Suddenly the smoke alarm sounds. I intended to clean up the **burned drippings** from dinner two nights ago, but I forgot, and now my plan **is ruined.**

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