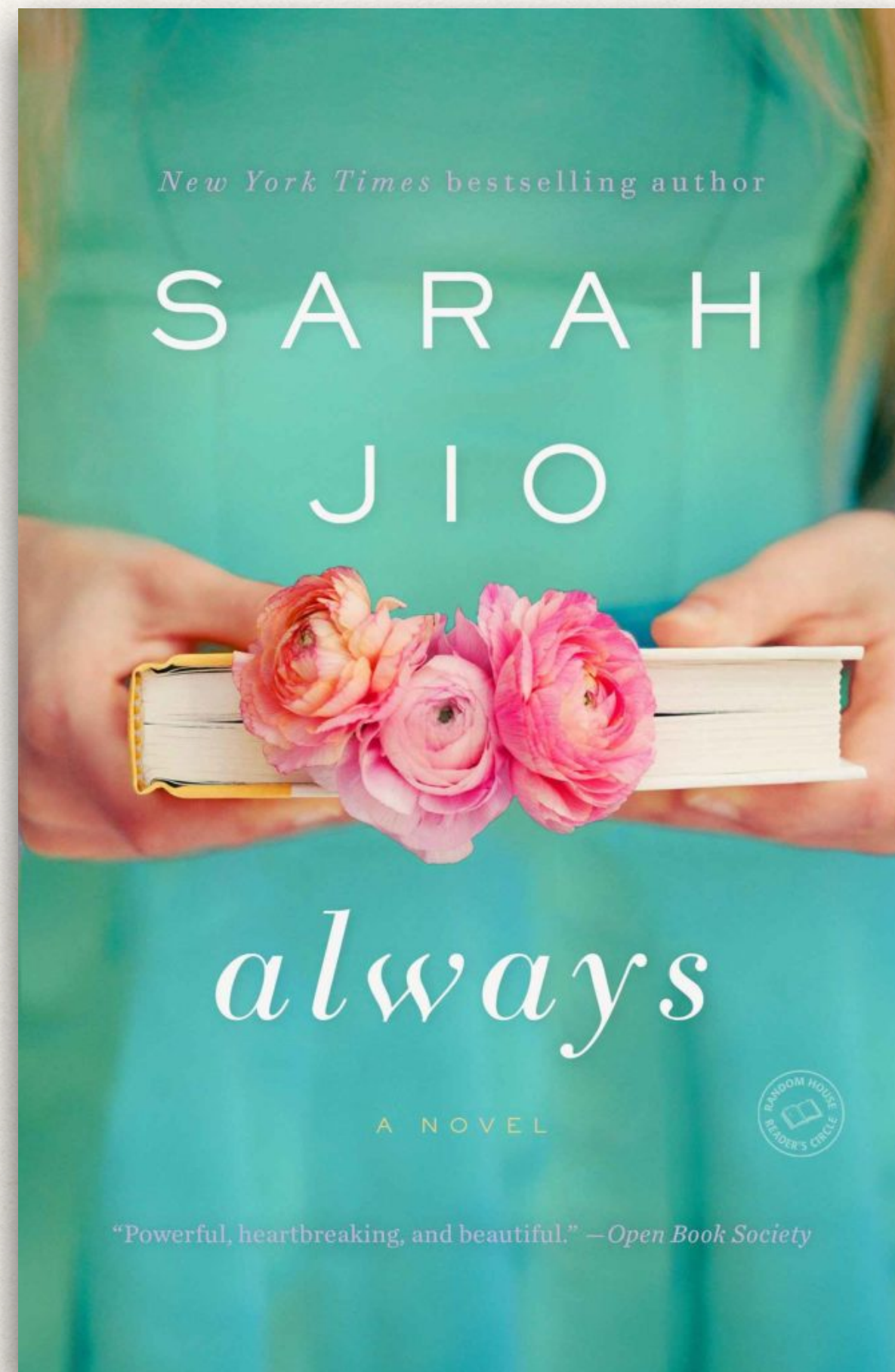


Закр́тый клуб

Читаем вместе по-английски



'Always' by Sarah Jio

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Lesson 13

Always

Chapter 9, Part 3

Chapter 10, Part 1

Chapter 9, Part 3



Always

Chapter 9

- I look out to the restaurant beyond her; half the dining room is **empty**. “Surely you can **get us in,**” I say.
- She looks at me, then Cade. “Well, I—I,” she **stammers**.
- **Just then** a woman **approaches**. Blond, with **dark-rimmed glasses**. I **recognize** Dawn, the manager, immediately. **Over the years,** she’s become a **reliable source** on the downtown restaurant business, and I’ve **quoted** her in **numerous** articles.

Always

Chapter 9

- “Kailey,” she **greet**s me warmly, stopping beside the hostess. “I read your piece on Pioneer Square. The restaurant **value**s the potential business that new development may bring, but **on a personal level I feel for** the people who might **be displaced**. Your writing always makes me **realize** that **there are two sides to every issue**, especially the hard ones.”
- “Thank you,” I say, forcing a smile. It’s a tough moment to accept a compliment, **given** all that Cade has lost.

Always

Chapter 9

- “Are you doing an interview?” she asks, **assuming** that Cade is a subject of my **ongoing** series.
- “No reporting today. Just lunch,” I say, **turning to** Cade.
“Just...the two of us.”
- Dawn looks at Cade, then at me. For a moment I’m not sure how she **will react**.

Always

Chapter 9

- **"It would mean the world to me** if you could find us a table," I tell her. "Maybe something in the bar, **tucked away?"**
- Dawn is a **consummate professional**. She smiles, **squares her shoulders**, and turns to the hostess. "Jennifer," she says, **"see** Kailey and her guest **to** table nineteen."
- "Thank you so much."

Always

Chapter 9

- Jennifer **selects** two menus and begins to walk ahead. Cade and I **follow**. "Will you be comfortable here?" she asks, stopping at a table **in the far corner of** the bar. There are no other **diners** in the area.
- "It's perfect," I say, smiling.

Always

Chapter 9

- I sit down, and Cade **continues to** stand. "It's okay," I say, **pointing to** the chair beside him. "You can sit there."
- He stares at the chair as if it's a **foreign object** from a **strange land**. For a moment, I'm convinced he'll **bolt**, but then he **drops his bag to the ground** and **sits at the table** with me.

Always

Chapter 9

- The waiter arrives next. If he's **put off by Cade's presence**, he doesn't show it. Dawn **has** probably **briefed** him; I'm **relieved**.
- "Hello," I **say to** him. "What's your name?"
- "Kyle," he says.

Always

Chapter 9

- “Hello, Kyle. I’m Kailey, and this is”—I pause, feeling an **unexplained surge of emotion**—“Cade.” It’s important to me that this waiter knows his name. And **I wish he could know** so much more, that he once **was a force** in the **music industry**, that I once...

Always

Chapter 9

- “Nice to meet you, Cade,” Kyle says, **pretending quite well** the situation **is like** any other **run-of-the-mill** restaurant interaction.
- Cade **stares ahead.**
- “I think I’ll just order for us both **if that’s okay,**” I say nervously.
- Kyle **nods agreeably. “Perfect.”**

Always

Chapter 9

- We'll have the **chicken satay**, the **eggplant**, and **green beans**. The **prawns** and **pot stickers**. An order of the **sea bass** and, oh, the **pad Thai**."
- "I'll get that right in," Kyle says, **spinning on his heels**.
- Cade keeps his hands **in his lap**, where **his gaze is fixed**.

Always

Chapter 9

- I don't know **what is going on** in his head. I don't know what he must feel. But my heart is beating so fast, I worry that it might **burst**.
- "Cade, you and I **had our first date** here," I say, **letting out** a nervous laugh. "You probably don't remember. It was **a long time ago.**" I turn and point across the room. "We sat **over there.**" I smile.

Always

Chapter 9

- I'm not sure if he's even listening. And I feel as if I'm talking to myself in the mirror. "I was nervous about my dress," I continue. "But you said I **looked like** Stevie Nicks. Remember?"

Always

Chapter 9

- His gaze doesn't leave his lap.
- "Well," I say. "That comment made me feel **pretty cool.**" I **sigh.** "You always knew what to say." I **keep my eyes on** him, **willing him to look at** me. "You always **made me feel special, wanted.**"

Always

Chapter 9

- The waiter **fills** our water glasses, and I **take a sip**. Cade **guzzles** his, and Kyle instantly returns to fill it **a second time**.
- "You **saved my life,**" I continue, once we're **alone** again. "Do you remember?" I don't **wait for him to respond**. "I almost **fell down a cliff.**"

Always

Chapter 9

- Cade listens, but I'm not sure he understands.
- When Kyle **brings out** our food, Cade surveys the table with big eyes.
- **"Go ahead,"** I say. **"Dig in."**
- He **cautiously** reaches for a pot sticker, and I push the plate toward him. **"Have as much as you want. All of it if you'd like."**

Always

Chapter 9

- He **shoves** the pot sticker into his mouth, and then another. With no regard to **napkins** or **silverware**, he reaches for a prawn and then **a slice of sautéed eggplant**. He **crams a handful of** green beans into his mouth next, then **moves on to** the pad Thai after **I've spooned** some of it onto my plate. I **hand** him a fork, and he takes it.

Always

Chapter 9

- He's **ravenous** and focused, as if, without a moment's notice, the waiter will return and **whisk** all of this **luscious** food **away** and **shoo** him out the door **in the process**.
- "I'm glad you're enjoying the food," I say as he **polishes off** the prawns.

Always

Chapter 9

- “When you left,” I say, “I didn’t know why. I didn’t know whether you **needed a break from** me, or if you needed to **take time away from life**, from the company. I waited, Cade. I waited so long.” I **wipe away a tear**, and when I notice a bit of food in his beard, I inch my chair closer to him and **dab** my napkin to his face and beard. He **doesn’t flinch**. I don’t even know if he’s listening.

Always

Chapter 9

- I sigh. "But you never called. You never **wrote me**, not even once. You just...**disappeared.**" I nod to myself. "And, just when I'm **about to get married**, I find you again. On the streets. And you don't know me. You don't even know me." **A lump is forming** in my throat, and I **swallow hard**. "But I know you. I could never forget you." I **extend** my hand across the table to him. "And I want to help you, **if you'll let me.**"

Always

Chapter 9

- He is **unfazed**, and his eyes remain **cemented** to his lap.
Tearfully I pull my hand back.
- The waiter returns to the table. "I'm glad to see that you two **have enjoyed** things."

Always

Chapter 9

- “Yes, thank you,” I say, **offering my credit card**. He returns a moment later, and I **sign the receipt**.
- **Following my lead**, Cade **rises to his feet** and lifts his bag from the floor. As we **weave** through the restaurant on our way out, a few **diners** at nearby tables **gawk** and whisper, but Cade **registers no response**.

Always

Chapter 9

- I realize that at this moment, there could be a half dozen of Ryan's or my colleagues and friends **looking on**. But I don't care. **All that matters to me** is this moment. And all I can think is: **What next?** When we get out to the street, **then what?** Do I **let him slip away?** What if I never find him again?

Always

Chapter 9

- It's a warm day for November, and the **spicy food** has made my cheeks red, so I **peel off** my sweater and tuck it into my bag. The **brisk air** feels refreshing on my **bare shoulders**.
- I look Cade straight in the eye a final time. "Well," I say, my voice **faltering** again. "Thank you for **letting me take you to lunch**. I...I mean, if you...if you ever..." My voice **trails off**. He doesn't know me. He doesn't want my help. I **take a deep breath**. "I **wish you the best**," I say. "I always will."

Always

Chapter 9

- As I turn to leave, I feel a light hand on my shoulder, **gently pulling me back.**
- Cade looks at me **quizzically**, then drops his bag to the sidewalk. As I face him, he touches my shoulder again, at the place where my tattoo **resides**. He **delicately** touches it, **tracing the lines** and **swirls** with his finger, then rubbing it lightly as if it might **come off.**

Always

Chapter 9

- A moment later, he steps back and **unfastens** the last remaining button on his jacket and lets the right sleeve slide off, **revealing** a **dirt-stained, torn** T-shirt and a **bony** shoulder beneath. And then I see it, his tattoo, just like mine. Still just as vivid and beautiful as on the night we wandered into that **tattoo shop** in Belltown and, **on a whim**, like the wide-eyed hopeless romantics that we were, got **matching tattoos. Just like that.**

Always

Chapter 9

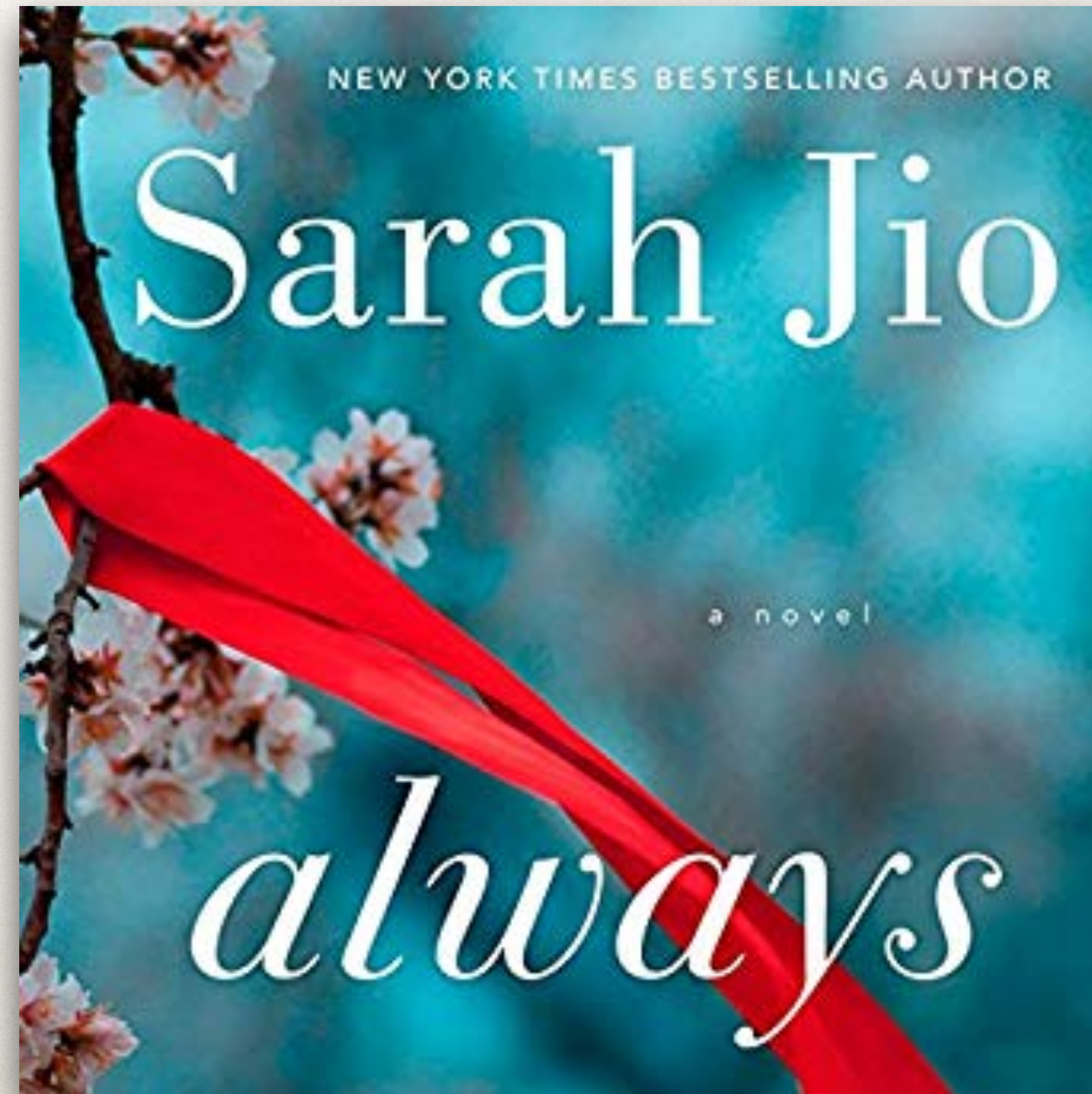
- A decade later, we stand on this Seattle sidewalk, our tattoos **the only evidence** of that old life. But it is evidence, and my heart **flips and flutters** when I see a **flicker of recollection** in Cade's eyes. He's in there somewhere.

Always

Chapter 9

- His eyes **lock** on mine. "Kailey," he **mutters**, his voice **soft** and **timid** but familiar. So familiar. "Kailey," he says again, as if he's learning how to form the word with his mouth.
- "You remember," I **cry**. A **single tear trickles down my cheek**.
- I close my eyes **tightly**, then open them again, looking up at the sky. Just above the buildings, painted across the sky in the **faintest swath of colors**, is a rainbow.

Chapter 10, Part 1



Always

Chapter 10

- AUGUST 3, 1996
- **“Let’s go up to the deck,”** Cade says as the ferry slowly **releases itself from the dock** and **forges out** into Elliott Bay.
- I scrunch my nose. “Won’t it be a little cold up there?”
- “Nah,” he says confidently, **slipping off** his black **denim jacket** and **tucking** it over my shoulders.

Always

Chapter 10

- The **crossing** to Bainbridge is only thirty minutes, and fifteen minutes in I can see the island in the distance.
- He offers me his hand, and together we walk up the narrow stairway that leads to the **upper deck**.
- **We've been dating about two and a half** months now, and I still **feel butterflies flutter** inside when we touch.

Always

Chapter 10

- On the top deck, he reaches for the camera **dangling** by a **strap** from his shoulder. "Wow, the light is beautiful out here. There's just enough **cloud cover.**" He points to the **railing** ahead. "Stand over there. **Let me take a picture of you.**"

Always

Chapter 10

- "I don't know," I say **shyly**. "**I've never liked having my picture taken.**"
- "**Humor me,**" he says, pointing ahead. "Just one photo."
- "Okay," I finally say, walking ahead. I lean back, letting my arms **drape** across the railing on either side of me.

Always

Chapter 10

- **What I don't admit to Cade is** that cameras have always made me **feel anxious**. Behind **the lens**, someone is looking at you, but you can't see them. It's **one-sided** and **nerve-racking**. And I feel **vulnerable** as Cade's camera **flashes** again and again.

Always

Chapter 10

- “Try to relax,” he says, **lowering** the camera and walking toward me.
- **“I’ll do my best,”** I say, **looking away.** My cheeks **feel stiff,** my mouth **awkward.**
- He lifts the camera back to his eye. “If only you could see what I see.”

Always

Chapter 10

- The wind is cold and it's **whipping** my hair across my face, **this way and that**. Cade takes one more photo, then walks to me, **wrapping his arms**, warm and strong, around my waist. And when **our mouths find each other**, he pulls me even closer. For a moment, a magical moment, **we're so entwined** in this **embrace** that I'm not sure where he begins and I end.

• —

Always

Chapter 10

- The ferry **sounds its horn** as we arrive on the island. We walk with **a herd of** other passengers **off the ramp** and through a long corridor that leads to the terminal. The little town of Winslow is just ahead, and we **walk hand in hand** along the sidewalk that leads to Main Street.
- "Hey," Cade says, pointing ahead. **"Let's rent** a motorcycle and see the island **in style."**

Always

Chapter 10

- On the next block, I see the **rental** company, with a lot of motorcycles and scooters parked in front. "Really? **Do you know how to ride?**"
- He grins. "Do I know how to ride?"
- I **flash** him a **playful smirk**.

Always

Chapter 10

- “I guess I’m **going to have to prove it to you,** then,” he says, still smiling as we **weave through** the rows of bikes. Cade walks into the rental office and comes back with the key to a shiny black motorcycle **trimmed in chrome.** He hands me a **helmet** and then **puts one on** himself.

Always

Chapter 10

- "Ready?" he says, **straddling** the bike.
- "I guess," I say nervously.
- He hands me his camera. "**Mind stuffing this in your purse?**"
- "Sure," I say, fitting it inside my bag.
- Cade **pats the seat** behind him, encouraging me to **get on.**
"Don't be afraid, baby."

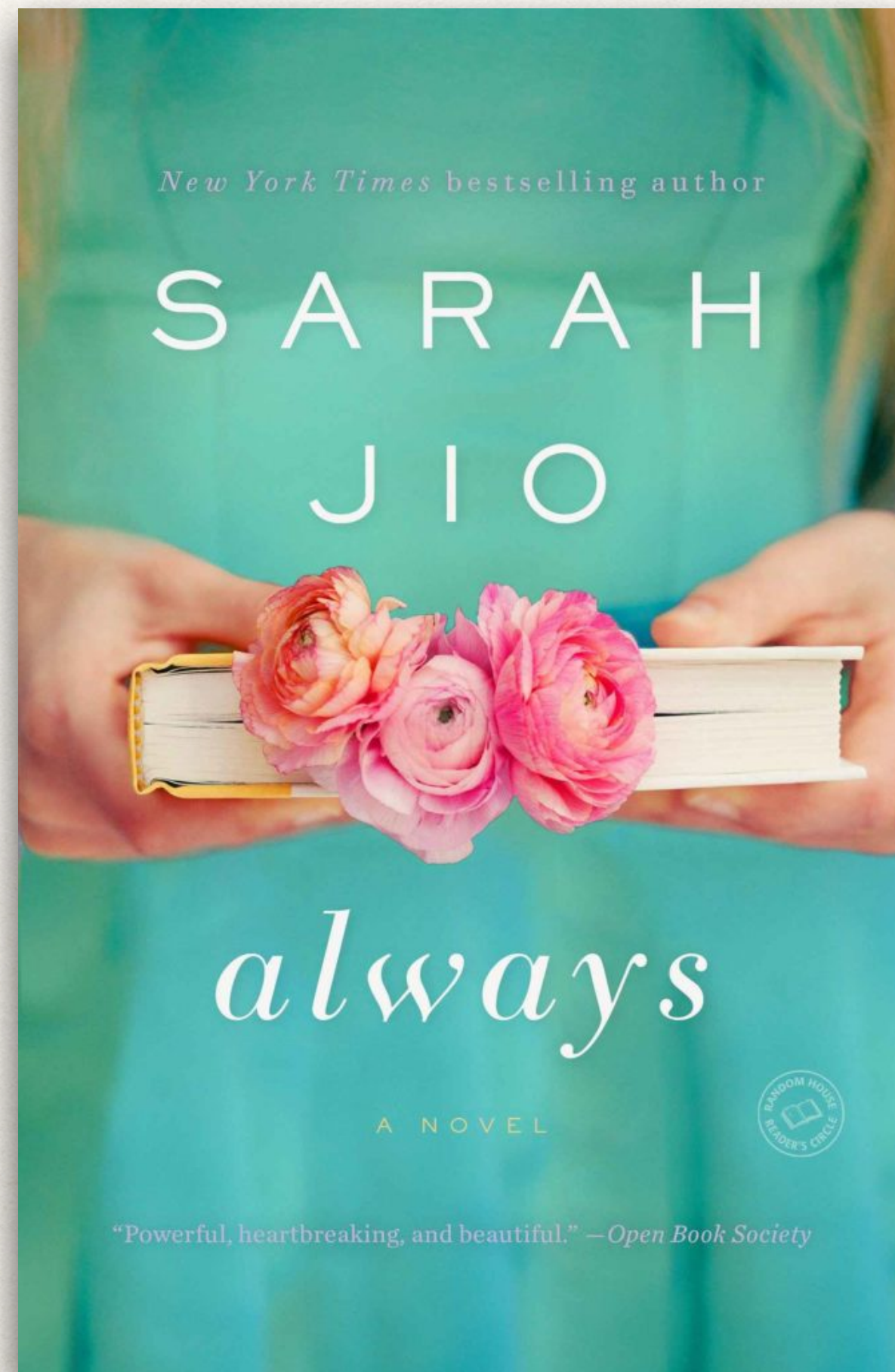
Always

Chapter 10

- I **swallow hard**. "I've never ridden a motorcycle before. **What if I fall off?**"
- "You won't," he says, handing me his jacket, which I immediately **put on**. "I promise. **Just hold on to me.**"
- "Okay," I say, climbing onto the bike and wrapping my arms around his waist as he **guns the engine**.

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