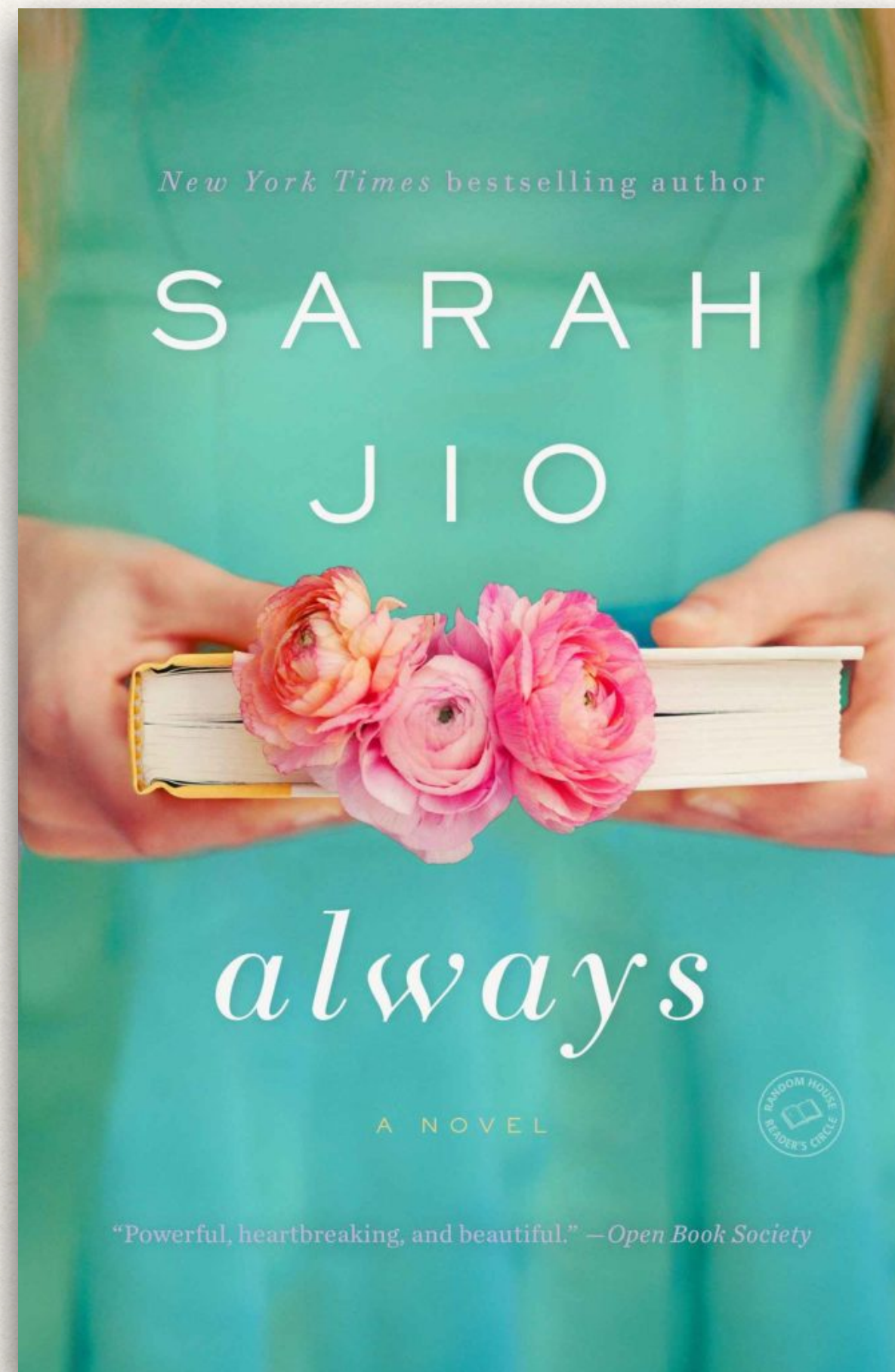


Закрытый клуб

Читаем вместе по-английски



'Always'
by
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Lesson 23

Always

Chapter 17, Part 2

Chapter 18

Chapter 19, Part 1

Chapter 17



Always

Chapter 17

- I **pour** coffee from the French press and **watch him take the first sip** from his **mug**, closing his eyes as he takes another, as if he's trying to remember coffee, me, life.
- "I thought I'd **make us an omelet**," I say, opening the fridge. I pull out **a carton of eggs**, butter, some spinach, **shredded cheese**, and a few green onions that look as if they've seen better days.

Always

Chapter 17

- I pour myself a second cup of coffee, then **chop** the spinach and **trim off** the **wilted ends** of the onions. Butter **sizzles** in the pan as I **whisk** the eggs together in a white **ceramic bowl**. Ryan loves my omelets, and I make them for him often. As I pour the eggs into the pan, watching the edges **firm** and the middle **bubble slightly**, I **feel overcome with guilt**.

Always

Chapter 17

- When Ryan comes home, Cade will hopefully soon be settled in the brain injury program at Harborview, and I'll tell Ryan everything. He'll understand, I **reassure myself**. Ryan always understands.

Always

Chapter 17

- I **divide** the giant omelet **into** two, then **dish up a serving** for each of us. Cade's hand shakes a little as he holds the fork, and a few bites fall to the plate before they reach his mouth, but he eats, and when he finishes his plate I offer him the rest of mine, which he happily takes.

Always

Chapter 17

- I think of all the things I have to do: plan the wedding, get Cade set for the brain injury program, begin the **monumental task of finding out what happened to him, including figuring out** what James knows or doesn't know. And write about it all. But I don't want to do any of it. I just want to be right here, in this moment.
- —

Always

Chapter 17

- After breakfast, I quietly **clean up the kitchen** while Cade sits on the couch with Eddie. By eleven he's **dozed off**, and I **suspect** that he's years behind on his rest.
- I **slip out to the porch** to call Tracy, **letting him sleep as long as** he needs to. "Hi," I say **quietly**.
- I hear the hospital in the background. "Why are you whispering?" she asks.

Always

Chapter 17

- "Cade is here. He's sleeping."
- "Cade's at your house?"
- "Yeah," I say. "I brought him back here last night. I didn't know what else to do."
- **"Is Ryan cool with this?"**
- "He's not here," I say. **"He's on a business trip** to Portland this week."

Always

Chapter 17

- "Oh, Kailey," Tracy says. **"And so,** what, he's just sleeping in your **guest bedroom?"**
- "Well now, yeah, but last night he actually slept in my bed. I mean, not with me. He **just sort of fell asleep** there." I swallow hard. "I **gave him a bath, got him cleaned up.** He's wearing Ryan's clothes."
- "Wow," Tracy says, **taking it all in.**

Always

Chapter 17

- "I know," I say nervously.
- "He's **going to start** that program at Harborview soon, right?"
- "Yeah," I say, pausing for a moment. "But I was thinking, maybe it would be better just to **have him stay** here. I'm **the only one** who really knows him. He could live here, in the guest bedroom, until he's **well enough to be on his own.**"

Always

Chapter 17

- “But, Kailey, you’re not a **medical expert**. Cade needs **rigorous therapy** and rehabilitation. I mean, **don’t get me wrong**, I’m sure you **would take excellent care of him**; it’s just that he needs more than that.” She’s quiet for a moment. “You and I both know that Ryan’s **never going to be comfortable with the idea of you caring for Cade for an extended period of time.**”

Always

Chapter 17

- I shake my head. "Ryan would understand."
- "Really?" Tracy **counters**. "Here's a man you once loved **with all your heart**, and he **resurfaces**, and you **take it upon yourself to be** his personal **nurse** and **caregiver**."
- "He'd do it for someone in his past, too," I say.

Always

Chapter 17

- “I’m not so sure he would, or that anyone would. I think that for you, this is different. I know you. You lost this man once and your heart **can’t handle losing him again**. I **get** that. But, Kailey, **playing house with** Cade **isn’t going to save** him. If you **care about** him, you’ll make sure he starts the program at Harborview. You’ll **let him go** so that he can **get better**.”

Always

Chapter 17

- I sigh. "You're right."
- "You know I am." She's interrupted by a **work matter**, then returns to the phone. "**I've gotta go,**" she continues. "But, Kailey, I think there is one huge way that you can help Cade."
- "What do you mean?"

Always

Chapter 17

- **"Find out what happened to him,"** she says. **"Ever since** you told me about the **John Doe** report **matching his description** from 1998, I've just had the **creepiest feeling."**
- "Me too," I say.

Always

Chapter 17

- “Cade **had a full life** and a **thriving business** when he left, or when we thought he left,” she says. “I think someone may have wanted a **cut** of that, maybe someone who **had something to do with his state** today.”

Always

Chapter 17

- I nod. "Yeah," I say, **lowering my voice** again when I see Cade through the window **stirring** on the couch. **"I think so,** too. Something's not right."
- **"Help him make it right,"** Tracy says **before hanging up.**
- —

Always

Chapter 17

- The rest of Tuesday passes, and by Wednesday morning, I'm **struck with** how time can **barrel along** when you're not doing much of anything. In my case, sitting on the porch with Cade, **sharing quiet meals** at the table, telling him stories that I'm not sure he remembers or even understands.

Always

Chapter 17

- But **for every split second** he looks at me as if the light **has blinked on**, it warms me in a way I cannot describe. This happens mostly when I play him music, old records we **used to love**. In those moments, I **see his spirit lift**. I see the old **spark** in his eyes.
- When Ryan calls that evening, I step onto the back porch to answer the phone.

Always

Chapter 17

- "Hi," he says.
- "Hi," I reply.
- "I miss your voice. I miss you so much."
- "I miss you, too," I say, **tugging at** a **stray** piece of **yarn** on the sleeve of my sweater.
- **"How's your week been?"**

Always

Chapter 17

- "Ah, good," I say.
- "I **tried calling** you at the office, but you **haven't been answering.**"
- "Sorry," I say. **"It's been nuts."**

Always

Chapter 17

- "I know it has, honey," he says. "Listen, can I just say..." He pauses, "You've **just been so distant**. I know you **have something on your mind**, something you're not telling me or aren't ready to tell me, but whatever it is, please, **I hope it's not going to come** between us. Kailey, I can't bear to lose you."
- My eyes **well up with tears**, for Ryan, for me, for my past and my future.

Always

Chapter 17

- "You're not losing me," I promise him. Inside the house, I hear the sound of glass **shattering**. "But, Ryan, I'm sorry. I **have to go**. I'll call you later, okay?"
- Cade stands in the living room staring at his feet nervously. The Chihuly piece, a **ridiculously** expensive **gnarled** blend of multicolored **blown glass** that Ryan's parents gave us for an **engagement present**, lies in pieces on the floor.

Always

Chapter 17

- "It's okay," I say, rushing to his side.
- He **kneels** and picks up **a shard of glass** and then another, pushing them together in an **impossible attempt** to fix it. A moment later, I **notice blood trickling down** his hand and I gasp.
- "You're hurt," I say. "Just leave it. **I'll clean it up** later."

Always

Chapter 17

- I **jump to my feet** and return with a **damp cloth** and a **bandage**. "Here," I say, taking his hand in mine to **tend to his wound**. He **doesn't let go** when I'm **finished**. **Instead** he squeezes my hand in his.
- "Thank you," he says in the voice I **knew so well**. A voice that **made me laugh and cry**. A voice that told a thousand stories and **uttered** even more "I love you"s.

Chapter 18



Always

Chapter 18

- OCTOBER 17, 1997
- I **glance at** the clock on the wall in my apartment: six thirty-five. Cade's **an hour late**.
- "You look **agitated,**" Tracy says, **looking up from** the couch, where she's watching a **rerun** of Friends.
- I open my mouth to speak, but Tracy continues. "Did you read your horoscope today?"

Always

Chapter 18

- I shake my head.
- She nods. "Mercury's **in retrograde**. It's **throwing everything off**, but **particularly** for Aquariuses." She frowns. "I **hate to say** this, and I know how much you and Cade love each other, but things are looking a little **rocky** in the **relationship department**."

Always

Chapter 18

- “Well,” I say with a sigh, “you know I normally **don’t buy that stuff**, but”—I glance at the clock again—“I **have to be honest**: I’m starting to.”
- **“What’s going on?”** she asks.
- “Cade’s late again,” I say. “He **was supposed to be** here at five-thirty.” I **stare at** the dinner I’ve made—**sea bass** and **steamed asparagus**, which is now cold—and sigh.

Always

Chapter 18

- "Did he call?"
- "No," I say, **slumping** on the couch beside her. **Jennifer Aniston's hair looks** perfect on the screen as she sips coffee from an **oversize mug**. I run my hands through my hair and **consider** a new haircut, maybe changing the color. Maybe changing everything.

Always

Chapter 18

- Tracy nods **knowingly**.
- "Something's wrong," I say.
- **"How so?"**
- I shake my head. "It's Cade. He's...changed."
- "Changed?"

Always

Chapter 18

- I sigh. "Cade is the most **brilliant** person in any room, the funniest, the most **engaging**. I knew it when I met him, and ever since that day I've **been swept up** in his whole being. When his sun shines on you, you just...feel it. But when it shines elsewhere, it's cold."

Always

Chapter 18

- Tracy **turns off** the TV. "It's only a **phase**, a **bump in the road**," she says. "Every relationship has them. You two **are meant to be together**. I know it. You know it, too."
- I nod.
- "And besides," she continues, "your horoscope says that you can **work through this rough patch** and **come out** stronger."

Always

Chapter 18

- I force a smile, then turn to the door. It's Cade, looking **sheepish** in the doorway. "Hi," he says, running his hand through his hair. "I'm so sorry I'm late." He walks toward me and **places a quick peck on my lips. I smell alcohol on his breath and turn away from** him.

Always

Chapter 18

- “I’ll **just head out for a bit** and...**let you two talk,**” Tracy says, standing up and reaching for her sweater before going out the door.
- “Baby,” Cade says, taking my hand. “My meeting **ran late,** and then Steve from Everland—you know that band we just signed —**stopped into** the office, so I **took him out for a drink,** and I —”
- “Cade,” I say, “it’s fine.”

Always

Chapter 18

- "But it's not," he says tenderly. **"I can tell."**
- I sigh, looking out over the city. The **maple tree** with its **brilliant orange** leaves practically **looks on fire** on the street below. My heart actually feels on fire. I turn to face the man I love. "You **seem off** lately," I say. "You've **been late to everything** we've planned to do, and it just seems, well, that maybe you're **losing interest in me**...losing interest in us."

Always

Chapter 18

- "Oh, Kailey," he says, his eyes narrowing, **concern washing over** his face. "That's so far from the truth."
- "Then how can you explain it?"
- "I'm **just overwhelmed**, I guess."
- "With work?"
- He **furrows** his brow. "Yes. And other things."
- "**Like what?**"

Always

Chapter 18

- He looks away. "Nothing to worry about."
- "Cade, tell me," I say.
- "Listen," he says, **raising his voice** a **decibel**. "Trust me when I tell you not to worry." He stands up and walks to the window. "I don't want to **involve you in** something that..." He pauses, then turns back to me. "Oh, baby, I'm so sorry. My tone, it **sounds terrible**. Forgive me."

Always

Chapter 18

- I nod, **feeling tears well up.**
- Cade kneels beside me. "I promise," he says, "just give me a little more time and things will be better."
- He reaches for my hand, and I **let him take it.**

Always

Chapter 18

- “Whatever you’re going through,” I say, “I’m here. Just please **don’t shut me out.**”
- “How could I ever do that?” he asks.
- But I fear he already has.

Chapter 19



Always

Chapter 19

- NOVEMBER 26, 2008
- Cade sits quietly with Eddie on the couch. Earlier, I called Dr. Branson and learned that he can **move into** his new apartment in the brain injury program as soon as **the day after tomorrow**. And while it's good news, I **hate the idea of seeing him go**, and the **unsettling** feeling of knowing that without my protection he could just get up and leave and disappear again for a day, a year, or maybe even forever.

Always

Chapter 19

- I sit beside him and notice how he continually **brushes his long hair from his eyes.** I remember the **electric clipper** upstairs in the **bathroom cabinet.** Ryan **occasionally** uses it to **trim** his **sideburns.** I run upstairs to find it, along with a pair of **haircutting scissors.**

Always

Chapter 19

- **"Let's give you a haircut,"** I say to Cade, smiling.
- He gives me a confused look.
- "I can do it," I say, **pulling out** a chair from the table. "In the kitchen."

Always

Chapter 19

- He doesn't move from the couch, so I walk to him and take his hand. "I'll be **gentle**, I promise."
- **Cautiously** he follows me to the kitchen and sits in the chair placed on the **tile floor**. I drape a towel around his shoulders and **plug in the clippers, remembering the way Cade's hair used to be**. Short up the sides and a little longer on top. He **flinches** a little when I **run a comb through** it.

Always

Chapter 19

- “It’s okay,” I whisper, **first cutting off some of the length** before shaving up the sides. His **brown hair falls** to the floor in **clumps**. He sits **still, hands in his lap**, as I **snip** and **trim** and **comb** his hair into **submission**. I move to his beard next. **“Let’s just get this trimmed up a bit.”**

Always

Chapter 19

- He **doesn't protest** as I run the clippers over his face, freeing inches of **coarse facial** hair. I **brush off** the hairs **from the back of his neck** and **set the towel aside**, then step back and have a look. He stands and runs his hands through his hair, then touches his face. **The transformation brings me to tears**, and when he **catches his reflection** in the mirror on the wall he looks **deeply moved**, as if he's seen a **ghost**. A ghost from his past.

Always

Chapter 19

- "You look...great," I say, **equally** if not more **moved**. "Just as I remember you."
- He continues to stare at his reflection as I **sweep up** the hair on the floor and **tuck** the **haircutting supplies** back in the case. There's a **stack** of dishes in the **sink**, but I **don't feel like dealing with them** right now. Instead I walk to the **record player**, the one that **made Ryan affectionately roll his eyes**.

Always

Chapter 19

- A **carryover** from my days with Cade, who **swore** that everything sounded better on vinyl. I rarely use it anymore, but I **can't bear to part with** it. Even if my old records, **precariously** balanced on a bookshelf, **do nothing but collect dust**, their **mere** presence gives me comfort.

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