



## Milk: Fortune Cookie Fortune #12

Lynn Sloan

“Good morning” her mother said, appearing out of nowhere.

Alli jerked, looked at the glass of milk she held, then threw it in her mother’s direction.

Milk everywhere. The blob on the wood cabinet behind her mother’s stunned face elongated into drips and dropped onto the counter.

Okay, Alli shouldn’t have thrown the glass, but why couldn’t she walk into the kitchen and pour herself a simple glass of milk without getting ambushed?

Click. The empty, unbroken glass rocked against a table leg, click knock click, and the padding around Alli’s brain tore away in patches. Last night. Club lights. The bare-chested DJ. Smudgy martini glasses, hers and Crystal’s, circling Gil’s expanding collection of beer bottles. Crystal, her oldest friend. Crystal’s eyes sliding toward Gil, and him leaning toward her, pulling away, all innocent, when Alli looked at them.

Plink. The faucet. She turned away from her mother. Sunlight sliced through the window above the sink stacked with dishes she was supposed to have washed before she went out with Crystal, pretending she wasn’t going to meet Gil. “I don’t want you seeing that creep Gil anymore,” her mother had said.

A faint whistle, a breath eased out, almost silent, her mother’s. Alli needed to breathe too. Her head whined. Raw ache between her legs. Bruises seeping from the pulpy mess inside. She closed her eyes and saw a long hall. Yellow EXIT sign. Gravel under foot. Fumbling at the car door. Gil on top, then Crystal, beside, inside, both, all three, edges blurred, the hurt everywhere.

She wanted to bash her head into the dirty dishes. She wanted to grab the skillet on the stove and hurl it through the window. She wanted to rip the cabinet doors off their hinges. She wanted to spin around and around until she thinned into streaks and spun off into nowhere.

Drip. Click. Plink. The room quivered.

She wanted to curl into her mother and cry. “I’m sorry,” she whispered.

“Fuck you,” her mother said.

**You are often the life of the party.**

Lucky #12, 16, 35, 50, 11  
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