

# I KNOW WHAT YOU'RE THINKING

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CHAPTER 1

PHILL FEATHERSTONE

OPITUS BOOKS



*Beth and Cameron share a unique ability: each can see into the other's mind. When Cameron mysteriously disappears can Beth use her gift to find him?*



BETH WAS LYING on her back, with Cameron beside her. She adjusted her blindfold. Cameron felt claustrophobic when he wore a blindfold so he didn't have one, but Beth found it helped. They had agreed that it was better if they didn't touch, so they'd left a space between them. It wasn't a very big space but it was there.

'Ready?' Cameron said.

'Yes,' said Beth, in a voice not much louder than a whisper.

'Okay. We've not done it before, at least not like this, so be prepared for it not to work.'

'It will work, I know it will. There's no point trying if we're not positive.'

'If you say so. Okay, let's go.'

Cameron closed his eyes and took a deep breath. Beth started to go through her relaxation procedure. She began at her head and went down her body tightening and then unlocking every muscle group, stage by stage, the way she'd been taught to do in drama classes. Then she moved on to her mind, trying to empty her head of any thoughts, to shut out sounds – the bird outside her bedroom window, the gentle rhythm of Cameron's breathing – and to reduce to nothing the feel of the mattress beneath her body and the pillow under her head.

She imagined a room with no light and no features; a cavernous dark space lined with black velvet. She let herself sink into the gloom. Then she saw a pinpoint of light directly in front of her, as if someone had made a tiny hole in the fabric of the wall to create a window onto a sunny alternative world. She focussed on the light and slowly it grew into a blob. She knew that the light was important. She must remain completely still and do nothing to disturb it. At the same time she was aware of her own body and Cameron's somewhere below her, lying side by side on her bed.

The blob of light began to stretch upwards and downwards, lengthening into a line. The line grew, widening at the top. It took on a bluish colour. It began to sparkle, as if polished. It developed an edge and a point that glistened.

Suddenly she knew what it was. She sat up quickly and snatched off her blindfold. The afternoon sun streaming through her window was dazzling.

‘Jesus,’ said Cameron, opening his eyes and jerking upright. ‘What’s up? Are you all right?’

‘Yes.’ She couldn’t hold back her excitement. ‘I know what it is, what you were thinking of. I know.’

‘What was it then?’

‘It was an icicle. You were imagining an icicle.’ Cameron didn’t reply. ‘Weren’t you?’

‘No,’ he said. ‘It wasn’t that.’ She looked disappointed. ‘I’m sorry,’ he said, ‘I really I am.’

Beth was deflated. The picture in her head had been so clear. ‘What was it, then?’

‘I was thinking of a dagger.’

For a second Beth was thrown. Then she saw the connection. ‘But I was nearly right. Don’t you see? An icicle is long and thin and it has a sharp point. It’s like a dagger.’

‘Yeah, I suppose it is.’ Cameron didn’t sound convinced.

‘Of course it is.’ She giggled excitedly. ‘This is fantastic. The first experiment and we were so close. Let’s try again. My turn to send.’

‘Okay.’

They both lay back again and Beth replaced her blindfold. She went through the relaxation routine but this time instead of visualising a black room she reached back into her memory for something that would have meaning for both of them. It wasn’t an object. She recreated a walk

in the snow she and Cameron had enjoyed last winter. She remembered a long, straight lane between snowy fields. The lane was lined with fir trees, and as they'd passed them melting snow had sluttered from the branches. She remembered what she and Cameron had been wearing. She heard the crisp crunch beneath their boots. She concentrated as hard as she could, holding her breath, not moving, until she could keep it up no longer. She took off the blindfold and rolled onto her side.

'Anything?' she said.

'Not really. I mean I kept trying. I kept thinking what it might be that you'd want to send me, but there were so many things and nothing came clear.'

Beth was disappointed. 'I don't think you should be trying to think of anything,' she said. 'The idea is that you empty your head and make your mind a blank. If you're expecting a particular image it will push what I'm actually trying to send you out of the way.'

'Mm.' Cameron was doubtful.

'Look,' said Beth, sitting up again. 'I know you're not sure that this works but let's give it another go. When I was the receiver, what you were thinking of got through to me, didn't it.'

'Sort of,' said Cameron.

'It did. When I remember what I saw, it may have been a dagger. It's just that I mistook what it was. One more time, okay? Send me something.'

They lay down again, and Beth once more put on her blindfold. This time Cameron took hold of her hand.

Beth tried to clear her head but this time it was harder. She couldn't shift the image of the lane in the snow that she'd been attempting to send to Cameron. Every time she tried to recreate the velvet room and the blackness, the frosted trees and the frozen ruts pushed their way in. She sat up and took off her blindfold.

'What's up?' said Cameron.

'It's no good. I can't get out of my head what I was trying to send to you just now.' She slid her legs off the bed. 'I think I need to take a break.'

'What was it that you were trying to send me?'

'You remember when we walked along that lane in the snow, last February, you know, when you told me I was the only girl you'd really loved? Well it was that.'

'Holy shit!'

'What?'

'That's what I was trying just now to send to you.'

Beth was lost. 'You mean you were thinking of the lane?'

'Yes. And the snow, and when we stopped under the trees and a great lump of it came off a branch and just missed us. All that.'

'Why? What made you think of that? Why remember that now?'

Cameron shook his head. 'I don't know. It just came into my head.'

'But that's what I was trying to send to you. Just now. When you were the receiver but said you didn't get it.'

They both looked at each other.

'Oh my God,' said Beth. 'You did get it. It worked again. You knew what I was thinking.'