

Wait Until Dark by Kat Martin

Excerpt

Jonah Wolfe was not what she expected. Not at all.

April's best friend had gone out with him a couple of times so she figured he'd be attractive. She hadn't imagined he would be at least six-foot-two inches of handsome-as-sin, black-haired, lean-muscled male. With his perfectly symmetric features, slashing black eyebrows, and brooding dark eyes, Wolfe was beyond good-looking.

Though in a way she was surprised she'd noticed.

With the election bearing down on them, she had no interest in men, hadn't dated in nearly a year. More importantly, she was consumed by the murder of a man she worked with and terrified of what might happen to her.

She needed help, and Jonah Wolfe appeared to be exactly the kind of help she needed. Murder was a dangerous business. The private investigators who worked for Chase Garrett at The Max were reputed to be the best in Dallas. Wolfe wouldn't be there if he weren't extremely good.

He returned to the conference room with a yellow pad tucked under one arm and two Styrofoam cups filled to the brim with freshly brewed coffee. He set a cup down on the table in front of her, black, as she had requested, and returned to his seat, stretching his long legs out in front of him.

"If we're going to be working together," he said, "let's stick with first names, all right, April?"

"All right."

"Start at the beginning. Give me a quick run through of your day, into the evening as far as you can remember."

She took a fortifying drink of coffee, set the cup down on the oak conference table. "It started off as usual. I got up, got dressed, and went into the mayor's campaign office. I had a meeting scheduled with members of my staff to work on poster designs. Mark is up for re-election in November so we have plenty of work to do."

"I'll need a list of everyone in the office. Separate the ones on your personal staff."

"All right."

"What happened after the meeting?"

"I took the designs down to the printer to get things started."

"And afterward?"

"I went back to the office. We had a working lunch and kept going. We didn't finish till about six p.m."

"So you left around six?"

"Some people left, some of us stayed. It's not unusual for me to work till seven or eight."

"What about Dean? Was he there?"

She nodded. It made her chest feel tight to think those hours were the last David would live. "We both stayed. There were five others besides David and me."

He pulled a pen out of the pocket of his jeans. "I need the names."

She rattled off the names of the two volunteers and three staff members. "We all walked out at the same time. Since it was Friday night, we decided to stop at the Derby and have a beer. It's just a few doors down from the office. If we're going somewhere after work, that's usually the place we go."

"You and Dean went there together?"

"And Susan, Timothy, Collin, Brad, and Peggy. Collin sprang for pizza."

"What happened after that?"

"David drank too much. He's been known to overindulge on occasion. He needed a ride home and I was the only one with a vehicle parked close by. My car was in the lot behind the office so we went out the back door and walked directly there."

"So you and Dean left the bar together. The police will be looking at camera surveillance in the area. They've probably already found that out."

"I told them that. It wasn't a secret." She took a sip of coffee, her hand trembling when she picked up the cup. She took a moment to compose herself. Wolfe didn't rush her, for which she was grateful.

"Okay, so the two of you are out in the parking lot."

"That's right. I remember feeling a little dizzy as I reached my car. I was thinking maybe I shouldn't be driving either. Maybe we just should have shared a cab, but David's condo was only a few blocks away. I knew I hadn't had that much beer, and I'd eaten plenty of pizza, so there was no way I could be drunk."

"Go on."

She touched her forehead, straining to recall more of what had happened. She'd had a headache all morning. The harder she tried to remember, the more her head throbbed.

"I got in my car and David got into the passenger seat. He was really drunk—or at least that's the way he seemed. I remember reaching for my seat belt, but I was beginning to feel sluggish and I had trouble clicking the belt into place."

She looked up at Wolfe. "I don't remember starting the car. In fact, trying to fasten my seatbelt is the last thing I recall before the police burst into David's bedroom this morning."

April stared at Wolfe, trying to gauge his reaction. She didn't like the dark look on his face.