

THE SIGNS WE MISSED by Lena S. May

EXCERPT

Luke was lying on his back, his phone in one hand, a cigarette in the other.

He had missed the ashtray several times in the past hours, resulting in black burns on the sheet beneath him. It didn't matter, and they weren't visible in the dark anyway.

The blood wasn't, either.

He was still fighting to forget the pills and the water on the nightstand.

Today had been the first day in a while he had felt well enough to leave the house. Still lousy, but well enough.

He had decided the lightness in his head and the nausea in his stomach were the outcome of him not eating much lately. Hardly anything, except for dry bread, tea, and an apple.

That led him to the conclusion that not taking his pills was no longer the cause of his miserable condition; at least that was what he had tried to convince himself of on the way to the emergency room.

He should have thought of that earlier.

It was Sunday, the only doctor on duty had looked fatigued and stressed. He'd probably been glad all he had to do for Luke was to write him a prescription.

Warning him to get a new prescription earlier next time and keeping the emergency room free for emergencies, he had let him go in no time.

Luke's hands had been shaking when he tried to open the package at home.

Then, at the very last moment, he had changed his mind and slammed it down on the nightstand, almost angry.