

# The One by Audrey J. Cole

## EXCERPT

Sloane starts to untie her robe as she shuts the closet door behind her. Ethan presses his palm against the wall beside the doorway, fighting the urge to fling open the door and demand to know who she was talking to.

Instead, he turns and sinks onto the end of the bed. She hates him. He can see it in her eyes. And he doesn't blame her after what he did. But the last thing he expected was for her to seek comfort in another man. Maybe he was a fool to not consider this possibility. Some detective I am if I couldn't see this coming.

He flexes his jaw, hearing her humming from inside the closet. She says she's forgiven him. But she hasn't. And she won't. Not until she can understand what it's like to make a stupid mistake. She's achieved so much, and without help from anyone, that she's forgotten what it's like to be human. Driven herself to perfection.

Lately, he's wondered if he'd be better off with someone else. A woman with hobbies instead of an all-encompassing, high-performance profession. One who loves Christmas and children. A woman whose perfectionism doesn't illuminate all his own flaws. But he loves Sloane. Her drive, intellect, and beauty are incomparable to anyone else. Coming so close to losing her has made him realize it more than ever. And he's not ready to give up.

He thinks of what she told the man on the phone. I wish you could be there tonight, too.

A lot of her physician coworkers were likely attending the gala. So, who is this guy? How did they meet?

Ethan looks at the roses lying beside him. They aren't enough. Neither is the hotel he booked tonight. Nothing will ever be enough until Sloane can grasp what it's like to be flawed.