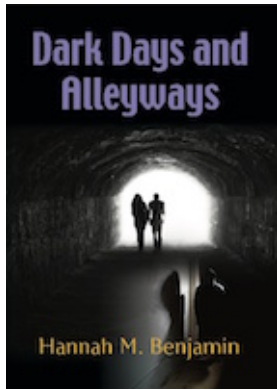


Dark Days and Alleyways



Hannah M. Benjamin



These five teens are just your average teenagers. So, why did it have to happen to them?

One night, the group of friends went out to get some fast food together. This single action brought the teens to find out that their small cozy town isn't all it seems.

They get kidnapped by a group of criminals. The friends get separated; four of them wake up in one room and one alone in another.

Now it's time for them to try to escape from the criminals and get reunited with the one who was separated from the rest. But, they soon find out that everything is not how it seems. With intense twists and turns, and blood spilling around every corner, it's hard to believe anything is how it seems.

But, surprisingly enough they're not completely alone. There is a secret team

who plans on taking the criminals down from the inside and want to help the group of tortured teens escape alive. But, will this only bring more heartache as lives continue to be taken?

They all may make it out alive, but then again, nothing is how it seems to be...

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DARK DAYS
AND
ALLEY WAYS

Hannah Benjamin

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First Edition

CHAPTER ONE

Buzz.....buzz.....BUZZZ-.... “uugggh” I reached for my phone and answered. “yeah, what’s up.” “JAKE. I KNOW YOU'RE STILL IN BED GET UP YOU'RE LATE.” it was Isabel. “what time is it?” I asked her through the phone. “6:45. school starts at 7:20. Sophie and I are at your door right now, if you don't get dressed and get down here in 2 minutes I will break in” she threatened. “okay, I’m coming. “hurry. We must stop at Marshals place to get Marshal and Aaron so they can walk with us. “okay, be right there.” I hung up. I got out of bed and stretched, then went over to my dresser and put on a green flannel that had a gray hood with blue jeans that looked good with my dark blue eyes. I put on my black converse and went downstairs through the kitchen to let Isabel and Sophie in. “hey guys, come in for a sec let me grab my book bag and a little breakfast.” I said as I opened the door. “hurry up.” Isabel said as she walked inside. She wore a green half cut jacket with a black top underneath, black leggings and blue converse. “hey.” Sophie said with a smile on her face as she followed Isabel inside. She wore a light blue dress with lace at the sleeves, collar, and bottom of the dress, and a

little lace bow was at the collar. Her hair was tied back as usual, with blue flats to match. She sat down at the table and put her hands behind her head and leaned back. Isabel went through my cupboards as I grabbed a muffin for breakfast. “don't eat all my food, Is.” I said as I closed the cupboard door and grabbed my book bag. “ready?” I asked. “finally.” Sophie said as she got up, “let's get going already” and with that, she walked out the door, me and Isabel right behind her.

Marshals house wasn't that far away. The cool thing was, it was his house, he owned it. Well, he's renting it. It's small, so the rent isn't that huge, and he has a job and everything to pay for it, plus his aunt helps him out with bill payments. He has his own place now because his parents kicked him out when he came out of the closet to them. They had this nasty fight, and now he's on his own. Good thing he has a cool aunt, or else he's still be living in my basement. I live with my mom, well, technically I live alone because she's literally never home and my dad walked out on us when I was 1. but she must be paying the bills somehow because we're still living there. I don't mind her not being home, she never paid me much attention anyways. But let's not get into that, this isn't some sob story about how hard it is to not have a mom around.

This story is about something worse.

We got to Marshal's house, and before we could get to the door, Marshal and Aaron came walking out. "Hey, just in time!" Marshal said with a smile. He wore a black band tee shirt with gray pants with rips in them, with red converse. His hair was slicked back as it usually was, in fact the only time I ever saw it messed up and not all gelled up is in the mornings whenever he slept over. "hey, homies." Aaron said as he followed behind Marshal. Aaron wore a blue, red, and green tie-die tee shirt and jeans with cheap green and blue Nikes. "let's add a flower crown to top off the look." Sophie said to Aaron. We all laughed, except for Aaron. "see, *this* is why I don't wear tie-die around you people! MARSHAL is the one who made me!" "what, tie-die looks good on you." Marshal said with a shrug. Aaron crossed his arms, and we started down the side walk. "hey guys, its Friday!!! you want to hang out after school?!" Isabel asked us excitedly. "Sure. We can meet up at my place this time. There's no way my mom will be home." we all agreed. "what about you, short stuff?" Marshal said, wrapping his arm around Sophie. "you coming?" "duh, now get off me you walking rainbow".

She said, pushing him off her. “ooh, haven't heard that one before.” Marshal joked.

“Ew. School is close.” Isabel said as we walked up to the school. “More like the gates of hell.” I said. “true.” Marshal agreed. We walked inside the chaotic building. Students flooded the halls, gossiping, laughing, throwing stuff, yelling, being annoying, the usual. We made our way through the sea of people to the lunch room where we always hang out in the mornings. We always sit in the back table where no one sits and where no one will bother us. “you guys. I got some big news.” Marshal announced. “Oh no.” Aaron said jokingly. “so, you guys know Mr. Patterns?” we nodded. We all had Mr. Patterns for reading class. Everyone knew about him, he’s our crazy fat reading teacher who is only friends are his books. He’s literally obsessed with his books. His classroom has more books in it than the library. “well, guess what I did? I pulled a prank on him! The best prank...EVER.” he said dramatically. “oh jeez, what did you do this time.” I asked. “Marshal, we only have 2 weeks left of school, wouldn't it be better if you pranked him on the last day-” “Shush. Save your questions for after!” Marshal said, cutting Aaron off. “You see, everyone pranks a teacher on the last day of school, they expect it. But two weeks, now that's

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unexpected. What did I do, you ask? Well, we know how he's obsessed with all those books, so I broke in and took all the books out of the classroom!" he said with a devilish smile on his face. "That. Is awesome. How did you do it?" Isabel asked. "after he left, I broke into his classroom, put ALL the books he had in there in a trash bag, and hid it outside his window, hidden in those thick bushes." Marshal explained. "that's insane. Have fun in detention for the next 2 weeks." Sophie said. "Hahaha. That won't happen, you see, as much as I hate that guy, I'm on his good side. There's plenty of other subjects he'd choose, it wouldn't be me. Plus, I wore a disguise so no one will be able to tell who it is." Marshal explained.

"Smart." Isabel said. "I can't wait to see his face first period!" I said excitedly. "yeah, good thing he never goes in his classroom in the mornings, and he's always late to class". Marshal agreed. Just then, the bell rang. "well, looks like its time." Isabel said sadly. "I'll go and be lonely in my first period." "Ha ha, sorry, Is. See you in 3rd." I said. She waved us goodbye. "okay, let's go, Sophie. Math time." Aaron said. "yippee." Sophie replied sarcastically. "let's go, Jake! Can't be late this time!" Marshal said with a smile. "yeah, let's go!" and that, folks, was the only time I have ever been excited to go to that classroom.

We sat down at our seats, and waited. Everyone was buzzing about how there were no books what so ever in the room. Then, Mr. Patterns walked in. “Okay class, settle do-.....” he stopped mid-sentence to look at his room. He just stared for a moment, then his face got bright red. “WHERE DID ALL MY BOOKS GO!?!?” He bellowed. He wobbled over to his desk, throwing things around, frantically looking for his lost friends. He then started wobbling around the classroom, looking around everywhere. The class went wild. I looked over at Marshal, who was trying to keep a poker-face, but I could tell he was choking down his laughter. He winked at me, and I gave him a thumbs up and a smile. I walked over to him and whispered, “I sure hope you don't get caught.” he laughed. “I won't” he whispered back.

Little did I know that I wouldn't be able to laugh about pranks the same why for a long time.

CHAPTER TWO

RIIINNGGG. “Finally.” I said as I grabbed my binder and walked out of my last class for the day with Sophie. “that class is so boring.” Sophie said as we made our way through the sea of people.” I mean, why do we even NEED history. It’s just a bunch of dead people.” Sophie complained. “right. I’ll meet you and everyone outside, okay? I got to go to my locker.” “okay.”

I walked down the hall to my locker and put away my binder. I didn't want to bring anything home for the weekend. “Yo Jake.” Marshal said as he unlocked his locker that was right next to mine. “Don't look now, but the popular plastics are coming.” I looked over at the busy hallway. He was right. Jenifer Realins, Cory Fallens, Marina stones and Nate Martins walked down the hallways, smiling those pearly white teeth and strutting their perfect bodies. Jenifer and Marina are two out of 3 of the hottest girls in school, perfect bodies, perfect faces, amazing hair, beautiful eyes, stunning bodies, gorgeous jaw lines.....oops, I’m getting ahead of myself. The point is, those girls are hot, and totally don't know I exist. “Soo hot!” me and Marshal both said

under out breaths. I looked over at him. “what.” he said with a shrug. “look at Cory. Best facial features Ever. And have you SEEN, Nate's, body.” Marshal said with a smirk. I slapped his arm. “what. It’s not my fault I have gym with him.” I punched him in the shoulder. “Ouch, what, you get to talk about who you think are hot all the time, then when I do it I get punched that's not fair.” Marshal whined, rubbing his shoulder. “Stop being so gay.” I said as we started to walk down the hallway. “excuse me, I will be as gay as I please.” Marshal said as he crossed his arms jokingly. I shook my head, and let out a little chuckle. “you make me so upset.” I said. “I know.” Marshal replied. “Hey, guys! Over here!” we heard Isabel yell. We looked over to see Isabel and Sophie leaning against a tree waving at us, and Aaron sitting on the ground crisscrossed with his eyes closed. We walked over to them. “Aaron. Are you sleeping?” Marshal said, leaning over Aaron and poking his head. “it’s called, meditation, and please stop poking my head.” Aaron said, not opening his eyes. “why are you doing that here?” Marshal asked. “Because, this beautiful tree was just the perfect place for it, and you and Jake were taking forever.” he stated. “okay whatever let’s just go already.” Isabel said impatiently.

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We started walking down the sidewalk, talking about our day. Marshal told everyone about what Mr. Patterns did after he saw all his books missing, Isabel told us about how sucky gym class was, we talked about how glad we are that school is almost over and that its Friday. “Dude, Jake, can I sleep over tonight?” Marshal asked as we neared my house. “sure.” I said. “Oh, me too! Can I join you guys?” Aaron asked. “yes.” Marshal responded a little too quickly. “Marshal, it’s my house. I make the decisions. Yeah Aaron, you can stay over too.” I said. “hey, if their staying over then I want to, too.” Isabel said. “are you going to be allowed to sleep over with a bunch of guys?” Aaron asked. “I’ve spent the night over at Jakes place once before, and besides, I don’t think my foster parents will even notice that I’m gone.” Isabel said with a shrug. “okay, sure you can stay over too.” I said. “well if all you guys are having a sleepover count me in!” Sophie said, jumping up and down. “your parents are going to let you stay over?” I asked. “pshh, duh. I’m an only child, and considering their always away on business trips and crap, they let me do whatever I want.” Sophie said, clapping her hands together. “Alright, its settled then, sleep over at my house!” I yelled. Everyone put their fists in the air and cheered. “We’re such dorks” Isabel said between laughs.

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“we're the coolest dorks, ever!!!” Sophie said, jumping up in the air with her fist up.

CHAPTER THREE

When we got inside, we threw our stuff down and went straight to the living room to take turns playing our favorite video games. We took turns battling each other on the video games for a while, then stopped to play some hardcore truth or dare and little games like that. And soon enough, it was 9:30 pm at night. “I’m hungry...” Isabel said, laying on the floor with her arms stretched out. “Me too.” Sophie said, laying on the couch. “hey, Jake, got any food?” Marshal asked, sitting on the ground next to Aaron. “Not a whole lot of good food. How about we just walk down to Mc Donald's? It’s a lot better than my cooking.” I suggested. “You guys got money?” “Yeah I have a few Bucks I’ll just get something small”. Sophie said. “Alright! Sounds good to me! Let’s go!” Isabel said, sitting up.

I'll just get a smoothie or something, they mostly sell processed animal flesh anyway.” Aaron said as we walked out. “That’s basically what fast food restaurants are.” I said. “I know. And it’s disgusting. I don't know how you people can stand it.” “I’m telling you Aaron, taste a cheeseburger and you'll understand.” he shook his head. “no thanks, Jake.” I shrugged. It was dark out as

we walked down the lamp lit streets. There were not many people out, but as soon as we got a little bit away from my house, I started getting this weird feeling. A feeling like, that we shouldn't be out right now. I ignored my feelings. I tried to convince myself that it was just paranoia, but no matter what, I couldn't shake the feeling. I didn't tell my friends this, though. They would probably just tell me it was all in my head or something.

The McDonalds we were heading to was on the far side of town, the side that not many people lived in, but a lot of cars passed through there, that's probably why a McDonalds was placed there. A lot of crimes happen there too, it even seemed like that's where crime flows from. Maybe that's why I had this strange feeling. "Man, I forgot how far this place was from your house, Jake." Marshal said, walking in front of me with his hands behind his head. "We've only been walking for like, 8 minutes." Isabel said. "So? That's a pretty long time to me." Marshal said. "Whatever, Marshal. Let's go down this way, it's a quicker way to get to McDonalds." Isabel said, pointing down the opposite road we were planning on walking down. Marshal stopped in his tracks. "I... I don't think we should go down that way." Marshal said. "Why not?" Isabel asked. "Yeah Marshal, why not?" a voice asked. We all froze. I slowly moved my head

around, looking for the person the voice came from. “Shit...” Marshal said under his breath. For moments, nothing happened. No one moved. No one talked. I was so confused. “What’s happening....” I thought to myself. “who was that guy? And how does he know Marshal?”

I looked around, and saw three men walking down the street towards us. “Stay behind me...” Marshal said in a serious tone. The men got closer. They were all wearing long tan trench coats and hats that were tilted to cover their eyes, they looked like the Mafia. They were buff, and looked to be older than us. “Marshal, how nice of you to come to us.” the man in the middle said. “And I see you brought some little friends. How lovely.” Marshal didn't say anything. He just stood there, with his fists clenched. “You got nothing to say to us, Marshal?” The man in the middle said, stepping closer to us. “That's okay. We can make you talk.” “Who are you people, and how do you know Marshal?!” Isabel suddenly yelled, stepping next to Marshal. “Hey!” Marshal yelled. “I told you to stay behind me! And shut up!” he said, pushing her behind him. “ooh. your friends got some nerve, talking to me that way...” The man said, stepping closer. “But since I’m feeling rather nice today, I’ll let it slide. In fact, since your fear amuses me, I’ll give you a choice. Let us take Marshal, or we kill him

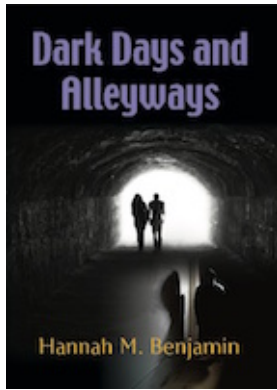
here on the spot.” He snapped his fingers, and in a flash the two men behind him grabbed Marshal and put him in a head lock, and put a gun up to his head.

I looked at Aaron in fear. He looked incredibly angry, his fists were clenched so tight that his knuckles were white. I looked back at Marshal. “You guys...” he started “you have to let them take me. I’ll be okay, I promise.” No one answered. “I’m getting bored.” Said the leader of the group. “You kids are taking too long. You have 30 seconds, if I don’t get an answer in that time frame, I blow his brains out, along with all of yours.” I looked at Aaron, Sophie and Isabel. They were all looking at me. I looked down at my feet. “I...I’m sorry, Marshal. Just...take him.” the man smiled. “Wise decision.” he snapped his fingers. “Take him away, boys.” The man who had the gun up to Marshals head slowly put it back in his coat pocket, and pushed Marshal in between him and the other man. They both put a hand on Marshals shoulders, and started walking down the street with him.

“Now... as for you four.” The leader said, “You may never, EVER tell a single soul about what you have just seen. Because if you do, and we get caught, we will come find you, and we *will* kill you. And on top of that, we will kill anyone else we think might be a tattle tale.

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You will be responsible for the death of many people; do you understand that? Good.” He paused for a second. “In fact.... I think we could use you four.” he said with a snicker. He stepped closer to us. “Fine young ladies we got here.” He said to no one in particular, “That's definitely useful. And you boys look strong, with some training you boys could be the best dealers around.” He said, with a devilish smile. “I've made my decision. And this time, you don't get a choice.” He whistled. In a flash, four men that didn't look to much older than us, maybe in their twenties, pushed us against the walls of a building and pressed a cloth against our noses. “Good night, children. See you when you wake up.” The area around me started to get fuzzy. It started getting darker, darker, until I fell into a deep sleep.



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