

WINDOW  
of the  
Heart

The Stained-Glass Legacy  Book Three

Amy R. Anguish



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Published by Scrivenings Press LLC  
15 Lucky Lane  
Morrilton, Arkansas 72110  
<https://ScriveningsPress.com>

Printed in the United States of America

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Paperback ISBN 978-1-64917-313-3

eBook ISBN 978-1-64917-314-0

Editors: Elena Hill and Linda Fulkerson

Cover by Linda Fulkerson, [bookmarketinggraphics.com](http://bookmarketinggraphics.com)

All characters are fictional, and any resemblance to real people, either factual or historical, is purely coincidental.

*To Kathy Cretsinger.*

*If not for her starting KenTen Writers' Retreat and Mantle Rock Publishing, I never would've met the other authors in this series, and we never would have come up with such a concept. I treasure her friendship and the years she helped mentor me.*



## Chapter One



“You’ve got to be kidding me.” Lennox Malone pointed to the front of the chapel. “Sara Beth, there’s a toilet on the stage!”

Sara Beth waved her hand through the air. “That’s an easy fix, Len. Don’t you see the bigger picture?”

“The bigger picture?” Lennox took in the vaulted ceiling, the cracked window, the dark spots of what must be mold growing where carpet might once have been. “Sara Beth, why this chapel? Of all the venues you could choose to marry in, why this one?”

“It’s so quaint.”

“Quaint?” Lennox rubbed her throbbing temple. “That doesn’t fit any of the words that came to mind when we walked in here. Filthy, run-down, dilapidated, yes. Those are apropos—but quaint?”

“Lennox, I know somewhere deep down in your amazing mind you can open your eyes and see the potential of this place. The sunlight filtering through that stained glass. The coziness of such a small venue. And the gorgeous trees outside that will be orange and red by the time my wedding gets here.”

“Six months.” Lennox motioned around them and accidentally knocked against the edge of one of the pews. The

decorative endpiece flew off and skittered across the floor. “That’s all we have. I’m not sure this can happen in six years, much less six months.”

“Brian’s cousin should be here any minute, and he’ll confirm it can be ready.” Sara Beth crossed her arms and pouted her lips. “Besides, I should be able to get married anywhere I want to. I’m the bride.”

“I think part of your brain fell out when Brian slipped that ring on your finger.” Lennox shook her head as she scanned the room. Potential? The only potential she could see was the potential for this structure to be condemned.

Scurrying and scratching came from the front of the building, and Lennox stepped a bit closer to the back door, just in case some creature popped out that was bigger than she was. Sara Beth didn’t seem to notice.

What must it be like to see everything through love-colored glasses? Not that Lennox truly believed in such things. After all, she hadn’t seen much proof of love in her life before now. But Sara Beth had been her best friend for ten years now, and Brian came across as a good guy. So maybe things would work out for one couple in the world.

“When is Brian’s cousin supposed to be here?”

“Around two.” Sara Beth smiled as she typed on her phone. Must be texting her fiancé.

“It’s almost two-thirty now.” Lennox tapped her smartwatch.

“He’ll be here. Brian promised.” Sara Beth pointed to the stage. “Can’t you just picture flowers along the windowsill? And candles in glass pillars. The stone in here will look great with the orange color I picked for your dress. And we might even incorporate some pumpkins and gourds. Would that be too much?”

Lennox sighed. “We can figure it out when we get closer. I’ll watch for sales at the craft stores. Don’t they put fall decorations out early in the summer?”

“Maybe.” Sara Beth tapped her fingertip against her chin. “Gourds might be overkill.”

“Are you sure you want me in orange?” Lennox fingered her pixie-cut hair. “I’ve been told in the past it’s not a good color for my complexion.”

“Wait until you see it. It’s not scary orange. More like what you’d see in a fading sunset.” Sara Beth’s voice grew dreamy. “And with us carrying fall bouquets of mums or sunflowers or something, maybe even with some leaves mixed in—it’ll be perfect.”

And as maid of honor, it was Lennox’s job to make sure it truly did turn out as perfect as Sara Beth dreamed. Which is why this location worried her. And Brian’s cousin still not arriving wasn’t a sign that things would improve anytime soon. Lennox wandered outside and took a deep breath of the early spring air. March teased them with mild temperatures and lots of sunshine this year, but that didn’t mean another cold snap couldn’t sneak up between now and Easter next month.

Today had turned out lovely, though not warm enough for the convertible pulling up to have its roof down. A lanky man got out, pushed his sunglasses back into his windblown, too-long hair, and flashed her a grin. Hands in his pockets, his gait said he was in no rush. Surely this wasn’t the cousin.

“Hi.” He stopped right in front of Lennox as if expecting her to act excited to see him.

“Ty?” Sara Beth rushed through the door of the chapel and gave him a quick squeeze. “Isn’t this going to be great? It’s so perfect. Just like Brian described.”

Brian had described the mold and misplaced toilet to Sara Beth? Or was she talking general appearances? Either way, Lennox sometimes wished she could be as optimistic and bubbly as her friend.

“You know I love this place. I’m thrilled you want to get married here. It’s been a while since we’ve been able to do a

wedding at the chapel.” Ty’s gaze roved up to the roof and back down again.

“It’s going to be magical.” Sara Beth turned and blinked at Lennox. “Oh. Did you meet my friend Lennox? She’s my maid of honor, so she’s here to help figure out what all needs to be done. She thinks it’s her job to make sure everything is perfect.”

“I’m Ty.” He held out his hand.

She took it and let go again as quickly as possible. “You were supposed to be here forty-five minutes ago.”

“Yeah. Sorry about that.” He shot Sara Beth a grin. Did he think women found him charming? “I couldn’t resist stopping on the way out here. I saw a little fruit stand selling flowers and a few early crops, like broccoli and strawberries, from their greenhouse. I picked up a few for my mom. She’s always going on about how she misses fresh fruit during the winter. Since it was so pretty out, I took the long way, not thinking about flooding from last week’s rain. One of the roads was still closed, so I had to turn around to find another cut-through that would work.”

“It’s fine. We’ve just been looking around.” Sara Beth looped her arm through his as if his excuse made perfect sense. “Lennox is worried we won’t have enough time to get everything repaired, but I told her it wasn’t that bad. What do you think?”

“I think you’re right.” Ty stepped into the chapel and paused as if taking in sacred ground. “There’s a bit of damage there.” He pointed to a spot where a tree branch had broken through the roof. “And we’ll obviously need to work on the pipes so we can get the toilet back where it goes. But most of this is aesthetic more than structural. Just cleaning.”

“Do we just ignore the mold? And the pews that are falling apart? And the broken glass? And the vermin?” Lennox pointed toward the front of the room.

“Vermin?” Ty and Sara Beth both shot her a glance.

“There was rustling.” She shrugged, refusing to admit to being overly dramatic.



“I’ll check into it.” Ty failed to turn his head in time to completely hide his smirk.

Lennox folded her arms across her chest. “What about outside?”

“Outside?”

“Yes. Outside. The flower beds are a mess. And the parking lot needs work. Otherwise, how will Sara Beth’s guests get their cars in and out?”

“Why do you need me?” Ty lifted an eyebrow. “Obviously, you’re a general contractor or something to be able to spy all the problems.”

Heat burned her cheeks. Her stupid pale skin was surely turning a bright shade somewhere between cherry and tomato right now. She squared her jaw and shoulders and lifted her chin. “I’m not a contractor. But I *am* concerned at how lightly you’re treating this. I mean, if you’re going to show up almost an hour late every time you have an appointment, I can’t imagine your work efficiency being any better. We have a schedule.”

“Being the best man, I’m well aware.” Ty picked up the piece of the pew that had fallen off earlier and set it back in its place.

The best man? Of course, he was. Why would her counterpart be someone she could get along with? Someone she would *want* to walk down the aisle beside. Not that she ever truly wanted to walk down the aisle with or to anyone. Not her dream.

Ty pulled a phone out and snapped some pictures of the roof damage, the mold, and the cracked window. At least he was doing something besides grinning and agreeing to everything the crazy bride said. Where was Sara Beth anyway?

There, near the back, her eyes focused on the front and yet far away, obviously dreaming of what would happen in six months.

Sara Beth’s phone rang, pulling her from her reverie. She glanced at the screen, and her face lit up. “Ty, help Lennox understand. Tell her about Evangeline. I’m going to take this call.”

Before either of them could protest, Sara Beth was outside. Awkward silence ensued.

“Okay, then.” Ty slid his hands back into his pockets and leaned back against the end of the front pew. It shifted behind him, and he quickly straightened, laughing. “Guess we’ll add that to the list, huh?”

“You think all this is funny?” Lennox motioned around them.

“On the contrary.” Ty cocked his head at her as if trying to figure out what made her tick. Instead, his expression made her want to squirm. “I take this much more seriously than you think. My great-great-grandfather and his uncle originally built the structure. It’s been in the family ever since. My father never loved it as much as Gramps and Great-Great-Grandpa Brendan did, though, so he didn’t check on it as often. And that’s led us to this.

“I’d say that tree fell during the ice storm, which means the hole has only been there a few months. The scratching is probably mice or squirrels. The flower beds can easily be cleaned out and replanted. I don’t know why you’ve decided to be so negative, but it’s going to be okay.”

*Breathe in through the mouth and out through the nose. And again.* How many times had she coached other ladies on breathing out their stress while teaching barre or PiYO? Lennox needed to get control of her emotions. He was right. She had been nothing but negative since they got here.

“And the toilet?” She couldn’t help herself.

“Unfortunately, when indoor plumbing was installed back in the eighties, no one factored in tree roots growing several feet in either direction. The roots grew through the pipes, so we need a plumber before we can put the toilet back. But I promise, you won’t have to worry about it being on stage during the ceremony. I wouldn’t want it to take attention away from your beautiful dress.”

“No one’s going to be looking at my dress when they can stare at someone as gorgeous as Sara Beth.” Lennox ran her fingers

through her hair as she surveyed the room again. “But thanks for the assurance. How can I help?”

“Stay out of the way.” Ty shrugged. “Seriously. Much of this even I can’t do. But I have all the contacts we need through my dad’s contracting company, and I’ll get people scheduled to get in here and work as I can.”

“As you can.”

“Yes. We have until September. It’ll be okay if they don’t get here right away. Except maybe the roof guy. That’s a priority.” He turned to face her fully. “Sara Beth mentioned Evangeline—the story of the first wedding that happened here.”

“It’s okay. I’m not romantic. And she’ll never know if you tell me or not.” Lennox leaned back, trying to see her friend through the open front door, but there was no sign of her.

“It’s sweet. Some people say it’s what’s blessed all the marriages that have started in this chapel since then.” Ty grinned and tossed his head back, knocking a loose strand of hair out of his eyes. “If you believe things like that.”

“I don’t.”

A glimmer of something flashed across Ty’s face at her blunt statement but disappeared just as quickly. “Well, if you change your mind, I’ll be happy to tell you.”

“Right. I guess I better give you my number so you can keep me updated on how things are going.” Lennox pulled her phone from her pocket.

“I’ll make sure Brian knows how things are going or if we run into any problems.” Ty gave her a side glance. “Unless you simply wanted an excuse to give me your number.”

“What?” Lennox took a step back. “No!”

“I’m not that repulsive.” Ty chuckled and once again moved the hair out of his face.

“You just need a haircut,” Lennox muttered as she turned toward the door.

“Hey.” Sara Beth peered up from where she sat on a rough-

hewn bench a few feet from the chapel. “Everything squared away?”

“I guess.” Lennox shrugged.

“Great.” She glanced behind Lennox and gave Ty a huge smile. “Thanks again for meeting us. I know you helped Lennox understand that everything really will be perfect.”

“As perfect as a shaggy-haired sloth can make things.” Ty’s reply brought that flush of heat back to Lennox’s cheeks.

“Okay.” Sara Beth waved. “I’m sure we’ll be seeing you a lot over the next few months. Thanks for all your help.”

Lennox slid into the passenger seat of Sara Beth’s car and buckled in without another word. So much for her remark not being heard as she left the building. A glance in the vehicle’s mirror showed Ty watching her. What was he thinking? Did he dread being best man to her maid of honor as much as she dreaded being paired up with him? A little niggler told her the issue was something altogether different. And she wasn’t at all sure she wanted to know.