

Digging deeper will put them  
in the killer's crosshairs ...

# REMAINS

CINDY BONDS



*Scrivenings*  
PRESS

Quench your thirst for story.  
[www.ScriveningsPress.com](http://www.ScriveningsPress.com)

Copyright © 2024 by Cindy Bonds

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

Printed in the United States of America

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means—for example, electronic, photocopy and recording— without the prior written permission of the publisher. The only exception is brief quotations in printed reviews.

Paperback ISBN 978-1-64917-407-9

eBook ISBN 978-1-64917-408-6

Editors: Elena Hill and Linda Fulkerson

Cover design by Linda Fulkerson - [www.bookmarketinggraphics.com](http://www.bookmarketinggraphics.com)

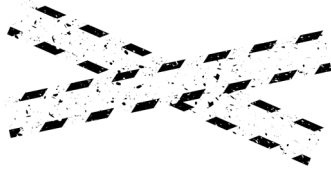
All characters are fictional, and any resemblance to real people, either factual or historical, is purely coincidental.

**NO AI TRAINING:** Without in any way limiting the author's [and publisher's] exclusive rights under copyright, any use of this publication to “train” generative artificial intelligence (AI) technologies to generate text is expressly prohibited. The author reserves all rights to license uses of this work for generative AI training and development of machine learning language models.

*And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard  
your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. ~ Philippians 4:7*



## PROLOGUE



“**W**hat’s wrong?” The high-pitched whimper echoed as streams of tears tracked down chubby, bright red cheeks. “Where’re you going?”

Wiping the little girl’s face, she gave Jacqueline a tight hug. “Nothing’s wrong, honey. But I do have to go. Remember, I’ll be back soon.”

Rushing down the stairs, Jacqueline’s quick footsteps tip-tapped on the wooden steps from behind.

“But Rach ...” Jacqueline pulled out her name, but there was no time to stop.

Just being here, saying goodbye—it was too dangerous.  
*God, please watch over them. Keep them safe.*

Pushing through the door and into the frigid Chicago air, Rachel gripped her arms. Snow clouds hung low. The stormy morning matched her grieving heart. If only none of this had happened. If only she’d left sooner.

Jacqueline’s muffled scream brought her back to reality. Rachel turned, but the girl was gone from the doorway. She scanned the area. It was eerily quiet. The only sound, the wind whirling through the barren branches of the trees.

After one last look at the empty window, she dashed down the paved pathway beside the house. Pausing, she snuck a look around the corner. Gabby's car sat parked on the other side of the road, puffing plumes of smoke into the gray sky.

"Hurry!"

With a nod to Gabby, she sprinted across the yard to the street. A burning sensation sliced through her side as the muffled echo of a gunshot hung in the dense air.

"No, God. Please," she whispered, falling forward. Gabby's scream resounded.

Her hands couldn't stop the fall as the curb entered her sight, her weight pressing down, her body useless to stop it.