





It was my necklace that drew her to me.

A NAME I WOULD KNOW
BY SUSANNA SPACE

A thin paperback in Borders, the glossy cover, her name in shimmering type. I reach over my son, curled in the stroller his breath heavy with sleep. Sit on the floor and flip through the pages. Run a finger over the grainy photograph, blond wisps framing her face.

She approached me after the first publishing class. “Holly,” she said, holding out her hand. Her nails painted a glossy beige. Crisp white shirt, dewy skin, bracelets jingling on slender wrists. “I’m in law too,” she said with a wide smile, sticking her finger in her mouth in a mock forced vomit. I mock-sneered back. Laughter.

As we talked, her words bubbled with a sharp wit that belied her soft brown eyes, eyes a half-size too large for her other, more delicate features. She touched my wrist, laughed at something I said. Her loose, easy way, her forthrightness, the sparkle of blush on her cheeks, her laugh, deep and full, it all captivated me.

I learned later it was my necklace that drew her to me. Tiny beads in a double loop set against white cotton. My style, as she would name it.

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A NAME I WOULD KNOW BY SUSANNA SPACE
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I signed the lease on a rent-controlled apartment in Boston with a stained clawfoot tub and bars on the windows. I waitressed. I temped. I found an internship in the editorial department of a little arts magazine, the kind that’s printed on newsprint and given away free.

Princess Diana was killed in a car crash, the X Files won an Emmy, and I enrolled in a postgraduate course that, the brochure said, prepared young professionals for a career in publishing. An English major, I fantasized about being a book editor, a stack of manuscripts on my desk. I dreamt too of being an author, my name centered on a crisp white title page. The nine-month program would be brief and practical. I would learn everything about magazines, newspapers and books from instructors working in the field. The campus was downtown. I was excited. I was ready.

I had landed my first real job working as a legal assistant for an attorney. A well-dressed Harvard grad, Philip had a thick-mustached, young-Einstein face. He was nice enough, and, though his cases were mostly injuries and accidents—explosions from gas leaks, chemical exposure injuries, wrongful death suits—the office was downtown in a fun, touristy part of the city. I was finally earning a salary, with paid vacation days and health insurance. Plus, Philip liked to write, so he liked that I liked to write, too.

Holly was an attorney with one of the prestigious firms whose embossed stationery occasionally landed on my desk. When I told her about my little office, my meager paychecks, she rolled her eyes. “I could get you a paralegal job that pays 60K,” she snapped her fingers, “like that.”

Holly had found The One: a lawyer she’d met during a summer internship. She described seducing him with heels and low-cut blouses. Rather than a wedding she referred to her Elopement, a word that in her mouth sounded impossibly sophisticated as if spritzed with expensive perfume. In those early conversations outside our new school she spoke of Eric’s intelligence, his many accomplishments.

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It will attach itself to just about anything.

At work I drafted letters, edited briefs, reviewed depositions. I went along to court appearances, where Philip and I waited in cold, dingy courtrooms for our cases to be called. I thought he was funny, always talking about how old he was (he was in his 40s, I guessed) how his youth had passed him by.

He thought I did good work and told me so. He would shake his head and tell me I should go to law school. I could get into Harvard, he said.

I didn't want to be a lawyer but I was flattered that he thought I could be one. And getting into Harvard? Though I didn't believe him about that, I wanted to.

A few weeks into the semester, Holly invited me to her place. The leaves were just starting to turn. A team of rowers glided across the Charles River.

With her handwritten directions I drove to Holly's neighborhood, a checkerboard of sunny blocks grand with maples and oaks. I parked the Honda in front of her Victorian duplex, the heavy front door washed in dappled sunlight. She opened it, grinning, her hair smooth and sleek, her dark jeans freshly pressed, a cotton top with pearled buttons loose around her collarbone. "Hi," we exhaled to each other, relishing our first meeting outside the dingy classroom.

We walked to her nail salon. My salon, she said. Holly grabbed *Us* magazine and *People*. We shared photos of Leonardo DiCaprio, Tori Spelling, Courtney Love, read the snarky Fashion Police comments to each other.

Later, over lattes, Holly looked doubtfully at my chest and asked about my bras. Were they the right size? Probably not. (Measuring me, a saleswoman at Filene's confirmed this.) My new bra felt like a corset, but it gave my small breasts a decided lift.

Like Philip's encouragement, Holly's attention fed a hunger I worked to disguise. Mostly friendships happened for me when someone approached me, not the other way around. And now that I was in a big city, it was getting harder to make new connections.

In college there were some girls who became close in my dorm. I spent time with them but I never felt like I fitted in. Groups for me were always intimidating. Instead my closest friends became the perky business student who introduced herself during the first week of school and the wild-haired potter who sat down with me at the dining hall and, with no introduction, struck up a conversation about art.

It seems implausible now, even to me, but I didn't understand that I could direct my life. That I could approach a classmate and ask her to join me for tea, or ask a guy out, or show up at the college radio station and ask to learn how to be a deejay. (I did that, actually, but quickly decided I wasn't any good at it and stopped going.)

I began to feel like an imposter at work. With plans for a new career, I bristled at the culture of law. I didn't like that we had adversaries. I didn't like the posturing and the way clients exaggerated their injuries to up their settlements.

Between client meetings and hearings and phone calls, Philip liked to give me advice. "Choose carefully," he would say about marriage, his gaze falling on some faraway spot beyond the conference table, "because life"—he'd sigh there, pausing for effect—"is a long time." He talked about his relationship wistfully, as if he pitied his wife for accepting him as her partner. He spoke of barnacles: After tumbling in the water as a barnacle baby, the formerly free-wheeling crustacean begins to secrete juice. Ready to commit, he said, it will attach itself to just about anything.

We said we'd co-author a book some day.

Philip missed his youth, craved it even. I bet at your age you can still daydream, he said one afternoon as he buttoned his overcoat, an over-full brown accordion file tucked under his arm. As if that was something which, at some point, we all lost.

The first Sex and the City episode aired that fall. Holly was a sexy, uninhibited Samantha (but married and partial to Charlotte-esque Lily Pulitzer cotton dresses). I liked Carrie, pseudo-philosophical and insecure with a weakness for suede boots and big, soft-hearted men.

Holly taught me to buy my jeans long to accommodate heels and lengthen the leg, and the importance of having certain “pieces” tailored. She coaxed me from the oversized cardigans and torn denim, leading me instead to the bias-cut skirts and fitted Theory blouses. We checked each other’s butts in French Connection “miracle pants” as we called them (long, creased, pocketless). We shopped designer at the best consignment stores and combed the endless plastic-hanger racks at Off Fifth.

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She wanted to be a magazine writer and a novelist. We said we’d co-author a book some day. We liked how our last names sounded together. We’re so complementary, we said.

As the weather cooled, we took long walks together across the city, for exercise (essential for maintaining your best self, Holly said), and to shop. Glimpsing our twin black baseball caps and blond ponytails in a Starbucks window one Sunday morning, I did a double-take at my new oversized plastic sunglasses. “I look weird in these, don’t I?” I asked.

“You don’t,” she announced, glancing sideways at me in vague approval. “You look rich.”

On weekends I walked to the Harvard Book Store. I needed time alone to recharge after work and school. Like the clothes I overspent on, there was solace in books.

My walks nudged the writer in me. I’d go home and sketch characters, assemble scruffy little patches of dialogue. I wanted so badly just to finish a piece of writing that might be good enough.

But for what I didn’t know. My own impossible standards? To earn recognition for my own work, rather than helping Philip get his percentage of a settlement or for good grades or some job I wasn’t sure I’d ever get? My mind always seemed to be working overtime to collect odd details, to make sense of the seeming randomness of my life. I didn’t know then that was just what it was to be a writer.

I liked seeing grunge bands in the basement of the Middle East or drinking Guinness at the Plough and Stars, where Seamus Heaney and David Mamet had hung out. Holly was more into clubbing, dancing, drinking \$15 cocktails. She wore her hair smooth and sleek, I liked mine loose and full. But I began to enjoy getting dressed up in my new, sexier clothes and my better bra and flirting with the preppy downtown boys. It was liberating to shed one identity and take on another. I was just 28, I could be so many things.

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Now here I was at 28 with a job I hated, expensive tastes, and credit card debt.

Holly would urge me to chat with some handsome guy or another. She even struck up conversations for me. But mostly we talked with each other. The deeper I got the more transfixed I became. She told me how she let Eric tie her to the bed. With marriage, she said, you have to keep it fresh. She asked which girl celebrity I'd want to have sex with. If you could choose anyone, she said.

I had always loved to dance. Holly was the perfect partner. Her slender arms, those woozy eyes, her broad hips rising and falling. Sometimes I would slip back from the crowd to watch her, curious, envious, proud.

By November Holly had quit her lawyer job. She was no longer an equal partner in her marriage, she said. But it hardly seemed to matter. She still had her elegant home, her expensive haircuts, her salon.

Perched at a high table surrounded by red velvet and swift waitresses in platform heels, she confided that she worried her decision would hurt her marriage. We both knew publishing wasn't going to make us rich.

"Oh Holly," I said, reaching across the table for her arm, "Eric loves you."

She sipped her cosmo through the tiny stirrer straw and rolled her big eyes.

"What if he did what you're doing?" I pressed on. "You'd support him."

"I wouldn't," she countered, eyes narrowed, as if struggling to bring me into focus. "I would feel like it was a bait and switch, and I'd probably leave him."

I knew we were different, Holly and I. She'd earned her degrees from an Ivy, not a big State school like mine. In high school I sold Marlboros and tampons at the linoleum-floored drug store, I waitressed at the Friendly's at the corner shoving the big metal milkshake cups onto the mixer, and refilling sticky ketchup bottles.

But I knew girls like her, girls who went to private school, whose parents got them summer internships in Manhattan, who took up painting and pottery and lounged by the pool in the forested neighborhoods out beyond the center of town where my family lived. Girls with thick manes of hair who laughed unabashedly, who smoked with an insouciance I admired, even loved.

I knew part of those girls' advantage—a big part—was their families. Now I silently accused my mother and father of holding me back, of failing to nurture my talents, my ambitions. They were well educated. They had resources. They could have sent me to private school, a better college. Why hadn't I gotten the support Holly had? I couldn't help wonder how would my life be different if I'd had Holly's upbringing?

I wondered, too, why my parents never pointed out what a risky choice an English degree from a mediocre school was for a girl who liked to charge Nine West slingbacks to her father's credit card. Why, in the midst of my novel-devouring and paper-writing and photography electives, had no one suggested I take a business course? Or steel myself for life as a starving artist? That those things were choices, that there were choices to be made at all, had eluded me.

Now here I was at 28 with a job I hated, expensive tastes, and credit card debt. I didn't want to spend my life being someone's assistant, making someone else look good. I wanted to be seen. I wanted to feel, the way Holly seemed to, that I had a right to be who I was.

I almost wasn't sure it was her.

"Let's take a break," Philip said. He offered me a place on the floor beside the conference table. We faced each other, cross-legged, the windows above us reflecting stacks of overstuffed accordion files and dog-eared legal texts. "Do this," he said, holding his hands up, palms inches from mine. The ever-present hum of tourists strolling downstairs and buskers trying to fill their tip jars receded as I worked to focus my mind. "Do you feel the chi?" he whispered.

I started telling Philip about the men I was dating. One had told me I was the Harley Davidson of women. Philip thought that was funny, and stupid. He waved that guy away.

Ine chilly Friday I drove over the bridge in new black boots and a short skirt. I climbed the steps to Holly's porch and paused at the top, listening to her heels click across the wood floor inside.

Eric answered the door. He wore a pale blue oxford, pants perfectly tailored to his round shape and wire-rimmed glasses. As we said hellos—I've heard a lot about you, I've heard a lot about you too—I found I couldn't reconcile this Eric with the idea I'd had of him. He was witty and smart, yes, but this was the guy Holly had all that hot sex with? He wasn't at all like the men she would talk to in bars or nudge me about on the streets.

"Susanna," Eric said, leading me to a gleaming maple table the size of an ironing board. "Look at this thing. What are we supposed to do with this?" He was smiling, teasing his wife. The late afternoon sun projected leafy shadows on the ivory moldings above our heads. The big rooms felt cold.

Holly rolled her eyes. I'd already heard about the table, purchased from the MOMA store for more than my month's rent. I made some joke, and Eric laughed. I turned to Holly. "Let's go," I said, my voice harsher than I'd intended.

That night we drank at a new club, a dark place with black walls and black velvet sofas. I kept losing track of Holly. When I found her she was with a guy in a rugby shirt whose glossy dark curls grazed his shoulders. I watched her red-lipped smile, her creamy arms, the dance of her manicured fingertips. Their faces were so close. I almost wasn't sure it was her.

The next Saturday Holly slipped into the chair beside me before class wearing cashmere and smelling of the faintest hint of perfume. Grinning as muted late autumn sunlight flashed across her dimples, she said she'd met a guy who would be perfect for me. She opened her notebook and laid down her pen. "I will be your yenta!" she said.

I met the guy, Paul, at a too-bright pizza place in Brighton. Holly and I debriefed afterward. Yes, I liked him. But no real sparks. I shrugged.

She waved off my indifference. She mentioned, not for the first time, his PhD, his promising future. She warned me about another girlfriend who recently had her heart broken by a man who was not husband material. I vowed to put aside my instincts and give this guy a chance. For me or for her, I wasn't sure.

You want to wait till you meet Brad Pitt. But that's not how it works.

In addition to their home across the river, Holly and Eric owned a condo near the waterfront. They decided they'd sell it in the new year. So after editing class one December afternoon I gathered my books and headed east to keep Holly company while she picked up some fixture too exquisite to leave behind.

That winter was one of the wettest on record. Wet snowflakes the size of quarters blackened the streets and dotted the sooty slush that already lined the curbs. As we walked, she told me about an ex from college she was emailing-flirting with. (This was years before Facebook and Google had just set up shop in a California garage.) He might be coming to town, she said, and she might want to see him.

The roar of the expressway silenced us, gusts off the harbor pressing against our wool coats. Inside the lobby, Holly said something to the doorman. She knew his name, teased him about his epaulets or the shine of his shoes. Still shaking off the cold, we rode the elevator up.

The apartment, a studio, was compact and sleek, the surfaces smooth and shiny. She fished under the sink as I wandered. The winter sun was sinking already. Beyond an enormous plate-glass window snowflakes glimmered in the waning light, set off by towering skyscrapers in black outline. A light chop blinked white in the harbor. Planes lifted soundlessly off Logan Airport's peninsular tarmac, slicing through the thick blanket of clouds.

I pressed my fingertips to the glass. We chatted as she clicked around the place. She said something about the impending sale, complained about their realtor.

I realized something then. Holly and I had been friends for months but she had never been to my apartment. We had never gone out in my neighborhood. I had never suggested we spend Saturday night at the pub across the street or see a band at my club. We had never started our weekend walks at my apartment, got lattes at my coffee shop, browsed at my bookstore.

Why? Did I think she'd be put off by the bars on my windows, the clanking elevator door? Would she bristle at the divey pubs, the bands with their dark lyrics, the crowds of artsy college students who were actually listening to the music?

Later I thought back to our conversation, the guy from college. The flirting. The excitement in her voice. The talk was so similar to ones I'd had with single friends. It was easy to forget she was married.

The PhD and I roamed the wide streets near Boston University, rode the trolley, dipped into dive bars. In three dates, though, I felt no sparks, and I told him so.

When I broke the news to Holly, she rolled her eyes. "That's the problem," she said, shaking her head as we walked Tremont Street clutching our new Chicago Manuals of Style. "You want to wait till you meet Brad Pitt. But that's not how it works."

"Not," she added, touching her bangs, eyes fixed on some faraway place beyond the brownstones, "Not if you want to get married."

I did want to get married some day. I wanted to share my life with someone, to have a home, maybe even a family. So I liked having Holly's help. I liked that she assumed it would happen for me. I'd had a lot of relationships but none had worked out yet, and I was starting to think maybe I just wasn't cut out for partnership. But to Holly it wasn't about those things. Marriage was just something people like us did. Like finding good work and traveling, it was a goal, and goals in Holly's world were achieved.

As the second half of the publishing program got underway in January, Holly and I started a writing group with a few other students. I read my essays cross-legged on her charcoal sofa. She laughed often when I read. Her interest in my words filled me with a rare confidence, my phrases great silvery helium balloons floating up past the wedding photos on the mantle to the high ceiling. I still didn't understand it, why Holly's opinion mattered so much to me. My fascination unsettled me. Was it her law degree, her haircuts, her MOMA table? Maybe it was her money. Or her marriage. Or maybe it was about something else.

As spring melted in the harbor, Philip and I had lunch together more. He paid and I got a break from the office, so I didn't mind. And I liked talking with him. We were, by then, friends.

One morning we were discussing a case. Snow melted off the eaves, sending a shimmering column of water past the window to the cobblestones below. There was the possibility of a settlement, and Philip needed a motion drawn up. I turned to go back to my desk when I heard him say something.

"What?"

"I'm in love with you," he said again.

He stood across the conference table from me. Normally I saw boundless energy in his face. But today he was a man with three young children, huge financial stresses, and a wife who wasn't interested in him any more. His eyes were watery and tired. A streak of late winter sunlight cut across the table between us.

I stared at him. My insides froze.

He began to speak again, but I turned away. I typed up the motion. Then I left.

You fucker, I thought as I walked home hopping over half-iced puddles, making my way through the soggy streets to the subway, my wool coat cinched hard around my waist.

Holly asked me to read a draft of her novel. A novel?

She wrote it during college. When I was learning not to gag on Milwaukee's Best, making mix tapes, reading Adrienne Rich.

I read most of the manuscript at home in bed. The prose was witty and tight. The protagonist was Holly to a T, a privileged, white, straight-A party girl. There were parts I liked, but overall the story felt clichéd.

A few days later, I handed the pages back to Holly before class. I admired the tight prose, I told her, its wit and energy, and the meticulously rendered scenes. As the other students trickled in with their Starbucks cups, she unclipped the pages and licked a finger, flipping through the draft I had marked up. She pointed to a red scribble. "No-one's ever said 'ick!' about anything I've written!" she said. Her words were a little too loud, and she punctuated them with her deep laugh.

I looked at my friend. She fell silent as she flipped through more pages. Had I been too critical?

She kept reading. One person's opinion would hardly set her back, I thought, and certainly mine wouldn't, because who was I? Some English major posing as a writer. A poorly paid legal assistant. I imagined our unequal footing—her superiority to me in so many ways—was plain. I realized later that it was the manuscript that had allowed me to challenge her. Being honest had felt good—necessary even. In fact, it hadn't occurred to me to respond to her work with anything but my true opinions. And so I had done on paper what I was so afraid to do in life. I had been myself.

After Philips's confession, I stepped up my job search. I avoided talking with him about anything but work. There were no more lunches. I interviewed with a publisher that made books and magazines for health insurance companies. It wasn't my dream job, but it was real editorial work.

The position was offered to me, and I accepted. That night I popped open a bottle of cheap red. It was happening, finally: I was trading beige carpets and banker's lamps for high ceilings and a pool table, and young co-workers who wore Doc Martens and buried their noses in style manuals. The salary wasn't much better, but it was a step up, and I was grateful.

My new work friends and I took long lunches at trendy waterfront restaurants. We took turns snuggling the head editor's diapered daughter during team meetings. We bundled in our coats and boots and shopped the artists' sales in the old loft spaces nearby.

I still worried I'd never become a "real" writer. But my anxiety was tempered by the fact that I was finally getting paid for my writing talents. I left my building each morning in my new leather jacket, my suede boots, and my pink beret, with a new sense of agency, of possibility.

Holly and I began our final projects. Inspired by an essay written by one of Emerson's MFA students, I asked a few classmates to write for a collection.

For her project, Holly created a magazine for young professional women. She asked me to write a "dream job" interview piece featuring a friend of hers who worked in advertising. Holly tossed off the name of a California agency like it was a name I would have heard before, a name I would know.

Holly's friend's voice was as clear and confident as a newscaster's. I telephoned her slouched in front of my dusty old Mac, the metal elevator door clanging in the hallway.

An account executive in the Venice Beach office of a global advertising firm, she ticked off the ingredients of success: a brand name on one's resume, a sense of one's self. I imagined her, heels clicking as she tucked away her Armani sunglasses and entered the Frank Gehry-designed workspace.

I hung up and looked around my apartment: the old computer I couldn't afford to replace, the coffee-stained table, the view of the brick building next door. I popped Shawn Colvin in the CD player and watched the rain.

That summer Holly got a job with a legal publisher, but she hated it and quit. So I helped her get an interview at my new company. Soon she was stationed at the desk beside me, just a flimsy corkboard room divider between us.

After a few months, though, the entry-level pay and the deference to client whims about punctuation and headlines began to get to her. During a team meeting she became adamant about using the word "overarching" in one of her articles. She called on me to defend her. I didn't.

John F Kennedy Jr was killed in a plane crash, Shakespeare in Love won Best Picture, and we were done with school. Holly and I walked together over the Summer Street bridge, saltwater sloshing below us in the dark channel on our way back to the office. She was blond again, and our hair blew like twin gold flags in the stiff wind. She pointed to my outfit. What is this you're wearing? she asked. It wasn't a compliment. I wore a long silvery skirt and a Women's World Cup T-shirt. She was in Theory and an A-line skirt, a thin gold chain floating on her browned collarbone. The blush on her cheeks sparkled in the midday sun.

I remembered the classroom, the necklace. It had been an afterthought, a cheap thing drawn from a tangle of other near-worthless jewelry, the only kind I owned. I had wanted to look good. But sporting a tan, my hair sunbleached, my jeans the right cut, I saw now how I had looked like something I wasn't. Her perfect match.

Holly and I didn't see each other much after that. The writing group moved to another house. I stopped going. We didn't work together any more or have class to bring us together.

I knew by then there was a lot I didn't like about Holly. And yet I missed her. I missed walking around the city in lock-step listening to her stories. I missed the way she hated the presumption of the words "Have a nice day!" (I hope you do too was her curt reply.) I missed the way she expressed concern about the age of my car and her dispensations of wisdom, like marriage being a place for your best self. I missed her attitude, her candor, her opinions, her snap judgments. Still, I didn't call.

Not long after, I fell in love on a weekend trip to New Mexico. Steve was a photographer and a rock climber who had moved to Santa Fe from Brooklyn. He visited Boston as much as he could, and I flew to Santa Fe every few weeks. He made sushi for me, tight, colorful rolls assembled with his big hands. We ate burritos smothered in green chile for breakfast and walked the limestone cliffs of Bandelier National Park. At night we lit fires and watched the stars from his little apartment balcony.

In February I got the OK to work from New Mexico for a month. Hiking the red-dirt trails I mentally aired out my ideas of what I was supposed to be, what I could be. The West is the best my new friend Megan chirped. She was an ex-New Yorker too. For some extra money I helped her photograph a wedding. I watched the couple through the lens as they made their vows, toasted, danced on the flagstones under a warm winter sun.

I called Holly, finally, when I had some news. Now we were just two friends.

We met at a new restaurant near her house. Tiny abstract paintings dotted the whitewashed walls, the tablecloth was cool under my hot palms. She had news too.

“You first,” I said brightly.
“OK,” she said. “I have an agent.”

Her book, the one I’d read, was on the brink of being sold. Her agent was negotiating with publishing houses. There would be movie options.

I congratulated her. I said words like amazing and fantastic.

Then I told her about my decision to move across the country to be with Steve.

“But what do you two have in common?” she asked, leaning forward, gold bracelets clanking as the waiter filled our water glasses. Now Holly expressed concern about Steve’s age (at 26 he was four years younger than me) implying a guy that young couldn’t possibly be ready for a serious relationship. More than that, she couldn’t fathom my attraction to a handsome six-foot-two artist who chopped his own firewood and cooked.

Wait, I thought. Isn’t this what I’m supposed to do? Isn’t this exactly what we talked about? His work had been published in Newsweek and Time. He had graduated from a well-known school. He had printed the work of famous photographers. He had credentials.

Two weeks later I was behind the wheel of my Honda in cutoffs and cheap sunglasses blasting Lucinda Williams, speeding west through the Iowa cornfields. Everything I owned was packed in the hatch. “You took my joy,” I chanted with Lucinda, “I wonnit back.”

It was five years later when I spotted her book at the Santa Fe Borders. The words of the opening chapter were still familiar, like the lyrics of a song I couldn’t quite forget. After a few minutes my son started to stir, and I slid the book back into its place. I wanted to buy it, to have a book on my shelf written by a friend. But we weren’t friends any more.

A memory: Holly and me, dancing. It’s late, the crowd has thinned. The lights go up and we stumble onto the street. She raises her hand for a cab, her hair glossy, eyeliner smudged a little. She tugs at her snug black top, leather clutch tucked neatly under her arm.

She glances back at me and smiles, her brown eyes bright. In the thick of the other late-night partiers, among the laughing and the clicking of heels and the couples kissing goodnight and the ever-glowing city sky, we hug. She disappears in a cab as I wave down my own ride. Soon I’m gone too, in the other direction, another night behind us.



SUSANNA SPACE

It took me years to write *A Name I Would Know*. During my 20s I was terrified of getting what I wanted in life and even more scared of failing—as a writer, as professional, as a friend, daughter, as a person. It took me a long time to work my way out of that. And then there was Holly—and the Hollies of the world. They blew my mind. How had they figured it all out? What made them so confident, so fearless?

It wasn't until much later that I recognized the differences between us were not about having it all figured out, but about confidence, social class, and a lot of other stuff. Ambition played a huge role too. I was very uncomfortable with my own ambition. It took a good decade for me to really make friends with my ambition, to begin to nurture those impulses rather than question them or tamp them down. Knowing Holly ultimately helped me figure that out.

My work has been published in *The Cincinnati Review*, *Pleiades*, *South Loop Review*, *Santa Fe TREND*. I am at work on a mixed-form memoir about feminism, motherhood, and loss. A graduate of The University of New Hampshire and Emerson College in Boston, I live in Santa Fe, New Mexico.

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