

# EPILOGUE

DR. MURPHY TURNED AWAY from the monitor. Earlier he had watched the recording of his patient's actions from the very first episode at West Wind. Not that he needed to view it to recall every detail.

Dr. Murphy had been treating Jack Logan for three years now.

"He always searches for the postcard the day before he's scheduled to leave?" Emily, the real Emily, sat across from Dr. Murphy. She wore a blue business suit. She looked just like the woman Jack described in *Have You Seen Her?*, though more reserved and a little anxious.

"Yes." Dr. Murphy imagined his med school mentor, a man who drilled him in patient confidentiality, rolling over in his grave as the doctor revealed patient information to someone he hardly knew. Or did he know her, through Jack Logan's book? What was true and what was Jack's imagination? Murphy was having a hard time remembering.

Jack wrote *Have You Seen Her?* after his initial breakdown during his first year of treatment. At the time, Jack appeared to be functioning better with each session. His grief would always

be there, but Murphy believed Jack was starting to become aware of his weaknesses, the first step in controlling them.

Then the second breakdown came.

Roman had found Jack in his room frantically going through his desk drawers, trying to find a postcard. The patient was distraught, believing that it was in one of his file folders.

They calmed Jack, eventually, but it was a setback. The therapy started again. A year later, Dr. Murphy was hopeful, thinking that his time Jack Logan was ready to leave West Wind, that this time it was for real. It wasn't.

By the third time, Murphy was fearful. The pattern was always the same. Dr. Murphy met with Jack the day before his discharge. All would go relatively well until Jack went back into his room and looked for a non-existent postcard with a picture of a missing girl.

Murphy decided at that point that he would wait for Jack to rebound and then try a different approach. He might have to compromise his principles, but he was running out of options. And this, he reminded himself, was an unusual situation.

The police had provided Dr. Murphy with a copy of their accident report on the death of Susan Logan. *Have You Seen Her?* hadn't been that far from reality. The crash had occurred near a gentleman's club named the Rendezvous, and there was an electronics store on the corner. The truck Susan ran into was doubled-parked in a loading zone just as Jack depicted. Susan had been looking back according to one witness, but there was no explanation as to why. There was no Alyson or anyone like her. The accident was called in by patrolman John McKenna.

Curious, Murphy went to the Rendezvous one Sunday evening. It wasn't as Jack had described. Not at all. There was no long hallway with pictures of models. There were two small bars as opposed to the one big one, and no raised stage. There were no booths where men could sit with exotic dancers. Dr. Murphy concluded Jack had never been there.

Then a waitress in a tight white dress walked up to him. She had dark hair and deep, blue eyes, but her eyebrows were blond. When she said her name was Candace, Murphy dashed out of there like Jack did at the beginning of chapter twenty-five. Driving home, Dr. Murphy knew what he had to do—and it wasn't to find Alyson Walker.

Emily White lived alone. Dr. Murphy found her through a friend of a friend, who agreed to send her an email. Emily responded, and she and Dr. Murphy exchanged a dozen messages. Then he visited her on a spring afternoon. Her house was just as Jack had described: a castle with a red sedan parked in a circular driveway. Emily was standing by the front door. Probably in the same spot where Jack had written he left her off after she confessed to having had Alyson's postcard sent to him.

It was the first time Dr. Murphy had met Susan Logan's half-sister and he was doing so with the understanding that there was something he thought she should read. Immediately upon meeting her, the doctor couldn't help but feel there could be more to this than he originally thought.

Emily smiled and shook his hand. She had a firm yet gentle grip. She invited him inside for something to drink. He politely declined, gave her a copy of *Have You Seen Her?*, and left.

Dr. Murphy was committed to this course and needed to let things play out with as little interference from him as possible. For everyone's sake.

Emily sent him a long email that night. The guilt over not contacting Jack had been eating at her she said. It was the first time she admitted it. Emily agreed to meet Dr. Murphy at his office the next day. There now seemed to be a sense of urgency on her part.

"Jack wrote this?" she asked after she was seated in front of Dr. Murphy's desk.

"Every word of it." Murphy took a nail file out of the center drawer and began filing, a habit he purposely formed.

His mentor had taught him to have an outward habit so that patients who needed to could focus on that and not on looking for other distractions.

“I am just like that.” Emily’s hand was shaking as she put *Have You Seen Her?* on top of his desk. “He got me pretty much right.”

Dr. Murphy sat back in his chair and reminded himself that this was not a patient.

“He’s a writer now?” Emily had bright green eyes. “He used to trade stocks.”

“It’s something he always wanted to do.”

“He never told us about that.”

“He finished *Have You Seen Her?* a year after the accident. He hasn’t written anything since.” Murphy continued filing.

“Is this about writer’s block?” Susan Logan’s sister appeared confused. Distraught, even. “Do you want me to help with that?”

“No.” Dr. Murphy sat up. “Ms. White, I want you to help Jack Logan leave West Wind.”

“Me?” she pointed to herself.

“Yes.” He wondered if she knew what he was asking of her. “Jack has unresolved issues with the others he’s written about, but it’s you he wants and needs forgiveness from. Ms. White—”

“Emily.” She almost smiled. “You know more about me than most people. You can call me Emily.”

“I think you can save him. Will you try?”

Emily paused. She hesitated so long he thought she would refuse. But no. “Yes, doctor. It’s about time I do.” She appeared to relax.

It was then that Dr. Murphy smiled and envisioned Jack Logan beginning the next chapter in his life.