

⚠ WARNING:
MATURE CONTENT

NO WAY
TO RUN

A hand is pressed against the left pane of a window. The window is divided into four panes. The text 'NO WAY TO RUN' is visible on the other side of the glass, appearing as if written on it. The lighting is blue and dramatic, with the hand and text appearing in silhouette against the bright blue background.

QREADS

JANICE GREENE



Darn!” Jasmine muttered under her breath. The business card she’d been holding had slipped from her fingers and fallen under the desk. Making sure her wheelchair was locked, she pushed forward on the seat and slowly slid down to the floor. Her legs folded under her.

She snatched up the card and began to pull herself back onto her chair. Then she looked out the door to see if anyone was watching. She hated for anyone to see her struggle. But Patty and Shauna were busy with customers. And it was near the end of the day. Soon they’d be taking the watches and necklaces and earrings and bracelets from the display

cases. De Lanza Jewelers would be closed for the night.

Jasmine went back to her computer, entering suppliers' names in neat rows. She tried not to yawn. Accounting wasn't work she loved, but it paid the rent. In fact she was very grateful to have her job. It wasn't legal, but some employers wouldn't consider hiring people who were paralyzed from the waist down.

She hardly noticed when the door chimed and someone walked in. Last-minute customers were not unusual. But then she heard a sound—half-gasp, half-sob—that made her scalp prickle.

Peering through the window at the front showroom, Jasmine saw a man in a ski mask standing close to Shauna. He poked a pistol with a long extension—a silencer, she knew from TV—into the girl's ribs. Her hands shaking, Shauna opened a display case.

Jasmine stared at the phone on her desk. "Move!" she told herself. "Call 911!" But she was frozen, helpless.

There was a click as the display case opened. Then the man shoved Shauna aside and neatly swept a pile of jewelry into his backpack. But just then Patty made a slight noise as she reached under the counter. Jasmine knew exactly what she was doing. That's where the silent alarm was hidden.

The man whirled around. Patty jerked her hand away from the counter, her eyes wide with terror. He knew what she'd done. The man aimed the gun and fired. There was a muffled pop. Then Jasmine saw a dark stain spread across the center of Patty's blouse before the wounded woman crumpled to the floor.

The man turned and hurried to the door, pulling off his ski mask. But just as his face was revealed, he glanced into the back office and saw Jasmine.

For a long moment, she stared at the light blue eyes and the cleft chin in his narrow face. He stared back fiercely. Then suddenly he was gone.

Jasmine turned to Shauna. She was bent

over the counter, as if holding herself up. Her body shook with sobs.

Jasmine wheeled over to her quickly. “Move it, Shauna! Go check Patty’s breathing,” she said. “I’ll call 911.”

“Her breathing?” Shauna’s voice was little more than a whimper.

“Tip her head back a little,” said Jasmine. “Then put your ear next to her mouth. Tell me if you can feel any air coming out.”

Shauna bent over Patty and did as she was told. “I can’t feel anything!” she cried. “Jasmine—she’s *dead!*” In panic, Shauna’s hands fluttered to her face.

Jasmine grabbed Shauna’s wrist. “Calm down!” she ordered. “You’re going to check her pulse now.”

Shauna pulled away. “I can’t touch her! She’s—she’s *dead*, Jasmine!”

“Get the phone and do what I tell you,” Jasmine ordered. Then she slid onto the floor and pulled herself over to Patty. The young woman had a weak pulse, but she wasn’t breathing at all.

Shauna called 911 while Jasmine began rescue breathing.

By the time the paramedics arrived, Jasmine's neck ached and her upper body was shaking with exhaustion.

Quickly, the two young men lifted Patty onto a stretcher. "Will she make it?" Jasmine asked.

"I can't tell until we have a look at her," the man nearest her said sternly. Then he noticed Jasmine's empty wheelchair and his look softened. Smiling, he patted Jasmine on the shoulder. "Good for you—you did all right," he said.

Jasmine heard the harsh wail of more sirens. Then two police officers walked in. Jasmine's heart sank. She longed to be out of the store. More than anything, she wanted to close her eyes and never look at this place again.



One officer sat down with Shauna, another with Jasmine, and the questions

QREADS

SERIES 1

Black Widow Beauty
Danger on Ice
Empty Eyes
The Experiment
The Kula'i Street Knights
The Mystery Quilt
No Way to Run
The Ritual
The 75-Cent Son
The Very Bad Dream

SERIES 2

The Accuser
Ben Cody's Treasure
Blackout
The Eye of the Hurricane
The House on the Hill
Look to the Light
Ring of Fear
The Tiger Lily Code
Tug-of-War
The White Room

SERIES 3

The Bad Luck Play
Breaking Point
Death Grip
No Exit
No Place Like Home
Outcast
The Plot
Something Dreadful Down Below
Sounds of Terror
The Woman Who Loved a Ghost

SERIES 4

The Barge Ghost
Beasts
Blood and Basketball
Bus 99
The Dark Lady
Dimes to Dollars
Read My Lips
Ruby's Terrible Secret
Student Bodies
Tough Girl

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