

*The*  
**ROOM**  
*at the* **END**



**HARMONY KENT**

The Room at the End  
By Harmony Kent

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## FOREWORD

Although this book follows British English spelling, grammar, and punctuation conventions throughout, I use the American spelling of 'Harbor' rather than the English use of 'Harbour' so as to match the series spelling, of which this book forms a part, and which uses American conventions. All other words are rendered using British English spelling.

Thank you for understanding.



## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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Co-Author in this *Harbor Pointe* series, Staci Troilo, designed the front cover for this book as well as the logos for both the series and the section breaks. My thanks to her for her wonderful creation.

I formatted each book.



## **POSSIBLE TRIGGER WARNINGS:**

This novella contains many references to suicide and suicidal thoughts. It also references off-page bereavement and off-page female to female marriage.

Some references to violence are mentioned, but remain vague and mostly off-page.

No profanity is used.

If any of these are likely to trigger you, please use your discretion when purchasing/reading this book.





*Dedicated to my wonderful friends, fellow writers, and Story Empire Website contributors. All of us together came up with the idea for this fantastic Harbor Pointe Series.*

*I further dedicate this book to both my constant and new readers. Without you, there would be no point.*



*'One need not be a chamber to be haunted. One need not be a house. The brain has corridors surpassing Material place.'*

From the Poems of Emily Dickenson

*'People might call it cognitive dissonance. Psychologists might point out to her that humans are perfectly capable of believing two opposing ideas at the same time, or engaging in behaviours that contradict their core beliefs. They might tell her that humans are highly adept at inventing thoughts and narratives to support the dissonance within. [...] this is true. She's able to bury dark things in her subconscious and to look the other way. It's a survival tool.'*

Loreth Anne White, A Maid's Diary



# CHAPTER 1



**N**ovember, 2072, Harbor Pointe Inn

Much like her life, the hotel failed to meet expectations. Even if the thieving government hadn't given the old place a complete refurbishment and removed all traces of its previous owners, it wouldn't have felt the same. Wouldn't have been *hers*. Mia shrugged the weight from her tense shoulders and showed a straight spine to the manager. With a forced air of calm nonchalance, she strode to within a pace of the reception counter. 'Mia Hawthorne.'

The manager's eyebrows lifted. Short, straight black hair in a severe cut framed her thin face and sucked any joy from her pale grey eyes. 'Ah, yes. *The Last Sanctuary* allocated you to us.'

Mia's smile felt more grimace than mirth. 'Ironic, considering.'

'Quite.' The stern-looking woman peered over her glasses and studied the new arrival. After a couple of seconds, she leant over the counter and offered her hand,

which Mia shook. 'Hilary Cameron. Let me show you to your accommodations.'

Hilary collected a couple of key cards from a drawer and walked around to Mia's side of the desk. 'Given the ... er ... nature of your stay with us, I felt it best to house you in the old keeper's cottage.'

Surprised, Mia stooped, picked up her two bags, and fell into step with Hilary. 'Right. Thank you.'

The pair walked in a silence which fell somewhere between stiffly-companionable and uncomfortable. What did the government employed manager think of the Harbor Pointe Inn's old owner coming here to end her life? For that matter, what did Mia herself think? At the thought, her abdominal muscles flinched and tightened. *I'll find out soon, I suppose.* With a soft sigh, she kept pace with Hilary as they crossed the courtyard—nestled between the horseshoe-embrace of the hotel's U-structure—and left the property via a back gate, which led to the rough track up to the keeper's cottage and, further on toward the bluffs, the lighthouse.

The chill wind carried malevolent memories on its deceptively soft breeze and froze the marrow in Mia's bones. Could she face the lighthouse again? And what about Daniel? Did her cousin work here still? How would he feel about her return, and her reasons for doing so? Hesitant to give anything away unnecessarily, Mia refrained from vocalising any of her many questions and concerns. With an internal shrug, she reminded herself, *You'll find out faster than you want. You know how tight-knit everyone is around here.* On that ominous thought, Mia jerked to a stop when Hilary halted their progress at the front door of the old stone keeper's cottage. On the

outside, the small dwelling hadn't changed at all in the few years she'd been away, unlike the hotel, of which the government had utterly ruined the rustic aesthetic.

A tight smile stretched the manager's thin lips as she gave both key cards to Mia and shook her hand. 'I'll leave you to it. The fridge is stocked with essentials. No alcohol.' The woman gave Mia a stern glower, and she had to stifle a laugh—what did it matter whether she imbibed or not, considering what she'd come here to do? Or had it more to do with the cost, seeing as she'd come here on the government's credit due to her current financial straits? Whatever, she refused to meet Ms Cameron's gaze as the woman droned on.

'However, you're welcome to dine up at the inn if you'd prefer. Breakfast is buffet style and runs between seven and nine-thirty. Lunch is light food, such as sandwiches and soup. You may turn up anytime between twelve-thirty and one-thirty. For the evening meal, you'll need to book with us in advance ... give us at least three-hour's notice. A full menu, as well as room service options, you'll find in the cottage.' Here, Hillary hesitated before continuing. 'Given that you're all the way out here—' The manager gestured around the bluffs, forest, and remote, rugged track. '—the staff would appreciate you not ordering for room service after dark, unless you're prepared to come to the inn to collect it for yourself. Alternatively, you may order online from Thatcher's in town, and they'll deliver via drone right to your door.' She gave Mia a brief nod—more a jerk of the head—and added, 'Put it on the inn's tab,' and turned to walk away. 'I'll leave you to get yourself settled in.'

'Thanks.' Mia's words dissipated on the brisk wind,

and she doubted the officious Ms Cameron had even heard her parting attempt at gratitude. Hard to appreciate a government usurper taking control of your old home and your business and your life, short as it was about to become. Mia had come here for one reason and one reason only: to die at her own hands. Was it mere coincidence that *The Last Sanctuary* had sent her here so she could kill herself, or simply one of those weird coincidental curve-balls life loved to lob your way from time to time?