

Snowflakes

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Xandra Lammers

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Chapter I

Julia had booked a seat by the window, and after the passengers had taken their places drop by drop, the plane took off. Below her, she saw the familiar landscape passing by. An indefinable feeling dawned on her, which she suppressed. This was life.

While she had been browsing the internet, sitting at her wooden desk, the advertisement had caught her attention. It had been raining for days on end. Water droplets beaded up on the window. The ad's white house was in a suburb of 1,700 inhabitants, with a cul-de-sac bisecting the neighbourhood, which was surrounded by a snowy landscape of a pine wood and a frozen lake. Its residents were leaving for the south for a year, and they were looking for a 'reliable person' to watch over their house. The neighbourhood had the occasional shop, a café/restaurant and a hotel. It was a 15-minute bus ride to the town centre. She had figured it out pretty well. She was not stupid. She was a survivor. At least, that is how she wanted to see herself. She was the only one to see it that way. She would prove to everyone else that she was.

She had been unable to give any meaningful answer when people asked her what her degree course in cultural anthropology entailed. She had heard herself uttering sentences without knowing what she was saying. She was leading the