

*Trial, Misery's Lover, Misery's Gift, Misery's Challenge, Misery's Triumph, Misery's Dilemma.* That's eight!

PAUL. Secret?

ANNIE. What?

PAUL. Nine.

ANNIE. Nine? Oh! Nine?? Why didn't you say?! When? WHEN? Please say "soon."

PAUL. Very soon.

ANNIE. (*So excited.*) Has it got a name? How stupid can I get? Of course it has a name. What is it, what is it?

PAUL. *Misery's Child.*

ANNIE. *Misery's CHILD?! I'm going to have a heart attack! Oh Paul, I want to read it tonight.*

PAUL. Maybe not quite that soon, but it'll be in bookstores any day.

*Beat.*

How long do you think before the phone lines are back up? I'd like to let my agent know I'm still breathing. And my daughter... my daughter must be worried about me.

ANNIE. It's the pass, Paul—it's closed, so no repair trucks can get through. But if you give me their phone numbers, I can try them for you as soon as it's possible.

PAUL. Okay. Thank you. For everything. It's... well, ironic, to say the least.

ANNIE. What is?

PAUL. When I finished this book the morning of the storm I felt more alive and more free than I had in years. And then later that day, I almost died.

ANNIE. But I was there.

PAUL. Yes.

ANNIE. Oh Paul. We are going to be so happy here.

*Paul isn't sure what to make of this, but this is a moment for Annie.*