

SIDNEY SHELDON

A photograph of a woman's back and hair, styled in a large, intricate bun. She is wearing large, ornate, multi-tiered earrings with blue and white beads. The background is a soft, light-colored gradient.

IF
TOMORROW
COMES

If Tomorrow Comes

Sidney Sheldon

 HarperCollins e-books

For Barry
with love

Table of Contents

[Cover Page](#)

[Title Page](#)

[Dedication](#)

[BOOK ONE](#)

[1](#)

[2](#)

[3](#)

[4](#)

[5](#)

[6](#)

[7](#)

[8](#)

[9](#)

[10](#)

[11](#)

[BOOK TWO](#)

[12](#)

[13](#)

[14](#)

[BOOK THREE](#)

[15](#)

[16](#)

[17](#)

[18](#)

[19](#)

[20](#)

[21](#)

[22](#)

[23](#)

[24](#)

[25](#)

[26](#)

[27](#)

[28](#)

[29](#)

[30](#)

[31](#)

[32](#)

[33](#)

[34](#)

[About the Author](#)

[IF TOMORROW COMES](#)

[Copyright](#)

[About the Publisher](#)

BOOK ONE

1

New Orleans

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 20—11:00 P.M.

She undressed slowly, dreamily, and when she was naked, she selected a bright red negligee to wear so that the blood would not show. Doris Whitney looked around the bedroom for the last time to make certain that the pleasant room, grown dear over the past thirty years, was neat and tidy. She opened the drawer of the bedside table and carefully removed the gun. It was shiny black, and terrifyingly cold. She placed it next to the telephone and dialed her daughter's number in Philadelphia. She listened to the echo of the distant ringing. And then there was a soft "Hello?"

"Tracy...I just felt like hearing the sound of your voice, darling."

"What a nice surprise, Mother."

"I hope I didn't wake you up."

"No. I was reading. Just getting ready to go to sleep. Charles and I were going out for dinner, but the weather's too nasty. It's snowing hard here. What's it doing there?"

Dear God, we're talking about the weather, Doris Whitney thought, when there's so much I want to tell her. And can't.

"Mother? Are you there?"

Doris Whitney stared out the window. "It's raining." And she thought, *How melodramatically appropriate. Like an Alfred Hitchcock movie.*

"What's that noise?" Tracy asked.

Thunder. Too deeply wrapped in her thoughts, Doris had not been aware of it. New Orleans was having a storm. *Continued rain*, the weatherman had said. *Sixty-six degrees in New Orleans. By evening the rain will be turning to thundershowers. Be sure to carry your umbrellas.* She would not need an umbrella.

"That's thunder, Tracy." She forced a note of cheerfulness into her voice. "Tell me what's happening in Philadelphia."

“I feel like a princess in a fairy tale, Mother,” Tracy said. “I never believed anyone could be so happy. Tomorrow night I’m meeting Charles’s parents.” She deepened her voice as though making a pronouncement. “The Stanhopes, of Chestnut Hill,” she sighed. “They’re an institution. I have butterflies the size of dinosaurs.”

“Don’t worry. They’ll love you, darling.”

“Charles says it doesn’t matter. *He* loves me. And I adore him. I can’t wait for you to meet him. He’s fantastic.”

“I’m sure he is.” She would never meet Charles. She would never hold a grandchild in her lap. *No. I must not think about that.* “Does he know how lucky he is to have you, baby?”

“I keep telling him.” Tracy laughed. “Enough about me. Tell me what’s going on there. How are you feeling?”

You’re in perfect health, Doris, were Dr. Rush’s words. *You’ll live to be a hundred.* One of life’s little ironies. “I feel wonderful.” *Talking to you.*

“Got a boyfriend yet?” Tracy teased.

Since Tracy’s father had died five years earlier, Doris Whitney had not even considered going out with another man, despite Tracy’s encouragement.

“No boyfriends.” She changed the subject. “How is your job? Still enjoying it?”

“I love it. Charles doesn’t mind if I keep working after we’re married.”

“That’s wonderful, baby. He sounds like a very understanding man.”

“He is. You’ll see for yourself.”

There was a loud clap of thunder, like an offstage cue. It was time. There was nothing more to say except a final farewell. “Good-bye, my darling.” She kept her voice carefully steady.

“I’ll see you at the wedding, Mother. I’ll call you as soon as Charles and I set a date.”

“Yes.” There was one final thing to say, after all. “I love you very, very much, Tracy.” And Doris Whitney carefully replaced the receiver.

She picked up the gun. There was only one way to do it. Quickly. She raised the gun to her temple and squeezed the trigger.

Philadelphia

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 21—8:00 A.M.

Tracy Whitney stepped out of the lobby of her apartment building into a gray, sleety rain that fell impartially on sleek limousines driven down Market Street by uniformed chauffeurs, and on the abandoned and boarded-up houses huddled together in the slums of North Philadelphia. The rain washed the limousines clean and made sodden messes of the garbage piled high in front of the neglected row houses. Tracy Whitney was on her way to work. Her pace was brisk as she walked east on Chestnut Street toward the bank, and it was all she could do to keep from singing aloud. She wore a bright-yellow raincoat, boots, and a yellow rain hat that barely contained a mass of shining chestnut hair. She was in her mid-twenties, with a lively, intelligent face, a full, sensuous mouth, sparkling eyes that could change from a soft moss green to a dark jade in moments, and a trim, athletic figure. Her skin ran the gamut from a translucent white to a deep rose, depending on whether she was angry, tired, or excited. Her mother had once told her, “Honestly, child, sometimes I don’t recognize you. You’ve got all the colors of the wind in you.”

Now, as Tracy walked down the street, people turned to smile, envying the happiness that shone on her face. She smiled back at them.

It’s indecent for anyone to be this happy, Tracy Whitney thought. I’m marrying the man I love, and I’m going to have his baby. What more could anyone ask?

As Tracy approached the bank, she glanced at her watch. Eight-twenty. The doors of the Philadelphia Trust and Fidelity Bank would not be open to employees for another ten minutes, but Clarence Desmond, the bank’s senior vice-president in charge of the international department, was already turning off the outside alarm and opening the door. Tracy enjoyed watching the morning ritual. She stood in the rain, waiting, as Desmond entered the bank and locked the door behind him.

Banks the world over have arcane safety procedures, and the Philadelphia Trust and Fidelity Bank was no exception. The routine never varied, except for the security signal, which was changed every week. The signal that week was a half-lowered venetian blind, indicating to the employees waiting outside that a search was in progress to make certain that no intruders were concealed on the premises, waiting to hold the employees hostage. Clarence Desmond was checking the lavatories, storeroom, vault, and safe-deposit area. Only when he was fully satisfied that he was alone would the venetian blind be raised as a sign that all was well.

The senior bookkeeper was always the first of the employees to be admitted. He would take his place next to the emergency alarm until all the other employees were inside, then lock the door behind them.

Promptly at 8:30, Tracy Whitney entered the ornate lobby with her fellow workers, took off her raincoat, hat, and boots, and listened with secret amusement to the others complaining about the rainy weather.

“The damned wind carried away my umbrella,” a teller complained. “I’m soaked.”

“I passed two ducks swimming down Market Street,” the head cashier joked.

“The weatherman says we can expect another week of this. I wish I was in Florida.”

Tracy smiled and went to work. She was in charge of the cable-transfer department. Until recently, the transfer of money from one bank to another and from one country to another had been a slow, laborious process, requiring multiple forms to be filled out and dependent on national and international postal services. With the advent of computers, the situation had changed dramatically, and enormous amounts of money could be transferred instantaneously. It was Tracy’s job to extract overnight transfers from the computer and to make computer transfers to other banks. All transactions were in code, changed regularly to prevent unauthorized access. Each day, millions of electronic dollars passed through Tracy’s hands. It was fascinating work, the lifeblood that fed the arteries of business all over the globe, and until Charles Stanhope III had come into Tracy’s life, banking had been the most exciting thing in the world for her. The Philadelphia Trust and Fidelity Bank had a large international division, and