



The Lost (In Death)

By Patricia Gaffney, J.D. Robb, Mary Blayney, Ruth Ryan Langan

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Featuring an In Death story from #1 *New York Times* bestselling author J. D. Robb, this thrilling anthology ventures into a world where the rules of love, time, and place can be forever lost...

In J. D. Robb's "Missing in Death," Detective Eve Dallas investigates a female tourist's disappearance during a ferry ride and starts to wonder...if she didn't jump, and she's not on board, then where in the world is she?

In Patricia Gaffney's "The Dog Days of Laurie Summer," a woman awakens after a severe accident to find a world as familiar as it is unsettling.

In Mary Blayney's "Lost in Paradise," a man locked in an island fortress finds hope for freedom in an enigmatic nurse.

And Ruth Ryan Langan's "Legacy" belongs to a young woman who uncovers a family secret buried on the grounds of a magnificent but imposing Irish castle.

From the Paperback edition.

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Editorial Review

Review

Praise for the In Death series

“Robb is a virtuoso.”—*Seattle Post-Intelligencer*

“It’s *Law & Order: SVU*—in the future.”—*Entertainment Weekly*

About the Author

J. D. Robb is the pseudonym for a #1 *New York Times* bestselling author of more than 200 novels, including the bestselling In Death series. There are more than 500 million copies of her books in print.

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Missing in Death

J. D. RoBB **One**

On a day kissed gently by summer, three thousand, seven hundred and sixty-one passengers cruised the New York Harbor on the Staten Island Ferry. Two of them had murder on their minds.

The other three thousand, seven hundred and fifty-nine aboard the bright orange ferry christened the Hillary Rodham Clinton were simply along for the ride. Most were tourists who happily took their vids and snaps of the retreating Manhattan skyline or that iconic symbol of freedom, the Statue of Liberty.

Even in 2060, nearly two centuries after she’d first greeted hopeful immigrants to a new world, nobody beat “The Lady.”

Those who jockeyed for the best views munched on soy chips, sucked down tubes of soft drinks from the snack bars while the ferry chugged placidly along on calm waters under baby blue skies.

With the bold sun streaming, the scent of sunscreen mixed with the scent of water, many jammed the decks for the duration of the twenty-five-minute ride from Lower Manhattan to Staten Island. A turbo would have taken half the time, but the ferry wasn’t about expediency. It was about tradition.

Most planned to get off at St. George, jam the terminal, then simply load back on again to complete the round trip. It was free, it was summer, it was a pretty way to spend an hour.

Some midday commuters, eschewing the bridges, the turbos, or the air trams, sat inside, out of the biggest crowds, and passed the time with their PPCs or ’links.

Summer meant more kids. Babies cried or slept, toddlers whined or giggled, and parents sought to distract the bored or fractious by pointing out the grand lady or a passing boat.

For Carolee Grogan of Springfield, Missouri, the ferry ride checked off another item on her Must Do list on the family vacation she’d lobbied for. Other Must Dos included the top of the Empire State Building, the Central Park Zoo, the Museum of Natural History, St. Pat’s, the Metropolitan Museum of Art (though she wasn’t sure she’d successfully harangue her husband and ten- and seven-year-old sons into that one), Ellis Island, Memorial Park, a Broadway show—she didn’t care which one—and shopping on Fifth Avenue.

In the spirit of fairness, she’d added on a ballgame at Yankee Stadium, and fully accepted she would have to wander the cathedral of Tiffany’s alone while her gang hit the video heaven of Times Square.

At forty-three, Carolee was living a long-cherished dream. She'd finally pushed, shoved and nagged her husband east of the Mississippi.

Could Europe be far behind?

When she started to take a snapshot of her "boys," as she called Steve and their sons, a man standing nearby offered to take one of the whole family. Carolee happily turned over her camera, posed with her boys with the dignified lady of liberty behind them.

"See." She gave her husband an elbow poke as they went back to looking out at the water. "He was nice. Not all New Yorkers are rude and nasty."

"Carolee, he was a tourist, just like us. He's probably from Toledo or somewhere." But he smiled when he said it. It was more fun to yank her chain than to admit he was having a pretty good time.

"I'm going to ask him."

Steve only shook his head as his wife walked over to chat up the picture taker. It was so Carolee. She could—and did—talk to anyone anywhere about anything.

When she came back she offered Steve a smug smile. "He's from Maryland, but," she added with a quick finger jab, "he's lived in New York for almost ten years. He's going over to Staten Island to visit his daughter. She just had a baby. A girl. His wife's been staying with them the past few days to help out, and she's meeting him at the terminal. It's their first grandchild."

"Did you find out how long he's been married, where and how he met his wife, who he voted for in the last election?"

She laughed and gave Steve another poke.

"I'm thirsty."

She glanced down at her youngest. "You know, me, too. Why don't you and I go get some drinks for everybody." She grabbed his hand and snaked her way through the people crowded on deck. "Are you having a good time, Pete?"

"It's pretty neat, but I really want to go see the penguins."

"Tomorrow, first thing."

"Can we get a soy dog?"

"Where are you putting them? You had one an hour ago."

"They smell good."

Vacation meant indulgence, she decided. "Soy dogs it is."

"But I have to pee."

"Okay." As a veteran mother, she'd scoped out the restrooms when they'd boarded the ferry. Now she detoured to steer them toward the nearest facilities.

And, of course, since Pete mentioned it, now she had to pee. She pointed toward the men's room. "If you get out first, you stand right here. You remember what the ferry staff looks like, the uniforms? If you need help, go right to one of them."

"Mom, I'm just going to pee."

"Well, me, too. You wait for me here if you get out first."

She watched him go in, knowing full well he rolled his eyes the minute his back was to her. It amused her as she turned toward the women's room.

And saw the Out of Order sign.

"Shoot."

She weighed her options. Hold it until Pete came out, then hold it some more while they got the dogs and drinks—because he'd whine and sulk otherwise—then make her way to the other restroom.

Or . . . maybe she could just peek in. Surely not all the stalls were out of order. She only needed one.

She pushed open the door, hurried in. She didn't want to leave Pete alone for long.

She made the turn at the line of sinks, her mind on getting the provisions and squeezing back to the rail to watch Staten Island come into view.

She stopped dead, her limbs frozen in shock.

Blood, she thought, could only think, so much blood. The woman on the floor seemed bathed in it.

The man standing over the body held a still-dripping knife in one hand and a stunner in the other.

“I’m sorry,” he said—and, to her shocked mind, sounded sincere.

Even as Carolee sucked in the air to scream, took the first stumbling step back, he triggered the stunner.

“Really very sorry,” he said as Carolee fell to the floor.

Racing across New York Harbor in a turbo wasn’t how Lieutenant Eve Dallas expected to spend her afternoon. She’d played second lead that morning to her partner’s primary role in the unfortunate demise of Vickie Tredor, the third wife of the unrepentant Alan Tredor, who’d smashed her skull with an inferior bottle of California chardonnay.

According to the new widower, it wasn’t accurate to say he’d bashed her brains out when she simply hadn’t had any brains to begin with.

While the prosecutor and the counsel for the defense hammered out a plea arrangement, Eve had made a dent in her paperwork, discussed strategy with two of her detectives on an ongoing case and congratulated another on closing one.

A pretty good day, in her estimation.

Now, she and Peabody, her partner, were speeding across the water in a boat she judged to be about the size of a surfboard toward the orange hulk of a ferry stalled halfway between Manhattan and Staten Island.

“This is absolutely mag!” Peabody stood near the bow, her square-jawed face lifted to the wind, her short, flippy hair flying.

“Why?”

“Jeez, Dallas!” Peabody lowered her shades down her nose, exposing delighted brown eyes. “We’re getting a boat ride. We’re on the water. Half the time you can forget Manhattan’s an island.”

“That’s what I like about it. Out here, it makes you wonder, how come it doesn’t sink? All that weight—the buildings, the streets, the people. It should go down like a stone.”

“Come on.” With a laugh, Peabody pushed her shades back in place. “Statue of Liberty,” she pointed out.

“She’s the best.”

Eve wouldn’t argue. She’d come close to dying inside the landmark, fighting radical terrorists bent on blowing it up. Even now, she could look at its lines, its grandeur, and see her husband, bleeding, clinging to a ledge outside the proud face.

They’d survived that one, she mused, and Roarke had diffused the bomb, saved the day. Symbols mattered, and because they’d fought and bled, people could chug by on the ferry every day and snap their pictures of freedom.

That was fine, that was the job. What she didn’t get was why Homicide had to zip off the island because the Department of Transportation cops couldn’t find a passenger.

Blood all over a bathroom and a missing woman. Interesting, sure, she decided, but not really her turf. In fact, it wasn’t turf at all. It was water. It was a big orange boat on the water.

Why didn’t boats sink? The errant thought reminded her that sometimes they did, and she decided not to dwell on it.

When the turbo approached that big orange boat, she noted people ranged along the rail on the tiers of decks. Some of them waved.

Beside her, Peabody waved back.

“Cut it out,” Eve ordered.

“Sorry. It’s knee-jerk. Looks like DOT sent out backup,” she commented, nodding toward the turbos at the base of the ferry with the Department of Transportation logo emblazoned on the hull. “I hope she didn’t fall over. Or jump. But somebody would notice that, right?”

“More likely she wandered off from the passenger areas, got lost and is currently trying to wander back.”

“Blood,” Peabody reminded her, and Eve shrugged.

“Let’s just wait and see.”

That, too, was part of the job—the waiting and seeing. She'd been a cop for a dozen years and knew the dangers of jumping to conclusions.

She shifted her weight as the turbo slowed, bracing on long legs while she scanned the rails, the faces, the open areas. Her short hair fluttered around her face while those eyes—golden brown, long and cop-flat—studied what might or might not be a crime scene.

When the turbo was secured, she stepped off.

She judged the man who stepped forward to offer his hand as late twenties. He wore the casual summer khakis and light blue shirt with its DOT emblem well. Sun-streaked hair waved around a face tanned by sun or design. Pale green eyes contrasted with the deeper tone, and added an intensity.

“Lieutenant, Detective, I’m Inspector Warren. I’m glad you’re here.”

“You haven’t located your passenger, Inspector?”

“No. A search is still under way.” He gestured for them to walk with him. “We’ve added a dozen officers to the DOT crew aboard to complete the search, and to secure the area where the missing woman was last seen.”

They started up a set of stairs.

“How many passengers aboard?”

“The ticker counted three thousand, seven hundred and sixty-one boarding at Whitehall.”

“Inspector, it wouldn’t be procedure to call Homicide on a missing passenger.”

“No, but none of this is hitting SOP. I have to tell you, Lieutenant, it doesn’t make sense.” He took the next set of stairs, glancing over at the people hugging the rail. “I don’t mind admitting, this situation is above my pay grade. And right now, most of the passengers are being patient. It’s mostly tourists, and this is kind of an adventure. But if we hold the ferry here much longer, it’s not going to be pretty.”

Eve stepped onto the next deck where DOT officials had cordoned off a path. “Why don’t you give me a rundown, Inspector?”

“The missing woman is Carolee Grogan, tourist from Missouri, on board with her husband and two sons. Age forty-three. I’ve got her description and a photo taken aboard this afternoon. She and her youngest went to get drinks, hit the johns first. He went into the men’s, and she was going into the women’s. Told him to wait for her right outside if he got out first. He waited, and she didn’t come out.”

Warren paused outside the restroom area, nodded to another DOT official on the women’s room door.

“Nobody else went in or out either. After a few minutes, he called her on his ’link. She didn’t answer. He called his father, and the father and the other son came over. The father, Steven Grogan, asked a woman—ah, Sara Hunning—if she’d go in and check on his wife.”

Warren opened the door. “And this is what she found inside.”

Eve stepped in behind Warren. She smelled the blood immediately. A homicide cop gets a nose for it. It soured the citrusy/sterilized odor of the air in the black-and-white room with its steel sinks, and around the dividing wall, the white-doored stalls.

It washed over the floor, a spreading dark pool that snaked in trails across the white, slashed over the stall doors, the opposing wall, like abstract graffiti.

“If that’s Grogan’s,” Eve said, “you’re not looking for a missing passenger. You’re looking for a dead one.”

Two

“Record on, Peabody.” Eve switched on her own. “Dallas, Lieutenant Eve; Peabody, Detective Delia; Warren, DOT Inspector . . .”

“Jake,” he supplied.

“On scene aboard Staten Island Ferry.”

“It’s the Hillary Rodham Clinton,” he added. “Second deck, port side, women’s restroom.”

She cocked a brow, nodded. “Responding to report of missing passenger, Grogan, Carolee, last seen entering this area. Peabody, get a sample of the blood. We’ll need to make sure it’s human, then type it.”

She opened the field kit she hadn’t fully believed she’d need for Seal It. “How many people have been in and out of here since Grogan was missed?”

"Since I've been on board, just me. Prior, to the best of my knowledge, Sara Hunning, Steven Grogan and two ferry officers on board."

"There's an Out of Order sign on the door."

"Yeah."

"But she came in anyway."

"Nobody we've spoken to can absolutely confirm. She told the kid she was going in."

Sealed, Eve stepped into the first of the four stalls, waved a hand over the sensor. The toilet flushed efficiently. She repeated the gesture in the other three stalls, with the same results.

"Appears to be in order."

"It's human," Peabody told her, holding up her gauge. "Type A Negative."

"Some smears, but no drag marks," Eve murmured. She gestured toward a narrow utility closet. "Who opened that?"

"I did," Jake told her. "On the chance she—or her body—was in there. It was locked."

"There's only one way in and out." Peabody walked around to the sink area. "No windows. If that's Carolee Grogan's blood, she didn't stand up and walk out of here."

Eve stood at the edge of the blood pool. "How do you get a dead body out of a public restroom, on a ferry in the middle of the harbor, under the noses of more than three thousand people? And why the hell don't you leave it where it dropped in the first place?"

"It's not an answer to that," Jake began, "but this is a tourist boat. It doesn't carry any vehicles, has extra concession areas. People tend to hug the rails and look out, or hang in a concession and snack as they watch out the windows. Still, it'd take a lot of luck and enormous cojones to cart a bleeding body along the deck."

"Balls maybe, but nobody's got that kind of luck. I'll need this room sealed, Inspector. And I want to talk to the missing woman's family, and the witness. Peabody, let's get the sweepers out here. I want every inch of this room covered."

Eve considered Jake's foresight in having the Grogan family sequestered in one of the canteen's solid. It kept them away from other passengers, gave them seats, and access to food and drink. That, she assumed, had kept the kids calm.

Calm enough, she noted, for the smaller of the two boys to curl on the narrow seat of the booth with his head in his father's lap.

The man continued to stroke the boy's hair, and his face was both pale and frightened when Eve crossed to him.

"Mr. Grogan, I'm Lieutenant Dallas, with the New York City Police and Security Department. This is Detective Peabody."

"You found her. You found Carolee. She's—"

"We haven't yet located your wife."

"She told me to wait." The boy with his head on Steve's lap opened his eyes. "I did. But she didn't come back."

"Did you see her go into the other bathroom?"

"Nuh-uh, but she said she was gonna, and then we were going to get dogs and drinks. And she gave me the routine."

"Routine?"

He sat up, but leaned against his father's side. "How I had to wait right there, and how if I needed anything, I was supposed to get one of the guys who work on the boat. The uniform guys."

"Okay. Then you went into the men's bathroom."

"It was only for a minute. I just had to . . . you know. Then I came out and waited like she said. It always takes girls longer. But it was really long, and I was thirsty. I used my 'link.' He slid his eyes toward his father. "We're only allowed to use them if it's really important, but I was thirsty."

"It's okay, Pete. She didn't answer, so Pete tagged me, and Will and I headed back to where he was waiting. They'd been gone at least ten minutes by then. There was the Out of Order sign on the door, so I thought she

might've used another restroom. Except she wouldn't. She wouldn't have left Pete. So I asked this woman if she'd just take a look inside. And then . . .”

He shook his head.

“She said there was blood.” The older boy swallowed hard. “The lady came running out, yelling there was blood.”

“I went in.” Steve rubbed his eyes. “I thought maybe she fell, hit her head, or . . . But she wasn't in there.”

“There was blood,” Will said again.

“Your mom wasn't in there,” Steve said firmly. “She's somewhere else.”

“Where?” Pete demanded in a voice perilously close to weeping. “Where did she go?”

“That's what we're going to find out.” Peabody spoke with easy confidence. “Pete, Will, why don't you help me get drinks for everybody? Inspector Warren, is it okay if we forage in here?”

“You bet. I'll give you a hand.” He added a warm smile. “And make it Jake.”

Eve slid into the booth. “I need to ask you some questions.”

“It was too much blood,” he said in a soft voice, a voice that wouldn't carry to his children. “A fatal loss of blood. I'm a doctor. I'm an ER doctor, and that much blood loss without immediate medical attention . . . For God's sake, what happened to Carolee?”

“Do you know her blood type, Dr. Grogan?”

“Yes, of course. She's O Positive.”

“You're certain?”

“Yes, I'm certain. She and Pete are O Positive. I'm A Positive, so's Will.”

“It wasn't her blood. The blood in the restroom wasn't hers.”

“Not hers.” He trembled, and she watched him struggle for composure, but his eyes teared. “Not her blood. Not Carolee's blood.”

“Why were you going to Staten Island?”

“What? We weren't. I mean . . .” He pressed his hands to his face again, breathed, then lowered them. Steady nerves, Eve thought. She imagined an ER doc needed them. “We were taking the ride over, then we were going to ride back. Just for the experience. We're on vacation. It's our second day on vacation.”

“Does she know anyone in New York?”

“No.” He shook his head slowly. “She wasn't in there. But she wouldn't have left Pete. It doesn't make sense. She doesn't answer her 'link. I've tried it over and over.” He pushed his across the table. “She doesn't answer.”

He glanced toward the concession where Peabody and Jake kept the kids busy, then leaned closer to Eve.

“She would never have left our boy, not willingly. Something happened in that room. Somebody died in that room. If she saw what happened—”

“Let's not get ahead of ourselves. We're still searching. I'm going to check on the status.”

Rising, she signaled to Peabody. “It's not her blood. It's the wrong type.”

“That's something. They're really nice kids. They're scared.”

“They're on vacation. Don't know anyone in New York according to the husband, and he comes off straight to me. What doesn't come off is how a body could disappear, a woman who we'll presume for the moment is alive could disappear, and potentially a killer/abductor could disappear. They're here somewhere. Get the witness statement, though I don't think that's going to add anything. I'm calling in more officers, ours and DOT's. We're going to need to get data, statements and do a search on every person on this damn ferry before we let anyone off.”

“I'll take care of our end before I talk to the woman. Ah, he's kind of flirting with me.”

“What? Who?”

“The adorable inspector.”

“Please.”

“No, seriously. I am spoken for,” Peabody added with a flutter of lashes, “but it's still flattering to have cute guys flirt.”

“Do the job, Peabody.”

Shaking her head as her partner went out to do just that, Eve gestured to Jake. “We’re going to need more men. I can’t let anyone off until we’ve confirmed IDs, interviewed and searched.”

“Over three thousand people?” He let out a low whistle. “You’re going to have a revolt.”

“What I’ve got is a missing woman, and very likely a dead body somewhere on this vessel. I’ve also got a killer. I want somebody in here with them,” she added. “I want a look at all security discs, cams, monitors.”

“That’s no problem.”

“We need an e-m an to try to triangulate the signal with Grogan’s ’link. If she’s still got it, we may be able to locate her. What time did she go missing?”

“As close as we can determine, right about one thirty.”

Eve glanced at her wrist unit. “More than an hour now. I want to—”

She heard the boom, the gunfire crackle, the shouts. Before the next blast, she was rushing through the door and out on deck.

Passengers whistled, stomped, cheered, as an impressive shower of color exploded into the sky.

“Fireworks? For Christ’s sake. It’s still daylight.”

“There’s nothing scheduled,” Jake told her.

“Diversion,” she muttered, and began to push and shove her way in the opposite direction of the show. “Get somebody to find the source, stop it.”

“I’m already on it,” Jake said and shouted into his communicator. “Where are we going?”

“The scene of the crime.”

“What? I can’t hear a freaking thing. Say again,” he yelled into his communicator. “Say again.”

Eve broke through the celebrating crowd, ducked under the barricade.

She stopped as she saw the woman arguing frantically with the DOT officer guarding the door of the restroom.

“Carolee!” she called out, and the woman whirled. Her face was deathly pale with high spots of color on the cheeks, and a purpling knot on her forehead.

“What? What is this? I can’t find my boy. I can’t find my son.”

The eyes were wrong, Eve thought. A little glassy, a little shocky. “It’s okay. I know where he is. I’ll take you to him.”

“He’s okay? You . . . Who are you?”

“Lieutenant Dallas.” Eve watched Carolee’s eyes as she took out her badge. “I’m the police.”

“Okay. Okay. He’s a good boy, but he knows better than this. He was supposed to wait right here. I’m sorry to be so much trouble.”

“Where did you go, Carolee?”

“I just . . .” She trailed off. “I went into the restroom. Didn’t I? I’m sorry. I have a headache. I was so worried about Pete. Wait, just wait until I—” She stepped into the snack bar when Eve opened the door.

Then slapped her hands on her hips.

“Peter James Grogan! You are in so much trouble.”

The boy, his brother, his father, moved like one unit, bolting across the room. “Didn’t I specifically tell you not to—”

This time the words were knocked back as her three boys grabbed her in frantic embraces. “Well, for heaven’s sake. If you think that’s going to soften me up after you disobeyed me, it’s not. Or only a little.”

She stroked the boy’s hair as he clung to her legs. “Steve? Steve? You’re shaking. What is it? What’s wrong?”

He pulled back to kiss her, her mouth, her cheeks. “You—you’re hurt. You’ve hit your head.”

“I . . .” She lifted her fingers to touch the bump. “Ouch. How did I do that? I don’t feel quite right.”

“Sit down. Pete, Will, let your mother have some room. Sit down here, Carolee, let me take a look at you.”

When she had, he took her hands, pressed them to his lips. “Everything’s okay now. It’s okay now.”

But it wasn’t, Eve thought, not for everyone.

Someone was dead. Someone had caused that death.

They were both missing.

Three

“Inspector, I need you to locate the source of those explosives, then I want that area secured. I want a complete list of DOT and ferry employees, including any independent contractors, aboard at this time. I want those security discs. When NYPSC officers arrive, they will support those assignments. Peabody, make that happen. Now.”

She glanced toward the Grogan family. She could give their reunion one more minute. “There are lifeboats, emergency evacuation devices on this boat?”

“Sure.”

“They need to be checked, and they need to be guarded. If any have been used, I need to know. Immediately. I want to talk to the guard Mrs. Grogan talked to when she . . . came back. For now, get his statement.”

“No problem. Lieutenant, we’re going to have to deal with getting these people, at least some of these people, off.”

“I’m working on it. Explosives, employees, discs, emergency evac, secured areas. Let’s get on it.”

She turned away, moved to where Carolee still sat surrounded by her family.

“Mrs. Grogan, I need to speak with you.”

“I’d like to treat her head wound.” Steve kept his arm protectively around his wife. “And check her out more thoroughly. If there’s a medical kit, I could use it.”

“I’ll find one,” Peabody told him, then glanced at Eve. “Our guys will be on board in a couple of minutes.”

“Okay. Find the kit. Organize the team. I want another search, every square inch of this ferry. I want the sweepers in that bathroom. I want it scoured. See if you can find out if anyone else has been reported missing.”

“Yes, sir.”

As Peabody left, Carolee shook her head. “I’m sorry, I’m a little confused. Who are you again?”

“Lieutenant Dallas, NYPSC.”

“The police,” Carolee said slowly. “You need to talk to me? I know I got a little upset with the security man, but I was worried about Pete. I couldn’t find my boy.”

“Understood. Mrs.—”

“If you’re police, do you have a zapper?” Obviously content now that his mother was where she belonged, Pete gave Eve a curious squint.

“Don’t interrupt,” Carolee admonished.

“Mrs. Grogan,” Eve began again, but lifted her jacket aside to reveal her sidearm—and the boy flashed her a grin. “Can you tell me what happened, after you and your son went to use the restrooms?”

“Actually, we were going to get drinks, then Pete needed to go, so we swung over that way. I told him to wait, to stay right there if he got out before I did.”

“But, Mom—”

“We’ll talk about that later,” she said in a tone that warned of lecture, and the kid slumped down in his seat. “And then,” Eve prompted.

“Then, I waited a minute, watched Pete go in, and I . . .” Her face went blank for a moment. “That’s funny.” She offered a puzzled smile. “I’m not quite sure. I must’ve hit my head. Maybe I slipped?”

“Inside the bathroom?”

“I—It’s silly, but I just don’t remember.”

Users Review

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