

Eva bit her lip.

She had no idea what would happen tomorrow, once Sophie's secret was revealed.

Because it would have to be, wouldn't it?

She'd agreed.

Of course, by then it would be too late. Everything Sophie had set in motion would culminate in the events of this evening.

She wished, in hindsight, Sophie had never told her.

It would have been easier that way.

The music paused for a brief moment, and the sound of the stream at the bottom of the hill reached her ears. The urge to pee dragged Eva from her thoughts, and she tottered towards the rhododendron bushes at the bottom of the slope.

Her foot slid out from under her again, and

she swore under her breath. Checking over her shoulder, she could still see the tops of some of the guests' heads, the ones who had ventured away from the marquee to smoke cigarettes, and there was no way she was peeing within sight of someone.

The ground began to level out, and Eva spotted a large rhododendron to her right.

She hiccupped, then groaned as she stepped into a large puddle left by the morning's rainfall.

'I'm having one more glass of champagne, then I'm calling it a night,' she muttered as she squatted behind the shrub.

She sighed with relief, and then straightened and tried to wipe as much of the muddy water off her sandals as she could, swearing as she recalled she hadn't even paid

her credit card bill yet, and here she was with damaged shoes that she'd only purchased a week ago.

Eva sighed, and resolving to leave as soon as possible, she turned to make her way back up the slope, and stopped.

At first, she couldn't work out what she was seeing.

A form lay stretched out behind one of the other rhododendron bushes several paces away from her position. Only the legs were visible, white and unmoving.

She swallowed, and moved closer, squinting in the poor light.

It looked like a person, and as she wobbled her way towards it, she recognised the skirt of the dress.

'Sophie? That you? You pass out or

something?’

Concerned, she quickened her pace.

She’d done a first aid course at school, and knew that if someone had passed out, you were meant to check their airway and then put them in the recovery position. If Sophie had passed out drunk, then she needed help.

‘Soph?’

As she rounded the corner of the shrub, she gasped.

Her best friend lay motionless, a dark splattered pattern now strewn across her new dress, her body twisted at an impossible angle where she’d fallen, one leg tangled behind the other and her face turned away from where Eva stood.

‘Sophie?’

She moved around her friend, fighting down

the urge to panic. If her friend needed first aid, she had to keep calm.

As she stepped over Sophie's feet to crouch down next to her, she stopped.

Sophie's eyes were wide open in terror, a thick trickle of the same dark splatter covering her cheek, a gaping recess where her nose had splintered into her face.

Eva screamed.