

BIANCA JANSSEN

*Staying when it feels uncomfortable*

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THE WOMAN  
WHO STAYED

— I STAY —



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It does not replace professional medical, psychological, or therapeutic advice.

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For those who stayed  
when it would have been easier to leave



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About the Author

This book is written  
for those who feel deeply  
but no longer want to lose themselves



## Prologue

### Becoming the Lighthouse

I always thought I was strong.

Strong because I kept going.

Because I kept carrying.

Because I swallowed my tears  
and told myself: it will be okay.

They used to call me an ice queen.

As if nothing could touch me.

As if nothing could break me.

What no one saw  
was how deeply I felt.

I had simply learned  
not to show it.

Until my body decided

that silence was no longer an option.

This book was not born from inspiration.

It was born from necessity.

From cold tile floors.

From a body that stopped listening.

From a mind that had become too full.

From a heart that had been whispering for years

and was finally heard.

I tried to keep everything under control.

My environment.

My relationships.

My emotions.

My responsibility for everyone.

Until life showed me  
that control is an illusion.

That surrender is not weakness  
but the only path to freedom.

Maybe you are reading this  
while your life still looks calm.

Or maybe you have been feeling it for a while  
that something is off.

That you are tired of being strong.

That you long for softness.

For truth.

For quiet in your own mind.

This book begins with a tumor.

But that is not what it is about.

Not really.

It is about the moment

you realize

you are not here to save everyone.

That you are not here to make yourself smaller

so someone else can feel bigger.

That you are not here to keep spinning

in search of validation.

You are here to stand.

And I learned that the hard way.

I call God the Source.

The energy that held me  
when I could no longer hold myself.

Maybe you call it something else.

That does not change anything.

What matters

is that there is something

greater than our fear.

I thought I had to stay strong.

But I had to learn to feel.

I thought I could carry everything.

Until I realized:

I don't have to carry anything

that isn't mine.

What followed was not recovery.

It was a rebirth.

Not a new version of me

but a return.

Back to my body.

Back to my truth.

Back to the woman I was.

Before I learned to please.

Before I learned to carry.

Before I made myself smaller  
to make others feel comfortable.

I thought I had to search for the light.

Until I realized

that I was it.

Not to save.

Not to prove.

Not to pull anyone along.

But to shine.

And if you recognize something

between these words,

that is no coincidence.

Maybe you are standing at the edge too,

ready to stop drifting.

And to become

who you have always been.

A lighthouse.

Not to carry others.

But to stay.



PART I — THE BREAKING



## Chapter 1 — The Day My Body Stopped

The day started like any other sauna day with my sisters.

Our sacred ritual of warmth, stillness, and femininity.

Eucalyptus.

Pinewood.

Steam rising to the ceiling and falling back onto our skin.

The soft singing of the wood as the heat stretched through the walls.

At the end of the day, we had booked a rebirth session.

Because 2025 felt like a new beginning.

And I felt that way too.

Lighter than the months before.

As if something had already shifted,

even before I knew what.

Looking back, I sometimes think:

It just came a little earlier.

My skin burned.

Sweat gathered in the hollow of my collarbone.

My heart wasn't racing,

but it felt heavy.

As if it was pushing against something.

I sat upright.

Back long.

Shoulders low.

Palms open on my knees.

I moved into meditation.

Not to relax.

But to go through it.

Breathe deep.

Stay seated.

Stay.

I thought I could transcend my body.

That I could carry this.

That I could breathe my way through it.

As if awareness were stronger than biology.

As if discipline were the same as listening.

I had barely eaten.

Intermittent fasting.

As usual.

My body had always carried me.

Strong.

Reliable.

Until it didn't.

I walked outside.

The January air cut across my wet skin.

My breath became visible.

“I think it—”

I didn't get to finish.

This was a fragment from *The Woman Who Stayed*.

You may recognize more than you expected.

The full book is available as an e-book (Dutch & English)

via

[www.biancajanssen.com](http://www.biancajanssen.com)