

International Bestselling Author  
**CRYSTAL NORTH**



**PRETTIEST  
PSYCHO**

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**P**RETTIEST  
**P**SYCHO

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## BLURB

*One, two, Kookaburra's laughing at you,*

*Three, four, deep in the asylum's core,*

*Five, six, twisted souls in a wicked mix,*

*Seven, eight, lay the bodies out straight,*

*Nine, ten, time to drench the walls in red again.*

They say I'm crazy, that I belong in this sanctuary of the damned.

But their ignorance is bliss; my soul's whispers scream louder than all the tormented monsters confined within these walls.

And I'll make sure I get what I came here for.

Hatchet, Snow, Bones, Ghost, Honeymonster and Nightshade...silly names for silly boys who are now my favourite new toys.

They think they're the apex predators here?

Hilarious, really, but I do love to laugh...especially when it's accompanied by a dying gasp.

Yet, even amid the delicious chaos of killers, something isn't right.

Soft linens and sharp edges; It's as if they're coaxing the darkness within me to unfurl its wings.

Who gives razor blades to the criminally insane and expects decorum?

The walls are whispering, and the strings pulled behind the curtain are darker than any crime committed within these corridors.

Here, it's kill or be killed, and the real show is about to begin.

And trust me, it won't end until the screams do.

**Welcome to the Asylum, where the line between predator and prey blurs, and dark obsessions turn into dangerous alliances.**

## ARE YOU READY TO LOSE YOUR SANITY?

*Prettiest Psycho is a dark 'Why Choose' novel, featuring absolute psychopaths with zero moral compass. Yes, they're smoking hot guys that our heroine doesn't have to choose between, but they are completely crazy. Then again, so is she. It ends on a cliffhanger but the duet will have a HEA – as much as seven convicted serial killers are capable of being happy and in 'love'.*

## CONTENT WARNINGS AND KINKS

Prettiest Psycho is a dark romance intended for over 18s only. It is set inside an asylum for criminally insane and notorious serial killers, and as such you should expect dark themes to be explored and revelled in, both on page and off. This list is by no means exhaustive, but should give you an idea of what to expect. Please know your triggers and your limits, and always put your mental health first.

Incarceration

Mentions Of Childhood Poverty, Neglect and Abuse

Depression

Self Harm

Suicide Attempts

Mental & Physical Abuse

Coercion

Torture

Violence & Pain

Murder

Sexual Violence

Abduction

Cannibalism

Piercing (Non-Consensual)



Electrocution  
Drowning  
Mutilation  
Asphyxiation  
Eyes Open/Eyes On Me Sex  
Instructional Sex  
Gamified Sex  
Deal/Conditionary Sex  
Angry/Hate Sex  
Violent Sex  
Exhibitionism  
Marking/Claiming  
Orgasm Denial  
Edging  
Spanking  
BDSM  
Breath Play  
Primal Play  
Knife & Blood Play  
Anal Sex/Play  
Piquerism  
Drugging  
Dubious Consent  
Non-Consent  
Breeding Kink  
Somnophilia  
Sexual Assault

*This book is dedicated to the psychos  
who make our pulses race.  
Because they deserve love too...  
sort of.*

## PLAYLIST

*Time for Tea - Emilie Autumn*

*Ghost - Confetti*

*Psychopaths - Ayelle*

*Bad Guy - Billie Eilish*

*Warning - Crimson Apple*

*Nothin But a Monster - ari hicks*

*You Made A Monster - Nick Kingsley &*

*Hannah Hart*

*You Should See Me In A Crown - Billie Eilish*

*A Little Wicked - Valerie Broussard*

*Unholy - Sam Smith & Kim Petras*

*Middle Finger - Bohnes*

*Toxic - 2WEI*

*Monsters - Ruelle*

*Castle - Halsey*

*Straitjacket - Bohnes*

*Joke's on You - Charlotte Lawrence*

*A Little Bit Off - Five Finger Death Punch*

*Alpha - Little Destroyer*

*Underneath the Mask - Royal & The Serpent*

*Fucking Crazy - Skylar Grey*  
*The High - Bryce Savage*  
*Riot - Hollywood Undead*  
*Baby (Acoustic) - Bishop Briggs*  
*Cradles - Sub Urban*  
*Savage - Bahari*  
*Escape - Azee*  
*I See Red - Everybody Loves an Outlaw*  
*Gimme More - Britney Spears*  
*Do It For Me - Rosenfeld*  
*Fight Like A Girl - Zolita*  
*Cross My Heart I Hope U Die - Meg Smith*  
*Assassin - Au/Ra*  
*Dangerous - The Tech Thieves, Besomorph*  
*Twisted - MISSIO*  
*Don't Blame Me - Taylor Swift*  
*River - Bishop Riggs*  
*Do I Wanna Know? - Arctic Monkeys*  
*Everybody Wants to Rule the World - Lorde*  
*Run Boy Run - Woodkid*  
*My Songs Know What You Did in the Dark - Fall Out Boy*  
*High Enough - K.Flay*  
*FU in my Head - Cloudy June*  
*Blvck - Bryce Savage*  
*Glory and Gore - Lorde*  
*Villain - Bella Poarch*  
*Sing to Me - MISSIO, Death Standing: Timefall*

*Gasoline - Halsey*

*Play With Fire - Sam Tinnesz, Yacht Money*

*Curiosity - Bryce Savage*

*Mad Hatter - Melanie Martinez*

*Game of Survival - Ruell*

Listen Here: <https://geni.us/prettiestpsychosongs>

## CASE FILE - KOOKABURRA



*N*ame: Kayla Kingfisher

Age: 22

Height: 5'6

Weight: 54kg

Hair: Red (dyed)

Eyes: Green

Distinguishing Features: Numerous arm and back tattoos (see file for photo catalogue), several piercings, scars on left shoulder blade.

Alias: The Kookaburra Killer

Date of Arrival: 01/01/23

Sentence: Life imprisonment within the facility. Minimal interaction with peers advised.

Treatment: Mandatory sessions only due to highly manipulative personality traits.

Crimes: [REDACTED]

PISTOL WHIP ME, DADDY



*'TIME FOR TEA' – EMILIE AUTUMN*

KOOKABURRA

God, this place is a fucking dump. I think the straitjacket, ankle manacles and fucking *muzzle* used to transport me here were a touch unnecessary. Though I guess I *did* bite my handler's finger off. Tasted like a grisly hotdog. But I've eaten worse.

Makes me laugh that they had the biggest, baddest, meanest looking sons of bitches to keep me in my place, yet with just one look they were quaking in their combat boots and reaching for their extra restraints. Pathetic.

Joke's on them; I'm into that shit.

Even when BBA – Baddest Bitch A, also known as chief douchebag, head of security – came at me, teeth bared and gun in hand, my thighs were clenching with hope. *Fucking do it. Shoot me. Or at the very least pistol whip me, Daddy.*

Snort.

Of course he didn't.

Didn't want to get that close. Even with me all restrained and trussed up like a gift under the Christmas tree. They didn't want to risk it.

So here I am. Waking from my sedation – because even restrained better than Hannibal fucking Lecter I'm apparently a flight risk – in the middle of bumfuck nowhere, where the weather is fucking diabolical if the grey skies and drizzle on the window pane are anything to go by.

I'm surprised they've left me unattended in what appears to be a shrink's office, all restraints gone. They must be watching. As if I'd be so stupid as to try to escape when I still



have the remains of fuck knows what sleepy juice coursing through my veins and no idea of the lie of the land.

Stupid and reckless I am not.

I'm playing the long game, baby.

And as soon as I get out of here, I'll hitch a ride right back to my hometown to finish what I started. Namely, laying my demons to rest in hell. There's still many names on my list. This is a side quest for me, not the finale to my story.

"Ah, Miss Kingfisher, you're awake. I am Director Seytan."

"Conscious," I correct, refusing to turn to see who has just joined me in the shrinky dink. Director Satan?

"Excuse me?" The voice is definitely female. Affronted. Maybe she doesn't like being corrected. Maybe she's got a wart on her clit because I didn't immediately jump to attention upon her arrival.

She doesn't walk to her desk and take a seat. That would mean putting herself in the line of fire. It would mean showing weakness. It would mean *losing*.

Oh, I love a good game. Bring it, bitch.

She clears her throat. It's not a nervous gesture, it's an angry one. Like a huff that's half oesophageal and half nasal. Attractive.

I don't bother to hide my smirk, it's not like she can see my face anymore than I can see hers.

Eventually, when she realises that I'm not going to draw my eyes away from the dreary vista outside the window, she huffs and stomps over to her desk. In my periphery, she takes a seat and stares at me, expectantly. Studying me intently while I tally raindrops that could almost rival my body count.

Whatever.

"Miss Kingfisher, I am a very busy woman and I can't sit around all day waiting for you to—"

“You’ve only just sat,” I point out flatly.

Again, another angry throat clear. Maybe it *is* a nervous gesture. Can you be angry and nervous at the same time? I wouldn’t know. They’re not emotions I’m acquainted with.

“It’s an expression.”

“So is ‘don’t shoot the messenger’. Wouldn’t that be fun?”

“Your perverse sense of humour will not be tolerated here,” she snipes.

My grin stretches wider. “Who said I was joking?”

“I’ve read your file, Miss Kingfisher. Guns are not your signature.”

I shrug. “I can devolve.”

“Not in here, you can’t.”

“Are we done?” I yawn and stretch, getting to my feet but keeping my gaze on the window. “I’m still fucking whacked from the roofie they gave me to get me here. I could really do with sleeping it off while praying none of your fucking goons raped me while I was out. This would be a shithole to raise a kid in. So, is there a trustworthy member of staff who can show me to my room?”

“This is not a hotel, Miss Kingfisher,” she snaps.

I finally turn to look at her and her face is mottled with anger. Good. I like rattling people.

“I’ll take that as a no, you don’t have any little flying monkeys to do your dirty work for you. I guess you’ll have to do then.” I snap my fingers at her. “Lead the way, Jeeves.”

A choked, enraged sort of sound comes from her but it takes her several swallows, her face burning red with indignation, before she forces out her words. “You may think your attitude is cute now, but we’ll see how long it lasts when you start treatment.”

I snort.

“And when will that be?” I ask nonchalantly, checking out my nails. *I could use a manicure.* “Because I feel like I could sleep for a week. Once I get laid.”

“Group therapy started ten minutes ago, the counsellors won’t mind if you’re late. Let’s go.”

“My file says I don’t play nicely with others. Are you sure you want to risk throwing them to the lion when I’m cranky, horny, and high?”

“Oh, I’m well aware of what your file says, *Kookaburra*. I think we can handle *you* just fine.”

I refuse to react to the stupid media-assigned nickname, or the vehemence in her tone. This woman despises me, and I don’t give a fuck.

I meant what I said to her though; I don’t play well with others. Well, unless you count *playing* with their dismembered body parts.

As therapeutic as that would be for me, I doubt that’s the type of therapy this witch has in mind. She gets to her feet, rounds the desk and marches to the door, her footsteps muffled under the plush carpet.

“Follow me. I will warn you that this establishment has the highest level of security in the country, using better than military-grade surveillance. There is no way of escape.”

“It’s people getting in you need to worry about,” I quip drolly. She doesn’t look back or break her stride, trusting that I’ll trot along behind her like a good little bitch. Like she’s the master and I’m the mutt. Laughable, really.

May as well follow her though. See what other losers they’ve dumped me in here with. Maybe I’ll find a new toy to play with. Maybe I’ll get laid. Maybe I’ll come across a tasty *snack*.

*I’m in the mood for hotdogs.*

## CASE FILE - SNOW



*N*ame: Callum Frost

Age: 22

Height: 5'9

Weight: 65kg

Hair: Brown

Eyes: Grey

Distinguishing Features: Tattoos covering majority of body (see file for photo catalogue), chest scar from knife wound – thought to be gang related.

Alias: Snow. Aka The Snowclone Killer

Date of Arrival: 09/04/2022

Sentence: Life imprisonment within the facility. Never to be released to mainstream incarceration for the safety of others.

Treatment: Ongoing. Initial reports reveal patient does not respond well to mandatory group therapy sessions.

Crimes: [REDACTED]

# FACEFUCKED BY A SPECTRE



*'GHOST' – CONFETTI*

SNOW

Ever heard that saying, every time you yawn a ghost sticks its dick in your mouth? Well, I'm that ghost.

“There's not an open window I won't climb through, a lock that I can't pick, a challenge that I can resist. The more dangerous and thrilling, the better.”

When you're lying slack-jawed and snoring in your bed, I'm the one rubbing the tip of my cock back and forth across your drool-covered lips.

Ever randomly woken with a sore throat?

Yeah, that's cause you got face fucked by a spectre last night. And let me tell you this; you fucking loved it.

“This is boring.” A loud, obnoxious yawn accompanies the tiresome, superfluous statement. I can surmise the speaker is bored through their yawn alone, even though I suspect they faked it. Their pathetic need to point out the obvious is as laborious to me as their disliking of my memoir.

I scowl fiercely at the bothersome chit who just arrived. Late, I might add. Tardiness is not tolerated at this facility. Even if it was Director Seytan herself that escorted the girl here and introduced her.

I don't know why she's here.

She's nothing. Hardly in the same hall of fame as the rest of us. I don't know how many people she's professed to have killed, but I highly doubt the legitimacy of her brag.

And she has a stupid name. Who ever heard of a killer called Kookaburra? Barely enough to pique my interest, let alone be deserving of my respect. Not that Director Seytan introduced her as such, but the staff here talk. Whisper. There

have been rumours for weeks that someone new was coming in, and when I bummed a cigarette from one of the night porters, he was good enough to let me watch the news with him.

*She was all over it.*

However, there's no denying as I sit across from her and she raises her eyes heavenward at my story, that I find my dick stirring in my jeans despite my total lack of interest in the impudent whelp. She's a fucking knockout, unfortunately. Curves in all the right places but slight enough to grip with one arm, long, luscious locks that would look great fistfisted in my hand while she chokes on my dick. Piercing green eyes that I'd love to fuck the life out of. And she has tattoos and piercings. She's the total fucking package.

Looks like she damn well knows it too.

For a moment, I allow my psychosis to play out, and my dick hardens to the point of pain.

*Crossing the room in three powerful strides, I stand before her. She doesn't cower before me, no, that's not her style. She meets my gaze head on, a challenge in her dead green eyes. Bring it, that glare says.*

*And I do.*

*I drop to one knee, under the guise of tying my shoelace or whatever, slip the knife from my boot, and then slash across her pretty porcelain throat before she can even blink. Dramatic. Showy. A shower of hot red elixir spraying my face and the walls, causing my tastebuds to come alive and dance. It's as vibrant as her hair, as striking as the shock in her quickly dulling eyes.*

*I wouldn't be able to resist running my fingers through my handiwork, staining my palms red with 'hands that will ne'er be clean'. That's Shakespeare. Pure fucking poetry. Iago may just be my hero because Lady M was a let down in the end. All women are.*

*And I wouldn't want them to be. Clean that is. My hands.*

*Nothing is fucking sexier than dying my dick red with the hot blood of my targets as I desecrate their corpses. I fucking love a corpse. And I love fucking one too.*

*Her smirk tells me that she'd love it, the dirty bitch. Maybe she's a fraction fucked up like me.*

*I can work with a sliver of darkness. I can nurture it, taint her, watch that black spot spread until nothing but corruption and sin and wickedness remain. Bliss.*

“Kayla,” the therapist gently chastises, wrenching me back to a far less flavoursome reality. “I know you’re new here, but we don’t interrupt one another in group therapy sessions.”

I bite back a smirk as she pouts. She’s not fooling anyone though; she isn’t chastised. She’s a fucking actress, and a manipulative one at that, I’d bet.

“But he was droning on and on. It was enough to make me want to cut off my ears with a machete so I didn’t have to listen to him. Who fucking waxes poetical over fucking poetry anyway? We get it! We had to read the same lame-ass poems in school too. Blah blah blah no one understands me. Spin another sob story, my hamster died when I was eight.”

Jaw clenched, I stare at her, at her audaciousness. Fuck wanting to fuck her. I just want to kill her. My hands curl into tight fists, itching to wrap around her dainty little throat and squeeze until the light leaves her eyes. Up close and personal. That’s the ending she deserves. And I’d fucking talk to her the entire time. Force her to listen to my story.

“My hamster did die, but I was five, actually. And I ate it,” I tell her firmly, with a no nonsense glare.

She gapes at me like I just revealed something truly fucked up, but that’s why I’m the best.

Besides, it’s not like it’s a secret. I’ve done worse. A lot worse. And a hamster tastes like any other rodent. Some even compare it to chicken. It’s probably considered a delicacy somewhere in the world. *Yeah, that’s right, I’m fucking cultured as fuck, not sick.*



I continue my monologue, delighting in the fact that I have a captive audience who are compelled to listen to my rhetoric. My truth.

“I’ve always been different, but it wasn’t until I was in school and forced to study fucking poetry that I was able to relate to someone, at long last. That dude in the poem *Stealing?* Yeah. He fucking *gets it*. When my fit-as-fuck teacher read that poem out, I was hard as a fucking rock under my desk, and for once it wasn’t because of her stretchy fucking pencil skirt that fit like a second skin and the stilettos that did wonderous things to her ass.”

I lose myself for a moment in the memories of that woman’s ass. Fuck, even now it has the ability to make my dick hard. I bite my knuckles to hold back a groan.

“No, this boner was over a fucking snowman. But you wouldn’t understand.

“So I did a little research. Discovered another poem. Do you realise how many poems are about death and killing things? Don’t even get me started on the dude who wants to fuck his lady’s corpse. And they say *I’m fucked up*.

*“They fuck you up. Parents. Teachers. Peers. Society. A fly. The goldfish. A budgie. The cat. Genius and talent and an autograph in blood. Education for Leisure.*

“The poems taught me how, opened my eyes, spoke to me. A manifesto if you will: how to become a serial killer for beginners. Only I transcended the teachers, made art, immortalised my legacy for others to imitate and aspire to for centuries to come...I’ll be the stuff of legends.”

## CASE FILE - GHOST



*N*ame: Silas Donnelly

Age: 24

Height: 5'11

Weight: 67kg

Hair: White

Eyes: Light blue-grey

Distinguishing Features: Chest and neck tattoo (see file for photo catalogue), scarring to scalp – cause unknown. Several genitalia piercings.

Alias: Ghost

Date of Arrival: 29/03/2020

Sentence: Six months. Temporary stay until a place becomes available at [REDACTED], hospital for the criminally insane.

Treatment: A wide range of therapies have proven unsuccessful, hence the hospital's refusal to accept the patient, resulting in his extended stay here.

Crimes: [REDACTED]

SHE FINDS THE REST OF US  
WANTING



*'PSYCHOPATHS' – AELLE*

GHOST

I've never been so pleased to see Doctor Seytan interrupt a therapy session. Once again it was Snow droning on and on about what a fucking genius he is and how, once he gets out of here, he'll show them all.

The guy's a total fucking narcissist.

It was a relief to see Seytan walk in and stop him in his tracks. Until she stepped aside and introduced our newest recruit, flooring me.

I mean, obviously, I knew we were getting someone new. Drainpipe died nearly two weeks ago on the last mission, and it was a given that they'd bring in his replacement, but I wasn't expecting...this.

A girl.

And not just any girl. But one of us. A killer.

My dick stirs.

Someone has resumed talking – probably Snow – but I can't take my eyes off her.

She's beautiful, in a wild sort of way. Her hair is a mess of bright red waves that fall down her back in a tangle. She looks freshly fucked and all the better for it. Her eyes are a piercing green, and they flicker around the room, taking everything in. Her eyes alight on Hatchet with a spark of glee, but it seems like she finds the rest of us wanting. And wanting I am. There's something dangerous about her, something that makes my heart race. I have to have her.

But I know better than to let myself get too close. We're all killers here, and there's no room for distractions. Not if we want to get out alive.

Snow tuts and shakes his head, muttering something under his breath. But I can tell he's intrigued by Kayla, just like the rest of us.

I watch as she walks towards her seat. I can't help but feel drawn to her, even as I remind myself that she's off limits. But as she gets closer, I can see the way her hips sway with every step, even in the god-awful orange jumpsuit they've dressed her in. Her curves are barely contained by the obnoxious material, and there's more than a generous amount of cleavage poking out of the top.

I know that I won't be able to resist her for long. Not that I'll actually do anything about it. But, you know, my hand and my dick will be getting real friendly for a time or two. I wonder if they'll give her Drainpipe's old room. If they do, it means she'll be right next to me. I don't know how I'd feel about that. It would be blissful torture, I expect.

Even now, my dick is responding to her presence, causing me to shift uncomfortably in my chair.

She catches me staring and gives me a smirk in response, her full lips curved into a knowing smile.

What I wouldn't give to turn that cocksure grin into an 'O' of surprise. She thinks she's got me pegged, but she wouldn't know what had hit her if I chose to make my move.

But I won't.

Besides, I desperately want to ask her questions – who she is, how she killed, how many, how she got caught – but it's frowned upon here. We're only entitled to know what the speaker wishes to share. And unfortunately for the rest of us, all Snow wants to do is drone on and on about his misunderstood genius.

I hope Kayla is keen to share, even though we're not a group of friends, we're a group of killers. Kayla looks like she can handle herself just fine, but the intrigue and not knowing enough about her might just drive me insane.

Well, more insane than the doctors already say I am.

If such a thing were possible.

Looking at Kayla Kingfisher, I can absolutely believe that it is.

SHE REEKS OF EAU DE  
DESPERATION



'BAD GUY' – BILLIE EILISH

KOOKABURRA

God, this guy sounds like a total fucking knob head. What a fuckpig. Am I really supposed to believe that I'm incarcerated with the biggest and baddest this shithole country has to offer? Please. I could dance bloody massacred circles around this guy's corpse in my sleep. Killer, my arse. He's a fucking wannabe if ever I saw one with his shaved undercut and tattoos bleeding into the back of his skull.

He does have bone structure to make angels weep though, and thick dark lashes.

Life really isn't fair sometimes. Boys do *not* need lashes like that. What on earth use for them could they possibly ever have? You never see guys batting their lashes or looking up coyly from under them to get what they want. Wasted.

Even his beauty is not enough to make up for his shitty personality.

This place blows.

Admittedly, I've not seen much of it yet. Just the bitch's office and now this windowless room with ambient lighting and chintzy soft furnishings that are trying to create a cosy, homely vibe.

News flash: they're not fooling anyone. The furniture is bolted to the floor, and the knickknacks on the side tables and bookshelves look to be glued down too. Not that a little superglue would stop anyone in a rage. Certainly not me.

I wonder if the books are fake. I hope not. I do like to read, and I happen to know five fail-safe ways to kill someone with a book. Six, if I'm in a pinch. It wouldn't be my weapon of choice, but I do enjoy a challenge.



My eyes skip over the droning monologue bore. Shame really; he's quite fit. *He definitely gets my heart pumping*, I think as I lick my lips. And he's probably closer to my age than the guy my eyes come to rest on.

*Hello Daddy.*

My core clenches. Holy Hell. Yes, please.

I love an older man, and this guy looks...droolworthy. Probably not old enough to be my actual daddy, thank fuck, but he definitely fits the vibe. His dark locks have a slight wave to them and tiny streaks of silver flash in the light as he scans the room. He's also ignoring the snore-fest guy. It almost makes me like him. His dirty, off-white, stained wife beater has seen better days and looks suspiciously marked with blood on the collar. Not his; he clearly hasn't shaved in a day or twelve, judging by the sexy stubble that would feel divine scraping between my thighs that he's sporting, and there's no visible cuts on his neck from whenever he last shaved. More's the pity. I love picking at old wounds.

He's wearing a silver chain around his neck, but whatever pendant is hanging from it is hidden behind his shirt, tucked away from my prying eyes.

*I want to see it. I want to see him stripped bare and silently begging for mercy as his life slips through the links of the precious chain I'll strangle him with, while I fuck him into everlasting oblivion.*

He catches me staring and smirks, probably reading the desire on my face but mistaking it for straight up lust, rather than the bloodlust I'm actually feeling. There's a glint in his eyes that makes him look dangerous. Deadly, in fact. And it gets my pulse racing. I lick my lips and wink at him. *Later, bad boy.* We'll get acquainted real soon.

The brown-haired, baby-faced tattooed guy is still banging on about kicking a snowman or some other shit, so my eyes dance to my next newest inmate. Another guy. *Shocker.*

This one I like. He's got that dirty blond, grungy looking hair and is wearing your stereotypical bad boy cliché leather jacket. Only his looks like a *real* motorcycle jacket and not a fashion piece. That piques my interest. Not that I'll be going on many *bike* rides during my sentence. Sadly, my riding activities will be restricted to dicks only. Luckily, they're my third favourite Ds to ride. Ducatis being the first, obviously. And well, if you can work out the other, let me know and I'll give you a prize.

Still, beggars can't be choosers, and I reckon if he keeps the jacket on and I close my eyes and pretend real hard, it could almost be as good as the real thing.

“Miss Kingfisher, do you have anything to add?”

My drool fest is interrupted by the peppy counsellor, who I scowl at. She's nowhere near as easy on the eye as the rest of the beating hearts in the room, and I'm annoyed she's pulled my attention away from perusing my next victims.

All eyes are on me, and it warms my skin. Not in an uncomfortable, embarrassed sort of way. More like in the same way that spotlights on stage bask the main character in a warm glow. This is *my* spotlight, and I happen to love it.

But after that snore fest from face-tatt guy, I'm not ready to share. I want a captive audience when I reveal what a psycho I am. I want the shock and the wow and the awe factor. If there ever was a definition of the *X Factor*, I'm it. I'll command their respect. Their admiration and their fear.

But not today.

I allow a slow feline grin to spread across my features as they eagerly await my response, and I pause a beat longer for dramatic effect. I could have been on stage, been anything I wanted....you know, *if I wanted*.

What I wanted was *this* life. The one I chose. The one I crafted. And getting caught was just step one of my mission.

“Sorry boys,” I breathe out in my best Marilyn Monroe impersonation, completely dismissing the counsellor from the

conversation and my radar. Stretching and fake yawning to push my tits out and highlight my long, slender neck, I hold them all captive. Even the snowman guy who loves to want to hate me. “I’m crazy tired and just about ready for four orgasms and then my bed.”

There’s a snigger and a gulp, a nervous sort of laugh and a snort of derision. I’ll take those reactions. All of them. There’s no such thing as bad press, only *no* press, and so long as I’m garnering their reactions, I have their attention.

It won’t be long before they’re eating out of the palm of my hand.

“Thanks for sharing, Kayla,” the counsellor replies cheerily. Honestly, she looks like she should work at Camp America or volunteer to build schools in Uganda or some such shit. She is far too...happy to be working with a room full of psychos. I wonder what her name is. Bet it’s Brittney or something equally chipper.

“I prefer Kookaburra,” I lie.

Her smile slips a little, but she catches it and responds smoothly. “We don’t tend to use...umm nicknames here, Kayla.”

I raise a brow at the counsellor.

Maybe Chelsey or Lindsay, or Barbie. It definitely has that drawling ‘ey’ sound at the end.

I’d bet one of my orgasms on it.

Then I worry that by this time next month I might look like Herman the German without access to any of my usual beauty products. Why did that pop into my head just now? Fuck. What was she saying?

I turn to the stupid fit snowman guy. “What’s your name?”

“Snow.”

I smirk and move on. “And yours, Daddy?”

He doesn’t answer. Doesn’t react in any way.

“That’s Hatchet, and I’m Honey,” the one in leather says, his voice as smooth as...well, *honey*. There’s something about him – so effortlessly laid back and *friendly* – that gives me clit palpitations. You know the sort – when the pounding pulse in your clit is going ninety to the dozen like you just ran after the ice cream van *and* got a bonus screwball.

“Honey? Sweet.” I wink, licking my lips thinking about that ice cream van.

“Honeymonster,” he clarifies with a returning smirk of his own.

“Are you gonna sugar my puffs for me?” I tease, and the grungy blond grins back at me and chuffs a laugh. I like him. He could be fun to play with.

“Who’s everyone else then?”

Honey points around the circle.

“Bones.”

*Bones* is apparently Scowly McScowl Face, and is too fucking beautiful for his own good, even with furrowed brows and a snarling expression aimed at me.

Brown locks the colour of chestnuts, shaved at the side to show scalp tattoos like Snow, and all black ink snaking out from under his t-shirt in every direction. He’s covered in tattoos and it’s a breathtakingly beautiful sight to behold. But those lips. *Oh sweet baby Jesus, those lips would make a nun sin for just one taste*. He has cold, snake-like green eyes and a *don’t fuck with me* expression that immediately makes me want to fuck with him and press all his buttons.

“Ghost.”

There’s something *haunted* about the boy Honey points to – no pun intended. He’s so pretty, with his delicate features and anime vibe. White-blond hair, pale, almost translucent skin, and the lightest blue-grey eyes I’ve ever seen. Honestly, they’re almost colourless, but full of pain and suffering. He’s an enigma. A closed, tightly-locked up book that I want to

crack open and read. I wonder what his skin would look like, when his head is thrown back in the throes of passion. Will he be flushed a rosy pink virginal hue, or will his flesh redden like a delectably spanked arse?

I can't wait to find out.

“Nightshade.”

Coal coloured hair, eyes so dark they almost look ebon, monochrome face tattoos, a deliciously dark expression and no doubt a soul just as pitch black as his three piece suit.

Fuck. My. Actual. Life.

He's a walking hazard to my poor vajayjay. He's danger and disorder and alarm bells wrapped up in a life-sized red flag that's made of the most seductive silk.

*I want him.*

He's mine, I just mentally licked him from head to toe and I will cut a bitch, or a bastard, if they try to take him from me.

“And our lovely counsellor's name is Jen.”

My nose curls. Jen? How ordinary. I never killed a Jen before. It's so...mundane. And now that her boring suburban name has cost me one of my precious orgasms today, she'll have to die.

“Guys, you know we don't use those names here! I'll have to introduce you properly,” Jen says with a beaming smile. Honestly, she's making my teeth hurt. Or maybe that's from how hard I'm gritting them. I have to suppress a growl..

“That is Callum Frost.” She points to Snow, and it suddenly dawns on me that he's the guy the media dubbed the Snowclone killer. Took them ages to catch him because he didn't have a *signature*.

I wonder how he fucked up in the end?

She points to Daddy Hatchet. “That's Forrest King, Kayla. Emerson Mead and Beckett Graves.” She points to Honey and Bones before moving on. “And Silas Donnelly and

Damien Night.” Ghost and Nightshade. “Everyone, this is Kayla Kingfisher, our newest resident.”

“What about that guy?” I ask, tipping my chin at the rodent-like guy everyone conveniently missed out. Counsellor *Jen* blanches.

“That’s Rat,” Honeymooner answers flatly. There’s something else in his tone, something I can’t place, but if I had to, I’d say it was something akin to *fear*. “But we don’t talk about him.”

“Like Bruno,” I quip. It falls on blank faces.

Jen laughs. “That’s a really good joke, Kayla.”

Fuck my life she reeks of Eau de Desperation. Why is she trying so hard?

I choose to ignore her. “Jesus, how long have you all been here?”

“It varies,” Honey Monster replies with an easy-going shrug. “Five minutes, to several decades.”

No one – even Daddy Hatchet – looks old enough to have been here *that* long.

Jen claps her hands together and smiles brightly at all of us. I don’t even think it’s fake. She seems like a genuinely happy, preppy person. I bet she doesn’t even drink coffee. She *needs* to die.

“As we’re about done here, why don’t you guys take Kayla to the canteen and help her settle in, and I’ll see you all tomorrow with Danny for art therapy.”

Art. Fucking. Therapy.

What the actual fuck? I have to paint my feelings? Fuck no with bells on. I’d rather get an ashiatsu massage from a sumo wrestler wearing snow shoes.

“Can’t wait,” I deadpan.

Kill. Me. Now.

GOOGLE CONSENSUAL NON-  
CONSENT. YOU'RE WELCOME



‘WARNING’ – CRIMSON APPLE

KOOKABURRA

*B*efore I get to my feet, I wait for the others to stand and shuffle into some sort of order, then trail along after them. With no fucking clue where I’m going, I follow along like a sheep. Baa fucking baa. I’m clearly the black sheep of this happy little family.

I almost miss Rat sliding into line behind me, but his stench gives him away. I recoil, trying to hold my breath because he smells like dead things, and take it from me, as someone who revels in all things blood, gore and death, I *don’t* mean that in a good way.

My body tenses, coiled for an attack just due to his proximity. There’s something about him that sets me on edge. I don’t know if I should believe Satan when she says this place is full of surveillance, and therefore I’m protected from him trying anything, or whether to trust that I’m caged with a bunch of monsters who will always revert to type when challenged.

And my being here *is* a challenge. They just don’t know it yet.

When Rat reaches out to touch my hair I’m unsurprised. *Reverting to type are we then? Bring it!* I’m hyper aware of him and his greasy fingers. Yellowed nails like fucking talons too. Ugh. That’s just gross. Especially on a guy. Why on earth would they want long nails like that? And why are his so discoloured? They remind me of decay in the worst possible way. I shudder internally.

Before he can touch me again, I spin, grab his finger and bend it back until it makes an audible snap. He squeals. All high pitched and rodent-like. *Jeez, if ever a nickname fitted perfectly...*



His rancid breath in my face makes me gag and want to heave, but instead, I punch him on the nose to make him step back. He staggers away from me as his nose gushes with blood.

Not my favourite orifice to watch someone bleed from, but hey, blood is blood and I'll take it. Any pain inflicted is a win in my books.

Warm satisfaction blooms in my chest at the pain on his face, the shock in his eyes.

“Oh my, what’s happening here?” Jen asks brightly, rounding the corner with a smile that seems to be straining at the edges. If possible, Rat shrinks even further away from me at her sudden appearance. Why is he more scared of her than me? Doesn’t he know I’m a killer? What’s she going to do, smile him to death?

“She broke my finger!” he cries, clutching his broken hand to his chest. Well, I think that’s what he says. It kinda comes out muffled because of the broken nose and blood pissing into his mouth. He uses his good hand to pinch his nose in an attempt to stem the bleeding, and it makes me smile with pride. *Yeah I did.*

Barely even a split second of contact, and I’ve shown him what I can do. *Don’t fuck with me.* He’s lucky he only touched my hair, otherwise he wouldn’t be breathing.

“He touched me,” I counter, by way of explanation. Not that I feel the need to explain myself or apologise – it would be hypocritical if I did – but it’s important to keep up appearances. *I’m here to reform, teach me how to be good, I’m so sorry, I promise it’ll never happen again.*

I almost snort out loud at the ridiculousness of it all. I couldn’t maintain that ruse for a minute if I had to say that shit out loud.

“Umm, Kayla...” Jen’s smile is still in place but it’s definitely taken on a frozen, brittle quality. “We don’t physically attack our resident...mates here.”

“He’s not my mate.” I frown. Does she mean resident *mates* like one would mean inmates or more like camp mates? She’s deluded enough to be alluding to the latter I think. I hold back a snort. Like we’re all happy campers here.

“Even so, it’s not really done here. But it’s your first day so I’ll let this slide and—”

“What about him?” I demand hotly, throwing an arm out to point at Rat and failing to keep my temper in check.

This time the smile definitely falters. “Sorry?”

“I said, what about him? Rat-boy? You never introduced him by the way. What’s his real name? Oh, whatever. I don’t really care, I just want to know what his punishment is going to be.” I fold my arms over my chest and scowl.

“His name is Rat. Just Rat. And what do you mean by *his* punishment? Why would he be punished when you attacked him? I think his finger is broken. Maybe his nose too.”

“Oh it definitely is,” I tell her with a sincere smile. “They both are. And he should be punished because I would have thought that in a place like this, consent would be taken very seriously.”

“It is.” Her face appears frozen now. Stricken. But I can read the confusion in her furrowed brow, and the glimmer of fear in her eyes.

“Because I was just assaulted, without my permission, and I think that *that* should be dealt with.”

“Isn’t all assault carried out without permission?” A dainty little crease appears on her brow as she cocks her head to the side, considering my argument. I really want to shake this dippy woman.

*Then take a nail gun to her stupid, preppy face.*

Violence overload? Maybe. Fucking worth it? Fuck yes.

I wink at her. “Not in the bedroom. When you go home tonight, google consensual non-consent. You’re welcome.”

Another sickly smile levelled her way while I wait to see how she'll digest *that*.

“Umm.”

I leave her flabbergasted and staring at me until Rat decides to flex his fingers and starts whining again. She immediately turns her attention back to him with a sigh. There's blood all over the floor and she's careful not to step in it. Wouldn't it be a shame if she slipped and broke something?

“Oh Rat, she's right. You'll have to be punished for this, but first we better get you to the hospital wing. Kayla, do you think you can catch up with the others? The canteen is just along this corridor, you can't really miss it if you follow your nose.”

Before I can reply, she's ushering Rat along the corridor in the opposite direction to the one we were heading in. Rat shoots me a filthy glare as he goes. I grin at him and wiggle my fingers in a jaunty *preppy* sort of wave.

*Be seeing ya, grease monkey.*

## CASE FILE - BONES



*N*ame: Beckett Graves

Age: 33

Height: 6'1

Weight: 84kg

Hair: Brown

Eyes: Green

Distinguishing Features: Numerous tattoos (see file for photo catalogue), several piercings.

Alias: Bones

Date of Arrival: 17/07/2016

Sentence: Under review. Recommended for parole.

Treatment: Ongoing. Patient responds well to individual therapy sessions.

Crimes: [REDACTED]

WE ARE SURVIVORS



*'NOTHIN BUT A MONSTER' – ARI HICKS*

BONES

I hate and I love and I hate women. And this specimen in particular smells like the best kind of trouble. She's here to stir shit up, I can tell. It's plain as day in her mischievous emerald eyes, all sass and bravado aside.

She's one of us.

And not just because her presence here decrees that she must be, but because her whole aura drips with the blood of her enemies, all whilst shining the most dazzling shade of iridescent black.

She must have an impressive catalogue of kills to be chosen and brought to the asylum.

Like I said, fucking trouble.

I'm looking forward to watching the chaos ensue. I'm coming up to seven years in here now – third longest stint after Night and Hatchet – and I've never seen them bring a girl in before.

Why?

Do they think we'll play nicely with her just because she's got a cunt? Or are they hoping that we don't? That we fight amongst ourselves over her? No pussy is worth fucking up our fucked up found family for.

Don't get me wrong, I'm not some sappy boy band wannabe claiming that these other assholes locked up with me are my *brothers* or any such shit. But we are survivors. Most of us have a good few years under our belt here, and we've managed not to kill each other thus far, which has to count for something.

Lock half a dozen or so total psychopaths up together and still give them access to weapons, and a fair few casualties are bound to occur along the way. But we seem to have formed a fairly solid team now.

Even Snow, who I think's a total asshole, has survived almost a year here. If I haven't killed him by now, I'll begrudgingly admit that I probably won't.

Not sure I can say the same about the new girl though.

I won't go easy on her or spare her life just because she has tits.

She needs to be kept at arm's length, no matter how captivating she may be. Honey's already sweet on her. Snow seems to loathe her, but that's likely because she didn't walk into the room and immediately fall on his cock, and he'll see that as a challenge. Ghost is unreadable as ever, but I doubt she'll crack me, Nightshade, or Hatchet.

It's only when we're seated in the canteen and the doors are closed but no food appears that I realise that we're not *all* seated. Hell, we're not all even fucking present.

*She's not here.*

"Fuck's sake!" Snow whines. "I'm hungry. Where the fuck is the red haired bitch?"

"Rat's missing too," Ghost mumbles. He's so quiet I barely catch what he's saying, but when I look around I realise he's right.

I sigh.

Rat's not the newest recruit to the team, but he's the worst fit. His relapses – despite our freedom to play on the mainland – have cost the asylum more than their fair share of staff, and even though I give zero fucks about the new girl, I wouldn't wish her death at Rat's hands upon anyone.

Being eaten alive isn't any sane person's first choice of ways to die. And although we definitely don't qualify as sane,

I still don't think any of us would choose death by cannibalism.

“Well, that might just be the shortest stay at the facility known to man.”

“Your money's on Rat?” Honey asks eagerly, leaning towards me with interest gleaming in his eyes.

I shrug like I don't care either way. But I *do* care if the uncomfortable twisting in my stomach is anything to go by.

“What do we all think of the newbie?” Snow asks, his abrasive tone making it abundantly clear that he's already made up his mind.

Ghost gives a one shouldered noncommittal shrug. I didn't expect him to have much to say on the matter. The guy's almost as mute as Hatchet.

“I think she'll be a good fit. Shake things up a bit,” Honey replies evenly. He's not fooling me. He likes her already. There's a gleam in his eye that's been missing for a long time.

“It doesn't matter what we think,” Nightshade adds, with a little more force than necessary. “She'll have to prove herself like we all did.”

I allow a slow grin to snake its way across my face. “She won't have to prove shit if Rat's already sunk his teeth into her.”

“I don't know,” Honey counters, shaking his head with a shrewd smile. “My money's on the redhead. You know their fire extends way beyond the bedroom.”

Ain't that the truth.



THEY'RE JUST GIVING ME A STEAK  
KNIFE FOR SHITS AND GIGGLES?



*'YOU MADE A MONSTER' – NICK KINGSLEY &  
HANNAH HART*

KOOKABURRA

I don't bother heading straight to the canteen. I take advantage of my unsupervised time to snoop and explore a little.

Every single door along the corridor that I try is locked, even the ones innocently labelled things like 'recreation room' and 'library'. They all require a fingerprint scan to unlock and access. Which sucks, and is bullshit if you ask me. I have to get permission to read a book? Whatever.

What if all your fingerprints get burnt off? How would the staff do their job then? Silly if you ask me. And in a place like this, with people like me around, I'd bet it happens more often than you'd think.

There's cameras all along the hallway too. Ceiling mounted ones every couple of metres, *and* on the door frames. Seems a bit excessive. It also means that whoever is monitoring the security knows that I'm alone and snooping, and as no one has come to reprimand me yet, I'm taking it as permission to keep going.

How much damage can one itty bitty little girl do, alone in a corridor full of locked doors and cameras?

Quite a fucking lot actually. If I wanted to.

But I meant what I said about being hungry and horny, so I soon give up my futile search in favour of following my nose to the canteen.

When I arrive, I stop dead in my tracks and my brows draw into a frown. I'm bewildered; I was expecting a large, school-style cafeteria, filled with the hubbub and activity of many inmates. But that's not what greets me.

I'm staring at a small room, much better suited to intimate dining, with only one table which is set for eight. There's no self serve counter, no dried-out congealed gloop bubbling under heat lamps, no plastic utensils. If it weren't for the fact that I'm wearing a very attractive bright orange jumpsuit right now, I could be fooled into thinking I had entered a fine dining restaurant. Only, there aren't even any waiters. There's literally no one here, other than six of the seven inmates I met at group therapy.

"Where's Rat?" Honeymonster asks, a slight, knowing smirk tugging at his lips.

"Who?" I grin at him and counter his question with one of my own. "Where's everyone else?"

Snow huffs. "You know who. Where is he? We can't eat until everyone's present." He stares pointedly at me, but I take my sweet time finding my place because *Rat* isn't here so *I'm* not the one holding us up.

Once I'm seated, thankfully next to Honeymonster and away from Snow and the only other empty chair, I glance around looking for...what? Staff maybe?

"Where do we get the food?" I ask no one in particular.

"They bring it out when we're all here," Honey answers.

"How many more are we waiting on?"

"Just Rat," he replies.

I frown at that. Are we kept in pods or something? No more than eight of us to interact at once? Where *is* everyone else?

"Well, they should probably get on with it then because *Rat* is in the infirmary." I don't bother to hide the smugness in my tone. I didn't like him, and I was glad he put his hands on me and gave me an excuse to warn him off. It was barely a scratch anyway. He was overreacting. I've broken my fingers fucking myself before and not moaned about it as much as he did.

The guy with the white-blond hair – was he Bones? Or Ghost? Who cares, he’s so pretty – gapes at me.

“What?” I jibe.

“Nothing,” he rasps, quickly looking away, seeming spooked by my attention.

No one around the table wants to meet my gaze and there’s a tension in the room that wasn’t there before. So I study the place setting. I drum my fingers on the plates and discover that they’re really made of china. Not plastic. The metal cutlery actually looks lethal and – I flick the glass before me and it rings loud and true in the room – the glasses are made of real fucking glass.

*What the fuck?*

Don’t these people know who I am? Who *we’re* supposed to be? What we can do with even the most innocent-looking items? I can turn a fucking paper clip into a lethal weapon, and they’re just giving me a steak knife for shits and giggles?

Is this some lame attempt at showing that they trust us? Or is it a test? To see if we’re trustworthy. Because I’m not, by the way.

I slip the knife from the table and slide it up the sleeve of my fetching orange jumpsuit. It clashes horribly with my hair and fits appallingly. I think I’m going to break out in hives if I wear it for much longer. That’s when it dawns on me that none of the men around the table are dressed like prison inmates. I mean sure, Hatchet is in a wife beater, but that appears to be by choice. Snow’s wearing a wannabe bad boy leather jacket, whereas Honey’s is the real deal. Ghost – the white-blond one I remember now – has on a thin grey zip top with the hood up so that only a lazy flick of pale fringe is showing. Bones and Night look like they’re off to the opera or some shit, in full blown suits and ties. Night’s is a three-piece.

Actually, their smart attire is what makes them look the most terrifying prospects around the table. The others look

more or less *normal* but those two are on a whole different playing field.

I gulp when Night catches my eye and smirks at me. Well. I think it's a smirk. With his sharp brows and numerous face tattoos, it's hard to tell. That may just be the way his face looks. Fuck my life if it doesn't get my pulse racing though. He's positively demonic. I like it a lot. Maybe even more than Daddy and Ducati dicks.

Metal doors at the far end of the room slide open and numerous staff file into the room carrying an assortment of dishes which are gently placed in the centre of the table. They leave, the doors close, and we're all alone once again.

"What gives?" I blurt out as the others all jump in and start serving themselves.

Bones stills and looks at me. "What do you mean?" His voice is as dark as the look he gives me. I shiver. I would *love* to meet him alone in a dark alleyway at midnight.

"Where's the surveillance?"

"We're always under surveillance," Snow scoffs. My fingers twitch to drive the steak knife into his temple, but like a fucking saint, I resist.

"But where's the people?"

"With the technology this place has, they don't need that many staff," Night explains, leaning forward in his seat to capture me in his fathomable midnight gaze. It's hypnotic. I'm pretty sure if he stared at me too long, I'd fall under his spell and do anything he asked. "And I'd put that knife back if I were you. They won't like it."

"Will I get in trouble?" I challenge, flirtily, batting my eyelashes. I don't give a shit, but I'm happy to keep him talking and his attention on me.

He shakes his head like I amuse him. "No. Not for taking it. It's what you intend to do with it that could lead to...trouble as you put it."

“I can’t be held responsible for my *intentions*, just my actions.”

Night gives me a *wanna bet* sort of look and I sneer. “What, does all their fancy technology include the thought police too? What are we, stuck in a dystopian YA novel?”

“YA?”

I stare at him in disbelief. Surely everyone knows that? Shaking my head at his cluelessness, I explain, “Young adult.”

Night laughs, and the sound sends delicious shivers down my spine and makes the tiny little hairs on my arms stand on end. “I don’t think most of us here can be counted as *young* adults.”

“Whatever.” I shrug before filling my plate with whatever dishes are closest to me. They all look good. It’s not until my plate’s heaped high that I notice the silence and look up. They’re all staring at me, except for Night, who’s twirling his wineglass in small circles, staring at it like it holds the answers to all of life’s greatest mysteries.

“What?” I snap, defensive.

“You eat a lot,” Snow says with a smirk. Jeez, is it like, the only facial expression he’s capable of? I swear someone probably told him he was a cheeky chappy when he was younger and now he thinks he can still play that role. It ain’t cute.

Damn him though, cause he is.

“Bite me.” I flick him the bird and get stuck into my food, but the prickly feeling of eyes on my skin continues.

STARE AT ME LIKE I'M JESUS  
WALKING ON WATER



*'YOU SHOULD SEE ME IN A CROWN' – BILLIE  
EILISH*

KOOKABURRA

Sighing, I put down my fork and swallow my mouthful and repeat, “What?” but with a little less attitude this time. More emphasis though. They’re really trying my patience.

“You made Night laugh.” The dark haired one wearing a suit – Bones? – sounds accusatory.

“So...” I stare at him waiting for him to fill in the blanks.

His face hardens and he scowls at me. “Night never laughs.”

I don’t believe that for a second. *Night* looks like a deranged killer – *aren’t we all* – who laughs as he devours his victims. I mean that in the literal, bitey sort of sense. He just seems the sort.

It shouldn’t thrill me, but it does. They all do, for different reasons. How is it possible to land in a place like this and be surrounded by such breathtakingly beautiful disasters?

I can’t work out if I’m blessed or cursed. But getting them eating out of the palm of my hand just became a much more appealing prospect. *I love my life.*

I frown and nod my head towards Hatchet. “He ever talk?”

“No,” Snow replies curtly.

“Can he?” I demand.

He shrugs. “Doctors seem to think so.”

“Well, when I get him to, you have permission to stare at me like I’m Jesus walking on water. Until then, keep your eyes to yourself or I’ll fucking remove them.”



I don't believe for a second that my threat will scare these guys – hell, they'd probably enjoy it and see it as foreplay or something – but I'm deadly serious. I'm tired and tetchy, and that makes me more than a little stabby. Not to mention, being around such fine specimens of home-grown psychos is doing nothing to dampen down my libido. The only thing getting *damp* around here is my panties. And that also makes me mad because I don't *want* to be attracted to psychopaths. I'm just wired that way, I guess.

“Jeez, you really rate yourself highly, don't you?” Snow sneers.

“Absolutely. You have to back yourself first and foremost. No one else will. And yeah, some of my personalities are a ten, sure. But on a day to day basis, you'll be dealing with little miss four. She's bitter and savage.”

“Umm, Sugar, we don't really joke about multiple personalities here. It's in poor taste,” Honey tells me, flicking a concerned look at Ghost.

“God, chill out. It's a joke, not a dick. You don't have to take it so hard.” I shake my head. “Anyway, I might not be joking. I can barely open a can of coke without breaking a nail. No way do I have the skills needed to unalive all those people without a little extra help.” I finish with a wink.

They all stare at me, and I'd like to think it's in amazement, so I give them a dazzling smile as I inform them, “I'm like a box of tricks, you never know what you're going to get with me.”

Thankfully, they all fall back to their eating and I'm forgotten once more, able to eat in peace. Who knows when my next meal will be, so I load up. I always have in situations like this. If it's available, and you don't know when it will return, you make the most of it. I almost wish the damn jumpsuit had pockets so I could save some food for later. Never hurts to have a little stash squirrelled away for a rainy, hollow day.

Overhead, an alarm sounds and my pulse spikes. Everyone turns to stone and my palms turn slick. The doors the staff came through open, and eight members of staff come running towards us. I tense, wondering what's happened, but they completely ignore us, rushing out through the door I walked through.

"Shit," Snow hisses.

"What?" I ask, adrenaline flooding my system and sending me into fight or flight mode. I tense, knowing nothing good is about to happen.

"That's the 'man down' alarm," Ghost explains quietly. It's hard to hear him over the blaring sound.

"Or woman," I add, though I'm not sure they hear me over the wailing and my own pounding heart. "What does it mean?"

The alarm drops to a lower volume, but doesn't stop.

"It means that someone's hurt."

"Rat?" I shake my head. "It didn't go off before."

"It only goes off when someone is seriously hurt. Like, when there's a danger to life."

"So I can't get the blame for this then?" I ask hopefully. Despite my attitude with Director Satan, I don't actually want to get off to a bad start here. Well, not *that* bad anyway. A little violence comes as naturally to me as breathing.

"No. This has nothing to do with you, sugar," Honeymonster says, not unkindly. I breathe an internal sigh of relief, but I'm careful to keep my expression closed off. I don't want anyone thinking I *care*.

"So what happens now? What do we do?" I look at the suddenly grim expressions around the table, moving from face to face and taking in how beautiful yet different they are. One thing's the same though: they all look worried.

"Nothing," Honey replies, his voice strained. Why does he look so worried? Should I be worried? I'm uneasy, sure, but I

don't feel as alarmed as they all look. "We're automatically locked in here until the staff come back and the alarm gets reset. We don't do anything."

"Is it someone on one of the other...umm, wards? Wings?" I nibble the corner of my bottom lip, unsure.

"Wings?"

"You know, like hospital wings."

Honey shakes his head. "It's just us."

"Yeah, I can see that. But what about the rest of this place?"

"It's just us, sugar," he repeats. Cold sweat trickles down my spine, a telltale sign that I'm embarrassed. I hate being made to feel stupid, and even though Honey doesn't appear to be trying to do that, I can't help the way it makes me feel. Trauma's a bitch like that.

"But...this place is massive. How can there only be eight inmates?" I swallow the embarrassment that's lodged in my throat. I need to know the answer more than I need to save face.

"You do understand that it's an exclusive, high security facility for the criminally insane, right?" That's Snow. His tone is enough to kill my discomfort and make me rage. How dare he sneer at me like that?

No. I didn't know that. I wasn't privy to my sentencing.

"Of course," I lie. "But I've met my fair share of nutters. There's a shit tonne more than just eight of us."

"Yeah but they're just nutters. We're nutters *with skills*."

"*Dangerous* skills," Night chimes in with wicked glee.

"So we're not just here for rehabilitation then?" I ask slowly, piecing their subtext together.

Night waggles his eyebrows at me – he looks absolutely demented doing so – and grins. "Clever girl."

Inside, I preen. Not gonna lie, anything with the ‘girl’ suffix on the end gives me major fanny flutters. *Good girl, bad girl, clever girl, little girl, baby girl, daddy’s girl...* I’m fucking melting.

Outwardly, I scowl but it just makes Night’s grin stretch even wider. He sees my bullshit. Can probably smell the pheromones in the air. Those horny hormones will be the death of me I’m sure.

I nod my chin towards him. “You called Night because of your surname?”

A slow smirk spreads across his beautiful face before he replies, “It’s a coincidence, but no.”

“Why then?” I frown. I thought it was obvious.

“Nightshade. It’s a—”

I’m cutting him off with a breathy sigh before he can even finish.

“Type of poison. Yeah, I know.”

He moves his open palm to the side in an *et voila* movement, and I’m captivated by his long slender tattooed fingers. *What would they feel like playing my body like an instrument*, I wonder.

“There you have it.”

“Poison? That’s your weapon of choice?” I thought for sure this guy was a cannibal. But I don’t think he’d be stupid enough to eat his victims after poisoning them.

“Bingo.” He salutes me with his wine glass. “Top up?”

“I’ll pass, thanks.” Because wine makes me slutty as fuck. Not because I think he’s out to kill me.

“Probably wise.” He smirks and it needles me. I don’t want him to think I’m scared of him. Because I’m not.

So I guess if all our nicknames are to do with our MO, it shouldn’t be too hard to work out why everyone’s here.

Snowclone: the copycat. Nightshade: the poisoner. Hatchet is pretty self explanatory. But what about the others? Bones probably doesn't bear thinking about. But Ghost? And Honeymonster? What's their deal?

And then there's me. Dubbed The Kookaburra Killer. The media claim it's because of the maniacal way I was laughing when I was found hunched over my final victim's body.

But it's so much more than that.

## CASE FILE - HONEY



*N*ame: Emerson Mead

Age: 32

Height: 6'2

Weight: 78kg

Hair: Blond

Eyes: Brown

Distinguishing Features: Birthmark on sole of foot, scar along right side of rib cage, gang and MC tattoos (catalogued in file).

Alias: Honeymonster

Date of Arrival: 07/12/2020

Sentence: ~~One year. Under appeal.~~ To be reviewed.

Treatment: All available treatments recommended.

Crimes: [REDACTED]

Note: Sentence appeal has twice been cancelled due to patient relapsing within the facility.

MR FUCKING LAID BACK AND EASY



*'A LITTLE WICKED' – VALERIE BROUSSARD*

HONEYMONSTER

New girl is fun. God knows what the admin were thinking, sticking her in with us. She'll be lucky if she isn't eaten alive. And I do mean that in the literal sense – even if I want to eat her in the sexual sense – especially with Rat around.

Still, pigeon among the cats aside, I can tell it's going to be a scream having her around. She's our first girl. I wonder if she knows that? That her mere presence in this facility commands our respect automatically. Well, from most of us anyway. Snow is just about losing his shit over her – his twitchy eye is a dead giveaway – and she even made Nightshade laugh. Like, what the actual fuck? The only time he laughs is when someone is bleeding out.

But then again, I heard the same about *Kookaburra*. Though I'll be the first to admit you shouldn't believe everything you hear, read or see in the media.

It takes a few moments for normality to resume. It's Kayla who shrugs, picks up her fork and resumes eating. To be fair, she's got the right idea. Nothing's gonna change while we're locked in here waiting to find out what went down, so what's the point in going hungry later? After a beat, I follow suit, and slowly the others do the same.

No one acknowledges the elephant in the room, that Rat is absent and the man down alarm has gone off. No one even speaks. We tuck into our meals like they're our last, which you never know, they could be. Food's good here too, so I like to eat my fill. I can already see Kayla doing the same, and I nod to myself. There's trauma there. Always easy to spot. Hatchet hides it well, but myself, him and Ghost all behave the same around food.



I was fucking pissed when Snow commented on Kayla's eating. That's not cool. Who gives a fuck how much anyone eats? How is it anyone's business? Clearly, he's never had to go without. I wonder if he was trying to flirt with her and just went about it in the most horribly wrong and awkward way possible. But I would have thought he'd have better game than that. He's not a bad looking boy, just a bit wet behind the ears. Still, I wouldn't have blamed Kayla for gutting him over a comment like that. I know I would have done, back in my starving days.

I've done worse in the past, for less too.

When I'm done eating, I take out my knife and use it to pick the leftover food from between my teeth. Then I clean under my nails with it. A quick wipe on the back of my jeans and it's as good as new again. I pocket the blade.

I see her watching me. Her eyes brimming with curiosity. It's killing her to keep quiet when she has so many questions just burning to break free. I shoot her a lopsided smile. Me? I'm the friendly one. The lovable rogue. Mr fucking Laid Back and Easy.

Until I'm not.

But by the time they realise that, they're struggling to keep their entrails inside their body. I'm wicked fast like that.

Kayla's expression – a mix of curiosity and longing – tells me that she wants to know why I'm allowed a knife like that, in a place like this. It goes against all the rules and protocols of regular institutions. But this isn't a regular institution.

We're not *regular* patients.

And Kayla is going to learn that slowly. We may be pawns, but we hold all the power in this place. It'll be fun watching her figure that out. Though I suspect she's used to getting her own way and will get there faster than the rest of us did.

The others are finishing up pudding when the doors to the dining room reopen. I've never had much of a sweet tooth, despite my name, so I just sip my water. Director Seytan walks

in, her face an unreadable mask. Nothing good ever comes of that woman deigning to grace us with her presence, and usually we're all pretty okay with that.

No staff follow behind her. Interesting. She normally only approaches us with her bodyguards. I wonder if it's the alarm that's caused her to break protocol, or Kayla's arrival?

"Residents," she begins, her nasal voice, cold and haughty. "There has been a serious incident involving a member of staff and Rat."

"Who?" I ask, slightly guarded. Fingers are quick to get pointed in a place like this, and things can often become heated. As in, hot blood on the cold floor, heated.

"It was counsellor Jen."

"Is she okay?" Ghost asks. His face is unreadable but I can hear the quiver in his question. He means, is she alive? He liked Jen. She's the only counsellor I've ever seen him open up to.

I'm holding my breath to find out.

The director's response is curt. "No."

There's a sigh amongst us, but we're unsurprised. We get through staff quickly here, particularly when tempers are running high or if we've been unable to practise our skill set in a while. Around the table there's an air of disappointment, and I know that it's because we all liked Jen. She was one of the better counsellors. Far too idealistic, sure, but her heart was in the right place, despite me threatening to carve it out once or twice.

Like I said, tempers, emotions, body counts, they all run high here.

Shame. I hope her replacement manages to last a little longer.

"What happened to her?" Kayla asks. We all stare at her. It's a question we never ask. It's like asking what we're *in* for. Nope. That information is sacred, shared only at a time of our

choosing. Never ask what happened to the staff, never ask who did it.

“She was killed by Rat.”

I’m surprised the Director answered her to be honest. She’s not usually very forthcoming with information.

Kayla blinks. Then she leans forward as if being closer somehow will get her answers even faster. “How?”

The Director’s voice is a whip. “That is on a strictly need to know basis, Miss Kingfisher. And you do *not* need to know that.”

“I disagree.”

Her defiant tone raises eyebrows all around the table. No one ever talks back to the director. Night looks like he’s holding back another laugh, and even Bones looks a little impressed at the balls on her.

“Excuse me?” It’s a challenge, not an invitation, but Kayla chooses to ignore the warning in her tone. She *is* ballsy, I’ll give her that.

“You have a resident that just killed a female member of staff. A resident who, only a few minutes before, assaulted me. As the only female resident here by the looks of things, I think I deserve to know Rat’s MO so that I can protect myself against him in the future. By any means necessary.”

There’s an astonished silence.

“If you must know, he gutted her with a concealed weapon and, even though she was able to raise the ‘man down’ alarm, she was dead by the time the staff arrived on the scene. Rat was busy feasting on her intestines and so was easily detained.”

“Is that why he was called Rat then? Because he feasts on human flesh?”

“Enough, Miss Kingfisher. Rat will no longer be an issue, so you have no reason to fear for your safety with him.”

“Why did you tell me then?”

“Because he isn’t the only dangerous person in this place, and you’d do well to remember that. Mr Forest, please show Miss Kingfisher to her room. She must be tired after all of the drama of her first day.”

“I am *not* tired!” Kayla protests, cheeks flushed with indignation, as Hatchet gets to his feet and crosses over to her. Wordlessly he waits for her to stand, and when she doesn’t, on a nod from the director, he takes her arm and gently pulls her to her feet.

“Get your hands off me!” She snarls, pulling out of his grip. Hatchet holds up his hands in defence. She doesn’t whip out the knife that she still has hidden up the sleeve of her jumpsuit, so I’m guessing her anger is for show or misplaced maybe. If she were really pissed at him touching her, I’m sure he’d be bleeding out already.

I think her ire is actually aimed at the director. She’s pissed she’s not getting the answers she wants, and she’s raging that she’s being dismissed and sent to bed like a naughty child.

Have to wonder who thought it would be a good idea to send Kayla here, because from the murderous expression on the director’s face, it sure as shit wasn’t hers.

*This is going to be fun.*

WHY EAT OFFAL WHEN YOU CAN  
FEAST ON PRIME RIB?



'UNHOLY' – SAM SMITH & KIM PETRAS

KOOKABURRA

*That fucking bitch!* She deliberately chose Hatchet to 'escort' me to my room because she knew I'd have a million questions and he wouldn't answer any of them. I meant what I said though, I *will* get him to talk. Eventually.

I'm seething, hands curled into fists and my footfall heavy, as I let Hatchet lead the way out of the canteen, but I follow closely behind. The last time I was left on my own, someone died, so excuse me if I don't fancy being alone again anytime soon.

I stare at his back as I keep in step behind him. His hair is dark and wavy, curling at the back of his neck where it would meet his collar, if he were wearing one. His shoulders are broad and powerful, the muscles clearly visible through the thin material of his top. It's not hard to imagine him brandishing a hatchet to chop logs. Or I guess, given where we are, making short work of chopping up a body or ten.

I didn't mean to snap at him when he touched my arm; my anger was directed at Satan.

How dare she insinuate that the other residents are a danger to me because I'm the only female here. *I'm* the danger to *them*. She'll see. By the time my plan's complete, she won't know what hit her.

"So, been here long?" I ask lightly. Silence. "What's this place like?" Nothing. "What did you do to get sent here?" Tumbleweeds. And a scowl. Okay, I guess that was insensitive.

But I don't let it deter me. I talk mostly to fill the silence, not because I actually expect an answer. It also distracts me from my rage, so I don't end up doing something stupid. *It's*

*your first day, Kayla, and there's already been a death. Play the long game.*

It doesn't take long for Hatchet to stop outside a door. The corridor was pretty windy and I wasn't paying any attention to where we were going. He taps the sign on the door. *Room 666.* I snort.

"This is me?" I at least get a curt nod this time. "Coming in?" I tease.

He shrugs and opens the door. No lock on this one I notice. Fun. I step inside and Hatchet follows, leaving the door open behind him. Boo.

The room is...unexpected. I try not to let the surprise show on my face, but I probably fail.

"No roommate?" I ask. He shakes his head. "Because I'm the only girl?" Another no. I guess they don't share rooms either. Probably safer that way. And it's not like this establishment doesn't have the room. It seems vast. Am I really to believe we're the only residents?

The room is large. Way bigger than I expected, and more like a mini suite you'd find in a hotel than a prison or asylum room. It's...actually really nice. The lighting is soft, warm. Welcoming, I guess. A bed and two doors are to the right, and a sitting area before me. There's even a kitchenette over to the left. The floor is the same as the corridors outside, but there's a beige rug in front of the small cream sofa. *That'll be murder to get blood stains out of.*

Even the bed is made up, with a fluffy-looking blanket draped over the bottom.

"I'm guessing one of those is the bathroom?" I ask Hatchet. He nods and points to the closest door. "What's the other one?"

He raises a brow at me, as if to say *see for yourself.*

I huff in mild amusement and walk over to the other door. It's a closet. Decent sized, and full of clothes that aren't

orange. Things I'd actually choose and wear myself. My jaw drops as I turn back to Hatchet, only to find he's followed me into the small space. My pulse flutters at his proximity.

“You're telling me I don't *have* to wear the jumpsuit?”

He smirks.

I reach up and rip the damn thing open, exposing my breasts to him, and letting the rough material fall from my shoulders to pool at my feet. I step out of it and toe off my flat pumps, not even caring that I'm naked before a stranger, it feels *that* good to be out of the damn thing.

Hatchet's eyes roam appreciatively over my body, making me preen as my nipples tighten under his scrutiny. I clench my thighs together, unable to resist teasing him with a wink when his gaze comes back to rest on my face. “Like what you see, Daddy?”

He shakes his head, but it's definitely not a no.

Stepping forward, I invade his space. He tenses, but it's only fair. He invaded mine. I reach out and run a hand down his muscular chest. “I'm taking a shower. You're welcome to join.”

He shakes his head again, but I swear there's the ghost of a smile at the corner of his lips. I raise onto my tiptoes so that I can kiss his whiskery cheek. He smells fucking amazing – like a pine forest at midnight under a full moon. He smells like *freedom* and I can't help inhaling deeply, trying to commit the vision his scent conjures to memory.

“Don't let the door smack you on that fine ass on your way out then.”

I step around him and walk to the bathroom, closing the door behind me this time. I refuse to listen to see if he's tempted to follow, so I crank the shower to warm up, and look around.

The bathroom is clean, modern, not too small. There's a bath with a shower over it, and the sink is part of a vanity unit.



There's products in the drawers and cabinet. Way nicer than the ones I use at home. It's eerie, but as I grab shampoo, conditioner, body wash, a loofah and even a fucking razor. I appreciate it.

Even the towels on the rail are fluffy, and when I grab one to take over to the shower with me, they're warm.

Whoa. This *is* like a hotel.

Stepping carefully into the bath, I move under the hot stream and allow the heat to pummel the aches of the day away. The straitjacket really did a number on my shoulders, and it feels good to unwind and soothe my tired muscles.

Not that my brain wants to relax and rest like my body. *What is with this place? I did terrible things – monstrous things the Judge said – and yet I've been sentenced to life imprisonment here. A place where they give us home comforts and real crockery, alongside knives and razor blades. It doesn't make sense.*

I can't let that distract me from my mission though. I came here to do a job, and I won't rest until it's done. No matter how long it takes. I'll just enjoy taking those beautiful disasters along with me for the ride. No one said I couldn't enjoy myself while I'm here – have a little fun.

*All work and no play makes Kayla a very stabby girl.*

I refuse to think about work or my dark and depraved urges, so I force myself to consider the other residents as I wash my hair and body.

Hatchet looks to be the oldest, possibly been here the longest too. He's the walking definition of the strong and silent type. His smouldering stare makes me tingle, and it's not hard to imagine all the fun we could get up to together.

Then there's Honeymonster. He seems sweet. Well, as sweet as a psychopath in an asylum can be, I guess. At least he was friendly. He has a bad boy vibe, but there's something seriously boy-next-door about him too. I was fascinated by the casual way he whipped out a hunting knife at the dinner table

and used the tip of the blade to pick his teeth. He handled it with skill and finesse. Just like I bet he could handle me in the bedroom the same way.

The others I need to study more closely. Though there's no denying that they were all more than capable of catching my eye. I haven't really had those one-on-one interactions though.

Just that one with Rat. Ugh. That guy gave me the creeps. Even just thinking about him now makes me shudder. He didn't seem dangerous. Just deranged. And Satan said he was eating the counsellor's entrails. She just casually dropped that bomb into the conversation. What a fucking sicko.

I mean, I'm all for a little bon appetit flesh, but why eat offal when you can feast on prime rib?

Still, I can't help but wonder what Satan meant when she said Rat will no longer be an issue. What does that mean? Has he gone? If he has, where to? Or did she mean no longer an issue in the euphemism sense?

I shudder and switch my train of thought elsewhere as I shave and scrub my skin.

There was one other resident who caught my eye. Nightshade.

But before I can delve too deeply into twisted fantasies starring him and his demonically dark laugh, a noise outside the bathroom makes me pause.

I'm done anyway, so I turn off the shower anyway and wring out my hair. Probably should have grabbed a towel for it, but if there's an intruder in my room, I don't want a towel to hinder me.

I grab the razor and hold it tight in my hand, then climb out of the tub. Slowly, I cross to the door and pause with my hand on the doorknob. My heart is racing with anticipation. Am I excited or scared? Both. But I'm ready to have some fun.

There's more shuffling from the other side of the door. A full thud. A muffled curse.

*Well, that blows my theory that maybe Hatchet came back to take me up on my offer.*

## CASE FILE - HATCHET



*N*ame: Forrest King

Age: 36

Height: 6'2

Weight: 72kg

Hair: Dark Brown

Eyes: Brown

Distinguishing Features: Scars below left eyebrow and on left shoulder from childhood trauma (taken from police and hospital reports).

Alias: Hatchet

Date of Arrival: 25/12/2000

Sentence: Life imprisonment within the facility with no chance of parole.

Treatment: Ongoing. Patient's refusal to speak impairs treatment plan.

Crimes: [REDACTED]

IT WAS ALL PROPAGANDA,  
BRAINWASHING BULLSHIT



*'MIDDLE FINGER' – BOHNES*

HATCHET

*I*nteresting creature. She's beautiful. Stunning, actually. Really fucking sexy. And enigmatic to boot. She's going to shake *and* stir shit up in here.

Good. We could use it. Life has been getting boring around here. Or at least it has been for me. Trapped in the asylum for just over twenty-two years now, so many firsts stolen from me because of circumstance.

I learnt to let it go a long time ago. Holding on to that shit, especially rage and resentment, it fucks you up. I'd never have survived my teenage years here if it weren't for the slew of counsellors coming through the doors teaching me to accept my fate and embrace the *unique opportunity* that had been given to me here.

I see now that it was all propaganda, brainwashing bullshit. But at the time, those quacks really helped me. I guess they shaped me into what I am today, but I needed that. I needed that more than they will ever know.

I can't help but wonder if the ballsy new girl is going to be my salvation as well. I sort of hope so. I can already see the determination in her eyes. The flirting, the quips, stripping naked and inviting me to shower with her...she wants to break me. She's vowed to make me speak, and I'm going to enjoy watching her try.

I hope it helps her too. Despite the front she put up today, it's clear to see that she's lonely. Just a sad little girl in need of attention.

She'll get plenty of it in here. But it might not make her any less lonely. Because loneliness isn't created by the absence of company, but by the absence of connection. Sure, the others

will fuck her brains out, but will that be enough? I doubt it. I'm sure she got this need met just fine on the outside. Didn't fill the void inside of her though. It's probably why she turned to killing in the first place. Chasing a high that no living person could give her.

It's about time I did something good with my life. In a place like this, you really start to question the meaning of good and evil. To be honest, I'm not so sure there's a difference anymore. But I'm going to try. I want to do right by her. Help her. By the time I'm through with her, I'll be able to look her in the eye and remind her that she is loved, without words being necessary.

## CASE FILE - NIGHT



*N*ame: Damien Night

Age: 34

Height: 6'3

Weight: 80kg

Hair: Black

Eyes: Dark blue

Distinguishing Features: Numerous body and face tattoos (catalogued).

Alias: Nightshade

Date of Arrival: 04/05/2009

Sentence: Life imprisonment within the facility.

Treatment: Numerous unsuccessful treatments including [CLASSIFIED] clinical trials and shock therapy.

Crimes: [REDACTED]

Note: Do not accept food or drink from this patient. Monitor closely.



HIS LEVEL OF INSANITY HASN'T  
GOT ANYTHING ON MINE



'TOXIC' – 2WEI

NIGHTSHADE

“*Y*ou’re not Hatchet.”

She’s dripping wet, naked, and brandishing a shitty little razor like it’s a lifeline. Cute.

My dick twitches in interest and the pulse in my throat starts to flicker double time, causing me to swallow thickly.

Her arm drops to her side, no longer seeing me as a threat – foolish – and I raise a brow at her with a slow one-sided smile.

“Disappointed?” I drawl, smirking because I already know the answer.

“No,” she lies.

“You can still call me Daddy if that’s what gets you off. I’m only a couple of years younger than Hatchet.”

She scoffs at me, but I see the way her own pulse flickers in her throat. She’s into it. Into *me*.

“Are you scared of me?” I ask, still watching that fragile pulse point like it’s a live lie detector. Which, I guess, it is.

“Sort of,” she answers after a beat.

“That’s not a no.” I smirk.

“But it’s not a yes either.”

She’s interesting. So brave. But is it all bravado? If she’d denied being afraid of me, I would have smelled her bullshit a mile off. But she didn’t lie. She opted for honesty, and her honest opinion is that she hasn’t decided if she’s afraid of me yet.

“Smart girl.”

Her pupils blow, and I file that away for later. I thought I imagined it at the dinner table, but her body has just confirmed it. Her nipples, hard enough to hang your coat on, could just be due to her getting out of the shower and being caressed by the cold air. But eyes never lie. She's aroused by me. Or by my words at least. I'll take that.

I turn my attention back to the blade in her hand, hanging limply by her side. I nod to it. "You planning to use that? You don't appear to have much hair left."

She glances down at the blade, seeming surprised that it's in her hand, then she drops it to the floor with a light clatter. Then she looks back at me.

"There. Now I'm unarmed." She scowls to hide her arousal, but I can see her nipples are hard peaks begging for my teeth, and her pupils are blown out. "What do you want?"

"Aren't you going to put on some clothes, or at least wrap up in a towel?"

She shakes her head. "No. Not until I know why you're here."

I can't believe her lack of embarrassment or shame. Not that her body would be a cause for either, but society has drummed it into us from childhood that our nakedness is something we should hide.

"Why's that?" I have to bite my tongue to hide my amusement.

"Because if you're here to attack or hurt me, I don't want a bulky, cumbersome towel getting in the way."

"In the way of my attacking you?" I fail to hide the amusement in my voice.

"In the way of my defending myself." She replies with a cheeky wink and a grin.

Really fucking cute. She continues to surprise me. I like her sass and her playfulness.

“And what makes you think I’m here to attack you? I made enough noise to alert you to my presence. If I wanted to attack, I’d surely be stealthy. I certainly wouldn’t stand around having a casual conversation with you while you’re naked and wet.”

“What other reason could there be for your being here?” She raises a brow in question but her green eyes are shining with mirth. She’s enjoying herself.

“Is that what you were expecting Hatchet to do?” I cock my head to the side and study the way her cheeks flush a gentle pink. It should clash horribly with her bright red hair – even dripping wet it’s vivid – but it doesn’t. She looks... completely fuckable.

It’s the huge green eyes that are doing it for me. She’s practically begging me to fuck her, to attack and hurt her. And I’d hate to disappoint.

I step closer, minimising the space between us, and to her credit, she doesn’t flinch or move. She holds her breath though, so she’s not stupid.

“What would you say if I told you I’m here to finish what Hatchet didn’t manage to get started?”

There’s a flash of surprise in her eyes, but it’s quickly drowned out by desire. She doesn’t even care to wonder how I know what didn’t go down between them. She hasn’t figured out that my room’s right across from hers, didn’t notice me silently following them down the corridor. Not when she only had eyes for Hatchet. But now her lustful eyes are all mine.

“Are you a good girl, Kookaburra?”

Her nostrils flare but she doesn’t answer. Reaching out, I trace the path of a single droplet of water as it travels along her long, creamy neck and down into the valley between her breasts. Goosebumps rise in my wake, and her delicate pulse point flutters again. I trail a finger from the sensitive dip behind her ear, along her sharp jawline, barely skimming the surface, until I’m gently cupping her chin between my finger and thumb.

She really is a work of art. Like something from a pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood obsession. Beautiful and barbaric. Sainly *and* sinister. The art history critics got it so wrong. Why would a redheaded woman be one or the other when she can be both and so much more? I see her strength. Her capabilities. But I can feel her fragility too.

And I want it all. Want her. Her pain and her pleasure. Want to break her apart and destroy her. I might even be tempted to put her back together again. Even if it's only to annihilate her all over again.

Her stare is so intense, so needy.

I snap.

My grip becomes bruising but she doesn't speak out. Her breathing hitches slightly but it's the only giveaway that shows she's aware of the change between us. She must be able to feel it; the air is charged.

She holds my gaze. Challenging. Defiant. *Try me*, that stare says.

So I do. I squeeze, nails digging in, until she winces. That's better. I loosen my grip, satisfied when my nail marks cause little crimson half moons to well up on her otherwise perfect alabaster skin.

Releasing her face, I grab her hips and spin her away from me. Even in the split second my hands are on her, the perfect way she *fits* still registers.

With her back to me, I apply pressure to her spine to make her bend to my will, which she does like a marionette being played by a master puppeteer. She's so...pliable. Malleable.

How far can she bend before she breaks?

I run my hand down the length of her spine, feeling the ridges and dips of her bones. She fascinates me.

"Just do it already!" she cries, losing patience.

I let the grin stretch across my face, knowing she can't see it. The grin that has had me likened to *The Joker* many times. If only they knew his level of insanity hadn't got anything on mine.

I fist my hand in her hair. Wrap it around and around my knuckles. Life affirming. Pull tight. Snap her head back. Ironic. Expose that beautiful throat.

My dick aches to be inside her so badly. I don't know how Hatchet managed to walk away from her. If I didn't know him better, I'd say he had the morals of a saint.

Keeping her right where I want her, I undo the zip on my slacks and free my throbbing cock. I guess little miss Jen won't be around anymore to keep it warm and wet, so I may as well enjoy myself tonight in Kayla instead.

I tease us both, running the tip of my dick back and forth between her lips, which frankly, feels fucking amazing for me. I guess she likes it too judging by the way she wiggles, silently asking for more. I ignore her though.

"Knew you'd be wet," I murmur, more to myself than for her to hear.

"I just got out of the shower, asshole," she snipes, still trying to impale herself on my cock.

"That's funny, because I'm talking about where the water doesn't reach, unless your cunt's so good you defy the laws of gravity."

She moans at my words and rubs herself against me like a bitch in heat until my dick is nice and slick with her juices.

Fuck teasing. Fuck waiting. Let's do this.

In one swift thrust, I impale her, fully sheathing myself. Her screams are bloodcurdling and music to my ears. Despite the fact she's dripping, she's fucking tight and I know it has to have hurt. It's good.

And the others haven't been here. I'm the first. Don't give a shit about being the last; so long as I'm the best.

“Fuck, yes,” she cries.

Have to agree with her.

I tighten my grip on her hips, pounding into her hard and fast, relishing the way her tight cunt is strangling my dick.

Jesus, that’s better than any noose.

I keep up the relentless pace until her whole body is quivering. I love it. Her vulnerability. The way *I’ve* made her knees weak and trembling.

“Fuck me until I pass out,” she begs, pushing back, trying to take me deeper.

“I will if you shut up your moaning and screaming.”

Fuck, it’s at times like these spit roasting is good. Keep their mouths full so that their whining is muffled.

“Make me.”

I see red.

With fucking pleasure. “You asked for this,” I remind her quietly, my thrusts reaching a punishing fever pitch, my grip bruising to the point that I can feel her bones grinding beneath me.

Withdrawing the wire from my pocket, I don’t even break my stride. It’s too easy to slip it over her head and round her pretty little throat while she’s distracted in the throes of passion.

She doesn’t even notice when I pull it tight like a cable tie. I feel the moment she becomes aware though; her pussy clamps down on me and her hands fly to her throat as a full body shudder wracks her from head to toe and she comes all over my dick.

Fuck, what I wouldn’t give to see her face in the mirror right now. The transformation from bliss-drunk heavy lids to wide-awake, fearful eyes.

The scent of her terror undoes me as much as the force of her orgasm and I come with a groan, filling her to the brim as she finally quiets, and her whole world turns black.



I'M CHOKING THE LIFE OUT OF MY  
FUCKING DICK



'MONSTERS' – RUELLE

GHOST

My dick is weeping, I'm strangling it so fucking hard. Can't remember the last time my balls ached like this. Been stuck in this hell hole for years with barely a whisper of a pussy in sight – the counsellors and Doctor Seytan definitely don't count – and then BAM in walks a beautiful redhead, and I'm choking the life out of my fucking dick, wishing it were my hands wrapped around her pretty little neck instead of my swelling pulsing cock.

Fuuuuuck. With a groan, I spill my release – first in fucking months – and I swear my cum shoots out of me like a geyser. Or maybe like a broken water main. It's never fucking ending. And the sounds of her getting railed in the room next to mine don't fucking help either. My dick feels like it'll never go soft.

I wonder who it is. Shagging her. Lucky fucking bastard whoever he is, if you ask me. I'd bet it's Snow – he's cocky enough – but she didn't seem that impressed with him in therapy earlier, or again at dinner. So maybe not him. I'd like to think she has better taste than that. He's a fucking asshole.

She clearly has a thing for Hatchet – calling him daddy and giving him come to bed eyes. Maybe it's him fucking her raw next door. Lucky sod, but he deserves it. He's been in here the longest out of all of us, so who knows if he's *ever* been laid.

I'd kill for just ten minutes with that sweet-looking cunt that just arrived. Even now, listening to her get used, I just know her pussy will still be tight for me.

I clench my fist around my still-erect dick, reminding myself that fucking the new girl is *not* an option, but then I cringe as the next squeal of pleasure echoes through the walls

and makes me groan. Why did her room have to be next to mine?

Fuck it. It's the same shit every fucking day in here and I'm sick of it. New girl arriving today was the first breath of fresh air I've experienced in months. I'm ready to fucking end it all if I don't get some fucking relief soon. I'm one slip up away from beating my own fucking skull in.

I start to jerk off again.

If I had her in here, I'd make her cum so hard she'd think she'd died and gone to heaven. I'd have her squealing and writhing and clawing at my sheets with her tight little pussy while I pounded her hard and fast and raw, fucking her senseless until she'd lost all sense of self. Until she forgot her own fucking name. I'd make her beg me to stop. I'd make her beg me to keep going. I'd have her begging for my seed and her fucking life. Then I'd give her the fuck of her life.

And when I was done, I'd throw her out, because I don't need another bastard problem in my life. Not now. Not ever.

But it's never gonna happen. It's a pipe dream. A fucking fantasy. The only fucking thing I'm getting off with is my fucking hand. And I'm so fucking tired of jerking off.

My dick isn't doing it for me anymore. It used to, as soon as I got out of shower or the pool or the fucking gym or wherever the fuck I was, I'd whip it out and give it a good hard tug. But not anymore. Not in here. It's not the same.

Right now I'm hard as stone, my erection refusing to quit, even though my heart isn't in it.

Seeing her today has made me realise I need something more than a slick palm and a firm five-finger grip.

I sigh and gather up the crumpled sheets I've just ruined. I fucking hate this place. The counsellors are a bunch of assholes, and Doctor Seytan is an evil motherfucker with a god complex.

Maybe I *should* fuck the new girl. It would give me something to do. It might even bring me joy. If I'm even capable of feeling joy anymore. I'm fucking exhausted. Bone tired of living. Wish I could just *ghost* out of here.

Fat fucking chance of that. My skillset is far too fucking valuable to Seytan and the board she answers to. They need me too much to ever let me die. I know; I've tried. They bring me back every time, and the punishments get worse and worse.

A shiver of fucking anticipation runs through me, and I'm cold and hot at once. I throw off the sheets and stumble to the bathroom. I'm sweating and shaking, and I'm clenching my teeth so hard my jaw aches.

As I slam the door shut behind me, my eyes land on the mirror over the sink. I look like shit, and I feel even worse. I'm pathetic. Fucking pathetic. Jerking off to the sound of two other people fucking. Wishing it were me.

I wash my hands and wipe them dry on my shirt. Then I turn back and lean against the sink, bracing myself with both hands against the mirror and staring into my own eyes.

My mom always told me I have soulful eyes, but now when I look into them, I just see a dead machine. The scar on my scalp prickles, as it always does when I think of my family.

Fuck.

It fucking hurts.

There's something wet dripping down my cheeks, so I'm definitely feeling something. At least I know that much. I know I'm not dead. That I am capable of feeling things. I'm sure I am.

It's just that everything I feel is fucking awful, and I'm so fucking desperate to feel something *else*, that I'm willing to do just about anything at this point. Even fucking the new girl. Whether she wants me to or not.

It doesn't matter. Nothing matters.

I'm fucking pathetic.

Eyeballing myself hard in the mirror, I reach down and grab my dick once more.

I'm sick. So fucking sick.

But it still stirs to life, and I go again to thoughts of the new girl choking on my cock, huge green eyes glistening with tears as she silently begs me to stop.

STICK A FORK IN MY VAJAYJAY FOR  
IT IS DONE



*'CASTLE' – HALSEY*

KOOKABURRA

*J*esus fucking Christ on a cracker, stick a fork in my vajayjay, for it is done.

*That* was a damn good fucking.

Could have lived without the cheese wire to the throat. Though it did make my pussy cream that much harder. Still. Not the point.

Blinking back the darkness, I come round on the floor of my bedroom. It's still so brand new to me, I barely recognise it, but what I *do* recognise is the psychopath staring down at my body. Thanks to the words inked above his eyebrows, there's a perpetual smirk on his pretty, demonic face.

At some point he must have flipped me over because he certainly appears to be enjoying the view of my bare breasts as he languidly strokes his long, thick cock. He seems so entranced, I don't think he's even realised I'm awake.

I remove the noose from my neck, take in a deep, life-affirming, shuddering breath and then prepare to rain hell down on Nightshade.

"You fucking dick," I hiss, making him jump.

"You—"

"Ever heard of a thing called consent?" I snap, cutting off whatever disbelieving utterance he was trying to make. "Partaking in an asphyxiation kink without gaining consent from your partner is not cool."

He stares at me, mouth open, and this time I don't think it's my breasts that have rendered him speechless.

"Are you just going to gape at me, or can a girl get a hand up?"

When he fails to respond, I huff and drag myself up off the floor, throwing the wire noose away.

“You’re alive.”

“Duh.” I curl my lip at his stupidity.

Of course I’m *alive*. Was he expecting that pathetic attempt at strangulation to finish me off? I mean, it totally did, but in the *petite mort* sense of the word, not actual death.

I walk over to the wardrobe and grab a silk robe. Like an actual honest to god real silk robe – none of that satin or synthetic shit – and pull it on. I feel like a 1940s starlet. Except considerably less glamorous. I just need a cigarette in a holder and my hair in rollers to complete the look.

When I turn back to face Nightshade, he’s frowning at me. And when his cum starts to slide down my leg, I bite back a grin.

“What’s so funny?” he snaps.

“Umm, you didn’t use a condom.” I mean, it’s probably not funny, not really, but it’s not *not* funny either.

“So? You’ve been sterilised.”

“Umm, no I fucking haven’t,” I snap back. What a fucking thing to assume!

“We all were upon admission.”

“Well, I fucking wasn’t. I think I’d know.”

He shrugs. “Whatever. Not my problem either way.”

Well if he was sterilised, as he so beautifully put it, there wouldn’t be a *problem* in the first place.

I reach between my legs, scoop up our combined essence onto my fingertips, and pop them in my mouth.

“Delicious. I could use a drink. Do you want one?”

I breeze past Nightshade, who still has his dick in his hands – beautiful specimen, the urge to pet it is strong – and make my way over to the kitchen area of my room.



There's a long island counter separating the living space with three stools along one side. On the other, I find an under the counter, glass-fronted drinks fridge, fully stocked with bottles of wine.

*What the fuck kind of prison is this?*

“Are you having, like, a stroke or something?” I ask, cocking my head to the side as I take him in. He's barely moving. I mean, he's jerking off – clearly having a different kind of stroke – but it's like he's in a damn trance. “Hello? Earth to deadly Nightshade? Do. You. Want. A. Damn. Drink?”

He does a double take, realises what's going on and quickly tucks his dick away. Shame. I didn't even get to choke on it.

“What did you say?” His tone is low, threatening. Exciting.

“I asked if you wanted anything to drink. Is this wine for fucking real?”

“Of course it is. Who would stock a wine cooler with fake wine?”

Doesn't he know we're meant to be in prison? Right now this place is looking nicer than The Ritz. Not that I've actually been inside The Ritz, but I've seen movies. I know things. And I know that even the fanciest hotels in London don't give you a fully stocked wine fridge and drool-worthy wardrobe for free. *Eat your heart out Julia Roberts. This must be costing the taxpayers billions.*

“So...” I prompt when Night still doesn't answer the question.

“So, what?”

“Do you want a damn drink?”

His slack jaw is comical. I laugh, and his expression quickly morphs into a scowl. Doesn't matter though, he's still fucking fine. Probably more fucking fine when he's glaring at

me like he wants to kill me. My pussy throbs. *Down girl, let's rehydrate before we go again.*

“No one ever does that.”

“Does what?” I scrunch my nose up at him. He's being weird.

“Offers me a drink.”

I stare at him like he's the crazy one.

“You must be parched,” I quip. “It's a wonder you haven't died of dehydration.”

He doesn't smile. He's still staring at me like I'm a bug under a microscope.

“If you had any idea who I was...” he mutters.

“You're the guy who just fucked me so good it hurts to walk. Your bedside manner could use a little work though. Look, are you thirsty or not? Because I probably shouldn't drink this entire bottle to myself, but if you're not having any, you can bet your ass I'm going to.”

“Fine.” He sighs.

“Fine what?”

“I'll have a damn drink if you're so hell bent on being a good hostess. Most people are wary to eat or drink anything around me.”

“I *am* the fucking hostess with the mostess already, thank you very much. I *did* let you fuck me.”

“*Let me?*” he repeats.

“Yes.”

“You didn't *let me* do anything.”

“Well, I sure as shit didn't stop you.”

“I'd like to see you try.” His threat, and the accompanying sadistic smile, sets my fanny fluttering all over again. Damn

him. I just can't resist a bad boy. And given where I now am, and who I'm living with, I guess that means I'm fucked.

Or – hopefully at least – I will be fucked. Regularly. And hard. By many different psychopaths. My favourite.

“There should be glasses in that cupboard there,” he says nodding to the wall-mounted cupboard to the right of the stove top.

I follow his instruction and find two cut crystal wine goblets, which is fucking ridiculous. Setting them on the counter, I raise a brow at Night and cock my hip.

“And where might I find a corkscrew, oh wise one?” I tease. I don't actually expect them to let us have an object as lethal as a corkscrew in our rooms. The razor for shaving is one thing, but there's five creative ways to kill someone with a corkscrew – on top of all the mundane ways.

“Try the top drawer,” he drawls back, amusement lacing his midnight tone.

I shiver. Fuck that's a sexy voice. I wish he'd talked dirty to me while he was pounding me from behind. I love me some good dirty talk.

The corkscrew is exactly where he suggested it might be, raising my suspicion.

“You seem to know the ins and outs of this room a little too well.”

“They're all the same.”

“You mean you have a pink razor too? And a fluffy blanket for snuggies?”

“What the fuck is snuggies?”

“You don't snuggie?”

“I don't know what you're talking about.”

“I think you protest too much...” I say in a sing-song voice that makes him glare. I laugh at his fierce scowl. He doesn't

scare me. He sets my fanny aflame. The angrier, moodier, broodier he gets, the more the vajayjay is down for a good time with him.

I grab a bottle of wine from the fridge, frowning when I notice how warm the glass is.

“What’s wrong?” Night asks, sounding bored.

“The wine’s warm. The fridge must be broken.”

“It’s red. It’s meant to be warm. Or at least room temperature. Tastes better drunk like blood though.”

“Ha-ha. Why’s it in the fridge then?”

“What makes you think I’m joking? You do realise where you are, right?”

“I can’t see you poisoning your victims and then drinking their toxic blood. One, you don’t seem that stupid, and two, you’re still alive.”

“Maybe I drink their blood first and poison them after,” he teases. His tone is mocking but the smirk on his face softens the jibe.

“No kink shaming here, dude, you don’t have to explain yourself to me.”

I open the bottle and pour two generous glasses, before holding one out to Night. He stares at it like *I’m* trying to poison *him*. Sighing and shaking my head, I pull my hand back and raise his glass to my lips.

“Paranoid, much?” I tease before flicking my attention back to the glass in my hand.

It smells...awful. I scrunch my nose up. I’ve never been a wine drinker, but I guess beggars can’t be choosers.

“What’s wrong?” Night asks again, sounding exasperated.

“It smells weird. Maybe it’s corked?”

“Stop—” but he’s too late, I’ve raised the glass to my lips and taken a large gulp. It’s bitter, with a tinge of sweetness as

it goes down. It's almost...cloying. Choking.

I cough.

But it doesn't help.

My throat feels dry. Scratchy. Like it's closing up, actually.

Nightshade stares at me with wide-eyed horror.

*What's his problem? I'm the one who's choking here.*

That's my last conscious thought before my knees buckle and my world turns black. A-fucking-gain.

THE ONLY THING THAT MATTERS IS  
THAT SHE WILL DIE



*'STRAITJACKET' – BOHNES*

NIGHTSHADE

Normally, watching someone take their final breath makes my dick hard. But not tonight. Not her.

She's dying alright, there's no mistaking my own personal fucking signature as the poison-laced wine works its way through her veins. The brain, kidneys, heart, lungs – it matters not. The only thing that matters is that she will die.

The pang of guilt that hits me in the chest surprises me. I didn't anticipate the deadweight that wraps itself around my neck and pulls me under with her. I didn't anticipate the sound of her voice echoing in my mind. I didn't anticipate that I'd find myself completely intrigued by the one woman I thought I wanted to kill the most.

I can't believe I'm about to do this.

Racing around the kitchen island to where Kayla has collapsed, I drop to my knees beside her prone form. She's still got a pulse, but it's faint. Weak. Nearly fucking gone.

“Shit!”

I've never felt panic like this before. I've never had the need to do this before.

Taking care to hold her up in my arms, I lean backwards, place her on my lap and start talking to her.

“Come on, Red. Open your eyes for me.”

Right now I'll do anything to try to save her.

“I'm not going to let you die. Not on my watch.”

I reach inside my suit jacket and pull out the tiny, hard black case I keep on me at all times. With one hand still on Kayla's pulse point, I flick the magnet catch on the case open

and retrieve the tiny vial of antidote from within. Kayla's fading fast, but I'm going to need both hands free to administer the drug. Reluctantly, I let go of her wrist and grab the small syringe from the black case. I quickly load the syringe with the antidote, flicking the side to ensure there's no air bubbles, and stab it into the side of Kayla's neck, slamming my thumb down on the plunger and watching the chamber empty.

I hold my breath and count.

"Come on," I say more to myself than to her as I wait to see if the antidote is going to work.

Seconds pass, minutes, maybe even an hour.

Nothing.

"Come on, Red. Stay with me." I check her pulse again. "Faster."

Her pulse is still weak but it is definitely getting stronger. Her eyelids flutter, so I rub my hand down her cheek, brushing her hair away from her face. Her eyes are still closed, but there's a spark of life in her again.

"Kayla. Open your eyes for me, sweetheart, baby."

I continue to talk to her softly, running my hands over every inch of her beautiful face, willing her to wake up. Willing her to be okay.

With a gasp that I'm sure will alert the entire facility, she comes around. This time it doesn't take me by surprise because my eyes are glued to her face, searching for signs of life. Her eyes open and a relieved breath whooshes from my lungs when she blinks up at me. Her beautiful, diopside green eyes look up and glaze over with confusion.

Fuck, I don't even know what came over me. Why did I lie and tell her we were all sterilised? Was it because fucking her raw felt so fucking good and I want to do it again, or is there another reason?



I have bigger things to worry about right now. Like keeping her heart beating and wondering why the fuck I'm suddenly Mother Theresa instead of The Grim Reaper.

"W-what happened?" Kayla's brows furrow in confusion as she tries to sit up, but I place a hand on her shoulder to keep her still.

"Just lie here for a moment, let me explain. You collapsed."

"Why? I felt fine."

I take in a deep breath and run my hands through her hair, cupping her face in my palms. Now that I've touched her, I can't seem to stop myself from exploring every inch of her. "The wine."

"It was corked?"

I shake my head. "Poisoned."

Her eyes widen. "What?" Again, she tries to get up and I have to gently hold her down.

"Yeah. Listen. Stay still for a minute and let the antidote do its thing. I'll help you into bed in a second. You need to pretend nothing happened tonight. You can't tell anyone."

"That I was poisoned?"

"About any of it. Especially not me being here."

"Why?"

I don't answer her, instead continuing, "And don't eat or drink anything in this room at all. Except tap water. Not until I give you the all clear. If you're hungry, let me know and I can give you a snack from my room or something. I'm just across the hallway."

"Why? What does it mean?"

"It means, Kayla, that someone was trying to kill you. And more importantly, they're trying to make it look like I did it."

Kayla's eyes scan mine, searching for any hint of deceit. She takes in a deep breath and nods. "Okay. But who would want to poison me?"

I shrug. "I don't know. That's what we need to find out. But first, we need to make sure you're safe." I help her sit up and then quickly grab her a glass of tap water. "Drink this, it will flush the toxins out of your system faster."

She takes a sip before handing it back to me. "Thank you," she whispers, her hand still shaking.

I shake my head. "Drink all of it."

I can see the fear in her eyes, and it ignites a fire in me. Someone tried to hurt her and blame me. I won't rest until I find out who. "You're safe now," I say, my voice low and heavy with promise.

Kayla shoots me an amused, disbelieving look. "Umm, no offence, but I barely know you. The sex was great and all, and thanks for saving my ass, but if someone is trying to kill me, the one thing I'm definitely not, is safe."

She's right of course, so what the fuck can I say to that?

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I DON'T LEAVE. I put her to bed instead. Alone, like a fucking gentleman, even though my dick is more than willing to go another round with her tight cunt.

It feels alien to be caring for someone rather than killing them. Actively trying to save her life – and succeeding – has done a number on me. Fucking hell, did I really call her 'sweetheart' and 'baby'? I need my head examining.

But that doesn't stop me from stroking a vivid lock of hair back from her face. She's drifted off, I should probably get off the bed and leave her to it now.

As if sensing my intention to move – or perhaps my reluctance to – she snuggles into me, her face buried in my

neck, her pert little tits pressed against my side, and I'm a happy fucking man.

Settling into a deeper slumber, her lips part in her sleep, her soft little snores a sweet melody. I think about her lying there, her head resting on my shoulder, and my dick twitches to life. Maybe under normal circumstances I'd be tempted to fool around with her while she sleeps. But not tonight. Not after all she's been through.

Who the fuck is this guy? How can I be like this after only a few short hours of knowing her? She's still a fucking stranger. But there's no denying the panic that hit me when she raised that glass to her lips and went down like a sack of shit.

Actually, that reminds me, I need to tidy up. There's broken glass that needs taking care of, and I need to investigate which poison was used.

Careful not to wake her, I extract myself from her arms and climb out of the bed. Her sleepy whimper of protest stops me in my tracks, but I wait until her breathing evens out again before moving over to her kitchen area. I grab the small dustpan and brush from under the sink, and make quick work of cleaning up, wrapping the glass in some kitchen towel and depositing it in the bin.

Then I turn my attention to the open bottle, and the untouched glass of wine. It's so obvious now that it was compromised. A clear, almost iridescent film coats the side of the glass, which is plain to see when I hold it up to the light. I bring the tainted wine to my nose and inhale deeply, understanding why Kayla would maybe confuse the wine with being corked rather than poisoned. It's subtle, but only an experienced nose that's well attuned to the many different varieties of liquid poison would be able to detect it. But to me, it's unmistakable. Green lace aphid poison. Deadly fucking potent when extracted in the right way. Clearly this was meant to kill Red. But why? And who, besides myself, has the skills to pull this off?

I grab the discarded corkscrew and remove the cork from the metal spiral and bring that to my nose too. I can't detect the poison on the cork which means that the wine was likely laced with the poison very recently. With the bottles stored on their side in the fridge, the poison would have seeped into the cork if it was left for more than a few hours.

Kayla stirs in her sleep, and my attention snaps to her like a magnet. All of my senses are on high alert, and I wonder if anyone will come looking later to see if they were successful. Yeah...that can be my excuse for staying. To see if the killer comes back, not because I want to make sure she's alright.

Once she settles again, I pour the wine down the drain. Then I slowly and methodically open and discard every bottle of wine in her room. All of them were poisoned. Whoever did this meant business, they weren't leaving anything to chance.

Fools.

A true poison aficionado understands the art of waiting. When you have a deadly poison that can work in seconds, you learn to appreciate the build up. Poison one bottle out of twelve, it becomes a game. When will the victim succumb? It doesn't matter when, not when you know they will.

I would never have been so...crass in my methodology if I wanted to kill Kayla, but whoever framed me didn't know that.

Once the wine's been taken care of, I fill the sink with hot soapy water and begin to wash all of her crockery, glasses, and kitchen utensils. I'm not leaving anything to chance.

I can't stop looking at Kayla as she sleeps through. I can't explain it, but there's a pressure in my chest. A tightness that makes me wary. Uncomfortable.

I feel protective of her.

And I don't know why.

I don't like it. But I'll be damned if I'll let anything happen to her on my watch. Especially with my MO. If she's going to

die by poison, you better bet I'll be the one administering it. Until then, until I can get to the bottom of who is setting me up, I'll protect her with my last breath.

Because I want to know who's framing me.

Not for any other reason.

TAKES MORE THAN A LITTLE  
STRANGULATION TO TAKE ME  
DOWN



*'JOKE'S ON YOU' – CHARLOTTE LAWRENCE*

KOOKABURRA

Well last night wasn't the most fun I've had involving a dick and nearly dying, but it also wasn't the worst experience ever either, so I'm chalking it up as a win.

Was it totally fucking weird coming round on my new kitchen floor with my head in Night's lap? Yes. Was it even weirder that he was stroking my face and murmuring pet names at me like 'sweetheart' and 'baby'? Fuck yes. But that wasn't even the weirdest part of my night.

It was waking up to find Night watching over me.

I closed my eyes and pretended to be asleep, but I couldn't resist peeking at him through my lowered lashes. He washed every item in my kitchen, opened every bottle of wine and sniffed them all, before pouring them all down the sink. I guess they were all poisoned or something. I don't know. He kept checking on me the entire time, the strangest look on his face.

I knew then that Night wasn't just some random hookup. There's clearly more to him, and I want to find out what that is. This whole place is weird, and not what I expected, and I need to get to the bottom of what's really going on.

I wait for him to leave my room before opening my eyes and sitting up. He's left me another glass of water on the counter, so I sip it slowly, trying to piece together everything that happened yesterday.

My head is throbbing, and I wince as I touch the bump on the back of my scalp where I must have hit it when I fell.

I head to the bathroom. In the mirror, all I can focus on is the dark circles under my eyes in my reflection. I look like an absolute mess. But there's something else, a spark in my eyes,

a fire that's been ignited. Might need to do something about the angry purple ring around my throat from the cheese wire though.

At first I thought Night was trying to kill me when he slipped that noose around my neck, but seeing his reaction to the poison has got me second guessing myself. He doesn't *seem* to want me dead, and I very much doubt a psychopath could fake concern so well.

I wash and brush my teeth. Find a hairbrush in the vanity, so use it, and tie my long bright red locks back in a fishtail braid. Whoever stocked my room was kind enough to think of everything, from hair ties to feminine hygiene products, perfume and even a small, still boxed, vibrator in my bedside drawer. What the fuck?

I grab some ripped jeans and a white tank from the wardrobe, deciding to forgo the underwear. It's creepy as fuck that someone knew my sizing. I'm not wearing *that*. But clothes are better than the orange jumpsuit, so I won't cut my nose off to spite my face. Funny saying that. I've cut someone's nose off before. It wasn't pleasant or pretty.

When I'm ready, my feet inside some trusty, chunky heeled, shit-kicker boots that I totally would have got for myself if I wasn't poor as fuck, I don't quite know what to do with myself. You'd have thought that an asylum considerate enough to leave weapons casually lying around for me to use would also provide some sort of welcome packet with a daily timetable, but apparently hospitality only goes so far. Whatever. I'll take the lethal shit over pamphlets and timetables any day.

As I'm standing in front of the kitchen island, lost in my thoughts, there's a knock on the door.

"Come in," I call.

It's not Night, but Hatchet who steps into my room.

"Good morning, daddy," I say, a mischievous grin stretching across my lips. "How are you today? Apart from



mighty fucking fine?”

He shoots me an amused smirk but doesn't reply. I huff. I *will* get him to speak to me. I'll make it my mission to break him before the week is out.

“Let me guess, you're here to escort me somewhere?” I ask. He nods. “Breakfast?” I ask hopefully. Another nod.

His gaze lands on my throat and anger flashes across his features fast as lightning. He raises a brow at me in silent question.

“Oh this?” I point to the tender spot on my neck and shrug like it's nothing. “That's nothing to worry your pretty little head about, gorgeous. I'm fine, as you can see. Takes more than a little strangulation to take me down.” I wink at him and smack him on his delectable arse. “After you, lead the way. Do I need to hold daddy's hand?”

I *swear* he snorts, even if don't *hear* anything. I close my door behind me – not that there's much point as there's no damn lock – and loop my arm through his. He stiffens momentarily under my touch, but hey, unless he says something or pushes me away, I'm not gonna stop.

We walk in silence, and I try to pay a little more attention to my surroundings this time, so that I don't constantly have to rely on a chaperone to show me around. It's pointless though, every damn door and corridor looks more or less the same. From what I've been able to gather so far, the facility is split into a minimum of two levels. Doctor Seytan's office had a window and looked out onto a thick forest. None of the other rooms I've seen since have windows, which makes me think that maybe we're underground. Or maybe that's just a ruse. I don't suppose it matters much.

When we reach the same room we had dinner in last night, I discover we're the last to arrive. I remember the stupid rule about not being able to start eating until everyone is present and feel a pang of guilt that they might've been waiting for me. Aside from Night, who's scowling at me, no one else

seems to mind. None of them look surprised to see me alive either though, so it makes me think there's either a very good actor in the room, or none of these guys we're responsible for poisoning me and framing Night.

Hatchet pulls my seat out for me like a real gentleman, and I raise my brows in surprise but accept his chivalry. As soon as he's seated, the doors at the far end of the room slide open and seven members of staff file in carrying plates.

I quickly scan the staff members, observing their expressions and movements. They all look rather composed, but their eyes seem to dart around the room, as if they are looking for something or someone. Feelings of suspicion rise as they approach the table and start placing the dishes in front of us.

I can't help but notice the odd look on Night's face as the staff members set down plates in front of us. It's as if he's trying to hide a smirk. I can't quite put my finger on what's so amusing, but it's starting to unnerve me.

"What's so funny?" I finally ask him, trying to sound casual.

Night just shakes his head and takes a sip of his juice, refusing to meet my eyes.

As soon as the last staff member leaves, the room falls eerily silent.

I decide to let it go for now and focus on the food. It's a beautifully prepared steak, eggs and pancakes, cooked to perfection. I cut into it and savour the flavour, momentarily forgetting about Night's strange behaviour.

But just as I take another bite, a sudden sharp pain shoots through my jaw and I yelp in surprise. I spit out the piece of food and see a small, metallic object glinting on my plate.

"What the hell is this?" I exclaim, holding up the foreign object for Night to see.

His expression turns cold as he inspects it closely. “It looks like a...screw,” he says flatly. It doesn’t look like any sort of screw I’ve ever seen, but I’m hardly Miss DIY.

My heart starts pounding. It’s clear now that something is terribly wrong. Who would put a *screw* in my food?

“What’s going on?” one of the others asks.

Suddenly all eyes are on me.

“Nothing. Just found something unexpected in my food.”

“Hey, Kayla. What happened to your neck?” Snow asks obnoxiously. Is it just my imagination, or is he deliberately trying to change the topic?

“Daddy Hatchet gave me a hell of a welcome party last night,” I say with a wink, knowing full well that Hatchet won’t contradict me. Night said not to tell anyone about me and him, he didn’t say I couldn’t *lie* and say I was having sex with someone else.

The pale one – Ghost – laughs, and the others join in, not realising the half truth in my words. Hatchet shoots me a glare, but I can tell he’s amused as well.

But I can’t focus on that now. I need to find out what’s going on with my food. I pick up the piece of metal and examine it closely. It’s a small square, with sharp edges and a polished surface. It’s definitely not something that would accidentally wind up in my meal and it’s definitely not a screw. Did Night not realise, or was he deliberately lying?

As I turn it over in my hand, I notice something etched into the metal. It’s a series of strange symbols, arranged in a pattern that seems almost...familiar. I can’t quite put my finger on it, but something about them is nagging at me.

I glance up to see Snow still grinning at me, and I’m suddenly angry. Who does he think he is, playing games with my food and endangering my life? Without a second thought, I lunge at him over the table, ready to deliver a swift blow to his smug face.

But before I can make contact, a pair of strong arms wrap around me from behind, pulling me back and restraining me. I struggle and sputter, trying to free myself, but the grip only tightens.

“Easy there, killer,” a familiar voice whispers in my ear, making me shiver with desire despite my rage. It’s Honeymonster. “You don’t want to start a fight in here, Sugar Puffs, trust me.”

I take a deep breath and try to calm down, but I can feel the rage boiling inside me. “He put something in my food,” I growl, pointing at Snow. “I saw it.”

Honeymonster nods and turns to Snow, his expression deadly serious. “What did you do, Snow?” he demands.

Snow just shrugs, still grinning. “I thought it might add a bit of flavour to her meal.”

Honeymonster narrows his eyes. “What kind of flavour?”

Snow’s grin grows wider. “Oh, just a little something to give her a kick. You know, spice things up.”

The anger rises again, but Honeymonster’s grip tightens around me, reminding me to stay calm. “What did you put in my food, Snow?” I demand, my voice shaking with rage.

Snow leans in close, his breath hot on my face. “Something to make you feel alive, darling,” he whispers, a dangerous glint in his eye.

Honeymonster’s grip finally loosens, and I step away from the table, my mind racing. What did he put in my food? And why? Is he responsible for the poison in the wine too? Is this some sick game he’s playing, or is there something more sinister at play here?

I turn back to Honeymonster. “Thanks. I guess.”

“No worries, Sugar. The repercussions for fighting in here are severe. You don’t want to experience them.”

I nod, still trying to calm my racing thoughts. “What do we do now?” I ask him.

Honeymonster looks at me thoughtfully. “We need to figure out what Snow put in your food and how it’s going to affect you. Then we’ll deal with him.”

I nod again, feeling grateful for Honeymonster’s level head in this situation. Together, we begin to examine the piece of metal more closely, searching for any clues as to what Snow might have added to my meal.

As I run my finger over the strange symbols, I suddenly feel a sharp pain shoot through my body. My head spins and my vision blurs. Honeymonster catches me before I can fall, holding me up and staring at me in concern.

“What’s happening?” he asks urgently.

I try to speak, but my mouth feels like it’s full of cotton. I can’t form words. The pain in my body intensifies, spreading through my limbs and making my muscles spasm uncontrollably. I gasp for air, feeling like I’m suffocating.

Honeymonster’s grip tightens on me, trying to hold me steady. “We need to get you out of here,” he says, his voice strained with worry. “Now, Sugar.”

With his help, we stumble towards the door, but it doesn’t open. Of course. It’s still mealtime. Fuck’s sake. This place is ridiculous.

Honey rushes over to a small electronic screen on the wall, slams his palm down on it and then quickly types in a code. A moment later the doors slide open and he helps me through them. The cooler air in the corridor helps to ease my pain a little, but every movement still sends waves of agony through my body.

“What was that?” I manage to gasp out, clutching onto Honeymonster’s arm for support.

“I don’t know,” he admits, his eyes scanning for any sign of danger. “But we need to get you to the medical room, fast.”

I nod, trying to focus through the pain. My body is starting to give out, and I know that I won't be able to make it much longer without medical attention.

The doors open and we stumble down the winding corridor, our footsteps echoing through the silence. Every jolt and bump sends pain shooting through me, and I have to bite my lip to keep from crying out.

We quicken our pace, and soon we find ourselves standing in front of another nondescript door. Honeymonster knocks before opening it, and when he half carries, half drags me inside, I see that he's brought me to the hospital ward.

I wonder if Jen made it here with Rat yesterday before he...

"Emerson? What are you doing here?" a kind voice asks.

I blink slowly and try to focus on the woman rushing towards us, but everything is blurry.

"Honeymonster found me," I manage to say weakly, my throat feeling dry and scratchy. "I don't know what happened. Maybe allergies?"

The woman nods, motioning for Honeymonster to place me on one of the beds. She examines me carefully, her face growing more and more concerned with each passing moment.

I grit my teeth against the next wave of pain.

Finally, she finishes her examination and administers a shot, and I lie back on the bed, feeling exhausted and numb.

Honeymonster sits beside me, his hand taking mine in a gentle grip.

"You're going to be okay, Sugar Puff," he whispers, his voice full of reassuring warmth.

I give him a weak smile, grateful for his presence.

The woman turns to him, her expression serious. "She's stable for now, but she needs to rest. Don't let her move around too much."

Honeymonster nods, his grip on my hand tightening. “I won’t leave her side.”

As I drift off to sleep, I can feel his warmth next to me, a soothing presence in the darkness. I feel like I’m safe with him by my side, just like I had last night with Nightshade in my room watching over me.

HOW MUCH MORE LEEWAY DO WE  
HAVE TO GIVE HIM?





*'A LITTLE BIT OFF' – FIVE FINGER DEATH  
PUNCH*

HONEYMONSTER

*I* may be laidback, but Snow's crossed a fucking line. Rage consumes me and it takes every ounce of control I possess to remain seated by Kayla's sleeping side, rather than go hunt Snow down to make him pay for that stunt he pulled in the dining room.

What the fuck was he thinking?

I have no idea what he gave her, but her reaction was strong.

I just hope she's going to be okay.

I take a deep breath and try to calm my nerves before reaching for Kayla's hand. Her skin is soft and warm, and I find myself lost in the simple act of touching her.

As I sit there, holding Sugar Puff's hand, my anger slowly dissipates. I can't stay mad when I'm with her. I'm surprised, but she just seems to have that effect on me, calming me down and bringing peace to my mind.

But then I remember what Snow did to her, and the rage returns. I can't let him get away with this.

I gently stroke Kayla's hair, watching as she sleeps peacefully. She looks so innocent and vulnerable, and I can't bear to think of anyone hurting her. I know I have to do something to protect her. Living in the asylum and being a puppet to Seytan and the board's whims is bad enough. It's hard enough to stay alive without us turning on one another.

I think Snow needs a reminder that we're on the same side here. We're meant to be a team at least, though oftentimes it feels like we're a fucked up family. Nevertheless, I can't have

Snow gunning for Kayla like that. Especially when it's unfounded.

I release Kayla's hand and stand up, my resolve hardening. I know what I need to do. I have to confront Snow and make him pay for what he did to Kayla. I have to protect her at all costs; she's new and doesn't deserve his ire.

Stretching out my stiff limbs, I glance at the clock on the wall and see that Kayla's been out for hours now. Jeez, where did the time go? The doc said sleep is the best thing for her, but is it normal to sleep for this long? Maybe I should fetch the doc to check on her.

Now I feel torn between staying with her and going to find Snow. Fuck. What should I do?

I take one last look at Kayla, making sure she's comfortable before making up my mind. As much as I want to stay by her side, I know I need to deal with Snow first. I can't let him get away with what he did to her.

Decision made, I quickly scan the room for anything I can use as a weapon, just in case things get physical. My eyes settle on a small metal lamp on the bedside table. It's not much, but it'll do.

Taking a deep breath to calm my pounding heart, I swallow down my adrenaline and anticipation and make my way out of Doctor Callaway's room and into the hallway.

Fighting is prohibited here, but from time to time we come to blows. It's unavoidable. The punishment for doing so is rarely worth the release of pounding someone to a pulp, but just this once I'm willing to make an exception in Kayla's honour. I'll readily take a punishment Seytan deems necessary if it means Snow regretting his actions.

I try to move as quietly as possible, not wanting to draw attention to myself.

As I round the corner, I see Snow standing at the other end of the hall, talking to one of the orderlies. He hasn't noticed me yet, which is good. I use this to my advantage, quickly

closing the distance between us as the member of staff walks away.

When I'm close enough, I grab Snow's shoulder and spin him around. He looks surprised to see me, but his surprise quickly turns to arrogance as he smirks and crosses his arms over his chest. I slam him into the wall in an attempt to knock the smarmy smile off his face, but it just makes him grin even wider. I fucking hate this guy. He's never been a team player, but Bones and Nightshade keep saying to give him time. He's not been here that long, but he's the reason Drainpipe died, so how much more leeway do we have to give him?

The thought of Kayla dying because of his arrogance makes me see red.

"What's your problem?" he sneers.

"My problem is what you did to Kayla," I growl, getting right up in his face, my voice echoing off the empty hallway even though I didn't shout.

He seems completely unfazed by my attack and says nothing.

"What did you give her that made her react like that?" I growl, grabbing his throat with my free hand.

Snow's smirk fades and is replaced by a look of uncertainty. "I didn't give her anything," he says slowly. "I swear. I was just trying to save face in the dining room by taking credit. I swear it wasn't me."

I don't believe him for a second, but I'm not going to waste time arguing. I raise the lamp above my head, ready to strike. Snow's eyes widen in fear – cowardly little shit – and he attempts to take a step to the side to escape me. He doesn't get far because I flex my fingers around his throat.

"I don't have time for your lies, Snow," I say through gritted teeth.

Snow shrugs. "So what? She's just a girl. She can handle it."

“Stay away from Kayla. Or else.”

With that final warning, I turn and leave him standing in the centre of the corridor, probably shaking with fear. He’s scared now, but I doubt he’ll give Kayla any more grief. At least I hope not, anyway.

I make my way back to the doctor’s room, chucking the lamp in a potted plant as I go, but then stopping in my tracks outside the door when I see Doctor Seytan inside, and Kayla wide awake.

I DON'T PLAY NICELY WITH GOATS



*'ALPHA- LITTLE DESTROYER*

KOOKABURRA

When I wake, Honeymonster is gone and Doctor Seytan is standing at the end of my bed, looking decidedly unimpressed.

“Finally, you’re awake. We need to have a talk, Miss Kingfisher.”

“I’m all ears,” I reply dryly, because I have nothing to say to this woman that would indicate we need to talk. She needs to talk, she wants me to listen.

“You’ve caused quite a stir since your arrival.”

“Can’t be helped, I’m afraid. It’s the Leo in me.”

“Don’t be glib,” she snaps, shaking her head in irritation like she wishes she could shake me off so easily.

I don’t hold back my satisfied grin. I love pissing her off. I wonder if she’s a Capricorn; I don’t play nicely with goats.

She clears her throat and continues, “Your behaviour with Honeymonster is inappropriate and unprofessional. You’re here to atone for your crimes, not to engage in fraternisation with our other patients.”

I raise an eyebrow. “Honeymonster is not my patient. And I fail to see how my interactions with him are any of your concern.”

“It is my concern when it affects the well-being of our patients and the reputation of this facility.”

“Are you suggesting that Honeymonster is unhappy with my company?” I ask, feigning concern.

“That’s beside the point,” she replies sharply. “The point is that your behaviour is unbecoming.”

I sit up in bed, feeling the anger boiling inside me. Who is this woman to judge me? “Listen here, Doctor Seytan. I don’t know what your problem is with me, but I’m not going to apologise for being friendly with someone. Nor will I apologise for sleeping with whomever I want to sleep with.”

Doctor Seytan’s face turns red with anger. “That’s the problem, Miss Kingfisher. You’re not here to sleep around. You’re here to make amends for the crimes you’ve committed.”

I scoff. “And what do you know about the crimes I’ve committed? You weren’t there. You don’t know the whole story.”

“I know enough to know that you’re a convicted criminal. And that you need to take responsibility for your actions.”

I swing my legs over the side of the bed and stand up, towering over the doctor. “You know nothing about me, and you have no right to judge me. A court of law has done that just fine. I might be trying to change, I might not give a flying fuck, but it will be hard when people like you keep trying to tear me down.”

Doctor Seytan meets my gaze, her eyes hard and unyielding. “I’m not trying to tear you down, Miss Kingfisher. I’m trying to aid you. But you can’t assist someone who refuses to be helped.”

“Oh really,” I reply, my voice dripping with sarcasm like molten lava. “Then let’s call a spade a spade and make things clear. I neither want nor need your help, aid or assistance. So kindly take your judgements, suggestions and disapproval, and fuck right off.”

I didn’t know it was possible, but her face turns an even deeper shade of red. She opens her mouth to reply but is cut off by Honeymonster entering the room.

“Kayla, you’re awake,” Honeymonster says. “How are you feeling now?”

I turn to look at him, my expression smoothing into a pleasantly blank mask. “Better than I was, thank you for asking.”

“This isn’t going to work,” Doctor Seytan mutters under her breath.

“Well, that’s not your call to make now, is it?” Honeymonster shoots back.

Doctor Seytan crosses her arms. “I will make them see reason on this. She’s not appropriate. She won’t fit in. She doesn’t play nicely with others and—”

“And it’s still not your call to make,” he interrupts with a charming, panty-melting smile. “Now, if you’ll excuse us, I’ve been asked to collect Kayla and bring her to art therapy.”

I have no idea if that’s true or not, but I don’t hang around waiting to find out. I hop off the bed, happy when the room only partially spins, and take Honeymonster’s outstretched hand.

“Thanks,” I say as soon as we’re out of earshot.

“No worries, Sugar Puff. I’m sorry I wasn’t there when you woke up. Had to pee. I think the Doctor must have been waiting for me to leave so she could pounce on you.”

“Not today, Seytan,” I murmur, and he laughs. He has such an easygoing, joyful laugh that it really is hard to imagine him as a killer, but then again, people would probably say the same about me. “So are we really off to art therapy?”

“Oh absolutely.”

“Damn it. I was hoping it was a ruse to break me out.”

“There is no breaking out of here, Kookaburra,” he says, suddenly serious.

I scowl. “Don’t call me that.”

“Why not? Kayla Kookaburra is cute.”

“My surname’s actually kingfisher.”



“No way. For real?”

“Yeah.”

“What’s wrong with Kookaburra then?”

“They gave me that name. I hate it.”

“They?”

“The media.”

“There’s a lot of power in a name, Kayla. Maybe you should own it. Make it yours. I happen to think it’s a cute name for a cute girl.”

“You know I’ve killed seven men who called me cute, right?” I warn.

“Yeah, but I bet none of them had dimples like these,” he quips, flashing me that grin again that makes my lady parts party.

“You’re lucky I’m still recovering. Otherwise you’d be bleeding out by now. Dimples or no dimples, I’m not cute.”

“If you say so, cutie patootie.”

“You know patootie is old Victorian slang for penis, right? You’re literally calling me a cute penis, and you think it’s endearing somehow?”

His grin gets even wider – it’s actually infectious damn him and his *twin* dimples – and then he throws his head back and laughs. It’s deep and booming and echoes through the corridors.

“Come on, Ko—Kayla,” he quickly corrects himself when I glare at him. “I think you’re going to love the art room.”

It takes several winding corridors and an elevator ride to get there, but when we arrive, my breath is stolen.

I was right about the windows thing. We’re at the very top of the building, the lift doors drawing back onto a large open-plan space that can only be described as an art studio. The room itself is large and circular, completely surrounded by

floor to ceiling windows spanning the full 360 degrees of the room, and various easels and art supply stations are dotted around.

The windows make the space light, bright and airy, but it's the view that steals the show.

All around us, as far as the eye can see, is the ocean. It completely floors me. I didn't think for a second that the facility was situated on an island, and more to the point, it doesn't look like there's anything else out here besides the facility and about a million trees.

"Beautiful, huh?" Honeymonster whispers in my ear, making me shiver.

"It's alright." I shrug. "I suppose they bring us up here to remind us that even if we did escape, there's nowhere to go?"

"Such a cynic."

"Bite me."

"Not until you beg."

Fuuuuuck, why does that sound so tempting?

I shake my head, trying to clear my thoughts, and walk over to one of the art stations. There are canvases, paints, brushes, pencils, and all sorts of other art supplies laid out neatly.

"What do we do here?" I ask Honeymonster.

"We create art," he replies with a smile. "It's supposed to be therapeutic."

"I don't know how to paint," I say, feeling a little intimidated by all the supplies.

"That's the point," he says, grabbing a canvas and some paint. "Just let go and see what happens, Sugar Puff."

I look at him sceptically, but he just shrugs and sets up his easel and the things he needs for painting. I watch him for a

moment, his face completely focused on the canvas as he grabs a pencil and roughly sketches out something beautiful.

“Here,” he says, handing me a canvas and some paint.

“I think I liked it better when you called me a cute penis you know.”

“Just try it.” He nods at the canvas.

“Shouldn’t we, like, wait for the others or a teacher or something?”

“Counsellor. And no. They’ll all be here any minute. You can use any medium you like, you know.”

“Thanks. I’ll think about it.”

I take the canvas and some paint, feeling a little unsure of myself. I’ve never been much of a painter, but I guess I’ll give it a try. In a minute.

For the most part, I simply stare out of the window at the view. It’s beautiful, especially today with the sun shining, but forlorn.

Eventually, the others arrive and a counsellor comes over to introduce himself.

“Hi, you must be Kayla. I’m Danny, lead art therapist here at the centre. You’ll have a weekly group session with me and the others, but you’re welcome to request up to two one-to-one sessions with me a week as well.”

“Ummm, thanks?”

“No worries. I’m really looking forward to seeing what you do today, Kayla. Don’t be shy or hold back. Art has no rules.”

“Art has no rules?” I repeat.

Danny beams at me. Bless him, he’s like an over eager puppy, and I hate puppies. Cruella de Vil is my spirit bitch.

“That’s right. No rules in this studio.” He laughs conspiratorially like we’re all friends here in some super secret

club, and I wonder how much force it would take to ram the end of the number 20 paintbrush I selected through his trachea.

“I can use any medium I like?”

“Anything...so long as we have it.” He frowns and then beams at me once again. Honestly, he’s like a lightbulb I want to smash to extinguish permanently. “And if we don’t have anything you like, I’m sure we can get it in. I’m given a very generous budget.”

“What if I want to paint with blood?” I ask, a sinister grin on my face.

Danny’s smile falters. “I’m sorry—what?”

“You said there’s no rules, right? Any medium I want? What if I want to paint in blood?”

He pales, swallows nervously. “Ummm whose blood?”

I shrug. “Doesn’t bother me. Why? Are you offering?”

“Sugar, give the poor bloke a break,” Honeymonster chuckles with gentle reproach. “Ignore her, Danny.”

“Who says I’m joking?” I scowl at Honeymonster.

“I didn’t say any such thing. I asked you to give him a break. If you don’t want to paint, draw. Whatever. Just stop torturing the counsellor.”

“Whatever.”

I shoot Honeymonster a death glare. I was enjoying myself. Danny was practically pissing his pants. Why spoil my fun? I thought Honey was cool. Obviously not. I need to remember that. See if I can return the favour by cock blocking him or something at some point.

“It’s a good joke, Kayla,” Danny says, forcing out a laugh. There’s sweat on his temples and I want to lick it, before driving something sharp through the paper-thin skin. “You’re more than welcome to observe today, or join in. Whatever. Go with the flow. Do what makes you happy.”

I've rattled him, I can tell.

"Killing makes me happy."

Poor guy looks about ready to pass out at my words.  
"Aside from that."

"Aww, but you said art has no rules."

"Ummm, killing isn't really art."

"It is to me. And I bet if you asked every other person in this room, they'd share my opinion. Careful Danny, wouldn't want to find yourself outnumbered in a room full of *artists* now, would you?"

"I'm going to go check on Silas!" he squeals before racing away.

I chuckle and turn back to my blank canvas. Swirling my brush in black paint, I start with a few clumsy brushstrokes. I glance over at Honeymonster and then try to copy his technique. It doesn't look great, but I'm almost having fun, so I keep going, blacking out my entire canvas with wide, sloppy strokes.

When I'm done, I switch to a bright blood red and begin to layer it up on the canvas. I work solidly for almost an hour, waiting for Danny to call time on the session.

"Psst," I call to Honeymonster, who's working at the easel closest to mine. "How long does this class last?"

"It's therapy, not class."

"Answer the question," I huff.

"Five hours."

"FIVE HOURS?"

"Shush. Yes. It's therapy. It takes time."

I stare at my messy black and red canvas wondering how the hell I'm supposed to spend another four hours on it. My hand shoots into the air.

"Yes, Kayla?" Danny asks from the other side of the room.

“I went wrong. Can I start again?”

“You can’t go wrong with art.”

“I didn’t. I went wrong with my therapy.”

“Your *therapy* went wrong?”

“Yes.”

“How, exactly, did your therapy go wrong?”

“I painted the wrong feelings. I have lots. Or maybe that’s my body count...”

“I see. Well, we don’t ever scrap projects in here Kayla, but you’re welcome to put it to one side to return to another day, and work on something else for now. Art can be confronting and it would seem like you were pretty lost in your work there, and now you’ve taken a break you’re not ready to explore what your subconscious has created.”

What a load of fucking bullshit. I’m sure that’s written plain as day on my face, but Danny just keeps smiling at me.

“Fine.” I huff and turn away from my canvas, stretching out my limbs and deciding to check out what the others are doing.

Honeymonster is painting a beautiful vase full of sunflowers. Yeah, I call bullshit on that. No one is that fucking happy.

Night has drawn a stunning, lifelike bouquet of flowers in charcoal, not a single smudge to be seen on his paper or on him. He’s always so poised and well-put together. I wish he hadn’t fucked me from behind last night; I’d love to see his cum face. When I look more closely at his image, I recognise a selection of highly toxic plants. He winks at me and grins.

I move on to Snow’s painting. He has plastic sheeting – the kind you use to kill someone on when you don’t want to make a mess – laid out on the floor, with a large white home-made canvas laid on top. It looks like a sheet stretched around a wooden frame and stapled to it. His ‘art’ involves a lot of

angry paint splatters as he dances around listening to scream-o music blasting from his headphones. He looks like a right prat, but his arse does look nice in his jeans.

Daddy Hatchet is making something out of clay, on a pottery wheel. He catches me watching him and his eyes narrow and his shoulders tense. Does he expect me to destroy his creation? I don't know what it is, but it looks beautifully phallic to me.

"Nice dildo," I tell him. "But if you're modelling it on yourself, it needs to be longer *and* fatter."

He tries to hide his smile but the corners of his lips twitch. His dirty, strong hands, covered in wet clay turn me on no end, and I have a sudden fantasy of a *Ghost*-esque sex scene playing out between us while a corny love song plays in the background. Whatever. That shit is *sensual*.

Bones is creating something abstract with molten wax, and I can't tear my eyes away from his movements. Where Hatchet was strong and rugged with his movements, Bones is gentle, almost delicate, with the way he uses tools to manipulate the wax around on the glossy cardstock to create his desired effect. I watch in fascination as he picks up a tiny iron and holds it to his picture, manipulating the wax from something abstract into a magical wild rugged landscape.

"That's amazing," I say, awed.

Bones ignores me, but I don't take offence. He's clearly absorbed in his art. I've never seen anything like it before, and I stand in silence watching him for several more minutes until I sense his irritation. I slip away and move over to Ghost.

He sees me coming and throws a rag over his work to prevent me from seeing it. I pout but it's wasted; he won't meet my gaze.

Sighing, I return to my easel and think about what I want to do next. I don't want to continue the blood painting because I can't decide on the main subject matter. I'm torn between wanting it to be Doctor Satan or Snow. Fucking dick. How

dare he spike my food and try to drug me. Well, not even try. He clearly succeeded in doing *something* to me, but I shudder to think what the full effects of that small metal square would have been if I'd ingested it.

I'm actually grateful to Honey for getting me to the medical room so quickly and for whatever shot the nurse administered that had me feeling fine after a short nap.

Doesn't mean I don't want to kill Snow though.

Feeling frustrated, I grab a sketchbook and a pencil and close my eyes. It's silly and I'll probably just make a mess, but I just let the pencil guide me for a few minutes. When I open my eyes, the outline of something is taking shape and I grin to myself, knowing exactly what I want to create.

As I work, I get lost in the drawing. It's like I'm in a trance, and nothing in the world matters except the paper in front of me. I add more and more detail, working on the shadows and highlights until it starts to actually look like something.

I hold the sketchbook at arm's length, admiring my work, just as Danny announces that the session has come to an end.

It's not perfect, but it's definitely something I can be proud of. I turn to show Honeymooner, but he's already gone. I guess I got so lost in my painting that I didn't even notice him leave.

I look around the room and realise that I'm the only one still here. But didn't Danny *just* say the session was over? How can they all have left so quickly?

"Where did everyone go?"

He shoots me an apologetic look.

"They left when they were done."

"You mean I didn't have to stay for the full five hours?"

His sorry expression morphs into one of guilt. I bare my teeth at him and he swallows audibly.



“But aren’t you glad you did? You’ve created something wonderf—oh—kay.”

“What? Don’t you like it?” I ask innocently, batting my eyelashes for good measure.

“Umm, it’s certainly unique, Kayla. Next week will be interesting, for sure.”

“Why?”

“Because next week we share the artwork created today in the next therapy session, and together we analyse the emotions behind your art.”

I stare at my half peeled banana skin with a dick protruding from it, beautiful Jacob’s Ladder piercing and all. What was I *feeling* when I drew this? I dunno. Maybe hungry, maybe horny. Whatever. You won’t find deeper emotion in there because I’m only capable of feeling rage with a side of stabby and screwy. In the shagging sense, although I *do* have a screw loose, too, according to several therapists I unalived.

“Psycho-analyse my dick.”

“The last one to leave the art studio has to clean up.”

“Sucks to be you.”

“Actually, I have to go meet with Doctor Seytan, so that’ll be you, Kayla.” A low growl rumbles from my chest and Danny jumps like he’s been whipped. “Sorry! Or I can do it when I’m done...”

That’s more like it.

I plaster a sickly sweet smile on my face as I watch the single bead of perspiration slide down his forehead.

“Don’t worry about it, Danny. I’m happy to do it for you today, but you’ll owe me, right?”

He nods like a dashboard dog.

“Of course! Anything you want. Anytime. Just say the word.”

“Thanks Danny, I knew I could count on you. Best get going, I wouldn’t want you to be late for your meeting with Satan.”

He chuckles, blushes, and scarpers over to the lift in double-quick time, stabbing the elevator call button a half dozen times like that will somehow get him out of here faster.

“Looking forward to next week, Danny!” I call as he escapes and the doors slide shut.

Fuck cleaning. I’m not a fucking maid. But I will take the opportunity of being left alone to explore a little. Starting with the view.

Fuck-all to see. Even on a beautiful clear day like today, there’s no land in sight. How did I get here? Wish they hadn’t roofied me so I could remember. Fucking cunts.

None of the windows open, and the glass is far too thick to ever break.

Fine.

Plan B, find another escape. Surely they must let us out at some point? And they must have supplies delivered at least.

Oh well, as I’m here I may as well see what Ghost was so keen to hide from me earlier. I walk over to his covered easel and rip the cloth away with a flourish.

Underneath, I see a painting that takes my breath away. It’s a portrait of a woman, naked and reclined on a bed. Her skin is a pale, creamy white, and her long bright red hair spills over the edge of the mattress. Her eyes are closed, and her lips are parted as though she’s lost in ecstasy.

The painting is so realistic that I feel like I could touch the woman’s skin and feel the warmth radiating from her body. It’s so sensual that I feel a flush creeping up my neck. This woman looks a lot like me, minus the tattoos, but way more... everything.

BEG FOR ME, LITTLE PET



*'UNDERNEATH THE MASK' – ROYAL & THE  
SERPENT*

KOOKABURRA

“*T*hat was covered for a reason,” a sullen voice says, breaking the silence and making me jump. I spin to see Ghost standing behind me, so close we could be touching. How didn’t I hear him creep up on me?

With the heels on my boots, he’s only about an inch taller than me, but the difference between us feels vast.

“Ghost,” I say, trying not to clutch my chest and let on how much he startled me, “this is incredible. Who is she?”

Ghost looks at me with an unreadable expression, his sharp cheekbones and arrow straight nose giving him a haughty air.

“No one you know,” he says, his tone much softer than the angles of his beautiful face.

I raise an eyebrow. “Is she a lover?”

He shakes his head. “No, just a fantasy.”

I can’t help but feel a pang of jealousy. The woman in the painting is so beautiful, so perfectly made. All curves and sweetly parted lips. I’ve never been sweet. Even as a child. But this woman...I can’t tear my eyes off her.

She can’t be me.

He’s watching me intently, and I can’t help but ask. “What is this? Why me?”

I can see the fire burning in his pale eyes and the way his fingers twitch like he’s perfecting the painting still with a brush. Then I realise he’s fighting the urge to touch *me*.

“That, my little pet, is a secret,” he whispers huskily. The term of endearment sends shivers down my spine. It makes

him sound so much...older and wiser than me. But I swear there's barely two years between us. The words change the dynamic, a definite power shift clear in the air, and I urge to rebel against it.

"No," I say firmly, taking a step forward so that we're toe to toe, "I want to know. All of your secrets, I want to know them all." I can feel the heat emanating from his body. He's so close to me, his breath warms my face.

"I want to know, so tell me," I whisper, less aggressively this time. I sound like I'm almost pleading, and that's ridiculous. I don't beg for anything.

"You don't know what you're asking," he breathes, his lips brushing mine in the ghost of an almost-kiss.

But I do know, I think to myself. I know exactly what I want. I want him. And I know he wants me too. The way he looks at me, the way he's painted me. It's not just lust, it's something more.

I take a step closer, closing the distance so that there's not a sliver of air that can come between us. "Please, Ghost," I implore. Which is definitely not begging. It's *not*. "I want to know."

He hesitates for a moment, his eyes darkening with desire. "Fine," he says, relenting. "But you have to promise me something."

"Anything," I say without thinking.

"Promise me that you won't run away," he says, his voice low and intense. "No matter what I tell you."

"I won't run," I promise, my heart racing.

He takes a deep breath, his eyes never leaving mine. "The woman in the painting," he begins, "she's not *just* a fantasy. She's a representation of everything I want but can't have. She's also real because she's you. But you already knew that, didn't you, Kayla?"

My heart stops for a moment as his words sink in. “What do you mean she’s me?” I ask, shuddering at the chill running down my spine. Why would Ghost paint me? We’ve just met and barely exchanged two words with each other before now.

“She’s you,” he repeats, his eyes boring into mine. “Or rather, she’s the you that you could be. The you that you’re afraid to be.”

I take a step back, feeling a sense of dread rising in me. I feel exposed. *Seen*. And that is not okay. “I don’t understand,” I say, my voice trembling. “What are you saying?”

He steps forward and reaches out to almost touch my cheek, but doesn’t quite make contact. I swear I can feel it though.

“You’re holding back,” he says softly. “You’re afraid to let go, to be yourself. But in that painting, I captured the essence of who you could be. The woman beneath the tattoos and the tough exterior. The woman who’s not afraid to give in to her desires.”

He doesn’t know what he’s talking about. All my life I’ve been giving in to my desires; namely, the desire to fuck and kill as I please. What more could I want?

“You don’t believe me, not yet. But you will. You’ll see, Kayla, you can be so much more than this facade.”

“Show me.” I demand. He raises a pale, almost invisible, brow at me. “Prove it. Show me what I can be.”

He shakes his head infinitesimally, then sighs.

When he speaks, his voice has taken on a lower, more authoritative quality. “Strip.”

I smirk as my pulse spikes, false bravado taking forefront to camouflage my nerves. “What?”

“You heard me. Do as I say, first time, or I walk.”

A sudden rush of excitement courses through my veins as I raise my shirt over my head. I take it off slowly, revealing my

tattoos and my toned stomach, and finally my breasts. His eyes roam over my skin, and I can see the desire building in them. My nipples pebble under his appreciative gaze.

I reach down to remove my boots, setting them to one side along with my socks, and then I shimmy out of my jeans, revealing that I'm bare underneath.

As I stand there, in front of him, almost naked, I feel a sense of vulnerability that I haven't felt in a long time. I've always been the one in control, the one calling the shots. But now, with him standing there, I feel like I'm his to control.

"Good," he says as he walks towards me. The heat of his fingers brushes over my tattoos, tracing the intricate designs but still not making contact with me. I shiver at his ghost-touch, at the heat of his body so close to mine.

He leans in, his lips almost touching my ear as he whispers, "You're a work of art, Kayla. And I can't wait to explore every inch of you."

His hot breath continues to caress my neck, and my heart begins to race. Each breath that he takes, right on my neck, sends a shiver of need straight to my clit. His cock presses against my thigh, and I moan at what his touch does to me.

He doesn't say anything else, he doesn't need to. His lips ghost invisible kisses down my neck, and then that mouth that was just speaking in hushed tones is finally upon my skin, sucking and licking.

His teeth graze my neck, just barely breaking the skin and making me gasp. My knees buckle and threaten to give way, but he stops abruptly and admonishes me.

"No. This won't do." He points to one of the large wooden tables. "Lie down. On your back."

His voice is rough and commanding and completely unexpected. It sends a shiver down my spine to be spoken to like this.

My body obeys him, even as my brain rebels, and I lie down on the nearby table, legs spread, breasts bared. When he looks down at my body I can see the desire in his eyes.

He drops to his knees between my legs, his hot breath on my pussy, and I part my legs wider, inviting him to explore me, but all he does is continue to breathe on me. Part of me wants to demand he do something. Part of me wants to beg. But I stay silent because this feels a lot like a test. And I've never wanted anyone's approval a day in my life, but fuck if I'm not keen to impress Ghost.

After a moment, he stands and takes a long lick from my ankle up my calf to my knee. He draws his tongue along the sensitive flesh, leaving a hot wet trail in its wake. My toes curl and my foot lifts off the table in response. He bites my knee, not painfully but not gently either, and my arousal drips onto the table below me.

His hands tighten on my calf as he works his way down my thigh, this time coming closer to my pussy with each kiss and bite but stopping before he reaches the promised land. By the time he returns to my ankle, I'm on fire. My hands reach for him in desperation, but he's too far away. I can just barely touch his white-blond hair with my fingertips, but I don't make contact. Stroking my fingers through his hair wouldn't give me the contact I need. I need his mouth on me. I need his lips, his tongue, his teeth. God, I need his cock.

He looks up at me, his light grey-blue eyes almost glowing. He knows what I want, and he's going to give it to me. But he's going to make me beg for it.

He moves up my body, kissing his way to my breasts. My nipples are hard and aching for his touch, but he bypasses them and continues his slow, torturous upward trek. My hands are fisted in his hair now, and I know I'm pulling on it hard, but he doesn't complain. Instead, he places soft kisses on my skin as he moves. I don't register where he's gone until his mouth is on my throat. He soothes the tender skin there with



his tongue, and this time he doesn't stop until he reaches the junction between my neck and my shoulder.

His hot breath is on my neck, and my heart is pounding in my ears.

"Beg for me, little pet," he whispers.

I have to fight against the wave of frustration that threatens to overcome me. Begging out of frustration is not my style, and I've never craved someone's touch so much in my life.

"Please," I manage, my voice cracking. He doesn't answer. Instead he pins my hands above my head. His cock presses against my thigh, and my hips buck in response. But he doesn't give me what I want. Instead, his mouth explores my stomach, licking and sucking before biting softly.

My pussy is aching, desperate for him, but he continues to avoid it. I feel his hot breath right below my belly button, and then he's kissing me there, fucking that shallow little dip with his tongue and making me shudder all over.

"Ghost—" I cry.

He pulls away and fixes me with a stern stare. "My name is Silas Donnelly. You use my last name or you call me Sir. Do you understand?"

I nod. "Yes."

"Yes, what?" His words are like a whip.

"Yes, Donnelly," I reply, stubbornly refusing to give him the title he wants. He smirks knowingly at me and then moves away from the table.

I lean up on my elbows and stare at him. "Where are you going?"

"Did I say you can move?" he snaps.

My back hits the table so fast it hurts, and my arms fly back above my head where he placed them.

When he returns, he's holding a glass jar full of paintbrushes.

"I hope those are clean," I mutter.

"Well they would be if someone did their job and cleaned up like a good little maid."

"I'm no-one's maid," I spit, anger rising.

"Then the brushes won't be clean. And that's on you, but I'm not about to let it stop me."

Then, he's between my legs, spreading them even wider and opening my pussy up to him.

He selects the large, wide brush that I used to paint my canvas black and grins at me. In one long stroke he drags the brush from my décolleté, between my breasts, over my stomach and down to my pubic bone, leaving a wide trail of black paint in his wake. The bristles are scratchy but my nipples still tighten at the sensation.

His grin widens.

"Do you like that?" he asks.

"I... I don't know."

"That's okay," he says. "We'll just keep trying new things until you do."

Then he takes another long sweep, this time dragging the brush from my outer thigh to my knee. He dips the brush in a nearby pitcher of warm water and then drags it through the wetness on the inside of my thighs. I gasp as it dries. The paint is supposed to stay wet so it can release easily from the canvas, but instead it dries and adheres to my skin.

He takes the wide brush and sets it aside, then selects a finer paintbrush. This one is covered in red paint and I suspect it might be one that he was using to paint the finer details of my hair.

This time he uses it to paint my breasts. I start to squirm, but he pins my torso to the table and continues. He pays

special attention to my nipples, painting them one at a time, and I struggle to breathe in the minutes that it takes for him to finish. When he's done, he leans over me and looks at his work with a critical eye.

I'm sure my skin is as red as the paint when he leans down and gently takes my left nipple between his lips.

"Ahh fuck," I moan.

He releases my nipple, and then he repeats the action on the other one, sucking hard enough to leave a mark.

"Please—"

"Please what, little pet?" He kisses his way up my body, stopping to give each nipple one last kiss.

My mouth is dry so I lick my lips. "More," I whisper.

"I want to hear you say it," he says.

I know what he wants me to say, but I can't do it. That would make it real. It would make me vulnerable.

"No? Not ready to submit? Then I'll continue."

He lowers his mouth to my stomach, and then he drags his tongue along my skin in the same path that the paintbrush took. He's not as gentle, and my skin shivers and dances with the sensation.

"Donnelly, please," I beg.

"Please what?" he asks, kissing my body like he's worshipping it.

"I need—"

"Need what, little pet?" He teases my clit with his tongue, and my hips buck.

"I need you to touch me," I choke out, my voice high and desperate.

"I am touching you," he says, moving away from my clit and making me whine with desperation.

I close my eyes as he continues his exploration of my body, his lips grazing the trail of his pain. I know that he's moving slowly on purpose, taking his time to fuck with my head and break me down. He pauses to suck the paint off my hip bone, and the graze of his teeth makes me grind against him.

"Hmmm, more paint I think."

He selects a tiny paintbrush, one so fine I can barely discern the bristles, and smirks wickedly at me.

"I thought you were the quiet one," I grumble.

"Oh I can be, but quiet doesn't equate to nice, and you should know we're all mad here."

He dips the brush in the warm water and then the cold paint, icing my hip with it before he works it into a swirling pattern, tracing a trail down the side of my body toward my pussy.

"Fuck," I moan when he works the paint into my slick folds, and the cold feeling is the most exquisite pain.

I struggle against his hold on me, and it's a losing battle. My hips buck even harder against him when the handle of the paintbrush enters me, and I cry out when he stops.

"Donnelly!"

"I did nothing, pet." He releases my legs, but he keeps the paintbrush inside me.

"Please, fuck me," I beg.

"You're not ready to ask properly, so I'll continue."

He picks up the paintbrush and mixes up some more paint, this time adding a generous amount of blue and black. I tense when he dips it into the clear water so that the water is tinted, and he smirks before he kisses me again. "Relax, little one. I just want you to feel."

His words are soothing, and I find myself relaxing into him. "Good girl," he whispers before he puts the paintbrush

back onto my pussy and swirls it around. He paints me with the different colours, starting with the clear water and then mixing it with the black and blue until he has a dark sapphire blue.

“Do you like this colour, pet?” he asks, and I nod.

“Yes,” I whisper.

“Good. Because this is the colour of your bruises.”

He presses the paintbrush inside me. It’s too much, too invasive, and I’m terrified of what he’ll do to me next.

“Please—“ I beg again. I don’t know what I’m asking for, but I know I need it. I want to experience everything with him. I know that’s what I want.

“Please what, little pet?”

“I want you to fuck me,” I whisper. “I want you to mark me.”

“Ask again, and I will.” He’s smiling down at me, and I’m sure it will be the death of me.

“Donnelly...Please,” I whisper. “Please fuck me.”

“No,” he says as he releases me and steps back. “I think you need to learn a lesson.”

I’m on the verge of tears as I stare at him blankly. My cunt is still full of paint, and I feel like he’s ruined me for anyone else. “Donnelly, please...” I’m almost sobbing now, I need my release that bad. “Please, I need you inside me. I want to feel you.”

“You’ve asked me to fuck you first, little pet. So that’s what I will do.”

He leaves me, and he walks out of my line of view, leaving me stinging and desperate for more.

“No,” I whisper. “Don’t leave me.”

“I’ll be back soon, pet.”

“No!” My arousal is still strong, and my pussy is dripping for him.

It’s like he’s woven a spell over me. I could get up off the table, get dressed, and leave. But somehow I *can’t*. I *need* him to come back and finish what he’s started. It’s too cruel to leave me like this.

I almost weep when he steps back into view.

“I said I’d be back soon. Have a little faith, pet.”

I nod frantically, thinking that if I agree with him it might put me out of my misery sooner. He grins. “I’m going to take this away now.”

He takes the paintbrush out of me, and I gasp at the loss of sensation. Then he strokes my clit with the tip of the brush until my hips buck, and I come. I come hard, and I cry out as my body explodes.

He crouches in front of me, and brings the paintbrush up to his lips, licking my juices off in such a way that it makes my cheeks heat. “That’s better, pet.”

I breathe hard, and I’m still trembling. I’m not sure what he did to me, but I feel like a part of me has broken. I’ve shattered in his hands. He’s taken everything I had and everything I am, and he’s made me into something that I don’t recognise. I’ve never been as vulnerable as I am now, and I’ve never felt so beautiful. It terrifies me.

He takes the time to explore me for a minute, licking my pussy and gently nibbling my clit. I moan loudly, my fingers grasping at the table beneath me. I’m too sensitive. He slips his tongue inside me, tasting me deeply, and I cry out. I’m on the very edge of my orgasm again, and he stops.

“Donnelly, please,” I beg, and my voice is thin.

“Please what, little pet?”

“Please make me come.”

He laughs, “You haven’t earned that yet. The last one was given free.”

I feel shame and anger swirl inside me. “Fuck you, Donnelley,” I growl.

“Now isn’t that an interesting thing to say?”

I glare at him.

He moves so he’s standing in front of me, still fully clothed. I feel like I’ve been stripped bare in front of him, and I’ve never felt so exposed. So seen. He’s still smiling down at me, and I want to punch him.

“You want me to fuck you?” he asks, and his voice is mocking now.

I nod. “Yes.”

“Yes what?”

“Yes please, fuck me,” I spit at him.

“Is that what you want?” he asks. “For me to fuck you?”

I narrow my eyes at him. “Yes,” I spit at him. “I want you to fuck me. I just said that!”

“I want to make sure you’re ready, little pet,” he smiles. “I want you to be sure, preferably with an apology for that insult first.”

He knows how to push my buttons. I want him to fuck me, but I’m not ready to forgive him yet. I glare at him. “I won’t.”

He kisses me again, and I taste my arousal on his lips. “I can fuck you for hours, little pet. You may find your resolve wavering.”

“No.”

He smiles at me, and it makes me want to cry. He looks at me like I’m his world, like all he needs is me, but broken at his feet. “I don’t think you have a choice.”

He drives two fingers inside me, and I cry out. He’s right. I’m already soaking wet. I thought he’d keep me waiting for

hours, but I'm more than ready for him. He pushes his thumb against my clit, and my hips gyrate against him. He moves his fingers faster, and every muscle in my body tightens as I near the edge.

“Do you want me to make you come, pet?”

I nod, and my mind is blank.

“Do you want to come for me?”

“Yes,” I whimper. “Please.”

“Good girl.”

He removes his fingers, and I cry out in frustration. He laughs, a cruel sound that makes me want to shrink away and hide from him. “You want my cock, little pet?”

“Yes.”

“Yes...what?”

“Yes please, Donnelly. Fuck me,” I say quickly.

“Better.”

He pulls a condom out of the pocket of his jeans and shrugs his hoodie off.

His chest is beautiful, chiselled to perfection, his black ink a stark contrast to his pale skin. I reach out to touch him, to explore and memorise every inch of him, but he shrugs me off.

“I didn't tell you to touch me.”

“I'm sorry,” I gasp. I know he'll punish me if I disobey him, and I can't risk him leaving me wanting still.

“You don't have anything to be sorry for, beautiful.”

“*You're* beautiful,” I whisper.

He smirks. “You're mine, little pet.”

I nod.

“Spread your legs,” he says.



I gasp as he pushes a finger inside me again. He leans down to kiss me. I'm writhing against him, and I'm so close.

"Are you getting close again, little pet?"

I nod.

"I'll take that as a yes." He smirks.

He pulls his finger out of me and pushes his hand between my legs. Warmth radiates from him, and my breath hitches as his fingers find my clit again. He trails a finger over my lips, and I open my mouth to suck his finger inside.

"You're so fucking hot. I can't wait to bury myself inside you."

I can feel his erection straining against his jeans, and I desperately want him inside me.

"Donnelly...please."

He grins. "Just a little longer, little pet."

His fingers move faster, and I'm so close I feel like I'm going to shatter into a million pieces.

"Good girl," he whispers, "I want you to come for me, and then I'm going to fuck you until you come apart in my arms."

I dig my nails into his thick arms as the orgasm crashes over me. I'm still shaking when he pulls his fingers out of me. I watch his every movement as he undoes his jeans and releases his erection.

Holy fucking shitballs! He's huge. Like, so fucking long it seems to never end. It must be like trying to walk around with a telegraph pole stuffed down his trousers at all times. And don't even get me started on how it looks standing to attention. It surpasses his bellybutton.

If all the blood wasn't already in my pussy, it is now at the sight of him stroking himself.

Several piercings on the underside glint in the light, and I'm reminded of my painting from earlier, the banana-dick.

My jaw drops. He grins at me.

“How many are there?” I ask.

“Ten. A nice even number, don’t you think?”

I gulp as he carefully rolls the condom down his never ending erection. I want this. I want him so much it hurts. But that is going to rearrange internal organs.

“Fuck me,” I gasp.

He smirks. “Aren’t you the demanding little pet?”

That’s not what I meant, but yeah. I nod. “Please.”

He presses his lips to mine. “You’re so fucking sexy. I can’t wait to fill you up.”

I gasp as he slides into me in one movement. I’m so wet for him that he slides inside me with ease, but I’m not used to that kind of length. And the piercings – oh fuck.

There isn’t a vocabulary on this planet that can describe the feeling of those ten delicious bars and twenty heavenly balls. I’ve never felt this full before.

I’ve never felt this alive.

Not even when killing.

He starts to move, and I’m already on the edge again. His thrusts are slow, but he pushes harder and harder into me until I’m crying out. He brings his hand to my clit and gently strokes me. I’m aching to come again, greedy as I am, and I’m desperate to get there.

“Beg me, beautiful.”

“Please, Donnelly.”

He speeds up his movements, and I dig my nails into his back as he presses down on my clit in a hard pinch. He hits my sweet spot, and I scream.

“Sir! Fuck! Donnelly. My god.” The words fall out of my mouth in a garbled mess as I thrust my hips against him to prolong the orgasm.

He laughs against my neck. “Still with me?”

“Yes!” I cry out, still balanced on the edge of something monumental.

He goes back to moving slowly inside me, still thrusting deep into me until I’m screaming for more.

“Please, Sir.”

He pushes into me, and I force my eyes open to watch his face. He’s watching me, and the desire in his eyes is unmistakable.

I’m addicted, and I need more of him.

“Look at me, little pet,” he whispers, “I want to see you come for me.”

I moan as his thrusts pick up speed, and I know that this is it. The last time. I don’t have anything left in me to give now.

I’m so close I can taste it.

“That’s it, little pet,” he murmurs, “come for me.”

He strokes my clit in a steady motion, and I’m shattering around him. I scream his name as I come apart, my muscles tightening around him.

“Fuck,” he groans. His thrusts are wild, and he pounds into me until he comes with a roar.

I slump against the table, completely spent, and he wraps his arms around me. After a long moment of silence, I open my eyes. He’s still staring at me.

He pulls out of me, and I gasp in shock.

“Silas…”

He quickly knots, then disposes of the condom and wraps his arms around me again, tucking my head under his chin. “I’m here. You did good.”

I relax into him, and he holds me until the cold starts to seep into my bones, and I begin to shiver.

“I’ll get you some water, beautiful.”

I nod, suddenly parched and aware of how sore my throat feels. “Thank you.”

He kisses me and then leaves me. I rub my arms, trying to warm myself against the cold. When he comes back, I’m still curled up on the table. He sits beside me and holds out a bottle of water. “Drink.”

I take it from him and drink it all before reaching out for him. He passes me a blanket. “Thank you.”

“Anything for you, beautiful,” he murmurs.

I shake my head. “Don’t call me beautiful.”

He takes my hand and kisses my knuckles. “Why not?”

“It’s too much.” I know I’m being irrational; I just can’t help it.

“Why is it too much?” he presses gently.

“Because I feel things I shouldn’t. Because I’m broken, inside. Really fucking fucked up beyond all belief. And because you can’t love someone who loves being in pain.”

He kisses me again then nods sadly. “I understand.” He wraps me even tighter in the blanket. “Let’s get you to bed. You need to rest. It’s been quite a second day for you.”

I’d protest, but I’m so tired that I don’t really have it in me. It *has* been a hell of a day. Again. Fuck. I’ve only been here two days and so much has already happened. Will it always be like this? Or will things settle down?

I can live without the repeated attempts on my life, but being two days and two dicks in I’m not so sad about.

My eyelids feel like there’s lead weights attached to them pulling them down, and I don’t have the strength to even stand up, let alone get dressed and see myself back to my room.

Silas shuffles around me, but I’m too busy resting my eyes to figure out what he’s doing. Eventually though, he slides his

hands under my legs and lifts me bridal-style into his arms, still wrapped in the scratchy woollen blanket he gave me. I blink open my eyes and look at him. Up close his long, thick, dark lashes are such a contrast to his pale complexion that it makes him seem like he's wearing makeup, but it just adds to his beauty. I wasn't lying or in some post-coital daze when I said he was beautiful; he really is breathtaking.

“I'm going to carry you back, is that okay?”

I nod sleepily and curl into him, resting my head against his chest and listening to the steady thrum of his heartbeat. It's lulled me into a deep slumber before the lift even comes.

I'D RATHER LIVE A LIE WITH HER,  
THAN BE DEAD WITHOUT HER



*'FUCKING CRAZY' – SKYLAR GREY*

GHOST

Well, that was unexpected. I have to say, if I wasn't so fucking sated, I'd be disappointed in myself for succumbing to her so easily.

I never intended for her to see that painting, but I should have known the second I hid it from her that it would just pique her curiosity. She seems the sort.

She's out cold by the time I get her to her room, so I place her on the bed and pull the throw at the bottom of the bed up and over her.

Reluctantly, I leave her to sleep, and slip next door to my own room. I strip off and climb into the shower, and as I stand there under the scalding hot spray, I bask in the afterglow of our heated encounter. I can't help but wonder what other secrets she's capable of uncovering. Her piercing green eyes hold an air of mystery which just draws me in even more.

I meant what I said to her, about her holding back and who she can really be if she just lowers her guard. But I don't think it's soaked in yet. She doesn't fully believe me. But she will.

Even if I have to continue to teach her lessons like the one I gave her today. Hell, if it's that much fun, I *want* her to take her time learning who she is. I'm more than willing to show her, over and over again.

I know I have to be careful though. I can't let myself get too attached to her. But it's hard. It's hard because she's fucking gorgeous, tempting and intoxicating. But also because ever since she arrived, I've not had a single thought about ending it all. And that's unheard of with me. I don't know what it is about her, but she's got me under her spell. It's

strange because we've only just met, but I feel like I can trust her...maybe even confide in her later down the line.

Or maybe I'm crazy and I'm thinking with my pussy-whipped dick.

It doesn't matter. If I've been willing – actively willing – to die every single day since I got here and learned what was really expected of us, then it really doesn't matter if she's just using me. Because I'd rather live a lie with her, than be dead without her.



EMOTIONS ARE FOR PUSSIES



## 'THE HIGH' – BRYCE SAVAGE

### BONES

This is a terrible idea. I told Seytan as much but the old bitch never fucking listens to me. We've been summoned to the mainland for a job and we've been instructed to take the new girl with us.

Horrible idea.

She's new. She hasn't got a clue what's really going on behind the scenes at this establishment, and, as such, she's likely to be a fucking liability who gets us all killed tonight.

I creep into her room, which is ridiculous considering I'm here to wake her up, but old habits and all that. The lump under the covers is stupidly small, like she's all curled up like some small animal in hibernation. It's hard to think of her as a killer – a killer of our calibre anyway – but there you go. She's here for a reason so she must be good at something.

As I approach the bed, I can hear her soft snores. I gently nudge her shoulder, and she stirs in her sleep, muttering something under her breath. I clear my throat to wake her up properly, even though what I really want is to watch her sleep. And fuck her.

"Time to wake up, newbie," I say, my voice low and rough. "We've got a job to do tonight."

She blinks a few times, and I can see the realisation slowly dawning on her face.

"Right, okay," she says, rubbing her eyes. "What do I need to know?"

I shake my head, frustrated. "You need to know that we're heading into dangerous territory tonight. The people we're dealing with are not the sort to take kindly to any missteps."

She nods, and I can see the determination in her eyes. “I won’t let you down,” she says, throwing back the covers and revealing her naked body in all its glory.

My dick stirs to life, but now is not the time.

I snort. “We’ll see about that. Get fucking dressed.”

“What shall I wear?”

I glance down at my form-fitting all back asylum-issued outfit and raise a brow at her.

“A fucking cocktail dress, princess.”

“Ha-fucking-ha.” She stands and brushes past me, deliberately getting too close so that her skin grazes mine, causing me to grit my teeth. I need to keep my cool and stay focused. A pair of tits and a shaved cunt aren’t going to be the reason I die tonight.

As she rummages through her closet for something to wear, I lean against the door frame and watch her. She’s like a deer in the headlights, unsure of what to do next. For all her bravado, I can sense her nervous energy, and it’s making me antsy. We don’t have time for this. I need her to focus, to get her head in the game.

“Come on,” I say, my voice low and commanding. “We don’t have all night.”

She shoots me a look over her shoulder, one that’s half death glare and half sexy smoulder, and I can tell she’s annoyed, but she doesn’t say anything. Instead, she pulls out a red dress and slips it over her head. It’s tight, clinging to her curves in all the right places, and suddenly I can’t take my eyes off her. She catches my gaze and smirks, as if she knows what’s going through my head.

I clear my throat and look away. “Just hurry up and get ready,” I say, my voice suddenly as tight as my pants.

“I am ready.”

“You can’t wear that.”

“Why not?”

“You need to wear black.”

“Shoot, all my black formalwear is at the dry cleaners.”

“Shut up,” I grind out, stepping into the small wardrobe space alongside her. The air thickens and the walls seem to shrink in her presence. Why did I step so close to her?

She tilts her head, watching me with dark eyes. “What’s the matter, tough guy?” she asks, her voice teasing.

I grit my teeth. She’s not making this any easier for me. “Just put on something black,” I say through clenched teeth. “We don’t have time for this.”

She laughs, a sound that sends shivers down my spine as she strips off and becomes naked once more.

“Someone’s a little tense,” she says, reaching past me to grab a black top from the rack. Her fingers brush mine, and I can feel the heat of her skin. It takes all my willpower not to grab her and throttle her senseless. Or kiss her. I don’t know. Her scent is intoxicating, messing with my mind.

Instead, I step back and watch as she slips into the top without a bra. Fuck. It fits her like a glove, clearly showing her nipples through the thin fabric. She’s going to freeze out there, but it won’t be half as bad as my blue balls.

She turns to face me, and I can see the desire in her eyes. It’s almost enough to make me forget why we’re here.

Almost.

“We ready?” I ask.

“Umm, sure if it’s okay to go out without pants or shoes,” she teases, pointing to her glorious pussy.

“Hurry. Up.”

Definitely throttle her. My fingers are itching to crush her dainty little bones beneath my power.

She smirks again and grabs a pair of stretchy, skin tight black pants, pulls them on commando, and then bends at the waist to do up her shoes.

“What the fuck are they?”

“What?” She looks back at me over her shoulder, and I have to tear my gaze away from her arse with difficulty.

“What you’re wearing.”

“Leggings?” She shrugs.

“On your feet,” I snap, finally losing patience. The chopper is going to be waiting for us, and it’ll be me that cops it for our tardiness.

“Boots. They’re sturdy.”

“They have heels.”

“So?”

“You need to be able to run.”

“I can run in heels. Do you know how many men I’ve killed in boots like these? Trust me, whatever goes down tonight, my footwear won’t be a problem.”

Against my better judgement, I grab her hand and pull her along with me. Or that’s what I intend to do, but my feet don’t move and she ends up crashing into my chest, where my arms circle her of their own accord, caging her in against me like something precious.

Fuck.

“You don’t need to be a killer to win at this game,” I say, my voice thick and low.

She arches an eyebrow at me.

I don’t like the look in her eyes, but there’s not much I can do about it. We’ve got a job to do, and she’s coming with me. I try to ignore the racing of my heart, and I watch through narrowed eyes as she straightens up. She reaches up to stroke my cheek, and I force myself not to move.

She tilts her head to one side and bites her lip. “We’ll see about that,” she says, her voice low. “But first, we need to get the fuck out of here.”

I nod, and we head towards the door, her hand somehow still in mine. I drag her along the corridor, towards the elevator and when it arrives, we enter and I press my thumb against the pad to select the roof.

The elevator slides upwards, and she turns to face the doors.

“What are you thinking?” she asks, her voice low and filled with something I can’t quite name.

I shrug. “You’re going to be a fucking liability tonight.”

“I might be.” She turns to face me. “But whose fault will it be if I am? I don’t know anything that’s happening.”

We lapse into silence, just watching each other. The elevator seems to be moving slower than molasses, and the tension inside it is building by the second. For all the shit I give her, she doesn’t deserve to die on this mission. She’s a fucking idiot, but she’s got nothing to do with this. She’s just someone who got sent to live in the wrong place at the wrong time.

“Okay, so you’re trying to prove a point here, right?” I ask her.

“That’s right.”

“So, if you stay out of my way I’ll make sure you’re safe tonight.”

She cocks her head to the side and smiles. “Maybe,” she whispers, her voice low and seductive.

The elevator dings and the doors slide open. Slowly, we step into the small roof on top of the building. The chopper is waiting for us, blades turning and ready to take us to the destination. All of the others are already on board, Snow scowling up a storm.

A smug sense of satisfactions floods me at the sight of his scowl. I fucking hate the guy. He's not been here that long, and he's always making trouble. Especially on missions. He thinks it's the Snow Show, especially because his signature was copying other's kill methods. He seems to think he can do all the jobs singlehanded. He doesn't understand the importance of working as a team. Or that our particular skill set can't be mimicked.

Tonight, I'm finally going to put him in his place. I turn my attention back to the woman beside me, studying her carefully. She's considerably shorter than me, even in her stupid chunky heeled boots, and although she's slight, her outfit shows off the curves she has in all the right places. Her hair is a wild mess of red, and her eyes are bright with excitement. She looks like she's just been fucked.

Good. Let Snow think that – it'll just piss him off even more.

“Are you ready for this?” I ask her, my voice low and smooth.

She meets my gaze, a smile curling her lips. “Duh,” she murmurs.

“Well, newbie, I think it's time we had some fun.”

Without warning, I reach out and pull her close, my lips crashing down on hers. She gasps in surprise, but then she's responding eagerly, her arms wrapping around my neck. The kiss is fierce and passionate, as if I'm attempting to brand her. To possess her. To make her mine.

I don't normally do this shit. I mean, emotions are for pussies, but there's something about this chick that has me riled up. There's something about the way she looks at me, as if she's giving me a challenge, daring me to take her.

She pisses me off, but not as much as Snow. So if kissing her riles him up, I'm all for it.

Her lips are soft and pliant against mine, but I press harder, deepening the kiss, my hands tightening on her waist. Her

fingers dig into my hair, and I groan as her tongue flicks against my lips. My dick swells, desperate to be inside her, and her taste, her touch, her scent...it all overwhelms me.

Suddenly, she pulls back, breathless.

“What the hell are you doing?” she murmurs, her eyes narrowed and her hair falling into her face. She’s smart enough to sense that the kiss was all for show because she keeps her voice down, and I have to give her props for that.

I look her up and down, and then I let my gaze land on her lips. I trace the lower one with my fingertip, her breath hitching as I do so.

“Just making sure you’re ready for what’s coming,” I tell her.

Then, I turn and climb onto the helicopter. Snow is already up ahead with Valentine, our pilot and guard for the night, and he’s leaned forward, his ear pressed to the speaker inside. I hold my hand out for her and when she takes it, I pull her up into the chopper, not meeting her eyes.

She takes the seat between Hatchet and Honey, who immediately places his hand on her thigh, and she doesn’t say a word as Nightshade, Ghost and I take the seats opposite them. It’s not a big helicopter, and she’s squashed in between us. I can’t help but study her as we take off into the night, her face a perfect, indifferent mask, even though I see a million questions blazing in her eyes.

As soon as we’re clipped in, the helicopter takes flight. Kayla doesn’t bat an eyelid at the sudden movement, making me wonder if she has experience flying in this manner or just a damn good poker face. The first time I flew with Valentine I nearly puked my guts up. Not that I’d admit that to anyone.

It only takes about forty minutes to get to the mainland but the chopper doesn’t land once we’re no longer over the ocean. It rarely does. We’re usually taken into cities and released, or occasionally dropped off near large country estates and made to walk the distance. If the mission is particularly time-



sensitive we might get driven in, but mostly once we're dropped off we're on our own.

We've been told the mission tonight is a big one – one which Kayla must complete. She doesn't even know it yet, but she soon will. And she won't have any choice but to comply. The rest of us are just along for the ride. Backup most likely, in case something goes wrong.

Which it will, because Seytan insisted on the newbie being kept in the dark until the very last minute.

We're eventually dropped off in Manchester, the chopper landing right in the city on one of the high-rise hotel's helipads. It's more high profile than we're used to, but we roll with the punches. Kayla hasn't spoken once and as we disembark, she remains stubbornly mute.

Valentine opens the secure chest of weapons and begins to hand them out. Snow is given a hunting knife but sneaks several grenades into his jacket pocket when Valentine isn't looking, because he's an asshole. Hatchet is given an axe, Honeymonster, a selection of throwing knives, and Ghost takes a taser. That's new.

Nightshade and I load up on guns with plenty of ammo.

Valentine turns to Kayla and she gives him a cool raised brow but she isn't fooling me, I can see her eyes shining with excitement. Until Val hands her a baseball bat and her shoulders fall. Interesting. The media reported that she liked to cave her victims' skulls in with a bat. Was that incorrect?

Val shrugs and presses the bat into Kayla's reluctant hands before turning to Night.

“You know the target, and the rules. Make this one flashy. Draw it out a bit. You have until sunrise.”

Nightshade nods and Valentine leaves, heading inside the hotel ahead of us, most likely making his way to the bar and then his room for the night. He'll have a whore ready and waiting, no doubt.

“You heard the man. Let’s do this.”

We traipse after Night who leads us over to the hotel’s fire escape door which has been conveniently left propped open. I follow him, hoping that by having Kayla out of sight, she’ll be out of mind and hold up her end of the bargain to stay the fuck away from me.

No such luck. We’re not even half way down the first set of stairs when there’s a dull thud followed by Snow’s whining “fuck! What’cha do that for?”

“Quit touching my ass or I’ll remove your fucking hands,” Kayla hisses, every word dripping with murderous intent.

“With what, a fucking baseball bat?” Snow scoffs.

I glance back over my shoulder to see the pair of them bringing up the rear, which is a really fucking bad idea because Snow is no fucking lookout.

“Hold on, D,” I say, placing my hand on Night’s shoulder.

“D? What’s that short for? Dick? Daddy?” Kayla snorts. I ignore her.

“Apparently the *children* can’t play nicely together so someone needs to split them up.”

Night sighs and nods at me, and I remove myself from our single file line and climb back up the stairs to take up the rear position. Just walking past Kayla and inhaling her scent makes my dick stir to life. Fucking hell.

“Kayla, move behind Nightshade.”

She pouts but doesn’t argue and takes my spot, minx that she is brushing past me and invading my space as she passes.

I shake my head and then catch Snow smirking at me. Taking my place behind him, I smack him on the back of the head.

“Ow! What the fuck old man?”

I hit him again for his cheek. Sure I'm eleven years older than him – and Kayla – but I'm hardly *old*. Hatchet's thirty-eight for fuck's sake! I'm seriously considering putting a bullet in him, but he'll only whine and slow us down even more.

“Keep your eyes off her arse and stay alert,” I snap.

Once I'm in place we continue our descent, and this time, with the children separated, we make it to the bottom without any drama.

In the basement parking garage, a shiny black stretch limousine is waiting for us. I raise my eyes heavenward at the ostentatious show of wealth. Tonight's delivery method tells me all I need to know about our newest target.

Wealth.

Prestige.

Corruption.

Night opens the door and we step into the limo's plush surroundings. A tumbler of whiskey, neat, waits for Night in a sparkling crystal tumbler, not a hint of ice in sight. An image of the media's earlier claim about the victim making his own ice cubes by the bucketful flashes into my head. No one ever expects the *ice* to be poisoned.

I sit as far away from Kayla as I can, but somehow she ends up diagonally across from me, flirting up a storm with Honey.

I turn away. Outside, the bright lights of the city soon start to fade away, and within half an hour we're out in the countryside. Not like, the actual rural landscape, but definitely the suburbs these rich, entitled pricks like to refer to as being in the country.

The limo stops and Night opens the door allowing the cool night air to blow in, reminding us all that we're still flesh and blood. Even if Snow likes to think he's fucking invincible.

We exit the vehicle and head towards a large, custard yellow, mock Tudor mansion that sits surrounded on three

sides by a moat. A fucking moat. On the fourth, a lake stretches out for miles.

Jesus. What the fuck is wrong with these people? A Chelsea Tractor is parked on the driveway, personalised plates declaring 'BIGDNRGY'. Fuck my life. Is the D for dick or dollar?

As we cross the bridge that takes us over the moat on foot, none of the home's extensive security lights come on. They're either all for show, or the powers that be have done us a solid and disabled all the alarms, cameras and additional security measures to save us some time.

As we approach the front door, I turn to Snow, "That gonna be fucking open for us too?"

He scans the grounds, not even looking at me, "Yep."

He raises a hand to knock, but the door swings open before he makes contact. I smirk.

The inside of the home is even more ostentatious than the outside. Rich, dark woods, deep reds and greens dominate the decorating scheme.

A quick look around shows paintings from the likes of Picasso, Van Gogh, Dali and Rembrandt, all tastefully lit, hanging on the walls. A large, inlaid, stained-glass chandelier hangs from the ceiling. It looks like a fucking kaleidoscope of colour. There must be something wrong with the lights—the intense glare makes me squint.

Just like that, I realise this is just another rich fuck with too much time on their hands.

Night turns to the rest of us, "Just like we usually do."

He leads us through the wide open foyer, past a statue that looks like it's made from gold. When I get a good look at it, I'm not sure if it is or not. If so, it's got to be worth a fucking mint. If not, it's a ridiculous copy.

I eye the large staircase that splits the room in two, up to the second floor. The staircase itself is a work of art. I know

nothing about architecture or design, but that shit looks good, in an Op-Art kind of way.

Night leads us up the stairs. I fall in behind him. Kayla's smiling at me, a come-hither look in her gaze. I can't take those cat-like eyes. I glance away.

Night stops at a door, kicks it open and I follow him inside, stepping over large splinters of broken wood. A large bed dominates the centre of the room. Two women in sexy-as-hell lingerie lie on the bed, tied up in a variety of positions and gagged.

He walks towards the bed and the pair start kicking and screaming – as much as they're able.

My stomach churns as I take in the scene. These women are probably someone's daughters, sisters, friends... I don't feel guilt or remorse, just a cool sense of acceptance that these women are going to meet a nasty end because they happened to be in the wrong place at the wrong time.

Night turns to us with a smirk, "Well, boys, this is what we came for. Let's get to work."

I watch as the others start to pull out their weapons, eager to have their moment of madness unleashed.

I back away towards the door. It doesn't take seven psychos to kill two women. Besides, I want to fuck shit up.

"Mind if I tag along?" Kayla asks just as I reach the broken bedroom door.

"That's not exactly keeping up your end of our deal now, is it?"

"You'll hardly notice I'm here."

Fucking doubtful. All I can smell is her.

I glance at her, taking in her seemingly unintentional but nevertheless provocative attire. Her curves are barely concealed under the tight fabric, and as much as I want to push her away, I can't deny the attraction I feel towards her.

Reluctantly, I nod. “Fine. Just stay out of my way.”

She grins, looking far too pleased with herself. “I promise. I’ll be your shadow.”

We make our way through the rest of the upstairs, with me taking out anyone who gets in our way with a fast bullet. The adrenaline rush is overwhelming, and I can feel myself succumbing to the darkness that the facility tries to keep dormant within me. I get lost in the moment.

Kayla is surprisingly competent, keeping up with my every move and taking out anyone who tries to sneak up on us with a swift blow to the skull.

When the staff have been taken care of, it’s time to fuck shit up. I think Kayla will enjoy this bit, so I lead her down the wide sweeping staircase and along to the opulent formal dining room. At the far end of the room sits a large Welsh dresser with glass doors, displaying the finest crockery and cut crystal.

I fire a bullet through the glass and Kayla grins.

Taking the hint, she pushes past me – making contact *again* – and then goes to town bringing her bat down again and again on each item on the shelves. Glass and crystal and bone china fly everywhere and a wild, almost manic laughter bursts free from her lips.

I can’t help but stare at her. I’ve always had a thing for redheads, and I don’t even care that hers is dyed. I want to run my fingers through it.

Bleeding.

I shake my head, clearing the thought, and move to help her.

By the time we come to the end, the place is a fucking mess. Juice from the smashed fruits and vegetables that were once in the decorative bowls splatter across the floor, mixing with the shards of crystal. Kayla’s eyes are shining with delight. Her cheeks are flushed, her hair even more messy than

before, her chest heaving. Those perky breasts and pert nipples are taunting me and the need to kiss her again almost floors me.

The others are done and already wreaking havoc downstairs. I can tell their adrenaline is riding high in their shouts and whoops. They're ready for anything.

All I want to do is to bend Kayla over the broken mess of debris scattered all over the table, and fuck her into oblivion.

Fuck.

My control snaps when she waltzes past me, breasts brushing my arm in that deliberately casual way of hers, and before I know what I'm doing, my tongue is thrusting its way past her lips, demanding entry. My fingers tangle in her hair, tugging until she whimpers and the sound goes straight to my dick.

I jerk away from her seductive mouth, but keep my hold on her hair, needing to control the distance between us. Her leaf green eyes shine in triumph, and I can't bear it.

I spin her away from me, not caring that her hair twists painfully with the motion, and I slam my free hand onto her back, right between her shoulder blades. Her torso is crushed onto the decimated dining table, which resembles a bed of broken glass.

Roughly, I yank her leggings down to her ankles and plunge two fingers straight into her cunt. She's dripping, turned on by the chaos she's caused both in the dining room and within me. I finger fuck her relentlessly, adding a third to stretch her limits, and pushing down on her scalp so that her cheek bites into the broken shards of glitter on the tablecloth. Red starts to taint the once pristine white cloth, blooming out from under her cheek, and the sight of her bleeding for me is my undoing.

My breathing is ragged, tearing painfully from my chest, but I can't hear it over the blood pounding in my ears and the symphony of sounds coming from Kayla's cunt. I'm loath to

remove my fingers but I can't release my cock without something giving; and it won't be my grip on her hair.

I don't trust this woman. Can't risk giving her an inch. Won't give her freedom to touch or taunt me.

The noise her cunt makes when I drag my fingers free is positively sinful, but it's her whimper of protest that makes my dick weep with precum.

Before I see to myself though, I bring my fingers up to my face and inhale her scent. She's so fucking sweet it hurts. I devour her essence off my fingers like a man starved – which I guess I am. Fast approaching seven years in this hell hole with barely any release in sight. The quick fucks I've managed to steal have nothing on the taste of this girl though.

Once every trace of her is removed from my fingers and imprinted on my soul, I pull down my pants just enough to free my aching cock. Roughly I palm the length of it, squeezing to the point of pain, and watching as precum oozes from the slit. What I wouldn't give to make her choke on my cock.

But I won't give her the satisfaction of gaining that sort of power over me.

I work my cock ruthlessly, squeezing, pulling, massaging until I can no longer resist her. I imagine her moans and the dirty things she would beg me to do to her. I imagine her tits in my hands, the pressure building as my balls draw up tight. I imagine her belly swollen with my baby – and snapping out of my fantasy, I realise that I'm completely fucking fucked. She's it. She's the one. I've always been fascinated with the idea of knocking someone up, but I've never found the right person. Until now, it's always just been a fantasy. Whenever the time came to put my dick in some woman, I always reached for a condom and covered up. I didn't want to impregnate *them* but I do *her*.

I palm the pain away and refocus. I'm not going to come until she's out of my system. I'll be damned if I'll be tempted



to come back to her for more.

With that goal clearly in mind, I line myself up at her entrance and slide inside to the hilt. I groan as I watch her jerk forwards with the force of my thrust, breasts crushed against the china-strewn tabletop.

Nothing beats fucking a woman from behind.

Fuuuuck. Not again. Her cunt feels too good.

I manage a couple of rough thrusts before I drag myself free. Spitting on her arse, I bury myself balls deep in her tight ass. She screams and the sound almost makes me come. Her cunt lubed my dick enough that she won't bleed from the force. Unfortunately.

The sensation is different but ten times hotter. I dig my fingers into the tight flesh at her hips and lever her up further onto my cock, eliciting a harsh cry from her lips. She begins to squirm, trying to dislodge me but I hold on tighter, gripping her hair and hips roughly and pulling her down on to me.

It's only moments before I feel my balls pull tight and my orgasm rocks through me, but I make sure those moments are savage and wildly unrestrained.

Done, I pull out and stand up, turning her over and staring down at her. Her big green eyes look up at me with bruising intensity. She's pissed. I didn't ask for permission, and she didn't get to come. I don't give a shit about her pleasure. This was for me.

With my thumb, I swipe the blood that's trickling down her cheek back up to the source of the cut. It's beautiful, like her. I can't resist digging my nail into the laceration, and her hissing response makes me smirk. I didn't come in her cunt but it's gushing like I did. Princess likes a little pain with her pleasure.

Or should I say my pleasure?

I suck the blood off my thumb and the taste of her makes my dick stir to life once more. Fuck.

“Get dressed. You have a job to do and the mark will be back any moment,” I tell her harshly.

I wipe my dick on the edge of the tablecloth, tuck it away and turn my back on her, determined not to give her another thought.

But somehow I already know that I’m going to fail.

I'LL SKIPADOODLEDOO THE FUCK  
OFF INTO THE METAPHORICAL  
SUNSET



*'RIOT' – HOLLYWOOD UNDEAD*

KOOKABURRA

If Bones didn't just ream my ass so fucking good that I can't walk, I'd take my bat to the side of his fucking head. How fucking dare he!

I sit up and brush broken glass and crockery from my skin as best I can, before climbing down from the table with difficulty. With nothing else to use, I copy Bones, and clean myself up as best I can with the tablecloth, before pulling up my leggings and grabbing my bat.

It didn't slip past me unnoticed that the others all got knives and guns – that prick Snow even pinching some grenades – and all I got was fucking equipment from the PE store cupboard. Whatever. They think I can't be trusted with a real weapon? They should see the damage I can do with this bad boy.

Swinging the bat in time to the merry little tune I'm whistling, I exit the dining room and head towards the main foyer where we came in, following the sounds of distraction to guide my way.

It's absolute carnage when I get there, the opulent reception area wrecked beyond all recognition.

"Look out below!" Snow crows and I only just jump out of the way as the massive chandelier falls from the ceiling and crashes right where I was standing a moment before.

I glare at the asshole. That's twice he's tried to kill me today. I won't let him attempt a third time.

I'm desperate to find out what's going on, but my stubborn pride won't let me ask. Woken in the middle of the night – practically kidnapped with no explanation – and taken *out of prison*. I knew the asylum wasn't like a regular jail, but we're

not regular inmates. And they just...let us out? Provide us with weapons and transportation and send us on our merry way to fuck shit up and start a riot? Why? What's the point? And how the hell do they plan on rounding us back up?

Clearly, it's not the others' first rodeo, but why would they willingly go back? We're obviously hanging around here, waiting for something. And I know I should take advantage of their distraction to just slip away and disappear, but fuck if curiosity doesn't get the better of me. I want to know what's happening, why we're here, what they want from me, so I'm staying put. At least until I have answers.

Then I'll skipadoodledoo the fuck off into the metaphorical sunset.

If they wanted to keep me, they shouldn't have let me out.

If they wanted me back, they should have put a fucking leash on me.

Anger bubbles up inside me, and I reach for the nearest object lying on the floor where it's obviously fallen off the decimated table it was on. It's heavy, some sort of solid brass knick knack, like a paperweight or something. Might be a clam shell but looks like a vagina to me. Fitting.

I launch it with all my might at Snow and it clunks him on the forehead, and he drops to the floor like the sack of shit he is.

"That was one hell of a shot, Red," Night says appreciatively.

"I know." My grin is wide and triumphant, the anger gone.

"That guy fucks me off."

*The feeling's mutual.* It's on the tip of my tongue to ask Nightshade what's happening but a shrill whistle rents the air and I wince as I look around for the culprit responsible for bursting my eardrums.

Hatchet is giving me a smouldering grin and fuck my broken ass, I'm ready to go again.

“It’s time,” Night says. “Positions.”

I nod and mentally prepare myself for whatever is about to happen. I take my position, bat in hand, ready to swing at anything that comes my way. The adrenaline is pumping through my veins, and my face is sweaty. The anticipation is killing me, but I don’t let it show. I’m not weak. I’m not vulnerable. I’m a fighter, and I’ll do whatever it takes to survive.

As we wait, I can hear the muffled sounds of someone approaching from the outside. The guys have fanned out around the foyer, but I’m right in the middle opposite the door. It feels deliberate, staged, like whatever is about to step across the threshold is specifically for me.

Finally, the door slowly opens, and a heavy-set pig of a man in a too-tight suit and shiny loafers steps through. I freeze. I know this man.

It’s the judge from my case. He grins at me, oily and smug, and I feel a flash of rage.

He takes one look at me, eyes scanning the destruction of his home, and his grin falters. I’m sure the bruises and cuts on my face and my wild hair don’t make me look particularly intimidating, but I hold my bat up menacingly, ready to strike.

“Well, well, well,” he says slowly. “Look who we have here.”

I don’t say anything. I don’t trust myself to speak without cursing him out or spitting in his face.

“You were always a troublemaker, Miss Kingfisher. But I didn’t expect you to make it out of that asylum. You’re resourceful, I’ll give you that.”

I narrow my eyes at him, trying to figure out what game he’s playing.

“What do you want?” he demands, his voice betraying his fear.

All around me, the other guys chuckle. It's a terrifying sound and Judge Jeremiah pales, noticing their presence for the first time.

"Nothing much," Nightshade says, his tone low and deadly. "The asylum just wanted to thank you for their latest recruit."

Bones steps forward, and Judge Jeremiah visibly shrinks back in fear, even as his lip curls in a sneer at Bone's tattoos. He's a scary mother fucker, but not as terrifying as Nightshade with his facial ink. No, he was very careful to keep his face neutral when looking at Night.

"What does that mean?"

"It means that your services are no longer required."

"I see."

"I don't think you do."

"The asylum doesn't want me to send any more recruits their way? Got it. Message received loud and clear. You can go now."

"Now, Judge," Bones drawls, his voice dripping with menace. "That's not very hospitable of you, is it?"

The judge swallows hard but tries to maintain his haughty air. "And why would I be hospitable to the likes of you? You've clearly broken in and trashed the place."

Nightshade steps forward, his eyes flashing with something that sends a shiver down my spine. "Because if you don't, we'll make sure everyone knows about your little side business."

The judge blanches, and I can practically see the sweat beads forming on his forehead. I don't know what they're talking about, but it's obviously something that terrifies him.

"Fine," he says, defeated. "You're welcome to stay. Do you require refreshments?"

Nightshade smirks and it's fucking beautiful in its deadly intent. "We have no interest in your piss poor taste in sub-par liquor, Judge. Just you."

"W-what?"

"Kayla?"

I flick my attention to Night as soon as he calls my name.

"I think it's time your bat was acquainted with Jeremiah."

I don't need telling twice.

Stepping forward, I raise my bat and grin at the judge who looks about ready to piss his pants.

"Say hello to BMBF," I say with a feral grin.

"BMB what?"

"Batty Mc Bat Face."

Before he can reply, I bring the bat down on his head with all my might. He crumples to the floor in a heap, blood oozing from the gaping wound on his skull.

"Shit, Sugar, that was a job well done," Honeymonster says, patting me on the back. "You're making my dick hard."

I smile, feeling a sense of satisfaction that I've not felt in a long time. This is what it feels like to take control of your own destiny, to make your own rules and to exact revenge on the people who wronged you.

"Keep going. Make sure he doesn't get back up," Night orders.

I nod, grabbing the nearest object – a somehow unbroken vase – and smashing it into the judge's face. Snow whoops and it spurs me on, beating him mercilessly until he stops moving altogether. The satisfaction I feel is immense, and I can't help but revel in it. This man deserved everything he got and more.

When I think he's unlikely to recover from his beating, I stop. Sweat is dripping off my brow, but I feel exhilarated.

"He's not done," Nightshade says, his voice tight.



“I think he is,” I reply with a laugh.

“You need to end it. Finish him.”

My laughter dies down, replaced with a feeling of unease. This is not what I signed up for. Yes, I’m a convicted murderer. I’ve killed countless people, but it’s always been on my terms. Beating Judge Jeremiah was fun, but I’m not going to kill him just because someone else tells me to. I don’t work that way – even if I do want the bastard dead for sending me to hell.

I take a deep breath and pick up my bat again. I approach the judge’s unconscious body, and my hands shake as I raise the bat above my head. My heart pounds as I bring the bat down with full force. The sound of bones cracking and flesh tearing is sickening. “Again,” Nightshade demands, his voice as hard and unyielding as the blow I just delivered.

I drop the bat and step back, as bile rises up in my throat.

“No.”

Snow grins at me, and I can see the smug satisfaction in his eyes.

Nightshade shakes his head, looking like I’ve gravely disappointed him, and pulls his gun. The sound of the blast echoes around the foyer and the cold marble floor rapidly turns red with Judge Jeremiah’s hot fresh blood.

He’s dead. There’s no surviving a shot like that at such close range.

A second later a wave of burning fire explodes through my body, and I crumple to the ground.

HOW HAVE WE ALL GOT IT THIS  
BAD AFTER ONLY TWO DAYS?



*'BABY' – BISHOP BRIGGS*

HONEYMONSTER

*M*otherfucker. As soon as Kayla's shock chip goes off, I race forward to catch her as her knees buckle, but I'm not the only one moving. Ghost and Night have both made a move to grab her, and although we're all too late to stop her hitting the floor, Ghost manages to at least slide his hand under her head so that it doesn't smash on the marble.

I'm surprised at both Ghost and Night making a move to save her. Night is an insane son of a bitch who doesn't give a shit about anyone, and Ghost is quiet, always keeping to himself. I'm more than a little shocked that they've both formed enough of a bond with Kayla that they'd rush to protect her like that.

Snow makes some cocky fucking comment, and I'm halfway across the foyer, ready to punch his lights out, when Bones steps forward and does exactly that.

I stare at him in shock. Bones too? Fuck. How have we all got it this bad after only two days?

Hatchet catches my gaze, amusement written all over his silent face. I shrug. We're behaving like we've never seen a pussy before. It hasn't been *that* long for some of us. We need to get a grip.

I take a deep breath and slowly let it out before turning my attention back to Kayla. Ghost and Night are still crouched around her, and it looks like Ghost is trying to wake her up.

"What do we do now?" I ask evenly.

Bones steps forward. "We need to get her out of here. The job's done, so I guess back to the helipad?"

I nod. Yeah that makes sense. “Okay, do you think the limo has waited for us?”

“Hope so. I’m not carrying his ass back to the chopper,” Bones mutters, already moving towards the door after stepping over Snow’s body.

I move over to Night and Ghost, and carefully lift Kayla into my arms. They glare at me but don’t argue, as I’m probably the strongest out of all of us.

As I hold Kayla close to my chest, I look down at her. She’s a mess, her hair is matted with sweat and blood, and her clothes are torn. I can smell the metallic tang of blood mixed with a slight hint of burning that I don’t want to think about. It’s never nice when the shock chip is used, and we’ve all learnt the hard way that you can’t say no to the asylum.

“We need to move, now,” I say firmly, urging Night and Ghost to follow me. They exchange a glance before nodding in agreement. We move in unison, like a well-oiled machine, each of us covering the other’s back. Hatchet remains behind to deal with Snow. Part of me wants to shout to leave him, but there will be hell to pay for all of us if we leave a man behind. It’s not worth it. *He’s* not worth it.

As we step out of the building, the night air hits me like a wall. It’s cold and damp, with a hint of rain in the air. The sky is overcast, and the moon is hidden behind a veil of clouds. We move quickly, our footsteps echoing on the deserted driveway.

Kayla’s breathing is becoming more laboured, and I know we need to move faster. I pick up my pace, really feeling the dead weight of her body in my arms. The adrenaline is pumping through my veins, and my heart is racing. We need to get her to the chopper, and fast.

As we round a corner on the driveway, I catch a glimpse of movement out of the corner of my eye. I turn just in time to see a figure lunging towards us. I barely have time to react before Night tackles the figure to the ground, his knife glinting in the moonlight.

“Keep moving,” he growls, as I watch him viciously stab the figure over and over again. Ghost pulls me along, and we move quickly towards the limo. The sounds of fighting behind us are a distraction, but I don’t dare look back.

Finally, we reach the limo, and Ghost opens the door so that I can load Kayla into the back. I can see the worry etched on his face and again, it surprises me. Does he see her as more than just a piece of ass to claim?

My leg bounces anxiously as we wait for the others to join us. Snow and Hatchet appear first. Snow’s sporting quite a few bumps and bruises, not to mention a killer black eye already starting to form courtesy of Bones, and I grin at him.

Hatchet raises a brow at me and I shake my head.

“We’re waiting on Night. Someone attacked us on our way back but he’s taking care of it.”

No sooner have the words left my mouth than footsteps approach us. We all tense up, ready for another fight, but Night emerges from the shadows, his knife and face stained with blood. He wipes the blade on his suit trousers before getting into the limo with us.

“Let’s go,” he says simply, and the driver hits the gas, the tires screeching as we speed off into the night.

Kayla’s body is shaking in my arms, the shock chip still doing its work. I stroke her hair gently, trying to comfort her as best I can. I can’t help but wonder how long it will take for her to recover from this ordeal.

As we drive through the deserted streets, I can’t help but feel a sense of unease settle over me. We’ve completed our mission, but at what cost? Snow and Hatchet are both injured, Kayla is barely conscious, and Night is covered in blood. And for what? Money? Power? It all seems so senseless now.

I glance over at Night and see a look of determination etched into his features. Despite the chaos we’ve caused tonight, he seems unfazed. He craves this kind of violence. I mean, to an extent, we all do. But it’s not as much fun as it

once was. Especially when you're just a puppet and someone else is pulling the strings. It got old, fast. And yet we have no choice.

Night catches my eye and nods towards the backseat where Kayla is slumped over, her breathing shallow and erratic. We both know what needs to be done.

"We need to take care of her," Night says, his voice low and steady.

I nod my agreement, already reaching for the first aid kit stowed under my seat. As I tend to Kayla's superficial wounds, I can't help but wonder how each of us got here. Kayla in particular.

How did we become these people?

I remember the days when I was just part of a ragtag group of misfits, pulling off small-time heists for the thrill of it. But then we caught the attention of a local motorcycle gang, who promised us bigger scores and more excitement. I was so naïve and hungry for adventure, so I followed them down a dangerous path.

The first life I took was accidental. Protecting Bait, the leader of The Sharks. Stupid name for a stupid gang I wish I'd never got involved with. But he liked that I stuck my neck on the line for him, and made me his favourite. Before I knew it, I was his go-to killing machine, and I didn't hesitate to serve him because I was just a stupid awe-struck kid looking for recognition.

I served his ass for my entire teenage years, and most of my twenties, until he spectacularly let me take the fall, stitching me up with the cops and painting me as a psycho serial killer.

To this day, I can't work out why.

But my skill set must have caught someone's attention because when I was sentenced to life in prison, I wasn't taken to Belmarsh, I was whisked away to the asylum where I've been stuck ever since.

Now, I'm in too deep. There's no turning back, and I never even got a say in the matter. Would I have chosen this over a life in prison? Probably. Because even then I was a fucking idiot. But if I knew the cost involved, the real price I'd have to pay, then things would have been very different.

My trip down memory lane has distracted me enough that I don't even notice we've arrived back at the hotel. Kayla is still out cold, and I'm not relishing the thought of carrying her back up however many flights of stairs it is to get to the roof.

"Any chance we can take the lift, just this once?" I ask Hatchet hopefully. I don't really expect him to say yes, so it surprises me when he nods.

The limo stops and we climb out, me with Kayla in my arms once more. We enter the hotel through the staff exit and use the service elevator to get to the top floor. From there, it's only one flight of stairs to get to the roof, which is more than manageable.

The door is still propped open, and Valentine is in the chopper, engine on, propeller whirling, ready for take off. He smirks at me when he sees Kayla in my arms.

Once we're all in and I've arranged Kayla to lie across my, Night's, and Ghost's laps, we're cleared for takeoff and heading back to our prison on a rock, in the middle of the ocean. And I stroke my little Sugar Puff's hair the entire time.

PUSSY WHIPPED TWATS





'CRADLES' – SUB URBAN

SNOW

What a fucking joke. The mission should have been a cakewalk, but no, Little Miss happy clappy cunt had to go and ruin it all.

How fucking hard is it to kill a stupid bastard who deserved everything he got and more? I knew as soon as I laid eyes on her that she didn't have what it takes to be one of us, and tonight just proved that. She's a fucking amateur. Has she even killed before? Her actions tonight make me think not.

As soon as the chopper landed on the roof, I was out and gone. The others can deal with her useless unconscious body. She was a fucking liability and all she's good for is fucking.

Not that I've had that pleasure yet. I can't get over my hatred of her long enough to shoot my shot. Or simply take what I want from her. It infuriates me that I want her so bad. I have to keep telling myself that it's simply because I've gone nearly nine months without sinking my dick into a nice warm pussy. It's not her. It's just her cunt. That's all this is. An infatuation with her pussy.

But there's no denying that the sight of Bones railing her up the ass while she bled all over the table got my dick hard.

Not as hard as when the stupid bitch refused her kill order and got her shock chip activated. It was fucking hilarious *and* she looked sexy as hell once she was incapable of talking... walking...anything really. She's much more fucking tolerable when she's unconscious than when she's awake. Hell, if I didn't think Honey would have my ass for it, I might have been tempted to fuck her while she was out for the count.

No doubt one of her many pussy-whipped twats will be keeping watch over her all night like the under the thumb little

cunts they are. Shame really. My dick's been hard since I watched her hit the floor, body jerking as ten thousand volts coursed through her delectable little body.

I'm not looking forward to tomorrow though.

She failed her mission. And even though the guy ended up dead anyway, she'll have to be punished for failing. Which wouldn't be a problem – I'd fucking enjoy watching it actually – except that they like to preach that we're a team here. So if one of us fails, we all fail. If Kayla has to be punished, we all will.

So not only am I *not* getting fucked, I'm also going to have to take one for the team because of her incompetence.

Fucking great.

SHE'S MINE NOW



*'SAVAGE' – BAHARI*

NIGHTSHADE

I growl low in my chest as Snow hops out of the chopper and fucks off, leaving the rest of us to deal with Kayla's unconscious form.

"Just let it go. He's a fucking knob," Bones mutters. He's not wrong.

"That's an insult to dicks everywhere," Ghost mumbles, but I still hear him and crack a wry smile. I guess none of us have warmed to Snow yet. I wonder if I should just toss him off the roof at this point, or if he might still prove his worth. We can always use him as bait on the next job. The punishment would be worth it to be rid of him.

"What should we do with her?" Honey asks, cradling Kayla in his arms. She's still out cold, but that's not unusual after the shock chip has been deployed.

"I guess take her to her room," I say, rubbing the back of my neck to keep from snatching her to my chest. "One of us should probably stay with her just to make sure she doesn't suffer any nasty side effects."

Snow, the pussy, puked the first time his shock chip went off. Unfortunately he was only semi-conscious at the time, and he almost choked to death on it. Wish he had. But the rest of us got the blame for not watching out for him. Go figure.

I'd rather not face additional punishment if something similar happened to Kayla. That's all.

"I'll watch over her," Honey offers at the same time as Ghost and Bones say, "I will". Hatchet shakes his head like the whole thing is ridiculous- which it really is, but I'm fucked if I can explain it.

“I’ll look after her,” I say, holding my arms out for Honey to pass her to me. He flinches and takes a small step back, a reproachful look on his face. “Give her here.”

“No. I can carry her.” His arms tighten around her slightly.

“But if I’m going to stay with her, it just makes more sense for me to take her.”

“But no one said you’re the one staying with her,” he points out.

I grit my teeth and count to three. I don’t have a problem with Honey, never have, but that doesn’t mean he isn’t testing my patience right now.

Hatchet steps forward and takes Kayla from Honey without a word, and off course, Honey lets him. No one argues with Hatchet. He fixes me with a firm look that clearly says *sort it out*. It’s late. We’re all tired. Let’s get this done.

“Rock, paper, scissors?” Ghost suggests. I snort.

“Fine,” Honey agrees.

“Are we fucking children?” I growl out, my jaw tight.

“You scared to lose?” Bones asks with a wicked grin.

“Fuck you.”

Hatchet stands by and watches in amusement as Ghost and Honey count down and draw. Ghost opts for rock while Honey chooses scissors. Ghost’s winning grin is shit-eating until Honey smacks him in the balls.

“Ooof!” Ghost wheezes out a cough as he doubles over, but is still smiling when he recovers and straightens. “Motherfucker.”

“Sorry, I slipped,” Honey replies with an easy shrug and a *no hard feelings* smile.

I turn to Bones and we play. My paper beats his rock, and my grin is deadly as I face Ghost.

“Come on, Casper,” I tease. “Show me what you’ve got.”

Ghost doesn't rise to the bait. Very little rattles him, and even after all the time I've known him, I don't feel like I *know* him at all. He's even more of a closed book than Hatchet – and that's saying something because the dude never talks.

“Wanna raise the bounty?” I ask slyly.

“What?” Ghost blinks at me, the hint of a frown creasing between his eyes.

“Winner takes a blade from the loser,” I propose.

Ghost grimaces and shakes his head. “Pass.”

“Guess you don't want it bad enough,” I taunt.

“I'm not a fucking masochist.”

“Money where your mouth is, right now, or I'm taking her,” I say, nodding to Kayla who's still out cold in Hatchet's arms. Bones looks fully entertained, and even Honey can't disguise his interest in the outcome of this new wager.

“Fine,” Ghost grinds out from between his gritted teeth.

“Three... Two... One...Shoot.”

I draw my knife with my right hand, at the same time as I opt for rock. Ghost chooses scissors and I flash a snake-light, predatory grin at him.

“I win,” I say in a slow, drawling gloat. Ghost scowls at me.

“And I get to stab you,” he quips.

“Fair's fair. She's worth bleeding for.”

Ghost draws his knife from the pocket of his hoodie, flicks the blade open and strikes.

Gotta hand it to him, he's lightning fast. Even if it was broad daylight I wouldn't have seen the attack coming. He's in and out of my flesh before I can draw a sharp breath, wiping the metal on his jeans before flicking the knife closed and returning it to his pocket.

I'm surprised he had it in him.

My fingers find the shallow cut on my abdomen and I curse under my breath that a perfectly good shirt and waistcoat have been ruined. Red may be worth bleeding over but sacrificing damn good tailoring might be a step too far.

I feel no pain.

“Give her here,” I say to Hatchet when Ghost walks away without another word. He hands her over without question – not that I’d expect any words to come from his mouth, but his face is expressive enough when he wants it to be. Right now, there’s no reproach on his face, only acceptance.

Once she’s in my arms I carefully hold her up to avoid getting my blood on her. Though the idea of her naked and covered in my blood, begging for mercy, makes my dick hard.

“Goodnight gentlemen,” I call over my shoulder to the others as I head for the lift. “I have a date with sleeping beauty.”

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THE LIFT DOORS slide shut behind me, and I lean my head back against the wall as I press the button for the main floor. Blood trickles from the cut on my stomach, and I can feel a smirk playing at the corners of my mouth.

Ghost may have won the bounty, but I got what I wanted. Kayla in my arms, and a little bit of pain to remind me of the thrill of the chase.

She’s breathing softly by the time I step out of the lift and make my way down the hallway. The door to her room is slightly ajar – not surprising, Seytan probably had a good snoop while we were out on the mission – and I nudge it open with my foot as I step inside.

The room is dimly lit, and I carefully place her down on the bed. She’s on her back, still unconscious, and I wonder if I need to roll her onto her side.

Probably not. It's not like I'm going anywhere. I'll just keep an eye on her.

I take a moment to look at her. Despite the blood, sweat and dirt covering her skin, she's pretty, with a heart-shaped face and full lips that I long to feed my cock between.

Her chest rises and falls with each breath she takes, and I grow hard at the sight of her slightly parted lips.

*I could do anything I wanted to her right now, and she'd never know.*

The thought makes me groan as my dick pulses.

I want to take her mouth, fuck it, own it and mark it as mine.

She begins to stir, her eyelids fluttering and her chest rising and falling faster, as if she knows my dirty intentions and they arouse her too.

"Soon, Red. Let's get you cleaned up first," I tell her reverently, touching her tenderly as I strip her off, toss her ripped and dirty clothes into a pile on the floor at the foot of the bed.

She's fucking magnificent naked. I didn't take the time to fully appreciate her the last time we fucked, but right now I have all the time in the world.

I gently roll her onto her side, and she coughs up a little blood as I do. I wipe it away with the thumb of my free hand, and she shifts as if she's trying to get more comfortable.

Her body is lean and toned, with supple curves and pale skin that's a stark contrast to the bright colourful riot of tattoos covering her body.

I trail my free hand down her back and over her ass, and she sighs softly as I gently massage her side.

There's a first aid kit in the bathroom, and I grab it alongside a face cloth which I run under lukewarm water and wring out. Carefully, I use tweezers to remove the glass that's



stuck in her skin, dabbing at her cuts with antiseptic. She doesn't even react to the sting.

When she's patched up, I use my trusty kit to inject her with a little something to help her sleep better. Wouldn't want her waking up and disturbing my fun. Then I remove my shoes, peeling back the insole in my right shoe to remove the blade I keep there for emergencies. I slowly unbutton my slacks and ease them down my thighs, along with my silk boxers.

She's settled, and I know that my secrets are safe tonight.

My dick springs free, hard and throbbing, the purple head swollen to bursting. My fingers trace over the slender razor blade, flipping it back and forth in my hand.

Lightly, I run the blade down my dick, the sharp sting adding an extra head fuck to the experience. I've never used a blade on my cock before, but I'm not about to knock it when it feels so fucking good.

I take my free hand and hold it against my cock, stroking my fingers in time with the slow, feather-light sawing of my blade over the head. The sharpness of the pain is a pleasurable contrast to the warmth of my hand as together they coax me to the edge.

Pleasure is swiftly bubbling to the surface, my balls drawing up tight as the blood rushes in to fill my steel length. I keep sawing at the head of my cock, ignoring the warm gush of pre-cum threatening to ruin my fun, teasing the blade a little deeper with each pass, knowing that the skin will yield, and when it does, it's game over for me.

My orgasm hits just as the blade slices the tip of my dick and my dual release of thick ribbons of cum and hot blood spills out over my fingers. I keep sawing until the last of the tingles leave my cock. My entire body is sheathed in sweat and my breath is sawing out of my chest.

I leave my dick as it is; covered in my release and ready for Kayla to taste.

My knees feel like they're going to give out as my muscles spasm and quiver. I collapse down to the bed beside Kayla, and run my blood and cum soaked fingers over my lips. My tongue darts out to taste the nectar and the flavour explodes on my tongue. It's too good not to share. I capture her pliant lips with mine and kiss her deeply. Her lack of resistance is the green light I need to slide my tongue into her mouth.

I have to fist my hands into the covers to prevent myself from going further. But then I think, why the fuck shouldn't I?

If she didn't want me to, she'd wake up and stop me. There's nothing preventing her.

I pull back from her and curl the fingers of my left hand into a fist, then press the heel of my right hand into the centre of my left palm. When I pull my hand away, I'm left with a thin smear of blood on my palm. My blood.

She'll awaken soon and I'll take her anyway I want, but I'll have her on my terms.

My eyes close and I can already feel my dick thickening, growing again as I imagine it inside her mouth. I fist the shaft and begin to pump. She'll wake soon, and I need to get my dick wet.

I want to fuck her. To claim her mouth, her throat, her pussy, her ass, and all the parts of her that I've left untouched.

Maybe she could have just a little taste. It might encourage her to come round sooner.

Yes. That's it.

Standing, I turn so that my thighs are pressed against the mattress, level with Kayla's sleeping face. I never noticed how long her eyelashes are before now. She really is beautiful. I run my fingers over her face, rub them on her soft pillowy lips.

"Open up for me, Red," I softly demand, my voice still rasping from the strength of my release.

I almost expect her to open her eyes and look at me, but she doesn't. She'll do that soon enough though. She'll wrap

her lips around my dick and suck out every drop I have to give her.

I spread my legs a little further and lower my hips. I rub the head of my cock against her mouth, painting her lips with the cum and blood that's clinging there.

"Come on, beautiful. I've got a treat for you."

My hand wraps around the base of my shaft and I guide the head between her lips. She doesn't hesitate, doesn't fight me, and I slide in deep.

I take a fistful of her hair in my hand and I pull her head back, then I push her head forward, burying myself in her throat. She doesn't even gag. Instead, she swallows me all the way down, like the good fucking girl I knew she would be.

She doesn't respond. Just takes everything I give her. I'm using so much control to hold back. To not come again so soon. She's fucking perfect, pliant like a doll, and at my mercy as I plunge into her pretty little mouth.

I push a little further, until my balls are resting against her chin. Dragging my hips back and forth, I savour the sensation of her tongue massaging the underside of my dick and I shiver.

I want to fuck her face so hard, but I hold back. I'm the one in control. I'm in charge. I'm going to fuck her face just the way I like it.

I slowly ease out until the head of my cock is resting against her lips, and she moans. The vibrations tickle over my dick, and I groan, a bead of pre-cum welling at the tip.

"You like that, don't you, Red?" I croon.

I swear she moans again, trying to tempt me back.

"Fuck, sweetheart, you only have to ask."

I thrust my cock back in, as hard as I can.

She gasps and nearly loses me, but my hand is there to guide her back, to make sure my dick is still buried in her throat.

“See? It’s easier when you’re nice.”

I start to fuck her throat, my hips rising and falling, guiding my shaft in and out. It’s hard to resist the urge to just drive my dick in deep and come, but I want to make this last. I want to fuck her beautifully, and I want to come down her throat.

She’s moaning like crazy now, and pressing her head back against me. I’m so close to losing it.

“That’s it, baby, fuck my cock with your throat.”

I break away from her mouth to let her breathe, and she takes a deep gasp of air. Somehow her eyes are still closed, and I fucking love it. I could get used to this. Sneaking in every night to have my wicked way with her while she’s none the wiser.

I should fuck her pretty pussy.

At the very least I should taste her. It’s only fair; she had a taste of me.

I grab her hips and drag her towards me. She doesn’t resist as I lean down and press my face to her cunt. Her scent hits me first; sweet but not cloying, with a musky undertone that sends me wild.

I kiss her pussy, and she lets out a long low moan. It’s music to my ears. I nuzzle my nose between her lips, inhaling her mouthwatering scent. Her body responds, her hips rocking back and forth, and she’s moaning, pleading with me to take her. To give her what she wants.

I’m tempted to eat her out right now; to claim her pussy as mine, to make her sing with pleasure, but I want to fuck her too. I want to bury my dick deep in her hot pussy and feel her come on me.

What’s better, is the fact that I don’t have to choose; I can do both. Taste her first and fuck her after. I have all the time in the world, and no one to tell me no.

I wrap my arms around her thighs and pull her even closer to me, pressing my face in tight.

She bucks against me, lifting her wet pussy up to meet my mouth. I bury my nose in her cunt, inhaling deeply. Her scent fills me, and it makes my cock twitch. I want to devour her, to lick and suck every inch of her.

I part her lips with my tongue, and she gasps as I start to lick her. Her clit is swollen, a hard little nub begging for attention. I tease her, pressing my tongue flat and circling it over her clit, but never quite giving it what it wants.

She's wiggling and squirming and silently begging. She wants more. I tease her relentlessly, licking and sucking, lapping at her pussy like it's the essence of life. I'm not giving her what she really wants.

I return to her clit, holding her down, and continuing to lick and tease her. I'm loving every minute of it.

I move my head up a little, and she squirms under my weight but doesn't try to escape. I'm still pinning her, but I'm nuzzling into her cunt now, licking and lapping at her wet lips. Her thighs are wide, and I lean over her, moving my head down to her pussy. I love the way she smells. I love the way she tastes.

I bury my tongue deep in her wet snatch and suck at her nectar, loving the way she gushes on my tongue.

I want to make her come while she's unconscious, but the need to fill her overrides that desire. I should reward her for being so good – she's not struggling against me at all, not trying to get away.

“Good girl,” I whisper.

I reach out and grab her tits, pulling her nipples into stiff peaks so I can get at them more easily. The sight is magnificent; she's practically throwing herself at me.

I pinch her nipples with both hands and pull her down hard as I press my face to her pussy. I'm devouring her wetness,

sucking at her nectar while I milk her tits, and she's moaning and gushing on my tongue.

She might be unconscious, but she's so turned on she's practically writhing in my arms. Her pussy is clenching on my tongue, wanting more. I'm so hard I can barely think. She's so fucking delicious, and she's close to coming, but I don't want to stop this. I hold her down and tease her with my tongue, licking her pussy like it's ice cream and I'm the world's greediest child.

I have no idea how long we stay like this. It's incredible but I can't take it much longer. She's so fucking delicious and I'm starving for her.

I can't hold back any longer. I need to fuck her.

I push her thighs apart and sit up, spreading her pretty pussy wide for me to see. Her arousal coats her thighs, glistening in the low light of the room and stirring the excitement within me.

If she didn't want this, her body wouldn't be begging for me.

Her eyes are closed, and that makes it feel even more thrilling. She doesn't see me; she doesn't know what's coming.

My cock is throbbing. I stroke it over her pussy, wetting my shaft in her juices, and then I press the head of my cock to her opening.

I'm not sure if I'll fit. She's so tight and I'm so big. But it feels incredible.

I want to fuck her. I want to fuck her so bad. I want to feel her come on me, but I want to feel her pussy squeezing the cum from my cock even more.

I press harder. Her pussy lips are quivering, trying to close, but too weak. I don't stop and I don't relent. I keep pushing, and I keep pressing. I'm forcing her pussy open, and I'm

moving deep inside her. Her wetness is leaking down my shaft, coating me in her juices as I push deeper, deeper, deeper.

I fist my hands in her tits, digging the nails right into the soft flesh until her skin too yields and ten perfect little bloody crescent moons mar her perfect breasts. It's the sexiest sight I've ever seen, knowing that she'll wake in the morning and feel the ghost of me, but not know who it was desecrating her flesh while she slumbered.

I start to fuck her. I fuck her hard, and I fuck her deep. Her pussy is tight, hungry but she's so wet and welcoming. The sounds her needy cunt makes are obscene – testament to how much she wants this.

Her pussy stretches to accommodate me as I slam my whole length into her relentlessly. Her body is so soft under me, and even though I'm holding her down, she's not struggling.

She's accepting me. She's enjoying this.

Her pussy is squeezing, gripping me, sucking me further inside her. I'm thrusting over and over, fucking her harder, and faster, and deeper. She's moaning, her body telling me everything I could want to know. She's loving this.

She's begging for more.

It's exhilarating. I'm fucking her like I've never fucked anyone before. But she's not struggling. She's not trying to stop me. She's taking everything I give her and her body is begging for more.

My cock is so deep in her pussy I don't think there's any more room. I'm all the way in, but I can't stop myself. I need to keep going, to fuck her senseless.

I grab her thighs and push my hips down, thrusting my cock deeper, and I feel something inside her give way and suddenly I have another inch, another inch that she didn't even know she had.

She's moaning louder now. Her breaths are getting frantic. She's loving this.

I'm pounding her, thrusting into her with everything I have and watching her breasts bounce as they bleed under my nail marks.

I'm unable to resist leaning down and taking her nipples between my teeth. I bite as hard as I fuck, and then I suck the blood from her wounded tits.

I'm fucking her fast and hard, and her tight pussy is milking my cock. I want to come so fucking bad. I groan, the need to fill her making me desperate.

She's bucking against the bed, and I'm thrusting hard against her hips, pounding into her, my balls slapping against her thighs as I fuck her as deep as I can. I can feel her pussy stealing my cum. It's hungry, hungry and desperate and I know what I have to do to satisfy it.

I reach down and grab her hair, bunching it in my fist; she doesn't resist me as I pull her head to one side and expose the long, elegant column of her pretty little neck.

Fuck, she needs a necklace.

I look at the soft skin of her throat, so close to my lips. She's still moaning and writhing under me but she's not struggling. She's accepting my kisses, my teeth. She's begging for my bite.

I move my head down to her neck and sink my teeth into her skin until I taste her blood on my tongue. She arches her back and moans as I bite down, as she feels my teeth breaking her skin and penetrating her flesh. I bite down and draw her blood into my mouth. I drink from her, tasting the wine of her life, feeling her pulse at my lips and sucking on her, draining her strength.

She's orgasmic. Her orgasm is tearing through her. It's so hard and so fucking deep that it triggers my own. I slam my hand down onto her throat, squeezing the life out of her as my cock thrusts and my balls empty. My cum floods into her



pussy and I feel her life ebbing away, feel her pussy milking my cock for every last drop.

On the precipice of death, I release her.

Collapsing down on top of her, we both lie there, gasping for breath. Her heart is racing, and I know mine is too.

She's mine now.

She may not know it, but I do.

And when she wakes in the morning it'll be irrefutable.

FEELING LIKE I'VE BEEN STRUCK  
BY LIGHTNING ON REPEAT



*'ESCAPE' – AZEE*

KOOKABURRA

I feel like fried chicken. Not the sexy, eleven secret herbs and spices kind. More like the, got pissed up last night and attempted to cook and almost burnt the house down kind.

Everything hurts and I've barely any memory of what went down. The final thing I remember was refusing to kill Judge Jeremiah – even though he deserved it for being a corrupt cunt and selling me out to this shit hole rather than sending me for a nice cushty stint in Pentonville or Belmarsh – then waking in my bed just now feeling like I've been struck by lightning on repeat.

Except...I swear I woke up at some point in the night, to find someone in bed with me, touching me in a way which makes my cheeks heat now to think about it.

But that was likely just a dream.

I stumble out of bed and make my way to the bathroom. I catch a glimpse of myself in the mirror and almost vomit at the sight. My hair is wild and greasy, my eyes are bloodshot, and there's a cut on my cheekbone that I don't remember getting. I turn on the faucet and splash water on my face, hoping it will somehow cure my pounding headache and queasy stomach.

When I take another look, I notice the savage bite on my neck, the ring of fingerprint shaped bruises around my throat, the scabbed over nail marks on my breasts, and the imprint of teeth marks ringing my nipples.

What the fuck happened last night?

As I leave the bathroom, I notice a note on the kitchen counter. It's scrawled in messy handwriting that I don't recognise. Of course I don't, I've been here two nights and

haven't got a clue what the fuck is going on. It reads: "Sorry for last night, Red. Know you're going to have questions when you wake. Come find me. I know a place where we can speak, unwatched and unheard."

Fuck. Well, that tells me that there's cameras or possibly microphones in my room then. I shiver, not liking that at all. Not that I thought for a second that the sumptuous surroundings of my room afforded me any kind of real privacy, but still, blissful ignorance was better than having it confirmed like a slap in the face. I'm guessing the note is from Nightshade. I think he's the only one that's called me Red, but I can't be sure.

Deciding answers can wait a little longer, I shower, taking my time to catalogue my injuries as I wash dried blood, sweat and dirt off my body. My thighs are tight with dried cum, and my pussy is as sore as my ass.

Some cuts reopen and bleed in the hot steam, and one or two I'm forced to remove broken glass from with my nails – though not as many as I was expecting. It stings like a bitch but it's hardly worth a trip to the medical room over.

Once I've used up all the hot water, I exit the shower, stem the few small cuts that are still weeping, and dry myself. I'm just finishing getting dressed when there's a knock at my door.

"Come in," I call, because let's face it, I can't stop them with no lock.

It's Nightshade. And he's frowning at me.

"What?" I demand.

"What's taking so long? Didn't you see my note?" *Ah, so it was him then.*

"One, I just woke up. And two, yes I did see your note but I had a shower first."

"A shower?"

"Yeah, you should try it some time."

“I don’t shower. I take baths.”

“With bubbles?” I tease.

A frown creases his brow. “With wine.”

“That’s not a no about the bubbles,” I point out. His answering scowl gives me fanny flutters. Does he even know how beautiful he is? The more fierce the glare, the harder I fall. He’s such a beautiful monster.

“I can’t believe you thought a shower was more important than getting answers!”

“I want a bath now. With bubbles and wine and you for company,” I tell him. “You can wash my back.”

“What?” That’s thrown him.

I smile sweetly. It feels alien on my face. “Nothing. You were saying there was somewhere we could go?”

He frowns a moment longer then tilts his head, appraising me. “Follow me.”

I do, and he leads me out of my room, along the winding corridors to the elevator we used before. When we step inside, I stop him from scanning his finger.

“Let me try.”

He smirks at me but I ignore it, placing my thumb on the scanner. Nothing happens. I try again. Then I try all of my fingers, on both hands. Huffing in frustration, I move aside for Night to do the honours.

“Why doesn’t it work for me?”

“You don’t have clearance.”

“How do I get clearance?”

“You don’t. Not until Seytan decides you’re worthy.”

“That’ll be never then,” I snort. He doesn’t reply and we ride the rest of the way in silence.

When the elevator stops, the doors open and I blink. We're outside.

I turn to Night. "What is this?"

"Umm, it's daylight. A forest. The great outdoors. Are you telling me a city chick like you has never seen a tree before?"

I scowl. "Ha.Ha. I'm sorry if being roofied and transported here in manacles and a straitjacket doesn't quite marry up with you being able to walk straight out of the front door!"

"It's more than a hundred miles to the mainland. Where are we gonna go? In case you didn't notice last night, they have ways of making sure we don't escape that are far more effective than four walls with bars."

"You said we could talk?"

"I'm here to show you around," he tells me firmly. "I'll answer any questions about the site and what freedoms you'll be given etc for the duration of stay here."

I snort. "Stay? You make it sound like a holiday."

The shake of his head is so infinitesimal that I almost miss it. He's saying it's not safe to talk here. Not yet. But he knows somewhere, and he'll show me, all under the guise of being my tour guide.

I nod and he turns on his heel and strides off into the thick trees, leaving me to scramble to keep up with him.

As we walk deeper into the forest, Nightshade begins to tell me about the surrounding area. He explains that the island we're on is only a small part of a much larger archipelago, and that most of the islands are uninhabited and unexplored. He tells me about the wildlife that inhabits these islands – from the dangerous predators to the brightly-coloured birds and insects. I listen to him talk, fascinated despite myself.

At one point, we come across a small stream that runs through the forest. Nightshade stops and crouches down beside it, reaching out to touch the water. I watch as he dips his fingers in, feeling the coolness of the water. For a moment,

I'm struck by how peaceful he looks – so unlike the fierce, dangerous man I know him to be.

“What are you thinking about?” he asks, turning to look at me.

I shrug. “Nothing in particular. Just taking it all in.”

He nods, a small smile tugging at the corner of his lips. “It's beautiful here, isn't it? The noise and chaos of the city seem so far away.”

“I suppose,” I murmur, not quite ready to admit that I'm enjoying this unexpected excursion, but also surprised by his words. He's so...unreadable and somehow he keeps surprising me. He's not what I expected, at all.

We continue on our journey, the forest growing denser around us. My heart beats faster as I realise just how far we've come from the facility. What if we get lost out here? What if Nightshade has some ulterior motive for bringing me so far into the wilderness?

As if sensing my unease, he stops abruptly and turns to face me.

“Red,” he says, his voice low and serious. “I need to explain some things to you.”

I swallow nervously. This is it. Whatever he has to say, it's going to be important – I'm going to get the answers I desire.

“What is it?” I ask, barely above a whisper.

He takes a step closer to me, his eyes trained on mine. “You need to know that last night was a test. One which you failed.”

My heart sinks at his words. A test? What kind of test? And how did I fail it? I open my mouth to ask, but Nightshade holds up a hand to stop me.

“Before you ask any questions, you need to understand that this is serious. The people who brought us here are not to be underestimated. Doctor Seytan isn't in charge. She's not the

one pulling the strings. She's as much of a puppet as we are. The people who run the asylum are dangerous and powerful, and they'll do anything to achieve their goals. And they have a special interest in you."

"In me? Why?"

"I don't know," he admits, running a hand through his slicked-back hair. The action doesn't marr it in the slightest, nor does his hand come away looking sticky with product. Huh, go figure. "Are you even listening?"

"Yes," I snap, guilty that I was caught out and jumping to defensive.

"Well, they've been watching you for a long time. It was the same with all of us. Convicted for multiple murders, sentenced to life imprisonment but brought here instead."

I stare at him in disbelief. This can't be happening. It's like something out of a bad spy movie.

"What else do I need to know?" I ask, my voice trembling slightly.

"Your test was to kill that guy with zero hesitation."

"It was the judge that sentenced me."

"I know. We all had to take out our judges."

"Why?"

"So there's no loose ends. No official record of us going to the asylum."

"What happened when I refused? I just remember pain and everything going black."

"Shock chip. We're all equipped with them and they double up as GPS trackers. Powerful kit. Monitors our vitals, transmits our locations, can be activated remotely and capable of emitting ten thousand volts at the touch of a button. Amongst other things."



“*What?*” I yell. He glares at me, and it takes a concentrated effort to lower my tone when I speak again. “They chipped us like fucking animals?”

“That should be the least of your worries,” he warns cryptically. But I can’t focus on that right now.

Panic is rising like a tidal wave, bringing down a red mist that makes it impossible to think. “Take it out! I want it gone. Get this thing out of me!”

“I can’t. Only a highly skilled surgeon could do that.”

“What? Why?” My hands are clawing at my body like it’s covered in ants or spiders and I’m only half listening to his words, lost in my haze of panic.

“Because it’s placed at the base of your skull, embedded behind your spinal cord and any attempt to remove it would result in paralysis.”

That clears the fog.

“What?”

“You heard me.”

“That’s fucked up. Why would they do that?”

“To keep us in line. How else would an organisation be able to let half a dozen known and convicted serial killers run around the country doing their dirty work for them? Don’t tell me you didn’t think of running last night.”

I shake my head. “Of course I did. But my damn curiosity got the better of me and then I woke up smelling like fried chicken.”

“Tasty.”

“Oh, I am. But that’s not the point. I just want to get out of here now. I’m no one’s killing machine.”

“It’s impossible to escape.”

“There must be a way.”

“There’s not. Hatchet’s been here twenty-two years and counting. Don’t you think if there was a way, he would have found it by now?”

I huff in frustration, hating his negative, matter of fact attitude. But also, *twenty-two fucking years?!* The guy’s not *that* old. He must have come here when he was a teenager.

*Holy shit, was I even born?!*

Daddy Hatchet indeed.

I dig the toe of my boot into the grass. “I refuse to accept that. Maybe it’s not possible *right now* and we can’t leave just yet. But we need to bide our time, figure out their weaknesses, and strike when the moment is right.”

“We?”

“Well I can’t imagine you enjoy being somebody’s bitch any more than I do.”

“And how do you propose we do that then? Assuming *we* wanted to.” He shoves his hand into his pocket.

“We stick together. We watch each other’s backs. We pool our resources and knowledge. And we wait for the right opportunity to present itself. What about the shock chip? Is there any way to disable it or deactivate it?” I ask.

“Unfortunately, no. It’s programmed to respond only to the commands of the people who put it in us. But we can take precautions to avoid triggering it. Like not going against their orders, not trying to escape, and not acting out of line.” Nightshade takes a step closer, his voice low and serious.

“So we need to be careful.”

“We need to be careful, and we need to be smart. The people who run this place are experts in manipulation and control. They know how to get inside our heads and use our weaknesses against us. We need to stay strong and united, even if we’re not planning to leave.”

I nod in agreement, feeling a sense of relief that I'm not alone in this. "You do want to escape though, right?"

"I'm nobody's bitch."

A shrill whistle goes up and I startle. "Who's that?"

"Hatchet. He's somewhere nearby. Probably chopping wood."

"So the sexy lumberjack look isn't just a fashion statement?"

Night smirks. "And he's not just chopping wood because he likes to polish his axe."

That sounds way too kinky to be anything other than a euphemism.

I giggle. It's a nice distraction from the reality of our situation. But as my laughter dies down, the weight of our predicament returns. We're prisoners, rightly so, but with no way out and an unknown fate awaiting us. When I just thought I was going to prison, that was one thing. But being sent on secretive missions to kill on command? Fuck that.

"We need to come up with a plan," I say, my voice low and urgent.

Nightshade nods, his eyes scanning our surroundings. "We do, but we can't rush into anything. We need to bide our time, wait for the right opportunity."

I sigh, frustrated. Waiting is the last thing I want to do. I want to take action, to fight back against our captors. But I know Nightshade is right. We need to be patient if we want to have any chance of escaping.

"Hatchet!" Nightshade shouts. "We're heading back in. Want to join us?"

Two shrill whistles. Nightshade smiles.

"What does that mean?"

"It means he'll meet us at the lift."

“Does he only communicate in whistles?”

“Sometimes he uses smoke signals too,” he deadpans.

“You’re fucking hilarious.”

“Deadly.”

NO CAN DO, FUCKEROO



*'I SEE RED' – EVERYBODY LOVES AN OUTLAW*

KOOKABURRA

“*T*he doctor wants to see you,” Nightshade says when we exit the elevator back into the facility.

“Satan?”

He smirks. “No. Sara Callaway.” At my blank look he sighs. “The real doctor. In the infirmary...that means hospital wing, by the way.”

“Look, I might not be smart enough to discern the difference between poison and a corked wine, but I was clever enough to kill over a hundred people, so give me some credit.”

“Weren’t clever enough to avoid getting caught though, were you?”

“Hello black pot, have you met the kettle?”

“But we weren’t questioning my intelligence.”

“Whatever.” The corner of my lips twitch against my will. “How do I find the medical room?”

He shrugs and it’s infuriating. “You’ve been there before.”

I cross my arms and glare at him. “May have escaped your notice but I was almost dying when I was taken there. For the third time in under twenty four hours, might I point out. Don’t think I don’t know what you were really trying to do with that wire around my throat!”

“Please,” he scoffs. “If I wanted you dead, you would have been by now. I could have just let that poison do its thing.”

“Why did you work so hard to save me anyway?”

“Are you kidding me? Do you know how long it’s been since I even had a sniff of a cunt?” His crude language sends

tingles to my pussy, and there's nothing I'd like more than for him to have a *sniff* of it...and maybe a taste too.

“So that's it? You enjoyed fucking me and didn't want it to end?”

“Do I prefer fucking your warm responsive body over your cold dead corpse? Yes.” His insinuation that he'd fuck me dead or alive shouldn't turn me on, but damn, it does. I love a psychopath, and Night ticks all the boxes for me.

“And that's the only reason?” I push, cocking my head and trying to sniff out his bullshit.

“It's what I said, isn't it,” he replies firmly, a look of irritation passing across his beautifully sinister features.

“I don't believe you.”

“I don't care.”

“I do. I want to know the truth,” I insist. I'm one step away from stomping my feet to get what I want. What's wrong with me? I'm usually a stab first, asked questions later kind of girl. Why can't I seem to let this go?

“Why?” he counters.

I hesitate, then decide to just be honest. “Because...I want you to be someone I can trust.”

“That's not possible.” His tone is emphatic.

“Why not?” I frown.

“Well first of all, look where we are. This is an asylum for psychos. You shouldn't trust *anyone* in here. And second of all, you definitely shouldn't trust me because I'm a monster.”

“How so?” I mean, we're all monsters here, right? What is it about Night that makes him think he's more monstrous than the rest of us?

“What kind of monster doesn't even have a heart?” he asks. Pretty sure that's a rhetorical question, and the answer is all of them. Isn't that, by definition, what makes us monsters?

“You don’t need one,” I tell him. And I mean it. I don’t have a heart. “I’m not looking for a guy with a heart. I’m not even looking for romance. Just someone I can trust and get a good fucking from, from time to time.”

I give Nightshade a sideways glance but he says nothing more.

“Fine. Then I’ll take my leave,” I say, about to start searching for the infirmary. He grabs my elbow and pulls me back to him, holds me there with a vice grip.

“What am I to you?” he asks, his tone low and urgent.

I shake my head in exasperation. “You’re an obnoxious asshole.”

“You know exactly what I mean,” he snaps softly.

“I can’t answer that.”

“Why not?”

“Because you won’t thank me for it,” I reply.

“I’ll kill you if I find out I’m important to you.”

A smile tugs at my lips at his words, and he scowls when he sees it.

“What?”

“Glad to know you’re honest.”

“Why would you think that?” His tattooed brows are drawn so closely together they almost touch, and if he didn’t look so damn fierce, it would almost be comical. Except, it’s not. It’s really fucking scary, and even fucking sexier.

“Because you’ve already told me that you’ll kill me,” I clarify.

“I don’t want to kill you,” Nightshade says, sighing heavily. “I just want to get this over with.”

“This?” I raise a brow.

“Yes, this.”



His lips crash down on mine in a devouring kiss. His hands find purchase on my hips, caressing there, then gripping me hard enough to bruise. I can't get enough. My heart is racing, my pheromones are pumping, my sex is aching with need. I want him. I feel like my throat is alight, like liquid fire has replaced my blood and is burning through my veins. His kiss makes me feel powerful, like I could knock down the walls of this building with my bare hands and swim all the way to the mainland. But as the kiss continues, as the burn in my throat intensifies, as my body responds to his...I feel like I'm losing myself.

This is not who I am. This is not what I want. I'm a monster too, and like Nightshade said, monsters don't have hearts. I don't want this, I need to get a grip. I'm not supposed to feel this way.

Breaking the kiss, I push Nightshade away and take a couple of steps back. Immediately, I ache to return to him. I try to come up with the most scathing insult that I can think of. What comes out of my mouth is: "I like you."

And I hate myself for saying it, I hate myself for meaning it, I hate myself for not hating Nightshade.

I turn and bolt for the infirmary.

I fucking hate myself.

He doesn't follow me.

When I get to the infirmary after only a few wrong turns, I storm up to the doctor. She looks up from her charts to greet me. "Ah, Kayla... I've been expecting you."

"Let's just get this over with," I growl.

"Of course." She nods, going along with my rude tone.

She comes around from her desk to pick up a roll of bandages from a table. Tearing off a long piece, she hands it to me. "Go on."

I look down at the bandage. "What do I do with *that*?"

“What do you do with it? Well, you wrap it around the...”

“I mean why am I here? It’s not for a lesson in bandaging myself up. And I already treated my cuts and grazes, so it seems a little unnecessary.”

“You’re right. You don’t need a bandage.”

“So why am I here?”

“It’s protocol to give all patients a check up after their... chip has been activated.”

“You mean after some asshole in an office clicks a button and attempts to turn me into a french fry?”

The doctor chuckles. “Well, we prefer to call it ‘activating the chip’ but essentially, yes. I just need to run some tests to make sure everything is functioning properly.”

“With me or the chip?”

“Yes.”

I glare at the doctor but sit down on the exam table anyway. She takes out a small device and begins scanning my body. As she works, I notice how attentive she is. She seems to really care for her patients, yet she knows about the chip and what it’s capable of doing, so clearly she’s a monster.

Her dark hair falls in waves around her face and her eyes are a bright blue that seem to sparkle in the harsh light of the infirmary.

I wonder if she’s the doctor who implanted the chip in the first place, or if she would have the skills needed to remove it. Obviously, I’d never outright ask her, but it wouldn’t hurt to try to get her on side.

“Are you the only doctor working here?” I ask instead.

“Hmm? Oh, yes. I was the apprentice until Doctor Cooper retired eighteen months ago and now it’s just me. I’m Sara by the way, Sara Callaway”

“But...doesn’t that mean you never get a day off?”

“I like my work. It’s not so bad.”

“Seems like one hell of a commute.”

“I live here on the island for the most part. Actually, most of the staff do.”

I want to say something about how shit that must be, to literally be a prisoner to your own job, I don’t think that will garner me any favour with her, so instead I say, “I was outside just now being shown around. It’s really beautiful.”

She smiles at me. “I love the woods, but if you trek to the northernmost point of the island there’s a spectacular waterfall.”

“I’d love to see that.”

“Maybe you’ll get to in the summer. I know they run all sorts of therapy incentives here and the summer months often involve more outdoor adventures.”

“Sounds good,” I reply with a bland smile.

“Well, everything looks good with you, Kayla. How do you feel in yourself?”

“A little deep fried, but nothing too bad,” I say dryly.

“Well, if you have any side effects crop up, just come see me. My door’s always open.”

“What sort of side effects should I be watching out for, you know, as a result of being electrocuted to within an inch of my life?”

“Oh anything really. Anything strange, come see me.”

“Will do.”

“I’ll tell Doctor Seytan you’re cleared for this afternoon’s therapy session. Go and enjoy your lunch.”

“Right. Thanks. Bye.”

I wonder if she’s telling Seytan to watch me closely for any signs of anything off. Probably. If the chip is messing with me, she’ll want to know.

I leave the infirmary and walk back the way I came, following my nose to locate the dining room. Once I enter and take my seat – the last to arrive again – the wait staff enter and drop off our lunches.

It's some sort of grilled chicken salad. I pull a face.

“What's wrong?” Honeymonster asks.

“Rabbit food.”

“Ah, we have therapy with Seytan next. You're going to want a light lunch.”

“Not me,” I reply before calling out to the last waiter who's just about to leave, “Excuse me?”

“Yes, miss?”

“Can I get something else please? I don't like salad.”

He seems a little taken aback by my request but quickly nods. “Certainly. What would you like?”

“Steak and chips, all the trimmings. And a large, stodgy dessert. Something traditional.”

“Right away, miss. Coming up.” He turns and walks away.

“You're going to regret that,” Honeymonster taunts.

“Bite me,” I snap

“With pleasure.” He winks at me, and my bad mood recedes a little.

I watch the others tucking into their food and wonder how the hell they can bring themselves to eat something that looks so bland and insipid.

My own dish soon arrives and I scoff it down. Every mouthful leaves a burning trail in my stomach, but I don't care. It's perfect, exactly what I wanted.

When I'm finished, I'm filled to bursting point, and when I stand I feel the food pressing against my stomach. I'm sure it's going to erupt at any moment. But I needed those chips, and that bread and butter pudding.

The others all finished a while ago and have been waiting for me. Hatchet – sexy specimen that he is – has been staring at me with barely concealed amusement, and I vow to myself that I’ll up my efforts with him. He’s too gorgeous not to take for a ride.

“Come on. There’ll be hell to pay if we’re late,” Bones mutters, crossing to the door. I don’t care. Why does he think I would?

Nevertheless I follow them, like the good little sheep I am, and Nightshade leads us back to the lift. This time I don’t keep quiet, filling what little space in the elevator there is with my nervous chatter as we descend.

“Well, this is a bit cramped for an orgy, boys. Couldn’t you have found us a more roomy spot?”

Honey laughs and Snow scowls. I’m beginning to wonder if he’s even capable of another facial expression.

“Would you just shut up for once,” he snaps.

“No can do, fuckeroo,” I sing.

He grinds his teeth together and digs his fingernails into his palms, and I preen with satisfaction that I’ve managed to get under his skin yet again.

As the lift doors open, I follow the group out into a dimly lit hallway. The air is heavy with the scent of musk and sweat, and my pulse quickens with anticipation. What are we about to walk into?

IT DOESN'T TASTE BLUE



*'GIMME MORE' – BRITNEY SPEARS*

KOOKABURRA

N ightshade leads us to a heavy wooden door and pushes it open, revealing a stone room. The walls, the floor, even the ceiling, are all decked out in thick, cold, grey stone. The temperature is colder down here, but the air is thicker. Even in the low light, a glint of silver on the floor catches my eye and I see that it's a small circular drain. Unease swirls in my stomach as I take in the rest of the room.

A chair that looks like it came from a dental practice is in the middle of the space, and together with the restraints and the drain, it makes my lunch threaten to resurface. The walls are lined with all my favourite toys – the tools I've used to kill – and I don't know whether to be afraid or excited. Maybe I'm somewhere in the middle with a massive side of arousal thrown in.

"This looks fun," I quip dryly.

"Welcome to the party," Snow purrs in my ear. I don't like it. Anything that has him purring so sexily in my ear is going to be nothing good for me. The guy hates me. Which means—

"Ah I'm glad you finally made it," Doctor Seytan says, stepping into the room and closing, and then locking, the door behind her. For a second I think she must be insane to step into a room, alone and unarmed, with so many certified psychopaths, but then as if to remind me of the power she holds, I swear I feel the chip in the back of my neck tingle.

I have to be imaging it. Right?

"Boys, as you know, the consequences for failing an assignment are severe," Doctor Seytan says, coming to stand before all of us. I wonder why I'm being excluded from that statement? Probably because I didn't know shit.

“With all due respect, ma’am, we didn’t fail the mission,” Nightshade says.

“What was the mission?” she asks dangerously. Night grits his teeth.

“To neutralise the threat of Judge Jeremiah,” he replies carefully.

She scowls. “Wrong. The mission was for Kayla to kill Judge Jeremiah. That did not happen.”

“He’s still dead though,” I call out, unable to hold my tongue. “What does it matter who dealt the final blow? He was practically gone by the time I was finished with him anyway.”

Seytan’s smile turns reptilian as she narrows her eyes at me.

“The directive was that *you* kill him, Miss Kingfisher.”

“Well, maybe *you* should have told me that!”

A stunned silence falls.

“Take a seat, Miss Kingfisher,” Seytan says, her jaw clenched.

“I’m fine standing, thanks.”

“I insist. A little help, Mr Frost?”

Snow steps forward and I grin at him.

“I don’t see what’s so funny,” he says lowly, grabbing my arm and dragging me over to the modified dentist’s chair.

“You are. Mr Frost? Snow? That’s hilarious, snowflake.”

His fierce scowl turns into a deadly smile as he pushes me back and I fall into the chair. He makes quick work of strapping me in so that I can barely move and then he leans over to whisper in my ear, “we’ll see who’s laughing when your blood, sweat and piss is pouring down that drain.”

I shiver.



“Let’s begin.” Seytan claps and then rubs her hands together like some archetypal movie villain. Honestly, she reminds me of Umbridge – and I fucking hated that cunt.

But I’m not about to give her the satisfaction of seeing me squirm, ask questions or beg.

“Who would like to go first?” Seytan asks. No one answers. I squirm in my chair, wondering what’s coming but knowing it won’t be anything good.

“I will,” Snow says after a beat.

My heart races as Snow steps forward, anticipation and dread mingling together inside me. I don’t know what to expect, but I know it’s going to be brutal. Seytan nods, a wicked grin stretching across her face.

“Excellent,” she purrs. “Let’s see what Mr Frost is made of.”

I snort. “I always wanted a Mr Frosty toy but I was never allowed.”

Snow moves towards the wall of tools, his eyes scanning over them thoughtfully. I try to catch his gaze, but he doesn’t look at me. He selects a gas-powered blow torch, and I can’t help but let out a shuddering breath. Snow turns back to me, the purple-blue flame flickering ominously in his hand.

I brace myself, but the first burn still makes me gasp in pain. Snow runs the torch down my arm, burning through the skin with ease. My skin bubbles up, blisters and breaks, spilling hot blood down my skin and onto the floor. I grit my teeth, trying to keep my screams inside, but it’s nearly impossible. Snow is moving with precision, burning more and more into my flesh, and I can feel the tears starting to form at the corners of my eyes.

As the pain increases, so does my arousal. It’s a twisted sensation, but I can’t deny the way my body feels – hot and tight and wanting. I know I shouldn’t be enjoying this, but I can’t help it. Snow leans in close to my ear, his breath hot against my skin. “You like that, don’t you?” he whispers, and I

can feel a rush of wetness between my legs. I can't deny the pleasure that's coursing through me. Snow is hurting me, but he's also making me feel more alive than I've ever felt before. I'm gasping and panting, and I can see the way Snow's eyes are darkening with lust. He's enjoying this as much as I am.

The burning changes to cutting, when he pulls out a long, thin scalpel. Slicing my skin into ribbons with ease and precision. When he's satisfied he's inflicted enough damage, he changes to a poking and prodding, hell-bent on causing as much suffering as possible.

Snow runs the scalpel along my flesh with barely any pressure. It's maddening. I can feel the desire winding tight in my belly, and every time Snow flicks the blade, I have to stop myself from crying out. It hurts, but it also feels incredible. I'm torn as to what I want more – Snow to stop or keep going. He watches me carefully, appraising me as he cuts and prods. It reminds me of a cat toying with a mouse, and I wonder how long I'll last.

I should hate him, and maybe I do, but I can't deny that I want him too.

I don't know how much time passes, but Snow is still working on me when Nightshade calls out in a bored tone, "Enough. Let someone else have a turn."

"No." Snow shakes his head, eyes alight. "I want to keep going."

"You can't," Bones insists. "It's my turn." He steps forward.

"You'll fucking wait your turn!" Snow huffs.

"I think you'll find that her skin is starting to break apart. It's probably not a great idea to drag this out," Bones says.

I squirm in my seat, feeling it and knowing that he's right. It feels like Snow has been at me for hours, but it's probably only been a few minutes.

“I’ll take over,” Nightshade says, his tone brokering no argument.

Nightshade steps forward, grim determination in his eyes. He moves to Snow’s second tool of choice and picks up the scalpel. He examines it, standing very still with the tool in his hand. My heart starts to sink but then he drops it to the floor with a noisy clatter and kicks it away.

“Pathetic,” he murmurs, shaking his head. His eyes skim over the apparatus on the wall and light up when he finds whatever it is he’s looking for.

I’m breathing hard and coated in a sheen of sweat, so when he steps out of my line of vision, I don’t turn my head to follow him and see what he selects. It won’t make any difference. It’s not like I can stop him.

I feel him behind me, and then his hand snakes around my throat and tightens. My eyes widen and I open my mouth to shout but his hand cuts across my windpipe, choking me and making it impossible to breathe. I buck and struggle in my chair, but I can’t break free.

My pussy is clenching in time to my panicked pounding pulse.

Still gripping my throat in a vise-like grip, he moves around to the front of the chair to face me. He’s so strong, I can barely believe it. He doesn’t even look like he’s trying, and yet I can’t move. He’s holding me tight, his hand like a vice around my throat, cutting off all my air.

Panic rises in my chest.

I thrash in the chair, trying to break free, but I can’t make him stop. My vision is tunnelling, and the room is starting to go grey and hazy at the edges. My heart is pounding, and I can feel blood rushing to my face. I’m dizzy and black spots are dancing across my vision. And I’m so fucking close. I try to beg him without words to end it, but he doesn’t.

He flexes his fingers and releases me, and my head hits my chest as I try to gulp air down me like a cold beverage on a hot

summer's day.

When I no longer feel like I'm dry drowning, I drag my head up with difficulty. Night's gaze is impenetrable, giving nothing away. Goosebumps erupt all over my body and my nipples pebble against the thin fabric of my top. Nightshade notices and his dark eyes dilate.

"Is that the best you've got?" I whisper.

Murder flashes across his features and he stalks over to the wall of goodies.

When he returns, his expression is carefully schooled, and in his hand is a tiny clear vial, filled with a deep blue liquid.

"What's that?" Snow asks, tilting his head and sizing me up.

"It's a very particular poison," Nightshade answers, not tearing his eyes from mine. "It'll paralyse her... but it won't kill her, well, not right away if I give her a high enough dose. In fact, the paralysis will only increase her sensitivity." His lips twitch up into the tiniest of smiles. "She'll be awake, but she won't be able to move a muscle from the neck down. She'll be able to feel everything, though."

"How do you know?" Snow asks.

"Because I made it," Nightshade says, a smug note in his voice. "I've tested it on myself, and I'm still here."

My heart is racing, but I can't deny the ripple of heat that is running through me. I'm intrigued and excited, and I know that I'm going to have my mouth on whatever that vial holds before this is over.

"I'm going to administer it to her and then she's going to want me," Nightshade says, his voice firm. "She'll be desperate for it."

"Do it then," Snow pushes, sounding eager and excited.

Nightshade moves around the chair to stand behind me, his hands cupping my shoulders and he runs his thumbs up my

neck to my chin. He leans in close to my ear as I feel the tip of the vial against my throat. “You should be afraid,” he whispers. “When I’m done, you won’t have any say in what happens next.”

My heart is pounding, but it’s not out of fear.

“You don’t need to poison me to make me want you, Night,” I say quietly as he leans in to raise the vial to my lips.

He brings his lips to kiss the shell of my ear and whispers, “Trust me”.

Can I though? He said not to, and how he’s, what, trying to help me?

He tips the contents of the bottle into my mouth and I almost gag on the sickly-sweet flavour that bursts on my tongue. He pulls away before I can retch and raises his hand, hovering it over my chest, and then he shoots it down to my waist.

“It doesn’t taste blue,” I quip, smirking to hide my discomfort. I will not panic, because panicking doesn’t change the outcome, and if it’s my time, then it’s my time.

Then the paralysing agent hits my heart like a sledgehammer and my body freezes in place, locked in a constant state of arousal. The room is spinning, and my vision is blurring. My heart is pounding, and I can feel it in my throat. The feeling of total helplessness is overwhelming in the best possible way. I can still wiggle my fingers and toes, and I can still move my head and mouth, but my limbs feel so heavy, I couldn’t move them to save my life. The worst thing though is the heat. It feels like flames are licking their way across my body, moving upwards from my toes. It’s nothing like the power of Snow’s blowtorch, but a thousand times worse because every pulse of heat goes straight to my pussy. I struggle to move and scream, but it’s absolutely futile. Every time I scream out, the heat only grows worse. I feel like I’m burning alive from the inside out, and the only thing I can do is lay there and moan. It’s the most intense feeling I’ve ever

experienced, and I'm forced to accept that I might never again leave this room alive. But the worst thing is, even as I lie there, I'm feeling it all and loving it. I feel like I might die in a few minutes, but I'm coming like crazy.

The sensation of the cuffs cutting into my wrists and ankles, the cramps in my legs, and the agony of stretching my arms and legs to breaking point is delicious and I moan in protest. I don't want it to stop. I want more. I need more.

I'm writhing in my skin, my moans and whimpers of pleasure loud enough to echo through the room. I know I should feel...something like shame or embarrassment...but I can't. Can't bring myself to care. Can't feel anything other than pleasure and heat.

Nightshade grins at me, a one sided smirk that's devastating as he steps away from me. I whimper.

"I'd say she's ready for you, Bones."

I swap one beautiful tattooed monster for another, my greedy gaze drinking in every inch of his bare skin. The fiery lotus tattoo on his throat ripples as he swallows and approaches me with slow, measured steps.

The goddess tattoo on his stomach taunts me with her wide smile and fangs, the tip of her tongue grazing where his pants begin, hinting at the promised land below.

I can't tear my gaze from the bulge in his pants. It's fucking huge, and my mouth starts watering.

He smirks as he rocks back and forth on his heels, his smirk turning into a wicked grin. "Scared?"

I scoff and the sound echoes around the room. "I've been through worse," I say, and it's not a lie. I'm horny more than anything, and if I were scared of anything, it would be the fear that someone won't take the edge off, won't let me come.

His eyebrows raise in mocking surprise, and I lift my head to meet his eyes. The fire in his gaze is intense, and I close mine, looking away.

He grabs my jaw in a vise grip and pushes his forehead to mine, his breath hot on my skin. “Open your eyes, Kayla.”

I shake my head.

“Open your eyes,” he says again, his tone fierce.

I shake my head again.

“I’ve nothing to lose,” he whispers, “but you do. Open. Your. Eyes.”

My eyes fly open and the impact of his striking green stare almost knocks me out. He’s looking right into my soul. He’s seeing everything. He’s seeing it all, and looking at him, I suddenly understand that he knows. He knows what I’ve done, what I’m capable of.

“I want you,” I whisper.

“Yeah, I know,” he says, softly, as he brushes a lock of hair from my eye. “I want you too...to scream for me.” My heart stutters in my chest as he brings his lips to mine, closing his eyes as I whimper softly into his mouth.

He breaks the kiss and looks me in the eye as he unbuttons my pants, his fingers grazing the skin on my waist in all the best places.

“Eyes on me,” he says, his voice firm. “I want you to watch.”

I nod and he fists my shirt, ripping it clean down the middle and exposing my breasts. Then he tugs my pants down, followed by my underwear so that I’m naked and open to him.

He rocks back on his heels, his eyes roaming my body. “Beautiful,” he murmurs. “Such perfect skin.” He reaches up and traces a finger from my left nipple to my navel, sending fire in his wake.

I close my eyes.

“Eyes on me,” he says, his tone barely above a whisper.

My eyes fly open as he brings his lips to my nipple and he sucks it into his mouth, pulling it hard between his teeth. I cry out, but it's a broken sound. He licks and sucks and nips, and just as I'm relaxing into it, he stops.

His lips are released by an electrifying sensation coursing through me. I cry out again as the pain and pleasure collide.

He raises his eyes to mine and sniggers. "Like that, did you?"

I gasp to drag in another breath as he starts again on my other nipple, and I'm panting as he flicks his tongue over it, sending pulsing waves of pleasure through me.

He bites down, and my body jerks as the pain-pleasure ripples through me. Part of me is fighting it, the other part can't get enough.

He soothes the pain with his mouth, and then he's back to his torturing ministrations, and I'm begging and moaning for more. For him to get on with it. For him to hurt me.

But he knows what he's doing, and he's taking time to enjoy this. He's torturing me, in more ways than one, and I'm here for it.

It's only when he steps away to put space between us, that I see the wand in his hand. The tip glowing purple and crackling with energy.

Fuck.

He's standing between my legs, just out of reach. "Eyes on me," he says, the command in his voice stronger than ever.

I look up at him and fear snakes through my veins as I realise the intensity of his stare. I'm trapped. I'm trapped in those eyes. I'm trapped in this moment.

My heart is beating in my ears as he takes a step closer, his eyes never leaving mine. He's still out of my reach, but I can see his hand closing around the handle of the wand, the sparks jumping from the tip to his skin.



“Do you want this?” he asks, his tone soft. I nod. His face hardens. “Say it.”

“I want this,” I say, the words coming out strangled.

The words are barely out of my mouth when he surges forward, the purple light from the wand kissing my navel. I yelp and try to jerk away, but the restraints are too tight, the poison in my system still keeping me paralysed, locking me in place as the light kisses my stomach again, just above my pussy. It’s so hot I want to scream.

He keeps his eyes on me as the wand kisses my hip bone, and he smirks as I attempt to squirm, my body feebly fighting his hands. I’m panting for breath, the pain in my body is so exquisite.

“Enough,” Doctor Seytan snaps, making me flinch. I forgot she was here. Watching. Overseeing. “She’s not meant to be enjoying this.”

His hands drop from my body, and I can’t help the groan of displeasure leaving my lips.

The doctor approaches, her lab coat ruffling as she steps up to take Bones’ place. I’m a lot less happy to see her. The doctor takes a step towards me, then another. I just want this over with now.

“If I hear so much as a whimper from you, Mr King will punish you. Do you understand?”

Somehow, I still manage to sneer at her. “Daddy Hatchet can punish me all day long, and I’ll still scream for more.”

She slaps me across my face, the crack echoing through the room. My head hangs down as I try to stop myself from laughing.

“Get on with it then, Doctor,” I taunt.

I don’t even flinch when she takes the wand and puts it to my left nipple. I don’t cry out when she flicks the switch and it sends lightning shooting through my body. I’m not in any kind of pain. When she moves the wand and it kisses my right

nipple, I moan, unable to stop myself. The contact is welcome and delicious. It makes me want to scream and beg for more. She lowers the wand and flicks the switch again. My body arches and I let out an almighty scream.

Then she drops it to the floor and steps away.

“Mr King. I have meetings to attend. I expect her to be broken when I return. Mr Frost? Accompany me”

Hatchet doesn't meet her eyes. Instead he nods and steps up next to me. I look up at him as he stares down at me, pleading with my eyes once Seytan leaves and locks the door after her and Snow.

“Don't do this, please.” I cringe at how weak I sound, but at least I waited until Snow and Satan were gone.

Hatchet snaps his fingers and Nightshade steps forward.

“Get her down,” he orders. Bones moves the restraints and lifts me into his arms, his hold firm but tender. “Chain her up.”

I whimper as my arms are pulled above my head, suddenly craving the warm restraint of the chair. Heavy chains are wrapped around my wrists and then I'm drawn up on to the very tips of my toes.

“Ghost. You're up.” I groan at Nightshade's words, knowing that whatever Ghost has in store for me, it's going to be deliciously torturous.

The crack registers before the pain – a burning lash across my back that can only have come from some sort of whip.

I drop my head back and scream at how good it feels.

Ghost steps closer, his eyes dark with deviant pleasure, as he brandishes the whip once more. I grit my teeth, bracing myself for the next strike, but it doesn't come. Instead, I feel his hand trail down my bare back, tracing the lines of the whip's mark.

“You like that, don't you?” he murmurs, his breath hot against my ear. I shiver, unable to deny the pleasure that is

coursing through my body.

He steps back, and I'm left hanging, my arms aching from being stretched above my head. Honeymonster approaches, a wicked grin on his face as he holds up a small, thin blade.

"Now, for a little something special, Sugar Puff" he says, trailing the blade along my uninjured arm from my elbow towards my armpit. I gasp as he breaks the skin, the pain sharp and intense.

But then, as he licks the blood from the blade, I feel a new sensation – a thrill that is almost intoxicating. "Stop," I urge, even though I want more. "The poison—"

"Is already out of your system, Red," Nightshade calls. "I'm not stupid."

Honey grins at me, then leans forward and licks the trail of blood from my arm again, making me shiver. Ghost lashes my back again, the force of this blow swinging me forward so that I impale myself on Honey's blade. His grin would make the devil baulk.

I gasp as Honey pulls the blade out of my arm, blood gushing out of the wound. The pain is unbearable, but the rush of pleasure that comes with it is undeniable. A bead of sweat trickles down my temple as I try to catch my breath. Ghost stands behind me, his whip at the ready, waiting for someone's next instruction.

The room is filled with the sound of our breathing and the occasional crack of Ghost's whip. The heat is rising in my body, my skin slick with sweat. Nightshade leans in, his lips brushing against my ear.

"Are you ready for more, my sweet little pet?" he whispers.

I nod, unable to form words. He steps back, grinning, and Honey raises the blade once again. I close my eyes, bracing myself for the pain.

But it doesn't come. Instead, his fingers trace over the cuts on my arm, sending shivers down my spine. His touch is gentle and tentative, as if he's afraid to hurt me further. I open my eyes to see him looking down at me with a mixture of concern and desire. He lifts my chin with his finger and brushes his lips against mine. It's a soft kiss, almost chaste, but it sends a jolt of electricity through me.

I'm surprised by the tenderness of his touch, considering the roughness with which he's been treating me. It's almost as if he's trying to make it up to me.

But I know that's not the case. This is just another way of exerting control over me, of making me crave his touch even when it hurts. And I'm powerless to resist.

He steps back again, his eyes dark with lust. I can see the hunger in his gaze as he considers what to do next. Ghost steps forward, cracking his whip menacingly. I brace myself for the next round of torture, knowing that it's only going to get more intense from here on out. But as Nightshade steps up to me once more, his hand on my cheek, I can't help but feel a sense of excitement mixed with fear.

"Let's see how much you can take," he whispers, before turning to Hatchet. "Bring over the toys."

My heart races as I watch Hatchet disappear over to the far wall of the room, only to return moments later carrying a tray filled with an assortment of implements.

I bite my lip, trying to prepare myself for what's to come. But nothing could have prepared me for the agony that follows. Nightshade and his men take turns using the toys on me, each one more painful than the last. I scream, I cry, I beg for mercy, but it only seems to spur them on.

As time passes, the pain becomes a blur. All I can feel is a burning, all-consuming desire that threatens to consume me. I don't know how much longer I can take it, but I can't bring myself to beg for them to stop. The pleasure is too powerful,

too addictive. I am lost in a world of pain and pleasure, unable to differentiate between the two anymore.

And then, suddenly, it's over.

They step back, leaving me hanging from the chains, my body trembling with exhaustion. Nightshade himself steps up to me, his eyes still dark with lust.

“You did well, Red,” he murmurs, running a hand over my hair. “Very well indeed.”

I open my mouth to speak, to ask for release, but he cuts me off with a sharp look. “Not yet,” he says. “You still have much to learn.”

And with that, he turns and walks out of the room, leaving me alone with the others and the aftermath of the torture.

I'm hanging there in silence, my body aching and my mind in a daze when Hatchet approaches. My body feels so heavy – even my eyelids – that it's a struggle to raise my gaze to his.

“Daddy—” I croak, my voice cracking from the strain of screaming and a lack of water. How many hours has it been? How much longer will this go on?

“Ssssh, little pet, we're almost done,” Ghost croons, brushing back my hair and kissing my neck. “Daddy Hatchet's gonna make you feel so good.”

I shiver all over and close my eyes, a second later there's a sharp pain on my nipple and I hiss as it's repeated on the other one.

“Fuck, Sugar, that looks sexy as hell,” Honeymonster murmurs. I blink open my eyes and stare down at my chest. I don't even know when my top was removed, but the two silver rings through my nipples make me whimper, the sight of them sending a bolt of lightning straight between my legs. They're beautiful.

I yank at my bindings and growl, frustrated that I can't get free. I want to touch them. I want my release. I've always loved getting my nipples pierced – not the pain so much as the

sensation that follows. The feeling of the metal going through my flesh, the tugging and pulling of the needle as my nipples were pierced was all so damn fucking sexy. I don't know why I stopped wearing them. And these delicious rings are no different – so much so that I don't even register the way they're slowly being twisted and teased.

Ghost steps back and I wince, the pressure on my nipples is suddenly almost unbearable. He raises his hand and I flinch, waiting expectantly for another strike.

But instead, he raises the whip. It hits my thigh with a sharp crack and I cry out, my body sobbing in pain. I glare at Ghost, my eyes narrowed, and pull at my chains again.

Ghost nods, smiling kindly. “Sweet little pet, we're almost done,” he says, running a hand down my arm. “Just a few more touches and we're all through.”

“A few more touches,” I gasp, trying not to shudder. I'm tempted to ask what he means. But I'm too afraid of what the answer may or may not involve.

“Daddy Hatchet has one more gift for you,” he tells me.

I glance down at Hatchet, kneeling on the floor before me. I feel a hand slip down between my legs and groan as my clit is slowly and teasingly rubbed. Finally!

“That's right, darlin',” Honeymooner coos in my ear, “Let us make you feel good. You deserve a reward for taking Seytan's punishment so well, Sugar Puff.”

Hatchet rubs my clit, while Ghost plays with my sensitive breasts from behind, the dual sensations sending me hurtling towards an epic release. Everything I've endured has been building me up for this moment.

My desperate gasp turns into a pained cry as Hatchet pinches and pulls the hood of my clit and raises the needle. I scream in agony as he drives it through my skin, the searing pain burning through me like hot lava.

A moment later Hatchet pulls back to admire his handiwork, then reaches out and pinches the sensitive skin. I whimper and he frowns, dissatisfied. He flicks the new metal piercing and I scream, my entire body shuddering with a powerful release. I'm sobbing now, the pleasure is so intense I can't even form words, I can't even think. I can just feel it. Overwhelming, painful, and so fucking good. I can't thank them enough for this. Or I would, if I had any words left to give.

I don't even notice my arms being unchained, can't discern whose strong arms catch me, as I give in to the darkness and finally relax.

I'M GOING TO DO WHATEVER I  
WANT TO YOU





*'DO IT FOR ME' – ROSENFELD*

HONEYMONSTER

Fucking hell, this woman is magnificent. None of us fared that well when we suffered through our first punishment, and yet she took to it like a duck to water.

Never see a baby duck drowning, do you?

She feels weightless in my arms, and I've no intention of handing her over to any of the others or playing silly games for the right to take care of her.

Besides, I've seen the damage Night inflicted while she was – supposedly – under his 'care'. There'll be none of that with me.

We leave the dungeon, as Ghost calls it, together as a group. Well, minus Snow who fucked off earlier with Seytan. He's not one of us anyway. In the lift, none of us speak, but I'd wager that we're all thinking something similar: That we got off far too lightly on that punishment, and therefore there must be something more to come.

The unknown makes me uneasy, but I push those feelings to the side, determined to focus on taking care of Kayla.

Starting with the burn on her forearm that Snow inflicted.

I want to fucking kill him for it – even though the logical, damaged part of my brain knows he had no choice.

I'd be lying if I said we didn't enjoy torturing Kayla. It's in our nature, all of ours, to crave chaos and pain like that, and using permanent methods to make her ours plays right into our depraved fantasies. There's no denying it. And if she hadn't enjoyed it as much as us, I'd probably feel some sort of guilt or remorse, but instead I just feel a deep-seated sense of satisfaction that this girl is perfect for us.

On the main floor, everyone filters off to their rooms, Ghost and Night sticking with me until we're outside their doors. Wordlessly, we say goodnight and I kick open the door to Kayla's room. The place is completely ransacked but that could just be her personality. It wouldn't surprise me if her room is chaotic. I know mine is.

I place her on the bed and make sure she's okay before heading into the bathroom to draw her a bath. I rummage around in the cupboards for some bath salts to chuck in, and pull out the first aid kit.

Maybe a bath isn't such a good idea with burns, cuts and fresh piercings.

Fuck. I should have asked someone what was best.

There's a burn gel in the kit that I hope will help soothe her arm, and some antiseptic ointment that I hope will be alright on her cuts.

There's no denying she's beautiful, but she's a mess. Covered in scrapes and bruises, wounds that are both old and new. Maybe I should speak to the others about going easy on her. She's not been here that long, and it would be a shame to break her so early on. Though I'm sure she could take it.

When she's all cleaned up, I pull off her clothes and cover her with the blankets before stripping down to my boxer shorts and sliding into bed beside her. My fingers trail down her arm until they reach the burn and I apply the gel gently, hoping that it will soothe her pain.

Then I take her into my arms, her back to my front, and hold her tight.

Can cuddling be a kink? If so, I'm afflicted. There's nothing I love more than to hold a woman – the right woman – all night long, and to wake up beside her in the morning. Sure, I enjoy a little blood play too, but nothing gets me harder than proper aftercare, snuggles and consent.

As I hold Kayla, I can feel her body relax against mine, and I know that she needs this as much as I do. She needs to

know that we're not all monsters in this place, and that we can be gentle, too.

I press my lips to the back of her neck and whisper in her ear, "You're safe with me, Sugar Puff. I won't let anyone hurt you." She stirs slightly in my arms, but I'm not convinced that she's awake.

"You can sleep now," I say softly. "I'll be here with you all night, darlin'."

With that, she completely relaxes and surrenders herself to a deep sleep in my arms, her breathing even and her body supple. I stroke her hair gently, knowing that she needs this rest after the ordeal she's been through.

As I lie there with her, I can't help but wonder how we got here. How did we become these depraved individuals who enjoy inflicting pain? And yet, I can't imagine anything else. It's a part of me, and it always will be.

But with Kayla, I feel like things could be different. We've never taken a woman as our own in here. There's been limited access to the opposite sex, and while I know I've slept with some of the staff, I know some of the guys haven't and others have done it a lot more than me.

There's something about Kayla though. I know we all feel it – even Snow if he'd get his head out of his arse long enough to realise it. She's not like any of the other women I've slept with, and I'd say the same for the other guys is probably true too. There's something about her that draws me in, and I can't resist the urge to protect her.

As the night wears on, I find myself drifting off to sleep, with Kayla still in my arms. It's a peaceful slumber, one that I haven't experienced in a long time. And when I wake up in the morning, I feel more refreshed than I have in weeks.

I glance down at Kayla, who is still sound asleep in my embrace. She looks so innocent and vulnerable, and I feel a fierce protectiveness come over me. I know that we're not good for her, but I can't let her go now. Not when I can feel

her heart beating against my chest, and her warmth seeping into my skin.

I softly kiss her forehead, before carefully extricating myself from her and heading to the bathroom to shower and get ready for the day ahead. We have work to do, and I need to figure out how to keep Kayla safe in this dangerous world we're slaves to.

I think it's going to take all six of us to protect her. And that means making peace with Snow and bringing him on board as soon as possible.

As I get dressed, I think about the others. How will they react to my attachment to Kayla? I know that they all felt something for her during the punishment, but will they be okay with me wanting to keep her close? I think Night is fully on board, besotted with her if his marks of ownership are anything to go by. And there's definitely chemistry between her and Ghost. But what about the others?

Could she be the one for us? The one to unite us and free us from this hell?

I push those thoughts aside for now, knowing that I have more pressing matters to attend to. I need to talk to Ghost and Night about what comes next. We need to keep Kayla safe, and that means being on high alert for any danger that might come our way.

But for now, I'll head to the roof with my coffee to bask in the warmth of the morning sun and the possibility of a brighter future for us all. With Kayla by our side, maybe we can find a way out of this darkness and into the light. And maybe, just maybe, we can find a way to heal ourselves and each other.

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AFTER MY MORNING COFFEE – which was rudely interrupted by Snow turning up for some unknown reason – I head back inside and find myself outside Kayla's door. I contemplate

knocking or just letting myself in, unable to help myself or stay away where she's concerned.

I decide to just slip in and see if she's still asleep. Maybe I could even get back into bed with her...though that's probably weird. Definitely weird.

But I want to.

As amazing as my coffee was, it doesn't beat the view of seeing Kayla sprawled out in bed, still fast asleep and looking so peaceful that for a moment I feel a pang of jealousy. What right does she have to be that at peace after what she endured yesterday?

But then I think, maybe it was my presence last night that helped her to find that peace, and I feel a bit better.

I tiptoe towards the bed, trying not to disturb her peaceful slumber. My heart rate picks up as I take in her beauty. She's kicked the covers off at some point and her curves are shamelessly on display, enough to make my dick stir, but that's not what captivates me and causes my breath to stutter in my chest.

She looks so vulnerable and innocent in her sleep.

If she's a monster like the rest of us – and her very presence here inside the asylum indicates that she must be – then she shouldn't be capable of looking like that. We are far from innocent.

I can't resist the temptation.

Stripping off, I climb into bed beside her, careful not to wake her up. I wrap my arms around her and pull her close to me, inhaling her sweet scent. She stirs a bit, but she doesn't wake up. Good. I'm content to hold her a little longer before she wakes and puts on her hardened mask.

She murmurs something in her sleep, stretching like a cat, before flipping over and snuggling into my chest. She freezes suddenly, and I know that she's not only awake, but is aware of my presence in her bed.

I tense, waiting for her reaction.

Then she surprises me by relaxing.

“That’s the best night’s sleep I’ve had since I got here,” she admits. “Were you with me the whole time?”

“I left for about an hour to have coffee, I’ve not been back long. I hope it’s okay?”

“That you had coffee? Sure.”

“I meant, was it okay that I stayed the night?”

“I’m sure you had your reasons,” is all she says.

Again, her words shock me. Why isn’t she angry that a virtual stranger is in her bed?

She must sense my unspoken question because she answers it without turning to look at me. “I don’t have a lock. You can do as you please and I can’t stop you. Why waste energy being mad about it?” She snuggles back against me, turning so her perfect ass brushes against my cock, teasing it. “You’re naked.”

“Only since I came back. Not last night. And just for the record, I’ve never snuck into your room, Sugar.”

“Someone has been, I’m sure of it. I didn’t make this mess.” She gestures to the chaos of her room. So it was ransacked then. She’s not naturally this untidy. But by whom? And why?

My money would be on Seytan – either she did it herself or, more likely, had one of the staff do it. But what would she be looking for? We only came in here with the clothes on our back. Sure, some of us take advantage of our trips to the mainland to bring back some souvenirs, but generally speaking, whatever we desire in here we can get by asking, so there’s not much need to smuggle things in.

Kayla’s new thought, and Seytan seems less keen to have her here than she does the rest of us. Is it because Kayla’s a woman?

“I bet it was Snow. That little prick looks like he likes to fuck with people for fun,” Kayla mutters.

Maybe she has a point. He seems to hate her as much as Seytan – the difference being that Seytan is likely jealous of the attention Kayla’s getting, whereas Snow isn’t willing to admit that he wants her. I wouldn’t put it past him to come in here and fuck with her shit just to annoy her.

“Hmmm, maybe,” I agree. “I can help you tidy up if you like.”

“I’ve got a better idea of what you can do, now you’re here,” she counters with a cheeky wink that makes me smile.

I raise an eyebrow, curious as to what she has in mind. Kayla has a mischievous glint in her eye as she reaches up to caress my cheek.

“Kiss me,” she whispers, her lips dangerously close to mine. I don’t hesitate, leaning in to capture her lips in a heated kiss. How could I not when she asked?

Our tongues intertwine as our hands roam over each other’s bodies, igniting a fire that’s been smouldering in me since we first met. She hisses when I graze her burn, but if anything it only seems to increase her desire.

Kayla pulls away, panting and flushed. “I need you,” she murmurs, her eyes full of desire and dark like bottled glass. I don’t need any further encouragement, grinning and rolling on top of her.

My lips and tongue are soon busy mapping out the sweet skin of her neck while she writhes underneath me.

“Honey—”

I love the sound of my name falling from her lips like a revered prayer. It’s a plea for more, to give her what she wants, what she needs, but she doesn’t know that she’s going to have to try harder than that to turn me into putty in her hands.

“—please,” she whimpers, sounding unsure of herself and how to handle me. I don’t want her to feel that way.

I pull back, so that I can see her face and gauge her reaction. She's still flushed and her lips are swollen from our kiss. She takes my breath away and for a moment I'm so lost in her green gaze that I forget what she was begging for.

"Please what, darlin'?" I ask, shaking my head to clear myself from her spell. There was me thinking it would take more to turn me to putty, but it turns out, one look at those big doe-eyes and bee-stung lips and I'm a goner.

"Fuck me. I need you to," she blurts out, her eyes pleading with mine, silently begging me to take her for myself.

She lifts her hips and moans softly as I slip my fingers between her thighs. She's already wet and very ready for me.

"Say it again, Sugar," I demand softly.

"Fuck me," she repeats, her eyes fixed on mine.

"Soon," I promise, kissing her to soothe the sting of my rebuttal.

I can't promise her a love that I know I'd never be able to give her. How can I, when every fibre of my being is telling me that falling for her would be like falling off a cliff face? Instead, I give her what she wants, what she needs, what I can: pleasure and the promise of satisfaction.

I slip a finger inside her, pumping gently as her hands tangle into my hair, pulling me in for a kiss. She moans into my mouth as I slip in a second finger, the action causing her to shudder and break our kiss. She closes her eyes, gasping.

I pause, waiting for her to open her eyes and look at me. My eyes are fixed on hers, not letting her look away. Slowly, her eyes flutter open and I see the pleasure there as her chest rises and falls in laboured gasps.

I stroke her a few more times, maintaining eye contact, until she squirms uncomfortably beneath me.

"Honey, don't—"



I shut her up with a searing kiss. She needs to know that I see her; that she can't, doesn't need to, hide from me. Eye contact is sexy as fuck and I won't let her shy away from my gaze.

"Come on, darlin'," I coax, "Be good for me, give me what I want. Give in, Sugar."

With a groan, she does exactly that and shudders around my fingers, her orgasm ripping through her. I kiss her deeply as he cries out into my mouth and I swallow her moans, loving the knowledge that I'm the one that did that to her.

I pull out of her gently, mindful not to make it too much of a shock for her. I smile as she throws her arms around me and pulls me to her, kissing me like she can't get enough of me.

"Ummm, that was a wonderful way to wake up," she purrs, stretching languidly with a content smile on her face.

"How are you feeling after yesterday?"

"Sore. Like I was tortured for hours at the hands of a bunch of psychopaths," she quips.

Even though she chuckles to show she's joking, I grimace, because it's not funny. That *is* what happened, and she shouldn't be so blasé about it.

"How are the piercings?" I ask, stroking one hand along the swell of her breast but being careful to avoid her swollen nipple.

I've never really been one for piercings, but there's no denying that the rings look sexy as fuck on her. It's like a brand of ownership, and I didn't expect to like that as much as I do.

"Delicious," she moans, batting my hands away so that she can squeeze her tits and play with the piercings. Fuck, that makes liquid heat flood my veins.

"And this one?" I reach out and gently run my thumb over the ring that's piercing the hood of her clit. The rasping noise

she makes sends lightning straight through to my dick. “Do you like that, Sugar?”

“Mmmhmm,” she replies, with a nod as her eyes flutter closed again.

I withdraw my fingers and her mewl of protest makes me smile. She opens her eyes to glare at me.

“Baby, I’ve got no qualms in giving you everything you’ve ever dreamed of and more, but you *will* watch. Every single second. You *will* know it’s me bringing you untold pleasure and you *will* tell me exactly what you want. Understood?”

Her pupils blow and she whimpers her assent, nodding. It’s like the words have caught in her throat as she swallows several times before trying again. “Yes.” It comes out as a ragged whisper and I know that my words and my authority have just turned her on more than any actions could.

“Good girl,” I praise. “Now let’s see how hungry for my touch you really are.”

I run my hand down her stomach once more, lingering a little on the cluster of piercing that sits just above her beautifully swollen clit, and then roughly drag one finger through her glistening lips. She arches off the bed in response and I watch her closely, drinking in the way her face contorts and her chest heaves. With my free hand, I pull her legs up and over my shoulders so that she’s wide open to me and I can see exactly where I’m about to fuck her.

I bring my mouth down and suck on her clit, taking the ringed piercing into my mouth too. She responds with something unintelligible, but her fingers fisting in my hair tell me everything that her words can’t: how badly she wants this.

I tease the ring with my tongue, careful not to hurt her, but the way she’s pulling on my locks makes me wonder if she wants it a little rougher.

Releasing her clit from my mouth with a tender kiss, I ask, “Do you like that, darlin’?”

“Yes.” She hesitates.

“But...” I prompt, lifting my head from between her thighs to watch her facial reactions closely.

I swipe my tongue right across her clit and grin when she bucks her hips up.

“Please.” It’s a quiet little whimper of desperation, and my cock throbs with need.

“No,” I tell her, firmly. “Say it. Tell me what you want or I stop, Sugar.”

“Please don’t stop.” She’s breathless and needy.

I pull my mouth away from her soaked pussy and glare at her. “Tell me what you need then.”

She sucks in a fortifying breath, as if drawing strength and courage from it, before letting it go again and closing her eyes. “Pain.”

I flick her clit and she cries out loud enough to wake the whole corridor, her pussy gushing.

“You’re a dirty little girl, aren’t you?” I chuckle. “Eyes open, Kayla. This is your last reminder.”

“Or?” She has the audacity to ask with more sass than one word should be allowed to carry. She knows I have no intention of stopping now that I’ve had a taste of her, but that doesn’t give her all the power. I still have a card up my sleeve to play with her.

“Or I’ll be so gentle, so kind and sweet and tender when I make love to you, that you’ll cry and beg for me to fuck you the way you really want, Sugar.”

She blinks at me. “That shouldn’t sound so fucking hot.”

I smirk at her. “We have time to do all the things, darlin’, neither of us is going anywhere.”

“Promise?” she asks, that rare vulnerability flashing in her eyes for a split second.

“I promise,” I tell her. And I mean it. She will not leave my bed before she’s had every single orgasm that’s in me to give her. “Now, be a good girl and tell me what you want. What does your body crave?”

“I... I...” She stutters, stumbling over her words. She’s mine now. I don’t just have her heart or her soul, I own her body. All of her. Completely.

“Tell me what you want, Kayla,” I say more firmly this time, a slight edge of warning to my tone that lets her know I won’t ask again.

“A hard spanking.”

And fuck if it doesn’t just about undo me. Despite the many lives I took to land myself in this hell, inflicting pain on others doesn’t get me off. Giving pleasure does. But if pain brings her pleasure, I’m a slave to her needs. I have to fight back a groan as my cock oozes precum at her request.

“Is that right?” I taunt her gently, a smile tugging at my lips..

“Yes,” she replies, her voice sharper than before. She’s angry now. Ready to fight for what she wants. “I want you to spank me hard. I want to feel it. I want it to hurt.”

A full grin breaks out on my face as I reply, “You’ve got it, Sugar Puff. Your wish is my command.”

I run my hand down her stomach and between her legs, spreading her with my fingers and shoving two inside her sopping pussy. She fits around me, tight and warm, like a fucking glove.

She tries to rock up to meet my fingers and I pull them away, chuckling as she whimpers. “Not yet, darlin’. Be a good girl for me.” I take my hand out of her pussy and bring it down on her soft skin.

I hold it there, rubbing my palm against her flesh and crushing her clit between the palm of my hand and the hard metal of the ring. Her body shudders beneath me.

I love the way her body responds to my touch. It makes me impatient to have her, to fuck her until she comes undone and to claim her as mine. But I'm nothing if not patient.

Taking a deep breath to strengthen my resolve, I pull away from her and sit up, planting my feet firmly on the floor and spreading my legs slightly to ensure I have my balance. Kayla watches me with hungry eyes, and when I pat my lap to encourage her to come to me, she practically leaps into my arms.

She places herself on my lap, her thighs straddling my hips on either side of me, her soft, delicious ass resting on my straining crotch.

“Up,” I bark.

She leans forward, pressing her breasts against my legs and resting the palms of her hands on the floor for purchase. The position raises her lush, heart-shaped ass up towards my face and it takes everything I have not to sink my teeth into it.

I lift one hand and run it down the length of her spine, before raising it away from her warm silken skin. There's a pause, then I bring my palm down heavily, slapping her flesh hard.

“Oh fuck,” she moans, tossing her head back to gaze at me. Her lids are heavy, half closed in bliss, but they're still technically open so I let her off.

Grabbing her hips to keep her steady, I lean forward and press a kiss to her neck before biting down on it and then laving the area with my tongue.

“Good?” I tease her, pulling back to strike the same spot again and again, turning the pale creamy skin, a vivid angry red.

I'm struck by how a large part of me wants to explore her body, to memorise all its soft, luscious curves with my hands and my mouth, for longer than just today, but that's not what she wants right now.

I spank her again, loving the way her flesh burns for me.

“Yes,” she moans. “So good.”

I wish I had my knife on me. I could show her a *really* good time with that. An expert knows how to use a blade to bring immense pleasure, without the need for pain. Though of course, I wouldn't deny her a little of both. “You like the pain, don't you, darlin'?”

She doesn't answer. Doesn't need to. Her juices leaking all over my thighs tell me everything I need to know.

I bring my hand back up to smack her ass again, and again, and again. Unforgiving palm on soft flesh, turning it from pink and warm, to crimson and sore. Kayla groans and writhes in my lap, grinding her pussy down on my leg and soaking me with her essence. I'm sure it would be wet enough to hear if I wasn't drowning in the sound of her moans and the slapping of my hand against her ass.

“You like that?” I growl in her ear, my voice coming out harsher than I intended as my resolve to give her everything *she* needs before thinking of myself wavers. “You like it when I pin you down and make you take what I give you?” In answer, she moves her ass back, seeking my hand, inviting the next smack.

Which I deliver, with twice as much force, making her yelp and groan with pleasure as I massage the tender skin then take my nails over it.

Knowing that she craves more and that she's not done yet, I slip my hand under her, my fingertips searching for her clit, and when I feel it, I grind my palm against her, rubbing it hard and fast, not caring for the new piercing and how tender she must be.

If she wants pain, I'm not about to disappoint her.

“Oh. My. God.” She grits out as she grinds down on my palm and tightens around my fingers.

I move my mouth to the back of her neck and suck hard as I rub her clit until she comes with an ear-splitting scream.

Then I hold her until she catches her breath.

When she's breathing normally again, I release her hips, removing my hand from inside her as I do. Her juices spill out and soak me and I take a moment to admire how her pussy is even pinker and wetter than before. It looks fucking delicious, and I've every intention of leaning in to have a taste but I'm distracted by her movements.

She climbs off my lap, stands, naked and flushed, and is the most beautiful fucking thing I've ever seen. She steals my breath away, like *I'm* the one who just had the best orgasm of my damn life, not her.

My mouth waters and my cock aches to be inside her. But there's a bigger prize on offer right now and I'm not going to miss the opportunity.

"God, you're so fucking sexy," I tell her. "That ass could make angels weep."

Her eyes flash up to meet mine and I see what I need there. She wants more.

"Don't move," I say, just for good measure. She wants more punishment, not just a free ticket to fuck me. Even though I'm sure that's exactly what she'll be begging for in a moment.

I grab my shirt from the floor, rolling the material into a makeshift blindfold and holding it in front of her eyes.

"I'm going to blindfold you, tie your hands behind your back," I say. "I'm going to tie your feet together. And then... eventually, I *might* just fuck you."

Her breathing catches, her chest swelling. "I'm not going to move?"

I shake my head. "Nope."

"What are you going to do to me?"

“I’m going to do whatever I want to you,” I say. “Because I’m in charge, Sugar. Because you’re my good girl and a total fucking pain slut.”

She flushes. “I am.”

“Do you trust me?”

“To make me feel good? To give me what I need? Absolutely.”

“That’s good enough for me. For now.”

“What do you mean?”

“I think that’s enough talking. Turn around.”

She hesitates, a slight frown creasing her brow and wrinkling the top of her nose, before she decides to trust me and go with it. She turns, and I slip my black shirt over her eyes, tying it tight.

“On the bed, face down,” I instruct, fisting my cock and giving it a hard squeeze as I watch her do exactly what I asked. I love giving orders, giving pleasure, seeing to her needs first, and I love that she’s onboard with it.

Once she’s wiggled herself into a more comfortable position on the bed, I grab my belt and snap it loudly through the silent air. She jerks and yelps as I bring it down on her ass. The stripe that’s left behind is angrier than any mark my hand left.

“Beautiful,” I tell her, caressing the welt so that she whimpers. “But I need this belt for something else. Arms behind your back, darlin’.”

Fuck if I’m not torn between wanting to lash her with it or truss her up. She complies, breathing deeply through her nose, holding her arms back with hands clasped together. She’s so trusting. I like that about her. I like how I can tie her up and spank her and choke her and fuck her any way I want, and she’ll go with it, because she knows that I’ll make it good for her first and foremost.



I've already decided that I won't fuck her today, but she doesn't know that yet. I plan to leave her spent and wrung out. Truly mine.

I loop the belt round her wrists and tie it tightly. She turns her head to the side so that she can breathe more easily and I take the opportunity to lick the shell of her ear and whisper "beautiful".

Her responding whimper nearly ruins me. My skin is burning with need, but it's not just the need to bury myself so deep within her that she's moulded to the shape of me, but the desire to make all her twisted fantasies a reality.

I leave her on the bed, slipping into her wardrobe, which is also trashed, and quickly locating the items I need. A pair of silk tights, and another couple of belts. Hers are much thinner than mine, but they'll work for what I have in mind.

Returning to Kayla on the bed, I flip her over with no warning and her surprise gives way to a nervous laugh. She can't be comfortable with her hands tied behind her back like that now, the belt digging into the marks left by the chains, but it doesn't matter. Soon she'll be drowning in painful pleasure, and the discomfort in her arms will be long forgotten.

I tie one belt around her ankles, the other just above her knees, taking a minute to admire the way her thighs are forced together. Her nipples are proudly on display, begging for attention and I'm momentarily distracted as I suck one into my mouth and roll the other between my fingers. Her gasp is loud in the quiet room and I know that restricting her movements has made the sensations more intense for her.

"I'm sorry," I say, switching to her other nipple. "I got carried away. I'll leave you in peace for a while."

Her cheeks are flushed, her lips swollen and parted as she stares up at me without seeing. "No. Don't stop. Please, Honey."

"Come on now," I say, pinching her pink, hard nipple. "I'm going to take you to places where you've never been

before.”

“I know,” she says. “I trust you. I know you’ll take care of me.”

“It’s a good thing you do,” I say, my voice gravelly as I kneel on the bed so that I can wrap the silk tights around her neck. I don’t have an asphyxiation kink, but I have a feeling that she does. Or at the very least, she’ll get off on the combination of helplessness and pain.

She’s wriggling, her muffled pleas adorable, her back arching off the bed as I secure the tights with a slipknot. I tug on it to check that it’s tight enough to restrict her breathing, and then I slap her breasts.

Her hips buck up off the bed as she gasps.

I grip her hips so that she can’t move and watch as her skin blushes and burns. Her fucking gorgeous body is on display for me and I can do anything I want to it. She’s mine. This is my playground. But I don’t hurry. I want her wrung out with pleasure.

I’m so fucking hard that if I move too fast I’ll come before I’ve even started to play, so I sit back and admire her. Take my time with her, learning the curves of her body with my tongue, nipping her skin so that she twitches and shakes under me. I’m going to learn all her little nuances, all her triggers, all the ways I can please her.

I run my tongue down her chest, my hands roaming freely over her glorious body. “You’re mine,” I say, biting her breast. “Say it, Sugar.”

“I’m yours,” she gasps, her voice breathless and desperate.

“And this is my pussy,” I whisper in her ear as the heat of my hand lands on her mound, cupping her. “Say it.”

“Your pussy,” she tells me. “Yours.”

I pinch her clit between my thumb and forefinger, rolling and tugging the piercing as I press my lips to her ear. “And is this my clit?” I say.

“Yes,” she moans, her body going limp. “It’s yours.”

“What are we going to do with this pussy?” I ask her.

“Fuck it,” she whispers. “Make it come.”

I drag my finger slowly through her wetness, dragging it from her entrance, to the tip of her clit and then back again. “How?”

“Please,” she begs, her hips arching up to meet my hand.

I smack her. “Say it,” I say, “Say how you want me to fuck you, Sugar, or I’ll stop.”

“Use your fingers,” she tells me, squirming. “Please, use your fingers.”

I bring my wet fingers up to her mouth and she sucks them clean. “Good girl,” I praise. She preens.

I drag my fingers back down to her entrance, and she pulls against her binds. She’s so fucking hot like this, unable to move. Her arms are bound to the bed and she’s trying so fucking hard not to move her hips. It’s ridiculous.

She’s grinding against my hand, her breath coming out in desperate gasps. “Please,” she’s begging me, “please.”

I drag my fingers through her wetness and bring them to her clit, spending a moment teasing her. She’s so fucking tight that I know I’d never last long inside her, but I’m going to make it good for her.

I slide one finger inside her, stroking slowly in and out, careful to find the spot that makes her back arch and her nails claw at the bed.

I push a second finger inside her and she moans, her breath coming faster. “You like this,” I tell her, my movements still slow and steady. “You like me fucking you like this.”

“Please,” she moans, “please, harder.”

I give her what she wants, pulling my fingers out and replacing them with a single, hard thrust, my palm slamming

down on her clit.

She comes like that, completely undone, her screams muffled by me pulling on the noose around her neck, her back arching, her body shuddering. I hold still, trying to catch my breath.

I don't want to come yet, but I'm so fucking hard it hurts. I want to push my cock inside her and thrust until I empty inside her. But I want her bound and gagged on the bed when I do. I want her to see who's fucking her. Next time.

"Well done, darlin'," I coo. "Time for another."

I don't give her time to recover or protest. Slamming my fingers back into her, I bite down on her nipple and she screams. Her walls clamp down around me and her muscles spasm. I repeat the action on her other nipple, drawing her orgasm out. When she turns to jelly beneath me, I slow my fingers pumping into her but add a third to stretch her. She whimpers.

"Honey, please, no more."

"It's cute that you think you're done. Or that you have any say in the matter, Sugar. Let's go again."

"I can't," she wails, but I twist her piercings – all of them in turn – until she gushes all over my hand.

"There, that wasn't so hard, was it, darlin'?"

She shakes her head but I can see that she's almost at her limit. A sheen of sweat covers her beautiful skin and her hair is sticking to her damp forehead. I brush it away and kiss her.

"I'm so proud of you. Give me one more and we can be done."

She whimpers, but I don't know if it's in protest to me saying we're almost done, or demanding another orgasm from her.

I move down her body, kissing a trail and leaving goosebumps in my wake. I pay special attention to her nipples,

nipping them until they're stiff peaks. Her scars look livid against her flesh, angry and puckered, and I kiss each one reverently, trying to breathe her pain away.

"Sugar," I whisper, "I love you like this. So fucking much."

A tear drips down her cheek and I swipe it away. I kiss each scar and I think about all the pain she's been through, all the suffering that she endured only a few short hours ago.

She wails when I curl my lips around her clit but my fingers are still buried in her pussy, and I've timed it so that I know this orgasm will be bigger than the others. I pull my lips away and watch her clench around my fingers and fall apart.

She's shaking, and I know I've pushed her too far. Almost to the brink. I stand up and admire the state she's in. I'm gentle when I enter her slick body one last time with my fingers, but I only give her a minute to recover. She whimpers when I bottom out inside her, the heel of my hand grinding on her clit, but I know she's ready. I bend down and take her mouth in a searing kiss and she moans into my mouth.

"I love fucking you," I say, each word punctuated by a thrust of my hand.

"I love it too," she replies as her pussy clenches around me.

I'm slammed by her final orgasm, pulling too hard on the noose, knowing that I'll leave marks and that I'm no better than the others. I grab my aching cock and pump it furiously, finishing all over her stomach, tits and mound, with a roar. My hips tremble and I lean back, breathing hard. I know that she's sore but I don't want to pull my fingers out. Don't want to break contact.

But I have to.

I slide my hand free from between her thighs and groan at the mess coating my hand all the way down to my wrist. Pulling her blindfold off, I capture her gaze with mine and make her watch as I lick and suck myself clean. Despite being

spent, her pupils dilate and her breathing becomes more laboured. Fuck, could she really go again? She might just be perfect.

When my hand's clean, I help her sit up and undo my belt from her wrists, taking time to massage the feeling back into her shoulders. I remove the belts from her thighs and ankles, and then the noose from her neck. An angry purple line remains behind and I trace my finger over it, pleased that I've marked her as mine, and ashamed too.

"Come on, darlin'," I say, helping her to her feet, "Let's get you cleaned up."

She stands, her legs buckling underneath her before I tighten my arm around her waist. I pick her up, smirking when she wraps her arms around my neck.

"Shower time?" she asks, yawning.

"Bath."

"I want bubbles."

"That can be arranged."

I carry her into the bathroom and place her down on the counter top. She watches me with glazed, sleepy eyes as I fill the bath and seek for something that will make bubbles. When the tub's half full of hot water and iridescent bubbles, I switch off the faucet and lift her into my arms again before stepping into the water and taking a seat, Kayla on my lap, pulled in close against my chest.

She winces slightly as the soapy water hits her cuts, but soon relaxes. "Umm, this is new. Nice," she murmurs.

"You've never done this?" I ask, surprised. She shakes her head.

"Oh Sugar, taking care of you and piecing you back together after you've come apart so prettily for me, so many times, is almost as satisfying as taking you apart in the first place," I tell her with a kiss to the top of her head.

She sighs contentedly, yawning wide and then relaxing against me, showing me that she trusts me with more than just her pleasure – much to my satisfaction.

“Come, let me care for you,” I say gently, starting to wash her body with gentle hands. She lets me, but maybe she doesn’t realise that I’m asking to care for her long past this present moment.

YOU'RE THE FACILITY'S PUPPET





*'FIGHT LIKE A GIRL' – ZOLITA*

KOOKABURRA

It takes well over a fortnight for me to fully heal, though there's nothing to be done about the burn scar on my arm. The word *slut* is still ugly and purple and raised and angry. Almost as angry as I am about it. I guess I can forgive myself for not realising what Snow was doing when he took that blowtorch to my flesh at the time, but I feel sick every time I catch sight of it. Mostly with myself for not doing something to stop him.

Thankfully the weather has turned, and I can wear long sleeves now.

Aside from the hideous burn, I've spent the best part of the last two weeks horny as fuck and masturbating furiously. If it were an Olympic sport, I'd have more gold medals than Michael Phelps.

Those piercings have done something to me. It's like they've pierced my skin and injected a drug into my bloodstream, rather than just marring me with beautiful bolts of metal. I've always been autosexual, but now it's like that's increased a hundredfold. I've looked at my swollen clit, pierced through with the matte black ring, so many times in the past two weeks that I've lost count. I'm perversely proud of how it looks and feels. The ball on the ring adds a delicious weight that keeps me in a constant state of arousal. I've prodded it while masturbating, once even turning the toy inside me to hit the ring. I can't stop watching myself in the mirror, touching myself in the shower, stretching my pussy with every household object I can get my damn hands on. I'm like a woman possessed. I don't know how I still have the energy.

Each morning my pussy is even more sensitive than the previous day. I even think my clit is bigger and more pronounced. Like a cat, I have to spend at least half an hour purring on my vibrator just to be able to function.

But with no one coming to collect me for therapy sessions, and having my meals suddenly delivered to my room, there's little else to do but play with myself to alleviate the boredom. There's been occasional knocks on my door, but I've ignored them and they've soon gone away and given up. Which suits me just fine.

I can't stop thinking about what happened. About what they did to me. And about what I did with Honey. The burn aside, it was all fucking hot and I've never masturbated this much in my life. My actions are completely involuntary; I'm a slave to my own body.

My pussy throbs and pulses on my toy, then flames white-hot. My vision seizes and I see spots. The stimulation must be too much for my brain to handle. I'm deaf and mute and blind. I forget to breathe. For a moment, it feels like I'm dying. I'm going crazy.

*Well, crazier than I already am.*

In an instant I regain my senses and collapse on the bed. It's like my body has been slammed into a brick wall. I roll over, panting, and realise that something has to give.

*I need to get laid.*

And the only way that's going to happen is if I stop licking my wounds and face the music. It's time to rejoin the others out in the real world of the facility, and hopefully then I can tempt them back into bed with me.

I manage to keep my hands to myself long enough to take a shower, get dressed, and change my bed. It fucking stank.

My whole room is a shithole, and white-hot anger surges through me when I remember that it's not just in this state because I've done nothing but continuously orgasm for the last

fourteen days, but because some fucker trashed it while I was being tortured at the hands of six psychopaths.

Satan.

I fucking hate the bitch. How dare she send me on a mission, blind, and not inform me of the expectations. She set me up to fail, probably so that she could both use the shock chip and punish me afterwards. I don't care what Night said about there being bigger forces at play – that bitch has it in for me, and she did this on purpose.

Using my fury as fortifying armour, I pull my shoulders back, lift my head up high, and storm out of my room like I'm heading into battle.

I bypass the dining room and various therapy rooms I'm still yet to explore, becoming more and more frustrated as I stomp my way through the winding corridors, unable to find my target: Satan's office.

By the time I *do* find it – having passed it twice already – I'm a hot, sweaty ball of rage. I raise my hand and hammer on the door with force, all whilst wishing it was my fist slamming into Satan's face.

“Enter.”

Even her voice grates on me. It's like nails scraping down a blackboard. I shove the door open and march into her office. She doesn't look surprised to see me, glancing up from her computer to stare at me over the top of her winged spectacles. She raises a brow at me before sitting up straight and clasping her hands together on the desktop.

Everything about her, from her body language, to her chintzy clothes and her smug, insufferable expression, is fuel to the flames of my temper.

“Ah, Miss Kingfisher, you've finally found your way out of your room, I see.”

I ignore her sarcastic jibe, even though her words curl my fingers into fists, the nails digging into my palms.

“What the fuck is going on?” I spit.

Her expression is falsely sympathetic. “I’m afraid I don’t know what you’re talking about, Miss Kingfisher.”

“Yes. You. Do.” I force the words through my gritted teeth as I take a step closer to her desk with each one. “Why are we chipped like fucking dogs?”

“Well, we couldn’t have you running around in public without reassurances and safety measures in place now, could we?”

“We’re meant to be in prison,” I point out, my voice trembling because of my anger, the weakness only serving to piss me off even more.

“I don’t see you escaping any time soon. You’re not that good a swimmer.”

Her dismissive, flippant tone makes me see red. Growling, I round the desk and advance on her, my hands outstretched ready to throttle her.

“Ah, ah, ah, I wouldn’t touch me if I were you,” she says sweetly, scooting her wheeled chair back a little from me. She holds up her hand and it takes me a moment to see what she’s holding. A small black device, about half the size of a regular car fob. Her thumb is resting on the single button and her expression is far too full of glee. “Or, maybe you’re a glutton for punishment. Go ahead, put your hands on me, we’ll see if your heart can survive another round with the shock chip. Only this time, I won’t go easy on you.”

I grind my teeth together and drag air in through my flared nostrils. I want to kill this woman more than any other cunt that’s fucked with me in my past – and that’s saying something. “I am not your puppet.”

“You’re right.” Her immediate acquiescence takes me back, my brow creasing, but then her smile turns serpentine as she adds, “You’re the facility’s puppet. Their property. I’m just unlucky enough to be in charge of you reprobates. You belong

to the asylum now until you die. So you best make peace with that.”

“Never,” I spit. “I’ll never roll over and take what you’re saying as gospel. I’ll fight. And I *will* win. And when I have this chip out of me, you’ll be the first one I come for.”

“I look forward to seeing you try,” she says with a laugh that almost snaps my control. “Now if you’ll excuse me, I have actual work to do rather than dealing with your temper tantrums.”

Snap.

I’ve launched the glass paperweight on her desk at the wall before I even realise what’s happening. It smashes upon impact and shards of glass rain down all over her plush beige carpet. I hope the slivers get embedded in her skin when she has to clean it up.

Satan gasps, outraged. “Miss King—”

“*You* sent me on a mission without any information or instructions. *You* turned me into a french fry and *you* let six known psychopaths torture me for hours,” I seethe.

“What’s your point?” Her tone is laced with exasperation now, but she sounds wary too. Good. She should be.

“I passed your tests. I’m still alive.”

“What do you expect, Miss Kingfisher, a medal?”

“A reward,” I reply without hesitation, ignoring the way she shakes her head in disbelief at my gall.

“Really? And what would you like? Let me guess...your freedom? The chip removed? That’s not—”

“I want a way to communicate with Hatchet,” I demand, cutting her off.

She gapes at me.

“What?”

“You heard me. I want to be able to communicate with Hatchet. I think we should have phones.”

“Phones? In prison?” she snorts.

“This isn’t a normal prison though, is it?”

“No, but—”

“You want us to work as a team. Complete these so-called missions which are basically just kill orders for people who have wronged whoever’s in charge.”

“What’s your point?”

“My point is that you need a harmonious team. You have some of the best killers in the world within your walls, but something isn’t working.” I pause to see what she thinks, but her expression is unreadable.

“Go on,” she prompts with a raised brow. I think she’s mocking me, or humouring me at the very least. But if what she says is true and she’s just a glorified babysitter, I’ll wager that whoever’s really in charge is listening in. So my next words are for them, not *her*.

“I think that’s why I was brought here. Why *they* wanted me.” I stress the ‘they’ because she’s made it perfectly clear she doesn’t want me here, doesn’t agree with the powers that be who chose me. “The better we all get on, the more effective we can be as a killing team. I can do that. I can bring everyone together. Make us unstoppable. And I want security clearance too. To use the lift, the roof garden, go outside without a chaperone. All of it. I want access to books.”

“You really think a lot of yourself, don’t you?” She scoffs.

I’m just opening my mouth to reply when there’s a knock at the door. I freeze when Satan smiles and calls for whoever’s on the other side to come in.

Snow waltzes in, hands in the pockets of his ripped black jeans, his leather jacket slipping off his shoulders.

“You wanted to see me?” His tone is polite enough, his face neutral, but there’s insolence in his gaze too.

“Ah, Snow, yes I did. I need your assistance with Miss Kingfisher.”

“What?” I spin to face her but she ignores me. “I’m not going anywhere with him!”

“She has been most impertinent and needs to be punished. See to it, and make sure it’s good. You’re dismissed.”

“I am not—”

My words are cut off by the lightning coursing through my body as Satan pushes the button to activate my shock chip.

Every sense in my being becomes overwhelmed by indescribable chaos.

First, there’s the initial shock, a sudden jolt that feels like a thousand needles piercing my skin all at once. It’s as if my entire body has been drenched in ice-cold water, but I’m on fire. The shock sends violent shivers down my spine. My muscles clench involuntarily, and I can’t control the convulsions that wrack my body.

My vision blurs as if someone has thrown a sheet of static over my eyes. It’s impossible to focus on anything, and the world around me is a chaotic swirl of colours and shapes.

I can hear a deafening, high-pitched buzzing in my ears, drowning out all other sounds, as if I’ve been plunged into a relentless storm of noise.

My heart pounds like a jackhammer, each beat echoing in my chest as if it’s trying to escape the torment.

Time stretches, and seconds feel like hours as the electric current courses through me. My mind races in a panicked frenzy, and I’m unable to think clearly. Fear and confusion consume me, and I desperately wish for the torment to end.

As the electricity continues to surge, a burning sensation spreads throughout my body. Like I’m on fire from the inside,

my skin tingles and sizzles with the intense heat. I can smell the acrid scent of burning flesh, and the taste of metal floods my mouth, as if I were sucking on a copper penny. It takes a second of agony to realise it's blood; my blood. I must have bitten my tongue with the force of the shock.

All I can think about is the overwhelming need for this nightmare to be over. I feel like the helpless puppet I denied being, completely at the mercy of the relentless electrical current coursing through my body.

I would give anything for it to stop. It's a terrifying, agonising experience I will never forget – a chaotic, all-consuming maelstrom of pain, fear, and confusion that leaves me utterly powerless – until it stops as suddenly as it started, and I crash forward into Snow's outstretched, waiting arms.

Fuck.



I'M SMOOTHER THAN AN ICE RINK



*'CROSS MY HEART I HOPE YOU DIE' – MEG SMITH*

KOOKABURRA

*I* come to, submerged, and the world around me is a chaotic, watery blur. My lungs scream for air, and my heart races with panic as I struggle to make sense of my surroundings.

Ice cold water envelops my head, and it feels like a relentless grip, pulling me deeper into darkness. All the while my entire body pulses with a desperate need, and the force of...something slamming into me causes me to jerk with each movement.

Water stings my eyes.

*Why am I wet? Surely I'm not crying? Is this another nightmare? Have the demons of my past returned to haunt me? I thought I slayed them once and for all. They shouldn't be able to hurt me now. Nothing can hurt me now. I took away their power.*

My chest tightens, and I try to inhale, but all I get is a searing burn as water – real and ice cold and not something from a night terror – rushes into my nose and mouth. My body convulses with the instinctive need for oxygen, and I thrash in a futile attempt to break free from the suffocating embrace of the water.

At the same time, I'm aware of waves of pleasure rippling through my body. *How is that possible? I've never enjoyed this. No matter how sick and twisted I've become, this has never been pleasurable.*

I force my mind to relax, praying my body will follow suit. If my demon thinks I'm close to passing out, they might relent their hold on me.

It allows me to take stock of my body. Beyond the burning need to breathe, there's a bruising grip on my hip, and an iron force holding my head down. Muffled sounds of fucking reach me underwater and disbelief makes my blood run cold.

*Not again!*

Time feels distorted, as if it's stretching and compressing at once. Every second is an eternity, and I'm aware of every heartbeat, each one echoing in my ears like a drum of impending doom. Each one timed perfectly to the unwelcome thrusts desecrating my body.

My thoughts become fragmented, and I struggle to hold onto reality, even as everything in me coils tight in anticipation of unwelcome release. The world outside my liquid prison becomes a distant memory, and all that exists is the relentless pressure on my head and the desperate need to breathe, and the building pressure between my thighs.

*I can't do this.*

The burning ache in my chest intensifies, and it's as if my body is on the brink of surrender. My vision blurs, and I can see fleeting glimpses of light and shadow dancing in the water, taunting me with the promise of escape.

*Give in.*

*Or fight.*

*What's it going to be, Kayla?*

The primal instinct to survive takes over. I kick and claw, desperate for any leverage to break free. My limbs feel heavy and uncoordinated, but I fight with every ounce of strength I have left.

Then, as suddenly as it began, the water releases its grip, and I burst through the surface, gasping for air. My lungs greedily fill with precious oxygen, and the world comes rushing back into focus. The sensation of regaining consciousness is disorienting, as if I've just emerged from a nightmare into a world of an even harsher reality.

The terror of nearly drowning – of *being drowned* – lingers, and my heart races as adrenaline courses through my veins. I'm trembling, coughing, still trying to gulp down oxygen in a desperate attempt to try to kickstart my lungs into working again. I sink to the floor, overwhelmed by the sheer relief of being alive and the vivid memory of the suffocating darkness that I just escaped.

That's when I see it.

I am not alone.

From my prone position on the floor, I take in thick-soled black military-style boots, leading up to long, lean legs, clad in ripped black jeans.

Snow.

Motherfucker.

“Fuck...you...” I grind out from between coughing fits. My soaking wet hair is stuck to my face but I don't have the energy to move it out the way. I don't think my legs could hold me up right now, even though I long to get up and kick Snow's ass for whatever he's just done.

I hate him. Despise him as much as Satan. And I loathe that I can't fight him right now.

I grab hold of the cupboard door and try to pull myself into a seated position, but that's when I notice that my jeans are down around my ankles and I freeze.

“What did you do?” I rasp, my throat burning and protesting with every word.

Snow sneers down at me.

“Nothing you didn't fucking love, slut,” he spits before bending down, fisting his fingers into my hair and yanking me up to meet his mouth. I hiss at the pain, even as my pussy convulses and our combined release leaks onto my thighs.

He brings his lips to my ear, then bites the shell so hard I wince, and my cunt throbs in response.

“Stay in your fucking lane, Kookaburra,” he whispers. “Especially where Seytan’s concerned.”

He lets go unexpectedly and I drop back to the floor like a sack of shit, coughing up a lung from the sudden impact.

Fuck. I thought I was dead. Now I’m going to have to worry about secondary drowning for the next however many days the danger lasts.

By the time I’ve got it together enough to sit up and pull my jeans up past my knees, Snow is long gone.

Gripping the edge of the tub, I pull myself up onto my shaky legs. The sight of the bathtub still full of water makes me retch.

*That cunt better not have ruined baths for me!*

Angrily, I pull the plug and the tightness in my chest doesn’t ease until the last drop of water has drained away.

I think of Satan’s earlier comment about me not being that good of a swimmer, and can’t help but wonder if she knows. I don’t swim. At all. Ever. I avoid all bodies of water bigger than a bath wherever possible, and the discovery that I’m incarcerated on an island was both a blessing and a curse. A blessing because what’s left of my monsters will never find me here. A curse because I’m reminded of the hell they put me through every single day.

How could she know?

But then again, her comment, coupled with Snow’s attempted drowning, feel like too much of a coincidence to ignore.

Pushing those thoughts to the side, I pull myself up onto my feet, and then promptly collapse down onto the toilet. I don’t even want to think about the sticky mess between my thighs, I just want to get cleaned up, without having to climb into the bath to take a shower.

By the time I’m done, I’m completely spent and just about able to drag my ass into my, thankfully, freshly made bed.

Fuck facing the real world today, if that's what it's like. I'd rather stay in bed and lick my wounds a little longer, refusing to let my brain dwell on what Snow took from me when it wasn't on offer to him in the first place.

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I ENTER THE 'HOSPITAL WING' with a sense of unease gnawing at my insides. I hope this works. I'm not exactly here under false pretences; I am feeling weak and lightheaded because meals stopped being delivered to my room, and I'll admit I've been too paranoid to eat what little packet food is in my cupboards.

Dr. Carraway raises her eyes from a cluttered desk when I step inside.

"Kayla? How can I help you?" she inquires, her voice warm and professional. My head throbs with exhaustion, and I find it challenging to put my thoughts into words.

"I'm worried I have an infection," I finally manage to say.

She arches an inquisitive eyebrow, her expression one of genuine concern. "What sort of infection?"

I hesitate, conflicted. "Well, actually, maybe two?"

"You think you have two infections?" Her response holds a hint of scepticism, though she strives to maintain her composure.

"Yeah," I reply with a heavy sigh. "I've sustained some... injuries, and I think one or two might be infected."

Dr. Carraway leans in, urging me to continue. "And the other?" she asks gently.

"Further south," I tell her with a pointed chin nod down towards my lady garden.

Which, when you think about it, is a stupid name for someone who shaves. I'm smoother than an ice rink down

there. Maybe I should call it that instead. Hmmm. I might try it out.

Confusion crosses the doctor's face as she processes my words. "Oh, I see. Have you been engaging in sexual intercourse without protection?"

"I think being sterilised is protection enough, don't you?" I retort, my tone tinged with bitterness. It's not her fault, but I can't help the rage that bubbles up when *that* particular topic of consent comes up.

"Ummm, what?" She blinks, her gaze fixed on me with a puzzled expression.

I clarify, "I was told that all the patients are sterilised upon arrival."

"Kayla... I don't think that's true," she murmurs, her lip caught between her teeth. "And even if it were, it wouldn't protect you from catching an STD."

"Are you saying I'm diseased?" I ask, feeling a surge of anxiety. Fucking Snow! I'll kill him.

"What? No. I mean, we don't *know*. Yet."

"Well, can you find out? The last thing I want is my lady rink drying up and becoming unusable in here. Have you seen how hot the other psychos are?"

Dr. Carraway raises an eyebrow at my choice of words. "Rink? Never mind." She shakes her head and then seems to focus on the other part of what I said. Her smile becomes strained and her tone takes on a reproachful edge. "We don't call the residents that here, Kayla."

"Why not? It's a badge we wear with honour," I quip, attempting to lighten the mood.

"Let's get you looked at, shall we?" She swiftly changes the subject.

"You want to examine my hoo-haa?" I joke, though my anxiety still simmers beneath the surface.

“Umm, no. The other injuries?” She gestures towards an examination table. It looks a lot less inviting than the hospital bed I was given last time. “You can pee in a cup to determine if you have a UTI or similar. But I really need to examine your surface wounds.”

“Sure. So, shall I lie down or something?” I comply, ready to face whatever lies ahead.

“Let’s do the urine sample first.”

I watch as Dr. Carraway retrieves a pair of latex gloves from a nearby cabinet and begins to methodically prepare for the examination, her movements precise and unhurried. It’s clear she’s accustomed to dealing with a wide range of patients and their unique idiosyncrasies in here.

“Am I the only female resident?” I ask, even though the guys told me I am.

“You are.”

“But, there have been other women before me?”

“You’re the first.”

“Why?” I whisper.

“I don’t know. Shall we?”

I can’t tell if she’s deliberately trying to change the subject or get me looked at so that she can get back to whatever work she was doing when I interrupted.

Dr. Carraway retrieves a small plastic cup from a drawer and hands it to me. “If you could, please provide a urine sample in this cup. It will help us rule out any urinary tract infection.”

I nod, taking the cup from her. It’s a simple task, but my trembling hands make it feel more daunting than it should. “Sure,” I mumble, heading toward a small bathroom adjacent to the examination area.

With a sense of relief at having a moment of solitude, I collect my sample, praying that at least this part of the ordeal



will yield no surprises. Returning to the examination table, I place the cup on the designated tray she points to.

When she nods, I gingerly make my way to the examination table. Its cool, sterile surface is a stark contrast to the tumultuous thoughts racing through my mind. As I settle onto the table, a chill races up my spine, and I try to keep my breathing steady, masking my vulnerability with a facade of confidence.

Dr. Carraway, now fully gloved, examines the surface wounds on my arms and legs with a professional detachment. The stinging pain as she cleans and inspects the injuries is a stark reminder of the chaos and violence that brought me to this place.

“These cuts look fairly superficial,” Dr. Carraway notes, her voice a soothing balm as she continues her examination, her gloved fingers deftly inspecting the wounds. “They don’t look infected, but I’ll clean and dress them for you. It’s crucial to prevent any potential infection.”

I offer a weak but genuine smile, appreciating her care. “Thank you. Can you look at the burn on my arm, please, too?”

“Of course,” she replies with a nod.

I hesitate, then carefully pull up my sleeve. The doctor’s eyes widen in momentary shock, but she quickly regains her professional composure.

“That looks... sore.”

“It’s the itching that’s driving me crazy,” I admit.

“You mustn’t scratch it,” she cautions. “If you break the skin, the risk of infection is much higher.”

“I can’t help it,” I confess, my fingers curling with the need to scratch right now. It’s as though the simple act of uncovering the burn to show her has awakened the fiery itch once more.

Dr. Carraway offers a reassuring solution. “I can give you some ointment. It’s a gel-based formula, better for burns.”

“Okay. Thank you,” I say, hastily pulling my sleeve back down so that I’m not tempted to defy her and scratch myself until I bleed.

“Of course. It’s what I’m here for.”

I pause, feeling a sudden rush of vulnerability. “I mean, thank you for not judging me... It’s hard being the only girl in here. No one to talk to.”

“Kayla, you can always talk to me.”

“I can?”

“Of course. As your doctor, I’m here to look after more than just your physical health.”

“Oh... thank you. It’s hard to know who I can trust.”

“Kayla, you’re safe here.”

“I don’t think I am,” I whisper, tears welling up along my lower lash line.

“What do you mean?”

“Doctor Seytan told them to do this to me.”

Dr. Carraway hesitates, her expression torn between professional duty and empathy. “Kayla, I—”

“You don’t believe me.”

“It’s not that,” she replies gently. “Look, let’s talk about something else instead, okay?”

“Sure.”

“Do you require the morning-after pill?”

“I... I think it’s too late for that.”

“I see. Would you like to book another appointment with me in a few days to discuss contraceptive options?”

“That sounds like a good idea.”

“Okay, let’s just go over a couple more things.”

Dr. Carraway proceeds to examine my overall physical health, checking my vitals and asking questions about my general well-being. Each answer feels like a step toward building trust, yet a lingering fear of consequences remains.

Finally, she removes her gloves and steps back, looking at me with genuine concern and professional curiosity. “Kayla, I understand that this environment can be challenging, and there are many uncertainties. We’ll do our best to ensure your health and safety here.”

I appreciate her reassurance, even if it feels somewhat hollow in the context of our predicament. “Thank you, Dr. Carraway. I... I hope I can trust you.”

She nods, her expression earnest. “You can trust that I’ll do my job to the best of my abilities, Kayla. Now, let’s send your urine sample for testing, and we’ll go from there.”

As I leave her behind, I feel the weight of my situation pressing down upon me. I can’t help but wonder what the results of the tests will reveal and what lies ahead in this strange, unsettling place I’ve been confined to. Most importantly, I hope I’ve made some headway in getting the gullible doctor on my side. I need all the allies I can get if I’m going to get out of here.

IT'S DARKER THAN SATAN'S BUTT  
CRACK OUT HERE



'ASSASSIN' – AU/RA

KOOKABURRA

We're back in the helicopter again, being taken to the mainland under the cover of darkness, dressed all in black. It can only mean one thing; we're being sent on another mission. And again, I know nothing about it.

All of the others are tight-lipped, with serious expressions on their faces. I wonder how they're feeling. Me? I'm preoccupied by my visit to the doctor. I need to get my head in the game.

The public, the press, the law, they all say we're crazy. Insane. Monsters. Psychopaths. But if that were true, wouldn't we be excited at the chance to be released from our prison and sent to mindlessly kill. Wouldn't I feel more like an eagerly released hellhound and less like a manipulated marionette? Why aren't we all chomping at the bit to get on land and cause chaos?

I don't think these guys are any crazier than I am, despite what our files may say.

As we land and disembark from the helicopter, I notice the distinct lack of chatter among the team continues. Even Snow isn't being his usual dickish self. It's an eerie silence that amplifies the anxiety building inside me.

I study our surroundings. This time, we're not in a city, but on the outskirts of one judging by the lights in the distance. We've landed at a small airstrip – a private one if I had to guess. Around us are a handful of small aircraft hangars, but other than that we seem to be in the middle of nowhere.

We're all just standing around, waiting for something to happen, when we're suddenly met by the pilot who hands *me* a folder.

I frown at him. At least last time my weapon was a bat. What am I meant to do with a file? Paper cut someone to death?

Wouldn't be the first time, but these missions usually seem a bit time-sensitive.

"What is this?" I ask the pilot, raising my brow in question at him.

"Mission," he replies, sounding bored.

I shake my head. "So give it to Hatchet or Night."

"No can do. My instructions were specific. This file is yours."

"Why? What does that mean?"

The pilot shrugs at me and I have to resist the urge to punch him...although do I? What's the worst that will happen if I do?

Hatchet catches my eye and gives me a slight shake of his head, as if he knows exactly what I'm contemplating.

I glare at him then sigh. "Fine." I'll play nice.

My hands shake slightly as I open the file. I take one look at the image in there, slam the folder closed and thrust it back into the pilot's chest.

"No way. I'm not doing that," I growl.

"Orders are orders," the pilot says emphatically, shoving the file back into my reluctant hands.

"No," I protest, the file crumpling as my fingers curl into angry fists. I am *not* a puppet to be used. I refuse.

"You're running point on this one. Hatchet has the weapons already. See to it that no-one on your team fails."

"You can't just—" I call out, but he's already back in the chopper and starting up the engine, drowning me out and cutting me off.

“Fuck!” I kick the ground in frustration, tip my head back and roar up to the stars, “Motherfucker!”

My eyes close and I have to take several deep breaths before I can open them again without the danger of going postal. When I do, I glance around at the others, *my team* the pilot called them, waiting for them to speak up or protest, but they all remain silent.

Then it hits me. Their uneasy silence. They knew this was going to happen.

“So we’re a team huh?” I ask sarcastically. Snow, fucking idiot that he is, misses my tone and nods. “Funny how none of my *teammates* thought to clue me in about this. Again.”

I can’t help adding that last word bitterly. It’s one thing to be dragged on the mission blind, another thing to be just as blind but expected to lead somehow.

*How am I meant to control six supposed psychopaths?*

Then it *really* hits me. This is another test. I told Seytan, or the powers that be listening in, that I have the ability to unite these guys and make them unstoppable. Maybe this is their way of telling me to put my money where my mouth is.

*I can’t fail. I have to prove that I’m not only useful, but that I’m indispensable.*

I look at the guys, taking the time to size them up. Standing beside each other like this, it’s easy to see their similarities and differences. The main likeness being the apprehension in their eyes. I know it mirrors my own.

But we *are* puppets – no matter how much I protest that I’m not – they see us as some sort of groups of soldiers, or a fucked up vigilante gang, a bunch of powerless captives who have to follow orders no matter how much we may disagree with them. And I do disagree with *this*.

I take a deep breath and open the folder once more. The image inside is burned into my mind, and I can feel bile rising in my throat. It’s a picture of a young girl, no more than ten

years old, with curly blonde hair and bright blue eyes. She looks so hauntingly familiar, but I can't place why or where I could possibly know her from.

"We can't do this," I say, my voice barely above a whisper. "We're not monsters. Not this kind of monster, anyway."

"Orders are orders," Night says, parroting the pilot's words back to me, his voice monotone and icy.

I close my eyes and try to push back the images flashing through my mind. I see the girl's face, contorted in fear and pain, and I know that if we don't follow through with this mission, the consequences will be dire. The people giving us orders have already proven that they're not known for their leniency or forgiveness – I'm still bearing the scars of the last order I didn't follow.

I take a deep breath and steel myself for what's to come. "Fine. Let's go."

We make our way to a nearby van and pile in. As we drive towards our destination, I can feel the tension in the air thickening. It's like a physical weight, pressing down on my chest and making it hard to breathe. The other's aren't helping. Their own anxiety is mingling with mine, the weight of expectation and distrust strangling me.

The drive remains silent.

What am I supposed to do? Should I be using this time to come up with a plan? Give them instructions? What would Night do?

As we arrive, the scene unfolds before us like a grim tableau set in a desolate part of town, where hope seems to have abandoned its last foothold. The warehouse looms large, its weathered façade a testament to years of neglect. The air is thick with the acrid stench of decay, assaulting our senses as soon as we step out of the vehicle. My stomach clenches, and a knot of apprehension tightens within me, its origin unknown, but palpable.



The questions gnaw at my mind, persistent and unyielding. Why have we been brought to this forsaken place? Why would a child be all the way out here so late at night?

The disconcerting lack of answers intensifies my unease, casting a shroud of uncertainty over the situation. Every nerve in my body tingles with anticipation, ready to react to whatever malevolent secrets this place holds.

With an air of quiet determination, Hatchet distributes firearms to each member of our party. The cold metal of the weapon settles heavily in my hand, its weight a grim reminder of the gravity of our predicament. We stand poised on the precipice of the unknown, weapons at the ready, as the minutes tick away like an ominous countdown.

As leader, I think I'm the one expected to pull the trigger. I have to be. This is my test. A do-over on the first one that I failed. But killing the corrupt judge who sentenced me to this hell is so much easier than taking the life of a child.

Fuck.

I've never regretted a single kill. I know I've done monstrous things, things that I'm meant to feel remorse for. But I don't. I'm *proud* that I found a way to tackle my demons. But this little girl isn't *my* demon. She's...she's fucking innocent. And I don't know if I can do this.

Then I look at the others. At the grim determination on their faces. We're fated to spend the rest of our lives trapped together in the asylum, only being let out for missions like this one. I barely know them – can barely stand Snow – yet I feel the need to shoulder the responsibility for this one. I don't know their demons any more than they know mine, but I do know that they've all been here longer than me, and must have had to do unspeakable things many more times than I have.

I don't want the death of a child on their hands. On their conscience. Adding to their own list of burdens to carry.

It has to be me.

“Let’s go,” I say flatly, palming my gun, making sure the safety is off, and pulling my shoulders back in a vain attempt to inject some false confidence into myself.

That’s it. It’s all I have to say for them to all fall into line ready to follow me. I wonder if I look as sick as I feel. What the others will think of me when I do this. Will they even be able to look at me? Will I be able to look at myself?

The warehouse’s looming entrance beckons us forward, our footsteps cautious and stealthy. We make our way inside, Snow directly behind me, Honey at the rear and the others somewhere in between. We all have our weapons at the ready, and I can hear the sound of muffled crying coming from somewhere in the building. It’s like a knife to the gut, and I have to fight to keep from breaking down then and there.

War rages within me, two sharp voices commanding my attention.

*I can’t do this. We should run.*

*You have to. You have no choice. You’re doing it for them.*

The suffocating darkness is our ally, concealing our advance as we navigate a labyrinthine network of corridors and rooms. The walls, once vibrant with colour, now bear the scars of neglect, graffiti scrawled in faded hues. Our senses are heightened, and our instincts sharpened, as though we have been thrust into a nightmarish scenario.

Amidst the chilling silence, a haunting melody of muffled cries permeates the air, a mournful chorus that pierces the very core of my being. The sound is both distant and near, like an elusive spectre that taunts us with its ethereal presence.

My emotions threaten to spill over, but I swallow them down. *Complete the mission first, fall apart after.*

We continue our relentless advance, the cacophony of our racing heartbeats the only accompaniment to our journey. Each step takes us closer to the source of those anguished cries, as we inch through the shadowy maze of the warehouse. With every passing moment, the cries grow louder, more distinct,

and the gravity of my mission bears down upon me with unrelenting force.

Finally, we reach a metal door where I can hear the sobbing of the little girl beyond, and I know that we have to move quickly before I turn and run.

The handle on the door is smooth and ice cold beneath my trembling left hand. I raise the gun in my right and take a deep breath to steady my aim. Knowing I should just pull open the door and squeeze the trigger, versus actually doing it are two different things.

The latch releases – it wasn't even locked – and the door swings towards me. I have to take a step back to open it fully. The crying abruptly stops and a soft *pop pop pop* reaches my ears instead.

I'm slammed out of the way before I can compute what's happening. Stumbling, I graze my palms on the rough exposed brick to keep myself from falling over as chaos and debris explode around me.

My ears ring as the disjointed popping gives way to the unmistakable sound of gunshots, and the words "attack" and "ambush" clear through the fog and ringing in my ears.

"Move!" I scream at Snow who's prone on the floor, as I throw my entire weight into the metal door in a desperate bid to shut it.

Metal can stop bullets, right?

Fuck! I don't know!

Why is Snow still in the way?

"We need to get out of here," someone yells just as I manage to slam the door shut. There's no lock. No way to bar it. I've brought us seconds at best.

"Grab Snow."

I hesitate as Snow's legs and feet disappear from view, my attention snared by the door. Bullets are pinging off the metal

now, not penetrating. Yet?

“Sugar! Come on!” Honey yells, but he sounds so far away.

“What about the girl?” I say, blinking every time a bullet hits our shield. “I can’t just leave her.”

“She’s dead already,” Bones snaps. “If there was even a girl to begin with.”

“What?” I’m being slow. I know that much, but my brain is just like a web page that’s stuck eternally loading. *What aren’t I getting?*

I begin to cough, and the room – hallway? – that we’re stuck in starts to sway violently.

“I don’t—”

My knees slam into the concrete floor, jarring my bones painfully.

“Fuck’s sake!” Night grumbles, pushing towards me. “You guys grab Snow. I’ve got sleeping beauty.”

“Sleeping beauty?” I manage to ask, the words coming out slow and thick and awkward on my tongue.

*Actually sleep does sound good right about now.*

“They tried to gas us,” he tells me, bending down to grab me and haul me into his arms. “You got some of the hit before Ghost kicked the canister away and you got the door closed. This was an ambush, and we’ve got to move.”

I drift in and out of consciousness as I’m jostled up and down rhythmically. My guess would be that Night is running, but the twists and turns of the corridors make me feel sick, so I close my eyes and concentrate on trying to stay awake and not puke on him.

I was a terrible leader. I led them through a maze with zero thought as to how we’d find our way back, and I walked them right into a trap.

When the cold night air hits my lungs, I scramble to free myself from Night's arms. He drops me, jarring my knees *again*, and I vomit over the gravel pathway.

Was that there on our way in? I'm sure I would have noticed. I take ragged breaths to fill my lungs, spit to clear my mouth as best I can, and get back up onto my feet. I don't recognise our surroundings at all, and the van isn't here.

"Where are we?" I ask.

No one answers. I spin around to find out why and see them disappearing into the darkened treeline.

*Those fuckers! So much for being a team!*

I stumble after them, the aftereffects of the gas messing with my depth perception and my ability to coordinate my movements. I crash across the gravel as stealthy as a one man band, and duck into the trees roughly where I *think* I saw the others disappear.

It's pitch fucking black and denser than a hippy's pubic hair.

"Fuck!" I hiss when I trip for the umpteenth time.

"Newbie, shut the fuck up and get over here," Bones hisses. I'd recognise his disdainful drawl anywhere.

"I would, if I knew where the fuck over here was," I mutter under my breath.

A hand clamps round my arm and I yelp in surprise, then my attacker – saviour? – slams their other hand down on my mouth.

"Shut up," a voice growls in my ear. I relax. It's just Bones. When I nod my agreement to keep quiet, he releases my mouth but not my arm and guides me through the darkness to where the others are waiting.

Snow is out cold on the floor.

"What's wrong with him?" I whisper.

“He was shot. Actually, those bullets were meant for you,” Bones explains. I frown.

“For me?”

“You were running point. You opened the door. You were supposed to be the first one to step through it. Snow realised what was going on and shoved you out of the way.”

“Oh.” I turn my attention to Snow. He’s conscious at least, but paler than Ghost. I grimace. “Are you okay?”

“Peachy,” he replies drolly. Obviously he’s fine if he’s still capable of being an asshole. I nod at him though, a silent word of thanks passing between us.

“Fuck. Now what?”

“You’re in charge, you tell us,” Bones drawls sarcastically.

“I don’t fucking know!” I cry, exasperated.

“I told you to keep your fucking voice down,” he snaps back.

Give me strength.

“Night, Hatchet, any ideas?” I ask turning to the two oldest members of the team and looking to them for guidance before I throat punch Bones.

Actually, punishing him sounds like a really good idea.

*He carried your ass to safety.*

One free pass then. But if he’s a dick to me again he’s getting it. Maybe a dick punch too for good measure.

*Not too hard though. Wouldn’t want him out of action. You enjoyed being reamed in the ass by that bad boy.*

“I think we should make a run for it,” I blurt out.

“Don’t be stupid,” Snow scoffs before grimacing in pain. Ghost appears to be tending to Snow’s bullet wounds, and either Snow’s a big baby, or Ghost isn’t being too gentle about it. My money’s on a mix of both.

“What? They can’t be watching us all the time,” I insist, even though I’m secretly terrified that it’s true.

“They literally have a chip in you, that can electrocute you at the push of a button, and yet you want to run?” Every word from Bones’ mouth drips with scornful disdain. “Did it not occur to you that the chip can do so much more than just fry your brains out? They might have GPS, maybe even a microphone too. Of course, they’re always watching.”

Fuck. How did I forget about the chip? I’m blaming the lingering effects of whatever they tried to gas us with.

“I’m going to get the chip taken out, and when I do, I’m out of here,” I insist with false bravado. “The offer is there to have yours removed too.”

“I’ll pass thanks,” Bones mutters sarcastically before raising his voice slightly so I can hear him better. “That’s how Kidney died. Trying to get his chip out with a carpet knife and a mirror.”

*Who the fuck is Kidney?*

“I’m not gonna do it myself, I’m not stupid. I’m going to get a highly skilled surgeon to do it for me.”

Okay, so maybe I’m reaching a bit on the *highly skilled surgeon* brag, but I *am* going to get the doctor on side and I’ll take it from there. If she can’t do it, she’ll know someone who can. And if she doesn’t, well, she can learn. It’s not like I’m going anywhere anyway.

“Oh and you just happen to have one of those in your back pocket do you?” He scoffs. Dick or throat? One of them’s getting punched.

“Actually, I do. Maybe you should try making friends. Apparently you catch more flies with honey than vinegar.”

“Enough you two,” Night calls out in a bored tone, though I swear there’s amusement tugging at the corner of his lips. “Stop bickering so we can figure this out.”

“Figure what out?” Honey asks.

“What happened, and what we do next.”

“I still say the next steps should be to fucking run,” I insist. Maybe we could get to a surgeon before they realise we’re gone?

“You think Snow’s pansy ass will survive being French fried after taking three bullets for you, Sugar?” Honey asks with a smile to soothe the blow of his words.

Shit. Guilt wracks me for the tiniest split second before I shake it off.

Too fucking right Snow should take bullets – plural – for me. It’s the least her can do after—

“Why did he do that anyway?” Honey asks, stepping closer to me, his warm brown eyes scanning mine for answers. Even though it’s darker than Satan’s butt crack out here, his eyes shine with a welcoming warmth that invites confidence.

I roll my lip between my teeth not wanting to tell them.

“Maybe he likes me?” I offer with false naivety.

“Snow doesn’t like anyone,” Bones snaps. Jeez what is his deal? He’s strung so tight. Anyone would think he needs to get laid. “He’s a selfish cunt at best and a dangerous fucking snake. There’s no way he’d take a bullet for anyone without an ulterior motive.”

“Well you’ll just have to ask him about that when he wakes up, won’t you?” I reply cheerily.

“Huh? Wakes up? He’s not as—” His words die off when he turns around and learns that Snow has in fact fallen asleep. Or passed out from the pain. Whatever. I guess our secret is safe for now. Though I can’t fathom why I’m protecting him.

“So what the fuck was that?” I ask, changing the subject.

“A trap,” Nightshade replies at the same time as Bones says, “an ambush.”

“So the girl...?” I ask.



“Was it a ruse to get us out here? Yes.”

Relief floods me when anxiety should probably be taking centre stage. I didn't have to kill that girl.

“Was there even a girl target?” I ask, hopefully. I vaguely remember one of them hinting that there might not have been back when we were in the midst of all the chaos. I hope they're right. I'd rather be set up and shot at than have the life of an innocent on my hands.

“There was no girl. Well, not that we could see anyway.”

“But we all heard her, didn't we?”

“It could have been anyone. Even a recording, Sugar Puff,” Honey tells me gently. I hope he's right, I know that logically he probably is, but I'm still...unsettled.

“Should we go back and check?” I ask, rolling my lip between my teeth.

“I think it would be suicide,” Night says with a shake of his head.

“But...she was the mission, right? The target?” I ask. Reluctantly they nod. “So if she wasn't there, we failed the mission, so why haven't our shock chips gone off? Or mine at the very least.”

“We don't know.”

“Will I get punished again?” I ask, torn between apprehension and hope.

Bones chuckles. “Not the same way as last time. Even Seytan knows you enjoyed it too much.”

“It's not my fault that your idea of torture is like a bit of slap and tickle for me. Level up your game next time,” I snap back, even though there's a smile tugging at my lips.

“Challenge accepted, newbie.”

“You ever run point on a mission?” I challenge him, eyes now flashing with anger.

“No.”

“Then stop fucking calling me that. I’ve obviously done better than you.”

“Kayla,” Night says softly, drawing my attention to him, “like Bones said, *you* were the target. Whoever ambushed us in that warehouse wanted you dead, not some girl.”

“How do you know?”

“Because you were running point. They knew you’d be the first through the door.”

“So it was Seytan then? She gave the orders, right?”

“I don’t know. It could be anyone in charge. And I don’t know about the chips or punishments, but I do know we need to get out of here and back to the safety of the island, because someone wants you dead – and I don’t actually think it’s anyone within the asylum.”

His words slowly start to sink in, and I shiver.

*If not Seytan or the ones in charge, who? And, more worryingly, how did they know where to find me?*

IRREFUTABLY MARKED AS MINE



*'DANGEROUS' – THE TECH THIEVES &  
BESOMORPH*

NIGHTSHADE

We didn't get back to the chopper until the break of dawn. We ended up waiting in the woods for Snow to come around, scoping out the warehouse to see if anyone came after us. No one did.

It was an ambush, that much was clear, and Kayla was obviously the target...but why? Who is trying to kill her? It can't be someone within the facility itself because they could have easily succeeded by now, but whoever is trying must have connections within the asylum because how else would they poison her food?

I need to ask her if there's been any other instances where she's felt threatened or watched. There certainly hasn't been any attempts on her life at night. I know because I've been sneaking into her room to drug and fuck her almost every night.

Once Snow came around, Honey and Ghost helped carry him through the woods – which was a fucking long trek – until we came to a clearing on the other side. From there we were able to cross farmland and head for the lights of the small town in the distance. We must have walked miles, and Bones and Kayla griped at each other with every fucking step.

I know he's pissed that I've been fucking her – he caught me coming out her room one morning and has been giving me shit about it ever since. Guy's got it bad for the fiery redhead. He has a breeding kink – he confided that to me once years ago – and I'm sure half of the reason why he's mad is because he's scared I'm going to knock her up first.

If you ask me, he shouldn't have wasted his shot with her shooting his load inside her ass – no matter how tempting it is.

Maybe I wouldn't mind knocking her up myself. I'm certainly fucking her enough that it might happen.

I need to check with the doctor that she's not on any contraceptive and make sure it stays that way. And if she is already, well, I'll burn that bridge when I get to it.

Eventually, thanks to Hatchet's excellent sense of direction, we made it back to the drop off point where Valentine was waiting for us, pissed at being kept out late past his bedtime.

Not only that, but we don't even get a lie in as thanks for staying out all night. No, today marks the beginning of Hell Week, an annual asylum tradition that tries to break us. We've never *not* lost someone during hell week, and I'm curious to see if Snow will crack. Kayla's too stubborn. And it's unlikely to be any of the rest of us – though Ghost sometimes comes close – because we've all weathered this storm before. It sure as shit won't be me.

I have no intention of going anywhere so long and the enigmatic Miss Kingfisher is still with us.

Speaking of, she looks exhausted this morning. I'm glad I decided to give her a night off from my dick.

Without thinking, I reach out and grab the jug, refilling her glass of orange juice when it's empty. Silence falls and everyone bar Kayla stares at me. She carries on eating like nothing has happened. I glower at the others, silently daring them to say something about how pussy whipped I am or similar, but I obviously still have clout in this place because they all turn back to their meals without a word.

Yeah, whatever, they can think what they like, but I know that we're all secretly whipped. She has a magical pussy, and I'm sure it has nothing to do with her being the only female inmate – because I've fucked the staff plenty – and everything to do with her. So when Kayla wants something, she gets it. And this morning, she wanted orange juice with breakfast. Fine by me, it's a good source of vitamin C, and if I'm coming

round to Bones' idea of knocking her up – and I very much am – then I may as well ensure she's as healthy as she can possibly be.

My dick stirs at the thought of sneaking into her room at night and fucking her while she's swollen with my baby in her belly. Maybe even one of the others' babies. Pretty sure we're all fucking her at this point. Except maybe Snow and Hatchet. They want to though. It doesn't matter. So long as she's ours and she's pregnant and I can fuck her anytime I want, I can share.

I'm sure the others would feel the same way.

Once breakfast is over, I glance at the clock. It's a quarter past nine in the morning. I'm sure she's planning on sleeping all day, but that's because she doesn't know about hell week yet. We were out all night and she seems tired. The rest of us are used to it at least. Well, Snow's in the medical wing because taking three bullets is not normal for any of us.

“What happens today?” Kayla asks, sounding as tired and defeated as she looks. I frown. I don't like seeing her like this, and definitely not when she's about to face down her worst fears in a relentless week of tasks and ‘therapies’ designed to break us. She looks already half way there.

“We have some free time until Snow is ready to join us for group therapy,” I tell her, deliberately not telling her about what the day has in store. “You're welcome to come to the gym with me.”

“There's a gym?”

“How do you think we stay this fit?” I quip, raising a brow at her as she checks me out. I mean, obviously I meant physically fit for the missions we're sent on, but if she thinks I'm the other type of *fit* I'm going to take the compliment. “There's even a pool.”

I notice that she pales and shudders slightly at the mention of the pool. Interesting. She better hope that Seytan doesn't

discover whatever issue she has with pools – she’ll use it against her in the blink of an eye.

“A pool?”

“Yeah, we have a pool. You okay with that?” I ask her, knowing that if she’s not into swimming that it could be a problem.

“I love swimming,” she says, a little too quickly, I think. She glances at the clock, looking suddenly nervous. “What time do you start?”

“Normally I’d be there already, but as we were out all night we lost a little time,” I tell her, shrugging. “We have an hour or so until Snow’s ready to join us. The pool’s open for another few hours this afternoon as well.”

She shrugs.

“I’m actually pretty tired. Last night was...insane. Maybe I can join you next time?” She lies almost as prettily as she comes apart on my dick.

“Sure thing, Red,” I placate her. “Next time.”

She shivers again and gives me a tight smile.

“I’m going to go for a quick shower then head back to bed,” she mutters, getting up and leaving.

Whatever. I just hope that the problem she has with swimming won’t be a problem this afternoon. Hell week is going to be hard enough without her being petrified of some of the shit we’ll be doing.

I have the gym to myself for about an hour before Bones and Ghost slink in. Ghost has his headphones on and his hood pulled up. He dips his head in acknowledgement of my presence and then splits off from Bones to work on the punching bag. Bones ignores the equipment and marches up to me, seething.

The smirk is already tugging at my lips before the words have even left his mouth.

“Are you still fucking her?” He spits, his hands curled into angry fists.

“No,” I reply with a pause, waiting for his features to relax a little before being unable to resist winding him up. “Not right this second.”

He reels back and punches me, right in the jaw, and the bones crack. His or mine, I don’t know, but I spit blood at his feet. I will not be dragged into fighting this guy. Not over her.

“What’s it to you anyway?” I jibe.

“Stay away from her. Stop sneaking into her room at night. Let her choose who she wants to fuck. Stop assaulting her in her fucking sleep.”

“What? So you can knock her up without her knowledge? Isn’t that like the pot calling the kettle black?”

“It’s not the same,” he grinds out.

“Isn’t it?” I ask, massaging my jaw. Nothing’s broken, but it aches. “You know, I like your way of thinking.”

“What do you mean?” His eyes flash dangerously.

“I like to fuck beautiful women when they’re sleeping, you like to knock them up. The amount I’ve been fucking Kookaburra bareback and raw, she’s probably already carrying my child—”

The second hit, right on top of the first, packs a little more punch and I stagger back a little. I’m definitely going to be feeling that in the morning.

I take a menacing step towards Bones until we’re practically nose to nose and evenly matched.

“I’ve been there for her. I’ve been the one fucking her, not you. And I’m going to continue fucking her and making her scream my name, just in case you need the visual.”

He punches me in the face one more time, stunning me into silence.



“Grow up,” he spits.

I hope he doesn't try to fucking kill me in my sleep. I almost feel bad that I'm not suffering from the same rage and insecurities as he is, but I don't. I've never doubted that Kayla wants me. I'm not stupid, I know she wants the others too, but unlike Bones, I don't have any qualms with sharing her. Doesn't mean I'm going to let him tell me what I can and can't do though

“Don't *ever* hit me again,” I warn, before turning on my heel and striding over to the treadmill. I start jogging, but he doesn't follow me. Good. We have enough on our plate without taking on the punishment for fighting on top.

When I finish my run, I stop the machine and turn around. Ghost is leaning against the leg press machine, watching me intently. His hood is still up, but his headphones are around his neck, and he doesn't look to have broken a sweat. He never does. He looks haunted because he's always battling some invisible demon – one he refuses to share with the rest of the class.

“What's up, Ghost?” I ask him. I've got time for the kid. He's not a total arsehole like most twenty somethings. Like fucking Snow.

Never did find out why he took those bullets, but I damn well will.

“I came to talk to you.” His hands are balled into fists again and he's staring at them.

“Okay,” I reply, walking over to him. “Talk.” I look him in the eye and wait. He's a decade younger than me, but I'm not going to treat him like a child.

He stares at me, indecision written all over his face. After a long moment, he licks his lips and begins.

“You guys were fighting about Kayla, right?”

I don't move. I don't even blink. I just stare at him, trying to determine if he's fucking with me. “I know you were.”

I raise a brow at him as if to say *why are you asking stupid fucking questions then?*

He takes a deep breath and swallows. “I-I don’t think you should.”

“What? Fight?”

“Get her pregnant.”

“I don’t see that it’s any concern of yours.”

He hesitates, hearing the warning in my tone, but decides to be brave and continue anyway. Ballsy fucker.

“It is.” He looks up at me. “She’s ours.”

“I think you’ll find she’s neither a horse nor an item of inheritance.” My tone is mocking.

“It’s not that,” he snaps. “She’s one of us.”

“Bullshit,” I scoff back. “If she were, I wouldn’t be talking to you, I would be talking to her.”

He swallows and I can see the internal battle in his eyes as he weighs up whether to continue or walk away. Eventually, he takes the plunge and continues. “You do realise we all have some connection with her, right?” he pleads. “We all have an inkling who her father is, even if she doesn’t. And she’s already connected with all of us.”

“Some of us more than others,” I point out pettily.

“The point is, this would be a horrible environment to raise a child in. What do you think will happen? They’ll just let her go because she’s pregnant? You’ll be condemning that child to a lifetime of incarceration just because of who its parents are, and worse, you’ll be giving *them* exactly what they want: a new generation of soldiers to control.”

Fuck. Why hadn’t I thought of it like that? Obviously I didn’t think getting Kayla pregnant would result in her freedom, nor did I think we’d play happy families, I just like the abstract notion of her pregnant and mine and being fucked all day long.

“You don’t know that,” I protest, even though the *kid might* have a point. “There’s no saying if Seytan would even *let* Kayla get pregnant. Or keep it if she was.”

“Why do you think they brought in a woman this time?” he presses. “They know we have a shelf life, they’re trying to ensure their legacy of killers.”

I mean, it sounds a bit far fetched if you ask me, but that’s exactly why I know he’s right. Fuck. He *is* right. But it might already be too late for Kayla. The more I think about it, the more I’m convinced that my baby is already growing in her belly, and the thought fills me with pride. And not just to get one over on Bones. I *want* her pregnant. I want her irrefutably marked as mine, even as I share her with the others.

But I don’t want to give the asylum any more power over us than they already have.

With nothing else to say, I nod to Ghost. I’ll think about what he’s said, but it’s out of my hands. Even if she’s not pregnant, and I do stop fucking her, someone else will take my place and sooner or later she will be with child. Which means we need a plan B.

Maybe Kayla was right.

We *do* need to get out of here.

COME WITH THE PRICK OF A  
NEEDLE



*'TWISTED' – MISSIO*

BONES

I'm raging when I leave the gym, having worked myself up into a frenzy. It's been too long since I fucked the redhead, and it didn't get her out of my system. All it did was fuel my obsession with her.

I can't stop thinking about her as I navigate the winding corridors back to my room. I still have about an hour to kill before we're due in therapy and my dick's so hard it could cut a diamond.

The image of her curves, her soft skin, her red hair cascading over her shoulders is burned into my mind. I try to push it away, but it's no use. I need her again.

I stop outside her bedroom door, pulse racing with anticipation. I know I shouldn't do this, but I can't help myself. I need her. My palms are sweaty and my heart is pounding as I knock on her door and wait, my breath coming in short gasps.

The door opens and there she is, just as stubbornly, infuriatingly gorgeous as ever. Her green eyes widen in surprise when she sees me, but then a sly smile crosses her lips. "Well, well, well, what brings you here?" she purrs.

Her confidence riles me. What right does she have to know the exact effect she has on me? Why does she get all the power? Palming the small tin in the pocket of my slacks, I push past her and step inside, closing the door behind me.

"I couldn't get you out of my head," I say, my voice hoarse with need.

My fierce expression has her backing away from me. My eyes rake over her body hungrily, and I remember exactly

what I did to her last time. “And I thought I’d take up where we left off.” I smile. “Unless you’d rather not.”

I hold the tin out to her. She looks at it, eyes wide with shock. “What’s that?” she whispers, eyes darting from the tin to my face, and back to the tin again.

“It’s something to relax me,” I say, grinning.

She shakes her head and backs away until she hits the bed. “I think you’ll like it very much. If you keep still,” I add with a grin,

“I don’t...” she stammers, shaking.

I hold out the tin again. “Go on. Take it. You know you want to.”

She shakes her head and takes another step back until her legs hit the bed. Her back is against the headboard, and she’s trapped. Her face is pale and she looks terrified. I’ve never seen anything more beautiful and captivating in my life.

“Bones...” she whispers, throat working.

I step closer to her, crushing the tin in my hand. There’s a sharp, metallic smell, like blood, or iron, and my dick pulses with need.

“I need to get you out of my head,” I confess.

I climb onto the bed and lean down to her.

“Shh...” I say, stroking her cheek with my finger. The smell of her blood is already beginning to intoxicate me, making my dick grow harder. Why can I smell it? Is she bleeding already? Or is it just my imagination?

She’s shivering as I lean closer to her neck, my mouth watering. I’m just about to sink my teeth into her soft skin when she whimpers, “You know, maybe I’d rather take a rain-check on this.”

I stop, inches away from her, my mouth poised over her skin.

I pull back, a savage smile on my face. “You can say that again. And again. And again. You can say it until you’re blue in the face. But knowing that you think you don’t want this just turns me on even more.”

I sit up straight and lick my lips, then shift my position on top of her, positioning my hard dick between her thighs. “I’ve been thinking about this since I last had you. I can’t wait anymore.”

I begin to move my hips, rubbing my covered cock over her clit. She answered the door in nothing but a T-shirt and it’s already ridden up beneath me revealing how beautifully bare she is – aside from her delightful new piercing.

She moans, twisting her body to get away from me but I lean closer and nip at her ear, whispering, “Oh, please don’t make me do it.”

I nibble along her jaw to her throat, and she writhes beneath me, trying to push me off.

She tries to move her leg up to kick me off of her but I grab her ankle, pinning it down beside her ear, and I lean my chest into hers, my other hand pushing her other leg up, spreading her wide.

Fucking delicious. She’s so goddamn perfect it makes me seethe and ache.

I can see her thighs are already glistening with her slickness and I don’t want to wait much longer.

I look into her bright green eyes and they’re shining with defiance and arousal. She’s still so goddamn beautiful. I’m going to make her beg me for it, implore for my cock. She’ll scream and cry and plead and I’m going to love every fucking second of it.

I unzip my trousers and free my aching cock, fisting it and pumping the length slowly in anticipation of what’s to come. Shifting my hips, I line myself up with her entrance and, without warning, I push into her. It’s so much tighter than

before in this position – so hot and tight...so fucking good. I groan.

She freezes as if in a daze as I push into her, hard, and fill her up, causing her to whimper beneath me, her eyes squeezed closed, her lips forming a tight line. She doesn't want to enjoy this, but her body betrays her.

“We don't have to like each other, princess,” I coo, pulling my hips back and sinking into her again.

“Good. Because I fucking hate you,” she snarls.

I grin at her and kiss her softly. “Say it like you mean it.”

“Fuck me like you mean it,” she spits, turning her head away from me and closing her eyes once more.

I freeze, feeling her so tight around me. This won't do at all.

Reaching down, I touch her clit and when she opens her eyes, looking up at me through heavy lids with a sultry viridescent gaze. While she's still impaled on my dick, I grab the tin and bring it in front of her.

“W-what is it?” She asks again, staring at the tin with a mixture of apprehension, interest and fear.

“Don't tell me, the fierce and mighty Kookaburra killer is scared of needles?” I tease with an acerbic smile. I know her; know she won't back down from a challenge. Know that if I want her consent to do this, she has to feel like she has no other choice.

I'm all for dubious consent. Hell, I've been known to enjoy a little non-con too. But not with this. I know it's a little much for most people.

“What do you do with the needles?”

I'm surprised by the question. She's such a curious little kookaburra. My smile warms, and I drag my cock from her pussy before slowly sinking back in as a reward for her inquisitiveness.



“I insert them for sexual pleasure.”

“Where?”

“Into the skin.”

“Whose skin?”

“Yours. But I’m not opposed to experiencing it myself from time to time.”

“And it...feels good?”

“It makes me feel good. I can make it feel good for you too. Or...”

“Or?”

“Or I can make it hurt.” She shivers but her eyes darken and I know my little slut has a thing for pain. “I could do both...” I offer enticingly.

“Can—” she swallows, and I’m captivated by the movement of her throat, reminded that I was about to sink my teeth into her until the sharp points of my canines pierced her delectable skin. “Can I see them? The needles in the tin?”

“Of course, princess.”

It’s so easy to be nice to her when she’s inquisitive and docile, and impaled on my cock.

I flick open the small metal tin then turn it around and lower it to show her what’s inside. A half a dozen butterfly needles and a selection of pins and other sharp items lie within, wrapped in sterilised packaging.

“Are they clean?”

“Sterilised.”

“New?”

“Never used.”

“Why do you have them on you?”

“Because I’ve been waiting to use them on you. Since the moment I watched Hatchet pierce these delectable nipples and

that delicious fucking clit, and I watched how your body responded to it, I knew you'd love this as much as I do."

She doesn't respond to that, instead asking, "Will I bleed?"

"You can. You don't have to though. Would you want to?"

She rolls her lip between her teeth, considering. "I....think so."

I groan and my dick swells inside her, making her gasp and shudder.

"And it's sexual?"

"For me, yes."

"So stabbing gets you off?"

"Among other things, yes. But the reason why I prefer needles and sharps to knives is because there's a delicate art form to it. Any thug can thrust a blade and make someone bleed. But I can make you come with the prick of a needle.... What do you say?"

She clenches her jaw before huffing out, "You're actually giving me a choice this time? I seem to recall you conveniently forgetting to ask for consent last time."

I grin in delight at her ire. "I seem to recall that you fucking loved it, and never asked me to stop. But, yes, for this I'm willing to give you a choice."

She sucks her teeth then sighs. "Okay."

"Okay what?"

"Okay, I'll try it," she clarifies with exasperation. Her tone and the way she flicks her eyes heavenwards make me want to strangle her.

"Excellent," I grind out. "Pleasure or pain?"

"They're one and the same to me," she says with a shrug.

Why does this infuriating woman have to be so fucking perfect for me? Why do my balls ache to empty inside of her and my blood boil with the compulsion to make her mine,

permanently and irrevocably, until she's perpetually swollen with my offspring?

"Trust me?" I ask, opening the sterile wrapping and taking out one thin, glimmering needle. It's so fine, it almost disappears in my fingers, unless I move it so it catches the light.

"Never," she bites back.

Her attitude makes me smile. We'll see if she's still full of scorn and sass when she's begging to be allowed to come on my cock once I've turned her into a human pincushion.

Still seated deeply inside her, I take the needle and carefully thread it through the skin of her areola, right above her beautifully pierced nipple. My dick throbs and she rolls her bottom lip between her teeth.

"I didn't feel anything," she whispers, sounding somewhere between awe-struck and disappointed.

"We'll get to that," I assure her softly, taking a second needle and repeating the action on her other breast. The symmetry is breathtaking and when I reverently kiss her nipples, Kayla whimpers.

"D-don't stop," she begs when I pull away. "Please, Bones."

*Now she begs.*

Next, I stick one of the pins into the head of each needle, then swirl the pin in her skin, feeling the softness and warmth of her flesh give way and a pinprick of blood seep out.

Her breath hitches and she moans when I flick the pins out of the needles and discard them on the floor.

"You look so fucking pretty when you bleed for me," I tell her, lifting her up to sit on my lap, so that she's straddling me.

Automatically she reaches up and grasps my neck. I take advantage of her position and hold her hips, guiding her back down onto my dick.

“That’s it, princess,” I soothe my voice low and soft. “Take all of me, little by little. Good girl.”

Bending her knees, she wraps her legs around my waist. She doesn’t need to be told what to do next. She rocks against me and I groan at the movement of my dick inside her.

I reach for another needle and thread it through the piercing in her nipple and add another to the soft tissue underneath. Her left breast gets the same treatment and every time I pierce her skin, Kayla’s eyes become more and more hooded. Her wetness leaks out of her pussy despite my cock filling her up.

“Give me more,” she pleads.

“More what?” I ask, thrusting up into her and stealing her breath on a gasp.

“More...pain.”

“I’ll give you your pain, but you’ll come on my cock while I’m inside you.” I roll my hips to punctuate the order.

I pick up more pins, this time the longer ones, and stick one through her lower left labia. She screams and the sound only makes me more determined to hear it again.

“More,” she breathes, moving her hips in a rocking, clenching rhythm that drives me out of my fucking mind. She licks her lips then whispers, “Please.”

“You’re going to be so fucking sore tomorrow,” I growl, and slowly push another long pin through the delicate skin of her right labia.

“More, fuck, yes,” she chants. Her nipples are hard and red, the areolae bruised by the sting of the needles.

I take her left nipple into my mouth and suck on it lightly, careful not to stab myself.

The connection I feel with her when I’m taking away what hurts her is powerful. I feel like I’m giving her what she needs, like I’m taking away every bad thing she’s ever experienced

and replacing it with unwavering devotion and adoration. She just doesn't know it yet.

I take a moment to let gravity take the weight of the small needles, shifting her so that they are hanging on her flesh. When she gasps and clenches her internal muscles on my dick, I know she's close.

"I love it," she pants, looking down at her pincushion skin and flushing.

"I know. And I love that you love it," I whisper against her mouth in response, though the reverence in my tone suggests I might love something else. "Come for me, princess. I want you to come on my cock while I fill you up with these little pins."

I take a needle and pierce each nipple again, right at the tip. Her scream of pleasure echoes through the room. The holes are already inflamed and stretched from the earlier piercings, and now they're on fire.

My thrusts become shallow and short while she rides out the sensation. I watch her with an indulgent smile on my face while she takes a shuddering breath, then take out the needles in one swift movement, and I'm rewarded with a sound somewhere between a sob and a moan of pain. I slide the now bloody needles gently over her heated skin and revel in her response, painting her flesh crimson with her beautiful blood. The scent is intoxicating.

"Oh, my god," she moans, flexing her fingers.

"Are you okay?" I ask her gently.

"I'm perfect," she breathes.

*Yes, you are,* I silently tell her.

I stroke her cheek with the back of my fingers and lean in to kiss her deeply, our mouths moving in tandem with the action of our hips.

When I break the kiss, I reach into the tin once more, pulling out clawed metal thimbles that have been sharpened

into wicked points. One by one I slide them onto the fingers of my right hand, before lifting it for her to see.

Her pupils dilate.

“You like that?” I rasp.

“Fuck,” she replies, her voice quivering with need. “You have no idea how much I like it.”

“Then show me,” I demand, setting a hellish rhythm with my thrusts. I’m fucking her hard and deep and she’s so tight, she feels like an inferno. I scrape my taloned fingers across her flesh and she whimpers as she shudders from head to toe, a small orgasm washing over her.

“I feel you inside me. I feel you swelling when you take me. Throbbing when you pierce me.” She punctuates every sentence with a sharp thrust of her hips.

“I want you to feel me,” I growl back. “I want you to feel my claws on your skin. I want you to feel the points of my needle nails as they break through your barriers.”

“Yes,” she hisses through gritted teeth.

I drag my sharpened nails across her breasts, leaving behind red marks that raise in anger. They’re not deep enough to bleed, and even though I know that I’m only hurting her in a superficial way, I know that it’ll be real. I know that she’s feeling what I’m doing at a visceral level.

I slide my right hand between her and my body, around my cock so I’m gripping the base and watching as she bounces on it. My thimbles break the skin so that pinpricks of my blood mingle with hers. It’s almost my undoing. I use my left hand to take her chin and turn her to face me.

“Come on, little girl.” I jerk my hips, driving deep into her. “Shake for me. Fuck my cock with your tight little cunt. Make yourself come around me while I make you bleed.”

I grab her breasts as hard as I can, the metal tips sinking through her flesh like a hot knife through butter, my tongue laving at the blood that immediately begins to flow from her

wounds. She tilts her head back and screams as the walls of her pussy convulse around me and it's too much.

I let go of my control, thrusting up into her, taking her weight on my shoulders. I dig my claws into her hips and roll my pelvis so that I grind against her clit piercing. My cum shoots out of me, and every pulse of my cock makes her cunt clench and her body spasm in response. Her cunt splinters around me, and I drive up into her one more time, feeling her pussy pulse in orgasm around my dick.

I refuse to let her collapse when she's done.

"No," I groan and take a handful of hair. I pull her head back and press my mouth against her neck.

"What?" She seems confused, so I thrust up and grind my groin against her clit as I bite down and feel her flesh give way to my teeth.

"Oh god, oh god," she pants and her eyes roll back in her head as I begin to suck. My cock is still hard, I still need more.

She stiffens and I know she's on the edge again.

"Come again, princess," I order roughly, flicking at the needles that still remain in her breasts. "Come for me."

She screams as she comes, her pussy clenching down on my cock as if it's trying to keep me inside her for good. I thrust two more times and then I'm coming again too. I empty myself inside her, my hips jolting against hers as I force her to take every last drop this time. I grip her hips hard enough to leave bruises as well as the cuts, but I don't care. I'm barely able to keep my hands off her. I reach up and tug on the needles and her scream is muffled against my shoulder. The sight of her beautiful skin threaded with my needles as she throws her head back in ecstasy is too much.

*I'll never tire of this,* I think as I close my eyes and imagine her pregnant and bleeding for me.

"Fuck fuck fuck," I rasp. I really fucking love her pussy. And I hate myself for it. I fill her with everything I have, then

slump back against the bed and breathe hard.

“Holy shit,” she breathes out, just as a fist hammering on the door startles both of us.

“If you two fuck birds have quite finished,” Honeymonster calls through the door. “We’re due in hell.”

I lift Kayla off my lap and mourn the loss of her slick heat when my cock slides out of her. She winces when I put her on her feet, and satisfaction blooms from my chest. I told her I’d make her sore.

“What happens now?” she asks, nodding to the needles in her breasts.

“I remove them, and then we get cleaned up,” I tell her, pulling off the thimble-claws and dropping them into the tin. Everything in there can be sterilised or replaced later.

“Will it hurt?” she asks eagerly, making me laugh.

“We don’t have time, little princess. But if you ever want to experience this again, just come see me.”

I’ll find a way to have her again. My body aches with my need for this girl again already.

“I’d like that,” she says softly.

“Good,” I say, swiftly removing the remaining needles from her breasts and labia without an ounce of care. Kayla closes her eyes and moans, testing my resolve to get out of here and to therapy.

Taking her by the hand, I lead her into the bathroom and turn on the shower, making sure the water’s nice and hot.

“Now get in the shower,” I demand, with a peck on her cheek and a slap on her arse. “See you in hell.”

I leave her room just as she gets under the water.

I’m already hard again.

It doesn’t matter what hell week throws at me, now that I’ve found the one, I know they’ll never break me.



# MY DEADLIEST PSYCHOS



*'DON'T BLAME ME' – TAYLOR SWIFT*

KOOKABURRA

*F*uck knows what just came over me.

I've always been sexually...insatiable.

The therapist I was forced to see after the woman running the foster home I was in found me screwing her husband and her son *at the same time* called me a sex addict.

Please, if she'd tried a little double penetration maybe she'd realise why it's so damn addictive.

Then again, if Batty Betty McGee had actually given it up to her sadist husband once in a while, maybe he wouldn't have come looking for me. Rather me than Flo. Which is exactly why when their son started sniffing around the younger members of the home too – like father, like son – I volunteered as tribute. Sure, I was young, but the other girls were even younger, and so long as I let them do whatever they wanted to me, let them hurt me however they wanted, they were leaving the other girls alone.

That was when I discovered I love three things in this world: sex, pain and power. And using the first two to get what you want in life amplifies the third tenfold.

I muse over my history as I shower, wondering why I let Bones do all that to me. Sure, the dicking was mighty fine, but I can get good dick from plenty of people in here. I don't actually *like* Bones all that much, even though he's absolutely gorgeous. Dangerous, threatening, mean...my lethal combinations. His personality leaves a lot to be desired, much like Snow's. I'm basically living inside a walking, talking, breathing, red flag museum at this point, and I'm more than ready to stock up at the gift shop with all the merch.

When I'm done, I dry off and then wipe the steam from the mirror so that I can inspect the damage. It's minimal, but damn if the sight of the puncture wounds on my breasts and hip don't make me throb and ache.

I'm late for therapy. The term makes me snort and shake my head. We've not had art therapy or group therapy for ages, and I've been truanting my mandatory one-to-one sessions.

Judging from the way Honey and Bones both referred to hell, I can deduce they feel the same way as me about forced group activities. The only ones of those I enjoy are the sexual kind. Hmm, maybe I can suggest to the counsellors some sex therapy or a bondage gang bang to help us grow as a team.

I pull on a short, oversized white T-shirt dress, not caring that my wet hair immediately makes the material over my breasts cling and turn see-through. My piercings look amazing, and there's even a little blood still weeping from the cuts on my left breast where Bones grabbed it so hard. It's seeping into the damn material and spreading like the prettiest rose in bloom.

Barefoot, I pad along the softly carpeted corridors until I come to the room where I first laid eyes on the psychos. Has it really only been a few short weeks? It feels like I've been here forever.

They're all waiting for me when I step into the room, my eyes hungrily drinking in each and every one of them. There's no denying they're all beautiful monsters, or that the darkness in each of them calls to the darkness in me.

I like them all. I want them all. My deadliest psychos.

"You're late." Nightshade's blue-black eyes are heavy lidded as he watches me walk towards him. I can see the hard press of his erection against the soft fabric of his trousers. I clench my thighs in response, feeling the rush of moisture between my legs.

"I'm sorry." I lean down to kiss him on the lips, letting my mouth linger over his too long for politeness but not enough

for desire. I draw back and see a flash of anger in his eyes before he masks it with a smirk.

“You’ve been a naughty, bad girl, Red.” His hand comes up and cups my jaw, gently stroking the skin with his thumb as he bends down to kiss my other cheek. I take the opportunity to nip his earlobe and he jerks back, glaring at me. I swallow hard, suddenly feeling like a rebellious teenager. No one controls me. Not unless I *let* them.

I lean up on my tiptoes to whisper something filthy in his ear. I’m bold with my words, but my voice is soft. He makes a strangled noise in his throat, grabbing my wrist and pulling me to him, so that his mouth is at my ear.

“Want to play that game?” he breathes.

“Any game you want,” I whisper back.

“Bones.” He looks at the other assassin through hooded eyes and nods. I’m shocked by the speed that Bones is able to shake off the effect, and I have to suck in a breath as his icy green gaze sweeps over me, before boring into Nightshade.

“What game?”

“Tonight, we take her,” Nightshade hisses, “and fuck her. Together. Hurt her. Make her scream.” He steps back to the chair he’s seated in and pulls me to him by my waist, pressing me against his body. He kisses me hard. I whimper and grind down onto his lap, desperate for more.

I don’t even care that we’re in a room full of people, let them watch. Let them *want*. I just hope he’s not fucking with me.

“That’s quite enough of that, Miss Kingfisher,” a sharp, feminine voice calls out, stepping into the room.

Satan.

Fucking bitch ruins all my fun.

“We have a therapy session to get underway and you’re holding everybody up.”

I ignore her and continue kissing Nightshade to prove a point. I whistle to my own tune. A light zap shoots through me and I groan. Bitch just pressed my shock chip in warning. Fuck, if my skin isn't on fire from it. My pussy tingles and I'm half tempted to carry on to see if she'll up the voltage.

My core pulses as I reluctantly break Nightshade's kiss and take my own seat, glaring at Satan all the while.

"Now that you're all here and paying attention, let's get started."

I narrow my eyes at the old bitch. I was here before her and she's acting like *I* held *her* up. When she smiles, I wonder what she's up to. Satan's about as trustworthy as a spider that's just eaten, or a shark that's just killed. I think she's as loco as the rest of us. No way am I opening up about shit around her. Where are the counsellors?

She smiles at me disingenuously before turning to face the rest of the room.

"*Most of you* have all had your individual sessions with me and we've worked on your backgrounds, getting to know each other. How you got here. Who you are. We're going to start getting to know each other as a group now."

She pulls her chair up to the wall and sits back in it, her hands folded neatly in her lap. Her twee blouse is tucked into a knee length black pencil skirt, absolutely plain. She doesn't wear much makeup, if any, but her nails are neatly long, dangerous looking talons.

"While I appreciate that many of you have shared in group therapy sessions before, today we're trying something different, and I think it will be highly beneficial for the rest of the group."

The lights dim, leaving us in a soft glow and she covers her mouth with her hands, coughing delicately into her long, bony fingers.

"I have something of importance to show you all."

She reaches over and the light flickers on an old television, the deep voice of a man instantly filling the room. The newsreader's face comes into view a moment later.

“This is the main story from tonight's news. The country has been stunned by the events in the small sleepy village of Breckton, where late last night, a deranged killer went on a rampage, killing an entire congregation during midnight mass.”

It's clear the footage is old, from the grainy image to the dated suit and tie the newsreader is wearing. But why is Satan showing us this? I glance around the room but it's too dark to make out the others' expressions. I squint my eyes, trying to see better or read their body language but it's no use. I can't figure out what's going on. Only that Seytan said this was important, so it must pertain to one of us, right?

The news report goes on for some time, announcing that the killer was caught in the early hours of the morning, still at the scene of the crime when Siobhan Whittaker, a parishioner unable to attend the service that night, raised the alarm when her husband failed to return home after mass.

I don't get it.

“Reports from the Breckton community say that this heinous, monstrous crime was committed by one of their own, though we've been given no name yet.”

Satan switches off the television and the lights come back on. I blink and surreptitiously try to work out who the report might have been about, but everyone's faces are careful blank masks. I don't even *know* where Breckton is – haven't even heard of it – so I can't even try to place the guys' accents to the area.

“Now, I've brought this up today because I want to know,” Satan begins, “what you think of the man who butchered innocent people in his own church.”

Well, I have my own thoughts on the matter. I mean, I've killed plenty of people in churches and on a number of

occasions, the victims have been praying at the time. I personally don't have a problem with it, so long as they're on my list of demons to target.

I don't know who killed those people, but I'll bet if they're sitting in this room with me, they did it because they had a damn good reason.

"We're all different people with different life experiences. To some of you, this news will be shocking and hard to digest, but to others, it will be a reminder of the world you used to live in, the things you once did."

I raise my hand for the first time in the group and Satan nods at me, inviting me to speak.

"I would have done the exact same thing as the guy in the news who killed all those people." I shrug and rest my hand on my lap again, glancing around the room. "The world's a hard place. I don't see why a soul would have a problem with the person who rids the world of evil."

All eyes swing to me, and I suddenly feel like the one in the hot seat, and not the one who's supposed to be doing the questioning. "Why do you think that, Miss Kingfisher?" Satan asks, her voice even and modulated, though she's unable to hide her dislike of me from her face. "Why assume that the people in that church weren't innocent?"

"Because the killer could have struck in the daytime, at Sunday service, where there would have been kids in the congregation. He didn't. He waited for a midnight mass – and those only happen, what, once a month or so? – and struck at a time where there wouldn't be children present. So that means it wasn't a mindless rampage or a break in psychosis, it was well-thought out and planned in advance. The killer had to have patience, and, if they stayed at the scene of the crime instead of fleeing, it means that everyone who was on their target list was at that church that night. Otherwise they would have left to find the others. That congregation was far from innocent, and whoever killed them did that little village and the rest of the world a favour. Bravo to them."

I sigh and turn to the room, finally making eye contact with the other guys. They all look different in the light, but they all have the exact same expression: shock.

I'm not the only one who thinks that way. Nightshade levels a glare at me that sends a shiver down my spine, but I can tell that he respects my opinions because he inclines his head slightly before settling back in his chair.

"And if I told you that the killer was barely a teenager?" Satan asks in a tight voice.

"Then you'd just be proving my theory correct," I tell her. "Those people did something horrible to that child – probably in the name of God – and got their just desserts."

"Well put, Miss Kingfisher," Satan's smile is tight and as fake as they come. "Is that a normal way of thinking, though?"

I shrug and turn back to her. "I don't know. I've never been in a situation where I had to ask myself that question." I don't bother to elaborate any further. I'm sure she knows what I'm talking about.

"What about you, Miss Kingfisher?" Satan asks me, her voice pleasant but her eyes cold. "Have you ever killed a man in a church?"

I square my shoulders back and stare her in the eye fearlessly. "As a matter of fact, I have. I'm not ashamed of that fact, nor is it a secret."

Satan's eyes widen just a fraction, her interest piqued. "Do tell."

I lean back in my chair, crossing my arms over my chest. "It was a long time ago. I was thirteen and I had just run away from my foster home. I joined a cult. They brainwashed me into believing that the only way to please God was through human sacrifice. So, when they told me to kill a man in a church, I did it without question."

The room falls silent, the only sound being the hum of the air conditioning. Satan leans forward, her eyes locking onto



mine. “And how did it feel, Miss Kingfisher? To take a life in the name of a *false* God?”

I pause, thinking back. “It felt...powerful. Like I had control over life and death.”

Satan nods slowly before her face twists into an expression of disgust. “You just can’t ever tell the truth, can you, Miss Kingfisher?”

I laugh, even though she called me on my bullshit. “Who cares if every word out of my mouth just then was a lie? No one gives a fuck who I’ve killed or my reasons for doing so. We’re all killers here, and you clearly think very little of us, so why share sob stories to try and gain your approval? I sure as shit don’t want or need it, and I bet the others don’t either. Go fuck yourself.”

Her smile is glacial. “Let’s see if you’re still smiling and laughing tonight, shall we?”

“Don’t you know, monsters aren’t scared of the dark? We’re not afraid of anything because we slayed our demons a long time ago.”

“Is that so?” Satan gets to her feet, smooths out her skirt, and then turns to the rest of the room. “I’ll see you after lunch. Miss Kingfisher, please wait behind.”

Again, I laugh, like the naughty kid being kept behind after class. I’m not scared of her. Not scared of anyone in this place. There’s nothing she can say or do to me that will break me.

I watch as the other guys file out of the room, their eyes downcast and their shoulders slumped. Are they afraid of her, afraid of what she can do to them? They shouldn’t be. Whatever’s going on here, it’s them who need us, not the other way round. I’m not afraid of her or anyone else – what’s the worst they can do to us? We’re killers, monsters, and I’ve stared death in the face more times than I can count. I’m not afraid of dying.

“Sit down, Miss Kingfisher,” Satan motions to the chair opposite her. “I want to talk to you about something.”

I sit back down, crossing my legs and leaning back in the chair. “What is it?”

She leans forward, her eyes locked onto mine. “I think you and the asylum are a lot alike, Miss Kingfisher. You both have a thirst for blood, a desire to see others suffer. But where you differ is in your goals. You kill for the sake of killing, for the thrill of it. The asylum kills for a purpose, to further their agenda.”

I scoff. “And what agenda is that?”

Satan leans back and folds her hands in her lap. “The asylum is in the business of world domination. And they seem to think that with your skills and your...unique way of thinking, you could be a valuable asset to their team.”

I raise an eyebrow. “And what makes you think I would want to join your team?”

“You don’t have a choice. You’re already a part of it whether you like it or not. However, the powers that be heard your little speech in my office the other day and decided to grant your wish. Because they share the same desires, Miss Kingfisher. And because I know what you truly want. You want power, control, and respect. You want to be feared, not just for your killing abilities, but for your mind as well. Which is exactly why they want you to have these.”

I consider her words for a moment. She’s right – I do want those things. But I won’t admit it to her. While I’m distracted, she hands me a brown cardboard box and I remove the lid. Inside are seven identical devices that look a lot like—

“You’re giving us phones?”

“*They* are giving you the phones, Miss Kingfisher. Not me. You can’t call out, can’t use them off this island, cannot communicate with the outside world in any way. There are no internet facilities on them, and they are fully monitored at all times.”

“And what do *they* want in exchange for this bribe?”

“That you deliver on what you promised. Unite the team and make the asylum the most sought-after network of killers available to the highest bidder.”

I can tell from her expression that she hates this, hates giving me this power, and it makes me grin. I have no intention of doing any such thing whereby I hand the power back to the asylum, but for now, I’ll let them think I’m their pawn.

I hold onto the box and stand. “I’m assuming I can go now?”

“See you after lunch, Miss Kingfisher. If you have the stomach for it.”

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ALL CHATTER STOPS when I step into the dining room, giving me the distinct impression the guys were just talking about me. I wonder if they were comparing notes on my performance in bed. Ten out of ten, at least.

“What’s in the box, Sugar Puff?” Honey asks, throwing me a cheeky wink that gives me fanny flutters. Fuck that boy is too fucking cute for his own good. Especially when idly twirling his hunting knife in his hands like that.

“I have gifts,” I say with a sweet smile. Honey perks up, sitting forward in his seat and flashing those dangerous twin dimples my way. He stabs his knife into the table top with force and turns his full attention on me. Fuck he’s irresistible. “For everyone.”

One by one I pass the labelled, boxed phones out to each of the guys and they stare at me in wonder.

“What did you do to get us these?” Night eventually asks, frowning.

He’s the smartest one in here, catching on quickest and knowing that we don’t get anything for free.

“Don’t you worry your pretty little head about it,” I tell him dismissively. His nostrils flare, and I don’t know if it’s at my easy dismissal or the patronising term of endearment I just used. Well, it’s true, he *is* pretty. So fucking lethally gorgeous he’s a danger to all bad-boy loving pussies across the globe.

*And he’s all mine.*

He just doesn’t know it yet.

None of them do. They’re not aware that I’ve claimed them as my own. Even Snow. He did take bullets for me, so I guess he deserves a chance – not that I plan on letting him know it. If he wants in my good books he has a hell of a long, broken glass lined road to crawl along before he’s in my good graces or in my favour.

“What are they for?” Bones asks, suspicion lancing his tone. I tut. Trust him to look a gift horse in the mouth, and return to being a cunt to me now he’s had his fill of my pussy.

“They’re for Hatchet.” Six shocked faces stare at me, none more surprised than Daddy Hatchet himself. “I wanted us to be able to communicate. I want to know him better, and this was the only way I could think of.”

“That’s...mighty sweet of you, Sugar Puff,” Honey says, the first to recover. He gets to his feet, rounds the table and kisses me on the cheek. It takes effort to stop my eyelids fluttering closed like a damn damsel. *I’m a fucking killer, I do not swoon over anyone.*

“They’re monitored, obviously,” I tell them before they can get too excited. “Seytan said they only work here, you can’t use the internet or anything but we can message each other. Probably make calls to each other too, but no-one else. I just thought it would help somehow.”

“Red, this was very thoughtful. Thank you.” Nightshade holds my gaze until I start to squirm, embarrassed. I nod my head in acknowledgement of his words and duck away from his beautiful blue-black orbs.

“Thank you, pet,” Ghost whispers, causing my core to pulse. I can’t read the expression on his face at all, but suddenly I’m thirsty for him. Desperate to connect with him once more. Was what happened in the art studio a one-off? Now that. I have freedom to move around the asylum as I please, maybe I could return there in the hopes of finding Ghost and replaying our little one-to-one art lesson again.

Bones and Snow don’t say a word, but I wouldn’t expect them to. Arseholes.

The phone remaining in the box beeps and I open it.

It’s a message from *Forest*. I frown, not remembering who that is from Counsellor Jen’s early introductions. I remember that Ghost’s real name is Silas Donnelly, and I know their last names because that’s how Satan refers to us, but which one is Forest?

I glance around but they’re all absorbed in their phones, so anyone of them could be messaging me. Knowing the only way to find out is to open it, I click on the message.

FOREST

Thank you. What a good girl you are. Daddy  
Hatchet x

I flush at his praise and cradle the phone to my chest, feeling a warmth spread through me. Yep, definitely fucking swooning over here. What are these beautiful psychos doing to me?

*This is progress.*

I can do this.

A CHILD OF THE LORD



‘RIVER’ – BISHOP BRIGGS

HATCHET

In all my time in this asylum, no one has tried to communicate with me using alternate methods. I’ve been shouted at, patronised, whipped, hit and punished for refusing to speak, but not once has someone tried to use anything other than speech. In the early days they were so preoccupied with getting me to *talk* they never stopped to consider that getting me to *communicate* could be something else entirely.

Eventually they gave up, leaving me alone for the most part, though occasionally trying to catch me by surprise with electro-shock and other hideous forms of ‘therapy’.

Facing my twenty-third year inside these walls, I’ve seen countless recruits come and go – and by *go*, I mean be eliminated once they were no longer useful – and I’ve not spoken to any of them.

I’ve not uttered a word since I was nine years old and gifted to the Breckton parish priest at the time. It took me four years to snap. Kayla was right in saying the murders were planned, that I deliberately chose to strike at midnight mass when the community’s most depraved parishioners came out to *worship*.

If I’d been older, I would have taken the kids out with them. A fucking mercy killing. That village is rotten to the roots and the only way to save it is to nuke the fucking place and raze it to the ground.

Kayla saw that. She saw *me*. The child I was, and what I was forced to endure. And then she went out of her way to secure phones for each of us, with the sole purpose of communicating with me?

She's floored me.

Until now I found her beguiling. I may not speak, but I watch and I see everything, and I could tell right from day one that she would change the very foundations of the asylum, but I didn't expect it to happen so quickly.

They're all ensnared by her. I wouldn't go as far as to call it love. Not really. I barely think we're capable of such an emotion. But it's definitely something more than lust. Even Snow's changed. He's less selfish, less self-centred. I don't know why he saved her and took those bullets, but I think the asylum may have finally found its dream team. With Kayla acting as the glue that keeps us together, we could be unstoppable for them.

But I don't want to be.

Twenty-two years of following orders, growing up brainwashed and indoctrinated to the asylum and its missions, and this is the first time I've wanted to fight for something else. For *someone* else.

I've never had a problem with being in the asylum. Unlike the newer recruits they bring in. Maybe their reasons for killing were different to mine, but for me, being their pawn is a fucking holiday camp compared to being a *Child of the Lord* in Breckton.

Freedom.

The word tastes alien on my tongue as I roll it around my silent mouth and stare in wonder at the fiery redheaded girl who's gone out of her way to *know* me.

I never let myself dream of a future. I was the asylum's soldier through and through. Work for them until you die. Either on a mission or once your time was up.

As she explains to the others what she was thinking in procuring the phones, I can't help but wonder the price she paid. For me. For all of us. No one has ever done anything kind for me before.



She deserves so much more than my silent gratitude.

I pick up the device, surprised when it unlocks using my facial ID. Obviously, I'm out of touch with technology. Even at thirteen, most of the kids, hell most of the town, didn't have mobile phones, so this is all new to me. Luckily for us, we have access to movies, so I'm not completely inept. I bring up the messaging app and find that all of the numbers have been pre-saved in the device. I click Kayla's name and rattle off a quick message of thanks.

I smile when she blushes and holds the phone to her heart like a warm hug. Maybe I don't fucking know what love looks like, but the way I felt when she handed me that phone, the way she holds hers to her chest like it's precious when I thank her... Makes me think maybe.

I'm going to have to show her how much her sacrifice means to me.

LET ME SHOW YOU WHO'S REALLY  
IN CHARGE



'DO I WANNA KNOW?' – ARCTIC MONKEYS

GHOST

The phones are an interesting touch. I never have much to say, but I keep fingering it in my pocket, wondering if I should message her.

What would I say?

That I'm completely captivated by her? That I've not been able to stop thinking about her? That I've filled three sketchbooks full of drawings – all of her – since I painted her in art therapy?

I'm obsessed. And obsession never ends well for me. Or for *him*.

The need to have her again is all-encompassing. It takes over my every waking moment, every thought, every dream. My nightmares have been replaced by her. Having her, taking her, showing her who she can be. And when the nightmares start, they're always the same: losing her to *him*.

I don't message her. I leave the phone in my hoodie pocket and follow the others out of the dining hall, watching with resentment building in my chest as Honeymooner flirts so effortlessly with her.

Why can't it be that easy for me?

Ever since that day in the studio, I've been trying to figure out how to approach her. It's not just about the sex. I want that connection. She seems to have it with everyone except me. Even with Snow and Bones – their hateful banter isn't fooling anyone.

I want to be able to talk to her, to hold her, to feel her warm body close to mine. But I'm afraid. I'm afraid of losing control, of giving into my obsession and scaring her away.

She's too important to me to risk it all. To let *him* get his hands on her.

I guess that's a problem for another day, because we're about to face down hell week.

We come to a stop outside Seytan's office, and she leads us wordlessly to wherever this afternoon's session will take place. It'll fill the whole afternoon and well into the evening and night, but I doubt any of us will be hungry after we're done here. Facing our demons only ever leaves us broken and exhausted.

As we walk along the corridors, I can feel the tension building inside me. My obsession with Kayla is like a ticking time bomb waiting to explode, and I'm afraid that today might be the day that it finally does.

"Today, we're going to explore our deepest fears," Seytan says, her voice echoing off the narrow walls as she comes to a stop outside the pool room. "We're going to confront the things that scare us the most and see if we can overcome them."

A knot forms in my stomach as I think about what she's saying. My fear isn't something that can be conquered by facing it head-on. It's something that's deeply ingrained in me, living within me. How do I confront a part of myself? How do I cut it out when *it* festers and breeds inside me like a cancer?

"You'll be locked in this room until fears have been faced – however long it takes. Good luck, and welcome to Hell Week."

She pulls open the door to the pool room, and we all file in, me at the back. Behind me, Seytan closes the doors and I hear the key turn in the lock, before her steps echo away down the corridor as she leaves. Doesn't mean she won't be watching us though. I try the door anyway, but of course it's locked.

The room is dimly lit, with only a few small lamps casting shadows on the walls. The air is heavy with the scent of

chlorine and something else, something musky and dark. Water is dripping somewhere in the room. I'll admit, I don't love the water, don't spend any time down here, but this place looks dank and foreboding, and I can't imagine why anyone would willingly come here to swim.

I look around and see the others have already begun to scatter, each taking a corner of the room. We know the drill, we've been through this before. But this time, it feels different. There's something in the air, something sinister.

I make my way to the edge of the pool, my eyes drawn to the dark, rippling water, and the knot in my stomach tightens as I stare at it. The water seems to be alive with something, something lurking beneath the surface.

“What are you afraid of?”

I jump at the sound of Kayla's voice, turning to see her standing behind me, her long fingers toying with her phone. Her eyes are wide in the dim light, fixed on mine. She doesn't come closer.

I swallow hard, my heart racing. “I'm afraid of losing control,” I admit, my voice barely above a whisper. “Of giving into my obsessions and scaring people away.”

Kayla nods slowly, her expression thoughtful. “I know how that feels,” she says softly. “But sometimes, you have to face your fears head-on. Confront them, and don't let them control you.”

A surge of courage wells up inside me. Maybe Kayla is right. Maybe it's time to face my fears, once and for all. I pass her the phone from my pocket and turn back towards the pool.

Without another word, I take a deep breath and dive into the water. It's cold and shocking, sending a shiver down my spine. But as I swim deeper, I realise that there's nothing here to be afraid of.

It's just me, and the water, and the darkness. And for the first time in a long time, I feel like I'm in control.

Maybe this session today isn't about me or *him*.

I swim to the end of the pool and climb out at the other end. I'm dripping, and the air is chilled against my skin, causing me to shiver. The cancer inside of me stirs, its interest piqued by Kayla's presence. I turn away. I won't let him have her.

Kayla walks over to me, concern etched on her face. "Are you okay?" she asks, reaching out to touch my arm. Her touch sends a jolt of electricity through me, and I feel my control slipping away as the other part of me, the darker part of me, basks in her touch.

*You can't have her. She's mine.*

*You're weak.*

*I saw her first.*

*A pathetic argument for a pathetic shell of a man. Or should I say boy?*

I turn to face her, my breathing laboured as I struggle to keep my obsession in check. "I... I need to get out of here," I mutter, backing away from her. "I can't be around you right now."

Kayla's eyes widen in surprise and hurt, and she takes a step back. "What are you talking about? What's going on?"

"I can't explain," I say, my voice choked with emotion. "Just...please, leave me alone for a while."

I turn and run from the room, heading for the changing rooms, leaving Kayla behind. I know I've hurt her, but I can't help it. The darkness inside me is too powerful, too all-consuming. I need to find a way to get myself under control.

As I enter the locker room, I'm met with silence. I quickly strip off my wet clothes and grab a towel from the clean pile, wrapping it tightly around my waist. I need to get out of here, away from Kayla, before I lose control completely.

But as I turn to leave, I catch a glimpse of myself in the mirror. My eyes are wild, my skin pale and clammy. The cancer inside me is growing, feeding on my fear and obsession. I can feel it taking over, consuming me.

*I don't want to let him out.*

I close my eyes, taking a deep breath and trying to calm myself. But it's no use. The darkness inside me is too strong. I need to find a way to fight it, before it obliterates me.

I open my eyes and see a razor blade lying on the bench beside me. My hand reaches out for it before I can even think. The metallic glint of the blade sends a surge of excitement through me. I've found my weapon. I don't even question why it's there or where it came from.

*Weak. Pathetic. Despicable.*

I lift the blade to my wrist, tracing the cool metal along my skin. The darkness inside me roars with approval, urging me to end it all. But a small voice inside me, a voice that sounds suspiciously like Kayla's, tells me to fight it. To not give in to my fears and obsessions. To not let *him* win.

With a shaky hand, I lower the blade and take a step back, my breathing ragged. I need to get out of here, away from the temptation. Maybe if I can just get some fresh air, clear my head, I can find a way to fight back.

I make my way to the door, my heart pounding in my chest, and push it open. But instead of the cool night air, I'm met with darkness. Thick, suffocating darkness that seems to swallow me up.

Panic sets in, and I stumble backwards, trying to find my way back to the light. But it's no use. The darkness is all around me, seeping into my skin and wrapping itself around me like a boa constrictor. Laying claim to what it wants. It wants to take over me, so that it can have her. Kayla.

*No!*

I throw myself at the door, trying desperately to push my way out, scratching and clawing at the handle. But it's no use. The darkness won't let me out, and it won't let me fight.

And then I hear a voice, my own voice, but different. I'm taunting myself, mocking myself. But it's not me, it's *him*. "This is what you want," it says. "Who you are. Face it or be consumed."

I listen to my own voice, as the darkness closes in around me. I'm scared, but at the same time, I'm excited. I know what I have to do.

I take a deep breath and turn the blade to my arm, slicing it open. The blade makes a sharp, metallic sound as it meets my skin, leaving a trail of red ice in its wake. My obsession demands blood, and I'm happy to give it what it wants. *My* blood though. Not hers.

Never hers.

I watch my blood pour, swirling into the centre drain like a whirlpool and the cancer inside me stirs, its hunger quickly being sated.

I raise my arm above my head, watching as my blood flows out.

Ever since I was little, my mum would tell me if I cut my arm above my heart, I'd be bleeding out love. But I know better now. I'm not bleeding out love, I'm bleeding out my obsession. My craving. No one can love me unless I'm in control.

The darkness has taken everything from me. My father left me when I was young. My friends dropped me, one by one. I don't have a future outside of the four walls of the asylum. And I never had any luck with the ladies.

*Until her.*

The thought makes me realise that this is *my* life, and I'm taking it back. I know Kayla is right. I need to face my fears,



before they consume me. I've given into them far too much in the past, and I've suffered for it. Now I'm ready to fight back.

The darkness inside me draws back a little, satisfied that it has its prey right where it wants it. I've given in to it for so long, it thinks I'm easy. That I'm already halfway gone.

Now it is time to show it that *I'm* in control.

"Fight back," I whisper into the darkness. "Let me show you who's really in charge."

It doesn't take long before the cancer inside me is tamed, but it feels like a battle has waged within me for hours. He's never gone, just wrestled into submission until the next time he rears his head and fights his way out.

I can't let that happen, can't put Kayla at risk like that. It's part of the reason why I've been keeping my distance from her. Ever since the day in the art studio when I snapped because she saw my painting, I've been battling my obsession for her with my obsessive need to protect her from *him. Me.* We are one and the same, no matter how much I prefer to pretend otherwise.

I drop to my knees, exhausted, but invigorated. Today, I've beaten it. I've beaten *him*, and I did it all on my own.

# LEAVING ME HOLLOW



*'EVERYBODY WANTS TO RULE THE WORLD' –  
LORDE*

KOOKABURRA

Fucking welcome to *Hell Week*. The bastard shock-chip be damned, I need to *hurt* that woman. There's no doubt in my mind now that she knows everything. The pool is a coincidence too far. Or too many. Whatever the malapropism should be. My brain's too scrambled by the black body of water in front of me to function properly.

I tried to distract myself by talking to Ghost, but he dived into the water, freaked out, and hasn't been seen since.

Maybe he found a way out.

I drop both our phones on a nearby bench, take a wide berth around the edge of the pool, practically skirting the walls where I can and head off in the direction that Ghost took.

"Where are you going?" Someone calls from behind me, but over the fear pounding through my veins and the blood roaring in my ears, I can't discern who it is. Doesn't matter, I haven't got the words to answer them anyway.

I push through the double doors Ghost took, and find myself in a small, narrow corridor. There's a door on my right, one on my left, and one straight ahead marked as a fire escape. I race towards it, throwing my full weight onto the safety release bar, but nothing happens. Desperation makes me teary. The chlorine fumes are clawing at my throat, threatening to choke me, and I need to get out of here.

I'm not good with water, but I'm especially bad with chlorinated pools.

Does Satan know that? Fucking bitch. I bet she does.

Panic sets in as I realise I'm trapped. I turn around and try the door on the right, but it's locked. The door on the left is slightly ajar, and I push it open, hoping for an escape route. Inside is a small changing room with a single window. I rush to it, but it's barred shut. I slump to the floor in defeat, my heart pounding.

As I catch my breath, footsteps approach. A tall, dark figure stands in the doorway. I can't make out their face, but I can feel their presence looming over me.

"Who are you?" I ask, my voice shaking.

The figure doesn't respond, but instead takes a step forward. I scramble to my feet and back up against the barred window.

"Stay back," I warn, but the figure keeps advancing.

There's a sharp pain in the back of my neck and when I blink, they're gone.

I stumble forward, catching myself on the edge of a bench. My head is pounding and my vision is blurred. I reach up to the back of my neck, feeling for the source of the pain. But there's nothing there.

What the hell was that? Something to do with the chip maybe?

I try to swallow, but my throat is dry. I take a step back. But it feels like the darkness is closing in on me, making it hard to breathe. This is a dead end. There's no way out. What am I supposed to do? I told Ghost to face his fears, but there's no way I can do the same.

And where *is* he? I can't believe that he might have found a way out and not come back to tell the rest of us.

*Really, Kayla? How well do you know him? You've had all of a handful on conversations with him and you've let him cover you in paint and fuck you with a paintbrush. You're acting like he has some sort of loyalty to you. He doesn't give a fuck about you.*

I shake that thought from my head. I need to focus on my fears. There's three names left on my original list. Obviously I'm now adding Satan and everyone associated with this place. But the ones on the first list, they think I don't know them, that I don't remember, but I do. Until those demons are slayed, I cannot truly face my fears.

I stumble back to the poolside, not even aware of where my feet are taking me. I'm fevered, frantic, desperate and alone. It doesn't matter that I'm trapped in this room with the others, because I'm locked in my own private hell.

I scramble backwards until my back hits a wall. Feeling behind me, I inch my way along until I find a corner.

I curl up into a ball, my knees pulled up to my chest. My breaths come in short gasps as I try to calm myself down.

But the fear won't leave me. It's like a disease, eating away at my insides and leaving me hollow.

I close my eyes and try to focus on something, anything, that will take my mind off the darkness that's closing in on me. But all I can think about is how I got here, how I ended up in this place of torment.

I think I hear footsteps in the distance, but I don't move. I don't care who it is anymore. I just want it all to end.

But then I hear a familiar voice, a voice that cuts through the darkness like a knife. A voice so dark that my fears cower from *it*. From him. My salvation.

THEY'VE ALL LOST THE FUCKING  
PLOT



*'RUN BOY RUN' – WOODKID*

NIGHTSHADE

“*H*ey, Red. Are you okay?”

There's something seriously fucking wrong with Kayla. It's this room, I'm telling you. It's causing all kinds of crazy reactions in us. First Ghost dives into the pool and goes bat shit crazy and disappears, and now Kayla's in some sort of trance, completely non-responsive.

“Guys, give me a hand,” I call, pulling Kayla into my arms. She's stone under my touch. Ice cold and clammy. And there's nothing in her gaze. It's completely empty. Terrifyingly so.

“Guys, a hand?” I shout again, unable to tear my gaze from Kayla's too pale face.

When no-one moves to help me, I turn to see what the fuck they're doing.

*They've all lost the fucking plot. What the hell is going on?*

In one corner of the room Bones is fucking stabbing himself for some unknown reason, in the other Honeymooner is wildly slicing his knife through the air as if trying to ward off invisible spectres. Snow is driving his fist into the wall over and over again, and even in the low light I can see his knuckles are bloody, leaving smears on the brick after every hit.

Most worrying of all though, is Hatchet. He's stripped down to his jeans and is climbing into the shallow end of the pool, his expression as vacant as Kayla's. And I know he can't swim.

“Hatchet, mate, what are you doing?” I shout.

He ignores me. Doesn't react in any way, once he's in the water, he turns away from me and begins to walk towards the deep end. Step by step the water rises against his abdomen, his chest, his shoulders.

"Fucking stop!" I yell, torn.

He doesn't listen and I'm forced to lay Kayla down on the floor. Racing around to the deep end, I crouch at the pool's edge and try to catch Hatchet's eye. He doesn't see me.

"Hatchet? Hatchet! Forest? Stop!"

The water's up past his chin now and I know in another few steps his mouth and nose will be under. I dive into the pool without thinking, swimming over to him with strong, sure strokes. When I reach him, he's still moving forwards and he's impossibly strong to try and stop. I climb onto his back and attempt to drag him backwards into shallower water.

"Hatchet, what are you doing?"

"Forest has been chosen. He's a child of the lord now. He must be baptised. Cleansed to do his bidding."

Holy fucking shit, did Hatchet just *talk*? The voice came from him, but it was cold and monotonous and not at all what I thought he'd sound like.

"Snow! Help!" I yell, coughing when I swallow water.

Around me, Honey and Bones both step off the edge of the pool, plunging themselves into the deep end.

"Fuck! Snow! Help!"

Snow finally fucking hears me and turns, but his gaze goes right through me, unseeing. His eyes lock onto Kayla and he starts walking towards her with determined strides, a look of pure hatred on his face. Fuck. I'm torn. Do I let Hatchet go to save Kayla from Snow, or do I keep fighting him to save his life?

I watch in dismay as Snow grabs Kayla by the hair, drags her to the water's edge and throws her into the pool. He jumps



in after her.

“What—?”

I’m cut off by strong arms wrapping around my throat, dragging me under. I release Hatchet in an attempt to fight off my attacker but they have me in a choke hold I can’t fight. I kick and struggle, breaking the surface of the water just in time to see Snow plunging Kayla under and holding her down.

*What the fuck is happening? Why is he trying to drown her? Why is Hatchet trying to drown himself? And who the fuck has the audacity to try to take me under?*

I’m pulled back into the depths of the water, my senses instantly overwhelmed by the cold, murky embrace. Panic surges through me as I desperately attempt to claw my way back up to the surface. Strong arms are still constricting around my throat like a vise, squeezing the air from my lungs.

My initial instinct is to break free, to thrash and fight off this unseen assailant, but their grip is unyielding, and I find myself rapidly running out of breath. I kick and struggle with all my might, but the water only seems to tighten its grip around me.

Just when I fear I might lose consciousness, my body convulses, and I manage to break through the surface of the water. Gasping for air, I frantically scan my surroundings, my vision blurred from the waterlogged struggle. Snow still has Kayla held under the water and dread coils in the pit of my stomach as I grapple to make sense of the chaos unfolding before my eyes. The events have taken a sinister turn, and I can’t fathom why. I struggle to free myself from my own attacker, my thoughts racing as I realise that the once-laughing faces of my comrades have transformed into masks of menace and aggression.

“What the fuck is happening?” I sputter again, my voice strained and raspy as I continue to wrestle against the relentless grip that threatens to drag me back into the abyss.

There's movement out of the corner of my eye – a pale blur – and I yell for help one last time. “Ghost!”

I'm dragged under once more and as a second set of arms lock around my legs, I think that'll be the last time I see the surface.

HELL IS MURKY, WET AND  
SUFFOCATING



*'MY SONGS KNOW WHAT YOU DID IN THE DARK' – FALL OUT BOY*

KOOKABURRA

The water takes me back. Back to a different time and place.

I always thought hell would be full of fire and brimstone – it's what they taught us at Sunday School – but my early years taught me that hell is murky, wet and suffocating.

I thrash and kick, desperate to break free from the grip of the memory pulling me under the water. My lungs ache for air, and panic sets in as I realise I may not make it to the surface again. *Not again.*

But then, something strange happens. A strange energy pulses through my body, and I feel a surge of something that I can't explain. Suddenly, I feel myself rising up from the depths of the water, and then I'm on the cold hard tiles of the water's edge, wondering what the hell happened.

"Help the others," someone hisses. "I've got her."

At first, I'm not sure what's happening. But then I cough and blink and see a ghostly figure hovering over me.

"You're okay, Kayla, but you have to come back to us. You're the only one who can save them. Face your fear."

I look up at the pale figure, my heart racing with confusion and terror. Who is this person? What do they want from me? But as I stare into their eyes, I feel a sudden sense of familiarity. It's like I've known them my whole life, and they're here to guide me through the darkness.

Then it hits me, it's not a ghostly figure, it's *Ghost*. Silas. I haven't known him all my life, but he sure knows me, and if he thinks I can do this, then I have to believe him.

With trembling limbs, I push myself up and take a step towards the water. As I do, memories rush back to me, memories of a time long ago, when I was just a child, playing in the pool with my family.

I remember the sound of splashing in the water, the feel of the cool breeze on my face, and the laughter of my sibling – a brother – as we splashed in the shallows. But then, something happened. A shadow appeared in the water, and before I knew it, I was being dragged under by an unseen force.

It was a traumatic experience, the first of many, and one that has haunted me for years. But now, as I stand before the murky water, I realise that this is the moment I've been waiting for. The moment when I finally face my fear and conquer the memory that's been holding me back for so long. My family, my original family, tried to drown me, many times until disposing of me became too taxing and they abandoned me to my fate. Now's my chance to fight back and save the only real family I've ever known.

"I'm ready," I whisper, feeling a sense of determination wash over me. "I can save them."

I take a deep breath and close my eyes, trying to clear my mind and focus on the task at hand.

The memory of that day comes flooding back to me again, and I feel myself being pulled under once more. But this time, I'm ready. This time, I fight back with all my strength, kicking and thrashing until I break free from the grip of the memory.

When I finally surface, gasping for air, I see the others in the water with me, Night and Hatchet, struggling to keep their heads above the surface. Without hesitation, I dive back under, swimming towards them with all my might.

As I reach them, I realise they're not just struggling against the current, but something else as well. Something is pulling them down, dragging them deeper into the water. I reach out and grab hold of Night, pulling him towards the surface with all my strength.

But then I feel it too. The pull of something dark and sinister, trying to drag me down. I won't let it. I fight against it with everything I have, and slowly we make our way towards the shallow end.

As we reach the steps, me towing Night awkwardly with one hand while he pulls Hatchet's dead weight along too, I'm gasping for air and shivering from the cold. But we're alive.

I made it.

I turn to Night and see a look of gratitude in his eyes. "Thank you, Red," he says. "I'll get Hatchet out. Now go save the others."

There's no time to rest. The others are still out there, still struggling against the darkness that lurks beneath the water's surface.

Diving back under, I squint through the murky depths and swim towards the dark shadows. My hands find Honey's large bicep and I have to use all my strength to drag him to the surface. When we break through, he immediately starts coughing and spluttering, but he seems with it enough to get himself out so I dive again looking for Bones. He's the only one left.

I can't see him, can't feel him, and panic sieges my lungs. A bubble of precious air escapes between my lips and I push myself down deeper. The water is colder now, and the darkness is almost suffocating. I scan every inch of the water, my heart pounding with fear.

How deep does this pool go? It seems unfathomable. I'm yet to reach the bottom and my lungs are burning, urging me to turn back and head to the surface.

Just when I think all hope is lost, I see a faint glimmer of light. I swim towards it, and as I get closer, I realise it's Bones. His eyes are closed and his body is limp. I grab him and kick towards the surface, my limbs heavy with fatigue. I thought bodies were supposed to be weightless in water? Bones feels like the heaviest load I've ever carried.

As we break the surface, a surge of relief washes over me.

I can barely keep my head above water, but I manage to drag Bones towards the pool's edge. We're in the deep end still because I don't have the strength to get us to the shallow end, but then strong arms are there lifting both of us out of the water.

When we finally reach safety, I collapse beside him, gasping for air.

After a few minutes which feel like mere seconds after spending an eternity trapped underwater, I blink my eyes open and find five concerned gazes staring down at me.

I take a deep breath and sit up, shaking my head to clear it. They all look relieved, but they also look like they're in shock. I can't blame them. I'm pretty sure I'm in shock too.

"What happened?" Honey asks, his voice hoarse.

I open my mouth to answer him, but all that comes out is a cough. My lungs still feel like they're full of water. Night hands me a bottle of water and I gratefully take a sip, clearing my throat. I've no idea where he got it from, but I'm glad for it.

"We made it out," I say finally, looking around at them all.

There's a moment of silent relief, and then a chorus of voices starts talking at once, all of them asking questions that I can't answer.

"We all made it out...except...what happened to Snow?" I ask when I realise I don't see him amongst the others crowding around me.

"He tried to drown you," Ghost says in a quiet voice.

"What?"

"I don't know what happened, but I pulled you both from the pool and when he tried to push you back in, I knocked him out. I didn't know how else to stop him."

“Oh.” I mean, what do I even say to that? Fucker tried to drown me *again*? “Where is he?”

Ghost points to the shallow end of the pool, where sure enough, Snow is laid out on the tiles.

“Is he okay?” I whisper.

Suddenly I’m shaking and my ears are ringing and black spots are dancing before my vision.

“Red? You okay there?” Night asks, but he sounds so impossibly far away.

I try to nod, but my head feels too heavy to move. Instead, I slump back against the wall and close my eyes, trying to slow my breathing and steady my heartbeat.

“Just give her some space,” Honey says, his voice closer this time. “She needs a minute.”

I hear footsteps moving away and then returning, and then a hand touches my shoulder. I flinch away instinctively, but the hand stays there, warm and steady.

“It’s just me, pet,” Ghost says softly. “You’re safe now. We’re all safe, thanks to you. You did so well.”

I open my eyes to see his face hovering over mine, his dark eyes searching for any sign of panic or pain. I force a weak smile and reach up to touch his cheek, feeling the rough scratch of stubble beneath my fingers. He’s usually so smooth, so soft skinned and baby-faced. I’ve not seen this side of him before.

“I know,” I say, my voice barely above a whisper. “I just need a minute.”

He nods and goes to move back, to give me some space, but I reach out and grab his fingers.

“Stay. Please,” I plead.

“Of course.” I take a few deep breaths, trying to clear my head and steady my nerves. As my breathing slows, I take in



my surroundings. The sight of the pool no longer fills me with paralysing fear.

“Everyone okay?” Night asks, taking charge.

They all nod, but there’s a sense of unease amongst us. I can feel it in the way they’re all standing, tense and ready for anything. We all know that we’re not out of danger yet.

“Did we do it?” I ask, looking around at them. “Did we face our fears?”

“Is the door unlocked?” Honey adds.

Ghost jogs off to check, but even from where I’m sitting on the floor, I can just sort of tell that it won’t be. It’s a feeling in my gut, and I don’t like it at all. He walks back looking dejected. “No. They’re still locked.”

We all stare at one another, our expressions glum. “That means there’s more to come.”

WE DON'T BELONG TO ANYONE  
BECAUSE WE'RE A FAMILY



*'HIGH ENOUGH' – K.FLAY*

SNOW

Well, isn't Nightshade just a ray of fucking sunshine. It's not like any of us *want* to be stuck in this place, but obviously whoever's watching us doesn't feel like we've confronted enough of our fears to earn our freedom.

I cough, the stench of chlorine is really starting to bug me. My eyes and throat burn from being in the water while Kayla thrashed and fought against me.

I'm not proud that I tried to drown her again.

She's the key to us getting out of here, I know it. Obviously the water is her fear. I figured out as much when Seytan had me drown her in the bathtub. I don't entirely know what came over me down here, but I felt compelled to do it again, to force her to face her fear of the water. Maybe in the hopes of getting us out of here faster, but I'm honestly not convinced that I wasn't just trying to kill her.

I heave a sigh, watching as Kayla wraps her arms around herself and nervously eyes the pool, her wet red hair hanging around her face like tendrils of angry fire. Nightshade's right, as much as I hate to admit it. We're not getting out of here until we've faced our fears, and it's obvious Kayla's fear is still water.

I get to my feet, rubbing my jaw and the back of my head. Ghost has a surprisingly mean right hook, and I definitely cracked my head when I hit the tiles. Doesn't seem to be any lasting damage though.

The others are all so wrapped up in Kayla they don't even notice that I've come around, or that I've crossed over to her.

I crouch down.

“Are you okay?”

She nods but I can tell that she’s lying.

Now that the adrenaline has died down and the need to save everyone is gone, she’s going into shock. She’s shaking and shivering, her teeth starting to chatter together.

I hold my hand out to her and she stares at it like it might bite her.

“What?” she asks, her voice guarded and her expression distrusting.

“I just want to help you up. Come to the changing rooms with me. We can find you some dry clothes and get you warmed up.”

“Snow—” Nightshade warns. I hold my hands up in innocence.

“I don’t know what came over me, any more than the rest of you do. But I swear, I feel fine now and I’m not going to hurt her.”

Kayla hesitates for a moment before reaching out to grasp my hand and slowly getting up. She wraps her arms around her chest and shivers, still feeling the cold water seeping through her skin.

I lead her towards the changing rooms, my footsteps echoing in the empty pool area. As soon as we enter the dimly lit room, I can see the relief on Kayla’s face. The air is warmer in here, and the smell of chlorine is muted.

I guide her towards the showers, turning one on and warming it up before encouraging her to step under the spray. I help her out of her wet clothes, trying my best not to look at her naked body. But despite my efforts, I can feel the blood rushing to my dick.

Kayla notices my discomfort and gives me a small smile. “Thanks for this. I really appreciate it.”

I nod, not trusting myself to speak. She knows what I did, what I tried to do, so why isn't she kicking my ass for it?

The silence between us is awkward, and the tension is building up.

Suddenly, Kayla steps closer to me, her eyes intense as she stares straight into my soul. "I need you," she whispers, her voice barely above a whisper.

My heart races as I look into her eyes, feeling the heat between us growing stronger by the second. I know what she's asking for, and I want it too. But I can't let my desire get in the way. This isn't what she needs. Isn't what any of us need.

I take a step back, trying to shake the thoughts from my head. "Kayla, we need to focus on getting out of here. We can't let our emotions cloud our judgement."

Her face falls, disappointment written all over it. But I know it's for the best, even as hurting her makes me feel like an absolute dick. We can't risk anything that might slow us down or jeopardise our escape.

Besides, if the others came in here and found me railing her after she's just nearly drowned, they'd kick my ass.

"Shower. Warm up. I'll grab you a towel and some spare clothes," I tell her before leaving her under the hot spray. I grab a change of clothes for myself from my locker and quickly get changed, hoping a little distance will break the tension between us.

A loud sob stops me in my tracks, and I drop my wet things to the floor as I race back to the shower room.

Kayla is curled up on her side, sobbing in the corner of the room, a plume of steam surrounding her.

"Fuck, Kayla. I'm here." It doesn't matter that I just got dry and changed into my only set of spare clothes, I race across the wet tiles to get to her, falling to my knees to pull her into my embrace.

I cradle her to my chest and let her fall apart as the hot water beats down on the both of us.

“S-sorry,” she hiccups eventually. She’s trembling in my grip despite the warm water, and a wave of fierce protection comes over me.

“Don’t apologise. You have nothing to be sorry for. It’s me who should be apologising,” I tell her.

“I-I c-c-can’t s-stop,” she sobs.

“Trust me a minute okay?”

I know she must be in a bad state because she nods, even as she continues to judder and shake. I place her back down on the tiles, on her knees this time, and kneel up myself. I peel my soaked shirt from my skin and fling it into the corner, then I slide my sweatpants down my thighs.

*God, I hope no-one walks in right now, they’ll fucking kill me.*

“W-w-what are y-you d-d-o-ing?” she stammers, staring at me with wide eyes as I fist my cock and pump it roughly a half dozen times.

“Put your mouth on me, Kayla,” I instruct.

“W-what?”

“You heard me.”

She’s drawing in ragged breath after breath, but she’s not exhaling and I can see that I’m losing her. I steel myself and my voice.

“You heard me, slut. Get your fucking mouth on me right now. I won’t tell you again.”

It works. She blinks at me in shock, exhales deeply and bends at the waist to take my dick into her mouth. But again she hesitates.

“Snow—”

“Shut the fuck up, and take that dick like a good girl.”

She inhales, pupils blowing, and fuck if she doesn't take my breath away, staring up at me with wide innocent eyes like that. I have to remind myself this isn't about me taking what I want, but giving her what she needs.

She takes me in her mouth and holds me there, adjusting to the feel, weight and taste of me.

"Perfect, slut," I praise her softly, "Just like that."

She looks so fucking beautiful with my cock in her mouth and tears streaming down her face.

"You don't have to suck, don't do anything, just hold it there for a moment."

Her eyes flutter closed at my instructions, and she does exactly as I say. I stroke my hand down her cheek, murmuring soft praises to her as I do.

"Good girl, such a good little slut. Get my cock nice and warm for me. You're so fucking good at that, my little slut. I'm so proud of you."

With every syllable of praise that falls from my lips, she shakes a little less and slowly comes back, calmer, more centred. When she starts to suck me, I pray to gods I don't believe in to remain stock-still and to give me the strength needed not to jerk my hips forward to fuck her mouth. This isn't about me. This is about her.

I've only ever known two ways to bring someone out of shock, immense pain or...this. I don't know why it works, but the gentle praise and redirection of her attention onto another task, seems to be working. Besides, she's had enough pain within the four walls of the asylum to last a lifetime, I think. I can't add to that anymore.

My gaze falls to the burn on her arm just as she starts to suck me in earnest.

"Kayla, stop," I tell her gently. When she ignores me, I carefully clasp her chin in my hand and tell her, "Eyes on me, Kayla."

It takes a couple of repeats of my request until she hears me, and when she does, I can see that the blind panic in her gaze has given way to something much more powerful: desire.

“You’re okay now, you can stop.”

She sucks me harder, a flash of defiance lighting up her big green eyes. I bite back a smile, glad to have her back.

“Enough now, slut,” I tell her gently, releasing her chin to stroke her face once more. “You’re back. We’re done here.”

She releases my cock from her lips with a soft pop and pouts. “What if I didn’t want to stop?”

“The water’s turning cold,” I tell her, though I have no idea if that’s true or not, I’m so wrapped up in her. “Let’s get you dried and dressed.”

“You’re wet too.”

“And you’re the priority, come on.” Not giving her a chance to protest, I scoop her into my arms and cradle her against my bare chest. My sweatpants are still around my thighs, but so long as they don’t fall and trip us up, it’ll be fine.

I carry her out to the changing area, wrap her in a towel, then use another one to dry off her hair, before shrugging off the wet sweatpants and wrapping my own towel around my waist.

“Are you okay?” I ask softly when she doesn’t move.

“Y-yeah. Thank you.”

“Please don’t thank me.” I grimace painfully at the stab of guilt in my gut. “I’m the problem not the cure.”

“It doesn’t matter. You helped me when I needed it most. Thank you.”

I nod, because I still feel bad, but I don’t want to upset her by arguing with her, and hunt in the other lockers for more spare clothes. I find a T-shirt that’s probably Honey’s and pass



it to her, and I find some more joggers and a shirt that belong to Bones and pull those on myself.

Once we're both dressed and ready, we head back out to face our next fear but Kayla freezes as soon as the water comes back into view.

"I can't do this," she whispers.

"You can."

"You knew my fear before today, didn't you?" she asks in a whisper.

Feeling guilty, I swallow. "Seytan told me. She wanted you put in your place."

"And the other thing you did...did she tell you to do that too?"

I grimace. I don't want to have this conversation. Especially not when we're all locked up together with no chance of escape. Would I have willingly sexually assaulted her if Seytan hadn't ordered me to? No, I wouldn't. I'm a monster, not an animal. But that doesn't mean I didn't enjoy myself, in a sick and twisted sort of way.

"Is that why you jumped in front of those bullets for me, to apologise?"

"Kayla—" my tone is pained. "Let's not discuss this now."

"Maybe you should come out and share with the rest of the class what the fuck she's talking about," a hard, angry voice says.

Sighing, I turn around and meet Nightshade's furious gaze. He's flanked on both sides by all of the others, their expressions a mix of anger and confusion.

Great. Now they're all going to know, and I'll be lucky to make it out of here alive.

My heart is pounding as I stare at Nightshade, trying to find the words to explain myself. But before I can say anything, Kayla steps forward.

“It’s not his fault,” she says firmly. “Seytan manipulated him into doing it. He didn’t have a choice.”

Nightshade snorts. “Bullshit. You have zero need to defend him. I saw what he was doing to you in the water just now. Has he done that before? Or was it something worse?”

Kayla frowns, but doesn’t back down. “I’m defending him because he’s not the bad guy here. Seytan is. And if we have any hope of getting out of here, we need to work together.”

There’s a moment of silence as Nightshade glares at Kayla, then finally nods. “Fine. But if he pulls any shit like that again, I’ll make sure he regrets it.”

I’m relieved that Nightshade isn’t going to press the issue any further. But I know that I still have a lot of making up to do.

As we stand by the edge of the pool, I watch Kayla take a deep breath and stare into the water. It’s clear that she’s still terrified, but she’s determined to face her fear and get us out of here.

The water is cold and murky, but I keep my focus on Kayla as she continues to stare beneath the surface. It’s clear that there’s more to her fear than just the water, than just being drowned, but it’s not my place to expose the truth. Especially when she’s just saved me from an ass-kicking from Nightshade and the others.

Footsteps approach and when I turn around, I see Seytan, flanked by two of her goons. They’re the guys who normally bring in new recruits, the heavy muscle, and generally, once we’re within the four walls of the asylum we don’t see them again.

They’re sadistic sons of bitches, and I don’t like their presence.

“Well, well, well. Looks like someone’s finally decided to face their fear,” Seytan sneers. “But don’t think for a second that it’s going to save you. You’re all still mine.”

Kayla steps forward, her voice steady and determined. “We’re not yours, Seytan. We’re not anyone’s. And we’re going to get out of here, no matter what it takes.”

Seytan laughs, a cold sound that sends shivers down my spine. “Oh, my dear. You really think you can escape from here? We own you. All of you.”

Kayla’s face hardens. “You don’t own me. You don’t own any of us. And we’re not going to let you keep us locked up here forever.”

Seytan moves closer to us, her goons following her lead. “You’re all such foolish little children. You think you can stand up to me? You think you can defeat me? Defeat the power of the asylum?”

I step forward, putting myself between Seytan and Kayla. “We don’t have to defeat you, Seytan. We just have to get out of here. And we will.”

Seytan smirks. “Oh, I don’t think so. You see, I have eyes and ears everywhere. And I know everything that goes on in this place. You’ll never escape.”

But I can see the doubt in Seytan’s eyes, the fear that we might actually succeed in escaping. And that just gives me hope. We’ll find a way out of here, no matter what it takes. And Kayla is going to be the key to our escape.

“Take her,” Seytan instructs.

My blood runs cold and I step closer to Kayla, taking up a defensive stance. I don’t know what Seytan has planned, but if she has her goons with her, it isn’t going to be anything good for Kayla.

I’m not the only one who steps forward to protect her, just the first. The others quickly follow, forming a tight circle around her, and pride floods me. I’m so proud of Kayla for giving us the courage to stand up to Seytan, for giving us the chance to be a real team. Until now, I’ve been in it for myself, but now I see that together we can win.

Seytan shakes her head. “I don’t want to hurt the rest of you. But I will.”

Seytan lifts her hand and I watch as one of her goons lifts a thick, heavy chain from behind his back and wraps it around his fist. He comes at us with the chain, raising his arm and aiming for Kayla.

I do the only thing I can think to do. I tackle Kayla to the ground and take the hit for her.

I see the chain coming at us, but I don’t feel it when it connects with me. It’s as if I’m watching everything from outside of my body. I feel arms grab me and pull me to my feet. And then I feel myself being shoved into the wall. But I don’t feel pain. I don’t feel anything.

As soon as I’m able, I turn back to the fray and use my fists to protect Kayla as best I can. The six of us fight so that she doesn’t have to, pushing Seytan’s goons back until one’s in the water and the other’s against the wall and Seytan is forced to call them off.

“Okay! Okay! I get it. You’re all protective of her. Enough,” she snaps. “This stops now. You’ve made your point. You’re a team now.”

She’s right. I don’t know exactly when it happened, but we *are* a team.

Seytan turns on us. “But if you ever try to do anything like that again...I promise I’ll make you regret it. Do you understand?”

Kayla comes over and leans into me, wrapping her arms around my shoulder. I wrap mine around her waist as I gaze into her bright green eyes, and I know that we’re in this together. We’re a team. We don’t belong to anyone because we’re a family. And we’re going to get out of this place one way or another. We’re going to get off this island. And we’re going to get the hell away from Seytan and the asylum once and for all.

Seytan leaves and Kayla still remains as she is, cuddled up to me.

“Thank you,” she whispers. “Thank you all.”

# SNUGGIES



*'FU IN MY HEAD' – CLOUDY JANE*

KAYLA

I'm fucking lonely. It wasn't an understatement when Satan called it Hell Week. After the events in the pool, she put us through our paces and then some. I can't help feeling like I was given a harder time than the others, but I have to give them credit, not one of them raised a finger against me. She definitely went harder on us after our show of solidarity beside the pool. Almost like she was testing our bond as much as she was testing our physical and mental limits.

Seytan eventually lost her goddamn mind with us, calling in her goons to torture me instead, and they didn't go easy on me like I think the guys would have done.

Whilst I admire them for taking a stance on my behalf, I don't understand why they're all keeping their distance. The only time I saw them during Hell Week was for group torture sessions, but that all ended several days ago. I get that we're all wiped out from it. I'm taking meals alone in my room, but still. Could none of them stick their face around the door and say hi? I've not seen or spoken to any of them. They've not responded to my texts. And I've not even woken up sore from my mystery nighttime visitor – it took me long enough to realise that they weren't just dirty dreams I was having – and now I miss his presence too.

Their rejection hurts.

And I hate that I feel this way.

I could be glib and claim it's just my cunt that's aching and lonely, but there's something sore in my chest too. I don't know when it happened, but they got under my skin and made me *feel*.

I toss and turn in my bed, alone with my thoughts. I can't help but wonder why they're all avoiding me. Did they blame me for Seytan's outburst? Did the disaster in the swimming pool result in them all having a tougher week too? Am I the weakest link in the group? I can't help but feel like an outsider, like I don't belong. But then again, I've always felt that way, even before Hell Week.

I close my eyes and try to push the thoughts away, but they persist. I've always been on my own, even when surrounded by others. My parents...are best not thought about, but my peers at school never seemed to understand me. It's not like I'm a bad person – being a serial killer aside – I just don't fit in anywhere.

As I lie there, feeling sorry for myself, there's a soft touch on my back. I bolt upright, startled, and turn to see who's there. To my surprise, it's Nightshade. He looks at me with concern in his eyes and without thinking I throw my arms around his neck and bury my head into his chest.

He wraps his arms around me, holding me close. The warmth of his body seeps into mine, and for the first time in a long while, I feel safe. I don't know how long we stay like that, but eventually, he pulls away and looks at me.

"I'm sorry," he says softly. "We were trying to give you space to process and heal."

I shake my head, not trusting my voice. I don't know how to put into words the way I feel, the way their rejection has affected me this week, yet somehow Night seems to know.

"It's not your fault," I manage to say. "I've always been alone."

Nightshade looks at me, and I can see the fierce determination in his eyes. "Not anymore," he says firmly. "You have us. We're a found family now and you're at the centre of it. The heart."

With those heartfelt words, something inside me shifts. For the first time in my life, I feel like I belong somewhere. Like I



have a family.

Nightshade leans in, his breath hot on my neck, sending shivers down my spine. His lips graze my earlobe, and I gasp, my body responding to his touch. He pulls back, looking at me, his eyes searching mine for any sign of hesitation. But I'm not hesitant. I want this. I want him.

Without a word, he leans in again and captures my lips with his. It's soft at first, tentative, but then it grows more urgent, more passionate. His hands roam my body, exploring every inch of me. And as he touches me, the soreness in my chest starts to dissipate, replaced by a warmth I've never felt before.

We stay like that for a while, lost in each other, before Nightshade pulls away, a small smile on his lips. "Better?" he asks, and I nod, a sense of contentment washing over me.

I'm not even disappointed that we're not fucking.

"Much, thank you," I tell him softly.

"How about that bath and a bottle of wine?" he offers.

My smile brightens. "And bubbles?"

"I'll even throw in some...what did you call it?"

"Snuggies!" I laugh.

He pulls a face which makes me laugh harder. "Yes, that."

"Please." A tingling warmth spreads through me, right down to my toes.

"Okay, wait here while I go and get it ready."

He slips from the bed and disappears into my en suite, and a moment later I hear the tub filling up.

When Nightshade returns, he's carrying a bottle of wine and two glasses, and the sweet scent of bubbles wafts from the bathroom. He hands me a glass of wine before helping me up from the bed and leading me to the bathroom.

The scene in front of me takes my breath away. The bathtub is filled with bubbles, and there are candles lit all around the room, casting a warm glow. No idea where he got them from, but there's no denying the bathroom looks romantic as fuck. Nightshade helps me into the tub, and I sink into the warm water, letting out a contented sigh. I can still have baths. Snow didn't ruin that for me. Or maybe it's because I feel so safe in Night's company.

He joins me, water splashing out over the top making us both chuckle.

As we sit there, sipping wine and chatting about everything and nothing, I can't help but feel like this is where I'm meant to be. Like I do belong somewhere at last. Sure, it's with a group of psychos, but I'm just as crazy as them, so maybe that's why it works. Why I fit.

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I'M semi-woken from the best nights' sleep I've had in years by a delicious toe-curling burn between my legs. I can't quite tell if I'm awake or dreaming, but I've had this dream before. I always wake from it feeling blissfully sated and wet between my thighs.

"Mmm," I groan, not managing to prise my eyes open as the sensation of being stretched between my legs intensifies.

Something thick and warm rubs back and forth across my slit, until my hips are subconsciously mirroring the movement and my juices begin to flow and act as lube.

I moan softly as I lose myself in the sensation, and my exhausted brain conjures images of my psychos bringing me untold pleasure.

"Shh, Red, just relax. Go back to sleep and let us make you feel good."

This is a dream. I have to be dreaming because I swear Night said *us*. Part of me wants to open my eyes and see who

our unexpected guest is, but if this *is* a dream, I don't want it to end.

Instead, I relax down into the mattress and I'm rewarded by Night murmuring "Good girl" in my ear. I whimper at the praise and resolve to do exactly as I'm told – another sign I must be dreaming. A heavy hand covers my mouth, partially blocking my nose too so that my airway is restricted. Helpless desire surges through me and I sink deeper into my bliss.

Thick fingers probe between my legs, finding my clit and toying with my piercing until I'm aching.

I've had sex dreams before – since before I was even a teenager – but nothing compares to the *dreams* I've been having since coming to the asylum. These psychos have awakened something in me, and my dreams are almost as good as being awake.

Crazy comes with some mighty fine cock.

In my dream, a second finger stretches my pussy and I groan with wanton need. My juices are leaking out of me despite being stuffed so full, and I sleepily rub my thighs together, chasing the friction that I need to get off.

Warm breath on the back of my neck and a hand sliding up my thigh, make me gasp. The sensation is so real that I can't help but open my eyes.

What I see makes my heart race.

There are two men in my bed, both of them gorgeous, tattooed and completely naked. Night is lying next to me, his dark hair tousled and his eyes gleaming with desire. The other man is Bones, and he looks just as hungry for me.

I bite my lip, and a rush of excitement wash over me. I've been with two men before, but the thought of it with *them* makes me tremble with anticipation.

Night leans in and kisses me deeply, his tongue exploring my mouth as his fingers dance over my sensitive skin. After we bathed and drank together, he tucked me into bed, kissed

me goodnight, and left me to sleep. I was disappointed he didn't take it further, but now I know why.

He was always planning on coming back.

Bones crawls up the bed, his eyes locked on mine, until he's towering over me. I grip the sheets as his strong hands circle my ankles, gently pulling my legs apart.

"This is what you want," he growls, not even voicing it as a question, his eyes hot with desire. And I can see it in his face, he wants this as much as I do.

"It is," I breathe, watching as he gently nudges my knees further apart.

"Then it's time to make all your fantasies come true," he growls before he starts to trail kisses up my legs.

"Mmm," I moan, shuddering when he reaches my thighs. He looks up at me with his piercing green eyes and, as his warm tongue slides up my centre, I know this is exactly what I want.

"Yes," I whisper, giving in to the incredible sensation.

He grins before he teases my opening with his tongue, gently licking me, then sliding a long, elegant finger inside me, making me moan and arch up to meet him. My slit is getting wetter by the second as his tongue strokes me over and over again, playing with my piercing, and I can't think about anything but the incredible feeling between my legs.

"Night," I moan, gripping his hair as another finger slides inside me, making me feel full. That explains the delicious stretching burn. I rock my hips against him, needing the friction.

"I need you now," I murmur, but he just chuckles, teasing me with his fingers.

"I know," he says, moving his other hand to my knee to hold me down.

Gah, I forgot how infuriating he can be! That's the moment I know, one hundred percent, that I'm no longer dreaming. There's no way Bones would be such an asshole to me in my sleep.

But despite that, or perhaps because of that, I'm squirming against him, desperate for release.

Night leans in to kiss my neck. His soft lips and warm breath against my skin is almost enough to make me come.

"Easy, Red, baby, you're going to feel so good when we both make you come," he growls, his hand sliding down my side, cupping my ass and then my hips to pull me tight against him. My back is to his front, his rock hard cock digging into my ass.

"Please," I whimper, but Bones just turns his head to kiss my leg and then sinks his teeth into the sensitive flesh, making me gasp.

"Not quite yet," he says, his strong fingers massaging my thighs until I'm quivering with need.

Night locks his arms around me, playing with my nipple piercings and squeezing and massaging my aching breasts until I'm out of my mind with frustration.

"More," I groan. They're driving me crazy and I can't take it anymore. "Please."

"Only if you're good," Night says, and I swear I can hear the smile in his voice.

"You know I'm not," I murmur, rolling my hips against Bones' mouth in desperation.

"This is what you want, baby," Night whispers mirroring Bones' earlier words, as Bones' tongue laves my entrance again and then sinks inside me.

"Yes, yes!" I gasp, rolling my hips again, and they both chuckle against me.

"So eager. So desperate." Night chuckles.

“I am!” I plead, but they show me no mercy.

“Shhh,” Night soothes as he strokes my hair, my desperation cooling.

I moan, loudly this time, as Bones’ fingers slide from my soaking pussy to my ass, spreading me apart. I have no idea what he has planned, but I’m ready for anything. Night kisses along the back of my neck, sending shivers through my body.

“Such a sexy little slut,” Night whispers, and I shudder as Bones’ tongue teases my ass.

“So fucking beautiful,” Bones groans, his hair brushing my skin as he licks me again before pushing his finger inside, making me groan. He slides it in and out, gently stretching me, and my breathing quickens.

“More,” I gasp.

“Of course, princess,” Bones says, and a second finger slides into me.

“You want us both?” Night rasps into my ear, his fingers digging into my flesh as he kisses down my neck.

“Yes,” I moan. I want them both to fuck me, to claim me.

Bones growls before pulling away, his hand still on my leg. I whine in protest and try to follow him, but Night squeezes my hips and brings me back to him.

“Tsk, ts, baby, you got a lot of punishment coming if you’re not even *trying* to be good for us,” Night says into my ear, his voice stern. I freeze, my back to him as his hands roam over my body.

“How do you want it?” he murmurs, his breath tickling my neck. I whimper as one of them slides into me, and I don’t even care which one it is.

“Please,” I beg, moving my hips back to him.

He holds me against him, teasing me with his cock, dragging my hips back and forth so that I’m the one fucking

him, but at his mercy, and my helplessness in the entire situation makes me even wetter.

Helplessness, submission for the right guy or guys, is turning out to be my kink. One of many, it would seem.

I've never wanted it so bad before, but being taken like this, being mindlessly fucked by the two of them, it makes me feel so safe, so protected, so adored. It's everything I ever wanted and it makes me feel like I'm flying, like I don't have to think about anything, I can just feel.

Night takes his time, torturing me until I'm panting and begging for more, until I'm clawing at the sheets, desperate for release. The entire time, Bones' tongue plays with my clit, keeping me poised on the edge of release but refusing to let me fall over the edge into the abyss of pleasure.

"Please," I whimper, but they don't give in, they just keep teasing me. Night by sliding his cock inside me bit by bit, just enough that I can feel it, but never enough to make me come, and Bones' agile fingers playing my body like a skilled musician.

My knees are shaking and I'm about to just beg them to finish me off when Night finally thrusts deep into me and Bones pinches my clit.

I cry out, my orgasm ripping through me, long and drawn out and so fucking delicious.

"I love y— this," I pant.

They both smile before Night leans down and kisses me.

"I feel the same," Night says, running his hands up and down my body.

"And I love fucking you," Bones adds, his tone low and gravelly with desire. My toes curl in the most delicious way.

"I hope you got what you wanted," Night whispers, smiling down at me as he rolls me off his chest and onto my back.

I'm still breathless and recovering but manage to pant out, "Oh, yes". And it's true, I'm feeling perfectly satisfied. Exhausted, too. "That was amazing."

"Good. Because now it's our turn," Bones replies in a hard tone that makes me freeze.

"W-what?"

"I believe," Night says slowly, a demonic glint in his eye, "That we promised you that we'd fuck you together. Make it hurt. Make you scream."

I swallow my nerves as trepidation – and maybe anticipation – causes a rash of goosebumps to break out across my skin.

"If you still want to play our game, princess?"



YOU'LL BE HAVING MY BABY



*'BLACK' – BRYCE SAVAGE*

BONES

*B*iding my time for this moment has nearly been the death of me, but Nightshade insisted that we give her time to heal after Hell Week. I barely saw her because we were all wrapped up in our own personal versions of hell, and during the week, meals are either withheld or given in our rooms. Isolating us from one another is a large part of their mind fuckery, and we're all used to it, but I doubt Kayla is. It must have been hard on her, probably thinking we'd abandoned her. Fuck knows why that makes my chest ache, but it does.

When Night caught my eye tonight at the dinner table and winked, I knew it was on, and my dick's been hard and raring to go ever since. Waiting for her to fall asleep was torture, and my heart was pounding as I made my way through the darkened hallways, the only sound coming from the soft padding of my bare feet on the carpet. I knew I had to be quiet, but my anticipation was making me reckless, each step like a hammer blow that threatened to shatter the stillness of the night.

When I reached her room and slipped inside, the low light spilling from the bathroom door which had been left ajar illuminated the two of them in the bed. Her sleeping form. The rise and fall of her breaths stirring the sheets. Then Night's deadly gaze locked on mine and he got to work.

Watching him play with her, tease her, take her while she slept turned me on more than it had any right to. I can see the attraction now, the appeal. I could live out all my breeding fantasies without her ever knowing, ever complaining, ever being able to protest or tell me no.

It's a seductive idea.

As Nightshade continued to play with her, my own desires grew stronger. Watching him take control of her body so effortlessly made me feel things I'd never felt before. At least, not when it came to sex. Killing was another matter. As he explored her, his fingers trailing over her skin with a possessive touch, I wanted it to be me.

So when Night beckoned for me to join him, I didn't hesitate, pulling off my shirt and slacks, and sliding into the bed beside her. It was amazing, how responsive her body was, even in slumber. My dick was so hard and desperate for her, but I was torn between wanting to continue and wanting her awake.

She fucking loved it. Having the two of us worship her. From the moment she awoke, I could see it in her face, in the way she bit her lip in blissful pleasure, the way she tangled her hands in my hair and pressed herself closer into my mouth. Her body was so warm and wet, wrapping around me in desperate need. She dug her nails into my back and I loved it, fucking loved every minute of it.

Her orgasm was a work of art.

But it left me wanting, needing more.

So when Night tells her we're not done yet – as if, when we've barely gotten started – I can't help adding my own threat, "If you still want to play our game, princess?"

"Of course," she replies, still breathless, but her eyes have lost that sleepy weightiness and are now bright with excitement and challenge.

"Good," I tell her, sternly. "Because games have rules."

"Rules," she echoes thoughtfully. "I'm not very good at obeying rules."

I can see the wheels turning in her head, her mind working hard to figure out what I mean. I let her ponder for a moment, though I'm sure she's beginning to guess.

“Tell me, Kayla,” I begin, my voice dark and menacing, “what do you think is the most important rule of any game?”

“Don’t cheat...?” she replies, her voice shaky with the beginnings of fear. That’s not the answer I wanted.

“Don’t cheat,” I respond with a nod. “Good girl. But what if you cheat, princess? What happens then?”

She looks from me to Nightshade, her eyes widening as she realises what I’m implying. Nightshade suddenly grips her arms tightly, holding her in place. Kayla struggles against his grip, but it’s no use. She’s trapped, caught in our web.

My voice is low and dangerous. “If you cheat, Kayla, then you must be punished. And I’m the one who decides what that punishment will be.”

Kayla’s eyes widen even further, and her breathing quickens. She knows what’s coming next, and her eyes are a little apprehensive, but a whole lot more turned on.

Nightshade releases her arms, and I shuffle closer. I take hold of her chin, forcing her to look up at me.

“Tonight, Kayla,” I say softly, “you’re going to learn a very important lesson. You are going to obey our rules, and you are going to do exactly as we say. If you don’t, there will be consequences. Do you understand?”

Kayla nods. Goosebumps rise on her skin, and I know that she’s ready for what we have in store for her.

I let go of her chin, and Nightshade leans in close, his lips brushing against her ear as he whispers something I can’t hear. But I know what he’s saying. He’s telling her what we want from her, what we’re expecting her to do. And as he speaks, Kayla’s eyes glaze over with lust, before her eyelids become heavy. It’s like she’s in a trance, and I know that she’s ours to command. I let Nightshade take the lead. He reaches out, cupping her cheek in his hand, and then he leans in, capturing her lips in a kiss.

Kayla moans, her body arching towards his, looking for more. It makes me smile. All of the attitude and sass she usually gives me has melted right out of her, and in its place is a warm, pliant, little doll.

“Good girl,” I coo, my voice dripping with satisfaction, “such a good girl. This is going to be so much fun.”

Kayla reaches out to touch Nightshade as he kisses her, and he thrusts his hips forward so that he’s pressed against her. His cock is hard, his control slipping, and Kayla wastes no time grinding against his dick, slipping it through her wet pussy lips, chasing another high.

“Mmm,” Nightshade groans, his lips leaving hers to trail kisses down her neck. “She’s eager.”

“She’s a bad girl,” I murmur, taking hold of her hips and pulling her away from his dick. “You’re not allowed to come yet.”

“You talking to her or me?” Night groans.

“Both of you. Up, princess. Now.”

I smack her ass to encourage her to move quicker, and as she rolls away from Night and climbs out of bed, she shoots me a smirk.

Okay, maybe there’s still a little sass in there, but there’s time to fuck it out of her.

I sit up and swing my legs out of bed, perching on the edge of the mattress and bracing my feet on the floor. I spread my legs wide and beckon for Kayla to come closer. Beside me, Night takes the same position, obviously thinking she can take it in turns to suck both of us.

“On your knees, Red,” Night commands.

Kayla’s smirk widens.

“What’s funny?” I ask softly.

“You want to give me that kind of power?” she challenges, causing my own smirk to stretch across my face. She shivers

and looks to Night. His expression is demonic and she swallows nervously.

“Why don’t you try it and see?” he says, though it sounds more like a threat.

Her answering smile is like the cat who got the cream, but we’ll see who’s smiling at the end. She slowly sinks to her knees, enjoying our undivided attention on her bare skin. I drink her in, cataloguing the lingering cuts and bruises from Hell Week, as well as her old scars, and unexpected anger bubbles up within me. I like to hurt her, but I don’t like seeing her hurting. I hate the thought of Seytan and her goons laying their hands on her.

“Bones?” she asks tentatively. “Are you okay? You look mad.”

“Just plotting murder, princess. Anyway, I’ll be okay when that *fuck-me* pout of yours is actually fucking me.”

She looks like a goddess as she sinks to her knees between my legs, and I can’t help reaching out to grip her throat firmly and pull her forward, my cock brushing against her lips.

“And from the looks of things”, I continue, “you’re gonna be good and ready for it. What do you think, Nightshade?” I ask, pulling my hips back so that Kayla opens her mouth.

“I think she’s fucking perfect,” he replies.

I chuckle as I guide Kayla’s open, eager mouth to the tip of my cock. It’s all the encouragement she needs.

Kayla’s eyes roll back in her head as she grasps the base of my dick, guiding it down her throat. With my hands tangled in her hair, I fuck her face.

My balls slap against her face, and there’s saliva dripping down her chin. I can’t help but grin. I pull back, letting her catch her breath, but she doesn’t get long. I fuck her mouth again, harder than before, my grip on her hair tightening.

“Fuck, princess,” I groan as I lean back, her eyes never leaving my face. “You’re so beautiful like this.”

I tug at her hair again, forcing her to take more. I move my hips, thrusting forward, fucking her pretty little mouth.

“Look at you,” Night’s voice says from behind her. I hadn’t even noticed that he’d moved, I was so lost in her. “Your throat is swollen from being fucked, and you don’t even mind. You like it.”

Her eyes widen at Night’s dirty words as he wraps a hand around her neck and squeezes. He’s not wrong. She’s so fucking beautiful being used like this. My dick is throbbing, and I know that I won’t last long. As she takes me even deeper, I note how much tighter it feels with Night gripping her throat. It makes me groan with longing to spill my hot cum in her warm, wet mouth.

“Don’t stop, baby,” he whispers in her ear. “Just keep going. Your cunt feels amazing. I wonder if you can take more fingers? I could use both hands. Stretch you nice and wide ready for our cocks.”

Kayla whimpers but continues to suck me, her mouth moving up and down my dick, and my hips buck as she caresses my balls with one hand. I let go of her hair, instead reaching out to touch my fingertips to her face, stroking her cheek. Her tongue laps at my cock, sending electric shocks through my body.

She moans, and I can feel the vibration all the way to my toes. The touch of her tongue is almost enough to send me over the edge. Her mouth slides off my dick, and she sucks me back in, the sudden suction causing me to groan.

She’s so determined to get me off, to make me feel good, to steal back her power, but she doesn’t know that she’s playing a game she won’t win. Because I won’t spill a single drop of my seed anywhere but buried deep inside her cunt.

I push her away.

“Stop, princess,” I command. “You’re not getting what you want.”

She looks at me, mouth open, eyes wide, and I grin at her. There's a flicker of defiance in her gaze as it darts to Nightshade, but she doesn't argue.

"Go and lie on the bed. Facedown."

Surprisingly, she doesn't argue. She moves away from me, and I watch her, savouring this moment, knowing that everything's about to change.

Her ass looks fucking magnificent, and the temptation to take it again is there.

I climb up behind her, kneeling on the bed. I spank her ass, hard, listening to the resounding slap of skin against skin.

"Tonight," I murmur as I rub my palm against her ass. "You're ours." I spank her again, loving the way she wriggles her ass to try and avoid the next blow. "And you're gonna take everything we give you."

I lean over her, my cock brushing against her pussy, the dampness of her arousal soaking into my shaft. I ram into her, burying my cock balls-deep inside her.

"Oh," she gasps.

"You're so fucking tight, princess," I groan. "So. Fucking. Tight." I punctuate each word with a sharp thrust.

Her pussy pulses around me, trying to squeeze my cock in her warmth, but I'm too big. I'm going to own her.

"You're ours," I murmur. "And we're never letting you go."

"Never," Night agrees.

"I won't let you go," I tell her. "I'll tie you to this bed until you learn your place, princess."

"You need both of us, princess. You need us filling you up."

"Yes," she moans. "Yes, please."



I can almost guarantee that whatever she's thinking isn't what we have in mind, but she'll discover that soon enough.

As much as I'd like to play with her and tease her for hours, I'm too impatient. I've waited long enough.

"Make her come," I tell Night. "We'll need her nice and wet for the next part."

Night slides his hand under her torso and down to play with her beautifully pierced clit. Every time I think of Hatchet driving that needle through her skin, it makes me hard. "I'm almost jealous that you're inside her," he tells me.

"You don't have to wait much longer," I assure him. "Just a little more lube and we'll both be inside her."

"I want that," he growls.

"I know you do." I grin. "But we're going to start with just my cock."

"Are you going to fuck my ass?" Kayla asks, panting hard. Her voice is thick with desire.

"Not yet," I chuckle.

"I'm so close," she whines, her hips bucking down into the mattress as she grinds on Night's hand.

"Hold on, princess," I tell her. "It's not time yet."

"I want to come," she moans. "I need to come."

"But Night hasn't even tasted your pussy yet," I tell her. "And you're too good to waste your juices."

"My juices?" She giggles. "I'm dripping all over the place."

"I know," I grin. "I can smell it in the air. Come closer, princess."

I pull her hips up and Night slides onto the bed, positioning himself under her. Reluctantly, I release my cock from her heavenly cunt and push her forward.

"Sit on his face, princess. Let him taste you like I did."

She relaxes her thighs, lowering herself down with a moan. “Oh, yes,” she purrs.

“You like that, princess?” I tease.

“Mmmm, yes,” she moans.

“You like having his tongue in your cunt?”

“Yes,” she hisses.

“Then you’re going to love this even more.” I bite down on her shoulder and then slide my cock back into her pussy.

“Oh,” she moans.

“Oh. Definitely,” I agree.

I slide all the way in, pressing my hips against her ass. She’s so wet, so warm. I run my hands up her sides, wrapping my arms around her front to play with her nipples.

“That feels...so good,” she pants.

“Don’t come yet,” I warn her. “Not until we tell you to.”

She lets out a high-pitched whine of protest.

“Oh, princess,” I chuckle. “Tonight, we’re going to test the very limits of your control.”

I slide out just a little, then plunge back in and fuck her hard, just the way I know she likes it. Holding her close, I stroke her nipples and tweak her piercings as I drive into her, loving the feel of her pussy taking my cock.

“Oh, fuck!” She throws her head back against me. “I’m... I’m...”

“Not yet,” I warn through gritted teeth. “Hold on.”

I keep fucking her with her wetness drenching my cock. Night is underneath her, eating her out like a pro. He knows how to eat a woman out, that’s for sure. I like to make the pussy mine. Night prefers to worship it.

“Wait...” She tries to pull away. “I can’t...”

“You can,” I growl. “And you will.” I slide my hands around to her ass, spreading her cheeks, and I drive into her again, fucking her so hard that she moans with pain and pleasure. I spank her ass and she cries out.

“That’s right, princess,” I tell her. “You’re going to come until I tell you to stop.”

The next time I spank her, Night spansk her too. She gives an extra hard moan, taking it all.

“That’s our good little slut,” I tell her.

I slide out of her pussy and then spank it. “Oh,” she cries. “Oh, yes.”

“That’s it,” I tell her. “Be a good little slut for us.”

“I’m...I’m going to come,” she moans.

“Good,” I chuckle, and spank her ass again. “Come for us.”

She comes hard, arching her back and pressing her hips up against me. She’s loving it. I grab her neck and push her down, pushing my cock into her as deep as it will go. She screams out in pleasure.

“I want to feel it,” I tell her, grunting with each thrust. “I want to feel your pussy spasming.”

Her cunt feels amazing, already so tight before she started coming, and I never want the sensation of her walls squeezing my dick, trying to milk every last drop, to ever end.

“It is,” she moans. “Please.”

I give her a few last hard thrusts and then push her away from me. Night grabs her hips, pulling her back towards him. He’s still licking her out. I step back, letting him have his turn at her pussy.

She’s still twitching in orgasm, her eyes rolling back in her head. He slides his tongue into her and kisses her clit. I let him lick her for a moment, savour the taste of her.

“Please...” she begs. “Night, I need your cock so bad.”

“Ride me, Red. Sink that gorgeous cunt down on me and take what you need.”

She scrambles to position her hips over him, raises them and then sinks onto his cock, moaning as he slides into her again.

“Feels good, doesn’t it?” He growls, grabbing her waist and helping her move.

“So good,” she moans.

“You need to come again, don’t you, princess?” I ask her. “You need to come one more time before we start.”

“Yes,” she moans.

“Hold on,” I tell her. “We’re going to make you come, together.”

“Yes,” she hisses. “Do that.”

I reach behind them, sliding my finger into her ass. I pump it in and out, pushing it against Night’s cock as she rides him. It takes no time at all. She throws her head back and groans, the sound low and throaty and different to her other orgasms.

“Fuck, she just gushed all over me,” Night murmurs.

“Good. We’re going to need it,” I tell him.

Kayla’s oblivious to our conversation, still rocking her hips and using Night’s cock to chase the last of her release.

When she finally stills, she collapses onto Night’s chest, panting hard. I slide my finger from her ass and go to the bathroom to clean up. When I return, Kayla’s right where I left her, eyes closed while Night strokes her hair and murmurs praises to her.

“Look at how good you’ve done for us,” I hear him say.

“Is she okay?” I ask.

“She’s great,” Night tells me. “She’s perfectly relaxed and pliant. She’s ready.”

I purr in satisfaction. “Good. Good girl.” I stroke Kayla’s damp hair and press my lips to her head. I love it when she’s like this. I love to see her let go. It makes it all worth it.

“Are you ready for this, princess?” I ask her.

She doesn’t respond. Her eyes are closed and her lips are parted. She’s breathing deeply and slowly, completely at ease.

I kiss her little nose, stroke her hair, and just enjoy the sight of her. She finally begins to stir.

“Ah,” she sighs, blinking up at me. “Is it time to sleep?”

“Almost, princess,” I promise her. “But you need to make us both come first.”

“You just relax, princess,” Night tells her. “You don’t have to do anything. We’ll do all the work.”

“That sounds like a good plan,” she mumbles, already closing her eyes once more.

“Good girl.”

I press my lips to her spine. I knead her breasts, tweaking her nipples and pushing them together. She sighs with contentment and I know she’s ready to keep going.

Pulling her up into my arms, I make room for Night to move further up the bed. He positions her pillows behind him so that he’s half-lying, half-sitting and leaning back on the headboard. When he gives me a nod, I return her to his open arms.

She settles against him, nestling her face into his neck as he wraps his arms around her. I take my place next to him, stroking my fingers down her spine and up again.

“That’s right,” he growls into her ear. “Relax, baby. Relax. Let us in. You’re doing great.”

She hums in contentment.

“You know what, princess?” I whisper. “We’re going to make you come. You’re going to come for us one more time

and it's going to be incredible.”

I help Night shift her into position, so that she's straddling him once more. It's a powerful feeling, lifting her up and controlling her descent down onto his cock. I take it slow, lowering her onto him inch by inch until he's halfway seated inside her, and then pulling her back up to the tip. They both groan.

“Fucking tease,” Night hisses. I grin.

“You want to see her full, don't you?” I whisper, stroking her nipples. “You want to see her stretched between us?”

“Yes,” he groans. “Yes.”

I lower her down again, watching as Night sinks deeper into her.

“Oh,” she moans. “Oh, yes.”

“That's right,” I whisper. “You feel so good, don't you?”

“Yes,” she moans again.

“I bet you want to come again,” I whisper. “I bet you want to feel that big cock inside you and fill you up.”

“I do. That's what I want.”

“Too bad we're not going to give you that,” Night teases her.

“Y-you're not?”

“No. We've going to give you both of our cocks. At the same time.”

“Fuck, yes,” she breathes out on a blissful sigh.

“In the same hole,” I add.

She tenses. “What?”

“You heard us, princess. Now be a good girl and relax so we can stretch you big enough to take the both of us.”

She whimpers as I press my cock up against Night's, nudging at her entrance, demanding entry too, but her body

relaxes.

“It won’t fit—”

“Shh, we’ll make it fit, princess. You know why?”

She shakes her head and I grin. “Because we both want to breed you.”

“W-what?” She freezes, but she doesn’t tense.

“We both want to fuck you raw, fill you with our seed, and watch your belly swell with our child.” Fuck my cock oozes pre-cum with my words.

She shakes her head – as if that will stop us – and tries to protest.

“Be a good girl and take it,” I tell her.

She frowns at Night. “You said we were all sterilised!”

“I lied,” he replies with a shrug and a wicked grin. He gives zero fucks that he’s mislead her, and nor do I. Let her think what she likes, it won’t stop us.

“Why?” She asks him, her voice barely above a whisper. She’s still speared on his cock, and making no effort to move.

“I wanted to fuck you raw. I don’t want any barriers between us. Ever.”

“But the others—”

“Have all been fucking you raw too? We know, princess. And we don’t care. You’re ours now. All of ours. And we can share our toys.”

“I’m not on birth control yet! I have an appointment with the doctor in a few days.”

“If she even tries to give you contraception,” I growl out, “I’ll slit her fucking throat.”

Kayla gasps at the vehemence in my tone. “You c-can’t mean that.”

Enough. It's time to show her that I mean exactly what I say.

Gripping her hip hard enough to bruise with one hand, I use my other to squeeze the base of my cock as I push my hips forward and attempt to join Night buried inside her.

"Fuck!" She screams as her flesh slowly gives way to the pressure of my dick refusing to back down. "Bones, no!"

"Shh, relax, let me in. You're gonna feel so good in a minute and I know you love a little pain with your pleasure."

She moans at my words, relaxing like the good fucking girl that she is.

"That's it, princess. I wish you could see what I do right now. Your cunt is so fucking swollen and stretched. So fucking pretty and accommodating."

I can't stop talking, and I won't stop until she's screaming with pleasure, coming over and over again until she's twice beyond the point of exhaustion.

"Want to know what it looks like, princess?" I ask, hauling her back against my body. "I'm forcing myself into you right now, and I bet you love every fucking minute."

She whimpers at the exact moment that Night fucks upwards into her, forcing her against me, and I drive my cock into her depths.

Fuck, it feels like heaven sheathed in her. It's so fucking tight, she's so fucking hot, I'm never, ever, letting this woman go.

I lick at her neck, one arm locked tight around her, holding her to me while I begin to thrust in and out. Her pussy is stretched to her limit and I'm not fucking gentle. I'm harder, rougher, and the more I fuck her, the more I realise that tonight isn't about being gentle with her. It's about claiming her. It's about marking her. It's about fucking her so fucking hard, so fucking deep, that she never forgets who she belongs to. She's



ours. She's been ours from day one. And I'm going to put my baby in her belly to prove it.

"That's it, princess, I can feel you about to come. You have no fucking clue how hot you feel around our cocks. How fucking good you feel." I lick her neck, kissing up to her ear and biting down hard enough on her lobe to make her gasp out. I move my hand around to her clit, pinching it between my fingers before lazily drawing circles around it. "Come for us, princess. We'll make you come so hard, you'll be ruined for any other cock but ours."

"I... I can't..." she starts to protest but I silence her with a harsh bite to her shoulder as Night reaches up and grabs her throat.

"You can, and you will," I tell her, pressing deep enough that I can tell she's fighting to expand for me. "Because we fucking want you to."

"Yes." She moans, giving in and relaxing, allowing me to slip that little bit further into her. My entire body shudders in response to her.

"That's right, Princess. You're going to come and you're going to take every drop of what we give you."

She's shaking in my arms, as if she's fighting an inner battle with herself.

"I don't—"

"Breathe, Red," Night commands. "You can do this. Just breathe."

She takes a shaky breath, trembling as she does, and sighs when Night reaches out and cups her breasts. He pulls her down to take her nipples between his lips, he sucks them in and bites down roughly, and the change in angle makes me hiss "Fuck."

I kiss her shoulder. "That's it, princess. That's it. Come for us."

She goes still, transfixed on Night and I watch in awe, as she reaches out to wrap her hand around his neck, holding him to her and crying out as she comes.

I drive into her faster and harder, shuddering with the effort to hold back. She's mine. She's mine and I'm going to put my fucking child in her tonight. I might be willing to share her with the others, but it's at my say-so. She's fucking *mine*.

As if he can hear my possessive thoughts, Night fixes me with a hard look over Kayla's shoulder and when he speaks, his words are more to me than her. "That's it, Red. You're doing so well. You're already *ours*." His tone is hard, immovable, non-negotiable.

"Please," she whispers, shaking from head to toe.

"Please what?" I taunt, softly, "please fill this pretty little cunt up with cum?"

She whimpers.

"Or fill you with our babies?" Night adds.

Her orgasm rips through her as those words leave Night's lips, and she shudders and moans with satisfaction.

The possessiveness I feel for this woman is like nothing I've ever felt before. I've never been one to give a fuck about anyone or anything. I don't allow myself to care, to carry the burden of other people's emotions. But here I am, my cock buried deep inside her, and I'm prepared to fuck her raw and fill her with my baby.

Her cheeks are flushed, her green eyes glassy, her body trembling as she struggles to get her breath back. I kiss her shoulder, my voice soft as I speak. "So beautiful, princess. So fucking beautiful."

"Please," she whispers.

I can't deny her anything. I might claim ownership, all the rights and responsibilities that come with that, but Kayla is ultimately her own woman. She's got free will, and I won't take that from her, not really.

“What do you want, princess?” I ask, brushing the hair from her face. “Tell me what you want and I’ll fucking give it to you.”

“I...” She doesn’t seem to know what she wants.

“Say it, Kayla,” Night commands, licking at her neck. “Ask us to fill you.”

She’s shaking from head to toe. Her thighs are still trembling when Night shoves her forward and rams his cock deep into her as he grunts in satisfaction.

I’m still balls deep, but I can’t move. I can’t fucking move, she feels too damn good for me to pull away.

“Fill me, please. Both of you. At the same time,” she begs.

“We still need to hear you say something else,” Night teases in a sing-song reproachful voice.

She shakes her head, cheeks on fire.

“You know you want it, Red. We’d take such good care of you.”

“I—I—”

“Yes?” I prompt when she falters on the words.

“Put your babies in me,” she eventually whispers, her eyes screwed tight. She holds her breath on the longest exhale as she asks for something I’m not sure she even knows the ramifications of.

“Oh, princess,” I growl. “My babies have been waiting so long to meet you.”

“He means he’s been waiting so long to meet you,” Night corrects, “but he’s right. We all have. One look at you and we all fucking knew, you were made for us.”

We take it in turns to thrust inside her, our movements staccato and fevered. It’s like a race to the finish line, who can get there first, knock her up first, and I know that it’ll be me.

She is mine. All fucking mine. And I don't care who knows it.

I wrap my hand around her throat and press her down onto Night, making her scream out as she comes for the second time that we're both buried inside her. I take what I want from her, stealing her orgasm for myself, claiming it, before I allow myself to lose what's been building inside me for what feels like forever.

I roar out my release, my cock pulsing violently as my semen shoots into her willing pussy. She's mine. All mine. She might have made her choice, but I'm still going to make damn sure she never forgets.

Night's release follows my own, and when we're both done, we still, catching our breaths and trying to remain inside her for as long as possible.

Neither wants to be the first to leave, but eventually we know that we have to.

I withdraw with as much care as I can, but she still whimpers at the loss of me. Night follows suit, and for a moment I'm transfixed by her gaping pussy leaking the mingled juices of the three of us.

Then I come to my senses and roll her off Night, onto her back on the mattress, so that I can slam her legs closed and elevate them up above my head. With one firm hand on her ankles, I keep them there.

“What—”

“It gives the best chance,” I tell her, though I have no idea if it's true or not. Surely it must help? If my semen's on the bedsheets it's not knocking her up.

Night chuckles as he gets off the bed and disappears into the en suite, presumably to get cleaned up. He pauses at the door and turns back to us. “I'll run her another bath.”

“Not too hot,” I warn him.

“Best chance of what?” Kayla asks.

“Getting you pregnant.”

“I thought—”

“You thought what, princess? That it was a game? Dirty talk designed to get you off? That I just used you for my own pleasure and I didn’t give a fuck about you?” I ask, my voice harsh.

She looks down, embarrassed and shakes her head. “No, I didn’t mean that.”

“What did you mean?” I growl, grasping her chin with my free hand and forcing her eyes back to mine. “Did you think I’d just said that shit to get you worked up?”

“I wasn’t sure what to think,” she whispers.

“You trust me, right?”

“Of course I trust you. I wouldn’t have let you do...all that to me if I didn’t!”

“Then stop fucking doubting me, princess. I’d never lie to you.”

“Sorry.”

I wait for her to say more, but she doesn’t, so I decide to move things on.

“You’re my girl, princess.”

“I thought—”

“You thought what?”

“I don’t know.”

“You thought I didn’t want you? Didn’t like you?”

She shrugs. “Something like that, yeah.”

“But I do, princess, I so fucking do. And I know I’ve been an asshole, but I’ll make it up to you. You’ll see. We have time. Now, I’m going to use my mouth to try and get your pussy clean. Is that okay?”

She nods, biting her lip in anticipation.

My tongue flicks over her clit, and I can still taste his cum on her. It makes me want to mark her again. All mine. I lave up her cum, cleaning her thoroughly before I return to her clit, working her over into another orgasm. The echoes of her moans are loud in the room, bouncing off the ceiling and echoing as they bounce off the walls.

“What do you want, princess?” I whisper when I’ve finished, my mouth still against her pussy.

“More,” she moans, tilting her hips.

“You want my mouth to keep doing what it’s doing?” I ask, amused that she’s so worked up that she can’t even form full sentences.

“Yes.”

“Like this?” I ask, sliding my tongue inside.

“Yessssss...”

I put pressure on her clit with my tongue, and she explodes in my mouth, her cum dripping down my chin and onto my chest.

“Oh god, Bones!” she calls out, not even realising that I’ve moved from between her legs.

“Call me, Beckett,” I say, wiping my chin with the back of my hand and grinning at her triumphantly. “You should at least know my name, seeing as you’ll be having my baby.”

PSYCHOPATHS IN TUXEDOS  
SHOULD BE ILLEGAL



*'GLORY AND GORE' – LOURDE*

KOOKABURRA

I've never felt so sated in all my life. Waking up in bed to waves of pleasure still rolling over me from the night before is nirvana. I yawn and stretch, surprised when I hit two warm bodies, one either side of me. Deft fingers are idly playing with the ball of my clit piercing, turning me the fuck on all over again. I'm insatiable. I cannot get enough of these men.

"Ummm, good morning," I murmur. "You both stayed."

"As if we could leave after that," Night says softly, kissing my cheek. I'm pretty sure it's him playing with me.

"So last night was pretty...intense."

"I think the word you're looking for is amazing, princess," Bones replies, kissing my right cheek and grinning at me. "Good morning, gorgeous."

His hand skims my chest, down past my breasts until it comes to rest on my lower abdomen. I blush thinking of the words he whispered in the heat of the moment last night. why was it so fucking hot? Why is the moment making me clench with need again?

"I wonder if it worked," he says, reverently, almost to himself.

"If what worked?" I ask, brows arched in confusion.

He grins at me, such a beautiful, distracting sight that I almost miss his response. "Knocking you up."

I swallow hard. "You—"

"Meant every fucking word, princess. I'm not going to stop until my baby's in your belly, and even then I probably



won't stop. I want you as close to permanently pregnant as can be."

"She likes that," Night tells him, before I can protest that he's fucking crazy. He slides a finger into my wet pussy, and I know there's no hiding the truth from him. "She's soaked."

It's fantasy. His words are hot, yes. My body responds. I've never been desired beyond a quick fuck before, so the idea of someone wanting me, long term, wanting to keep me and cherish me and view me as good enough to be the mother of their children...of course it's going to make me weak at the knees. But that doesn't mean I want it to become my new reality.

If Bones is serious about knocking me up, I need to move up my appointment with the doctor to discuss birth control. I'll just need to keep it a secret, because I think he'd absolutely make good on his threat to kill the doctor if she stands in the way of him getting what he wants.

I squeeze my thighs together to prevent Night from going any further and distracting me with sex, but I shoot him a sympathetic smile in apology.

"Sorry, I'm starving. Can we get breakfast?"

"It's after noon, so I think you mean lunch, but yes. Go shower. We'll see you in the dining room in a bit, princess," Bones tells me with a kiss. He slips out from my sheets and is gone before I can even say goodbye.

Night captures my face between his tattooed hands and draws my full attention onto him. "Just to be clear, I want you pregnant with my baby just as much as Bones does. We're not fucking around. And if last night didn't do it, you bet we'll both fight over you until it does."

His kiss steals any protest or argument I might have had, and I lose myself in his claiming for several minutes. Just as I'm about to cry fuck it and climb on top of him, he pulls away with a knowing smirk.

“Shower. Touch yourself if you like, but don’t come. I want to be able to smell your arousal and frustration at breakfast.”

As fast as Bones left, he does too, and I’m silently cursing him for being such a tease.

I do as he says though, showering and bringing myself to the very brink of orgasm, then denying myself the release. Why? Because I crave his approval. When I see him I want him to know I did exactly as he said, and I want him to lavish me with praise. I’m a whore for it. Can’t get enough.

Dressed in a jumper dress with a belt cinching me in at the waist, I pull on the shit-kicker boots that I’ve come to think of as my own, give my hair a quick blast with the hairdryer, and then allow my rumbling tummy to guide me to the dining hall.

Everyone stops talking and stares at me when I enter, and my cheeks flush. Bones shoots me a knowing grin. I can’t meet his gaze.

“Saved a seat for you, darlin’,” Honey calls, patting the empty space between him and Night. I take my seat, tucking myself in, and no sooner have I done that, Night’s grabbing my napkin and smoothing it out across my lap, his hand lingering at the apex of my thighs. It doesn’t matter that my dress falls just above my knee, I may as well be naked with the way his touch burns me. A tiny whimper escapes my lips, and his answering grin is so smug I want to stab him and kiss him and grind on him and demand that he makes me come all at the same time.

I do none of those things. Instead, I reach with trembling hands, for the jug of water on the table and pour myself a glass as the doors at the other end of the room open and the serving staff file in with our plates. Maybe I’m just ravenous, but the food smells better than ever today, and I greedily tuck in to my chicken parmigiana as soon as it’s placed on the table before me.

The room remains quiet while we all eat, and it's so hard not to break the silence with groans of appreciation at how good the food is.

Bones catches my eye and smirks, just as Night leans in and whispers, "Good girl, you could be eating for two now, so keep going."

Fuck, the pleasure of his praise wars with the panic his words create in me, and I end up freezing for a moment. I take a long gulp of water, wishing it was wine, to hide how flustered I am. We're just finished up our meal, the plates being cleared away when Seytan enters the room and. My heart sinks.

*Great.*

Nothing good ever comes from one of her visits.

"Gentleman, Miss Kingfisher, I have another mission for you," she says in a no-nonsense tone.

I frown. Is this what normally happens when they're sent on missions? Do they get told about it? I sure as shit haven't been enlightened before the last two. Is this going to be another set up? Another attempt on my life?

"Tonight there's a very important gala being held at Waterfeld House." The location means nothing to me, but the others shift uncomfortably in their seats, and Night, whose hand is still in my lap, fists the material of my dress. Without thinking I lay my hand over his and give a gentle squeeze. He immediately grabs my hand, lacing our fingers together, and takes in a deep breath, as if he's somehow drawing strength from my touch. I feel the same, but it's nice to be needed.

"Kayla," Seytan says, turning her attention to me. "I know you're new here so that won't mean much to you, but Waterfeld House is a country manor on the outskirts of Bath. It's the headquarters for a prominent charity that works to support victims of domestic abuse. Or at least, that's what it is on the surface."

My expression must show my confusion because Night squeezes my hand so hard it hurts, his own trembling with what I assume is barely contained rage.

“I don’t understand,” I say.

“It’s run by a collection of corrupt billionaires. Politicians, MPs, Judges...upstanding members of the community. And it’s a front.”

“What’s a front?”

“The entire charity is a front for what really happens at these events.”

“Which is....?” I prompt when she doesn’t elaborate.

“An auction.”

“Aren’t there usually auctions to raise money for a good cause?” There’s obviously something darker at play, but Seytan’s not being very forthcoming about it. It’s still a shit-tonne more information than I had going into the last missions, but it’s not enough.

Seytan takes a deep breath, then sighs, like I’m being deliberately obtuse just to wind her up. “The charity is a front for human trafficking. It finds victims under the guise of supporting them, then sells them to the highest bidder at the galas.”

My jaw drops and my stomach sinks just as fast. Ice courses through my veins.

...what do I even say to that?

“That’s....” My voice is barely a horrified whisper.

“Quite,” Seytan replies sharply, her face flashing with rage before shooting me a sympathetic glance. “You are to infiltrate the gala as potential...buyers.”

I feel sick. my stomach churns. No one protests, but no one looks happy either.

“Except for you, Miss Kingfisher.”

“Me?”

“Women are not potential buyers. The only females in attendance are the stock.”

“Stock?” My lunch is threatening to make a reappearance, and now I’m the one squeezing Night’s hand so hard the bones crack.

“The ones for sale.”

“I’m going to be sick.” My chair scrapes across the floor as I get to my feet, looking for an exit, but Seytan is blocking the way.

“You’ll be accompanying the gentleman as a potential trade. They give the charity *you*, a victim of domestic assault, and in exchange that buys their place at the bidding table for the night.”

“No,” Night growls out, getting to his feet. I blink and suddenly they’re *all* on their feet, wearing matching expressions of rage.

“What’s the plan?” I manage to grind out, surprised that I sound so much calmer than I feel.

“When the event starts, bidders and...stock will all be in the ballroom together. The women have no idea what’s going on and think the event is to celebrate their success stories. There’s an hour, the golden hour it’s called. Disguised as a drinks reception, it’s actually browsing time for the bidders to choose who they want. When the time’s up and the auction is ready to begin, the women are removed from the room. That’s when you’ll strike.”

My pulse starts to thunder, white hot rage coursing through my veins, reigniting my *need* to kill. “Strike how?”

“Kill them all. Every last man in the room.”

“What about the women?”

“They’ll be taken to safety. We have men on the inside who will be in place ready to intercept them and get them out.”

“But then what happens? You can’t kill a room full of high profile people without some sort of backlash.”

“It’s taken care of. Gas leak. The house will be blown up as soon as you’re all out. And it’ll be done in such a way that the cause of death will not be questioned.”

“No,” Night says again. Seytan blinks at him like she didn’t even notice he spoke before, and then she looks at the others, takes in their stances and facial expressions, the clenched fists and she sighs.

“I told them you’d react like this.”

“Like what?” I ask. I’ve not reacted. I’m still processing. Reeling, I think.

“I told the organisers that they wouldn’t be on board,” she tells me, nodding towards the guys.

“Are we ever given a choice about which missions we do?” I ask.

“No. Not really.”

“Didn’t think so. It doesn’t matter either way, because even if it *was* optional, I’d want to do it.”

“What? Kayla, you can’t be serious,” Honey hisses, horrified.

I turn to him, my face blazing with anger that’s not aimed at him at all. “Didn’t you hear a word she said? Those women —”

“We’re not using you as bait,” he says vehemently, shaking his head. The others make noises of agreement.

“I’m doing this. With or without your support. We don’t have a choice anyway. But those women deserve this. No one deserves...that.”

“Thank you, Miss Kingfisher. Gentleman, you should listen to her and get on board with this mission quickly. You’ll be leaving shortly because it’s too suspicious to take the helicopter to Waterfeld House, so we have arranged a

limousine to transport you all there, and it's quite a drive. Miss Kingfisher? Please come with me, we'll get you ready for the event and ensure you have a bulletproof cover story in case you're questioned. Gentleman, excuse us. Miss Kingfisher will see you when it's time to depart."

On numb, shaky legs, I follow Seytan out of the dining room, apprehension and the need for revenge churning in my stomach. Somehow, being fully informed about the mission this time has made me feel worse. I just hope we can pull this off and get those women the justice they deserve.

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*PSYCHOPATHS IN TUXEDOS should be illegal.*

My breath catches the moment I step out onto the roof to join them, and they turn their attention on me. Six tuxedos. Six sinfully sexy psychopaths, all staring at me with blazing gazes.

And they're all here for me, hungry for me, protective of me in a way I wasn't expecting.

I'm addicted to them. To the way they make me feel, to the way they look at me, the way they make me forget and live in the moment.

I have fallen, hard.

I've fallen for all of them.

The flames lick between my legs, and I shudder in anticipation as the heat spreads up my thighs and into my belly, making me burn for them.

"Now I know what was taking so long," Snow murmurs, before being hit in the chest by Honey.

"What he means, darlin', is that you look sensational," he says with a drawl and a wide smile that flashes those twin knee-weakening dimples at me.

“Beautiful,” Ghost adds, staring intently at me and refusing to drop my gaze.

“Exquisite,” Bones adds in a low, deadly tone. He makes it sound like a threat. Like *I’m* the threat. I shiver.

“More seductive than poison,” Nightshade says, his voice like honey on my bare skin. He thinks I’m seductive? He’s the most enthralling, thrillingly dark and dangerous entity I’ve ever met. I’m literally a puddle whenever I’m around him – around any of them – and yet he’s looking at me like I’m a vial of the most deadly and potent poison he’s ever created.

I’m trapped in his dark blue orbs, the colour reminding me of lapis lazuli, with tiny fleas of gold. I’m hypnotised by the intensity of his gaze, the way he seems to know every thought I have, every secret desire I’ve ever harboured.

The other men are watching us, a mix of amusement and arousal in their expressions. But Nightshade has me mesmerised, and I can’t look away.

“You’re going to kill me,” I whisper, not sure if I mean it as a warning or a plea.

Nightshade’s lips curve into a wicked smile. “I plan on it,” he says, his voice dark and dangerous. “But not before you kill us first.”

I’m not sure what he means, but I don’t have time to ask. The other men are moving towards me, surrounding me like wolves closing in on their prey. And I can feel the heat building between us, a wildfire threatening to consume us all.

I’m in too deep, and I don’t know if I want to be saved. All I know is that I need these beautiful, deadly psychopaths in tuxedos like I need my next breath.

“Come on, we have a job to do,” I manage to say, as I’m enveloped in a heady cloud of their colognes. Six differing scents should war with one another, but somehow they don’t. They work together to create something harmonious and alluring.



Hatchet loops his arm through mine, his smile knowing and warm. A rash of goosebumps erupt where his hand touches the bare skin of my arm, and I swallow hard. We follow the rest of them as they lead the way across the rooftop, each step sending shivers down my spine as their bodies brush against mine.

What was Seytan thinking dressing me in silk? It has to be one of the most arousing fabrics to caress my skin, and by the time we make it to the chopper with the light wind stirring my dress, I'm burning up.

Snow climbs into the front of the helicopter, sitting beside the pilot who's waiting for us to strap in before starting the engine. My elegant updo thanks him for his thoughtfulness.

Hatchet deposits me in the middle seat, before taking the one opposite me. Nightshade and Bones sit on either side of him, leaving Ghost and Honey to take the seats beside me. Honey slips his hand onto my thigh and I reach over to slip my hand into Ghost's. He blinks at me in surprise, and I give him a shy smile.

"Is this okay?" I ask, nodding to our entwined fingers.

"Y-yeah." He swallows. "More than okay."

The trip to the mainland is our shortest, and even with the headphones on to allow us to communicate, we don't.

I lose myself in thoughts of tonight, wondering what weapons we'll have – if any. Surely an event like this will include scanners and bag searches...so how will we get weapons in?

Earlier I'd asked Seytan that but she told me not to worry, everything would be taken care of. This time it felt genuine, and not like she was trying to keep me in the dark. I'm not saying I suddenly like the woman or trust or, nor am I suddenly au fait with my position here at the asylum, but for a mission like this, I don't mind being a pawn. No, not a pawn to be sacrificed. A soldier.

Tonight, we do good in the world by being bad.

I get to embrace the darkness within me, unleash it and come out the other side a hero.

We land, get ushered into a waiting sleek black limo, and then we're on our way to the event with several hours to go even as darkness falls early.

The limo ride is quiet and contemplative. I'm not sure what's meant to happen when all the women are removed from the room. Obviously I know the psychos are meant to strike, but what about me? I can't stay in the room and draw attention or suspicion, but I won't leave my psychos behind to do this without me either.

As the limo comes to a stop outside the wrought iron gates to the manor house hosting the event, I take a deep breath and steel myself for what's to come. The tension builds within me. The house is beautiful, tastefully lit up without being showy. Exiting the limo, the hum of activity from within filters out through the open door and reaches my ears. My keen senses are on high alert, and my muscles tense as the adrenaline kicks in.

Inside, the ballroom is packed with way more people than I was expecting – way more *women* than I was expecting – and the air is thick with the scent of money and power. A thrill runs through me as I realise that we're about to disrupt that power.

I glance around the room, taking in the faces of the wealthy and influential. They're all here, and they think they're invincible. But they have no idea what's coming for them.

The sound of chattering voices and tinkling glasses fills my ears as I scan the crowd, looking for any sign of danger

“Champagne?” Night offers, holding out a glass to me. It's been decided that he'll be my 'date' for the evening. My handler. The term makes me feel sick. The others spread out and work the room, pretending to be interested in the

merchandise on offer. My stomach churns and I'm not sure if I should abstain from the alcohol or down it in one.

I give Night a small nod, and he raises the glass to his lips, holding my eye as he takes a sip. He swirls the cool liquid around on his tongue before swallowing and holding the glass back out to me.

“What was that?” I whisper. *Apart from fucking hot.* “Did you just check my drink for poisons?”

He nods and his answer in my ear is so low I have to strain to hear him. “Poison. Roofies. Any illicit substance that has no right in being there. How else do you think they keep these women calm and pliant when the time comes?”

I refuse to ask or even think about what exactly these high profile ‘gentlemen’ are buying with their bids. I couldn’t stomach the answer.

I take the glass from him, nodding my thanks. Night is tall and fiercely handsome, with broad shoulders and a confident stance. He’s perfect for the job of watching over me tonight.

“Do you think they suspect anything?” I ask, taking a sip of champagne. It’s crisp and refreshing, but my nerves are still on edge

He shrugs, his eyes scanning the room. “They’re too busy mingling and showing off their wealth. They don’t expect anyone to challenge them.”

I nod, trying to calm my racing heart. There are so many variables that could go wrong but Seytan asked that we trust her, trust the back up team they have in place to cover every eventuality. All we have to do is...kill

A voice interrupts my thoughts. “Well, well, well. Look who decided to grace us with their presence.”

A tall, handsome man with piercing blue eyes stands in front of us. His suit is tailored to perfection, and his smile is almost too charming. There’s a sleaziness to him, something I can’t quite put my finger on, but he reminds me of a snake. or

a used car salesman. Maybe a politician. They're all one and the same to me.

"Markus," Night says, his voice cold but polite. "Thank you for allowing us to attend tonight."

Markus chuckles, taking a step closer to us. "You're so welcome, Damien."

I blink in surprise that this man knows Night's real name. It worries me slightly, then I remind myself that he won't live to tell anyone anyway.

"We're always ready with open arms to welcome and support women like you, Natalia," he says, turning to me. Natalia is my cover for tonight. He eyes me up and down, making my skin crawl.

Is this guy meant to be the front man for the charity? Is he meant to make endangered women feel safe and secure? I barely keep the few sips of champagne I've swallowed down.

"You certainly know how to pick them, don't you?" He chuckles, the comment aimed at Night I believe not me.

I grit my teeth, against the sudden surge of anger. Night squeezes my arm in warning, reminding me that I'm a victim. Meek. Scared. Grateful.

Fuck that.

"I'm so grateful for Damien's help," I reply, trying to keep my tone even. "I felt so silly getting dressed up tonight, it's been so long since I had nice things. But everyone looks amazing."

Markus raises an eyebrow, clearly amused. "Oh, no. Making these women look and feel good is what we're all about. Tonight we celebrate their successes, their survival stories." He leans in closer, his breath hot on my cheek. "We show them the good time that they deserve."

I feel Night tense beside me, but before he can say anything, Markus is being called away by a vaguely familiar politician.

When he's mingled and smarmed his way to the other side of the room, I allow myself to breathe, and the white knuckle grip I have on my champagne flute to relax.

Night plucks it from my grip and deposits it on the tray of a passing waiter.

"Hey!" I complain but he fixes me with a smouldering stare.

"One. You need to keep a clear head. And two, it might be bad for the baby."

"What baby?" I hiss.

"The one I hope we put in you last night. But never fear, after we're done here, I'll see to it that you're definitely knocked up by the end of the night."

"After the bloodbath?" I reply sardonically, trying to hide my body's reaction to his dirty words.

"I couldn't think of a better time than when we're bathed in blood."

"Gee, you say the most romantic things," I quip, even as my heart does somersaults and swears he's just professed his undying love for me.

"Yeah, but your core is clenching and your thighs are damp and you wish you wore underwear with that delectable dress now, don't you?"

I hate that he's right.

"It's almost time," I whisper.

The atmosphere in the room has shifted. The guests are getting restless as they wait for the main event. I can feel the tension in the air, almost taste it. It's palpable. This is what we've been waiting for – our chance to take down these powerful men, to stop them from preying on women like they're disposable objects.

Night moves closer to me, his breath hot on my neck. "Stay safe," he murmurs, his hand on the small of my back.

“We’ll take them down together.”

I nod, feeling a sense of solidarity with Night and the rest of the team. We’re in this together, and we’ll come out of it together, too

Suddenly, the lights dim and the music stops. A hush falls over the room as a spotlight shines on a stage at the far end of the ballroom. Markus steps forward, his hair looking greasy in the bright beam of the spotlight.

“Ladies and gentlemen, welcome to tonight’s gala, where we celebrate the strength, resilience and tenacity of these beautiful young women.” There’s a smattering of polite applause, and many of the women in the room shift uncomfortably on their feet.

Without exception, all of them are done up to the nines with glamorous hair and makeup, stunning evening gowns, and dripping in diamonds. I have to say the ‘charity’ has gone all out to make them look and feel the part. The duplicity makes me even angrier, and I bite my tongue until I taste blood to keep a lid on my rage. *I can’t fuck this up before it even starts.*

“Now, in just a minute, I’ll ask the ladies to go backstage where they’ll be brought back out to meet you, one by one, and share their survival story with you. We will celebrate each and every one of them for the heroes they are.”

More applause, though it feels fake to my ears. Can clapping sound sarcastic, mocking? Because this does. My stomach churns. This is my cue to leave.

I squeeze Night’s hand, rising onto my tiptoes to speak into his ear when he tilts down to me.

“I’m just going to use the bathroom,” I say, in case anyone is listening. “I’ll see you after?”

He gives my hand a reassuring squeeze and flashes me a warm, confident smile. “You’ll do amazing. Remember, every woman here has a story like yours. I’ll be right here in the crowd, look for me if you get nervous.

I blow out a nervous breath that isn't entirely fictitious. "Thanks. See you on the other side."

I let him go and head in the direction of the rest rooms, which are thankfully part of the main room. This was an important part of Seytan's plan. To keep me from being separated from the guys, I get to hide out in the loos until the women are all gone, the doors are locked, and the fun can begin.

As I walk into the bathroom, I take a moment to compose myself. Adrenaline is pumping through my veins as the reality of what we're about to do sinks in. We're here to take down these disgusting men and show them that they can't treat women like objects. I take a deep breath and splash some water on my face, trying to shake off the nerves.

I creep back to the restroom door, peeling the door open a crack and peering out. The women are escorted out of the room by a group of well-dressed security guards, who I pray are Seytan's other team, and I watch them leave with a sinking feeling in my stomach. I don't know what's going to happen next, but I know it's going to be dangerous. At least they won't be witness to it. They've been through enough.

Once the women are gone, the lights flicker briefly – our signal – and Bones steps out on stage behind Markus.

His throat is slit before the crowd can even react to Bones' presence.

The room erupts into chaos as the guests scramble to get away from the stage. Markus is frozen in shock, his throat gaping open like a second mouth, as he stares unseeingly out at the crowd. Blood spurts from the wound, painting the stage in a gruesome red hue. And then Bones drops his lifeless body where it falls forward, off the stage and into the panicked crowd.

I watch from the shadows, heart pounding. This is it. The start of the bloodbath. Am I bloodthirsty, avenging or aroused?

Hell, why can't I be all three?

The guests are in a panic, running for the exits and pushing each other in their scramble to get out.

The rest of my psychos, my team, emerge from the shadows armed with weapons. They move with a deadly precision, eliminating anyone in sight. The scene is like something out of a horror movie. Or a porno, depending on your tastes.

I watch in awe as the team moves in perfect synchronisation, taking out anyone who dares to stand in their way. The sound of gunshots echoes through the room, intermingled with the screams of the guests. It's a symphony of chaos and violence, and I'm both thrilled and aroused to be a part of it. I pull open the bathroom door and step out into the carnage.

Night appears by my side, his eyes shining with a fierce intensity. "Let's do this," he growls, handing me a knife.

I take it, feeling the weight of it in my hand. It's good.

I nod at Night, and we join the rest of the team, moving through the room with deadly intent.

The scent of blood and gunpowder and so much fear fills my nostrils as we take down one guest after another. The adrenaline pumps through my veins, making me feel invincible. This is what it's like to be a part of something bigger than yourself. Something that's worth fighting and dying for.

Night disarms an overweight MP who has pulled a gun and is firing random shots in his panic, taking him down with a swift punch to the face. He falls to the ground, unconscious. Night doesn't hesitate as he picks up the man's gun, fires a bullet into his brain and turns to the next target.

I follow his lead, taking out anyone who gets in our way.

It's like a dance, a deadly tango, and we move with the precision of a well-oiled machine. The screams of the guests echo in my ears, but I don't falter. We're doing this for them,



for all the women who have been treated like trash by these men.

I smirk as I catch sight of Hatchet, who's standing at the back of the room with his arms crossed, watching the chaos unfold.

Night grabs me suddenly, pulling me to him and crashing his lips down onto mine in a bloody, brutal kiss.

My heart speeds up as his tongue slides into my mouth, exploring every inch. His hands, covered in blood, grip my hips tightly as we lose ourselves in the moment.

The sound of gunfire and screams fade away as we kiss, lost in this moment of destruction and passion. His hard body presses against mine, and I want him more than I've ever wanted anyone

We pull away, both of us gasping for breath, and lock eyes for a moment. There's a fierce intensity in his gaze that matches my own, and I know that we're both in this until the end.

We break apart, and I spin around, raising my knife to take down another guest who's foolish enough to stand in our way.

I make my way through the crowd, slashing at anyone I come across before crashing into Ghost. He's paler than usual in his stark black tux, a smear of red on his cheek marring his beautiful clear complexion.

"Delectable, Miss Kingfisher," he says.

"Donnelly?" I check.

He gives me a wolfish grin. "Of course, how could I resist an invitation to the party of the year? You *really* know how to throw a bash. I'm harder than fucking steel. I could fuck all night!" he crows.

I bite back a laugh and he blinks at me, and suddenly his expression is less manic, more embarrassed. Ghost is back.

"Sorry," he murmurs.

“Don’t be. You do you,” I tell him, squeezing his hand and pecking him on his bloody cheek. “Besides, you look fucking hot,” I add, loving the way his cheeks flush.

The moment’s lost as a guest staggers into us, grabbing at Ghost and imploring him to help.

“Don’t touch him, “ I snarl, possessive anger surging through me. How dare he touch what’s mine!

I stab at him, driving the knife into his throat with unnecessary force and propelling him backwards.

“You killed him,” Ghost says, blinking at me.

“Duh. That’s the general idea,” I laugh.

“But you killed him for me.”

“I didn’t like him touching what’s mine.

My words snap something inside of me and he surges forward, grabbing the back of my neckcloth and thrusting his tongue into my mouth. The kiss is confident, sexy, toe-curling and all *Ghost*.

“Later, baby,” I tell him with a wink.

The look he gives me is scorching.

The room is quieter now, littered with blood and bodies. My desire for my psychos becomes overwhelming. I wade through the bodies, stabbing and slashing as I go, making sure the men on the floor don’t get back up again.

Then Bones is before me, demonic and covered in blood. He’s shed his suit jacket, and his shirt, and the goddess on his stomach is painted red, tongue out, eyes gleaming with glee as she tastes his depravity.

Leaning forward, I lick the length of his torso and then whimper. That was a bad idea. There’s a rush of wetness between my thighs and my clit throbs.

“Is it cold in here, or are you just pleased to taste me?” he teases with a wicked grin, before tweaking my nipples

roughly.

“Fuck, please,” I beg, my knees buckling.

“Patience, princess. You’ll get yours.”

A hand on the small of my back makes me shiver, and I pull away from Bones, to see Snow leaning in. My breath catches, and I roll my lip between my teeth ready for whatever he wants to give me too. More than ready.

An almighty crash makes me jump and I jerk away from them both. A guy has jumped on Honey and tackled him to the floor, and before I know what I’m doing, my feet have carried me across the ballroom and I’m blindly stabbing my knife into the guy’s back in an all-consuming rage.

“Leave. Him. Alone.” I hiss with each thrust of my blade.

“Darlin’ you got him good. You can stop now.”

But I don’t, because the lust and the blood and the bloodlust have me in its grasp and I can’t break free.

Eventually Honey throws the dead guy off him, and captures me in his arms, pulling me down on top of him and disarming me easily. He kisses me deeply, his hands on my hips, dragging me back and forth along the hard length of him until it breaks through the fog and I groan.

“Honey, please—”

“There she is, my little blood-loving monster. You were fucking magnificent. My dick’s hard.”

“I noticed,” I giggle.

“I want to fuck you right here, but I guess we better make sure the others don’t need us.”

“And we’re kind of on a timer, aren’t we?” I ask, hoping he’ll contradict me, tell me we have all the time in the world and fuck me senseless on the carpet of dead bodies.

“Darlin’,” it’s somewhere between a reproachful groan and a heavenly prayer and I giggle again, feeling light and

overjoyed. I feel as bubbly as the champagne I sipped and like I could just dance in this beautifully massacred ballroom.

“You’re a magnificent sight.”

I blush, shoot him a coy smile and it’s on the tip of my tongue to beg him – to beg *someone* – to fuck me, when strong arms wrap around my waist and life me off Honey.

“Boo, Daddy!” I pout. “Spoil all my fun.”

I stick my tongue out at Daddy Hatchet and he shakes his head, smirking at my antics. I can’t resist. Leaning forward and pressing my lips to his.

I groan. Fuck. He tastes so good.

“We have to go, princess,” Bones tells me.

“Is everyone dead?” I ask, blinking out of my trance. Hatchet nods. “Boo. I wanted to play. Wanna pick ‘n’ mix the bodies with me?” I tease.

Hatchet shakes his head but I *swear* I see longing in his eyes. I take his hand in mine and squeeze. “Okay, next time,” I swear.

He gives me a chaste peck on the lips, but it spikes my heart rate as much as any filthy tongue fucking.

“I love y—this,” I tell him quietly, correcting myself, saving myself, at the last second. “Let’s go.”

The doors to the ballroom are magically unlocked, and the entire site is deserted as we walk down the long winding driveway. Our limo waits at the open gates and we file in one by one. Bones is on one side of me, Night on the other. Snow sits opposite me, a fierce scowl on his face. *What’s his problem?*

Fuck. That turned me on. Just as the limo begins to pull away, the sky lights up and the car shakes. I jump to my feet, raising my head out of the open sunroof, watching, mesmerised, as the Manor House is lit up and turned into a firebomb. It’s beautiful. Chaotic. Carnage.

And *we* did that.

Silky hands slide under my dress, ghosting the skin and teasing at the wet apex of my thighs. My eyes flutter closed and I lean my head back into the night sky, silently begging whoever's down there to put me out of my misery. but as suddenly as the hands were there, they're gone, and a rougher, calloused hand finds mine, tugging me sharply back into the limo.

I hit the seat with a thud, frustrated and horny and mad.

But tonight we did a good thing, so maybe I can let go of the anger.

And I can take care of the other problem myself when we get back. Who needs six sinfully sexy psychopaths to take care of you when you have a fully charged vibrator back home?

A JUNKY DESPERATE FOR. MY NEXT  
FIX



'VILLAIN' – BELLA POARCH

SNOW

“*W*hat the fuck do you think you’re doing?” I ask, stepping out of the elevator onto the rooftop garden and immediately being assaulted by all things fucking Kookaburra. The smell of her hits me first, as intoxicating and distinctive as she is. She smells like a heady tropical flower, intoxicating, and one that if I get too close to it will bite my fucking dick off. Or make me crave more until I’m addicted, a junky desperate for my next fix. Her moans of pleasure reach me next, and when I round the corner, the sight of her splayed out on *my* bench with a short dress bunched up around her waist, makes my jaw clench.

And my dick hard.

I pull out my phone and snap a picture of her, to obsess over later.

It’s been too long since I was summoned to Seytan’s office. Too long since I was ordered to *make sure* it was ‘good’. Too long since I took three bullets to atone for what I did, and too long since we all survived hell week. Hell, even last night, seeing her in that dress and being stopped from touching and kissing her, has been too long.

Not seeing her, not sleeping, not eating...and being torn apart by an emotion I can’t explain. What has this girl done to me? She’s fucked me over and fucked me up. And now she’s *here*. In my space. Just when I managed to get her out of my head, she pops back up and infects me all over again.

“What does it look like I’m doing?” she snaps, pulling my thoughts away from the emotion I don’t care to examine any more.

“Defiling my sacred space,” I huff, hands on hips and forcing a fierce scowl in place to prevent myself from falling to her feet and devouring her.

I came up here to clear my head. To get *her* out of it. Why is she here, tormenting me?

“I’m enjoying nature.”

I scoff, happier to verbally spar with her than address the elephant between us.

“That abomination is not natural,” I sneer, nodding my head towards the toy buzzing in her hand.

She didn’t even have the decency to stop when caught in the act. Who does that?

*And why does she make my balls ache so badly?*

“Aww you sound jealous. Scared that a little bit of plastic and two AAs can do it better than you, snowflake?”

“It’s *Snowclone*. And no. I’m not jealous.”

“Really? Cause it kinda seems like you are,” she taunts. She shifts the toy and gasps, her eyelids fluttering closed in a moment of bliss.

That’s how it should have been. The first time I took her. Blissful. Earth shattering. Life affirming.

Not what I did.

Not what I was made to do.

She draws in a deep breath and opens her heavy-lidded eyes. She tries to fix me with a fierce stare, but her trembling muscles and the hitch in her voice steal her authority away. “I know you’ve been watching me,” she pants. “You’re probably the fucking pervert that’s stealing my panties too.”

“You don’t fucking wear any,” I complain. Because if she did, I would absolutely fucking steal them.

“Because they keep getting taken, duh. Now, if you don’t mind, kindly fuck off. You’re killing my buzz.” She laughs



and waves her bright pink toy at me. “Bzzzzzzz. Get it?”

I *long* to stride over to her, rip that shitty little toy from her hand and lob it off the fucking roof.

So. Fucking. Tempting.

“Actually I do mind. This is *my* space,” I inform her.

“I was here first.”

“Then you can be the first to leave,” I insist with a huff. She’s really trying my patience, but fuck if her glistening cunt splayed wide open for me to admire isn’t the most enticing distraction for my anger.

“I’m not going anywhere for at least another orgasm.”

“*Another?* How long have you been up here?”

“I’m not keeping track. Do you mind? A girl needs a little privacy.”

“Don’t let me stop you.” I cross my arms over my chest, stubbornness settling in. “Come in front of me or don’t come, I don’t care. But I’m not leaving.”

She bares her teeth at me and growls, and I fucking love it, even though I hate her. She would be a wildcat in bed. I could tell from the way she made it so hard to drown her, and I can still see it now.

She’s got fire.

“What does that do anyway?” I ask, hoping to distract her and throw her off her game. There’s nothing worse than the feeling of blue balls, and I want to give her the female equivalent. I briefly wonder if it takes batteries, and if it does, I plan to steal them. “Doesn’t look like any dildo I’ve ever seen before.”

“Familiar with them, are you?” She smirks. I take a step closer and she immediately pulls it out from between her legs and holds up a hand to halt me. “Stop right there.”

“What?” I growl, frustrated. It’s like being taken to a sweet shop to *just look*. I’m not good with being told *no*.

“Don’t come any closer. It’s one thing if you’re going to refuse to leave, but quite another to be so damn close to me. Don’t you dare ruin this orgasm for me. And don’t even *think* about touching me!” she snaps, her eyes flashing with wicked defiance.

I bare my teeth at her and snarl. “How would I ruin it? Throw that shitty bit of plastic away and come enjoy the real thing.” I grab my dick and give it a squeeze, knowing that as much as I hate to want her, I’d hate to not have her even more. The need to have her properly, to...make up for before, burns hot in my veins.

She chuffs a laugh and ignores my instruction. “Please, spare me.” Her gaze falls from mine, effectively dismissing me, and my anger swells.

I rip off my belt and snap it through the air, satisfied when the loud crack makes her jolt and turn her attention back onto me.

*This won’t do. This won’t do at all.*

Stalking towards her with a predatory stride, she futilely attempts to stop my advance.

“Snow! Stop. I said *fucking* stop!”

When I ignore her, she launches her fucking dildo at me – right at my face – but with the reflexes of a big cat, I catch it before it can smack me. The laughter dies on her lips.

Her essence floods my senses, and holding her angry gaze, I bring the still buzzing toy to my lips and slowly clean every inch of it with my tongue. Her intoxicating flavour explodes on my tastebuds, hotlining straight to my dick, and I know I’ll never be satisfied until I drink her sweet ambrosia right from the source.

Her pupils dilate and her breathing stutters.

Toy and belt still in hand, I close the distance between us.

“Hold this,” I instruct, thrusting the now clean vibrator back into her hands. As she reaches out to take it, I pounce, wrapping my belt around her wrists and pulling it tight.

“What the fuck do you think you’re doing?” She snarls at me. “Don’t touch me.”

But that’s not what her eyes say. Her eyes are begging me to touch her, to taste her, to have her. She looks starved for my touch.

“I didn’t. And I don’t intend to,” I smirk, stealing the toy back.

“I swear to god, Snow. You better not fucking touch me. If you do, I’ll castrate you in your sleep!”

I grin at her and kick her ankles wider so that she’s splayed out on the bench just like I found her. Only now she’s at my mercy.

“Spread those thighs, little slut. Show me that well used pussy that’s been taken by countless men, besides the best.”

She grins at me and wiggles further down the bench so that she can spread her legs wider, but I see the way her nipples harden with the insult.

Her pretty smooth pussy glistens. She’s so fucking wet. So fucking ready for me. And instead I have to use this stupid shitty toy on her because there’s no way I’m going to go against her wishes when she’s so very clearly refused to give consent.

*This is my atonement. I want this time to be different from before.*

“How can something so used still look so good?” I murmur as I pop open the button on my jeans, undo the fly and lower the stiff material over my hip bones. Then I flick the waistband of my boxers down so that my dick springs free. The ring piercing in the end glints in the sunlight and I love watching her reaction to it. Slack jawed and hungry.

“Ah, finally realising what you’ve been missing out on, are you? No matter how stretched that cunt has been, you’re still gonna be tight for me. I fucking know it.”

“Do. Not. Fucking. Touch. Me.” She growls out from between clenched teeth. She’s not angry though. I’m not stopping her from leaving. I’m not forcing her to do anything. *This time*, the vile voice inside my head jibes. I shut that motherfucker down. She’s not acting like she hates me – not really – and I know she’s not a-fucking-fraid of me either.

*She’s just as fucked up as you are.*

“I won’t. Yet. But you’ll beg me to by the time I’m done,” I vow.

She scoffs. “Doubt it. Why would I when I can waltz back into that lift and get any of the others to finish what you couldn’t get started?”

Her taunt makes me see red. I’d backhand her for that comment under normal circumstances, but something makes me stop. *She doesn’t want me to touch her.* Or at least, she *thinks* she doesn’t want me to touch her. *Yet.* I get the feeling that if I ever want to sink myself into her sweet depths, *with consent*, I’m going to have to play the game her way. *For now at least.*

Round two to you, Kookaburra. Seytan won round one. Will I make it third time lucky?

I palm my dick, pulling myself hard until I’m throbbing and leaking precum at the crown. Kayla watches my every move with hungry, filthy eyes. When I tease the pierced tip with my thumb, her tongue darts out and mimics the movement across her lips. She’ll soon be putty, in the palm of my hand while I feast between her thighs, I’m certain of it.

“I don’t want to touch you, you’re a filthy fucking slut!” I taunt. “The only thing I want to do is make you come so hard you squirt.”

“You’re fucking delusional,” she snaps. “There’s nothing you can do that my little buzzy toy can’t do better.”

“I’m not delusional.” I run my hand down my chest and over my abs, and when I reach the top of my pants, I hold her gaze. “But I’m gonna show you just how wrong you are.”

My fingers tug on the elastic of my boxers, and I jerk them further down my thighs. With a guttural groan, I grasp my length again and rub my thumb over my slit, collecting the clear liquid that has pooled there and spreading it over my head and length. A little whimper bubbles up her throat, and I grin at her before starting to slowly jack myself.

Her nipples are hard. Her thighs are slick. Her eyes are wide and glazed. She’s dripping wet – I can tell from the way her bare pussy lips shine. Her arousal intoxicates me and I can’t wait to make her mine. To make her scream my name. To make her come so hard and so often she’ll be too exhausted to fuck any of the others ever again.

“I’m still fucking waiting, Snowflake,” she snaps.

“You’re fucking wet, you know it, and you love it. Don’t you?”

She closes her eyes and bites her lip, but her cheeks flush with arousal.

“Open your eyes. I want to see that pretty green gaze while you take all of this.”

She huffs, but obeys me. Good fucking girl. I don’t tell her that though; she hasn’t earned the right to be praised.

“I’m not waiting any longer.” I bring the dildo up to her swollen pussy lips and rub it up and down a few times, teasing her, before pushing it in right up to the hilt. A throaty moan escapes her and her back arches so that her tits jut out at me, begging for me to suck them. I ignore them for now, and kick her ankles wider apart before I lean over and blow gently across her clit.

“Snow, oh god, stop fucking teasing me you fucker!”

“You need to learn patience, Kookaburra. Patience and obedience. Because I’m in charge now, slut, not you.”

She's soaking wet. Her pussy is so swollen. Her piercing is magnificent. I long to take it between my teeth and tug until she screams and creams all over my face. Every time I thrust into her with the toy, she moans and tries to wiggle her hips down so that it can penetrate her deeper. Her obedience won't be an issue, I can tell that much already. I'll be able to fuck her into exhaustion.

"No one listens to a word you say, they just fuck you and fuck you and fuck you over!"

The need to touch her makes my palms burn. To compensate, I slam the dildo right into her wet entrance again, as hard as I can, to show my anger and frustration at her stupid fucking *no touching* rule. I hate it. Again and again I thrust the fucking thing into her cunt. I hate her. She whimpers and clenches down around it, so fucking close despite my rough treatment. Slam! I hate myself for being so weak and fucking powerless around her.

She throws her head back and screams her release to the sky, coming so fucking hard she ejects the damn vibrator from her pussy. I toss it off the roof before she can register what's happening.

"Fuck," she pants to the clouds lazily drifting by overhead. "I hate you. But that was good."

"I'm not done with you yet, slut," I bark. And I mean it. As if one paltry orgasm makes up for the weeks of hell her mere presence has put me through.

"I told you not to fucking touch me!" she yells before pausing, looking around, and turning her attention back to me. "What have you done with my vibrator?"

A slow, self-satisfied smirk spreads across my face, "You won't be needing that again."

"Snow! What did you do?" she screeches.

"I took care of it," I tell her smugly. "Now get over here, sit on my face, and let me take care of you."

“No! I don’t want you to touch me.”

“I won’t. But you never said anything about *you* not touching *me*.”

That makes her pause.

“You swear?”

“Scott’s honour.”

“It’s meant to be Scout’s honour,” she replies dryly with a wry smile tugging at her lips.

“Please, I was a fucking Boy Scout and I had zero honour.”

“Why doesn’t that surprise me,” she quips, drolly. “Who’s Scott then?”

“Come sit on my face, give me half a dozen more orgasms and maybe I’ll tell you.”

She glowers at me but gets up off the bench, and I have to hide my grin. Taking a step back, I shrug off my jacket and drop it to the floor, then lie down on the soft astroturf.

“You know,” she says, coming to stand over me. “I haven’t forgiven you for trying to drown me.”

She doesn’t mention the other – much worse – thing I need to atone for.

“Let me make it up to you. Drown me in your juices.”

“Well, when you put it like that...you don’t have to ask me again.”

She straddles my face, and I’ve never experienced anything so heavenly as I stare up at her puffy pink pussy hovering above my face. She lowers herself down onto my mouth and I breathe her in, licking and sucking her clit to restart the orgasm train. She tastes so good, and I’m in heaven licking and sucking her until she re-lubricates my face with her juices.

“I fucking love that,” I murmur, “make my face shiny.” She giggles and grinds her pussy down onto my face so I can’t

breathe for a few seconds, but then I grab her ass and tug her up until she's just hovering over my face, and I resume my gentle assault on her dripping pussy. She's obviously enjoying herself because she doesn't scream at me for touching her, doesn't even acknowledge my touch. And even though I want to take that as a green light to explore every inch of her skin, I don't dare in case she stops me.

Her moans get louder and more desperate, and she starts rocking back and forth. She doesn't need to ask if I want more, I'm right there with that.

She starts to gyrate on my face in earnest, a symphony of cries and pussy juices and joy. I grab her ass again to pull her down hard and keep her down, hard enough to make her scream, but only for a few seconds. When she's finished her orgasm she rests her pussy on my face and lets me go at her pierced clit again, my tongue magic licking and teasing the little ball that rests there.

“Oh my god, oh my god, you're so good at that.”

“Mmmm, yeah I am, ” I say, just before she grinds her pussy down onto my face and climaxes again.

She only screams for a second. And it pisses me off. That's not good enough. I want her throat red raw from screaming, as tender and as sensitive as the brand on her arm I gifted her. I want to try and talk her into doing this again, desperate to make her see how good this is, but right now she's still riding the orgasmic wave, so I continue my onslaught on her clit.

She lifts her hips off me – maybe trying to escape my enthusiastic attention when she's already sensitive – but I just lick along her pussy lips, puffy and wet and glistening.

I'm ready for a taste of her ass.

Her lovely heart shaped ass is just in front of my face, and in the flesh it looks so enticing. No wonder Bones couldn't help but fuck it.

I stick out my tongue and circle it around her tightest hole, and she lets out a startled laugh.



She slides off my mouth and raises her hips up so her pussy is level with my face. She leans back on her elbows, spreads her legs and starts to gyrate slowly.

“You like that, don’t you,” she says, “licking my ass?”

“Mmmm.” I say, and I stick my tongue out again and slowly push it against her ass.

“Ohhh,” she groans, and starts a rhythm with her hips so her ass is sliding against my tongue.

“I do,” I say when I break for breath. “I really like it.”

She lowers her sex back onto my face. “You like eating me out, don’t you?”

“Mmmm,” I say, the vibrations against her skin causing her to moan and buck up away from me.

*Fuck it*, I think, bringing my hands up to her flesh and sinking the first two fingers on each hand into her soaking wet cunt.

I pull and stretch her wide, admiring the way her cunt gapes and glistens above me. She collapses back down onto my face, and I thrust my tongue deep into her – as far as I can go.

She rocks her hips against my face, my mouth, my fingers. I press my fingers against her g-spot and she screams – long and loud and so much more satisfying.

I keep my fingers buried in her soft pulled-open cunt, letting her ride my face to orgasm. I just lie there and stare up at her pretty pussy as it slides back and forth in front of my eyes. When she’s finished her orgasm I slowly pull my fingers out of her, and she seems reluctant to let them go. Good.

I lick my fingers clean, but there’s no hope for my face. She’s destroyed me and I couldn’t be happier.

I roll her over onto her stomach and pull her ass in the air. I bury my face into her ass and lick it all over, and then I go for the prize. Her asshole. It’s tender and the skin is soft around

the hole, and I kiss it and lick it and push my tongue against it. She shifts a bit uncomfortably, but I grip her ass tight enough to assure her it's okay to let me keep doing this.

She stays still, and I keep licking.

Soon she's moaning and hips rocking, and I can tell she can't decide if she should move away or move towards me. I push my tongue against her asshole again and she moans and rocks forward, and I push my tongue inside her.

"Oh god," she moans, "keep going. Please don't stop," she begs and it's music to my fucking ears.

I give her what she wants. I stick my tongue inside her as far as I can, and my actions cause her delicious pussy juices to flow down my face. I think she's done, but then she's back, grinding her ass back against my face, on the verge again. And who am I to deny her? I owe her this at least.

I'll let her come again and I won't even try to fuck her.

I lick and lick and kiss and kiss her hole, and soon she's crying out with another orgasm. She collapses onto the astro turf in a pile of wetness, and I'm as high as can be. I'm addicted to her taste, her smell and the feel of her skin. I want to eat her out whenever I can.

She rolls off me, lies on her back and gasps.

"That was amazing," she says.

Then she shocks the shit out of me when she leans over and kisses me.

It only lasts for a few seconds – our first real kiss – then she gets up, fixes her dress and walks away.

*What the fuck?*

BLOOD TURNS ME ON



*'SING TO ME' – MISSIO*

KOOKABURRA

*I'm a fucking mess and it's time to stop running.*

Ironic, that I have that thought right as the lift doors slide shut and I run from Snow.

That was too intense. Something has shifted between us, and even though I refused to let him touch me – sort of – there's...feelings other than hate there. No one has ever taken bullets for me before. And the way he knew exactly what I needed after my panic at the pool.

I don't forgive him for drowning me, or the other thing, but I understand that he had no choice. He's as much a victim of Seytan's sadism as I am.

As I stab the button to close the doors, planning to take the lift down to the ground floor, I pause. The mechanical click of the button seems to resonate in the heavy silence that surrounds me. My body tenses, and I can feel the weight of everything that's happened crashing down on me. It's as if a leaden blanket has been draped over my shoulders, threatening to suffocate me. I've been running for so long, always trying to stay one step ahead of everyone. My demons, the law, Seytan. But now, with these psychos by my side, I no longer have to be alone in this fight. The burden of isolation slowly starts to lift, replaced by a glimmer of hope.

I promised the people in charge that I could unite us, turn us into a family of killers. But I didn't promise it for them. I promised it for myself. To belong. So that I could finally stop running. The elevator's dim lighting casts eerie shadows on my face, highlighting the uncertainty in my eyes and the determination in my clenched jaw.

Just as I'm lost in my thoughts, the voice of Honey cuts through the silence, jolting me out of my reverie. His deep, gravelly tone carries a hint of concern, making me jump with a start. My heart leaps into my throat, and I struggle to regain composure.

"You okay there, darlin'?" he asks, his voice a soothing contrast to the adrenaline coursing through my veins.

I have to swallow my heart back down to be able to reply to him, my chest still heaving from the fright. "Fuck. You scared me. Don't do that!" I snap, my words laced with irritation, and I reach out, slapping playfully at his chest.

Honey responds with a smirk, his lips curving upward, revealing those goddamn dimples that always seem to disarm me. In an instant, my anger melts away, and a soft smile tugs at the corners of my lips. His tone is teasing as he counters, "Don't what? Be in a lift at the same time as you?"

I roll my eyes, but my voice softens. "Don't skulk in corners."

"Skulk?" Honey raises an eyebrow, feigning innocence.

"Yes," I retort, my tone firm, but my eyes betray a hint of playfulness.

"In corners?" he continues, a mischievous glint in his eyes.

"It's what I said," I reply with a hint of exasperation.

"In a lift," he adds, clearly enjoying the banter.

I huff in frustration. "I didn't see you."

"In this massive lift?" Honey's voice drips with amusement.

"Shut up," I mutter, a small smile playing on my lips.

Honey leans against the elevator wall, his eyes never leaving mine. "Where you running off to in such a hurry? Or who are you running from, should I say?"

“Snow was on the roof,” I admit, my voice laden with the weight of my recent encounter.

“Oh dear. Did you leave him alive?” Honey’s concern is genuine despite his teasing tone.

“Just about,” I reply with a wry smile, appreciating his understanding.

“And now you’re going to the art room?” he inquires.

“Yeah,” I nod, the thought of the art room offering a small comfort.

“For some therapy?” Honey’s voice holds a touch of sympathy.

“Something like that,” I confess, my vulnerability showing through.

Honey’s expression softens, and he takes a step closer.

“What’s with the twenty questions?” I ask, frustrated as I meet his gaze.

“Just trying to get to know you better, darlin’, that’s all. Feels like a hot minute since we spent any time together, is all.”

I blush, even though I don’t think he meant it in a sexual way. But it has been too long.

Honey steps closer to me, his hand resting on my waist. The warmth of his hand seeps through my top, and I try not to let my heart rate spike at the contact. With the weight of everything I’ve been running from crushing me, I need someone to hold onto.

“I’m sorry,” he says softly. “I didn’t mean to make you feel uncomfortable.”

“It’s fine,” I reply, my voice barely above a whisper. “I’m just tired of running. And I feel guilty.”

Honey’s hand tightens slightly on my waist, and I look up to meet his gaze. His eyes are the warmest shade of brown I’ve

ever gazed into, and there's something in them that makes me feel safe, even though I know I shouldn't because he's a killer like me. But in this moment, I don't care. I lean into him, craving the closeness.

"Why do you feel guilty?" he asks, his tone laced with genuine concern.

"We've not spent much time together." I shrug.

"We have time. There's no pressure. It's been an intense introduction to life in the asylum. It's not always like this, I promise."

"But, the others—"

"May just need you a little more than I do right now," he interrupts softly.

I try to hide my hurt but he sees it flash across my face, hears it in my wounded question: "You don't want me?"

"I always want you, darlin'. But I'm good. Steady. Stable."

"You're a stable psychopath?" I tease, trying to lighten the moment. Honey doesn't let me though. There's no hiding my real feelings behind glib jokes with him. He sees me.

"I'm probably the stablest psycho you know. Some of the others, they *need* you more than me. I've got time. I can share, and I know you're more than worth the wait."

His words ease some of the guilt that's been settling in my chest. I didn't even realise how tied up in knots I was over this. I like all of them. Like the weird relationships I've forged with each of them, even in a relatively short space of time, but once I realised it was more than just sex and a good time and making the most of a shit situation, things changed for me. I've been feeling so torn about not splitting my time with them equally. Between being sent on missions, continually tortured and surviving several attempts on my life, if I'm not recovering, I'm fucking. And I feel like I need a damn timetable to fit them all in. But I crave more than just a physical connection too.

But then a part of me, the part of me who's not backing myself and claiming I'm a ten, wonders if they feel the same. Am I just easy pussy? It feels like a genuine connection with most, if not all, of them. But what if I'm projecting my desire to belong onto them when I'm just a hole to fuck?

"Stop that, Kayla," Honey scolds me gently, seeing my thoughts as if they were projected into the sky like the bloody bat signal. "I'm crazy about you, was from the minute you walked in in that god awful orange jumpsuit. I can't speak for the others, but I reckon they feel the same. This is real, not convenient."

As the lift arrives at the art room, I pull away from Honey's touch. I need to focus on something else. I need to release the pent-up emotions inside of me. I give him a quick kiss goodbye, step out of the lift and wave to him as the doors slide shut.

Alone, I walk over to the paint table and pick up a brush, dipping it into the nearest pot of black paint. Without even thinking about it, I start painting black streaks on the nearest blank canvas with all the energy I can muster. The sound of the brush scraping against the canvas is the only sound in the room for a while.

A pained hiss breaks me out of my trance and I drop the paintbrush in surprise. Whirling around, I scan the empty space looking for the source of the sound.

"Danny?" I call out, praying I've remembered the art counsellor's name right. "Are you here?"

Silence.

"Hello? Who's there?"

I'm not afraid, more pissed off that my solitude has been interrupted.

When no one answers, I abandon my sloppy black painting and begin to stalk around the room. Unarmed, like a fucking idiot.



The problem is, the space is vast, and with the elevator shaft right in the middle of the room, there's parts of the studio that I can't see from where I'm standing. Not to mention, massive canvases and backdrops in the way.

"Danny?" I whisper. "If you're trying to scare me, I don't appreciate it."

No reply, but I swear I hear a pained groan, muffled but close by.

I take a deep breath and work my way towards the back of the room.

The back of the studio is clear, but I reckon Danny has a room off to the side somewhere. I hunt around for it, eventually spying a ginormous canvas on wheels, which I roll out of the way. There's an unmarked door behind it, which I try.

It's unlocked.

Inside, the room is dark and I have to hunt around for the light switch.

When I find it and flick it on, the sudden brightness makes spots dance before my eyes and I have to blink to clear them.

Before I can take in my surroundings, I'm slammed against the wall and a strong forearm is pinning me in place by my neck.

"Who the fuck are you and what the fuck are you doing here?" A rough voice snarls in my face.

I look up at the man pinning me to the wall. White blonde hair. Pale blue-grey eyes. Grey Hoodie. His face is full of pain but his eyes are cold. I know those eyes. I know that expression. I know that man.

"Ghost?" I ask, wondering why the fuck he's pinning me to the wall now that we can both see each other.

I yelp out in pain as the pressure around my neck increases.

“No. Ghost is gone.”

“What the fuck are you talking about?” I gasp, struggling to free myself from his hold.

“They’re both gone.”

“Both? Who?” Maybe it’s the lack of oxygen, but I’m confused as fuck.

“Silas and Ghost are gone.”

“Then who are you?” He’s lost his damn mind. I know they think we’re all crazy here, but he’s certifiable. Fucking bat-shit if you ask me.

“I’m your worst nightmare.”

“I doubt it,” I manage to scoff despite the darkness slowly closing in at the edges of my vision. I have no idea why Ghost is deciding to be such an asshole, but I’m not scared of him.

“You think so?” He growls.

“I know so,” I pant.

He’s silent for a moment, then, “You know you’re going to die here, right?”

“You say that, but I’m still here,” I point out though every word costs me what little energy and oxygen I have left.

He lets up for a second and I suck in air like a fish out of water.

“Because you haven’t witnessed what I can do.”

“I don’t care if you’re the devil himself. You’re not going to hurt me,” I say with as much conviction as I can muster

“You’re wrong. And you’re fucking with the wrong guy,” he hisses, jerking my head back sharply.

That’s when I notice the blood.

“Ghost!” I gasp. “You’re hurt.”

“I’m. Not. Ghost!” he grinds out angrily.

Inspiration strikes. “Donnelly, you’re bleeding.”

“I know.”

*So he’ll answer to Donnelly? What the fuck?*

“Can I look at it?”

“Why?”

Fuck. What should I say?

“To tell you what sort of wound it is and how to treat it.”

“I know what sort of wound it is. I did it.”

“You did it to yourself?”

“I did it to him.”

“To Ghost?” He shakes his head. “To Silas?”

“Yes.”

“Why?”

“To kill him.”

*Why does he want to kill himself...Silas?*

“It looks like a really deep cut. Can I help?”

“What can you do?”

“I can make sure you don’t die too.”

“Fine.” He drops me, but I’m so stunned I only stumble a couple of steps before whirling to face him.

I look up at him, standing completely still.

“I’m Kayla.” I tell him carefully. I’m keeping my distance, but I’m not sure why. Ghost isn’t himself right now, and this doesn’t feel safe.

“I know who you are. They’re both obsessed with you. They’ve tried so hard to keep me away from you, but I’m more powerful than both of them combined. I’m Donnelly.”

“It’s nice to meet you at last, Donnelly.” I pause. I want to ask him what the fuck he’s doing, why he’s trying to kill *Silas*

but the blood steadily dripping from his wound is my main concern. “May I?”

“Why?”

“Blood turns me on,” I confess. It’s not a lie, but I’m not fucking horny right now. I’m confused as fuck, worried for Ghost, and a little nervous to be in the presence of a true fucking nutter.

He smiles at that, a cold, twisted macabre thing that makes my insides shiver.

“Be my guest, pretty little thing. You can lick it if you want.”

I try not to let him see my shudder as I inspect the long deep gash running from his wrist to his elbow where his hoodie sleeve is pushed right up. His hand is covered in dripping blood and his sweatpants are stained too. There’s a pool of blood on the floor and I notice that his feet are bare.

*He has really pretty feet.*

*Not the fucking time, Kayla!*

“Is it clean? What did you use to make this cut? It’s deep.”

“A razor blade.”

“Was it sterile?”

“Yes.”

Can I trust him when he says that? Probably not.

“Is there a first aid kit in here? Something we can stem the bleeding with? I think this needs stitches. I could take you to the medical room.”

“No!”

“Okay, no to the medical room, not a problem. How about we move out into the studio? There’s a bit more room.”

“Fine,” he begrudgingly agrees.

Donnelly steps back to allow me to exit the small supply room, and follows closely behind me. I'm a little on edge, but I know that I can handle myself. I'm just thrown by this turn of events, that's all.

I lead Donnelly back round to the main part of the studio, spying a first aid kit behind Danny's desk and rushing over to it. Honestly, there's so much blood loss, I don't know how Ghost is still standing.

"Nice painting," he says dryly.

"You don't like to paint?"

"Can't fucking stand art."

I blink. What to say to that? Ghost loves art. I think back to when I was last alone in this studio with him. How he wanted me to call him Sir, or just use his last name. Was that Donnelly then? It can't have been. He said—

Why am I even thinking about this, like somehow there's two or maybe even three people in one. Ghost is infuckingsane and if I start to seriously consider what I'm thinking, then I'm fucking mental too.

I clean the cut as best I can, rinsing with the small bottle of saline solution in the kit. Donnelly doesn't even flinch when I wipe it over with antiseptic. I apply pressure with sterile gauze. When the gauze turns red with blood, I try not to freak out. Donnelly watches me closely, curiously, the entire time. Wrapping a second bandage around the first, I tie it off as tight as I can and then raise his arm up to try to slow the bleeding.

Donnelly doesn't utter a word. I'm covered in his blood, holding his arm in the air, trying not to squirm under his intense scrutiny. I have no idea how long we sit like that until a quiet, soft voice says, "I'm sorry, Kayla."

I hesitate. "...Ghost?"

He nods sadly, refusing to meet my gaze.

"We need to get you to the hospital wing. This needs stitches."

“In a minute, please,” he begs. He sounds so dejected, so broken, I give in to him. I just want to pull him into my arms and hold him, but I don’t know how that would go down, so I don’t.

I try to catch his eye, but he’s looking right past me. Turning, I follow his gaze and take a look at the canvas he’s staring at. It’s a painting of a young man, his face twisted in agony. The colours are vibrant, yet somehow muted at the same time. I can’t help but be drawn to it.

“Did you paint that?”

He nods.

“What’s his story?” I ask, gesturing to the painting.

Ghost sighs heavily, looking down at his hands. “He’s me,” he says quietly. “Or at least, he was. Before Seytan got her hooks in me.”

I glance at him, suddenly feeling a sense of camaraderie. We’re all broken in our own ways, all seeking redemption.

“I’m sorry,” I say softly.

Ghost shakes his head. “Don’t be. It’s not your fault. And besides, I’m not that person anymore. None of us are.”

I nod in agreement. “That’s why we’re here, right? To start over, to find a new purpose.”

Ghost nods, a small, broken smile playing on his lips. “Yeah. To take control of our lives and not let Seytan or anyone else dictate our paths.”

“I wish,” I sigh. And I do. Removing the chip and getting out of here isn’t simple, and that’s just the start.

We sit in silence for a few moments, each lost in our own thoughts. But then Ghost turns to me, his pale blue-grey eyes intense.

“Listen, I know we’ve all got our issues and we’re not exactly the most stable group of people. Me in particular. But

we're in this together, and I want you to know that I've got your back, no matter what."

A lump forms in my throat, overwhelmed by his words. For the first time in a long time, I feel like I belong somewhere. But shouldn't I be the one reassuring and comforting him?

"Thank you," I whisper, and Ghost nods in response. "Ghost, do you want—"

"No."

"Okay."

We continue to sit there, side by side, lost in our thoughts until the sense of needing to help Ghost weighs down too heavily on me.

"Come on, let's get you to the medical wing."

As I help Ghost up, he pulls me into his arms and presses his lips against mine. It's a desperate sort of kiss, one that takes me aback, but it's still welcomed. The warmth of Ghost's embrace is magnetic.

My heart races as I give into the moment, wrapping my arms around his neck and pulling him in closer. His lips are soft and gentle, but the intensity of his kiss is overwhelming.

We break apart, gasping for air, and look into each other's eyes. There's a hunger there, a desire that's been simmering beneath the surface for far too long. Ghost takes my hand and leads me over to my painting, his touch sending shivers down my spine.

He pins me against the canvas, crushing my chest into the cold, still wet paint and running his hands all over me, caressing my body with a hunger that both excites and frightens me. I'm so lost in the moment that I barely notice when he tears off my dress, revealing my bare chest. It's only the cool air kissing my skin causing a rash of goosebumps to break out on my body that clues me in to what's going on.

He grips my head, turning it to the side so that my cheek is kissing the canvas, and his lips find mine again. I forget everything else but the heat of his body against mine.

Ghost's hands run down my back. His fingertips trace along my spine as they travel towards my ass, causing me to shiver. His touch sends a jolt of electricity down my back, making me moan into the canvas.

"Ghost," I whisper. "I want you."

"You have me," he replies, his voice quivering. "Completely. I've been trying to work up the courage to tell you, I'm yours."

Ghost pulls down his blood-stained sweatpants, letting them fall to the floor, revealing his bare erection and many, many piercings. Against the canvas, he presses into me, his hardness, his strength, begging for attention.

He kisses down my neck, trailing down my back. He runs his hands down my thighs, caressing each and every one of my curves.

He turns me around and pulls me against his chest, his hands cupping my ass. Now his erection presses into my belly, the cold piercings contrasting his heat, and his warm skin burning against me.

Ghost kisses my lips gently, softly, hesitantly, but with a passion that's unrivalled. Then he kisses down my chin, to my neck, and down to my chest, purposely avoiding my breasts. I lean back, pressing my body against the canvas, savouring the feeling of being at his gentle mercy.

This beautiful man, half-naked and powerful, is looking up at me and I don't have a single doubt. I know exactly what I want.

I pull Ghost's face up to meet mine, our eyes locking together. "I'm yours, Ghost," I vow.

"And I'm yours," he says, and then we're kissing again, lips locked together as if we're never going to let go.



Ghost wraps his arms around my lower back, lifting me up off the ground. Our legs meet, our bodies press together. I wrap my legs around his waist, my arms around his shoulders. He presses me back against the cold canvas and lines himself up at my entrance.

We lock eyes, sharing a moment, and then he thrusts so deeply into me that my eyes roll back.

He surges into me, faster and faster, harder and harder. Holy fucking shit, he's so deep I feel like he's splitting me in half.

“Oh, god,” I moan. “Ghost.”

I bury my face in his neck, kissing his skin, biting it, savouring the moment.

He groans in response. “Oh, fuck,” he moans. “You feel so good, Kayla.”

He thrusts into me again and again and I know my orgasm is building, I can feel it just out of reach.

Suddenly he pulls out, making me wince and leaving me feeling bereft at the loss of him, before spinning me back to face the canvas, slamming his hand down on my spine so that I bend forward and kiss the wet paint. And then he's grabbing my hips, pistoning back into me and making me scream.

“Holy shit,” I huff.

My fingers dig into the canvas, trying to find a grip as he pounds into me. My torso slips and slides in the wet paint but I don't even care.

“Does that feel good?” he groans.

“Yes,” I moan. “Oh, fuck. Ghost, yes!”

He pulls out of me again, and I gasp, feeling empty as he slaps my ass so hard I yelp.

“Hey—”

“Call me Donnelly.”

Ice cold dread washes over me but then he's behind me again, pressing his erection against my clit, rubbing it back and forth until I'm trembling and unable to think straight. It's still the same person, right? Ghost wouldn't hurt me. And I don't think Donnelly would either. At least, not in any way that I wouldn't fucking beg for.

He doesn't hesitate to press forward, and I'm so fucking glad because I was so ready for it. His dick is so fucking big, I can't even begin to comprehend how he's not breaking me right now. I feel every single one of those delectable piercings rubbing my inner walls, pushing me closer and closer to the edge.

He holds my body in a bruising grip as he thrusts into me again and again, pumping into me in a way that I can't even comprehend, it feels so fucking good.

Ghost – Donnelly? – moans out my name as he rams into me faster and faster. My eyes lock on someone standing in the doorway to the lift.

Honey.

“Fuck,” I groan, unable to tear my eyes away from him, my core clenching and pulsing. How long has he been there, watching? And why does that turn me on so much?

His gaze scorches me, the want and need written so plain on his face that he takes my breath away. I reach out to him, beckoning him to come join us. He shakes his head, barely, but he doesn't leave either.

“Please,” I mouth. He steps forward and my heart soars. “I want to suck you,” I call out, on a pained, needy groan.

That makes him move faster, by the time he's crossed the space to reach us, his jeans are already down and he's fisting his cock and presenting it to my open and willing mouth like a gift.

“Swallow me,” he orders me. “Take every drop, darlin’.”

Donnelly pauses for a second, but then continues destroying me in the best way.

I smile up at him, loving the power he gives me over him in this moment, and I take him to the back of my throat, sucking and licking every inch of his cock, savouring his unique, addicting flavour. He groans at the sensations I'm creating for him, at the attention he's being lavished with, and I revel in it. It's a power rush. He's the type of man who could have any woman he wanted. He could have anyone fawning all over him. And yet, here he is, choosing me.

This is how it should be.

This. Is. How. It. Should. Be.

I'm consumed with a desire so strong that I can't even begin to express it as I take him deeper into my mouth. It's fucking perfect. The head of his cock is pressing against the back of mouth, demanding entry into my throat, making it difficult to breathe. But I fucking love it. Love how he fills my mouth. I've never tasted a cock so perfect in my life.

I press forward, encouraging him to push past my barriers and go deeper. He makes a small noise of surprise and his cock pulses and twitches in my mouth.

"Oh, fuck," he hisses. "Oh, darlin', yes, like that."

Donnelley's hands drift down my back again but I can't focus on that. I can't focus on anything but the press of Honey's cock deep in my throat.

I moan as I take an extra inch of Honey into my mouth, until my lips are pressed against his hard stomach. Another pulse of his cock followed by another of his almost pained moans has me on the brink of orgasm.

"Oh, fuck," he groans, his hand coming forward to grab a fist full of my hair. "You're so fucking good at this. Oh, fucking hell, you're perfect. You take me so good. So fucking good. Good girl. You're my good little girl, aren't ya, darlin'."

I moan at the praise he's showering me with. The pressure of his hand on my head makes me take him further down, until I'm gagging and I just can't take any more.

"Take it, baby," he encourages me. "Take it all."

I do, and I love it. Juices are flowing out of my pussy as much as drool is leaking from the side of my mouth. "Oh, fuck. Oh, fuck.

With one hand, he pulls out of my mouth, and I gasp for breath. My attention instantly turns to Donnelly and the press of his cock against my slick, wet pussy once more.

"It's alright, darlin'," Honey groans, holding onto my head to ensure I don't move away from him. "He's going to keep takin' you from behind. That's what you like, isn't it?"

I moan in response, and it's all the answer he needs. He smiles down at me, and I see nothing but desire and affection in his eyes. "Now be a good girl and swallow me whole again."

I'm fucking helpless, lost in his praise as he guides me back to his cock and I open wide to take him. I've become a doll, a vessel for them to use and enjoy, and I know the moment they feel my submission because the pair of them turn feral in the pursuit of their own pleasure.

"Oh, fuck!" Donnelly moans, pounding into my dripping cunt with a new ferocity as Honey does the same to my mouth.

I scream around Honey's dick, overcome by the pleasure the two of them are taking from me. There's a huge orgasm building inside me, and I don't know if I can handle it. Donnelly moans again, his voice sending shivers down my spine.

"Pet," he moans, his voice shaky as his thrusts become erratic, his arms shaking. "Oh, god, yes, little pet. So. Fucking. Good. Such a good girl. No wonder they tried to keep you from me."

He's so close to losing it, I can tell from his fevered thrusts, his rambling grunts, his staccato rhythm.

I release Honey's dick from my lips with a pop and plead with Donnelly.

"Come inside me, please," I beg. "Both of you. Fill me up and make me yours."

As I take Honey back, deep into my throat and he begins to press his hips forward, forcing me to take every inch of him again, there's a groan, a shudder, and then he comes deep in my throat. I swallow him down, loving his musky, salty essence, taking every last drop. Then I suck him clean, teasing the tip of my tongue over and around his slit until he's jerking away, complaining that it's too sensitive. Behind me, Donnelly comes too with a sharp slap to my arse, and their joint orgasms trigger mine in a wild, unexpected explosion that makes black spots dance across my vision. Fuck. Fuck that was so good.

I scream, my muscles spasming. Donnelly's arms lock around my waist, holding me still as I ride out my orgasm.

I don't know if I can handle this.

"Oh, fuck, Little Pet," he moans. "I'm going to come again."

I gasp as he pulls out again, yanking me away from Honey and spinning me around to face him yet again.

Then he's kissing me as his cock spasms, spilling his cum all over my abdomen. It's so fucking hot, being claimed, being marked like that, that I groan as I come again myself, my empty pussy walls desperately clenching around air, mourning the loss of him. Of them both.

That was fucking perfect.

By the time I've caught my breath, the other two are fully clothed, and I'm still a naked fucking mess. Honey grins at me and passes me my dress.

"You good, darlin'?"

“Better than good,” I reply.

He winks at me and flashes a cheeky grin. “I’ll say. What now?”

“We need to get...him to the medical wing,” I say, hesitating to use his name.

“Ghost?” Honey asks carefully, immediately picking up on my unease.

“Yeah?”

“Shall we get that cut seen too?”

“Yeah.”

“I’ll come with you,” I say, struggling to turn my dress the right way round and pull it on over my head.

“Darlin’, I’ve got this. You go shower.”

“But I want to make sure he’s alright.”

“You look like a crime scene. I can’t take the two of you into the medical wing looking like that.”

“Fine.” I sigh. “But as soon as I’m showered, I’m going to see him. I need to talk to the doctor anyway.”

“No problem. Now, can you walk after that mighty fine fucking, or do you need to be carried?”

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BACK IN MY ROOM, I step into the shower, seeking refuge in the soothing cascade of water. The steam engulfs me as I let the hot water wash away the dirt, paint, and blood from my skin. But I also let it wash away the fear and the uncertainty that has been clinging to my skin for far too long. The hiss of the showerhead drowns out the eerie silence that haunts me.

When I’m finally done, I wrap myself in a soft, warm towel and wring out my hair. I don’t want to take too long, don’t want to be away from Ghost, so as soon as I’m dry, I

comb and tie back my hair, then dress in leggings and a baggy, oversized fluffy jumper, just wearing thick, warm socks on my feet. I'm dressing for comfort, I realise. Wrapping myself up in a fuzzy hug.

Ready, I head for the medical wing, but as soon as I enter the space, I see that it's deserted. Panic sets in like a sudden surge of electricity as I frantically search the sterile room. The white walls seem to close in on me, their silence amplifying my anxiety. My eyes dart from one corner to another, desperately seeking any trace of Ghost at all. A drop of blood, a discarded bandage...anything.

But there's nothing.

His absence is like a gaping wound, an unsettling void that sends shivers down my spine. I stand there for a moment, my shoulders slumping, guilt weighing me down. I should have gone with them. What if Donnelly came back again and took over. What if he attacked Honey? I need to find them both.

Just as I reach for the doorknob to leave, the doctor's soft voice stops me in my tracks. "Kayla, please stay for a moment," she implores, her tone unusually gentle, rather than professional. I turn to face her, her expression a mix of concern and empathy. My stomach knots with anxiety.

She sighs, meeting my gaze and revealing tired, sympathetic eyes. "I know we were going to meet next week but as I have you here now, I may as well tell you. Almost all of your test results came back clear," she says slowly, as if choosing her words with caution. "Except for one."

My heart leaps into my throat, and I clutch the hem of my jumper tightly, twisting the material nervously.

"What is it?" whisper, dread washing over me.

The doctor hesitates, her gaze locked with mine. "The pregnancy test," she says, voice barely above a whisper.

A shockwave of emotions courses through me. Fear, disbelief, and despair collide in a torrent of overwhelming sensations. Tears well up in my eyes as I stagger back, unable

to comprehend the implications of her words. I slump into a nearby chair, trembling.

“No, no, no. This can’t be happening,” I mutter to myself, my mind racing a million miles a minute. “I can’t be pregnant. Not in here, not now.”

“I’m really sorry, Kayla.”

“Have you told anyone?”

The doctor shakes her head. “No. I-I’m supposed to, but I kept the pregnancy test and request for contraceptive off your file. No one knows but me.”

I look up at the doctor, my vision blurred by tears, my eyes pleading for a lifeline in the sea of uncertainty. “Please,” I beg, my voice trembling. “You have to help me. You can’t tell anyone about this. What do I do?”

The doctor’s gaze softens further, her expression a mixture of compassion and concern. “I understand, Kayla,” she says. “Your situation is complicated, and I won’t disclose anything without your consent. We’ll handle this discreetly. You don’t have to go through with this.”

Her assurance offers a glimmer of relief, but the weight of the decision ahead still bears down on me like an unbearable burden. I swallow hard, my throat tight with emotion. “You’re right,” I admit, my voice barely above a whisper. “I don’t have to have it. But...” My voice trails off, the words catching in my throat as I grapple with the painful truth.

“But you don’t think you can get rid of it either,” the doctor finishes my sentence, her understanding evident in her eyes. Her words hang in the air, a stark reminder of the impossible choices that lie ahead.

As I sit there, grappling with the enormity of my situation, the room seems to close in around me, suffocating and oppressive. The weight of the secret I now carry, the uncertainty of my future, and the haunting spectre of motherhood in this nightmarish place combine to leave me feeling utterly trapped, like a caged bird yearning for freedom.



“You have to get me out of this asylum, off this damn island. I can’t have a baby here.”

The doctor’s eyes soften with sympathy, and she nods slowly. “I promise, Kayla, I will do my best to help you,” she assures me. “But with the chip....it’ll take some time.”

“Can you remove it?”

“I’m not a surgeon.”

“So you didn’t put it in?”

She shakes her head. “No. I didn’t. And I don’t know who did. All of the residents arrive with the chip already installed.”

“But can you remove it? I know you’re not a surgeon, but could. you?”

“Not without risking your life.”

“Is there any other way of helping me?”

“I’ll see what I can do,” the doctor says, her voice tinged with a mixture of determination and compassion. She leans in closer, lowering her voice as if to share a secret. “I have some leave coming up in just a couple of days. During that time, I’ll make the journey to the city, speak to a colleague I trust. We’ll explore every avenue, Kayla, I promise. I want to help you, and I will. But you have to be patient.”

Her words hang in the air, a lifeline of hope amid the suffocating darkness of my circumstances. I nod, tears welling up in my eyes, grateful for her commitment to my cause. “Thank you,” I manage to choke out, my voice wavering with emotion.

Leaving the medical wing, I make my way back to my room, each step heavier than the last. All thoughts of finding Ghost and Honey are pushed from my mind. The weight of the world presses down on my shoulders, the gravity of my situation sinking in deeper with every passing moment.

My room, once a sanctuary of sorts, now feels like a prison cell, closing in on me, bearing witness to my turmoil.

I collapse onto the bed, the soft mattress providing little comfort. My mind races with a torrent of thoughts and emotions, each vying for my attention. The shock of the pregnancy test result, the uncertainty of the future, and the daunting journey that lies ahead leave me reeling. Yet, beneath it all, a glimmer of hope persists, a tiny flame that refuses to be extinguished. With that fragile hope, I clutch at the possibility of escape, of freedom from this asylum and this forsaken island, willing to endure whatever it takes to make it a reality.

MIXING UP THEIR BODY PARTS  
LIKE A PICK 'N' MIX



*'GASOLINE' – HALSEY*

KAYLA

*M*y phone buzzes on the nightstand, and even though I'm avoiding everyone, again, I still get a little thrill that one of them is reaching out to me.

DADDY HATCHET

What's wrong, Flame?

I SNORT when I see his message with his nickname for me. But then again, I did change his name in my phone from Forest to Daddy Hatchet so I guess I'm just as bad. I wonder if it'll stick – his name for me.

It makes me think about the other guys, and how each of them have claimed me as their own with a nickname of sorts. Honey calls me darling, dropping the 'g' in that sexy drawl of his that always gives me fanny flutters.

Snow calls me slut. He wields it as an insult, but I felt that dynamic shifting from the moment he took those bullets for me, to the other day on the roof. I don't want him to call me anything else, it wouldn't feel right between us if he did.

Bones calls me princess. Like with Snow, the tone has shifted. He no longer brandishes the word like a weapon, but whispers it to me reverently. I wonder if he'll change and start to call me something else when he discovers I'm pregnant.

Nightshade calls me Red, or baby when he's feeling particularly affectionate, and it feels so sinfully perfect coming from his lips.

And Ghost. I'm his little pet. I think. Maybe I'm Donnelly's little pet. Because Ghost still holds me at arm's length and refuses to let me in.

I turn back to my phone and consider Daddy Hatchet's message. Flame? I grimace. I'm not sure I like it. Growing up I was always picked on because of my hair colour, and just because I choose to dye it an even more vibrant shade of red now, doesn't mean I like the name *flame*.

Flame? That's a new one. Because of the hair?

IT TAKES a minute for his message to come through. I stare at the screen, waiting, and just as I'm about to give up and put the device back on my nightstand, it buzzes in my hand.

DADDY HATCHET

No, because we're all drawn to you like moths...

HIS MESSAGE SENDS warmth spreading through my chest again. Okay. Maybe his nickname for me isn't that bad after all. Like moths to a flame. But he says *we* are *all* drawn to you. Does that mean what I think – what I hope – it does?

All?

DADDY HATCHET

Yes, all.

I've been flirting with you since the day I arrived, and you've barely shown any interest.

DADDY HATCHET

I've spoken more to you via these few messages than I have to anyone my entire adult life. And I've been watching you this whole time. Can't seem to help myself. I'm as captivated by you as everyone else is.

That makes me really sad.

DADDY HATCHET

I don't need your pity.

It's not pity, it's compassion.

DADDY HATCHET

I thought we were monsters. Monsters don't have compassion.

No, they don't show compassion. There's a difference.

DADDY HATCHET

So what's bothering you, treacle?

Treacle? Ha! I'm anything but sweet.

DADDY HATCHET

I disagree. Your scent is burnished into my soul, it's the sweetest thing I've ever smelt and still not had the pleasure of tasting. Every night I dream of it, of you, of driving that needle through your pretty little clit, and it's getting harder and harder to ignore.

MY CHEEKS BLAZE. I wasn't expecting that. Especially not from him. What do I even say in response? For once I'm floored. I have no witty comeback, no flirty, teasing retort. I'm

staring, with my mouth gaping open, at my phone, wondering how on earth to flip the power back to me. But I've got nothing.

You want to taste me?

HIS RESPONSE IS instantaneous and direct.

DADDY HATCHET

More than anything.

MY CORE PULSES at his words and my fingers itch to say *well, come taste me then* but something stops me. His second message comes through and distracts me from replying.

DADDY HATCHET

But that can wait. Right now, I want to know what's wrong with you.

What makes you think there's something wrong?

DADDY HATCHET

No one's seen you in a couple of days. Are you hiding from us again?

I wasn't hiding, I was recovering from Hell Week. Weren't we all?

DADDY HATCHET

Wasn't on about that time, Roadrunner. Besides, that was ages ago, and you've been seen since Hell Week, so what's with the disappearing act all of a sudden?

I don't know what you mean.

DADDY HATCHET

Of course you don't, Kayla.

THERE'S a lull where I wonder what I'm supposed to say, wondering if I've upset or angered him, and feeling disappointed that he's used my actual name rather than a term of endearment, but then a second message arrives. Right when I'm contemplating confiding in him. *Saved by the buzz.*

DADDY HATCHET

Keep running, someone might chase you, little bunny.

FUCK, that thrills me. And it's an excellent opportunity to change the subject.

Is that your kink then? Chasing rabbits?

DADDY HATCHET

I like chasing all kinds of prey.

That's really fucking hot.



DADDY HATCHET

Maybe when you start to trust and confide in me, I can make you my prey and I can hunt you down for that taste I've been craving.

I'm an open book. No secrets here. Devour me, Daddy.

DADDY HATCHET

We'll see. Tell me what happened with Snow. Why did he take those bullets for you? Why is he suddenly a changed man?

Still seems like an asshole to me.

DADDY HATCHET

I don't think you really believe that for a second.

Maybe it's the power of the magical pussy. You should try it sometime. Apparently it can work miracles.

DADDY HATCHET

Maybe once we've managed a meaningful conversation rather than flirty banter, I'll consider it. As beautiful, and I'm sure magical, as your pussy may be, that's not what's changed Snow. YOU are. What's he atoning for? It's more than just being an asshole.

Go ask him if you want to know.

DADDY HATCHET

Why are you protecting him?

The same reason I'd protect any of you.

DADDY HATCHET

Which is?

Figure it out yourself. If you want deep and meaningful, tell me this, are you the killer Satan made us watch that news report about?

DADDY HATCHET

I am.

So you killed an entire congregation of people?

DADDY HATCHET

I did.

Good. They must have deserved so much worse than whatever you did to them.

DADDY HATCHET

I cleaved their bodies up with an axe. Hence the name 'Hatchet'. I was young, stupid, and so fucking traumatised. But I probably shouldn't have spent the rest of the night mixing up their body parts like a pick 'n' mix.

Why did you stay? Why not run?

DADDY HATCHET

Everyone I knew, loved, and hated was in that church. What else was out there for an almost fourteen year old boy?

And you've been here ever since?

DADDY HATCHET

Yes. Over twenty years. I'm thirty-six now, in case you were wondering.

A fourteen year age gap between us? How are you so fucking hot for an old guy?

DADDY HATCHET

Careful, bunny. You can't run fast enough to escape me.

Can I ask you something?

DADDY HATCHET

Anything.

Well damn, now I have lots of questions.

DADDY HATCHET

We have an abundance of time.

I won't ask why you did it. But did killing them bring you joy? Did it end your pain?

DADDY HATCHET

Joy? No. End my pain? No. It ended my suffering and it brought me peace, and I don't regret that. What other questions do you have for me, little one?

You really should be careful with your terms of endearment. A stone cold killer could get very swoony very fast when you talk like that to them. Okay, next question, what's up with Ghost?

DADDY HATCHET

What do you mean?

Ghost. Silas. Donnelly.

DADDY HATCHET

Ah, so you've met all three of them then?

Yes. But how the fuck can one person be three people? And how am I supposed to know which is which?

DADDY HATCHET

That's not my story to tell. Ask Ghost.

I can't. He won't open up to me. I've tried. I'm worried about him.

DADDY HATCHET

I'll say this. If you've met Donnelly and lived to tell the tale, you must be very special to Silas indeed. Which means you're good for all of us. Got to go, I'm due in individual therapy with Seytan. Be good. Come out of your room today. We all miss you.

Fucking hate that bitch. Give her hell for me, Daddy x

I WATCH MY PHONE, eagerly hoping for one last reply, but it doesn't come. Disappointed, but also thrilled by the conversation we did have, I ponder what he means about Silas.

From what I can figure out, Ghost's personality is sort of split into three different entities. If that's even possible. Ghost is the withdrawn, quiet boy who we see on a day to day basis, but Silas and Donnelly live within him too. I'm not sure which one fucked me the first time in the art room, but there's no doubt in my mind that the second time was a mix of Ghost and Donnelly. What a head fuck.

What did Hatchet mean *if I lived to tell the tale* after meeting Donnelly, Silas must care about me? What about Ghost? It's so confusing.

And actually, I have bigger problems to worry about.

It's been five days since the doctor broke the news to me, and I've seen nothing and heard nothing from her since. She

didn't say how long she'd be gone, and whenever I've gone to the medical room to check, it's been empty.

I hope she returns soon, and with a plan of action. I need to figure out how the fuck I'm getting this chip out of me so I can get the hell off this island.

Preferably before my crew of deadly psychos figure out I'm knocked up with one of their babies in my belly.

YOU'RE MINE NOW, LITTLE PREY



*'PLAY WITH FIRE' – SAM TINNESZ*

KOOKABURRA

The buzzing of my phone wakes me from a fretful slumber. Nightmares have been plaguing me for days, each one more vivid and terrifying than the last. I fumble for the device on the nightstand, my fingers trembling as I unlock the screen. The digital clock reads 1:47 a.m., the room shrouded in darkness save for the dim glow of the screen.

With bleary eyes, I squint at the message notification. It's from Hatchet, the one person who has been a constant source of comfort in this desolate place. The text is brief but confusing

DADDY HATCHET

Fancy a run?

DID HE SEND THIS EARLIER? Or is this some kind of joke?

I yawn and stretch, contemplating ignoring it and going back to sleep, but then I pause.

My heart races as I read over his message again, a mix of excitement and anxiety coursing through me. His message is a flicker of light in the suffocating darkness of this asylum. Whatever he wants, I'm here for because it means a break from these four walls that have been driving me insane for days now.

His cryptic offer sends a shiver down my spine. Why on earth would he want to run in the dead of night?

Then it hits me as my brain slowly wakes up. Our earlier conversation from a few days ago. He said he liked to chase all kinds of prey, called me little bunny or rabbit or something. Said he'd been craving a taste of me.

*Fuck yes.* It's just the distraction I need.

Careful not to make a sound, I slip out of bed, my feet landing on the soft, carpeted floor. The room is a shadowy maze, the light from my phone casting eerie shapes across the floor. I dress in silence, opting for dark, inconspicuous clothing that blends into the night, and running shoes I've not even used before now. Every creak of the floorboards beneath my feet feels like a betrayal, as if the very walls themselves are listening.

With my heart pounding, I make my way to the lift and press the button for the exit level, wondering if it'll work. Once I was granted access to go wherever I pleased within the asylum, I didn't feel much like exploring. I've used the lift plenty to get around, but I've not been snooping. Shame on me. Maybe there was a way off the island that I could have found.

I breathe a sigh of relief when the lift starts moving, and when the doors softly open and the scent of the forest and the chill of the night air hits me, I shiver.

Guided only by the faint moonlight filtering through the dense trees, I step out of the lift and stride across the lawn to the edge of the treeline. Each step is a delicate dance, an intricate ballet of silence and stealth. The asylum is eerily quiet at this hour, the only sounds the distant hum of machinery and the faint rustling of leaves outside.

I pause on the edge of the trees, wondering if I should step foot into the woods. Peering through the darkness, I look around for any signs of Hatchet. Any signs of life at all.

There's none.

My phone buzzes again and I pull it from the pocket of the dark hoodie I'm wearing. Before I can unlock the screen,



several more messages flood in.

DADDY HATCHET

Good girl.

DADDY HATCHET

Dark clothing won't keep you hidden from me.

DADDY HATCHET

When I catch you, I'll devour you.

DADDY HATCHET

Get ready, little prey.

DADDY HATCHET

Run.

MY HEART POUNDS as I read Hatchet's messages, the thrill of anticipation mingling with a growing sense of unease. The darkness of the woods ahead beckons like a vast abyss, and I can't shake the feeling that I'm being lured into a game with high stakes. But the prospect of escaping the asylum, even for a short while, is too tantalising to resist.

I take a deep breath, my exhalation visible in the cold night air. The scent of damp earth and pine needles fills my nostrils as I cautiously step into the woods, my senses heightened to every rustle and whisper of the night. Moonlight filters through the dense canopy, casting eerie, shifting shadows that seem to come alive with every swaying branch.

My phone remains clutched tightly in my hand, its screen dimmed to minimise any telltale glows that might give away

my position. Hatchet's messages continue to flood in, each one sending a shiver down my spine.

I start to move, a stealthy jog at first, my feet making minimal noise on the forest floor. Every step is calculated, every rustle of leaves avoided as I navigate the uneven terrain. The darkness is oppressive, and the sensation of being hunted intensifies with each passing second.

My breath comes in ragged gasps as I pick up the pace, branches and underbrush whipping against my legs. The woods seem to close in around me, as if the very trees themselves are conspiring against my escape. I can't help but glance over my shoulder, the shadows playing tricks on my eyes, making it seem as though something is lurking just beyond my vision.

Hatchet's messages continue to taunt me, his words both exhilarating and terrifying. Each text sends a shiver down my spine, and I can't help but wonder if he's closing in, if he's watching my every move.

The chase is on, and the thrill of the hunt courses through my veins. But with every step, the forest becomes more disorienting, more labyrinthine, and I can't shake the feeling that I'm not alone out here – not just alone with Hatchet out here.

My footsteps quicken, heart racing, as I push myself harder, deeper into the woods, running blindly into the night, my every instinct screaming at me to stay ahead of the predator behind me.

My breaths come in rapid bursts, and the adrenaline surges through me as I race through the tangled undergrowth. My heart feels like it's about to burst from my chest, and the forest blurs into a disorienting mosaic of shadows and moonlight. The scent of damp soil and pine needles fills my nostrils as the woods become a maze of seductive uncertainty.

The forest around me seems to come alive with ominous whispers, as if the trees are conspiring against me. The

moonlight casts eerie, elongated shadows that dance and sway, creating phantoms in the darkness. Fear claws at my throat, threatening to overwhelm me, but I force myself to keep running, to keep pushing forward.

I hear something—a distant rustling, a twig snapping, a soft, sinister chuckle that carries on the night breeze. Panic grips me, and I veer off the path, crashing through the underbrush, hoping to throw off any pursuer. But the forest is unforgiving, and the tangled thicket only serves to slow me down.

The sound of pursuit grows closer, and I can't ignore the sinking feeling that I'm being herded like prey, that Hatchet is closing in with each passing moment. My phone remains clenched in my hand, its screen a faint, ominous glow that illuminates my frantic expression.

I break through a thicket and find myself in a small clearing, the moonlight casting an eerie glow on the ground. I turn to scan my surroundings, my heart pounding in my ears. And then, I see him—a dark figure, lurking in the shadows at the edge of the clearing, his silhouette menacing and predatory.

It's Hatchet.

My blood runs hot and cold, arousal and terror gripping me in its icy embrace as I realise that this chase was never a game. I'm trapped in the heart of the forest, with nowhere to run and nowhere to hide.

I take a step back, my breath catching in my throat, my phone slipping from my trembling hand. The words of his earlier messages echo in my mind, and I know that I'm at his mercy, helpless prey ensnared in his hunt.

As I take another step back towards the trees, Hatchet's grin becomes visible in the moonlight. He emerges from the shadows with a slow, deliberate pace, his movements predatory and calculating. The gleam in his eyes sends a shiver down my spine and has my core clenching.

He continues to advance, his movements fluid and sinister. He's dressed in dark clothing, blending seamlessly into the night, and there's an eerie calm about him as he closes the distance between us.

Do I want to be caught?

Or should I run and eke the chase out a little longer?

There's no denying I feel exhilarated. More alive than I have in ages. I love this.

My phone buzzes on the solid ground, and I reach down to pick it up.

DADDY HATCHET

You can't run forever, little bunny.

BY THE TIME I stand upright again, he's upon me.

But instead of attacking, Hatchet stops in front of me, his breath hot on my face. I can smell whiskey on his breath as he tilts his head to the side, his gaze raking over me. I feel exposed and vulnerable under his intense scrutiny, my pulse racing as my mind tries to process what just happened. I know Hatchet would never hurt me, but my brain is still wrapped up in the chase, flight or fight mode pumping my body with adrenaline, and causing confusion.

The weight of his stare presses down on me, making my knees weak.

The heat rises in my cheeks as I look up at him, my eyes meeting his.

Hatchet's lips curve into a wicked smile, and he steps closer until we're almost touching.

"You know what I want," I murmur, as his hand reaches up to brush a stray strand of hair from my face. It must have come

loose in the undergrowth, but he tucks it behind my ear with care.

I hold my breath as he leans in, his lips hovering just inches from mine. Then centimetres. I blink and it's millimetres.

It's like time and space are closing in, leaving only Hatchet and me in the world. His hand finds my waist, pulling me closer as he captures my lips in a fierce kiss. His lips crash against mine, his tongue demanding entry, a collision of desperation and dominance. My initial shock is quickly replaced by a strange, inexplicable, almost primal attraction. I've wanted Hatchet since the moment I laid eyes on him, and being made to wait has drawn out something possessive in me.

My body betrays me as my heart races, and for a moment, I'm lost in the intensity of the kiss. The forest seems to hold its breath, the moonlight casting a surreal glow on our entangled figures. It's a kiss that defies reason, one that blurs the lines between predator and prey.

I melt into him, my body responding to his touch like I've been waiting for this moment forever. His tongue explores my mouth, taking what he wants and leaving me breathless in his wake.

I can't help the moan that escapes my lips as his other hand slides down my body, tracing the curve of my hip before moving between my legs. I feel his grin against my lips as he teases me with his fingers through the material of my leggings and my knees almost buckle. I'm helpless, lost in the sensation of his touch.

When he finally breaks the kiss, his eyes are darkened with lust but seem to gleam with a sense of satisfaction, before he releases his hold on me and steps back. He leaves me standing there, breathless and bewildered, unable to make sense of what's just transpired, as he pulls his phone from his pocket and types away at a furious pace.

A moment later, my own phone buzzes and it thrills me as I open the message.

DADDY HATCHET

You're mine now, little prey. I knew once I had a taste, I'd never be able to give you up. I'm going to make sure you never forget it. But first, you need to run.

WITH AN ALMOST TAUNTING smile still etched on his face, Hatchet nods at me. My heart pounds in my chest, my breaths coming in ragged gasps, as I watch him, uncertain of his next move.

With a predatory glint in his eyes, he takes a deliberate step back, creating a brief gap between us. In that moment, a surge of adrenaline and fear courses through me as I realise he intends to chase me once more.

I'm both terrified and excited by his words, and I take off into the woods without a second thought. The adrenaline pumps through my veins as I hear Hatchet's footsteps following close behind me. I run as fast as I can, my heart pounding and my body screaming for air. But I can't stop. I won't stop. I know what's waiting for me at the end of this chase, and I want it more than anything.

The sounds of Hatchet's pursuit come from behind me, his footsteps matching the rhythm of my panicked heartbeats. I race through the moonlight and shadows, the forest floor uneven and treacherous beneath my feet. The thudding of my heart fills my ears as I push myself to the limit, my every instinct screaming at me to escape the man who now pursues me with relentless determination.

The forest becomes a blur as I push myself harder through the dense underbrush, branches and leaves whipping against my skin and tearing at my clothes. I never know if it's fingers

reaching for me, or spectral branches trying to catch me. And I don't stop to find out. My breaths come in short, desperate gasps as I dodge between trees, each one a potential obstacle in my frantic flight.

As the chase continues, I can't help but wonder if there's any way to outwit him, to find a hiding place or a means of escape from this relentless torment.

Suddenly, the sound of Hatchet's breathing grows louder and I know he's getting closer. I *swear* I can feel his hot breath on the back of my neck, sending shivers down my spine. I'm so close now. So close to the edge. To the release. To the prize.

Before I can react, he lunges forward with a lightning-fast movement, grabbing my waist in an iron grip and sending us both crashing to the ground. The forest floor tears at my cheek and the hot metallic scent of my blood immediately floods my senses. Pain shoots through me as his fingers dig into my flesh, and I cry out.

"No!" I yell, struggling against his hold. But it's futile. He's stronger, and his grip is unyielding. The forest echoes with my cries, but there's no one here to hear them, no one to come to my rescue.

# THE THRILL OF THE HUNT





*'CURIOSITY' – BRYCE SAVAGE*

HATCHET

The thrill courses through me as I chase her through the moonlit forest. Her scent lingers in the air, a tantalising mixture of fear and sweat, drawing me closer with each step. It's instinct, a predatory drive that courses through my veins, and it sends shivers of anticipation down my spine.

The moonlight filters through the dense canopy above, casting elongated shadows that dance around me as I navigate the treacherous terrain. My senses are heightened, attuned to every sound, every movement in the woods. Attuned entirely to her.

Her heartbeat thunders in my ears, a rhythmic drumbeat that guides me toward my prey.

She darts between trees, her movements agile and unpredictable, but I am relentless, a shadowy spectre that pursues her with unyielding determination. The thrill of the hunt pulses through me, a dark ecstasy that I cannot deny.

I can hear her laboured breaths, the quickening cadence of her panic. It fuels my desire, my need to capture her, to make her mine in this twisted game I play.

Her footfalls on the forest floor are erratic, the twigs and leaves beneath her feet betraying her path.

As I close in on her, I catch a glimpse of her figure ahead, a fleeting phantom in the moonlight. Her scent grows stronger, an intoxicating blend of vulnerability and desperation that ignites the primal beast within me.

The chase continues, a macabre dance between predator and prey. I can almost taste the fear that emanates from her, feel the adrenaline rushing through her body. With each passing moment, I draw closer, closing the gap between us,

until I can hear the frantic rhythm of her heartbeat, until I can almost reach out and claim her as my own.

And each time it happens, each moment she's a hair's breadth away from me, I let her go. Because I never want this chase, this exquisite torture, to end.

The forest becomes my dark and twisted playground, a realm where the boundaries between reality and madness blur. I am consumed by the thrill of the hunt, the intoxication of the chase, as I stalk her through the moonlit night, my senses alive with the promise of capturing my prey.

As I chase her, the memory of our earlier encounter lingers in my mind like a dark stain on pristine sheets. The kiss, fierce and unexpected, still haunts me, a tantalising taste of something I've longed for way too long.

For months, I've watched her from the shadows, an elusive prey that I could never quite garner the courage to capture. She has been my obsession, a riddle I was determined to solve. But tonight, something shifted, and I finally knew I could wait no longer. I had to have a taste of her, and that kiss was both electrifying and sinister.

I can never let her go now.

The memory of her soft lips against mine, her breathless gasps, and the mingling of her fear and desire fills my thoughts as I pursue her. It's a sensation I can't shake, a craving that has only grown more intense with each passing moment.

I wonder if she feels it too—the twisted allure of our forbidden connection. The forest, our battleground, seems to amplify the urgency of our pursuit, as if it is a stage set for a dark and forbidden romance.

As I close in on her, I can't help but relish the torment I've put her through, the mixture of terror and arousal that's flooding her system. She is no longer just my prey; she is a participant in our deadly game, a willing accomplice in this dance of predator and prey.

The moonlight bathes the forest in an eerie glow, casting a surreal light on our twisted encounter. I can almost taste the fear and desire that emanate from her, and it only fuels my determination to capture her, to make her mine in every sense of the word.

The chase continues, but now it's different. It's charged with the knowledge that we've crossed a line, that we've tasted the forbidden fruit of our desires.

The primal urges within me surge like a wildfire as I stalk her through the darkness. The taste of her, that electrifying kiss, has awakened something raw and savage deep within me. It's as if a dormant beast has been unleashed, and it hungers for more.

My senses are ablaze, every detail of our chase heightened to a fever pitch. Her scent lingers in the air like an intoxicating perfume, driving my instincts wild. I can feel the heat emanating from her body, the pulse of her racing heart, and it's a siren's call that I cannot resist.

With each step, the boundaries between predator and prey blur further, until I can no longer distinguish between them. My need to make her mine has me in chains, making me question if I'm the hunter or the hunted. I'm as much hers, her victim, as she is mine. She has me captured and ensnared in the trap she set for me. The chase has become a frenzied dance, a primal courtship of desire and danger. My pulse races in time with hers, and I can taste the anticipation, the need that hangs in the air like a palpable force.

As I close in on her, I'm driven by an insatiable hunger, a need to possess her in ways that transcend the physical. It's a dark and twisted desire, one that thrives on the fear and vulnerability of our game. I can almost hear the pounding of her heart, the rush of blood in her veins, and it fuels the fire within me.

The moonlight casts eerie, shifting shadows that dance around us, a reflection of the primal forces at play. Every

instinct within me demands that I capture her, claim her as my own, and sate the hunger that gnaws at my very soul.

Our chase continues, a savage, relentless pursuit that defies reason and morality. I'm almost done. The need to have her overriding my desire to draw out the chase. The primal urges inside me become a driving force, propelling me toward a climax that promises to be as dark and twisted as the night itself.

She's tiring now, falling behind so that my breath kisses the back of her neck. I'm so close now. To capturing her. To claiming my prize.

The triumphant thought spurs me on, and I lunge forward, locking my arms around her waist and sending us both crashing to the ground. I use my arms to brace her fall and prevent my body from crushing her, but she still scrapes the forest floor and she cries out.

She yells and struggles against my hold, but it's pointless and a waste of the energy she's going to need to keep up with me now that I have her. She doesn't know how long I've waited for this. Hungered for it. Like a man possessed, obsessed, I have no intention of rushing my devourment of her.

I hold her tightly, feeling the frantic pounding of her heart against my chest. Her body trembles in fear and anticipation, and it only serves to fuel the fire burning within me. I brush my lips against her neck, savouring the taste of her skin, the sweet and salty mixture of sweat and fear.

How I long to whisper in her ear, *You're mine now*, if only I could find the words. To tell her that no one else will ever touch her without my say. Because she belongs to me now.

She struggles against me, her body writhing in an attempt to break free, but I hold her tighter, revelling in her helplessness. I know what she wants, what she craves, and I'm more than willing to give it to her. But I enjoy the chase.

Rising up a little, I release the pressure of my hold on her and she grasps the chance to break free, crawling out from under me and dragging herself across the ground. It's a beautiful sight to behold; she's psychically weakened and exhausted, but mentally still full of fight.

With a sudden surge of desire and strength, I grasp one ankle, pulling her back towards me, and then flipping her over.

I pin her beneath me on her back so that I can stare upon her face. Her eyes widen in terror, but I'm not interested in scaring her anymore. I want her to feel pleasure and pain in equal measure, to experience the full range of emotions that our twisted game has to offer.

Her face is all scratched and dirty, and there's a small gash on her cheek that's bleeding. The sight of the scarlet slash – a perfect match to her flame-red hair – against the whiteness of her skin drives me wild. But it's the scent of her sweet blood that drives me over the edge.

I lean down, pressing my lips against hers in a brutal, devouring kiss. She moans into my mouth, her body arching against mine as her own desires take hold. The heat of her breath, the softness of her lips is a heady rush that sets my blood on fire.

I'm feral in my need for her, while my mouth continues to ravish her, my hands are clawing at her clothes. I break our kiss only to rip her hoodie off over her head and tear her black shirt down the middle.

Her skin seems to glow in the moonlight, pale and ethereal, tempting me to taste all of her. Those dual piercings through her nipples send a pulse of desire to my cock – evidence of the first time I marked her as mine, without her even knowing it.

But it's not enough. I need to see all of her. Roughly, I tear her leggings down her legs, the clingy material snagging at her ankles, unable to breach her runners. Good. She's trapped by her own garments.

Finding her bare and wet beneath makes me feral with need. The beautiful piercing in her clit glints and winks up at me, a badge of ownership, marking her as mine.

My gaze turns possessive, taking in every inch of her exposed body with a hunger that cannot be satiated. How I long to take her, to claim her as my own in every way possible.

But I hold back, taking my time to savour her, to tease her with my touch. I trail my fingers down her stomach, feeling the rhythmic rise and fall of her chest as she struggles to contain her desire.

My hands roam her body, caressing her curves and exploring her depths with a hunger that borders on madness. I want to consume her, to make her mine in every sense of the word. And she wants it too, her body writhing in pleasure beneath me as she surrenders to my touch.

I take one of her breasts in my mouth, licking and sucking until she moans with pleasure, then biting down on her nipple until she cries out and arches into me.

As I trail my hand down her stomach, slipping my fingers between her legs and finding her already so wet with need, she bucks up to meet my touch, wanting more, and I'm more than happy to oblige.

Sipping my fingers into her wetness, feeling the warmth and slickness of her sex, I press deeper, gliding inside her and marvelling at how tight and hot she is. She gasps, clutching at my shoulders as I move my finger in and out of her, building her pleasure until she's panting and writhing beneath me, wordlessly begging for more.

I know what she wants, what she needs, and I'm more than willing to give it to her.

With my free hand, I fumble with my jeans, flicking the button open and pulling down the zipper to release my aching cock. I fist it, pumping it hard in time to the rhythm of my

fingers in her sweet pussy, and she moans, her hips thrusting up to meet my touch.

When her legs start to tremble and her breathing is erratic and desperate, I play with her clit and the little hoop with the ball that rests there, while trying to resist the urge to pull it out with my teeth. Every move I make elicits more and more moans from her lips.

Her scent is intoxicating, a sweet and heady mix of arousal and fear that only drives me wilder. I can't help but want to take her, to claim her in every possible way. But I want her to beg for it first.

Slowly, I pull my fingers from her dripping sex, smirking as she whimpers in disappointment. I lean down, pressing my lips to hers once more, tasting the salt of her sweat on my tongue.

“Please,” she whispers, her voice soft and breathless. “Please, take me, Daddy.”

I grin, feeling a rush of satisfaction at her submission *and* her pet name for me.

But I don't give in so easily.

Not yet.

I trail my hand across her body once more, tracing circles around her nipples, marvelling at how hard and sensitive they've become. I know the piercings will have helped with that.

Finally, I take one between my fingers, pinching and twisting it just enough to make her gasp. *Beg*, I silently tell her with my eyes. *Beg me*.

I can feel myself growing harder, my own desire building to an unbearable level.

“Daddy, please,” she whimpers, reading my expression perfectly, like the good girl she is. She's always seen me, been able to read and understand me, and it's just yet more evidence that she was made for me. Made to be mine.

Positioning myself between her legs, without warning, I enter her with a fierce thrust, claiming her in one swift movement. She screams, but it's a scream of pleasure and ecstasy. As I continue to piston into her with wild thrusts, she cries out. We move together, our bodies tangled and intertwined, a savage, primal dance of desire and hunger. She's mine now, completely and utterly, and nothing will ever change that.

She claws at my skin, breaking the surface so that my hot blood kisses the goosebumps covering my flesh, marking me as hers as much as she's mine.

The possessiveness just makes me move faster and harder, my mind consumed by the overwhelming desire to make her mine in every way possible. I can't stop. I could be hurting her, but I can't stop. I need this, need her, need to possess her completely.

She screams my name, her body convulsing beneath me as I push her to the brink of ecstasy. I know that she's close, so close, and I want nothing more than to make her come undone.

I sink my teeth into the tender flesh at her neck, piercing her skin and drawing a gasp from her lips. The metallic taste of her blood on my tongue only fuels my desire, pushing me closer to the edge.

Her body shatters beneath me, the waves of her orgasm crashing over us both. With one final thrust, she shatters again, her body tensing and releasing around me as she cries out my name once more.

I want nothing more than to fill her, to brand her from the inside out as mine, but not before I taste her sweet release.

I pull out of her, my cock still hard and throbbing with need. I guide her hips up towards my face and bury my face between her legs. Her scent is even more intoxicating up close, her juices coating my tongue and sending a shiver down my spine.



With a deep animalistic growl, I devour her, my tongue lashing at her clit, my fingers buried deep inside her. She writhes and moans beneath my touch, her body trembling with pleasure. I can feel my own release building, the need to claim her driving me towards the edge.

As she reaches her peak once more, I feel my own climax rushing towards me. With a final, guttural cry, she explodes, her hot cum flooding my tongue and flooring me with taste.

I suck her dry, lapping at her like a man starved, until she's writhing beneath me and begging me to fill her.

I line my aching cock up at her entrance and wait.

Her heavy lids open and she blinks up at me, desperate need shining in her eyes.

“Daddy, please—”

That's as far as she gets. I slam home, making her scream and pull me closer. It only takes a few savage thrusts before I follow her over the edge, my own release tearing through me as I empty myself inside her, with a silent, primal roar.

We lie there, panting and spent, our bodies entwined in an intimate embrace. She's mine now, and nothing will ever change that. I'll never let her go. And if she tries to run from me, I'll hunt her to the ends of the Earth and bring her back again, kicking and screaming if I have to.

We stay like that for a while, our bodies entwined and slick with sweat, the only noise is the ragged sound of our breathing.

Finally, I pull away from her, a satisfied grin on my face. She looks up at me, her eyes heavy with pleasure, and I know that we're both thinking the same thing: This is only the beginning.

HIS AFTERCARE IS TOP NOTCH



*'MAD HATTER' – MELANIE MARTINEZ*

KOOKABURRA

I float back to the asylum, on a blissful cloud, my hand in Hatchet's the entire time. I shiver in my hoodie, which is thankfully long enough to cover me to mid-thigh, thanks to Daddy Hatchet shredding my clothes like tissue paper.

He knows the woods like the back of his hand, and what seemed like a labyrinth to me, seems crystal clear to him as though he's reading a map.

"I never would have found my way back alone, would I?" I ask, chuckling. Hatchet gives me an indulgent smile but doesn't say a word. I didn't expect him to. I may have joked that I have a magical pussy, I didn't expect him to have one taste and suddenly become loquacious.

As we approach the asylum, the air grows thick with the scent of disinfectant and antiseptic. Hatchet tightens his grip on my hand, as if bracing me for what's to come. I can't help but feel a sense of dread creeping up my spine.

But Hatchet seems unfazed. In fact, he's wearing a mischievous grin as he leads me through an unknown back entrance of the asylum, as though he's done this a hundred times before. The halls are eerily quiet, save for the sound of our footsteps echoing off the walls.

Suddenly, Hatchet pulls me into a stairwell and shuts the door behind us. I can barely see his face in the darkness, but I can sense his excitement.

"Why did you bring me in here?" I whisper, my heart racing. In response, he presses a finger to my lips.

He leans in close, his warm breath tickling my ear. He takes my other hand and places it on his chest, where I can feel

his heart beating rapidly. I can't help but feel a sense of exhilaration as I realise what's about to happen.

Without warning, Hatchet picks me up and pins me against the wall, his lips crashing down on mine. His kiss is feverish, a mix of hunger and desperation that sets my body ablaze all over again. I'm scratched and scraped all over, bleeding and sore, but so so ready to go again with him.

I wrap my arms around him, pulling him closer as we lose ourselves in the heat of the moment.

The stairwell feels like our own little world, a place where we can forget about the outside world and give in to our desires. Hatchet's hands roam over my body, stroking every inch of me as though he's trying to memorise every curve and contour. I moan into his mouth, my own desire building to a crescendo.

As we break apart for a moment, gasping for air, Hatchet's eyes search mine, his gaze intense and filled with passion. I know what he wants, and I'm more than willing to give it to him.

He lifts me up once again, and I wrap my legs around his waist, feeling his hard cock pressing against me. He fumbles with his jeans and then he's thrusting into me, and I cry out in pleasure, my nails digging into his back. The need is just as strong, just as ferocious as before, but at the same time he holds me more tenderly.

We move together in perfect harmony, our bodies fitting together like pieces of a puzzle.

In this moment, everything else fades away. The asylum, our scars, our pasts – it's just Hatchet and me, lost in the throes of passion. And as we reach our peak, our bodies trembling and writhing together, I know that I'll never have a moment this perfect again.

After, he walks me to my door like a perfect gentleman, but doesn't come in. I kiss him goodnight, though it inexplicably feels like goodbye, and head for the shower.

Letting the water heat up, I peel off my ripped hoodie and discard it on the floor, then I stare at my reflection. It's becoming a habit to catalogue my injuries in this mirror. I'm mostly covered in dirt, but there are scrapes and scratches, cuts and grazes. Bruises are already forming on my knees and on my hips where he grabbed me. I cherish each of those small fingerprints like he's still holding on to me, even though he's gone. The cut on my cheek is a little deeper, but doesn't need stitches. It's already scabbed over but probably could do with a good clean. My hair is a rats' nest of twigs and bracken and dead leaves. It's comical. My lips are swollen and bruised from feverish kisses, and the bottom one carries the indents of teeth – but I'm not sure if they're mine or his.

My eyes though, they're so bright and alive.

I look thoroughly fucked, and I love it. Loved every minute of it. Wouldn't change it for the world.

My hands skim my flat stomach and I wonder what changes are going on inside me right now. I'm such a fool. I never even asked the doctor any questions. Will tonight have hurt the baby? Are there things I shouldn't be doing? Things I definitely should?

I don't even know how far along I am.

Or who the father is.

Shit.

Stepping under the shower, I let the hot water cleanse me once more, pouring my immediate worries down the drain. My muscles ache and I feel like I could sleep for a week, but it's a good tiredness.

When I finally feel clean, I shut off the water and climb out, wrapping myself in a fluffy towel and taking a comb to my hair one tiny section at a time. Untangling it is a painstaking process, and it's another half an hour before I exit the bathroom ready for bed. I pull on a long sleeved shirt and some sleep shorts, and climb into bed.

My phone buzzes on the nightstand and I see a glass of water waiting for me. I smile softly. Hatchet must have snuck in and got it for me while I was showering.

DADDY HATCHET

You were amazing tonight, little prey. Good girl. Make sure you drink and get some sleep, and I'll see you in the morning. Daddy x

MY CHEST FEELS WARM, my tummy's full of butterflies, and my core is clenching reading his words. Maybe he didn't come in and tuck me into bed, but this is the next best thing. His aftercare is top notch, almost as good as Honey's.

Smiling, I put the phone down and reach for the glass of water, taking a long drink. I don't want to be up all night peeing, but the more I drink, the thirstier I suddenly feel. I glug and gulp until the glass is empty and then replace it on the side, feeling satisfied that *Daddy* will be proud of me.

A wave of exhaustion washes over me and before I can even yawn, my eyes are closing against my will, and everything feels impossibly heavy.

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THE STRANGEST WHIRRING noise pulls me from my dreams. I'm glad, because they were taking a dark and sinister turn, but I can't place the source of the disturbance when I blink open my heavy eyelids.

I feel like I'm floating, or bobbing on a boat, but at the same time, something in the back of my mind tells me that those options aren't quite right. There's a familiarity to the sound, but I'm too tired to place it and my eyes close of their own accord once more.

As I drift off, the whirring noise seems to grow louder and more insistent. It's definitely not the sound of a boat. I try to sit up and look around, but my body feels cumbersome and unresponsive.

The whirring noise grows louder and I realise with a jolt that I'm no longer in my bedroom. Panic hits me as I try to remember how I got here, wherever 'here' is. I frantically try to look around, trying to make out anything in the darkness, but my head will barely move. My limbs won't move! My breathing quickens, and I let out a muffled scream. That's when something cold and metallic clamps around my neck.

"Shh, shh," a voice whispers in my ear. Is it alien or familiar? I can't tell. "Don't be afraid. You're safe."

I struggle against the restraints, but they hold fast. I am not comforted. I don't *feel* safe. The whirring noise gets louder still, and I feel a sudden jolt as if something has shifted around me.

"That's it," the same voice says. "You're doing fine. Just relax."

Relax? How can I relax when I'm strapped to something in the dark? When I don't know where I am or who I'm with?

The whirring noise starts to fade and then there's silence. Only, my ears are ringing.

Then, a blinding light floods the space. I squeeze my eyes shut, but the brightness seeps through my eyelids. Footsteps approach, and then the voice speaks again.

"Welcome home, little sis," the voice says. "Won't be long now. We just need to take care of that tracker first."

My heart rate triples, beating so fast I'm convinced it's going to tear itself right from my chest as terror and something close to hysteria bubbles up from my chest.

*No! Not the chip! They won't find me if it's removed. My psychos won't know where to look for me.*

“Kayla, relax,” a soothing voice says, a warm, comforting hand rests on top of mine and squeezes gently. I know that voice. It’s female.

“D-doctor?” My speech is slurred, clumsy. I don’t feel right.

“Yes, Kayla. It’s me. We did it. We got you off the island. You’re safe now. Just one small procedure to remove your chip and you can be free of the asylum.”

“N-no...n-need...”

“What’s wrong with her?” The doctor asks sharply. I don’t know who she’s talking to, she’s never spoken to me like that before.

A deep, masculine voice responds, “She’s been heavily sedated for the trip. Her mind is clouded and confused right now.”

The doctor lets out a sigh of relief. “Good. That’s good. So long as you used the drugs I prescribed. We can’t risk anything happening to the baby. Let’s get started then.”

The cold metal of a surgical instrument brushes against my neck. I thrash and try to scream, but my weakened body is no match for the restraints.

“Hold her still,” the doctor orders, sounding a lot less comforting and reassuring.

Hands grab onto my limbs, pinning me down, and the restraints around my body are loosened.

Rather than being able to make a break for freedom, rough hands flip me over and slam me face down onto a cold metal table.

*Holy shit. Is that an operating table?*

The restraints are replaced, tighter than before and I can’t move a muscle.

Tears stream down my face as the instrument digs into my flesh. A sharp pain shoots through my neck, and then



everything goes numb. I'm awake. But not. Present. But so far away. Sounds seem to be coming from underwater, and echoes of my past, or my childhood, ring in my ears. I don't want to get lost, trapped in those hellish memories.

I watch with cool detachment as medical instruments – a lethal looking scalpel and wicked long nose pliers – pass before my face into gloved hands.

There's pressure, then release, and hot liquid runs from the back of my neck, down to my shoulders and chest, dripping onto the table. It's an alien sensation, like wearing gloves in hot water. I think it's my blood, but I can't move to see.

Even though I'm petrified, my heart beats steadily. A machine counting out the beats, tormenting me with its calmness.

I'm not calm! I'm not steady. I'm raging on the inside, absolutely convinced that I've fucked up. I put my trust in the wrong person, and I've exchanged one prison for another. Only this time I don't have the love of six psychos to keep me strong.

That's when it hits me.

I love them.

And I'm sure they care for me too. Maybe even love me, if they're capable.

But my love for them is irrefutable.

More tears seep from my eyes, but they're not just tears of fear. They're tears of regret, of longing, of despair. I think about the psychos and how they must be feeling right now. Do they know I'm gone? Do they miss me? Do they even care? I think they would.

Will they look for me? Raise the alarm that I'm gone? Implore Seytan to track my chip and find me?

Maybe they already have. Maybe they're on their way already.

Hope, like a fledgling bird, flutters in my chest, but I don't have the conviction, the belief in their love, to make it fly.

My thoughts are interrupted by a sharp tug on the back of my neck, and the pressure becomes unbearable. I cry out. The machine counting my heartbeats beeps faster, and there's a rush of heat in my neck. Blood. It's definitely blood.

"Got it," the doctor says, relief evident in her voice. The pressure breaks. I can breathe. The machine slows back to a steady rhythm.

"She'll be disoriented for a while, but the sedation should keep her calm. Let's get her to her room."

I'm lifted onto a stretcher, still on my front, but they carefully manipulate my neck so that my head is facing to the side and I'm lying on my uncut cheek. Then I'm wheeled out of the operating room.

My body is limp and heavy, but my mind is racing. What have I done? What have I lost?

As I'm rolled down the hallway, I catch a glimpse of myself in a mirror. My hair is matted to my head, all that hard work combing it, wasted, and my skin is ashen. I look like a zombie.

The door to a tiny room is opened, and I'm deposited onto the bed. It's more like a cot or a slab than a bed, and I long for the comforts of the asylum in more ways than one. The restraints are removed, but I don't have the energy to move or fight. I'm lifted onto the hard cold bed and a threadbare blanket is haphazardly tossed over me.

My body feels like it's made of lead, but it isn't as heavy as my heart.

The doctor approaches me, no longer a friendly face or a beacon of hope. She's holding a syringe filled with a clear liquid. I can't even fight her as she injects it into my arm, and a cold sensation travels through my veins.

“Sleep now,” she says softly. “You’ll feel better when you wake up. This is for the best. You’ll see.”

The doctor turns away from me and speaks again, in a much firmer, colder voice, but I can’t see anyone in the shadows.

“Do *not* touch her. I mean it. She needs to heal. You’re only here to watch over her tonight.”

And with that, darkness engulfs me.

SHE'S ACTUALLY PRICELESS



*'GAME OF SURVIVAL' – RUELLE*

NIGHTSHADE

I sleep like the dead, always have, but especially when I've had my fill of Red's sweet cunt. Maybe that's why something suddenly jerked me awake just now – because I haven't had her tonight. And now I can't get back to sleep.

The asylum is quiet. Eerily so. The night is heavy with an oppressive darkness.

I had every intention of leaving Kayla to rest. Hatchet texted me earlier saying he was taking her hunting tonight, so I know she'll be tired. If she's even back yet.

But I can't shake the need to see her. It's a gut-wrenching need that has me sitting up straight in bed, palming my dick.

I'll still leave her alone. Won't indulge in my fantasies or partake of her exquisite nectar. I won't even allow my fingers to skim her curves, or my tongue to trace her beautiful patchwork of tattoos. I won't feed my cock between either set of her plush pillowy lips.

Even though my dick is rock hard just thinking about her.

I climb out of bed and pad barefoot, in just my tented silk boxers, across the hallway to her room. Opening the door, the light from the hallway behind me spills into her room, illuminating her empty bed. The sheets are flung back like she's just climbed out of bed, but the door to the bathroom is open and the light is off.

"Kayla?"

No answer.

I take a step towards the bathroom and a sudden chill runs down my spine. I pause, listening to the silence. It's not just

quiet, it's dead. I can't even hear the sound of my own breathing.

"Red?" My voice trembles.

A strange feeling of dread begins to fill me. The kind of feeling you get when you know something is very wrong. A feeling I've only ever felt in life-or-death situations.

My body becomes drenched in a cold sweat as panic grips me.

I take another step, and then another, making my way to the bathroom. I've never been one to scare easily, but there's something about this silence that's getting to me.

As I reach the door to the bathroom, a sudden movement catches my eye. I whip around, my heart pounding in my chest, and see the outline of a figure standing in the doorway I just came through.

"Kayla?" I whisper, my throat suddenly dry

"No. I couldn't sleep. I feel I owe her an explanation," Ghost says, his eyes wild and sleep-derived. He looks rough, but I can't muster up the energy to care about him when *she's* gone.

"She's not here. I don't know where she is."

*Where is she? She never leaves her room at night. I should know, I fuck her into the sweetest oblivion and leave her so sated she doesn't need to go looking for relief elsewhere.*

She's become my anchor in this sea of madness, the only reason I've managed to hold on to some semblance of sanity. I just hide it better than the others. From the moment she offered me a drink, I was a goner for her.

"Wasn't she out with Hatchet tonight?" he asks me carefully, as though he can sense the tension rolling through my body and is suddenly wary of me. Of what I can – and will – do when I snap.

I nod but it's a jerky, involuntary movement. "Yeah. Do you think they're still out there?"

"One way to find out." Ghost pulls his phone from his sweatpants pocket and rattles off a quick text.

"Try Kayla's phone. Call her," I instruct. It's pointless calling Hatchet, obviously. Ghost tries Kayla's phone, and it comes to life on her nightstand, lighting up the darkened room and buzzing across the wood. My mind races with dark, terrifying thoughts. Where is she?

"Fuck. She can't be out with Hatchet still. She'd have her phone with her to communicate with him."

Just then, Ghost's phone beeps with a message and my heart soars. Maybe she's in Hatchet's room with him.

"He says they're back. He saw her to her room and left. She should be in bed."

"Well, tell him she's fucking not!" I snap, as anxiety churns in my stomach. My grip on my rage is slipping. My control is ebbing. "And while you're at it, go and wake the others. Check she's not with any of them. If not, we need to start a search party."

"Alright, on it."

Ghost disappears, rushing along the corridor calling the others' names, and I'm left in the dark. The sudden silence is almost deafening. The usual noises of the facility – muffled cries, tantalising whispers of darkness, the occasional scream – are all absent. It's as if the world has gone eerily silent, save for the rapid thumping of my heart.

Kayla should be in her room, in her bed, or in one of our beds. She shouldn't be able to move around the asylum because they lock all of the doors at night. With the exception of our rooms, which don't have locks, and the door to the outside because we're on a fucking island and where would we go?

It's about keeping us from snooping, not keeping us safe

What if she's not even inside the building? She could be anywhere on the island, and I know she's not been out much to explore. She could easily get lost, or even hurt in the dark.

I take off across the hallway to my room, needing to put some clothes on to go look for her.

Once I'm back in my room, I leave the door open, then turn on the light. I'm no longer tired. I feel awake and uncomfortably alive, the way I used to when the last kill didn't give me the high I needed to sustain me until the next one.

I rummage around in the back of my closet, looking for something appropriate to wear. Seems stupid, to be worrying about clothing when Kayla might be in danger, but if I'm about to go traipsing all over the island looking for her, I can't very well do that in my usual three piece suit. But it's virtually all I wear.

At the back of the closet I find the gym bag I sometimes use, and pull out my workout gear.

It reminds me of the day in the pool. When everyone was forced to confront their demons but me. I don't have any demons. No skeletons in my closet. Nothing haunting me.

*Or so I thought.*

Watching Kayla battle with the water, and knowing I couldn't help her, nearly drove me insane. Like now. The possibility that she could be hurt, or gone...that's my demon. The force of my feelings for her.

I can't lose her. I *won't* lose her.

I step into my black sweatpants, pull on my black T-shirt, slip my feet into black trainers, and don a black hoodie. I'm just zipping it up when my phone beeps with a message and again, my heart soars, thinking it might be Kayla.

That's what I mean about demons. Caring for someone. It fucks you up. I *know* her phone is on her bedside table, but I still hoped it could be her.



I exit the closet, grab my phone to check the message. It's from Hatchet: *Want me to search the woods?*

I type back a quick message: *Yes. Please. I'll speak to the others first and we'll hunt in here.*

Snow chooses that moment to pop his head through my partially opened door.

"What's going on?" he asks, running his hand through his hair.

"Kayla's gone. She's not in her room. She's not with one of us, and she's not here," I tell him with a calm, matter-of-factness that I'm definitely not feeling on the inside.

Snow's eyes widen and then his face contorts into a mask of frustration. "Shit, man."

"I know. Hatchet is hunting for her outside but we need to search the facility. If there's no sign of her we'll go to Seytan."

"Okay. Let's do this."

"Keep your phone on you, and text me if you find anything!" I call out, as Snow turns and starts running around the corner towards the common room.

I take a moment to compose myself, and then I leave my room.

Moving quickly, I run down the hallway to the next room, and then the next, checking each one of our bedrooms. There's no sign of her

Did someone take her? I'm running out of options.

I come to the dining hall and find it unlocked, which immediately sets me on edge. Even more than I already was.

Several steps of footsteps enter behind me and I whirl around. But it's only the others. One by one, they enter the dining space, their faces etched with confusion and concern.

We're all psychopaths, until now only bound together by our shared darkness and the asylum that contains us. But not

anymore. Now we're bound together by *her*.

"What's going on?" Honey asks, his usual smiling expression gone, replaced by a pale face, gaunt with worry. "Ghost said Kayla's missing?"

"Kayla's gone," I reply, my fear transforming into anger. "She went out with Hatchet earlier but he brought her back and saw her to her door. There's no sign of her. He's gone back outside to search for her."

"Okay. Where do you need us, outside too?" Honey offers.

Snow, with his penchant for being a dick who only cares for himself, growls. "Let's tear this place apart."

I shake my head. "The dining room wasn't locked, so now we need to check every floor, every room to see which doors have been left unlocked and to try and find her. We need to split up."

"I'll check the roof," Snow offers.

"Good. Ghost, can you search the art room, supply closets, that sort of thing up there?"

"Yes."

"If Donnelly and Silas want to help and get involved, let them. we need all hands on deck."

"Oh, I'm already here and raring to go," Ghost says in the voice I've come to recognise as Donnelly's. I give them a brief nod of acknowledgement and turn to Honey.

"Honey, you take the recreational areas. It's highly unlikely, but I'll go and check the gym and pool, changing rooms, all of that area. Bones, you take the therapy rooms."

"No problem," Bones agrees.

"If your area's clear, go help Bones. Keep your phones on you, and text if you find anything!" I call out, as they all split off and disappear in different directions.

United, but separate, we storm through the asylum, our frantic footsteps echoing off the sterile white walls. I'm too impatient to wait for the lift, so I run along the corridor to the emergency stairwell and take the steps down to the pool.

As much as I want to find Kayla, I really fucking hope she's not down here. I'd dread to think what state she'd be in if she was.

It's quiet as I pad across to the pool area. Everything is still. The water is inviting, not murky and foreboding like it was the other day. They must have put something in the water, or a gas in the air, that made everyone else hallucinate or trip. Bones and I have talked about it since and it's the only explanation we've been able to come up with. The staff here are not strangers to playing with substances all in the name of *therapy*.

There's an eerie silence, but the space is empty. I still check the changing rooms, showers, and toilets. Try the emergency exit, but it's locked. Search the deserted gym.

I'm a little relieved that she's not here, but I'm more anxious than ever to find her. I make my way back up the stairs, my heart pounding with every step. The adrenaline is coursing through my veins from the rush of fear that comes with the possibility of losing someone I care about. It's a relatively new feeling, but I did feel it when Hatchet was trying to drown himself too.

As I reach the top of the stairs and push open the door to the first floor, there's a faint noise from down the hallway. It sounds like a muffled cry, and hope leaps into my throat. Could it be Kayla?

I break into a run, sprinting down the hallway towards the noise. It's coming from one of the therapy rooms. I skid to a stop outside the door, panting and out of breath.

I hesitate for a moment, my hand hovering over the doorknob. What if it's not her? What if it's someone else? But I can't afford to wait. I twist the knob and push open the door.

The room is dark, with only a faint glow coming from a small lamp in the corner. There's the noise again, louder this time, and my heart sinks. It's definitely not Kayla, but a radio that's only tuned to static.

Feeling frustration rise, I grab the damn thing, yanking it from the socket and throwing it at the opposite wall with all my strength.

Where is she?

Why have none of the others text to say they've found her?

I take a deep breath and try to calm my racing heart. Maybe I missed a room. Maybe she's in a place no one has thought to check yet. Or maybe someone has taken her and is keeping her hidden. The thought makes me clench my fists in anger.

I continue my search, moving quickly down the hallway and checking every door, every room, every hidden corner. Most doors are locked, but a few are open and I search each one thoroughly, but Kayla is nowhere to be found. A fresh wave of panic surges through me, and my grip on reality slips even further, just as it has so many times before. Never like this though. never this strongly.

Footsteps behind me make me whirl around, but it's just Honey, his blond hair pulled back in a messy bun and a concerned look on his face.

The tension in the air is palpable, our anger and desperation boiling over.

"Anything?" he asks.

I shake my head, feeling defeated. "No. You?"

He shakes his head too, lips pressed together in a worried frown.

We tear through the open rooms of the hallway like a pack of wild, rabid animals, overturning furniture, smashing windows, and screaming Kayla's name into the darkness, until we come to the end of the floor.

My phone beeps at the same time as Honey's, but he gets to it first.

"It's Snow. Says the chopper's missing."

"Fuck!"

"Do you think she ran or was taken?"

"She wouldn't know how to handle a helicopter," I tell him, feeling confident in that at least. It's a pretty specialist skill, one none of us have, hence Valentine always taking us to the mainland for our missions. "And why would she run?"

That's rhetorical. I absolutely don't want to consider the answer to that question any more than I want to consider the possibility that someone has *taken* her.

"Maybe she's on a mission? And Valentine's taken her to the mainland in the helicopter?"

I shake my head. We've never done individual missions in all my time here.

"We need to alert Seytan. She can tell us if Kayla's absence is sanctioned."

"And if it's not?"

"Then she can raise the man down alarm."

"But there's no body."

"Do you think I give a flying fuck?" I growl, my anger simmering over into a rolling boil. "She can gather the staff and interrogate them. I'll kill them one by one until someone talks. Someone must know something."

"Let's go then. I'll tell the others to meet us at her office."

"She'll be in her quarters with the other staff."

"Do you know where?"

"Yes."

"Fine, I'll follow you then. Lead the way."

I nod and we turn back towards the stairs, our footsteps echoing through the empty hallway. As we make our way down, my anxiety turns into a raging anger. How could no one have seen or heard anything? How could Kayla just disappear like this?

We reach the correct floor, I lead Honey down a different hallway, towards Seytan's quarters. All of the staff are on this floor, but her suite of rooms are separate from the others. I know the way by heart, having had to visit her many times before.

As we approach Seytan's door, voices come from the inside, raised in heated argument. I hesitate for a moment, not wanting to interrupt, but then my impatience takes over and I push the door open without knocking.

Seytan is standing in the middle of the room, arguing with a man I don't recognise. Is he one of the leaders?

They both turn to look at us as we enter, their voices trailing off into silence.

"What is it?" Seytan asks, her eyes narrowing as she takes in our expressions.

"Kayla's missing."

Seytan's eyebrows furrow in concern. "Missing? For how long?"

"A few hours. No one has seen or heard from her since she came back inside with Hatchet," I tell her, feeling the anger and frustration bubbling up inside me. "We've searched the entire facility, but she's nowhere to be found. Hatchet is searching the island, but Snow's just told us the chopper is gone too."

Seytan's eyes widen. "The helicopter? That's not good."

"No shit it's not good," I snap, the anger getting the better of me. "Someone has taken her, or she's run. And we need to find out which it is."

Seytan's expression turns grave, and I can see her mind racing with possibilities. "Okay, I'll track her chip," she says finally.

"Clancy, get my laptop. Now."

The guy – Clancy – rushes from the main living space we're in, into one of the side rooms I happen to know is an office.

The others, all except Hatchet, file into the living room behind us.

"Texted them to join us here," Honey says quietly as Seytan narrows her eyes at us.

"What's going on?" Bones asks

"Seytan's going to track Kayla's chip. Find out where she is. But the chopper's been taken."

"Yeah, saw that message," he replies, his voice tight.

Clancy returns a moment later carrying Seytan's laptop and hands it over to her. She doesn't thank him, placing it on the coffee table and sinking into the plush velvet sofa. She busies herself logging on while we all stand around waiting like spare parts. Maybe coming to Seytan should have been the first thing we did.

Finally, Seytan speaks up, her eyes flicking between the laptop screen and our faces. "Her chip isn't registering," she says, her voice tense.

"What? That's impossible," I say, my heart sinking with every passing second.

"I'm afraid it's not. Her chip is being blocked by a signal jammer."

"What the fuck?" I shout, my anger boiling over. "Who would do that?"

"I don't know," Seytan says, her expression grim. "But we need to find her. And fast."

“How are we supposed to do that? We have no idea where she could be,” Bones says, his voice laced with frustration.

“We’ll have to search the island,” Seytan says. “Split up into teams and search every inch. Hatchet is already out there. I’ll join him as soon as I can. But first, let’s gather the staff and see if anyone has any information. She didn’t get off this island in a helicopter by herself.”

We follow Seytan out of her quarters and down the hallway towards the staff rooms. As we walk, Honey falls into step beside me.

“What do you think happened to her?” he whispers, his voice laced with worry

“I don’t know,” I admit, feeling a sense of helplessness wash over me. “But we’re going to find out. And whoever did this is going to pay.”

Honey nods, his jaw set in determination.

We reach the staff rooms, and Seytan knocks on the door, her voice firm as she calls out for everyone to come out. Gradually, they begin to appear, faces drawn with concern.

“Kayla is missing,” Seytan says, her voice ringing out across the group. “We need to know if anyone has seen or heard anything that could help us locate her. This is not a drill, people. This is serious. We need to find her.”

The staff nod, murmurs of agreement rippling through the group. Seytan then divides them into teams, sending them off in different directions to search the island. Ghost, Bones, Snow and Honey go with them. I stay with Seytan.

“Was anyone missing?” I ask her, when they’ve all gone off.

She nods, her face pale.

“Who?”

“Doctor Callaway. And Valentine.”

“Valentine? You think he’s taken her?”



“He’s the only one who can fly the helicopter.”

“But, why is the doctor missing?”

“I’m not sure. I need to search her office. Something isn’t adding up.”

“I’ll come with you.”

Seytan sighs and leads the way back towards the stairwell. We climb up to the next floor and make our way down the hallway towards the medical wing. A sense of unease settles over me as we approach, the hairs on the back of my neck standing on end. Something about this entire situation is off, and I can’t quite put my finger on it.

Seytan opens the door to the medical wing and we step inside. The air is thick with the scent of antiseptic. The doctor’s office is at the back of the wing, tucked away behind glass fronted doors. Seytan leads the way, her hand hovering over the keypad that controls the locks. She punches in a code and the doors slide open with a hiss of air.

Seytan begins rifling through the drawers and I join her, searching for any clues as to why the doctor might be missing. There’s nothing obviously out of place, but when I reach the last drawer, something catches my eye. It’s a small, leather-bound journal, tucked away in the corner.

“Hey, Seytan, check this out,” I say, holding up the journal

She turns towards me, her eyes narrowing as she takes in the book. “What is it?”

“It looks like a journal. Maybe the doctor left some clues in here.”

Seytan nods, her expression serious as she takes the journal from me and opens it, roughly flicking through the pages. A folded sheet of paper falls out.

“What is that?” I ask, bending down to pick it up. She beats me to it.

She unfolds the piece of paper, her eyes rapidly moving from side to side and she skims the information.

“What is it?” I ask again, unable to contain my curiosity and need to know.

“It’s a series of test results,” Seytan says, her voice barely above a whisper. “On Kayla.”

“What?” I say, feeling a sense of horror wash over me. “What kind of tests?”

Seytan scans the information again, turning pale.

Just then someone races into the medical wing, knocking into something and causing a ruckus.

Before we can move out of the office to investigate, Valentine appears in the doorway, out of breath.

“Valentine? We thought you’d left the island. You weren’t at roll call.”

“I was on a video call. Clancy just filled me in. Where’s the asset?”

“That’s what we’re trying to discern,” Seytan tells him.

“Well, what does the chip say?” he snaps.

“We can’t get a read on it. Something seems to be jamming the signal.”

He grimaces. “So this is a professional hit then. They knew what they were doing?”

“Apparently so.”

“The helicopter’s gone. We thought—”

“That I’d stolen her away in the middle of the night? Please. I’m just as invested in this program as you are. More so. Find her. She’s a valuable asset, and we can’t risk her falling into the wrong hands. Have you checked on your little pet project?”

Seytan blanches and shakes her head, before pulling a phone from her pocket and tapping away at it. Somehow she’s

even paler when she looks back up.

“Valentine?” Her voice is shaky and her hands are trembling.

“What, Paula?”

“Be careful bringing her in. She’s not just a valuable asset.”

“I’m aware that she’s our daughter. But I’ll treat her the same as the others.”

“What?” I blurt out, unable to keep quiet any longer. Kayla is *their* daughter? Theirs? As in, *Valentine* and *Seytan*? What the fuck is going on?

“Not that.” Seytan holds out the test results to him. When he doesn’t take the sheet of paper, she continues speaking. “I think she’s pregnant. So she’s actually priceless.”

“Then why the hell did you let her go?” He snarls, swiping the doctor’s desk clear in the process.

“I didn’t.” Seytan insists. She’s still clearly shocked, but there’s steel in her voice too. She doesn’t like being spoken to that way. “She was *taken*. There’s a difference.”

“Yeah, by the looks of it, by the fucking doctor *you* said we could trust and that insane vermin boy who was *supposed* to be terminated! Where the fuck is our daughter, Paula?”

“Probably at the mercy of our vermin son.”

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I can't wait to meet you! My DMs are always open for your thoughts and reactions to my books, and if you loved them,

please consider leaving a review or blasting about them on your social media (don't forget to tag me!)

Crystal

xoxo

## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Crystal is a full time romance author, after finally leaving education for good (hurrah!).

As well as writing, she's raising her savage, half-feral son, her man-child husband, their needy fur baby, and her many houseplants, pet rocks and shiny crystals.

She likes to read dark, twisty, stabby, steamy books, and dream up wicked new cliffhangers to torture her readers with. And if she ever finds herself with mystical 'free time', she spends it reading her never ending TBR pile, which I bet you can relate to.