

LAYLA FAE

MONSTER
EVER
AFTER

IMMIGLE

A CHRISTMAS MONSTER ROMANCE

MR. JINGLE: A Christmas Monster Romance

Monster Ever After

Layla Fae

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Contents

[Title Page](#)

[Copyright](#)

[Dedication](#)

[Content warning](#)

[Chapter 1](#)

[Chapter 2](#)

[Chapter 3](#)

[Chapter 4](#)

[Chapter 5](#)

[Chapter 6](#)

[Chapter 7](#)

[Chapter 8](#)

[Chapter 9](#)

[Chapter 10](#)

[Epilogue](#)

[Books In This Series](#)

[Books By This Author](#)

If you've ever dreamed about an all-powerful, tentacled eldritch being who would smite all your enemies, cuddle you, and provide mind-blowing orgasms (not necessarily in that order), this book is for you.

Merry Christmas!



Content warning

Possibly triggering scenes: attempted rape on the FMC by a side character, few details, quickly interrupted and avenged. Another heavy topic: online abuse, harassment.

Steamy scenes and romance tropes include: virgin hero, edging, tentacle sex, oral sex, somnophilia, tentacle double penetration (also triple and sort of quadruple—this means four tentacles, NOT four holes), bondage, facial, flavored sperm, monster peen, infertile hero (no pregnancy or baby), praise, mirror sex, gut rearranging, jingle bells.

I will be honest. This book came out heavier and more serious than the others. Longer, too. On the upside, you probably won't be laughing much during the steamy scenes (though you might be busy doing something else). On the downside, if you're looking for a fluffy, low-angst read for Christmas, this book is not it, though it isn't actually dark. After the dramatic beginning, it is basically all fucking and falling in love for Christmas.

Our hero, while a terrifying monster who can devour entire planets, is a completely besotted loving sweetheart (with dom energy) when it comes to the heroine.



Chapter 1

Him

She's crying today. Big tears roll down her cheeks, and she blows her nose with a loud, snotty noise, only to cry harder again until she becomes quiet, desperate sobs wracking her body.

I watch her through the glass, the darkness inside me roiling like a swarm of hornets. Whoever did this to her will suffer.

Soon.

But right now, I can only watch, helpless and raging in my prison. She hasn't cried so hard since I met her. When something ugly happened, she would usually sniff, utter a teary laugh, and look for a silver lining or a humorous spin on the situation.

"Look how many new insults I have learned," she would tell her sister on the phone, laughing as if she weren't hurt. "*If ugly was a crime, you'd get a life sentence. This one's almost poetic!*"

She relays only the funny ones and omits the horrid words that sit like thorns in her gut, drilling deeper and deeper every day, making her bleed.

Your mother should have had an abortion when she was pregnant with you, bitch. This one made her cry, too. But not as bad as today.

I hate this world. Three millennia of being stuck here were supposed to

make me see its beauty, but all they did was turn my indifference into vicious hate. The people are petty and boring, full of little inconsequential evils, and the planet is mediocre.

I've had better.

If I had broken out of this prison before I met her, I would have rained fire on planet Earth to watch its people die in flames, screaming and sizzling. I wouldn't even pollute myself by devouring it.

But I met her. And she's the sole reason I will not destroy this world.

I am so close to the wall of my cage it feels like I could touch her. But when I reach out my mind arm, the crimson tentacle dissolves into red smoke against the invisible barrier, obscuring my view.

Not today.

I move back to watch. I have never touched anyone, but tonight, I want with all my might to wrap my arms around her. I've never had a body either, but that is changing. Soon, I will become a physical being. It's almost ready. Only the last few details need to be finished before I am complete.

Building a body is painful. But her tears, her silent, soul-piercing sobs, hurt more.

Finally, she stands up, and I can see the thing she is holding in her fist. A crumpled piece of paper. She straightens it, looks at it once more, and chucks it in the trash. Taking big, steadying breaths, she calls someone.

"Hi, Mom."

Her voice is wet and thick, and I strain to hear the other end of the conversation. The mother is concerned, knows at once that something is wrong. But there is an undertone of impatience, too. That makes my rage colder. I know I won't punish the mother because Kelly would hate that.

But I want to, anyway. The mother believes Kelly's brought this on herself by making godless art, in her own words. I want to cut off her tongue and make her choke on it for ever saying this to her daughter.

"I can't come. No, Mom, please. They know where I live. I got threats. Yes, I talked to the police. You know I did."

"And they told you not to worry, because they are looking into it. It's just online trolling," the mother says, that tone of impatience louder.

"I won't be able... I can't brave the airport. Too crowded, too chaotic. It's not safe. I'm sorry. I tried to get groceries today but had to turn back before I even reached the shop. Someone filmed me while running a commentary," she says quietly. "It was... It wasn't kind."

That explains the tears.

“All the more reason for you to come home,” the mother says, her voice wheedling. “Come on, honey. You’ll be safe with us.”

“They are everywhere,” she whispers, tugging the curtain closed. “I don’t want to put you in a dangerous situation.”

“What dangerous situation?” the mother says, exasperated. “So someone filmed you! Kelly, just get over it! You’re making this thing bigger than it is. Even the police told you so.”

She just shakes her head, her eyes glistening with fresh tears. I clench my new jaw, my teeth as sharp as glass shards. Every move prickles, and yet, I glide closer to the wall and press my new hands against the barrier.

They are big, strong hands. Perfect for strangling. Knocking out teeth. Breaking limbs or necks, if need be.

Soon.

“I’m not coming,” Kelly says, her voice stronger. “I’m sorry. I threw the ticket away. Look, I would only spoil the festive spirit for you guys. Merry Christmas, Mom. I’ll call you tomorrow.”

She hangs up and turns off the phone, preventing the mother from calling back. Then she drops on the bed and lies there, not a limb moving.

She’s normally a ball of energy, always moving, jumping from one project to the next. Cooking gourmet meals, arranging flowers, making art.

Always making art.

She’s been growing more and more inert in the past weeks. She hasn’t decorated for Christmas, even though she always fills her apartment with garlands of green and miles upon miles of Christmas lights. There’s always a Christmas tree, too, even though she spends the holiday itself with her parents.

This year, the apartment is cold and barren.

If I were capable of worry, that would be my primary emotion. But all I can feel is rage and the need to punish. And underneath my wrath, subtler emotions glimmer. Protective tenderness. Despair for freedom. And the hunger, always the hunger.

Once I get out, I will make sure no one hurts my star again.

An hour passes. Kelly gets up with a groan and comes over to me. I freeze, biding my body not to move a muscle. I moved once when my body was already half-solid, when it could be seen, and she shrieked and ran away. Long ago, believing my mirror was haunted gave her joy. Now, she's too on

edge, and anything can spook her.

She could see me in the depths of this prison if I moved, and I long to be seen, but I stand completely still. I won't add to her suffering today.

I know I will frighten her when I come out, though. But then she will be able to touch me. She will know I am real. And while I am still just a shadow inside her mirror, she might believe she's just seeing things if she glimpses me. I don't want her to think she's losing her mind.

So I freeze when she comes over and stares at her reflection.

Right into my eyes.

"Get a grip," she says, her voice close to breaking. "This is all temporary. It will get better. It always does. So don't you fucking dare give up now. You can do this. No matter how much it hurts."

It sounds like she's speaking to me, too. But needlessly. I know I can do this despite the pain. I must.

Her voice becomes stronger, and she straightens, determination squaring her shoulders. She can still rally, talk herself into believing in a better future.

But I can see she's a shadow of her former self. She used to laugh and dance, and have friends over all the time. So many friends. There were lovers, too. But not in the recent months.

Nobody visits her now. She doesn't open the door to anyone, even her best friends, for fear of putting them in danger.

And she wilts, a flower without water and sun. It doesn't help that the sky is always overcast and days are so short. Her nights are long, and dark, and lonely. Those are the worst.

She can't sleep. The medicine makes it difficult to wake from nightmares, so she stopped taking it.

But last night, she took out her bottle of pills and a bottle of vodka and put them on a table right by the mirror. She sat there for a long time, staring at the ensemble. Then she took out her sketchbook and drew it in harsh charcoal lines. She went to sleep with her fingers stained black.

Before, she used to create funny, romantic comic books. She could build captivating erotic stories frame by frame, making her strange characters almost leap out of the page or screen. People adored her stories.

But now, she creates this. Monochrome visions of despair.

I sped it up after I saw it last night. Suddenly afraid I would not make it before she did something stupid, I went into a frenzy. Atom by atom, cell by cell, I worked through the night, assembling my physical form. It hurt. New

nerve endings, not used to receiving signals, burned with pain I could barely withstand.

My physical existence is an impossibility in the prison of mirror glass, one I can overcome by what little magic I still possess in my bound state.

That night, I built myself for her, and every new growth was like being pierced with a shard of glass.

I thrashed against the walls, making the pain even worse. She couldn't hear me through the barrier, so I allowed myself the comfort of beating my new body against the walls, the pain so powerful I couldn't stand still because then it would consume me.

It felt like I imagine dying feels. And through that agony, I added another cell. Another synapse. Another fiber.

It is all done now. I am almost complete. But I am also weakened from the feat of such fast self-creation, so I have to wait. Just a bit more, so I can rest and make sure my attempt at escape won't kill me.

Dead, I will be useless to Kelly.

My heart will have to be made right before I break out. The beat of my heart will shatter the prison. At least, this is what's supposed to happen. The old hag who imprisoned me said only a beating heart would let me leave, and that organ can only work for someone who can feel.

After millennia, I finally have enough emotions to sustain a heart.

All thanks to Kelly.

Time passes. I watch as she tries to read, but she can't focus. Every noise, even as innocent as the flushing of a neighbor's toilet, makes her flinch. She gets up, peers out through a crack in the curtains, comes back. She turns on her phone. Seeing the avalanche of notifications, she turns it back off with a shaky sigh.

When she finally goes to bed, it's two a.m.

Soon, I promise, as her eyelids flutter closed from nervous exhaustion. Soon, I'll be there, and all your troubles will end.

I watch her sleeping form. As always, she sleeps naked. She kicked the sheets off as soon as she fell properly asleep, and I can see it all. My eyes roam her, hungry. In the mellow light of the night lamp, her body looks soft and golden.

I feast on her with my eyes alone, my hunger becoming a dark, gaping abyss. The swell of her breast, her nipples dark and soft as she sleeps. The lines of her stomach, dipping toward the lovely hollow of her navel. The dark

stain of hair between her parted legs.

A promise of hidden sweetness.

My new member, one I created through a haze of the worst agony, hardens with painful pinpricks of glass digging into flesh. It's one area where I let myself be creative. It will be hidden most of the time. Only for her eyes. So it doesn't have to look human.

I wonder if she will like it. It is similar to something she drew once.

That drawing and her reaction. I remember it now as my cock swells with more desire. How pink her cheeks were when she was drawing. Her eyes glassy, pupils shot wide. When she finished, she pushed her hand inside her panties, closed her eyes, and made herself come, her breathing sharp, stifled moans of pleasure coming out plaintive.

That memory lives in me, a dark, forbidden thing. I grip my cock with a shudder of pain. It's barely possible to have a body inside a mirror. It's not a fully functional one, more a sketch than an actual thing, because one cannot live without a heart. And yet, it works just as I know it should thanks to what little magic I can use in this prison.

I could stroke myself, all the right nerve endings coming alight with pleasure, and then ejaculate right there. Just watching her toss and turn in her sleep, light sliding over her naked skin, makes me so hungry it wouldn't take much.

But it has to wait. I have a burning desire to never waste my release. It is for her. Another thing I carefully engineered, using the knowledge of human anatomy I have amassed over millennia, watching from my trap. It will be perfect for all her needs.

And therefore, none of it will be spilled needlessly.

I grit my teeth and check over my body, making sure everything is in place. I attempt a breath, but there is no air inside my prison. That means I cannot speak yet. Can't exercise my new vocal chords.

Body vibrating with impatience, I force myself to wait. Come dawn of the Christmas Eve, I will break out. I will not surprise her in the middle of the night. It has to happen in daylight.

Time passes. Seconds tick on the clock, ponderous and slow. Finally, time crawls to seven a.m. Kelly stirs, mumbling through her sleep, and I brace myself. I push all my magic, all my creative power, into manifesting a heart.

I funnel all my raw emotions, the alien, impossible things that have

become a part of me, into the form of a blood-red organ. My chest gapes open, blood gushing, darkness oozing out. The abyss is here, hidden inside me, unquelled. It is, for all means and purposes, me.

The dark, unfillable hole that gapes in hunger and need.

My heart will nest right by it, a living pulse next to the void, my love and anger feeding the abyss. I convulse in agony, my mind red, red, red, and through the haze, I build the heart, string by string, the hard, powerful muscle growing.

This is too much.

My prison groans under the strain of so much potent energy. The glass walls bulge and bend. I am the center of the vortex, the beating pulse of the black hole, and when it seems like I will not be able to sustain all this power, when it almost slips out of my grip...

Thu-thump.

All around me, glass bursts into glittering dust. I fall forward, the agony of my first heartbeat darkening my mind. For the first time in eons, I descend into nothingness.



Chapter 2

Her

I'm having a nice dream for one. Someone is there, right behind me, where I can't see, but it isn't a menacing presence. There is a faint jingling of bells, and I lean against that warm body with a smile. It's Christmas soon. That's why the bells are jingling. So I'll have Christmas this year, after all. What a relief.

I sink into the dream, letting it fill me with warmth and comfort. It's good to have someone in my corner.

The sound of shattering glass draws me out, and I roll to the other side with a murmur of protest. I'm not waking up. Because when I wake up, I will have to return to my reality of being bullied, hated, *hunted*. And having no one to protect me from it.

Wait.

My eyes shoot open. I can't linger inside a dream. I'm not safe. And I just heard breaking glass. Could someone have broken my window...?

I sit up and squint in the dark. My night lamp is off. But there is a line of gray, depressing light under my dark, floor-length curtains. It seems like the windows are fine. I get up to check the one in the kitchen.

And freeze.

There is a man lying under the mirror. He is naked, a huge, strong male body curled in a fetal position. His skin is covered by glistening, dark spots.

I reach for my phone with shaking hands and turn it on. It plays a loud jingle, and I shove the phone under my pillow until it ends. I'm breathing hard, already sweaty despite having just woken up. I urge the system to load faster so I can call the police.

Someone broke into my apartment.

Seconds pass. I grip my phone, checking the screen, but it seems to have frozen. Damned piece of junk. The one moment I need it the most, it fucking freezes on me.

There is a soft moan of pain, definitely masculine, and I hiccup once. What will I do if he wakes up? I check my phone again. Still frozen. All right. So I'm on my own. There is a naked burglar in my apartment, and I'm alone.

What do I do?

I'm shaking so bad and breathing so fast it's difficult to think. *Pull yourself together, Kelly.* I clench my fists and deliberately slow and deepen my breathing. The man isn't moving. In the gloom, I can see the outline of his face. It looks weird. Like he has a mask on.

A frying pan, I think but shake my head. He's right by the door. There's no way I can sneak by and get to the kitchen. I need to find a weapon in my bedroom.

And maybe put on some clothes. Right. I've never been more frustrated with myself for sleeping naked than at this moment. I put on a tank top and shimmy into my jeans. My underwear drawer is on the other side of the room, too close to the intruder, so I skip panties, socks, and a bra.

Good enough.

Dressed, I feel a bit more confident, so I look at him more closely. There is something like glitter on the floor. Right. Broken glass. But what...

The mirror. I scrutinize it, my heart beating fast in confusion. The antique mirror is broken, only the wooden panel remaining. And the glass is positively pulverized. There are no shards, only powdered glass littering the floor, covering the man's skin...

I realize what the dark spots on his skin are. Blood.

This makes no sense. Did he break in and shatter my mirror? But why is he naked? And why did he break it so thoroughly? Is this even possible?

Another moan escapes him and he stirs, uncurling. Goddamn, but he's

huge. And... and...

What the fuck is that?

I laugh. My entire body shakes with laughter. I can't stop. Tears run down my face, and I hoot until my belly aches, until my cheeks hurt, the recently unused smiling muscles screaming from protest, and still I can't stop. I'm gasping for breath and laughing like a crazy person, because that's what I am.

Crazy.

The strain got to me at last. I crossed the fucking line.

I'm barking mad.

Hysteric laughter bubbles out of me, suffocating me from within, and I can't stop, can't stop, can't stop. I laugh and laugh, lying curled up on the bed, spasms rocking me from head to toes.

It's Egad. Fucking Egad from my comic book. He has the exact same cock, and I should know, I drew it. No living man has a cock like this. It's purely fictional.

So I see Egad lying on my fucking floor, as real as my bed, and that means I am a fucking psycho.

He stirs with another moan, turning toward me. I gasp as his cock slides down his thigh, the tip landing right in the glass dust.

Oh no. He'll hurt himself.

Wait, no. What am I thinking? He isn't real. He's just a figment of my imagination. My laughter bubbles away, and I gulp deep breaths, still giggling as I stare at his cock. It's *exactly* as I drew it.

Now that the first shock has worn off, I'm sort of relieved. I've been called a crazy bitch so many times, I half believed it. And being an artist, imagining the things I have imagined, is a sort of madness, I'm sure.

So it's a relief that it finally happened. One less thing to dread.

Egad moans again and turns onto his back. He rolls right into a thick layer of glittering glass, and I wince. Real or not, I can't watch this.

"Egad?" I call out. My voice is hesitant.

Well, of course. It's the first time I'm talking out loud to an imaginary person.

He moans again, his mask shifting. I squint at it. This is where my mad vision differs from the Egad I drew. He had a handsome face with dark, promising eyes and long eyelashes. He was my best male artwork. Even just looking at a drawing of him with that fantastic cock standing at full mast

made me all hot and bothered.

But this crazy vision has a mask on. It's impossible to say whether his eyes are open or closed.

He isn't real.

Right. I get up and tiptoe to the window. With quick, efficient movements, I open the curtains. Cold, dreary light floods the room and I can see my imagined visitor in his full glory.

A prickle of doubt stirs in my gut. He's no Egad. I don't know what he is.

The panic slams into me with full force, as if it's just been waiting to tackle me again after the moment of relief. In the harsh light, the intruder doesn't look like a psychotic vision my overwhelmed mind concocted.

He looks real.

And he's bleeding.

There are hundreds of tiny red spots on his arms, his legs. His hands are covered in glistening drops of blood. And his cock. The conical tip is bleeding. It's good he's not erect, or the internal parts that only come out when he's aroused would bleed, too, and I just can't imagine how painful that would be.

God, I'm raving.

Less looking at cocks, more looking for weapons, I chide myself.

Right. I published this comic. People know I drew it. This might be, what, a joke? A provocation? A rape attempt? God only knows I've been threatened with sexual assault too many times to count.

Fuck.

I look at my phone again. The screen is black. I try to turn it on. Nothing.

The crazy vision slash burglar slash rapist brings his hand to his face and rubs his mask with a groan. The mask... looks organic. I'm not sure how I know, but my skin suddenly crawls with realization. It's not a mask. It's his *face*.

It's leathery, deep red, and looks sort of Christmassy, with a faint gold and green ornament on his forehead. Instead of eyes, there are two eye-shaped grey spots. If there is a mouth, I can't see it. There's a sort of red ribbon instead. With gold thread. And his nose is a small red ball.

Rudolf the red-nosed reindeer.

At this point, I can't decide whether I'm sane or not. This is too strange.

He sits up. I grab my bedside lamp and yank the plug out of the socket. The lamp is made of plastic and shaped like a fat, smiling Santa Claus. I use

it all year round.

Not the best weapon, but it will have to do.

He groans and coughs violently. I stand there, squeezing the ridiculous lamp with both hands, while he sits in the wreckage of my mirror, surrounded by glass dust, and coughing his lungs out while blood trickles down his back.

I'm conflicted. On the one hand, I'd love to run, but my apartment is the only safe place I have left. I literally have nowhere else to go. And...

And he looks so pitiful. My eyes go, unbidden, to his cock again. The wounded head weeps blood. It's not a prosthetic or a disguise. It's real. And it must hurt like a motherfucker.

He stops coughing and just breathes, loud, wheezing breaths. He hasn't looked at me yet, and I don't know what to do.

His breathing calms down, and he looks at the floor around himself. He makes a small sound in the back of his throat. A low hum.

He looks up.

The mask-like face turns to me and we... watch each other, I suppose, even though his eyes aren't actually eyes. I don't know how he sees with them, but he must. I *feel* the weight of his gaze on me.

His eyes never leaving my face, he braces his hand against the floor, his open palm pressing into the glitter, and I give a shaky sound, something akin to a giggle. My hands are slippery on the lamp, and I squeeze it with determination.

The man stands up. He's so tall, he'll have to duck to walk through a door, but not tall enough for his head to touch the ceiling. He wobbles and staggers against the wall, painting it red with his blood. I squeak and try to say something, but my mouth is so dry no words come out.

He leans against the wall, panting, and strokes down it with his bloody hands, adding another grisly mark to my décor.

"There goes my deposit," I gasp out.

And that answers my conundrum. I am crazy. Even if he is real. Because what normal person would worry about their apartment deposit in such a situation? I can't scream, can't ask him who the fuck he is, but *this* I can say?

Fuck me.

He pauses, turns his face to me, and I shiver. It's expressionless and alien, and I can read nothing in it. Is he about to attack? I don't know.

He grunts, turns back to the wall, and takes a step away from it. His foot lands in the glass dust, because it's everywhere, and he lurches, hissing from

pain.

“You should step away from there,” I say. “You’ll only get more on yourself.”

He grunts again, the sound harsh and animalistic, and I shut up. He ignores my advice, steadies himself, and focuses on the wall.

Suddenly, the skin between his shoulder blades boils and turns red. It’s not the red of blood, but a lighter, jewel-like color that glimmers like a multifaceted surface of a cut ruby.

Four shimmering, half-translucent tentacles shoot out of that spot and spread like a hellish version of wings at his sides. There are two on either side, perfectly symmetrical. Long, thick tentacle arms pulsing with reddish inner light. If he spread his arms, those tentacles would be longer and thicker, though they thin towards the tips.

It’s a magnificent sight. I wish I could draw it.

It is also one hundred percent not possible.

So he isn’t real, after all. I lean against the wall, weak and confused. All of this is giving me whiplash. Wouldn’t he stick to just one state of being? Let him either be real or a figment of my imagination. I’d take either at this point instead of this stupid back and forth.

The tentacles shoot to the wall. There is a pulse of red light. A gust of warm wind splashes against my face and shakes the crystals adorning my boho lamp, making them clink pleasantly against one another.

I blink. The wall is pristine. Not only is the blood gone, but all the small marks that were there even before I moved in are erased. It is perfection.

The tentacles unfurl gracefully on either side of him, shimmering a deep red, and he turns back to me.

Surely now, he’ll say something. I wait, watching him with wide eyes, but he only stares back at me. His body is quivering, and more blood trickles down his side. My eyes flicker down.

Poor penis.

Somehow, that does it. Someone is naked and bleeding in my bedroom, and he’s bleeding from his huge, monstrous peen. That makes him so non-threatening that some of my fear abates.

“You can... Um. You can use my bathroom. To put yourself together,” I say cautiously. “So you don’t have to leave here all bloody like this.”

This will also give me a chance to coax my phone back to life and grab that frying pan from the kitchen.

He stares at me. The gray spots that serve as his eyes brighten. They glow red like his tentacles, still spread menacingly behind his back, and it's not creepy. Not creepy at all.

I shiver.

"Not leaving," he says and immediately starts coughing again.

I flinch, because his voice sounds as gritty as if his entire throat were filled with shards of glass. This isn't a human voice, and if it is, it doesn't sound like it's been used much. And what he said... I open my mouth to address it, but he turns away and starts walking toward the bathroom, his steps unsure.

The door closes behind him. I release a long, shaky breath and slowly uncurl my fingers from their death-grip on the Santa lamp. Right. I should do something.

He's not leaving. That means I should get out, go to the police, and have them throw him out.

What if he isn't here when they arrive? Maybe I really imagined him. Or maybe he'll leave on his own, and then the police will never take me seriously again. I can't let that happen.

But what is my other choice? Wait until the weird burglar gets his bearings and feels better so he can threaten me properly?

Yeah, not happening.

I step through the remains of my mirror, the dust crunching slightly against the soles of my slippers. I throw the phone in my purse, put on a jacket over my tank top, and stuff my sockless feet into warm boots.

One nervous struggle with the lock later, I am out of the door, running down the stairs, my heart beating like crazy.

I burst out of the building, the cold air knocking the breath out of me. I stop for a moment, listening, but there are no sounds of pursuit. Okay. *Calm down, Kelly.*

I walk, feeling much too exposed. If this takes too long, maybe I could go to a hotel? I still have some savings from the time I could sell my art without being harassed.

But first, the police.

I walk fast, heading for the bus stop. There are few people around. It's the Christmas Eve and still early. I keep my head low and curse myself for not getting a hat and a scarf. Not so much for warmth as for anonymity. I am too recognizable with my head uncovered.

So I hurry on, huddling into my collar to keep my face from view. That's why I don't see him.

I bump into someone hard, because I'm walking so fast. A male voice swears as I mutter an apology and try to go around him. Something tugs on my sleeve, and I turn.

Fuck.

It's the guy from yesterday, the one who followed me while filming with his phone, calling me a whore, asking how much I would charge for sucking his cock. Then he told me he wouldn't actually pay me, but he'd enjoy choking me with his dick, anyway.

Said he'd show the video to his friends.

He followed me right to my building, and I was so panicked, I didn't even think that I was leading him to my doorstep. I put in the code with shaking hands, covering the keypad so he wouldn't see it, and then slammed the door in his face when I was in.

And now he's here.

I tug my sleeve out of his hold and start walking. I look furtively around. There's no one but us in the area. *Crap.*

He quickly catches up and grabs me again, this time harder. A sharp pain zings through my shoulder and I turn to him, trying to yank my hand free. No use.

"It's fucking you," he says, an ugly flush creeping up his cheeks. They are deeply scarred from acne. Somehow, in my overwrought state, the edges of the scars become crystal clear, his face growing large and filling my field of vision.

I'm hyperventilating. I should scream, I think, but my voice won't come.

He glances around and grins.

"My boys will want to see it."

He pulls on my hand, dragging me toward an unkempt lot with a few run down garages. I struggle against his grip, and he yanks me so hard I almost fall.

"Keep walking, bitch," he hisses, his face completely red now. Whether from anger or excitement, I don't know.

"Help!" I scream, but my voice comes out stifled. Not loud enough to be heard from a distance.

"Shut up!" he spits and hits my cheek.

It's not a hard blow, but I've never been hit in my adult life. It leaves me

more baffled than hurt, and in my shock, I let myself be pulled.
Pulled toward one rusty garage without a padlock.



Chapter 3

Him

Having a body is a tricky business. There are so many sources of information that it's overwhelming. I can hear sounds coming from everywhere. My vision is flooded by light and colors. I can smell so many scents just in Kelly's apartment alone, and the sense of touch is a shockingly pleasant thing to have.

In the mirror, I couldn't touch anything apart from the glass walls that pierced me with shards every time I moved.

But here, I can touch so many things. Like Kelly's towels. They are fluffy, and they smell like her. Delicious.

The jets of water whipping my back in the shower are less pleasant, but I imagine it is mostly because of the glass dust still embedded in my skin. I stand in the shower and focus, expelling from my body anything that doesn't belong there.

It hurts. The water under my feet turns red.

And through the susurrations of the shower, through the sharp prickling of the glass leaving my body, I can hear the apartment door closing.

My star is afraid.

I turn off the water and look in the mirror. Something should be done about my face. And clothes.

Standing still on legs that become more and more sure with every minute, I let my mind arms unfurl. Power pulses through them. Half-ethereal, half-solid, the mind arms exist in all possible dimensions, transferring thoughts and energy between the planes of being, connecting me to the deeper layers of the Universe.

Humans would say it's magic. I suppose that's true in a sense.

I draw power from the cauldron of potential existence, a dimension bursting with infinite, malleable energy, and transform my mask into a human face. It is not my final face, because Kelly hasn't drawn me yet, but it will do for a quick trip outside.

There is a pile of fashion magazines on a shelf. I pick one up and flip through it until I find a man's picture with the entire outfit portrayed. The clothes shimmer into being over my body, complete with shoes and a watch. The feel of clothing against my freshly healed skin is another thing I will have to get used to.

It's not unpleasant. The shirt, especially, is cool and crisp against my chest, perfectly molded to my body.

Though I could use some more space in my pants.

Adjusting the outfit, I take one last look in the mirror, a cool satisfaction filling me. I am finally on the proper side of the looking glass. Finally free.

I leave the apartment and follow the sweet scent of my star.

By the time I'm out of the building, I have sorted out walking and implemented mental filters. All irrelevant information will be kept out so I can focus on what's important.

Kelly.

Somewhere down the street, her scent changes. It's metallic and stronger, and I speed up, my nose pointed, my muscles becoming hard. Something's happening to me. There is a hard coil in my gut. My mind sharpens, my vision narrows. Without hesitation, I launch into a run, my thigh muscles bunching as I plough through the snow in shoes that are clearly wrong for the weather.

As I run, letting my nose pick the path, I focus inward. There. Over my kidneys. The adrenal glands pump an electric, cool liquid into my bloodstream.

Adrenaline. My body is reacting to the change in Kelly's scent. It is so new, and yet it already knows. How important my star is.

A garage looms in front of me. My mind arm, drunk on the same cocktail

my body is on, punches through the flimsy door. Another arm adds a second hole, and both of them grab the door and pull it out. The garage gapes open.

My adrenaline-fueled senses catalogue the situation in a fraction of a second. Kelly struggling against a man's grip. The red-faced man smelling of arousal, a hand on his belt.

A phone propped against a wall. Recording.

One red arm dives inside the phone, absorbing all the information stored in there to see what has happened until now. My three other mind arms wrap around the man and lift him off the floor. One is coiled tightly around his throat, another around his chest, while the third one sends a jolt of energy to his still erect dick.

The man screams, his shriek so loud my ears pop.

Kelly only watches, sitting limp on the floor where she has fallen, her eyes huge, lips parted.

Right. Kelly's here. Can't kill him. Kelly's against killing.

But I thirst for this man's blood. I want to hear more of his screams. I want to bleed him drop by drop, and then pump his filthy blood back into his veins and bleed him again, listening to his shrieks of pain.

I watch him, panting with this new desire, visions of bloodshed filling my mind. I could crush him in so many ways, each of them more delicious than the last. Overcome with hunger, I forget Kelly, forget why I am here, and focus on the man, my anticipation growing.

I shall consume him.

This is not a new thought, I realize with a flutter of panic, but it is too late. The path has already opened. I am now free, and even though I have grown a body, even though I have a heart, my nature is still the same. And it has smelled food.

I have awakened something that has lain sleeping for a long, long time.

Millennia.

This dark, all-encompassing need to destroy feels very familiar.

I want to... I want to...

Devour.

The abyss inside me gapes, cold and hunger spilling out. The garage becomes dark, all light snuffed out and consumed. I clench my new human jaw, wrestling with my demon, my nature, *me*. The mouth inside my chest opens wide, creating a tunnel within my body, and through it, the freezing cold of my home dimension bursts into my lungs, my stomach, the very

marrow of my bones.

I know one thing. Can't let it touch my heart.

Wrestling with the darkness, I groan under the strain. It's my true nature, and it wants out. *I am hungry*, it snarls against my weakening hold. *Feed me. I want to feed!*

Feeding was all I did before the hag locked me up in my prison. My home world birthed only one monster, and then it expelled me into the whirlwind of other worlds and dimensions before I had a chance to devour it.

Ever since then, I fed. Entire planets were my meals. My human mouth salivates as I remember the crunch of tectonic plates in my gaping mouth. The heat and coldness of a world, all tastes fused into one, the thrill of myriad sentient beings funneled into my void to fill it with bright intelligence for one quick moment before being snuffed out forever.

I am the Devourer of Worlds. The Destroyer of Galaxies.

If I become myself again, I will lose every last thread of thought and become reduced to an endless rampage among the stars. Always hungry, never satisfied.

I cannot let it happen.

So I scream, letting the man fall to the floor, curling my mind arms protectively around myself. I reach out to other dimensions, other places, siphoning power into me, but the abyss is open, and it devours everything before it can reach my body. All the power, all the hope, the colors and music from heavenly planes, gone.

It keeps asking for more.

I fall to my knees, weeping from the pain. I will lose. Barely half an hour with my star, no, not even that, and I will become the force I always was. The hunger. The crunch of teeth. Billions upon billions of souls which will barely make a dent in my gluttonous void when I devour them.

The path is clear and inevitable. I will consume this city. This country. This world. My star will be snuffed out, one of the myriad souls in my infinite darkness, and she will be forever lost.

I weep with the pain of it. My body cracks along the seams, darkness spilling out between my ribs and vertebra. I am seconds away from disintegrating and unleashing the demon, myself, on planet Earth.

A hand lands on my shoulder, the touch feather light.

"What's wrong?" she asks, voice shaky.

I roar with the pain, the rage, the helplessness, and lash out with my mind

arms. They grab her and press her close to me, so close I can barely breathe. They wrap around us both in a cocoon of pulsing red magic, reaching out, seeking...

Kelly whimpers, and I hug her more tightly. Her jacket is in the way, so I make it disappear. Still, it's not enough. I need her close. My mind arms pulse with the dregs of my power as I wrestle with myself, and Kelly's clothes are gone.

I dig my fingers into the curve of her hip, so warm and yielding.

My body responds to her on a level that is way below my highest faculties, below the struggle, below the pain. Thread by thread, I untangle my thoughts from the hunger and focus on the feel of her in my arms.

As my will strengthens, I call on my body's abilities, its natural mechanisms. Like the instinct that led me here and made me protect her without thinking.

Maybe I can battle one urge with another.

Even if the hunger is eons old, ingrained in me from the moment I was born, I spent millennia trapped. The urge became dormant after a few centuries. It stopped reigning over me.

With time, I grew more sentient. Now I hope against hope my body can keep me here. It wants to live, too.

My heart beats out a frantic call to arms.

Everything disappears. Everything but the feel of Kelly squirming against me, her shallow breaths warm on my shoulder, her breasts soft against my chest.

I inhale her scent. My star. She is so very scared.

I press her closer, trying to communicate by touch alone that I won't hurt her. I might have a demon inside me, one that will never stop wanting to devour her planet, but I will protect her. From the evil people who hurt her. From this ugly world.

From me.

Kelly stops squirming and sighs, her breath a caress against my skin. She softens, not limp, but accepting. She is no longer fighting my touch, and now she is truly close, her body welcoming me.

My nerves fire off, my brain flooding with a warm, sparkling mist. I release a big breath, draw in another, and my body becomes whole again, the last tendrils of darkness dissipating.

Whatever is happening, it's good. And it feels good. Warm, as if someone

had wrapped my heart in one of those fluffy towels of hers. I don't have a name for this feeling. Don't know what it is. All I know is that it was caused by her relaxing against me.

I never want this to stop.

The press of the abyss becomes a background noise. I am fully in my body, my senses anchoring me to this plane of being, and the woman in my arms smells less like fear now. I breathe her in, feeding another hunger, one that is different from my natural unquenchable need to devour.

I run my fingers down her naked skin, feeling all of her with my mind arms. They are pressed tightly around us, keeping her trapped against me. The hunger increases, pushing away the dark void. My body buzzes pleasantly, hyper-aware of the swell of her breasts, the touch of her hard nipples against my chest.

The smell of her. Warm and spicy, with a lingering aftertaste of metal.

My cock hardens, pushing into her belly, and I murmur in appreciation. I *like* this hunger. It can be satisfied. And I know exactly what needs to be done to quench it.

Kelly squirms against me and whimpers. She can feel my erection and she's reacting. Her scent wafts up to me, warm and potent.

She smells like she is hungry, too.

I nuzzle into her hair, running my hands up her sides, my thumb catching on her nipple. I murmur something. Not words, I'm not good with them, but my throat seems to know what noises to make, so I let it.

"Egad," she whispers. "Stop."

I am no Egad, but I heed her command. My star wants me, I know that. But something must not be right. Maybe her brain doesn't yet know what her body has made amply clear.

Then I hear it. A male whine of pain.

We're in the cold, filthy garage where that fucker just tried to rape her.

Having remembered that, it is easy to disengage from the pleasant, warm urgency that filled me when I pressed Kelly's naked body to myself. I have a job to finish. And then I must take my star back to safety.

I disentangle my mind arms from her, and she steps away. Her arms are wrapped around her, covering her breasts, and she shivers. Dark anger coils inside me, at myself this time. I shouldn't have let her suffer the cold. I touch her gently with two red arms, and her clothes return. Kelly squeaks in surprise and shoots me a wary look.

“What... What the fuck is this thing?!” whines the man for whose blood I have thirsted so recently. He’s curled in a corner, shaking. Snot comes out of his nose.

I cannot let myself feel the hunger again. No killing.

Can’t even think about killing.

I consider asking Kelly what to do with him, but I know her enough to realize having to decide would be a burden. So I make the choice without her input.

His cock will be useless to him from now on. I’ve made sure of that with that first crippling shock. But it doesn’t feel like enough. So I snatch up his phone, my mind arm diving into it to check for anything I missed. I destroy all recordings of Kelly but leave the others.

It’s not the first time he attacked a woman and recorded it.

My mind arms unfurl, shedding red light over the interior of the garage, scanning it. There are some things stored here from previous attacks. A woman’s underwear. A stolen lipstick.

I’m not sure how it works, though I know the general idea from what I’ve seen of this world from my prison. So I dive into his phone again, and from there, into the Internet. I seek the best way to execute a lawful punishment, one that Kelly will approve of. Bright streams of data travel up my mind arms as I learn everything I need.

It is finished in seconds, my mind dizzy and overfilled with information, and I blink in the gloom, letting myself adjust to a normal, human state of being. Drowning myself in data, numbers and numbers of it, was informative. But it left me reeling.

Still, now I know what to do.

I tie him up, one touch of my mind arm making sure he’s cuffed and immobilized. Using the connection on his phone, I send an urgent anonymous tip to the police. Wipe all traces of me and Kelly from the garage.

“We need to leave,” I say to her. My voice sounds strange, the sound reverberating inside my head and outside at once.

Kelly doesn’t react. She stands still, shivering, and watches me. So I try to explain.

“The police will come.”

She shakes her head, whether refusing to go or believe me, I don’t know. I let out a frustrated sigh, annoyance creeping in. We need to leave now. She doesn’t want to get tangled in this mess. Because she does not need the police

to protect her and punish those who hurt her.

I will do it all.

But how to communicate it to her? There is no time for a lengthy explanation, no time for wading through a deep forest of words, trying to make my meaning clear. I wouldn't even know where to start.

I know her language, I have learned it long ago. It's translating my thoughts into human words and meanings that's the problem.

"Please, Kelly," I say, taking her hand, praying that it will work. "Let's go home."



Chapter 4

Her

I look at the guy who dragged me here, now tied up and crying on the floor. I don't feel sorry for him in the least. Then I glance at Egad. I know it's him. The pulsing red tentacles growing out of his back give him away, but he looks different. For one, he has a face.

I don't like it. It's very handsome, practically perfect in the overblended, plastic way of fashion photoshoots. It looks artificial and not very human. But I guess it is better than the weird mask-like thing he had on before.

His clothes are another matter. He looks like some kind of billionaire CEO, with a white shirt stretching across his chiseled chest, a diamond-studded watch on his wrist, and leather shoes polished to a high shine, wet from the melting snow.

His pants are much too tight. I imagine this cut wasn't designed with well-endowed men in mind.

"Jesus Christ," I snap at myself, rubbing a hand over my face.

Could my brain stop thinking about his cock for a minute? *Right, stop thinking about cocks. Think about something else.*

Unfortunately, that something else is everything that happened in the past ten minutes. That guy dragging me here. His hands on my mouth, on my body. I shudder, tears springing to my eyes, and look back at Egad's bulge.

After what almost happened, it's weird that looking at a cock straining against the fabric of luxurious trousers would bring me comfort, but it's *my* cock. Well, not mine, per se, but I created it. I drew it. It feels like the joy of making art, and therefore, it seems safe.

"Please, Kelly," Egad repeats, tugging on my hand once more.

He isn't forceful, but I can see his urgency. He's right, I suppose. We should leave. But what will happen to this guy? He will freeze to death if we leave him alone like this, and while I hate him with all my might, I wouldn't wish that fate on him.

"You said... the police are coming?" I ask Egad, remembering his words. He nods once.

"They will take him. There's evidence. Please, come home."

His tone of voice is off, almost robotically devoid of emotion, but his hand on my wrist is warm, and there is something so earnest about him. I let myself be pulled out of the garage. His tentacles disappear from view, and he looks completely normal apart from the fact he's not wearing a jacket.

I look around. There's no one nearby, although I can hear the blaring of sirens in the distance. Egad speeds up, his shoes slipping in the snow. We don't speak. I am shaking, my body weakening, and there is this empty, sucking feeling in my stomach. I gulp big breaths, trying to calm down, because I know these are just the aftereffects of the frightening situation.

At this moment, I am grateful for Egad's hand holding mine, for his sure lead making it easier for me to keep walking.

If I were alone, I would probably sit down in the snow and cry.

Soon, we're at the door to my building, and I put in the code with trembling fingers. Before I can try to bar him from entering, Egad opens the door for me, and I go in. He follows, and I sigh.

Should I race up the stairs and lock the apartment door before he reaches it? That would be prudent, though I'm not sure my door would keep him out.

But the thought of locking myself alone at my place feels heavy. I don't want to be on my own now, and there is no one else to go to. Also, Egad saved me down there. And then... And then he held me, made my clothes disappear, and pressed me close as if his life depended on it.

Conflicting emotions rise in my chest, and I shake my head. I am not ready to think about that moment. It was too strange to process quickly, but what's more, it was emotionally overwhelming. I don't understand what happened, but I know it made me feel...

Safe.

Among other things.

I open the apartment door and let Egad go in first. So it's a risk. But I need company right now. I am too shaken up, too vulnerable to be alone, and Egad has just saved me from a rapist. Right now, he is the most trustworthy person available to me, which is sad in its own right.

Well. Beggars can't be choosers.

I take a deep breath and push the events of this morning deep, deep down. They will crawl out later, when I'm alone in bed. But for now, I can pretend everything is fine.

He watches me silently when I take off my jacket and shoes. I put on my slippers and walk down the hall, wincing when I see the mess on my bedroom floor. Right. This must be cleaned up first. I turn to get the vacuum cleaner from the nook by the shoe cabinet and pause, watching Egad.

His tentacles are out, and he keeps them close to his body in the narrow space. They cast a reddish glow on him and the walls, and the scene looks eerie and magical. My fingers itch to draw him. Instead, I stand still and watch as he touches two tentacles to his dress shoes. Just like that, they turn into a bigger copy of my pair of slippers.

I giggle as Egad tilts his head to the side, frowning at his feet. He's wearing fluffy pink slippers with bunny ears, ridiculously large on his huge feet. Paired with his power suit, they look adorably out of place.

He looks up at me and snaps another tentacle to his face. The mask is back in a blink, and I stop giggling, though I am still smiling.

"I wish I could draw you," I say. "Right here, just like this. The light is exquisite, and I really like what you have going on with your outfit. A bold fashion statement if I ever saw one."

I giggle again and he just stares, his mask unreadable.

"Could you go into the kitchen while I clean up?" I ask when the silence stretches for a moment too long. "If I don't do it now, there will soon be glass dust all over the apartment."

Normal conversation. Laughter. Ordinary chores. Keep the pain locked in so it can't consume me.

I can do this.

Egad shakes his head and steps closer. I move to the side, thinking he wants to pass me and head for the kitchen, but he catches my hand and looks at my face. He's ridiculously tall, and standing so close, I have to crane my

neck to see his face. Mask. Whatever.

He doesn't speak, only holds my hand in both of his, his thumb stroking my knuckles. I shiver from the touch. It's warm and just... so intimate. But coupled with his alien, expressionless face, the comforting caress makes me confused. I shy away, and Egad follows me, keeping close.

"Stop, Egad," I say, my heart hammering in my chest. It's not from fear, I realize. It's something else.

"Not Egad," he says, that voice ringing strong and flat. "My name is Jingle."

"What?" I ask, scrunching my face in disbelief. What kind of name is that? "Is this like your surname or something?"

"No. Just name. Jingle."

I shake my head, and he keeps stroking over my knuckles, his touch firm and distracting. He doesn't let go, doesn't speak, and we stand like that until it becomes too awkward.

"Look, Mr. Jingle. I don't know how you got here in the first place," I say, deciding to put my foot down. I'm barely holding myself together and don't need any more complications right now. Because that's what he is. A complication. "And I know you saved me down there. But I... I think I need to be alone now. Can you please leave?"

He hangs his head, clasping my hand harder in his.

"No," he finally says, his voice no longer flat. It's almost a snarl, and I flinch. "I won't leave you alone."

I huff out a breath, feeling helpless in the face of his obstinate behavior. I don't know who, or what, he is. I don't know how he got here. And the name he gave me is ridiculous.

"I know you, Kelly," he says in a low voice, raising his hand to cup my cheek. "But you don't know me. I understand. I can fix it."

"Fix it? I don't get you. Who are you, really?"

His hand is warm against my cheek. I watch his face, trying to understand what he means, when I notice his tentacles rising high behind his head. All four are poised as if to strike. Their red glow is reflected in the glass dust on the floor behind him, and I can see the crimson shimmer from the corner of my eye.

The tentacles float closer to my face, and I am suddenly afraid. He choked a man with them. Lifted him off the floor as if he had weighed nothing. And now they are reaching for my face.

I try to move away, my eyes wide open, watching the pointed, quivering ends of the half translucent limbs.

“It’s all right,” he whispers, the mask devoid of emotion. “Just want to show you.”

The tip of one tentacle touches my temple, and a warm jolt goes through me from head to toes. I sigh, leaning back against the wall. It feels good. Like something warm touching me somewhere deep, deep below skin level.

Like a soft caress right against my brain.

Another tentacle touches my other temple, and two more wrap loosely around my wrists. Mr. Jingle cradles my face in both his hands, and his mask looms over me.

“Let me show you, Kelly,” he says.

“Don’t hurt me,” I whisper, because I feel raw and open, and I can no longer pretend nothing’s happened. This morning put me through a wringer, and that’s after long, exhausting weeks of being bullied and hunted. I am done. There is no more fight, no more energy in me. I just want to give in.

“Never,” he says.

His tentacles pulse against my skin, all four at once. My entire body tingles.

And disappears.

It feels like I’m underwater. There are no smells, my vision is strange and distorted, and I float, weightless. Bodiless. I’m not breathing, but I don’t need to breathe. I don’t have any needs, I realize. I am an indifferent tendril of smoke floating in... in...

An antique shop. I know this place.

I try to move deeper inside the shop to make sure this is the place, but I can’t. There is a barrier in front of me. Though I can float from left to right, I can’t go forward.

Am I dead? It feels like it. No body, no feelings. Even the thought of being dead doesn’t affect me. I am serene—no, that’s not the right word. Serenity means peace, something positive, and the nothingness that fills me is not good.

It feels lifeless.

I am two things, I realize, trying to separate my impressions and find out what are mine and what are the other’s. I am Kelly, with Kelly’s mind and thoughts. But I am also this other thing, the one that is floating, locked up

since time immemorial in its prison, dead but somehow alive, bodiless and yet filled with sensations.

I don't understand it.

There is a faint jingling of bells. I look up, disinterested and yet hungry for something, anything, to pull me out of my ennui.

"Hello!" a cheerful voice calls out, and I perk up.

The part that's the floating, cold being finds the voice interesting. It rings bright and pure, and it feels like light. There's never enough light in this murky prison.

And the part that's me, Kelly, thinks the voice is familiar. A moment later, I know why.

Because I see myself.

It is strange to not have a body. I lack the normal reactions to an emotion, like a heartbeat speeding up or breath coming faster. And yet, I have these emotions, and they are purely idealistic. More like concepts than feelings.

An echo of hunger awakens inside the being. It is surprised, because it hasn't felt it in a long, long time. Centuries. But it is strange, at the same time. This hunger is not physical at all. It is more like a hole somewhere deep in its soul, begging to be filled, hurting from how empty it is.

To feel it for just one human is a novel experience. It used to hunger for entire worlds.

The bodiless being watches the younger me with cool interest, analytical, as if studying an insect stuck onto a pin. It wonders why that creature, of all humans it has seen, has sparked that hunger.

And I, Kelly, realize with a start the hunger I feel, this being's hunger, is very similar to sexual need, but not physical. I desire myself, not with a body, but with my soul. If I had cheeks, I would blush. It's completely absurd but—so thrilling.

Kelly on the other side of the mirror, who is three years younger than me and just sold her first painting for a really good price, is looking around the shop with curiosity. She wants to buy a Christmas gift for herself with the money she made.

After chatting with the elderly shopkeeper and seeing the pictures of his two grandkids and three cats, she wanders around, her delighted eyes taking in item after item.

How young I was. So innocent. I would chat up anyone at the time. I even

exchanged correspondence with this shopkeeper, Mr. Wright, after graduating from college and moving. Old-fashioned letters. He died six months ago.

I am no longer that open, trusting Kelly. A few weeks can change a person beyond recognition.

She comes closer. The being's focus sharpens, pulling me out of my thoughts. Its aggressive attention forces me to process everything alongside it, leaving barely any space for my own thoughts and emotions. We become one, and all of its impressions are now fully my impressions.

Kelly stops in front of the mirror. Slowly, her gaze travels from the bottom to the top, eyes widening when they take in the ornate carvings on the frame. She comes closer, so close we could touch her, and so, hoping against hope, we press into the surface of the wall separating us from her.

She is so close her breath ghosts over the glass, and we push ourselves into it to feel even just an echo of her warmth. There is nothing, of course, but at least we can see her. Our focus absolute, we become level with her face, letting it obscure the rest of the shop, the rest of this cruel, boring world.

Her face is delighted, eyes sparkling like stars, and she smiles while looking directly at us. That smile pierces us, and our hunger roars in our prison, filling it with an angry buzzing.

We want her.

To devour? No, that would mean she would be gone. We want her to look at every day. To listen to. We want to see that smile, those eyes on us, every day, every hour.

Our mind arms shoot out, coalescing from nothing, and beat against the barrier. We have no mouth to roar, and yet we do, the sound a mere vibration.

Kelly frowns and takes a step back. She saw us. She felt us. We freeze, not wanting to scare her. Please, please, don't let her be scared.

Her mouth is open in awe, not in fear, and she claps her hands.

"A haunted mirror!" she says in delight.

Ah yes, I remember through the overpowering hunger of the shadowy being whose emotions I share. This Kelly is in her horror phase. She adores everything monstrous and creepy. Instead of being afraid like a normal person, she's fascinated.

"How much is it?" she asks, skipping away to the shopkeeper.

We hammer on the barrier again, rabid with how much we want her to

come back, to look at us, to touch us, but she's talking to the shopkeeper. Slowly, her posture changes, shoulders slumping forward.

It's too expensive, I tell the being, whose disappointment is like a vise squeezing us together. It's like pain but it's not physical, which makes it worse. It comes from everywhere and nowhere, and there is no soothing it, no changing position, no hunching protectively.

There's nothing we can do.

We squeeze into a tight ball of energy, the pain hammering at us from all sides, when Kelly casts one last forlorn look at the mirror and exits the shop, the cheerful bells by the door jingling out her departure.

We are in agony. We've never felt like this. Even the worst of our hunger never felt as violent, as oppressive as this pain.

We'll never see her again.

Time passes. People enter and exit the shop, and we hate them all. We hate those jingling bells, because every time they sound their melody, our entire being lurches with a new hope, and then we crash into disappointment because it's not her, it's not her, IT'S NOT HER.

Until it is.

The shopkeeper is about to lock up when the bells jingle again. She enters, her cheeks pink, eyes bright, mouth smiling. We freeze, our being expanding, growing, until we fill the entire space of the prison. We push at the walls hopelessly, and she comes over and looks at us, her eyes full of mischief.

"I'm taking you home, mirror ghost," she whispers, bouncing on the balls of her feet. She is so, so excited.

And we feel ready to burst with what can only be joy.

It's the first time we feel it. We've been imprisoned on planet Earth since the New Kingdom of Egypt, and in that time, we've slowly learned some human emotions. Deprived of our regular modes of being, the hunger and the devouring, we were empty for a time.

Until, slowly, we experienced boredom. That was our first emotion. We felt so very bored in our prison. It was a polished copper plate fitted with a metal hand, used by generations of wealthy Egyptian women. It transformed with time, fitting in with every new era and fashion, until it became what it is today.

The hag who imprisoned us wanted us to see the world. She didn't want us buried under rubble in a long-forgotten ancient city or locked up in a

museum. No, our punishment was to see the world we had been planning to devour, and repent.

We haven't repented. It's been over three millennia, and we have not felt an ounce of regret. But it might yet come as our emotional range grows. Because right now, we are feeling joy for the very first time since our birth. That means we could learn to feel other emotions, too.

We could be free.

Kelly arranges for the mirror to be delivered to her apartment the next day. The shopkeeper gives her a discount and they chat for a few minutes. Before leaving, she blows us a kiss and promises to see us tomorrow.

We spend that night longing for her. But beside that forlorn desire, there is another new emotion.

It's hope.

I'm back in my body, shuddering all over. Mr. Jingle's tentacles—mind arms, as he calls them—are all around me, wrapped around my waist, pressing into my back, rubbing up and down my arms. I look high up at his face that reveals nothing, and yet I know exactly what he's feeling. That desire, hope, and joy. He's free, and he has me in his arms.

The residue of his emotions is still inside me, filling my chest with something that feels like a loving, glorious pain, and I raise my hands to his mask and caress it with wonder.

"You really are my mirror ghost," I whisper.

He leans in close, and I hold my breath.



Chapter 5

Him

“Humans kiss,” I say, my mouth that is not a mouth inches away from her lips. “And I will kiss you. As soon as you draw me a face.”

She takes a shuddering breath, the air she expels fanning my desire. I am hot inside, my blood rushing fast. Flowing down, down, into my cock. It hardens and presses into Kelly. She makes a soft, surprised sound and doesn’t move away.

We stay like this for a moment. My mind arms quiver against her, ready to plunge in and possess. My cock weeps in sorrow at not being inside her. And yet, I wait. Only my fingers brush against the skin over her cheeks, her throat, her collarbones. She is so warm and smooth, and I revel in her.

Finally.

“Why Jingle, though?” she asks, and her voice is thick. She clears her throat and presses closer to me, looking up.

“It was the sound of you coming back,” I say simply.

Kelly huffs a surprised breath, her eyes wide. Her cheeks are delightfully pink, and I smell her need, but remember what happened before. Her smell alone is no proof that she wants it now. I must give her time to decide.

Then again, the hunger inside me roars with passion, and I can feel the abyss lurking just underneath, watchful. If I allow this to go on without

satisfaction for too long, it might open again.

“I need you, Kelly,” I say, my mind arms sliding down to the curve of her ass.

She gasps, eyes glazing over, and just looks at me with her lips parted.

“What are you?” she whispers.

“I am hunger,” I say honestly. “I am destruction. I am the power that snuffs out planets.”

She shakes her head, and I know she doesn’t understand me. The scale is wrong. She sees life as a microcosm with herself in the center. I can see the Universe and reach into other dimensions. My scale is infinite, and hers is so very small.

One day, I’ll show her galaxies and see what she makes of them.

Later.

Heeding my body’s impulse, I thrust my hips into her, making my cock press deliciously into her belly. My throat makes a sound, and Kelly gasps, her hands clutching my elbows. It feels like sampling a delicious whiff of a world before taking the first bite. So full of promise.

My hunger sharpens.

“I... I don’t even know you. Well, I know you, I’ve been inside you, or so it seems, but...”

She stops speaking with a moan when my mind arm wraps around her chest, pressing into her breasts. I send a gentle jolt of warmth into her, teasing her nipples. I know she likes touching them when she masturbates.

I’ve seen it so many times.

“Inside you,” I say, those words whetting my appetite. “Yes. You were inside me. Now I’ll be inside you.”

Kelly throws her head back, and I drag one mind arm over the skin of her throat, letting the warmth and energy from the divine planes pulse into her. It’s pure, numinous pleasure. I want to show her I can give her more than any other male, more than anyone.

Light and music of the gods travel into her, the stream but a trickle so as not to overload her. Gently, I feed magic into her body. Kelly opens her mouth wide, but not a sound comes out. Instead, she trembles violently in my arms, her eyes squeezed shut, and then slumps against me, breathing hard.

“Did you just.... Did you just make me *come*?” she asks, looking at my face with an emotion I think is outrage. “You barely touched me! You didn’t even... and I came!”

I wonder why she sounds so accusatory. Should she not be happy? My cock pulses with feverish need, and I press into her again with a low moan, but it is not enough. Won't be until I bury myself in her.

"I thought you liked pleasure," I say, because Kelly tries to push me away, and even though I am so restless, so starving, this is important.

Kelly believes communication is the cornerstone of a good relationship. That's why I'm trying so hard to squeeze my meanings into words.

"But not... Not like... How dare you! So you can just touch me whenever and make me come? That's crazy! I wasn't ready! And it was too fast. You didn't even work for it."

"Ah."

I run my hands down her back to her bottom and splay my fingers.

"I will work for it," I say, kneading her flesh, and it is another whiff of the meal to come, another promise. Her butt is so soft yet firm in my hands, and my cock twitches with approval.

Kelly gives a shaky breath and presses her lips into a line, looking at me uncertainly.

"Jingle... I swear, your name is so weird... Look, I don't think we should do this. I mean... We've barely met. I barely met you. And it's just a crazy time, and so many things are happening at once..."

She lowers her eyes and just stands there, her body wrapped up in my arms, the scent of her need heavy in the air around us.

Her body wants me. And if I don't have her soon, if I don't satisfy this hunger, my demon will be out again. I'm not sure I can keep it contained. I almost lost the last time, and the only thing that kept me human was Kelly's naked body. If she denies me that...

I could tell her this. She would understand and give herself to me as a sacrifice. I know she would.

But I don't want her to be a martyr. I need her to genuinely want me. Not because having sex with me will save the world, but because it will save her.

"Can't it be simple?" I ask, straining to shape my thoughts into the right words. "I want you. You want me. It could just be us, feeding each other's want until we're sated. Isn't it enough?"

She doesn't look up, only stands there, chewing on the inside of her cheek. I clench my teeth, feeling the thing in my chest stirring. Not long now. Soon, it will be out.

Kelly lifts her face to me and smiles.

“You’re right. It can be simple. What you just did, showing me your past... It feels like I’ve known you forever. I feel like I can trust you, which is so fucked up... Sorry. Didn’t mean to be rude. So I guess... Yes. Let’s do it.” She sighs, running her hand up my chest. “Anyway, I always wanted to see Egad’s cock in action.”

“Not Egad’s,” I say, putting my hands under her butt and lifting her, pressing her breasts to my chest, her cheek against my cheek.

“Jingle’s cock,” she gasps and then giggles.

I step over the remains of the mirror, running one mind arm over the mess to make it disappear. I lower Kelly to her bed and reach my mind arms, which shake with the effort of holding the abyss in check, to remove her clothes. Then I remember she wanted me to work for it.

With an angry huff, I struggle with the button of her jeans until I finally undo it. The zipper is easier. I tug them off her and run my human hand up the inner side of her thigh, fingers light against her skin.

She gasps, and I marvel at the gooseflesh that appears in the wake of my touch. So beautiful.

She has no panties on, and I cup her mound with my hand, just feeling it as tremors go through me. So hungry. So inconceivably empty. I need her inside me. Me inside her.

They are the same.

I get rid of my clothes with one touch and stand between Kelly’s legs, eyes focused on the glistening, dark flesh at their junction. She is swollen, just like my cock is swollen with blood.

It throbs as if it wants to burst.

Kelly raises herself on her forearms and stares at my cock, her lips parted and pink. She licks them and scoots closer on the bed, raising her hand. At the last moment, before she touches, she lifts her eyes to my face.

“May I?”

“Please.”

She flinches, because the way I spoke this word was harsh. I’m barely holding myself together. But Kelly recovers quickly and wraps her small palm around my cock.

I groan, the sound loud, and the abyss vanishes. I am fully in my body, and this is the first taste, that first sip that overpowers me with its sweet freshness. It’s heavenly. So much better than any world I have tasted.

She looks at me with surprise and then moves her hand up and down my

length. I groan again, closing my eyes. This is... This is too much. Too good. Better than feeding. I never want it to stop.

Only... One thing could be better.

The feelers come out, grasping at the air. They want to be buried in her warmth, snug and close, pressed into her from the inside, and instead, they fumble in the cool air. Kelly's sharp intake of breath tells me she sees them.

"They are... Just like I drew them, only red. Like your tentacles."

Her voice is full of wonder, and a moment later, she presses a trembling finger to the narrow, conical tip of my cock. The feelers wrap around her finger instantly, feeding desire and pleasure into it, and Kelly moans and then giggles.

"It tickles!"

But I don't care. I thrust my hips, urging her to stroke me harder, and my feelers connect with her finger, pushing everything I'm feeling into her.

It's an ability she designed when thinking up Egad's anatomy. Thanks to the feelers, whatever I'm feeling she will feel, too. My desire, my pleasure, all of it. And if I'm inside her, stroking her cunt with hard thrusts, her pleasure will double through the feedback loop.

When I come, she will come harder.

Kelly moans again, squirming on the bed, and pumps faster up and down my cock. Liquid spills out of me, hot and thick, and Kelly grips me harder, her eyes squeezed shut, mouth open and panting. She moves her hips back and forth to the rhythm of her strokes, and my body is so new, so inexperienced, I can't take it anymore.

A sweet weight descends deep into my loins, pulling my balls up, and the next thing I know, I'm shooting my release all over Kelly's face and hair, my entire body locked in intense, orgasmic pleasure as she whimpers out her own orgasm.

I blink down at her. She wipes her eyes with the back of her hand, and still, her eyelashes are glued together with the creamy, golden liquid. I want to say I'm sorry, but I can't.

Because I'm laughing.

All my existence, I chased after one thing: satisfaction. Ruled by my hunger, I devoured and devoured to feel a moment of reprieve. I wanted to be full and sated, just once.

And I finally am. Not through destroying a world and claiming billions of souls. I am full and sated, because my beloved stroked me so well I came in

her hand.

Because I have a body.

“Yes, hilarious,” Kelly grumbles and rolls off the bed. “Warn me next time.”

“Yes. There will be a next time,” I say after I stop laughing.

And then the next, and the next, and the next. I discovered the best thing in the Universe.

In all universes.

“And you still haven’t touched me properly,” she says, pulling her tank top off and wiping her face with it.

I stare at her beautiful breasts, full and round, their nipples still hard. My cock hasn’t softened yet, and this sight sends a fresh jolt to it. That spoils my satisfaction. What if the release is short lived? What if the hunger comes back after just a few minutes of reprieve?

Kelly continues, oblivious to my concerns.

“Though that’s my fault for making it up this way. Feedback loop my ass. I never imagined Egad would come just from a quick handjob... Though nothing wrong with that, of course. Anyway. I’m babbling. You will have to tell me how you got yourself the cock I drew. And this had no taste, by the way.”

I don’t reply to that, because I know. To create a taste, one must experience it first. All in good time.

“Nothing wrong with what?” I ask, because the way she said it, as if catching herself, nags at me.

Kelly stops on her way out of the bedroom and turns to me, stepping from one foot to the other.

“Well, it was rather quick. But, I mean, it’s okay. All parties were satisfied, which is more than I can say about some other encounters I had. I mean... Yeah. And I guess you haven’t done this in a long time.”

“Never,” I correct.

She gapes at me for a moment before shaking herself off. Then she glances at my cock that shows no signs of deflating.

And then she smiles, a gorgeous, radiant smile full of light. I haven’t seen it in weeks. Ever since the harassment started. It takes my breath away, quite literally.

“That explains it. Well, I am honored. And I’ll be happy to show you the ropes,” she says with a sassy smirk.

Ropes. The idea sounds intriguing.

“But I gotta shower first. I’ll be back soon.”



Chapter 6

Her

I feel light and kind of sated for the first time since... I don't actually know. I haven't had sex in a long while, not just because of the bullying, but even before that. I was tired of short, disappointing relationships. Of men who thought I would be game for any dirty fantasy because of my art.

Well, I might draw erotic stories with fancy cocks, but I'm pretty vanilla. Or maybe not. But I haven't found a man whom I would trust with the things I want done to me.

And Jingle—Christ, that name—makes me feel safe, no matter how ridiculous that sounds. My mind rebels against this idea, but my heart knows. I can trust him. And to think he was a virgin. Still is, maybe? I don't really know. I guess if he hasn't put it inside me, then he still is.

And that feels even safer somehow. He won't make demands, won't expect me to enjoy being demeaned and spat on just because I draw dicks. No, he will just be happy he can touch my tits.

Probably.

I sigh, letting the warm water wash his flavorless, odorless cum out of my hair. What he is... I don't even want to think about it. My mind actually rebels against the knowledge. Because if what he says, what I felt when I was in his memory, is true, he is like... Like Hitler, only worse. Hitler didn't eat

any planets.

And at the same time, he is like a baby human. His body, his humanity, is new, but his mind and soul are millennia old.

The way he showed me his memories is uncanny. But it worked. He had said I didn't know him and he would fix it, and he did. He crammed years of building a relationship into a short time, and I feel as if I've known him for years.

Yes, I should stick to this. I know him. I know he is passionate, completely devoted, and in search of himself. This makes him complicated, but not evil. I can live with complicated.

I turn off the shower and squeeze water out of my hair, focusing on the facts.

It's Christmas Eve, and ever since Jingle fell out of the mirror, he's only done nice things for me. Saved me. Cleaned up the mess in my room. Provided mind-blowing orgasms, though I hope he will learn to take his time. Going from ten to one hundred in a matter of seconds was not completely pleasant.

But still. He hasn't hurt me. And from what I've seen of his memories, he never will. This is a guarantee no human being could ever give me.

I can't help but think Jingle is my Christmas gift.

The best one I've ever got. Nothing can compare.

I walk out naked with just a towel wrapped around my head to teach my virgin Christmas gift some tricks.

But when I reach the bedroom, I stop and gape. It looks completely different. I don't even know how he did it in a matter of those ten minutes I took in the shower.

I look at him with wide eyes. His tentacles are poised at his sides, casting a red glow on his shoulders and forearms. He is naked, his cock at half-mast, the feelers hidden. For a moment, I forget the room, devouring him with my eyes, because he is male perfection personified. Huge. Chiseled. Powerful.

Just what I like and never had. Also, very much not a fumbling virgin man, I realize, looking at the bed.

It is twice as big as before, equipped with four sturdy posts. I know this bed, because I drew it. It's from my first comic story, *The Bound Bride*. It was before I got into monsters, so this was just a cute, erotic comic of a couple who had some kinky sex on their wedding night. There was bondage, and now that I look at the posts, I can see the coils of silvery rope falling onto

the silky sheets.

“You said ropes,” Jingle says. I glance back at him, and he is fully erect, the protruding ridges running spirally over the skin of his cock pulsing slightly red, as if there were light inside them. “And wanted me to work for it. How is this, Kelly?”

I’m speechless, so I turn away from him and examine the other changes he made to the room. There is a small Christmas tree in a pot decorated in gold and red. Christmas lights climb the walls and ceiling, soft and glittering in a multitude of colors. My bedroom is changed beyond recognition, and I should thank him for doing this, because it is the best gift ever...

Instead, I cry.

Jingle is by my side at once, his arms and tentacles wrapped around me, and I press my cheek into his warmth, sobbing harder and harder until I’m wailing. He lets me cry until I hiccup, and then he helps me calm down. Warmth pulses into me, gentle comfort, and I sink into him, latching on to the peaceful feeling he feeds into my body.

We stay like this, two naked bodies pressed together. He doesn’t try anything, doesn’t reach for my butt or tits. Just holds me, and it’s the safest I have felt in my life.

“You like Christmas,” he says quietly, stroking softly down my back. “I’m sorry.”

I laugh through my tears and press closer to him. To never leave this safe place. This is what I want.

“Not your fault. And I adore Christmas. Only this year... I don’t know how much you saw, but probably enough. It... Yeah. It was hard. Still is. Though I don’t know. You make it better.”

“Good.”

He steps away to look at me, but his tentacles linger comfortingly on my shoulders and back.

“I will make it all go away, Kelly.”

I laugh a bit wetly, thinking he’s planning to sex me up so hard I will forget everything. I look at the bed and the ropes and think. Actually... It sounds very, very appealing right now.

“Please, do.”

I lie down on my back, spreading my arms wide. Jingle, who was looking at the dusty corner where I keep my laptop in its bag, turns to me with a low snarl. He tilts his head to the side, watching me until he seems satisfied. He

walks over in two long strides, his erect cock bobbing.

Once he stops by the bed and just looks at me, I stare back at his cock. It truly is magnificent, even better than the one I drew. Because it's real.

I wonder what it will feel like inside me. It's conical, with a narrow head and a very thick base. The deeper in it goes, the more it will stretch me. But I can't imagine I could fit all of it inside. The fucker is long.

The circular pattern of protrusions running along the shaft is another thing I thought would be cool when I drew them. Now I bite the inside of my cheek, eyeing them with apprehension. They still pulse with a faint, red glow. When I held him in my hand, they felt hard and unyielding.

He has a normal ball sack, though it's hairless and his testicles are larger than human ones. That means he shoots bigger loads, something I experienced face-first when he came all over my head.

The feelers in the tip of his cock are hidden, but if I started touching him, they would come out, wiggling, half-translucent red tendrils. I wish I could run my tongue over them and feel the feedback, feel how it feels for him.

But Jingle is done watching me. He wraps a tentacle around my wrist and gets the rope. With one touch of another tentacle, my hand is bound, and there is no slack at all. It doesn't hurt, but I can't move that hand, and it's alarming.

I haven't really thought it through.

Jingle secures my other arm, and I test the ropes. No give at all.

"Um. Jingle?" I say, my stomach fluttering with anxiety or maybe thrill. "I don't think I want the ropes, after all."

He pauses, his hand on my ankle. He looks at me, stretched out before him, my arms immobilized, and his cock twitches. His body is tense and hard, and I can see the fast rise and fall of his chest. He's excited.

"Tell me to stop and I will," he says after a moment and keeps watching me.

I pull on the ropes again, considering. He promised to make me forget everything. Maybe he can get me out of my head enough that the heavy weight I've been carrying will finally be gone, even for a bit. It's worth trying.

"Okay."

He nods once and pulls my leg up to my chest, securing the rope under my knee and tying it to the post behind my head. He walks around the bed and grabs my other leg, doing the same. I whimper, because I've never been

in such a vulnerable position in my life. I'm helpless, all of me on display. I grab the ropes with my palms and pull myself up a bit.

As I thought, I can glimpse my pussy, wet and dark with arousal. My clit throbs, begging to be touched.

Jingle straightens and watches me, and his cock is wet with pre-cum. The moment stretches, and I squirm, the air cool against my wet labia. Finally, he sits down on the bed and puts his hand on my buttock, stroking down firmly.

"This time, it won't be fast."

I gulp, trying to remember what happened in the comic. A few bondage configurations, this one among them. Vaginal sex without protection. And...

Jingle's tentacles rise over me and slowly descend, teasing my throat and lips with gentle touches. I'm breathing fast, that touch too mild to do anything, and yet it has my blood rushing loud in my ears.

Because that comic was all about edging.

Jingle massages my buttock with his hand, making low, sensuous murmurs deep in his throat. His tentacles graze my collarbones lightly, making me shiver. My pussy pulses and grabs at nothing, and I wish he would just touch me there...

But I asked for this. Though maybe not to such an extreme.

One tentacle strokes over my lower lip and I open my mouth, curious. It slowly dips inside, just the tip, and I flick my tongue against it.

Jingle hisses out a harsh breath and stops, leaning closer to my face. His mask hovers inches above me, the tentacle still pressed against my lip.

"Do it again," he says, voice harsh.

I lick over it, and he gasps, pushing it deeper inside my mouth. Curious about his reaction, I wrap my lips around the smooth, warm tip and suck gently. Jingle groans, his fingers digging into my buttock. I suck him harder, loving how the tables have turned, when he stands up, yanking the tentacle out of my mouth.

His cock thrums with the red glow, and his feelers are out, thrashing in the air. He turns away from me, taking hungry breaths, the muscles on his back playing with every inhale.

"Slowly."

"It doesn't have to be," I say, because his reaction is so hot, I can barely stand it.

But Jingle shakes his head and turns back to me, his tentacles quivering. The feelers are hidden again, and he unclenches his fists slowly, sitting back

by my side.

He runs his thumb across my lower lip and pushes it inside. I suck on it, too, but it's not as sensitive as the tentacle. He merely sighs, his other hand going to my breast. It's a bit squished under my knee, so he pulls it up, freeing most of it. He runs his fingers gently around the nipple, much too light, and still, it pebbles for him.

He hums appreciatively and raises his tentacle again, cautiously sliding it over my nipple. It gives me a jolt of something electric and tingly, and I try to arch my back, moaning. Jingle reaches over me and frees my other breast, pinching the nipple with his fingers. Another tentacle wraps around it, making it tingle with a warm, honeyed touch.

I close my eyes and whimper, because whatever it is he's doing goes straight to my clit, making it pulse with need. I want his hands or tentacles on it and inside me, but the only thing that's touching me is the cool air.

Two tentacles keep caressing my nipples, zapping me with that warm, arousing energy from time to time, and he runs his fingers over my calves and feet. He tickles me, and I break out in breathless giggles that soon turn to sobs when he doesn't stop.

"No..." I gasp, trying to speak through the laughter. "No giggling."

He stops and pats the sole of my foot before sliding his fingers back up to my knees. He pushes at them, opening me further, and the ropes adjust, holding me like this. My heart hammers, wondering if this is it, if he will finally touch me.

Jingle stares at my core while his tentacles play with my nipples. Finally, he grazes the inside of my thigh with his knuckles, and in the wake of his hand, a tentacle follows, pulsing with something fluffy and tingling, a kind of touch I have never experienced before. I shudder and sigh, trying to arch my back, to somehow push myself into him, but Jingle ignores it.

He repeats the caress on my other thigh, and he's so slow I could cry, except it feels so good. His tentacles creep so high up my thighs they almost touch my labia, and I shiver expectantly, because any minute now...

They pulse a soft current of energy into me, and I cry out, teetering on the edge of an orgasm. He still hasn't touched me, but I want to come so hard, I'll take it, if only it were just a touch stronger...

The current stops, and I slump on the bed with a cry of disappointment.

"Please! You've had your fun. Please, please, make me come."

Jingle's tentacles wrap around my thighs, right by the junction of my

legs, and pulse into me again. He stands up and stops touching my nipples, and now there is only that warm, sliding presence wrapping around my legs just under the curve of my ass, slithering tighter and tighter as I try to cant my hips, hating that there's nothing inside me.

This is hell. A delirious, almost-orgasmic hell, and I can't stand it.

Except I do. I take it all, and Jingle stands over me, his breathing harsh. Finally, the pulsing, heavenly energy eases, becoming just a slow, insistent throbbing, but he keeps his tentacles wrapped tightly around my thighs.

Still no orgasm for me.

"Look up."

I open my eyes and frown in surprise. My entire ceiling is one large mirror, and I see myself, red cheeked and panting, hair in disarray, my pussy entrance glistening.

And Jingle stands above me, his face trained on me. He's stroking his cock with leisurely movements, and the feelers are out. I watch, mesmerized, as they search the air for something to latch on to while he pumps along his ribbed length with his huge, fisted palm.

"Please, fuck me," I whisper.

My entire body is tense and sweaty, and I'm in tremors. I need just one touch. After his magic ministrations, all I need is the brush of a finger against me, just one, and I'll soar.

"Watch."

Jingle points at the mirror. I look up obediently and gasp in surprise.

His tentacles are gone. Except, I can still feel them wrapped around my thighs, so they are there, only... invisible.

I stare at the mirror, mesmerized, as Jingle's tentacles pull my legs further apart, making me feel the stretch. I can see the dip in my flesh where they squeeze me tight, I can see my skin sliding a bit, I can feel their strong, sure grip.

But I can't see them.

When something slides against my outer labia, I gasp in shock at how unexpected it is.

Jingle chuckles. The tentacle caresses me slowly, just outside of where I want it, and I can't tear my eyes away from the sight.

The dissonance between what I feel and what I see is utterly thrilling.

Another touch on the other side has me shuddering. Two tentacles massage my outer labia, their touch firm and much too precise for my liking.

And still, the orgasmic energy inside me builds further. I've never been strung so tight, brought so high, and not allowed to come.

"Please," I gasp out through my constricted throat.

All my muscles are hard and shaking from tension, my insides are wound in a tight, pulsing coil of need, and if I don't come now, I'll explode.

"It's been barely fifteen minutes," he says, and I swear, I can hear smugness in his voice.

Cheeky bastard. I should have never said anything about how fast he came in my hand.

The tentacles slide a quarter of an inch closer to my center. I strain, eyes wide open, mouth panting, waiting for one to brush against my swollen clit. Just a bit, a little more...

They suddenly slide over my skin, unravelling, and the touch disappears completely. I groan with disappointment, my entire body shaking. I am slick with sweat, tendrils of hair plastered to my skin, and up in the mirror, I look like a total mess.

"How the fuck are you a virgin?" I ask when Jingle leans closer to me, his fingers pinching my nipples, one each, and then sliding up my inner thighs, but never high enough.

"You were my teacher," he answers, the pads of his fingers reaching the soft crease where my thigh meets my pelvis, and retreating.

I'm thankful he eased on the magic pleasure his tentacles provided, because if he strung me any tighter with that, I would probably black out from the tension. What he's doing now keeps me nicely hot, but not on the verge of madness.

"I did... oh fuck... a great job."

I groan, because his tentacles wrap around my nipples again and tease them with something cold and electric. My body breaks out in goosebumps as freezing, liquid energy flows into my nipples, hardening them even more.

It goes on like this. His tentacles tease my breasts, wrap around my thighs, caress my arms and face. At one point, one wraps loosely around my throat and sends warm energy into me, allowing me to relax before the maddening torture begins anew.

When Jingle is finally satisfied, I am a wretched, twitching pool of frustration and desire, unable to form coherent sentences.

He stands up, his tentacles uncoiling from me entirely. His cock is in his hand, and I gasp at the sight. It's a deep indigo purple, swollen so much it's

almost twice as big as normal, and the feelers are so dark they're almost black. Jingle strokes up and down with a low moan, and I realize all the time he's been denying me, he's denied himself as well.

Something touches my asshole. I gasp, because even there, all my nerve endings are wide awake and sensitive. The firm, smooth pressure of his tentacle wiggles against me, and suddenly, I sense viscous wetness.

Jingle groans and grips his cock without moving his hand. He is trembling and so fucking hot, but as the pressure pushing at my asshole increases, I look up at the mirror, desperate to see what's happening.

The only thing I see is slight movement in my ass. An almost imperceptible opening.

I release a shaky breath, and the next thing I know, something slides inside my pussy. I cry out, the friction so delicious I'm ready to lose it, and Jingle groans with me, throwing his head back.

And I can see it clearly now. My pussy lips being nudged aside, my entrance stretching over nothing. Transfixed, I watch while the friction inside me grows more insistent, the movement becoming deeper. I stretch further, the pink, glistening flesh of my inner walls visible.

It's unreal.

Another tentacle presses to my nipples, teasing my oversensitive nerves with a jolt of divine energy, and the pressure in my asshole grows. Something slick pushes easily inside, and I can see it in the mirror. Both my holes are open, allowing me a glimpse of my inner flesh, but I cannot see the things that fill me.

Another invisible tentacle presses against my mouth, and I open, allowing it to slide in. I suck on it, and Jingle moans loudly, his entire body gripped by violent shudders. He squeezes his purple cock with a tight fist, but suddenly, he lets go and thrusts his pelvis.

Jets of golden cum fall all over me, but this time, there are no feelers pressed into me, and I don't get the feedback. I don't come with him. Instead, I lie there, my legs and breasts covered with his cum, and some of it has fallen right on my pussy. I watch, gasping, as the invisible tentacle fucks his cum into me.

They move faster, with purpose. The one in my mouth swells, and I suck on it harder. Jingle shudders and gasps, and the tempo picks up. The tentacles in my asshole and pussy have an interchangeable, maddening rhythm. When one pulls back, the other thrusts.

The one in my mouth doesn't move much, only rests against my tongue, sending a jolt of strange flavor into me every time I suck. It's like nothing I have ever tasted, and it has my tastebuds going haywire with how good it feels.

I'm full. My pussy is stretched wide, my asshole is delightfully full, and I can feel the friction inside, two fat tentacles sliding against one another through the thin wall separating them. My holes pulse, widening and narrowing in turns, and I force my eyes to remain open, even though my orgasm is looming, all my instincts prompting me to shut my eyes.

I don't.

I come watching my holes stretch open as Jingle shudders above me with a groan, his fist pumping up and down his swollen cock. The orgasm shatters me into pieces, and I scream and scream, all the buildup coming to a head taking my breath away.

The last wave rolls through me, and I gasp for breath, everything inside me raw and still taut, my pussy and asshole clenching around the invisible tentacles. Jingle snarls and sits by my side. He pushes the head of his cock to my thigh, and before I have a chance to protest that it's too much, I'm gripped by another wave. It builds fast, roaring in my ears, thrumming in my pelvis.

Jingle's feelers press into my skin, sending all of his pleasure into me, and I am delirious, half dead, gloriously alive.

When he comes, I don't scream, only freeze with my mouth wide open, everything inside me so tight I can't breathe. I teeter on the edge for one beat of my heart and then fall, blood rushing in my ears as my body convulses with an orgasm that's so intense it hurts.

When I come to, groggy and out of breath, Jingle's tentacles are still thrusting inside me, slowly now. My entire core is bathed in his cum, and the tentacles... what... they scoop it and fuck it inside me. Thrust by thrust, they fill me with his cream, and I am all slick inside. This is so fucking hot.

Kink unlocked.

I blink. If I weren't so spent, this would send me into another frenzy of arousal, but as it is, I can only record it in my mind for later.

The tentacles slide out and become visible again. They are covered with a golden, glistening sheen, which looks quite festive with their red light glimmering underneath. I giggle.

Jingle's head comes into view above me.

“I worked for it, Kelly,” he says, quiet satisfaction in his voice. He’s getting better at expressing emotions.

“That you did,” I say weakly. “That you fucking did.”



Chapter 7

Him

I had meant to track down her online abusers and punish them, but when Kelly laid her beautiful body on the bed like the most delicious feast, there was no way I could refuse. This keeps getting better.

And as I consume more and more of our shared pleasure, my appetite only grows.

I want to spend every waking minute filling Kelly with my mind arms and my cock. I want to wrench orgasm after orgasm out of her. I want to ambush her and send pleasure from heavenly planes into her, making her come when she's in the middle of something else.

And then, when she shoots me that accusatory glare, so charmingly mitigated by her blushing cheeks and wide irises, I want to apologize and make it up to her by feasting on her with my mouth.

But for that, I need a face.

Kelly will draw me one. She's in the shower for the second time today, and if I have my way, it won't be the last one. Though I long to come inside her, too.

Later.

I open her computer and turn it on. She hasn't taken it out in a while, choosing avoidance as her way to deal with the barrage of hate. Even her

phone is usually disconnected from the Internet. And the list of blocked numbers is a mile long.

For a moment, I ponder how to execute my punishment. It should be satisfying for me, productive, and acceptable to Kelly should she ask me about this. It's a tall order, and I know I could do what I want, that is, obliterate them and their families, but then I would have to lie to Kelly.

Never.

As I ponder a fitting retribution, a memory comes. How it all started.

I am watching from the mirror as Kelly video chats with Sara, another artist who makes explicit art. They are close friends but have never met in real life. Sara lives in Finland.

"You have to stop," she repeats, her eyes haunted. Even through the smoothing filters, I can see her face is haggard. She's not been sleeping well.

"So they can crush you and move on to somebody else?" Kelly asks with a bitter laugh. "No, I will not let that happen. Someone has to put those... those... evil troglodytes in their place."

"You don't understand!" Sarah bursts out. "It doesn't work! I did my research when they first started doing it to me. It's a large group, Kels. And they are organized. They have some sort of secret incel forum where they pick their next target and then do anything they can to destroy her. The best strategy—the only strategy that works—is to ignore them, delete their comments, block them, and wait until they get bored. You don't engage or you'll have a target on your back."

"It's not right," Kelly says. Her mouth, always smiling, is now a flat, hard line. "Even if I can't reason with them, someone needs to say something! So other people can see it's not right. So they can see you CAN protest against the bullying."

Sarah shakes her head and begs Kelly to stop responding to the hateful, destructive comments that appear in hundreds under her every post. The haters are crafty, knowing exactly how to hurt Sara without triggering any bots, and they are like a hydra. If you get one account blocked, three new ones will appear.

But Kelly has made up her mind. Armed with her determination and belief in justice and happy endings, she sets out on her crusade, protecting her friend from abuse as best she can.

And she succeeds. It takes them only a day to abandon the unresponsive,

not-fun-at-all Sara and focus on this new, exciting target.

Every time Kelly engages, they grow more vicious, until the game they are playing becomes something more. It becomes personal.

All of their hate, frustrations, their sick and violent fantasies focus on Kelly.

I frown, watching the cold screen and remembering with sharp clarity everything that happened next. At that point, it wasn't just online abuse. Kelly did commissions, so her contact information was listed publicly. Her phone and email blew up with lewd, threatening, hateful messages. And then, someone got her address from her newsletter and published it, making her an easy target for psychos and perverts.

They crapped on her art and person, threatened her with violence and rape. Soon more hate poured in from people who weren't a part of the original group but saw what was happening and wanted to join in the fun.

They saw all the hate pouring in and followed. The vocal majority decided Kelly deserved it, and the majority must be right. It's a human bias that took me a long time to understand.

It doesn't matter why they bullied Kelly, though. They shall be punished. All of them.

Kelly deleted all her profiles, finally giving in after the situation only kept escalating. That put an end to most of it. Without an easy target, the crowd of haters dispersed. Only the nastiest, most hardcore of them remained.

Let's start with them.

My mind arms dive into the keyboard, seeking the right point of access. When I'm inside the computer, I can easily hop on the Internet. I know what I'm looking for. I've watched it all unfold, and I've remembered user names, email addresses, avatars, phone numbers. Even if they were fake or temporary, they can serve as a starting point to tracking down the people involved.

I start with those who sent personal threats. There are thirty-one people who kept pestering Kelly over a longer time, and eighty-three who only sent her something once. All are swiftly dealt with, and I keep hunting.

Playing with code and data is not unlike navigating the starways, the subdimensional shortcuts I took to get from one corner of the Universe to another. I learn quickly, absorbing knowledge as I go, and throw in some of my own creative magic to spice things up.

Soon, I'm done with the worst offenders, and only the plethora of petty haters remain. They are innumerable, but I hunt down each and every one of them. Kelly deleted all her information, but it's still up there saved on servers scattered across the globe, floating in the ginormous cloud of online information. The comments are there, as well.

Nothing is lost on the Web.

By the time Kelly enters, wearing a fluffy bathrobe, her hair wrapped in a towel, I am done. I fold my mind arms behind my back and blink, getting used to seeing with my eyes and not my subliminal senses.

"What are you doing?" she asks, sitting down on the bed.

I take a few deep breaths, sinking more fully into my body. I seemed to be bodiless for a moment, all my mental resources engaged in the hunt. But now I'm back, heart pumping blood, lungs working hard.

My stomach grumbles, the sound surprisingly loud.

Kelly looks pointedly at my middle. But I am still naked, so her eyes automatically lower to my cock.

Even just feeling the fleeting brush of her gaze, not really a touch, more like a sensation, has me hardening.

"You're hungry, I suppose," she says, tearing her eyes away from me with a blush. "I guess you haven't eaten since..."

"Never," I finish for her, and she nods. "Not human food."

"I can make scrambled eggs," she says, getting up. "Come on, we can talk in the kitchen. You must be thirsty, too. I'll get you something to drink. Any preferences?"

We walk to the kitchen, and she turns to me, leaning against the clean counter. Clean not because she's so tidy, but because it was hardly used during her weeks of depression. She barely ate.

But that's fine. I will feed Kelly, and she will get everything she needs to gain back her healthy glow.

"I want to drink the thing you love the most," I say without hesitation.

Even though I'm feeling off-kilter, the hunger making me weaker, and my mind arms are tired after dealing out punishment, I am determined to sort everything out before the day's end. And this bit is important. I need to learn the taste to replicate it.

Kelly smiles, another brilliant, lovely smile, and I long for lips of my own to return it.

"That would be eggnog, but I don't have all the spices I need to make it

perfect. I suppose I could run to the shop..." A shadow falls on her face when she remembers what happened when she left the apartment this morning.

"It can wait."

Kelly's back is to me as she opens a cabinet to get something, but I won't let her cook if she's anxious again. I touch her nape with one mind arm and dip it under the collar of her bathrobe and lower, settling the tip over her tailbone. I pulse warmth and comfort into her, and she relaxes with a sigh.

"This is handy," she says, bracing her hands against the counter, her eyes closed. "They should give those out to people with anxiety... Mmm. It's like a massage but better. Like someone is caressing my soul."

I come closer, my hunger for food forgotten. The way she speaks resembles the sounds she made when I buried my mind arms inside her, and the recent memory has my cock stirring. I stand close behind and wrap my arms around her, my palms pressing into her breasts. She leans back against me, squishing the mind arm between our bodies, and gives a low moan.

"You were right, you know?" she gasps when I knead her breasts through the fluffy fabric, slowly increasing the stream of pleasure pouring into her through my mind arm. "You made me... oh, fuck... forget about everything. It was glorious. Yes, oh, I love this. Please."

"We have things to do," I murmur, but my cock is already hard, and from the way she pushes her butt into me, I know she wants me, too.

"Then just a quickie," she gasps. "It's only fair after the last one. Please, fuck me, Jingle."

I need to bury my cock in her beautiful, inviting cunt, but not yet. I want to wait for the moment I am finished, the perfect male I will become for her. So instead, I let two mind arms slither up her legs and just caress her entire core, sliding over her clit and pussy lips. She is wet, new arousal pooling between her legs.

I groan into her hair, because every touch of my mind arm against her sends feedback straight to my cock. She could not touch it at all, and still, I would orgasm from sliding my mind arms all over her.

But I won't plunge into her just yet. I adore making Kelly come, and even for just this quickie, I want to do it more than once. Giving her pleasure is addictive, especially after years of watching her please herself.

Or seeing other men fumbling inexpertly between her legs.

I know exactly what she needs. I've seen the way she angles her fingers, the tempo she picks, first slow and luxurious, then speeding up when she

nears her peak. I know all her fantasies. Those she drew just for herself and never published are the key to her pleasure.

“You’re a dirty, dirty girl,” I growl into her ear, angling the tip of one mind arm to slide over her clit just the way she likes, only better, because I’m feeding honey from the god realm into her.

Kelly throws her head back and moans, her body shuddering. She’s on the cusp of orgasm, and I want to feel her come, so I push another mind arm deep into her cunt. She screams and her muscles squeeze me tightly, pulsing rapidly at first, then more slowly.

I slide my hands under her bathrobe and squeeze her nipples. They are delicious. For the longest time, I could not understand the obsession human males had with breasts. I still don’t know where it stems from, only that I am obsessed, too.

Then I remove my mind arm from Kelly’s cunt. It’s wet, bathed in her cream, and I push it into her mouth, making her taste herself on me. I push another mind arm in her pussy, and then a second, because if I can’t put my cock in her, at least all my tentacles will be inside.

I fuck her slowly, groaning when she flicks her tongue over me in her mouth, gasping when her sweet pussy clenches around me. I push in as deep as I can, and Kelly moans, arching her butt. I set the pace, fucking her slowly with two mind arms, my body shaking from how hard it is to keep myself from coming.

But I want all four to be sheathed in her. So I coat the last one with wetness to make it easier and press the tip into her asshole. Kelly twitches against me, and while I keep one hand on her nipple, I press another over her ribs, keeping her close. She won’t be going anywhere.

I push slowly in, pull back, and thrust. Kelly keens, the sound muffled, and I fuck her in earnest. Two mind arms stretching her cunt, one plundering her asshole, one pressed into her tongue. She’s shaking in my grip, and I snarl, my cock pulsing with need, ready to release cum all over the bathrobe on her back where I’m pressed into her.

So I pulse a jolt of pleasure into Kelly to push her to another orgasm. Her entire body spasms in my embrace and she slumps against me, unconscious or exhausted, I don’t know. I thrust two more times, going as deep as I dare, and come as well, coating her bathrobe with cum.

Slowly, I pull out of her mouth. She’s breathing fast, her body loose. I crane my neck to look at her. Kelly’s eyes are open but unseeing, and she

wears an expression of pure bliss.

I slide out of her, one tentacle at a time, leaving the one in her asshole for last. It's squeezed tight by her clenching muscles, and Kelly hisses when I pull it out.

"That was..." she stops and takes a shuddering breath. "If this keeps getting better at this rate, you'll kill me. I don't think I can live through so much pleasure. It's unreal."

"You'll be immortal by my side," I say, pressing her close.

With one swipe of my mind arm, the mess over her bum is whisked away, and we're both clean.

"What?" Kelly asks, and even though there's a hint of confusion in her voice, her body stays completely relaxed.

"Immortal," I say. "Please, feed me. And I will have water if I can't have eggnog now."

She shakes her head to clear it and I release her when I'm certain she can stand. Still, Kelly takes a moment to just breathe and calm down. When she finally reaches for eggs in the fridge, her hands practically don't shake.

"You know, I drew a tentacled monster once," she says, putting the frying pan on the cooker. "Not quite like you, he couldn't make them invisible plus they were slimy because he was a sea creature but... Yeah. It's better than I imagined."

"Oh, and by the way, I wanted to use this as my weapon when I saw you lying on my floor and thought you were a burglar." She turns to me with a teasing smile, the frying pan in her hand. "Would it have worked?"

"You have nothing to fear from me," I say. She probably knows this by now, but some things require repetition. Another feature of human communication it took me a long time to understand. For me, saying something once is enough. I will remember what's said and act accordingly.

Not for her. So, for example, after I finally tell Kelly I love her, I will repeat it every day.

"But if I had suspected it would make you feel better in that situation, I would have allowed you to hit me with this."

She smiles, and something in my chest loosens. Making Kelly smile may be my new favorite thing. Right after fucking her.

Then my stomach grumbles again, and Kelly giggles.

"Right, back to cooking."

"Make enough for both of us," I say, trying for a stern tone of voice.

Kelly flinches and looks at me over her shoulder. Maybe too stern. But no, she needs to eat. I won't have her wasting away.

"Yes, sir," she mumbles, and I remember. She used to fantasize about being ordered around, among other things. I know the right answer, too.

"Very good, pet."

She blushes and turns away. She works much faster now, completely focused, and I remember this for the future as another way to get her out of her head. Though she won't need much of that with me by her side, it should still come in handy while she heals in the coming days.

We eat together after I fashion myself a temporary mouth, and the first bite of food has my eyes dimming in delight. I turn inward and watch the pleasure areas in my brain light up. Not as good as sex, but very high on the list. Kelly's a superb cook from what I've observed and heard others say, so I know even her scrambled eggs are perfection.

"It tastes amazing. You did very well," I tell her, and Kelly perks up, watching me with starry eyes.

After weeks of abuse, she's starved for praise. I curse myself for not noticing it earlier, but then again, it is fine. I have all the time in the world to shower her with words of appreciation and pride.

After we're done eating, I drink almost half a gallon of water to quench my thirst before Kelly makes me stop, and then suffer when my stomach distends with the huge amount of fluid.

"Just don't move around too much for now," Kelly tells me sympathetically when we're back in her bedroom. "It should pass in half an hour. You'll need to pee, I guess."

I sigh and stretch out on her bed. I suppose I could vanish some of the water from my stomach, but I want this body to function properly without additional help. Better learn its ways from the start so I can maintain it properly.

Kelly gets dressed, and I watch her, not feeling any need to put on clothes myself.

"Be a good girl and draw me a new face," I tell Kelly, feeling smug when she blushes again.

She's about to reach for her sketchbook when she hesitates. Her body tenses, face pinching tight.

"I haven't drawn much recently," she says, turning to me. "I'm not sure... I might be a bit blocked. Are you certain you want to rely on my skills? You

might not like the result.”

I get up, stifling a groan, and come over to her side.

“You don’t understand,” I tell her, running my fingers through her still damp hair. “I don’t want you to draw it so that I will like it. I want you to draw me a face you will like. Something you will be happy looking at for the rest of eternity.”

She gives me a shaky laugh, and I hold her patiently, waiting until she can process it. I know she hasn’t really drawn anything creative in weeks. But she needs to start again. Without it, she will never be happy, no matter what I do. No one else can give her this, it’s only in her power to claim it.

In some matters, she will have to work for her happiness herself. Though I’ll be by her side always.

“I know it’s hard,” I say, words coming easier and easier. “But I need this, too. So be a good girl for me, Kelly. Make me a face.”

She sighs and leans into me. After a moment, she pushes back and gets her sketchbook, her expression determined. I return to the bed and wait, watching.

Kelly starts out uncertain. There is a lot of huffing and frowning. She tears out page after page after only drawing a few lines. But soon, her demeanor changes, and I can see she’s finally found her groove.

I lie still, not daring to break her focus. It’s a precious thing, and she makes her best artworks when she is in that peculiar state when all of her being is turned inward, her fingers translating onto the page what she can see so clearly in her mind’s eye.

Finally, she looks up, her face bright, eyes full of stars.

“There’s my girl,” I say.

And rush to the bathroom, because most of the water has finally made its journey downward. Today is the day of firsts, and so I piss for the first time, looking curiously at the stream of liquid coming out of my cock. It’s accompanied by a feeling of deep relief, which is not at all sexual, and yet it feels a bit like a tiny orgasm.

Having a body truly is a marvelous thing.

I wash my hands and wipe them with one of those fluffy towels. When I come back, Kelly’s pacing the room, the drawing in her hands. She looks up at me with a bright smile and presents it.

The face is handsome, but not perfect. The eyebrows are dark and heavy, and underneath them, the light gray eyes are filled with light. The square,

masculine jaw is offset by a slightly too narrow nose. The hair is dark, streaked with silver. I suppose it fits. I am ancient, though this body is not even a day old.

Overall, the face looks real, charming, ageless, and its expression is slightly aloof, eyes staring in the distance.

“Well? What do you think?” Kelly asks, excitement bubbling in her voice. “I hated that plastic, artificial thing you had on before. No offense. And I think if someone looks too perfect, they might not seem real, or they could be deemed cold and unapproachable... So I made it a bit interesting, but still conventionally handsome. I like it very much.”

Well, that’s settled then. I focus, looking intently at the drawing. It takes some creativity to translate the soft lines into the shape and texture of an actual human face, but by the time I’m done, the result is just right, complete with a raspy five o’clock shadow.

“Oh wow,” Kelly whispers.

I wave one mind arm in front of me, making the air shimmer and coalesce into a floating mirror. I look just as she drew me, the face perfect in its imperfection, the eyes intent and brimming with sentience. It’s me. I am human.

Or as human as I’ll ever be.

“Perfect. You did very well.”

Kelly beams at me, and something inside me flutters excitedly. Finally, I can do another thing I’ve been dreaming about for so long. While all my senses worked through the mask, there was one thing I did not dare attempt when I didn’t have a real human face.

My mind arm reaches up to the ceiling and conjures a small branch of mistletoe. Kelly looks up and back at me, her bright smile gone, her lips parted in awe.

I step closer and she stays put, breathing faster. A delicious blush stains her cheeks, and I cradle her face in my hands, looking at her with my new human eyes, drawing her scent in through my new nose, brushing the tip of my tongue against my lip.

I lower my face to hers and simply look at her, drinking in her wide pupils, the shaky flutter of her breath, the way her tongue darts out to wet her lips.

And then I kiss her.

Kelly’s mouth is soft under mine, her breath warm. I press my lips to her

and let my instincts take over, moving the way my heart tells me to. She releases a soft gasp, and I swallow it. We share air, breathing together, both hearts beating fast.

I have fucked her with my mind arms, and yet, this is a completely new high.

Kelly's hands go around my neck and she clings to me, so I cautiously press my tongue inside her mouth. She makes a small, broken noise, and we're kissing for real, tongues tangling together.

She tastes... I can't compare it to anything. Her taste is warm, living, and very much like her smell. I get lost in it, my hands roaming her body. She's shorter than me and I need to bend low to reach her face.

At one point, I realize I no longer have to. I've instinctively wrapped my mind arms around her and lifted her up to devour her mouth more comfortably.

We kiss and kiss, stealing each other's breath, and over our heads, the conjured mistletoe glistens in the glow of Christmas lights.



Chapter 8

Her

I'm giddy and breathless. Kissing Jingle is my new favorite thing in the world. I am weightless and dizzy, held safely by his tentacles and arms, and I can't get enough of him. He makes low, vulnerable sounds deep in his throat, his breath is fire, and he tastes like no other man I've ever kissed.

I can't put a name on his taste, but it's glorious. When I breathe him in, there is something dark and luxurious deep underneath, an ancient hunger, raw and powerful. It makes my body light up in response, because it's just so very alien... and so very *right*.

When my head spins too much for comfort, I break away. My face is still pressed to his, cheek rubbing against cheek, and I can feel his shaky breath against my earlobe.

Slowly, Jingle puts me down, and I hold on to his forearm to steady myself.

No one has ever kissed me dizzy before.

"This was amazing," I say, gazing at his face. He looks stunned, and I draw in a sharp breath. Being able to see his expression is the cherry on top of the cake. I love it.

"Yes," he breathes, his dazed eyes boring into mine. "Let's do it again."

Without ado, I am lifted again, our mouths pressed together. I moan,

clutching him to me, but it's too much and not enough, so I wrap my legs around him and press close. I try to rock against him, wishing for my clothes to be gone.

He seems to read my mind, for although he doesn't vanish my clothes, his tentacle winds tightly around my thigh and presses against the side of my core, sending a jolt of pleasure through my clothes. I arch, trying to throw my head back, but Jingle holds it firmly and doesn't let my mouth slide off his.

We keep kissing while the tension inside me mounts. Velvety warmth encompasses my entire core, the seductive energy pulsing in rhythm with the dance of his tongue in my mouth. I moan and try to squirm in his grip, but he holds me tightly, devouring me slowly, his tongue exploring. His tentacles wind around my limbs, attacking my body from all sides, and soon I can do nothing more than just take it.

We kiss, but I stutter in the rhythm, too overcome by the pleasure he's showering me with. Gold explodes behind my eyelids as my body blooms with a slow, luxurious drumbeat of sensation. My legs shake, my core plundered by a magic I can't name, something that slithers inside me and lights me up from within, pressing all the right points.

I come apart with his mouth on mine, and he kisses me through my orgasm, unhurried and completely engrossed.

When I slump in his arms, he presses one last kiss to the corner of my mouth and tears himself away, holding me in his grip as if in a net. I'm completely safe. I can hang like this, entirely at his mercy, and he will never drop me.

He'll take care of me.

"I want to fuck you with my cock," he says, his voice low and husky.

I look into his eyes, and they are intent with sharp focus. His lips are parted and red from our kisses, and I can only nod, because I want it, too. I want him inside me.

Jingle carries me to the bed and gets rid of my clothes with one touch. So *much for getting dressed*, I think, but he won't let me think too much. He conjures another mistletoe, and it hovers right over my lower belly. I frown, wondering at its placement, but as he pushes my legs apart and leans his face close, I understand his meaning.

"I will kiss you all over. Will you be good?" he asks, tearing his dazed eyes away from my pussy to look at my face.

"I will," I say without hesitation and then frown. "Good how?"

“Tell me if I do well. If I don’t, tell me, too. I know you usually pretend to enjoy it. No pretending with me.”

I blush, ashamed. He’s not supposed to know this, but then, his mirror has seen things. This means *he* has seen things. Enough to know me really, really well.

“I’ll be good,” I whisper, licking my lips nervously.

Jingle leans over me and just looks. He gently exposes me with his fingers and stares some more. And then he licks me. He is thorough, gloriously slow, not a hint of impatience about him. This alone makes for an excellent start.

I do my best to make truthful, instinctive sounds. If his touch doesn’t hit right, I’m silent. When my nerve endings light up under his caress, I let him know with a moan. Soon, I don’t even have to think about it, because he learns so fast it’s uncanny. I slowly climb the high as he focuses on all the right points.

Then his tentacle slithers inside me, and it fucks me slowly to the rhythm with his mouth. I slam my eyes shut and breathe fast, my fists clenched. My legs tremble, trying to close, so he wraps his tentacles under my knees to hold me open for himself.

This time, there is no magic rushing me to release. It’s only him and his new tongue, and I unravel slowly for him. It takes time, but at this point, it feels too good for me to feel self-conscious about it. I’m close, and as he sucks my clit into his mouth and fucks me with his tentacle at an angle that has it pressing into my G-spot, I climb my peak with a sense of finality.

This orgasm is slow, frothy waves pulsing through me one after another, growing in power and then splashing over me with fainter and fainter echoes of that ecstasy.

“You did very well,” Jingle says, raising himself on his elbows over me, looking smug.

I giggle because it seems absurd.

“If anyone did a great job, it was you,” I say, smiling up at him. “It was amazing. It’s like... It’s like you came straight out of my comic stories. You’re so perfect.”

He says nothing to that, only pushes higher so his cock rests between my legs. I reach down to touch it, and his eyelids grow heavy with pleasure when I wrap my fingers around him.

He is big. Like before, when he edged me and kept himself hard for long

without coming, he's grown bigger than his normal. It's not a feature I originally gave Egad, so it must be something he came up with, or just a natural consequence of his unique anatomy.

It has me worried. I've never had such an enormous cock inside me. And the ridges...

But then I beam at him. No matter how big he is, we will figure it out. There's always a way.

"Come here," I whisper, tugging his cock closer to my pussy. "Come home."

He sucks in a breath, and then he's in, the tip sliding past my entrance.

His feelers instantly press into me, and I moan, feeling the glorious friction of him sliding inside me. I can feel it from my end, the pleasure of him slowly filling me up, and from his end, too. The ecstasy of being pressed from all sides by my heat, the perfect sensation of being inside.

I deepen my breathing, holding on to my sanity, because the double sensation is too much. It overloads my senses, and I can see black spots dancing across my vision. My body is shaking, and the pleasure is so intense it hurts, but at the same time, it's the best I've felt with a cock inside me.

He hasn't even put it fully in.

Jingle stops, and I sense that over a quarter of his cock is still outside. Still, my entrance is stretched wide, hugging his shaft tightly from all sides, and it feels impossible that he will fit all of himself inside me.

So I tug on his hips, drawing him slowly closer even as I hiss in pain at the burning stretch. It's okay. I can accommodate him. And I need this cock sheathed fully in my pussy.

I need to feel what it's like to bottom out inside a woman.

Jingle stops before the rest of him can push in. I'm shaking and whimpering, because it's too much, but I want him inside me so badly, I can't stop even though it hurts. There is an ache deep inside my belly, and I know realistically he will never fit without breaking me.

"I want it so much," I sob. "Please, do something."

"Be still," he whispers.

He pulls out of me, and I whine in dismay and reach for him, but he wraps his tentacles around my body to immobilize me. Then, his face set in a look of utter focus, he pushes one tentacle into me.

It tingles deep inside, and I giggle and try to squirm, so he presses my hips to the bed with his hands, too, his face harsh with concentration. Slowly,

the tingling changes into something hot. It feels like I'm melting inside, and I open my mouth wide, astonished. It doesn't hurt. But I feel soft and malleable, like fresh clay, and then... and then...

I cry out as a powerful shudder goes through me. I can feel it as clear as if I saw it. I'm expanding. He's remaking me, reworking my pussy to become longer and more flexible. Another wave rushes through me, and I shake all over, sweat breaking out on my face. He snarls and holds me down even harder, his fingers and the coils of his tentacles digging into my flesh.

Another wave whooshes through me, the most powerful yet, and I arch my back, the movement arrested by his bruising grip. But I don't care. I can feel it now, my insides coalescing into a new shape, a better shape, something that will welcome all of him.

The sensation peters out, and only a bit of soreness remains. It feels a bit like an inflamed gum, the sort of felling that has you want to poke it with your tongue all the time.

"Poke me," I say, opening my eyes.

Jingle tilts his head to the side. He's breathing hard, his tentacles lit up with a red light, and his face is cast in an eerie glow.

"Poke me," I say again. "I need you inside me. Now. Jingle up my world."

I giggle again, maybe delirious, maybe hysteric. For Christ's sake, I just let this world-devouring demon rearrange my guts, literally. And now I want him to rearrange them metaphorically.

"As you wish," Jingle says, and his tentacle slides out of me with a wet sound. My muscles try to clamp down on it, but it's out. Jingle takes a moment to do something and then he thrusts into me in one smooth motion.

There is a loud, cheerful jingle of Christmas bells.

But I can't question it or comment, because I'm too busy moaning and arching my back as his hips slam into me, his cock buried balls-deep in my cunt.

We both groan together. He fills me up so deliciously, and I wrap around him in a glorious, perfect sheath. This one moment when his entire cock is inside me, and I am tight and hot around him, is the most exquisite, the most sublime sensation in the world.

He pulls back and thrusts with a jingle of bells, and I lose it. With the feedback, with his sensations layering on top of mine, it takes exactly two thrusts, and I'm coming. I clench around his cock, and then it gets even

better, because he keeps thrusting as I pulse around him, and the feedback from him, the feeling of my muscles tightening around his length, makes my orgasm sharper and longer.

When I slowly come down from the high, dazed and shaky, he keeps thrusting, and his pleasure mounts. It zings through me, electrifying and bright, and I hurl toward another peak, sobbing from how good it is.

He thrusts in a frenzy, burying his huge cock entirely in me, the bells jingling wildly. When he stills and shoots his load deep inside my pussy, I come with him, whimpering as the waves of our shared orgasm blow through me, shaking loose everything that was tight, pouring ambrosia into my muscles.

I am weightless, completely satisfied, and happier than I've ever been.

Before I fall asleep, I register the faint jingling of bells and a whispered *I love you*. And then I sink into a restful sleep with no nightmares.

I am safe.



Chapter 9

Him

I don't know how long I have slept, only that it's dark outside and Kelly's ass is pressed into my cock. My very hard cock.

I know an average human male will often wake up with an erection. With my beloved by my side, it is a gift.

Cautiously, I peer at her face. Her cheeks are pink, lips parted. Her eyelashes are dark against her skin, and she looks so innocent. Delectable.

This is a chance to do something else Kelly has drawn and hidden in her private folder after making herself come with trembling fingers. Without disturbing her too much, I wrap my mind arms around her and reach with one to her center, coating her pussy with wetness to make it more delicious for her.

I position myself carefully and push inside her, my cock practically sizzling when it's enveloped by her heat. Kelly stirs and moans, and I press deeper, knowing she can take me even in her sleep. When I bottom out, I just hold her close, listening to her breathing. It's faster, and her eyelids are moving, but my star is still very much asleep.

I pull my hips away and smoothly glide back in, enjoying the luxurious pace. My mind arms creep to Kelly's nipples and tease them, but just lightly. I want her to wake up moments away from orgasm.

She mumbles something and sticks her bum out, and I gladly make use of this new angle. Thrusting deeper but still slowly, I kiss the top of her head and tease her nipples again, sliding another mind arm to her clit.

Kelly's breathing picks up, and she tenses. So much for being careful. I will just have to practice so I can do a better job next time.

"It's me," I say. "You drew this once."

She relaxes with a sigh, and I tease her clit some more. Not enough to send her to her peak, but enough to keep interest. I thrust evenly, every thrust marked by the jingle of my bell.

We have time. And my cock is a glutton for her cunt.

"I did," Kelly says, her voice hoarse from sleep and pleasure. "Thank you. For remembering."

She's still warm and soft from sleep, but her body is wide awake, pleasure fizzing in her bloodstream. I send more into her, teasing her nerve endings, pulsing nectar of the gods straight into her brain. This cocktail is different every time I do it, and this makes her body unable to build resistance. Her pleasure will not be blunted through repetition.

Kelly keens and arches into me, her ass moving to the rhythm with my thrusts. I send a powerful jolt into her clit, and she tenses in a whole-body shudder, her sweet cunt clenching on my cock. While she's still in the throes of orgasm, I thrust a mind arm in her asshole, shaking from the pleasure myself.

She is my drug, one I will never get enough of. My star.

I'm close now, and I pound into her, curtailing the stream of divine energy. This time, she will come from the feedback, my cock buried deep inside her sending all my sensations into her.

Kelly moans and presses her ass closer, drawing me in. I push another mind arm inside her mouth and groan from the pleasure. It's like being triply sheathed in her, and all that pleasure feeds into my straining cock.

The heat of her pussy, the powerful squeeze in her asshole, the caress of her tongue zing to my balls, and they tighten in expectation. A moment later, I bathe Kelly's cunt in my cream, pouring so much into her that it drips out, making a mess.

She climaxes with me, and her internal muscles clench all around me, milking my cock, squeezing the mind arm buried in her asshole. She flicks her tongue against the one in her mouth, and I twitch.

"This is how you will wake up from now on," I promise, sliding out of

her.

“Mmm.”

She rolls to her back and stretches, arms reached high over her head. She looks just like my Kelly, the one I fell in love with: happy and glowing with light.

“Mr. Jingle, what’s making you jingle?” she asks and giggles, watching me with sparkling eyes.

I sit on the bed, lift my cock, and show her the piercing with a little bell. It’s right by the base of my dick, a tiny silver bell. I thrust my hips up to demonstrate, and it gives a cheerful, festive sound.

Kelly claps her hands in delight.

“Does it hurt?” Before I can answer, she makes a delighted sound and sits up, practically vibrating with energy. “I want one, too! Please, make me one! Or two. I want two!”

She straightens, pushing her chest out, and I know she means her nipples. This is Kelly, impulsive and trusting. And how could I deny my star? I wrap my mind arms around her nipples, pouring pleasure into her to soothe the pain. It’s a piercing, after all, and even if it’s manifested gently, it will still hurt.

Kelly hisses in pain when they appear and immediately moans from pleasure. I cock my head to the side, observing her reaction. It’s something to explore later.

She looks down and gingerly brings a finger to one pierced nipple. She tweaks the little gold bell, and it tinkles.

“So pretty,” she exhales, lifting her starry eyes to me. “And you know what? I know exactly what we will do today!”

I cock my head to the side, waiting for an explanation. Kelly giggles again, seeing my expression.

“You know, this bodes very well for us,” she says, trying for a serious tone, but her eyes dance with mischief. “That you say so little. Because you’ll find out soon enough that I talk a lot.”

“I know.”

She nods with a quiet laugh and launches herself at me. Unprepared, I am tackled onto the mattress. Kelly’s hair is in my face, her body pinning me to the bed. She squeezes me in a hug and sighs contentedly, and I breathe out slowly, telling my muscles to relax.

It feels wonderful to be hugged by her like this. Especially since we’re

both naked.

“None of that,” Kelly chides me jokingly when my cock hardens, pressing into her. “We have somewhere to be.”

“I want to stay here,” I say. “There is nothing out there worth seeing. You are the only good thing in this world.”

Kelly slides off me and wags her finger.

“You only say that because you’ve never been to the Christmas Market.”

I press my lips together to keep myself from cursing. I know I will hate the Christmas Market, just like I hate everything else apart from her. But Kelly wants to go, and I’m never letting her out of my sight.

The hag who imprisoned me, a witch who wielded the power of the King of the Underworld himself, wanted a different outcome for me. When she imprisoned me, she said I would come to cherish this world if only I gave myself a chance to know it.

She was wrong. My hatred for Earth and its people only grew, surpassing in power the most formidable black holes in the Universe. It’s Kelly alone I love.

I’ll do anything for her. Even go to her Christmas Market.

Kelly keeps up a constant stream of chatter while she dresses, her little bells tinkling cheerfully until she puts on a bra. She wonders about the decorations, telling me how she always wanted to go there on the Christmas Eve but couldn’t when she spent holidays with her parents. Then she ponders out loud what I should wear.

“...those shoes you had before were completely inappropriate, and I would rather you wore these bunny slippers instead,” she says with a giggle and points to my pair of fuzzy slippers that are a larger replica of hers. “Oh! And we can get eggnog! You wanted eggnog, right? I can’t wait, it will be so much fun!”

Kelly finds an outfit online that she thinks will be perfect for an outing to the Christmas Market, and I make it materialize on her bed. Jeans, a simple red sweater, a pair of boxers with reindeers on them, a shirt and socks. And then a jacket and a scarf, and a pair of boots. I look at all the items and sigh.

Since I’m trying to learn the human ways, I do my best to put it all on without magic. Once you figure this stuff out, it’s easy.

Sort of.

“Let me help you with that,” Kelly laughs when I try to make the scarf stick around my throat by tying it into too many knots. She undoes my mess,

coils the scarf expertly and secures it. Then she stands on tiptoes and drags my face down by the scarf to steal a kiss.

When she pulls back, I follow her and claim her mouth again. Maybe if I get her distracted, she will forget about that stupid market. I wind my arms lightly around her throat, just like she wound the scarf around mine, and send a mellow stream into her.

“Oh. This is... Oh wow.”

Kelly melts against me, sighing in bliss. But ten seconds later, she jumps away and glares at me, evidently cross.

“I know what you’re doing,” she says, her eyebrows drawn in a frown. But a moment later, her face clears and she beams at me. “You will love it! It’s the most beautiful when it’s dark out and all the lights shine brightly. There will be music, and you can even decorate the big Christmas tree with tinsel. You buy some and just stick it on the branches where you can reach. I’ve always wanted to do that!”

“Let’s go then.”

I realize it will always be like this. Kelly dragging me out to see more of the world she loves. And me following, unable to deny her, no matter how much I hate the places she takes me to.

Who knows? Maybe one day her joy and delight will rub off on me.

Kelly gets us a ride, and when we exit her building after the car arrives, she doesn’t even glance nervously around. Good. She feels safe with me, and I made sure everyone who’s ever threatened her will be incapacitated for now.

We arrive and walk the rest of the way. There is, indeed, a band playing up on a stage, a plethora of wooden stands selling everything from knickknacks to some regional Christmas dishes, and a crowd of people milling about.

And the tree in the middle of the market definitely suffers from an overload of tinsel on its bottom branches.

Kelly stops, taking it all in, and I squeeze her hand. Even through her mitten, I can tell she’s shaking.

“What’s wrong?”

She gives me a brittle smile and sets her shoulders in determination.

“Nothing. It’s just crowded.”

I remember her phone conversation from before. She didn’t want to brave the airport. Said the crowds would give her anxiety. And yet, she wanted to

come here so badly, she decided to face her fears.

“They are all blacked out right now,” I say to reassure her. When Kelly frowns, not understanding, I clarify. “Everyone who’s ever sent you threats. Everyone who’s made you feel worthless or unsafe is unconscious right now, trapped in a nightmare. They won’t wake up for some time. They can’t hurt you.”

She covers her mouth with her hand and tries to back away, but I wrap my invisible mind arm around her waist, keeping her in place. She doesn’t seem to be reassured in the least. Instead, her anxiety turns into something worse. I don’t understand what’s happening and decide it must be because I haven’t expressed myself clearly enough.

We’re standing under a leafless tree, not yet in the throng of the market. It’s gloomy, the space brightened only by the snow capping nearby bushes and the ground under the tree. My jaw tightens as I pour all my mental resources into picking the right words.

“I did not kill them,” I say, watching her expectantly. She should appreciate it. “I know you are against killing. So I punished them in another way.”

Kelly shakes her head, her eyes wide. Whether from astonishment or terror, I can’t tell. She’s still pressing her trembling hand to her lips. I don’t understand this. I tried so hard to do the right thing, to keep her safe and happy as well, but I must have erred.

The silence becomes unbearable.

“Say something,” I ask her quietly.

“This is horrible,” she whispers. “You... How did you even do this?”

There is nothing for it but to answer honestly. I have already decided I would never lie to Kelly.

“I tracked them down from your computer. And reached them mostly through their phones. My mind arms aren’t constrained by time and space.”

She comes closer, cheeks burning red, eyes no longer confused. Instead, they are filled with lightning. My star is angry. I focus all my attention on her, concentrating so hard I can see the blood rushing in her veins, the heat rising in her face and torso.

“You had no right!” she hisses, poking me in the chest. “And you didn’t even... You did that behind my back! How could you?”

“I want you to be safe,” I say, trying to understand the root of her anger. “Are you upset I did not consult you?”

This seems to be the case, though I don't understand why it would make her this angry.

"Yes! No! Fuck!"

She whirls away, hiding her face in her mittened hands, but I keep her tethered to me. I'm not letting her run alone into the crowd. No matter how angry she is, her safety comes first.

We need to work through this. I need to explain, only I don't know how.

"So why are you angry?" I ask.

Kelly gives a frustrated huff and turns back to me.

"Because you did something cruel and horrible and I should have never trusted you. But I was so starved for..." She shakes her head, and I reel in sudden horror.

Tears cling to her eyelashes. I made my star cry. And I don't understand fully why, or how to undo it. Again, I decide on honesty. She just said I lost her trust. Can't give her any more reasons to mistrust me.

"I gave them back only what they sent into the world," I say, struggling to make my meaning clear before she bursts into tears. "Their nightmares are their words. Every hurtful comment they ever said or typed, not just to you, to anyone, is said to them in their dreams. And they are defenseless in sleep. They feel the full impact of their own words. It's like karma. You like karma. Please, Kelly."

She pauses, and I hold my breath. We look at each other, her breathing slowly calming down. She is still wary, but at least she's not crying or trying to run.

"So the nightmares... It's only what they said to other people? Nothing else?"

I nod, and she takes a big breath. We watch each other, Kelly's eyebrows furrowed in thought, her eyes still blazing. She's thinking through my case, and I wait for her judgement, unnerved by how powerful emotions are. They can turn us from lovers to enemies and back to friends in an instant.

"It's cruel, I suppose, but..." Kelly starts, chewing on her lip. She glances around and sighs deeply, all angry energy dissipating. "You're right. Seems like karma. And I think it's not right that people who bully others never seem to get their comeuppance, you know? But to make them unconscious and give them nightmares... Still, these nightmares are about the harm they inflicted. Huh. It's not that bad. They will wake up from this?"

"Tomorrow."

She steps closer and peers at my face, her eyes searching.

“Why did you do this?”

I take a moment to arrange the words in my head before I speak them. It’s more important that I realized before. If incomplete information can make Kelly feel so strongly, I need to be better at telling her the whole truth from the start.

She gives me time, watching but not rushing me.

“Because they made you suffer, and I wanted to punish them. But also, it was a problem that needed to be solved. My goal was to give them a strong incentive to never do this again. I want you to be completely safe. The easiest way would be to kill them, but you would never stand for this. So I chose the next best thing.”

Kelly pales but doesn’t move away, so I allow myself a breath of relief. I must have spoken the right words.

“Thank you,” she breathes, her face sharpening in resolve. “You’re right. It was a problem. I’m glad... I am glad you took care of this. Is it wrong that I feel sort of good about it? Now that I’ve thought it through, it feels very much like justice.”

I shrug and dip a mind arm under her scarf, letting it rest on her nape to brush her skin with warmth.

“Forgive me. I don’t know about right or wrong. I act in ways that will serve your health and happiness. You are my moral compass, Kelly.”

She stares at me in astonishment and then smiles. It’s not her most infectious, beaming grin, but it is a smile, albeit a crooked one, and my heart sings in response.

“We will need to talk about this, but now is not the time. We came here for festivities and fun, and I won’t let them spoil even one more thing for me. I’m done missing out on good stuff because some cunts bullied me. Let them suffer. Good for them.

“Okay, I’m famished, Mr. Jingle. It will serve my happiness very much if we get something to eat. And eggnog!”

We eat, and then she drags me to a stand selling Christmas drinks. We get eggnog, and it’s delicious, creamy and sweet, but with a bite of alcohol and spice that makes it feel energizing instead of heavy. I completely understand why Kelly likes it, and so I finally add the last piece to the puzzle that is me.

I am complete. But I don’t tell her yet. I hardly speak, but she doesn’t need me to, and I can rest and just soak in her bubbly joy. There is enough for

both of us.

Kelly drags me to the Christmas tree, and when no one's looking, she makes me put her pink tinsel high up so it won't get tangled with the rest. She laughs a lot, her cheeks red from excitement and the cold, her eyes sparkling with joy.

If I look only at her and ignore all the annoying people surrounding us, it's bearable. Even fun.

We browse the stalls, eat gingerbread, listen to the music. Kelly talks constantly, dragging me from one place to the next, her hand always in mine. She is making up for the time lost to misery, and she takes her joy and fun with both hands, greedy and passionate. It makes my heart full.

I suppose it works just like the feedback loop she built into my cock: when I feel pleasure fucking her, she feels it too. Now, when she is happy and shares it with me, I am happy as well.

When the band packs up and the stalls close one by one, Kelly gives me a radiant smile. Her eyes brim with light, and she's practically buzzing with joy.

"Merry Christmas," I tell her, and she grabs my scarf to drag my head lower. When we kiss, it starts snowing, soft flakes falling soundlessly on our heads. Kelly laughs, her lips still pressed to mine, and her laughter fills my chest with light.

"You taste like galaxies," she tells me with a playful smile.

"It's the abyss," I answer, pressing a hand to my chest. "It's right here, by my heart. The power that can devour your world. As long as you're by my side, it is tame."

Kelly looks worried for a moment, and then she smiles again.

"Keep me happy, and I promise I will stick around."

I take her hand and we walk through the swirling snowflakes, cheerful Christmas bells jingling in the distance.

"That's the plan."



Chapter 10

Her

It's late when we arrive back at the apartment, but I'm not tired. I slept for a few hours by Jingle's side, and it was the most restful sleep I've had in weeks. I'm full of energy and my appetite is back, even though I've stuffed myself full with eggnog and gingerbread.

I open the fridge and make a disappointed sound. Of course, I haven't done any shopping for almost two weeks. And since I didn't feel like eating most of the time, it wasn't really a problem. It is now, though. My stomach gives a yearning twinge, but the fridge is practically empty.

Jingle hovers behind my back, and I turn to him, watching his tentacles speculatively.

"Could you create something to eat?"

He watches me, and then his mouth stretches in a wide grin. It's uncanny, not quite touching the eyes, and I cock my head to the side.

"Did you mean to look creepy, or is it just how you smile?"

His grin widens, becoming truly eerie, and he chuckles.

"It's how I smile."

I smile back, and we just stand there, grinning at each other until I can't stand it anymore. I burst into giggles.

"All right. What made you smile like the Cheshire cat?" I ask.

“I can feed you.”

I don't understand what he means until he reaches for the zipper in his jeans. This has me giggling again, because come on. It's not like I've heard something like this for the first time.

“This line is so corny,” I say through my giggles. “But yes. I might be interested in blowing you if you only phrase it differently.”

He stops, his fly half-undone, and watches me with hooded eyes.

“Be a good girl for me. Suck my cock, and when I come in your mouth, swallow every drop of my cum. Can you do this, pet?”

My jaw drops and I stare at him, my pussy fluttering with arousal. It's completely ridiculous how he made me go from giggling to a lady hard-on in a matter of seconds.

“Yes.”

He unzips himself, his alien yet familiar cock springing free. I know it was inside me. He literally rearranged my vagina to make it fit. And still, I can't help but stare at the uncanny shape, the hard ridges. The feelers searching the air for something to latch on to.

I kneel in front of him and push out my tongue, touching the feelers with the tip. They connect to me with a punch, and I gasp when Jingle's arousal and hunger rolls through me.

Well then.

I lick over him, reveling in the feedback. Every lick of my tongue makes my core pulse with pleasure. I'm soaking wet within minutes, and I haven't even taken him in my mouth. He won't fit fully anyway, but with my mouth and both my hands, I will have him covered.

I let his pleasure coursing through my body guide me. We both groan as I flick my tongue against the narrow tip. I suck on him, eager to find out what it feels like, and stop in astonishment.

His pre-cum tastes familiar.

I tease him with my tongue, pressing my thighs together at the tingling pleasure, and suck some more, waiting for the taste to hit. More trickles out of him, and I let it sit on my tongue, trying to pin down the flavor.

When I finally recognize it, my eyes grow wide with understanding. I let his cock fall out of my mouth, the loss of contact making me shudder with cold, but I'm too excited to mind right now.

“You did it for me!” I whisper in awe, looking up at his face.

He trails his fingers through my hair and nods.

“Your favorite taste. It is also a regeneration serum. A fountain of youth, if you will. A healing agent. And all the nutrients you currently need to thrive. It will adapt to your needs.”

I sit down on my heels, too stunned to continue blowing him right now.

“Are you telling me... Are you telling me your cock is some kind of freaky Philosopher’s Stone?”

He shakes his head once. I glance at his cock, purple and pulsing with need, the feelers coated in more creamy pre-cum.

“It can’t change things into gold. Though these can.”

One of his tentacles shoots out to touch my toaster. I blink. It has suddenly become an object of solid gold. Jingle’s tentacle taps it again, and it reverts to its normal state.

“Please, suck my cock, Kelly. And then be a good girl and swallow. You’re close to anemia,” he says.

I shake off my confusion and look at his cock again, trying to understand the consequences of me ingesting his cum. I’ll be always healthy. Always young. Or as long as I keep blowing him regularly, I guess.

“That’s one way to make me kneel for you,” I mutter, rising to take him in my mouth again.

“I only need to call you pet and you’ll do it,” he says.

My mouth full of cock, I don’t answer, and soon, I lose all interest in this conversation as his pleasure punches into me, made more potent by the brief interlude.

He groans, thrusting his hips but not hard enough to make me choke. I still have some control, so I wrap both my palms over the thickest part of his shaft and suck him in as deep as I can. My muffled moan of pure bliss vibrates against his cock, making the pleasure even more exquisite.

Guided by the feedback, I work him faster, reducing us both to mindless lust. I squirm, hunting for friction while the steady stream of his mounting ecstasy brings me closer and closer to my peak.

I can feel his orgasm a moment before it arrives, a whole body shudder that makes me freeze. He thrusts in my mouth two more times and floods it with his cum, pushing his cock so deep that I have no choice but to swallow.

Not that I mind. It tastes just like eggnog, rich and sharp on my tongue, and I swallow fast to keep up while my body shakes in our shared bliss.

When I finally sit back, panting, I’m so giddy and full I can’t stop laughing. It’s not because it’s funny, although maybe it is a bit, but I am just

so filled with delight I can't help but express it.

Jingle zips up and crouches by my side, his tentacle pressing into my neck, bathing my skin in a red glow.

"You're all good now," he says with satisfaction.

This only makes me laugh harder.

"You make pregnog," I wheeze out when he tilts his head to the side, watching me in confusion. "Get it? Preggnog!"

He smiles and shakes his head, but that won't deter me. I'm in the grip of a full-on hysteria, and the way my entire body tingles, nerves firing off, and everything is alight with pleasure, doesn't help me to stop.

"It's not. Won't make you pregnant. Ever. One thing I am entirely incapable of."

I lie down on the floor, howling with laughter.

"You engineered... fucking egnog cum... and had the audacity... to remove its actual function?"

I'm sobbing from laughter, and something tells me this is not normal. Nothing is this funny. And yet, I can't stop laughing. I just feel so absolutely fucking glorious.

"The healing kicked in," Jingle says, wrapping his tentacles delicately around my wrists. "It's okay. I'll monitor you."

I'm sprawled on my back, and my entire body is one, glorious ball of light. Soon, the laughter stops and I just lie there, staring dreamily at Jingle's face looming above me, his expression calm. And it all feels...

Like home. But better.

I must have dozed off, because the next thing I know, I'm in bed, Jingle's warm body pressed to the length of my back, his cock resting against my buttocks. His arm and tentacles are around me, and I'm in a cocoon of warmth and safety. His even, relaxed breathing lulls me back to sleep.

When I wake up again, it's morning, and Jingle's cock is buried balls deep in my pussy.

I gasp as he thrusts slowly into me. I'm wet and absolutely mad with need, so I arch my back, pressing myself into him with a moan. He tweaks my nipple with his finger, making the tiny bell jingle to the rhythm with the one by his cock.

It doesn't take me long to come, and soon he comes, too, taking me with him to another peak. After fucking, we lie in each other's arms, and he feeds me images and memories through his mind arms. I name a place I want to

travel to, and he shows me what he's seen of it over the ages.

It's the morning of the Christmas Day, and I have finally found my place on Earth. It's in Jingle's arms. He promises to show me the world, and then the galaxies and other universes, and I believe him. With him by my side, everything is possible.



Epilogue

CW: Consensual consumption of food expelled from a penis by characters who are not in a relationship with each other. Reader discretion is advised.

Still here? All right. Brace yourself.

It's New Year's Eve today, and we're packing. We will fly to see my mother, because I have a few things to say to her before we leave to travel the world. It didn't take Jingle long to convince me. It's what I've always wanted. I can create my art anywhere, so it won't impede me.

I'll miss some of my friends, but we'll visit often enough.

The more time I spend with Jingle, the more convinced I am he is perfect for me. We had a short but serious talk about his infertility, and once I said I didn't consider it a problem, that was enough for him.

I squint at my wardrobe, trying to decide which pieces I can't live without. With Jingle's ability to conjure anything out of thin air, we can travel light. But there are some things I don't want to part with.

There's a knock on the door and I dash to open, suspecting it might be a neighbor. Someone else would have to use the buzzer to enter the building first. Jingle comes out of the kitchen and stops, waiting.

I open the door and take a step back. A handsome though uncanny man stands in the doorway. His chin is a bit too pointy, his skin a warm brown, and his white teeth revealed in a wide grin look eerily sharp. A smiling

woman in her thirties stands next to him, but his sheer presence draws my eyes back to him immediately.

Behind me, Jingle hisses something. A moment later, I realize he's speaking in a language I don't know. I've never heard it before.

The man replies in a similar manner. I look at the woman by his side with a questioning look, and she shrugs.

"I haven't started ancient languages yet," she tells me in a conspiratorial whisper. "He's teaching me how to control the weather for now. So you know whom to thank. Thought you might appreciate it."

She gestures at the window in the kitchen, where fluffy snow gently floats down in a light breeze. The temperature is just cold enough for the snow not to melt, but not so cold as to be freezing.

When I woke up this morning, I thought it was exceptionally beautiful.

"Am I to understand that you..." I don't finish, watching her with interest.

The woman nods with a pleased smile, and I look at Jingle over my shoulder. He's staring at the man with such intense emotion that I almost flinch. It's not anger, exactly.

I don't know what it is.

"Um. Why don't you come in?" I say, addressing the woman. That man makes my skin crawl.

"Thank you," she says. He follows her as she comes inside, and catches my hand, lifting it up to his mouth. At Jingle's angry hiss, he grins and stops without touching my skin with his lips.

"It's a joy to meet you, Kelly," he says, watching me with a smirk. "I knew you were one to keep an eye on from the moment you were born. Glad to see my instincts were right."

I step back into Jingle's embrace. He wraps his mind arms protectively around me, and I realize he didn't hide them. This means our guests know who he is.

"I'm Daisy," the woman says, approaching us after she's taken off her jacket. I take her hand, but Jingle only nods, never letting me out of his hold.

The man comes over next, and I do a double take. He no longer looks like a human being. No, he looks exactly like the Christian...

"...Satan?" I ask, forcing back the giggle trying to burst out of me.

"At your service," he says, giving me a gentlemanly bow. As he lowers his head, I notice the horns. They are massive. I can see the muscles in his

neck cording to control the weight.

“Jesus Christ,” I whisper, staring at him.

Satan makes a displeased face and shudders, and I force another giggle down. Do suppressed giggles turn into farts? Oh my God. This is surreal, and my mind has officially given up.

Daisy clicks her tongue and smacks Satan on his muscular arm.

“Stop scaring her! Talk to your friend, and please, no slaughter today. It gives me a migraine, and I just can’t stomach this so soon after the Winter Solstice debauchery.”

He kisses her with reverence and steps back, eyes full of mischief.

“As you wish, my queen.”

“Come on,” Daisy says, taking my hand. “Make me a cup of tea. We can join them after they solve whatever issues they have.”

“What issues?” I ask her after I’ve put the kettle on. Daisy picks a tea bag from my collection of flavored teas and sits down.

“Well, your boyfriend spent a bit of time in a prison of sort,” she starts. “As it turns out, my husband was the one who put him there. Not directly, he had some sort of emissary, but, well, he’s the one to blame. We’ve been sitting on pins and needles ever since he realized the Destroyer was free.”

I peek out of the kitchen and listen, uneasy. They are in the bedroom, speaking in that weird hissing language.

“Don’t worry,” Daisy says, waving her hand. “My hubby won’t put him back in jail. He just wanted to make sure the Destroyer is... well, domesticated.”

“Domesticated.”

I repeat the word with distaste, staring at her with narrowed eyes. I’m not a fan of the way she speaks about Jingle. As if he were a wild beast. Something to be controlled.

“Well, we’d rather he didn’t eat planet Earth,” Daisy says, giving me a bright smile. “But it seems like we shouldn’t have worried. Good job saving the world, by the way. Luc says if it hadn’t been for you, the Destroyer would have devoured our world the second he was free. Care to share your secret?”

I shrug, mollified. Jingle showed me bits and pieces from his past. I had looked into the abyss that his hunger was, and it looked back at me.

I can taste it on his breath every time we kiss.

“Pussy, I guess,” I answer Daisy’s question with a crooked smile.

She laughs at that. We sip our tea, chatting, and soon Jingle and Satan

join us. Satan sits next to Daisy and Jingle stands behind my chair protectively, one tentacle pressing against my nape and sending a stream of reassuring warmth into me.

“So, truce?” Satan asks. I look up and catch Jingle’s curt nod.

“Then you must have a cookie,” Satan says, smiling, though his eyes are hard.

He twirls his fingers, and a crystal platter of exquisitely decorated sugar cookies appears on the table. Daisy makes a sound, a kind of muffled squawk that she quickly covers with a cough.

I have a bad feeling about this. Could these cookies be poisoned? What’s going on? I glance at Satan, and there is a challenge on his face.

Jingle steps away from me and takes the chair to my right. He hovers one mind arm over the table, and a crystal glass of pale-gold, creamy eggnog appears.

It’s my turn to cough.

Daisy shoots me a look, panic and laughter warring on her face. I look at the eggnog, then at the cookies, and back at Daisy, raising my eyebrow questioningly. She gives me a tiny nod, pressing her lips into a line, though her eyes are full of laughter.

I can’t. If this eggnog is what I think... And these cookies are the same thing... How, though?! I can understand eggnog. Its texture is similar to that of cum. But cookies?

Satan stares at Jingle coldly, his mouth set in a line.

“I suppose it’s only fair,” he finally drawls. “We have two human witnesses. This pact will last as long as we both live. Neither of us will attack the other. We will not plot or try to cause each other harm. The protection extends to our families. Anything to add?”

Jingle’s face is as hard as Satan’s. He doesn’t say anything, only slides the eggnog closer to our guest. The platter of cookies moves on its own, stopping right in front of Jingle.

Neither of them reaches for their treat, both staring at each other with hard, manly expressions. And I know one thing. If suppressed giggles indeed turn into farts, Jingle is in for one smelly evening.

I have to laugh. Otherwise, I will run from here, screaming. Because if they are truly about to eat each other’s...

“Come on, boys!” Daisy says, her voice shaky. I bet she’s suppressing some giggles, too. Or hysteria. “On three. One, two, three!”

Jingle grabs a cookie and stuffs it in his mouth while Satan gulps down the eggnog. Jingle chews fast and swallows, and Satan puts the glass on the table with a thud and wipes his mouth with the back of his hand.

“Glad that’s settled. Have a great day.”

Satan is out of the kitchen before I can blink. Daisy gives me an apologetic look and rushes out after him. And Jingle plunges his tentacle into his stomach and stands still with a look of concentration on his face. Then he puts another tentacle in his mouth.

I watch, transfixed, as it pushes deeper and deeper, down his esophagus, the light so bright I can see it through his throat. Finally, he pulls it out, smacks his lips with distaste, and makes the leftover cookies and the eggnog glass disappear.

“All gone. Still, this was necessary. He was the only real threat we had. With that settled, we’ll never have to worry about anything.”

I gape at him, all kinds of questions crowding on my tongue. Finally, I decide to let most of them go unasked, because I don’t want to know. Not ever.

“Do you think suppressed giggles turn into farts?” I ask.

Jingle smiles and puts his arms about me, our peculiar guests forgotten.

“Do you want them to?”

I think about it while snuggling into him.

“Not really. Can you make my travel bag bigger on the inside, though? You really can’t expect me to pick just a few outfits. And I can’t leave behind my current sketchbook, and you know I wanted to try sculpting, so I will need space for that, too, and...”

We go to the bedroom, where Jingle makes my travel bag open into something he calls the Wardrobe Dimension, and then he helps me pack. Everything fits inside with room to spare, and still, the bag is as light as if it were empty.

Jingle kisses me, his eyes warm, and I snuggle into him with a happy sigh. All is well with the world.

THE END

I wish you a Merry Christmas and delicious eggnog!

Books In This Series

Monster Ever After

SATAN: A Christmas Monster Romance

It's Christmas Eve and SATAN is here.

Yup, you read that right. And I can't spell, so now, I need to deal with Satan, who has been getting the letters I've been writing to Santa for over 20 years. The sexy devil is here in all his wicked, sinful glory, standing right under the mistletoe.

Because apparently not only am I dyslexic... I am also on HIS naughty list. You see, I've never been good, but there was that ONE SIN I've never committed. Yes, I've been saving my cherry for Mr. Right, and Satan is not pleased. He wants to corrupt me. Tempt me. Seduce me. He wants to make me sin repeatedly, in more ways than one. With him.

And while his rod is no candy cane, I might just give in to temptation. Because tonight, Satan tastes like Christmas.

Full Sack: Thanksgiving Erotica

He can procure anything. His price? To be paid on her knees.

When Jennifer's cat falls ill, her only chance to save him is to find Racoan, the elusive dealer in all things rare... or impossible. Some call him a wizard, because anything one asks for, he can give. For a price.

Which Jen is ready to pay. Racoan's secret power is her only hope so she will gladly take his magic wand in her mouth and do as he says. Except Racoan doesn't want her to kneel and open up. He wants to be Jen's date to her family's Thanksgiving.

And Jennifer would rather choke on him and be done because if Racoan keeps pushing, she might develop a case of feelings. He's just too perfect with that masculine physique, uncanny eyes, and a filthy mouth. Except,

Racoon is not what he seems.

And falling for a monster man with a sack full of magic is the last thing Jen needs.

JACK: Halloween Monster Erotica

Jack is a monster full of tricks... with one very special treat in his pants.

Suzy is feeling lonely on Halloween. She performs a love spell, hoping to summon a nice, perfectly safe Mr. Hunky to keep her entertained... but she fails. The creature that answers her summons is neither nice nor safe, but oh boy, is he hunky!

Jack-o'-lantern is a devious ancient monster who once tricked the devil himself into granting him immortality. Now, Jack is here, a grinning pumpkin in the place of his head and a thing out of this world in his very bulging pants. The monster will have Suzy in every way he pleases, filling her close to bursting with his fertile seed... and nothing can hold him back.

JACK 2 and Other Stories

It's Halloween and Jack is back to claim what's his.

Ava hasn't seen her ex for a year. She trembles at the very thought of him as she saw him last: a monster, his powerful body sleek with sweat, his head a flaming jack-o'-lantern. Even though she ran away as soon as he revealed his true form, the image is burned into her mind.

It haunts her in hot, sweaty dreams from which she wakes with a moan on her lips, the sheets tangled between her legs. But those dark, sensuous dreams are not enough to push her back into Jack's monstrous embrace. Ava avoids him at all costs.

And Jack won't have it. It's Halloween, the night when he is the most powerful, and he will have Ava back, even if he has to hold her captive in his Halloween mansion. It lies in the Halloween Realm, a magical place where everything is hotter, spicier, and more orange.

Ava will be at the mercy of the pumpkin-headed demon whose heart and body hunger for her and her only. She's in for a Halloween night full of filthy, monstrous wonders.

Some of them may taste like pumpkin spice.

WARNING: Contains a Layla Fae brand of epilogue.

Remember JACK? This story is about Jack Junior. He's all grown up and ready to play.

This Halloween Monster Erotica Box Set is perfect for a spicy, hilarious, and very monstrous Halloween night. It includes the following titles, previously published in the Monster Ever After series:

JACK

GRIM

ORC

CROW

JACK 2: a new story, published for the first time in this book.

Books By This Author

DRACO: A Dragon Chef Romance

My boss is a dragon and he tastes like magic.

When I say I'm a clumsy woman, I'm not being cute. With the amount of things I have tripped over, dropped on myself, and fallen into, it's a miracle I am still alive.

One might even say I'm cursed.

So how the hell did I end up working in a restaurant kitchen? And not just any kitchen – this one is run by the notorious chef Draco Domanski, who cannot abide people tripping on asparagus or spilling coffee down his shirt. (Which I do not regret. The memory of that shirt clinging to his abs comes handy in the shower.)

Sowing chaos in Draco's precious kitchen, I've come to know all signs of his displeasure. Eyes gleaming red. Smoke fuming from his nose. Tail wrapping around my leg.

Draco can't stand my klutzy ways. And yet, he can't let me go. Because there is a certain... service... only I can perform for him. Or more accurately – on him.

It has to do with his secret spice, and boy, do I mean it when I say spice. Draco is doubly endowed (as in, he has two) and as hot as only a dragon can be. He tastes heavenly.

And I can't fall for him because he's my boss, keeps calling me Rabbit, and his fangs could rip me in half.

If I ignore the tension cooking between us, it will go away. Right?

TRICKSTER: An Old God Romance

He cursed me. He kidnapped me. I won't let him seduce me, too.

After Trickster cursed me with his sick version of the Midas Touch, my life

was in ruins. I rebuilt it brick by brick, and when it finally seemed like I could be happy again, he kidnapped me.

I'm stuck in his military compound filled with magical beasts, and Trickster hounds my every step. He tries to woo me with words of affection, playing tricks on my mind and heart. He does magic for my amusement, conjuring anything I wish for, changing his appearance to make me laugh, touching me in ways that awaken wild passion.

The only thing he won't give me? Freedom. Apparently, I belong to him. We'll see about that. Even though he can make my heart beat like it's in love, I know better. I will never fall for his tricks. Because even the face he shows me is a lie.

GHOUL: A Romance in the Dark and Twisted series

The hunt has begun and I am the prey.

The newspapers call him Ghoul. He is a serial killer responsible for murdering countless female victims.

They say he eats human flesh. Bites off chunks of bloody tissue with his inhumanly sharp teeth, his eyes flashing white in the dark. They call him a monster, a demon, a beast.

Some claim he isn't human.

So when I walk in on Ghoul standing over another victim and licking her blood off his knife, I don't stop to think. I run.

And Ghoul gives chase.

WARNING: This MF romance contains dark and supernatural themes and is intended for adult audiences. Check the content note inside before reading. Reader discretion is advised.