



AJ PRESENTS

A HITTA  
HAS *Feelings*  
*Too*

Dallas And Chloe's Hood Love Story

M. MONIQUE

**A THUG HAS FEELINGS TOO**  
**DALLAS AND CHLOE'S HOOD**  
**LOVE STORY**  
**BY: M. MONIQUE**

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To all the members of the Smith and Atkins family, everything that I do is because of all of you. Special love to my mother, Karen. This is all for you! To my sister, Denyale, thank you for your never-ending support. To my cousins Joney Lee, Kirsti, Tanikqua, and Kristen. I love y'all like sisters! Special love to my grandparents, Robert "Red" Smith, Flora Mae Blackmon, James Atkins, and Rachel Atkins. Without the four of you, I wouldn't be who I am today. Special love to my children, Luke, Aalivia, and Christien. To everyone connected to me... I love you all!

# PROLOGUE

## DALLAS MCQUEEN

### Sixteen Years Ago

Something was wrong. I knew it the minute I looked into the stands, and my mother wasn't in her usual spot. Usually, Francesca would be here before the crowd so that she could get my baby brother settled. As half-time approached, my mother still hadn't shown for the game. This was the most important game of my high school career. Despite the anxiety that I felt, I had to fight through it if I was going to help my team pull off the win.

Agony seeped through me as the game progressed. I was the top high school quarterback in the nation, which came with lots of pressure. My teammates relied on me, my arm, to execute these passes as flawlessly as I could. I wasn't the best for nothing.

When the game clock reached zero, my heart rate picked up. We were state champions as of tonight. That's why I didn't understand my mother not being here to support me. There were several scouts in the crowd, getting a look at the number one quarterback in the country.

Hurriedly, I breezed through all the post-game interviews, ignored the thirsty bitches, and got dressed as quickly as I could. We lived only blocks away from the football stadium, so instead of catching a ride with my homie Hollis like I usually would, I decided to walk. Hollis would probably be up here all night flirtin' with the hoes and shit, and a nigga ain't have time for that.

On the walk home, my gut churned. I learned early how that was never a good thing. The last time I had this feeling, it was discovered, later on that day, that my grandparents were killed. Had I known me having these strange feelings actually meant something, I would've reached out to my grandparents to let them know to be safe. I still kind

of blamed myself for them being dead, no matter how senseless it seems.

I made it to the street we lived on within ten minutes. The night breeze was a little chilly, but nothing too harsh. All I was ready for was to check on my mother and brother, then get to bed. Hopefully, she'd just ran into something with Houston. His lil' ass was always into something and wreaking havoc on the house.

As I approached my house, I saw my mother's boyfriend's sedan in the yard. My face immediately balled up. I couldn't stand this nigga, Lester, for shit. Where my mother had met this low life was a mystery. All he ever did was come over and complain about shit. My mother was smart, beautiful, and needed no damn man dragging her down the way Lester was. What made it so bad was how Lester was a fuckin' cop. Not just any cop, but a detective. He was well known around the city, but I guarantee no one actually knew the real him. Lester was a fuckin' buster.

Besides, whoever the fuck got her pregnant two years ago needed to come see about his fuckin' son Houston. I didn't need my father anymore. I was a man now. I'd spent eighteen years not knowing the nigga. It used to fuck me up how a nigga could just disappear on his kid. Houston didn't need to grow up the way I fuckin' did.

What was funny is Houston looked just like me when I was his age, right down to the blonde hair and blue eyes. I wanted to question my mother about his father, but Francesca was one of them black mommas that would backhand ya ass if you questioned anything dealing with grown folks' business. Shit, no matter how fuckin' old I am, I respect my mother and always would.

Opening the metal fence, I jogged up the steps of the porch, house key in hand. As soon as I was turning the nob, I heard Houston crying and glass breaking.

Sprinting toward the back of the house, where my mother's bedroom was, I found her lying in the middle of the floor, beaten, bloody and unconscious. Lester was standing

over her, panting, dripping sweat, his fists balled at his sides. He was in a daze and didn't notice me standing there. His shirt was ripped from his body, scratches planted across his face and chest. My mother had fought back.

Houston was in the doorway, crying. Picking my brother up, I took him to his room, laying him in his crib. "Shhh, I got it lil' bruh," I soothed him.

With teary eyes, I hurried back to my mother's room before Lester could sneak his bitch ass out. I guess he'd come out of his delusion, cuz his eyes widened as soon as he saw me.

"It ain't what—"

I bum-rushed his muthafuckin' ass. Lester was no small nigga either, but I had age and stamina on this nigga. My fist connected with his face over and over, my rage so swift and consuming that I blacked the fuck out. Lester hit the floor. I probably should've stopped there, but to see my mother still wasn't moving caused me to kick that muthafucka Lester to sleep — literally.

Breathing hard, I backed away from Lester's lifeless body, satisfied. That nigga put his hands on the wrong fuckin' woman.

"Police! Freeze!"



It seemed like I was inside this funky ass interrogation room forever. Honestly, I was over the bullshit and was just ready to go to the hospital to see my mother and get my little brother. We didn't have any family here, so I was sure they'd sent Houston to a stranger's house.

"You know you're in a lot of trouble, son. I don't give a fuck how good you are in football. You can kiss those scholarship offers goodbye! You can kiss life goodbye!" this bitch ass Detective Thibedeau barked.

Grilling the funky ass breath detective, I cracked my neck and remained silent. I'd already asked for a lawyer, but

this bitch ass detective was doing his best to get a rise out of me. Did I mention Lester was a detective? Yeah, and apparently, this was a muthafucka whose dick he'd sucked and fucked on by the way this muthafucka was breathin' down my damn neck. I didn't give a damn. Wasn't no nigga 'bout to put his hands on my moms and live. Fuck that shit!

“Your sorry black ass thinks that this is funny, huh?” Thibedeau slammed his hands down on the metal desk before charging toward me.

I was seated in the metal chair, my arms chained under the table. When the detective put me in a headlock, I immediately started resisting. As much fuckin' trouble as I'd been in on the streets of New Orleans, I'd never had an issue with the police. No hoe was in my blood, and I'd fucked up half of the niggas in New Orleans for fuckin' with me. I was respected even at eighteen years old.

“Fuck you, nigger!” the cop yelled in my ear, damn near busting my ear drums. He was trying to choke the life out of me, but the muthafucka was struggling like shit.

The room door busted open, and a commotion caused the officer to release me. I watched, breathing heavily as a white muthafucka came charging toward the officer, punching that bitch so hard that he knocked him off of his feet.

*Damn!* For a minute, I thought this was my lawyer until the dude stood in front of me and faced me. It felt like I was looking in a mirror. From the blonde hair to the aqua blue eyes, this muthafucka looked just like my ass. Or rather, I looked just like him.

“The fuck you lettin' that muhfucka beat ya ass fo' son. Ain't no pussy runnin' through my bloodline.” He turned to one of the other officers that entered the room behind him. “Get these fuckin' cuffs off of my damn son. Now!”

The officer moved toward me and did just that.

“Get yo' ass the fuck up so we can get the fuck outta this muthafucka.”



This was my first time meeting my father, Dimochka “Dime” McQueen. I couldn’t even be mad at the man. I had just taken a man’s life, and he had just saved mine.

# CHAPTER 1

## CHLOE SMITH

“Bitch, I swear I’m finna shit my panties.”

Millie roared on the other end of the line as I smacked my teeth.

“Chloe, you act like this nigga got gold drippin’ off of his body or somethin’. Ain’t no nigga that damn fine that you havin’ a whole panic attack from being around him again.”

Shifting my lips to the side with a head roll, I acted like Millie could actually see me. “Hoe, I have told you over and over that Dallas is by far the finest muthafucka I have ever laid eyes on.”

Laughing, Millie said, “Girl, whatever. Go in there and get this shit over with. You and I both know that if your cousins find out about this nigga puttin’ his hands on you, they gon’ kill Kevin’s dumb ass.”

Sighing, I snatched the sun visor down to view the slight purple/black eye I was sporting courtesy of a fuck nigga by the name of Kevin Blankenship. I pouted, pissed that I even got involved with this nigga.

“Mills, this ain’t as easy as it sounds,” I huffed.

She smacked her teeth. “I’m on the phone with a bitch that will flatline a bitch, yet you scared of a damn nigga that, in your words, you don’t even like, like that.”

Millie was right. Although Dallas McQueen was fine as sin, he was too damn light-skinned for my chocolate-loving ass. I don’t know. It’s just something about a dark-skinned nigga that makes me want to do some nasty shit to their asses. Sadly, Dallas was beatin’ all of them niggas! *Shit!*

Mugging my reflection, I slammed the visor back closed. Why couldn’t these fuck niggas just do right? Shit, I think I’m a good woman. Maybe too flirtatious, but what fine

bitch wasn't, damn. Sue my ass for wanting to always have a good time.

Kevin Blankenship plays professional basketball for the Orlando Suns. We met in the club one night a couple of months ago. Millie and I went out that night looking for fun, not thirsty niggas. Kevin was thirsty as fuck and would not leave a bitch alone.

After curving him for weeks, I finally agreed to a date with his ass because he was on some romantic shit. I thought the night was going well until this muthafucka wanted to try to hit. Okay, one thing about me. I love to party and shit, but fuckin' niggas I just met was a no-go for me, which I explained to Kevin like a grown ass woman should. Huh! Bitch! If you had seen my black eye the *first* night that nigga hit me, you would've thought Mike Tyson did that shit. It's been a little over a week, so the bruise wasn't looking too bad.

Good thing I lived on my own. Dodging my family members was hell but shit, I had to. Had either of my family members seen this shit, they would've black-suited Kevin, which brought me to Dallas' fine, fuckin' sexy as shit ass.

“Stop being a scary ass bitch and get in there and talk to him.”

I was about to answer Millie when my phone beeped. It was on Bluetooth, so when I saw an unknown number pop up on the car's display screen, I groaned. Kevin had been calling me nonstop for four straight days. I blocked him after the first night, only to get these random ass numbers calling me. Let's just say a bitch has been up all fuckin' day and night watching her back like a paranoid crackhead.

“Alright.” I sighed heavily. “I got this. Damn, he's just another man,” I coached myself while Millie cackled.

“Hoe, first chance I get, I wanna meet this man. Got me over here sweatin' over a nigga I ain't even seen before.”

Chuckling, I replied, “Not from me not trying to show you.”

“Sis, I am not losing no sleep over *your* love interest. I need my own fuckin’ man,” she surmised.

I hung up on Millie’s crazy ass, already aggravated for why I was sitting in this parking space, anyway. As I peered at the red brick four-story building, my heart raced. Deciding that I didn’t drive all this way for no reason, I cut the ignition, then exited my Beamer. I was parallel parked, so I hurried to get out of the street in these stilettos my stupid ass threw on trying to get the fuck out of the house this morning.

The red bottom heels clicked against the cement as I approached the door that read *THE MCQUEEN FIRM*. Pulling the door open, I marveled at the clean, professional interior. The floors gleamed, and the space smelled fresh. A sitting area was to the right, situated in front of a mural depicting several historic sports figures. I was impressed.

My heels caught the attention of two men standing at the reception area to the left, where a pretty older woman was sitting, minding them no business.

“Good morning, beautiful,” the older of the two gentlemen greeted. He was a nicely built brown-skinned guy with a bald head, and of course, he was a part of the beard gang. It was neatly trimmed and glistening against his brown skin.

Smiling, I waved at the three. “Good morning.” I was fairly sure I looked goofy sporting these large Gucci shades, but I ain’t need everybody in my business.

“Would it be possible for me to get a few minutes of Mr. McQueen’s time?” Mustering up the sweetest smile I could, I prayed these niggas ain’t give me a tough time.

“Mr. McQueen has his first appointment in about forty-five minutes. Let me see if he can see you really quick. Who can I tell him needs a minute of his time?” the receptionist replied with a warm smile.

“Chloe Smith.” She nodded before pressing a few buttons on the desk phone.

“You wanna have a seat, or...”

“No, I’ll just wait here,” I commented to the other guy, who was eyeing me up and down lasciviously.

He wasn’t bad on the eyes, but I wasn’t attracted to the overly thirsty expressions he was making with his lips and shit. Niggas thought just cuz LL did that shit that every man looked sexy doing it. No! Just get some damn lip balm, is what I wanted to tell dude. However, I minded my business. I rolled my eyes behind the shades before turning my attention back to the mural. I had bigger issues than dealing with this weirdo.

“Yes, sir...” the receptionist was saying into the earpiece.

“Excuse me, ma’am.” I turned toward her. “Mr. McQueen will see you. Hollis here will take you up to his office.”

Hollis was the bald guy. I smiled, thanked her, then followed him to the elevator. He was a gentleman, letting me on the elevator first, then smiling. He smelled like heaven, and his teeth were straight and blindingly white. See, this was the type of nigga I went for. Dressed in blue slacks and a light blue Polo shirt, he was a well-put-together brother.

“D gon’ be happy to see you, lil’ mama.”

My eyebrows crashed together. Not sure why he would say that. The elevator doors closed with my mind still wondering what the hell this nigga was talking about.

## DALLAS

My pops once told me, any man willing to kill for the ones he loved was a good ass man, the *best* type of man. Well, shit, that’s me. No, I didn’t start my life out bodying niggas. The opportunity actually presented itself when I should’ve been enjoying one of the best achievements in my life.

The night I killed my mother’s boyfriend, Lester, I expected my life to be over. I expected to live the rest of my days in a jail cell. Surprisingly, I had been cool with that. Any muthafucka put they hands on ma *mère* could kiss they fuckin’ life goodbye. Whatever amount of time the courts would’ve

given me, I would've ridden each of them bitches out with a Kool-Aid smile on my face.

I didn't know what it was about me that made me such a lethal nigga. Even before going under, I was that nigga nobody wanted to see. It had been almost three years since I left the organization that basically raised me. It was a private sector of the government ran by Dimochka McQueen or Dime as he's commonly known — yeah, my father. I went from not knowing shit about that muhfucka to being his right-hand man.

Ever since the day he pulled me out of that interrogation room, I'd been all over the world bodyin' muhfuckas. It sounded harsh, but every muthafucka I killed deserved that shit and then some. The shit these muthafuckas did outchea in this world was crazy as fuck. Still, I was by far crazier, and all I was doing was cleaning this nasty-ass infested world up.

Being a civilian had been hard at first. Being back in my city of New Orleans was like a dream. Before I left the agency, I hadn't stepped foot in New Orleans. When I came back, most niggas thought I was in the pen for murdering Lester. Others thought I was dead. I never gave any information on what I was actually doing, and it was gonna stay that way. The minute muthafuckas find out you a hitta, they comin' for you, scared that one day you'd be after their ass for whatever reason.

The police hadn't fucked with me. Whatever strings Dime pulled, everything from the night of me beatin' Lester's ass was erased. Even the officers that arrested me were still on the force but acted like shit never happened. I'd seen them niggas around, but they'd just looked the other way and kept shit pushing.

I still didn't give a fuck about what I'd done to Lester. Wasn't no muthafucka on this planet who wouldn't see me if they eva did some shit to cross me. I'm just not that muthafucka to cross. Dead ass. I will kill a muthafucka so good I'd nut on myself.

My new life consisted of managing athletes, entertainers, and whoever needed my services. Being the owner and CEO of one of the most sought-after managing firms in the country was a blessing for a nigga like me and where I came from. While I only had a select few clients, I enjoyed what I do. Do I get bored at times? Maybe. Running with my niggas Gatah and Stephan kept me busy and out of trouble, though. Besides myself, I had one other agent: Keith. We ran this muthafucka like a champion thoroughbred.

Standing at the floor-to-ceiling window of my office, I watched the Monday traffic flow down Canal Street. It wasn't quite ten in the morning, but my tie had already come off, and my sleeves were rolled up to the middle of my forearm.

Something was wrong. I could feel that shit. My grandfather used to tell me to follow my gut. If that shit is telling you that something is going on, believe that shit. That's why I had been on edge ever since I came into the office this morning. Typically, my day was a breeze, as I was doing what I loved to do — boss shit!

Deeply inhaling, I rubbed my freshly trimmed beard. I hadn't felt this way in a while. I'd talked to my mother earlier, so it wasn't anything with her or my brother. The crew I run with is on my line daily, so them niggas were straight. If some shit were up with one of them, my phone would've been blowing up. So what the fuck was it?

My desk phone chirped, bringing me out of my thoughts.

“Yeah.”

“Sir, there's a young lady here that's requesting a few moments with you.”

Mrs. Frita had been a loyal employee of mine for the past year. She knew me and how I liked to roll. My schedule was solid, and I ain't fuck with that shit unless it was an emergency. People paid me good fuckin' money to get a meeting with me.

Besides, what bitch was comin' up in my shit demanding my fuckin' time? A bitch that obviously got life fucked up. I ain't been fuckin' none of these hoes outchea for some time now, so not nan one of them muhfuckas betta be in my fuckin' building on no bullshit.

“She says her name is Chloe Smith.”

Real shit. My heart stuttered in my chest. My body reacted the same way it did the first time I laid eyes on her ass seven months ago at Gatah's and Yaya's wedding. Walking Chloe down the aisle had felt surreal as fuck. I dreamt about that shit almost every night.

“Send her up with Hollis.”

“Yes, sir.”

What was wrong with Chloe, that she had to personally come see me? The feeling that I had earlier was coming back full force. I was already mentally preparing myself for whatever she was about to drop on a nigga.

When my office door opened minutes later, I turned to see Chloe standing there in front of Hollis, looking finer than a muthafucka. Her ass was stuffed inside some heavily distressed light denim jeans. She wore a vintage t-shirt sporting MJ going up for a dunk. Yet on her feet were some high-ass black stilettos. I have to admit. Her style was everything to me. I usually went for the glammed-up bitches. Chloe's laid-back style was intriguing, sexy, and effortless. Her hair was cut short on the sides but kept long on top, flowing across her forehead in bouncy curls. Her brown skin glowed as if she'd fell from heaven or some shit.

We stared at each other before Hollis cleared his throat.

“Make sure Mrs. Frita holds my calls,” I ordered. With a nod, Hollis was out the door.

“Mornin', sug.”

She smiled nervously, biting the corner of her bottom lip. “Hey.” She waved.



I motioned for Chloe to take one of the chairs in front of my stately oak desk.

“This is a surprise,” I drawled, taking the chair opposite her. Turning my chair to face her, I did the same to her chair. Our knees touched from how close we were sitting.

“I know, Dallas. I apologize for not calling first.”

Amid her talking, I reached for her shades. Chloe was wearing these square-shaped, oversized sunglasses. While they were cute on her, I wanted to see her beautiful brown eyes while we conversed.

At the same time that I was reaching for her shades, Chloe was reaching for my hand to stop me.

“No,” she protested before I slid them off of her face.

My head tilted to the side in confusion.

“The fuck put they hands on you, shawty?” My anger was instantly through the roof. The hell? Resting my elbows on my knees as I stared at her, waiting for my fuckin’ answer.

She nervously cleared her throat. “That’s what I’m here to talk to you about. Uhm...one of your clients, Kevin, and I got in sort of a disagreement the other night and...”

My eyes roamed her beautiful face as my jaw repeatedly clenched. I was trying like fuck to control the anger raging through me.

“Kevin Blankenship,” I asked, already knowing the answer. I wanted to be clear on the muthafucka I needed to choke to death.

She nodded, her eyes glistening with unshed tears.

“Don’t you shed one muthafuckin’ tear.” It was probably too harsh, but her tears would’ve sent me into dangerous territory.

Chloe willed her tears back. “I just need you to tell him to back off. I’m not trying to get him into any legal trouble or anything, and I damn sure don’t want my family to find out cuz they will kill his stupid ass.”

Head cocked, studying Chloe's eyes, I replied. "And you think I fuckin' won't, behbeh."

Chloe's eyes grew wide as her breath stalled in her chest.

"No, Dallas. Please, none of that, okay," she whined. "Just talk to him and have him stop harassing me. He's been blowing my phone up nonstop from numbers that I don't recognize. I blocked him on everything, yet he's still calling." Her frustration showed in the lines forming between her eyebrows.

"Shit, I should've just called the police," she expressed, exasperated. "I don't want my fuckin' name mixed up with none of these athletes on some domestic violence bullshit. A bitch ain't got time for that," she continued to rant.

Placing a finger to her lips, I shushed her. "When's the last time you slept, *chérie*?" I let my finger linger a little longer than necessary, which she didn't seem to mind.

Hunching her shoulders, she sighed.

Licking my lips, I fought against the fire that was burning to come forth.

Standing, I took Chloe's hand, bringing her to stand with me. I led her over to the couch nestled against the floor-to-ceiling windows I had been standing at minutes ago.

"Lay down," I insisted.

Chloe did what I said without argument. Backtracking, I went to my desk chair, removing the suit coat I'd placed there this morning. Walking back to Chloe, she was already barefoot, with her feet up in a fetal position on the sofa, her hands rested under her cheek. She watched me place the coat over her before her eyes closed contentedly.

The fact that Chloe felt she could trust me wasn't lost on me. Even if she didn't say it out of her mouth, the fact that she even came here looking for my help said a lot, especially when she came from the stock of a Smith. Them niggas were savages in their own right. That's why I clicked with them so well.

I waited for Chloe's breathing to slow, letting me know she'd dozed off. Leaving Chloe on the sofa, I left my office in search of Hollis. His office, the security room, was two doors down. Without knocking, I opened the door. He was in mid-sentence with Rochelle. Whatever the fuck they were talking about was gon' have to wait.

Ignoring Rochelle's questioning gaze, I told that nigga to come fuckin' rap with me right muthafuckin' now. He ain't ask no questions but did what I said. Rochelle wanted to ask what was going on, but I turned my back, heading back down the hall, Hollis behind me.

I owned the entire building, but the fourth floor was all me. Couldn't nobody come up the elevator and get on my floor without going through Hollis and Brady. Brady had better be his mannish ass in the lobby doing what the fuck I paid him for. He had been on some lazy bullshit lately. I dug into his ass about it, and he'd seemed to get it together. Otherwise, I wouldn't have left Chloe alone in my office. Getting on the elevator, Hollis and I rode down to the lobby, then out the back exit. I wasted no time pulling the blunt from my pocket and lightin' that bitch.

"Damn, nigga, the fuck happened that quick?" Hollis joked.

This nigga and I played high school football together. Hollis was one of the few niggas I fucked with since being back in New Orleans. We'd been tight in high school and had beaten a couple of niggas' asses together. Our friendship was solid. Hollis was a clown then, and he was still a clown now. However, the nigga was solid as fuck.

"Mane, I got some business to handle out of town. I need you to keep an eye on Chloe for me. I'mma have Rochelle take her back to my place and get her situated. Nobody in or muthafuckin' out. When Rochelle gets Chloe settled, get that bitch the fuck up out my shit."

Not one bitch has ever been in my space, period. The only reason I wanted Rochelle to help Chloe get settled was cuz she was a woman and wouldn't make Chloe feel

uncomfortable. Rochelle had been on some bullshit lately since I hadn't been fuckin' her ass. Shit, to be honest, I hadn't fucked a bitch or let a bitch suck me since I laid eyes on Chloe. Crazy right?

"Aight, when you rollin'?" Hollis asked. See, this was why I fucked with this nigga. A nigga that's got ya back, regardless of the situation. That's the nigga you need in ya circle.

Dragging from the blunt, I replied, "As soon as a muthafucka finishes this blunt and calm my ass the fuck down."

Hollis cackled, making me chuckle.

"Rochelle gon' be salty as fuck." I shrugged. "Shawty's bad as hell, though, homie. I can see why ya feelin' her. Hell, she got any sistas?"

Eyeing Hollis, I tried to ascertain whether he was joking. The nigga was so good at that shit I told him he should've been an actor.

Shaking my head, I inhaled the Kush. "Nah, just her. Don't make me fuck you up, nigga."

Hollis laughed. "Chill dawg. Ain't nobody gon' touch ya precious queen. Shit, ya might wanna put Brady up on game cuz the way he was lookin' at shawty..."

Brady's fuck ass. It was somethin' about that nigga that rubbed me the wrong way.

Grinning, I took a couple of extra pulls of the blunt before ashing the tip.

"That muthfucka can try."

If he only knew the beast inside of me, that was begging to be set free. With how I was feeling, no muthfucka wanted to see me at this point. *Soon, muthafucka*, I counseled myself. *Soon*.

## CHAPTER 2

### CHLOE

The sofa in Dallas' office was so comfortable that I was out in minutes. I didn't realize he'd left me there for two hours until some saddity bitch stood over me, asking me to wake up. My eyes fluttered against the natural lighting spilling into the office. Between the sofa and the soft, manly cologne clinging to Dallas' coat, I felt comfortable.

"Dallas wants me to escort you to his home," the black Barbie stated.

She was a gorgeous woman with expensive threads from head to toe. She reminded me of a regal queen, the way her back was so rigid and her head held high. The Brazilian bundles cascading down her back were well laid. I could tell she spent a grip on that install.

"Did you hear me, child?"

*Child?* My eyes drifted from her toes to her head. Oh, I got it. When I looked closely, honey was an older woman. She must be in her thirties. She still looked good, though. Throwing that word child around was out of jealousy. *But for what?*

"Where's Dallas?" I know this nigga didn't really leave me in the custody of who I was gonna assume was his woman. She gave off that threatening vibe. Women only did that when a man was involved.

"Dallas had other matters to tend to. Now, come along. Lunch traffic will be starting soon, and we have to make it across town. By the way, my name is Rochelle."

Oh, I remembered this hoe now. She was the woman all in Dallas' ass at Gatah and Yaya's wedding. Now that I think about it, he'd paid her close to no attention the whole night. Shit. Had I paid *that* much attention to him even then?

Gathering my purse, I followed this trick out of Dallas' office, perturbed.

The nigga could've told me himself to sleep for a while, then head back to Pensacola. I didn't need to go to his house.

Hollis was waiting for us in the lobby with a smile on his handsome face. Ooh, bitch, I could really go for him. He was everything, and his body was built like a Mack truck.

At this time of day, the lobby was buzzing with activity. Standing next to Rochelle's high class behind, I felt underdressed. Yet, the gaze of every man walking by landed on me. It was like each of these niggas was undressing me with their eyes. Rochelle tooted up her nose, disgusted.

Hollis chuckled. "You ready, Miss Chloe?" he asked. Hollis had the sexiest brown eyes.

Nodding my head, he led me outside to a black-on-black Suburban.

"What about my car?" I asked. They weren't about to leave my baby on this street.

"Got it handled. Your job is to relax my behbeh." Smiling at Hollis, I climbed into the front seat of the truck.

Rochelle stood by the truck without getting in. "The fuck you doin', mane? Get in the truck," Hollis directed.

Rochelle rolled her eyes. "I do not sit in the backseat," she sassed, folding her arms across her bountiful boobs.

I guess her saying that was supposed to make me get out of the truck and get into the back seat. Instead, I reached for my seatbelt, locking that bitch in place. I may have been just a little petty, but fuck that. This hoe was gon' get her attitude together before I popped her ass in between them hazel eyes.

Hollis jerked his head. "Hop in the back, Rochelle. We gotta go."

Huffing, she got in the truck, slamming the door. *Huh! And what bitch?*

"What you like to eat, shawty?" Hollis quizzed in my direction after he'd gotten in and started the truck.

Shrugging, I replied, “Pretty much anything. I could go for a fat ass burger, though.”

Hollis grinned. “My kind of woman. Shiitt, I know the best spot too. We’ll get it to go though, cuz ya nigga gon’ be lookin’ for ya ass in about thuhty.”

I had no idea what the fuck Hollis was talking about. Between his thick accent and the way he pronounced his words, I was lost as fuck.

After Hollis grabbed us lunch, the rest of the ride to Dallas’ house was comical. Well, Hollis and I laughed it up. He was a really cool guy, and I loved that he had a thick Louisiana drawl, just like Dallas. *Fuck!* Here I was comparing this nigga to the nigga I claimed to not fucking want!

We pulled onto a street lined with beautiful homes. It actually took me back to my parents’ home in Pensacola. Hollis pulled the truck into the circular driveway of the single-story stately white house. The grounds were plush green and seemed well taken care of. The circular driveway was lined with well-manicured shrubs. I was impressed that Dallas actually lived here.

Bay windows lined the front of the house. A separate two-car garage sat to the right of the property, and an open breezeway connected the garage to the house.

Hollis grabbed the food while I climbed from the truck. It felt odd being here. I wasn’t uncomfortable. It was more a feeling of contentment, which I didn’t understand. I barely knew Dallas in any type of way other than the fact that he was close with my family. Gatah and Stephan didn’t fuck with anyone on that level unless they were A1.

Rochelle beat Hollis and me to the front door, which was stupid because Hollis had the key. She stood there tapping her thousand-dollar stiletto against the concrete. Shaking my head, I hoped this hoe wasn’t staying around.

Once we were inside, Rochelle switched her ass straight to the back, where I assumed the bedrooms were.

“That bitch is crazy,” Hollis muttered. I laughed in agreement.

For a man, Dallas had great taste. The interior of his home was all warm colors and matching furnishings. Family photos lined the walls, bringing a smile to my face. The beautiful, regal woman whose portrait was mounted above his fireplace was absolutely gorgeous. She must be his mother.

Admiring all the pictures, I came across a man who looked just like Dallas, only younger and with short hair. I didn't know Dallas had a little brother. He was cute!

“Where is Dallas anyway? I could've driven back to Pensacola. It wouldn't have been a problem.”

Hollis handed me my food, motioning toward the kitchen. I followed him into the large space. Like the rest of the house, the kitchen was spotless. It didn't look cooked in at all. The stainless-steel appliances glistened against the oak cabinetry. Even the four-seater kitchen table was set to perfection with what looked like the best China. I thought about not eating on it until my stomach growled in protest.

Hollis huffed as he pulled out a chair and sat at the table. “Nah, shawty, the nigga said to bring you hea, and that's what I'm doin'.”

“Once you're done eatin', Rochelle will show you to your room.”

Sitting myself down, I immediately dug into my bag. The burger Hollis had purchased me smelled and looked delicious.

“My room?” I asked, taking my first bite.

Hollis nodded. “Ya room shawty.”

Out of nowhere, Hollis belted out Rochelle's name. “The bitch probably plunderin' through my nigga's shit,” Hollis griped, getting up from the table and heading toward the back of the house in search of Rochelle.

I chuckled, tending to my good-ass burger.



“Damn, a bitch can’t take a piss without you lookin’ for me?” I heard Rochelle say as she appeared around the corner.

Rolling my eyes, I continued to eat while Hollis dealt with her.



After eating, Rochelle did as she was asked and showed me to my room. I could tell she was feeling some type of way about all of this. Shit, I would too if my nigga looked like Dallas and was talkin’ ‘bout letting a bitch spend the night. Hell nah!

We passed two other rooms. One appeared to be an office and the other a weight room. There was another door at the other end of the hallway that was closed. I guessed that was Dallas’ cave.

The room I was in was fully furnished with a television mounted on the wall directly across from the four-poster bed. A door to the left led to a walk-in closet, while a door to the right led me into a spacious bathroom. Impressed, I smiled. There were signs all over that a woman furnished the room. From the purple bed set and matching furnishings, I wondered if Rochelle was the one to help put this setup together.

“I’ve already purchased you some toiletries and clothing. They’re in the truck,” Rochelle relayed, standing in the doorway with a sour expression on her face. I’m not sure how she still looked so young when she seemed to keep these bitch faces so much.

“Thank you,” I answered politely. Eyeing me up and down, she rolled her eyes before leaving the doorway.

Hollis shook his head, watching Rochelle’s departure. “Don’t pay her no mind,” he advised.

Nodding, I sat on the bed, not really knowing what to do. I was in unfamiliar territory.

“I’m gonna run Rochelle back to the office. The house is secure, so you have absolutely nothing to worry about while

you're here. I will be back in less than an hour. Feel free to make yourself at home. If you need anything, I'll be outside in the truck once I make it back." Hollis winked at me before leaving.

Damn, now I was all by myself in this fine ass nigga's house. How was I gonna avoid plundering through this nigga's shit?

### **Later That Night**

## **DALLAS**

The nine-plus-hour drive to Tampa had been quick. God must've known a nigga wasn't fit for dealing with no bullshit on these roads cuz them bitches were clear the whole damn way. As soon as I got the location on KB, I was headed straight for the nigga.

Kevin had been signed with me for almost a year now. I took him on as a courtesy cuz the nigga couldn't get anybody else to fuck with him. Niggas like Kevin had too much muthafuckin' money and too much muthafuckin' mouth. The nigga thought that just cuz he was rich, he could do people any kind of way. Agents dealt with cocky players all the time. However, Kevin was cocky *and* dumb as fuck. The nigga couldn't spell his own fuckin' name without help. Being the good guy that I am, I helped the nigga out. He would regret fuckin' with my shawty, though.

A nigga like me had eyes everywhere. Tampa wasn't a city I visited often, but this nigga Trevor, who I knew from my previous life, owned his own underground fight club here. The shit was dope as fuck if you asked me. I'd rather go watch one of them fights than one of these rigged-up ass professional fights.

Pulling into the warehouse's parking lot, I reached under my seat for the Desert Eagle I loved riding with. Placing it at my back, I slid from the truck. I was still in my clothes from earlier, but that shit didn't matter for what I was about to do.

The warehouse door opened as I approached it. Trevor grilled me, shaking his head.

“Muthafucka yo’ ass must be out for blood. This nigga drove here in his fuckin’ slacks an’ shit.” Trevor clowned. That was cool. He and I joked like this all the time. We’d needed something to pass the time while in the trenches.

“Where the fuck that nigga at?” I asked, getting straight to the point.

Jerking his head to the left, Trevor replied, “In the back.”

I passed two of Trevor’s goons, Mike and Rico, on the way to the back. They each threw me a head nod as they continued their conversation. Them niggas was solid as fuck, so no snitchin’ was gon’ be this way.

The back was the room designated for those who went against the fight club’s code. If you came in here, chances are you weren’t leaving — at least not alive.

“I ain’t know if you were on some grim reaper shit or not, so I prepared for the worst.”

Laughing, I snatched a black rubber band from around my wrist to wrap my dreads up.

“I’mma have to grow me some dreads. Bitches love that shit,” Trevor commented.

This nigga.

KB was pacing the interior of the boxing ring with his hands on his hips. He was probably wondering why he was here. My instructions to Trevor and his goons were to pick him up, bring him to the spot, and nothing else. Don’t say a word to his muthafuckin’ ass.

When KB saw my face, his eyebrows bunched in confusion. If you wonderin’ why I drove instead of flying, this was why. I needed to stay under the radar and get where I needed to get quickly. I ain’t have the time to cut through the red tape. I had to get to KB quickly. This anger in me had to be released ASAP!

“The hell, nigga? I got a game tomorrow. I can’t be out this late, man.”

KB sounded like a straight bitch. Climbing between the ropes, I completely unbuttoned my shirt, tossing it to the side. The Rolex I’d spent a house on was unclasped and in my pocket.

“Nah, bruh. Fuck a game. I hea you like puttin’ ya hands on shit that don’t belong to ya,” I drawled, eyeing him.

KB smacked his teeth, waving me off.

“Man, that fuckin’ bitch was a tease. She out here dancin’ all on niggas like she ‘bout that hoe shit, but then gon’ block a nigga. The bitch stupid as fuck.”

While KB ranted, I circled him like a king lion circles its prey. KB was talkin’ big shit for somebody that was about to get his head knocked the fuck off.

“That hoe ran to you, for what? The hell you supposed to be?” KB chuckled.

“Square the fuck up, nigga. Lemme see if them hands can hang wit’ *me*, yahurme.”

Laughing nervously, KB shook his head.

“You’re my fuckin’ agent. If some shit pops off with me, you ‘spose to make that shit disappear. Kind of fuckin’ help you ‘spose to be? Niggas said you were solid, but you ‘round here ‘bout to fight me over a bitch.”

Smirking, I said, “Disappear, huh? I thought I told ya to square the fuck, nigga. Last warning.”

KB shook his head in resignation and called himself getting in a fighting stance. This fight would’ve been unfair if KB wasn’t around my height and size. I had him by a few pounds but fuck that shit. Chloe wasn’t a buck forty, soaking wet. If he could put his hands on her, I could put my fuckin’ hands on him. It was that simple.

KB threw a jab, which, of course, didn’t land. I let him throw another one, toying with him. I was a raging beast. The

first hit I connected that shit was gon' be it. All it took was a left hook to put KB on his ass.

“Oooh!” Trevor chuckled. “Muthafuck!”

KB was leaking all over the ring, staggering to get to his feet. “The fuck, man!” he bellowed through his busted jaw.

“Square the fuck up, nigga!” I roared. Blood boiling through my veins, I could taste this nigga's fear.

KB staggered my way tryna rush me. The nigga ain't know who the fuck he was dealing with. Sidestepping him, my right fist collided with that nigga's temple, knocking him to the mat.

As I watched KB's eyes rolling around in his head, I pulled my heat, squatting close to his head. I pressed the barrel Desert Eagle to his forehead.

“As of today, our contract is null and void. I will show you why niggas don't fuck wit' me, if you eva in you fuckin' life think you can come for me or mine, yahurme? I will kill yo' muthafuckin' ass then give ya eulogy and hug ya mom's Miss Michelle while she cries over ya fuckin' casket.”

I wanted to pull this fuckin' trigger so bad that I tasted the gun smoke off that bitch. Digging the barrel in KB's forehead, I growled, “Stay the fuck off Chloe's line! If she tells me you're fuckin' wit' her again, I'mma make sure ya ass disappears, muthafucka!”

Standing, I kicked that nigga in his ribs. Blood poured from his mouth as he moaned out in pain. “Fuck you, bitch!” KB grumbled.

I was halfway out of the ring, settling to let this nigga keep his life. He was a public figure and came from a loving family. I ain't want to break his mother, Miss Michelle's heart.

Trevor and I made eye contact. My intentions were written all over the scowl on my face.

“We gotchu.” Trevor motioned for Mike and Rico to come toward the ring.

“Get the tub ready,” Trevor ordered.

“Nah, we gotta handle this a lil’ different. His momma needs to see her puss’ ass son’s body.”

As I said, I ain’t wanna break Miss Michelle’s heart. When a child goes missing, not ever locating your child was the most torturous thing a parent could go through. I couldn’t put Miss Michelle through that.

Going back into the ring, I walked over to KB. “You’s a dumb ass, coward ass muthafucka. The thing is, you think I’m fuckin’ playin’ witchu, yahurme. You gon’ learn some fuckin’ respect today, nigga!” Lifting the cannon, I emptied my clip in his bitch ass.

”*Calmez-vous* (calm down).” Even though I was trying to calm myself down, it was no use. Once this side of me surfaced, it was hard to get him back under control. “Y’all niggas know what to do.”

Heading out of the warehouse, I dug in my pocket for another blunt. *Fuck!* I promised my mama I was gon’ stop this smokin’ shit one day or at least slow it the fuck down. I lit the tip, waiting for the feeling of relaxation to overtake me. Damn, I needed to make it back to New Orleans ‘for I fuck around and find the energy to kill me another muthafucka.

# Chapter 3

## CHLOE

Morning arrived swiftly. Thanks to the most comfortable bed I'd ever slept in, I woke up refreshed. Last night had at first been a struggle, being in Dallas' house all by myself. One thing I noticed is that Dallas was an immaculate man. Everything in the house was in its place, dusted and all. I tried to make myself busy by writing, but my thoughts were all jumbled. I didn't make it past one paragraph before I gave up on that.

Hollis had stayed outside in his truck all night. The only time we interacted was if he came into the house for something. Otherwise, it was just me and the four walls.

The spa-like bathroom attached to the bedroom was a dream. I spent close to an hour in there showering and handling my morning routine. As I checked out my eye, the bruise was fading, so with a bit of makeup, no one would even know anything had happened. I spent the morning trying to write again. I had a manuscript I was dead set on finishing in the next couple of weeks and dealing with Kevin had seriously cut into my work time.



It was approaching noon when I called it quits. I had gotten nothing done but one chapter. Moving from the bed, I dressed lightly in a pair of gym shorts and a t-shirt. I made my way to the kitchen to see if I could scrounge up something for lunch since I had forgone breakfast. Dallas' kitchen was built for a chef, with all stainless-steel appliances and rich oak cabinetry. The stove looked like it hadn't been used in ages. It was so pristine. Opening the cupboard, I found it was fully stocked. I was in the middle of deciding what to cook myself when the sliding glass door to the patio opened. Dallas stepped inside of the house with two large German Shepard dogs behind him.

My heart rate picked up. Not at the sight of the dogs but at the sight of Dallas. He looked like he'd just come from working out. The white tee he wore clung to his broad chest, exposing every curve of his muscular physique. Then he had on a pair of black ball shorts, showing off his powerful thighs and legs. Dallas had tattoos everywhere. His fingers were even tatted. His bold blue eyes met mine, causing my body to shiver. Turning away, I pretended to rummage through the cupboard. Chile, I forgot why I was even in this bitch!

“Whassup, shawty?”

Dallas' thick accent and husky, deep voice made my entire body shiver. How could his voice sound so *sexual* when he wasn't saying anything sexual? It was the strangest thing.

“Good morning. Just grabbing something to eat really quick.” I answered.

Dallas came further into the kitchen, the dogs on his tail. I backed up, not sure whether I should be afraid of them or not. I wasn't usually afraid of dogs, but these dogs looked like they could tear my little ass to pieces.

“Don't be scared, shawty,” Dallas assured. His words were missing the “r” sounding southern as fuck.

He rubbed the tops of both the animals' heads, then squatted to their level.

”*Tu vois bèbè la-bas* (you see baby over there)? “*C'est ta mère* (that's your mother). *Vous la protégez toujours* (you protect her always)... *Sommes-nous clairs* (are we clear)?”

Hoe! No this nigga didn't just speak some voodoo shit! He sounded so sexy that I wanted to push him on this tile floor and ride his dick like a bullet train!

“Chloe, meet brotha Rock and sista Pebbles.”

Chuckling, I kneeled to rub both their heads. Rock and Pebbles both licked my hand, learning me.

“Were you able to get some sleep last night?”

Nodding, I smiled. “Thank you for having me here. I will be out of your way by tonight.”



Shrugging, Dallas said, “Or you can stay for a few days... get to know me, nahmean.”

My dumb ass was so stuck I just stared at him, eyes blinking. He stared back, waiting for my response. A minute passed before he chuckled lightly.

“I’m about to hit the shower. After, I’ll take you to one of my favorite spots.” His eyes were on me, seemingly looking into my soul.

That’s how I felt every time Dallas’ eyes landed on me. It was like we were connected in some way. My body had never responded to anyone the way it did to Dallas, especially not anyone lighter than a Snickers candy bar.

Nodding my head, I smirked. “Thank you. I wouldn’t have messed up your kitchen.”

He fully smiled, his platinum fangs sparkling. “Shawty, you can do whateva ya wanna in my kitchen.” Licking his lips, I stared into his blue eyes, lost. *Was he flirting with me?*

That was strange. After Gatah’s wedding, I hadn’t seen or heard anything from Dallas, not that I wanted to.

“Yeah, sure...” I stuttered. I could probably form a normal sentence if he weren’t looking at me like I was his last meal covered in million-dollar sauce. Now I was starting to sweat!

“Will you be okay with Rock and Pebbles, or should I put them back in the pool house?” Oh, so that’s where they’d been. That was one spot I didn’t have a tour of. They must be well-mannered animals not to have made noise all night.

Rock and Pebbles stared at me, begging to keep them company. “We should be fine, right?”

I wondered if they understood English as Dallas had just talked to them in a language that sounded like French. Both animals barked so loud that I covered my ears.

“I guess that’s a yes,” I giggled.

Dallas smiled. “They’ll never hurt ya,” he assured. With that, he left the kitchen, leaving all his male cologne

mixed with sweat scent lingering on my senses.

“Between us, y’all daddy is one sexy ass muthafucka,” I disclosed to the pair. Hearing Dallas laugh, my cheeks flushed.

“He heard me!” I whispered to Rock and Pebbles. They barked in unison, drawing a smile from me. These were my new friends.



On the ride to the restaurant Dallas was taking me to, I did my best to ignore his intoxicating scent. It seemed to surround me, wrapping me in all kinds of wicked thoughts. The thing about me is the party girl in me is also a die heart freak, which is weird seeing as I was a virgin. A damn shame, right?

I really just want a nigga that I can be so freaky with that he’ll feel like I’m the only woman he sees in and out of the bedroom. I wasn’t naïve to think that men would be faithful just off the pussy alone. However, I believed that there was a nigga out there for me that would treat me right and fuck me right, not leaving any room for me to want something elsewhere, and vice versa.

I wasn’t thinking of anything in the relationship form with Dallas, only the fact that he did something to me whenever I was around him.

“Shawty, you ova thea thinkin’ ‘bout somethin’ so tough I can feel that shit, yahurme.”

Dallas was gripping the steering wheel with his left hand while his right rested on the gear shift. His hands were three of mine and were tatted all up. The strength in them was evident.

“Nothing really,” I lied, turning my gaze away from his features. Dallas was going to be the death of me. I just knew it.

“Nah, shawty. Don’t lie to me. Just think of me as ya friend.”

I busted out laughing, glancing his way. “Yeah, right! So, you can run and tell my cousins my business?”

Mugging, Dallas’ eyes shifted my way momentarily. “The only time G and Steph would know some shit ya told me was if it had somethin’ to do witch a safety. Otherwise, I gotcha.”

Licking my lips, I let his words sink in. He probably wasn’t the best person to have this discussion with, but he was a man. “You ever been faithful to a woman?”

Dallas smirked. “Hell fuck naw. The only behbeh gettin’ that type of treatment is the one I’m ready to give a ring to.”

My eyes narrowed on him. Dallas was about to lose some major sex appeal points. “So, you would cheat up until you get married?”

Shaking his head, Dallas sighed. “Nah, shawty. What I’m sayin’ is that if I feel like I meet a woman that I’m willing to spend my life with, I’mma be faithful to her from that moment. She gotta be a bad bitch to even get my mentality on that level.”

Studying Dallas, I was upset at how handsome I found him. If he felt like a woman had to be perfect to be by his side, then hell a bitch like me ain’t stand a chance. “So, have you ever met a woman that made you feel that way?”

Dallas was quiet. I realized we were at the restaurant when Dallas pulled the Bentley into a parallel parking spot in front of the joint. He was quiet so long that I assumed he would not answer my question.

“Yeah, actually, I have, ” he answered, cutting the ignition. I was surprised that he was honest. Most niggas would’ve laughed that shit off and definitely would not have owned up to it.

“Well, where is she? Is it Rochelle? You brought her to Gatah and Yaya’s wedding. You know what they say when a man does that.” Damn, couldn’t I stop asking this nigga

questions like he was my nigga? I had no business caring who his perfect woman was.

Dallas scoffed. “That’s just some pussy, shawty. She’ll never be on the same level as the woman I have my eyes on.” Dallas was staring dead at me. I didn’t know whether his last statement was literal or figurative, so I just kept quiet.

“Come on inside, shawty. Thinkin’ ass.” He chuckled.

## DALLAS

Sitting across from Chloe in the restaurant, I could honestly see myself doing this with her on many occasions. I had long legs, so even in the booth, her crossed knees kept brushing my legs every time she shifted in her seat. I loved the way Chloe’s milk chocolate skin glowed in the sunlight. Her beautiful brown eyes wandered everywhere except on me, which was cool. Shawty was a runner, I could tell.

We’d already ordered our food and were waiting for the dishes to arrive. Chloe wanted the entire menu but settled for shrimp and grits, my favorite. She added strawberry crepes as well. I loved a woman that could eat without tryna be all cute and shit.

I didn’t know what attracted me to Chloe so heavy. Shit, shawty brought up Gatah’s wedding, so I wondered what she’d think if I told her how I hadn’t had a taste of pussy *since* the wedding. My dick wanted Chloe in the worst fuckin’ way. No matter what I tried to do not to think about her, I did, which was why I found myself at my primary care doctor’s office the following week after the wedding. Going off of the fact that I’d one day snatch Chloe up, getting a complete check-up had been a necessity.

I have never fucked a bitch raw, but I was a man of honor and respect. I would make sure my body was clean before I even laid down with behbeh. One thing was for sure. I wasn’t gon’ be using no fuckin’ protection with her. Behbeh was gon’ get pregnant out the fuckin’ gate! Shit, I would turn thirty-four in two days, and my mother won’t let me live it down that I have no children yet. I would try to rectify that for her soon, though.

“How ya likin’ ya job, shawty?”

Chloe smiled sweetly, her eyes sparkling. I knew from Gatah and Stephan that Chloe worked for the local newspaper as a columnist. Lowkey, I read all of her shit. Shawty was good with the way she could draft a story.

“It’s okay. Honestly, I’d enjoy writing books more. I’m sort of not feeling the whole constrictive environment,” she admitted.

Laughing, I shook my head. I knew some other things about her that we wouldn’t get into right now.

“What? Seriously, I need freedom, ya know.” She smacked her lips, leaning back against the booth.

“Freedom, huh? Is that why ya sexy ass is still single?”

Chloe choked on air. She started coughing so hard I laughed.

“Shawty, you petty as fuck, not to mention dramatic.”

Calming down, Chloe patted her chest.

“I’m still waitin’ on my answer, *chérie*.”

When I was speaking of Rochelle not being on the same level as the woman who I had my eyes on, I was speaking of Chloe. Chloe knew it, even if she didn’t want to acknowledge that I was referring to her. She was good at pretending that she didn’t feel the vibe between us.

“Actually, I’m single because niggas are fuckin’ stupid,” she revealed, pointing to the fading bruise underneath her light makeup.

Nodding in understanding, I tamped down the anger rising in me. I had already deaded Kevin’s ass, so I couldn’t bring him back to fuck him up again.

“All niggas ain’t shit, lil’ mama. Yeah, sometimes we be on bullshit, but only wit’ females that ain’t shit to us. You just gotta let these niggas know you ain’t ‘bout that fuck shit, and if he ain’t fallin’ in line, fuck ‘em. Any nigga would love

to be wit' a woman as beautiful and smart as yaself. Don't eva settle for a nigga that ain't at least five levels ahead of you."

The food arrived, interrupting our conversation. Chloe's eyes widened when she saw how much food was on her plate. This is what I loved about Gadsden's Place. The service was excellent, but the food was even better. It cost to eat at this lil' hole in the wall, but it was muthafuckin' worth it.

"So why are you single?" Chloe asked as I savored the creamy grits and savory shrimp.

Shrugging, I replied, "Simple answer. Behbeh girl is runnin' from me, but not for long, though."

I chuckled when Chloe rolled her eyes. Yeah, she definitely felt a lil' something for me even if she didn't want to admit it. She was feeling some type of way, thinking I was talking about another bitch.



We were enjoying the rest of our meal when Rochelle walked through the doors of the restaurant. My phone had been going off for the last twenty minutes, with me ignoring it. A part of me knew it was Rochelle. I wasn't at the office today, and I'm sure she was waiting on me for obvious reasons. Rochelle's eyes made contact with me, a subtle scowl on her beautiful face.

Chloe's back was to the door, so she didn't see Rochelle until Rochelle was at our table glaring at me.

"Can't you at least answer your phone, Dallas?" she demanded.

Spooning some grits into my mouth, I eyed Rochelle, resisting the urge to cuss her the fuck out.

Rochelle and I had been friends for a while. We had known each other since elementary school. Fuckin' with her on a sexual level was a mistake that I deeply regretted. Us fuckin' changed the whole vibe from her side. Mine was solid

as fuck. I ain't care about no female in that way other than Chloe's track and field ass.

I wasn't a total asshole, but I could be. Rochelle was still salty cuz I hadn't fucked her ass in months. Shit, I couldn't help it that my dick could only get hard for Chloe.

Chloe side-eyed Rochelle but continued eating, ignoring her.

"Whassup?" I didn't have to explain to this bitch why I wasn't answering *my* phone that I paid the fucking bill for. The fuck. She obviously ain't know this nigga.

Popping a hand on her hip, Rochelle's nasty attitude havin' ass glared at me. "You couldn't tell me you weren't coming in today? Some important documents needed to be taken care of."

Nie see. I'on do that bossin' me around an' shit. I mean, not unless it was Chloe.

"Last I checked, my name is on that fuckin' buildin', shawty. And how the fuck you knew to find me hea?"

Put off, Rochelle stuttered, "Well, I was riding by and saw your car parked outside."

*Lyin' ass bitch.* I chuckled. "Oh, fa sho'. Check it, though. I'll holla atcha 'bout them papers when I can."

When Rochelle realized she'd been dismissed, the embarrassment on her face grew to anger. *Hmm. I'd never seen this side of her, which was strange. I'd have to watch this bitch.* Friend or not, no bitch was gon' get the drop on me. I needed a fuckin' blunt to calm my fuckin' nerves after this bitch just blew my fuckin' day.

Here a nigga was tryna be a gentleman an' shit, and Rochelle was 'bout to have me showin' my ass in front of wifey.

Thank God for small favors cuz Rochelle had the common sense to walk the fuck away without me having to repeat my fuckin' self. Damn, that was fuckin' close cuz my Glock was itchin' to fuckin' bust, yahurme.

“Just some pussy, huh?” Chloe chimed, sipping from the lemonade she’d ordered.

Grinning, I winked at her. Her eyes narrowed, but she kept quiet. I wondered what she was thinking. Shit, the last person she had to be worried about was Rochelle. As far as I was concerned, I ain’t see nobody but muthafuckin’ Chloe Smith.



# Chapter 4

## ROCHELLE KEMP

Stomping my way out of the restaurant, I wished I could turn around and slap the shit out of Dallas with his arrogant ass. Ugh, I couldn't stand him! It took everything in my power to pretend that I had feelings for him when I was really waiting for the day to kill his no-good ass, which wasn't totally accurate. I did have feelings for Dallas.

All the years I'd put into planning Dallas' demise, then I had to go and actually fall in love with the nigga. I hated myself for it. Yet, I didn't know how *not* to love him.

Dallas was so sexy that he made a woman look past his arrogant and demanding ways. I can't tell you how many times I'd have to check a woman for hitting on my man. Well, not actually my man. Dallas would never let me call him that, and he never called me his girl.

If I ever tried taking things to the next level with him, he'd ignore me for a few days until I got my act together. This was going to sound stupid of me, but Dallas had never even taken me out on a date. All the events I'd ever accompanied him to were social events for the company or with his friends. Still, to go on a date with just the two of us had never happened in the last couple of years.

I'd known Dallas since elementary school. He was the funny-looking boy from the block that stole the girls' heart with his beautiful blue eyes. What really made the girls fall for him was that he could fight his ass off and whooped every nigga's ass that ever tried him. It was such a turn-on to see a man as fine as Dallas be so *manly* and rugged. His features had only blossomed as he got older.

Coming back into Dallas' life hadn't been easy because he trusted no one. I proved to him that I was a good asset to his company as his assistant. We'd worked together now for some time, and I thought we were getting closer.

That was until that bitch Chloe showed her ugly ass face. Fucking bitch! How dare Dallas be on a fucking date with this hoe and at his favorite place, no less? And then he was smiling and laughing all in this bitch's face like he was in love or something.

Making it to my car, I snatched the driver's side door open and slid in. One, I was horny, and two, I was fucking horny! Sorry, but after fucking Dallas, no other nigga out here could please me like he could. I'd never been with a man that didn't give me affection or head yet satisfied me to the fullest. Since Dallas wanted to play with my fucking emotions, I was going to one-up his ass. He was going to wish he'd never crossed me in more ways than one.

Snatching my cell from the cup holder, I placed a call to the only person who I knew would be all in with helping me get rid of Dallas.

"Hey, honey," his voice poured through the speakers of my Lexus. I cringed inside, hating already that I needed this muthafucka's help.

"Hey, baby. I miss you. When can we meet up?"

He groaned on the other end. Not out of frustration, but out of lust and yearning. He couldn't resist me for anything! "Honey, the wife is on business this weekend. We can spend it together."

I didn't want to spend the weekend with him, but I would just to accomplish what I needed to do.

"This weekend's fine, bae." Grinning, I disconnected the call, still pissed off that Dallas didn't want to fuck with me. Fuck him and that dumb ass Chloe bitch!

## **CHLOE**

This little hole-in-the-wall restaurant Dallas had brought me to was to die for, and since the staff greeted Dallas by name, it let me know he frequented this place often. I didn't expect the food to be as good as it was. The setting was nice and quiet.

Although nearly packed, it didn't take away from the coziness of the space. One thing I did notice was that Dallas attracted lots of attention. Even if they were with a man, women still stared at him way too long. Dallas would just speak and keep it moving or say nothing at all. I found that interesting, seeing as he was sort of...arrogant.

Stuffed wasn't even the word for how I felt. Dallas had to drag me out of the booth cuz my fat ass just had to have those crepes. All sense of thought fled when Dallas' hands lifted me out of the seat. I expected his hands to be rough, but against my skin, they felt strong yet soft."

We made eye contact, sending shock waves through me. His blue eyes literally melted my thoughts.

"Stop looking at me like that." I felt my cheeks warm under his gaze. I was trying to ignore the way he watched me from across the table during the meal. He definitely knew his ass was sexy, and his eyes didn't make it any better.

Chuckling, he steadied me on my feet before leading me out of the restaurant, waving bye to the staff.

"Do you mind if I slide through the office right quick, shawty?" Dallas asked, opening the car door for me.

"You're actually *asking* me if you can do something when I'm the one putting you out?" I replied. Grinning, he closed the car door, then went around to the other side.

"I'm not a complete asshole., mama. If you feel like goin' back home, then I'll take ya, no worries."

His accent...lawd help me! Watching Dallas maneuver into traffic, I studied his features. *Home?* Why did that sound so normal? Shit, could I see myself being with Dallas and *that* way? Hell yeah! Did I *want* to be with Dallas in that way? Hell yeah, bitch!

"Go handle your business. I'm sure I can find something to do to stay out of your way," I advised.

Dallas licked his lips before grinning. "You'll never be in my way, shawty. And if you are, I'll just pick that fine ass up and move ya." My body overheated at his words.

“Careful, I don’t want to think you’re flirting with me,” I joked.

Dallas scoffed. “I’on flirt, behbeh.”

Laughing, I said, “So what would you call all this back and forth that you’re doing with me? Or the way you keep looking at me?”

“Oh, that’s simple. I like talkin’ to and lookin’ at ya sexy ass. Is that a problem?”

Turning to focus my attention out of the window, I shook my head.

“Hmm, hm. Shawty, don’t be scared of me. I can make ya feel shit that you’ll remember in the afterlife.”

Whipping around, my eyes bugged at him. Dallas was calmly watching the road as if he hadn’t said something that shook me to my very core.

Damn, this whole not liking light-skinned niggas was about to go out of the window. Not only was Dallas proving me wrong, but he was making me feel shit I ain’t want to feel for *no nigga*.



Sitting inside Dallas’ office again, I listened to him conduct business. I didn’t know Dallas outside of working for my family and listening to him handle his shit turned me on. He still sounded hood as fuck, but the way he took charge and didn’t stand for any bullshit was a major soul snatcher.

I was deep in my phone when his office door opened, and in walked Rochelle, looking aggravated.

I typically wasn’t a woman that cared what another did or thought. However, Rochelle had shit twisted if she thought she was going to keep being rude to me and me not call her out on her shit. Fuck that. Nobody wanted her fucking man, and I was about to let her know that if she said any shit sideways. I’d let her slide both times she’d been in my presence.

“Shawty, my fuckin’ door was closed. That means knock on that shit!” Dallas barked, disconnecting the call he was on.

Rochelle, of course, seemed embarrassed, but brushed it off quickly. Taking in her expensive skirt suit and red bottoms, Rochelle was a beautiful woman. I could see why she was stuck on Dallas. Still, don’t come for me cuz the nigga don’t want you, hoe!

“Were you able to review those papers? I have a meeting with the client in the morning.”

Dallas leaned back in his chair, eyeing Rochelle. I could see steam flowing from his ears as he assessed her. I wondered what he was thinking.

“We gon’ have a problem, Ro? I mean ya ass been actin’ real salty lately an’ you know I’ain wit’ the bullshit. If you got a problem, speak that shit, but don’t come ‘round my fuckin’ company bein’ a bitch to her when she ain’t did shit to ya. Ya know how I get down. Don’t fuck wit’ me, yahurme.”

*Damn!* I pretended to stare at something on my phone, acting like I wasn’t paying them two cents of attention. However, the way Dallas had just put Rochelle in her place had my panties wet.

“Nie, them papers gon’ be ready. As for Chloe, she ain’t ya concern an’ don’t let me bein’ nice to ya ass fool you. I’mma a nigga ova e’rthing. This business shit is just that, business. Don’t come in my fuckin’ shit thinkin’ you run a muthafuckin’ thing. The only person runnin’ me is the one I’m chasin’, and that ain’t you, shawty. So, are we gon’ do business, or do I need to find me a new assistant? Cuz eitha way, you gon’ dead that petty shit.”

My heart was racing to listen to Dallas scold Rochelle. Dallas claimed Rochelle was only some pussy, but clearly, baby girl wanted to be a lot more. Surely, he was still fucking the bitch from how crazy she was acting. I mean, she was beautiful, and he’s sexy. They actually would make a stunning couple. Rochelle’s attitude was just ugly.

Rochelle cleared her throat. “We’re good, and I apologize. I just didn’t want things to get behind. You’ve built quite a name for yourself, and sometimes distractions... can get in the way.”

Nodding, Dallas agreed.

“I’ve made all the finalizations on your birthday guest list if you’d like to go over it before I give it to the club,” Rochelle smoothly changed the subject.

Shaking his head, Dallas said, “I’m straight. Just make sure we’ on have these problems again.”

Nodding sternly, Rochelle turned to leave, once again not even acknowledging me.

I shook my head, chuckling. Some of these bitches be crazy over niggas, and for what? Wasn’t nan nigga finna talk to me or treat me the way Dallas just handled Rochelle.

“What you ova thea smilin’ fa? You’re the one got ha actin’ like dat.”

Laughing, I asked, “Nigga how?”

Dallas’ blue eyes became serious as he eyed me up and down. “Cuz shawty, know ya got my attention.”

## DALLAS

Once business was handled, Chloe and I left the office. She had been quiet ever since I made my intentions clear to her. Like I said before, she was a runner, and I could already see the wheels turning in her head. Was I going to push her into bein’ with me? Hell naw. I had spent the last few months preparing myself for the day she and I would come together. I could wait another day or two for her to get on board. I wouldn’t wait much longer, though. At some point, Chloe was gonna have to accept that she and I had a vibe strong as shit.

Before we’d made it *home*, I took Chloe by the mall to do a little shopping. She didn’t have many clothes at my place, other than what I had Rochelle pick up yesterday. I expected Choe to be here for at least another few days. It had only taken her one store and one hour to get all that she’d needed.

Take now, for instance. I couldn't concentrate on shit my pops was saying cuz I was staring at Chloe while she made me dinner. Yeah, behbeh was in the kitchen whipping up some fried chicken that smelled like my momma's kitchen. We'd both showered and changed into lounge clothes, me in gray sweats and a white tee, her in a pair of pink cotton shorts and a pink tank top. Her feet were bare, showing off her beautifully polished red toes. *Shit!* I was gon' fuck the life outta this girl. The cotton shorts weren't too short, but fuck, her ass was so fuckin' thick them bitches was clinging for dear life.

"Aye, son, did you hear me?" My pops' voice broke me out of my trance.

"Yeah, I don't know about that muhfucka."

We were discussing this dude, Grisham, that my pops wanted me to get some intel on. Although I was no longer in the business of going on ops, I still did a little dabbling here and there with intel only. Grisham was this Russian opp that went rogue a few months ago. I was tryin' my best to stay out of the shit, but my pops wouldn't let it ride.

"Son, you're the fuckin' best the team had. None of these other muthafuckas can touch that bastard."

My pops was right. I got my first body at eighteen. By the time I was thirty, I was known as *Un Fantome*, the Ghost. Why? Cuz I take fuckin' souls, and niggas don't even see me comin'. Whenever I went on assignments, my distinctive dreads and blue eyes were concealed. I wore black from head to toe. The only people that actually knew who I was were the members of my team. Grisham was one of those members.

"Listen, pops. I'm old as shit and ain't got time to be chasin' no fuckin' puss' ass *traitre*."

Dimochka McQueen, or Dime, is my father. Although I never knew him growing up, my pops had saved my ass after I killed my mother's boyfriend, Lester. The funny thing was my mother knew where Dime was the entire time I was a kid. She just didn't want to be with him cuz of the lifestyle he was a part of. Francesca hated I had become what she fought so hard to keep me away from. Still, like father, like son. Only I was

better than my father. Wouldn't you know that my dad also fathered Houston. Crazy, right? My mother had me thinkin' she was outchea on some hoe shit when all along she just didn't want to be with my pops.

Francesca had chosen to struggle rather than receive help from the man she was in love with but couldn't see spending her life with. My parents were cool today with them both dancing around the fact that they wanted to be together. Who was I to get into their business? Shit, I'm tryna fuckin' pull my shawty and ain't have time for grown-er folks' business.

"Think about it, son." Leave it to my pops not to let the shit go.

"Yeah, whateva mane. Get off my fuckin' line." Disconnecting the call, I continued to stare at Chloe's ass while she fried up that chicken.



# Chapter 5

## CHLOE

“So, when’s your birthday, and how old will you be?” I asked Dallas.

We had just finished dinner and were chilling on the living room couch watching one of the *Fast & Furious* movies. Dallas sat on one end of the plush sofa while I sat on the other, sipping on a glass of wine. He was nursing a beer.

Smirking, I could’ve sworn I saw Dallas blush as he smiled. Why did I become aroused every time his glistening fangs peek out? Ugh. Just uncontrollable sex appeal is what Dallas gave off without even trying.

“Thursday and thirty-four.”

My mouth dropped. I suspected Dallas was around Gatah and Stephan’s age, but he was even older than them? My youngest uncle is the same age as Dallas. That was a bit weird, but he carried it so well. The only thing telling was the wisdom behind those blue eyes of his. At almost twenty-five years old, I had no business being attracted to a man ten years my senior. Or did I?

“Close ya mouth, lil’ mama. I said thirty-four, not seventy-four.” He grinned.

Laughing, I sipped my wine. “Whatever. You look good for your age, though.”

Dallas shook his head in amusement. “I’mma still be fine as fuck when I’m a hundred behbeh, fuck you talkin’ ‘bout?”

I almost spit my drink out, laughing. “Shut up, witcho cocky ass!”

Dallas shrugged. “You don’t think I’m fine as fuck, shawty.” Here he was staring at me again.

Staring into the wine glass, I gulped. *Damn, why did he have to put me on the spot?*

“I mean, you’re fine for a light-skinned dude.”

He chuckled. “What’s that supposed to mean ‘for a light-skinned dude’?”

Smiling, I said, “I don’t particularly find light-skinned dudes attractive. I like chocolate skin. Sounds shallow, but it’s just something about a dark-skinned nigga that makes me so...” I let my voice trail off, watching Dallas’ eyes roam from the top of my head to the bottoms of my bare feet.

“Hmm.”

“Like Hollis,” I continued.

Dallas’ head cocked to the side, his eyes flying back to mine. “Oh, so you crushin’ over the homie?”

I really wasn’t. True, Hollis fit the description of a nigga I’d like to talk to and get to know. For some reason, though, I didn’t get the same vibe from Hollis or any other nigga, like I vibed with Dallas. It was like his energy was pulling me to him.

“So, you don’t find me attractive cuz I’m light-skinned? Mama, that’s crazy.” Why did all of Dallas’ words sound like the ‘a’ was replaced with an ‘e’? My goodness, his thick, raspy drawl was just too much for my little coochie.

Clearing my throat, I gulped down the rest of the wine. Placing my feet underneath myself, I got more comfortable on the sofa. “I’m not saying you’re not attractive. I’m saying I’m normally not attracted to lighter complexed guys.”

Dallas mulled over what I said. “Aight. So why me then?”

And here it goes. I didn’t want to explain to Dallas that I’d been dreaming about his ass ever since Gatah and Yaya’s wedding. I mean... every single night, sis. I couldn’t get him out of my head no matter what nigga I went out with. I hadn’t had a decent conversation with a guy since I laid eyes on Dallas. It was like my flirting meter broke when I met Dallas.

Although I was still a virgin, I spent quite a bit of time entertaining guys. Why? Because a bitch be fuckin’ lonely,

that's why. Yeah, I got my best friend Millie, but she is always off on her basketball shit. My girl stayed busy with school and sports, which was cool cuz Millie wanted to be in the WNBA come next season. I was proud of my girl.

However, we rarely spend time together, and I don't have any other friends. I took to Yaya and Mariah, but I couldn't take them any damn where without their husbands or my cousins acting a damn fool. Besides, them hoes had kids, and I ain't have nobody but me.

I couldn't even see my mom and dad like I wanted to. Both of my parents are doing fed time for drug trafficking. While my parents did get down with our family empire, the police had set them up, planting drugs on them. That was eight years ago. I missed my parents so much. If it weren't for the love and support of my family, I wouldn't have made it where I am today.

“Damn, you thinkin’ mighty hard shawty. Fuck I must be losin’ my swag.”

Rolling my eyes, I smirked Dallas’ way. “Wouldn’t you like to know? I’m not about to boost your little head up more than it already is.”

Dallas bit his bottom lip, trying not to smile. “Ain’t nun ‘bout me lil’, my behbeh.”

I choked on my own spit.

I was bent over coughing while Dallas found it funny.

“Whatever nigga, every dude says that.”

“I ain’t every dude.” Mugging me, he exposed his fangs in the sexiest way. My clit jumped, wondering what his mouth could do.

“You talk a lot of shit, you know that?” I goaded.

Dallas hunched his wide shoulders. “I talk what I know I can back up, shawty. One day you’ll see that, yahurme.” He turned away from me, then took a swig of his beer.

My mind told me to leave the subject alone, but the woman in me wanted to be freaky as hell right now.

“One day? What’s wrong with today? Right now?”

It turned me on like crazy to watch Dallas’ eyes slide over my body. He did it in such a way it was almost like he physically touched me.

“Come here, *chérie*.”

I ain’t know what the hell a *chérie* was, but I crawled my ass over to him. My nerves started kicking in when I neared him. Dallas reached for me, pulling me into his lap. This is the closest we’d been since we’d hugged at the wedding.

Sitting atop his massive thighs, I took in his clean, male scent mixed with Chanel cologne. His white tee clung to his chest, showing every curve of his chest and powerful shoulders and arms. My eyes landed on each of the exposed tattoos, trying to make an imprint in my mind.

Reaching a hand up, Dallas ran all five of his fingers down my face. My body shivered. Whether it was because his touch tickled me or turned me on, it was a combination of both.

“You’re beautiful.” Dallas gripped my chin, bringing my face toward his.

Heart thudding in my chest, I leaned into him, accepting his thick lips. Without hesitation, Dallas turned the kiss from a peck to a full-blown orgasm. He pulled my tongue into his mouth, sucking it like it would give him the nectar needed to survive. His hand smoothed up the back of my neck and into my hair, gripping the short strands. Bending my head to the angle he wanted, Dallas deepened the kiss. I hungrily matched his tongue’s strokes, eliciting a moan from deep in his chest.

The shrill of a telephone knocked me out of the haze I was in.

Groaning, Dallas reached for his phone. It was a special ringtone, so I guessed the call was important. He rarely answered his phone when he was around me, and it would ring. I went to move off of his lap. Dallas gripped my thigh,

trying to keep me in place, but I maneuvered out of his lap. As soon as I was on my feet, I made a dash for the bedroom I was occupying. Dallas' arrogant chuckle following me.

Plopping down on the bed, I grabbed my phone off of the nightstand. I needed something to get my mind off of what just happened between us. As I scrolled through today's top news, my mouth dropped when I saw a familiar name.

*NBA star Kevin Blankenship was pronounced dead this evening after his car left the highway and struck a tree, instantly bursting into flames. The coroner's office confirmed that the body is that of Kevin Blankenship. The cause of his death has been listed as blunt force trauma.*

What?

With my heart racing, I dialed Millie's number.

"You must've seen the news?"

"Mills, why didn't you call me?"

Millie sighed. "Cuz he was a fuckin' asshole anyway for putting his hands on you. Karma came around real quick on that nigga."

I smacked my teeth. "That's not nice. He's still someone's child." I felt terrible about Kevin's accident.

"Whatever, tell me how things are with you and Big D."

Scoffing, I disconnected the call. *Big D!* Yeah, Big D alright, which is why I was gonna stay my ass away from him. Not only was I scared of the dick, but I was also scared of that crazy nigga too. A part of me knew he'd killed Kevin, and I didn't know how to feel about that.

## DALLAS

"Yeah, nigga."

"Fuck, why you soundin' like a nigga don' blocked ya from some pussy or sum?"

Leaning my head back on the couch, I gripped my hard ass dick. Chloe didn't know how she had just been fuckin'

saved. I was about to ruin behbeh's life. My dick was so fuckin' hard that I would've been fuckin' shawty for a few days.

"What it do, behbeh?" Houston, my baby brother, was my heart. For real. I loved this lil' nigga like I birthed his ass. He was seventeen and a whole handful for my mother, which was why I made regular trips to Dallas to get on his ass whenever he got out of line.

"When you get here Saturday, make sure ya talk to mama. She's on that bullshit."

Rubbing my eyes, I asked, "The fuck you mean?"

"Mane, she on my shit about me tryna throw this lil' party Saturday night."

I huffed. "Nah, lil' nigga, the only thing that should be on ya mind is that game. Fuck partyin', nigga. You can do that shit in college. Don't let any of this popularity bullshit go to ya head. I don't told ya ass that shit."

Sometimes Houston could be a little arrogant. I mean, I was a little too, but arrogance in a young fella was sometimes deadly.

"Ugh, hea you go. I swea you stay takin' mama side. Y'all won't let a nigga breathe for shit."

Clearing my throat, I was about to go full big ass brother on this hard-headed ass boy. "Aye yo', first pipe that shit down. Ain't nobody tryna stunt ya lil' nigga. Shit, I was ya fuckin' age, and I understand, but I could've gave a fuck 'bout all that partyin' shit back then. I was tryna make it up outchea ya' dig. It's a time for all that partyin', but for right nie, ya need to stay focused on makin' it up outta high school. Yahurme? It doesn't take but a second for shit to change, and ya know that."

Houston was quiet on the other end, but I knew he heard every word I'd said.

"Yeah, whateva, bro. I'mma get ya ass so drunk one night you gon' wake up wit' a gang of bitches! Ya celibate ass."

I chortled, shaking my head. “Nah, I’m good on these hoes outchea. Ya betta make sho’ you keepin’ it cool too, nahmean.”

“Most definitely, dawg. Ain’t no bitch finna have me ‘round here dirty. No suh. I’ll kill a muhfucka.” Houston was dead ass serious too.

Unfortunately, he was just like me when it came to the bullshit. He ain’t play no games. My brother hadn’t caught a body yet, but I was sure it would come soon enough. I hated to say that. However, Dime’s blood *did* run through both of us. No matter how far we’d try to run from the beast inside of us, it would surely one day surface.

Hanging up with Houston, I needed something potent to get my mind off of fuckin’ the brains out of Chloe. *Fuck!* Mane, her lips were just sexy as fuck. With the way she was sucking on my tongue, I wondered if she’d suck on my dick just like that. I was getting hard all over again. Going into the kitchen, I reached for my stash that I kept near the stove. I had a few pre-rolled blunts for occasions like this when I didn’t have time to roll shit.

Stepping out of the kitchen, through the sliding glass doors, and onto the patio, I lit the end of the blunt, dragging heavily from it. The potent herbs immediately began calming me down. Months ago, I used to smoke so much that my mama begged me to slow it down. Not that she had a problem with it. She just thought I was using the herbs to cover up underlying mental issues I’d suffered being a part of Dime’s team. She didn’t want me to mask the issues but seek help.

Fuck that shit. I knew how to control myself. If I ever felt out of control, I’d deal with shit then. Until that time came, the Kush was gon’ have to be a nigga’s best friend. I did, however, appease my mom by slowing it up. This was my first blunt all day, and I hadn’t felt the need to kill a muthafucka. Besides Rochelle tryna get the snot slapped outta her, I’d call today a win. I guess I was making progress.

Finishing up the blunt, I sighed deeply, praying I’d get some sleep tonight. With Chloe a couple of doors down from

my room, that shit was gonna be hard as hell, literally and figuratively.



# Chapter 6

## CHLOE

Ooh bitch, do you know how hard it is to dodge a six-foot-six, two-hundred-fifty-pound nigga? Hell no! That's what I've been doing for the last day and a half. Let me tell you. It wasn't easy. It didn't matter where I tried to go in the house. I smelled Dallas. Even when he went to work yesterday and this morning, it still felt like he was in the house. It was as if his spirit was with me or something. I didn't know, but it was strange as fuck.

I couldn't even be to myself cuz Rock and Pebbles followed my ass everywhere, like they were watching me or something, making sure I didn't prowl in Dallas' shit. Hell, them damn dogs were so big, I ain't wanna talk too loud for fear of spooking them. They even slept in the room with me last night.

The only time Dallas and I talked today was for him to let me know that he was on his way to the firm for a bit and to hit him up if I needed anything. I requested a small vanity and extra pillows, which he found funny. I would be here a couple more days and wanted to feel as comfortable as possible, not to mention I was on edge because of the news about Kevin being killed.

My soul knew that Dallas was behind this, no matter what the coroner's office said. I was from a family of savages, and they made all kinds of shit disappear. I would leave it alone for now. Truthfully, I didn't really want to know the answer.

Dallas' birthday party was scheduled to start in a couple of hours. While he was at work yesterday, I found myself at the mall shopping for something to wear. The outfit I was gonna wear tonight was sure to turn heads. I couldn't wait! Maybe I could find me a nigga to get my mind off of Dallas.

My ringing cell brought me back to the present. A huge smile graced my face when I saw the correctional institution number where my father was located. Pressing the talk button, I waited for the customary monotone voice that stated where the call was from and the rules of talking on the line. When that was over, my dad's smooth, deep voice came through the line.

"Baby girl."

Every time I heard either of my parent's voices, I cried. "Hey, daddy." I sniffled. It was so hard with my parents being in prison. I just wanted them home with me.

"Don't you start nie. What's been up? I'm havin' some crazy feelings an' it bet' not be about no nigga."

Smiling through my tears, I replied, "Everything's good, daddy. I'm just on a little vacation. Nothing serious."

"Hmm, hm. Well, don't make me have to fuck some lil' raggedy muthafucka up."

Laughing at my dad, I knew he wasn't playing. "Yes, sir. Are you doing okay?"

Talking to my parents was getting more and more challenging the older I got. I wanted to visit them, but they wouldn't allow it. Neither of them wanted me to see them in that type of situation. I understood, but it hurt. My parents did their best to make it feel as though they weren't away. I talked to them almost every other day, and I send them photos and cards regularly. I missed them so much my heart ached.

"Baby girl, I told you that you never have to worry about your mother and me. We're good. I promise you. All I want for you is for you to be happy. As much as it pains me to say this, when I get out of here, I actually want to see yo' little ass settled down with a family and shit. Don't be 'round here givin' yo' shit to these niggas that ain't 'bout shit. Get you a nigga that's gon' bust a muthafucka head wide open if anybody so much as look at ya' wrong."

I laughed at my dad's crazy ass. That's exactly how he was over my mother, and vice versa. I wondered if I'd ever

find the type of love they had. The type of love that weathered anything and came out stronger. Surprisingly, my mind drifted to Dallas. He'd fit one of the characteristics my father had just mentioned. If I knew nothing else, I knew Dallas would kill for me. My dad and I talked for a few more minutes until his time was up. He told me that my mother would call me tomorrow and to stay safe. I promised him I would then disconnected the call with tears streaming down my face.

*God, please bring my parents' home.* I prayed the same thing every night, for how long I couldn't remember. A part of me just knew that one day a miracle would take place to free the two people who meant the most to me. I was hopeful that day would come, even now.

I hadn't heard from Milli today, so I shot her a quick text.

**Me:** *Wyd bitch?*

**Mills:** *Mindin' my bznness.*

**Me:** *\*eye roll\* Yeen got nun.*

**Mills:** *LOL, right.*

**Me:** *Goin' out for D's bday 2nite.*

**Mills:** *\*middle finger\**

**Me:** *I'mma try to enjoy myself w/o u.*

**Mills:** *U better... and give that nigga sum, hoe!*

I busted out laughing through my tears. Along with my parents, I missed being around Millie too. She was one of the people who kept me goin' on days I would struggle.

Sitting at the vanity, Dallas had so nicely purchased for me today. I pulled out my makeup to start getting ready.

"What you cryin' fa, shawty?"

Dallas' voice boomed through the room. Startled, I turned from the vanity mirror, quickly wiping my eyes.

"Oh, nothing. I was just talking to my dad and a friend."

Dallas nodded, taking in my partially clad body.

“Need to talk?”

How sweet of him to want to listen to me. “Nah, I’m good. Happy birthday, by the way. I need to start getting ready so that I can turn up!” I giggled, gyrating my hips on the stool I was sitting on.

Dallas grinned. “Yeah, aight. Thank you, lil’ mama. I’mma pack two guns fa that ass.”

Scoffing, I rolled my eyes at him before turning back to the mirror.

“Don’t come behind me half-dressed eitha.”

“Half-dressed? Anything I wear is always classy.”

“Hmm, hm. Don’t play wit’ me shawty. Ya ass will be stayin’ hea. I ain’t got time to be breakin’ muhfuckas necks cuz you wanna be hot in the ass. It’s my birthday. I’d like to enjoy it if you don’t mind.”

“Trust me, I am not getting in your way tonight. If anything, you need to be worried about all them hoes that are gon’ be on yo’ ass. Just for future references, if you plan on fuckin’ a bitch or two tonight, will you please not do it here? That’s tacky. And frankly, I could do without the noise or the smell,” I relayed, turning my nose up.

Dallas laughed. “Shawty, you got me fucked up. Only my lady is entitled to them kinda demands. You tryna be that?”

Dumbfounded, my words got stuck in my throat.

“Hmm, hm. Finish gettin’ ready, *chèrie*.” Dallas walked away from the room door, leaving me to stare after him.

## DALLAS

A couple of hours later, I was convinced Chloe was tryna kill a nigga. She came out of the room dressed in light-washed, heavily distressed denim shorts that showed off all her brown thighs. When she turned around, her ass cheeks were spilling out. She paired the shorts with an army green

long-sleeve half sweatshirt that was cinched under her perky titties. I could tell she didn't have a bra on, and I could swear I saw the outline of nipple rings. The army green stilettos combat-looking boots on her feet showed a peek of her pretty toes. Her hair was styled perfectly, the short strands glistening against her forehead. My fingers longed to pull that shit again.

“Mane, you on dat bullshit.” She laughed like something was funny, but I wasn't laughing. “Yeen comin' behind me like dat.”

Chloe nodded. “Since I can't tell you what to do *in* yo' shit, you can't tell me what to do *with* my shit, meaning my body and clothing purchases. That's only reserved for my nigga.”

Clenching my back teeth, I kept the retort I had on my tongue from spewing forward. Chloe was skatin' on real thin ice with that fuckin' smart ass mouth she had. But hell, she was right. I ain't like it, though.

“I'm tellin' ya ass nie, don't get fucked up.”

She popped a hand on her hip. “Who gon'—”

“Aht, aht, lil' behbeh. That's enough of that fuckin' back talkin' fa tonight, yahurme. Let's go.”



The whole ride to the club, I struggled to keep my composure. Chloe had the interior of the truck smelling like vanilla and cherries. Hell, my dick was trying to bust through these fuckin' jeans I had on. It pissed me off, though, cuz I knew shawty knew exactly what the fuck she was doing to a nigga.

We made it to club Voo, my favorite spot. While I don't go out often, when I did, I came here. I personally knew the owners and all the staff. Whenever I was at club Voo, I was able to carry my heat and do as I please on the property. Meaning, if I had to body a nigga up in dis bitch, they weren't gon' say shit!

A Meek Mill and Drake joint banged through the speakers sending the club into a frenzy.

Chloe was already shakin' her ass before we made it inside good. Every nigga we passed had their eyes glued to shawty. I wasn't mad or no shit like that. Shit... look at my bitch nigga. Ain't she bad? That's the fuck how I felt. I made sure to stand close to her, my hand at the small of her back leading her to VIP.

I spotted Rochelle waiting at the entrance of my VIP section lookin' salty as fuck. Of course, she was dressed to fuckin' kill in a badass leather catsuit. Behbeh was tryin' like hell to get my attention, but that shit was long gone. It belonged to the half-naked bomb bitch walking in front of me twerking her fat ass up the fuckin' stairs. I started to smack that shit. Damn, I wanted to smack that shit!

Chloe entered the VIP first, walking right past Rochelle to give Hollis a church hug. That's all that shit better had been. The fact that she told me Hollis was more her type of nigga had me eyeing my dawg like I was a fuckin' hatin' ass nigga. And I was neva that.

"Muhfucka, you lookin' like you finna take a bite outta her ass," Hollis clowned.

I shot him the bird before chuckling. We both watched as Chloe sat on the sofa to the left, waving at the only other people in the section. Brady, Cam, and Tre had the dumbest, thirstiest fuckin' looks on their faces. Them niggas was probably tryna figure out how to bag her.

While Cam and Tre had never laid eyes on Chloe, Brady had already met Chloe at the office. I had to keep my eye on that nigga. He hadn't personally done shit to me. It was just the subtle mugs he'd throw my way as if the nigga were jealous of me or sum.

"Happy birthday Dallas," Rochelle stated, sidling up next to me. She tried to wrap her arms around my neck, but I dodged that shit. She settled for a kiss on my cheek, which I mugged her for.

“Thanks, Ro, but keep them lips to yaself, lil’ behbeh.”

Rochelle’s eyebrows bunched together. Her eyes wandered to Chloe, who was engrossed in a conversation with Brady. Rochelle was sizing Chloe up again, wondering what Chloe had that had a nigga like me attracted to her. Rochelle knew the kind of bitches I usually went for, especially age-wise. I had never fucked with a shawty as young as Chloe, at least not on a serious level. My ass was definitely tryna be on a serious level with Chloe.

Rochelle handed me a small bag with a jewelry box inside. I hope she ain’t break the bank for whatever it was, cuz she still wasn’t gettin’ the dick.

“Thank you, ma’,” I expressed genuinely.

Rochelle smiled big as hell, her dimples showing in her cheeks.

“Alright, let’s turn up, nie!” Hollis’ dumb ass shouted.

Bottle girls came into the section, placing different liquors on the glass table in the middle of the section. Rochelle was trying to steer me toward the sofa she was headed to. I instead made my way over to Chloe, sitting next to her. My presence halted whatever she and Brady were talkin’ about while Cam and Tre’ sat there lookin’ like two sick puppy dogs.

Chloe turned to me, confusion on her face as I was literally sitting side by side with her. Rolling her eyes at me, she turned back to Brady to continue whatever conversation they were having. I looked across the table to find Hollis laughing, and Rochelle with her nose turned up. They could both kiss my ass. This was my fuckin’ party.

Gatah and Stephan slid through along with Dirk, Buck, and Skies. Chloe looked like she wanted to fall through the floor when she saw them niggas walk in.

“Why you ain’t tell me they were comin’?” she panicked.

“Girl, if you’on calm ya’ lil’ ass down. Them niggas ain’t stuntin’ you.”

For real. These niggas were my crew. I have done some crazy shit with them. So, hell yeah, they knew they fuckin' cousin was holed up with me. The fuck kinda nigga I look like keepin' *them* type of secrets an' shit. Nah, behbeh could be mad at me all she wanted, but shiiitt... I was bangin' with these niggas and trusted them with my life, and I ain't trust too many people.

“What it do, Dee?”

The homies dapped me up, each of them finding a seat. Gatah and Stephan shooed Brady away from Chloe with a mug. I laughed hard as hell. Chloe just smacked her teeth in aggravation.

“Y'all niggas get on my nerves,” she fussed.

Shrugging, I motioned for a bottle girl. “Get me a Bud Light.” I wasn't a heavy drinker, and besides, I had a bag of blunts to go around.

“Shut yo' ass up! I outta body slam you on this sofa for tryna be on some sneak shit,” Gatah advised.

It seemed as if Chloe's night was ruined. She pulled her phone out, ignoring the rest of what Gatah and Stephan were both bitchin' about. I told them niggas I handled shit. Chloe gave me the meanest look before putting her head back in her phone. Pulling a blunt from my pocket, I lit it and tried to enjoy myself. With Chloe being mad at a nigga that shit was gon' be hard.

The party was laid back for the most part, which is how I liked shit. After the blunts were passed around, everyone who smoked was high as fuck. Those who indulged in liquor were lit but sober enough in case some shit popped off.

Chloe had come around, dancing in her seat to certain songs, ignoring me and the homies. The only person she seemed to give some play was Hollis. He was eating that shit up too. That fucked with me cuz Hollis knew a nigga was feelin' Chloe. I'd told him about her on a number of occasions.



The fact that he was smiling all in her face had me ready to fuck his ass up.

Hollis peeped that I was grilling him, causing him to slide his ass back where the fuck he came from. Chloe didn't see the interaction, so when Hollis excused himself, she just smiled.



As the night continued, we enjoyed good music and drinks. The crew started heading out the closer it became to midnight. Gatah and Stephan were tryna get back to their women, and I couldn't blame the homies for that. They each blessed me with a gift along with the rest of the crew. I had a pocket full of gift cards cuz them niggas were lazy as fuck.

"I've never seen you block over a chick before, Not even me," Rochelle commented. She'd found her way over to sit next to me. I thought I was doing good giving off that don't fuck wit' me' vibe, but obviously, she was ignoring that shit.

"Ro, stop mindin' my fuckin' business shawty. You really finna piss me the fuck off wit' that bullshit, yahurme." As you can tell, I don't tolerate a lot of shit before I lose it. Here I was high off the Kush, and shawty was blowin' my shit.

Hearing giggles next to me, I turned my attention to Chloe, who had her phone out in front of her, presumably taking photos. She was poutin' her lips so sexily I had to taste them muhfuckas again.

Leaning in her space, I kissed Chloe's cheek. She slightly moved away, smiling. Placing my arm on the back of the sofa behind her, I pulled her back toward me.

"I'm on LIVE," she said, panning the camera to catch me.

I grilled the viewers, making sure my diamonds blinded them, then used my right hand to slide up her throat. Biting my bottom lip, I made it clear to Chloe what the fuck I was 'bout to do. Her breath stalled in her throat, but the lust pouring from her was overwhelming.

# Chapter 7

## CHLOE

The background noise of the club faded as Dallas kissed me. This kiss was so full of passion and raw sex that I felt my panties flood. The way he was gripping my throat with his strong, tatted hand turned me on. My nipples were hard, pressing against the fabric of my sweater.

Dallas broke the kiss, his lips grazing my cheek to go to my ear.

“I’m ready to eat my cake.” Eyes bugged, I stared deep into Dallas’ blue orbs. I didn’t know whether it was the vodka or the fuckin’ nigga himself, but I found myself nodding my head.

Feeling my phone vibrate in my hand it occurred to me that my LIVE was still going. The comments coming through were hilarious. I promptly turned my phone off, embarrassed.

“Come on, shawty, let’s go.”

Taking Dallas’ hand, I let him lead me from the VIP section. I ignored Rochelle’s stale ass face as well as Brady, who, although cute, was too fuckin’ thirsty for me. Hollis smirked as he dapped Dallas up when we passed by him. I returned his smirk with one of my own.

The alcohol was definitely the issue. I’d only had two drinks, but damn, I didn’t remember making it back to Dallas’ house. Neither one of us said anything as Dallas opened the front door to let us in.

“I’m gonna go check on Rock and Pebbles. Five minutes.” Dallas licked his lips as if he were already fantasizing about the way I tasted.

While he went to do his thing, I decided to wash the club off of me.

I must’ve taken forever cuz when I came out of the room, Dallas was sitting on the couch in a pair of gray sweats

and nothing else. His chest was so damn thick, rippled, and tattooed every damn where. Oh my goodness. I wasn't gonna survive the night. I didn't know what the fuck I was thinking. Shit, I wasn't thinking. The fuckin' alcohol was!

Sauntering toward Dallas, I handed him the small bag with his gift in it. I'd purchased him a pair of platinum cufflinks.

He took the gift bag, blushing.

“Thank you, *chérie*.”

Without even looking in the bag, he sat it to the side, pulling me by my legs to stand in between his. I had on a cotton night set, nothing special. With Dallas ogling me the way he was, my body heated up, making my nipples stand out.

Dallas reached under my shirt, his hands grazing my abdomen, making my body shiver. As his hands traveled north, he palmed my breasts, drawing a moan from deep within me. Dallas leaned forward, placing wet kisses on my stomach and belly button.

Lifting my tank top even more, I lifted my arms as he slid it over my head. His eyes glossed over as he marveled at my pierced nipples. The gold hoops that hung from them sparkled.

In a flash, Dallas was on his feet, picking me up like I ain't weigh shit. Turning, he positioned me on the sofa until my hips were damn near falling off. I only got a glance at his hard dick pressing up against the fabric of his sweats. Was I intimidated by that pole? Hell yeah, bitch!

All thoughts fled when Dallas' mouth locked around my right breast. I was a C cup, not too small, not too big. My head fell back as his tongue played with my nipple and ring. It felt like a flood was happening between my legs as my body shivered. Dallas switched to my left breast, showing it the same treatment.

His hands roamed down to my shorts, sliding them down my legs. I didn't have any panties on, which he obviously liked from the way he growled. My pussy was bald;

it had to be in that Florida heat. The only tattoo I had was along my pelvic bone. It was an angel wing on both sides.

Dallas licked over both, causing me to spread my legs for him.

“Fuck lil’ mama, she ready as fuck.”

Dallas’ typical deep raspy drawl was more pronounced. I barely understood what he was saying cuz my ass was in the clouds. At least I thought I was in the clouds until I felt his tongue slide across my pussy. My body jerked at the unfamiliar feeling.

“Mmm, fuck...” Dallas moaned against my southern lips.

His tongue glided over me swiftly, playing with the most sensitive part of me. The sucking and slurping sounds mixed with his growling and moaning had me crying out in no time. Yet Dallas kept going.

“That fat ass pussy taste so fuckin’ good shawty...”

I came again, my body feeling like it was floating, and I was unable to stop it. The last thing I remember was screaming Dallas’ name as I came, for I don’t know what time.



“Hello.” I didn’t give a fuck that I was calling Millie before the sun even came up. “Bitch, I’mma slap ya ass so good when I see you!” I growled through the Bluetooth.

Millie’s half-sleep voice cackled on the other end. I didn’t know what the fuck she found funny. Here I was, up at the ass crack of dawn runnin’ for my damn life from Dallas’ evil ass.

“This is not a laughing matter, Mills. This nigga’s got a demon for a mouthpiece!”

Laughing, Millie asked, “Bitch, what the hell are you talking about?”

I groaned even as my pussy throbbed. “Hoe, is you listenin’? This light-bright ass nigga, with those fuckin’

platinum fangs done killed a bitch!”

Millie was laughing so hard I couldn't make out what she was trying to say.

“Mills. Why yeen tell me not to fuck with these good head havin' ass niggas? Did you forget I'm a virgin? I need to sample at least three dicks in my life before I settle down. Fuckin' with that French nigga my ass ain't gon' see nan dick but his.”

For real. What the hell was I supposed to do now that I knew what Dallas' lips and tongue felt like on my coochie. *Honk!* Shit, I was gonna wreck my ride on this interstate.

“CiCi! Where the hell are you?” Millie sounded wide awake now.

Mugging no one in particular, I smacked my teeth. “Heading my wanna be grown ass back to Pensacola. The fuck. Ain't no way I can be up in that man's house after what he did to me. Hoe, I passed out... literally!” I shook my head, ashamed. “Hell naw, Dallas can keep that spirit seeker to his damn self.”

Millie sounded out of breath from laughing. “CiCi, girl, turn your crazy ass around and go back to that man. You said you'd try to have fun last night, and you damn sure did, baby! I saw your LIVE. It looked like you were having a damn good time. That kiss, though!”

Sighing, I shook my head again.

“Millie, I can't with him. Dallas is too fuckin' cocky and sexy for his own damn good. Besides, you know I do not mess with no light-skinned niggas.”

“Really, CiCi? Girl, Dallas might be light-skinned, but he got them dark chocolate nigga ways. All rough and shit. I watched the way he was tonguing you down, CiCi. His tongue looked like it *could* do some damage.”

“You know what, Mills? I am not listening to you.”

Millie chuckled. “I say let him break you in. Shit, he rocks with your people, so at least you know he's good.”

Millie did have a point, but still. My young ass ain't have no business messing with a dude like Dallas. He was liable to fuck my whole life up.

“Whatever, hoe. He better stay away from me before I sic Gatah and Stephan on his ass. I can't keep dyin' over some fuckin' head, you hear me!” I hung up on Millie as she died laughing.



The rest of my ride was smooth. The first thing I did when I made it to my apartment was shower and change into something for a quick trip into my office. I had a cozy little office in downtown Pensacola not too far from Yaya's boutique, LIV. She and I had lunch together often, but I was gon' have to try and dodge her ass today. The remnants of Dallas eating the life outta me were still strong, so I needed to steer clear of all family. I *walked* like a hoe that had her box snacked on!

My dumb ass snuck into my own fuckin' office, throwing a quick wave at Latoya, the front desk receptionist for the building. I kept it moving until I reached the elevator, taking it to the third floor.

The office space that I rented was a two-room unit that overlooked downtown Pensacola. The other room I used to sleep in if I ever found myself working into the middle of the night. Although I wrote for one of the major papers in the city, most people didn't know that I wrote books on the side. Besides Yaya and Mariah, none of my family knew about this side of me.

I considered this office my studio. Whenever I stepped in here, it was like I transformed into *her*. Blue is my pen name. I donned that name after meeting Dallas, of course. His blue eyes reminded me of sex, deep penetrating, emotional, pussy throbbing, dick-pounding sex. *Shit!* I was tryna get my mind off this nigga, and here I was fantasizing about him.

Dropping my purse and cell phone on the mahogany desk, I plopped down into my leather desk chair. Leaning back, I shook my head in defeat. Why did I have to meet

Dallas? Why did my body want this nigga like it craved him? Not only that, but why did I feel my soul pulling him to me and vice versa? A part of me knew that Dallas would show his face, and soon. I was just going to get as much work done as possible before he showed up and destroyed my fucking life.

## DALLAS

Chuckling to myself, I wasn't surprised to see that Chloe had ditched me. Shit, after the head I gave her ass, she should've been still asleep. I got it, though. Behbeh was scared of me.

Tasting Chloe had me still feeling some type of way. I was done for the moment that I stuck my tongue in her tunnel, and her walls gripped me. Her pussy was the best birthday cake and present I'd ever had. I was gon' have Chloe the way I really wanted her soon. The fact that she up and left pissed me off, but I'd teach her about runnin' away from me. Chloe could run all she wanted to. Daddy was gonna come after her ass every time.

I'd give Chloe the time to drive to Pensacola to get her mind right. Fuck a friend zone or whateva she was gon' try to pull on me. Ain't no fuckin' friends when I don' ate the box, and I'on eat shit that ain't prepared in the kitchen. Fuck you mean. The only person eva gon' see this freak shit from me was high-tailing it back home at this present moment.

I just had to taste Chloe, though. The way her fat ass was sittin' in them jeans last night had me hard right fuckin' now. Like damn muthafucka, calm ya big ass down! My dick ain't seen a pussy in months, and the nigga was beggin' me to fuck the lining out of Chloe's pussy. However, a man like me knew Chloe was green. She was pure, and I loved that shit. It made me know I had to go after her ass harder. If any nigga was gonna have her, it was gonna be me. The way I'm feeling, I'd kill any muthafucka that tried to get in my way.



It was a little before noon when I strolled into the building where Chloe's office was located. Call me crazy or whateva, but I wasn't walkin' out this bitch without her.

Smiling at two pretty brown-skinned receptionists staring at me, I walked past them on the way to the elevators.

“Excuse me, sir. All visitors have to check-in,” the darker one of them instructed.

Pivoting on my Jordan’s, I approached the desk they were sitting at, eyeing me up and down like I was the last supper.

“Sorry ‘bout that, I was headed up to see my girl.”

Once I made it to Pensacola and realized Chloe wasn’t at her apartment, I knew she’d be here. She didn’t know I knew, but behbeh girl was a beast with the pen. I’d read her last three books. Reading what she’d written gave me a little insight into her mind, and I liked what the fuck it showed me.

Besides knowing about Chloe’s address and side hustle, I knew a little about her personal life. Not too much to seem like a creep, but enough to know that I was gon’ take care of lil’ behbeh once I got her.

“Your girl?” the other chick asked.

Nodding, I said, “Chloe Smith.”

Both women gawked, mouth open and all.

I chuckled. “Do I need a pass or sum, or can I go on up?”

I was gon’ holla at Chloe about this unsecured bullshit of a building she was working out of. My wifey wasn’t ‘bout to be vulnerable like this. These two women sittin’ here didn’t know me from shit and were more concerned about my appearance. For all they knew, I could’ve been headed to murk some-fuckin’-body.

“Uhm... Chloe?” The woman’s name tag read Sierra. The other Alana.

“Yeah, my shawty.”

They each eyed me curiously. Finally, Alana typed some shit on her computer before handing me a badge.

“Turn it back in before you leave. She’s on the thi—”



“I got it. Thank you, behbeh.” I pocketed the badge, then went for the elevators again.

Females were crazy. A nigga could be the fuckin’ grim reaper, but they let looks deceive them. Just like niggas. We do the same shit. Fuck, look at how my slow ass was chasin’ behind this hard-headed ass girl. But, aye, that’s my fuckin’ shawty, so I can chase that ass if I want to.

The elevator opened on Chloe’s floor. I walked down the short hallway until I came to the door for her office. The nameplate read *BLUE*, and I grinned. Shawty thought she was slick. I wondered if the name had anything to do with my eyes. For so long, I hated these shits. That was until I got older and found out the *real* bitches loved them. Although I wasn’t that hoe nigga, I indulged in a few bitches.

As I twisted the knob, the door opened quietly. The office space was clean and fresh. The covers of Chloe’s published work hung on the walls along with many of her accolades. I was proud of Chloe. Although she hid this part of herself from most people, I could understand wanting anonymity. Shit, I was like that myself.

Moving past the gallery portion of the office, I peeked into Chloe’s door. She was sitting at her desk, eyebrows bunched together as she furiously typed away at the laptop.

“If you’re delivering something, please just place it in the front. I will come out and sign it,” she said, not looking up. See, me and shawty were gon’ fall out. No way should she be in here as engrossed in her work as she was and had no idea who was coming in or out.

Pushing the door open, I entered the room. “It’s clear G and Steph ain’t been up in here cuz I can guarantee ya they’d be on ya ass fa havin’ this unsafe shit, my behbeh.”

Chloe clutched her chest as her eyes flew to me.

“Dallas,” she croaked.

“Hmm, hm. Don’t fuckin’ Dallas me, shawty. Why the hell you keep runnin’ from a nigga?”

Rounding Chloe's desk, I leaned against it, folding my arms across my chest. Staring down at her, I smirked at her shocked expression. I tried not to focus on the half-cut shirt she was wearing, showing off her sexy belly button.

“You got me fucked up ya’ know that?”

Clearing her throat, Chloe narrowed her eyes at me. “Here you go talkin’ shit. Has it occurred to you that maybe I don’t like you like that, Dallas?”

Licking my lips, Chloe did exactly what I knew she’d do. I couldn’t help it. I laughed.

“Shawty, ya’ lyin’ like hell. What the fuck is ya’ problem, huh? Tell me. I ain’t no sucka ass nigga to be chasin’ after ya’ ass, nor am I on no stalker shit. If you straight up don’t wanna fuck wit’ me, just say that. The thing is, I know ya lyin’. You’re just scared.”

Chloe studied my face for a minute. I waited patiently to see what she’d say. If this girl sat here and lied to me, I was gon’ hem her ass up against this desk and prove her wrong. Was I coming on too strong? Hell, fuck no! I done been as patient with behbeh as a nigga could be. Chloe needed to tighten the fuck up fa sho’.

Finally, she smacked her teeth. “You’re so arrogant I can’t stand it,” she sassed.

Shrugging, I replied, “If I were ya nigga, ya wouldn’t be sayin’ that shit.”

Her breath hitched, and her eyes bucked. “And what do you think I’d be saying?”

Bending to become eye level with Chloe, I brushed my fingers down her face. Her body shivered under my touch. “You’d be tellin’ me how much you love this dick and don’t stop.”

Her eyes darkened as she bit her bottom lip.

“Can I have you, Chloe? No bullshit, lil’ behbeh. Fa myself?”

I bent my body down until I was squatting, encasing her between my legs. Pulling her by her calf muscles until her knees touched my chest, I propped my forearms on the arms of her chair, effectively closing her in. My face was close to hers, smelling the vanilla coffee on her breath.

“Please don’t hurt me, Dallas,” she whispered as she folded.

“Neva shawty. Lemme have sum suga.” Chloe was the most beautiful woman I’d ever known. Just the thought of her truly being mine brought me joy.

Chloe leaned into me as her sweet lips touched mine. This girl didn’t know how gon’ she had me. She would find out soon enough. Standing, I brought her with me as our kiss deepened. Grabbing her ass, I lifted her short ass off of the floor, holding her to me as I kissed her like this was the last time.

Someone clearing their throat interrupted us. Chloe turned to see who it was while I continued to kiss down her scented neck.

“Uh... bitch, does Shaun and Stephan know ‘bout this?”

Yaya’s voice made me grin against Chloe’s neck.

# Chapter 8

## CHLOE

I could've fallen right through the floor when I heard Yaya's voice. Here I was being hemmed up by Dallas, his hands gripping my ass, while we tongued each other down like it was no tomorrow. He thought it was funny what Yaya just asked, but I didn't. My cousins were gon' kill me.

"Hey Ya! Wh-, I mean, how you doin' girl..." I stuttered.

Yaya shook her head, pretending to be ashamed as Dallas continued to kiss down my neck like he didn't know we'd just been interrupted.

"Hmm, hm. Does my man know about this?" she asked again.

Dallas chuckled against my neck. "Ya' mans is cool. G knows whassup, Steph too. So, both y'all calm y'all lil' asses down," Dallas chided.

"Wait, did you tell them about us?" I screeched.

Dallas mugged me.

"I wish you would give a fuck 'bout what they *could* say. I realize they fam an' all, but you're grown as fuck, lil' behbeh. I'm ya nigga now, so don't think you runnin' from me again. The only time them niggas gon' need to see me is if I fuck shit up, and that ain't hapnin'."

Yaya grinned. "Ayeeee," her silly ass instigated.

"Nie, I want *my* woman to get her shit so we can dip. Get ya nails and shit don', ya hair. We gotta hit the road afterwards."

"Huh? Hit the road for what? Why can't you just stay with me?" I asked question after question. Dallas and I live in different cities, so I'd have to adjust to seeing him when I can. I couldn't just uproot my life from Pensacola to New Orleans.

“Houston has his homecoming game tomorrow, and I want you to come with me.”

Blinking, I asked, “To Texas, where your mother is?”

Dallas chuckled. “Yeah, shawty. A little road trip, yahurme. We’ll be back in a few days.”

“Listen, yeen gon’ be b—”

“Chloe,” Yaya fussed, “get yo’ shit and get outta here.”

Rolling my eyes, I stepped out of Dallas’ embrace to shut my laptop down and collect my things.

“I’ll get my nails and toes done. My hair doesn’t need anything done to it yet,” I informed him. He nodded.

“Cool shawty, let’s be out.”

“Hmm, hm. Fast ass,” Yaya commented as I walked past her out of the office.

“Shut up! Worry about them fish I had a dream about last night.”

Yaya choked on the air, going into a coughing fit. Dallas and I both died laughing.

“Hell naw, bitch! My baby is only six months old. I be damned if I’m poppin’ out another one anytime soon!”

“You actin’ like you not finna leave here and run straight to the drug store. Gon’ girl! That’s why them hips lookin’ extra juicy.”

“Shiitt!” Yaya whined.

“Don’t worry, she ain’t gon’ be too far behind ya,” Dallas added his two cents.

My head whipped around to look at him while Yaya cackled.

“Who?”

”*Who?*” Dallas mimicked me. “You, the fuck.”

Balling up my face, I glared at Dallas.

“You can look like that all you want to, mama. Dat don’t move me. Nie, let’s go, we got shit to do.”

“Actually,” Yaya interrupted. “How about I go with Chloe to the shop while you catch up with Gatah. He misses you when you’re not here,” she joked.

Dallas and I laughed.

“Yeah, whateva. Y’all tryna be slick. Don’t make me and G have to come show our asses whereva y’all finna go.”

Giggling, I replied, “Bae, the shop? Who we gon’ cut up with at the nail shop?”

Dallas shrugged. “I’on know, but if I think Mr. Ming tryna hit, I’m comin’ through that bitch blazin’.”

Yaya and I fell out cackling. Dallas did not differ from Gatah and Stephan in bein’ crazy.

“Think it’s a game. Yaya, you know G ain’t wrapped too tight, so I wouldn’t be laughin’ if I was you.”

Yaya smacked her teeth.

“Hmm, hm. Nie gon’ get my woman together. Make sho’ you stop and get that pregnancy test too cuz them hips is lookin’ a lil’ thick, behbeh.”

Yaya glared Dallas’ way. “What? I’m a nigga. I can tell these things.”

“I hate you,” Yaya sneered.

“I love you too, sis.” Dallas rebutted.

Shaking my head, I loved the way Dallas was around the people that were closest to me. He seemed like a part of my family. I wished my parents could meet him. I was having crazy thoughts not to have even laid down with the man yet. However, I was confident there wouldn’t be any issues in that department. Sadly, I knew that once I gave my body to Dallas, I would be his forever. At least from my point of view.

We made it down to the lobby, all eyes on us. My office building was made up of primarily women professionals with a couple of men. During this time of day, the building

was always busy. There was no sense giving the stink eye to none of these hoes eyeing my man cuz he looked damn good in gray joggers and fitted white tee. His gray Jordan's were fresh too. Dallas' blonde dreads were hanging around his shoulders, reaching the middle of his back, taking his sexy, rugged look to another level.

Dallas' blue eyes never strayed to any of the females vying for his attention. His ass was cocky, but at least he wasn't being disrespectful. Most niggas' eyes wondered whether or not they were with their woman. The fact that Dallas was holding my hand tightly in his while strutting past all these bitches like they didn't matter made me felt warm inside. Silly, but true.

"Damn hoe," Yaya said to this one chick, damn near tripping over her feet. "You ain't ever seen a fine nigga before?"

Embarrassed, my cheeks heated. She'd probably seen fine niggas before. Just not as fine as Dallas McQueen.

## **DALLAS**

A nigga felt good as fuck that I finally got Chloe to fuck with me. You couldn't tell me nothin'! I'd been waiting for this for months. I wished it were under different circumstances, but hell, it was still fate.

I hit up Gatah to see where that nigga was at. Chloe would be at least a couple of hours at the nail shop, so I'd burn this time with the homies. When I pulled into the parking lot of the warehouse, a grin crossed my face. I hadn't been here in a minute. Things had been running smoothly for the fam since all the bullshit went down with Stephan and Mariah. They were expecting their first child now, so shit was all good.

"Aye nigga, the first fuckin' time I think you doin' some shit to my cuzzo that I'on like, I'm kickin' yo' ass." Gatah went in as soon as I hit the door. Gatah, his pops Joseph, Buck, and Dirk were sitting at the table counting up stacks of money.

"Chloe?" Joseph asked, confused.

Gatah nodded as everyone turned my way. “Yeah, this nigga’s been after cuzzo. To my knowledge, her lil’ ass done gave in too.”

Joseph’s eyebrows spiked. “Say what! Ah, hell naw. My niece not ‘bout to be ‘round here with the wolf from over yonder.” Everybody died laughing.

Joseph was always joking, so I didn’t take what he said to heart. I knew it was all in love.

“I’m gon’ tell you just like I told my hard-headed ass son. If you ain’t ready to be with her and treat her right, leave her alone. If you can’t be faithful, move around. It’s plenty of hoes out here to fuck on. Let Chloe be for the right nigga to come along and give her what she deserves. Baby girl has been through a lot, and as her uncle, I’m gon’ make sure don’t nobody add to that. Feel me?”

Dapping pops up, I grabbed a stack to help with the count. “No worries this way, pops.”

“Yeah, nigga, better not be. I’ll fuck yo’ ass up ‘bout that one. I’on give a fuck if Steph and I gotta jump yo’ weird lookin’ ass, we fuckin’ you up.” Gatah added.

The warehouse rumbled with laughter at his dumb comments. Yeah, they would have to jump me. Cuz a nigga wasn’t no pussy, and I ain’t eva lost a fight a day in my life. I’on give a fuck how raw a nigga’s hands is.

“You stay talkin’ shit for somebody who won’t give me that fade nigga.”

Gatah grinned. “I gotcha, real soon, muthafucka. Now count my shit ‘for I put you over my knee.”

Everybody busted out laughing again. I did, too cuz even though Gatah and I bullshitted all the time, he was my homie. All these niggas I truly fucked with. I’d never really had niggas I could truly depend on other than Hollis and my cousin Saint.





By the time we finished up the count, I figured Chloe would be done with her salon shit, but it turns out she and Yaya went shopping, which I fussed at her for not using the credit card I'd given her lil' ass earlier, independent ass girl.

Since wifey wasn't ready, I decided to roll out with the fellas to grab a quick bite to eat. It looked like we weren't getting on the road tonight, which was cool. We'd leave in the morning and still make it in time for the game. I was starvin' like a muhfucka, and this time I spent with the fellas was needed.

As soon as we walked into the restaurant, every bitch was eyeballing us. We were used to it. It happened everywhere we went, whether or not the women were with us. I ain't pay attention to the shit, especially now that Chloe decided to stop fuckin' runnin'. I was gon' be on my best fuckin' behavior.

Shit, a bitch couldn't suck my dick after meeting Chloe, so a bitch damn sho' couldn't get at me now that I had lil' behbeh. These hoes out here be grimy as fuck, though. Bitches be swearing a nigga dick don' been inside of them when my dick ain't been no fuckin' where. Speaking of, my cell phone buzzed in my pocket. I intuitively knew it was Rochelle. Her ass had been blowing my shit up all fuckin' morning.

“Yeah, Ro, what's good?”

Gatah mugged me at the mention of Rochelle's name. We found a booth, all of us sitting to peruse the menu. I already knew what I wanted, so I tended to this fuck ass call.

“Uh, I was just checking on you. You're not in the office today. I wasn't aware that you were going to be off,” Rochelle stuttered into the phone.

This woman was really itchin' for me to go donkey on her ass.

“Ro, mane, chill wit' dis crazy shit. I'on do well wit' bein' nice if I feel like a muhfucka watchin' me an' shit. The office is good. That's what the fuck I got Keith and Hollis fa.

Hit them muhfuckas up if you need somethin'. I'm good. What else?"

The niggas were cackling quietly like some lil' bitches, even pops.

Rochelle sighed into the phone. "Dallas, when did you become such an asshole to me? I'm just looking out for you. I've never seen you *not* working. Now you're—"

Chuckling, I cut Ro off. "I have always been an asshole, behbeh. I just reserve that shit fa people who deserve it." My statement must have tagged Rochelle with a left hook cuz she was quiet for a second.

"Anything else, mane?" I was trying to avoid getting frustrated. I really liked Rochelle as my assistant and ain't wanna have to break some other bitch in.

"N-no. When will you be back in the office?" she had the nerve to ask.

"Bye, Ro." I ended the call mad as fuck.

"Man, you better watch that crazy bitch. You see the track record these hoes attached to y'all niggas got. Y'all need to quit slangin' y'all fuckin' dicks everywhere. Nasty muhfuckas," pops fussed.

"I'm gon' agree wit' pops old ass on this one, D. See what the fuck happened with Steph and Mariah with that looney bitch he was fuckin'. That bitch better not bring heat Chloe's way, or you already know what I'm gon' do to her saddity ass."

"I wish a muhfucka would come for Chloe. *My* track record speaks fa itself, yahurme."

Regardless, these niggas were right. Rochelle was starting to act a little psycho, and I wasn't feelin' that shit. I needed to get rid of her ass before she made me *get rid* of her ass. Real talk.

Wasn't nobody jeopardizin' shit I just started with Chloe. Rochelle was good peoples, and I hated to do her dirty, but she should've been humble and move out the fuckin' way.

Was I wrong for fuckin' her? Probably. Shit, it wasn't like she didn't know the deal, yahurme.

Never once had I made Ro feel like shit with us was anything other than a nut. Fuck, a nigga didn't even moan or no shit like that when I was in the pussy. Even though it was good, that moaning shit be makin' bitches feel like you fallin' in love with their ass an' shit. Not me, bruh. Fuck that! Well, fuck that before I met Chloe.

The first time I met shawty, my heart literally fluttered. A nigga thought he was having a heart attack or some shit when I felt my heart skipping. My dumb ass grabbed my chest and everything. I realized it wasn't *physical* but a spiritual, soul snatchin' effect that Chloe had on me. I believe that's why my body couldn't react to another woman's body. Crazy, but the shit was true.

We ordered our food and made small talk. The niggas clowned over different subjects while I was in my head about Chloe. I wanted her in the worst way. Not just to bust her walls down, but to love her... like genuinely love her. Shit, a nigga was already *in love* with her. She better not fuck over me either.

# Chapter 9

## CHLOE

Dallas offered to cook dinner while I packed. Although it was barely six in the evening, the sun was already down. After getting my nails and toes done, Yaya and I decided to go shopping. Dallas had given me his black card before leaving me this morning, which I didn't use. When he called me after I left the shop, he questioned why I didn't use it. Of course, I told him I had my own shit and didn't need his money.

Girl! You would've thought I cussed his ass out.

"Behbeh, if I didn't want you usin' it, I wouldn't have given it to you."

"Yeah, but—"

"But nothin' shawty. You and Yaya 'bout to hit the mall up. Spend that shit, yahurme! I'on give a fuck 'bout what you got. I better see a fuckin' dent in that shit by the time you done."

Rolling my eyes, I said, "Okay," before hanging up the phone. Yaya was cackling so loud that people sitting in the car next to us at the red light could hear her.

"Tamin' that ass already, I see," she clowned. Oh, sis wanted to be funny. I had a trick for her ass, though.

"Hmm hm, how 'bout we stop by the drug store first," I countered. Yaya mugged me.

"Fuck you and Dallas. Y'all niggas trying to put some bad juju on me. My ass *is not* fucking pregnant!"

While Yaya ranted, I side-eyed her. I don't know who she thought she was fooling. She and Gatah's raunchy asses be fuckin' any an' everywhere, so I wouldn't be surprised if my girl were pregnant again. The old folks say if you dream about fish, someone close to you is pregnant. Well, the only close friends I had were Yaya, Mariah, and Millie. Wait a minute!

Millie's ass better not be fuckin' pregnant! My mind started racing before Yaya spoke.

"Stop at the damn drug store, bitch. Y'all get on my fuckin' nerves," she fussed.

Our first stop was the drug store.



Shopping had gone great. I appreciated the time I spent with Yaya, even though she pouted the whole time about possibly being pregnant. Mariah called while we were out complaining that she couldn't do shit cuz Stephan wouldn't let her leave the house without him. She was five months pregnant, and Stephan was actin' like she was nine months pregnant. I understood him, though.

With Mariah being pregnant and having Xavier, her being in public alone could cause some issues with Stephan being a celebrity or whatever. They were such a cute couple, though. I loved Mariah for everything she did for Stephan and for bringing my pudgy Xavier into our lives. I promised her we would do a girl's night soon. She lived in New Orleans with Stephan until the season was over, then they would be back in Pensacola.

Going through all the bags Dallas had helped me carry in, I realized I had more shit than I needed. We were only going to be gone a few days, but hell, I wanted to be fly on this little road trip, so I'd bought enough shit for three weeks!

Forty-five minutes later, I had one suitcase, and a duffle bag packed. The aroma of whatever Dallas was in the kitchen throwing down wafted up into my nostrils, causing my stomach to growl. Shedding my clothes, I decided to take a quick shower before the food was done.

While in the shower, my mind drifted to Dallas. He was so fuckin' sexy I couldn't stand it. Not only was he sexy, though, but he was also *rugged*. Like, beat the fuck out of a nigga rugged. That shit turned me on more than anything.

I also thought about the relationship he had with my family. Any man that I decided to be with would have to get

along with those close to me. I wanted Dallas to meet my parents to see if they would hit it off just like Dallas had done with the rest of my family. They loved Dallas. I could tell just by the way they spoke highly of him. Thinking of my parents had me ready to cry again. Damn, I wish I could just see them.

Showered and moisturized, I donned a pair of cotton night shorts and a basic tank top. My titties were nice and perky, so I forwent a bra. My nipple rings would be noticeable through the fabric, but Dallas had already seen them. I mean, he'd seen my coochie, so... why be modest now? Remembering what he'd done to my pussy caused a current to run through me.

Shaking off the lustful thoughts, I followed the scent of something delicious to the kitchen. Dallas was spooning something divine onto two separate plates. A fresh salad was already placed into two bowls. All of that was prepared within a minute's thought.

Dallas was standing at the island barefoot and shirtless, his dreads hanging around his shoulders and down his back. He must've used my guest bathroom cuz I could smell his fresh scent over the food.

He was wearing black cutoff sweats, and that was it. The sweats hung low on his hips, showcasing his ridiculously sculpted body. Although his upper body was heavily tatted 'til the point where his skin wasn't visible, his thick legs were completely bare. Dallas had the type of legs that were made for holding a bitch up against the wall while he fucked the shit outta her. Like how most buff niggas were big up top but skinny at the bottom. No, baby! Dallas was thick all over!

"Hungry?" he asked, watching me stare at his tattooed biceps. This nigga knew how fine he was.

Yes! Clearing my throat, I went to grab the two bowls of salad to set the table.

"Nah, shawty, I got this. Go into the living room and put a movie on. I'll be there in a sec." Dallas' blue gaze traveled from the top of my head to the soles of my feet. All of a sudden, I felt nervous. I never felt nervous around a man. I

was the queen of flirting, and here I was actin' like a little teenager.

Doing as he said without putting up a fuss, I went into the living room and turned on the sixty-inch television. Deciding to make the mood a little more romantic, I turned the lights down as I thought of a movie that Dallas and I could watch together. Settling on *A Thin Line Between Love and Hate*, I sat the remote down.

“The hell? Is you tryna say somethin' shawty?” Dallas asked, coming into the living room carrying the salads. His face was balled up at the big screen, which caused me to laugh.

Dallas placed both bowls on the coffee table before moving the table away from the sofa to give us space. I guess we were going to sit on the floor and eat.

“What? I love Martin Lawrence,” I justified innocently.

“Hmm, hm. Let me find out,” he mumbled, going back into the kitchen. I watched his toned ass until he disappeared.

Giggling, I grabbed the throw blanket on the back of my couch to place on the carpeted floor. I tossed a few throw pillows on top of the blanket as well.

Dallas strolled back in with the other two plates, placing them on the coffee table as well. On his last trip to the kitchen, he brought back a roll of paper towels, a bottle of chilled champagne, and two wine glasses. As soon as Dallas made himself comfortable on the floor next to me, his cell phone vibrated. Pulling it from his pocket, he glanced at the screen before sending the call to voicemail.

“Say grace, *chérie*,” he spoke.

“What does that mean?” I asked, ignoring his buzzing cell phone that was going off again.

Dallas ignored his phone as well. He was instead popping the cork on the champagne to pour us a glass.

”*Chérie*?” he asked. I nodded.

“It means sweetheart.”

My heart literally melted in my fucking chest. This whole time this nigga had been calling me sweetheart. How fucking... sweet.

“French, right?” I asked for clarification. That was the only language I knew that sounded close to what he was speaking to Rock and Pebbles that day.

Nodding, Dallas smirked. “You tryna learn French, shawty?”

Smiling, I shook my head no. “I’m okay with choppin’ up good ole English so...”

Dallas laughed, showing off his glistening fangs.

“Nah, mama, we gon’ work on that. You gon’ be ‘round my folks and me, so I will teach you a lil’ sum, sum to get you by.”

I took the flute of champagne he handed me, gulping down half the glass.

“Slow down, mama.” He grinned. “Say grace so we can eat,” Dallas instructed, shaking his head at how I had almost destroyed my glass of champagne.

Dallas grabbed my hand as we bowed our heads. I said a short little prayer, thanking God for everything He had done for myself and my family. I also threw in a prayer for my parents. Once I was done, Dallas grabbed the salad bowls, handing me one. We devoured the salad in no time. The main entrée was seared lemon pepper salmon, sautéed mixed vegetables, and wild rice. I must say, on the first bite, I fell in love. This nigga could cook his ass off!

“Who taught you how to cook? This is delicious!” I gushed.

”*Ma mère*, my mother,” he replied.

You ever seen a thuggish sexy nigga speak another language to you? It felt orgasmic. It’s funny how Dallas was mentally and physically making love to me.

“How was life growing up with your parents?” Dallas quizzed out of nowhere.



My parents were a sensitive subject. I loved and missed them with everything in my being. Most people thought my parents were getting what they deserved. Jamison and Melony were two good people that just got caught up. Why couldn't anyone understand that? Some people deserved second chances in life, and I wished that for my parents every day.

“They love me more than life. Growing up was like being with a king and queen twenty-four/ seven. My dad worshipped the ground me and my mother walked on, and it wasn't only for show. He loves my mother so much that he has never cheated on her, never raised a hand to her, and he kissed and hugged her freely. No matter who was around, their love for each other was evident. As for myself, I'm their angel. Being the only child, I was spoiled.”

Chuckling, I continued to eat until my plate was empty.

“I never lacked love from them.”

Talking about my parents was even worse than thinking about them. I couldn't help but get emotional. I hated to turn into an emotional wreck in front of Dallas, so I did my best to fight back the tears stinging my eyes.

“Shawty, every bad thing in life has a meaning. It sounds crazy, but sometimes those things are meant to break us to make us stronger. We choose to let it hinder us or keep us focused, motivated to want and do better. Your parents are proud of you. I believe that. Your family is one of the strongest families I've ever met. Y'all go hard for each otha. I'mma go hard for you.”

Dallas reached to wipe away the tears strolling down my face.

“How 'bout desert?”

Sniffing, I nodded. He got up to go get it while I got my crybaby ass together. I had no idea what Dallas meant when he said he'd go hard for me, but I was sure he'd already done that when he took care of Kevin. Maybe that's what he was talking about.

My thoughts were interrupted by Dallas' buzzing cell phone. This was at least the fifth time that it had went off. I didn't want to intrude by looking at who was calling, so I let the voicemail pick up.

Holding a single plate topped with a slice of some sort of cake, Dallas sat back next to me.

"Your phone rang again," I informed him.

Dallas shrugged. "It doesn't matter. When I'm with you, if it's not an emergency, that shit can wait. I'll neva put work ova you." *Oh, so it was work.*

"You must be a very busy man then."

Dallas used a fork to cut into the delicious-looking cake. Lifting the fork to my mouth, he told me to open it, so I did. Carrot cake — it melted in my mouth. The flavor was so good that I moaned. I swear this nigga was slowly killing me.

"I can't eat like this every day with you, Dallas."

He grinned. "Yes, you can, behbeh. It ain't gon' do nun but fatten them thighs up. I'm cool with that." He ate from the cake, then fed me another piece.

"To answer your first question, I am a busy man. I travel a lot. I gotta keep up with these clients ya know."

"Do you like what you do?"

We were down to the last couple of bites of the cake, which Dallas fed me both.

"Yeah, I do, actually. I'm bossy as fuck, so it works."

Giggling, I popped him on his bicep.

Dallas sat the plate to the side, then swiftly pulled me into his lap. Being in his strong embrace was everything. The way he held me, hugging me to his body, planting his face into the side of my neck, kissing me there. His hands roamed all over my back while he continued to hug me. This was the most erotic, genuine, heartfelt hug I'd ever had from a man.

"Thank you," he said softly, kissing the corner of my lips.

“For what?” I responded, dazed as he continued to plant kisses on me.

“Givin’ us a chance. I’m not gon’ disappoint you.”

Gripping my chin, Dallas brought my lips to his, kissing me with so much fire that we could’ve set the house ablaze. Tugging at his dreads, I tried to hold on as he took the kiss deeper.

My body started grinding on him of its own accord. Feeling the hard muscle stiff as a brick beneath me turned me on.

I don’t know how he did it, but Dallas stood with me in his arms, my legs around his waist. Our kiss never broke as he carried me to my room. I felt the softness of the comforter touch my back as he laid me down. Moonlight streaked through the windows casting a glow around the man standing before me. His menacing glare would scare someone else, not me, though. It turned me on like nobody’s business.

Dallas leaned over me, trailing kisses down my neck, onto my shoulders, then my chest. Removing the thin straps of my tank top, he exposed my pierced nipples.

“I love dis shit, behbeh,” his deep gruff voice vibrated through me as he took my right nipple into his mouth.

My body arched off of the bed, lost in the feeling of his mouth on me. He showed my left breast the same attention before tugging at my cotton shorts.

“Ya pussy is the best thing I’ve eva eaten, shawty,” he grumbled, completely removing the flimsy shorts.

*What?* This nigga must be tweakin’!

Whatever I was about to think next flew out of the window when his tongue slid through my slit. His thick tongue was doing tricks in my pussy, making me cry out in less than two minutes. Dallas moaned his pleasure as I leaked all over his tongue, mouth, and chin. My clit was overly sensitive. Dallas tried to kiss it, but I moved away.

Dallas kissed back up my body, taking my thin tank that was wrapped around my mid-section in his hands, ripping it from my torso. *Fuck!* This nigga was about to destroy my young life.

Here I lay butt ass naked under Dallas' gaze. His blue eyes were on fire, blazing dark heat toward me.

I watched, mesmerized as he removed his sweat shorts. His thick, veiny rod was so hard it looked angry. Dallas was thick and long bigger than I imagined. No way in hell should a virgin be fuckin' with that! He stroked himself as he bit his bottom lip staring at me.

"He only gets like dis fa you *chérie*." Dallas climbed onto the bed, towering over me.

Now was as good a time as any to tell him. "I've never done this before," I whispered.

Dallas licked his lips, smiling seductively.

Gripping his hard dick, he placed it at my wet waiting opening. When he started pushing forward, the pain my body experienced was overwhelming. He felt like an anaconda trying to fit through a tub drain.

"Shiitt, pretty mama! Relax fa me," Dallas groaned. His lips touched mine, kissing me softly.

Doing my best to relax my body, it took a few times until my body allowed Dallas to enter me on a pained whimper fully. Dallas kissed the cries right off of my lips.

"Ya' body was meant fa me. Just like mine was meant fa you."

The next instant, Dallas was moving inside of me. His strokes were powerful yet seductive eliciting cries of pleasure from my lips. I had never felt anything so good, so filling. Dallas skillfully worked my body. I begged him over and over not to stop.

"Shawtyyy, this pussy so good you got a nigga ready to nut in you already."

My muscles contracted around Dallas' dick, hugging him. Hurriedly pulling out, Dallas palmed his monster of a dick, trying to get himself under control.

I moaned in pleasure at Dallas' words. He was driving me crazy! I reached for his hard member, exploring the length of him. The pleasure written all over his face warmed my middle even more.

"Ssss!" we both hissed.

"Put me back in," he demanded.

Guiding his dick back inside of me, my legs shook when a powerful orgasm claimed me.

"Uhn, uhn... Dallas," I moaned uncontrollably.

Dallas hiked my left leg up, placing it over his shoulder. He grabbed my right ass cheek pounding into me so good my bed started shaking, the headboard tearing up the wall the same way my nigga was tearing up my pussy.

"*Bèbè tu te sens si bein* (baby, you feel so good)!" Dallas growled in my ear. He was speaking French to me while he destroyed me.

I shamefully rained down on him so hard that I repeatedly called his name.

"Fuck! Ahhh, shiittt!" The backboard hit the wall harder as Dallas' strokes became rougher, harder.

I leaned up to kiss down his throat, nipping at his strong neck. Him growling and moaning so sexily, was easily the most erotic shit I'd ever heard. My body responded in kind. With eyes rolling to the back of my head, I let the orgasm take me higher.

"Arrggghh..." An animalistic sound vibrated from Dallas' lips as his body stiffened above me. I felt his dick pulsing mercilessly inside of me as he released all his seeds in my most sacred place.

Breathing heavily, he laid his head on my breasts, his dreads tangled in my fingers.

“I’ll do anything fa you shawty. Ain’t no otha bitch gon’ eva have me. Whateva you want, I’ll make that shit happen fa ya.”

Tears leaked from my eyes as we held each other. We fell asleep this way.

# Chapter 10

## ROCHELLE

Midnight passed, yet I was still wide awake. I lay in bed staring at the ceiling fan, wondering where the hell Dallas was. A part of me knew he was with that young bitch. For the life of me, I couldn't see what he saw in her. Her little fast ass needed to be somewhere being with men her own age instead of playing in the leagues with the big dogs.

That's what was wrong with grown ass men. There were good decent women out here, women like me with good jobs, independent and nurturing. However, instead of classy mature women, these niggas wanted young ratchet hoes.

Ugh. Dumb ass niggas. Us mature women weren't what men looked to anymore. No matter what our body looked like, no matter what our status was, these niggas wanted young pussy, plain and simple. Aggravated, I sat up.

"Where you goin'?"

Damn. I was trying to ease out of bed without this lame ass nigga knowing. I had better things to do than be laid up with some no sex game havin' ass nigga. I hated when a man talked all that bullshit about what they can do to a woman in the bedroom, only to get here and not even be able to give her a decent muthafuckin' orgasm.

Now Dallas, on the other hand. That nigga knew a thing or two about a woman's body. Hell, he'd only ever fucked me from the back, but that was all it took for me to have multiple orgasms. We never had any intimacy, just straight sex. Still, I figured one day he'd come around and show me the love and affection I desperately wanted from him.

"I'm running down the hall for a sec. I need something out of the office."

He nodded, then rolled back over to go back to sleep. Shit, he should be worn out after I did all the fucking work.

Rolling my eyes, I grabbed my robe, throwing it over my naked body. I padded down the short hallway to the door at the end where my home office was located. The setup was cozy and, most of all, private. I worked out of it often, so I wanted to be comfortable.

Heading to the desk, I sat down, then opened my laptop. I drummed my manicured nails on the solid wood, waiting for the laptop to start up. Entering my password, seconds later, I was in. Clicking on the program that anxiously awaited me, I almost died from what I saw. Looking at the date, it was the night before last.

Unmuting the sound, my heart died in my chest. I felt like all the wind had left my body.

There Dallas was, with his head between Chloe's legs, eating her soul out on his living room sofa. Her moaning was loud as hell, and so was his.

*What the fuck?* Unable to take what I was seeing, *hearing*, I slammed the laptop closed. I wanted to scream, yet I couldn't. Tears tried to flood my eyes, but I furiously batted them away.

How could he do this to me? Not once had Dallas ever done anything remotely toward *kissing* me, let alone giving me head! I was so angry that the tears I tried to fight away splashed onto my cheeks. Fierce anger consumed me. Did this nigga think he was gonna just fuck me and move on? Who the fuck did he think he was? Dallas had another thing coming if he thought he was about to be happy with the next bitch after I'd been laying down with his ass all that time.

Storming back to my room and the bed, I climbed on top of Brady, palming his dick, massaging it to get him hard. Ugh, I hated a nigga that took forever to get it up. Brady was five years younger than me, so his dick should *stay* hard. He wasn't near as endowed as Dallas but fuck it. Chloe's and Dallas' moans were stuck in my head. As much as it made me sick, I was turned on. I had to get this frustration out somehow. Brady would have to do for the time being. I'd worry about my anger come morning.



## CHLOE

Dallas was officially making me fall in love with him. How did I go from not liking light-skinned niggas to practically being in love with one? I believed Dallas' ass had that voodoo shit in his blood or somethin'. He had to for a diehard chocoholic like myself to switch teams.

This morning, I woke up to breakfast in bed — literally. I was calling every hog within three counties when I smelled something divine hit my nose. As I opened my eyes, there was a platter of pancakes, sausage, eggs, and strawberries waiting for me on the nightstand with a glass of orange juice. Warm, fuzzy shit drifted through my body at the sight. The sun wasn't out, but I remembered we had to get on the road soon.

Last night was the best night I'd ever had. Dallas had taken my body to places I only thought I could achieve in my dreams. He was so in tune with my body it seemed like he was made for me, which is exactly what he'd said. I didn't believe him until we actually made love. Now I understood what he was talking about. Even now, my body felt his touch, his kiss. There were passion marks on my thighs, breasts, and I'm sure, my neck. He had a few too.

It didn't matter that Dallas was older than me. The way he took care of me last night, I didn't know if I'd ever want to be without him. Just the thought made me sick to my stomach. If I were already feeling this way and we'd only shared one night, I could see why Rochelle was acting the way she was. That light-skinned, blue-eyed, dread-head ass nigga's dick was too good!

“What you in here daydreamin' 'bout, shawty?” Dallas strolled into the room with a plate full of food and a glass of orange juice of his own, looking sexy as hell in black joggers and a black t-shirt.

Licking my parched lips, I sat up in the bed, bringing the covers with me to cover my exposed titties. Dallas' eyes shot straight to them, grinning. He took a seat on the side of the bed, swinging his legs around, then leaned up against the

headboard. He looked my way, expecting me to divulge the information.

“My thoughts are private.” I winked, grabbing my plate off the nightstand.

Dallas chuckled. “Yeah, aight, lil’ mama. As long as they ‘bout me, then we good, shawty.”

Smirking, I replied, “That’s the beauty of private thoughts, baby.”

Dallas chewed his pancakes in thought. “Aight, you got that. So, I can think ‘bout who I want to then? Especially while I’m fuckin’ you so good you stay cummin’. Even while I’m eatin’ on that fat muhfucka.” He pointed his fork toward the middle of my thighs.

Dallas was about to get this plate full of tasty food right in his face.

“Hmm, hm. Look at ya,” Dallas goaded, grinning.

Ignoring him, I stuffed my face. *Arrogant ass nigga!*

“What did I tell ya lil’ feisty ass last night?” he asked.

Continuing to ignore him, I polished off my eggs in four bites.

“I told ya that ain’t no other bitch gettin’ this dick. That means ain’t no other bitch gettin’ my time, thoughts, attention, none of that shit.”

Shaking my head in denial, I said, “That’s impossible, Dallas. You’re a man, and men cheat all the time. If not physically, then mentally.”

It’s crazy that I would be with someone feeling like they would automatically be unfaithful. At least, that was what I told myself. Just in case it ever happened, I wouldn’t be blind-sided. I’d know how to handle it.

Dallas huffed. “Nah, behbeh. When a nigga gets him a real woman, he ain’t fuckin’ that shit up fa nobody. Nahmean. Yeah, it’s niggas outchea doin’ they women dirty, but that’s fuck nigga shit. I’ain talkin’ ‘bout no fake ass relationship

either. I'm talkin' 'bout that one you can't live without. You'll know when a nigga can't live without ya. He'll do any and everything fa ya. It would be nothin' fa him to see to it that ya always straight. If you ain't straight, he ain't straight. If he gotta body a thousand niggas to keep his queen safe, secure, he gon' handle dat shit no question."

Did he really feel this way? Not for me, but in general. Was he a man capable of actually being faithful?

"*Fidèlité* lil mama." Dallas was saying.

"Huh?" Here he was speaking French again.

He repeated himself. "Say it."

I tried to say it slowly, but it just sounded like *fidelity* to me.

Dallas chuckled. "Loyalty shawty. Whether or not you're in his presence, he knows how to remain loyal to ya cuz he can't live without ya, yahhurme."

I studied Dallas over the rim of the glass of juice. He was talking some deep shit right now, and I hated to admit that I was falling for it.

"You gon' have my baby?" Dallas asked out of nowhere. I almost choked on the juice.

He laughed, snatching the glass out of my hand.

"Nigga, we've been a couple ten minutes." Damn, we didn't use any protection last night. Ya girl was not on no damn birth control! Ugh, my parents were gon' kill me if I ended up pregnant before I was even married. "And I'mma need a ring on my finger before I give any nigga a baby."

Dallas' face balled up with the sexiest mug. "You let another nigga in my shit if you want to, shawty."

"You know what I'm sayin' smart ass," I replied, giggling.

"Nah, my behbeh, make that shit plain fa a nigga. Besides, in my mind, we've been together for at least six months."

“What?” I scrunched my nose up, confused.

He nodded. “Yeah, about six months.”

I rolled my eyes. “So that means you’ve been cheatin’ on me with that Rochelle bitch.” Now was a good a time as any to throw her name in there.

Dallas grinned. “See, that’s all you had to say, shawty.” I realized Dallas knew what I had been thinking about when he’d first walked into the room. I punched him in his arm as he laughed.

Sitting his plate to the side, Dallas tackled me down to the bed, which was relatively easy. I tried squirming to get from underneath him, but his ass was too damn strong. He wasn’t even trying to hold me down. Deciding not to waste my energy, I relaxed.

Dallas smiled down at me, then kissed both of my cheeks, my forehead. He trailed his fingers down my face like he always did, then kissed my lips.

“I got a secret to tell ya,” Dallas whispered in my ear.

I didn’t know what he was about to say, and for a second, it made me nervous. Don’t let this nigga tell me he got something, or worse. He’s crazy as fuck!

“I haven’t been with a woman *mentally* nor *physically* since I laid eyes on you, *chérie*.” Dallas’ eyes pierced my soul.

I knew in that moment that he wasn’t lying. Some niggas said shit just to please a woman, filling her mind up with bullshit. However, I knew better with Dallas. He was laying something on the line right now. He was showing me a side of himself that I knew was sacred.

”*Fidèlitè*, lil mama, whether or not he’s in ya presence,” he whispered while staring deep into my eyes.

Damn, I was in love with this nigga.

“The only issue you’re gon’ have outta me is how often you gon’ be soakin’ this fat, juicy pussy you don’ fucked up an’ gave a nigga.” Dallas kissed the laugh right off my lips.

*Crazy ass, arrogant ass nigga.*

## **DALLAS**

“So, tell me about your mother.”

Chloe and I were an hour into our seven-hour drive to Houston. We’d make it there a few hours before the football game, which would give us time to get freshened up and dressed. Having Chloe with me felt right and normal. I couldn’t wait for her to meet my mother and my lil’ brother.

“My mom’s cool peoples. You’ll love her. She’s a literature professor at UH. She can cook any type of food you want. She loves to travel and get on her sons’ nerves. She was the best growing up. She ain’t give me everything I wanted, but she made damn sho’ we were good.”

I could neva repay my mom for the way she raised my brother and me. For her to have been single, raising two boys, she did that shit. That’s why I take care of her the way that I do. My mom’s neva gon’ want fa shit.

Chloe chuckled. “Hmm, hm. I bet y’all got on her nerves plenty growing up.”

“You know it, mane. A nigga stayed fightin’. I had my mama worried an’ shit. She thought I was gon’ die in them streets. I neva started no trouble, but that shit always found me, nahmean. The pale-faced nigga, with blue eyes and fuckin’ blonde hair. Niggas tried me just cuz.”

Chloe nodded in understanding.

“What about your dad, if you don’t mind me asking?”

I neva talk about my dad. Not cuz I was ashamed of him or nothin’ like that. It was just the lifestyle that he... *we* lived. Not even the homies knew about Dime. At some point, though, Chloe would meet Dime. Also, I couldn’t full well be in a committed relationship without the woman knowing who I truly was. Chloe knew I ran with her cousins, but behbeh had no idea who was pushing this Suburban up Highway 90.

“I ain’t really know Dime ‘til I was eighteen,” I started. It was best for me just to be straight up. I didn’t want secrets

between Chloe and me. I wouldn't dump all the shit on her at once, but I'd eventually tell her everything. "The fucked-up thing was it took me killin' a muhfucka 'for me to find out who my pops was."

The truck was silent for a minute before Chloe spoke. "Who did you kill?"

I glanced over to see her eyes studying me. She didn't seem afraid of me, nor did she seem put off by what I had just told her.

"I came home from a game to find my mom's boyfriend beatin' her ass. So... I beat *his* ass to sleep. Moms was unconscious when the paramedics got there. The police came and arrested me. They tried charging me with murder."

Reliving that night didn't make me feel any type of way. Shit, I would do it all over again if it meant keepin' my mother safe.

"The dude I killed just so happened to be a police detective, so you can imagine them muhfuckas wanted my head. Dime showed up while I was in interrogation and snatched me up outta that bitch."

It went back to being quiet. I focused on the road, thinking about where I was in my life. I had the woman that had been clouding my thoughts for the past six months. I had someone that I wanted to actually be with and grow with. The last thing I wanted was for her to judge me in any type of way that would bring a divide between us. I knew that it was selfish to want her to accept the part of me that was a killer.

Chloe reached over the console, resting her hand on my thigh.

"Well, I think you're a great son to defend your mother the way you did. That's some shit my family would do and have done. We all have a past. Mine isn't as colorful as yours, but I spent a lot of my time being sad over not having my parents. So, for you to protect your mother with your life is commendable. I'd give anything to have my mom and dad with me. Honestly, I would protect them the same way."

This is why the fuck I was in love with this damn woman.

“So, did your mom and dad ever get back together?” she asked.

Smiling, I nodded my head. “They think I’ on know that they creepin’ an’ shit, but I peeped it years ago. Before I even met Dime, I knew that Houston and I had the same father. We look just alike, even though I’m finer.” Chloe laughed. “I guess my mama givin’ that muhfucka a hard time though cuz he be on some crybaby shit sometimes. I can tell when she don’ put him on silent treatment or in the doghouse. That shit be funny as hell. I’mma let him live, though. If my mother’s gon’ be with anyone, I’d rather it be someone that ain’t fa the bullshit. My pops may be a lot of things, but he’d neva hurt my mom.”

## **DIMACHKA “DIME” MCQUEEN**

### **Houston, Texas**

Dragging my hands through my hair, I had never been more stressed out in my life. I’d been in some of the roughest shit holes in the world, yet I felt scared as fuck sitting here across from the only woman I’ve ever loved or been in love with.

Francesca Touissaint had the looks and mind to bring any man to his knees. How I became so lucky to have her was still beyond me. It was definitely divine intervention for a woman like her to be in my life, especially after all the shit I’d put her through.

The life of a paid hitman wasn’t anything to involve a family in. When I met Francesca, I was knee-deep in a job, so the last thing on my mind should’ve been hitting on a woman. Still, I couldn’t resist Francesca. Something about her pulled me to her, drawing out the one emotion I never thought I’d have for a woman — love.

My childhood was fucked up, to say the least. My black grandfather and white grandmother raised me on my mother’s side in South Central LA. The only thing I knew of

my father was that he was a drug addict that died by the needle. I met my mother twice in my lifetime. Once when I was in grade school, and the other was on her death bed. Whatever hatred I had for my mother died the day she did.

All the anger I felt growing up without two of the people who should've cared for me led me down a path of destruction. I was doing any and everything just to end up dead. All of that changed the moment I met Francesca. I was no longer searching for a death wish. She brought me life — literally and physically.

Francesca giving me a son had been the happiest moment in my life. I had made so many plans to leave the life of killing to marry my woman and raise our family together, but hell nah. Francesca let my ass know quick that she wasn't about none of the shit that I was into. She let me know that if I couldn't totally walk away from the life I led, then she wanted no parts of me. So I said fuck it and went to my superiors to request retirement. That shit ain't go as planned. Three decades later, I was still in fucking chains but not for long, though.

“I promise this is it, Chess. The papers are already signed and submitted.”

Francesca rolled her pretty brown eyes. The fruity concoction she was sipping on was damn near water now, but she still sipped it.

“Until I see RETIRED on letterhead, I will not believe you, Dime.”

Damn! When muhfuckas say black don't crack, they mean that shit. I was one-quarter black on my mother's side. Her father was black, and her mother white. I attributed my youthful but mature looks and perfect skin to my African heritage.

Francesca would be fifty-three on her next birthday, but she didn't look a day over thirty, not to mention, she was getting attention from muthafuckas left and right. She had the body of a runway model with long, thick black hair down to her ass. Her exotic eyes were hypnotic. The arch of her



cheekbones and perkiness of her nose hinted at her Indian roots. Francesca's skin was the color of coffee mixed with heavy cream.

If I didn't get my shit together, someone was bound to scoop her fine ass up. Shit, it had almost happened once. Had it not been for that muthafucka puttin' his hands on my woman and my son murkin' his ass, I'd be a crazy, stalking ass man right now. Scratch that. That muthafucka would still be a dead sonofabitch. Wasn't nobody snatching up my woman!

"Where's this case taking you?"

Nowhere actually. It was more like a means to an end.

Yuri Grisham was one of my assignments. I knew I left that muthafucka for dead. How his mug managed to pop up on FBI radar was beyond me. Although Yuri had changed up his look, he was definitely still the same bastard that I'd pumped six holes in a couple of years ago. I watched him take his last breath. To know that he was still walking this earth pissed me the fuck off. Traitors weren't allowed to breathe the same fucking air as me. Fuck that shit.

"And do you have any idea how awkward it is to be having lunch with you while security is standing over us like we're celebrities?" Francesca chuckled. "The killer is needing security. How ironic."

Grinning, I chugged the last of the brew I'd ordered. Security definitely wasn't here for me. They were here for *her*. Baby girl had no idea I always had people watching over her. They were doing what Lester was supposed to do years ago. That shit ended badly. Oh well. The new muhfuckas knew not to cross me. I'd put a muthafucka so deep in the ground about this woman.

"Damn, I wish I could put another baby in you," I replied.

Francesca smacked her pretty white teeth with a cheeky smile. "Hmm. You got two hard-headed ass boys already. Don't play with me, Dime. Find you one of these young hoes to pop you one out."

I cackled. “Hell no! Yo’ ass is plenty. We’re just going to get Dallas on board to give us some grandbabies.” My fucking oldest was a handful, I know. He got it from my dog ass. Well, used-to-be dog ass.

Francesca cleared her throat. “Speaking of your eldest, he’s on the way here. He has a surprise for me. If my baby walks through that door talking about he has some lil’ hussy pregnant, I’m gonna beat your ass.”

I laughed as the server came to remove our dishes from the table and leave the check.

“He’s a grown ass man, baby. If he wanna bust a lil’ one out, let him. The fuck can we do about it? Besides, any woman who gives him some kids gonna has to be just as crazy as his muthafuckin’ ass.”

Francesca agreed. “Why couldn’t I have normal men in my life.” She sighed.

Normal? Nothing was normal about me or my offspring. I would *try* to bring Francesca some normalcy, though, once Yuri Grisham was out of the fucking way. My retirement wouldn’t be peaceful with that muthafucka lurking.

## **FRANCESCA TOUISSAINT**

The sunshine was bright and beautiful today, with a slight breeze, which was a blessing. Although it was October, this Texas weather could be iffy. Dime held my hand as he walked me to my car. We were done eating and had to part ways here. A part of me wanted to just say fuck it and have my man fully in my life, but the things he was into would no doubt bring more harm than good. Could his lifestyle had still affected me although we weren’t technically together? Yes, but so far, it hadn’t.

I was afraid to really be with Dime in the familial way. Being with him in such a permanent way and then losing him because of his work would kill me. Some stupid part of me thought that as long as I kept him as a partner, I wouldn’t get too attached to him. That ship sailed long ago. I’d been in love

with Dime since the first time we made love. That was the same night we conceived Dallas.

Here I was thirty-four years later, still in love with this sexy ass man. Dime put me in the mind of that actor that played Aquaman. Yes, ma'am, Dime looked just like that sexy ass man. The only difference was Dime's cropped curly shoulder-length locks were blonde, and his complexion was lighter. Otherwise, they could go for brothers. Dime was a couple of years older than my fifty-two years, but he could easily be mistaken as much younger.

"Next time you come out in public, I'll need those jeans to be a little less tight, baby," Dime commented as he tapped me on my ass. The distressed denim jeans were one of my favorite pairs, so he could hang that up.

"When McQueen is my last name, maybe we can talk about my wardrobe."

Dime's face balled up, making me smile. Dallas looked just like his father when they made this face.

"Fuck you mean. McQueen is written all over you, woman. I bet you want play with me, though." Standing at my car door, I turned to face Dime.

"You're such a big ass baby. Get your shit together, and you won't have to worry about me in that way."

Shit, what was it with men thinking they could hold a woman down when he wasn't even her husband? Granted, Dime and I have been *together* for some time, but hell, even our children didn't know we were together like that. I'd be damned if I tell Dallas that his father and I are together. Dallas felt the way I did — Dime's lifestyle was too much for anyone to take on.

"Get my shit-. You know what, Chess? Why do you have to make me feel like an asshole? You know I'm trying to make shit right."

Grimacing, I rolled my eyes. Reaching up on my tip toes, I kissed Dime's plump lips.

“Calm down, Dime. As much as I hate to say it, I’m ready for us to be together without us doing all of this sneaking and shit. I want to go to sleep with you, wake up with you, and have breakfast with you. We can’t do any of that until you’re free.”

I felt tears coating my eyes, which I hated. Every time I met up with Dime, this was how we parted.

“Baby, don’t cry,” he fussed, wiping away the couple of tears that fell. “We got this. I got us. We’re going to be fine.” He soothed, wrapping me in his powerful arms.

I believed Dime. He’d never lied to me before, and there had never been any other women besides me. I didn’t know one man that could be faithful to a woman he wasn’t actually married to, yet Dime was faithful and loyal to me.

Dime had always taken care of the boys and me, even when the boys didn’t know it. Dime was always there for us. Him showing up to get Dallas out of that bullshit murder charge had been the turning point in us as far as being together was concerned, but otherwise, he’d never really left our side. I hated that Dallas and Houston had to be without their father while growing up, but with Dime’s lifestyle, I couldn’t risk having him around us like that.

It still bothered me that Dallas had followed in his father’s footsteps. Although Dallas had long since retired, I suspected my son was still involved in some shit, especially with him being involved with the Smith family. I’d met his homeboys a few times, and a mother wasn’t stupid. The Smith family was no different than the man standing in front of me — ruthless.

“I love you, Dime,” I whispered against his chest. I hated telling him this for fear that it would be the last time I got to tell him. Why couldn’t Dime just be a regular guy with a regular job? Not some... hitman.

“I love you, queen Chess,” he replied, drawing a smile from me.

“Your son’s game starts at—”

“I already know, love. I’ll be there, same spot as always,” Dime informed as he opened my car door.

I slid in, pushing the brake and push to start button simultaneously. The Jag purred to life, blasting cool air my way. Dime crouched down into the car door, hovering over me.

It was a shame that at our age, we were literally sneaking around. I couldn’t even sit in the stands with my man to watch our son play one of his most important games of the year. Brushing off the sadness that swept over me, I pecked Dime’s lips again. This kiss turned into a heavy tonguing that drew a moan from my lips.

“I’m never leaving you, Chess.” Dime kissed my ear.

This man was the love of my life. Like a goofy teenager with her first love, I couldn’t wait to be Mrs. Dimochka McQueen. The day wouldn’t come soon enough. *Lord, let the day come*, I prayed. I did not want to live my life without Dime in it.

## DALLAS

We made it to Houston without incident. Pulling into my mother’s yard, I was almost a little bummed that Chloe’s and my bonding time was halted. I’d gotten to know a lot about her, including her likes, dislikes, and her favorite color an’ shit. She told me about her love for writing and how she came to be Blue.

High-key, I know baby named herself after me — well, my eyes. However, I was gon’ let her tell me that when she was ready. That shit made me feel good knowing she’d been thinking about a nigga all this time. Even though she fought my ass tooth and nail, she must’ve felt some type of way about me to adopt a name that directly reflected me.

Chloe laughed as she watched my crazy ass mama run down the driveway toward the truck.

“Oh my goodness, your mother is gorgeous!” Chloe beamed.

I got out of the truck, catching my mother as she leaped into my arms, wrapping her arms around my neck. My mother was five feet eleven inches and sported an hourglass figure. People liked to say that Francesca resembled the actress, Paula Patton. I mean, my mother was beautiful as hell, so I'd give her that.

My mom reigned kisses all over me, making me ball my face up. "Aye, nie. Stop allat. My lady watchin'," I joked.

Popping me on my arm, my mother stood on her feet, smiling. "Boy, I haven't seen you in weeks!" She followed me around the truck so that I could open the door for Chloe.

"Aight," my mom said, pleased. "You know damn well Houston is about to give you a run for your money." She continued, taking Chloe into a big hug. "Dear, you are gorgeous. If the boys start fighting over you, we'll just call the police and let them handle it. I'm not getting in the middle of two bison."

Chloe laughed while I mugged my mom.

"Oh shit!" I heard from the direction of the front door. Houston was standing there eyeing Chloe like she was asshole naked.

My mother looked from Houston to me, then to Chloe. "Chile... Come on with me so I can show you around."

Houston watched Chloe's every move as she walked past him with a slight wave and "Hello."

"Hey to you too, behbeh." Houston 'bout had a heart attack when he saw the thickness of Chloe's ass in those damn gray joggers she had on. "Damn! Yo, whea you find *that* at?"

I popped his ass upside the back of his head. "Her name is Chloe, and quit lookin' at my girl's ass, nigga. The fuck. She's too old for ya anyhow, youngblood."

"Shiitt... Yo' ass too old for *her*, my nigga," Houston cracked back. And this was how it was with my brother and me — all love and craziness.

# Chapter 11

## DALLAS

Chloe and my mother hit it off well, which I knew was a possibility. I looked on pleased as they stood at the kitchen island, looking through family photos. Chloe was down-to-earth, beautiful, and well-mannered, the qualities any woman needed when they met moms for the first time. My mother was gushing over Chloe as if she birthed her. I felt comfortable leaving Chloe in my mother's hands while I went out to handle some business.

Approaching the chattering women, I hugged Chloe from behind. She fit perfectly to me, her head resting against my chest, my dick pressed against her thick ass. How I went so long without her, I didn't know.

"I'll be back shortly, behbeh." I dropped a couple of kisses on Chloe's upturned lips. She was pouting, but I'd make up for it later.

"Dallas," she whined, "we just got here. Why can't I just tag along?"

"Oh, what? You'on wanna hang with me and moms?" Houston came into the kitchen, adding his two cents.

"I'd love to hang out with the two of you. You got any secrets about your brother you can share with me?" Chloe asked.

"Oh, most definitely, behbeh. Wait 'til he leaves though cuz D ain't wrapped too tight."

I mugged that nigga. "Nah, you ridin' with me homie so I can drop ya ass off at the stadium," I directed his way.

Houston's fresh ass wasn't finna be around my woman without me present. Fuck that.

"Behbeh, chill, aight. I won't be gone long, promise." Chloe smacked her lips, which I kissed again. "Stop that poutin'." Running my fingers down her face, I then pinched

her chin. “You so fuckin’ sexy girl.” This drew a small smile from her.

“Whatever. That sweet talkin’ ain’t gon’ work. Gon’ on, though. Maybe your mother can tell me some juicy stuff that I can use against you later.”

“Oooh yes, girl!” my mother chimed in.

Shaking my head, I glared at both women.

“Just be ready when I get back so we can head out.” They nodded in understanding. Leaving them to their business, I headed out of the house with Houston hot on my heels.

“Mane, tell me how you bagged *her*,” Houston commented as he threw his game bag in the back seat of my truck.

I smirked.

“For real, mane. Damn, shawty ass is thick as fuck. Her face is sexy, *and* mama likes her. Nigga that’s the whole fuckin’ package right there!” This nigga. “Ya lame ass normally be havin’ these saddity bitches.” *True.*

“Mane, shut ya ass up on my girl dawg,” I warned Houston, who slid into the passenger seat, shaking his head.

“Nah, mane, I’m legit tryna figure this out. I know you in love an’ shit cuz you done left her ass wit’ mama. So, tell me whassup.”

I had to remember that Houston was an adult now, eighteen. We talked all the time with me putting him up on game about life in general. He confided in me about pretty much everything that went on in his life. He wasn’t aware to the full extent of who I was, but he had some idea.

“Yeah, that’s wifey,” I confirmed. “But yeen gon’ be ‘round hea lookin’ at my girl’s ass, mane. Find you one of these young thots to fuck on or sum.” Houston laughed.

“Fuck that, my nigga. These hoes got too much shit an’ a nigga ain’t tryna be visitin’ no damn clinic for no fuckin’ body, yahurme.” I heard that.



“Well, I’m sure it’s some lil’ thang that’s got ya attention. You young, so don’t be all into these females like that. Just see how you vibe with ‘em.”

Houston was quiet as I pushed the truck up the road and out of the neighborhood. He had something on his mind, I could tell. He’d eventually get it off his chest. Not five minutes later, he sighed deeply.

“Mane, mama and daddy been creepin’. They must think a nigga’s stupid or some shit.”

Of course, I already knew.

“Yeah,” was all I said.

Houston glanced my way. “You don’t see nothin’ wrong with it?”

Maneuvering the Suburban through highway traffic, I thought about Houston’s question. I felt like if any nigga were gon’ be with my mother, then I’d rather it be my dad. At least I could trust his ass.

“First off, they grown as fuck, so the decisions they make ain’t up to us. We can *not* like that shit all we want. Secondly, the best man to be with moms *is* dad. He may not have been there for us in the way you feel he should have, but I can tell you it’s not for him not wanting to be. Of course, me sayin’ it doesn’t make up for the lost time. I learned over the years that things ain’t always what they seem when it come to the two of them. Lastly, don’t worry yaself about them. If they’re gon’ be together, then as their children, we should be happy for them and support them.”

Houston listened intently, soaking up every word. No matter how hard-headed he was sometimes, I knew without a doubt that he looked up to and admired me. I had to make sure to keep my life in order, if not for myself, then for him. I didn’t want Houston fallin’ into these streets for shit. That’s why I stayed on his muthafuckin’ ass!

“I get it, bro, and you’re right. I know mama loves dad too cuz she won’t even find another nigga to date. Do you know how many niggas checkin’ fa her ass? Too fuckin’

many. If dad gon' make a move, that shit better happen cuz these niggas outchea don't give a fuck about him."

"Fa sho'," I conceded. "But aye, get ya mind on the game. No need to worry about mom and dad. They gon' be alright."

"Yeah, you right," Houston chuckled. "I gotta go outchea tonight and show these niggas why the fuck they can't see me on that green."

Laughing, I dapped Houston up. "Cocky ass nigga."

Hunching his shoulders, Houston grilled me. "I got it from you and pops, nigga."

Damn, sho' did.



I dapped Houston up again before he got out of the truck. I made sure he was inside the stadium doors before I pulled off. Pressing a few buttons on the touchscreen, I dialed the number for my homie Saint.

"Yeah, nigga?" he answered on the first ring.

I chuckled. "Muhfucka, where you at?"

"Shit, around the way," Saint replied.

"I'm slidin' through in twenty," I informed him.

"Bet."

Paul Touissaint, better known as Saint, was my day one nigga. My mother had only one sibling, Paul Touissaint senior, who had a son. The elder Touissaint was killed in a shooting when he and my mother were in their twenties. Saint went to live with his mother in Texas after that. My mother always made sure she stayed in contact with Saint's mother so that he and I could have a relationship.

After I'd been recruited to work for Dime, Paul's and my contact kind of fell off. It had to in order to keep people from speculating on what the fuck was going on with me. After a few years passed, I reached out to Saint. He'd been

heavy on my mind, and I already told y'all when I have them type of feelins' I know some shit be up.

It turns out Saint was knee-deep in his own shit. Saint supplied some of the purest coke the south has ever seen. His empire had been growing, and he was stacking hella paper. You know what happens when a nigga starts makin' that fuckin' paper. Saint was the type of nigga to help any muthafuckin' body, especially if he had it.

Saint had helped a lot of muhfuckas come up. Still, just cuz you help a nigga doesn't mean that nigga down for you. Saint wasn't naïve to the bullshit muthafuckas do, but he had a good heart and never wanted to feel like he'd left a nigga behind. Well, the same muthafuckas he'd tried to help ended up turning on him. Same story, different fuckin' location. The muhfucka bodied some niggas that robbed him.

Good thing he had a cousin like me. I cleaned that shit up for him and recruited him to come work for my father and me. Shit has been solid ever since. Saint was my family, so of course, I was gon' rock with that nigga 'til the fucking end.

Pulling into the parking lot of the soul food restaurant Saint owned, I parked and cut the ignition. Making sure my heat was locked and loaded, I placed it at my back before getting out of the truck. I ain't give a fuck who I was around. The burner was gon' stay by my side always.

Walking into the restaurant, I waved at the few staff that Saint had on his payroll. I spotted Saint sitting in a corner booth, grubbing on some fried chicken and French fries. *This nigga*. I dapped him up as I slid into the booth across from him. I ain't usually sit with my back to the door, but as I said... Saint was my day one.

"I got the chopper next to me, so you good, nigga," Saint commented, tearing into a chicken wing. See what the fuck I meant. "You eatin', drinkin'?" he asked.

Shaking my head no, I signaled for the server. Lili strutted her fine ass over to the table with a smile. She was a bad, thick light-skinned chick with long natural hair. Her pretty face was blemish-free.

“Heyyy D!” she sang brightly.

“What’s good, lil’ behbeh?” In no way was I flirting, but females took it that way.

“Waitin’ on you to stop playin’ wit’ me,” she fussed.

Chuckling, Saint shook his head. “Fuckin’ funny lookin’ ass nigga,” he muttered.

“Uhn, uhn don’t hate, Saint. Yeen want none of this good, good remember. So, mind ya business,” Lili replied, batting her fake eyelashes.

Eyeing Lili up and down, I smirked. “Good, good, huh?” Lil’ behbeh *did* look like she’d give me a run for my money. She’d been trying to get at me for years, but I ain’t mess with them *known* thots. Hell nah.

“Yeah, baby. So whassup?”

I licked my lips. “Can I borrow a pen and a piece of paper, please, suga?”

Lili grilled me, perturbed. “What? So yeen gon’ answer my question?”

Chuckling, I held my hand out for the pen and paper she handed me.

“My shawty got that good, good, so I’m straight,” I responded nicely.

Saint, who was still eating, started fake choking. While his dumb ass got himself together, I shook my head.

“Yo’ shawty? The fuck?”

I turned to Lili, letting her know I was good and that she could move around. I had business to tend to.

“Yeah, nigga, my shawty,” I reiterated.

Sitting the paper on the table, I scribbled some information on it. Sliding it across the table, I waited for Saint to read it.

“How soon, nigga?” he quizzed.

“Yesterday. Ya got me?”

Saint wiped his hands on a paper napkin before picking up the piece of paper and stuffing it into his pocket. “Of course, I got you, nigga.” He dapped me up. “So, is this got to do with ya shawty?”

I nodded.

“So, they know I’m comin’ or naw?”

It ain’t really matter to Saint. He just wanted to know how he needed to move. Saint was still a part of the network, so he’d be able to get done what needed to be done. Since I was retired, I couldn’t dredge that part of me back up without causing some noise. Muhfuckas wish I were back in the game, but I was on some new shit.

“Nah, they don’t know.”

He understood. “They goin’ to N’awlins?”

“Yeah, we headed home Monday.”

Saint smirked. “We? Nigga, who the fuck is this chick that got you tweakin’?”

Saint was just like me with women. He ain’t really fuck with nobody on the level of actually being with them due to his line of work. The only difference between him and me was that Saint wasn’t trying to get out of the business. He swore he was gon’ be murkin’ niggas ‘til the day he died.

“Since when you started bein’ like these messy hoes?”

Saint laughed. “Fuck you, dawg. We’ll meet you in NO.”

Dapping Saint up, I got up to leave.

“Since you won’t give me no play, I’m gon’ have to holla at that lil’ brother you got, D. He got a game tonight, right? I’m gon’ try to make it so I can give him a victory dance later, nahmean.” Lili sauntered up beside me, walking me out the door.

“Lili, getcho ass back up in here!” Saint shouted. I chuckled, annoyed, while Lili rolled her eyes and went back

into the restaurant like her boss told her ass to. I shook my head. Hoes these days ain't have no fuckin' shame.

I made one more stop before I headed back to the house. Yesterday while Chloe was shopping with Yaya, I had made a phone call to a local jeweler here in Houston that I'd dealt with before about a piece of my jewelry. I needed something special for my lady. Dropping ten g's on custom, next day jewelry for my girl wasn't shit. That ring was gon' be a couple of mansions. Scooping my package up, I headed for the crib.

# Chapter 12

## CHLOE

“My son is really taken with you.”

Francesca and I were in the living room. As she casually watched the news, I perused through the third photo album she'd produced.

I glanced up from the photo album I was looking through to find Francesca smiling at me. She was such a beautiful woman. Her portrait hanging above Dallas' fireplace did her no justice. It amazed me how youthful she was. She reminded me of my own mother the way she smiled and tended to me.

“Dallas is a great guy,” I replied, going back to the childhood pictures of him.

Dallas was a chunky little boy, but as he got older, he morphed into a little man. His football pictures drew me in. There were hundreds of them, with him solo and amid different plays. I counted at least half a dozen trophies in various clips.

What also caught my eye were the newspaper articles about Dallas and his achievements. He was the number one quarterback in the nation at eighteen years old. This would've been around the time he killed his mother's boyfriend. Dallas had never mentioned what happened in between the time of the killing leading up to now. I would not intrude, though. As of today, I considered him a well-to-do sports agent, so I'd leave it at that.

“That's it? Dallas is a great guy?” Francesca prodded. Smiling, I understood. His mother was trying to see what type of woman I was to have made an impression on her son.

“I've known Dallas for a few months. He's really close to my cousins, but I never imagined I would be his girlfriend.” Chuckling, I added, “I fought 'til the very end.”

Francesca scoffed. “You were running from Dallas?”

Laughing, I confirmed with a head nod.

Francesca smacked her teeth. “Good for him. I swear that boy is so arrogant. He gets it, honestly, though. His father is the same way.”

I wasn’t going to dig into that comment. It was the longing in Francesca’s voice that I heard beneath the statement. Any woman would have picked up on that. I thought about what Dallas told me about his parents. Looking over at Francesca, I watched the play of emotions across her face.

“Sometimes men can love you so much that it’s hard to move on. I’m not talking about it in a controlling, manipulative way. I’m talking about the way where you know no one will ever love you or treat you as good as he has and will.”

Was she talking about herself?

“Dime, Dallas’ father, has treated me like a queen from the moment I met him. Truthfully, I’m running from him in a way, so I get it. Still, these McQueen men *are* good men. Never question that,” she responded.

I stared at Francesca, wishing I could ask her why she was running from Dime. That was nose-y as fuck, though. I was sure she had only given me the information she wanted me to know.

“Well, I think we should get ready for the game. It’s starting soon, and Dallas told us to be ready when he got back. Lord, if he comes through that door and we’re sitting around shooting the breeze, he’s gonna swear I put you up to it.”

Giggling, I sat the photo albums on the coffee table and stood. Dallas had brought the luggage in earlier, so all of my things were in the room we were staying in.

“Okay, well... I’m glad to meet you, Miss Francesca. Dallas loves you to death, so I’d say you did a wonderful job raising him. A man that treats his mother right will treat me right.”



She agreed. “If Dallas brought you to meet me, then this is serious. I’ve never met any of his... *playthings*. Should I be readying my house for some grandbabies?” she asked.

Coughing, my eyes bucked.

Francesca cackled. “Go ahead and get ready, dear. We’ll have this discussion later.”

Scurrying to the back where the bedroom was, I closed the door behind me. Shaking my head in resignation, I went to my suitcase to pull out the outfit I was wearing to the football game.



“Chloe, behbeh, I thought we talked about you comin’ behind me half-naked.”

Dallas was standing over the sink in the bathroom, grooming himself, when I walked in. He was shirtless, with a pair of True Religion jeans riding his hips, showing a little of the Ralph Lauren Polo boxers underneath. His dreads hung around his broad shoulders. To watch a man as gangsta as Dallas stand in the mirror and moisturize and oil his dreads did something to me. I loved how he kept himself up. I was going to have to make sure I kept up with his ass!

Smacking my teeth, I hip-bumped him. I had on my signature jeans and t-shirt. The jeans were heavily distressed, showing off my entire leg and thigh. The vintage Michael Jackson tee I was wearing clung softly to my breasts. I knotted the shirt to cinch at my belly button.

“You ‘bout to be out here lookin’ all delicious. Why can’t I?” I protested. Dallas stared at me through the mirror, his eyes traveling all over my body.

“Who the fuck you tryna look *delicious* fa, shawty? Ya nigga right chea, so don’t get that ass hemmed up against the fuckin’ shower.”

Beaming, my face flushed.

“Whatever! I better pack my brass knuckles in my purse in case a bitch tries me tonight. Why yo’ ass gotta be

so... ah!" I squealed as Dallas lifted me off of my feet and placed me on the countertop. Positioning himself to stand in front of me, he gripped my chin, pulling my face toward his.

He kissed my lips, sliding his tongue between them. I held onto the sides of his face while our tongues mated. *Shit, I was gonna have to change my panties!*

Pulling away, Dallas looked deep into my eyes. His blue orbs were so hypnotic.

"Am I all you need?" he asked.

Eyes wide, I nodded yes.

"Is you wearin' that shit fa me?"

Again, I nodded.

"Then that's all you had to say, lil' mama. Niggas gon' look at you just like bitches gon' look at me. Just don't make me fuck you up 'bout my shit."

"And don't make me fuck you up about mine," I countered.

Dallas smiled. "That's whassup."

He finished getting ready while I watched. I couldn't wait for us to make it back home so he could blow my fucking back out. He was talking about hemming me up against the shower, but shit, I wanted him to!



We arrived at the stadium where the game was being held less than an hour later. The sun was going down, so the weather wasn't that bad. I hadn't been to a football game since I was in college. Millie and I stayed going to shit like this. The atmosphere was always crazy.

When we pulled into the parking lot, I admired all the people that had shown up to watch the game. The parking lot was packed. It took me right back to my high school days in Pensacola. Pensacola bred some of the best football players to ever do it. Seeing Houston in action tonight was going to be exciting.

Dallas came over to open mine and his mother's door. Taking my hand in his, I was thankful he was such a gentleman as I decided to wear a pair of open-toed, black high heels. They weren't stilettos, even so, your girl had to keep it cute being on Dallas' arm. No, I wasn't bougie or high class or none of that shit. I wasn't conceited, nor was I self-conscience. I just wanted to match my nigga's fly, shit!

Dallas' grip on my hand was so firm and *possessive*. Shit, I was ready for this man to get me naked. My body flushed at just thinking about what I wanted to do to him. He smelled so good with that YSL dripping off of him. He was iced out, blinding anyone who looked his way. Not to mention he was getting plenty of attention from the niggas and hoes.

"Lord, I should've driven my damn self." Francesca sauntered past us, shaking her head.

Dallas paid for our tickets, then escorted me to a seat in the bleachers right at the fifty-yard line. I had to ignore the stares coming our way from these thirsty ass bitches huddled on the stairs with some equally thirsty ass nigga. If I weren't with Dallas, I probably would've flirted with the dark-skinned, gold-grilled nigga eyeing me up and down like I was a piece of steak. However, I was with my nigga who was *that* nigga! Dallas paid them no mind, either.

We sat high enough to see the entire field but close enough to where I felt we were *on* the field. Dallas sat on the end while I sat next to him. The bleachers were packed, so there wasn't much space for us. I loved this atmosphere, though. Seeing all these people here to support the youth was refreshing.

The players filed onto the field ten minutes later. I stood with Dallas as we cheered Houston's team on.

"What number is Houston?" I asked.

Dallas pointed toward the field at the player who was clearly Houston sporting number ten. Among the other players, Houston looked like a giant. Shit, even with my heels on, he and Dallas towered over me.

“He is gonna break some lil’ girl’s heart,” I grumbled, watching all these fast ass girls fawn over Houston, calling his name and shit as if he could actually hear they dumb asses over the band playing. I mean, it was sickening. And some of these hussies looked older than me!

Dallas laughed, his fangs glistening under the spotlights. I imagined it was just like this for him back in his high school days. Shit, ain’t nothin’ changed. The nigga still attracted too much fucking attention. What the fuck did I get myself into?

## **DALLAS**

I couldn’t be happier for Houston and his teammates. The game had been a tough one, but my brother was on his savage shit and showed everybody on the field and in these stands why he was the fucking best in the nation.

The rival team had done their best to knock Houston off his block. They were tackling him so fuckin’ hard I had to go down to the field a couple of times, to Chloe’s dismay.

Oh yeah. I was that type of brother. I’on give a fuck how old you are. Ya mammy and daddy could get it to! I understood football was a brutal sport, but shit, these muthafuckas were tryna have Houston leavin’ the field on a stretcher!

Even so, Houston came from Dime’s sac...no pun intended. We came from the same stock, so my brother definitely gave them niggas a run for their money out there. He threw for three touchdowns, had no interceptions, and ran for some history-making yards. Houston was even better than I was at his age.

I was determined to help Houston make it in whatever he wanted to do for his life. Whatever college he chose to go to, I would be with him on his first day, like I was his fuckin’ daddy. If he chose to go pro or work in his field of choice, I was gon’ be right there rooting him on. Fuck not being proud of him for the decisions he makes. He made it to eighteen, stayed out of trouble for the most, kept his grades up, and ain’t

gave my mother too much of a hard time. When he did, I got him back in line ASAP!

Chloe and I were sitting in our same spot on the bleachers, waiting for Houston to get done with his after-game shit. The bleachers were slowly clearing out, some people were hanging back waiting for their loved ones or just shooting the breeze.

I grilled a group of muhfuckas that kept eyeballing my shawty like they were finna come snatch her out of my lap. I dared them niggas to try me. One against four ain't mean shit to me. We'd only been waiting ten minutes or so, and with the number of reporters vying for Houston's attention to get just a few words out of him, we'd be here for a bit longer. If those muhfuckas knew what was good for 'em, they'd give me *and* my shawty fifty muthafuckin' feet.

Chloe was sitting comfortably in my lap with my arms around her waist, holding her to me. She was texting furiously back and forth with her best friend she called Millie.

“Uhhh, this hoe is being so messy.” She giggled.

I wasn't trying to be nosey, but hell, whatever she and Millie were talking about had her skinnin' and grinnin' her ass off.

“You talkin' 'bout me, shawty?”

Chloe smiled, blushing.

“Of course. She wanna know if your tongue is as good as it looks.”

Chortling, I leaned into her ear. “Tell her my tongue is *better* than it looks, yahurme.”

Chloe's entire face flushed as her thumbs halted on the keyboard.

We were keeping it rated G since the kids were out, but shit, this was my fuckin' woman. It was funny how I went from never showing a bitch affection to always wanting to be affectionate with Chloe. No matter where we were, I had to have her close to me, in my space, touching her.

“Hey, D.”

When Lili walked up the steps to stand in front of us, I already knew she was on some bullshit, interrupting my time with my lady. Lili was with two chickens, her sisters, all three of them lookin’ like they needed to go back to the farm. Hoes mane, they do the dumbest shit.

“Whassup.” I greeted. Chloe shifted in my arms, glancing at me over her shoulder.

“Oh, don’t worry boo, I was just speakin’.” Lili eyed Chloe up and down, and so did her sisters.

“No worries here. I know who I got,” Chloe countered, finishing up her texting then putting her cell phone in the small cross-body Chanel purse she was wearing.

“Hmm.” Lili smirked. “It was good seeing you earlier, D,” she suggestively stated.

Chloe stiffened.

“Yeah, you too. Just like I told ya ass then, my shawty got that good, good. So move the fuck around fa I embarrass you outchea.”

One thing I don’t do is this messy, petty female shit. That’s why I kept my shit lowkey. If a bitch wanted the smoke with another bitch, then cool. But *this* one, I’d put a bullet in any muhfucka comin’ for her.

Smacking her teeth, Lili scrunched her face up. “You don’t have to be nasty, shit! A bitch can’t fuckin’ speak without yo’ hoe gettin’ offended.” Lili’s girls instigated the shit by giggling like some fucking hyenas.

Chloe chuckled. “Nah, I’m not offended, but you gon’ keep them names to yourself.”

Lili smirked again, her and her girls trying to get a rise out of Chloe. This bitch ain’t know she was fuckin’ with the wrong nigga. A certified, crazy muthafucka, that’s me. You’d think her knowing Saint and the fact that I fuck with him heavily would make this dumb bitch think twice about starting some shit with me. But again, Lili was a dumb bitch.

“Lili—” I started, but Chloe interrupted me.

“Uh, uh. Don’t save her. You told her one time, that’s all she needed. Anything after that is begging, and the only woman you gon’ be ‘round here beggin’ is me.”

Fuck my life. I forgot Chloe was a Smith, so she was definitely with the shits. I would let my baby tap Lili’s ass under different circumstances, but this shit was petty as fuck. And a nigga was too old to be outchea letting his lady fight over him.

“Ain’t nobody beggin’ this bitch fa shit,” I defended. “But I’mma give her one mo’ muhfuckin’ chance to move the fuck around fa I show my ass.” On my mama, I would.

“Lili, don’t let this saddity bitch rile you up. Let’s go. The nigga ain’t allat no fuckin’ way!” her uglass oldest sister chimed in.

Chloe laughed, and so did I. The shit was funny as fuck. The dumbettes stalked off, taking they funky ass attitudes with them. Shit, I’m tryna tell y’all. I don’t know why muthafuckas be wantin’ this heat! Here I was tryna be this reformed, give a muthafucka a chance nigga, and every-muthafuckin’-body was tryin’ my life. The fuck?

“Now I see why Gatah and Steph don’t take your ass anywhere,” Chloe concluded.

Shrugging, I grabbed her chin, turning her face toward me before I kissed her gloss-covered lips.

“Sexy ass. You got my fuckin’ dick on brick.”

No lie. Any other bitch would’ve been outchea squabbling with Lili. However, Chloe was proving to be a different breed as far as class is concerned. She didn’t get loud or disrespectful, but still held her own. That’s the kind of woman I fuckin’ needed. With the way my mind was set up, I ain’t need no help being crazy.

Chloe giggled, blushing hard. Houston needed to hurry the fuck up! A nigga was ready to dive in Chloe so fuckin’ bad.

# Chapter 13

## DALLAS

The parking lot was flooded with people as we made our way to the truck. It was a Saturday, so the teenagers were most definitely about to be on some bullshit. It pissed me off that not one security guard was in sight for the number of people milling through the parking lot, not to mention it was well past nine in the evening. Back in my day, a gathering this large wouldn't have been an issue. Times were different, though. Hell, half these muhfuckas probably had cannons on 'em. I did.

“Houston, you definitely did your thing tonight. I must say I'm impressed,” Chloe complimented. She was secured by my side, holding on to my arm as the truck came into my line of vision.

“Thank you, beautiful,” Houston gushed. “I'm tryna get like Dallas an' get me a shawty as bad as you.”

This drew a laugh from both Chloe and my mother, who was walking hand in hand with Houston. Even in that little gesture, Houston showed the amount of love and respect he had for my mother. He wasn't paying any attention to the thirsty ass lil' thots, speaking, trying to get his attention.

“All these pretty girls, and not one will do?” Chloe asked.

Houston's face balled up. “Hell nah, behbeh.”

Houston was interrupted when a couple of niggas he hung with came up dapped him. These lil' knuckle head niggas these days. Both their asses looked high as fuck. I know Houston better not be smokin' no shit! Fuck, I smoked enough for the both of us.

“Hey, Miss Francesca,” they spoke in unison.

“Antonio, Franky,” my mother greeted them dispassionately.



“Whassup, D?” They were speaking to me but, of course, staring at Chloe. I smirked. Young niggas couldn’t be discreet.

“Yo quit starin’ at my fuckin’ sis like that. Y’all niggas wouldn’t know what to do with that, no ways,” Houston defended.

“Son, language,” Francesca fussed. Chloe chuckled.

“My fault, mama, but they starin’ at her ass an’ shit. That’s disrespectful as fuck.” Mind you; this was the same nigga that stared at her ass the first time he’d seen Chloe.

“Mane ain’t nobody bein’ disrespectful. The damn girl is fine as hell,” Antonio justified.

Houston growled, jumping at Antonio and Franky. They flinched like some lil’ pussy ass bitches. “Aye dawg, y’all bounce fa I act a fool outchea. And don’t hit my fuckin’ line ‘til y’all learn so manners, muhfuckas!” he barked.

By this point, I was laughing with Chloe. Houston was definitely my brother. The nigga went from zero to one hunnid quick!

Hitting the fob to unlock the truck doors, I pocketed the keys. We were steps from the truck, still laughing, when I heard tires screeching. Instinctively, I grabbed Chloe, placing her in front of me as I rounded the driver’s side of the truck. Just like I knew it, gunshots rang out, sending people screaming and running for cover through the parking lot.

“Houston!” I shouted, just as bullets hit the truck. “Fuck!”

The constant blast of what I knew to be an AK rapidly pierced the night. It was hard hearing over the gunshots and screams, but I swore Houston didn’t answer me. Swinging the driver-side door open, I lifted a screaming Chloe off of her feet, tossing her inside. Like the good girl my lil’ behbeh was, she crawled over to the passenger seat.

Pulling my heat from my back, I ran back to the rear of the truck, aiming at the black-on-black Denali flying through the parking lot, still blasting. I had a good shot, but the parking

lot was so packed I didn't want to fuck around and hit one of these kids. The gunshots stopped as the truck bent the corner of the parking lot.

Heavy footsteps ran past me. I realized it was Dime chasing after the truck. Deciding to let him handle that, I rushed around to the passenger side of the truck. Houston was on the ground, huddled over my mother. My heart stopped in my muthafuckin' chest. This is the first and only time I had ever felt genuine fear.

“Houston!”

Grabbing his attention, Houston stood to his feet, shock all over his pale face. My mother lay on the ground, covering her eyes. Her body uncontrollably shook as she cried. Reaching down, I lifted my mother off of the ground. Houston opened the back seat passenger door. I deposited my mother on the seat as she continued to cry.

Houston and I both rushed around the truck. He hopped in the back, and I hopped in the front. Starting the truck in the rearview mirror, I saw Dime stalking up behind the truck, scowling, pissed as fuck.

Snatching the door open, he gently yanked my mother out of the truck. “Meet you at the crib.” Slamming the door, they were gone.

“The fuck just happened, mane?” Houston sighed in disbelief.

Chloe was balled up in the passenger seat, her head resting against the glass of the window.

Peeling out of the parking lot, I was thankful my shit was bulletproof. Call me paranoid or whatever the fuck you want, but I don't ride in shit that a bullet can pierce. Muhfucka like me done killed a lot of muthafuckas ridin' unprotected. Trust me. Had it not been for the extra precautions, one or *all* of us would've been fucked up.

Reaching over the armrest, I palmed Chloe's thigh. She glanced my way, tears glistening her eyes, cascading down her cheeks. At some point, I was gon' sit behbeh girl down and

explain to her some shit about me. If she weren't curious before, she would be now.

“Whoeva that muthafucka was, was aimin’ at us, bruh,” Houston concluded.

He was right, though. This was the first time someone had ever blatantly come for my people. Instantly I was wondering who the fuck it could be. The only obvious person I could think of was Grisham. Still, why the fuck would a known assassin make such a big public spectacle the way he just had?

I was confused as hell. The shit was sloppy as fuck, and innocent bystanders were everywhere. Just like me, Grisham had a million different ways he could kill a muthafucka. What just took place didn't make sense.

Grisham had the right muthafucka, though. Damn, why the fuck couldn't I just bury *Phantome*? Muhfuckas wouldn't be happy 'til I burned every muthafuckin' thing down fuckin' with me and mine!

“It's gon' be alright,” I mumbled.

Chloe sniffled as her hand came to rest upon mine. Without saying so, she was telling me that she trusted me. I wasn't gon' fail her.



We made it back to the crib shortly after that. Dime's truck was parked in the driveway. Hopefully, he'd calmed my mother down by now. It wasn't lost on me that Dime was actually at Houston's game. Why he didn't make his presence known was stupid as fuck. I didn't understand why he and my mother kept playing this sneaky-ass game. Houston and I were grown as fuck and didn't need to be protected from shit that petty.

Chloe didn't want to eat any of the concession stand food at the football game, so I ushered her in the kitchen to whip us something up. Thankfully, my mother was a cooker and had some leftover spaghetti in the refrigerator. While the food heated up, I poured us both a glass of lemonade. Once the

spaghetti was warm enough, I fixed us both a plate, then sat at the table with Chloe in silence as we ate. From the subtle glances she was throwing my way, the questions would be coming soon.

Dime walked into the kitchen, standing right beside Chloe's chair.

"Dime, Chloe. Behbeh, this is my dad, Dime," I introduced. Chloe stared at Dime, unblinking.

Dime bent down to kiss Chloe's cheek. "Damn, you finer than a muhfucka. Son, I'm so proud of you. You got you a baddy." Dime grinned down at a bemused Chloe.

I grabbed Chloe's empty plate and glass along with mine and carried them to the sink.

"It's nice meeting you, Dime, and thank you." Chloe smiled. She was still wearing the stress of the night on her face.

"D, after you two get... settled, we need to talk," Dime informed me. I nodded in agreement. "Your mother's sleeping, so whenever you're ready, I'll be in the den."

"Come on, behbeh." I clutched Chloe's hand, leading her to the room. Forgoing the bed, I went straight to the bathroom. We needed to wash the night off of us.

Turning the knob on in the walk-in shower, I set the temperature to the warmest I could get it without burning us. Stripping down to nothing, I eyed Chloe as she slowly removed her clothes.

Damn, my bitch was sexy as fuck, yahurme! Her body was Jessica Rabbit stupid. That ass was sittin' so fuckin' lovely, and my mouth watered to taste that shit, which I would. Hell, Chloe had me like that with wanting to do that freaky nasty shit with her that I envisioned in my fuckin' dreams. Shawty could have me that way, *any* way.

Chloe's eyes cascaded down my body, stopping at my hard dick that I fisted, biting my bottom lip.

"Get ya ass in the shower," I demanded.

Smirking shyly, Chloe sauntered past me, grazing my abdomen with her manicured nails. My body flinched, her touch turning me on even more. Following behind Chloe, I closed the glass door.

The shower was one of those sauna-style ones, with brown beige tiled walls and a tiled seating area. Wide shower heads were on either side, creating a complete enclosure feel. Four people could easily fuck in this shit and be comfortable. I was definitely about to fuck Chloe's ass all over this bitch.

Chloe squeezed body wash onto a loofa, then lathered her body seductively. I leaned against the wall, watching as she put on a show. The gift I'd given her earlier dangled from her nipples. Each platinum bar held the initial D on one side and M on the other. The ice against her skin sparkled. When she reached between her legs to clean her pussy, I groaned. Turning her back to me, she rinsed off with a giggle.

I came up behind her, pressing my dick to her back with her short ass. Wrapping my hand around her throat, I used my thumb to bend her head back and to the side so that I could get my tongue all the way down her throat. She kissed me back, moaning into my mouth.

Chloe squirmed, rubbing her body against the brick between us. I sucked and bit my way down her neck, making sure I left my mark on her. Any time a nigga looked at Chloe, my shit was gon' be marked the fuck up. The fuck you thought.

"Dallas," Chloe whispered as I continued sucking down her back. When I bit her right ass cheek, she moaned. I slapped that muthafucka, going to my knees.

"Bend ova, shawty." Chloe ain't need no direction. She bent over, placing her hands on the tiled seat.

Spreading her ass cheeks, I let my tongue glide down her middle, stopping to bless her ass for a minute. This shit was turning my behbeh on so much that her legs were shaking already. Shit, she liked it, so I loved it. I definitely didn't mind pleasing Chloe this way. Deciding that I had to move on before Chloe tapped out early, I headed to my destination.

Damn, you ever ate a woman's pussy, and wish you could bottle that shit? I mean, not fa no other nigga, but fa yaself. Just to eat whenever the fuck you want. Shit, fuckin' with Chloe's ass, we were gon' stay fuckin', and her ass was gon' stay pregnant, yahurme.

Chloe's moans battled with the sucking and slurping sounds I was making in her box. I spanked her ass, groaning from the taste of her juices running to the back of my throat. Chloe came three times before I stood, abruptly turning her and lifting her off of her feet. Her legs went around my waist as I carried her to one of the tiled walls.

Being that Chloe was light as a feather, I was about to enjoy the fuck out of this shower session. Behbeh slid down the wall as she palmed my dick, and I cuffed her ass cheeks. Bringing her center to my pole, I slid her down on it. It took a minute from how tight she was, but she was wet as fuck. The suction was making my knees weak.

"Fuck, goddamn!" I growled like a bitch. I thought being inside of her and wanting to cum too soon the last time was a fluke. Hell naw. Behbeh's pussy was just lethal as fuck!

Chloe wrapped her arms around my neck, throwing her head back as I bounced her on my dick. She was a pro though cuz she started riding me, helping a nigga out. Water cascaded around us as we made love.

"Yesss!" she croaked. "Damn, nigga, you so fuckin' good and deep!" Shit, I was tryna get deeper.

I was gon' bite a hole through my lip tryna to stop my ass from tellin' this woman to marry me tonight! I mean, we were getting married regardless, but ya nahmean. A nigga was dead ass in love with this woman.

All thought fled when Chloe's pussy tightened around me. "Fuck!" Lifting her a lil' bit, I swallowed her right nipple.

"Shiitt! Dallas, oh my-... Uhn, uhn!" Chloe's hands traveled through my locs, gripping them.

Growling, I looked Chloe in her eyes as I tried to drill a hole through her stomach.

“Cum on ya nigga dick!” I demanded, knowing I couldn’t hold this nut back any longer.

“Ahh!” Chloe yelled out as she squirted all over me. Fuck man, she ain’t have to do a nigga like dat!

“Yeah, Chloe! Squirt on this dick!” I encouraged her, bouncing harder. Her muscles continued clinching around me, drawing an animalistic growl from the pit of my soul.

Dropping my head in her neck, my arms strained to hold her as I felt the most soul snatchin’ nut shoot out of me and into her suctioning walls. My dick was still fuckin’ hard, though!

“Goddamn! Good pussy havin’ ass,” I grumbled into her neck. Neva *eva* had I had back-to-back orgasms inside of no pussy, not in my thirty-four years. So, when I felt the familiar tingling sensation surge up my spine, I knew this was about to be that time.

“Fuck me! *Je ne te quite jamais* (I’m never leaving you)!”

Chloe used her thigh muscles and the tile wall to help herself ride me. She tugged at my dreads as I felt her cumming again.

”*Je t’aime* (I love you)!” I released inside of her, damn near dropping my lil’ behbeh in the process.

# Chapter 14

## ROCHELLE

### The Same Night... Pensacola, Florida

Now that this fat piece of shit was good and fucked, it was time for him to give me what I needed. Laying across his burly, hairy chest, I pretended to relish in stroking his chest hairs.

“Baby?” He was snoring, but he was going to have to wake his ass up and listen to me after I had let him sweat all over me for the past two hours.

“Baby?” I called again, patting his chest.

He mumbled, “Hmm,” without opening his eyes. It was dark in the room, but I could tell he wasn’t fully awake by the light snoring coming from his direction.

“I need your help.” I pushed out a couple of tears, playing this role to the fullest.

He groggily came to. “What’s wrong, sweetness?” he asked with genuine concern. Too bad I really didn’t like his ass like that. Otherwise, he was a good man. Well, besides the fact that he cheated on his wife all the time.

Clearing my throat, I replied. “It’s my boss. I wanted to tell you sooner, but I knew you wouldn’t have approved. I’ve been lying to you, dear.” I cried some more.

He rubbed my back, shushing me. “What the hell are you talking about? Calm down and talk to me,” he urged.

“For the past couple of years, I’ve been working for Dallas McQueen.”

He went to sit up, but I pushed him back. “Wait! It’s not what you think.” When he calmed down, I continued. “I wanted to kill him. That was my original plan. But as time passed, it became harder. I guess I got cold feet,” I lied. “However, some things have happened over the past week that has set me back in motion to get rid of him.”



He stared at me in the darkness, panting, trying to decipher what I had just told him.

“Are you going to tell me what happened?”

I couldn't tell him the truth, of course. “He's been sexually harassing me, causing me all types of issues at work. I'd hate to quit because I make significant money, and I actually love my job.” I poured on the fake tears.

“Shh, honey. It's going to be okay. I will help you. You know that. I've always helped you. I can't believe you've been around Dallas all this time and never told me. How did you manage to sneak this past me, little girl?” he playfully asked, pinching my chin.

I sniffled. “I just was meticulous,” I admitted. Truthfully, I didn't know how he *didn't* know. I guess it helped that Dallas was never with me in public.

“Okay, I will handle it first thing on Monday. Just stay away from his ass until then,” he chided.

Nodding in peace, I laid my head back on his chest. If I couldn't kill Dallas personally, I'd surely talk a muthafucka into doing it for me. I fell asleep with a smile on my face.

## **DIME**

### **Back in Houston, Texas**

The one night I decided to let Francesca's detail take off, I paid the price. I had almost lost her and my children tonight. I knew without a doubt that Grisham was sending a warning. No way did he miss hitting them on purpose unless he wanted to.

It was after one in the morning when Dallas slinked his ass into the den, smoking some loud ass Kush.

“Ya mom's gonna beat your ass smokin' in her house.”

Dallas smirked, taking a long drag from the blunt, then handing it to me. I inhaled the smoke, shaking my head.

“Now you're trying to get me caught up.” Shit, Francesca would kill my ass for smoking this shit. However, it

was good as hell, relaxing my otherwise tense body and mind.

Grisham had tried taking this away from me, family. It was a tough pill for me to swallow, knowing that someone I should've gotten rid of a long time ago was out here aiming at the people I loved. Still, this was the shit that came with being a hitta, especially when a muthafucka knew who you were. Family was always the weakness. Families are always who cowards went for first.

"I got a red dot for Grisham," Dallas voiced, sitting in the recliner across from the love seat I was sitting on.

The television was down low, showing a loop of last night's local news. The shooting incident was the top story, of course. Thankfully, there weren't any cameras in the makeshift parking lot. Or else Dallas and I both would've been all over that bitch. Plus, I didn't need any fuckin' body getting in the way of my putting a bullet in Yuri Grisham.

"Nah, this is all on me," I replied, handing him back his blunt.

"Fuck that. That muthafucka came for my mama, my brotha, and my girl. No fuckin' way I'mma sit this one out. Not even fa you, Dime."

"I'm not asking you to. I'm telling you to." This hard-headed muhfucka was so stubborn. Shit, is this what Francesca had to go through dealing with me?

"Don't nobody tell me to do shit," Dallas countered.

Grinning, I motioned with my head toward the general area at the back of the house where the bedrooms were located. "Not even Chloe?"

Dallas pulled from the blunt, eyeing me. He wanted to say some shit. I could tell by the play of emotions across his face. He went from 'fuck you' to '*fuck you*'. I knew the signs of a man in love. I was the same way with my woman.

"Listen, D. Your mother is fucked up behind this. This is exactly why the fuck she won't let me in the way I want her

to. The last thing I need is something happening to you or Houston. I'd never forgive myself."

Dallas chuckled.

"Mane, I done been in deeper shit than this will eva be. You trusted me then. Just cuz I haven't been on an opp in almost three years doesn't mean I don't know what the fuck I'm doin'."

He was right.

"Yeah, I know. Running with those fuckin' Smith boys got you keeping your game straight." Dallas had been on countless missions and had completed them all without fail. He had war wounds, of course, but nothing major.

"This is different, Dallas. Without the proper intel on Grisham, there's no telling who he's working with. I know I originally wanted you to get at him, but for your mother, I'm asking you to leave this to me."

Contrary to what anyone thought, I loved the fuck out of my boys. If anything happened to them or their mother, I'd be as good as dead.

"And what about you, homie? Mama ain't gon' fare too well if some shit happens to ya."

Dallas' comment should've been innocent, but I knew better. I should've known he knew that his mother and I were still together.

"Stop bullshittin'. Whateva the fuck you gotta do to make mama happy, do that shit. You could've walked away a long time ago, Dime. Yeah, you got this muhfucka gunnin' fa you but fuck him. When we catch up to his ass, that Draco's gon' light that bitch up after I stomp his ass to sleep. That shit ain't stoppin' you from retiring though, mane."

Wow, here my grown ass son was giving me advice. I was a fucking boss in the mercenary business. I've killed countless people and slept peacefully every night. Why Grisham was stuck in my fuckin' claw, I didn't know. It was just something about loose ends that I didn't like.

“The powers that be aren’t gonna let me rest until he’s dead, D.”

Dallas nodded in understanding as he finished off the blunt. “Fuck them! Put ya fuckin’ paperwork in and hurry the fuck up while ya at it. Mama’s gon’ fuck ‘round and find another man. You know how shit ended with Lester. I ain’t tryna kill no other niggas about my mama. Grisham is the last muhfucka that’s gon’ eva come for her.”

I agreed. Thinking about Lester filled me with regret. I could never tell my son that it was because of me that Lester was even in his mother’s life and why his life had drastically changed. Lester’s dumb ass I didn’t feel sorry for. That stupid muthafucka got his ass killed fuckin’ with the wrong family.

“Take your lady back home. Get her out of Houston. Grisham is here, and we know that now. Your mother and brother will go with you.”

“No, I won’t,” Francesca’s voice sounded from the doorway.

“Chess baby—” I started.

“No, Dime. I’m not gonna allow some maniac to run me away from my own home. If you can’t protect me here, then find someone who can. Otherwise, Dallas, take your brother with you and Chloe when you leave.”

“Ma—”

“No!” Francesca shouted. “I’ve been quiet all these years, letting the two of you run shit, make decisions for me. Not anymore. Dallas, do what the fuck I said. Don’t fuckin’ try me, Dime. Stay yo’ ass here and protect me, or I will walk away from your ungrateful ass so fast you’ll wonder if I ever existed. Now play with me.”

Dallas and I both watched Francesca storm out of the den.

“And y’all losin’ y’all fuckin’ minds smokin’ in my shit!” Francesca yelled loud enough for us to hear.

Dallas smiled. “You got ya hands full, mane. Mama is summin’ else,” he expressed.

Balling my face up, I grilled him. “And you don’t, son?”

Bobbing his head, he agreed. My daughter-in-law, with her fine ass, was gonna give my son a run for his money if she already hadn’t.

## CHLOE

“Oooh bitch, is your pussy still sore? I know it is. Hmm. I can honestly see why you was runnin’ from that nigga,” Millie’s messy ass cackled through my line. I was trying to be discreet and not to laugh, but I couldn’t hold it.

Dallas, Houston, and I were on our way back to New Orleans. My stay in Houston was so much fun aside from the drive-by. I was still a little shaken over it, but Dallas had fucked most of my thoughts away. Whew... chile! Remembering what he did to me in that shower... Fanning myself, I ignored the perplexed look Dallas threw my way.

Call us crazy, but here I was in the passenger seat, with my bare feet in his lap while he cruised up the interstate. I was minding my business sitting completely normal, the right way to sit in the passenger seat when he put the center console up and positioned my legs on him. He went between controlling the wheel and massaging my feet. I loved the affection he showed me. With this nigga he always wanted to be touching on me.

Houston was in the back seat with a pair of Beats on in his own world. He had said little since leaving. I could tell he was upset that he had to leave his mother behind. He would also miss a few days of school until this shit blew over. With his football career going so well, I know that also dealt a blow to him.

“Hoe, you must be reminiscin’. The dick was that good, huh? I’mma have to find me some and soon. My coochie is shriveling up being around all these bitches.”

Smacking my teeth, I cackled. “Rule number one, never tell your girls about your man’s dick. Then them triflin’ hoes gon’ wanna try it out.”

Millie screeched. “Shit, unless he got a friend that I can take to heaven.”

This damn girl was so stupid.

“Tell her I got a friend, actually my cousin,” Dallas commented.

Cocking my head, I realized he’d heard everything Millie was saying. I wondered if this cousin looked just like Dallas. Hell, these muthafuckas couldn’t go around being this damn fine!

“Who?” Millie practically shouted on the other end.

Dallas grinned. “Saint. The nigga needs a woman to calm his ass down,” he replied.

Millie huffed on the other end. “See hoe, why I gotta be all the way here in Orlando. I’m finna say fuck this shit and haul my ass to New Orleans witchu.” *Her ratchet ass!*

“There’s no way you’d give up basketball and school to come be with me. And I don’t live in New Orleans. I live in Pensacola. My man just won’t let me go home,” I corrected.

Dallas chuckled. “And you not.”

Shaking my head, I rolled my eyes at him. “Aw, him in love...” Millie instigated.

“Bitch, get off my phone!” I laughed. “When you serious about coming to see me, let me know. I miss you.”

“I miss you too, sweetie,” Millie’s voice became serious. Instinctively, I knew something was wrong.

“You okay, Mills?” I asked.

Chuckling, Millie blew it off. “Yeah, guh! I’m ‘bout to put me some leggings and tank top on and head to the store. Let a few niggas stare at my ass.”

Hollering, I hung up the phone. The girl was dumb as hell. Hopefully, Millie was okay. I knew my girl had some issues she had gone through when she was younger. I wasn't sure what any of it was, but I tried to be there for her like a best friend should. I'd check on her once I got settled.

“You and ya girl are close.”

I nodded, resting my head against the headrest, enjoying Dallas' strong, tatted hand massaging my foot.

“She can come visit any time, which is a privilege cuz I'on let nobody in my shit, yahurme.”

“So, I'm privileged since I've been in your house? Rochelle's been in there too, though,” I griped.

Dallas pinched my big toe. “Nah, you special, lil' behbeh. And the only time Ro's ever been in my shit was the day she and Hollis took you over there. You're the only woman that's ever been in my house like that.”

“Facts,” Houston seconded.

His revelation was surprising. What made me so special to him? I dare not ask, though.

“It explains why Rochelle disappeared once we got inside. She was looking for traces of another woman.”

Licking his lips, Dallas glanced my way. “She disappeared?”

Shrugging, I replied, “Yeah, for a few minutes when we first got there.”

Understanding, Dallas let it go. I didn't know what he was thinking, but I hope that bitch Rochelle wasn't on some bullshit. I'd hate to whoop her ass for fuckin' with my man's shit.



We made it home... I mean to Dallas' house shortly after nightfall. Dallas handed me the house key and told me to go inside while he and Houston brought in the luggage. I did as he asked with a smile on my face. Knowing I was the only

woman that Dallas gave this *privilege* to was encouraging. That meant he at least thought highly of me. I know he'd said it out of his mouth, but he was actually showing it in many ways.

Once I had the door opened, I trotted to the room where I'd slept the time I had stayed here. Everything was still in its place. Going into the bathroom, I was bending over to prepare a nice bubble bath when Dallas walked in.

“What you doin’ in here, *chérie*?”

“Fixing a bath,” I responded, turning the faucet on.

Dallas came up behind me, turning the water off.

“If you’on getcho ass outta hea, shawty. The fuck you usin’ this bathroom fa?”

Hunching my shoulders, I was confused. “I’m just taking a bath, Dallas.”

When he grilled me, his fangs glistened. Without a word, he grabbed my hand, leading me out of the room and down the hallway to the room at the other end — the master bedroom.

He opened the door, switching on the lights, which were automatically dimmed. Dallas’ room was all man. From the high back sleigh bed big enough for ten people to the leather settee positioned in front of the floor-to-ceiling window overlooking the yard. The flat-screen television mounted on the wall across from the bed was even bigger than the television in the room I was in. Dark polished wood furniture made everything appear hard, yet sexy.

Dallas led me through a door where his walk-in bathroom was. *Shit!* This nigga was gon’ make me marry his ass. The bathroom was spotless, with a sauna style, glass-encased shower, his and hers sinks, and ocean green accents. What drew my attention was the clawfoot tub to my right. That bitch was beautiful. I’d never taken a bath in one of those.

“Stay there,” he commanded, leaving me by the sink.



Going to the tub, Dallas turned the water on, checking the temperature. He came back my way, fumbling under the sink until he produced a bottle of something pink. When he went back to the tub and poured some in, I realized it was bubble bath.

“Ya bath, shawty.” He walked up to me, dropping a wet kiss on my lips. Leaning back, he bit his bottom lip. “Take ya time, too.” His eyes roamed my body, making me overheat.

“I’mma fuck you up, girl,” he promised before leaving me to the puddle between my legs.

# Chapter 15

## CHLOE

As I soaked in the tub, my mind drifted to the events of the night before. I'd never been shot at before. It was scary, to say the least. The funny thing is, I wasn't focusing on the actual shooting. I was thinking about the way Dallas had protected me. The way he didn't shy away from the danger. Instead of getting out of harm's way, he ran toward it. That frightened me. I loved my cousins Gatah and Stephan to death. When Stephan got shot a while back, it was the most devastating thing I'd gone through, other than my parents being arrested.

It was naïve to think that Dallas would stay out of trouble being as he ran with Gatah and Steph. My cousins were into some shit, so the danger came with the territory. At least these days, it did. Surprisingly, both Gatah and Stephan had calmed down since being with their women. Maybe my being with Dallas would calm him down as well.

Because his phone stayed blowing up with business calls, he seemed to facilitate that part of his life well. Never did he conduct business while he and I were interacting. That was commendable of him, especially since he made a shitload of money doing what he did. It was the other shit I was afraid of.

I didn't get out of the tub until the water was damn near cold. Drying my body, I wrapped a plush towel around my frame. Padding to the room, I didn't expect Dallas to be stretched out across the bed, shirtless in his signature sweat shorts, knocked out.

My poor baby was tired. We'd been back and forth on the road, and at some point, he was bound to crash. Biting my bottom lip, I admired his physique. Dallas could make any woman fold if left alone in a room with him. His body was so sculpted and heavily tatted. I loved it. I especially loved the *NEW ORLEANS SAVAGE* tattoo across his abdomen amongst the hundred other tattoos he had lining his torso and abdomen.

He had *NEW ORLEANS* on his right forearm and *LOUISIANA* on his left forearm. Uhhh... Dallas just did something to me! My pussy ached for him to kill it again.

Dallas' print caught my eye as I neared the bed. His rod was so thick and long. Like he had enough for four bitches. But hell, no bitch was getting my shit! I'd make sure this nigga didn't even think about another bitch. Starting with this head, I was about to put on his ass. Yeah, he was asleep, and I know he was tired, but my body was feenin'. His ass shouldn't be so damn fine!

Okay, so a bitch ain't ever sucked a dick before. But hey, I wanted my man to know I'd do anything for him. I wanted him to know that he didn't need to go elsewhere for shit. So, I was about to put this porn-watching, learned head to good use.

Climbing on the bed, I positioned myself between Dallas' legs. He instinctively reached for me when the bed dipped. His eyes stayed closed, though. The lighting in the room was still low, setting the mood for some bomb ass lovemaking.

I ran my hands up Dallas' strong thighs, eliciting a hiss from between his thick lips. Just like that, I watched the print in his shorts grow against his right thigh. His eyes fluttered open as my hands traveled up to his abdomen, then coming down to grip the waistband of his shorts. Between the strong smell of Kush and the redness of the whites of his eyes, Dallas had definitely had him a blunt before coming to bed.

Leaning down, I placed a kiss on Dallas' abdomen. I relished in how his muscles contracted beneath my lips. His body smelled fresh from the shower he must've taken in the other bathroom since I was occupying his for so long.

Kissing down his abdomen, I tugged on his shorts. He lifted so that I could pull them down his thighs and off of his feet. On my knees, between his legs, I stared him in his eyes as I grabbed his pole. The tip glistened with pre-cum. Dallas watched me under heavy lids, his blue eyes dark as hell.

Sticking my tongue out, I licked his wide head.

“Mmm.” Dallas’ hand went to the back of my head. My hair was short, but this nigga always found a way to grip the short strands. It turned me on like nobody’s business.

I made sure my mouth was waterfall wet when I took him into my mouth. This nigga had so much dick that I fisted to base just to keep myself from going down too far. This nigga was gon’ choke me to death!

“Shiitt! Suck dat shit, lil’ behbeh,” he encouraged as I sucked him for dear life. Wasn’t no other bitch gon’ do this for my man.

“Chloe, I’mma nut beh,” he panted. It’s not like he wanted me to pull back cuz the way he was holding my head in place while he worked his hips. My hand was covered in the saliva dripping from my mouth. For this to be my first time, I thought I was doing pretty okay from how Dallas was responding.

“Oooh shit!” he exclaimed seconds later as I felt his warm substance hit the back of my throat. Instead of gagging, I swallowed hungrily.

Like the last time he destroyed my pussy, this nigga’s dick didn’t even go down.

“Come ride me, sug,” his husky, thickly accented voice whispered across my ears.

Dallas reached up to remove the towel from my body. My nipple rings, courtesy of this man, glistened under the low lights. He licked his lips, letting me know he was about to suck the life out of my poor breasts. Straddling Dallas’ hips, I let him lead his dick to my opening. With effort, I slid down on him. I was beyond wet from giving him head, the pleasure he was experiencing transferring to my body.

Dallas palmed my ass as I started riding him.

“Uhhnn...you’re so deeeep, babyyy!” Shit, I felt this nigga in my forehead. Dallas grunted as I placed my hands on his chest, trying to give myself some leverage.

“Lemme suck on my nipples, beh,” he requested, leaning up to take my left nipple into his mouth. Just like that,

a bitch came right on this nigga's dick.

“You came so fuckin’ hard on this good dick, shawty,” he stated, taking my other nipple into his mouth. I came again, my nails digging into his shoulders.

Dallas sat up, placing kisses down my neck, on, and between my breasts. Bouncing me roughly down his dick, I knew he was close.

“Chloe, you drivin’ a nigga crazy. This my muthafuckin’ pussy. I eat it and fuck it so good another nigga better never touch my shit.”

I couldn’t speak cuz this nigga’s dick was tapping my brain.

“And this ya dick shawty. He’on want no pussy but yours. If he ain’t at the back of ya throat or deep in this good ass pussy, he in my fuckin’ pants, yahurme.”

Nodding, my body twitched as another orgasm ripped through me.

“Dallas!” I didn’t even recognize my own voice as I called his name repeatedly. He pounded into me, groaning. My name sounded like his last prayer coming off of his lips.

“Yeaah! Ride this nut out, behbeh!” Dallas grunted, causing a flood to happen between my legs as my pussy put a vice grip on his dick.

Dallas fell back onto the bed, throwing his head back in ecstasy. Yet his tight grip on my ass never wavered as I bounced up and down his length. “Hea I cum, shawty!” he growled seductively.

Falling across Dallas’ chest, I listened to his rapid heartbeat. He wrapped his arms around me, encasing me in his sweat-soaked body.

”*Je t’aime.*” Dallas kissed my forehead. I had no idea what he was saying. I didn’t even have the energy to ask as I drifted off to sleep.

**ROCHELLE**

My blood boiled to a new level of rage as I watched and listened as Dallas fucked the life out of Chloe. Tears streamed down my cheeks as I heard him calling her name, watched him *admire* her, allow her to fuck him with no protection, and tell her that he loved her! I was furious. Who the fuck was this simple bitch? She didn't have shit on me!

“What you in here doing?” Brady waltzed into my home office like he owned the place. I tried to close the laptop hurriedly, but by this time, he'd already heard the moaning and snatched the computer from my reach.

“The fuck you watchin'?” he asked as he got a glimpse of Dallas' naked body.

I almost killed myself fighting him for my property.

Brady pushed me back into my desk chair, grilling me.

“You's a sick ass bitch. Why the fuck is you recordin' this nigga and his bitch fuckin'? The fuck kinda shit you pullin', Ro?” Brady was furious. Not more furious than me, though. Between the betrayal that I felt from Dallas and the embarrassment I felt from Brady catching me, I blacked out.

In my desk drawer was the forty-five my daddy gave me when I was sixteen years old. He said it was my protector and that if any nigga got in my way, use it. Pulling the loaded and cocked gun out, I pointed it at Brady. He didn't even have a word to say before I sent him to his maker. My laptop fell out of Brady's hands, crashing to the floor. The screen went black.

Growling in anger, I swept the contents of my desk onto the floor.

Breathing heavily, I immediately panicked. What the fuck was I going to do now? How the fuck was I going to get rid of this body? I had no intentions of killing anyone, yet here I was with a dead body in my house.

With shaky hands, I reached for my cell phone amongst the contents strewn about the floor.

I dialed the only person who I knew could help me.

“Dear, my wife is in the other room. Make it quick.”

Crying, I said, “Please help me. I need you right now. Can you please come over?” I begged.

“Honey, what’s wrong?” he whispered.

“Please just come. I need you,” I cried even heavier, disconnecting the call.



Like I knew he would, he showed up twenty minutes later.

He stood at my door, confused by the disheveled state that I was in. The jogging pants I had on were three sizes too big complimentary of Brady. My t-shirt was clean but wrinkled. The thousand-dollar install on my head was all over the place.

“Rochelle, what is it?” he asked.

“Follow me.” I led him through my house and to my office.

“Holy fuck, Rochelle!” he griped.

Covering my eyes, I couldn’t stop the tears from falling. Brady’s lifeless eyes stared at me, bringing a sense of dread over me.

“You gotta help me. It was an accident.” Sliding down the wall, I cried into my hands.

“Calm down, Rochelle,” he huffed. Pacing back and forth with his hands on his hips, he stopped in front of me. “We have to move the body.”

Looking up at him, I agreed.

“Get up and help me,” he demanded. I did so without a debate. If he could help me get out of this shit, then so be it.

Dragging Brady’s big ass through the house was no easy feat. We made it to my garage, both of us out of breath.

“Open your trunk,” he ordered.

Going back into the house, I grabbed my keys, pressing the fob to release the trunk.

“Come help me.”

Taking Brady’s legs, I helped him hoist Brady into the trunk of my Mercedes sedan. *Damn, how long would it take me to get the blood out of it?*

“What now?” I asked.

He rocked on his heels, his hands on his hips.

“We gotta destroy everything.”

As I watched him pace again, a thought crossed my mind. Dallas had just confessed his love to Chloe, which meant she loved him too. Killing Dallas wouldn’t give me satisfaction anymore. Seeing him hurting and suffering is what I wanted for the rest of his life. A bullet, he did not deserve.

“Or better yet, how about we set Dallas up?” I suggested. Stopping mid stride, he looked at me.

“How do you suppose we do that? He’ll never fall for it,” he rebutted, “and he knows too many people in the city that’ll get him off of it.”

He was right, but I had another plan.

“Come here, baby,” I purred with a smile.

. He dismissed the dead body in the trunk like the pussy he was, coming to stand in front of me. Maneuvering around, I placed his back to the trunk.

“Killing him made you horny, huh?” He chuckled.

Smiling, I reached behind my back for the forty-five. Sending one in his gut.

“No. Killing you is gonna get me what I want.”

Sending another bullet through his heart, he dropped backwards into the trunk on top of Brady. It took a lot of sweating and upper body strength to haul the bottom half of his body into the trunk. I closed it, pleased that I had a plan.



# Chapter 16

**JAMISON SMITH**

**Reidsville, GA, Georgia State Pen**

This morning was just like any other day on the block. Boring as fuck. I stared at the cemented ceiling in a daze. It was barely six in the morning, but shit was poppin' already. At my age, I should be somewhere enjoying the fruits of my labor. Instead, here I was in a cell and would be for the next seven years. This ride would've been okay had I not had a wife and child to tend to. Fuck, I missed my babies like a muthafucka. Talking to them and sending letters and shit wasn't the life. I wanted to hold them, give my wife kisses, my daughter hugs.

I thought about them daily. The only way I was making it through this shit was thinking about the day when I would physically see them again. Pictures were nice, but I wanted to lay eyes on my shawties.

The feds thought setting wifey and me up was gon' make us turn on my family. No sir! My daddy ain't raise no punk ass muthafucka, and wifey was my ride or die. My family was all she had. Melony's parents were in her life. However, they didn't take care of her the way my family and I did.

When Melony and I first met, it was our senior year in high school. I was a cocky muthafucka, with good reason to be. I was a beast on the basketball court, which garnered me lots of attention. While all the hoes wanted me, Melony was the only girl I had eyes for. Her petite frame, beautiful, dimpled face, and beautiful brown skin called to me so intensely.

I could still remember how I felt the first day I laid eyes on her all those years ago. The love I had for my wife had never faded. I'd never cheated on her, and I never would. Why? Because I fucking love her that much. We created a life together in our daughter Chloe. She was the best part of her

mother and me. I would never go against my family. I'd die for them before I'd ever harm them in any way.

“Smith!” CO Roberts’ voice thundered through my cell.

Turning to look his way, I lifted an eyebrow. The fuck he wanted? My stay here had been pretty smooth cuz niggas knew who the fuck I was and what I came from. That didn’t mean a couple of muthafuckas didn’t try me on some tryna be tough shit. Yeah, they asses got laid the fuck down. The COs respected me and didn’t give me any problems. Still, them niggas knew if I was in my cell to myself, then that meant I was thinking... meditating.

“Get yo’ shit together, mane. You outta here.” My cell wasn’t closed, so Roberts walked in smiling.

“Get the fuck outta hea, yo,” I responded unmoved. No way in hell this nigga was for real.

“I ain’t fuckin’ witchu, Smith,” he revealed. “Get your shit. It’s time for you to go.”

My heart rate sped up, unsure of what to think.

“What you mean, mane.”

Another CO, Tucker, came in holding a box.

“Wait. Y’all movin’ me?” I huffed, getting off the hard ass bunk. That’s what it had to be. Shit, I ain’t get no fuckin’ papers about a transfer. I was about to blow a fuckin’ fuse until Tucker calmed me down.

“Nah, no transfer,” he said.

“You out...like free, my nigga,” Roberts uttered.

I stared at them both, blood roaring through my ears, waiting for them to bust out laughing.

Tucker handed me the box. “Come on, man. This is real, no bullshit.”

Taking the box, I looked inside to find a white t-shirt, denim jeans, and all-white Jordan’s. All this shit was brand new. What the fuck was going on?

“Get dressed and packed.” They stood outside the cell to wait for me.



After I dressed, I slowly packed my things. Truthfully, I was too scared to hope that this was legit for fear these muhfuckas were gon’ yank my ass in the end. Putting the last of my belongings in the box, I waited for the joke.

“Follow us,” Roberts motioned.

Walking out of the cell, I met the gaze of a few of the inmates I’d been cool with over the years, and they were just as bewildered as I was. I hoped like hell my brothers ain’t set this shit up. I told them niggas to leave me be to keep their asses off the radar.

It seemed like an eternity going through door after door before we reached the main door to the lobby area. The buzzer sounded as the door opened. I couldn’t believe I was steps from leaving this fuckin’ hell hole. Immediately, I thought about Melony. Where was she? My first priority would be to get to her.

The steel door leading to the outside of the building opened, the sunlight beaming so bright that I had to squint my eyes. As my feet hit the dirt walkway leading to the edge of the prison grounds, my steps picked up. This shit was really happening.

“Alright, man, please don’t bring ya ass back here,” Tucker commented.

“Yeah, nigga. Keep yo’ ass out of trouble,” Roberts added.

I mugged both of them as the last metal gate opened. Standing on the other side was a nigga I ain’t ever seen before leaning up against a cocaine white Denali truck with blacked-out windows. He was looking at me behind dark shades, with his arms crossed over his chest. This nigga better not be on no bullshit, or I’d fuck his ass up and get back in them gates.

“Mr. Smith. Saint, nice to meet you, suh,” he drawled, holding out his hand.

“Saint?” I asked, shaking his hand.

He nodded. “A friend of a friend.”

Motioning for me to get in the truck, I went around to the passenger side rear door. As I opened the door to put my box in, my heart stopped in my chest.

“Hey, baby.” Melony smiled as tears poured out of her eyes. The box hit the ground as I snatched my woman up out of the seat, holding her to my chest. She wrapped her legs around my waist, her arms around my neck, holding on to me for dear life. I placed a million kisses on her beautiful brown face, which looked the same as it did nine years ago. My baby was still gorgeous as fuck.

“Y’all get in, nie. We got a ways to drive.”

Placing Melony back on the seat, I picked the box up, deciding to put it in the front seat so that I could share the back seat with Melony.

“Come here, baby,” I summonsed as I got comfortable.

As Saint pulled from the parking lot, Melony climbed into my lap.

“I love you.” She sniffled into my neck.

Running my fingers through her long silky locs, I fought back my own tears. I hadn’t cried in a long as fucking time.

“I love you too, shawty. We ain’t neva gon’ be apart again. Do you hear me?”

Melony nodded in understanding. I kissed her lips, relishing the feeling I’d missed like a muthafucka. Damn, not once did I think my day was going to end with me being back in the presence of my wife.

“Where’s Chloe?” I asked.

I didn’t care about shit else right now. Like who the fuck this nigga was driving the truck. That could wait.

Whoever he was had the fucking power to get me and my wifey out of prison, so as far as I was concerned, the nigga was cool. Hopefully, it was no fucking strings attached. I ain't wanna have to body a nigga my first day out. The fuck.

“Chloe is safe. I'd let you call her, but my orders are to bring the two of you to her.”

Orders? “Orders from who?” I questioned.

Saint smirked. “Ya future son-in-law.”



We ended up in New Orleans. The ride had been smooth, us only stopping once for food and to fuel up. The eight-hour drive was nothing compared to being in a cell. Shit, I'd ride to California if that meant I'd still be free, that my wife would still be free.

Saint navigated the truck into a circular driveway of a beautiful house. Whoever my soon-to-be son-in-law was, he must've had hella pull. By the looks of this mansion, he was well paid, too. I know good and damn well my baby girl bet' not be hooked up with no drug dealer. I was gon' beat her ass already!

Saint parked in front of the front door, and Melony and I wasted no time jumping out of the truck.

Before we made it two steps up the walkway, the front door swung open.

Some white lookin' muhfucka with blonde dreads smiled jovially at us.

“Mr. and Mrs. Smith,” he greeted, hand outstretched. I shook his hand. “Dallas. It's good to meet you two.” He took Melony's hand, placing a kiss on her knuckles.

Eyebrows crashing together, I was 'bout to punch this muhfucka in his face when I heard Chloe's sweet voice.

“What's going on out here?” Before Chloe appeared, Melony was already in tears, running toward her.

Chloe's eyes stretched wide, tears immediately flooding her face. "Oh my god!" she screamed, dropping to her knees as Melony hugged her.

Seeing my babies together again had me incredibly emotional. I blinked back my own tears as I side-stepped Dallas to go to my queen and princess.

"Dadddyyy!" Chloe cried as I crouched down to embrace both of them in my arms.

"I'm here, baby!" I cried with them.

## **CHLOE**

I couldn't believe that my parents were actually here! They looked the same as they did when I last saw them. This was the happiest day of my life!

Dallas and my dad got along well, which was a blessing. Dallas' cousin Saint was everything and a damn bag of chips with his fine, dark-skinned, dreaded ass. I was definitely gonna put my girl Millie up on game about this nigga here! He was a sweetheart, too, if you got past the mug he kept on his sexy face. Rock and Pebbles were enjoying all the attention Saint was showing them. I could definitely see Dallas in him.

We spent so much time talking and catching up that I forgot they'd just spent quite a bit of time on the road. Dallas led my parents to the same bedroom I used early on. My parents didn't really want to rest, but I made them.

Dallas was standing in the walk-in closet in his room, donning some slacks.

"I can't believe you did this for me. I don't even know how." I sniffled.

Dallas pulled me into his arms, kissing my forehead then my tear-stained lips.

"Didn't I tell ya ass that I would do anything fa ya?"

Nodding, I laid my head on his chest.

“You’re so good to me, Dallas. Why?” I mumbled, wrapping my arms around his waist.

He hugged me tighter.

“Cuz I can’t live without you, yahurme. If anything or anyone is fuckin’ wit’ you, I’m solvin’ it, no discussion.”

I wanted to dig deeper into his feelings for me, but I decided to let it go.

”*Je t’aime*,” he whispered. “That’s why.”

Looking up into his blue orbs, I smiled. “You know I have no idea what yo’ ass just said.” I chuckled.

Dallas stared at me as if he were hypnotized. Something changed in his eyes that made the air stall in my chest. He bent down to sweetly kiss me. Our lips and tongue mated, not roughly but sensually. I felt something in this kiss that I’d always felt but could never put a finger on it.

“It means I love you, shawty,” Dallas stated through wet sloppy pecks he placed on either side of my cheeks.

My heart soared through my chest at his admission. *What bitch!* I screamed on the inside.

Feeling giddy as hell, I leaped in Dallas’ arms. He caught me mid-flight laughing.

“I love you, Dallas.” I fought back the tears as I buried my face into his neck. This man was literally everything to me. I prayed he did nothing to make me think or feel differently about him.

## DALLAS

Seeing the smile on Chloe’s face upon seeing her parents had me on a high. I would do anything for lil’ behbeh, no questions. I knew being without her parents was killing her, so I had to make that shit happen.

It felt like forever since I’d been to the office. Although I conducted business on my phone most times, actually being in my own space was rewarding.

“Strollin’ in at it’s almost closing time. Must be niicee,” Hollis joked. I dapped him as we headed for the elevators.

“Your assistant is in a funky mood, so tread lightly,” Mrs. Frita warned.

Chuckling, I winked at her. Rochelle could kiss my ass.

“Oh, yeah. Brady ain’t show up for work today. I guess the nigga somewhere drunk off the pussy. I don’ called his ass a hunnit times with no answer.”

Hmm. Brady was fuckin’ up all around, I see.

“Fuck him. Find somebody else who knows how to fuckin’ come to work and do their job,” I told Hollis. He nodded.

We rode the elevator to the fourth floor as he filled me in on the shit that had gone on since I was out — the usual, Rochelle was on her bullshit.

“I’m tellin’ you, bruh. Get rid of that hoe,” he advised as soon as the elevator doors opened. Rochelle was standing there with her hand on her hip, mugging Hollis and me.

Walking past her, I went straight to my office, not saying shit to her.

“Dallas,” she called, “good afternoon to you, too.”

I threw her a head nod. My office was just how I left it. Although I didn’t have any appointments today, I needed to catch up on some paperwork. I had already informed Chloe that I would be here a little late.

“Boss, if you need me, I’ll be down the hall,” Hollis cracked, getting the fuck out of dodge.

Rochelle was definitely about to work my fuckin’ nerves. I only had one blunt in my pocket, and I was trying hard to leave it there. I was doing well with this not smokin’ so much shit.

“Dallas, I need your help.” Rochelle started.



I walked around my desk, dropping into the chair. Eyeing Rochelle up and down, I wondered why a woman like her couldn't find a man that actually wanted to fuck with her on that level. Rochelle was beautiful and intelligent, yet she couldn't get a man to save her life.

“Whassup?” I asked.

Huffing, she walked over to my desk, leaning her fat ass against the wood.

I guess she thought I was still interested by the way she purposely crossed her legs.

“My car's acting up. The guy that can fix it is out in the hood, and you know I don't like going on that side. Is it possible for you to take it for me?”

Chuckling, I shook my head. “Hell nah, shawty. Ask Hollis.”

“Hollis doesn't fuck with me like that. You know that,” she countered.

“Ro, mane, I got lots of shit to do. I'on have time to be doin' that shit. Tow that muhfucka.”

Shaking her head, she made the praying hands sign. “Please, Dallas. The tow trucks don't like going to that area either. People be thinking they shit about to get repoed.”

She was right. “Aight whateva, mane. Call the nigga and tell 'em I'll be that way later on.”

She smiled with pleasure before leaning down to try and kiss me. I mushed her head back quick as fuck.

“Hell nah, get on shawty.”

Smacking her teeth, Rochelle stood, switching her ass out of my office.

“Crazy bitch,” I muttered.

I hope she enjoyed listening or watching me fuck the shit out of Chloe last night. That dumb bitch thought a nigga like me didn't know she was spying on my ass. I was gon' let them cameras stay where the fuck they were for the time

being. I'd fuck Chloe and eat her ass every night just to drive Rochelle's stupid ass crazy.

Laughing to myself, I dug into this stack of papers resting on my desk.



Cranking Rochelle's sedan, I wondered what the fuck was wrong with the shit. The check engine light was on, but the car was running smoothly as hell. I didn't smell anything funny either as I left the parking lot of the firm.

It was a little after nine o'clock, and I wanted to make it home by ten. Chloe had made me dinner, and I couldn't wait to taste *her*.

The side of town Rochelle was referring to was one of the wards that had been rebuilt after Katrina. Most of New Orleans was back up and running, but the effect Hurricane Katrina had on the city could still be seen in some areas, no matter how much the city tried to fix shit up.

A familiar feeling swept swiftly over me. Something was up. I reached for my cell to dial Chloe's number. The last time I fuckin' felt this way, it was cuz of behbeh girl. In the middle of dialing the number, my corner came up. As soon as I turned into the hood, red and blue lights flashed behind me. Disconnecting the call, I sat the phone back in the cupholder.

I wasn't surprised. Being pulled over was bound to happen driving this kind of car in this area. A couple of people milling the streets were being nosey tryna see who was inside the sedan.

I pulled to the side of the road and waited for the police officer to come to the window. Other than the blunt in my pocket and the heat at my back, I was straight. Niggas wouldn't fuck with me. I had a concealed carry permit anyway.

The window was already rolling down when the officer approached.

"Hello, sir," the officer, a young white dude, spoke.

“Whassup?” I asked. Two other patrol cars busted the corner lights flashing. *The fuck?*

“Sir, this vehicle has a plate on it that’s not for this car.”

Laughing, I said, “You’re kiddin’ right?”

The officer shook his head. “No, sir. Can I see your license, registration, please?” He flashed his flashlight in my eyes, pissing me the fuck off. I was trying to remain calm, but I was gon’ choke the fuck out of Rochelle the minute I laid eyes on her ass.

Reaching for my license, you’d have thought I pointed a gun at this muthafucka.

“Woe, sir, step out of the vehicle,” he demanded as the other officers surrounded the car.

“The fuck is the problem?” I questioned.

“He has a gun.” The first officer informed.

See, this was how niggas got killed. Fuckin’ dumb ass cops.

“Yo, mane, I got a permit. Just get this fuckin’ registration and my license and move the fuck around!” I growled unintentionally. Being ruthless was in my DNA, and I couldn’t stand the fucking law. If I felt disrespected, my ruthless side was gon’ show its muthafuckin’ head real quick.

“I said step out of the vehicle!” the cop shouted. By this point, guns were being aimed at me.

Chuckling, I did as this bitch boy asked.

Turning around, I placed my hands on the hood — no sense in making an unpleasant situation worse.

“Y’all gon’ feel dumb ass fuck when this is ova,” I informed them.

Coming up behind me, another cop reached for the Desert Eagle at my back.

“Any other weapons on you, sir.” This one was white too.

“Nah.”

“Pop the trunk, get the dogs out hea,” he ordered.

“Mane fa what? Y’all muthafuckas on some bullshit.”

“Shut up,” the one searching me barked as he dug into my pockets, pulling the blunt out.

I heard the trunk pop open, and then all hell broke loose.

Because I was bigger than this muthafucka, when he tried to slam me on the hood, he couldn’t.

“You’re under arrest!” He yelled.

These muhfuckas were tweaking. Watching the cops running around acting like fuckin’ bricks were in the trunk had me questioning if it was. *I know this bitch ain’t plant no shit on me!*

It took three officers to drag me to one of the patrol cars. As we passed the trunk, I glanced inside.

“The fuck!”

Stuffed in Rochelle’s trunk was Brady’s bitch ass. Fuck that nigga... It was the body of Police Chief Gary Thibedeau’s bitch ass that surprised me. *That fuckin’ bitch!*

To Be Continued