



Broken Captive (Wren's Song 3)

Author: *Addison Cain*

Category: Erotic, Romance, Fantasy, Suspense, Horror

Description: A Reverse Harem Omegaverse Dark Romance

Wren's rebellion failed.

Caspian has marked her, Toby has claimed her, and Kieran is unwillingly caught in her spell. Affection and betrayal, pleasure and pain—each Alpha with their own brand of demands and desires.

Broken Captive: Wren's Song Book 3 is a dark, sinister Omegaverse Reverse Harem tale for those with twisted tastes and a passion for unabashed bad boys. Complete power exchange dominates these pages, as do THREE smoking-hot Alpha antiheroes.

Total Pages (Source): 29

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Chapter 1

“She is not to feel pain.”

A command like broken glass grinding into an open wound. Sharp, gouging—the kind of abrasive threat that would make a grown man feel Death breathe down his neck.

The physician’s hands stuttered, his work dabbing blood from mangled fingers faltering. Such hesitation betrayed much more than the Beta’s anxious scent. This was a male who knew one wrong word would see him a corpse. “I’m afraid that is impossible, sir.”

Hovering overly close, Caspian snarled. “What did you just say to me?”

In the short minutes since the physician had begun examining his captive mouse, the First Alpha’s fine mood had decayed. Raging victory at her chicken-scratched promise of loyalty faded. The glory that had beaten through his chest upon seeing her pale flesh marked by his many bites, depleted.

The ruby-red rivulets of blood that ran from the garish wound where his teeth had pierced her throat were no longer beautiful.

The glassy-eyed albino was a fucking wreck—one stuttering exhale away from the reaper.

Keeping an unwavering eye on his prize, Caspian put a hand on her ankle, one of the

few places on her body that was not damaged, as he addressed the frazzled Beta physician who'd been dragged from his bed in the middle of the night.

“No Pain! And no scars will remain.” This he could give her, stroking his thumb over the protrusion of her ankle bone. “Do you understand me, doc? Only the bite on her neck is to be left alone.”

From where he paced beside the bed, Toby issued a challenging growl. Clipped words followed a twitch in his cheek. “My claiming mark will remain on her shoulder, Caspian. Do you hear me? Remove it, and you force me to bite her again.”

Chest expanding in an angry breath, Caspian was cut short when the physician interjected. “Gentlemen, I cannot erase this kind of damage with a handheld cauterizing laser. All of these wounds will scar, though I will do my best to keep it minimal. But skin cell manipulation requires delicate application of the larger equipment in my clinic, days of careful monitoring, possible surgery depending on the depth of the damage. She should be brought—”

The very idea inspired pulsating fury in Caspian's chest, a cage of unbending black encasing a shriveled, beating organ. “Suggest taking the Omega from this den again, and I'll slit your throat.”

One threat against the old man, and Caspian's mouse finally turned her head. Their eyes met, muddy brown to bloodshot violet, and a look of such heartbreak took her from vacant to wretched. It said, please. It urged the target of that glance to settle and be calm.

One thing it did not do was challenge; not that look. The mouse gave him a look of complete and miserable surrender.

Where had the warrior gone? The mouse brave enough to face his brawn with little

more than a bent piece of cement-caked rebar?

Where was the hellion who'd taken his leaking cock with a scream, bucking her hips to pull him deeper even as she'd tried to throw him off?

What of the Omega who had set her teeth to his throat, and dared mark him as if she might claim ownership?

How she had howled and spat curses with her eyes. How she'd choked on Toby's then Kieran's cocks, guzzling down their cum once knotted and trapped beneath Caspian's full weight.

He'd filled her to the brim with seed, forced her to hold it all in so it might swim around her belly and let the fiery thing know she was outmanned. And still she'd fought, grinding Caspian's knot deeper, howling her rage as that perfect cunt fluttered and sucked.

Caspian had fucked her every possible way, knotted her more times in those maddening hours than he'd ever taken a woman. It wasn't about keeping her pinned. It was about filling her with more, forcing submission upon the hellcat who had, without question, bruised several of his ribs and torn several pretty gashes into his skin.

The urge to get more cum inside her, to sink his teeth into the wriggling, vicious mouse's flesh... he'd been drunk on it. High on her scent, intoxicated with the strangling grip of her pussy.

On the broken thing's strength.

He'd fucked her face down, scraping her tits over old, wet cement. Flipped her over once the first knot shrunk and shoved his way back in so he might see her blown eyes

when he brought her to another ragged climax. All claws and teeth, she'd also taught him that a little Omega severed from sanity was as dangerous as she was fun.

Volleys of blows had struck his temple. But when his little mouse went for the eyes...

Had he been weaker, he would now be blind.

Delicate fists were trapped, but only after she'd broken his nose. Sent him roaring as he knotted her a third time and fucked her into a pulp while his men were in a riot of applause. Hundreds saw. The Syndicate, their slaves... the females daring enough to leave the pen and gawk.

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They saw him maul his prize. Saw her disarmed, subdued, and ridden.

And their ovation fed Caspian's beast.

Kieran and Toby savored his kill as well. Just as pack should.

They got the remains the monster within deigned to share.

They got her throat.

The same throat Caspian had torn with his teeth. That need had gripped him, demanding all who'd borne witness see that the hissing viper was his, no matter whose cock she swallowed.

Kieran had been the one to take her by the hair so Toby's prick could be shoved between her gnashing teeth.

She'd bitten him good, of course. The sick fuck had gotten off on it, cumming almost immediately and swamping her cheeks with spermy cream. Whatever tension had been brewing between Alphas Two and Three was obliterated when she sputtered and coughed, following that pathetic moment by licking her lips and opening wide for more.

Kieran dipped in, Toby tending to his Second's prostate with a clever finger and words of encouragement.

This was seen by the Syndicate. They saw all three Alphas who ruled them united in

victory.

They saw an Omega of amazing capability cowed and owned by her betters.

A glorious, violent mating—truly worthy of his pack.

But even then, the insane little guttersnipe had not submitted. All saw her wriggle her way out of their embrace to seek out a new weapon, and then to scream when the Omega could not find her adopted child.

Before she had been violent. In that instant, she went stark raving mad.

The wiry teenager had been dragged away by wiser members of his gang the moment he'd been stupid enough to beg Caspian for mercy for his mom.

Dragged off like the child he was, denied the view of his guardian's interminable and violent rebirth. And that would follow him through the years in the gang.

Once sworn, these males had only one allegiance.

The Syndicate swore fealty, abandoned family, gave all to their leader.

They didn't cry or beg for mercy.

Alec had failed his first test of loyalty, and would be brutally punished.

He'd missed the glory of the men's cheering—the blood the mouse had drawn from Kieran, Toby, and even Caspian.

In his sobbing state and begging pathetic wailing, he'd missed the glory of an Omega's whirlwind of violence and lust.

God, the pretty mouse's fierce subjugation had been beautiful.

Where she kept that side of herself when mellow and docile, Caspian could never guess. But seeing her unleashed, even just the once, was enough to slake a thirst he'd never known he might possess.

He'd jerk off to the look on her face when he first fucked into her dripping cunt for years. Feel her flesh between his teeth, the taste of her blood and his on his tongue.

The way she'd roared...

But now, after a full and proper capitulation, he did not feel vindicated.

He looked at the little Omega holding his eyes and felt a simmering disquiet.

Damage. Pain. Wounds that would scar.

Broken fingers the best doctor in Dale City was struggling to set.

A female who reeked of loss. Not joy. Not the epiphany of being owned by strong males.

One who suffered.

A grinding, soul-deep moment of realization sunk in. These were not just bite wounds. Caspian had marked the mouse. He could still feel the squish of her breaking skin in his teeth, was already eying the unmarked ankle he caressed as if ready to set his teeth to that snowy patch of skin.

And he had chomped down so many times she would be scarred with the crescent shapes of his enthusiasm for life.

Across the bed, Toby continued to pace, no longer replete or satisfied from fucking her mouth. “You should not have threatened her boys.”

Drawing up to full height, Caspian cracked his neck and at long last broke the stare he’d shared with the mouse. “Are you not proud of your mate?”

Palms slapping the mattress, rocking it enough that the Omega winced when her body shifted, Toby bellowed, “She’s your mate now too! Look at her fucking neck! At her arms, her tits. What part of her did you not maul?”

Only the slender ankle under Caspian’s stroking thumb. That was the only place that had somehow been spared in their battle.

A corkscrew of needle sharp sensation rocked Caspian back on his heels, mud brown eyes darting back toward the woman whose gaze was not shut to him. But that was not what held his attention. Bubbling antibiotic foam had been sprayed over the gouges in her neck, dripping a fizzy pink mess down her filthy chest.

Watching it, knowing the reason she bore such wounds, left his overused prick so hard it sawed at the zipper of his pants.

Kieran, arms crossed over a scratched chest, let out the most disappointed of breaths. “You marked her, yes. Get it out of your system before she hits estrous. Fuck her, fill her, knot her, whatever. Then wash your hands of this madness before we lose face.”

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Toby, veins in his neck throbbing, seethed. “You got hard and marked her with cum, just like the rest of us.”

“But I never bit her!” Scrubbing a hand over his jaw, Kieran looked away from his First as if ashamed. “Cunts of all flavors are just down the hall. Females who desire nothing more than to please. You cannot trust one womb! She tried to kill you and you marked her for it!”

A hundred women, maybe more, waited in the pen to suck his cock with gusto on demand.

To debase themselves and do filthy things just for a moment of his attention.

And this mouse was practically a virgin. Unskilled. In no way eager.

Hated him.

And this little slip of girl is the one he’d bonded to in a passion.

Estrous or not, that foreign pining in his chest—the infectious pain—she was the cause!

The Beta doctor cleared his throat, swallowed, and began to set the bones in her other swollen, gnarled hand.

The Omega didn’t so much as blink. By all appearances her lavender-rimmed pupils told the story of a bitch in heat. But it was all a lie.

Warm, salty tears marked her blood-speckled cheeks. A deep sense of loss resonated through her spirit straight into Caspian's heart.

His pretty mouse—the utterly still, wrecked girl—grew so far lost in her thoughts, it was as if she didn't notice how the doctor manipulated her joints, the pricks of his needles, or the steady stream of Toby's obnoxiously loud purr.

For all appearances, she felt no physical pain.

But it was a lie. Those violet eyes were clouded by hurt. She even inadvertently shrank when Caspian leaned over her to draw in a long analytical sniff.

He'd threatened the doctor so now she would not so much as whimper.

Fussing like a smitten schoolgirl, Toby grabbed a discarded pillow and fluffed it, adding it the makeshift nest he'd been building around her for the last hour. All of his efforts smeared with blood and reeking of Omega fear.

Knee to the mattress, he smooshed that pillow into place so she was cocooned in Caspian's bedding, his voice suddenly soft. "There you go, my sunshine."

A bonded male smitten with his mate.

One who practically vibrated with possession.

One who overstepped himself when he grabbed a creamy thigh, gently prying the Omega's legs open. There, for the whole room to see was a cock-battered cunt that still seeped Caspian's seed.

Between pretty, swollen labia oozed a pearlescent trail of male conquering.

Of domination.

As if he had the right, Toby reached forward and scooped up a palm-full of leaking cum. A moment later that same hand was smeared against the gaping wounds on the pretty mouse's neck—rubbed in while Caspian roared.

The Third was flung across the room, Caspian pressing his female down into his mattress. Like a maniac he licked that cum from her wound. Cleaning his mate while offering a comforting purr.

Tongue fully outstretched, he caught himself.

Under him she was utterly still, oddly pliant.

Notched between her bruised thighs, cradled in the shape of her body, Caspian said the words before he could stop himself. “We could come to a compromise, you and I.”

Though she seemed asleep, the Omega rattled.

“Show me you're willing to play by my rules, and I'll keep my fierce little mouse.”

It wasn't a compromise he sought, no matter the words. He wanted something she was utterly unwilling to offer.

The Omega didn't want him. She didn't want Toby. And Caspian suspected she loathed Kieran. But that thing caging the organs in his ribs hungered for more than her surrender.

“Be a good girl for me until your next estrous. Play house and please. Give me all an Omega owes her Alpha, and I will set your boys free.”

For all that she moved, she might as well have been asleep. She judged his word as valueless.

Listing his demands, Caspian began with, “I will fuck other women.”

Not so much as a flinch.

Irritated that she believed she could ignore him, Caspian licked at her lips. “Sometimes I’ll want those women to fuck you while I watch.

Chapter 2

“No.” Wiping blood from his lips, Toby returned to the ailing mouse’s side. Voice even, almost conversational despite the reek of rage that wafted from his skin, he said, “Our Omega would not enjoy being used by your sluts. Fuck whoever you want, Caspian, but my mate will know only our attention. If you still want Henrietta delivered wearing a big bow, I suggest you honor this stipulation.”

Ignoring Toby, Caspian put his nose to the mark that had shredded the Omega’s neck, ignoring how she stiffened at the word mate. “You will nest in this room.”

The Third refused to be unheard. “Caspian, your girls are not to touch her. I’ll put down every last bitch in the pen before I allow it!”

Caspian further doled out his commands. “I expect you to smile and purr. Obedience will be rewarded. Defiance will be punished.” Hand slipping up her bite-riddled leg, the First Alpha smiled. “You’ll see to my cock, to Kieran’s, and to Toby’s. You will learn to take all three of us at once, dripping pack seed from every last orifice. That is how you shall be paraded before my men.”

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There it was, a wince. The mouse still had some pride.

“It’s up to you, pretty mouse, whether this arrangement lasts a handful of months or a year. The sooner you’re healthy enough for estrous, the sooner your boys will be free. Therefore, you will eat what is given. Drink all we offer. You will exercise and dutifully follow the doctor’s orders.”

A spark began to grow behind the Omega’s distance stare. Under weighty distrust, a tiny sliver of hope—just enough to assure her good behavior. Because he knew she no longer had any faith in his empty promises.

People like her survived on belief. And his little mouse was nothing if not a survivor.

One morsel of faith.

A mustard seed.

Careful of her wounds, Caspian climbed off her body, standing over the strange, pale thing. “Alec is to be punished for disloyalty to the Syndicate, pretty mouse. Nothing can be done to change that, but you have ten days to convince me that instead of cutting off his hand, he should only be whipped.”

“Be a good girl, and I’ll wield the whip myself,” Toby crooned, leaning down to press a kiss to her forehead. “I promise it won’t be more than a tickle and a little blood for show.”

Kieran, still scowling, had his own warning for the Omega. “Toby would also be the

one sawing off the dumb kid's hand if you fuck up.”

A nod, almost imperceptible, came from the female.

Chest rumbling with the offering of his purr, Caspian smiled. “My pretty little mouse is a good girl. She won’t need another reminder.”

“No,” Toby agreed, another kiss pressed to a snowy head. “She won’t.”

Two days reprieve was offered. Two days for flesh to heal.

Yet splinted finger bones were weeks from fully mending. She could not talk, not that anyone really wanted to hear her thoughts.

No, they wanted her to smile and sleep, to accept their caresses and food.

The myriad of bites that peppered her flesh were no longer pink, but slivery scars. They blended in with her skin yet simultaneously stood out like a beacon—shining against powder white.

Glaringly obvious.

A blazing maze that said, owned.

Caspian had taken to staring at them, eyes fixed, anytime he was in the room.

That is, when he wasn’t touching them, licking them, gnawing over select spots as if to keep his favorites pink enough to stand out.

Her breasts. Her inner thigh.

The only place he treated with true reverence was her ankle.

Toby would fuss over her healing wounds, pouring bitter medicine down her throat. Spoon feeding her. Purring, Caspian had taken to rubbing her feet. All this while Kieran lectured on how she must behave before the men.

While he threatened her Alec. While he pointedly failed to offer more than a passing comment on Mikael's health.

Overindulged as she was, feet dwarfed in callused, careful hands, lips pecked by a smiling shaven-headed psychopath who kept her drugged and buried in pillows, Wren sometimes forgot there was more to notice than lovely sensation and deep, masculine purrs.

Until her fuzzy gaze met disapproving green.

Kieran was an anchor.

One who held himself aloof and stared a great deal.

The behavior of his packmates had the Second Alpha on edge.

Wren could not find it in her to care. Under drugged pain and the itch of mending bone, she felt adrift in her skin. Things weren't right no matter how long the doctor was forced to sit at her bedside.

And forced was the word for it. His life had been threatened in subtle and not so subtle ways those first two days. If she winced, the Beta received a backhand. Should she moan in her sleep, Wren woke to the sound of the doctor being kicked.

“I told you no pain...” Caspian hissed, voice snake-like and deadly.

Worse for wear and smelling unwashed, the older male climbed to his feet and let out a desperate breath. “More drugs will do her more harm than good.”

“I don’t want her in pain!”

The old man, through exhaustion and days of terror, snapped. “Then you shouldn’t have beaten her!”

And that was the last Wren saw of her dedicated caretaker. When she’d woken and found only grinning Toby at her side, she’d vocally cried.

Because she knew what had happened.

The Beta was dead.

And that squishy, invasive comfort streaming through her bones coming from the male shushing and purring at her side...

Mate. Caspian had said.

Flippantly. As if it was nothing of note.

Someone finally wanted her, and he was crazy through and through.

Signing poorly, he talked as he practiced structuring her language. “Sunshine. You’re looking much better today.”

Unable to converse with her fingers still splinted, Wren only blinked.

“Are you hungry?” That sign he had down pat.

No.

“Thirsty?”

No.

Face thoughtful, an uncharacteristic scowl came to Toby’s brow. “I’ve waited a long time for you. For my mate.”

It took everything an exhausted Wren had not to show an ounce of disappointment.

“I know this is new. An adjustment period is to be expected.” A wink brought out fine lines on the side of Toby’s eyes. Laying on the charm, he said, “A month from now you’ll be so in love with me you’ll never remember that it started... with difficulty.”

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She felt her brow arch before she realized she'd done it.

Chuckling, purr amplified as he leaned over, Toby grinned. "Trust me, sunshine."

Wren trusted a burning building more than the madman with his dangerous fetishes.

"I'll learn how to love you however you like best. You have my word on that, Jax. I'll buy you pretty baubles, give you pretty dresses, and feed you all the water a girl could want."

On and on went the diatribe, Wren's eyes growing heavy. When well-muscled arms snuck around her and a shamefully misbuilt nest buckled under the Third Alpha's weight, she slept.

That is until Caspian barged in, dragging Rosie behind him. "Get out. Your time with her is over."

Chapter 3

Red lips painted to perfection, dressed in blue to bring out her eyes.

Rosie.

Perfect and pretty and not at all scarred.

Rosie, who didn't bear the mark for defective upon her face.

Weight in the nest shifting at her back, Toby rolled his shoulders, stretching from his nap. All of it for show, Wren could sense that bone deep.

With a wink and a quick stolen kiss on parted lips, the dismissed Third Alpha said, “Be my sweet sunshine for Caspian.” In a snap, his gaze turned toward the couple at the door, all semblance of gentleness replaced with a murderous sneer. Voice loud enough to assure every word was heard, he announced, “And if Rosie touches you, I’ll kill her. It won’t be quick.”

Graceful, hazarding on careless, Toby climbed from the nest, heading out the door with no further word. Not even a glance at his scowling leader.

Nor did he so much as twitch at the snarled, “Later,” that came from his First.

The first thing someone learned upon being thrust into the Warrens was that bad things would always get worse. If you starved so hard your belly protruded, the next thing you knew, your first meal would give you dysentery. Many died this way.

Those who grew so thirsty they drank from the puddles knew the microbes would rot their teeth. What could be worse?

It would also rot them from the inside out.

Decaying that way took time... and led to an ugly death.

A female might be captured and forcibly mated. Perhaps three of them took her, used her, and toyed with her future for sport. Out of estrous they might mark her. They might threaten her family. They might break her and pretend at putting her back together.

They might contaminate unwelcome bonds that rattled bones and made her innards

ache.

They might insult her by bringing in a more adequate female. By fucking her in front of them.

Reminding the Warrens rat that, claiming marks or no, she was nothing... and that it could always get worse.

Perhaps this knowledge was why Wren didn't blink, expected nothing but ugliness from these males.

No matter Caspian's promises, they would not keep Alec safe. But that didn't mean she refused to play their game and put him in direct harm either.

Heal, earn their trust, flee.

Take her boys, sell her body along the monorail tracks to get them all out of Dale City. Steal if she had to. Run so far Caspian could never find them.

But these things took time. So for now, Wren sat up, the soft blanket Toby had used to cover her nakedness falling away to show bite-marked breasts. Each little matching crescent had almost healed thanks to the doctor's advanced tech, his diligence, and his forced captivity in this room.

And he had been murdered for it. Wren didn't doubt that for a minute.

He had been murdered because she'd slipped. A single errant whimper, that is what his life had been worth.

She wouldn't slip again.

These men wanted to play house? Fine, she'd be their pretty mouse, their sunshine, their whore.

She'd eat their food, drink their water, take their medicine and grow strong. Eyes glowing with intention, Wren met the muddy gaze of a very bad man.

One look, and Caspian make a hungry sound, one so desperate she almost thought she'd heard him whine.

And maybe he did. Rosie certainly turned his way, an incredulous look on her perfect face.

"You've eaten today?"

Two bowls of the black goo, yes.

"Drank plenty of water?"

So much that Wren felt bloated and was annoyed by the near constant urge to pee.

"Are you in pain?"

So much fucking pain she hardly knew how to force the simple head shake of no.

Her nailbeds, though coated in scabs, stung. Her broken fingers itched and ached. Her skin had been sealed on the surface, thanks to the kind Beta doctor, but deeper wounds, all the bruising, were days away from anything but leaving her a pulped mass of aches.

Worse than all the physical ailments was the unseen one. The bone-deep internal twitch that was Toby's crudely forged link. The buzzing pinching of her internal

organs marked Caspian's cruelty and connection.

The pair of them had infested her living corpse.

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And they would be the death of her. But not until she got her boys as fucking far away as possible. She'd even kill them if that's what it came down to.

But not in a rage. They were too strong for even that mindless death-machine Omegas became to protect their brood. They were the perfect pack, despite their grievances and constant snarling back and forth.

Hand to his throat, Caspian kneaded the skin as if unaware of what he was doing. "You don't seem well."

Splinted fingers did a poor job of trying to smooth bed-wild hair into something fetching.

"I've waited two days, and I need to fuck." This all blurted out while the obvious erection in Caspian's pants leaked.

Then fuck Rosie, Wren thought. Glad he was far enough away that his poor excuse of a purr couldn't truly touch her.

Utter filth, the Alpha's eyes glowed with something perverse. "But I want to look at you while I'm doing it."

Relief faintly coursed through tired veins.

As if he too felt his offer was her balm, Caspian drew his hands from a throat grown red from rubbing to knock against his heart. Or perhaps she misread him, for his grimace made it seem as if the last batch of food stuffed down his maw must pain

him.

Dragging a silent, yet strangely composed Rosie behind him, the First Alpha approached. “Scoot to the edge of the bed, pretty mouse. Spread your legs so I can see your juicy cunt.”

The only part of her that didn’t ache.

Fine.

Hair a tangled mess, unwashed and a physical wreck, Wren slunk to the edge, laid back even as Caspian pulled out his cock, and locked her eyes on the water-stained ceiling.

A sound of distress came from the beautiful blonde in the pretty blue dress. It was not the sound of a woman getting fucked, it was the sound of a person shoved to their knees then choked on a fleshy length of meat.

And it was enough to draw lavender eyes from the uneven ceiling to the eyes of her living, breathing tormentor.

He looked as if he suffered the most terrible kind of pain.

Staring down between her legs. To the dry slit. To pink inner labia that fanned out from chalk-white skin. To the cunt he’d previously penetrated, filled with filthy cum, and tasted.

And for some unknown reason, knowing he was skull fucking another woman, and staring at a thing he would not let himself have, Wren almost felt sorry for him. Which made little sense, considering the man had no real regard for her welfare beyond that of a favored toy. Knowing that the marks he’d left on her would prove

this whole thing pointless.

She felt sorry as he did things to Rosie's throat that would have made Wren vomit.

She felt sorry that no matter how often or hard he fucked his favorite Omega, he'd never know joy.

She felt sorry that she hated his guts and wished to see him destroyed.

And she felt sorry that she grew wet to the sounds of another woman gagging on his cock.

One tiny pearl of slick, that was all it took to shatter Caspian's composure.

One second he had been little more than a perverted voyeur. The next he buckled over and set his mouth to the very part of her he'd demolished two days prior.

Lapping at her like a madman. Trying to drink up the sad offering a disinterested body might offer. He growled, whined like a dog, then rested his head on her sunken belly as he gushed his seed down the throat of another.

None of it had been for Wren's pleasure. No, he'd swallowed her up in greed.

But as the male panted, bent over, rubbing his scruffy face on her belly, she took pity and stroked his head with splinted hands.

"You need to eat more, pretty mouse..."

Softly spoken words that made no sense.

Lavender eyes drew down just in time to see small, female hands grasp Caspian's

knot and massage it in a way that would milk him almost like a cunt. She saw the wheat colored hair peeking up from the edge of the bed she'd been forced to "nest" in. She saw the travesty this would be if she'd loved this male.

But she didn't.

And she didn't care.

That did not stop her gasp when Caspian stopped licking her for his pleasure and doubled down his effort for hers. Light airy flicks over her clit, swirling, pointed laps of a tongue over labia and slit.

It should have been humiliating how quickly she came. Her empty cunt flooded with slick so quickly the room spun. It drenched his face and set the Alpha into a fit of long groans.

"Thank you."

What the actual fuck?

Kicking back, scooting away from the mouth on her parts, Wren needed to be anywhere but this room. As far as possible from an existence where a shrinking penis was slipping from the loudly sucking lips of a foreign woman.

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She needed to be home, in her beloved nest, surrounded by her boys and salvage.

“Shhhhhhhhh, darling mouse.” Soft kisses came over deep scattered wounds that ached the most. “Be still, I don’t want to hurt you. I’ll fuck this sweet pussy as soon as you might handle me. I’ll fuck you so hard you’ll forget your name.”

Coughing up the excess cum that had overcome her throat, Rosie wiped at her running mascara.

Her face red, her eyes on the cracked cement floor she stood, straightening her dress and smoothing her hair as if this horrible treatment meant nothing to her.

It wasn’t just Wren who’d been degraded.

And that, that is what broke a bitter Omega’s heart.

Chapter 4

“Mmmhh.” Drugged by deep sleep, a breathy hmmm escaped Wren’s parted lips.

A rocking sensation drew her further from muddled dreams—a gentle bump, bump, bump that jostled just enough a sleepy Wren’s lashes parted. She nearly gasped.

Kieran.

At her side, braced, the naked beauty of the only Alpha male who’d yet to intrude into her nest.

Not quite near enough to touch, not even looking at her in the dark. His sculpted body—defined muscles rippling—caught up in pleasure.

But it was why muffled grunts were kept locked behind his teeth that left her frozen still.

Fists clenched in the covers, sweat gathered on Kieran's brow.

He was being fucked... by a softly whispering Toby. "Look how pretty she is, our sweet Omega. Smell her eager cunt. Fill her up with a feast for me."

One word grunted impatiently passed Kieran's parted lips. "Harder."

To hear him breathless, to see him mounted by a lower ranked Alpha... for pleasure... Wren didn't know what to make of it.

What had been rolling hips, Toby hardly visible in the dark, became rough, dedicated thrusts that jostled both bodies closer to where she laid. Shrouded in shadow's Wren spied from slightly parted lids, and saw little of Toby's naked form beyond where his hands stroked Kieran's back, or where his pelvis shoved a lube shined cock straight into the Alpha's body. But she sensed through their link that he was fully aware of her regard.

And was pleased by it.

She could even feel his pleasure, his building release in the base of her spine.

She could hear him silently calling to her, tempting her to be braver and show them her attention.

That was his game.

And where she refused to engage, the bed began to shake with more force, knocking back against the wall so roughly that there was no way she could pretend to be asleep.

Caspian's massive form was pressed to her back. Unsure if he slept or if he too had his eyes on the scene, Wren had her answer a moment later.

He gave an approving grunt right before something thick and wriggling borrowed between her thighs.

Fingers.

They slipped and danced as her clit peeked from its hood and her labia bloomed with unexpected slick.

There was no hiding her response. For the first time in the presence of these men, Wren was aroused by something other than an Alpha growl, desire perfuming the air with the scent of honest slick.

Hooking his fingers behind her pelvic bone, Caspian rubbed hard at that secret spot. Teasing the nerves, milking her slick glands until a wet squelch of noise squished with his hands' every movement.

She should have been scandalized at the taboo scene taking place beside her, not readily spilling slick.

She should have shut her eyes so hard she'd never have to see Kieran's pupils expand when he got the first breath of her arousal.

She should not have moaned when Caspian began to thrust his slippery fingers in and out of her hungry hole in tempo with Toby's cock disappearing into Kieran's ass.

And she definitely should not have looked to see the engorged prick hanging down from Kieran's hips, dragging a trail of precum over the sheets.

She'd never seen his dick so big. So angry looking.

Face almost hostile in its hopeless pleasure, Wren couldn't deny this act was something the Second Alpha enjoyed.

Not when his fat cock rocked back and forth with the swing of Toby's hips, a pendulum that left her mouth watering. Kieran was uncut, the swollen head having burst past his foreskin to shine as it dripped beads of delicious fluid.

Unsure what drove her, Wren desired to reach out and suck that dangling organ. To wrap her hands around the hint of his knot just as she'd watched Rosie do to Caspian the last several days.

More slick gushed from her slit.

Toby fucking Kieran before her eyes. The daily display of Caspian sitting in his chair, staring at Wren's naked body—staring into her eyes—while Rosie labored to suck him dry. Rosie who may as well not have been there for all the heed he paid her. She was a hole, one he could use while his mouse was still in too much pain to bear his sexual aggression.

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These thoughts blended into one pornographic mess, stirred up her sleep-labored brain into a whirlwind of carnal craving that hit Wren like a punch in the gut.

With a strangled cry, she gushed all over Caspian's hands, her leg shaking when she kicked and cried out a disgusting release.

"Naughty girl, I didn't say this pretty pussy could cum." Grainy, his voice slurred with desire, Caspian whispered equal parts chastisement and filthy praise in her ear. "Now you'll have to be punished."

With mouth and hand.

Teeth took to her shoulder, biting down with enough force that she hissed. Where his calloused hand forcibly moved between her thighs, Caspian increased the pressure and speed of his fingers, fucking into her so hard slick squirt out and sprayed her legs.

Where was her blanket?

Why couldn't she think straight?

And why didn't she protest when Kieran reached for her, flopping her around like a rag doll and dragging her under his rocking body?

One moment she'd been flush with Caspian, a second later she was spread-eagle, prone directly under Kieran's pulsating cock.

Impaled without so much as a kiss or sweet word, that instrument burrowed its way

deep.

Though it had only been days since she'd been filled, the burn and stretch reminded her so much of that first time Caspian had mounted her in her home that Wren could almost smell the mildew dank air.

Home...

A smile bloomed on her lips.

And then Toby drove all three of them forward.

“Fuck!” Kieran lowed as the veins in his neck pulsed.

Toby made his own animal sounds and he reached past the man who sheathed his dick and fisted a handful of Wren's hair. “Look at her, Kieran! Tell me there is not a more beautiful female on this planet!”

Hooded eyes, mouth slack from over-sensation, Kieran seemed beyond anything but the feel of squeezing cunt and invasive cock.

Already knotting her, Wren's needy pussy fluttered in protest as the bulge of flesh grew too large to give her the friction a starved womb desired.

Still she came, her body unable to deny such pressure, or to deny the chance to feed off warm soupy cum that dumped from the beautiful male straight into her.

Toby, however, was not yet ready to release.

As if to punish the Second for such selfishness, or as if to laud him for swelling the Omega's belly with so much sperm, Toby began an all-out assault on Kieran's ass.

Tied to her by his knot, there was nothing the Second could do to stop him. Though he snarled, and threw back his head with threats of death, dismemberment, revenge...

Through it all, Toby laughed.

Until he too was swept away, breath caught in a grunt, face twisted as he jetted the Second full of his first burst of cum.

Pulling out, spraying over Kieran's back, Wren's face, her nest... everywhere.

The force with which creamy fluid shot out of him, the way he continued to beat at his throbbing meat and mangle his knot. Wren had never seen anything like it.

Testicles drew up tight, swelled, shrank, swelled. Over and over like a living thing. A fountain of cum that speckled his pecs, ran dripping down his straining thighs.

As his ushering wound down, a panting Toby announced to the Alpha who'd yet to fully participate. "She still wants more."

With a grunt of agreement, Caspian shifted his weight. "I feel it too. Our pretty cum-slut doesn't think one knot is enough."

Tawny hair hanging in his eyes, the tips spiky with sweat, Kieran hoisted a stiffening Wren upright.

"Don't be nervous. Shhhhh." Caspian whispered, his chest sliding over her back. "This one time, I'll go easy on you."

Cockhead to her second hole, pressing forward before she'd grasped what this was, Wren clung to Kieran, her splints digging into his back as her asshole was breached.

It hurt, gravity pulling her down Caspian's aching organ.

She could sense his impatience, how much he needed friction to alleviate a pain he'd been carrying in his cock for days.

No amount of Rosie's mouth had fully satisfied him.

Not one of the cunts he'd used in the pen where Wren couldn't see.

He'd been a walking, disgruntled erection.

His knots has been insignificant, the usherings he'd poured in his women meager.

The tight ring of her ass squeezed him so tight, her guts felt his pleasure.

Perverse groans vibrated from him to her. They echoed through the bones Toby had claimed, left her resonating with them.

One sated. One in desperate need.

And her trapped in pleasure and pain—realizing that this whole event had been staged.

Kieran's knot gave a mighty pulse, he emptied another great spurt just as Caspian found himself fully seated. There was only a small bit of flesh between their cocks, and she was such a small girl to be speared so relentlessly.

Sweating from the urge to force them both out, head lolling back against the First Alpha who always took advantage, Wren felt a tear leak from the corner of her eye.

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Toby kissed it away. Just as he murmured words of encouragement and love to her when Caspian began to thrust.

There was slick enough to smooth Caspian's invasion. There was cum enough still pouring from Kieran to keep Wren's cunt contracting. And there was Toby incessant kisses on her mouth, his breath mingling with hers until all three of them filled her up.

The orgasm that twisted from her toes and locked each muscle up tight, left her screaming like a woman caught under the knife. Any who heard would have thought they'd tortured her. Beat her. Broke her down bit by bit.

They would have seen the tears that rode those cries, and not known them for what they were.

Matching the intensity of her dirge, Caspian erupted. A volley of warmth shot so deep inside her the sensation would never fade. He came, his knot outside her tender ring, yet threatening the gate.

He came.

And so did she.

As if it was the first time, ever.

And when it was over? When the men gently disengaged and a flood of their seed dumped from her cunt and ass? When she had to sit in the mess and realize that she

was awake, that this thing had happened between them. That she still thrummed with their pleasure and completion?

Wren sat dumbstruck.

Chapter 5

It was Toby's voice that finally broke through the ringing in her head. "You're okay, sunshine."

Okay?

"Come here."

As in move? No. She couldn't do that. Everything was still buzzing, swirling, and pinching under her skin. A flood still leaked out of her, staining her legs with slippery scented ownership.

And this room smelled terrible.

Like other women. Like years of sex, and pain, and... Longing?

Help.

Wren wanted to shout out that word. But she'd never been able to speak. No matter how many times her father had slapped her for willfully remaining silent. No matter how much her flustered mother had begged.

Help me.

Fingers threaded through her hair, kneading a head grown cottony. "I'm here,

sunshine.”

My nest is all wrong. This room is too dark. My chest hurts. I’m frightened!

“Let’s get you cleaned up, hmmm?”

I’m drowning. You’re killing me.

“There’s nothing like a bath after a hard fuck up the ass, eh, Kieran?” A good natured slap bounded off the lolling Second’s chest.

Arm thrown over his handsome face, Kieran growled a spent, “I’m going to castrate you with a rusty spoon.”

How could this be nothing to them? How could they tangle their limbs with hers and press their heated flesh to her body as if ready to find slumber in the cooling pools of their shared ejaculate?

“Up you go.” Arms came under knees, cradled her shoulders, and Wren was carried away from the scene of her destruction.

“When you look at me with those big eyes, I know you can see me.” Toby nuzzled her nose with his. “A little fear, a little wonder... Someday you’ll even learn to smile. And it won’t be from the gifts, or the fucking, or the babies that will swell out your belly. It will be because you just can’t help yourself, sweet pea.” With a chuckle, he added, “Well, some of those grins will be from the fucking. I’m going to keep you so clogged with cum that it will never stop dripping from those fleshy little petals between your legs. Everyone will know I was Alpha enough to claim a mate.”

With the heat in his last words, the snarling challenge as he bit out each syllable, Wren grew smaller.

Alphas didn't claim mates unless they wanted to breed, or were growing old and wanted the constant companionship of a bonded female slave. Young males, men of power, would never!

Yet Toby had bitten her. Purposefully, brutally. And, stupid as Wren was, she had not realized it until after she'd faced the three of them down in the Waterworks.

And lost.

Caspian had done far more than bitten her. He'd mauled her flesh, scarring her for life on every last place anyone might see.

Except her face. That had already been ruined by the tattoo that marked her as defective.

But at least Caspian had also said his claim would only last until her Estrous. It almost made this madness seem reasonable. But Toby, he wanted to keep her.

Yet he let the others have their fun. Built a malformed nest around her and played on her fears for his benefit.

A good mate would bring her her boys.

A good mate wouldn't have seen her ripped from her home and degraded.

Good mates did not exist.

And that horrible truth was something all Omegas learned young.

Having missed the sound of water filling the tub, Wren hissed when the thing she'd been clinging to lowered her down. A drowned Warrens rat swimming in a pool of

fluids, and pain, and inner disgust.

Help me.

Those two words would never be heeded in a place like this.

He took a cup and poured water over her unwashed hair. “I promise you everything is going to be okay.”

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No. It wouldn't be.

Suds were added, all those dingy locks washed clean until they sparkled like fresh snow.

Wren had never seen snow. Only mud and dirty air and disappointment.

“Dip your head back. Good.” Male hands worked under the water, her hair floating behind her like the net she'd been caught in. “I knew you'd do me proud tonight. When tempted, Kieran has never been able to resist you. Do you know why?”

Kieran is a horrible male.

“Because for as far back as he can remember, his mother pimped him out so she could get a fix.”

A drop, a sinking hold of sensation, sucked the air from lifeless lungs.

Toby winked, still toying with her hair under the water. “Mommy issues galore. And then there you are, offering your life for two kids who aren't even yours.”

Oh, they were hers. In every possible fucking way but DNA, those boys were hers. And that right there was the reminder she needed to pull herself out of the tornado of ugliness these males had trapped her in tonight.

A full breath stretched her ribs.

“So you understand?” Helping her sit up, Toby reached for a bottle of scentless cream that would keep her hair soft and shining. “No one has ever loved him. I certainly don’t. Caspian hates him. But you can. You will.”

No.

“Yes, you will. You’ll love him for all the times he was forced to take a cock so his mom might get high. You’ll love the little boy who never had a soul to kiss his scraped knees. You’ll love him because you know exactly why he is the way he is.” Again he pushed her back into the water to rinse silken hair clean. “Granted, you might die the death of one-thousand cuts along the way... but I’ll be here to lick your wounds clean.”

I’m going to take my boys far away from you. From all of you.

“And Caspian, he’s completely under your spell. Won’t it be fun to watch him falter and break?”

You’re a sick man.

“That’s enough of a soak for my sweet little sunshine. Come on out now.” Water sloshed, spilling from the tub to rush over cracked tiles, Wren pulled from enough water to hydrate a family for a week. “Let’s dry your splints and make sure the swelling’s in check. Then straight back to bed with you.”

Chapter 6

Wren was restless. A good sign that healing progressed, that pneumonia retreated, and that Alec’s ten days were almost up.

Funny how ten days could pass in a blur.

When they weren't fucking her, one of them was sleeping beside her—as if they managed their criminal syndicate in shifts.—leaving her trapped in the most disgusting nest imaginable.

It was filthy, the bedding having not been changed since the day she'd signed her soul away to Caspian. And it seemed the males didn't mind the bloodstains, or dried salves, or the days' worth of sexual fluids that had soaked so deep that entire blankets were stiff and crunched when moved.

In fact, it seemed they were competing to see who could defile her nesting place the most.

It was hard to judge the winner.

Kieran certainly sprayed more cum than the others—pointedly directing his eruptions to all corners like a dog marking his territory. After he'd pounded her down into the bedding, that first knot was always wasted, left to splatter her breasts so he could use the whole of his body to rub his scent all over her flesh when he fucked her immediately after the last salty droplet splashed her skin. He used her roughly, forcibly ensuring her pleasure under extreme circumstances and chastising if she failed to cum.

The Second rarely slept, using his time with their broken captive to play every sick sort of sexual game he might imagine. This he did, Wren was certain, in an attempt to make her balk. He wanted her to fail.

He wanted her gone.

Yet clung to her in the rare moments his exhausted eyes did close.

When he'd wake, untangle his limbs, hand running through his dark hair as he stood

over her, he'd scowl. And then she'd be punished with words—all the ways the other whores sucked cock better. That she was sickly and weak... an embarrassment.

His tirade never took place before the other males. No, it was Kieran's secret spite and blatant insecurity that stabbed at her in exactly the right place. Because all he claimed was true.

Wren could hardly take a cock down her throat without gagging and begging for air. She didn't know advanced sexual technique, or exotic positions. And yes, she was ill, and scarred, and had lived her entire life aware her defects made her an embarrassment.

So the barbs didn't sting her already numbed psyche, and that frustrated Kieran all the more.

The Second Alpha was not going to inspire the meltdown they both knew he hoped would get her sent from Caspian's den.

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Yet still he pushed. He'd ask her to bend backwards like a bridge and bear the entire weight of her inverted body on hands and feet so he could fuck her until her legs cramped and she fell. She'd obey, the upside-down world rocking as her hair brushed the floor.

When inevitable failure to hold such a position brought her tumbling to the ground, again he'd compare her to all the beauty that waited in the pen. Yet it wasn't them who'd pull his head to her breast, and comb through those tawny locks with her fingers while he sputtered and raged... and allowed it.

The dark marks under his eyes, the obvious exhaustion. He became putty—that slept and drooled and clung so hard it made her bones ache until the cycle could repeat.

Then there was Toby who thought he was her succor. Toby who saw that she was gently bathed, that her hair was combed, medicines injected and swallowed, fingers observed. Toby who talked to her with his hands as he practiced sign language. Toby who would devour the pussy Kieran inevitably left stuffed with his cum for hours on end.

Until her nerves couldn't take another second.

Until she truly wanted to scream.

It was his attention that sent her closest to falling off the edge. Toby's dedication that endangered Alec.

Because she wanted to slap him away and scream that she didn't need his tenderness

or pretty words.

Were Kieran wiser, he'd forfeit his time and give Toby every possible hour to drive her insane.

"You look much better today. Rosy cheeked and soft as silk." He'd signed it perfectly.

A small, practiced smile was offered. Wren playing house, playing mate, to appease the one whose bond rattled in her bones with unmatched hunger.

"Once your cough is under control, and your lungs have recovered, I'll take you up top to a restaurant and a show. Just us two for a night on the town."

Like normal women who didn't sleep in filth and sell their bodies? Air left her lungs, a slight disbelieving snort ruining Wren's facade.

Tone edging toward warning, Toby said. "All other males will envy me."

Resolute energy flowed from his end of the bond, the buzz working to chase away her incredulity.

The life he'd paint for her... how many years had she dreamed of such things? It was as if he plucked the thoughts out of her head and offered them to her on a silver platter.

But all that sparkled in his display was poisoned. And she knew that.

Knew better.

Because there were no decent Alphas.

And she would never get to go up top. Never sit at a fancy restaurant's table. Never smile while draped in diamonds.

But Toby in his unintentional cruelty was also relentless.

Once when she was still aching from Kieran's attention, when she was tired and frightened and lonely for her boys, Toby's ministrations and his measured promises of the perfect life cracked her armor.

Wren had cried.

Toby had seen it.

But instead of raging at her for breaking character, he set the brush aside and pulled her to his chest.

Purring, he let her splinter, felt her desolation through the tenuous link, and did nothing more than hold her.

More importantly, when she was finished and shaking, scared for what she'd done, he promised not to tell.

Caspian and Kieran didn't need to know.

But the First Alpha had felt her wretchedness through the link, and came in a high temper to see what had happened. By then, Toby had dried her eyes, kissed her lips swollen and pink, and left her exactly the way Caspian liked to see her best.

Clean. Virginal.

Shy.

Nervous.

The distraction slowed Caspian's angry breath.

With a stroke down her smoothed hair, Toby said, "It was a coughing fit. Nothing more."

"She's supposed to be getting better!" The First Alpha paced the length of his room, openly angry at the intangible thing that kept her chest rattling despite breathing treatments, special food, and a smorgasbord of pharmaceuticals.

Truthfully, Wren was.

Though her chest still ached, she could draw in a deeper breath than she had been able to in years. In the last ten days, her body had begun to fill out, breasts ripening and rear getting plump. She'd always been extremely pale, but now her skin was no longer sallow and sunken.

There was still ample mending to be done, but her health was much improved, considering...

For the first time in years, she was actually sick of eating the same thing day in and day out. A luxury of feeling only the well-fed might ever know.

"Well, I'll leave you to it." Toby pressed a lingering kiss to her forehead. "Be a good girl, sunshine. Caspian's had a hard day."

Caspian... who brought his other whores to the den she nested in. Who would barge in and throw back her covers, so he might reach for and stroke her ankle while he looked her over every single morning.

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Whatever he saw determined which woman he'd summon to service him.

Usually it was Rosie, days on her knees having left their mark in rug burn and scrapes. But Wren had also seen a lovely black-haired doll. A red-head with smiling lips and a vacant expression. And others who'd faded into the background.

Some arrived obviously high, eyes half-lidded and swaying on their feet. Some came reeking of perfume, their clothing already mussed from another male's use.

Not a single one of them looked at Wren, as if ordered to ignore the mangled Omega and her mockery of a nest.

But Rosie, she always snuck a glance when Caspian wasn't looking.

Usually after the First Alpha had sent her sprawling with a shove, and stood over his healing prize, splashing the jets of warm cum Rosie's hard work had inspired over Wren's bared tits and cunt.

Zippering up, he'd leave Wren coated in seed, ignoring where Rosie gathered herself from the floor, and went about his business.

Until his cock would grow hard again, and Rosie, again, would be ordered to her knees to drain him. Sometimes he bent the blonde over in half, ass up at the edge of the bed so Caspian's mouth could sample the delights of his caught prize while he fucked a pussy he could pound with all the violent enthusiasm Wren knew he wanted to pour upon her.

She wondered why he even bothered to play a game that clearly made him miserable.

When all three of the males gathered nightly to share her as one, the trio were savage, snapping teeth and guttural grunts. It was only in these private moments Caspian seemed cautious.

After hours of this charade, after he'd fumbled through papers and worked via the data relay on his arm, the flavor-of-the-day would be ordered away with a blunt, "Get out," and only when they were alone, would Caspian creep into Wren's nest.

The cock that had been in another woman's mouth or pussy would then be buried between her thighs, the brutal First Alpha struggling to take her as gently as a barbarian might. When he knotted, felt her traitorous cunt's pulsating and eager response, a low whine always intermingled within his moans.

Only once he'd done this, forgetting Rosie was still in the room.

The blonde Omega had watched the entire exchange, her face blank of all emotion. When Caspian's knot had subsided, when he'd kissed the back of Wren's neck, licked at the scars he'd left on her throat, and praised her with the filthiest words he might find, he left the nest to take a piss.

His eyes had caught on Rosie.

The look he'd given her was... callous.

As if she were as insignificant as an empty dish, he continued forward and left the women alone together for the brief time it would take to drain his bladder.

"Monsters, all of them." Hard words from a hard woman, Rosie slicing through Wren with a razor sharp gaze. "Wipe that look off your face. Never let an Alpha see."

The look in question was shame. Wren was inundated with it.

For coming so hard the world had gone fuzzy. For mewling and urging the male who'd just used another woman to show her his physical affections. For wanting the woman who had pleased him with her mouth for hours to see that it was really her cunt he craved. For debasing herself. For enjoying it. For being a petty bitch who was so fucking riddled with secret jealousy she wanted to tear every woman who'd known Caspian's attention limb from limb. Who knew that such thoughts were evil and tried to stuff them down so far she felt nothing, saw nothing, but the way he looked at her as he used them.

Who was slowly going insane with worry for her boys.

And whose fingers were still trapped in splints. Who was silent and anxious, yet still got wet when the First Alpha gave her that look.

Pouring a glass of water, Rosie brought it over and held it to Wren's mouth. "We'll never be friends. Don't look to me for help."

The door opened, Toby walking in to find Rosie at his mate's bedside.

Before he might reach over and snap her neck, Rosie said, "Your Omega can't properly nest under these conditions. This bedding is filthy. The mattress reeks of other women. Take better care of your things or put her in the pen where she can take care of herself."

And like a truly uppity bitch, she tossed her blonde hair, and walk right past the seething male.

Within the hour, the mattress, pillows, blankets, all of it, had been carted away and replaced with new. Toby, with Caspian lingering near his work, stood by and watched

Wren build a real nest. Both of them leaning on their portion of the link—aware that despite her blank expression, she was elated to be free of the horrible smell.

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The new nest was the finest she'd ever built.

Chapter 7

These sensations, inside and out, were entirely new. Even the pitch of her purr was on a scale Wren couldn't recall having producing before. Lush and indulgent, it hummed from her chest while she let herself do something as silly as burrow.

As if she were happy—safe, and separated from the nightmare of her life.

Cocooned in snowy white cotton, weighted down with blankets stuffed with fluff, she allowed herself a moment of bliss.

In a nest.

A perfect nest made from wonderful things.

Yet the precious moment ended when a warm hand reached under impeccably arranged covers to seize her ankle.

Purr stuttering to a complete stop, Wren braced, found her heart beat far too fast, and forced out a different purr. The expected purr.

“It's rude not to invite me in, mouse.” The male teased. “And what happens to bad girls?”

They get fucked. Hard. Without the growl or sweet lies.

They get shown that they like it.

Reminded they were made to be a whore.

Yet, it was the little moments, Wren reminded herself. The little moments hidden within the bad one had to treasure. And even though it had been short-lived, she had enjoyed her fresh nest while it had really been hers.

Would dream of it. Hold it in her mind just as it was now.

Before they spoiled it.

Pulling her leg from Caspian's grip, Wren maneuvered like a fish in water. The bedding above her peaked as she flipped. Where his hand waited, her face appeared.

A little mouse peeking out of her hole.

Because she could not bring herself to reach for him, Wren looked to his fingers. Veined and rough, she set her teeth to a knuckle and bit down hard enough to sting. Leading a chuckling monster in as if carrying a kitten in her teeth, Wren brought Caspian into a sacred Omega space.

It seemed the male would pretend respect. He didn't immediately make a grab for her breasts or shove his thick fingers in her cunt. Instead he settled exactly where he should.

He rested, pulling her weight into the nook at his side.

Looking down at the intruder, blankets tented by her head, she blinked.

The man just lay there; arm behind his head, eyes closed.

A moment later, it seemed he snored.

Slinking from his chest, Wren went back to her secret preening, her rolling about, and her sighs—finding that the scent of an Alpha had only enhanced the comfort found in soft sheets.

Even if the Alpha was Caspian.

Her natural purr returned, there was even a soft smile playing at her lips with so much clean slipping against her skin.

Until he pounced with a growl... and she squealed.

And laughed.

An honest-to-God laugh that rode the high of her surprise.

Dedicated male lips went to the mark on her neck, stubble scraping delicate skin as he lavished her with unexpected, tender attention. When he nipped, and played, pressing her down into a mattress that did not reek of decades of sex. When he smiled back where no one could possibly see, a twist knotted in the bond. Right in her guts.

A belly flip.

One that fell abruptly away when the First Alpha lost his grin. “It’s time for Alec’s punishment.”

Reality smashed her pretend world to bits.

She was going to be sick.

Moving her mouth as if words might come out, she so wanted to ask if her boy could be spared.

Had she not played house well? Did she not allow them all to screw with their new toy in whatever way they saw fit?

“A whipping.” Touching his nose to hers, Caspian purred. “He can keep his hand. This time.”

Swallowing, she nodded as if promising there would never be another time.

“And you will stand before my men, and watch. At my side.” Voice dropping in tone and thickening with warning, he added. “A loyal, marked Omega.”

Cold, teeth rattling, Wren nodded again.

“Don’t disappoint me.” That final warning given, Caspian threw back the covers to show that both Kieran and Toby stood near enough to grab and pin her down. And both of them wore unyielding expressions, measured her, ready to spar.

“Come.” In his hands, Toby held clothing. A luxury they had denied her since dragging her chained from a cage. “We don’t have much time.”

The dress was white, bridal. Completely inappropriate for the grungy Waterworks or the disgusting crowds gathered within. Already the dragging hem had grown saturated, lace catching on old cement and sodden from the pooling water caught in uneven slabs. It clung to her figure.

A shroud that left her bitten arms bare to the cold.

Still she sweated.

Nerves gnawing at her guts, banked by a stalwart Caspian and an unsmiling Kieran, mist rained down on her head.

Damp hair began to curl into itself, to stick to her skin.

Several levels below, Toby, wielding a bullwhip, had her boy chained to a wall for all the Syndicate to see.

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Crack.

She'd twitched at so loud a noise.

A tickle, he'd told her. Some blood for show.

Yet her boy was screaming, every cell in Wren shouting for her to kill all who stood between her and her child.

Crack.

So much blood. The ear-piercing screams of an innocent.

And she could not go to him... because those who had gathered had not come to this place to see a kid tortured. They had come to stare at her. The defeated Omega Caspian had bitten. The wild thing who had survived her Omega rampage and been cowed by their great leaders.

To see if she'd snap under pressure and entertain them once more with her death.

Crack.

The unbroken pinky finger of her left hand curled around the nearest living support. Wren took the hand of the man responsible for her boy's torment, held it with all she could, because she could not bear this alone.

The intimate touch before his men... Caspian allowed it.

Just as he allowed her silent tears to run free, the convenient mist concealing every trace.

Crack.

Four strikes and Alec had lost the ability to stand, hanging from chained wrists like a broken doll.

Crack.

Voice grown hoarse, the boy's screams no longer reached her ears. Though his shoulders shook with visible sobs.

Crack.

Lavender eyes turned away from the rivulets of blood running down the flesh of her beloved child. They settled on a muddy brown gaze.

Caspian, the arrogant and deceitful king, saw everything.

Unmitigated despair.

Crack.

Squeezing the tiny finger she had hooked to his palm, he offered. "It won't kill him."

And that justified this?

"The kid came to me. He took an oath when he joined, swore to forsake all family. That was his choice."

Crack.

“Which means”—significance burned in that treacherous gaze—“that he is no longer your boy. He belongs to me.”

Always. Alec would always be her boy.

Even when he was old and gray. Even after her body had long since decomposed in the mud, Alec would be her boy.

Crack.

Love, she felt pure emotion even in that horrible moment. And Wren knew Caspian could feel it churning in her. And knew that the Alpha was well aware it was not for him.

Crack.

His eyes narrowed, a less than subtle reminder that this was her punishment too. A test that, should she fail, would be the end of more than just her life.

Alec who suffered. Mikael who healed. Both were nothing to him.

Crack.

That was why she'd been paraded before his slaves, his servants, his whores, and his Syndicate. An Omega. A woman he'd defeated at her most dangerous. Who he'd mounted in abject victory. Who he had marked in a frenzy of violence that would never leave her skin.

Crack.

Each lash might as well have been lain to her flesh.

“That’s enough!” Caspian’s voice boomed across the massive space. Loud enough that even a thousand gallons of rushing water could not drown out his bark. “Punishment has been served.”

Panting from the exertion of wielding the whip, Toby cut a glance over his shoulder. Then he turned, bare chest covered in a myriad of tattoos. He looked right to her.

The way her bones vibrated, Wren knew he called through their link, demanded that she give him her attention. But she couldn’t. She couldn’t lift her eyes away from the weight of Caspian’s stare.

She would never be able to look at Toby again.

“It could have been the kid’s hand. Remember that, pretty mouse, before you hold a grudge.” It wasn’t Caspian words that made her flinch, it was what was buried far beneath them—a hint of regret.

It was as if even a megalomaniac of his proportions had finally recognized that what he’d done had... eternal repercussions.

As if the thought had never occurred to him.

As if his unsettled feelings were foreign, uncomfortable.

What vibrated from him was too subtle to be called guilt, and too selfish to be culpability.

His concern was utterly selfish, the male bothered by the loss of something he’d never had to begin with.

As if to offer this recognized deficit that lingered between them, he spoke over her head. “Kieran, have the boy taken down and put somewhere dry.”

Her face was so warm, the splints binding her fingers creaking from the force she’d exerted gripping Caspian’s hand for support. Which had to be why her bones protested when she let go, her fingers slipping from Caspian’s grasp.

Chapter 8

“No.”

No?

Back in Caspian’s den and away from the eyes and ears of his men, Wren had wept. The ugly kind of sobs that left one rocking themselves and breathless.

Curled up in the corner, sopping wet from the waterworks downpour, her dress was no longer white.

Dingy, like the Alphas’ whole fucking hive, it suited her.

Stuck to her skin, marking the floor where she’d plopped down in a puddle, it gave her a barrier to shut out the males when she buried her face in her knees.

After she’d purged, hiccupped, and hated, silence stole over her thoughts.

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Everything felt fuzzy, disconnected—as if she'd floated beyond reality and watched from a distance.

Toby's hand on her shoulder, the very hand he'd used to wield the whip that had mutilated her boy, didn't so much as make her flinch. She'd hardly felt it at all.

Whatever he muttered to her, was lost.

But she was not lost.

She was more than one terrible collection of days.

More than the brand on her face or the bite shaped scars on her skin.

She was a mother.

And unlike the little ones dead and buried in the mud outside her home, Alec and Mikael still lived. Would thrive.

She had to help assure it. Do whatever it took to make it all better.

Alec needed her now. He needed her collected and capable. He'd need her smiles and purrs.

He needed her medicine.

Yes! Pushing from the ground, Wren ignored the crouching male at her side and ran

to the murdered doctor's box. Rifling through the medications Toby had meticulously organized by day and hour, she knocked it all aside in search of the precious injection: a healing boost.

When her hands closed on the prefilled syringe, feeling rushed back. Holding it to her heart, excitement on her face, she'd turned to Caspian and shown him.

"No."

How could it be so simple to deny her child relief?

Yes.

"No."

Holding it out to him, she crossed the room and went to her knees, prepared to beg... lick his boots if that's what it took.

Radiating agitation, the brute fisted his hands into balls, and glared. He met her eyes and snarled, "I told you no."

Wren tried to unfurl his fingers, to put the syringe in his hand. But he was too strong. So she set her cheek to his thigh and held to his leg as her shoulders shook.

"Mouse, you are angering me."

There had to be some way to purchase mercy for her boy!

Clawing at his zipper, she pulled out a flaccid cock, feeding it into her mouth just like Rosie did. Tears streaking her face, she tried every trick she'd seen, and though he swelled, Caspian never got fully hard.

The shove that knocked her back onto the floor sent the syringe flying from her grip. Scrambling after it, Wren let out a cry when Kieran snapped it up in his hand. It was him she fell upon next, kneeling at his feet and holding onto his leg so that he could not kick her away.

No matter her debasement, the Second Alpha wouldn't even look at her.

Aloof, staring forward, he ignored the silent begging and louder sobs. He even ignored her screams when Toby forcibly peeled her away. Kieran just walked out of the room, dismissing her completely.

Striking out at the Third, she shoved him off and stood before the pair of offenders as if she stood a chance at seeing them ripped apart. Panting, smoothing her hair and trying to catch her breath before she fell into a dangerous mental state, she shook, coughing up old phlegm that rattled its way out of her chest.

And could not pull herself together even enough to breathe properly.

Enraged, Caspian threw her box of medicines, roaring, "What more do you want from me? Never have I spared a hand!"

Pills spilled over the aging rugs, bottles broke.

Next he lifted her breathing treatment machine over his head, smashing it against the distant wall. Metal split at the seams, internal bits destroyed.

"You take all this crap and still you cough! I have to hear you wheeze while you sleep. I feed you a fortune in engineered foods. And you want to give what I provide to a traitor? He knew you'd sold your body to me and came begging for a place anyway!"

She didn't care about the medicines or the machines. All she'd lived for had been those boys.

Wren growled... she hadn't meant to, but the insulting noise had slipped out all the same.

Both Alphas froze.

Nearest her, Toby reeked of something far deeper than anger. That was nothing to the wave of fury emanating from the First Alpha across the room.

“GET OUT!”

Stepping between her and the rampaging First, Toby held her behind his back. “I'll take her upstairs.”

Nostrils flaring, Caspian's livid glare turned upon his Third. “Toss her back into the Warrens. Let her remember what life was like before I dragged her out of the mud.”

There was no fight left in her when Toby dragged her from the waterworks. None.

He wasn't purring or sweet, but nor was he as rough as his anger signaled an infuriated Alpha should be. There were no words between them, only the singed buzz of an insubstantial link.

One that fluttered with... concern.

Nothing like the burn that twisted her guts from the male above. Even with Caspian far away and locked in his den—she could feel his tumultuous wrath. Feel how it was

blended with desperate lust as he thought to slake such feelings on the body of another.

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She could sense his confusion when the simple act of fucking was not enough to assuage the tempest.

And because both males had been arrogant enough to force a half-formed link on her, they sensed her total disgust. Her hatred. Her disappointment in their failings as men.

“You need to cool off for a few days.” Toby snarled between clenched teeth, openly angry with her. “Stay out of his reach before you push him to ruin what we have.”

His grip on her arm tightened, the Alpha marching her along like a child who needed to be put in the corner.

But he didn’t bruise. He didn’t yank.

Considering his anger, Toby was downright gentle.

He was even worried.

That did not change how he shoved her out of their building to land straight in the mud.

Knees scraped, the familiar squish of unsteady ground under her hands, Wren took in her first deep breath of outside air since she’d been taken.

It reeked of shit.

Cold air brushing naked arms, wet skirts icing in the cold, she picked herself up...

and felt utterly alone.

The long walk home did nothing to ease her distress. Not when neighbors took one look at her and turned their backs.

Everyone knew who she now belonged to.

And reviled her for it.

Planks rocking under her bare feet, heart worn, she dragged her sorry bones all the way to her busted door.

No longer did she have a home. Mud had been tracked all over the floor, items cast aside and broken when looters deemed they held no value.

It was as if she'd never existed. Her life in this sorry den erased.

The scent of her boys did not even linger in the air, the smell of rot and mildew pervading each breath.

No wonder they had all been sick...

She was a terrible mother.

One of her boys lay in the hospital fighting his weak lungs for life. The other had been beaten bloody and left to hang before a gang of thugs.

And this room, this place that had been her home was so beneath what they deserved that her skin itched just standing in its walls.

So she left.

Walking around the sinking skyscraper she'd carved out a room in, she climbed over a fence made of scrap. Her skirt caught, tore, and left a lace trail that ran through soggy mud. She didn't care. Not when she was so busy hating herself for ruining her boy's chance at a better life.

Curling up in a place she had spent many of her worst hours, Wren shut her eyes and shrunk in her skin.

"He's just a kid. A stupid one, but still." It was the last person she expected to hear. Tawny hair falling in his eyes, Kieran stood over her. In his hand was an empty syringe.

Palm opening, it fell into the mud.

Turning to walk away, he snarled over his shoulder, "Tell anyone I gave it to him and I'll kill you."

Chapter 9

Wait!

He hadn't seen her hands sign the entreaty, ignored her pathetic throat sounds as she fought the mud to stand.

Rushing to catch Kieran before he slipped away, Wren threw her arms around his middle and held him with all her might.

He froze, stiff as stone under her arms, but he didn't push her away. He didn't slap her face or snarl.

The Second Alpha only stood there, as if unsure what to do.

Face pressed to his broad back, Wren breathed in the familiar scent of potent male—flooded with a burst of true gratitude and unadulterated appreciation.

Had she words, so much would have tripped from her lips. Had her fingers not been splinted, and had he the knowledge to understand her sign language, she would have told him that she would never forget his kindness to her boy.

“What are you doing?” This strained voice Wren did not even recognize.

Without allowing the awkwardly motionless male out of her grasp, Wren crept from his back to his front—so he might see her face, view her wide, glistening eyes.

All the filth she’d brought with her from the ground smeared his clothing, making it look as if he almost belonged in this dump. As if they were a matched set. And she should have apologized for ruining his clean things, but there was no way she would let him walk away without letting him know how much this meant to her.

Kieran didn’t seem to notice her filth, not when he stared down at her with a complicated blend of emotions playing over his face.

Confusion dominated. Under it sat annoyance. Intrigue. Disbelief. Anger.

She needed him to understand. Ear to his heart, she hugged him not only in gratitude, but because holding someone in that moment lifted such a burden.

He had given her air when she was drowning.

He had saved her from the worst kind of self-doubt.

And he had comforted her boy, even if Alec never understood what had been injected into his veins.

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Wren knew Kieran desired to leave. That he hated her. She'd even take his coming beating without so much as a cry of protest so long as she could silently display how she felt.

Just for this one moment where she knew her boy had been given a secret, precious gift. Where the man who had delivered it let her take comfort in him, even though he disliked her.

She took her moment with full enthusiasm, with a smile and the purr reserved for actual happiness.

When his grip came to her horribly tangled and mud spattered hair, she didn't resist. Scalp tingling from the pressure, from the strength of his grip, she was made to lift her head.

The face looking down at her was a stranger's.

He moved so quickly she'd barely had time to draw breath. One moment she'd been hugging the villain who'd taken pity on her child, the next she was slammed against the sagging wall of her building.

By him.

Because he was kissing her as if he'd die without another taste.

Kieran, who never kissed when he fucked her.

Startled, her purr stumbled into a whimper. He swallowed it, the entirety of his body pressed against her slight frame in the dark.

The noises coming from him were desperate, the force of his body rubbing against hers imprinting the wall into her skin.

And then a second later he was off of her, panting, green eyes burning as if she had done him harm.

Chest heaving, knowing she looked utterly befuddled, Wren kept herself painted against the wall.

The male pacing before her, the one manically running his hands through tousled tawny hair, was a stranger.

You hate me.

But he glared at her with such longing.

You use me like a disposable doll.

Stopping long enough that his boots sunk a good two inches into the mud, he cut her a glance, looked about ready to rip her head from her shivering shoulders... as if he heard her silent tirade.

And then flew at her again.

Tongue and teeth and lips that gave no quarter, he didn't care that she barked out an alarmed cry.

He blocked out the sky with his mass, held her pinned so the mud could not suck her

down further, and rocked his hips against her belly with manic jerks.

Wet warmth that had not come from mist or mud marked her stomach, the male spilling so much precum the outside air would waft the aroma for all those near to sniff.

A dangerous Alpha was fucking, laying claim. Do not disturb.

Caught up in his impatience, Kieran began to bunch up her tattered dress.

It was as if he didn't even realize there was more than his urges before him. One second he was growling for her slick, the next he had freed his cock and rammed it so deep inside her, Wren's teeth snapped together.

Tongue invaded her mouth, he whined and bucked and pulled at her hair.

This was not the calculating seducer who only gave her pleasure with pain, the one who degraded her and did all he could to make sure she hated him.

This was a man possessed.

A man who was arrestingly rough and infinitely gentle.

Her back would be gouged with bits of cement wall, her pussy was screaming that he was too big, that she was stretched too full.

That his looming knot would see her in tears.

Yet her bowed body reveled in it, despite the fact that he pumped into her in the most horrible of locations.

A graveyard.

The mud that held her shame.

It was as if it didn't matter. As if she was absolved.

As if this was what it should always feel like with a male.

Before Wren might even register what twisted her toes, an orgasm of epic proportions left her screaming into the mouth of a man she didn't know at all.

His following knot was set deep, bursting out and interlocking them together in a way that left them both vulnerable.

All it would take was one thug slamming him on the back of the head with a rock. One freezing neighbor to drive a blade between their ribs to steal their clothes.

Sagging until mud squished Wren's back, the pair of them took to the ground.

He wouldn't meet her eyes, his own cast to the side as if he was in pain.

As if he felt guilt.

The warmth of his following burst, the twist of her vaginal cavity squishing his meat tight distracted just enough she didn't realize how deep she'd sunk into the mud.

It covered her ears, creeping up her cheeks and about to fill her mouth.

The Second Alpha, his head thrown back, sucked in a hearty breath. Tossing his gaze her way, his breath caught and he yanked her out of the mire.

Dragging her out of the mud, he climbed up the scrap heap she'd piled for her fence and kept them both clear of the very mud that was slowly devouring Dale City.

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Metal digging into the fresh cuts Kieran's enthusiasm left on her back, Wren watched her breath fog in the night. Felt her delicate tissues pulsate and beg for more fluid from the fat cock inside her.

Whimpered when Kieran dumped another hot load of cream deep into her belly.

This knot expanded all the larger.

A knot the Alpha could not resist grinding deeper as he ripped open her filthy gown and lapped at her nipples.

Raw, tingling, exhausted, broken-hearted, world-weary, Wren lay back on her sharp metal scraps, eyes to the sky, while her unsplinted fingers played in tawny hair.

“Neither of those kids are your blood. Why waste the effort?”

The entirety of his voice was foreign, innocent. And, this was the first honest question Wren had ever heard from the pretentious, cocky male.

Hand to his chest, Wren pressed Kieran to sit up so that she could display the muck-filled yard he'd found her in.

Gated by debris and soppy with too much wet—where the syringe Kieran had dumped at her feet had been swallowed by mud, Wren laced her working fingers in the silent, brooding, utter fool's hand.

Even surrounded by such a place, Wren knew Kieran had no idea what his eyes felt

upon. She knew he didn't see.

But she looked to at him all the same, and pet his arm as if he were the lost child looking for a home.

Behind them, so many little bodies were lost in that mud. Some sinking, some rising. A sharp eye would see the bits of sun-bleached bone poking out here and there. They would see the little markers etched with names rain and wind had worn clean.

There had been little Faith, barely hours old when Wren had found her squalling in the mud. Tossed away like garbage at the Warrens' gates. Even though she'd been only child herself, Wren had taken her home, named her something suiting for those large, wise eyes, and held her to her breast the entire four days it took the baby to die of starvation.

Because Wren had no milk and could find no one who might trade with a penniless mute.

She had begged at the gates that separated her sector from the higher levels.

Been kicked, ridiculed, and spit upon.

Stiff with rigor mortis, wrapped in the prettiest cloth Wren could scavenge, the poor thing was properly buried. Weighted down with debris so her little body would not float up in the mud, Wren had scooped mud over the shallow hand-dug grave.

That was only the first infant Wren had stumbled upon over her years in this hell. So many tiny babies cast off to squeal in the muck for milk she'd never be able to provide.

It was those graves she pointed at first.

Kieran looked where she directed, eyes squinted and openly restless. So she'd cradled her arms in an unmistakable position and rocked them. As if they'd held a baby. She pointed to another bubbling mound. Same motion. Again. Again. Again.

Older kids were cast off too. Gwen, Cecily, Brandon, Xerxis, Palo... on and on their names went.

Very few had lasted longer than a month.

Some she got to hold a whole year.

Only Mikael and Alec had lasted long enough to have an actual future.

The Alpha still knotted inside her looked, then glanced back when Wren signaled the height of the child who was buried. She pantomimed a terrible cough.

Beside that grave slept a boy, one who'd been older than Alec when he'd passed. Who had been strong and smart. Wren pantomimed vomiting.

Each lost little life... she told their story without a single word. Starvation, violence, disease... an accident. She made the great Kieran bear witness. She made the bastard see what the Warrens really was.

Hell.

To his benefit, when he had seen enough, he set his forehead to her breast and said nothing. He never asked how many bodies she'd had to weigh down with bricks so they wouldn't float to the surface. He didn't ask their names or how she'd found them.

He just listened to everything she couldn't say.

All the while his knot pulsating between them.

All the while his lips brushing over hers as if they were lovers and not the bitterest of enemies.

Chapter 10

Dress in shambles, bodice shredded down the middle in a way Wren would never be able to mend, she broke from Kieran's hold when at long last his knot subsided. The panting male still hovered, tensing when she shuffled away—yet this was what he'd continuously demanded from her each time he fucked her in Caspian's den.

“Get off me. Others do it better.”

Wren had no doubt that they did. And she'd never cared about impressing him.

She just functioned because she had a goal. Save Alec. Heal Mikael.

Survive and try not to smirk at the scars she'd set into their skin in her rampage—avoid staring at their healing noses and black eyes.

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Yet in the foggy dim of the Warrens' night, it was not a sneer twisting Kieran's lips when she pulled away. It was a frown.

Shivering from the loss of his heat, a light groan accompanying the movement that rammed a jagged bit of scrap against her spine, she shifted her attention from him—from that pained expression—and took a good hard look at herself.

Caked in drying mud, more naked than clothed, warm semen slipping from her slit to instantly chill on her thighs...

And healthier than she had been in years.

Hip bones no longer jutted out. Her bared breasts had fullness and weight.

She shivered.

"You're cold." It was as if he gnawed his tongue, biting back unspoken slander. "You will go inside your home and you will not come out."

Wren shuffled back even farther, lavender eyes leaving her filthy body to take in the Alpha.

The Alpha tucking away his somehow still hard dick.

Kieran fought the teeth of his zipper before scrubbing his jaw with his palm. "Knowing Toby, he's already prepping a transport of food and water for delivery."

Doubtful. Wren could feel her bones shaking with his madness. Toby was ripping rooms apart and screaming at the sky, nowhere near the right state of mind to organize such a thing. But that didn't matter.

Trying and failing to cover her breasts with the remnants of her bodice, Wren nodded anyway.

"If I find out that you didn't heed this order, if I hear a peep about you scavenging or trying to run, I'll cut off a whole lot more than the kid's hand." This was the domineering Kieran she knew, the one whose words dripped malice. The one who stood over her and threatened. "Do you understand me, Jax?"

There was no argument. Only an idiot would scamper around the Warrens with her tits hanging free. Just smelling of Omega was a recipe for a violent death. She told him as much when she gestured toward her exposed chest and pussy.

When green eyes lit on cold pebbled nipples, drifting lower to where his seed leaked out, they came alive with more than just anger. "What does it feel like, that bond you got with them?"

Hmmmm.

Curious Kieran would have been slightly amusing had Wren not been shivering in the cold. Tired, and thirsty. Her body had grown spoiled by access to life's necessities and already complained about the lack.

Hugging herself to preserve warmth, she gnawed at her lip and felt exactly how Caspian's and Toby's half-formed bonds worked against her.

"Well?"

No point in brushing it off, she pointed to her guts and mimed a twisting cramp. That was Caspian, who even from this distance she could feel fumbling through the pinging in his guts with women and a great deal of drink. Each climax that erupted from his cock Wren felt like a ghost of sensation building at the base of her spine to burst and leave her insides completely unfulfilled.

She knew he suffered.

She knew he could not comprehend the cause.

He didn't sleep though the hour was late.

He felt the foreign pings of worry.

Lacking the ability to feel her out properly while gorging on his lustful appetites—it distracted him. Because he felt something was missing though he had surrounded himself with everything.

She wondered if he'd even jolted at her earlier burst of gratitude toward Kieran, or if he'd been too busying knotting his entire pen to grasp that that wondrous emotion had come from her.

Had he recognized her orgasm with his Second was not part of his physical pleasure?

Probably not.

That would require him to look past his own selfish interests and see her as more than just property. He would have to actually care to tune into the tiny two-way connection between them for more than a self-indulgent reminder of a terrible victory.

And a man like him, wasn't capable.

Next Wren ran her palm over her shoulder, her arm, pointing to joints to signify the bones underneath. This was where she felt Toby. Bone deep, resonate, the frame that held her together utterly affected by him.

Male obsession tingled in a constant state of vibration. There was also adoration, determination, and guile.

Were she not certain he raged in the Waterworks, she wouldn't be surprised if he were standing in the shadows watching her now—watching this with a smile.

Twisted guts and endless tingles, that ebb and flow and subtle taste of other emotions. And this was not even a full bond.

To explain to Kieran his effect on her, she caught the tip of a nail against his neck, drawing it slowly down until the Alpha broke out in gooseflesh.

Openly shivering, he closed his eyes, and let his head fall back while she extended the sensation.

Purring without thought, shoulders relaxing, it seemed he begged for more attention, but her lesson was over.

She was tired.

Voice soft as it had been that first time he'd seduced her on the floor of her home, Kieran said, "Go inside. Don't come out."

No food or water arrived that night.

No clothing or a source of heat.

Lying where she'd once had a nest, ancient linoleum under her body, Wren spent the night in icy cold.

Teeth chattering, mud freezing until she might crumble it off with her hands, she faced the kind of chill that killed.

Had she been warmer, she might have sensed grievous danger.

Had her joints not been locked in stiffness, she might have made it out.

But the ground had already been shaking long before her chattering teeth realized it was not just her body that rumbled.

The home she knew was destined to sink, was already descending into a torrent of mud. It oozed through the bars on her windows, ran in a river through her buckled front door.

And buried her no matter how she flailed and fought the tide.

Sucked under, encapsulated, Wren was caught in the drift.

Her pale arms flailing in the onslaught was the last view of his mouse Caspian saw before his cameras cut out, the Alpha screaming for his men to muster and dig her out.

But it was too late.

Several floors of Wren's sinking building had been claimed by the mud before they arrived.

And she was gone.

Chapter 11

Chest expanding, the human leather of his coat stretched and creaking with each great pant, Caspian shot daggers at the sunken shit heap. Thirty-four floors still stood, Dale City's engineers bracing the building far above the stink of the Warrens... while simultaneously doing nothing for those who had lost their homes in the mud.

Warrens rats were beneath their notice.

Just as they were beneath Caspian's.

All but one, at least.

Every inhale was laced with sharpness, every exhale burdened with an angry growl. No one neared him save Toby, who clawed at his shaved head, mattering beneath his breath as he manically paced.

The Third Alpha had already torn long gashes into his scalp, clawed his veined forearms to shreds—self-mutilation keeping him level enough to shoot his First Alpha a hateful glare.

“Twenty-four hours you said. A whole fucking day with no food or water. No blanket—punishment for being the perfect Omega who loved her brood. Had you not interfered, I would have been here with her, boss! She wouldn’t have died!”

“Watch your tone.” The warning had been spoken lowly, but it seemed the hundreds on the scene froze.

Toby, nostrils flaring, showed his teeth. “You murdered our mate.”

The barest of flinches. Knuckles cracking, Caspian looked away from the bubbling mud for the first time since arrival and set the full weight of his displeasure upon the seething Third.

Mindlessly picking at an oozing cut, Toby narrowed his eyes. “And now she’ll never know estrous. I’ll never fully bond her. And you... the ghost of your marking my sunshine will always ping in your chest. You’re half-bonded to a dead Omega. Only way to wipe her clean from your corpse is to fully bond another. And when you do, I’ll see her drowned in mud.”

Kieran stepped between them. “You know how he gets, sir. Pay Toby no mind. A day or two and he’ll remember his place.”

There were eyes on them, eyes that would report to rival gangs. To government. To his own men. They could not show dissension. But later... Toby was a dead man. “Leave.”

“Try and move me, and you’ll have a show on your hands that will echo through the city for fucking years.” And his Third meant every word, digging his feet into the soggy ground and bracing to be charged. “I’m not leaving until they pull her body out.”

Her body...

The thought of a limp, lifeless mouse hanging from a worker's arms like a rag, stole Caspian's next breath. She'd be blue under all that mud. Stiff.

How much water would it take to wash her clean?

Odd feelings accompanied such thoughts like barbed wire corded through his belly, squeezing as it cut deep. Vomit came to Caspian's mouth, swallowed back down by an act of pure willpower.

"They won't find her, sir." Kieran crossed his arm over his chest, looking to the building. "To dig down that far... she's buried with her children. I think that's what she'd want."

Brow cocked, Caspian turned his glare to the handsome one. "What?"

Was his Second growing fucking red-faced?

"I asked you a question, Kieran."

"The kids she found." Clearing his throat, the Second pointed to a patch of mud now littered with massive debris. "The ones who died. A dozen, maybe more, are buried there."

Reeking of jealousy, Toby shoved forward. Inches from the Second, his finger kissing the trigger to the firearm hanging from his shoulder, he demanded. "She doesn't talk to you. You can't read her hand signs. How do you know that?"

"The dying kid in the hospital told me." The answer came on a hiss, a bristling Second unflinching before the manic Third.

Kieran was lying, Caspian could always tell. And had Toby been in his right mind, he too would have seen the tick that betrayed their pack-mate.

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“Enough.” There had been more than enough antagonism. More than enough insubordination. More than enough of that vicious feeling pulverizing his guts to a pulp. “The men keep digging.”

Fingers fighting the clasp, the rusty thing finally gave and the cache’s lid groaned open.

Reaching for a canteen of drinkable water, the top was twisted and brought to cracked lips. Swallowing all she could, Wren gagged, spit up gritty mud, and bought that rust-flavored nirvana back to her lips.

Every muscle shook, strained and aching now that panic had subsided.

The rest of her dress she’d lost swimming for the hatch. Clothed only in dirt, fucking staggering and tired and sick, she’d dragged her tired bones away from a building that might tear free of its moorings and fall.

No Warrens rat would scamper near a sinkhole. They always got worse. Those fresh fools who came to scavenge always died.

Run to higher ground.

And if they were wise, sneak to a stash.

Because those who knew this dump had lost at least one home over the years. Starting

over with nothing was a death sentence.

Wren had four ancient canteens of water. She had clothing for herself and her boys.

There was even a single pricy package of rations she'd hidden away.

But this place was not safe.

Which was entirely why she'd put the small case of treasure here.

Ancient wallpaper sagged on moldy walls, flocked with growing fungus and faded by time. There was water in the pipes. Tainted water enough to wash half the mud from her unsteady frame.

There were stairs that led down into a half sunken foyer of what had once been a grand hotel. There were bodies rotting in the muck.

This was a dumping ground for the dead.

Unclean. Infested.

And also her salvation.

Pulling coarse fabric over her damp arms, Wren found warmth for the first time in hours. Choking down the precious rations, she found a belly that no longer ached.

Stuffing her face almost brought with it a feeling of guilt, but it's not like she could take food with her. She'd be murdered the instant someone thought there were edibles to be found in her pockets.

So long as the lids hung off to show they were empty, drained canteens she could

hawk for supplies.

Goggles were a necessity.

Tools for salvage.

First on the agenda was finding a new home. Someplace where she could wait out her finger bones healing. Until then, there was no point in going back to the males.

She had to be able to say her piece.

Caspian owed her a years' worth of water. He owed her coin.

And by their original agreement, she'd only had to serve until he was tired of her.

Since he'd cast her off, she was pretty sure that was that.

Of course, he'd probably kill her the instant she demanded payment for whoring, but Alec and Mikael needed funds to get out of this hellhole.

Mud clogged her ears, her pinky finger gently trying to dislodge what a rinse in old pipes had only pushed deeper. That ate up the hours of her day.

That and a great deal of restless sleep.

She would get through this, just as she'd gotten through the torrents of mud looking to pin her down.

Just as she'd survived abandonment and squalor.

Just as she'd survived the Waterworks and the Alphas who haunted them.

Two boys were counting on her. And she was going to see them safe.

Chapter 12

Flexing under dirty bindings, Wren stretched her healing fingers, clenched them against the brace, and hissed when an ache shot down her arm.

Bones seemed ready to be free of uncomfortable splints, the bruising had almost totally faded, but muscles were weak.

And so very stiff.

A bit of old leather between her teeth, and she continued the exercise, breathing through the irritation until her fingers grew too weary to follow commands.

Then it was the next hand's turn.

Four days she'd stuck near a new, unfurnished hole. Sleeping alone for the first time in years, Wren had felt a strange liberty in the solitude.

How much simpler it was to score food when there was only one mouth to feed.

Though she was perpetually thirsty, she'd found more than enough water to keep her alive.

And the ease of it, the relief she had only one person to see through to the next day, left her in a state of deep guilt that she'd enjoyed the respite.

So she punished herself with hard labor. Despite her fear, Wren crept up to the outskirts of the Waterworks every dawn and dusk, eyes peeled for a boy who might have been cast out.

Not a single sign of Alec was found.

Nor had Mikael been thrown out into the mud.

But she could not trust Caspian to keep either of them much longer. Not when his end of their link jittered and shook.

Inebriated. Pussy drunk.

Disgusting.

Tormented.

Raw.

Just like he liked to think of her—a raw mouse with so much to devour.

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Toby's echo in her bones wasn't much better. All she sensed from him was anger. The cunning kind that held a smile on its face and a knife at its back. Neither seemed ready to forgive her outburst. Neither had a moment's peace.

Even though it had been days.

Putting Wren in a difficult position. How was she to face them if they would not hear her? How was she to negotiate for riches that had been promised?

Left with the niggling thought that the only way to keep her boys alive was to steal them back, she debated avoiding the raging males at all costs. But if she were caught...

Spitting out the leather, Wren's teeth worked her lip as she deliberated.

Caspian was a liar of epic proportions who cared only for himself. There was a large chance he would never pay her her due.

How many times had he already gone back on his word?

But he had also marked her with myriad bites in his furious passion. Bites she would make him see when she came for her due. And if approached before his men, their First Alpha would lose face for denying his bonded Omega.

Such action made him look weak, and that was her greatest weapon against his damaged character.

But she needed a voice. She needed her hands so Toby might translate.

Yet they still fucking ached.

Frustrated, Wren studied the honeycombed splints, her nails only just starting to grow back.

Sitting there in the dark, flickers of the battle stole into her thoughts. When these hands had been broken, she'd made the men roar. And if there had been only one brawny Alpha to face? He would have died.

But three, moving in tandem? Three circling and countering her swinging rebar?

Indomitable.

The memory of smashing that cement crusted pole right into Caspian's snarling face bubbled up. Smiling, Wren laid down on her side and almost felt pride.

Sheltered inside a gaping crack along the outer walls of a sinking building, little wind reached her. There she waited out the sun, hours left before she might forage safely.

Cement was still cold, but she had layers to warm fattened limbs.

Someday she might even have another nest.

But right now she had something far more important. She had purpose, and she had delicious snippets of rage heavy memory to entertain her through the wait.

Chuckling, her teeth snapped shut. Between them was the phantom of the bite she'd taken out of Kieran's perfect ass. He'd howled, he'd snarled, and she had laughed as his blood filled her mouth.

How had she not seen that in all the mating since?

Because he always kept his back from her. He'd hidden it.

Which was a pity since fractured memory claimed he'd tasted divine.

Cunt clenching, Wren's cheeks went hot. Unwarranted slick swished enough to wet her pants, horrifying memory stealing in to remind the female there was so much more to that ass biting moment. Such as the huge cock that had knotted her still, Caspian's cock that she'd ridden like a veritable demon.

How could she do that?

Pressing her hands over her ears, she denied the guttural and filthy banging around in her head. Refused to acknowledge that they had come from her.

Drawing deeper into her jagged crevice, Wren shut her eyes and tried to slam the door on her thoughts.

But the mind refused to obey.

The images that played out in abandon were...

Lurid.

The smell of male. The taste of cum and sweat and blood.

The feel of pleasure in a broken body that could not feel pain.

The longing...

Worst of all, Wren had to acknowledge that when Caspian had set his teeth to her throat, she had egged him on. And this was after her limbs were bleeding from his snapping teeth. After he had torn into her body and harmed her for his pleasure.

She had offered the Alpha an invitation. Turned up her throat for his violence.

At that moment, the steady disassociation that had kept her going through the lonely days in hiding cracked.

How could she?

How could she submit herself to the very male who had harmed her boys?

Warm, salty water wet dirty cheeks. In the distance, two Alpha males felt the shift, their ears pricked.

“She’s alive.”

Chapter 13

Another muted gush. Cum twitched into whoever was riding his cock, but Caspian felt nothing. A sea of beautiful female bodies crawled over him, clever fingers, clever tongues, tight cunts and pretty breasts. Drowning him in carnal attention.

Yet the First Alpha couldn’t even tell who was in the room.

They sucked, he stared off into space. They lapped and stroked, he called for more to smoke.

Nothing would dull the throbbing ache that had somehow moved from his guts to his chest.

He couldn't eat.

Every breath stretching his barrel chest was worse than the last. Sometimes, when the drugs hit him just right, he dreamed his lungs were filling with mud. Always he longed to hear the unwell cough that had woken him in past nights.

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Missed the scent of his mouse but could not bring himself to seek her things.

He had not been back to his rooms since the mud had sucked her down, preferring the consuming distraction of his favorites in the pen. Naked, coated in female fluids, and coming down from a hideous headache, Caspian lay, daring for the first time in days to close his eyes.

Which carried him straight to the worst kind of hell. The kind where he felt his mouse's final desperation like a knife to the guts. Today it was only a dull throb of sad determination, of thirst and hunger. But as he suffered the torment, the bad feelings abated—as if a window had opened and sun streamed in. From the fragment of their link came joy, pride... arousal?

His dick twitched and someone, Caspian didn't even care to look, latched on.

The slippery tongue felt like sandpaper, the rolling wave of hands over his sack like slimy filth.

Pushing the bobbing head away, eyes still shut tight, Caspian drew in a breath of relief when his cock popped free of unwelcome lips.

Longing teased at all the internal places where he ached and rotted... embarrassed longing. The very feeling that plagued the mouse when he'd knotted her just right. When he held her close no matter if she was angry. A special feeling she only resonated with for him.

When she had been left to Kieran's devices, she never longed for him. Mostly she

drew away from herself and survived her time with the most desired Alpha in the Waterworks.

Her time with Toby had always left her overwhelmed and scared it was too good to be true. Yes, she longed for the Third, but the flavor was unique and pale in comparison for the few brief sips she had with Caspian.

Feeling that flutter now, knowing it wasn't the flagging drugs, aware that though his eyes were closed this was not a dream, Caspian jolted from where he sprawled.

An instant later he jackknifed up. Because that distant female longing had folded into sadness, and he could practically taste the salt of her tears on his tongue.

FUCK, she's alive!

Groaning in response to rough treatment, the smooth-skinned Beta draped over his thigh wiggled in her sleep. Immediately he shoved her arms—and the touch of the other five women he'd slaked his lusts on—away. Not a single chirped complaint when he ordered the used beauties off, not a single coy batting of their lashes or a flirty smile to tempt him back to the bed.

No, they shuffled off most likely in relief, considering how many hours he'd put them to work.

Only Rosie stood there, watching him with those big blue eyes.

Eyes that gave nothing away.

He didn't have time for her shit. Not now when his guts churned with the lightest vibration of her. "I told you to get out."

Pulling a pair of discarded panties from a raggedy dresser, the blonde slipped them over her hips. “Never thought I’d see you like this.”

Haggard and unable to knot? Yeah, he read right between her lines. “Any of you speak of it, and I’ll see you all skinned.”

“Hey.” Rosie held up her hands, the dispassion in her eyes matching the lack of condescending smirk he knew she was just dying to produce. “I remember what happened to Jetta.”

Jetta, one of the finer pieces of leather to make up Caspian’s prized coat.

Shrugging into his clothes, Caspian shot her a dark look. “What do you want, Rosie?”

“I want the big room.”

“No.”

She snorted a dark laugh. “Who else would you possibly give it to?”

Well the options were endless considering the stock he sheltered for his men. “Jean, Mai... that one with the curly hair.”

“Naomi,” Rosie offered, unflinching and unwavering. “Her name is Naomi.”

That’s right. Naomi who loved to eat cunt and tolerated cock.

“Please.” The fact that it was a real please, that it was coming from so jaded a female, got Caspian to cease doing up his trousers and look at her. Once she had his eye, the Omega continued. “I want out of the pen.”

Fuck no. Not with a mouth like that. His men fought over who got to spend time with Rosie. Some of them fancied themselves in love with her.

The very idea made him snort. “I don’t have time to listen to you complain about how full your belly is or the temperature of your baths. So you gotta suck some cock, so what?”

“It can be like it was before, between us...” Twiddling her fingers, playing the role of sweet miss, Rosie pulled out all the stops. Just like she had when she’d caught his eye years ago. “I know what you need, what it takes to please you. I’ll earn my place.”

Enough! Caspian tightened his belt, dismissing her entirely. “This is about the new girl Kieran brought in.”

A flash lit up the blue of her eyes. “He bleached her hair white...”

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And keeps her in his rooms. A little doll made up just to look like the mouse.

Caspian had only seen the new girl once, and had almost been sick on the spot. Roaring, he'd thrown both her, and the male balls deep in her cunt, out of his pen.

Kieran was lucky his toy had gone unnoticed by Toby, or that girl would have met a bloody end.

"You fucked me almost every day the mute was here and I never complained, but this? She's been here a week and he's letting her nest, trying to breed her! Kieran promised me an out. If I can't have a baby, then at least give me the damn room!"

"Rosie." He wanted to make this crystal fucking clear. "You weren't brought here to nest. You were brought here to fuck."

Tossing her hair, she sneered. "And the big room goes to the favored whore. Who fucks better than me?"

One raw little girl did. A sweet, quiet beauty of an Omega mouse. "The answer is no."

Rosie had always had a mouth, but she had never been openly spiteful. That's the only thing that kept him from killing her when she hissed, "You fucked me the night you threw her out. You were fucking me when the ground shook, watching her on those monitors. I'm glad I got to see the look on your face when your precious mouse died."

At that, he offered the nastiest smile that might stretch apart his haggard face. “She ain’t dead.”

Real, the first real flicker of honest emotion betrayed the beautiful blonde. She looked repentant, maybe even worried... for the girl. “But all that mud... why hasn’t she come back? If she made it out, why hasn’t she come back?”

Good fucking question, but not one he was going to entertain with Rosie.

“You don’t deserve her.”

That didn’t make any difference to Caspian. The sleek mouse was his. And she was alive.

The door banged open, a panting Toby rushing in to shout, “Boss—”

He knew, he felt her too. “Call the men. We’ll scour the Warrens and flush out the mouse. Whoever brings her back undamaged”—mud-brown eyes turned to the eavesdropping Omega who’d dared insult him, Caspian sneering—“can have Rosie for keeps.”

The woman’s face went white. “No!”

Before she might beg or cry, before she might cling to his leg and prattle on about her worth as an Omega, Caspian marched out the door.

Turning his back on the pen, he went to his rooms, his eyes lingering on the pristine nest his Omega had built.

Had enjoyed.

Had even, briefly, shared with him.

And then he went to scrub days' of sour sweat and desperate unfulfilling couplings from his skin.

Chapter 14

Holding out her last dented canteen for trade, Wren grunted at the peddler. Covered from head to toe, goggles protecting her eyes, she gestured freshly unbound fingers at the expired supplement bars.

She then held up four to signify what she desired. Four credit chips and a taste of food.

Wind whistling through the buildings, she couldn't hear the man's reply. But if he was of the mind he'd be trading her for less, she'd take the damn canteen somewhere else.

Not that she'd seen other peddlers about...

Everyone was on edge in the Warrens, but that was nothing new. Her old building tilted no matter the supports tethering it to the more sturdy structures. Like the rats Caspian liked to call them, everyone scampered about, prepared to duck the fall. And it was a fair reason to fear. When decrepit buildings finally went down, the tidal wave of destruction that followed killed off more than a few.

Though even destruction of that magnitude was not nearly as deadly as poisoned water, starvation, and everyday violence that plagued this part of the city.

When she shook her head at the offer of three chips instead of four, it seemed the huffing trader was willing to make the barter. Credits and a single bar of food were

placed in her hand, and he smiled, decaying teeth on display. Canteen offered, not so much as a word spoken between them, Wren took what might buy her three days of sustenance and began to turn.

The wind died down just enough for her to hear him say, "...I'll share the bounty, scavenger."

Whatever he was talking about, she didn't care. Itching her marked cheek under a faded bandana that kept her mouth free of flies, Wren left the old peddler to his table.

She had a schedule to keep. First her twilight scan for Alec and Mikael.

Slip past their favorite haunts just in case they'd been released and found their home long gone. Then, once it was dark, to the Waterworks to see if they'd been thrown out and left in the mud.

She'd conduct the same search at dawn, and had for days.

No sign of either boy had been found. Considering that Caspian wore a coat made out of people, that he'd had a child whipped, she knew anything he did with either of them would be theatrical.

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So... as least thus far... it seemed he'd done nothing.

Except cast her out, practically naked, into the mud.

Crushing down feelings of betrayal, Wren refused to acknowledge them. One could only be betrayed if one cared. She didn't. She wouldn't no matter how her eyes stung or how it sometimes grew hard to breathe.

Those Alphas didn't cherish her; they just enjoyed the novelty of fucking their very own freak. Even Toby—who wanted to take her out and rub the city's face in his defective, tattooed mate—thought only to parade her around, smiling that creepy unhinged grin while others scattered at the sight of them.

She was no one's mate.

This she had told herself, over and over earlier that day when she'd picked the honeycombed splints from her hand. She was her own person.

And the reminder, coupled with free wiggling fingers, left her feeling more herself than she had since waking up in a dark closet, bloody and draped with chains.

She was healthier than ever. And yes she was hungry. And yes she was extremely thirsty. But she could last years like this.

And she had not had to whore herself once since she'd fought through the torrents of mud and climbed free of her sinking building.

She had slept alone on her terms.

And as she had done before Caspian had ruined her already hard life, she had survived.

In the worst part of this city, clothes muddy and wind biting, Wren remembered pride.

And felt her heart warm—held onto that beautiful sensation, slamming the door shut on whatever ugliness the males on the other end of their links reveled in.

She was strong.

Though her fingers were weak and not every bone had healed perfectly straight, she could move them. Had practiced for hours with gentle sweeping motion and cautious stretches.

She had her voice back.

And now it was time.

This wasn't ideal, certainly not what she desired. But after days of deliberation, Wren had come up with no plausible alternate strategy.

In the dark of night, she had searched out potential places to make a new home. So far, nothing had been safer than the crack in the wall where she squatted. But that was no home, and there was hardly room for her body in there, let alone two growing boys. Tempted as she was to just sneak in and steal Alec, where would she take him for shelter?

There was no new home.

Despite years of trying, together they might find a way to climb over the gates and search out Mikael. But Wren had no idea which building housed her sick boy. And there were so many.

Tens of millions lived in Dale City.

Three credits left to her name. No food. No water. She could not provide for them like this.

She'd need money to buy her way out of the Warrens.

A year's worth of water could be traded for a lot, maybe even tickets out of this horrible city so they might find a fresh start.

The very thought warmed her heart further. She'd heard there were parts of the world that were still green. Distant places far beyond what even a year's worth of water and pockets full of coin might take her to.

Of course, she'd die before she saw such a place, but all she needed was a new city that would take in two boys and give them a real future. Far, far, far away from Caspian's Syndicate.

From the Alpha in his hideous coat. From brown eyes and secret smiles when no one else could see.

...she'd dreamed of him last night—dreamed of Caspian. And in the dream, he'd been kind. He didn't stink of other women. He didn't lie.

There wasn't pain or battles or mockery.

The nightmare had been horrific. The following ping in her heart when she'd

awakened more than enough to make her ill.

Ripping the wrapper from her last meal, Wren shoved it under the bandana keeping the reek of shit from her nose, and fought the dry thing for a bite.

And felt...

She felt a rippling sensation wiggle and squirm in her belly. She felt a come-hither buzz in her chest.

The quasi-bond sang to her that Caspian wasn't fucking his women. He wasn't drunk or high. But he was angry, frustrated. Had been for two days straight.

Taking the final bite of her dry supplement bar, Wren swallowed a jagged bit of food down her throat. It scoured her gullet all the way to her belly.

And that was that.

To face him starving and even thirstier would make her look weak.

The splints were off, her bones had healed, she could communicate at long last... and it had to be today.

Today she demanded her due.

He'd probably kill her.

And that... was better than living without her boys.

Chapter 15

“Sir, there is an intruder wading through Pitchfork Canal 7.”

For a moment, a painful beat of time, Caspian’s heart stopped. Hanging his head, it took three full seconds before he found the ability to draw breath. And it shook, damn the mouse, it shook rattling its way into his lungs.

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That was her pipe. The way she had first breached his kingdom all those weeks ago.

Unable to look at the guard who'd delivered such news, he kept his eyes on the data relay before him, and asked. "Does the intruder look small, like a child?"

"Yes, sir."

"It's her!" Toby shot around the table laden with the evil works of evil men, prepared to make a manic run down several floors of rickety rusty steps.

"We don't know that!" Caspian snarled, grabbing his Third's shoulder as he passed. But who the fuck else could it be in that pipe? "And if it is her, charging down there will scare her off."

They both could sense her caution, the flutters of distress and anxiety. And it was that, Caspian suspected which really stayed Toby's hand. Not his leader's order to cease.

Things between them had been... tense.

Crossing bulging arms over his chest, as if unsure what to do with the twitching limbs, Toby said, "She has no reason to run from me."

The Third believed it. Deep down, Toby believed there was no reason in the world the mouse might fear the Syndicate's infamous killer. And for that, Caspian had a dash of pity for the male. "We wait. If she's come for the boy, she will be captured. We'll deal with her afterward, calmly."

But continuing reports made it clear the mouse was not slinking into shadows heading the direction where the males' denned. Instead, she was climbing up the stairs, trying to blend in with the slaves.

Heading to him.

"Kieran should be told," Toby said, eyes darting left and right as if he might see her through the concrete and spy her approach.

"No." This moment wasn't for the Second. Let him stay locked in his room fucking his new toy, as he had for the last several days. The last thing Caspian wanted right now was the vitriol that bastard spewed burning the mouse's ears.

Toby didn't demand an explanation, he just backed away, as if the stairs leading from their perch were too much of a temptation to bear. Breathing hard from the corner, he snarled at the guards, "Leave."

When the trio turned toward the stairs, the Third hissed, "Not that way, you idiots!"

There was no other way for them to go. The upper levels at their backs were prohibited. And when the guards seemed confused Toby, in his infinite patience, threatened to behead their mothers if they didn't walk up, take a right, follow the hall for a hundred paces, and die there of starvation.

Without so much as a look at the madman, and his very real threats, all three obeyed.

Leaving Caspian and Toby alone on the landing overlooking the Waterworks, waiting for the mouse.

Walking to the railing, Caspian palmed bowed metal, and peered down into the deluge. She was there, just as he had seen her that first time. And she was trying her

damnedest not to turn her face up to collect some of that precious water on her tongue.

His mouse was thirsty, but would not drink his water.

She was dirty, but had not come to him to bathe.

No doubt she was also starving...

As if she felt the weight of his stare, she glanced up. But when their eyes met, even from the great distance she still needed to climb, she didn't look desperate or pleading.

She looked resolved.

No smile for him. No wave.

From their link, Caspian felt a wash of determination.

Head turning down, she gripped ancient railings and continued the climb.

"You let me think you were dead," Caspian said to no one.

It took every ounce of self-control he possessed not to run down those stairs and demand answers. Gripping the railing so hard it whined in protest, he made himself wait. Refused to show weakness before his men.

And then she was there.

Winded from the climb, she pushed back her hood and let all that glorious, mud-caked white hair fall free.

It had not been brushed, most likely in days. It was not braided and wound about her skull like the first time they'd met. It was just caught into some kind of thong, an afterthought. A burden.

Hands that would have been show white if not for the dirt, raised before her. Squaring her shoulders, the little mouse sucked in a breath, and began.

Caspian had never taken the time to learn how to speak to her, and in that moment fucking hated that he had no clue what she said. So he blurted, "Where have you been?"

Had his voice sounded choked, unsure?

Toby, eyes unblinking, marched closer.

And she, she almost flinched.

"He asked you a question, sunshine. Where have you been?"

The confusion on her face was unmistakable. Looking between them she signed, Toby translating, The Warrens.

The non-answer set his blood to boiling, Caspian barking, "Why not walk through the front gates? Why sneak in?"

Fingers moving slowly to spell out her meaning—the action obviously uncomfortable—she signed, There are guards at the door. I knew they wouldn't let me in.

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Bloodless fists released the railing, Caspian turning to face her full on. And God, seeing her in such a state outright gutted him. “There is a bounty worth a fucking mint on your head. The Syndicate has been combing the Warrens for days!”

So, you’re going to kill me. Instantly deflated, she sagged. A despondent pretty lavender gaze slipped from him to find the floor. I had hoped... Never mind. Just do it. Get it over with.

Before her eyes might grow any redder, they darted back up to Caspian’s, one last request on her unmoving lips. Please don’t hurt my boys.

“Goddamn it, Caspian! I can’t hear her say this shit!” Toby bellowed, “Tell her that you fucking love her already!”

Men like him didn’t love, that was for the weak and the mental. Toby, for example. But that did not stop the merciless twisting dagger in his chest when she snorted at the very thought.

Sobered, she fisted and unfisted clearly aching fingers, then flourished them in her special language. But Toby did not translate.

Hissing at Toby over his shoulder, Caspian demanded an explanation. “What did she say?”

Growling under his breath, Toby snarled, “You don’t want to know, boss.”

“THE FUCK I DON’T!”

The little mouse jumped, loudly swallowed, and moved in the same pattern. Repeating herself.

Toby took a step closer. “It’s not what you think, sunshine. He didn’t mean it.”

The look on her face was the most blatant kind of incredulous, the kind of look that couldn’t be faked. Fingers flying she dashed out a fountain of meaning, all of it directed at Toby, who tried to follow and failed.

“You’re going too fast, I can’t—”

That didn’t stop her. Marching right up to them, her lip curled, throat growling through the slapping violence of her unspoken words.

“Tell me what she’s saying,” Caspian barked, causing both frazzled Toby and the furious mouse to startle.

“I can’t fucking tell you what she’s saying,” Toby, hissed. “She’s talking too fast!”

With an animal growl, the mouse shoved past and went to their table. Taking up paper and pen, she wrote down, and violently underlined, exactly what she wanted to say. A second later it was held right up to Caspian’s face.

You owe me a years’ worth of water and pockets full of credits!

“After the ground shook, I went to your house. My men have been digging ever since.”

The paper slipped from suddenly slack fingers, the mouse’s expression transforming from determination to disquiet.

Toby, the madman and the killer, shook his head and translated her stupefied signs.

Why would you go there? Horror was there all over her face, as if the very thought was the reason her breath hitched. Are you crazy? You could have been killed! Don't you know how dangerous that was?

Voice almost gentle, Caspian asked, "Is that why you left?"

You shouldn't have gone there! It wasn't safe!

"I thought you were dead..."

The pain in his voice, the fact he'd actually allowed even a modicum of vulnerability in, she flat out ignored. Her eyes went to the fallen paper.

As she stared down, so much crossed her face, the mouse never having been skilled at concealing a single thought. More so, Caspian could feel the myriad troubles that weighed her down.

A deep sense of betrayal.

The total lack of hope.

Her disgust with him.

So much sadness.

All he could manage to say was, "Are you hungry? Do you want water?"

Lavender eyes shot up, aflame with indignation.

“We’re not going to let you leave,” Toby murmured, easing ever closer. “No one is going to hurt you either.”

Bending down she picked up her paper, ignoring Toby entirely and held it up to Caspian’s face.

Just like the letters she’d handed him weeks ago, he snatched the paper from her fingers, tore it, and tossed it over the edge.

The bits fluttered down, some sticking to concrete walkways, some drowning in the rushing river.

The look on her face...

It didn’t so much as alter when Caspian collared her neck with his grip. There was so much he wanted to say, days’ worth of sick feeling that lanced him internally even now, even feeling her soft throat under his fingers.

Unrelenting in her demand, she stood under the intimidation of his scowl—not so much as flinching when a roughened palm slipped from cupping her throat to caressing her nape.

Unaware when his second hand had come to play in the mud-packed strands of her hair, when he held them to his nose for a sniff, Caspian groaned.

It was the sound of despair.

“I’ll pay whatever you want if you stay. Right now. I’ll fill up your pockets and give you more water than you’d drink in a lifetime. But you are not allowed to leave again. Ever.”

Chapter 16

The rich overbearing Alpha scent called to his marked female, cutting through the mud crusting up her nose and the Warrens' stink she'd dragged in with her.

With Caspian pressed so close, Wren staggered and took a graceless step back.

Source Creation Date: July 10, 2025, 6:35 am

Countering, the First dared one of his dark smirks. “Do you agree to my terms, pretty mouse?”

Why was his voice so soft?

He wasn’t even purring. There was no real word for the growl-born rattle that came from the massive male’s chest. But the vibration did her in all the same.

Male fingers continued to slip over her neck and face, Caspian seeming to marvel at her filthy skin, stroking all the places it peeked from her clothing.

His pleasure in the moment churned in her belly, ran shivering through Wren’s viscera to meld with the same enticement Toby chimed within her bones.

“Make this easy on yourself. Say yes.”

Wide eyes blinking in shock, Wren didn’t know how to answer.

Caspian was going to pay his debt.

She never truly expected it, yet... victory felt unexpectedly hollow.

Wrapping her arms around her middle, Wren truly felt like a prostitute.

The transaction was almost complete.

Payment for her to fuck him and his friends, so that someday she would be the one

leaving his rooms to see a new, shiny girl brought in to replace her.

And that thought stirred a soul deep ache.

It had to have been written on her face, the eventual loss. The knowing that servicing men would be forever, as he had said.

Hand to Caspian's chest, she shifted back far enough to say what needed to be said before she made herself less than nothing.

You threw me out into the mud.

Unshakable, a liar through and through, Toby pressed his way nearer. "She says she never wanted to leave."

Wren threw the grinning Toby a sullen glare, the Third subtly shook his head where Caspian might not see.

She tried again. You took my boys from me.

"The money isn't for her. It's for the kids." Toby said, twisting her words to fit a very different narrative.

Wren shut her eyes, pinching the bridge of her nose. God, her fingers hurt and it was growing hard to sign.

Why was she even wasting the effort at this point? He said he'd give her what she wanted.

After a stuttering huff, Wren got down to the heart of her real fear. You, Toby, and Kieran made me whore.

That particular phrase Toby seemed to have trouble translating.

I don't want to do that anymore. I kept our bargain. I did unspeakable things. Now you keep yours and you pay me what you owe.

Mud brown eyes held hers. "Why is she crying? What is she saying?"

With a pained look twitching over his face, Toby pushed his way close enough to stop her fingers. His hold unyielding, she struggled, Wren releasing a defeated whimper, as she shook her head no.

Anger growing before the word burst from his mouth, Caspian snarled. "No?"

"She says," a look of outright sedition on his face, Toby offered, "she hated sharing you with the pen."

There was no way to counter these lies, even if they were bursting with half-truths, leaving Wren to wilt when Caspian forcibly pulled her to his chest and set his nose to her hair.

No comment was made one way or the other. Caspian offered no assurance.

He just forced up her chin and laid a brutal kiss to her lips.

Toby at her back, cutting off any chance to push away and escape, Caspian grinding a boil-hot erection to her front, Wren was caught.

The First devoured, pawed, starved groans rushing from his mouth to fill hers.

"Please," Toby whispered at her ear, fighting her filthy clothing to expose bare skin.

"Please, sunshine."

It was he, the obsessed Third who found his way into her pants first. His fingers that brushed her clit.

Bucking to escape, to seek more, Wren let out a moan that set Caspian roaring.

In tandem they tore away the remainder of her filthy things, no care for who saw, until Wren was bare before anyone who might dare look to their masters' terrace.

Both growled, but she was too thirsty to produce more than a single gush of slick. Both licked and lavished.

But it was Caspian who spun her about, who bent her in half over his table and shoved his cock balls deep before she might fully spread.

That one manic thrust, and Caspian's knot burst forward to trap her kicking and heaving over his papers.

Back arched, Wren keened, unsure how she got there or why it felt like her insides were on the verge of explosion.

A forced orgasm drew a raw scream that echoed despite the rushing water and slaves laboring below.

Alpha cum flooded her belly, churning with the rolling rock of male hips grinding forcefully against her buttocks.

Jerking and gasping every few minutes, Caspian peppered the back of her neck with lingering kisses. It seemed more than once he tried to speak, only choked gibberish met her ears.

And all the while Toby crouched next to her and held her eyes.

The lying maniac said it, as if it made this all okay. As if he'd make it up to her. "I love you."

Source Creation Date: July 10, 2025, 6:35 am

Pinned for ages, cunt quivering, grasping and sucking Caspian deeper each time his still hard cock spurt a fresh batch of seed, Wren saw him arrive.

Kieran, eyes sunken and face drawn, had made his way down to join his brothers.

Green eyes running over her pinned form, he looked as if he'd seen a ghost.

And indeed there was a ghost standing beside him—a pale female with long, white hair. A female who held Kieran's hand and glared with disgust at the filthy Omega speared on the table.

A near carbon copy of Wren.

“I thought I was your new little girl.”