



# Game of the Stepbrothers (2 Wicked Stepbrothers 1 Innocent Girl 4)

**Author:** *Stephanie Brother*

**Category:** Erotic, Romance, Adult, Young Adult

**Description:** "Now, Emme," he says softly, a grin splitting his face into a grotesque mask of horror. "It's time to play, wouldn't you say?" It's been 2 years since Emme Ford was tortured by her stepbrother Aiden Castillo. Since then, she has found peace and love with his twin brother, Blane. A Hawaii retreat sounds like the perfect way to discuss the future and finally bury the past - or at least so Emme thought ...

Some monsters hide in the light, and it quickly becomes apparent Aiden isn't done with the happy couple as he will not give up until he finally destroys them both. As unsuspecting Emme and hardworking Blane enjoy their holiday, Aiden lurks in the shadow, waiting for the perfect opportunity to strike and finally claim what he wants to destroy.

**Total Pages (Source):** 9

# Page 1

*Source Creation Date: June 26, 2025, 2:20 pm*

Prologue

2 years later

Every day, my scar taunts me.

Every look in the mirror, every time I wake up, I'm reminded I've been marked for life and there's nothing I can do about it. I know Blane doesn't like touching it – whenever his hands roam my body, he makes sure to avoid the spot on my back where the words are carved deep in my skin.

Blane tells me no one can see it anyway.

But I'm still self-conscious.

I imagine people's eyes burning through my clothes, seeing right through the fabric to the damaged, puckered skin, where Aiden's words lie forever.

I'm not done.

It's not just the scars. It's those words, that goddamned sentence which makes me wake up screaming every night, plagued by nightmares. It makes me shiver every time I go into a dark alley, keeps me looking over my shoulder on a cold night.

It keeps me in a state of perpetual fear and I know I need to be brave, need to trust Blane and the other men protecting me. Yet I can do nothing about the gut-wrenching feeling of dread deep in the pit of my belly.

Blane wants a baby.

He has made that abundantly clear, at first just hinting at the fact, but becoming more and more obvious with each day that passed. Finally, he admitted how badly he wanted a child out loud, and I've been dreading the topic ever since.

How on earth am I supposed to bring an innocent infant in the world, knowing there is a man out there who would do anything and everything to hurt it? I would never forgive myself when – if something actually happened.

In his sleep, Blane pulls me closer until my body is tight against his. I can feel his hardness through his pajama bottoms, always ready for me, wanting me.

At least that aspect of our lives hasn't changed, and I'm thankful everyday for choosing the right brother. I guess it always has been Blane, and Aiden could never stand it.

Settling into the crook of my stepbrother's arms, I close my eyes firmly and tell myself to go to sleep, but it's a vain effort. Dark thoughts keep penetrating my thoughts and I can't seem to be able to get a wink of sleep.

I lie next to Blane for hours, until it's finally an acceptable hour of the morning to get up. Nuzzling into his side, he groans when he feels me moving.

"Slept well?" he asks me and this time it's my time to groan as I bury my face in his neck. I love the way he smells – all musk and something sweet, like vanilla and mint. It drives me crazy, even after all this time.

Blane takes my face in his hands, flipping me on my stomach until I'm on top of his body, straddling him. His eyes are sleepy, but mischievous nonetheless and my gaze replicates his in moments.

“Ready for you,” he groans, guiding my hand over his boxer shorts, where his cock is begging to be set free and played with.

I tease him, running my hand over his shorts until he groans my name over and over again. Finally, he has enough of me and slips my hand into his boxers.

My fingers wrap around the thick head of his cock, the skin velvety smooth in my hand. I moan when I feel the drop of pre-cum already on his cock, the bead wet under my fingers. I pull my hand out of his boxers and bring my index finger to my lips, giving it a long, delicious lick.

I’ve come a long way since I was the sweet little girl whose innocence was taken away by her stepbrother ... And then once again by his twin. It’s like some sick fairytale.

The moment I lick his cum from my finger is the second he comes undone. With a low growl emanating from deep in his throat, he flips me on my back and rips my panties off until my pulsating sex is on full display.

Already panting, he licks a finger fervently and pushes it inside me without waiting for my approval. I moan and my back arches as he checks if I’m ready for him. Finding me wet and willing, he gives me a satisfied grin and removes his finger, gripping his cock and guiding it towards my dripping entrance.

“Want me?” he groans hoarsely, running the tip of his hard cock over my lips and clit until I’m mewling, asking him for more with animalistic sounds of pleasure. But he hasn’t had enough and he taunts me further by slapping my pussy with his cock.

“Please,” I whisper softly. “Need you inside. Need your cock inside me,” I beg him.

And he doesn’t need to be told twice, gripping my waist with one hand while he

guides his cock inside me with the other. I yelp as he drives his full-length inside me, his hard on so big and thick it almost bruises my insides.

“Fuck,” he groans, leaning down until we’re face to face, his mouth taking mine in a violent kiss. He grips my bottom lip between his teeth and bites down just hard enough to make me moan. “Be good and tight for me, baby doll.”

Arching my back again, I take in the whole depth of his cock, pounding deeper and deeper with each thrust of his hips. I can feel him pulsating inside me and my pussy responds with the same fervor, my juices running down my leg and making me drip.

This is how we like it in the morning – quick and rough. I’ve discovered I have a thing for dominance, and while Blane was extremely hesitant at first, he now does it out with an iron fist.

And I love it; love his rule over my body, mind and spirit. All of me belongs to him, and I whisper as much in his ear as he pounds his cock into my dripping wetness.

I know neither of us will last much longer so I clench my walls even more and Blane groans when he feels me tightening around his cock. In seconds, his pants grow into raspy breaths and then groans, and then he clutches strands of my hair in a fist and breathes heavily in my ear.

“Come on my cock, baby doll,” he orders, and I moan, knowing it won’t be long before I obey his wish. “Come on,” he says, pulling my head back by the hair. “Be a good girl for me ... Let me feel you come.”

I don’t need anything else as I feel the vibrations start deep in the pit of my belly, running through every limb until all of me is under pressure. I come with a loud curse, my clit throbbing as he finds it with his fingers, massaging rhythmically and not letting go even when my orgasm should stop.

“Need to come with you, baby doll,” he groans in my ear as a strangled cry escapes my lips, encouraged by his rubbing of my swollen clit. “Right now ...”

## Page 2

*Source Creation Date: June 26, 2025, 2:20 pm*

He groans loudly and curses before I feel him pulsing in me, finally releasing his cum, which I crave so badly. I feel the

liquid running down my leg as he releases his hold inside me, and I don't waste a second.

Not even waiting for him to finish and still dizzy from my own orgasm, I move from under him and to the side while he collapses on the bed next to me, still moaning.

Then, I move down and take his throbbing cock in my mouth, licking him clean.

The taste of his cum was an acquired taste, but now it's like I have an addiction. I lick every last drop and suck him dry until he can only gasp with each movement of my tongue over his thick head.

Finally, when I'm satisfied with my own work, I let Blane cradle me in his arms, giving him a mischievous smile.

"Now it's a good morning," I say wickedly, and his grin mirrors mine as I settle in his arms, the sheets damp with our combined juices.

And it's moments like this, the blissful mornings, the crazy orgasms, that I can forget about the predicament we're in ... If only for a few minutes.

## Chapter 1

"I'm home!" Blane's voice interrupts me from downstairs and I put down my book,

rushing down to meet him. As engrossed as I get in my romance novels, I'm always transported back to reality as soon as I hear that much loved baritone.

My book forgotten, I rush down the stairs, crashing into Blane's arms as he walks through the door. He laughs out loud, raising me in his arms and twirling me around like I weigh nothing. I let myself have that moment of pure pleasure, the happiness soaking through my skin.

"Missed you," I whisper in his neck when he slowly lowers me down, his hands on my ass, not releasing me for a second. "You were gone for a long time ..."

"I was gone for three hours," Blane objects with a grin, to which I reply with a pout.

"But it's Saturday."

He gives me an apologetic smile, setting me down and pressing a loving kiss to my forehead. Next, he heads into the kitchen and I follow in his steps like a lost puppy.

A lot has changed since those early days when our parents died and left us the company ...

At first, I acted as the head of the company, but it was pretty apparent I didn't have much of a clue what I was doing. So instead, we decided I would stay at home and help with the bigger decision, while Blane worked in the office.

But that means he's head of the company now, and also that he will be called to work at the most outrageous time of day when there is a crisis - and lately, it seems like that's all we're having. I wonder how the business is even staying afloat with all these terrible problems.

I listen to him prattle on about work, but I don't mind the slightest. And not only



because this is the man I love, and I would listen to him telling me a story about grilled cheese. It's because the company was started by my mother and their - his father, and it's our only legacy. It is important to both me and Blane to keep it afloat and as successful as can be.

"I have a surprise for you," Blane finally says, mischief sparkling in his eyes, and my pupils dilate as I clap my hands excitedly.

"What is it?" I wonder happily, and he comes closer to me, hiding something behind his back.

"Close your eyes," he tells me, and I obey, shaking ever so slightly. I know I'm just a big kid, but I freaking love surprises. This makes me happy, and he knows it very well, which I love about my man.

Pulling my hands to my front, he puts something thin and papery in them and allows me to look. I immediately do so, stopping on his face first before my eyes fly to the object in my hand.

It is indeed a piece of paper and it says 'Congratulations' on it.

I look up at Blane, feeling more than a little confused, but giddy at the same time. I know this is going to be good, whatever it is." What is this?" I ask, barely holding back my excitement.

Blane wraps me in a big hug, pressing another kiss against my lips. "Remember that charity auction we did?"

I think back a few weeks, remembering an auction we held for a local charity. We ended up raising a lot of money by selling some paintings, and if I recall correctly, there were some raffles for prizes for the guests as well.

“We won the raffle?” I ask with surprise. “I thought that wasn’t allowed.”

Blane shrugs before explaining what happened. “Guess they just pulled our name when they had the draw. We won a trip to Hawaii.”

I look at him, my eyes widening with excitement. “Can we go?” I ask hesitantly, fully expecting him to postpone the entire thing because of work. But what he says next takes me completely by surprise.

“I’ve booked a flight for tonight,” he says softly in my hair, and I can’t help myself - I actually squeal, like I’m some teenager. We laugh together as I exclaim I need to start packing and Blane wraps me in his strong embrace, whispering in my ear of some other plans he has with me before we leave ...

\*\*\*

The flight that night is peaceful and with no turbulence at all. I’m a nervous flyer, but I’m so giddy with excitement and happiness I probably wouldn’t even notice a few bumps on the way to Hawaii.

Blane grins at me every so often, responding to some last minute work e-mails on his tablet. I gaze at him adoringly most of the way there, thinking that this is the first holiday we’ve managed to take together. Since we’ve been together for about three years now, it really is a shame. But that doesn’t take away from my mood in the slightest.

Arriving at the hotel, I’m awestruck by the beauty of our surroundings. All lush greens and juicy looking fruit and flowers, it’s like we’ve gotten lost and ended up in paradise. A kind hotel receptionist shows us to our room.

I say room, but it’s really a huge, beautiful suite. I fall in love with the space

immediately, but am even more impressed when I walk to the balcony, looking at the beautiful view. It's all azure, crystal clear water, and a small island a few miles off the shore. It really is beautiful, and I wish we could stay here forever, just blocking out all the bad things that have happened in our lives so far.

As if on cue, my scar starts throbbing and I scratch it subconsciously, my brows furrowing. Then, a pair of strong arms envelops me from behind as I hear the front door click, signaling that the receptionist has left.

"My love," Blane whispers in my ear, and I settle in his warm embrace for a few blissful moments, watching the sun set over the balcony. "My only one ..."

His words like soft caresses on my skin, I feel a little better instantly - but Blane knows me better than anyone else, and he can feel the tension in my body.

"What's wrong?" he asks, and I bow my head down.

He won't take no for an answer, though.

He grabs me by the shoulders and gently turns my back to the fence on the balcony, so I'm facing him. He reaches for my chin, tilting my face up until we're looking into each other's eyes. "Tell me, baby," he asks, and it breaks my heart, knowing what I have to admit.

Instead, I purse my lips and fight back the tears that are threatening to escape my eyes, biting back a scream of frustration.

I hate you Aiden, you sick fuck.

He's ruined everything, every small, perfect moment like this one. Every single second of my life is scarred by what he did to me, to us.

I hope you rot in hell.

“Emme,” Blane says softly. “Come on now. You can’t be thinking about all that again?”

I raise my eyes defiantly to meet his. “How can you not?” I whisper angrily.

He sighs heavily and his arms leave my shoulders, leaving a dark and empty spot behind them. “I can’t keep talking about this. What happened should stay in the past where it belongs. Aren’t we happy together, baby? Don’t you love me?”

I can’t help but nod my head, though this does not help the problem at hand in any way. “But ...”

“No buts,” he asks, pressing a strong finger to my lips. He looks at me thoughtfully for a moment before breathing a heavy sigh. “It’s so beautiful here, isn’t it?”

I nod thankfully,

happy for the change in topic.

“This would be a beautiful place to take our kids ...”

And he’s changed it to something even less favorable.

“Blane,” I say with worry in my voice. “We’ve talked about this ...”

He raises his hands in the air defensively, signaling defeat. “I won’t bother you too much,” he says. Finally, he looks back into my eyes and gives me that mischievous grin I’ve always loved.

His smile is infectious, and as hard as I try to fight it, my expression soon mirrors his.

“I did get something for you before we left,” Blane admits softly, and once again, my eyes widen with surprise. This day keeps getting better and better, and my heart swells with love I feel for this man.

My one and only.

He pulls a long velvet box out of his pocket and I clap my hands with excitement. Blane is not one for big romantic gestures, and he’s never gotten me jewelry. He used to take me to expensive shops and let me choose whatever I wanted to, but he never brought me anything himself.

“What is it?” I ask shyly, and am met by Blane’s sexy, dark grin.

“Why don’t you open it and see?” he suggests.

I take the box out of his hands with trembling fingers, slowly lifting the lid. When I see what’s inside, I gasp lightly. It truly has taken my breath away.

I have to steady my fingers so the box doesn’t clatter to the floor, and I lift out a beautiful necklace with a shaky hand.

Dangling from my fingers is the most beautiful long silver necklace with a pendant on the bottom. It’s some kind of precious stone, carved in the shape of a doe.

“How beautiful,” I whisper softly.

Blane gently takes it from my fingers and I move my hair to the side so he can slip the pendant on. My fingers take the necklace and I admire the beautiful stone, which is somehow still raw yet so smooth.

“It’s made of amethyst,” Blane explains, his voice hoarse and embarrassed. “The doe ... she reminded me of you, darlin’.”

I nearly melt on the spot, but instead, I leap into his arms and he chuckles as I whisper ‘I love you’ in his neck over and over again.

## Page 3

*Source Creation Date: June 26, 2025, 2:20 pm*

“If I knew that’s what it took to get you all excited, I would’ve bought you jewelry long ago,” he jokes and I stick my tongue out at him, but I can’t help the silly grin on my face.

“Come on now, baby,” he says, the dark grin back on his face. “I have more plans for us ... You’re allowed to wear the necklace, and nothing else.”

I giggle as he pulls me back into our suite and straight towards the enormous bed.

### Chapter 2

The next morning, I wake up bright and early as per usual. I’ve always been an early riser, even when on holiday. What is strange though is the fact that I actually got some sleep.

Ever since ... everything that went down, I’ve been an insomniac. It takes me hours to fall asleep, and instead of the deep slumber I’ve come to expect, I’m plunged into a world of terrible nightmares, waking up in tears and screaming bloody murder more often than not.

Somehow, tonight was the first night I haven’t had a nightmare in ... years, really. I woke up perfectly rested and feeling refreshed for the first time in a long while.

Thrilled by the improvement, I press a kiss against Blane’s lips before quickly getting dressed for the beach. I put a sarong over my bikini and add a big sunhat and some designer sunglasses Blane insisted on treating me with.

Shutting the door lightly behind me, I head for the beach.

It's a beautiful day as I imagine every single one is in these parts. The sun is shining down but not beating me with its rays, the temperature tolerable and pleasant. I decide to go for a long walk on the beach.

As I walk along the sandy shore, I instantly wish I had brought my camera, or at least a phone, with me. There are so many beautiful sights around here I would just love to capture forever.

Before I know it, hours pass and suddenly the sun is up high in the sky and beating down against my skin. I foolishly realize I had neglected to apply sun block, and groan inwardly when I think of how sun burnt my pale skin will be in a couple of hours.

The trek back is long as I've made it a long way along the shore during my walk, enveloped in my own private thoughts. But none of it seems to matter, because I feel better and happier than I have in weeks.

A huge smile is plastered across my face when I finally make it back to the hotel grounds. But then, I freeze on the spot when I see the scene in front of me.

There's Blane, the man I love. And that scene alone would put a grin on my face, but ... There seems to be a woman with him.

I'm standing too far away to see who she is, but she is slim and pert, and has long blonde hair just like me. If I wasn't well aware that I was standing so far away, I might even think it was us - me and Blane, like it should be.

But he's laughing at something the blonde woman is saying, and then he wraps a hand around her bikini clad body, and before I know it, it reaches downward,



squeezing her pert ass.

A gasp escapes my lips as I stare at the scene in front of me, and then anger starts boiling in my blood. While a voice keeps telling me my Blane would never, ever do what I just saw, I have to face the hard facts, which are right in front of me.

Finally, I've had enough of looking at them and I storm back to our room to change.

Dressing in my prettiest and sexiest outfit, I head downstairs for lunch. And only a few minutes after me, Blane comes through the door and joins me at our table with a kiss and that cheeky grin.

I furrow my brow when he sits down, noticing he's managed to change and dry his salty hair since the last time I saw him. I have no idea how he did that, since I was just in our room, but I swallow my pride and deny the fact that something is wrong.

We go through our meals, my moves robotic, my heart pounding. Finally, I can't take it anymore.

"I saw you at the beach today," I say coldly, staring him right in the eyes. But all Blane does is return a completely blank look, devoid of all emotion.

"With that blonde woman," I clarify, making it perfectly clear what I did and didn't see.

"Doll, I have no idea what you're saying," he says with a confused grin. "I was in the reception area talking to them about the internet service. It's utter shit here."

I can see his brows knitting together in worry, no doubt already thinking about work. But I know what I saw, and I know where his hands were. I also know Blane wouldn't lie to me, unless he wanted to protect me ... or would he?

Doubt settles in and though I don't say anything else about the subject, I'm twitchy and nervous for the rest of the day.

There's this nagging feeling in the back of my head, like someone is watching. I feel like a pair of eyes is glued to my head and every time I turn around swiftly, I'm just a split second too late to catch them. And it's seriously starting to bug me out.

The feeling doesn't dissipate, but only grows stronger and stronger as the day goes on. Blane sees something is wrong, but doesn't push me to tell him what it is, which I both appreciate and resent at the same time.

Finally, he announces he'll go check some e-mails in the lobby which is apparently the only place where he can get good reception. I accept that with a grunt, and as soon as he's gone, I change into my nightgown and start getting ready for bed.

But I can't resist stepping out on the balcony again, and when I see the sparkling water in the moonlight, I can't help it - it's like the sea is calling me home.

Choosing not to care what anyone might think, I sneak my way downstairs until I'm on the beach. It's completely empty, and I enjoy the moment of solitude, though the annoying feeling just doesn't seem to fade.

As I'm admiring the reflection of the moon on the crystal water, a pair of arms wraps itself around me and my heart jumps up to my throat.

Turning around swiftly, I find myself in Blane's arms and I laugh nervously. Despite my confusion at what happened on the beach, I'm more than thankful to see him.

"Don't do that," I scold him. "You scared me ..."

He looks me deep in the eyes the moon playing tricks with his irises, making them

almost completely black. He looks like a devilishly handsome demon ... and I don't mind at all.

"Scared you, did I?" he whispers softly, the words like a caress on my skin. He murmurs something else under his breath that I can't hear, then leans in closer for a kiss.

And even though I've kissed Blane a thousand times before, this time it feels different.

As romantic as the picture might seem, there's something in his kiss ... Something dark and sinister.

Shivering, I let him kiss me passionately and deeply, claiming him with his tongue and pressing his body so close to mine I can feel the length of his thick cock against my thigh.

"Blane," I whisper softly, and he moves away at the sound of his name.

He gives me one last grin, but this one seems more ominous than the cheeky smile I'm used to from my love. I feel utterly confused as he salutes me goodbye, then disappears into the darkness.

My heart pounding with fear and confusion, I wrap my hands around my body to keep myself warm and head back into our suite.

### Chapter 3

At first, I thought this vacation would be a breeze - a welcome distraction from our busy everyday life. But with each day that passes, my anxiety grows. I'm having trouble breathing, and the nightmares have returned after that one night of blissful,

uninterrupted sleep.

Blane can tell something isn't right, but I'm still sulking about what I saw on the beach that day - something he still refuses to acknowledge.

Today is a terrible day and I've been in a foul mood since I woke up at 5 a.m., my scar throbbing and unnerving me with its mere presence. Blane has been gone for most of the day, surely dealing with another work emergency.

When we left for Hawaii, he promised me he wouldn't deal with work while we're here, but I've barely even seen him since our arrival. Left to my own devices, I've been walking around the beach aimlessly and r

eading more than I do at home.

But everywhere I go, I feel a pair of eyes on my back, gone as soon as I look over my shoulder. The feeling is so overwhelming, I've chosen to stay in our suite most of the time, too afraid to venture outside for fear of that gaze on my back.

I'm reading a book in the window seat when I hear Blane walk in our suite. He walks over to me, setting his laptop on the coffee table and giving me a sweet grin. Even though I don't want it to, it manages to melt all of my insides into mush, making me remember just how much I love this man ... my stepbrother, my once-tormentor, now-lover.

## Page 4

*Source Creation Date: June 26, 2025, 2:20 pm*

“Got a surprise for you,” Blane says, and his smile widens. “Know you’re a sucker for those.”

He’s full of surprised lately, and as much as I try to fight my expression of glee, a smile eventually appears on my face as I set my book down and join him on the couch.

He immediately wraps me in his embrace and I settle in his arms, the only safe place I’ve ever known. I’ve lost my father, my mother, lost a brother ... And Blane is the only one that can comfort me since everything went down.

Blane produces a brochure from his bag and lets me have it. My eyes scour the colorful pages, the words on the thick paper jumping out at me.

Secluded ... Romantic ... An adventure ... Beautiful and unforgettable.

“What is this?” I ask Blane, the excitement easy to hear in my voice. I thumb my pendant between my fingers and look at him expectantly.

He chuckles and smooths my hair down. “I wanted to apologize for being such a dick.”

I look at him, waiting for him to admit it was really him I saw down at the beach with that blonde woman, but no such luck.

“I’ve been working a lot, and I promised you a holiday. Thought we could spend some time really alone, just you and me, if you want?”

His eyes are hopeful, but I can see the mischievous grin hiding right under that expression. And I can't help it - my gaze mimics his and I grin widely, nodding at his question.

“Awesome,” Blane says, kissing me deeply and affectionately. He shows me the brochure again, explaining what we'll be doing there.

“There's an island off the shore, you can see it from our balcony. The hotel has two houses on it, each on one side of the island. They suggested this retreat - they have electricity, but no internet signal. The receptionist assured me it was all very luxurious ... But a real nice experience, being on your own there. One house's already taken, but I got us the second one.”

Clapping my hands excitedly, I meet his grin with one of my own. “Can we go now?” I ask excitedly, and Blane laughs at my happy face, grabbing me in his arms and pulling me down on the couch.

And as soon as his hands start roaming my body, I'm gone - going down the rabbit hole again ...

\*\*\*

Next day, we land on the shore of the island. We're taken there with a yacht that belongs to the hotel and I'm immediately stunned by the beauty of nature here.

Last night, I didn't sleep again; but at least this time it was because I was so excited, and not plagued by nightmares. I immediately take my sandals off when we land on the shore, burying my toes in the warm sand. A blissful smile lightens up my face and Blane's expression mirrors my own.

“You will find everything you need on the island,” the guide explains to us. “The

food pantry and fridges are stocked, and I believe you will truly enjoy the beauty of the island. A ship will arrive in a few days, and there's a direct line for the hotel in your kitchen."

We nod enthusiastically, our thoughts already preoccupied with exploring the beautiful island we've landed on. When the guide finally finishes, Blane is quick to tip him and walk me to the house where we'll be staying.

Though it is quaint, it's still luxurious with gorgeous, Egyptian cotton linens and towels, expensive champagne waiting for us when we arrive and every other luxury I thought I might miss during my stay here.

"I can't wait to go outside!" I exclaim, looking through the curtains at the beautiful sunny day. "There's so much to explore ... Do you think there are any wild animals here?"

I turn to face Blane, but as soon as I see his face, I know I'm in trouble.

And I don't mind it one little bit.

He makes his way over to me, gently tucking a strand of hair behind my ear as my eyes flutter closed, enjoying his sweet gesture. He tips my head back with one finger and I offer my lips to him.

He doesn't decline the offer, leaning down against my mouth and sucking my bottom lip in his, biting down gently. I moan lightly as his hands come around my body, wrapping me in a tight embrace.

"Nature will have to wait," Blane growls in my ear. "First, I have some other things for you to do ..."

He takes my hand, sliding it between his legs where his rock hard cock is already waiting for me, and I'm suddenly desperate for him to plunge into my tightness.

Moaning and giggling at the same time, I let him take me ... And I forget all about our plans, letting myself enjoy this blissful moment of peace and solitude.

How foolish I am ...

## Chapter 4

After a long day of making love and exploring the island, we decide to make our dinner by ourselves. Blane and I have a housemaid at home who prepares most of our meals, plus we eat out a lot, so actually preparing something from scratch is a little strange for us.

But seeing the fridge and pantry stocked with so much amazing food, I can't help but feel inspired by the local produce. I even end up picking some fruit and vegetables from the garden in the backyard.

Blane helps me with dinner, and we make grilled fish with steamed veggies and potatoes. It might seem silly, but the way we work together in the kitchen makes me feel happy.

When we finally sit down in the dining room, a feast before us, I'm ravenous. The dinner is delicious, and I choose to ignore the fact we've burned the fish a little and eat the blackened parts anyway, which Blane makes fun of me for.

We both shower and get ready for bed, but just as I'm coming out of the bathroom into the bedroom, there's a buzzing sound and immediately after that, we're enveloped in complete and utter darkness.



“Blane?” I ask immediately, my voice already filled with panic.

“Don’t worry,” he says reassuringly, and I can hear him moving to reach me across the room. “It’s probably just the buggy electricity here. Everything should be fine by the morning, so don’t bother yourself with it.”

Despite his words, I can feel a panic attack fighting its way out of me. The room is pitch black and Blane has to help me find my way to the king size bed. He holds me tightly in his embrace, never letting go, but even when he’s fast asleep, I can’t catch a wink of peace.

Finally, he rolls over and I break free of his embrace, which isn’t reassuring me at all at the moment. I can feel the panic taking over and I stumble through the room, somehow finding my way through the French doors leading down to the beach.

As soon as my feet hit the sand, I’m illuminated by moonlight and the fresh air finds its way into my lungs. I take deep, heaving breaths of the thick air and I feel like an addict getting his hit.

I stumble down the beach until my feet are in the water, telling myself I need to calm down in my head. I’ve been on edge for years now, but somehow, it seems like this trip isn’t agreeing with me even though we both thought it was exactly what I needed.

My hand flies to my heart as my breaths become a little less ragged and I finally feel the air entering my lungs, as hot and oppressive as it is.

I wish I were more careful, because no amount of panic could prepare me for what happens next.

A pair of strong arms wraps itself around me, and for a split second, I’m sure it’s just Blane coming down after me to check up on me and make sure I’m fine. The embrace

is loving and sweet ... but only for a moment.

Then, it turns vicious. The hands tighten around my body in a deadly embrace and I gasp, taking

in a sharp intake of breath just before a hand flies up and presses against my mouth forcibly.

I feel hot breath on my neck and someone whispers in my ear.

“Missed me, doll?” he whispers in my ear and I immediately start feeling the darkness around us, pulling me under. I’m sure my legs will buckle under my weight, but before the unconsciousness can take over, the body behind mine makes sure I stand upright, and the moment is gone.

My chance of blissful, dark ignorance is gone forever ... now I have to face the facts.

It’s Aiden.

I felt his presence ever since we came here, but I refused to let myself believe it. I had convinced myself he was gone years ago, that he would never come back - his sick obsession with us was finally over.

Should’ve listened to your instincts, doll.

“Don’t you dare blank out on me,” Aiden growls in my ear. “The party’s just getting started ...”

I whimper like a sad puppy, too weak to do anything about what is happening. His grip on my mouth is so tight I’m barely getting any air in my body, and my heart is pumping blood through my veins at such a fast rate, it’s a wonder I don’t pass out.

I wish I could go back in time and tell Blane. Tell him this would happen, ask him to save me.

Aiden's cruel lips mar my neck, sliding his lips across my delicate skin and I shiver under his touch, trying to twist myself out of his arms.

"Oh, you don't like that?" he mocks me, biting hard on my shoulder so I let out a muffled scream, right into his palm which is still covering my mouth. "Seemed to like me just fine on the beach the other day ... Wished you were my little friend, didn't you?"

I have no idea what he's talking about, but slowly, the memories start trickling in.

The other day, seeing Blane on the beach with another woman, grabbing her ass.

Only ... it wasn't Blane. It was Aiden all along.

I whimper again and he emits a low chuckle against my skin, sending goose bumps across my complexion. And suddenly, I'm more afraid than I've ever been in my entire life.

## Page 5

*Source Creation Date: June 26, 2025, 2:20 pm*

Even though they're twins, Aiden and Blane only share a physical appearance. It is true - sometimes it was even hard for me to distinguish between the two of them, and judging by the current events, I still have that problem ...

Blane was the bad seed on the outside, rebellious and darkly brooding. Aiden was my sweet stepbrother, my best friend ... Until he lost it.

Blane loved me, Aiden tortured me.

Blane caressed me, Aiden carved scars into my body.

Blane took care of me, Aiden only wanted me so he could destroy me and be victorious over his brother ... It's a game of brothers and I've gotten caught up in the middle of it.

"So much to tell you, baby," Aiden whispers deliriously in my ear, and my eyes widen at what's about to happen. I'm slowly realizing I can't do anything about the predicament I'm in.

He's got me, and this time ...

He won't let go.

I reach up and pull hard on his arm, for which I'm rewarded with a curse and a slap across my face, after which Aiden finally turns me around to see his face.

When our eyes meet, his hand still clasped over my mouth, I'm left speechless.

The resemblance is uncanny - he has the same haircut as Blane, the same face, the same eyes ... They're the same build, too. No one could tell them apart, except for me. Because I know that dark glint in Aiden's eyes all too well, and I know whatever awaits me won't be good.

"Time to play," he growls at me and drags me off as I kick and try to scream, but I'm no match for his sculpted body and strong, muscular arms.

My eyes fall to my last hope, thankful Aiden didn't notice it.

When I tugged on his arm, I tugged on my pendant too, and it came off in my arm. I let it fall on the beach and it's the only trace left of me there.

I think of Blane desperately.

Please find me, love ...

Find me before it's too late for me.

## Chapter 5

I'm dragged across the island, the shrubbery beneath my feet cutting into my skin and scraping my heels as I fight to regain control over my body. But it's no use - Aiden's grip is tight and death-like on my arms and I know this time he won't let go as easily as he did before.

Finally, he has enough of my muffled screams and he tears a piece off my night gown, stuffing it in my mouth maliciously so I can't make a sound. Hot tears of humiliation flow down my cheeks as I realize how exposed I am now, and to the person I despise and fear most in the world, no less.

He drags me for a long time and I struggle the whole way there. Finally, we arrive at a house which looks the same as mine and Blane's, but is supposedly the other one on the island. The house which surely looks welcoming and warm in the sunlight is dark and ominous, enveloped in darkness and only illuminated by a few rays of moonlight.

A woman stands at the door and as we come closer, my eyes widen immediately. It's the woman from the beach whom I now realize I saw with Aiden, not Blane - but something else about her is familiar.

"Move the fuck away, Marissa," Aiden hisses as soon as we're in her hearing range and the blonde quickly does what she is told, which makes me wonder why she is so fast to react.

Guess she knows what happens when she doesn't obey, and it can't be good.

But then a short gasp leaves my lips, muffled by the piece of fabric stuffed tightly in my mouth. I recognize the woman as the one who was with Aiden when he took me to his house all those years ago. I remember Blane telling me with horror how his twin strangled her.

But if she died ... how can she be here?

I mumble in the fabric and Aiden drags me inside the house, letting me drop to the floor like a ragdoll. I look up at him with pleading eyes as he stands over me, asserting his dominance. The woman, Marissa, comes up behind him like a lost puppy, and she looks at him with such insane adoration it sends chills down my spine.

I have no idea what I've stumbled upon here, but these two both seem completely, utterly insane. My thoughts are confirmed when Aiden laughs shrilly in my face, taunting me with his laughter and the manic look in his eyes.

“Thought you could escape?” he asks me, a devilish grin on his face. “You never will, Emme ... Every time you think you’re safe, I’ll be one step behind, waiting to claim you.”

My eyes flutter to Marissa, but she seems unbothered by this information. Really, it’s as if they’re working together somehow, as she doesn’t even make a scene or so much as ask him what he’s doing, dragging a gagged woman into their house.

Sick fucks.

Aiden comes for me and I let out a muffled cry, but all he does is pull out the rag out of my mouth, a finger raised in warning before my face.

“Still got that scar?” he asks me and I nod slowly, looking up at him with all the hatred in my body.

“Good,” he says with an evil grin. “Now if you know what’s good for you, you’ll keep that mouth nice and shut unless you want another one to join you.”

To consolidate his words, he waves a razor in my face and the steel glints in the moonlight. I feel the tears coming through again, realizing how fucked up this whole situation is.

Aiden grabs me by the shoulders next and drags me downstairs where there is an attic. It’s cold and damp and I hate it as soon as I see it. I’m sure there are rats here, which I wouldn’t even mind, if it meant I could be in their company instead of Aiden’s.

“Home sweet home,” he rasps in my ear, shoving me on a mattress on the floor. At least it’s clean and not smelly, which makes me feel a little bit better. I’m in such a state of shock I don’t even manage one scream as he ties me up and stuffs something

in my mouth to keep me quiet.

Finally, I'm left gagged and tied up on the mattress as I whimper softly, tears streaming down my face. Aiden steps back to admire his handiwork and smiles like a madman, apparently pleased with what he sees.

Then, his expression changes.

Ever so slowly, he touches his fingers to my cheek, caressing me softly, like I'm not a ragdoll but a porcelain doll, like he's so afraid the lightest touch might break me.

I look up into his eyes and search for feelings there.

But as fast as it appeared on his face, Aiden's expression darkens again. His hand lingers on my cheek, but is now threatening instead of brotherly. And then, he smacks me hard, the blow throwing me back on the mattress.

"You've been a bad girl, Emme," he snarls, the anger in his voice so apparent and scary, it makes me think I won't even make it through the night.

But then, a vicious smile replaces his frown and he pulls up a chair next to my mattress, glaring at me the whole time.

"Have to get a good look at you," he murmurs to himself. "Been a long time."

He settles into his seat, his eyes glued on me, and I know my sleepless nights are here to stay as long as he's around.

Because Aiden Castillo is the stuff nightmares are made from ...

\*\*\*



I hate the fact that time is passing and no one has come for me. No one knows where I am, or who took me. I think of Blane and how worried he must be and it just breaks my heart, knowing I may never see him again.

I've been in the devil's home for about a day or two now. I have no idea what time it is, my only recollection of time being the times Aiden drags me to the bathroom so I can wash up.

He brings me food downstairs and sits with me all the time.

He hasn't touched me ... yet.

But what he does instead is disturbing, too.

## Page 6

*Source Creation Date: June 26, 2025, 2:20 pm*

Usually, studios are filled with natural light and the sun shining through the windows. I guess it's a perfect metaphor for his work as Aiden's is in the basement, enveloped in darkness and a putrid smell of something rotting.

He has all of his supplies here, and all day ... he paints me.

He won't show me the paintings, but from his evil grin I just know I wouldn't like them if I saw them. Remembering the last

time I saw one of his paintings of me sends shivers down my spine. It was dark, twisted and bloody, my body contorted and broken in unnatural ways only a sick mind could come up with.

While he paints, he talks to me.

He tells me how successful he is under a fake name. Earns millions. With a wicked smile, he tells me Blane and I go to many of his exhibitions, not even knowing it's his. And he's even more pleased to inform me that he was behind the raffle that got us tickets to this hellish paradise. He brought us right into his lair, and we didn't suspect a thing.

Marissa is like his servant, bringing us food and almost kissing the floor he walks on. Their whole relationship is disturbing and I try hard to talk to the girl, but I'm gagged and bound for most of the time, unless I'm eating. When I am, Aiden holds a knife to my throat to stop me from screaming out loud, my tears mixing with the stale food they feed me.

I hate the fact that my worst nightmare has become a reality.

I let the darkness take me, and spend time in a state of semi-consciousness, not even fighting the currents that are pulling me under. I know I won't last long, even though he hasn't touched me, tortured me ... But I know it's coming.

And when it does, I don't want to be here anymore.

Hope comes in the shape of a knock on the door, so loud I can hear it from the basement. My hopeful eyes shoot up, but Aiden immediately yells for Marissa to get it, coming closer to me and pressing that well-known silver blade against my throat.

"Not a word," he hisses in my ear, and I whimper softly, listening to the conversation upstairs.

I hear the door opening and Marissa's voice speaking next. "Can I help you?"

"Hello, Ma'am," a man's voice comes through. "Don't mean to bother you. Just wanted to let you know a woman's gone missing from the island. Have you seen anyone around here?"

"No, not at all," Marissa feigns ignorance. I start thrashing in Aiden's arms, but he presses the blade closer and I feel it cutting my skin, gasping against the gag in my mouth.

"Told you," Blane whispers in my ear. "You let them see you, you're gone."

I turn deathly still in his arms, the tears of humiliation burning my cheeks as they stream downward.

The conversation upstairs becomes muted and we sit there for what seems like ages

until I hear Marissa saying goodbye and she comes down the stairs quickly.

“Didn’t suspect a thing,” she says triumphantly, her eyes feverish with the need to please Aiden. “We’re off the hook! He had no idea.”

Aiden finally lets go of me and I tumble to the floor like a sack while he walks over to Marissa, pulling her closer and pressing a kiss against her mouth. It’s the first sign of affection I’ve seen him show her since that display on the beach, which I’m now sure was just for my benefit.

Then, he slowly turns towards me, and his eyes are burning with a new desire. My heart blackens with soot as I realize what he has on his mind.

“Now, Emme,” he says softly, a grin splitting his face into a grotesque mask of horror. “It’s time to play, wouldn’t you say?”

## Chapter 6

The days are passing, and no one comes for me. I don’t understand it at all, and keep hoping someone will remember to check this house, find something that leads them to believe I really am here. But it just doesn’t happen.

Aiden is insane, I’ve come to realize this now and once and for all. The slightest thing will throw him off guard. I’m getting sick in the damp and cold basement, and once, I sneezed while he was painting me. It sent him in an insane rage and he tore the canvas he was working on, before coming towards me, his fists ready to strike.

He seemed to calm down some when I raised my hands in front of my face to protect myself. “Don’t,” he told himself, his voice painfully raspy. I think it was the first thing he said that day, being too caught up in his art and his mad mind. “Mustn’t hurt her. Need her perfect.”

He still punished me, though. Because I sneezed and interrupted his creative process, I was left without food for an entire day. All I got was water.

The food I get is sparse anyway, and I ended up passing out with the pains of my rumbling stomach. I woke up hours later, or at least what felt like that. There's no telling what time it is in this dungeon I'm kept in.

I tried hard to connect with Marissa, but she always refused to meet my eye. I finally see my chance when she comes in with some food and Aiden is out somewhere, so it's just the two of us.

I see my chance and my voice is raspy when I call out to her. "Marissa," I say pleadingly.

She completely ignores me and I reach for her hand hesitantly, my fingers trembling as I grasp her wrist. It's one of the few days when I'm not gagged and I know this might be my only chance.

"Marissa, we need to get out of here," I say finally, hot tears already streaming down my cheeks. "We can get help ... You and me, we'll do it together. We don't have to suffer like this."

She actually ponders my words for a moment, and for a second I think I've gotten through to her and she might actually consider helping me. But then, she rips her hand away from mine and slaps me so hard I fall back on the stained mattress.

"Don't touch me," she hisses at me, but her bottom lip is trembling and I think she's on the verge of crying, too. "Don't ever touch me. Aiden is right ... he's always right."

Why does your sentence sound like a question, then? I wonder sadly.

I don't have a chance to say anything else after that, and when Aiden returns, I immediately know she told him what I said. He storms down the stairs and as soon as he reaches me, he slaps me, too. My cheek is still burning with the impact Marissa's hand made on me and now it stings even more. I curl into a ball, hugging my knees to my chest. I've never felt more hopeless in my entire life.

Aiden is strange today. He doesn't paint, just pulls up a chair next to me and stares at me. Every so often, he runs a finger down my skin, taunting me. It scares me more than when he's painting, because at least he's taking it out on the canvas, not me. And as the day goes on, I feel the tension building up in the room. I know he's going to explode, and I'm dreading the consequences of one of us setting him off.

Finally, what seems like hours of being watched later, Marissa comes downstairs with a tray of food. When she's coming down the stairs though, she trips on the last one and goes down, the tray of food flying in the air.

It's like time froze still. Marissa is tumbling down the stairs, and at one point, her horrified eyes meet mine as she falls. We connect in that moment, and as she lands on the floor, her eyes still on mine, I see her mouth a sentence to me.

It seems like she is saying Help me. And that breaks my heart into even more shattered pieces. But it's nothing compared to what happens next, what I know will haunt me for the rest of my life.

The tray rattles to the floor, the sound echoing in the room. But the food that was on it splatters everywhere. It stains Marissa's clothes and some of it lands on the canvas which is positioned in front of the stairs. What is more, when Marissa lands on the floor, she ends up taking the easel down with her, ripping the canvas as she grips on for something to hold.

What follows is an incredibly tension filled few seconds.

Aiden is still facing me and I'm there to see the expression change in his face. One moment, he's focused and deep in thought. Then, it's as if his eyes froze with evil. He turns around ever so slowly, taking in the sight in front of him.

Another painting, ruined.

Food everywhere.

Marissa on the floor.

All of it combined sets him off and my heart stops in my chest when he advances towards Marissa, reaching her in a few long steps.

His hands wrap around her throat and he raises her in the air, his hands choking her. Her eyes connect with mine, the horror the only emotion left in them. I gasp lightly, scrambling to get off the mattress

and come help her, but I'm still tied up.

Still clutching her throat, Aiden comes for me and kicks me back on the mattress. I take a sharp intake of breath as the force sends me plummeting, the sharp kick to my ribs knocking out all of my fear, but unfortunately, just for a moment.

Marissa uses the distraction to her benefit and fights out of Aiden's arms, running for the stairs. But he's too quick for her, catching her on the second stair and grabbing her like she weighs nothing.

"Aiden, please!" she yells out, tears streaming down her face as he drags her downward. "Aiden, I love you. Don't hurt me ... You know I'd do anything for you! Anything!"

He positions her in front of the easel and makes her look at the mess in front of her.

“Look at what you did,” he says softly, too calm for my liking. “Look at this mess.”

“I’m so sorry,” she whimpers, stopping the struggle between them. She’s compliant, soft, just like he wants her to be. “I’ll clean everything up. I’ll make it up to you. I love you so much, Aiden ...”

He looks at her face long and hard. And it makes what happens next that much worse, because I know he took the time to think about what he is going to do.

With full force, he smashes Marissa’s head against the concrete floor. I hear her scream and I know I’m screaming, too.

So much noise. So much.

It hurts my head.

But I still watch.

I watch until she goes limp in his arms, her head a gaping hole of blood.

He drags her body towards me, dropping her in front of me so her empty eyes stare straight into mine. It’s like I’m hypnotized - I can’t look away. I look into the gaze of the woman whom he killed, the woman who was a person just a few seconds ago, but is now a dead body.

“Look what you made me do!” Aiden screams at me. “You stupid bitch ... You’ll get what’s coming now.”

He storms out of the basement and I’m left stunned and horrified with a corpse



staring me accusingly in the eyes.

## Page 7

*Source Creation Date: June 26, 2025, 2:21 pm*

I did this. It's all my fault ...

At that point, the darkness envelops me and I welcome it with open arms. I let my eyes close, let the darkness take all the pain away. I don't cry. I just lay back and pretend I'm somewhere far away ... I block it all out.

I'm not Emme anymore.

I'm not anything.

I'm just ... gone.

### Chapter 7

I don't see him for an entire day, but it doesn't matter to me. Time has stopped, because I'm not even in my body anymore. I float in and out of consciousness, thankful every time my eyes close and the darkness mercifully takes over. It's so much easier to block it all out, I'm starting to lose myself ... And what scares me more is the fact I like it.

I like being nobody ... being a blank canvas. There's not much of Emme left, and I know in a short while, she will be gone completely.

Finally, I hear him coming down the stairs. Half-starved, I crawl towards the staircase, ignoring the dead body on the floor, though it has started to stink badly.

I stop in front of a pair of dark boots and look up pleadingly.

“Water,” I ask with a raspy voice.

A cool waterfall hits my face with full force and I lap it all up as Aiden empties a jug of water over my head. He chuckles low in his throat at my misfortune, and for the first time in days, I feel a strong surge of emotions.

It’s hate.

Pure, undiluted hate.

And the need for revenge, which makes me feel alive for the first time since I’ve been abducted.

He leans down next to me, tipping my chin back with his fingers. I fight hard to conceal my feelings, knowing they might set him off and make him go on another killing spree. I’m surprised by the need to protect myself, when I had all but given up a while ago.

“Tonight,” he growls in my face. A sick smile splits his face which is so much like Blane’s. But not now. Now it’s only a sick grimace, the expression that of a sick, disturbed person. They’re nothing alike when Aiden is like this ... thank God.

“Tonight you’re mine,” he snarls next. “Tonight I’ll ruin you completely.”

With that, he lets my face drop and I feel the hatred boiling in my belly. He kicks me aside, heading for the dead body on the floor and dragging her up the stairs.

I look at it just in time to see Marissa’s beady stare and it makes me sick to my stomach. I turn to the side, retching and vomiting the little bit of water and sustenance left in my system.

Aiden looks at me with disgust when he reaches the top of the stairs, dragging the body out of the basement. “You’ll need to wash up first, doll,” he says cruelly. “I want you pristine for what’s in store.”

An evil laugh emanates from his mouth. “It’s the last time you’ll be perfect, princess. I plan on making you just as fucked up as I am.”

I shiver as his words resonate in my mind. Involuntarily, I reach for the scar he made last time he had his way with me.

“That’s right,” he says in a low growl. “Get ready for a few more of those.”

His laughter still echoing in the room, he shuts the door on his way out and I crawl to my mattress, curling up in a ball as I imagine the worst thing he might do to me.

\*\*\*

I feel sick for hours after that, and I retch several times, but nothing comes out of me since my body is so empty. Lying on the stained mattress, I feel sorry for myself, and I dip so low, I finally let myself to think about Blane.

I’ve been stopping myself every single time my mind drifted to my love. I told myself I mustn’t think of him, knowing just how much it would actually hurt.

But now, my mind is filled with images of him.

Sweet, loving. Rough, dark.

He’s the light at the end of the tunnel.

Tears fill my eyes as I think of his resolve to start the family. He’s always been the

strong one, the first one up after life dealt another blow. I was the one who languished under pressure, suffered from panic attacks and sobbed at any given opportunity. And Blane was the one who held me, consoled me, always made me feel like it was worth going on.

I clutch my belly as another bout of sickness overtakes me and I dry retch over the edge of the mattress.

That's when it hits me and my eyes widen as I lay back on the mattress.

Before we left, I complained to Blane about getting my period while we were on vacation and not being able to swim. But we've been here for over a week and ... nothing.

Calculating the days, I try to convince myself I've made a mistake. Surely this couldn't have happened now, in the midst of all this evil and terror.

But every single time I come up to the same conclusion. I'm sick, I've been feeling faint, and my period is missing.

There's a big chance I'm finally ... pregnant.

This is the sweetest thing, the very one Blane wished for so hard. We don't use protection, and after much convincing on his part, I went off the pill, too. But I always thought - and it seemed like I was right for a long while - that because I wasn't ready, my body would somehow sense that and I wouldn't get pregnant.

I guess not anymore.

Clutching my belly, I slowly stroke my soft skin, thinking of the baby that might very well be growing inside me at this very moment. And once again, the tears start

falling, and the sadness takes over, because the chances of this baby - or me, for that matter - making it out of here, are next to none.

And I know if Aiden finds out what I just did, he will show me no mercy.

Just then, I hear noises upstairs and someone coming down the stairs. I turn towards the wall, too terrified to look. I'm bound and I know I can't make a run for it in my current state.

As the steps come closer and closer, I curl myself in a ball and prepare myself for the worst which is yet to come ...

## Chapter 8

“Emme!”

A voice cuts through the darkness, and the familiar tone is too much to handle. I close my eyes tightly, telling myself this can't be ... It's Aiden, and he's come to haunt the rest of my dreams, forever.

But still, something tells me this cannot be right. Because the hands that touch me hesitantly are too soft, too strong, too merciful. My eyes finally flutter open as he lifts me up like I weigh nothing, cradling me in his arms.

I look into Blane's eyes, his gaze burning with hatred for his twin brother and love for me. I whimper, finally realizing my dream has come true ... He found me, and he came here to save me.

It's all going to be okay.

He cradles me in his arms and a growl escapes his lips as I moan in pain and

delirium, still too lost in the darkness to really understand what exactly is going on.

Then, his lips crash against mine, demanding but gentle. I let the kiss convince me it will all be alright. I let it take me to bright, colorful places, away from this place which reeks of death. His love is pure love, but it holds a promise of revenge ...

And if I was Aiden, I would be deathly afraid in this very moment, knowing what awaits him when he returns.

Blane sets me down gently, his arms supporting me so I don't topple over. A foolish smile comes over my face and I exclaim, finally getting my voice and reason back. "Blane!"

"Baby," he groans deeply. "I can't believe it ... Are you okay?"

His hands roam my body and I moan when he reaches the tender point in my ribs where Aiden kicked me. Blane's hands form fists and his lips twist in a grimace as he realizes I've been hurt.

## Page 8

*Source Creation Date: June 26, 2025, 2:21 pm*

But before we have time to do anything else, we hear some noise upstairs and my eyes widen with fear as they connect with Blane's. He presses a finger to his lips before quickly untying my bounds and motioning for me to get back on the mattress while he hides in the many shadows of the dark basement.

Hesitantly, I do as I'm told though my heart is beating in my chest like it's on the verge of bursting. I lie back on the mattress, my gaze focused on the staircase where A

iden's boots just appeared.

He's whistling. The sick fuck is actually whistling.

He finally comes downstairs and freezes in his tracks when he spots me. His eyes flutter to my wrists where the bounds are missing, and an expression of pure rage transforms his face into something terribly ugly.

Snarling, he comes for me and I cover my face with my hands in a futile attempt to protect myself ... and the baby, who is at this moment just a peanut in my belly.

But before he can grab me, Blane bursts out of the shadows and takes Aiden by the throat. An enraged snarl escapes Aiden's lips as I jump up from the mattress and as the two twins battle it out, I make a run for it.

I run out of the house and as soon as my feet hit the grass outside, I'm blinded by the sun shining in my eyes. Blocking the light with my hands, I call for help as loud as I can, screaming my head off.



But all that meets me is the crashing of waves on the beach and the solitary chirp on a nearby who looks at me curiously from a branch on a tree next to me.

I start running around aimlessly, my eyes looking for someone or something that could help me, but I come up empty every single time. There's no one here, the island deserted. I have no idea how Blane got here, but it is obvious he was alone.

Finally, I hear steps coming from behind me and I whip my head back in terror.

There's a man coming towards me, limping lightly as he runs. It's Aiden or Blane, and it makes me cringe that I cannot discern between the brothers. But the words he snarls at me make everything all too clear.

"You better run, princess," he screams in my direction, getting closer with each step. "Won't go easy on you this time around. You're MINE!"

Realizing Aiden is after me, I yelp softly and make a run for it, though I know it's a futile effort. I hear him panting behind me, and even further behind, I can hear Blane's voice calling my name desperately.

I run. I run as fast as I can.

The shrubbery cuts into my feet, the sharp rocks on the ground grinding into the soles of them. I run through thorns, leaves and branches, each of them leaving a mark on my once so perfect skin.

I finally come to a clearing, and I suddenly realize I've been running uphill all this time. What a foolish, foolish girl I am ... Because when I come to a stop at the end of the clearing, I realize it's not a clearing at all.

It's a cliff, and I'm standing on the edge with Aiden and Blane advancing on me as

fast as they can manage. I can only hope the better brother will be the first one to reach me.

I turn around quickly, my eyes glued to the spot where the forest becomes sparse, knowing I'm a target exposed like this. Panting, suddenly both brothers appear in the clearing and look at me intently.

My heart beating like a hummingbird's wings, my eyes flutter from one strong man to another. They exchange glances and for a second I'm sure they'll jump at each other's throats, but instead, they both head straight for me.

That's when I start screaming and calling Blane's name desperately.

One of the men trips and falls down, cursing loudly. The other advances against me until he's only a step away from me. I look into his eyes, the question obvious in my gaze.

Will you save me ... or hurt me?

The evil snarl on his face immediately reveals the brother who was faster is Aiden. I whimper in fear as he advances on me, grabbing me in his strong arms like a ragdoll. Desperately, I call out for Blane, who finally gets to his feet and heads for us.

"Not a step, brother," Aiden snarls at him, clutching his hands around my throat.

Blane stops dead in his tracks and emits a low growl from his throat as Aiden and I face him, his twin pulling us both backwards towards the edge of the precipice.

He finally raises his hands in the air, trying to be placating. "Aiden, there's nowhere to go anymore. Nowhere to hide," he tries to reason with his twin.

“You think you’re going to win again?” Aiden growls, the grip on my throat tightening. I’m so scared I might faint at any minute, and my hands protectively clutch my belly. I see Blane’s eyes widen as he takes this in, but he doesn’t let Aiden see.

“No, nothing like that,” he says instead. “Please ... We can work it all out. It will be okay, just come over here. Bring Emme here, dammit!”

It’s the last command that makes Aiden lose it. I know he could never stand taking directions, least of all from his brother. And throw my name in the game, and he will surely lose it.

“Fuck you,” he snarls at his brother, and my heart splits in two as I realize the divide I’ve created between the two brothers.

I never meant for it to end this way.

I may have been naive, but I always thought we could be happy together ... That we could fix things, overlook our differences and put the past behind us.

My hand flies up in a silent goodbye and I know this is my last chance to make things right.

“It’s okay, Blane,” I say softly, just loud enough for him to hear as Aiden pulls me back, even closer to the edge of the cliff. “Don’t worry ... I’ll be okay. You’ll be fine. You’ll get over this.”

“Shut up, bitch!” Aiden yells in my ear, his words echoing in my mind as tears start falling for the millionth time.

“Be strong, Blane!” I call out desperately as my love lunges forward, only a moment

too late.

“I love you.”

Those are my last words before Aiden jumps, pulling me down into the deep abyss with him. I can hear the sea crashing against the rocks below me ...

And then, there's nothing but darkness.

Finally.

Mercifully.

Chapter 9

Somehow, I'm alive.

Don't ask me how it happened, because I'm still fairly convinced it was a miracle.

When Aiden jumped, he lost his hold on me. The last thing I remember is his absolutely desperate and broken face as he mouthed my name, turning into a scream as he realized he was falling, falling, falling deep into the abyss.

Then, nothing.

I think shock took over, but it wasn't before my adrenaline kicked in.

When Aiden let go of me, I grabbed on to a side of the cliff which was covered in bushy, thick ivy. I remember it crackling beneath my fingers, but Blane was there. Blane, who is always my saviour, always there to make it all better.

He pulled me up - I don't know how he managed, but I was in his arms when I landed back in reality. He was clutching me close like I would fall apart in his arms if he let go.

And he never did.

Not even when they came to the island a few hours later and tried to pry me out of his arms. He carried me to the boat, held me in his embrace as we went back to the island. He was the one who placed me in the hospital bed and never left my side.

I slept for two days straight, and he later told me how worried he was when I wouldn't wake up. The doctors reassured him I would be okay, and he would be more than a little surprised when I woke up. They knew something he didn't ...

When I wake up, I am immediately smothered by his hug, but it feels better than anything I'd experienced in my life previously. He looks at me longingly.

"You're back," he murmurs. "I thought I had lost you ... Both of you."

I see the pain in his eyes. We've each lost both of our parents, and he lost his twin years ago, the only connection he had left to his family. I can't imagine the pain had he lost me too.

"I am," I say slowly, my voice raspy from the days of not speaking. He quickly gets me a glass of water and I take long gulps of the pleasantly cool liquid. We settle on the bed together, not caring about rules and regulations.

My first thought after that is the baby, and my heart beats at a quickened pace. I think of everything that happened, thinking it surely must be gone by now ...

But then I feel something. It's not a kick, or anything like that ... It's a presence. And

somehow, I'm a

bsolutely sure I'm still pregnant.

"What happened?" I ask hesitantly, because I have to know. I need to be sure this time around, need to know we can all make it out okay.

Blane hesitates, gently stroking my fingers as he pulls me in a tighter embrace. I let him wait, because I know he will tell me on his own time.

Finally, several long minutes later, he begins to talk.

"He jumped ... He didn't want anyone to have you if he couldn't, and I think he was tired of fighting," he explains tiredly, rubbing his eyes with his strong hand.

"Is he ...?" I begin, my voice breaking in the middle of the question.

I have to know, yet I am so fucking frightened.

I don't want to hear Aiden is gone, because that would mean I'm all Blane has left.

But I don't want to know that he's okay, either ... Because I know I'll keep living my life in fear, which, if you think about it, is not living at all.

He implores me with his gaze, searching for answers even though I'm the one who asked the question. Finally, when I'm starting to think he won't tell me, he responds.

"He's gone ... I identified ... his body, what was left of it. He landed on the rocks. They shattered him into pieces."

His voice is thick with pain and sorrow, after everything that Aiden did to us. After

every terrible fight, those sleepless nights when I woke up screaming, thinking he had come for me. The days of torture, the scar he carved into me.

And yet, I know we both mourn him.

Aiden was my best friend, my confidant, my light. Until the light went off in his soul and he let the darkness take him. I wish I could tell him the darkness came for me, too. It tried claiming me several times, but I resisted.

I guess I was always stronger than Aiden could ever be.

“There was a service when you slept. They scattered his and Marissa’s ashes on the island,” he explains softly and I cuddle into his arms.

I hope Aiden and Marissa finally find peace on the beautiful, mysterious island which was the home of my nightmares, but also the place where they all came to a stop.

## Page 9

*Source Creation Date: June 26, 2025, 2:21 pm*

Slowly, I move Blane's hands from my collarbone to my belly. I let him stroke it distractedly before turning to face him. I have some big news to share.

I was nervous about this, and not because of Blane's reaction - I knew he would be thrilled. I was more afraid of the way I would react, knowing I was not prepared for this new life growing in inside of me.

But something happened deep inside of me in that house on the island, realizing I was carrying my love's child. I realized I would fight for this baby, fight anyone and everyone. He became the reason I survived, the reason to breathe and take whatever life threw at me.

Blane's eyes look at me in wonder and my face breaks into a hesitant smile.

"We won't be so alone," I say softly. "We'll have some company ..."

His pupils widen at the news and I feel him freeze in the bed next to me.

"You ...?" he begins, imploring me to answer with his eyes, desperate for me to give him the first piece of good news in a long while.

Slowly, I start to nod.

And right there, in the hospital room, I feel the darkness retreat.

It snarls and writhes as it leaks away, and the sun shines into the room with full force until there's not even a single shadow left. And I know while the darkness may have



claimed Aiden ...

I am safe now.

Epilogue

3 years later

“Mommy, mommy, wake up!”

I open my eyes slowly, waiting for them to adjust to the sunlight. But before I can do that, someone starts jumping up and down on me, forcing a laugh out of my body.

“Why don’t you go bother Daddy?” I ask jokingly, and the little girl on top of me hugs me tightly before she answers. I tuck her in beside me, stroking her perfect silky blonde hair, thankful, like every day, that I’m now woken up by her laughter instead of the nightmares that used to plague me in the past.

“Daddy said you need to come downstairs,” my little angel says with a pout, and I laugh as I scoop her up in my arms, getting out of bed. I carry her downstairs as she chatters incessantly about her adventures in kindergarten.

For such a small child, she sure talks a lot. I wonder who she got that from.

Coming downstairs, we’re greeted by the smell of bacon and pancakes and my baby jumps out of my arms, running towards her Daddy excitedly. She clutches his legs, unable to reach further up, and he scoops her up in his arms to help him cook.

I come up behind them, hugging them both close. Blane turns his head and presses an affectionate kiss against my lips.

“Almost done,” he tells me with a wide smile, and I love the fact that his once

perpetual scowl is now a thing of the past. He's stepped down as the head of the company, leaving it in the capable hands of a family friend. These days, we're all about spending time together, always trying for another bundle of joy to keep our baby girl happy.

We sit down to breakfast and I tuck into my food with gusto.

My girl chatters as Blane and I exchange loving glances, feeling connected over the love we share for our child. But then, she asks a question that stops me in my tracks.

"Why did you give me my name, Mommy?" my baby wonders out loud.

I look at Blane, glued to the spot and unable to respond.

Because how are you supposed to tell your 2-year old she's named after the woman her uncle killed in cold blood? What on Earth am I supposed to do now?

Thankfully, Blane is there to save me, just like he always does.

"Marissa was a girl who isn't with us anymore," Blane explains patiently to our baby. "And we wanted to name you after her, to make sure we had another Marissa in the world. Once day, when you're a little bit bigger, we will tell you all about her."

That seems to please our daughter and she chatters for a while longer before disappearing into the living room to play with the Golden Retriever puppy we just got.

Blane reaches for my hand across the table, squeezing it to check if I'm okay. I offer him a brave smile, though I'm feeling nothing like my expression.

"Alright?" he asks worriedly, and I find it in myself to nod. I get up from the table abruptly and give him an apologetic smile.

“I just have to sort something out,” I say quickly. “I’ll be right back.”

I can see the confusion in his eyes, but also understanding. He gives me a soft nod as I leave the room, heading upstairs.

It’s been a long time since I’ve been in the attic, and when I pull down the stairs that lead up there, I struggle and inhale so much dust I nearly choke to it. Climbing it slowly, I finally make my way to the neglected storey.

It’s warm from all the windows in the roof, but the room is a huge ghost town. Everything is covered in dusty white sheets to protect our possessions from decay. But I know exactly what I’m here for as I step towards the easel in the middle of the room. It’s the only thing not covered in a sheet.

It’s the one thing I fear most in the world these days, but it’s also a fear I know I need to face.

It’s one of Aiden’s works, a portrait of me.

Grotesque and disgusting, it shows my body ravaged with knives and wounds, bleeding, decaying, while my eyes bore into the viewer, asking for help. In the bottom of the painting, there is an outline of another face, a mouth grinning wide like a Cheshire cat.

I look at it for a long time, and it surprised me that I’m not even scared of it. I’ve always feared it being in the house, and dreaded going up here for fear of seeing it.

I finger my scar, which has faded due to special creams and potions, as well as a surgery I had to remove it. It’s still there, and if I slide my fingers over it, I can make out the words Aiden carved in my skin.

I’m not done.

“Except, now you are,” I say out loud sadly, realizing this is finally my time to say goodbye to the past. Slowly, I reach for the canvas and turn it the other way around, moving the easel into the corner of the room. I pick a sheet from the ground and softly drape it over the easel, erasing my nightmare to existence.

I stand there for a while, until I can finally feel all my demons disappearing. Slowly, but surely, they scream and shout, but retreat to the dark corners in the attic, away from me and out of my mind.

I smile softly.

\*\*\*

“What was that all about?” Blane asks me when I return downstairs.

“Nothing,” I say mysteriously, and this time, the smile I offer him is perfectly genuine. “It was ... closure.”

He doesn’t ask for more information, realizing I’ve told him all I needed to. Instead, he hugs me close to his body and I listen to his heartbeat as we watch our daughter playing with her puppy.

Beat.

Beat.

Beat.

I can’t wait to tell him there’s another heart beating in my belly right this very moment.

THE END