



Ours

Author: *Summer Riley*

Category: Erotic, Romance

Description: Taken for a second time by the man she left for dead, Lexi's wildest fantasy and greatest fear have both come true. With whispered promises of the family she's always wanted, she's brought before crime lord Bloodbayne under the pretense that she will remain safe.

But when she's forced to do an unspeakable act, she realizes her safety is merely an illusion. Embroiled in a Mafia coup with her unborn child as the linchpin, her game of survival is more than she bargained for. Struggling with her feelings for Kade, and the darkness that resides within her, will she have her happily ever after? Or is she doomed to forever be a pawn in someone else's twisted plan?

Total Pages (Source): 67

Page 1

Source Creation Date: June 23, 2025, 5:33 am

Part One

CHAPTER One

Turning her pregnant body in the sports car's passenger seat, Lexi stared at Kade with terrified, wide eyes. This was the first time she had been able to get a good look at him since he had taken her from the Italian restaurant only a handful of minutes prior. She couldn't believe that all of this was really happening. Again. The monster was supposed to be on the opposite side of the country, tethered to a hospital bed in a vegetative state. Yet here he was, looking as handsome and healthy as ever. Cool as a cucumber in a leather jacket and aviator glasses, weaving in and out of Sunday traffic as he didn't have a care in the world. It made her question her sanity. It had been hanging on by a thread for months now, but perhaps she finally had a psychotic break.

"You're not real. This isn't real," she whispered, her lips barely moving.

Oh, this is real alright, Nikki answered from the corner of her mind. Somehow your demonic baby daddy rose from the dead! I'm shocked that he can even drive! Weren't his head injuries so severe that they said he wouldn't even know his own name if he ever woke up? Hmm. Odd. But I guess miracles happen every day! I do wonder where he's taking us, though. Maybe to another cabin in the woods so he can exact his revenge? Yeah. I think that's a safe bet, don't you?

Wiping her alter from her thoughts, she took in a shaky breath as reality sank in. She would be lying if she said that she hadn't fantasized about Kade coming back for her, but not once did she ever think it would happen. Unfortunately, this wasn't the happy

homecoming of her dream lover, filled with tender kisses and amorous declarations. This was another traumatic abduction, laced with menacing implications. She would be lucky if she, and her unborn child, survived the nightmare this time.

“Kade, don’t do this,” she pleaded, her green eyes dancing over his masculine profile. “Just take me back to the restaurant! No one has to know! I won’t say anything, I swear! It’s not too late!”

Arching a dark brow, Kade turned his head to look at his love. Studying her through his mirrored sunglasses, he silently seethed as she continued to beg for her freedom. After everything they had shared, how could she possibly think he would let her go back and live a life that didn’t involve him? He didn’t wake from the dead only to let her walk away. He would never let her go. Not now, not ever.

“Sweetheart, it’s far too late,” he replied, turning his attention back to the road. “Especially now that you’re carrying my child.”

Swallowing hard, she placed her opened hands over her belly in a protective manner. Understanding the heavy implications of his words, she lifted her chin in defiance. She needed to think in terms of survival. If she could get him to think that her baby wasn’t his, he would let her go. Surely, he wouldn’t want the blood of another man’s child on his hands?

“This baby isn’t yours, it’s Leo’s!” she exclaimed with feigned conviction.

Gripping the leather-covered steering wheel, he slammed his foot down on the gas pedal, causing the Nissan GT-R to lurch forward in an act of sudden aggression. Her denial infuriated him. How dare she lie straight to his face? Hadn’t she learned her lesson by now?

“That child is mine. You know it. I know it, fuck, even that pathetic husband of yours

knows it!” he hissed.

Visibly wincing, Lexi scooted her body closer towards the car’s door. The fact that he not only knew about the baby, but also her marriage to Leo, set her on edge. His deep voice was thick with betrayal. It caused a ball of guilt-laced anxiety to settle in the pit of her stomach.

“How did you know that we got married?” she asked, bracing herself as he narrowly missed hitting a Dodge Ram while switching lanes.

Suppressing a laugh, Kade shrugged his broad shoulders. Glancing in the rearview mirror, he noticed an older model Jeep Cherokee quickly gaining speed behind him. Speak of the devil, he mused. Apparently, his actions at the restaurant hadn’t gone unnoticed. Not that he was surprised.

“Leo loves his social media. You would think that with all that you’ve been through he would have deleted his online presence but nope! Still posting on X, still uploading reels on Instagram. Hell, he’s still blogging on fucking tumblr! He gave me all the information I needed within a five-minute search. It’s almost as if he was begging me to come and find you,” he said, purposefully slowing down the Nissan. “I was furious when I found out that you had married that little prick but really, it’s just a piece of fucking paper! It doesn’t mean a fucking thing! You belong to me, Lexi. That child you’re carrying is proof. There’s no going back now. We’re bound, it’s done!”

Hugging her stomach, she closed her eyes and screamed a silent curse. She had begged Leo to get rid of his accounts before they left New York. He swore that he would scrub everything, assuring her that there was no way he would jeopardize their new life together. It was a broken promise. One that had effectively sealed her fate.

“He will try to find me, you know,” she said, her voice trembling as she fought back the tears welling behind her eyelids.

“I know,” he replied bitterly.

Pursing his lips together, he checked the rearview mirror for the gray Cherokee recklessly slicing through traffic. He could almost make out the frantic features on the driver’s face, the man looked hellbent. It made him bristle. This was sure to cause Lexi, and his baby, undue stress. Why couldn’t the idiot just let the police handle things?

“Keep your eyes closed, do you understand?” he said.

“Why? What’s going on?” she asked, instinctively opening her eyes and glancing around the cab of the car.

Swearing hotly, he let go of the steering wheel and reached out towards her. Placing his palm on the back of her head, he firmly pushed her gaze towards the floor of the sports car. This wasn’t part of the plan. She wasn’t supposed to be around when Leo was dealt with. Unfortunately, the moron didn’t give him any choice.

“Nothing, just close your damn eyes, Alexandria!” he growled, holding her head in place.

Thrashing from side to side, she pulled away from his grasp. Turning clumsily in her seat, she looked at her handsome captor. Confusion and fear contorted her face as she raised her fist in self-defense. Ready to attack, she froze as a familiar SUV pulled up on the driver’s side. Blinking away her hot tears, it only took a second for her to recognize who was driving the Jeep.

“LEO!” she screamed. “LEO!”

Scrambling over the center console, she locked eyes with her husband. While she was relieved to see him, she didn’t like the murderous expression passing over Kade’s

face. Worried for his well-being, she tried to mouth a plea for him to stop chasing after them. She wouldn't be able to forgive herself if anything happened to him.

Oblivious to his wife's silent words, Leo gave her a reassuring smile. He was comforted to see that she was alive and unharmed. It was only by the grace of God that he had seen her through the restaurant window as she was thrown into the Nissan by the bastard who had kidnapped her before. Catching up to them had been the longest fifteen minutes of his life. But now that he had, there was no way he was going to let them out of his sight.

"IT'S OK, BABY! I'M NOT GOING ANYWHERE!"he screamed through the opened passenger window.

Page 2

Source Creation Date: June 23, 2025, 5:33 am

Thoroughly annoyed with the exchange, Kade grit his teeth and turned his head to stare at the man endangering his family. Leo was a special son-of-a-bitch to think he could just swoop in on his white horse and save the day. He had toyed with the idea of letting him live for Lexi's sake, but that was no longer an option. Two more miles and it would be all over for the idiot.

Yelling an obscenity, he forcibly shifted into fifth gear and slammed his foot onto the gas pedal. Within a split second, the powerful sports car responded, leaving the older Jeep in its wake. "Lexi," he said, his voice eerily calm. "Close your eyes. I don't want you to see what's about to happen."

Spinning around in her seat, she watched helplessly as Leo's Jeep slipped further and further away in the rear window. His tone caused an ice-cold chill to run down the length of her spine. There was no mistaking the heavy malice behind his words.

"Why? What are you going to do!?" she yelled, unable to stop the torrent of hormone induced tears.

Glancing at her through the corners of his dark eyes, he reminded himself to be gentle with her. Releasing his tight grip on the steering wheel, he moved to brush the tears from her flushed cheeks. He hated to see how upset she was becoming. It wasn't good for their child to have her be so worked up over nothing.

"I won't be doing anything," he said honestly, pulling his attention back to the road.

"Now do as I say and close your eyes. Stress isn't healthy for the baby."

Huffing a disbelieving laugh, she shook her head at the ridiculousness of his comment. Now he was concerned about stress affecting her child? God, he was even more insane than she remembered.

“Please don’t hurt Leo!” she begged, dropping her left hand to gently stroke his inner thigh in a calculated move. “I’ll be with you forever! Just please let him go!”

Looking down at her hand, Kade watched her fingers as they inched closer to his hardening cock. It had been far too long since he had enjoyed her intoxicating caress, it was almost enough to make his resolve crumble. He knew what game she was playing, though. Tempting him with her feminine wiles wouldn’t work this time.

“I won’t tell you again,” he warned, ignoring his growing lust. “Close. Your. Eyes!”

“I...I can’t,” she whimpered.

Pressing his lips together, he fought with the familiar voice trying to wiggle back into his consciousness. Nonchalantly reaching into the leather pocket gracing the driver’s side door, he found the uncapped syringe hidden as a last resort. He had hoped to never use the drug on her again, but it was painfully apparent she wasn’t going to follow his command. He wasn’t sure if the liquid inside would have any ill effect on their baby, but she had backed him into a corner. It angered him that she was forcing him to put their child at risk, but it was a gamble he needed to take.

Trying not to alarm her, he purposefully relaxed his body. Through his peripheral vision, he noticed two Kawasaki Ninja J2R’s racing up the freeway on-ramp. Right on time, he thought to himself. It was a relief to know that his men hadn’t reverted to their old ways in his absence.

Keeping tabs on the black motorbikes, he practiced what would happen next in his mind. Concealing the syringe in his hand as it rested on his left thigh, he silently

counted down from thirty. Leonardo Estrada deserved every fucking thing coming his way. If there was still breath in his body, no one would ever take his family from him.

No one.

Instinctively wary of Kade, Lexi followed his attention to the out-of-place Kawasaki's slowing down to flank either side of the GT-R. There was something oddly familiar about the red and black wolf skulls painted onto the sides of their ebony bikes. She knew she had seen them before, but her jumbled brain couldn't quite place them.

"What's going on?" she asked nervously as the Ninjas drifted dangerously close to the sports car.

Glancing at the leather-clad drivers as they peered inside, he gave each a sharp nod in confirmation before turning his attention back to Lexi. Toku and Cyris were the two most loyal and proficient Lieutenants he had. Bloodbayne would be pleased to hear how well they performed this minor task.

"Don't worry, the Skulls will never harm you. They know you're with me," he said simply.

"Skulls? I... I don't understand," she replied, twisting in her seat to watch the motorbikes as they fell behind the Nissan.

The Skulls, Nikki spat. Kade Volkov's Soldiers. Jesus fucking Christ, this isn't good. Might as well say goodbye to poor ole' Leo!

Thrown off by her alter's heavy statement, her world fell into slow motion. Watching helplessly as the Skulls slipped from view, her blood ran to ice. Taking notice of the way Kade's body stiffened beside her, she instinctively pressed herself against the car

door. Leo wasn't the only one in danger, she realized. Something wicked was about to happen.

Before she could react, Kade raised his arm towards her with something sharp and cylindrical held tightly in his large hand. Opening her mouth to scream, she felt him jab the pointed end of the syringe into the flesh of her throat; just as he had during her first abduction. Locking her eyes on the mirrored lens of his aviators, she whimpered as the drug took hold. Within seconds, her pregnant body grew painfully heavy, and her mind went numb. Slumping into the cramped passenger seat, she fought to stay conscious. She couldn't believe that this was happening again, she thought he loved her.

"You...youuu...monsssteerrr," she slurred as her eyelids fluttered down.

Nodding in agreement, he turned his dark eyes from her unconscious form to the rearview mirror. Slowing down the GT-R, he watched with pointed interest as each of his men pulled a sawed-off shotgun from their back holsters and took aim at the Jeep. His plan was going off without a single hitch and he couldn't be more pleased. Nothing would stand in the way of him finally claiming what was rightfully his.

"Sleep well, Sweetheart," he said, lifting the corners of his lips into an evil grin. "And don't worry, I'll never let anyone take you away from me."

CHAPTER TWO

Slowly regaining consciousness, Lexi groaned as her terrifying nightmare evaporated from her mind. As the last tendrils slipped away, she entered a reality that was stale and unfamiliar. Her first cohesive thought centered around her son and making sure he was safe. Time was of the essence, and she had to protect her baby.

Ignoring the pressure encasing her skull, she focused on regaining her senses. Off in

the distance, multiple masculine voices could be heard, deep in hushed conversation. While she couldn't make out the words, it was clear that they were having a heated discussion. Whatever they were talking about felt ominous, it put her on edge.

Page 3

Source Creation Date: June 23, 2025, 5:33 am

Opening her bloodshot eyes, she glanced around the tight space surrounding her. Much like her first abduction, she found herself lying on a twin sized mattress. Fluffy down pillows cradled her pounding head while a white faux fur comforter hugged her still numb body. Every so often, she felt herself jerk as the bed lurched upwards by an unseen force.

Pulling her eye-line to the curved wall of the room, she noticed three rectangular portholes. It only took a moment to realize that she was on an aircraft of some kind. Most likely a private jet since she was peacefully cocooned on a bed. Where the hell was Kade taking her now, and why did this abduction warrant such luxury?

It could be worse. You could be hidden away in some underground bunker, again. You gotta admit, this is a vast improvement. Take it as a win, Nikki said with a laugh.

Agreeing with the bitch in her head, she clumsily moved her pregnant body. Rolling onto her back, her eyes trailed to the open door positioned directly at the foot of the bed. Leaning against the jamb stood her captor, his large form filling the narrow entrance. With his arms folded and his shoulders hunched, his body language spoke volumes. He was guarding her like a wolf hiding a juicy rabbit from the rest of the pack.

Hearing a soft rustle behind him, Kade cleared his throat. Narrowing his dark brown eyes, he gave each of the three Skulls a solemn look. With his visual command, the men ceased their conversation. Moving their attention to their laptops and cell phones, they gave their Commander the privacy he needed to conduct his personal business.

Turning in the cramped doorway, he locked his heated gaze on his love. He was happy to see that she had awoke ahead of schedule. It was the proof he needed that the drug didn't have any ill effect on her, or their baby. He could finally let go of the nagging anxiety that had been plaguing him for the past five hours.

"Hey, Sweetheart," he began, purposefully softening his voice and plastering a large smile on his face. "How did you sleep?"

Tensing from the abrupt change in his body language, Lexi's green eyes widened as he stalked towards her. She didn't trust the loving aura he was trying to project. Did he honestly think she would forget what he just did? Her husband was dead because of him. The bastard was lucky that she couldn't fully move yet.

Reminding herself that the safety of her son took precedence, she reluctantly swallowed her anger. Deciding to fall in line with what she knew he wanted, she ignored her alter bristling in the back of her mind. Until she was physically able to fight and had the opportunity to escape, she would have to play his little game.

"Better than I have in months," she lied, eyeing him as he took a seat on the edge of the bed. "But I can't really feel my body, yet. I'm worried about the baby."

Nodding his head with feigned concern, he reached over to gently help her into a sitting position. Making sure her back was settled against the tufted leather headboard, he pulled the comforter down to expose her belly. Unbeknownst to her, he had spent the first hour of the flight curled around her on the tiny bed, his rough hands learning every new curve of her body. It was then that he felt his child move for the first time. He knew that it was healthy and thriving. Their baby was a fighter, much like its mother. She had absolutely nothing to worry about.

"Here, let me see if I can feel the baby," he said, placing his hands upon her pronounced bump.

Watching him intently, she found herself too dumbfounded to say a single word. He was touching her so reverently, gliding his hands over her like he was worshiping something sacred. Awe painted the handsome features of his face, causing her to forget about all of his evil deeds for just a moment. This was the Kade of her fantasies, the one she knew was inside of him all along. Against her better judgment, she felt her heart melt. This was a moment that she had waited so long for.

Yeah, but you see, Nikki interrupted. He won't have those heart eyes forever. That's not who he really is. Don't be blinded by this sweet act! But seriously, how can you possibly forgive him so quickly? He had Leo murdered, and let's not forget the fact that he has kidnapped you! Again! He's a dangerous son-of-a-bitch! Don't you fucking forget that!

Annoyed by the voice in her head, Lexi slammed a mental door in her phantom face. She was fully aware of how sick and demented her harbored feelings towards him were, the last thing she needed was a guilt trip. As if the bitch was some moral compass, she was just as insane as the man now cooing loving phrases to their baby. Rationally, she knew she should compartmentalize this moment. Tuck it away somewhere in the dark recesses of her brain so she could continue to hate him. But for whatever reason, she couldn't bring herself to do it. Why? How could she possibly love a man that was the physical embodiment of pure evil?

Oblivious to her internal conflict, Kade kneeled beside the bed. Carefully leaning down, he gently pressed a kiss against her belly. Whispering promises meant only for his child to hear, he was caught off guard by the feeling of a soft push against his mouth. It wasn't the agitated, angry kick he had felt earlier. This was warm and forgiving. Loving, even. It made his black heart swell with emotions he didn't think he would ever experience again.

"I just felt the baby, try not to worry anymore, my love," he purred, lifting his face to lock his gaze on hers. "What is it? I mean...the baby. Do you know if it's a boy or

girl?"

"You don't know?" she asked, arching a brow curiously.

Shaking his head, he straightened his long torso. The sex of their child was the one piece of information that Leo hadn't mentioned anywhere. He had assumed that they hadn't found out the sex, but the twinkle in her eyes told him she definitely knew.

"Tell me," he said.

Unable to stop herself from smiling, she practically beamed as the words tumbled from her mouth. "It's a boy. We're having a boy."

Closing his eyes, He soaked in her words. Relief flooded his body, giving him the chance to finally breathe again. A son. She was carrying his son. Now he could take her to Bloodbayne without any reservations, without any fear. Their fate as a family was now secure. Everything was falling perfectly into place.

Unsure if his reaction to the news was positive or negative, she took a nervous breath. When the ultrasound tech had told her the sex, she remembered feeling like she had been punched in the gut. She had since grown to love her son fiercely, but the feeling of initial disappointment was very real. She hoped he wasn't having a similar reflex.

"Kade?" she asked tentatively.

Opening his eyes, he raised his hands to cup her precious face. Leaning in towards her, he pressed his forehead against hers. He couldn't believe how blessed they were. It was another sign that they were truly meant to be. "Thank you," he replied softly.

Furrowing her brow in confusion, she opened her mouth but found herself unsure of how to respond. She had no idea why he was thanking her. It was a phrase she never

expected to hear from the man she nearly killed.

“Does this mean you’re happy it’s a boy?” she asked, her voice lifting in hope.

Humming a reply, he pulled away just enough for her to see the look of pure joy warming his features. He hadn’t felt this much elation since the first night they had been intimate; the night they had unknowingly created the life growing inside of her.

“Very,” he said huskily, claiming her lips in a passion fueled kiss.

Caught off guard, Lexi stilled as his lips moved eagerly over hers. After a handful of greedy passes of his tongue and teeth, she melted into the wanton kiss. She knew Nikki was a hair’s breadth away from interjecting, but she couldn’t care less. Never in her wildest dreams did she ever think she would have this moment. She deserved this little bit of happiness, consequences be damned.

Page 4

Source Creation Date: June 23, 2025, 5:33 am

Pleased by her lustful enthusiasm, he grinned against her whimpering mouth. She was making things far too easy, it felt amazing to have her right where he wanted. It was imperative that she go into this meeting knowing exactly who she was loyal to, she wouldn't be able to deny her feelings for him for much longer.

"Mmm," he groaned, reluctantly ending the kiss. "Can you move yet, Sweetheart?"

Licking the remnants of the kiss from her lips, she blinked her glassy eyes at him. She had been so wrapped up in the moment that she had forgotten about the paralyzing effects of the drug still in her system. Attempting to move her tingling limbs, she was thankful to be able to lift them from the mattress. It wouldn't be long before her full range of movement returned.

"Sort of," she replied.

Nodding his head, he moved his right hand from her cheek to tuck an errant curl behind her ear. "Good, we'll be landing soon," he said.

Swallowing hard, she watched him as he stood from the bed. Panic set in abruptly, causing a shrill sound to ring in her ears. She had a sinking suspicion of where they were headed and was praying to God that she was wrong.

"Where?" she asked, her voice cracking slightly.

Standing to full height, he shrugged his shoulders. Placing his hands on his hips, he put on an air of indifference. He wasn't going to lie to her, but he knew she wouldn't be pleased by his answer. Not that it mattered. She didn't have a choice, and neither

did he.

“LaGuardia,” he replied, his deep voice laced in ice.

Hit with an overwhelming wave of nausea, Lexi began to tremble. Holding back the bile rising in her throat, she lifted her gaze to meet her abductor. Gone was the loving man kissing her only moments ago. Kade Volkov was back, and it terrified her to the core.

“I won’t go,” she said defiantly, narrowing her eyes.

Leaning his head to the side, he chewed on the flesh of his inner cheek. Debating on whether to fight with the stubborn hellcat, he quickly nixed the idea. All the progress he had just made with her was slipping through his fingers. He needed to act quickly to subdue her will.

“Don’t you want our son to have a family? Don’t you want him to be raised in a happy home with a mother and father that love each other? Don’t you want to give him everything you never had?” he asked, purposefully playing upon her insecurities.

Staring at him with her mouth agape, she stammered as she thought of a reply. She was completely unprepared for his questions, and they stirred a myriad of deep seeded emotions within her. Of course she wanted all those things for her son, what mother wouldn’t?

“Yes! Of course! And I was going to give him a happy home and a loving family with Leo!” she spat.

Dropping his hands from his waist, he balled them into tight fists at his sides. He could almost feel his face sting from the verbal slap. How dare she say that to him within earshot of his Soldiers. She was lucky that she was carrying his son in her

womb.

“DON’T!”he growled, baring his sharp teeth.“Don’t you ever...EVER mention his name again!”

Lifting her rounded chin, she scrunched the fine features of her face. Pulling back her own lips, she matched his dominant display. She knew it wasn’t wise to provoke the wolf standing over her, but the floodgates were lifting. She was powerless to control the hormones surging through her tingling muscles.

“LEO! LEO! LEO! LEOOOOOOOO!”she screamed, her voice echoing around the cabin.

Bending over her livid form, he brought his nose to within an inch of hers. With his blood pressure rising, he fought the urge to wrap his strong hands around her delicate neck. It was time for him to draw a line in the sand. One that he knew, deep down, that she would never cross.

“Is that what you want? Huh? You want that limp dickd fucker raisingOURson?!” he hissed, reaching into the back pocket of his dark denim pants for his phone. “Fine.FINE, Lexi!Call him! Call him right the fuck now and tell him that youFUCKEDme...WILLINGLY...got pregnant, and now you want him to raiseMYson!”

Yanking out his cell, he entered his passcode and pulled up Leo’s stored information. Slapping the cracked screen in agitation, he dropped the phone in her opened hand before motioning towards it with his sharp chin. “There! Just hit the fucking call button and tell him. Go on. Tell himEVERYTHING,”he growled.

Glancing from the phone to Kade and back again, she blinked back angry tears.What the fuck did he mean, ‘call him?’This wasn’t making sense. None of this was making

sense. He was a lunatic through and through.

“How can I call a damnDEAD MAN?!” she yelled back, confusion covering her face.

Backing away from her, Kade allowed the tension between them to build before intentionally slumping his shoulders in mock defeat. Swallowing hard, he pouted his lower lip and tried to convey the image of a wounded man. He would use every trick in his book to make his love yield. She needed to let go.

“I see you think so little of me,” he said, his voice shaking at the seams. “That’s all I am to you, huh? Just a cold-blooded killer? Striking down anyone that gets in my way?”

He’s fucking crazy! You know he killed Leo! Don’t you let him manipulate you like this,Nikki hissed.Don’t let him!

Dancing her blurry eyes over his handsome face, Lexi mulled over rational words echoing in her mind. She knew that Leo was dead with every fiber of her being. She also knew that she was surrounded by dangerous men that didn’t have any qualms about silencing a pregnant woman. Her options were few and far between. She needed to do whatever she had to in order to protect her son.

Tossing the phone to the foot of the bed, she demurely turned her gaze to her pregnant belly. Letting out a soft whimper, she silently cursed herself. Why did she have to love him? Her heart was always the root of her pain. Everything would be so much easier if she could just hate him.

“I... I’m sorry, Kade...I know that’s not who you really are,” she admitted truthfully.

Page 5

Source Creation Date: June 23, 2025, 5:33 am

“Then say it,” he encouraged, taking a step closer. “Say that you love me and tell me that you want us to be a family.”

Turning her head upwards, she caught his dark gaze. This was her life now, she realized. There was no turning back. She needed to make the most of the situation. Perhaps they could be a happy family, someday. Stranger things happened.

“I love you...and want us to raise our son together,” she confessed.

Slowly curling his lips into a triumphant smile, he reached down to brush the back of his hand along her full cheek. He was ecstatic about how quickly she had dismissed her life with Leo. From the first night he saw her, he knew they belonged together. It was as a relief that she had finally accepted their destiny.

“Good girl,” he purred, tenderly kissing her forehead. “I love you so much.”

Keeping her eyes glued on his smug face, Lexi slowly moved her still tingling hands to the curve of her numbed belly. Almost immediately, she felt her son gently roll under her open palms. His calm movement took her breath away. She had only ever felt sharp kicks and frantic punches. Her motherly instincts told her that for the first time, her son was content.

Theirson was happy.

“We love you too,” she whispered, the admission painfully squeezing her conflicted heart.

CHAPTER THREE

Letting out an exasperated sigh, Lexi adjusted the seatbelt that was cutting into the crook of her neck. Kade hadn't said a word since buckling her into the second row of the Lincoln Navigator; nor had any of the other four rough looking men filling the SUV. There was nothing but stone-cold silence and a tension so thick, she was sure she could cut it with her Stiletto knife.

Chewing on her lower lip, she glanced out her window to watch the westbound traffic along I-278. It was very early in the morning, possibly two or three guessing by the amount of delivery trucks merging onto the freeway. She wasn't exactly sure where she was being taken but had a sinking suspicion. There was a snowball's chance in hell that he was taking her to some swanky high rise on the Upper East Side. Oh, no. Brooklyn was Bloodbayne's territory.

"Are we going straight to him?" she asked, ignoring the immediate heat of his gaze.

Reaching across the seat, Kade took her left hand in his and gave it a gentle squeeze. He knew she was apprehensive about their upcoming meeting with his Boss. She had every right to be, he would be lying if he said he wasn't just as nervous.

"No," he answered, softly brushing her knuckles with the pad of his thumb. "He isn't in the City. Our meeting isn't until Monday. We're headed to the Wilde until then."

Closing her red rimmed eyes, she leaned back in her seat and sighed in relief. Good, she still had time to prepare herself. Not much time, but enough time for her to ensure that Kade would protect her and their son from that fire kissed bastard. She wouldn't be able to do it alone.

"The Wilde? Funny. I've always wanted to go there," she said.

Releasing her hand, Kade moved to caress the side of her abdomen. Humming a reply, he held in a wolfish grin. They routinely conducted business from the hotel, selling their wares to nepo babies with deep pockets. Serendipitously, Leo had mentioned in a random post how he wanted to fly Lexi back to the City and stay at the Wilde for their anniversary. It made him insanely happy that he had stolen that gift. From now on, she would only be reminded of him when she thought of the hotel.

“We’ll be there soon, Sweetheart. Are you hungry?” he asked, arching a brow.

Nodding, she placed her hand over his and moved his touch lower so he could feel the small flutters she was experiencing. Their son was ramping up his movement, it was only a matter of time before she became sick with hunger.

“I will be,” she said with a grin. “He’s definitely letting me know.”

Feeling a series of tiny kicks against his hand, he couldn’t help but smile in amusement. His son already had him wrapped around his finger. It was good that the interior of the SUV was dark. He didn’t like to show emotion when his Soldiers were around. Weakness of any kind was a liability.

“Well, it’s a good thing that I ordered some food for you two then, isn’t it?” he replied.

Turning her head to look at him, Lexi’s breath hitched as her eyes settled on his proud face. Even in the dim light, she could make out every handsome detail. Her sweet man had returned, he looked so ridiculously happy. It caused her stomach to fill with butterflies, she wished he would stay like this forever.

“Oh? And what did you order?” she asked curiously.

Giving her a tiny wink, he tenderly caressed her bump one last time before removing

his hand. Turning his attention to the driver's seat before him, he painted a blank look on his face. Within the span of a heartbeat, his aloofness returned. They were quickly coming up to their exit, now wasn't the time to act like a fool in love. Until they were safely settled in their room, he needed to be alert and aware.

"You'll see," he replied curtly.

Narrowing her green eyes, she immediately bristled over his abrupt change in attitude. His hot and cold mood swings were giving her whiplash. He needed to be careful, two could play this game.

"Can't wait," she replied icily, folding her arms over her chest.

...

Stepping behind Kade, Lexi tried her best to ignore the three Skulls circling like hungry sharks. She didn't care that they were there for her protection, as Kade had claimed. They all rubbed her the wrong way. She especially didn't appreciate the lewd sideglances from the bearded one named Maddox. She had been around sexual predators all her life and could smell one a mile away. He reeked of torture and misery and made her wish she had her blade.

Page 6

Source Creation Date: June 23, 2025, 5:33 am

Ohhh! That's the spirit! Nikki purred. Let those hormones rage! Ya know, if you let me out, maybe I can persuade Kade to let you kill him. How does that sound?

Dismissing her alter's semi-appealing plan, she pressed her lips into a fine line. Giving the Skull a scathing look, she waited impatiently as he opened the hotel's door. As tempting as Nikki's offer was, she would have to deal with the disgusting gangster another time.

Crossing the threshold of the Wilde, she quickly caught up to Kade as he stalked down the hallway of the trendy hotel. Ignoring the sciatic pain shooting down the back of her thigh, she opened her mouth to chastise him for leaving her in the dust. Before she had a chance to mutter a single word however, she found herself silenced by a sultry female voice echoing through the lobby.

"Mr. Volkov! It's so good to see you! I was hoping you would arrive before my shift was over," cooed the young woman standing behind the check-in desk.

Sliding up to the counter, Kade curled his lips into a sly grin. It had been over a year since he had seen the tight-bodied brunette. Callie was a top earner for the Organization. She had a knack for keeping wealthy men under her well-manicured thumb. It was a trait that kept her employed and alive.

"Callie, it's good to see you, too. You look stunning, as always. Thank you for setting everything up so quickly," he said, his voice smooth and warm.

Leaning over the front desk, Callie gave the rugged mobster a flirty smile. Handing him a room key, she purposefully tugged on the fabric of her V-neck sweater to show

the edge of her red lace bra. She was more than willing to fall on her knees if he wanted her to, all he had to do was ask. It was the least she could do, she was sure he needed a good blowjob after the hell he had been through.

“Anything for you, Sir,” she purred, not seeming to pay any mind to the pregnant woman at his side. “You know I always aim to please.”

Narrowing her eyes in annoyance, Lexi looked back and forth between Kade and the vixen. Their interaction with one another was far too familiar for her liking. She was sure that there had to be some sordid history between them. Whatever it was, she didn’t like it.

Ha! They totally fucked, look! Look at the way she’s biting her lip! She’s probably remembering how good his cock felt in her mouth right this very second...and oh my God-his face! Didn’t he look at you like that when you fucked him on the couch? Oh yeah, he’s remembering her pussy for sure. Not that I can really blame him. She’s fit and ready to go...you, well, you’re a little round, aren’t you? Nikki snickered.

Mentally growling at her alter, Lexi wiggled her body closer to him. Hardening her features, she met the girl’s cold stare. Jealousy and possessiveness flooded her brain, two foreign emotions she couldn’t remember the last time she had felt. She wanted to claw the dark blue eyes out of Callie’s flawless face. How dare that bitch try to seduce what belonged to her?

“Kade,” she interjected, her annoyed gaze perfectly centered on Callie. “Take me to bed.”

Turning his attention, Kade was surprised to see her seething in anger. Following her eye line, he smirked as he noticed Callie throwing the same phantom daggers in her direction. He had a couple of jealous women on his hands. For a moment, he debated on whether he should let the two hellcats duke it out. Knowing a fight wouldn’t be

wise for the baby, he nodded an acknowledgement. Wrapping his long arm around her, he pulled her flush against his side. While he thoroughly enjoyed her possessiveness, there was no need to be so catty. She was the only woman he wanted, the only one he would ever want.

“Of course I’ll take you to bed, my love,” he said before turning back to Callie. “You think you could take care of my boys for me?”

Blinking at Kade, Callie stammered for a moment. He had never turned down her advances before, it was a huge blow to her confidence. What could that pregnant thing possibly give him that she couldn’t?

Licking her lips, she reluctantly pulled her gaze to the three lusting men and gave a small shrug of her shoulders. It wouldn’t be the first time she had kept his Soldiers occupied while he handled other business. Perhaps he would come down and join once his whale was fast asleep in her precious bed.

“Yes, Mr. Volkov,” she said, painting a faux mask of enthusiasm over her face. “I’ll take very good care of them.”

“Good girl,” Kade said before looking over his shoulder to his Skulls. “Enjoy the rest of your night with Callie. I’ll be in touch in a few hours.”

Not waiting for them to reply, he cradled Lexi against his side and ushered her towards the hallway leading to the elevator. Completely oblivious to the searing glance Lexi gave Callie as they left the hotel’s lobby.

...

Pressing the ‘eight’ button on the interior panel of the elevator, Kade drifted his dark eyes to Lexi. She was clearly stewing over something; he could tell by the way the

glaring spitfire kept clenching and relaxing her jaw. If looks could kill, he would be dead twice over. It turned him on.

“What?” he asked curiously.

Growling low, she fumed from the mental image of him screwing Callie on the check-in desk. Her hormones were clouding her judgement, and she couldn't reign in her rage. He might as well have been licking the whore's cunt right in front of her. Reaching over to the control panel, she slapped the 'stop' button, halting their trajectory between the third and fourth floors. She needed to vent her suspicion, otherwise she wouldn't be able to stop her alter from taking over.

“Did you fuck her?” she spat bitterly. “Or do you only fuck women you intend to kill?”

Thrown off by her heated question, he visibly scoffed. Moving in front of her, he leaned down and met her fiery gaze. Although he had the opportunity to soothe her temper, he couldn't stop himself from seizing this golden opportunity to play.

“Sweetheart, if I killed every woman I fucked, half of the women in Manhattan would be dead,” he said with a wolfish grin.

Widening her eyes in shock, Lexi let out a sharp gasp. She wasn't expecting that comeback, but she knew he was goading her; trying to distract her so he wouldn't have to answer the question. He wouldn't get away that easily.

“Have you fucked her, Kade?” she asked again, raising her hand to grip his chin between her middle finger and thumb.

Letting the hellion hold his amused face steady, he stepped his hulking form forward, causing her to slowly back up against the wall of the dark elevator. Pausing a moment

to memorize her tempestuous face, he wrapped his fingers around her wrist and gruffly yanked her hand from his chin. Not giving her a moment to react, he lifted her arm over her head and pressed it firmly against the wallpapered wall.

“Many times,” he breathed, lightly brushing the tip of his nose against hers. “Callie is a pretty good lay. She’s extremely flexible and she doesn’t have a gag reflex.”

Page 7

Source Creation Date: June 23, 2025, 5:33 am

Unable to stop her impulse, Lexi raised her left hand to slap his smug face, only to have him grab her arm and slam it above her head as he had with her right.

“Oh, are you jealous, my love?” he asked, pleased with the way she bucked against his hold. “Good. I like you like this, all hot and bothered thinking about me screwing the whore downstairs.”

Breathing hard, Lexi closed her eyes and gritted her teeth. She wanted to rip the virgin hair extensions from Callie’s scalp and shove them down her throat. She wanted to take her knife and scar every inch of her comely face. She needed to gut the bitch for touching her man.

Knowing he had her right where he wanted, he moved to brush his lips against the shell of her ear. “You want to kill her,” he stated matter-of-factly before trailing his lips down her neck.

Leaning her head, she moaned softly as his kisses turned darker, nipping and sucking on the flesh of her throat as if he was trying to mark his territory for all to see. “Yes,” she confessed, her blood running molten with sudden want.

Smiling against her skin, Kade casually moved his hand to her breast. Cupping his large hand around her right tit, he gave a tight squeeze before pulling his mouth away from her neck.

“I can arrange that for you, Sweetheart,” he said, locking his heady gaze on hers. “Once our son is born, I’ll arrange it all.”

Swallowing hard, she squirmed as he toyed with her nipple through the thin fabric of her maternity dress. In the back of her mind, she could hear Nikki screaming with glee. She hated to admit that she was just as excited about her love's weighty proposition.

"I don't want to wait," she hissed in annoyance. "I want to kill her now!"

"Oh, I know, my love...shhh, I know...but we have to be smart about this. You're in a delicate condition right now and Callie has been known to bite back. I can't risk something happening to you or our child. So, why don't we go a different route right now? I promise it'll get rid of all your frustration," he offered, his voice sultry and deep.

Pressing the back of her head against the elevator wall, she arched into his wanton touch. "Yeah? What?" she asked.

With his own arousal growing with every small whimper escaping her lips, he danced his gaze over her flushed face. She was already so close to breaking. One small push and she would be ready for Monday. He knew she wouldn't shy away from his suggestion. She wanted this just as badly as he did.

"There's a camera in the corner behind my shoulder. The feed is being broadcast in the backroom where Callie is right now with my Skulls. I'm sure she's watching us while they take their turns with her. Why don't we give her a show?" he said with a sinful smirk.

Slowly drifting her eyes from his devious face to the upper corner of the elevator, Lexi homed in on the tiny black bubble. He was right, she couldn't attack Callie in her current condition, but this? This would take the edge off her bloodlust.

"Mmm, yeah," she said, turning her attention to him once again, "let's give the bitch

one hell of a show.”

CHAPTER FOUR

Brushing his lips along Lexi’s cheek, Kade eagerly lifted the hem of her airy sundress up her thigh. He wanted nothing more than to fuck her on the hard floor of the elevator but needed to take her comfort into consideration. There would be plenty of time for that in the luxurious bed of their suite. This would be quick and easy. Something that would boost his love’s confidence and take the edge off of the desperation they were both feeling.

“Do you have any idea how beautiful you are right now?” he purred, turned on by her admission of murderous intent. “You’re perfect. Everything I’ve ever wanted.”

Whimpering in response, she spread her thighs as he dipped his fingers into her white cotton panties. Struggling to break his hold on her wrists, her face twisted in frustration. She was already growing impatient, and his praise only added fuel to her desperation. It had been far too long since she had felt his touch, and her body was more than ready.

“Shhh, just relax, Sweetheart. I know what you need,” he said, running the tip of his middle finger along her slit. “Oh, look at how wet you already are. You’ve missed me, haven’t you?”

Biting into her lower lip, she arched her hips as he found her swollen clit. As much as she wanted to deny his question, the words wouldn’t leave her mouth. After her first abduction, she tried to be intimate with Leo on a handful of occasions but stopped herself every single time. Kade had effectively ruined her from other men. She only wanted him. She would only ever want him.

Unsatisfied by her silence, he lightly pinched her clit between his index finger and

thumb, gently rolling the hardened nub to coax the words he needed to hear. “Say it,” he demanded, pressing his lips against her pulse point.

Swallowing a squeal, Lexi wiggled her pregnant body, her thoughts clouding over by the aching need building in her cunt. This was another power play; he needed his ego stroked. She wasn’t sure he deserved it.

Oh, come on, Nikki said with a sigh. Just give him the damn satisfaction! Look at you! You’re barely holding on. Would you fucking cave, already? God knows you need a good orgasm.

Pushing her alter back into the corner of her mind, Lexi drifted her gaze from the bubble in the corner of the elevator to the mirror attached to the wall before her. Fine, she hissed to herself, he could have the win. Next time, however, he would be the one doing the begging. She would make sure of it.

“Yes,” she moaned, watching his movements in the reflection of the mirror. “I missed this...and I...I missed you.”

Smiling triumphantly against her neck, Kade suddenly released her clit and moved his greedy fingers lower. Her confession was music to his ears, erasing the last bit of anger he had been holding onto since awakening from his coma. They now had a clean slate.

“That’s my good girl,” he praised, slowly pressing his middle and ring finger inside of her wet pussy.

Arching sharply against his calloused hand, she pressed her shoulders against the wall to keep her legs from buckling out from under her. He was stretching her and filling her exactly as she had remembered. Her overstimulated body wanted more of his wicked touch.

“Ahh...please...don’t stop,” she breathed. “Don’t...stop!”

Page 8

Source Creation Date: June 23, 2025, 5:33 am

Pulling away from her neck, he allowed his eyes to take their fill of her gorgeous face. Her reddened cheeks and furrowed brow made his cock strain against his tailored slacks. To know that only he held this power over her was the most intoxicating thing he had ever felt.

“Never,” he replied, rhythmically pushing and pulling his long fingers in and out of her silken cunt.

Moaning loudly into the air of the elevator, Lexi tried as best as she could to move her hips in time with his touch. Her rounded belly made her movements jerky and clumsy, but she was too far gone to care.

“That’s it, fuck my hand,” he commanded, his voice low and husky. “Show me how much you need me. Remind yourself that you belong to me.”

Gasping loudly, her glassy eyes darted from the mirror to his cocky face. Instinctively, her body instantly responded to his orders. Her pussy squeezed around his moving fingers, again and again as he curled them inside her. She should want to slap him for being so arrogant, but it only turned her on more.

“Fuck!” she squealed, relishing in the lewd sounds filling the tiny space.

Speeding the push of his fingers, Kade flicked his thick thumb upwards until he found her perfect clit. He loved how easily he was able to unravel her. She almost made things too easy for him. Almost.

“Oh...you’re getting close, Sweetheart, aren’t you?” he asked, rapidly tapping the pad

of his thumb against her tender clit. "I wonder if you will squirt your cum all over me like you did the first time."

Feeling her body climbing towards the peak of her sharp release, Lexi growled through gritted teeth. As much as she would love to deny it, he was right, she was close. So very close. She wouldn't be able to stop herself, now.

"Please...please," she panted.

Watching her intently, he lifted his lips into a smirk and nodded his head. He had her exactly where he wanted and couldn't be more pleased. Although too quick for his liking, he wanted to watch her break. He needed to feel her shatter around his greedy fingers. He had to have physical proof that she was his.

"Cum for me," he urged, his fingers gliding effortlessly in and out of her wet pussy.

Having his lewd permission, Lexi gave in to her carnal need. Swirling her hips a handful of times, she seized as a burst of pleasure ran through her core. Her tight climax sent waves of ecstasy through her trembling limbs and filled her vision with blinding stars that rendered her speechless.

Grunting an approval, Kade dropped his dark gaze as he felt a gush of warm liquid drench his hand, soak through her panties, and drip onto the floor of the lift. Helping her ride out the entirety of her release, he leaned forward and whispered sweet words of praise against her ear. He was so proud of her for trusting him enough to fully lose control. He knew she loved him.

Whimpering softly, she turned her head and captured his lips in a hungry kiss. In the back of her mind, she could hear the faint sound of Nikki cackling like a deranged lunatic, but she was too content to care what her alter thought. Nothing mattered at that moment but the lingering bliss tickling through her thrumming cunt.

Returning her kiss with equal passion, he reluctantly pulled his hand from her panties and released his hold on her wrists. Wanting to make sure his love and their son were ok; he gave her lower lip one more gentle nip before pulling away.

“How do you feel?” he asked, his deep voice tinged in concern, “that wasn’t too much for you or the baby, was it?”

A small laugh escaped her mouth, her shaky hands falling to her rounded belly. Too much? Hardly. She couldn’t remember the last time she had felt so relaxed. She didn’t even care about the evidence of her lust dripping down her shaking legs.

“No, it wasn’t too much,” she answered huskily, adjusting her dress.

“Good,” he said, moving to the control panel of the elevator and giving the camera in the corner a shit eating grin. “Now let’s go to our room and get you two something to eat.”

Humming a response, she steadied herself against the wall as the lift lurched upwards. She wasn’t sure what she was more famished for, food or her insane lover’s cock. Something told her she would have her fill of both before the night was through.

Casually glancing down, Lexi spit out a curse when she noticed just how much of her arousal had doused onto the floor. It was a sharp slap of reality that instantly sobered her. How could she have allowed herself to get that carried away in a public space? No wonder Nikki was laughing, she was sure the bitch would shove it in her face.

Noticing her worried expression, Kade took a step towards her and raised his hand to cradle the side of her rosy face. Making her meet his dark eyes, he gave her a sly smile. He knew exactly how to calm her trivial concern.

“Don’t worry, Sweetheart, I’ll make sure Callie is the one that cleans that up,” he offered with a quick wink.

CHAPTER FIVE

With his eyes filled with amusement, Kade watched Lexi as she shoved the last bite of her chili cheese dog into her mouth. He was thoroughly pleased by her voracious appetite. Since they had entered the suite twenty minutes prior, she had consumed a basket of fried pickles, one large pretzel smeared in mustard, and two chili dogs. It was more food than he had ever seen her eat in one setting.

“After our son is born, I want you to continue to eat. Maybe not quite like this...but you will not fall into your old habits again, is that understood?” he asked.

Picking up a glass of sparkling water, Lexi narrowed her eyes. Giving him a scathing look, she leaned against the back of her plush chair. As if he had any say in that matter. “I will eat how I want, when I want. Is that understood, Kade?” she bit back.

Shrugging his broad shoulders, he nonchalantly leaned down and reached into a brown paper bag at his feet. While he enjoyed her endorphin fueled confidence, she wouldn’t be so defiant once she began her extensive training. But for now, he would allow her to believe she had won the conversation. There would be plenty of time to revisit the argument once she had come to terms with her place in the Organization.

“I have something for you, well, a couple of things. Would you like your first present?” he asked casually.

Page 9

Source Creation Date: June 23, 2025, 5:33 am

Perking at his question, her anger melted into curiosity. She wasn't expecting to be gifted with anything. Well, nothing physical at least. Her emotional terror and trauma were gifts she would always carry with her, deep in her soul. "Uh, sure?" she replied, setting her glass down upon the table.

Pulling a black lacquered jewelry gift box from the bag, he placed it in front of her. While it wasn't the diamond ring he really wanted to give her, he was just as excited about this token of his love.

"I hope you like it, I had them specifically crafted just for you," he said.

Reaching for the box, she carefully picked it up. Looking at the name Annoushkascrolled on top, she leaned her head as she wracked her brain trying to think of where it was from. It was a substantial box, clearly from someplace a little higher end than the jewelry stores at the mall she was used to. Opening the lid, her eyes widened as they settled upon a delicate white gold bangle with three charms: the letter "K," the letter "L," and a white and yellow gold baby bootie. It made her heart squeeze to see their initials next to a symbol of their child. The romantic gesture threw her for another loop.

"Wow, this is...this is really beautiful," she said truthfully, pulling the bracelet from the box. "And thoughtful. Thank you."

Taking in a breath, he watched as she eased the bangle over her hand and onto her wrist. He had to pull quite a few strings to have the charms made on such short notice, but seeing her wear what was essentially their family in jewelry form made the headache worthwhile.

“It looks amazing on you. Do you like it?” he asked.

Moving her gaze from the bracelet to his proud face, she shook her head. She felt guilty for loving it so much, it was probably the most heartfelt present she had ever received. It only deepened the confusing emotions he harbored for him.

“No. I don’t like it...I love it,” she replied, a small smile lifting her lips. “I’ll never take it off.”

Thoroughly pleased by her reply, Kade gave himself a mental pat on the back for a job well done. Her reaction was better than the one that had been replaying in his head. He was looking forward to seeing her wear the bracelet and nothing else but still had one more gift. He had a feeling that she might like this one even more.

“Good, I’m happy you love it, but I’m not done just yet. Are you ready for dessert?” he asked, reaching back into the bag and pulling a pink and white striped box from the confines. Eyeing her carefully, he set it down next to the jewelry box.

Dropping her attention to the large pastry box, her mouth immediately fell open. Eagerly opening it, she took in a whiff of one of her favorite desserts of all time. Almost on command, she felt a series of tiny kicks under her navel, it seemed as if her son was just as excited for the famous cheesecake as she was.

“I’ve been craving Jackie’s for weeks now. How did you know?” she asked curiously, picking up her silver fork.

Folding his arms over his chest, he smirked as he watched her dive straight into the middle of the cheesecake. Again, he had to thank Leo for the little tidbit of information. Her darling husband had posted a picture on Instagram of her looking less than pleased eating a slice of cheesecake from a local bakery. Underneath was a caption that read, “Looks like our baby only wants Jackie’s. Anyone wanna send us

one and make my Sunshine happy? I'll forever be in your debt!"

Apparently, Leo was too stupid to realize that he could order the cheesecake online and have it shipped. All it would've taken was a simple web search to appease her craving. If he had really given two shits about either of them, he would have found a way to get her the damn cheesecake.

Fucking asshat, a deep voice muttered from the depths of his twisted mind. I hate to say this, but you were right Kade. He needed to be dealt with. It's better that she's with us now.

"Lucky guess," he replied, not letting the sudden emergence of his alter sway him from his current focus.

Cramming another bite of creamy cheesecake into her mouth, Lexi studied the enigmatic man before her. They hadn't spoken much since their lustful encounter in the elevator. Actually, they hadn't spoken much at all since he had taken her from the restaurant the day before. Now that she had his undivided attention, perhaps she could get some answers to the questions filling her mind.

"How long have you been awake from the coma?" she asked, licking graham cracker crumbs from the corner of her mouth.

Eyeing her carefully, he pressed his lips into a fine line. He wasn't quite sure if he should fill her in on all the details of his miraculous recovery just yet. He didn't want to risk all the progress they had made.

Don't you dare lie to her, his alter warned.

Letting out a long sigh, Kade decided to listen to his oh so lovely voice of reason; just this one time. "Five weeks," he answered honestly.

Nearly choking on her cheesecake, she coughed a piece of the pastry into her hand. Plopping it back into the box, she looked at him with wide eyes. Per the judge's orders, she was to be notified the moment he regained consciousness, if he regained consciousness. It was a phone call she both dreaded and looked forward to.

"Fucking hell, five weeks! Why the hell wasn't I told?" she spat.

"I think you know why, Sweetheart," he replied, unfolding his arms and softening his posture.

Swallowing hard, she stared at him for a long moment. The Tri-State Area was full of corruption. Bloodbayne probably owned half of the police force, if not the entire police force. They were never going to notify her. Why did she think they would? The disfigured fucker was untouchable. God, she was so stupid.

"So how long have you been stalking me, this time?" she asked, meeting his dark eyes.

Leaning over the tiny table towards his love, he held her nervous gaze. Little did she know that she had been under constant surveillance the entire time he was hospitalized, and he had been watching her as soon as he was able to leave his hospital bed. There wasn't a need to tell her that, though. It would only stress her out further.

"Almost two weeks. I wanted to take you the moment I saw you, it took everything I had within me not to. But I didn't trust myself," he said, his voice taking on an icy edge. "I needed to keep my distance. For your safety, and our son's."

Soaking in the implication of his words, her skin pebbled in trepidation. She often wondered how he would feel once he finally awoke. It was a constant concern that he would be angry with her, that his need for revenge would overshadow his obsession.

Knowing that her worries were justified instantly set her in a defensive position.

Source Creation Date: June 23, 2025, 5:33 am

“And what about my safety,” she began, placing her free hand against her rounded bump. “Oursafety, now?”

Ohhh. Careful, Kade. Be very fucking careful with her, his alter quipped suddenly.

Heading the phantom voice in his head, Kade took note of the way his love was suddenly gripping the fork in her right hand. The mental warning was right, his little hellion was getting ready to strike. He knew that if he didn't calm her nerves immediately, she would surely stab his carotid artery with the metal utensil. Fucking hormones, he growled internally.

“Neither you, nor our son, is in danger. I promise you,” he said, purposefully lowering his voice to soothe her agitation.

Swallowing hard, Lexi lifted her rounded chin and tried her best to hide her conflicting emotions. She wanted so badly to believe him. How could she, though? Sure, he may be the father of her child, and the one that held her heart, but he was still a cold-blooded murderer.

Funny, he could say the same about you, Nikki said with a sigh. I can't believe I'm saying this but trust him, Lexi. Now that Leo's gone, he's all you have left. And you will need him to be on your side when you meet Bloodbayne. Or did you forget about that?

Clenching her jaw, she protectively swiped her open hand over her belly. She wasn't sure if she should listen to the bitch in her head, but she had a good point. He was the only lifeline she had left, and she absolutely needed to have full loyalty when they

walked into this meeting.

Sensing that his love was struggling with something, he reached over and eased the silver fork from her fingers. Placing the utensil on his side of the table, he took her hand in his. He could feel his alter tugging on the strings, trying so desperately to slip into the driver's seat. But he would be damned if he allowed him to steal this moment. He was more than capable of calming his pregnant spitfire.

"Hey," he began, mentally slamming the phantom voice back in its place. "I won't let anything ever happen to either of you."

"Yeah? And what about Bloodbayne?" she asked, a quizzical look painting her face. "You're his Underboss, Kade. What if he orders you to kill me? What, then? Would you?"

Blinking at her, a deep frown pulled the corners of his lips. Her fear was warranted, there was a real possibility that Bloodbayne could tell him to kill her and the baby. If that order ever came, he would be forced to do the deed. However, he had the crime lord's word that they were safe from any retaliation. He was banking upon that security.

"He won't. You're too valuable," he stated matter-of-factly.

"That doesn't answer my question. What would you do?" she asked, arching a brow.

Not wishing to continue the conversation, he abruptly stood from his chair. Stepping over to her, he helped her from her seat. Everything was on the verge of spiraling out of control. He needed to divert her attention elsewhere. "Come here, let me show you something," he said, pulling her towards the expanse of rectangular windowpanes lining their suite.

Sighing softly, she stilled her round body as he moved behind her. A small shiver ran down her spine as his strong arms caged her securely against his torso. She knew he was trying to distract her from the issue at hand, and it unnerved her.

“What do you see, my love?” he asked, his hands drifting down to caress her belly.

Scowling as she peered through the window, she settled her gaze upon the famous skyline before her. Dawn was on the verge of breaking, causing an almost picturesque iridescence to dance over the City. In any other circumstance, she would be mesmerized. It truly was a beautiful sight.

“Manhattan,” she answered.

Nodding his head, he pressed his palms against the curve of her stomach. Almost immediately, he felt his son roll beneath his possessive touch. He had grandiose plans for their future as a family. Hopefully, they would ease her apprehension.

“Yes. And it will all be ours someday,” he purred, leaning down to nuzzle the crown of her head. “You have nothing to worry about. You’re both safe with me. I love you.”

Remaining quiet as he held her, she tried to make sense of the jumbled thoughts clouding her mind. She wasn’t sure how to react to his confident declarations. Part of her wanted to believe his honeyed words, while the other wanted to throw him out of the window.

Trust him, Lexi. That’s the only way you’re going to survive this time. Trust him and make sure that he knows he can’t live without you, Nikki said.

Taking her alter’s suggestion to heart, she turned in his arms. Purposefully locking her eyes on his, she gave him the sly smile she knew he couldn’t resist. She had just a little over twenty-four hours to cement his loyalty, and she intended to make good use

of them.

“Then take me to bed, Kade. Show me how much you love me,” she breathed.

CHAPTER SIX

Gasping in pleasure, Lexi slapped her open palms against the blue and white headboard before her. To her amazement, she could feel her overworked body racing towards her third orgasm of the morning. Kade was indeed a man of his word, he seemed hellbent on making her cum as many times as she could.

“Ahhhh.... yes!Right...there,” she panted. “Close...sooo close.”

Smirking to himself, Kade continued working his teeth and tongue in tandem over her sensitive clit. Biting and flicking against the firm bud, he dug his jagged nails into her soft thighs to hold her tightly in place. Her uninhibited moans were driving him mad, but he wanted just one more break before he indulged in his own release.

Instinctively following her wanton urges, she moved her shaking hips in a series of slow circles, her body greedily accepting every eager lick and nibble from her lover nestled between her thighs. Although she couldn't visibly see him, she could tell he was enjoying this just as much as she. It turned her on even more to know that he valued her pleasure even more than his own.

Well, well, well,Nikki quipped suddenly. He really is proving his love. My, aren't you a lucky girl.

Source Creation Date: June 23, 2025, 5:33 am

Closing her glassy eyes, she viciously shoved her alter back into the deep recesses of her mind. She knew Nikki was trying her best to break her concentration and ruin the moment. There was blatant jealousy in the bitch's tone and it made Kade's lewd actions all the more sweeter. She wasn't about to let the jealous cow win.

"Fuckkk...don't stop...don't stop!" she moaned.

Spurred on by her words, he languidly swirled his uneven tongue along her slit. Back and forth, repeatedly, until finally returning to her perfect clit. Groaning against her skin, he greedily sucked the pink bundle into his mouth, knowing full well that the tiny bit of friction would push her over the edge.

Grinding her sopping pussy against his hungry mouth, she whimpered a series of unintelligible words. Her spinning mind was no longer able to think or react to anything besides the sharp crescendo of bliss building within her core. After a handful of rapid breaths, she felt a wave of conflicting sensations crash upon her. A mixture of sweet pleasure and wicked pain that gripped her overstimulated body and left her whimpering for more.

Feeling her seize around him, Kade slowly eased his teeth and tongue from her core. Releasing his grip on her quaking thighs, he patiently waited until she had ridden out the entirety of her orgasm before encouraging her to move lower onto his bare chest.

Sucking in much needed air, she looked down over her belly at his flushed face. From his overly cocky grin, she could tell that he was pretty proud of himself. He had every reason to be, he was the only one who could make her split apart so beautifully. Now it was her turn, though. She was going to make the great Kade Volkov beg for

mercy.

“I want you inside of me,” she purred, slowly slinking her pregnant body further down his torso.

Hissing a curse, he raised his head from the mattress and watched as she carefully positioned herself over his aching cock. She wasn't going to hear any protests from him. Just the thought alone of being inside her silken cunt made him want to spill his seed right then and there.

“Then fuck me,” he ordered through gritted teeth.

Smirking at his impatience, she moved her hand to the base of his thick cock to hold him steady. She had him right where she wanted him. This was going to be fun. “What's the magic word?” she teased, hovering her soaked pussy over his length.

Growling low, he arched his hips in an act of annoyance. Lifting his hands from the bed, he eagerly gripped the sides of her hips. Her defiance was torture of the sweetest kind, but he couldn't be toyed with a moment longer. He needed to feel her squeeze around him. Now.

“Please, Lexi! I need you to fuck me,” he begged, his voice laced with desperation.

Licking her lips, she nodded once and guided the swollen tip of his cock to her waiting entrance. Keeping her eyes locked with his, she slowly lowered her cunt down onto his length. Inch by inch, stopping every other heartbeat to prolong the delicious sensation for both of them.

“Ahhh...good boy. Begging me so nicely,” she said with a tiny smirk. “It's been way too long.”

Agreeing with a masculine grunt, he moved his hands to her full tits. Palming the soft mounds, he squeezed his fingers into her skin in an effort to goad her into moving. It had been entirely too long since he was inside her. Her pussy felt even better than he had remembered. All of the months he had stayed cocooned in his coma were completely worth it for this erotic moment alone.

Covering his hands with her own, she began to languidly rock her lower half. Back and forth, making sure his cock hit every part of her tight sheath. While her belly prevented her from moving the way she used to, she easily found a comfortable rhythm. It might not have been as desperate and rough as their previous times together, but from the blissful look on her lover's face, she knew he didn't mind.

Running his thumbs over her darkened nipples, he groaned as she purposefully squeezed her inner walls around his cock. It was almost too much for him to handle, he had to warn her before he lost all semblance of control.

"Ahhh...shit, Sweetheart...keep that up...and I'll cum before...you have a chance to," he said in a strained tone.

"That's the idea," she replied, "don't worry about me...the only thing I need is for you to fill my tight little cunt with your white-hot cum."

Spitting an obscenity, Kade's eyes widened from a combination of shock and lust. Hearing the woman of his dreams say something so lewd sent his heady need into overdrive. "Holy fuck, Lexi," he said, his voice lifting in surprise.

Giving him a cheeky wink, she increased the speed of her thrusts as fast as her clumsy hips would allow. If he only knew how many times she had fantasized about this. She practically beamed knowing that a tiny bit of dirty talk was enough to set him on fire.

“Yeah? So? Does that mean you’re going to give me what I want,Kade?” she asked through heavy pants.

Pushing out a feral growl, he squeezed her tits until she winced from the pressure. She was lucky that she was in a delicate condition. It was taking all of his strength not to toss her face first onto the mattress and fuck her so hard she wouldn’t be able to walk for a week.

“Careful what you ask for,” he warned, lifting his hips to match her thrust-for-thrust.

Squealing into the air of the hotel room, she relished his dominant need. Ignoring her burning thigh muscles, she rode down on him as hard as she could. She knew they couldn’t play like they had in the past, but she was enjoying herself just the same.

“Yes...yes!”she moaned.

Committing the sound of their slapping bodies to memory, he grit his teeth and held onto his sanity for as long as he could. It wasn’t until he felt a warm gush of her arousal soaking the length of his cock that he lost all control. Within the span of two heartbeats, the floodgates of his release opened, bringing with it an orgasm so intense that he thought that his own death was upon him.

“FUCK!” he growled, holding her still as he coated the inside of her cunt with his cum.

Halting her hips, she gave him a sly smile as she watched his face twist in pleasure. She thoroughly enjoyed watching him break,she was already looking forward to the next time he would fall apart for her.

“How was that?” she asked sweetly, squeezing her pussy walls around his spent cock to milk every last drop from him.

Page 12

Source Creation Date: June 23, 2025, 5:33 am

“Lexi...ahh, please...so sensitive,” he hissed, giving her nipples one last pinch before dropping his hands to gently caress her belly. “God that was fucking amazing...are you ok, though? I didn’t hurt you, did I?”

Shaking her head, she couldn’t help but let out a breathy laugh. His genuine concern was almost heartwarming. Maybe he truly loved her? “No, you didn’t hurt me. I feel fine! More than fine, actually,” she replied, lifting the back of her hand to wipe a bead of perspiration running down the side of her flushed face.

Arching a dark brow, he carefully eyed her as she gulped in much needed air. He knew he shouldn’t have worked her so hard after the chaotic events of the day. He shouldn’t have been so selfish. His love needed to rest, the sooner the better.

“You’re exhausted. Here, cuddle next to me, Sweetheart, and get some sleep,” he offered, gathering her into his arms. “When you wake up, we’ll get ready and take a walk through Central Park. Maybe take in a show? I can get us tickets to anything you want to see. How does that sound?”

Unable to hide her shock, a dumbfounded expression passed over her features. Did he really just suggest a normal date? Who was this man and what did he do with her obsessive murderer? Perhaps his orgasm reset his brain.

“Well, it sounds very...domestic,” she replied, snuggling against his toned torso.

“Domestic? Yeah, I guess it does. But we are going to be parents. It can’t be all murder and sex all the time now, can it?” he said with a tiny shrug.

Nuzzling her lips over his skin, she mumbled as her tired mind succumbed to the inky bliss of sleep. It was almost ridiculous, the thought of them being a “normal” mom and dad. Just two, run of the mill parents. Volunteering with the PTA and taking their son to Little League. Moonlighting as assassins for the Bloodbayne Organization on the side.

Such a perfect little family, she said to herself before nestling against his side and falling fast asleep.

...

Slipping away from her candy-colored dream, Lexi reluctantly opened her still exhausted eyes. Extending her right hand, she eagerly felt around the satin sheets for Kade’s warm body. Finding only an empty space in his place, she huffed in annoyance before lifting her head from the pillow in search of him.

It wasn’t long before she found her psychotic lover, standing regally before the hotel window overlooking the Manhattan skyline. At first, she believed he was simply admiring the hustle and bustle of his future kingdom. She soon realized, however, that he was having a heated conversation over his cell phone. Only seeing the expanse of his muscular back, she knew he was livid by the way he hissed into the phone pressed tightly against his ear. Scrunching her face in concentration, she blocked out the world around her and focused her attention on the words spitting from his mouth.

“No, no, no! I was told that he wouldn’t be back until tomorrow!”

...

“Yeah? Well I don’t fucking care that there’s been a complication with the Bangkok deal. That’s not my territory and Bloodbayne fucking knows it!”

...

“Bullshit! I told him it was a shitty deal, it’s not my fucking fault that he wouldn’t listen to me! God damn it! Can’t you just stall him for a few hours, Val? You’re good at that. I donno...suck his cock or something!”

...

“Why am I being so obstinate? Because Lexi and my son fucking need their rest! She had a very long day and needs time to recover.”

...

“FUCK! Fine! Give us an hour...Yeah, of course they’re here, they’re my men...yeah, I’ll bring them. Fine. Look, I said I would and I will. We’ll be there soon!”

Abruptly ending the call, Kade threw his cell onto the floor with an angry growl. Muttering another obscenity, he roughly wiped his hand across his livid face. His blood was boiling, he couldn’t remember the last time he was so pissed off. He knew Valentina was only doing her job, but he wanted to strangle the bitch. She could have lied to their boss and given him more time, but no. Fuck, she was so far up Bloodbayne’s ass.

Kade! STOP, his alter interrupted. Quit blaming her! You know damn well it’s because of her that Lexi and the baby are alive right now so just fucking chill, alright? Jesus. Just take a deep breath and get Lexi ready. You know she’s going to need to be eased into this! If you don’t feel like you’re capable of staying in check, then just let me step in and do it for you!

Laughing out loud, he rolled his dark eyes at the absurdity of his alter’s suggestion. Like hell he would ever let Demetri take the reins. No, he needed to be the one who

remained in power. Especially now that their meeting with Bloodbayne was imminent.

Eyeing him warily, Lexi clumsily pulled herself into an upright position. Gruffly yanking the cum stained sheet, she held it against her bare chest. Why the hell was he laughing? She didn't think there was anything funny about what was about to happen.

"Kade," she began, her voice hard with defiance. "I don't want to go."

Instantly whirling on his heels, he settled his surprised gaze upon the beautiful hellcat in his bed. Shit, he thought, when the fuck did she wake up?

"Go where, Sweetheart?" he asked, trying to sweeten his voice to disarm the phantom daggers being thrown his way.

Narrowing her green eyes, she scoffed at her advancing lunatic. If he really wanted her to be compliant and willing, he needed to work on his technique. He should know by now that she wasn't someone to screw with.

"I heard everything," she spat, "and I'm not going! Bloodbayne can fuck off, I'm staying here!"

Source Creation Date: June 23, 2025, 5:33 am

Quirking his lips into a sly grin, he took a seat on the mussed bed. Shrugging his large shoulders, he let out an exaggerated sigh. While he admired her fire, this was an argument that she would not win.

“You don’t really have a choice, my love,” he replied, lifting his hand to cradle her face. “Now we can do this the easy way...or the hard way. I would hate to put you back into those awful restraints. Please don’t make me. I don’t want to hurt you.”

Swallowing hard, she suddenly remembered the days she spent bound in leather and chains in his underground bunker. She never wanted to wear those torture devices ever again. As much as it hurt to admit, she didn’t have a choice. Once again, she needed to keep the safety of her son, their son, foremost in her mind.

“Alright,” she reluctantly conceded. “But you need to promise me, Kade...promise me that you won’t let Bloodbayne do anything stupid.”

Nodding in agreement, he leaned forward and placed a tender kiss upon her forehead. He was relieved that she was finally accepting her fate within the Organization. It would make their lives so much easier if she didn’t fight it.

“Of course, Sweetheart. I promise you,” he said before standing from the bed and offering her his hand. “Why don’t we take a shower? I’ll wash your hair with that shampoo that smells like apple blossoms. I know how much you love that.”

Hesitating for a handful of moments, she finally placed her hand in his. She hated how quickly he could disarm her. Even with him threatening her only seconds prior, she felt herself melting at the thought of his fingers massaging into her scalp. What in

the actual fuck was wrong with her?

Ohhh. Isn't love grand, Lexi? Nikki quipped, her voice dripping in dark humor. It kills all your brain cells. Not that you had many to begin with.

Ungracefully rising from the mattress, she followed Kade as he led her waddling body towards the brightly lit bathroom. Mentally flipping off the bitch in her head, she hissed a silent reply.

Yeah right. So fucking grand.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Winding through the defunct meat packing plant, Lexi plastered a look of faux confidence over her face as she stepped directly behind Kade. Keeping her exhausted eyes locked onto the back of his head, she squared her shoulders and tried her best to ignore the agitated men flanking her sides. He assured her that they were only protecting her, but she knew that wasn't the case. They were making sure she wouldn't bolt at the smallest opportunity. It rubbed her the wrong way that after all he had put her through, he still didn't trust her.

Guess the feeling is mutual then, huh? Nikki snickered. Why are you still upset by that? In the grand scheme of things, his trust issues are kinda trivial, don't you think? I'm so sick of hearing about it. Move the fuck on, already!

Reluctantly agreeing with her alter, she continued to follow him through the maze of darkened corridors. She was about to meet the only person in the world that truly terrified her to the core, and didn't have the luxury of worrying about her toxic relationship with her lunatic lover. Her only priorities were to make sure that she, and her son, survived this meeting.

Stalking down the hallway, Kade scowled as the pungent smell of blood and decay filled his nostrils. He hated everything about the dilapidated slaughterhouse and avoided it whenever possible. It held too many ghosts, too many unpleasant memories that he would rather suppress. This was where Bloodbayne took those that needed to be broken into submission. It was foolish of him to think that Lexi would be treated with a little more care.

Rounding the crumbling corner, he slowed his steps as the office door came into view. Glancing over his shoulder, he honed his dark eyes on Lexi and gave a wordless warning. She needed to behave herself from this moment on. All hell would break loose if she decided to do something stupid.

Understanding his command, she nodded once and tried to convey through her face that he needn't worry. Just as long as he kept his end of the deal, she would be as compliant as a newborn kitten.

'Good girl,' he mouthed before giving each of his men a fleeting glance. They all looked just as pissed off as he felt. He had to use all but brute force to get them away from Callie's cunt. Apparently, he wasn't the only one that needed more time in bed.

Pushing out a sigh, he turned his attention back to the metal door and mentally readied himself for what lay ahead. Years of preparation had brought him to this moment. He should be filled with excitement that his plans were finally coming into fruition, but he was filled with apprehension instead. He didn't understand where this hesitation was coming from.

Because you actually love her, Demetri whispered. She's not a toy like the others. She means something to you...tous. Don't fuck this up. I'll kill you if you do.

Reaching for the doorknob, a deep frown etched into his otherwise handsome face. His alter had just hit the nail on the head. Lexi was the only thing he had ever truly

loved and that was a giant liability. For once in his life, he prayed his Boss would keep his word.

Turning the metal knob, he paused as the door was roughly pulled from his hand. Lifting his lips into a grin, he straightened his posture and offered a warm greeting to the commanding blonde filling the doorway. He hadn't realized how much he had missed her until that moment. "It's good to see you again," he said.

Eyeing him critically from head to toe, Valentina suppressed a smile from cracking through her icy exterior. While she was thrilled to see him walking and talking, this was far from a happy reunion. Pleasantries would have to wait.

"Where is she?" she asked calmly.

Turning his body, Kade gently took Lexi's elbow and ushered her towards Valentina with a look of triumph. This was the only introduction he wasn't nervous about. He knew his pseudo sister would adore her just as much as he did.

"Valentina, meet Lexi," he said, fixating his steely gaze on Lexi's flushed face. "Lexi, meet Valentina."

Blinking at the tall woman before her, Lexi was momentarily caught off guard by how regal she seemed. There was a thick air of authority surrounding her that made her stomach fill with butterflies. Valentina was clearly someone who shouldn't be trifled with.

"Hello," she said, holding her hand out in a formal greeting.

Brushing her hand away, Valentina took a step forward and brazenly pressed her hands against Lexi's rounded belly, squeezing her palms in an effort to feel the child she had spent months protecting. "What is it? Girl or boy?" she asked curtly.

Glancing back and forth between the woman and Kade, Lexi's face twisted in offense over the blonde's flippant attitude. She didn't care for the way she was touching her stomach, nor her rude question. Who the fuck did she think she was?

Page 14

Source Creation Date: June 23, 2025, 5:33 am

“I don’t see why that’s any of your concern—”

“Boy,” Kade interrupted, wrapping his long arm possessively around Lexi’s shoulders. “It’s a boy.”

Visibly relaxing the tension in her body, Valentina nodded in approval before finally turning her full attention towards Lexi. “Good. That should make things easier.”

Narrowing her green eyes, Lexi tried to pull away from Valentina’s touch. “Make what easier? What are you talking about? Why does it matter that I’m having a boy?” she asked.

“We,” Kade interjected, tightening his hold on Lexi to stop her from squirming. “We are having a boy. Now please calm down Sweetheart, it was just a small formality.”

Sighing in annoyance, Valentina removed her hands from Lexi’s stomach. Standing to full height, she openly stared at her. She hoped Kade would have been able to tame some of her fire, but clearly that was a pipe dream. They hadn’t even begun, and things were already off to a shaky start.

“Let’s get her inside. Leave your men here. Mitaka will be out in a few minutes to take them to their briefing on Bangkok,” she said.

Glancing to each of his men, Kade made sure that they understood their orders. He was thankful that they were being dismissed from the meeting. His love didn’t need the added pressure of an audience watching her every move.

“Follow me and don’t worry, everything will be alright,” he offered gently, leading her through the rusted doorway.

...

Standing ramrod straight, Lexi stared down the scarred troll sitting behind the desk before her. Keeping her face stoic and her body language frigid, she waited impatiently for Bloodbayne to speak. She didn’t want to give him the satisfaction of knowing that she was quaking beneath her stony exterior, that her heart was beating so quickly that she was sure it was on the verge of exploding. No, he didn’t need to know just how frightened she was.

“Alexandria,” Bloodbayne began, the space where his lips used to be pulling back into the best sneer he could muster. “It’s so good to finally meet the woman who almost put my heir apparent into his grave. Though I must admit, from what I see, I’m not entirely sure how you did it. You’re nothing more than a gutter rat and yet, you’ve managed to do what I thought was impossible.”

Swallowing hard, she felt Kade’s radiating tension as he stood behind her. He was feeling just as uneasy as she. It was a realization that left a bad taste in her mouth.

“Before we go further, my dear, I think you should know just how close you came to having a bullet put through your brain. Valentina was mere seconds away from pulling the trigger when she found out about your little gift,” Bloodbayne purred, pointing his knobbed index finger towards her stomach.

“Gift?” she asked, her arms instinctively wrapping around her bump protectively.

Rising from his seat, Bloodbayne casually strolled around his desk to stand in front of her. Annoyance flashed over what was left of his gnarled features. He knew she was smarter than she was trying to let on. Eventually, she would learn that false ignorance

grated him to no end; but he would humor her this time.

“Yes. You see, when you put my boy into that coma, you effectively ended my empire. The doctors didn’t think he would ever wake up. They warned me that if he did, he would be drooling vegetable for the rest of his life.”

Pausing for a long moment, he let his blue eyes drift to Kade. There was a flash of pain as he relived the moment, he was told what had happened to his most trusted confidant, the memory caused his voice to rise and curdle as he continued.

“Hundreds of years of power gone in a blink of an eye. Because of you! A worthless whore!”

Seething from Bloodbayne’s words, Lexi’s blood ran hot under her cheeks. What she wouldn’t give to have her knife with her at that moment. She wanted nothing more than to gut him like a fish.

Careful, Lexi, Nikki warned. This isn’t the time.

Sensing her rising anger, Kade gently placed his fingertips on her lower back to soothe her. For her sake, and his son’s, she needed to breathe and realize that she wasn’t alone. He would do his best to protect them both.

Wanting to push the girl further, Bloodbayne took a half a step closer into her personal space and continued with his story. “You see, Kade’s extracurricular activities never bothered me because they never interfered with his work. That is, until you came into the picture. Somehow, you were able to bewitch him to the point where he wanted to keep you. He begged me to bring you into the fold. He promised me that you had a certain set of skills that could be useful. I was skeptical but willing to give you a try.... but then, well...we know what happened. Don’t we? Blunt force head trauma from a kettle of all things, massive internal and

external injuries from being run over by an SUV a couple of times. You really did a number on my boy.”

Noticing the remorse falling over her somewhat attractive face, he chuckled darkly. Pausing for a moment, he gave her time to relive whatever painful memory was playing out in her mind. He wanted her to suffer just as he had.

“You see, Lexi, in my business we believe in the adage of ‘an eye for an eye.’ You destroyed everything I had built so I was going to destroy you,” he purred, glancing over his shoulder to the statuesque woman guarding the office door. “I sent Valentina to do the deed. She’s very efficient, only second to Kade, so I knew she would get the job done...and she almost did...but then she overheard the conversation you were having with your husband about the child you were carrying. At first, she thought it was his and was going to complete her mission but then she overheard you talking to yourself after you hung up the phone. Didn’t you, Valentina? Do you recall what Lexi said?”

Clearing her throat, Valentina gave a curt nod. Of course she remembered, it was the only time in her life where she had followed her gut and disobeyed her orders.

“I do, she said, ‘You’re a lying bitch. You know this baby is Kade’s, how dare you let Leo think it’s his. You know that you’re going to hell for this.’”

Soaking in her words, Lexi swallowed hard in recognition. She knew the exact day Valentina was referring to and remembered the moment vividly. Leo had called her to tell her he had hired a designer to set up the nursery. He was so excited to become a father and did everything in his power to make her feel better about the unintended pregnancy. Little did he know the true reason for her melancholy. Leo was the most wonderful man she had ever met. He didn’t deserve what happened to him. She would still be going to hell for everything she had put him through.

“Oh, Leo,” she whispered.

Thoroughly pleased with her apparent anguish, Bloodbayne took a breath and carried on with his story. “And in that moment, there was a chance that my family’s empire would survive whether or not Kade did,” he stated with an evil glint in his blue eyes. “God blessed me with a gift to right all of your wrongdoings.”

Source Creation Date: June 23, 2025, 5:33 am

Hugging her stomach tighter, Lexi took the tiniest bit of comfort when she felt her son roll under her touch. She didn't quite understand what the mobster was getting at. Her thoughts were too cloudy and jumbled, caught between her memories and reality.

"What gift? My child?!" she asked incredulously.

"Well, only if it was a boy," Bloodbayne answered.

"Why would it matter?" she spat back.

Leaning in uncomfortably close, he relished the way she recoiled in response. It seemed as if the little bitch needed a history lesson. "The Bloodbayne Organization goes back hundreds of years. My forefathers helped build this Country. Everything you see...everything you've ever known is because of us. We shaped America into the great Nation she is today," he said proudly.

"Oh?" she hissed without thinking, "I hadn't realized that political corruption, drug smuggling, and human trafficking were the proud cornerstones of our soc—"

Before she had a chance to finish her sentence, Bloodbayne raised his hand and viciously backhanded her face. An audible snap could be heard just as his ruby ring caught on her mouth and tore her bottom lip.

"You would do well to keep your mouth shut!" he growled.

Whimpering from the sting, she lifted her hand to cover her bleeding mouth. Behind her, she felt Kade's heavy hands move to her hips to steady her wobbly body. She

wasn't sure if he was trying to comfort her or hold her in place for another hit.

Keeping his beady eyes on her, Bloodbayne smoothed his hands down the lapel of his charcoal tailored suit jacket. He wanted to do more to her than a simple, little slap. She deserved all the pain he could inflict.

"The Bloodbayne Organization has been passed down from generation to generation through first born sons. This might shock you but yes, Kade is my biological son. His mother was going to abort him. Can you believe that? But luckily, I stopped the bitch before she could. And he's everything I could've ever hoped for. Raw. Vicious. Loyal to me. The perfect son."

Clenching his jaw, Kade honed his eyes on his father's snarling face as he rambled on and on about his importance within the Organization. Anger rose with every word, causing adrenaline to spike in his blood. If Valentina wasn't in the room, it would be so easy to dispatch the aging warlord and take control. But even with the bond he shared with the woman, he knew she would gun both he and Lexi down if he ever broke his loyalty. It was wise of his father to keep her around.

"So," Bloodbayne continued. "You see, with Kade in his coma, I needed another heir. There was a chance that you were carrying one, so I let you live. Wasn't that nice of me?"

Narrowing her eyes, Lexi bit into the flesh of her cheek to keep herself from saying something snide. Like she would ever consider that an act of kindness.

"Speaking of the child, do we know what it is?" Bloodbayne asked curiously.

"A boy," Kade answered immediately, his voice deep and menacing.

Clapping his hands together, Bloodbayne twisted his burned mouth into a grotesque

smile, “Wonderful! A grandson! Well, this calls for a celebration!”

“Wait,” Lexi interrupted. “What would have happened had this baby been a girl?”

“I would have killed you,” he answered without hesitation. “Lucky for you, you’re carrying precious cargo. Now, I can let you and the boy live...that is, if you swear your allegiance to me and agree to work for me as soon as you bring him into this world.”

Gripping his fingers into Lexi’s hips, Kade leaned forward and boldly placed a kiss upon the crown of her head. He knew she would make the right decision and wanted her to know that it was ok for her to agree. She would be working beside him; he would never let anything happen to her. With her allegiance, they would be together as a family. This was their destiny.

Closing her eyes, Lexi took a staggering breath. If it was just her, she would choose death in a heartbeat. But she had another life to consider. It was her fundamental responsibility as her son’s mother to protect him. No matter the cost.

“Yes,” she said reluctantly, her voice breaking at the seams. “I’ll do it.”

Chuckling low, Bloodbayne raised his hand to cradle her cheek. Lowering his arthritic thumb, he smeared the blood dripping from her injured lip down her chin. He could tell that this was the beginning of a beautiful relationship. All she needed to do was complete one small task.

“Smart girl. Perhaps my son is right about you,” he said, his blue eyes raking over her face. “Let’s find out, shall we? It’s time to prove your loyalty to me.”

Scrunching her face in confusion, she watched as Bloodbayne motioned to Valentina with his free hand. Taking her cue, the commanding woman walked towards a large,

rusty door behind the desk. What the fuck was going on, she wondered. She already agreed to working for him, what more could he possibly want from her?

Panic gripped her stomach, causing bile to rise in her throat as the hunk of steel slid open. Ignoring the evil glee wafting from the mobster, she instead focused on the horrific image being revealed inch by painful inch. Blinking at the grotesque scene before her, it took a handful of seconds for her brain to fully recognize the mangled shell of a man shackled to a folding chair. Gasping audibly, she shook her head in disbelief. This was a sick nightmare; it had to be. She didn't want to believe that what she was seeing was real.

"Leo," she whimpered.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Wrapping his arms around Lexi's torso, Kade pulled her tightly against his chest to keep her from falling to the ground. Gritting his teeth in frustration, he moved his livid gaze from Leo's moaning form to his father, and back again. Shit, shit, shit. This wasn't part of the plan.

How the fuck did this happen, Kade? Demitri hissed from the depths of his mind. You ordered your men to kill him so Bloodbayne couldn't do this shit! They even gave you fucking confirmation that he had been taken out!

Source Creation Date: June 23, 2025, 5:33 am

Cradling her in his arms, he tried to comfort her as his alter's words echoed in his mind. It was glaringly obvious that he didn't have as tight of a reign over his men as he thought he did. He didn't know why he was so surprised, Bloodbayne loved to assert his power. This grisly scene had nothing to do with Lexi swearing her allegiance, the deformed fucker was teaching him another valuable lesson.

"She can't do this," he growled, watching Bloodbayne step towards Leo. "Not in her condition!"

Casually removing a switchblade from the inner pocket of his lapel, the mob boss laughed hotly at his son's words. Moving behind the moaning man, he zeroed his icy stare on the whore. Like the little cunt could get away so easily. No, he needed more from her, and from Kade.

"Nonsense, he's practically half dead as it is," he replied, grabbing Leo's matted locks and pulling his broken face upwards. "Considering all of the other tests I could have given her, you should be thanking me for only making her do this."

Trembling in his arms, Lexi's mind couldn't comprehend the conversation going on around her. She refused to believe that what she was seeing was anything more than a nightmare concocted by her overactive mind. Once she woke up, everything would be back to normal. It would all be ok.

I hate to break it to you, but this isn't a fucking dream, Nikki quipped. And if you want to live, then you had better take care of the situation. Quickly.

Shaking her head, she mentally scoffed at her alter. Took care

of what situation? Killing her husband? She couldn't kill the sweetest, most selfless man she had ever known. He was completely innocent in all of this. They were insane to think she would ever do such a deplorable act.

Annoyed by her silence, Bloodbayne stomped his foot on the stained linoleum floor. He was growing tired of repeating himself. If it weren't for his love for his son, she would be lying on the floor with a bullet in her brain.

"Girl, did you hear me?!" he bellowed.

Snapping herself from her racing thoughts, she raised her gaze from Leo to the mobster. Giving him a scathing scowl, she narrowed her green eyes. She wished she had the power to kill with a single glance, the deformed goblin would be dead ten times over if she could.

"What?" she spat.

Using the hand holding the closed switchblade, Bloodbayne made a motion for her to come forward. "Come here and put this man out of the misery you have caused," he said, flashing his sharp teeth. "Kill him and prove to me that you belong here!"

Jerking her pregnant body, she tried to break Kade's strong hold. Oh, she would kill someone, alright. But it wouldn't be her husband.

"FUCK YOU!" she screamed, "I will kill you before I kill h—"

Lifting his right hand, Kade slapped his palm over her mouth to stop her from going any further. He hated to muzzle her, but he didn't care for the burning anger flashing over his father's face. She was skating on very thin ice and putting their son at risk.

"Quiet, Lexi!" he warned, his dark eyes moving to Valentina as she reached into her

tailored jacket for her gun.

Squirming in his grasp, she continued to scream from behind his hand. She didn't care that Bloodbayne couldn't make out what she was saying, it was satisfaction enough to know that she was getting under his burned skin.

Groaning into the stale air of the room, Leo began to stir. Hearing a woman's livid mumbles, he fought off the inky nothingness trying to consume him. Forcing open his swollen eyes, he tried in vain to center his double vision on the figures facing him. Lexi? Was she really there? Or was this just another hallucination?

"Sunshine? Is...is..is that you?" he rasped.

Stilling her thrashing body, Lexi's eyes widened as she heard his voice. It terrified her that he was regaining consciousness. He shouldn't be awake for what was going to happen.

"Hey, hey...it's it'ssss ok, beautiful...I'm...I'm gonna get us outta here, don't worryyyy" he slurred. "I'll ssssave you and my boyyy."

Pushing out a dark chuckle, Bloodbayne yanked on his bloodied curls; the forcible action causing the broken man to yowl in pain. The moron was foolishly gallant, he had to give him that. It was a shame that he was too much of a cuck to save himself when he had the chance.

"Remarkable. Even in the face of certain death, this man thinks he can save you and what he believes is HIS child. Your cunt must be lined in gold to have these two men willing to risk themselves to save you and your hellspawn," he sneered. "But to get back to your little comment...yes, you will...and yes, I can make you!"

Hearing her cue, Valentina pulled her glock from her crimson jacket. Racking the

slide to ready the first bullet, the tall blonde pointed the black weapon directly at Lexi's pronounced stomach. With her finger hovering over the trigger, she gave Kade the tiniest shrug. It gave her no satisfaction to see the fear flashing behind his eyes, but business was business. If she was given the word, she would carry out the order. Her time protecting the child was over.

"NO!" Kade yelled, his eyes frantically jumping between Valentina and Bloodbayne. "I'll DO IT! Let me kill him!"

Shaking his scarred head, Bloodbayne clicked his tongue in annoyance against the roof of his mouth. If he allowed his son to do the deed, it would cause a rift between the pair. Although that was a delicious prospect, his heir couldn't have any distractions during his upcoming trip to Bangkok. Besides, he needed to know if the gutter cunt was up to snuff.

"Quiet! Not another word from you!" he hissed. "Now remove your hand, son...I need to hear Lexi's answer!"

Keeping his dark eyes on Valentina, Kade slowly slid his hand from Lexi's mouth. He didn't care for the tension quickly building around them. He was counting on her to do what was needed for their family. He prayed she would play along.

"You can't kill me," Lexi spat as soon as he removed his hand. "My baby is too valuable to you, you said so yourself!"

Wincing from her words, Kade squeezed his left arm tighter around her torso. That was not the reply he was hoping for. "Lexi, stop!" he whispered.

Page 17

Source Creation Date: June 23, 2025, 5:33 am

Shaking his head painfully slow, Bloodbayne released the latch on the switchblade with his gnarled thumb. “You misunderstood me, girl. That child was valuable to me when Kade was a vegetable. Now there’s no real need for either of you, is there? Kade could make me an army of heirs! There are plenty of women within the Organization that would jump at the chance. I’m sure that one whore...what’s her name? Callie? Ah, yes. Callie. I’m sure she would be first in line,” he said, tilting his marred head to the side. “Now come and kill this pathetic man, or I will kill him and then I’ll have Valentina kill you and your son!”

Growling in frustration, Lexi’s eyes welled with hot tears. She didn’t think she had ever felt so helpless in her entire life. How dare she allow the sick bastard to have control over her like this?

Hey. I have an idea, Nikki interjected. Just hear me out. Let me step in! I’ll take care of Leo. That way, your conscience is clear! Look, either way he’s going to die, but you and the baby don’t have to. Let me do it! I promise to step back once it’s done.

Fixing her gaze on Leo’s bleeding face, she repeated her alter’s words. Under normal circumstances, she wouldn’t even entertain the thought of letting her step in. This was far from a normal circumstance though, and she made a valid point. Either way, Leo wouldn’t be leaving this room alive.

“Well?” Bloodbayne asked.

“Promise?” Lexi said aloud.

“What?” he replied.

Of course, Nikki purred. I'll let you step right in after he's gone.

Swallowing hard, Lexi studied Leo's broken body as she mentally apologized to him over and over. She could tell he was suffering immensely, killing him would be an act of mercy at this point. He would forgive her. He always did.

"Lexi," Kade whispered. "Please."

Blinking her tears free, she swallowed a pained sob and nodded her head. She hated herself for it, but she would agree to it. She would agree to everything as long as it meant that the baby squirming in her belly would live.

"I..I'll...I'll do it," she said, her voice heavy in defeat.

"Good girl," Bloodbayne praised, straightening his posture.

Sighing in relief, Kade eased his hold from his love. Toggling his attention between Valentina and his father, he relaxed his tense muscles. They seemed pleased as punch by her decision. He would be too, if she actually went through with it.

This is all well and good, Kade, but you know she's never going to forgive you for this, Dimitri warned.

Building a mental barricade between him and his alter, he clenched his jaw. What the fuck did Dimitri know? There was a reason why he was the one in charge, and not the idiot. Sure, she might be a little annoyed at first but she wouldn't be able to stay that way forever. She loved him too much to truly hate him.

"Go, Sweetheart. You can do this," he encouraged.

Finding herself both annoyed and comforted by his reassurance, Lexi squared her

narrow shoulders. Stepping towards Bloodbayne and Leo, she wiped the tears from her flushed cheeks. Watching her husband float in and out of consciousness, she felt her heart squeeze. She desperately wanted his pain to end, and as evil as her alter was, she wouldn't make him suffer any more than he already had. At least she hoped the bitch wouldn't.

No Lexi,Nikki said, masking her excitement with a sympathetic sigh.I'll make it as quick and painless as possible.

Licking his nonexistent lips, Bloodbayne yanked on Leo's hair once more, the sharp pain causing the poor man to spit an angry obscenity.Good, he thought. The brave fool needed to be awake to see who would be sending him to his grave.

“Wake up, Mr. Estrada! Someone wants to see you,” he demanded.

Fighting off the darkness trying to consume him, Leo forced his bruised eyelids open. Noticing his adoring wife walkingtowards him, he cracked a broken smile. There was bright light surrounding her, giving her an almost ethereal appearance. He couldn't remember the last time she had ever looked so stunning. She was a complete godsend.

“You...you're myyy angelll...Lexi,” he slurred. “Myyy be...beautiful angel.”

Reaching for the handle of the switchblade, Lexi instinctively winced at the comparison. Why did fuck he have to say that? She couldn't kill him now, not after hearing him call her his angel. Maybe she could signal Kade to lunge for Valentina, and she could use the knife on Bloodbayne. That could work, right?Yes, that plan could definitely work.

STOP IT,Nikki screamed.You know damn well that that hasty little plan will NOT work. Valentina will shoot both you and Kade before you even have the chance to lift

the knife. Stop being such a stupid cunt! Leo has no idea what he's saying right now. He's loopy from the pain and blood loss, he probably has no idea what's going on. Now, come on! Say a quick goodbye and let me slip in. I'll take care of it.

Noticing her hesitation, Bloodbayne snapped his fingers impatiently. "What are you waiting for, girl? Show me your worth!"

"Wait! Let...let me say goodbye?" she asked.

Narrowing his blue eyes, Bloodbayne mulled over the bold request. Leniency had no place in the Organization, but she didn't need to know that just yet. It could be fun to manipulate her into thinking she could get what she wanted from him. "Make it quick," he replied.

Nodding a reply, she reached towards Leo's cheek with her left hand. Mindful of his various lacerations and bruises, she carefully caressed his face as lovingly as possible. She would try to make his last moments as happy as she could. He was so close to death's door that she didn't think it would take much for him to slip into the final memory she wanted to leave him with.

"Hey, handsome," she began, bringing her face mere inches away from his.

Source Creation Date: June 23, 2025, 5:33 am

“Mmm...myyy Sunshinee,” Leo whispered, “howsss my boy?”

Stiffening from the dying man’s words, Kade clenched his hands into fists at his sides. The moron still believed he was the father. He wanted to set him straight and send him to hell with the knowledge that he wasn’t man enough to get her pregnant.

Don’t you dare, Kade! If you pull that crap, you will lose her. Simmer down, ok? Let her believe she’s being merciful and giving him a good death and console her afterwards. Don’t be a prick and just keep your mouth shut, Demitri barked.

Purposefully blocking out the evil trio surrounding her and her husband, Lexi gave him the brightest smile she could muster. There wasn’t any harm in him believing he was the father. She wanted him to cling to that as he slipped away. “He’s good...he’s uh..sleeping right now.”

“Mmm...sleep...I want...to go to sleep,” he mumbled.

Stifling a whimper, she traced the pad of her thumb along his blackened cheekbone. “I know you do, baby. Hey...remember the night you begged me to let you sleep?” she asked.

Licking his split lips, Leo hummed as his fuzzy brain recalled the memory. That week was the best week of his life. Her excitement had made it even more special.

“Disneyland,” he breathed.

“Yes!” Lexi exclaimed, thrilled that he was coherent enough to recall their vacation.

“You took me there for our first anniversary. I had never been, and you surprised me with that trip out to California. I was so excited to finally be at the happiest place on Earth. I dragged you all around that park for hours the first day...remember how I made you ride on ‘It’s a Small World’ five times in a row?”

“That...that damnnn song,” he murmured.

Lexi laughed, “Yes, that damn song! But you were such a trooper, you even wore those silly ears because I asked you to.”

“Hated them...but I’d...do anything...for youuu,” he replied.

Holding in a sob, she carefully pressed her forehead against his, mindful to not press too hard on his swollen skin. “I know...and I will forever love you for that,” she said, her voice filled with heartbreak. “You were so tired by the time we had dinner. Remember where we ate?”

“Mmm...Carnationnn Cafe.”

“That’s right! We had hot fudge sundaes and stayed there nursing our coffee until the fireworks,” she continued.

“Ahhh...the fireworksss,” he said.

“Yes! They were so beautiful. Remember how we stayed until they told us to leave? Then we went back to our hotel room at the Grand Californian—”

“Ohhh...that bed,” he interrupted.

Grinning at her husband, she was thankful that he was mentally able to follow along with her story. She wanted him to remember the details of that night. How they had

spent hours upon hours creating passionate fireworks of their own. That's where she wanted him to stay.

"Yes. That amazing bed. Can you remember what we did in that bed?" she asked, ignoring the livid energy radiating from the man standing behind her.

Closing his eyes, Leo quirked his lips into the signature cocky smile that Lexi had fallen for the first time they had met. Oh, yes. He remembered everything.

"Mmmhmm," he murmured.

Letting out a shaky breath, she raised her right hand and steadied the razor-sharp metal of the switchblade near his neck. Once his flesh was split, it wouldn't take long for him to bleed out. She was counting on his weakened state to speed up the process. She hoped he wouldn't even realize what had happened before he slipped away.

"Good," she said, giving him a long and tender kiss goodbye. "Stay there...just...stay."

Counting down from five in her mind, she prepared herself to let her alter step in. Nikki was ready and eager to take control, she knew there wouldn't be any hesitation on her part. The takeover would be fast and vicious. It was how Nikki handled everything.

Five...

Four...

Three...

Two...

One.

Source Creation Date: June 23, 2025, 5:33 am

Within a split second, Lexi found herself being thrown into the dark recesses of her mind, locked behind a stone wall made specifically to hold her while Nikki took the wheel. There was nothing for her to do but watch silently as her alter took full possession and carried out the grisly task.

Smiling wickedly, Nikki gripped the handle of the switchblade tightly in her hand. It felt amazing to finally be in charge of her body, but she knew it would feel even better once she released all the pent-up anger she was harboring. It was almost poetic that she would have the chance to kill Leo. It was because of him that she hadn't been allowed out. He deserved this.

"Goodbye, Leo," she purred, placing the blade against the skin of his neck.

Not wanting to give him a chance to squirm, she quickly sliced the blade through his throat. In one clean, efficient swipe, she cut him open from ear to ear, ripping through muscle, tendon, and both carotid arteries. A warm shiver of euphoria raced down her spine as she watched his ruby blood spurt from his split flesh. With every helpless jerk of his body, she could feel her confidence growing stronger and stronger.

She was finally right where she belonged.

Releasing his grasp on Leo's hair, Bloodbayne lifted his melted lips into an evil smile as he listened to the man's dying gasps. It seemed as if his son was correct in his assessment, the girl did indeed have a gift. She knew exactly where to cut, and how deep. It was a skill that was bred, not learned. It bode well for the future of his empire. With his lineage, the child she carried would be a force to be reckoned with.

Knowing her test was over, Kade stepped behind Lexi and yanked the switchblade from her hand. Wiping the blood from the knife on the arm of his blazer, he sheathed the blade and stuffed it into the front pocket of his slacks. Although he couldn't see her face, he could tell something was a little off. Her unbothered body language made him slightly uneasy.

Glaring at the empty shell before her, Nikki pulled back her lips in disgust. Of course the pathetic moron would die quickly. He was premature in most of the things he did. "Well?" she asked coldly, moving her eyes from the corpse to Bloodbayne.

Lifting his chin, the mob boss gave her a long and critical once over. It was odd that her demeanor had changed so drastically. But perhaps this was her afterglow, the dragon felt different for everyone. Who was he to judge? She had proven herself, that's all he cared about.

"Welcome to the Bloodbayne Organization," he replied.

"Thanks," she said nonchalantly, turning on her heels to face Kade.

Searching her face for any sign of distress, Kade was surprised to find the opposite. His love seemed almost giddy with excitement. Not in a thousand years would he have predicted this reaction. He didn't know if he should be frightened or turned on.

Tossing her blood splattered hair over her shoulder, Nikki raked her golden hued eyes over Kade's well-built body. In the back of her mind she could hear her alter yelling, demanding her to fallback into place. Lexi was stupid to think she would relinquish her control once Leo was dead. The dumb bitch would just have to wait. There were things she wanted to do first.

"I think I'll like it here," she said with a devilish smirk, relishing in Lexi's frantic screams.

CHAPTER NINE

Helping Lexi into Bloodbayne's personal limo, Kade narrowed his dark eyes. Climbing in behind her, he gave her enough room to relax and decompress. It had been a couple of hours since her little test, and she still didn't seem like herself. He hoped their long car ride would give her a chance to come down from whatever high she was on.

"Comfortable?" he asked, arching a brow.

Letting out a sigh, Nikki looked down at the annoying bump that held the entirety of her midsection. Did he seriously just ask her that? What woman in their right mind would ever be comfortable with a parasite sucking the life out of them?

"I would be much more comfortable if I could evict this thing," she replied, her voice laced with disgust.

Fully turning his head, he blinked at her comment. Admittedly, they hadn't been around each other that long, but it wasn't like her to talk about their son with such hostility. Just what the hell had happened while he was in his private meeting with his father?

"Did Valentina get you something to eat? I told her to, but I'm not sure she did. You're acting pretty damn hangry right now," he said.

Scrunching her face, Nikki tried her best to fold her arms over her chest. What she was offered was hardly what she considered to be actual food.

"She ordered Hawaiian pizza. Can you believe that? Disgusting. Whoever thought that putting pineapple on a damn pizza was a good idea needs to be shot," she mumbled. "She's lucky I didn't vomit all over her new Louboutins."

Immediately taken aback, a thoroughly confused look fell over his face. “I’ve seen you eat Hawaiian pizza dozens of times. I know that’s your favorite pizza, Lexi!”

Zeroing her amber colored eyes on Kade, Nikki pulled her lips back into a sneer. She didn’t appreciate him bringing up the cowardly bitch currently whimpering in the back of her mind.

“It’s not my favorite,” she scoffed.

Completely stunned by her comment, he stared at her with his mouth agape. He didn’t understand how she could deny something he knew was absolutely true. Perhaps this was just her pregnancy hormones talking. Yeah. That had to be it.

“Right. Well, if you’re hungry I can have the driver stop somewhere. Just tell me what you want, and I’ll make sure you get it,” he offered.

Turning her head towards the limo’s wet bar, she lifted her chin towards the row of crystal decanters. It had been far too long since she had a proper drink. Just looking at the various bottles of top shelf liquor made her mouth water.

“Know what I would really love? Some of that scotch. Be a dear and pour me a glass? Double, neat,” she said.

Source Creation Date: June 23, 2025, 5:33 am

“Real funny, Lexi,” he replied with a half laugh. “Tell you what, I’ll make you one in about fourteen weeks, ok?”

Pressing her lips into a fine line, she glared at him through the corners of her eyes. Fourteen weeks? That’s how long this demon spawn still had to cook for? Surely there was a way to speed up the process. There was no way she could feel this thing wriggle around inside her for another three and half months.

Don’t you dare think about doing anything to harm my baby! Lexi screamed, trying with all her might to take control.

Having the wind knocked from her lungs, Nikki coughed into the air of the limo. She wasn’t expecting her to be that physically powerful, it pissed her off to no end. How dare the bitch?

“Are you ok, Sweetheart?” Kade asked as he scooted his large body across the leather seats, his arm lifting to wrap around her.

Nodding her head, she took in a large gulp of air. Yeah, she was fine. She would be even better once she figured out how to suppress Lexi from ever seeing the light of day ever again.

“Fine, yeah...he uh...he kicked me, that’s all,” she replied, poking at her stomach with the tip of her index finger.

Lifting his free hand, he placed his palm against the side of her bump in the hopes of feeling his son move. Now that everything was set in stone, he could finally allow

himself to form a bond with his child. He was excited to teach the boy everything he knew.

“He’s getting stronger, huh?” he asked, tenderly caressing her. “That’s good. He needs to be for the plans we have for him.”

“And is that what you were discussing with your father all alone in that room?” Nikki asked, her voice tinged with annoyance.

Lifting his shoulders in a nonchalant shrug, he continued to trace phantom letters over her midsection. She was quite vocal about wanting to be included in his briefing with Bloodbayne after her test, but his Boss denied her. Although she had been accepted into the Organization, it didn’t give her full access. On the contrary, she would be kept in the dark about most things that didn’t concern her.

“Not really. No, we mainly talked about my trip to Thailand next week,” he said, clearing his throat.

“What’s going on in Thailand?” she asked.

“I need to try to salvage a deal. It’s nothing you need to worry about, my love. I’ll only be gone a few days. A week at the most,” he replied, his gaze drifting to the slow-moving traffic outside of his window.

Unable to stop her blood from boiling, a deep scowl etched onto her face. This was not the way she wanted to begin her new life. “Wait a minute. So, you mean to tell me that you’re just going to leave me alone on this farm out in the middle of fucking nowhere while you run off to a foreign country to play mafia guard dog?” she spat, her voice rising with a catty attitude.

Whipping his head to look at her, his dark eyes widened in shock. She had never

spoken to him like this before, and he wasn't quite sure how to handle it. This was more than just her hunger talking, she was still upset over her limp dick husband. Still, he didn't appreciate her tone.

"Mafia guard dog? The fuck, Lexi? Is this about Leo? Look, I know it was hard for y—"

Huffing out a cackle, she effectively cut him off mid-sentence. It was a good thing he was handsome, it almost made up for his lack of brain cells.

"This has nothing to do with him. I'm glad that he's dead. No, this is about you putting me in a corner and expecting me to just sit there until you say I can come and play," she growled.

"You're damn right I'm going to put you in a fucking corner, Lexi!" he hissed, unable to keep his frustration in check, "You're pregnant!"

Wiggling out from under his arm, she turned in her seat to face him. "Oh, so now you want to handle me with care? Putting stress on me or the baby wasn't a deterrent when you kidnapped and drugged me...and it certainly wasn't just a few hours ago, now was it?!" she spat.

"That was different," he said, purposefully lowering his voice to counterbalance her rage. "I had a handle on those situations!"

Shaking her head with a disbelieving laugh, she moved to straddle his lap. Balancing her pregnant body on her knees, she reached up with her right hand to grip a handful of his dark hair. Giving it a sharp tug, she made his eyes meet hers.

"Yeah? Really? So, you would've been able to protect us had Valentina pulled the fucking trigger?" she asked through gritted teeth.

Lifting his hands to steady her hips as the limo merged onto the freeway, he searched her livid face. While her anger was turning him on, he didn't appreciate the lack of trust seeping through.

"She wouldn't have. She's loyal to me," he replied. "She's loyal tous."

"Just as loyal as your Skulls are, huh?!" she accused, arching her brow.

Gripping her hips tightly, he couldn't help but scowl. He didn't want her to know that he no longer had complete control over his men. She was too fucking smart for her own good. "Enough, Lexi," he warned, his lips pulling back.

Having him right where she wanted, Nikki painted a smirk on her face. Twisting his locks around her fingers, she gave a sharp yank. It was turning her on to know that she was getting under his skin. She wanted to have a little taste of the fun her alter had been keeping all for herself.

"Don't you see? Your father is using you, Kade. When are you going to get it through your thick skull that you're just his littlebitch?"

Page 21

Source Creation Date: June 23, 2025, 5:33 am

Snarling in response, he raised his right hand to grab her throat. Squeezing his fingers into her skin, he bared his sharp teeth in warning. What the hell was wrong with her? This wasn't the woman he had fallen in love with.

Coughing from the force of his grip, her left hand moved to hold his wrist. Good, she wanted him to get rough. They had hours to kill in this damn limo, they might as well make them interesting.

"Come on," she squeaked, slicing her nails into his skin. "You...you can do better than that!"

Pulling back his arm, he brought her reddening face to his. Bitter irritation painted his features as he studied her, his stormy gaze noticing a tiny change after a handful of moments. Why hadn't he noticed her eye color until just now? Fuck. Now it was all making sense. He always suspected she had a lurker inside.

"Who are you?" he asked hotly.

Feeling his grip loosen, she ripped his hand away from her throat. Not allowing him time to react, she slammed her open palms against his shoulders, effectively pinning him to the leather seat.

"I'm your worst nightmare," she replied, capturing his lips in a hungry, stolen kiss.

Freezing under her mouth, he debated whether he should push her from his lap. In the back of his mind, he could hear Demetri warn him not to touch her. But his alter's reservation only fueled his curiosity. Besides, there was a chance that they could both

be wrong. Perhaps she just needed a release? Who was he to deny her?

Don't you fucking do it, Nikki! Lexi screamed from her confines. I swear to God if you do, when I take over, you'll never be free again! EVER!!

Unphased by the tepid threat, Nikki continued to taste Kade's lips. Slipping her hands from his broad shoulders, her fingers made quick work of unbuttoning his shirt to his waist. The little bitch in her head had every right to be worried. After she was done with him, he would never want her back.

Giving into the temptation, he greedily returned her kiss; teasing with nips and bites that ranged from sweet and tender, to downright menacing. A shiver of excitement ran down his spine as she fought back with equal measure. It had been so long since a kiss had gripped him so tightly. Perhaps he should have her kill all her former lovers.

Reluctantly pulling her lips from his, she gave him a wicked grin. Dragging her nails down his exposed chest, she scooted her body backwards so her fingers could move past her belly to the fly of his slacks. His kiss was tantalizing, Lexi hadn't lied about that. She wondered if his cock was just as impressive as she had made it out to be.

"I need to know what you taste like," she purred, slinking her body to the floor of the moving limo.

"You do? After last night, I thought you would have a pretty good idea," he replied cheekily.

Ignoring his comment, she slowly tugged on the black zipper of his pants. Dipping her fingers into the fabric of his boxer briefs, she smirked as his hardened cock sprung free. "You can beg as loud as you want, but you aren't allowed to cum until I say so," she ordered, wrapping her hand around his thick length. "Understood?"

Swearing under his breath, he dropped his hands to either side of his thighs. The sight of her mouth so close to his cock was almost too much. He wanted to shove himself down her throat and hear her choke on it.

“What was that?” she asked, casually brushing her fingertips up and down his length.

Fighting back his depraved urges, he clenched his jaw at her question. Balling his hands into fists, he struggled with the thought to agree to her demand. It wasn't like him to willingly relinquish his power.

“I won't ask you again. Answer me now or I won't suck you off,” she chided, leaning forward and flicking her tongue from her mouth.

Pushing out a fractured breath, he nodded his head. In that moment, he would give her whatever the fuck she wanted, so long as she put those pretty little lips around his throbbing cock. “Fine! I won't cum,” he replied, his voice strained and hoarse. “Not...not until you say so!”

“Oh, there's my goodmonster,” she cooed, holding his dick steady at the base.

Moving closer, she pushed her tongue from her mouth and gave an agonizingly slow lick from mid-shaft to the rimmed edge circling his head. She was pleasantly surprised by how soft his skin was. It was such a juxtaposition to how firm he felt in her hand. Although eye rolling and insanely ridiculous, Lexi was right. He truly was steel encased in velvet.

Hissing through gritted teeth, he watched as she teased his aching cock with her tongue. Her movements painfully languid as she dragged it up and down his length, inch by inch. His stomach tightened as the seconds ticked by, the pleasure causing a loud groan to bubble from his throat. Glancing at the wall that separated them from the driver, he was relieved that the privacy window was raised. The last thing he

needed was Bloodbayne's driver hearing him beg for mercy.

Um, that's not your love, Demetri interrupted. And you're making a terrible mistake.

Not giving two shits about what the voice of reason had to say, he quickly slammed a mental door in his alter's phantom face. He wasn't about to let the asshole end his fun. Until proven otherwise, Lexi was the one pleasuring him with her sinful mouth.

Adjusting herself on her knees as the limo hit a pothole, Nikki lapped the bead of precum from the head of his swollen cock. Swirling the tip of her tongue over his skin, she moaned with approval as she savored the clean taste.

"Ohh, you like that Sweetheart? Does this mean you're going to be a good girl and swallow this time?" he asked, remembering their earlier playtime in the shower.

Licking her lips, she let out a small laugh. "No. You have to earn that privilege. What I'm going to do is drive you insane until you beg me to let you cum. Then I'm going to ride you until I cum...and then I'll let you cum inside of me," she replied, moving her free hand under the hem of her dress.

"Holy fuck, you're going to kill me," he spat.

Giving him a devilish smirk, she slid her fingers into her soaked panties. Her body was tingling with its own sharp need. Maybe being pregnant wasn't as awful as she thought. She hadn't been this excited since killing Jamison.

Source Creation Date: June 23, 2025, 5:33 am

“No. Not yet,” she replied, taking his cock into her wet mouth.

Wrapping her lips around his girth, she bobbed her head up and down his thick shaft. Wiggling the flat of her tongue on the underside of his cock, she suckled his warm skin. Turned on by his masculine moans, she began to play with her buzzing clit, working her mouth and fingers in tandem to bring them both to the razor’s edge.

“Oh my God,” he growled, lifting his right hand to hold the back of her head. “That’s it, fuck! Just like that!”

Relaxing the back of her throat, she took more of him into her mouth. Swirling her needy tongue, she sucked hard for a handful of heartbeats before completely stopping. Hearing a heady protest, she resumed the game. Sucking, then stopping. Over and over again until she sensed his body threatening to break.

“I’m...oh, fuckkk...please!” he hissed.

Easing the tight seal of her mouth, she let his cock fall from her lips. Locking her intense gaze on his, she continued to toy with her sensitive clit. She was just as dangerously close. It would be so easy to let herself cum, but she wanted to feel him inside of her first.

“Not yet,” she warned. Stopping her fingers, she released her grip on his cock to rid herself of her hideous maternity panties.

Snarling in annoyance, he leaned forward to help strip the blood-stained sundress and white lace bra from her body. He didn’t mind fucking her fully clothed, but he had

grown to crave the sight of her tits bouncing against her belly. He could stay just as he was, but she needed to be naked.

Throwing her clothes behind her, she used his thighs as leverage to move her pregnant body back onto his lap. Resting on her knees, she reached between their bodies to grasp his cock. Guiding him to her entrance, she leaned forward and took his bottom lip between her teeth. Biting down gently, she sank her pussy down into his cock at the same time. Moaning like a whore as he stretched her open.

Lifting his hands, he roughly palmed her full tits. Squeezing them tightly, he flicked the pads of his calloused thumbs across her darkened nipped until he heard her squeal. Moving his eyes from her face to his possessive touch, he wondered when her milk supply would come in. He couldn't wait to taste it.

Releasing his lip from her teeth, Nikki kissed him hungry as her fingers sought out her clit once again. This position was clumsy with her huge belly in the way, but her need outweighed her annoyance. Using the movement of the limo to her advantage, she began to canter her hips. Rising halfway up on his cock, before taking him again to the hilt. Again and again, all the while squeezing her walls around him in a haphazard rhythm.

Breaking the kiss, he spat a heated curse. She was riding him with an intensity she hadn't ever done before. His heart was racing out of control, his body buckling under the strain. It was only a matter of moments before he felt the first wave of his release take hold.

"I...I'm going to cum! I can't hold on!" he warned, giving her tits a rough pinch.

"You can," she growled in response. "Don't you fucking cum!"

Breathing hard, she rolled her hips counterclockwise at a steady pace. With her own

orgasm building low in her belly, she moved her lips to his exposed neck. Licking a bead of sweat from his skin, she whispered all the lewd things she wanted to do to him once they arrived at Black Hollow Farm.

“Holy...fuck...please,” he begged.

Needing to break just as badly as he, she opened her mouth. Sinking her teeth into his neck, she marked her territory. Whimpering against his skin, her overheated body shattered in ecstasy.

Feeling her sopping pussy clench around him, he lifted his hips and allowed his body to follow. All at once his muscles tightened as his orgasm tore through them. Losing his breath for a handful of seconds, he felt his milky seed spurt inside her warm cunt.

Laughing as she came down from her high, she rested her forehead against his. Squeezing her walls around him, her pussy took every last drop. She was both exhausted and invigorated. She wondered if they had enough time for a second round once they had time to catch their breath.

“God,” she began. “Lexi was right. You really do have an amazing cock. No wonder she couldn’t fuck Leo after she came home.”

Widening his dark eyes, Kade instantly sobered up. Swallowing hard, the blissful remnants of his orgasm immediately washed away. What the hell did she just say? Lexi was right? Oh, fuck. Fuck. Fuck. Fuck. No. This wasn’t happening. He couldn’t believe this was happening.

“Who are you?” he asked coldly.

Lifting her flushed face from his, she gave him a flirty grin. Moving her hand to her wrist, she ripped off the bracelet he had given Lexi. Slipping it into the pocket of his

open dress shirt, she gave it a little pat. After that little delicious fuck session, she supposed he deserved to know that she was the one calling the shots from here on out.

“My name’s Nikki, and don’t worry about her. It’s just us, now.”

CHAPTER TEN

Walking into the gourmet kitchen, Kade came to an abrupt halt as his gaze landed on Nikki sitting in the breakfast nook. Noticing what she was consuming, he let out a low growl. He had only been around her for a few days but knew a coronary was in his near future if she didn’t go back to the depths of hell from which she came.

“Un-fucking-believable!Where the fuck did you get that?” he asked, his voice dripping in annoyance.

Picking up a piece of dragon roll with her chopsticks, Nikki dipped the morsel into a shallow dish of soy sauce. Plastering a look of feigned innocence on her face, she moved her attention from her Kindle to Kade. She rather enjoyed getting under his skin, it was her only source of true entertainment on the isolated farm.

“Get what?” she asked sweetly, popping the roll into her mouth.

Stomping his way towards the table, he ripped the tray of supermarket sushi away. He hated it when she played dumb.“THIS!”he bellowed, making a show of shaking the plastic plate in front of her face.

Source Creation Date: June 23, 2025, 5:33 am

“Hey! That’s my lunch!” she whined, her mouth full of dragon roll.

Pushing out a hiss, he walked over to the stainless-steel trash can and tossed the sushi into the receptacle. He had given the bitch the benefit of the doubt after her first indiscretion, hoping that she didn’t know any better. But he had spent hours combing over the pregnancy do’s and don’ts with her. There was no doubt in his mind that she was purposefully going out of her way to harm his son.

“You know damn well you’re not supposed to eat that!” he spat, turning to face her once again. “Where did you get it?!”

Swallowing her bite, she dropped both her e-reader and chopsticks on the table. Licking a dribble of sauce from her lips, she raked her gaze up and down his angry form. He had a wild look in his dark eyes, the one that turned her knees to jelly. It was enough of an incentive for her to keep poking at the wolf.

“It was in the fridge, right next to the sake, which was delicious by the way,” she replied, drifting her hands to her belly. “I think Junior liked it too, it put him right to sleep.

Balling his hands into tight fists, he stalked towards her. It had been days of this, her saying and doing little things that instantly boiled his blood. Sure, the sex after every fight was mind blowing, but it was time for the cunt to leave. She couldn’t be trusted, not with his son. He needed Lexi back. Now.

“Get up,” he said curtly. “It’s time to go.”

Physically perking, her golden colored eyes widened in excitement. She was hoping Bloodbayne would change his mind and allow her to accompany him to Thailand. She knew she had impressed him. It seemed as if the tides were finally turning in her favor.

“Yeah?! Well, it’s about damn time! We’ve been here, what, three days, already? I was beginning to believe daddy dearest really wasn’t going to let me go with you,” she snickered, carefully rising from her seat.

Not wanting to tip her off to what really lay ahead, he gave her a blank stare. He found it hilarious that even after being told multiple times, her first instinct was that she was welcome to join him on his little business trip. Whatever, he would play along, but the bitch was in for a rude awakening.

“Right, well, there’s a lot at stake on this trip. We needed to make sure everything was in place before we could go,” he said, taking her hand in his. “Let’s get you packed, we have to leave in a few.”

Nodding her head, she allowed him to lead her from the kitchen. Trying to keep up with his long strides, she winced as a sharp pain raced from her backside down to her mid-thigh. She had recently learned that sciatic pain was another lovely side effect of pregnancy. One that annoyed her just enough to cement her plans for the demon spawn as soon as they returned.

Like hell you will! Lexi screamed. You know damn well that I’m getting stronger, Nikki. I won’t let you kill my boy!

Laughing internally, she followed Kade into their shared master bedroom. While it was true that her alter was indeed growing stronger, she would love to see her try to take back control. Where was Lexi when she took a scalding hot dip in the jacuzzi or when she guzzled down two large glasses full of brandy? The little mouse was all

talk, she wasn't concerned about her son in the slightest.

"I put your suitcase in the closet for you. Try not to pack too much, we're not going on vacation. This is strictly business," he said, watching her like a hawk.

"Sure, anything you say, Kade," she said with a smirk, stepping into the large walk-in closet.

Waiting until she was fully out of view, he walked to the wooden nightstand beside their king-sized bed. Opening the drawer, he rummaged through its contents to find the items he needed. He had witnessed Lexi trying her best to take control, but hadn't stepped in to help, believing that Nikki should remain as Main until he returned. He now realized how stupid that idea was. She needed to be suppressed, preferably for the rest of their lives.

"What's the weather going to be like?" Nikki's voice called out suddenly.

Stuffing a syringe into his pocket, he pulled a pair of metal handcuffs from the drawer. Quickly shutting it he turned around and cleared the space to the closet. "Hot, and very humid," he replied.

Tossing a pair of black maternity shorts into her suitcase, she peeked her head out of the closet. "Should I pack any clothes at all?" she purred, her eyes giving him a lusty once over. "Maybe I should just walk around na—oh heyyy...what's that in your hand?"

Trying to hide the cuffs in his large palm, she gave a tiny shrug of his shoulders. "Nothing," he bluffed.

Arching a sculpted brow, she slinked her way from the closet. She was a little surprised that he would want to play again so soon after their last fuck session. She

thought for sure she had sucked him dry.

“Liar,” she said with a sly grin. “Want me to use those on you again?”

Biting into the soft flesh of his cheek, he watched in silence as Nikki tugged on the belt of her red satin robe. Slowly, the thin fabric fell to the floor, giving him a full view of her naked form. He had to lock his knees to stop himself from falling before her and forgetting his little plan.

Don’t you dare take the bait this time, Demetri warned. We need Lexi.

Heeding his alter’s words, he shook the desire from his mind. She could use all of her nasty little tricks, but he would be damned if he fell for them. Lexi and his baby boy were counting on him.

“Actually, I want to use these handcuffs on you,” he said, his voice dark and deep.

Visibly scoffing, she gave him an incredulous look. Clearly, he was getting her confused with submissive Lexi once again. Like hell she would let him put her in those things.

“Funny,” she replied, her voice shaking slightly.

“Oh, I’m not kidding,” he said, his face hardening with menace.

Source Creation Date: June 23, 2025, 5:33 am

Taking a step backwards, a nervous shiver ran down the length of her spine. It was as if a switch had flipped behind his piercing eyes. What he had planned wasn't foreplay, the realization ignited her fight or flight response.

"Turn around and go back into the closet," he ordered.

Painting an unbothered look over her face, she squared her shoulders. Under normal circumstances, she would be poised to attack him if he dared to touch her. Unfortunately, her massive body put her at a huge disadvantage. It pissed her off to no end that she wouldn't be able to fight him off.

"Why?" she asked.

Readying the cuffs, he moved into her personal space. Glaring down at her, he lifted his free hand to gently cradle the side of her flushing face. "Because it's soundproofed and the maids will be here any minute," he answered, purposefully dropping his voice an octave lower.

Blinking at him, she was momentarily thrown off by his sweet caress and threatening words. She had never personally dealt with this terrifying side of him, it made her skin crawl. The night before she had overheard him talking to himself, muttering something about how his cravings had returned and he wasn't sure if he could fight them off. She had written it off, thinking he was talking about booze or drugs. Now, however, she knew exactly what he was talking about.

"You won't hurt me," she breathed, pulling away from his touch. "You...you love me."

Scrunching his handsome face, Kade couldn't help but chuckle, the gruff sound filled with dark intent. "Love you? Fuck, I don't even like you! Now get into the closet before I lose my patience!"

Pressing her lips into a fine line, she bristled in anger. Admittedly, it was stupid of her to play that card, but she was desperate. She wouldn't have time to bolt for the door before he caught her. She needed to think of something else that might sway him. Quickly.

"What about the baby, huh?" she asked.

"What about him?" he replied coldly.

"Well...if you kill me, then you will kill your precious baby boy, right? Could you live with yourself if you did that?" she asked, lifting her chin defiantly.

Pausing for dramatic effect, he allowed her to believe she had him rethinking his plans. Of course he couldn't live with himself if something happened to his son. Lucky for him, he knew Lexi would find a way to stop him before he crossed that line.

Just let me step back in! That's what he wants, you stupid cunt! Lexi screamed.

Taking in a sharp breath, her alter's words clicked in her mind. He had no real intention of hurting her, it was so glaringly obvious. He only wanted to scare her into letting his little mouse take over. God, he was a moron to think she would give up her position so easily.

"Well that's not going to fucking happen," she hissed aloud.

Surprised by her odd outburst, he eyed her carefully. She wasn't speaking to

him, no. There was an internal conversation going on. It made him smile to know that his love was preparing herself. There was no doubt in his mind that she would be able to overthrow her as soon as he gave her a window of opportunity.

Confident that he wouldn't truly hurt her, Nikki made the decision to fight him off. Moving her clumsy body into an attack stance, she balled her hand into a tight fist. Using as much force as she could muster, she let out a feral growl and launched an uppercut towards his chin.

Instinctively taking a step backwards, his muscle memory took hold. Before she had time to react, he grabbed her thin wrist and wrenched her arm behind her back. Clicking his tongue in disapproval, he roughly grabbed her free arm and yanked it back. Holding her wrists with one hand, he used the metal handcuffs to subdue her.

"Should have tried a jab, your uppercuts are too slow," he chided, pushing her towards the closet. "Now get in the fucking closet!"

Thrashing her pregnant body, she tried in vain to break his grip on her wrists and shoulder. If it weren't for the parasite kicking her bladder, she would be in the kitchen right now grabbing a much-needed knife. She couldn't believe how worthless her body was in its current state.

Digging his fingers into her skin, he forced her into the closet. Giving her a harsh shove, he slammed the door behind him. Watching her fall hard to her knees, he spit out a sharp expletive. This wasn't going how he expected it to. He couldn't let his anger get the better of him. Lexi would ultimately pay the price for whatever physically happened to Nikki, he needed to watch himself.

Wincing from the pain radiating from her knees, she turned her head and gave him a scathing scowl. She hated that he had the upper hand, it made her pulse race with rage. "Well asshole, what now? Huh?" she asked, gulping in air.

Stepping towards her, he circled her once before kneeling his large form before her. He didn't care for the splotchy flush dancing over her bare breasts, nor the way she sounded as if she was on the verge of hyperventilating. She was working herself up. Most likely on purpose.

Make this quick, Demetri said. Any stress you put her under, the baby will feel too. Just yank the bandaid. Lexi will be ready.

Leaning close, he raised his left hand and gently wrapped his fingers around her throat. Giving a small squeeze, he forced her to meet his simmering gaze. "Let Lexi take over," he ordered, his voice eerily calm. "Now."

Laughing in his face, she rolled her eyes like a petulant child. "Fuck off, I'm never letting her back in," she replied, squeaking slightly as his grip hardened.

Who says I need your permission? Lexi hissed; her voice no longer contained to the dark corner of her mind.

Feeling a tight punch to her gut, Nikki gasped as her breath was knocked from her lungs. Distracted by the physical attack, she didn't have time to contain Lexi before she felt two more internal blows. One to her right kidney, and one to the back of her head.

"YOU...FUCKING...CUNT!" she screamed.

Source Creation Date: June 23, 2025, 5:33 am

Keeping a tight grip on her throat, he watched with wide eyes as her body forcibly jerked back and forth. A wicked grin ticked the corners of his lips, a low laugh bubbling from his throat. He knew exactly what was happening, and he couldn't be prouder of his love.

“Good girl,” he praised. “Keep going!”

Spurred on by his words, Lexi continued her phantom brawl. Attacking various parts of Nikki's limbs and face, she viciously attacked anywhere she thought wouldn't harm her baby. Again and again, not giving her alter the opportunity to retaliate.

Livid that Lexi had grown so strong, Nikki growled like a possessed demon. “Dumb...whore!” she spat. “Like...you...could ever beat...ME!”

Ignoring her invisible blows, she exhaled in preparation. Waiting for a break in Lexi's onslaught, she remembered what was needed to carry out her plan. As soon as she felt her alter ease her blows, she gathered all the strength she had left. Tensing her exhausted muscles, a bright wave of energy crashed through her body, the powerful action causing her body to seize, ending Lexi's physical assault and throwing her back into her mental cage.

Furrowing his brow in concern, Kade released his hand from her throat. Moving to grip her upper arms, he repeated Lexi's name until her body stopped trembling. “Lexi! Lexi! Sweetheart...are you ok? Let me know you're ok!”

Keeping her eyes closed, Nikki moaned dramatically. It was time to have a little more fun. “Kade...is...is that you?” she breathed, mimicking Lexi's cadence.

Spitting a curse, he pulled her into a grateful embrace. Thank fucking God, he thought. The nightmare named Nikki was over.

“Are you ok, Sweetheart?” he asked.

Humming a reply, she nuzzled the crook of his neck. Feeling his arms relax around her, she placed a line of soft kisses up his throat. His reaction to what he believed was Lexi’s return was sickening sweet. It was a shame that he truly loved her, the bitch didn’t deserve it.

“I knew you would come back to me,” he whispered, his hands running over her back in a soothing motion.

Suppressing a laugh, she continued to kiss his warm skin. She didn’t have a plan, really. He wouldn’t kill her and for whatever reason, she didn’t want to kill him. Perhaps they would just torture each other for the rest of their lives. Just a couple of murderous lunatics, bound together by hate and amazing sex.

“Did you?” she purred, pulling back her lips.

Nodding his head, a surprised yelp left his mouth as he felt her teeth sink into the flesh of his jaw. Working on instinct, he gruffly shoved her backwards. “SON OF A BITCH! What the hell, Lexi?!” he yelled, pressing his fingertips against his bleeding wound.

Falling awkwardly on her still bound arms, she let out a full-bodied laugh. Staying on her back, she watched in complete amusement as he rose from his kneeled position to loom over her. He looked sopissed. It was a small victory, but a victory, nonetheless.

“Oopsie,” she teased.

Scrunching his features in disgust, Kade bared his sharp teeth. Was this really happening? How the fuck was she still in control? He was so certain that Lexi had been able to pull off her coup.

“Fuck you, Nikki. How did you do it?” he asked bitterly.

Rolling her rounded body onto its side, she managed to raise herself into a sitting position. Shrugging her bruised shoulders, she gave him a shit eating grin.

“Lexi is about as weak as your pull-out game,” she replied. “Now uncuff me so I can finish packing.”

Growling in anger, he seethed in burning hatred. He wanted to kill her. He wanted to feel her neck snap in his hands. If it wasn't for the love he held for Lexi and his son, the bitch wouldn't be breathing.

Calm down for just a second, Demetri quipped, trying to soothe his alter's livid state. Look at her, she's exhausted. She probably couldn't handle another round.

Perking from Demetri's words, he slowly raked his brown eyes over her naked form. Covered in sweat and breathing hard, her eyelids drooped from fatigue; chewed up and spit out, her body sagged in exhaustion. She had a snowball's chance in hell of winning another fight. Lexi still had a chance.

Lexi just needs an incentive, Demetri hinted.

Understanding his alter, he reached into the back pocket of his jeans. Pulling out the syringe, he uncapped the needle. Grabbing her arm with his free hand, he yanked her onto her swollen feet.

“Get up!” he barked.

Wincing from his grasp, her legs wobbled as she found her footing. Noticing something in his hand, her gaze zeroed in on the syringe. Staring at it for a long moment, she slowly turned her attention to his injured face. She didn't know what he meant to do with it, but if he wanted to intimidate her, he would be sorely disappointed.

“What's that? Heroin?” she asked with a lift of her brow.

“Yeah. Something like that,” he replied, praying that Lexi was listening in on their conversation.

Straightening her posture, she couldn't help but smirk. “Perfect. It's been far too long since I've had a good high,” she said.

Source Creation Date: June 23, 2025, 5:33 am

Pressing his lips into a thin line, he stared into eyes. He had a feeling she would respond favorably to the idea of being drugged and wouldn't fight to stop him from injecting her. With her defenses down, Lexi should have no problem overtaking her.

"Well, get on with it then," she said, not paying attention to Lexi as she prepared to attack. "Remove these damn cuffs already so you can shoot me up properly."

Careful not to tip her off, he nodded his head. Reaching into the front pocket of his pants, he pretended to fish for the keys to bide Lexi some time. Distraction was the name of the game; he needed to keep Nikki's defenses down.

Pushing out an exasperated sigh, she eyed him as he dug around for the keys to the handcuffs. "What's taking so long? Are you nervous or something?" she asked. "If this is about Junior, don't worry. I'm sure he'll be fi—"

Before she could finish her sentence, Lexi summoned all of her pent-up rage and began her second attack. With an animalistic scream, she burst through the invisible walls of her mental prison. Only having a split second to succeed, she threw her consciousness into every cell in her body. Catching her alter off guard, the forceful action switched their positions, allowing her to fully step back in as the main personality.

YOU STUPID BITCH!! Nikki screamed, rattling around in her newly acquired prison.

With a sharp wail, Lexi shook violently as she took stock of her physical body. She was weak and disoriented, overheated and filled with pain. Wracked with vertigo, her

stomach churned, causing bile to rise in her throat.

“Kade...it’s me...it’s me,”she whimpered.

Swearing hotly, he tossed the syringe into the corner of the closet. Lifting his hands, he gently cradled her face. Looking into her wandering eyes, he felt relief wash over him when he noticed that they had returned to green.

“Lexi?!” he said, trying to get her to focus. “Oh, thank God! Are you ok?!”

Slowly meeting his concerned gaze, she swallowed a mouthful of vomit. Opening her mouth to answer, she was silenced by a crushing tightness consuming the muscles of her abdomen.No, she most certainly was not ok.

Noticing a look of true pain painting her features, a shiver of icy panic raced down his spine. He had never seen her face contort in such a way before, and it frightened him to his core.What the fuck was going on?Was Nikki trying to take over? He didn’t know what he would do if Lexi couldn’t stay in control.

“Lexi?Lexi!What’s wrong?” he demanded. “Tell me what’s wrong!”

Unable to form a coherent thought, she whimpered in response. Locking her shaking knees together, she felt the energy drain from her sore muscles. After what seemed like an eternity, the pain lessened just enough for her to verbalize that her worst fear was coming true.

“Our baby...he’s...ahh...something...something’s very wrong!” she managed to stammer before another wave of unexpected pain crashed into her.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Pacing back and forth beside Lexi's hospital bed, Kade kept his dark eyes on her sleeping face. She looked so peaceful, so angelic. It was in stark contrast to how she looked only hours before. He couldn't remember the last time he had ever been so afraid. Her doctor assured him that she and the baby were fine, that her contractions were caused by nothing more than dehydration and stress. Even with that assurance, he couldn't ignore the nagging feeling that something horrific was about to happen, and that he would lose them both.

Lifting his arm, he swiped his hand over his tired face. Letting out a sigh, he winced as his fingertips brushed against the bite mark on his jaw. That had been fun to explain away. The last thing he needed was to be dragged to the Cambridge police department for domestic assault. Luckily, the authorities that came to visit were under Bloodbayne's payroll.

Moving his gaze from Lexi, he glanced towards the electronic fetal monitoring machine. A small smile brightened his face as he listened to the sound of his son's heartbeat. It was strong and steady, whooshing at a healthy one hundred fifty-three beats per minute. His boy was definitely a fighter.

"Just like his Mommy," he whispered, reaching over to take her hand in his.

Feeling a small squeeze around his fingers, he turned his attention back to her. Noticing her eyelids flutter, he held his breath as she began to stir. He prayed that it was his Lexi waking up, and not the bitch.

"Hey, Sweetheart, how are you feeling?" he asked, keeping his voice as soft as he could.

Moaning softly, Lexi fought off the remaining grogginess from her much-needed nap. Shaking off the last bit of her nightmare, she met Kade's worried eyes. Deep lines etched into his handsome face, the aftereffects of worry and stress. Good, she thought.

After what just happened, he deserved to feel like complete shit.

“The baby,” she rasped, trying to pull her hand from his.

Tightening his hold, he stopped her hand from slipping away. While she had every right to be mad, he would be damned if he let her shut him out. “He’s fine, my love. Healthy as a horse. They were able to stop your contractions and he’s not showing any signs of distress. They said they would take you to do an ultrasound when you woke up just to make sure, but he seems to be doing just fine,” he said, leaning over the gurney. “I don’t know what I would do if anything ever happened to you or our boy. God, I love you so much. So fucking much!”

Pursing her chapped lips together, she felt her eyes well with hot tears. She was relieved to know that her baby was healthy, but his hollow declaration of love made her sick to her stomach. How could he possibly love her after everything he did with her?

“Really? You love me? You sure have a funny way of showing it,” she said, her voice filled with a mixture of pain and anger. “If you really loved me, you wouldn’t have done what you did.”

Closing his eyes, he felt a sharp sting on his cheek from her verbal slap. He deserved her fury, he only wished they could save this fight for a later date. A much, much later date.

“How much do you know?” he asked, reluctantly meeting her gaze once more.

“Everything,” she replied, successfully pulling her hand from his. “She made sure of it. The first time I couldn’t fault you, you didn’t know...but you sure as hell knew by the fifteenth time, didn’t you?! God dammit Kade! You just kept fucking her! Again, and again and again! Why?”

Source Creation Date: June 23, 2025, 5:33 am

Swallowing hard, he dropped his eyes to the linoleum floor. He wasn't used to feeling shame or guilt. He couldn't answer her question even if he wanted to. He didn't know why he kept going back to the bitch for more. Sure, the sex was phenomenal, but he always felt disgusting afterwards.

"I don't know," he replied, keeping his voice low.

Huffing a laugh, she rolled her eyes at his pathetic answer. "You don't know?" she asked incredulously.

Shrugging his broad shoulders, he threw his hands up in frustration. "I honestly don't know! All I can say is that I missed you! I missed you so much and I didn't know when, or if, you were coming back. I know it's sick...and I know it's twisted...but every time...every single fucking time, I pretended that you were the one I was having sex with," he replied.

Holding in a sob, she stared into his remorseful eyes. She wished she could hate him for lying, but she knew in her gut that he was telling his truth. Her alter made a point of allowing her to watch them every time they had sex, and every single time he screamed out her name as he came. He made it abundantly clear to Nikki that she wasn't the one he wanted. So why was she so damn upset about it?

"Is she there right now?" he asked, arching a brow. "If she is, you can ask her yourself. I never wanted her. I only wanted you."

Drifting her gaze to the IV embedded into her left hand, she sighed. "No, she's not," she answered, keeping her attention on the needle piercing her vein. "She's been

silent since we left the house.”

Stopping himself from smiling, he felt a wave of instant relief. Finally, the wicked witch was dead. “Oh? Well, good, that’s good! Really good! Maybe she’ll stay that way!”

Turning back to him, she watched as he nervously smoothed the bed sheet over her pronounced bump. His unpermitted touch made her scowl. She wanted to push his hand away, to tell him to shut up and stop annoying her. But as soon as she opened her mouth, she felt the soothing roll of her son as he responded to his father’s touch. It was the reminder she needed. There was much more at stake, they all needed each other. No matter what.

“How can I make it up to you, Lexi?” he asked, encouraged by the gentle kicks from his son. “Tell me how I can make this better.”

Wiping the tears from her cheeks, she cleared her throat. “You should let me fuck him,” she said without thinking.

“What?” he demanded, confusion dancing over his features. “What the hell are you talking about? Fuck who?!”

Licking her lips, she lifted her bruised shoulders into a tiny shrug. Her solution shocked her just as much as it did him. Wanting to see how he would react, she decided to run with it. He deserved to squirm.

“The one in your head. I know he’s in there,” she replied nonchalantly.

Well, well, well. This just became a hell of a lot more interesting, Demetri quipped.

Completely caught off guard, he huffed a disbelieving laugh. He couldn’t remember

ever talking about his alter with her. How the fuck did she know?

Monsters recognize monsters, Kade. Isn't that what you told her? Demetri teased.

Ignoring the bastard, he sucked in a large breath. Straightening his posture, he tried to put on the airs of being cool and collected. "I don't know what you're talking about," he said.

"Oh, stop it! I know damn well that you're fractured just like I am. Fuck, I'm sure I've met him already! Remember the first time you took me? Well, there were moments when you didn't seem like you. They were brief, but there. Now... maybe the mechanics and hierarchy is different between the two of you, and that's why the switching seemed seamless, I donno. But oh, he's in there all right," she said, thoroughly pleased with the dumbfounded look passing over his face. "Want to make this better?" Then let me screw him. It's only fair, right?"

Shaking his head, he balled his hands into tight fists at his sides. Like hell he would let that ever happen. If Demetri ever got his hands on her, it would be over. "No way. No fucking way!" he exclaimed.

Now, Kade, I think you should hear her out. This makes sense! Demetri said with a snicker. She gets her revenge, I get my revenge. It's a win-win situation if you ask me!

"Why not?" she asked curiously.

Yeah, why not? Demetri wondered.

Pushing out a low growl, Kade leaned over her. Unable to keep his possessiveness in check, he hovered his face an inch from hers. Hardening his features, he bared his sharp teeth.

“Because you are mine, Lexi, and mine alone. Never forget that you will always be mine,” he said, his voice tinged with darkness. “You, and this baby, belong to me. Do you understand?”

Keeping her green eyes locked onto him, she found herself nodding in response. Suddenly, her little flippant request didn’t seem so humorous. He may love her, but he wasn’t exactly stable. She needed to watch herself, lest she tangle with the wolf again.

Pleased with her obedience, he moved to place a tender kiss upon her forehead. “That’s my good girl,” he praised.

Opening her mouth to offer a reply, she was interrupted by a rapid knock on the door to her room.

“Come in,” he bellowed before she had a chance to.

“Knock, knock,” said a sweet voice.

Source Creation Date: June 23, 2025, 5:33 am

Watching the door open, Lexi plastered a faux grin on her face as a friendly looking brunette entered her room. Judging by her pink scrubs, she guessed the young woman was a nurse, although not the nurse she remembered when she was first admitted. She prayed that she hadn't overheard her crude conversation with Kade.

"Hi, there! I hope you've had a good nap? My name's Emma and I'll be your nurse. There was a shift change while you were sleeping," she said, walking towards the hospital bed carrying a large cup. "How are you feeling?"

Nodding her head, Lexi glanced from Emma to Kade, and back again. "I... I'm feeling much better now. Thank you."

"Oh, good! I'm glad to hear that. Your husband was so worried about you," Emma said, motioning to Kade with her free hand. "You've got a good one."

Smiling at his love, Kade felt his ego skyrocket from the nurse's compliment. Knowing that a complete stranger could see just how perfect he was for her warmed his black heart.

"Actually, I'm the lucky one," he said, laying it on thick.

Grinning warmly at the pair, Emma chose to ignore the slight tension she felt radiating from her patient. It was normal to feel on edge after experiencing something like she had. Although it was none of her business, she had no doubt that the two deeply loved one another.

"Aww, that's so sweet!" Emma said enthusiastically. "Your baby is blessed to have

parents that love one another so much.”

Letting out a nervous chuckle, Lexi gave the nurse a shaky smile. Oh yeah, she thought to herself. Their son was incredibly blessed to have a pair of loving, psychotic murderers as parents.

Mimicking her laugh, Emma brushed past Kade. Careful not to spill the contents of the cup she was carrying, she gently placed it on the bedside table. “Ok, so I’m going to take your vitals, then I’m going to check to see how the baby is doing...and then, if everything looks good, I’ll take that darn IV out of your hand and wheel you down to Ultrasound. How does that sound?” she asked.

“Perfect,” Kade responded.

Almost in unison, both women turned to look at him. Amusement danced over Emma’s face, while Lexi didn’t seem too thrilled by his interruption. If looks could kill, he knew for certain that he would be dead ten times over.

Clearing her throat in warning, Lexi moved her gaze from him to the nurse. She couldn’t believe his attitude. They would be having lengthy discussions about multiple things when they got back to the farm.

“Sounds good. I’m looking forward to getting this damn thing out,” she said, motioning to the needle in her hand. “Just curious, what’s in the cup? Do you need me to drink that?”

“Oh, I always like to bring in a big cup of juice to the moms before they go in for their ultrasound. Usually the sugar will wake the baby up! I brought you my favorite, apple juice. I hope that’s ok?” she asked, running a temporal thermometer across Lexi’s forehead.

“That sounds delicious, actually,” Lexi replied, her mouth watering at the thought. “It feels like I haven’t had anything to drink in ages. I can’t even remember what the last thing I had to drink was.”

“It definitely wasn’t juice,” Kade muttered bitterly under his breath.

Blinking at him, Lexi tried to remain still so the curse could take her remaining vitals as quickly as possible. What the hell was he talking about? What had Nikki done while she was locked away?

Oblivious to his comment, the nurse smiled sweetly at Lexi as she took her blood pressure. “Well, I’m almost done so you’ll be able to chug it down, soon. I promise you, it’ll be the best apple juice you’ve ever had!”

“Good, I’m so thirsty. So... does, uh...does everything look ok?” she asked, watching the nurse walk over to her computer monitor.

Stepping behind her keyboard, Emma gave a quick nod of her head. Considering how dehydrated she was when she was admitted, she was surprised at how well her body had bounced back in such a short length of time.

“You’re as healthy as can b—”

“Thank fucking God!” Kade interrupted, grabbing Lexi’s hand and giving it a tight squeeze. “But what about our boy?! Is he just as healthy?” he asked, his deep voice edged in panic.

Glancing at him from the corners of her eyes, Lexi’s anxiety spiked. She had never heard him sound so scared. That coupled with his whispered comment set off alarms in her head. Just what the fuck did her alter do?

Typing away, Emma hummed at his question. “Well, I’m almost done entering in her vitals. I’ll check on the baby in just a second, but none of the monitors have alarmed me so that’s a good sign. So, you’re having a boy, huh? Have you guys settled on a name?” she asked, locking up her computer.

Turning his head, Kade met Lexi’s. He was caught off guard by the question, they hadn’t had any time to discuss a name. He prayed she wouldn’t say ‘Junior.’ Nikki had ruined that nickname for him for all of eternity.

Shaking her head, Lexi looked at the nurse as she checked the fetal monitor. For a brief moment, she was pulled to the night of her second kidnapping. While she and Leo were having dinner, he told her he wanted to name her son ‘Ace.’ The memory was a dagger to her heart.

“We...uh, we haven’t discussed names, yet,” she replied, her voice cracking slightly.

Reviewing the monitor’s stats, Emma nonchalantly shrugged her shoulders. It wasn’t that unusual for parents to be overwhelmed with the naming process. Especially with their first child.

“Well, you guys still have around fourteen weeks to decide on one, try not to stress over it,” she said.

Source Creation Date: June 23, 2025, 5:33 am

“Yeah, that’s true. Fourteen weeks, plenty of time,” Lexi replied, fighting back tears.

Heading back to her monitor, the nurse went to work entering the baby’s information. Focusing on her task, she was completely oblivious to the confused stare Kade was giving Lexi.

“What’s wrong?” he mouthed. “Is it the baby?”

Frowning at him, Lexi quickly wiped away the tears rolling down her face. She could never let him know how much she hated herself for allowing Nikki to kill Leo. Part of her wished she just would have allowed Valentina to shoot her.

Pressing his lips together, he struggled with the uncomfortable weight of not knowing what was going on with her. Was she emotional from all of the hormones swirling around in her body? Was the gravity of the day’s events finally catching up with her? Was she thinking about her limp dick husband? Fuck. He hoped not.

Finishing the last sentence of her report, Emma looked up from her monitor at Lexi. Her blue eyes widened as she noticed the distress in her patient’s face. “Oh, please don’t worry! Everything is ok! You’re doing well and so is your baby boy. Why don’t you drink that juice while I go and get a wheelchair. When I come back, I’ll take the IV out and we’ll head to Ultrasound. Is that alright with you?”

Pulling her lower lip between her teeth, Lexi focused her blurry vision on the nurse’s kind face. Unable to speak, she nodded an answer. She didn’t deserve even an ounce of the compassion she was giving her.

“Great! Ok, I’ll be back in just a second. I’m sure you two can’t wait to see your sweet baby, that’s always the fun part!” the nurse said with a wink, relieved to see her patient’s face suddenly light up.

...

Wiggling the back of her head against the medical pillow, Lexi tried to ignore the mixture of excitement and trepidation that had settled into the pit of her stomach. While she was ecstatic to see her son again, Kade’s hushed comments during her examination had her on edge. She prayed that the ultrasound wouldn’t reveal any abnormalities.

Adjusting Lexi’s medical gown to expose her belly, the technician reached to her side for a bottle of lubricant. “I always try to warm the gel, but this is a new bottle so it might not be completely warm. I apologize in advance if it’s a little chilly,” said the redhead, offering her a kind grin.

Shaking herself from her racing thoughts, Lexi met the tech’s warm brown eyes. She hadn’t heard a word that the woman had said, but didn’t have the energy to ask her to repeat herself.

“Ok,” she muttered, ignoring Kade as he took her hand.

Opening the plastic bottle, the ultrasound tech smacked it on her knee before turning it over and squirting the sticky substance onto her bump.

Shocked by the icy cold gel, Lexi yelped as it touched her skin. Was this a medical procedure, or a torture session?

“Oh, I’m so sorry,” said the tech. “I did warn you, though!”

Swallowing a curse, Lexi nodded her head. Trying to get used to the sensation, she found comfort in a series of sharp kicks just above her bladder. It seemed as if her boy was just as startled, the thought that he was just as miffed as she made her snort.

Staring fondly at his love, he couldn't stop himself from chuckling. It was a shame that she had no idea how adorable she was. He could listen to her snorting all day.

Frowning at him, Lexi clawed her nails into the skin of his hand as hard as she could. How dare the jackass laugh at her plight.

Wincing in pain, he yanked his hand away. Her hot and cold attitude made his head spin. He didn't think he would ever get used to her damn hormones. "Hey, don't be mad at me, this is all Susan's fault," he said, motioning to the ultrasound tech.

Shaking her head, Susan laughed under her breath and pressed the flat of the ultrasound wand against Lexi's stomach. Just because the chiseled man was incredibly handsome didn't mean he could blame her for this little spat.

"Hey, I warned her!" she exclaimed, her voice filled with humor.

Breathing out a sigh, Lexi reached for his hand once again. He was annoying the hell out of her, but she did need his support. She wanted his support. "I'm sorry," she said aloud, hoping that both Kade and Susan would accept the shared apology.

"Think nothing of it," Susan replied, flipping on the speaker to hear the baby's heartbeat.

Bringing her hand to his lips, Kade pressed a kiss against her knuckles. Little did she know there wasn't much she would ever have to apologize for. "You can scratch me anytime you want to, Sweetheart," he said with a wink.

Giving him a genuine smile, Lexi turned her attention to the monitor attached to the wall beside her. Within a handful of seconds, the black and white skeletal image of her son appeared on the screen, causing her to gasp in awe.

Leaning in, Kade blinked his dark eyes as his brain registered what he was looking at. Within a split second, his entire world changed once again. This was really happening, there was an actual baby in her womb. He was going to be a father. Of course these were things he already knew, but seeing his son cemented everything. There was no turning back, now.

“Oh my God,” he said in amazement.

Pressing the wand against Lexi’s stomach, Susan allowed the parents a second to gawk at their child. The first look was always magical.

“What a cutie,” she cooed.

Source Creation Date: June 23, 2025, 5:33 am

Letting the room around her fall away, Lexi watched the monitor like a hawk as her baby danced across the screen. Feeling her heart swell, she silently counted each limb and made notes of his facial features. From what she could see, everything looked as if it should. He looked like a perfect little cherub.

“Is everything ok?” she asked, not taking her eyes off her baby’s profile.

Rolling the wand over her bump, Susan continued to take measurements for the doctor. Technically, she wasn’t supposed to give out any information after the data was reviewed, but she didn’t see any harm in putting her fears to rest.

“Everything looks great! She’s growing and moving around like she should,” she said.

Catching the misspoken word, Lexi blinked at the woman. She?She?Clearly, she had heard her wrong. There was no way her baby was a girl.

“I’m sorry...I thought I heard you sayshe,”Lexi said with a small laugh.

Clenching his free hand to center himself, Kade toggled his attention back and forth between Lexi and Susan.Shit.His ears weren’t playing tricks on him. She had caught it, too. The realization caused his adrenaline to spike through his veins.

This isn’t good,Demetri warned, mirroring his alter’s knee jerk reaction.

Oblivious to their palpable fear, the ultrasound tech pointed towards the monitor with a confident smile. “Yep! I did! Here, let me get a better angle,” she said, pressing the

wand to get a view of the baby's lower half. "Ahh...there we go. Yep! Definitely a girl! No penis, there! You're having a very healthy little girl!"

Turning her head towards Kade, Lexi locked her stunned gaze upon his. With hot bile rising in her throat, she found herself unable to speak. The last thing she heard before she heaved was him saying the words that her mind wouldn't stop screaming.

"Oh, fuck."

CHAPTER TWELVE

Unlocking the door to the mansion, Kade elbowed the hunk of wood open. Grabbing Lexi's upper arm, he unceremoniously ushered her inside. They hadn't said a word to each other since leaving the ultrasound room. Every time she attempted to speak, he was quick to warn her with a scathing look. There were too many ears listening in that damn hospital. He didn't need her to accidentally make their situation worse.

Slamming the door behind him, he warily eyed her from head to toe. He wasn't used to feeling this conflicted. He loved her more than anything but fuck. She should have been truthful from the get-go. Thanks to her lie, they were now in deep shit.

"Why did you lie to me?" he asked angrily, stepping into her personal space.

Standing ramrod straight, Lexi narrowed her green eyes. She was stunned and hurt by his accusation. What good would it have done her to lie? Especially over something that would be found out eventually. God, he was thick. Obviously, he didn't know her as well as he claimed.

"Really? That's where your mind went? You honestly think that I lied to you about the sex of my child?" she countered, squaring her shoulders and standing her ground. "At my twenty-week ultrasound, the tech told me that my child was a boy—"

“Ourchild,” he corrected, his voice deep and rough. “She’s ours, Lexi!”

Baring her teeth, she placed her opened hands protectively over her bump. His sudden outburst put her body on edge. Her blood raced through her veins, causing her temples to throb with every quick heartbeat. She knew she needed to calm down for the sake of her daughter but found herself growing more and more agitated with the man standing before her.

“Oh, so you still want to claim her? Even if she can’t be the heir to your precious crime organization?!” she asked, visibly shaking.

“Of course I fucking do!” he growled, his dark eyes locking on hers. “I love her!”

Furrowing her brows, she took half a step closer to him. He was confusing the hell out of her, and she didn’t understand why. “Then why are you mad at me?!” she hissed through gritted teeth.

Staring at her, he remained quiet for a long moment. He wasn’t mad at her, per se. He was angry with the whole situation.

“I’m not,” he said, purposefully softening his voice.

Scoffing from his reply, she roamed her hands over her stomach to try to stop her daughter from kicking. It seemed as if her little princess was just as upset with her father as she was.

“Then why are you yelling at me? Fucking hell, Kade! I feel chewed up and spit out. I’m hungry and tired. I have to pee...oh, and now...on top of everything else going on...I know it’s only a matter of time before Bloodbayne has me, and our daughter, killed,” she said, her thoughts running all over the place.

God, you're such a thick-skulled jackass, Demetri chastised. Comfort her right now, or I will do it for you.

Pushing out a defeated sigh, he opened his arms and pulled her into a full embrace. He hated the fact that she was terrified and wished he could take all of her fears away. Like hell he would ever allow anything to happen to his girls. She needed to believe that and trust him.

"He won't kill you or our baby girl," he said, nuzzling his lips against the crown of her head. "I won't let him."

Pressing her flushed cheek against his chest, Lexi closed her eyes. Listening to the steady thrum of his heart, she allowed herself to take comfort in his arms. Within a handful of breaths, her agitation with him melted away. He sounded so confident, she only wished she felt the same way.

Source Creation Date: June 23, 2025, 5:33 am

“We need to go,” she said, her voice laced with urgency.

“Go? Go, where? Lexi...there’s no running when it comes to Bloodbayne. He will send Valentina to hunt us down before we even get a chance to leave the Tri-State Area,” he replied.

Lifting her head from his torso, she gave him a quizzical look. What was he talking about? They had ample time to disappear.

“Bloodbayne hasn’t contacted you in days! If we left now, we could get on a plane an—”

“Lexi,” he interrupted, “I’m leaving in less than eight hours.”

Looking at him with wide eyes, she pushed herself away from his grasp. Frantically searching his stoic face, she stammered as her brain raced to make sense of what he was saying.

“What?! What are you talking about? You’re leaving? To where?” she demanded.

Pressing his lips together, he gave a small shrug of his shoulders. He didn’t know why he was surprised that Nikki kept her in the dark about his little trip, but it pissed him off, nonetheless. “Thailand. I have some business that I need to attend to. I’ll only be gone a few days...a week at most—”

“You can’t possibly leave me here, alone!” she said, raising her voice. “If you leave me...leave us...we will be dead before you come back. You can’t lea—”

“Lexi!” he exclaimed, gently grabbing her upper arms to make her focus. “Stop! Just...stop...and listen to me, ok? Just...listen.”

Snapping her mouth shut, she reluctantly followed his command. Nodding her head, she waited for him to speak. She prayed that he had at least a semblance of a plan.

Softly running his hands along her arms, he took in a large breath. Centering his gaze on hers, he softened his masculine features. He could tell that she was on the verge of a panic attack by her shallow breaths and dilated pupils. He needed to soothe her, for her sake and their daughter’s.

“Ok. Good...that’s my good girl,” he began, giving her a loving smile. “Now listen to me. Bloodbayne won’t find out. I promise you, ok? While you were in the bathroom changing, I had a littletalkwith the ultrasound tech and the doctor. I made sure that the sex of our child remained male onallyour medical records—”

“How can you be so sure?!” she interrupted.

“Sweetheart, just trust me. They changed the records right in front of my face and I know for a factthat they value the lives of their family members so they won’t say anything...now please, don’t interrupt me again, ok?” he asked, his expression turning stern.

Swallowing hard, she slowly nodded her head. She didn’t believe for a second that the hospital staff would care about his threat if Bloodbayne approached him, but she was curious to hear his plan.

Letting out a sigh, he moved his hands to cradle her face. Keeping her steady, he continued with his train of thought.

“There’s no running, Lexi...the only way to keep you and our daughter alive is to

eliminate Bloodbayne. But there needs to be planning involved...this isn't something that can be done right this second for a few reasons. For one, he isn't even in the country. He left for Columbia yesterday and he won't be back before I come home. His entire security detail is with him, so there's not even the slightest chance of a threat. You, and our baby girl, will be completely safe here for the next few days. I will be in constant contact with you. I'll text and call every two hours and as soon as I'm done with this ridiculous mission, I'll be on a plane coming home to you. Then we can come up with a plan to take him down, ok?"

Blinking up at him, Lexi mulled over his words. If Bloodbayne wasn't even in the country, then she really had nothing to worry about. She was more than capable of protecting herself for a few days. Once he came home, they could take his father out together. Their twisted little family would then be safe. This could work, she told herself. No. This would work.

"Ok," she said. "Just a few days?"

Leaning forward, he pressed his lips against her forehead. "I'll be back before you even begin to miss me."

Closing her eyes, she melted under his tender kiss. A week alone was nothing. She had been through far worse and had always found a way to keep her head above water. Even if Nikki remained silent, she knew she would be ok.

"Deal?" he asked, his lips curling into a lopsided grin.

"Deal," she replied.

"That's my girl," he praised, pushing a strand of hair from her eyes. "Now why don't you get ready for bed. I'll grab some snacks and meet you there. How does that sound?"

“Sounds perfect,” she said, feeling her stomach rumble. “Don’t be long. I’m hungry.”

“I won’t be, I promise,” he replied.

Forcing a cheerful smile, he watched her as she turned on her heels and headed towards the master bedroom. Chewing on the inside of his cheek, he waited until she crossed the threshold before dropping the charade. He was stunned that she didn’t ask any more questions. Maybe she finally trusted him?

You’d better hope nothing happens, Kade. You know damn well Valentina stayed behind, Demetri warned.

Turning towards the standing mirror flanking the hallway, Kade set sights on his reflection. Shrugging his shoulders, he hissed a reply. “I don’t think she caught onto that...but it’s not important. Bloodbayne won’t find out.”

Source Creation Date: June 23, 2025, 5:33 am

Uh huh,his alter replied.

“Oh, shut the fuck up Demetri!” he growled, stepping up to the looking glass.
“You’re just trying to get under my skin! Well, it’s not going to work!”

Would you get your head out of your ass for just one second?! This isn’t about you or me. This is about Lexi. She needs some reassurance,Demetri countered, switching the direction of the conversation.She needs to feel like you’ll come back to her, come hell or high water. Besides the baby, you are all she has left right now. She needs to be loved and comforted.

“Yeah? Well, it’s a fucking good thing that I intend on doing just that, huh?” he bit back.

Holy shit! You have no clue what lovemaking is! You only know how to fuck and she’s far too exhausted for that,Demetri criticized.I, on the other hand, know exactly what to do...if you let me step in for just an hour, I’ll make her so satisfied, she won’t even think of putting up a fight when you get ready to leave.

“Fuck that! She’s mine!” he hissed.

Of course she is. I’m not debating that. I’m the one that let you keep her, remember?Demetri replied.

“Then why do you want her?” he asked, glaring at his mirrored face.

Because it will benefit us all, Kade. Think about it for just a second, alright? She

wants this, otherwise she wouldn't have asked. You want this because you know it will clear your conscience...and I want this...well...we both know why.

"How can I be sure you won't hurt her?" he asked.

Well, I suppose you can't. My track record isn't the best, I admit, but she's good for you. She's good for us. I want to keep her around, Demetri said truthfully.

Staring at his own image, Kade struggled with what he should do. He was dumbfounded over the fact that he was actually giving his alter's idea a second thought.

You know I'm right. Forget our history...forget our rivalry...don't you want her to feel good, tonight? To feel loved? Don't you want her to finally realize that you belong to her as much as she belongs to you?

"Yes," he admitted.

Then give me an hour with her, Demetri said, knowing he was on the verge of getting his revenge. Just one hour and we'll be even. You have my word, Kade. I won't hurt her or the baby.

Narrowing his brown eyes, he carefully weighed Demetri's offer. There was a chance that he was lying to gain control; he knew damn well that his alter was feeling itchy again. It was a chance he needed to take, though. This would wipe all their slates clean. And while he hated to admit it, she deserved the attention he knew Demetri would give her. It sickened him to no end, but for once, his alter was right.

"We'd be even?" he asked.

Even steven, Demetri replied. I'll stay hidden away until you need me, again.

Hunching his broad shoulders, Kade growled in frustration. He couldn't believe he was agreeing to. He must really love her to put her needs before his own.

"You have one hour."

...

Wiggling her body towards the center of the king-sized bed, Lexi yanked the hair tie from her ponytail and raked her hand through her tangled locks. She knew she looked like a frumpy whale wearing Kade's t-shirt instead of one of the many silk nighties hanging in the closet, but she couldn't care less. His cotton V-neck was comfortable and large enough to cover her stomach. It was a win in her book.

Crawling under the plush comforter, she allowed herself a moment to process the day's events. She didn't understand why the universe continued to throw vicious curveballs her way. Perhaps it was karma for all the evil things she had done over the past decade of her life.

"You know...you're the only good thing I've ever done," she said, looking down at her pronounced stomach. "I've always hoped that someday, I would have a daughter. Shocking, I know...especially because I'm not exactly the girliest girl...but it's true! I'm so excited to put you in frilly dresses and have tea parties with you. I'll teach you how to sing and how to make chocolate chip cookies. God. I'm so happy that you're mine. I hope you believe me. I promise you that I will be the best mommy I can be. I'll protect you and love you in the ways that I wasn't. I swear to you that I will. I swear it."

Nudging open the bedroom door, Demetri slowly entered holding a pint of ice cream in one hand, and a jar of pickles in the other. Honing his warm brown eyes on Lexi, he leaned his head to the side.

“What do you swear?” he asked, walking towards the bed.

Lifting her gaze to Kade, she gave a tiny shrug of her shoulders. “Oh, I was just telling our daughter that I’ll do my best with her.”

Climbing onto the mattress, Demetri carefully scooted his large form towards her. For a split second, he almost felt guilty for stealing this moment from Kade. Almost.

“Of course you will. You’re going to make a wonderful mother. I couldn’t ask for a better role model for her,” he said honestly.

Surprised by his statement, her mouth fell open in disbelief. She honestly never expected him to ever say that to her. It was probably the sweetest thing anyone had ever said to her, but she didn’t buy it. How could he possibly believe she was a good role model?

Source Creation Date: June 23, 2025, 5:33 am

“Truly?” she asked, eyeing him critically.

“Absolutely,” he answered without skipping a beat. “Just think about it, Lexi. You’re strong and intelligent. You’re resourceful and resilient...you’re kind and—”

“But I’ve killed people!” she exclaimed.

Letting out a breath, he moved in close to her. He admired that she still had a conscience, but hated how it lowered her self-esteem. She had the ability to be great, it was a pity.

“Well, technically, you haven’t,” he replied. “But besides that, every single life taken was one that didn’t deserve to be here—”

“Leo did!” she said, narrowing her green eyes. “He was a good man and—”

“That was different, Lexi. That was a situation beyond your control. You did what you had to do to survive. To make sure that our daughter survived. Try not to dwell on it. Nothing can change the past, it’s best to let it die,” he said, knowing he needed to distract her from her dead husband. “Now, let’s go back to your question. Do I really think you’ll be a good mom? No, I don’t think you will be...I know you will be.”

Pulling her lower lip between her teeth, she let his words sink in. He was right, it was time for her to let Leo go. She had made the correct decision at the slaughterhouse. She did what she had to in order to keep her daughter alive. Exactly what any good mother would.

“Thank you,” she said, her voice soft.

“Yeah, of course,” he replied, giving her a sweet smile. Wanting to distract her from the heavy topic, he lifted his hands and shook the ice cream and pickle jar in front of her face. “So, little mama. Are you hungry?”

Looking at the snacks he brought, she couldn’t help but laugh. It was so cliché. “Pickles and ice cream...really?”

Shrugging his broad shoulders, he plopped the containers on the bed next to her thigh. “What? I thought all pregnant women craved them?” he said, pulling a spoon from his back pocket.

Shaking her head, she smirked at him before taking the spoon. He seemed so genuine in his answer, she had to give him credit for the effort.

“Perhaps separately but not together. At least I haven’t, so far,” she said, grabbing the pint of ice cream. “Ooh! Cookies and cream, my favorite!”

Picking up the pickle jar, Demetri leaned over and placed it upon the nightstand. He could’ve sworn that every pregnant woman sustained themselves on a diet of pickles and ice cream. Ah well, live and learn.

“Do you want me to run back into the kitchen and grab some gummy bears?” he asked.

Scooping out a spoonful of ice cream, she felt her heart skip a beat. She was equally creeped out and turned on. Only those closest to her knew about her need to have gummy bears with her ice cream. Especially after a particularly awful day.

“I would say yes, but I don’t really want to waste what time we have left together,”

she said, giving him a tiny grin before taking a bite from her spoon.

Carefully moving his body behind her, Demetri gently placed his hands on her slim shoulders. As soon as his fingers touched her, he felt a spark radiate between them. He wondered how the rest of her body would feel beneath his touch.

“Good. I don’t, either,” he replied. “May I rub your back?”

Swallowing her mouthful, she shivered under Kade’s touch. Glancing over her shoulder, she froze for a moment as she caught the loving look on his otherwise hardened face. She didn’t fully understand why he was acting so sweet to her all of the sudden. Maybe there was a chance that he wasn’t a complete monster, after all?

“Please?” she asked before turning her attention back to her ice cream.

Snickering to himself, Demetri slowly began to work his large hands across her back. Inching his warm touch, he kneaded his fingers into a large knot under her right shoulder blade. “You’re holding onto too much stress.”

Lexi snorted, the knee jerk reaction almost causing her to choke on her dessert. Coughing down the ice cream, she slapped her open palm against her chest and let out a strangled laugh.

“Really? Gee, I can't imagine why!”

Joining in with a laugh of his own, he continued to move his fingers down her spine until reaching the hem of the cotton shirt resting at her waist. Gliding his hands under the fabric, he smoothed his palms over her bare skin. It was good that she could findsomesort of humor in the situation.

“Well, please try to relax tonight.” he said, tenderly massaging her semi-tense

muscles.

“Any idea on how I can do that?” she asked flirtily, dropping her spoon into the half-eaten tub of ice cream.

Leaning down, he gently pressed his lips against the shell of her ear. He was a little surprised that she was making things so easy for him, but he wasn’t going to complain. “I can think of a few things,” he whispered hotly.

Licking her lips, Lexi felt her heartbeat quicken in excitement. How did he have the power to turn her on with a single sentence? She was always at a disadvantage against him. It wasn’t fair.

“Tell me,” she said.

Nuzzling her ear lobe, Demetri hummed as his fingers continued to dance along her soft skin. Before long, he felt her flesh pebble beneath his touch.

“Well...I could eat that pretty pussy of yours,” he suggested, pulling her lobe between his teeth.

Closing her eyes, she whimpered from his sinful words. Like she would ever turn that down, he had a masterful tongue.

“That’s a great idea,” she breathed.

Humming against her ear, he moved his attention to her neck, peppering it with a series of eager kisses and tiny nibbles. Pulling his right hand from underneath her shirt, he reached around her body to grab the ice cream container from her grasp.

“I knew you would like it. Now why don’t you get comfortable for me?” he suggested, tossing the carton onto the nightstand next to the pickle jar.

Swallowing hard, she nodded her head. Feeling him slip from behind her, she caught his gaze as he stood from the bed. There was a different intensity behind his eyes that she hadn’t seen before. It was less predatory, more lustful. It erased every stressful thought from her mind, replacing it with a heady want that made her ache.

Pulling the black shirt from his body, he watched her as she settled herself on the bed. He loved the way her cheeks flushed; it reminded him of the last coed he had. Only

Lexi was more beautiful. It was no wonder why Kade constantly fantasized about her, even after just fucking her. He was looking forward to experiencing her cunt firsthand.

“Is everything ok?” he asked, arching a dark brow.

Hearing his deep voice cut through her wicked thoughts, she snapped herself back to reality. How long had she been staring at him like that? She must have looked so stupid with her mouth open and her eyes wide. It’s not like she hadn’t ever seen him shirtless before.

“Yeah, why?” she asked, clearing her throat.

Giving her a sinful smile, he leaned over and helped her out of her shirt. Tossing the garment to the floor, he raked his hungry gaze over her bare tits and rounded belly. The sight of her caused his mouth to water and his cock to strain under his jeans. He couldn’t wait to taste her.

“Just wondering,” he said, helping her lie down on the bed.

Wiggling against the silk sheets, her breath hitched as he climbed his muscular body over her. Lifting her hand, she tangled her fingers into his dark locks. Giving him a cheeky grin she pulled him down to claim his lips with a passionate kiss.

Growling against her mouth, he allowed her full control. It wasn’t often that he let a woman dominate, but this wasn’t a regular fuck for him to satiate his hedonistic impulses. He wanted to make sure her needs came first.

Twisting her fingers into his thick hair, she used her teeth and tongue to deepen the kiss. Wantonly arching her body, she moaned as he cupped her full tit in his hand. A ripple of pleasure ran down her spine as his calloused thumb flicked over her nipple.

“Ahhh!” she gasped against his lips.

Thrilled by her response, he toyed with her hard nipple. Pinching and tugging in time with her heady breaths, his grip growing more forceful with every needy moan. She was a wicked little thing, enjoying the pain he loved to inflict. It heightened every single one of his desires. Squeezing her tit once more, he pulled away from her lips.

“I wonder how wet you are for me,” he husked.

Dancing her glassy eyes over his face, she hummed low. “Why don’t you find out?” she replied breathily.

Narrowing his dark eyes, he lowered his lips to the base of her throat. Slowly traveling down, he paused to lick the valley between her breasts. Groaning against her soft skin, he continued, leaving a trail of open kisses over the curve of her belly.

“I bet you’re soaked,” he said, reaching for the waistband of her panties.

“Think that highly of yourself, do you?” Lexi replied, lifting her hips as he pulled the white fabric from her ass.

Letting out a deep laugh, Demetri paused his advances to take a long look at the nude woman beneath him. He hadn’t understood the appeal of pregnancy until now. Lexi was simply glowing. Now he knew why Kade kept her from him.

“I do,” he purred, dropping to his belly and settling himself between her parted thighs.

Unable to see his face, she closed her eyes and tried to steady her breathing. Her focus was broken almost immediately by the sensation of feather light tickles along her inner thigh. Pulling her lower lip between her teeth, she resisted the urge to

squirm.

“Ohhh...are you ticklish, Sugar?” Demetri asked, moving his lips from her thigh towards her waiting pussy.

Not wanting to give him an advantage, she shook her head against her pillow. “No! I’m not!” she squealed.

Not believing her in the slightest, he used his fingers to aid in his experiment. As softly as he could manage, he swirled his fingertips in slow circles inching closer to her center. It didn’t take very long before he noticed her legs tremble. She was a terrible liar.

Source Creation Date: June 23, 2025, 5:33 am

“Uh huh,” he murmured, hovering his mouth over her cunt.

Encouraging her to drape her legs over his shoulders, he wiggled his greedy hands under her ass. Moving in close, he brushed his lips over her cunt. Flicking his tongue over her skin, he grunted an approval as he tasted her arousal. She was ready for him, and he couldn't be happier. It almost made him want to share this moment with Kade.

“I need you to be loud,” he demanded. “I want to hear you break for me.”

Opening her mouth to respond, her flippant response died on her lips as she felt the tip of his tongue dart up the length of her cunt. Slapping her hands on the mattress, she gripped the sheets to anchor her to the bed.

“Ohhhhhh,fuck!”she squealed, arching her hips sharply.

Removing his tongue, Demetri gave a small chuckle. He had barely touched her and she was practically bursting at the seams. He didn't know if it was due to her hormones, or if he was just that good. He hoped for the latter

“My...so eager,” he whispered.

Holding her steady, he continued with his carnal attack. Leaning back in, he gave her dripping slit a handful of slow licks. Squeezing his hands into her ass, he savored the tiny whimpers leaving her lips. Wanting a deeper taste, he pushed his tongue past the lips of her cunt, letting out a groan as she writhed against him.

Twisting her fingers into the silk sheets, Lexi let out a series of sharp moans. A

familiar ache began to build low in her belly. Swallowing hard, she concentrated on the pleasure building in her core.

“Ahhh! Yesss...just...just likethat!” she breathed.

Thrilled by her words, he dug his fingertips into her skin and greedily feasted upon her. Swirling the flat of his tongue against her slit, he lapped her heady essence. Purposefully ignoring her clit, he expertly worked the rest of her cunt. Licking phantom letters that spelled out his name, he marked his territory.

Furrowing her brow, she moaned in a mixture of bliss and frustration. Why was he teasing her like this? He knew exactly what she needed. It wasn't like him to deny her.

“Kade!” she gasped. “Kade, please!”

Instantly stilling, Demetri pulled his tongue from her delicious cunt. Raising his head, he locked his eyes upon her face. There was no way he would let Kade get credit for doing this to her. No way in hell.

Opening her eyes, she lifted her head from the pillow. Looking over the curve of her belly, she locked her eyes on his stern face. Why did he stop and why was he looking at her like that? Did she do something wrong?

“Kade?” she asked, letting go of the sheets and lifting her torso using her elbows.

Shaking his head, Demetri pursed his wet lips into a thin line. Sure, there was a chance her knowing the truth would ruin the night, but he didn't care. His animosity towards Kade was too far gone.

Thoroughly confused, she continued to stare. Just what the fuck was going on?

“What? Kade? What is it?”

“I’m not Kade,” he stated plainly.

Scrunching her flushed face, she balked at his statement. “Very funny,” she said with a roll of her eyes.

Licking the remnants of her arousal from his lips, he squeezed his hands possessively into her ass.

“I. Am. Not. Kade,” he said slowly, stating each word separately and deliberately.

Blinking at him in stunned silence, it took a moment for her brain to put the pieces together. Now she understood why things felt a little off, why his expressions were so different. She always knew he had an alter, it felt amazing to be right about this.

“Who...who are you?” she asked curiously.

“My name is Demetri,” he replied.

Swallowing the lump in her throat, she was thankful that her own alter was eerily silent. Nikki would have a field day with this if she ever found out. This was an insane turn of events.

“Demetri,” she whispered, letting his name roll across her tongue. “Does Kade know...is he?”

Shaking his head, he gave her a reassuring look. “No. I’ve blocked him. He has no clue that I’m in the middle of eating you out.”

Closing her eyes, she sighed in relief. Good. She didn’t want him to see this. Or did

she? An eye for an eye, right?

“So, he isn’t watching but, does he know?” she asked.

Source Creation Date: June 23, 2025, 5:33 am

“Does it matter?” Demetri retorted.

Giving it a long thought, she found herself without an answer. Did it? It certainly didn't matter to Kade that she didn't know that he was fucking Nikki's brains out.

“I guess not,” she replied.

Quirking his head, he gave her a sweet grin. He didn't want to kill the mood, they still had time to have some fun. “I've wanted you for so long, Lexi,” he purred.

“You have?” she asked, her voice cracking slightly.

Nodding his head, he continued. “Look...Kade fucked up. He screwed both of us over. This is his penance. He knows you deserve to be worshipped. And I can do just that. Please...let me?”

Keeping her eyes glued on his handsome face, she weighed her options. She did tell Kade that she wanted to fuck the one in his head but never imagined that it would truly happen. Was it wrong of her wanting to see what Demetri had to offer? Would this make her a cheating whore? If she was honest with herself, she really didn't care. Demetri was right, this was Kade's penance.

Laying her head back down on the pillow, she made her decision. Swaying her hips in his hands, she smiled to herself. Just this once, she was going to have her cake and eat it too.

“Then worship me, Demetri,” she said cheekily.

Smirking in triumph, he dropped onto his bare stomach once again. Removing his hands from her ass, he urged her to part her legs as wide as she could for him. He was going to do everything in his power to make her cum hard and fast. He wanted to leave her wondering if Kade was the one she really wanted.

Moving his left hand towards her apex, he used his fingertips to gently spread the lips of her cunt to expose her hidden clit. Leaning down, he opened his mouth and pressed the tip of his tongue against the swollen bud. Focusing his lustful attention, he tapped upon it in a series of rapid flicks.

Crying out in sudden pleasure, her eyes blew open wide. Moving her hands to her tits, she latched onto her nipples with her fingertips. Pinching them in time with his tongue, her moans grew louder. What the hell was he doing to her? She was beginning to lose her fucking mind.

Turned on by her feminine whines, he covered her clit with his mouth and pulled it between his teeth. With a gentle bite, he sucked hard while circling his tongue counterclockwise.

“Oh! Holy fuck! Holy...FUCK! Don’t...stop!” she begged.

Thrashing her head against the pillow, she jerked her trembling body. Time sped up, then completely stopped as her erratic heartbeat grew faster and faster. Letting go of all her reservations, she accepted the wanton bliss building within her core. He might be a stranger to her, but she clearly wasn’t a stranger to him. It was apparent that he had studied her and knew exactly how to make her crumble.

“So close,” she panted. “Sooo...close...please!”

Holding her still, he teased her swollen clit. Tapping and swirling with his rough tongue, he switched his pattern every handful of seconds to keep her body on edge.

Judging by the way her shapely thighs were tensing, he was confident that she was reaching her peak. Just a little more and he would finally own a piece of her. One that Kade could never take back.

Arching her torso from the mattress, she whimpered in a mixture of pleasure and pain. Everything felt sharp against her skin, adding fuel to the desire curling in her belly. Squeezing her eyes shut, she mumbled an expletive before sinking her teeth into her lower lip. She couldn't believe she was about to break in the hands of someone other than her love. It was an intoxicating thought.

Needing her to shatter, he used the best of his tricks. Sealing his lips around her overworked clit, he sucked as hard as he could. Lifting the sensitive bud with his tongue, he pressed it against the edge of his jagged teeth and growled an order for her to cum.

Gasping in surprise, she felt herself snap in half. A scorching rush of overwhelming bliss rippled through her shaking limbs. Unable to form a coherent thought, only one word tumbled from her lips as she savored her ecstasy.

“DEMETRI!”

Bursting with pride, he stayed true while she rode out the entirety of her release. Grunting an approval, he patiently waited for her body to collapse before removing his mouth from her quivering cunt. Raising his head, he watched in smug contentment as she gradually came down from her high. Hearing her scream his name was the biggest ego stroke he had ever felt. He couldn't wait to dangle this memory in Kade's face.

“How was it, Sugar?” he asked, licking her cum from his lips.

Slapping her open palm over her forehead, a disbelieving laugh bubbled from her

throat. Lifting her still buzzing head, she watched Demetri crawl up her naked body. “That was...wow...I... I,” she mumbled.

“That good, huh?” he asked with a lopsided grin.

Nervously licking her lips, she nodded her head. ‘Good’ wasn’t quite the word she would use. It was so much more than that. Should she feel dirty for enjoying it so much? No, this was penance, she reminded herself. A penance that wasn’t quite fulfilled.

“What else can you do?” she asked, breathing hard.

Raising a dark brow, Demetri leaned in close to her. “Oh, you want more?”

Locking her glassy eyes on his, she nodded her head. She wanted to experience everything he could offer her.

Nuzzling the tip of her button nose with his, he gave her a devilish grin. This was more than he could’ve asked for. He could barely contain his excitement.

“Tell me what you want, Lexi,” he encouraged. “Say it.”

Staring into his brown eyes, she felt a tiny pang of conflict. She had the power to end this, it didn’t need to go any further. All she had to do was say the word and she was sure Kade would step back in and take care of her. Only she didn’t want him to properly fuck her. She wanted Demetri to finish what he started.

“I want you to worship me again,” she breathed. “But with your cock, this time.”

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

Lifting his lips into a sly grin, Demetri met her flirty gaze. It was taking every ounce of his willpower to not let Kade watch. He couldn’t believe that Lexi, the woman that had tormented his existence for years, was finally begging for his cock. The night was turning out better than he could’ve ever hoped for.

“Are you sure?” he asked, giving her one last chance.

Reaching up to brush a lock of hair from his eyes, Lexi nodded her head. She was more than sure. There wasn’t a single speck of hesitation lingering in her mind. She not only wanted this to happen, she needed it to.

“Completely sure,” she replied, drifting her hand down to his bare chest.

Leaning close, he placed a tender kiss upon her flushed cheek. Their time together was quickly slipping away, and he was eager to continue. He was dying to feel her cunt squeeze around him.

“Good. You won’t regret this,” he vowed.

Raking her nails down his torso, her fingers hesitated once they reached the waistband of his jeans. She already knew every inch of his cock, but she wondered how Demetri would use it. Would his body move differently? Would muscle memory take over? She couldn’t wait to find out.

“I know I won’t,” she said, unbuttoning his pants and slowly pulling on the zipper. “You should take these off.”

Not needing to be told twice, he gently moved his body from hers and climbed from the bed. Stripping his denim and underwear one one fluid motion, he hissed as his aching cock was freed from its confines. Wrapping his hand around it, he slowly stroked its rigid length.

“Ready for me?” he asked.

Turning towards him, she spread her legs wide to give him a good look at her wet core. The walls of her pussy were still fluttering from her first orgasm, she was more than ready to have him fill her.

“What do you think?” she asked cheekily.

Spitting an expletive, he roamed his eyes over her splayed body. She looked so gorgeous trying to tease him with that lovely cunt of hers. It sent his cravings into overdrive. Unable to contain his excitement, he eased open the barrier between him and Kade. Still tied to the dark recesses of their consciousness, he was forced to watch while remaining silent. Just as he endured the first time Kade enjoyed her. It was revenge at its finest.

“Turn on your side, Sugar,” he encouraged, crawling back onto the bed.

Eagerly following his command, she moved her pregnant body to face the opposite wall of the bedroom. Lifting her knees towards her belly, her heartbeat quickened as he moved in behind her. Looking out of the corners of her eyes, she caught a quick glimpse of his handsome face. For a split second, she thought she saw something flash behind his eyes. Something darker than she had ever seen in Kade.

Brushing the ridiculous thought from her mind, she shivered as he pulled her against his muscular body. Lifting her leg higher, she draped her soft thigh over his. This position was a first for her, but she had read about it in all of her pregnancy books. She was looking forward to giving it a try.

Lovingly brushing the hair from her neck, he nuzzled her exposed shoulder. Smoothing his lips over her skin, he moved his hand between their bodies. Taking hold of his cock by its base, he moved the tip towards her slick entrance.

“Fuck...you’re still so wet,” he said, his voice low with need.

“It’s all because of you, Demetri,” she breathed.

Smirking to himself, he traveled his lips up her shoulder to the crook of her neck. Nipping her skin, he felt the flesh of his forearms pebble as his ego grew. He hoped Kade had heard that statement loud and clear. She was wet because of him.

Mindful of the time ticking away, he closed his eyes and slowly inched his cock into her silken cunt. With a low groan, he roamed his calloused free hand over her possessively. First with her belly, then upwards to her full tit. Squeezing it with his spread fingers until he felt her shudder.

Pressing her ass against his hips, Lexi whimpered as his thick cock filled her cunt. Feeling a surge of bliss, she reached upwards to touch the side of his head. Threading her fingers through his tangled locks, she focused on the way her pussy stretched so

deliciously around him.

“Holyfuck!” she exclaimed.

Growling in agreement, he began to move within her tight pussy. Tipping his aching cock upward, he rolled his sharp hips against her. Slow and steady, he thrust into her again and again. Relishing the way her honeyed walls clenched around him with every shallow withdrawal.

Pressing his lips to the shell of her ear, he toyed with her hardened nipple. Taking it between his middle finger and thumb, he pinched it roughly before soothing it with a gentle touch. He couldn't believe how amazing she felt. It was as if her cunt was made just for his cock. How could he let Kade have her back after this?

“You feel so good, Lexi,” he whispered, quickening his thrusts. “God...I've needed you...needed this...for so long.”

Source Creation Date: June 23, 2025, 5:33 am

Panting tiny breaths, she shivered from his words. Was that the reason why Kade kept him locked away?

Circling his hips, Demetri felt the unmistakable pressure of his pent-up frustration building within his core. With each wanton press, his heart pumped faster and faster. Making it harder for him to keep his demons under control.

“I saw you first, Lexi...I wanted...wanted you to be mine,” he confessed. “But I gave you away...to him.”

Listening as he spilled his heart, her eyes blew open wide. What did he say? She didn't understand what he meant by that.

“Why...did you give me...to Kade?” she asked, swallowing a moan as his cock tickled against her hidden crevice.

Spitting a curse, his adrenaline spiked through his veins, the pleasurable sensation leaving him dizzy and wanting more. Grinding against her ass, he couldn't help but smile at the carnal sound of their bodies slapping against one another.

“You...you were different...than the others,” he disclosed. “You had a purpose...you...were special...useful.”

Turning her head, a chill raced down her spine as her mind processed what was being said. In an instant, she was transported back to the bunker where Kade had kept her captive. Back to the moment when she had found the necklaces.

“The others,” she whispered.

Not seeming to hear her, Demetri focused on the burning need of his body. Curling his lips into a sneer, he pulled his hand from her breast and placed it on her swollen belly. Spurred on by the intensity of his impending orgasm, he found himself spiraling out of control.

“But look at what he did to you,” he growled. “She...should be mine.”

Furrowing her brow, Lexi slapped her free hand on the mattress to snap herself back to reality. There were too many conflicting emotions happening at once. Her mind was telling her to protect herself, to protect her baby. Her body, however, was betraying her, encouraging her to stay the course.

Letting out an animalistic groan, he dragged his hand from her stomach towards her throat. He was too far gone to realize what was really at play. “But she still can be,” his mouth pressing against her ear. “And you...you can be mine forever, too.”

Shaking her head, she gasped in surprise as he gently wrapped his fingers around her throat. Was he trying to hurt her? Or was this like the night at the cabin with Kade? She couldn’t quite read his intentions. Her body was too overrun with bliss.

Licking her earlobe, he dug his fingers into her neck. He could sense his body ramping up, preparing to snap in half. Would it be such a bad thing if he stole her away from Kade? To keep her with him for all of eternity? Judging by the way her body so enthusiastically responded to his, he didn’t think so.

She wanted this, too. He knew it.

“Give in, Lexi...come with me,” he purred.

Writhing in his arms, Lexi tried to suck in much needed air. Dark spots dotted her vision, her body shaking in a mixture of ecstasy and panic. She was on the brink; it would be so easy to surrender. Why was she fighting it?

Thrusting into her perfect cunt, he wrapped his free arm around her body to stop her from wiggling out of his grasp. Squeezing around her airway, he felt the sharp prick of his release pushing him closer to the edge. He wouldn't be able to hold himself together for much longer.

"Give...in," he ordered once again. "Be with me forever."

Thrashing against his embrace, she latched onto the wrist threatening to extinguish the light behind her eyes. Trying with all her might to pull his hand from her throat, she cried out in vain. This was much more than rough sex, she finally realized. He wanted her to join the others.

Knowing she was slipping away, she used the last bit of her energy to claw at his wrist and arm. As the seconds passed, her body weakened under the suffocating pressure around her throat. As hard as she tried, she couldn't maintain the fight.

Sensing that she was close, Demetri prepared himself for the wave of intense pleasure he was about to receive. Breathing heavily, he opened his mouth to offer her the last bit of comfort she would ever hear.

Kicking her exhausted legs, she heard his voice but couldn't understand his words. A sense of overwhelming euphoria filled her limbs as her blood pressure plummeted. Hovering on the brink, she resigned herself to her fate. Karma had finally come to claim her, and she was done fighting.

Just as she relinquished control, she felt his body stiffen. Almost immediately, his hand released its death grip on her throat and his arm loosened around her. Freed

from his dark embrace, she pushed his limp hand away. Coughing and gasping, she took in much needed air. Dragging her body from his, she was stopped by his arms wrapping around her once more.

“NO! Get off me!” she screamed, her voice raspy and broken.

“Lexi, stop! Lexi! It’s me! Don’t fight!”

Still her jerking body, she blinked in disbelief. Turning in his arms, she eyed his concerned face critically. The differences were minute, but there. Had she not experienced a switch firsthand, she wouldn’t have noticed them.

“Kade?” she asked wearily, her bloodshot eyes welling with tears.

Lifting his hands to her red face, Kade searched for any signs of acute harm. He was livid at himself for letting Demetri manipulate him, the fucker almost killed her. What the hell was he thinking letting him take control?

Source Creation Date: June 23, 2025, 5:33 am

“It’s me, Sweetheart! I’m sorry! I’m so very sorry!” he offered, his voice dripping with regret.

Unable to hold back her tears, Lexi sobbed uncontrollably. A myriad of emotions came crashing down upon her. Relief, joy, frustration, fury, they bled together, leaving her a shaking, blubbering mess.

“Shhh...you’re safe...you’re safe, now,” he said, trying his best to soothe her.

Shaking her head, she tried to push herself away from his grasp. Clenching her hands into tight fists, she pulled back before aggressively punching at his bare chest. “NO! I’ll NEVER be safe!” she spat. “NEVER!”

Holding his large body still, he allowed her to pummel his bare pecs. Wincing slightly with every hit, he patiently waited for her to lose her energy. He deserved her punishment, and he deserved her wrath, but he wasn’t about to let her shut him out. She needed to realize that what he said was true. She was safe. Demetri would never come close to harming her ever again.

Crying out into the stale air of the room, she continued her physical onslaught; punching and slapping at any part of his torso she could find. With every swing of her arms, she felt herself growing weaker and weaker. Her mind and body were spinning out of control, but she didn’t know how to stop. All she wanted to do was rage.

Growing increasingly worried about their daughter, Kade grabbed onto her arms and tried his best to still the spitting hellcat. He understood her anger, but she needed to calm down for the sake of their baby girl.

“Lexi,” he said softly, “please stop, Sweetheart. I know you’re angry, but you need to stop. Please don’t hurt our daughter.”

With her pregnant body heaving, she set her fuzzy gaze on his concerned face. She wanted to laugh at his plea, but didn’t have enough air in her lungs. She was the one in danger of hurting their daughter? What a fucking joke.

“Please, Lexi,” he begged.

Slumping her heavy shoulders, she dropped her head in defeat. She hated that he was right. Their daughter had been through hell and back in just the span of twenty-four hours. She couldn’t put herself under any more stress.

Easing his hold on her shaking arms, he leaned forward and pressed his forehead to hers. Pushing out a small sigh, he whispered an apology. Repeating it over and over, to both his love and their little princess.

“Quit! Quit saying that you’re sorry! It doesn’t fix anything. Tell me, why...why the hell did you let him out?” she croaked, her voice raw with pain.

Sinking his sharp teeth into the flesh of his inner cheek, Kade carefully mulled over his answer. He needed to be diplomatic and careful, only offering enough information to skate by. “He promised me that he wouldn’t hurt you.”

Pulling back her face to create distance, she openly scoffed. “And you took the promise of a serial killer seriously? With my life at stake? With our daughter’s life at stake?” she spat.

Pressing his lips into a thin line, he pulled himself into a sitting position. Raking his fingers through his dark hair, he fought to keep his own frustration under control. It was stupid to take Demetri at his word, but he was desperate.

“I just wanted you to feel loved tonight, Lexi. Demetri knew that and he used it to twist my insecurities. He made me believe that he could give you what I couldn’t,” he said, his intense gaze moving from her swollen face to her belly and back again. “You and our daughter are my only weaknesses. He saw an opportunity and he took it...but he never stood a chance. Believe me when I say that I won’t ever let anything happen to either of you.”

Staying silent for a long moment, she clumsily sat up. Wiping her tear-stained face, she found herself at a loss for words. There wasn’t enough time for them to rectify this. They would circle back to this conversation once he had returned from this meeting. Until then, she needed to take his words at face value.

Searching her blank face, Kade lifted his hand to grasp her rounded chin. Making her meet his eyes, he softened his features to try to convey to her how much he loved her. He wouldn’t lose her. Not now, not ever.

“Say you believe me,” he urged.

Furrowing her brow, she struggled internally. She felt like he truly loved her, in his own sick and twisted way. But did she believe that he would protect them? How could he possibly do that from thousands of miles away.

“Don’t leave us,” she said.

Pushing out an agitated sigh, he shook his head. How dare she change the subject. “We’ve discussed this, Lexi. I have to go. You, and our daughter, will be safe here until I return,” he said, dropping his hand from her chin. “I won’t be gone for more than a w—”

Before he could finish his sentence, he was rudely interrupted by the sound of the front doorbell. Hissing an obscenity, he yanked himself from the bed and reached

down to the floor for his jeans. Fucking hell, could he just have a few minutes alone with her? It pissed him off to no end that they were always being disrupted by someone or something.

“What’s going on?” Lexi asked, watching wide eyed as he threw on his jeans. “Are you expecting someone? You aren’t leaving right now, are you?!”

Buttoning up his pants, he tossed her a harsh glance in warning. Balling his hands into tight fists at his side, he stalked towards the door of the master bedroom. She had better stay put, no one needed to see her in her current state.

“Stay here, I’ll be right back,” he ordered while crossing the threshold into the hallway.

Plastering a deep frown on her face, she shivered as a ball of apprehension settled into the pit of her stomach. She didn’t care for the way he had looked at her, it made the hair on the back of her neck stand on end. Whatever was going on, he clearly didn’t want her to get involved.

“Stay here, my ass,” she grumbled to herself.

Sliding her body towards the edge of the bed, she eased herself from the mused mattress. Gathering her shirt and panties from the ground, she suddenly froze as she felt a series of sharp kicks to the right of her belly button. The movements filled her with relief, drowning out all her anxiety.

Source Creation Date: June 23, 2025, 5:33 am

“Oh, thank God,” she whispered, placing her free hand on her abdomen.

Comforted by the movement, she apologized to her daughter in the same way Kade had only minutes prior. Happy tears filled her eyes as she counted the various kicks and flutters. They were strong and true, letting her know that everything was as it should be, and for her not to give up. It was the reassurance she desperately needed.

“We’re survivors, aren’t we?” she said softly. “Now come on, we’ve got a visitor.”

Taking in a cleansing breath, she used her newfound burst of energy to step into her panties and change into Kade’s wrinkled shirt. Moving as quietly as possible, she walked towards the doorway. There was no way she was going to stay hidden away in the bedroom. She deserved to know what was happening.

Tiptoeing down the hallway towards the mansion’s foyer, she kept her ears perked. Off in the distance she heard Kade’s deep voice rising in agitation, and another male’s that seemed just as annoyed. While she couldn’t make out the words, she knew they were having an argument. Wanting to know more, she continued further down.

Padding her bare feet over the mahogany wood floor, she swallowed hard as she noticed Kade’s foreboding form at the end of the corridor. Even with his back turned, he was clearly in Alphas mode, with his shoulders hunched and his strong legs spread in a grounding position. He looked poised to strike at whoever stood before him.

Sensing that something was clearly wrong, she took a step backwards in retreat. Without realizing, her heel landed on an old plank. As the weight of her body fell on

the already damaged piece of mahogany, a loud 'CRACK' echoed through the hallway. Alerting everyone within earshot that she was waiting in the wings.

"Fucking hell!" she hissed.

Before she had a chance to react to the situation, her eyes widened in fear as she noticed a large German Shepherd bounding out from Kade's shadow. Barking and snarling, the beast lunged down the corridor towards her. Flinging her arms outwards, she screamed in terror. Unable to run, her body froze in place as the hellhound raced closer.

Whipping his body around, Kade's dark eyes narrowed as he noticed Lexi pressed against the wall. He should have known she would follow. Why the fuck didn't she ever listen to him?

"HALT!" he exclaimed.

Within a blink of an eye, the shepherd stopped dead in its tracks three feet away from where Lexi stood. Obeying Kade's word, the foreboding dog sat on its hind legs and let out a sharp bark in response.

"Guter hund," offered the mystery guest standing behind Kade.

Breathing heavily, Lexi moved her gaze from the dog to the man now standing side by side with Kade. She recognized him as one of the Skulls. The one named Maddox that she wanted to gut like a fish at The Wilde. Why the hell was he there?

Giving Lexi a scathing look, Kade slowly dragged his eyes from her to Maddox, and back again. Not only had she disobeyed him, but she dared to leave their room clad only in a threadbare shirt and panties. It made his left eye twitch in exasperation. They

would definitely have a conversation about this.

“I told you to stay in bed,” he growled.

Straightening her posture, she tugged on the hem of her shirt to cover her underwear from Maddox’s prying eyes. Staying mindful of the fierce looking dog, she raced to think of something that would soften the blow. Not that it would really matter, she already knew that she had royally fucked up.

“I, uh...I heard you call my name,” she said, clearing her sore throat. “So... I, uh...I thought you wanted me to come say hi to our guest...uh, hi Maddox. I... I trust you’ve been well?”

With a cocky smirk on his bearded face, Maddox allowed his blue eyes to take their fill of her barely clothed body. He wasn’t sure if Kade had roughed her up or sexed her up. Knowing his boss, probably both. He couldn’t blame him; he would do the exact same thing if he had that pretty little thing in his bed.

“I have, thanks Miss Curtis. It’s good to see you again,” he said.

Plastering a fake smile on her face, she nodded her head cordially. Yeah, she was sure he enjoyed seeing her in all her disheveled glory. It made her skin crawl. “And uh...who do we have, here?” she said, motioning to the German Shepherd.

Etching a deep frown on his face, Kade bristled with annoyance. He didn’t appreciate her little naive act, but he had to save face. He couldn’t treat her like a subordinate in front of his Skull. Maddox couldn’t think that he and Lexi were equals within the hierarchy.

“This is Cupcake. He’s going to stay with you while I’m gone,” he answered, walking towards the dog.

Lifting a brow, Lexi focused on the black and brown canine. It still looked like it wanted to tear off her face. Cupcake was too sweet of a name for the beast. Diablo or Demon seemed much more appropriate.

Standing next to the dog, Kade snapped his fingers once and pointed at Lexi. “Hier! Riech!” he ordered in German.

Springing into action, Cupcake jumped towards Lexi. With his pink tongue hanging out, the shepherd made a beeline for her naked legs.

Unsure of his intentions, Lexi instinctively recoiled. She was a dog lover, but this particular canine made her nervous. He certainly wasn't Leo's sweet little corgi.

“It's ok, Lexi. He's just going to smell you,” Kade said.

Muttering something under her breath, she made herself stand as still as possible. Watching the shepherd intently, she shivered as his cold nose moved from her bare feet, up her legs, towards the edge of her panties.

“Does he really need to get this close?” she squeaked as the dog began to smell her intimate areas.

Page 41

Source Creation Date: June 23, 2025, 5:33 am

“It’s just what dogs do,” Maddox said with a lewd grin on his face. “He needs to memorize yourscent.”

With an exasperated sigh, Lexi waited for the shepherd to finish his nasal interrogation. After a long minute, the dog finally seemed satisfied. Turning to look at Kade, Cupcake barked loudly twice to alert his master that he was done with his task.

“Guter hund,” Kade said, taking a single step towards Lexi and the canine.

Quirking his head to the side, Cupcake wagged his long tail as Kade came closer. Obviously pleased with his performance.

“He seems...friendly,” Lexi said, toggling her attention back and forth between the dog and Kade.

Maddox chuckled, the deep sound giving Lexi theick.

“Well, he will be to you,” Kade replied, before snapping his fingers once again. “Cupcake,fass!”

With another sharp bark, the shepherd quickly moved to Lexi’s left side and plopped his hind legs down on the ground. Sitting proudly, the dog looked to Kade for acknowledgement.

“So, what did that do?” Lexi asked.

“You’re under his protection. He won’t let anyone touch you,” Kade answered.

“Unless you want them to,” Maddox snickered.

Glancing over his shoulder to Maddox, Kade clicked his tongue against the roof of his mouth. His Skull seemed way too comfortable. It was apparent that he would have to assert himself during this trip.

“We’re done, here,” Kade said gruffly, heading towards the front door. “Come back at ten, Maddox. I’ll be ready.”

Shrugging his shoulders, Maddox walked to the door with a swagger in his step. He wanted to leave, anyway. Callie was waiting for him back at the safe house. Bloodbayne sure did know how to treat his employees right. Kade would be a lot more effective if he did shit like that.

“Cupcake is a very loyal dog, Miss Curtis. He will be good to you. I should know, I trained him. Oh, and don’t worry,” he said, lowering his baritone voice so that only she could hear as he walked past. “It’ll all be over soon.”

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

What time is it? Nikki purred.

Scrunching her face in frustration, Lexi stopped herself from picking up her phone. It had been well over two hours since her last text from Kade, and her anxiety was growing by the second. The last thing she needed was the bitch in her head making things worse.

I guess it doesn’t matter, does it? We both know he’s not coming back, Nikki taunted.

“Hey! Shut the fuck up!” Lexi spat aloud, her angry voice waking Cupcake.

Glancing at the shepherd curled at her feet, she whispered an apology and leaned down to rub his head. There were plenty of knives and Glocks hidden around the mansion, but she was thankful that Kade had left the pup with her. She had grown fond of the sweet demon over the past four days. He was her constant shadow, and she felt much more secure having him at her side.

“You’re such a good boy, Cupcake! When Kade comes home, I’m going to see if he will let me keep you,” she said with a warm smile.

Sniffing the air, Cupcake let out a small whimper in reply. Satisfied that there wasn’t an immediate threat to his human, he settled back down at his place beside her dining room chair.

Ugh, why would you keep that thing? It’s a disgusting mongrel,Nikki said.

“Dammit, Nikki! Why the hell did you have to come back?” she growled, toying with the sentimental charms on her bangle. “I was doing just finewithoutyou.”

You know exactly why,Nikki replied, her tone growing hard.

Holding onto the tiny white and yellow gold baby bootie, a chill ran down her spine as her brain replayed Maddox’s ominous comment. She was a sitting duck, all alone in the sprawling mansion. It was only a matter of time before something horrible happened. She could feel it in the pit of her stomach. Yes, she knew exactly why her alter had returned.

It’s a good thing you have me, ya know, Nikki said.

Rolling her eyes, Lexi placed her right palm against the curve of her stomach. “Oh yes, I’m so very lucky that you fucked the father of my child.”

You really ought to get over what happened between Kade and me. It was just sex, honestly. He's too much of a bore for me...all body, no brains. Talking to him was like talking to a brick wall. Now Demetri on the other hand, he's much more my type. Unlike you, I could handle that man. Just think of all the fun we could have together.

Source Creation Date: June 23, 2025, 5:33 am

Lifting her hand to touch her bruised throat, she pressed her lips together. Before Kade left, she made him promise that he would never let Demetri out again. At first, he had brushed her fears aside, claiming that his alter was no longer a threat. It wasn't until after she swore to leave with their daughter did he take her seriously. He groveled at her feet, vowing that Demetri would stay locked in the shadows. It was the first time she felt she had any real power over him. She thoroughly enjoyed watching him beg.

“Well, that's never going to happen,” she snapped back.

Nikki sighed. I suppose you're right. I'm into a lot of things, but necrophilia isn't one of them.

Huffing in annoyance, she felt her blood boil. She hated how pessimistic her alter was. Kade would come back to her. He had to.

Yes, I'm sure he will. Now tell me the damn time, will you?

Swearing under her breath, she reached across the table and grabbed her phone. Impatiently pressing her thumb on the home button, her eyes widened as she registered the time. Three in the afternoon. Exactly six hours since his last text.

Sucking in a sharp breath, her heart dropped to the floor. She knew time was ticking by, but didn't realize he was this late. Over the past four days, he stayed true to his word, contacting her like clockwork. It wasn't like him not to reach out, something had to be wrong. Very, very wrong.

Wasn't he supposed to text and call you every TWO hours? Nikki asked.

Ignoring her alter, she pushed the home button on her phone. Quickly entering her six-digit passcode, she pulled up her texts. Tapping on Kade's thread, she typed a frantic message.

Setting her phone down on the tabletop, she tried in vain to wrangle her racing heartbeat. Her fight or flight response was ramping up, and she could feel herself edging towards a panic attack. She needed to gain control over her emotions, before she completely spiraled.

I'm sure he's fine! He's probably just bashing in someone's kneecaps or something, Nikki said, breaking her concentration. That's what mobsters do, right?

Frowning from her alter's words, she jumped in her seat as she heard the mansion doorbell echo from the foyer. The melodic sound caught her completely off guard, causing the hairs on the back of her neck to stand up on end. She wasn't expecting company.

Waking from his light slumber, Cupcake moved into an alert position beside her chair. Growling lightly, he kept his brown eyes zeroed on the doorway connecting the dining room to the main hallway.

Unnerved by the shepherd's reaction, she grabbed her phone and pulled up her app. Clicking on the video alert, she took in a sharp breath when she realized who was at the front door. For a split second, she wondered if her mind was playing a trick on her. Why was she there?

"Valentina! Uh, hi," she said, her shaky voice transmitting through the app to the speaker on the porch. "I... uh... wasn't expecting you!"

Knowing she was being recorded, Valentina forced a smile upon her ruby red lips. Lifting a large basket filled with baby blue baby items, she tried to look as non-threatening as possible.

“I come bearing gifts,” she said.

Swallowing hard, Lexi reached into the pocket of her cardigan with her free hand. Finding her trusty switchblade, she cleared her throat as she stood from her chair.

“I’ll be right there!” she muttered before silencing her app. “Shit, shit, shit,” she hissed to herself.

Huh. Wasn’t she supposed to be in South America or something? Nikki wondered.

“Not now!” she said before glancing down to the dog. “Heir, Cupcake!”

Slapping the side of her thigh, she felt a tiny amount of comfort as Cupcake followed her lead towards the front door. At least she wasn’t at a total disadvantage. Between the dog and her blade, she stood a fighting chance should Valentina pull anything.

You really think that that mongrel will be of any help against the Amazon? Nikki asked with a small laugh. I’m pretty sure her bullets will outrun the flea bag.

“If you’re not going to be helpful, then just fucking shut up!” Lexi hissed through gritted teeth.

Suit yourself, Nikki purred before going eerily silent.

Shocked that her alter listened to her, she took in a cleansing breath upon reaching the front door. Counting down from ten in her mind, she tried to calm the icy panic growing in her belly. “It’s no big deal, Lexi,” she whispered to herself. “She’s just

dropping off some presents for the baby...that's all."

Dropping her eyes to the floor, she gave Cupcake a warning glance before placing her hand on the metal doorknob. Squaring her shoulders, she pulled her lips into a full smile before easing open the stately door.

"Valentina! Hi! It's so good to see you!" she said sweetly.

Showing herself in, the tall blonde pushed past Lexi with her arms full. Fully stepping into the grand foyer, she gave her a critical side eye before noticing the German Shepherd standing beside her.

"He gave you Cupcake?" she asked, arching a sculpted brow.

Source Creation Date: June 23, 2025, 5:33 am

Toggling her gaze from Valentina to the shepherd, Lexi nodded her head. She didn't appreciate the disgusted tone to her voice, it reminded her too much of her alter's.

"He did," she replied.

Shrugging her shoulders, the tall blonde walked over to the entryway table and dropped a large gift basket upon its lacquered top. Maddox told her that Kade ordered that he leave the dog in her care, but she didn't believe him. It added a small kink to Bloodbayne's plan, but not one so big that it couldn't be smoothed over.

"I suppose that was smart," she said.

Smoothing her hands over the white tee covering her belly, Lexi lifted her shoulders into a small shrug. Valentina carried an air of authority that made her skin crawl. She didn't quite understand why Kade trusted her so completely.

"He's a good dog," she said, leaning down to scruff the fur behind his ears.

"Uh huh," Valentina replied, placing her hand on her hip.

Growing more uncomfortable by the second, she motioned to the cellophane wrapped basket taking up most of the entryway table. "Oh wow, is that for me?" she asked, trying to look surprised.

Giving a curt nod, the blonde eyed the pregnant woman from head to toe. She was taken aback by how disheveled she appeared. Had she not bathed this entire time? She almost felt repulsed by her, until she realized that it wasn't dirt smeared across her

neck.

“Bloodbayne wanted to make sure that our little prince had some goodies,” she said nonchalantly, stepping into Lexi’s personal space for a closer inspection.

“Well, that’s very generous of him,” she replied.

Keeping her blue eyes locked on her bruised throat, Valentina hummed low. It only took her a second to recognize the handprint pressed into her skin. That son-of-a-bitch. She knew Kade couldn’t keep him locked in his cage for long.

“I see you’ve met Demetri.” she said.

Stammering for a moment, Lexi gave her an odd look. She wasn’t quite sure how to answer her. “You...you know about Demetri?” she asked, her voice lifting high.

Tilting her head, she couldn’t stop herself from laughing. She knew all Kade’s dark secrets. “Of course, who do you think helped Kade clean up all of Demetri’s little...messes? But hey, you managed to survive! You’re the first one that’s ever come out alive! Good for you!” she praised, her eyes dropping to her rounded belly. “I trust there was no harm done to our little one?”

Shaking her head, Lexi wrapped her arms protectively around her stomach. “No...sh...he, uh...he is doing just fine! Couldn’t be healthier!” she replied, kicking herself for almost letting the sex of her child slip.

Reaching down to her stomach, Valentina placed her cold hand against her bump. “That’s fantastic news. We wouldn’t want anything to happen to him, now, would we?” she said with a smirk.

Swallowing a scream, she nodded in agreement. The woman was acting like a cat

with a mouse, and she didn't appreciate it one bit. She knew. She absolutely knew.

Sensing a change in his human's mood, Cupcake pulled back his lips and let out a low growl. It didn't matter that he recognized the big woman. Orders were orders.

Narrowing her eyes, Valentina turned her attention towards the German Shepherd. Dropping her hand from Lexi's belly, she fought the urge to kick the dog. Its loyalty no longer seemed to side with her, it was yet another small snafu.

"Control your dog," she said sternly.

Dropping her lips into a frown, Lexi glanced back and forth between the blonde and her dog. For a moment, she wondered if she should let Cupcake go in for the kill. Ultimately deciding against it, she reluctantly followed the woman's words, she ordered him to heel. "Cupcake, sitz," she said.

Keeping his brown eyes centered on the tall woman, the shepherd obliged his human. Sitting on his hind legs, he patiently waited for further instructions.

"Sorry about that," Lexi muttered.

"Don't be. I suppose it's understandable why he's so protective of you. You are his Alpha's pregnant bitch, after all," Valentina replied, a hint of jealousy in her voice.

Dropping her mouth open in shock, Lexi pushed out an unbelieving laugh "I beg your pardon?"

Unbothered by her taking offense, the blonde shrugged her left shoulder. "Did I stutter?" she asked.

Widening her green eyes, she bristled inside. She wanted to reach up and slap the shit

out of the Amazonian. How dare she? “I would choose my words more carefully if I were you,” she replied, her voice shaking ever so slightly.

Shifting her weight from one foot to the other, Valentina smirked at the pregnant hellcat. She was happy to finally see a bit of the fire Kade had so reverently spoken about. It was good to know that she wasn’t a total doormat. Not that it would make a lick of difference.

“Careful, Alexandria. We don’t want to stress out the baby now, do we?” she asked.

Page 44

Source Creation Date: June 23, 2025, 5:33 am

Biting back a scathing response, she took in a much-needed breath. Bloodbayne's blonde whore wasn't worth the rise in her blood pressure. "Thank you for bringing over the gift, Valentina. Was there anything else you wanted?" she asked, eager for the woman to take her leave.

"Actually, yes. I spoke to Kade not too long ago," Valentina said.

"You did? When? Is he ok?!" Lexi interrupted, panic dripping in her voice.

Taken aback by her change in demeanor, Valentina almost felt guilty for what she was about to set into motion. It seemed as if she genuinely cared about Kade and his wellbeing. The poor little lamb was so clueless.

"On the way over here! He wanted me to apologize for not contacting you. Things went a little sideways in Thail—"

"What do you mean, sideways?" she interrupted, taking a step towards Valentina. "Is he ok?!"

"He's fine, he's fine," Valentina assured, motioning with her hands for the pregnant bitch to calm down. "He's very resourceful, there's no need to worry. Yes, things didn't go quite to plan but he was able to get the job done, and that's the important thing."

Lifting her hand to her chest, Lexi let out a heavy sigh of relief. He was alive and well. She could finally stop worrying. "Good! That's good! When is he coming home?"

Keeping a blank expression on her face, Valentina dropped her icy stare down to her belly. If she was a better woman, she would tell her the truth. Give her a head start, have her run as far away as she could and never look back. But what good would that do? Bloodbayne would eventually find her and the child. No one ever escapes him or his Organization.

“He will be home tonight, but very late. He told me that he doesn’t want you to wait up for him. It’s important that you, and our little prince, get some rest,” she replied.

Lifting her lips into a bright smile, Lexi felt a wave of relief wash over her. Rubbing her opened hands across her bump, she savored the soft kicks of her daughter. Once Kade returned, they would be another step closer to ending their living nightmare. Soon they would be free of the whole cancerous lot.

“That’s terrific news!” she beamed. “Thank you so much, you’ve made me feel so much better!”

Plastering a faux grin on her face, Valentina straightened her posture and turned towards the door to leave. There wasn’t any point in staying a moment longer, her work was done. Now it was up to the buffoons to finish the job. “You’re welcome Lexi, I’m glad I could put your mind at ease. Now if you’ll excuse me, I need to head back to the City before the entire Organization falls apart. I don’t think Bloodbayne can even wipe his own ass without me. Men are so inept.”

Stepping behind the blonde as she took her leave, Lexi scrunched her face in confusion. “Bloodbayne is in the City? I thought he was in Columbia?” she asked.

Opening the front door, Valentina glanced over her shoulder with a look that matched Lexi’s. She didn’t know what the hell she was talking about. “Why would he be in Columbia?”

Furrowing her brow, her mind began to race. The crime boss didn't go to Columbia? If that was true, they could have killed Bloodbayne the night they came home from the hospital. Why did Kade lie to her? What kind of game was he playing?

“Oh, I thought I heard someone say something about him being there. Guess I was wrong. Damn pregnancy brain,” she muttered. “Never mind!”

Eyeing her curiously, Valentina shrugged her shoulders. It really didn't matter what she had heard, but she tucked the bit of information away just in case. “Why don't you go make some tea and enjoy the gifts. There's plenty of chamomile in the pantry,” she said before crossing the threshold.

Nodding her head, Lexi leaned against the edge of the wooden door. Tea might do her a bit of good, it might relax her enough to get some much-needed sleep. In the morning, her love would be home, and they could finally get the ball rolling.

“That sounds great, actually. Thanks for the suggestion, and thanks for coming,” she said.

Waving her hand dismissively, the blonde walked towards her silver Jaguar C-X75 parked in the driveway. “Think nothing of it!” she yelled.

Not waiting for her to jump into her flashy sports car, Lexi quickly shut the door and bolted its lock. Taking a step to the left, she entered her code on the flatscreen keypad to arm the security system. Turning towards Cupcake, she gave the pup a smile and patted the top of her thigh.

“What a fucking bitch, huh Cupcake? Well. Now that that's over, why don't we make some tea and open some prezzies?”

...

Sipping on her second cup of chamomile, Lexi glared at the huge gift basket before her. She had been staring at it for over an hour, quietly arguing with herself on whether she should open it. Through the cellophane, she could see that it was filled to the brim with various baby items. Blankets, pacis, rattles, onesies; all in various shades of blue. They seemed harmless enough, but as she was learning, nothing was as it appeared when it came to Bloodbayne and his Organization.

Oh, would you just quit pussyfooting around and just open the bloody thing? Nikki sniped.

“Welcome back, whore,” she muttered under her breath.

Aww, Lexi. I love you, too. Now suck it up and see what Papa Bloodbayne bought baby hellspawn.

Placing her teacup on its saucer, she mentally flipped off her alter. “She isn’t a hellspawn,” she grumbled.

Whatever you say, now get to it! I swear I see a pair of Dolce & Gabbana baby booties! Nikki replied.

Source Creation Date: June 23, 2025, 5:33 am

Reaching across the dining room table, she clumsily grabbed onto the basket. Her arm felt unusually heavy, but she easily excused it away. It had been a very long, extremely stressful day. Besides, it was becoming increasingly normal for her to feel exhausted at this point during the day. Pregnancy was oh so much fun.

You feeling ok, bitch? Nikki asked curiously.

“Yeah, I’m fine. I’m just getting a little tired, that’s all,” she replied, pulling the basket towards her.

Uh huh.

Rolling her eyes, she paused for a moment as she heard Cupcake whimper beside her. Looking at the shepherd, she gave the pup a reassuring grin. “It’s ok, Cupcake! We’ll go to bed soon and when we wake up, Daddy will be home and everything will be ok!”

Nudging her hip with his snout, he gave another high-pitched whimper. There was a new scent on her skin that he didn’t care for. His human needed to lie down.

Giving the dog a curious look, she reached down to scratch his peaked ears. “It’s ok, boy! I’ll be quick,” she promised.

Turning her attention back to the basket, she tore open the clear cellophane. It was probably silly of her to even open the damn thing, since her daughter would never use any of the supplies, but she needed the mental vacation. She couldn’t help but feel a small bit of happiness knowing that her world would revolve around little baby things

very soon.

Reaching into the wicker basket, she removed the various items. With wide eyes, she carefully inspected each gift. Two incredibly soft cashmere blankets, multiple designer onesies and sleepers, there was even a silver Tiffany's rattle. She couldn't believe how luxurious everything was.

Oh, now I'm really pissed that hellspawn is a girl. We all could've lived a life of luxury. After all the shit we've been through, it's what we deserve but no, she just had to be a damn girl, Nikki grumbled.

"I'm glad she's a girl," Lexi said, dropping her free hand to her bump.

Almost on cue, she felt her daughter move against her palm. It was a slow and gentle press, not anything like the karate kicks she felt after Valentina left. It seemed as if everyone was ready to settle down for the night.

"I suppose we should go to bed," she said, allowing herself to yawn. "I can't wait to see your Daddy, and I know you can't, either."

Rising from her seat, she wobbled as she began to feel lightheaded. Gripping the edge of the dining room table, she closed her eyes and waited for her body to right itself out. Between the sudden nausea and exhaustion, she wondered if she would even be able to make it to the bedroom.

Barking once, Cupcake watched his human sway back and forth. How could he protect her from something he couldn't see? It made him incredibly nervous.

Exhaling a shaky breath, she opened her eyes and looked at her dog. He seemed worried, she felt terrible that she was making him uncomfortable. "Don't worry, Cupcake, this happens to pregnant women. I don't know why they call it 'morning

sickness' when it happens all throughout the day. But I promise, I'll be ok," she, righting herself and taking a couple steps away from the table.

Dancing from paw to paw, Cupcake let out a strangled bark. Good, his human was finally moving. But her movements didn't seem quite right.

Wait, Lexi, Nikki ordered.

"What is it?" she asked, stilling her body.

What's that hiding in the back of the basket? Do you see it? Nikki asked.

"See wh—" she replied, turning her head towards the basket.

Before she could finish her sentence, her eyes zoned in on a little piece of pink sticking out of the sea of blue. Almost instantly, all the blood drained from her face as she realized the implications of that particular color.

What the fuck is that? Nikki asked.

Moving back to the table, she reached in and grabbed onto the item in question. Quickly yanking it from the basket, she felt a phantom punch to the gut. It was a stuffed pink unicorn, she realized. Embroidered on its belly read 'GRANDPA'S LITTLE PRINCESS.'

"Oh my god," she whispered, her body shaking in a mixture of fear and anger.

I don't think God's going to help you, Nikki replied.

Swallowing back the bile rising in her throat, Lexi dropped the unicorn and danced her eyes around the dining room table. Fuck, fuck, fuck. She needed Kade home, now.

“Where’s my phone?! I need to let Kade know!” she exclaimed, panic lifting her voice.

You left it in the bathroom, Nikki reminded her.

Spitting a curse, she forced her sluggish legs to walk forward through the dining room. With every shuffled step, she found herself growing more and more weak. This was something other than pregnancy, did she eat something she wasn’t supposed to?

Page 46

Source Creation Date: June 23, 2025, 5:33 am

More like something you drank, Nikki said, her phantom voice unusually shaky. Get to the damn bathroom and call 9-1-1!

Suspecting that the tea she had consumed was most likely tainted, she hurried her exhausted body. Valentinameantfor this to happen, the bitch wasn't loyal to Kade at all! How was he so fucking naive to believe she could be trusted?

Staying directly at her side, Cupcake whined as they stepped into the main hallway. Something was very,verywrong, and it worried him to no end.

Blinking her watery eyes, she tried to center her blurring vision. All she had to do was walk another ten feet to the bathroom. Once she had her phone, she could call for help.

“It's ok...Cu...Cupcake ...I'mmm almos—”

Unable to finish her sentence, Lexi fell silent as her eyesight suddenly darkened. Stumbling over her own feet, she felt her body sway to and fro. Trying unsuccessfully to catch herself, she fell hard onto the wooden floor. Her last memory was that of her dog barking wildy, before she slipped into a drug induced sleep.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

Unceremoniously forced back into consciousness, Lexi gulped in a large mouthful of air. Attempting to raise her pregnant body from the ground, she froze as an intense pain encased her skull. Dropping her torso back to the ground, she whimpered as her head bumped against the unforgiving wood. Where the fuck was she?

Moving her gaze across the dark space before her, she realized that she was in exactly the same spot where she had fallen. Judging by the lack of light in the room, she guessed she had been unconscious for at least a handful of hours. On the verge of panicking, she took comfort in the fact that she hadn't been kidnapped and tossed into another underground bunker. Perhaps her fainting spell was caused by her pregnancy, and not from spiked tea?

With her thoughts turning to her daughter, she lifted her heavy hands to her belly. Frantically moving her touch around her sore midsection, tears welled in her eyes as she desperately searched for any sign of life.

"Please, please be ok!" she said aloud, her voice cracking from stress.

Unintentionally holding her breath, she silently prayed to God that her child would be ok. She didn't know what she would do if anything happened to her baby. She couldn't believe that they were in this position yet again. When Kade came back, if he came back, they were going to get as far away from his father as possible. She didn't care what she had to do, or who she had to kill. They were escaping Bloodbayne's stronghold.

With hot tears streaming down her face, she halted her hands as she felt a soft press against her palm. Releasing a guttural sound that was part sob and part laugh, she rubbed her stomach. Almost on cue, her baby followed her touch with a series of tiny kicks. In that moment, nothing else mattered. Her daughter was alive and moving, all was well in her chaotic world.

"That's my baby girl!" she praised. "You're so very strong. You're a fighter just like me. We'll be ok...we'll always be ok!"

Attempting to roll onto her left side, she heard a whine followed by a soft bark above her head. Remembering her canine protector, she looked up and gave the shepherd a

warm smile.

“I’m ok, boy, and she’s ok, too! I had a nasty spill, that’s all. I just need to get up and go to bed,” she said, wiping the tears from her cheeks. “Everything will be alright as soon as Kade comes home. Won’t it?”

Leaning his head to the side, Cupcake whimpered a reply. His human seemed to be ok, but there was something in the air that he didn’t care for. It made the scruff on the back of his neck bristle.

“I promise, boy...we’re ok,” she tried to assure the pup, “I’m going to roll my fat ass over and—”

Before she could finish her sentence, a sharp, singsong whistle came from the mansion’s foyer. Recognizing the high-pitched sound, Cupcake immediately stood to attention. Letting out several loud barks, the German Shepherd bolted towards the call, leaving Lexi bewildered in his absence.

Furrowing her brow in confusion, she hoisted her torso from the floor as she watched the dog run down the hallway. Clumsily rising onto her feet, she used the wall to right herself into a standing position.

“Kade?” she called out.

Pausing for a moment, she pursed her lips together. Hearing the dog’s happy bark, she grinned to herself. Of course it was Kade, who else would Cupcake welcome to sweetly? She was so relieved that he was safe, and that he had come home to her.

Carefully walking down the hallway, she wrapped her arms around her belly. Hugging her pronounced bump, she whispered loving phrases to her daughter again and again. Their nightmare was almost over, it was almost too good to be true.

“Your Daddy’s home, baby girl!” she said, excitedly. “Let’s go say hi, huh?”

Halfway down the corridor, she realized that Cupcake had grown silent. She found it a little odd, but quickly brushed the feeling away. Kade probably ordered the dog to be quiet. It was late into the night, he probably assumed that she was sleeping and didn’t want to wake her.

“Kade? Is that you?” she asked again.

Shuffling her swollen feet, she reached the end of the hallway. Turning the corner to her right, she fully expected to see his handsome face greeting her with his signature smirk. To her surprise, the foyer was completely empty. There was no sign of Cupcake, or her dark lover.

“Ha, ha. Didn’t anyone tell you not to scare a pregnant woman?” she asked, turning her head left and right. “You don’t want to make me pee my pants, do you?”

Spinning on her heels, she waited impatiently for a response. As the seconds ticked by, she started to doubt her sanity. The dog had been with her, she definitely saw him run to the door. She heard the damn whistle, someone had to be in the house with her, right?

I don’t like this. Let me step in, Lexi. Nikki chimed in from out of nowhere. Something is wrong and you aren’t equipped to deal with it.

Source Creation Date: June 23, 2025, 5:33 am

Perking from the sound of her alter's voice, she swallowed hard. She would be lying if she said she didn't feel the same trepidation, but there was no way she was going to allow Nikki to step in. That bridge had burnt to the ground.

"I can handle myself," she whispered, quietly moving back down the foreboding corridor.

You're going to get us killed! Quit being so damn stubborn! Nikki hissed.

"I'm done with you, Nikki. Goodbye," Lexi replied.

Blocking the bitch behind a mental door, she reached into the pocket of her cardigan. Finding her switchblade exactly where she left it, she yanked the weapon from its confines. Her alter could fuck right off. If something was truly wrong, she could easily protect both her baby and herself. There wasn't a doubt in her mind.

Tiptoeing towards the kitchen, she held the hilt of her Stiletto tightly in her hand. Hovering her thumb over the silver button, she tried to calm her breathing. Her blood pressure was rising, filling her ears with a rhythmic whooshing sound that only heightened her anxiety. She had seen too many horror movies with this exact same setup, it almost made her want to laugh.

Making her way into the gourmet kitchen, she looked around the dark room for anything out of the ordinary. Stilling her body, she noticed the sound of heavy footsteps walking up the corridor towards her. The strides seemed confident and fluid, she was sure they belonged to Kade. His gait was unmistakable.

Lifting her lips into a full smile, she placed her blade back into the pocket of her oversized sweater. Relief flooded her muscles, causing her to visibly relax as she stepped back towards the hallway. She knew she wasn't crazy; he was a man of his word. He would always come back for her.

Stopping at the threshold of the kitchen, she clicked her tongue against the roof of her mouth. "You're in so much trouble, Kade! I'm going to make you pay for scaring me!"

Entering the corridor, she took a handful of steps before her brain registered the human shaped shadow standing only a yard away. Freezing like a captured animal, her green eyes focused on the stocky man standing before her. The sudden sight of him made her stomach lurch.

Giving her an evil grin, Maddox tightened his right fist to secure the grip on his brass knuckles. He loved the look of shock on her pretty little face. His Boss told him to make things quick for her, and to not let her suffer too much. He didn't think he could follow orders this time, though. He wanted to have some fun with her, first.

"I'm sorry to disappoint you, Miss Curtis, but Kade couldn't make it," he replied, a hint of amusement in his voice.

Hissing a sharp curse, Lexi took a step backwards to create distance from the threatening man. In the darkness, she noticed something flash. There was no mistaking the silver metal covering his knuckles. She had been on the receiving end of that particular weapon during her rape as a teenager. Realizing his intentions, she shoved her hand into her pocket for her knife.

"Don't do anything stupid," Maddox warned.

Ripping her blade from her cardigan, she gasped as he lunged towards her. Trying to

move her pregnant body from his reach, she screamed as he caught her before she had a chance to ready her Stiletto.

Roughly grabbing the brunette, Maddox tossed her against the wall. Not giving her a moment to react, he wrapped his right hand around her neck and held her tightly in place. Using the inside edge of his brass knuckles, he pressed the metal dangerously tight against her carotid artery. Reaching for her right wrist, he repeatedly slammed her arm against the wall to loosen her grip on the switchblade.

“Drop it, bitch!”he growled, squeezing his meaty fingers against her throat.

Struggling to take in air, Lexi tried with all her might to push the Skull off her. Moving her thumb to press her blade’s release button, she whimpered as she felt her hand open, dropping her only source of protection onto the wooden floor.

Chuckling under his breath, he loosened his hold to allow her to breathe just enough so she wouldn’t pass out. He didn’t want her to die quite yet, not when the fun had only just begun. He was a little shocked that he was able to subdue her so easily, she wasn’t anything like Kade had touted.

“Look at you, giving up without a fight. It’s almost like you want this to happen,” he said, leaning his body against hers and meeting her terrified gaze. “I knew you liked me, I could tell from the way you looked at me at the Wilde. The way that you stared into the camera while Kade was finger fucking you...you knew I was watching. That little show was for me, wasn’t it?”

Registering his words, a look of disgust passed over her face. How delusional could one person be? “You’re...fucking insane!”she spat.

Shrugging his shoulders, Maddox let out a low laugh. “Yeah, you got me there. But Kade isn’t here, there’s no need for you to lie. I know you want me. If you wanted to

stop me, you'd be fighting me right now. Yet here you are...just waiting for me to push you on all fours and fuck your brains out."

Gritting her teeth, Lexi prepared herself for the beating that was sure to come. Like hell she would let the disgusting mongrel touch her. She would kill him with her bare hands if need be. He had no clue who he was dealing with.

Growing excited by her defiance, he dipped into his mind's filthy fantasies. He couldn't wait to hear Kade's whore squeal his name. "They say that pregnant pussies are the best. That they're always wet and aching for a good cock. I've always wanted to try one out. Lucky for you, I haven't had a warm cunt in a few days," he said huskily. "I hope you're ready for the fuck of your life."

Wincing from the pain wracking her bruised throat, she shook her head as much as his grip would allow. Twisting her body, she tried to gauge the proximity of his crotch to her knee. It would be difficult to defend herself with her belly in the way, but she had to try. There was no doubt in her mind that he meant to kill her after raping her. She had to protect her daughter at all costs.

"I wouldn't let you fuck me if your cock was the last cock on Earth," she squeaked.

Scrunching her face in anger, she yanked her left knee upwards with as much force as she could. In the span of a single heartbeat, her sharp kneecap made contact with her attacker's sensitive scrotum. Using his sudden shock to her advantage, she jerked her torso, breaking her wrist and throat free from his vicious grasp. Letting out an animalistic scream, she brought her balled fists to his chest and pushed his hunched body from hers.

Doubling over in pain, Maddox coughed as the wind was knocked from his lungs. Stumbling to regain his composure, he yelled an obscenity before trying to grab the squirming brunette. How dare she. He had planned on giving her a little bit of pleasure,

but not anymore. Now, the bitch was going to suffer.

“FF...FUCKING...WHORE!”he sputtered.

Rolling away from his reach, she dropped to her knees and scrambled for her switchblade. Slapping her hand over the floor, she frantically searched for her discarded weapon. Although her eyes had adjusted to the lack of light, her nerves were making it hard for her to see. If only she could find her fucking knife.

Source Creation Date: June 23, 2025, 5:33 am

Baring his crooked teeth, Maddox reached down and grabbed a handful of her tousled locks. Roughly twisting her hair in his fingers, he tried to yank her from the floor.

“YOU’RE IN FOR IT NOW, YOU LITTLEBITCH!”he screamed.

Yelping from the tight tug on her scalp, Lexi felt the edge of her switchblade graze her fingertips. Grasping onto the hunk of metal, all of her stolen confidence came rushing back. Unbeknownst to her attacker, the odds had just tipped in her favor.

Pressing the button on her Stiletto, she couldn’t help but smile as the razor-sharp blade sprang into place. With his fist gripping her hair, she stood clumsily to her feet. Turning to meet his steely gaze, she lunged towards him, slashing viciously at the arm holding her locks to free herself.

Growling like a junkyard dog, Maddox released his hold on her tangled hair. Instinctively taking a step backwards, he felt his forearm burn with the unmistakable fire that comes whenever flesh is split. He couldn’t believe the whore had the balls to slice him, it caused his rage to bubble through his veins. Foreplay was over, it was time to complete his orders.

Balling his hand into a tight fist, he pulled back his uninjured arm. Not wanting to give the bitch a chance to stab him, he threw his fist towards her cheek. His brass knuckles made contact with flesh and bone, causing a sickening“smack”to echo throughout the hallway.

Caught off guard by the violent punch, Lexi fell to the hard floor. Squeezing her hand around the hilt of her switchblade, she pushed out a broken cry as the acute pain in

her cheekbone grew to encompass the left side of her face. Dazed and confused, she lost all sense of reality in the chaotic moment. Not able to defend herself, she watched in horror as the Skull jumped on top of her.

“Stupid cunt,” Maddox spat bitterly.

Filled with uncontrolled rage, he attacked the bloodied brunette. Raising his arm to continue his onslaught, he punched her beautiful face twice in rapid succession. Each blow landing just hard enough to keep her from moving.

Moaning in anguish, she struggled to stay conscious. Taking his punches like a toy rag doll, she wondered how long it would take before he broke every bone in her face. Never in her wildest dreams did she think this would be the way she would die. Her limp dick'd attacker didn't deserve the honor of her death, it pissed her off to no end.

Smiling down at the whimpering woman beneath him, he lifted his muscular arm for a third blow. Too lost in his own bloodlust, he didn't hear the booted footsteps running down the corridor towards him.

Braving herself for what could be the final punch, Lexi instinctively flinched as his fist flew towards her. Before the brass knuckles contacted her torn skin, a loud gunshot rang through the air. Jerking from the sound, her eyes widened as she witnessed a bullet shoot right between her assailant's eyes, dousing her with warm blood and brain matter as his lifeless body fell on top of her.

“Lexi!”Kade yelled, sprinting towards her.

“Kade?!” she replied, weakly trying to push Maddox off her. “Is that...are you...are you really here?!”

Crouching beside her, he gripped onto Maddox's black shirt and threw his dead subordinate away from his love. Focusing his dark eyes on her swollen face, he felt his blood boil with wrath. He wished he hadn't killed him so quickly, the motherfucker deserved to be tortured for what he had done to her.

"Yes, I'm here, Sweetheart! Can you move? We need to get the fuck out of here, we don't have time," he urged, gently pulling her into a sitting position.

Swallowing back a mouthful of bile, she tried to focus her blurry vision. She was elated to see him, but why did they have to run? He just eliminated the threat.

"I don't think I can," she replied, lifting her hand to her bleeding cheek.

Nodding his head, he wasted no time gathering her into his arms. Carefully picking her pregnant body from the ground, he cradled her lovingly against his torso. Making his way down the hallway, his chest tightened as he heard her whimper in pain.

"Shhh, it's ok! I'm here now. I've got you," he whispered, trying to convey confidence in his tone. "I'll protect you, I promise."

Resting her head against his shoulder, she tried to gather her wits. What the fuck was he talking about? "Protect me from what? Maddox is dead!"

Clenching his jaw, he debated on what information he should divulge. Given her current state, the less she knew, the better off she was. Once they were at the safehouse, he would tell her everything. His top priority was getting her as far away as possible, before the rest of his Skulls swarmed the mansion.

"It's nothing you need to worry about," he replied, stepping into the foyer.

Lifting her good eye to his face, she took a proper look at her dark savior. To her

shock and dismay, his face looked almost as bad as she imagined hers to be. “What happened to you?” she asked.

Letting out a small growl, he locked his eyes on hers to distract her while he walked through the opened front door. Directly to her right lay the lifeless body of the dog entrusted with her safety. He knew she would be devastated to learn that Maddox had killed Cupcake. That trauma would have to wait for another day.

“Thailand was a trap,” he said.

“What kind of trap?” she asked.

Pausing for a moment, he scanned the darkness for any sign of impending dangers. Secure that they were indeed alone, he proceeded to walk towards the driveway flanking the left wing of the mansion. Maddox was an idiot for parking his Lexus in plain sight, but at least they would have a more reliable vehicle than the stolen Chevy he had arrived in.

“My father knows everything, Lexi,” he replied, adjusting her in his strong arms. “He wanted to teach me a lesson.”

Swallowing hard, all the blood drained from her bruised face. Remembering the stuffed unicorn from the gift basket, she began to tremble with another rush of fear.

Source Creation Date: June 23, 2025, 5:33 am

“He was going to kill me and our baby girl,” she stated matter-of-factly.

Nodding once, Kade stepped down the long driveway towards the parked car. Noticing that the driver’s door of the black sedan was wide open, he stopped dead in his tracks. He knew for a fact that it was closed when he arrived at the house.

“Fuck,” he said.

Perking from his obscenity, Lexi glanced around in the darkness. “What’s wrong?” she asked.

Opening his mouth to answer, he heard the unmistakable sound of someone cocking back a Glock behind him. Cursing himself for tucking his own pistol in his waistband, he gave Lexi a look of warning before slowly turning around. There was only one other person besides himself that carried that particular weapon.

“You don’t want to do this, Val,” he said, his deep voice steady and calm.

Letting out an annoyed sigh, Valentine aimed her gun at Kade’s forehead. Leaning her head, she studied his expression in the moonlight. In all of the years she had known him, this was the first time she had seen a look of true fear on his face. He finally had the family he needed, and he was on the verge of losing it. If she had a heart, it would be breaking for him.

“We all have to do things that we don’t want to do, Kade,” she replied. “You know that.”

Licking his lips nervously, he took half a step forward towards the statuesque blonde. “Please, Val... after everything we’ve been through together. After everything I’ve done for you, you owe me. Please...just let us go,” he begged. “You know damn well that I would let you go if you were in my shoes!”

Holding in her breath, Lexi toggled her gaze back and forth between Kade and Valentina. She could’ve sworn she saw her face softening. It was smart of him to play upon the affection she clearly harbored for him.

Clearing her throat, Valentina shrugged her shoulders. Now wasn’t the time for her mind to replay all the tender moments they had shared. She had orders to see through. “No one escapes your father, you know that,” she replied.

Adjusting Lexi in his arms, he took another step forward. She was on the verge of cracking; she just needed a small incentive.

“Yeah, I know that’s what’s been drilled into us since we were old enough to walk but think about this for a second. With me gone, you’ll be next in line. And don’t give me any shit about ‘but I’m not a man.’ The whole ‘male heir’ thing he likes to scream is complete bullshit. The sex of our baby never mattered, he was going to kill Lexi and our baby no matter what. This whole fucking thing was supposed to be one giant mindfuck lesson for me,” he said, his deep voice edged in anger. “But he fucking confessed to me when I woke up from my coma that he was planning on naming you his heir. With me gone, you’ll be next in line. You’ll finally have what you’ve always wanted. Bloodbayne has a soft spot for you, he always has. You have nothing to lose, here.”

Mulling over his words, Valentina’s resolve slowly melted away. She always knew in her heart that Bloodbayne’s misogyny was a lie. On more than one occasion, he had whispered his plans on bequeathing everything to her. She has always written it off, telling herself that they were the desperate words of a man who would say anything

to lose himself inside her. But perhaps Kade was telling her the truth? Besides him, she was the only one competent enough to run the Organization. With him gone, there was a real possibility that Bloodbayne would have her take over when the time came. It was a chance she was willing to take.

Reluctantly dropping her weapon, she squared her shoulders. She couldn't believe what she was about to agree to. I'll give you a twenty-minute head start, Kade. Nothing more, nothing less. I suggest you run and run quickly. I won't be able to stop them if they ever find you," she warned.

Blinking his dark eyes, he silently thanked God. He knew she wouldn't slaughter them. There was still some compassion inside of that steely shell of hers. "Thank you, Val," he replied.

"Don't thank me, yet. They'll be here any second. You need to hurry if you want to keep breathing," she urged.

Nodding an acknowledgment, he gave her one last look of gratitude before turning away. Carrying Lexi a handful of steps towards the waiting Lexus, he stopped when he heard his friend loudly clear her throat behind him.

"Kade. Aren't you forgetting to do something?" Valentina asked.

Pursing his lips together, he turned his beaten face to Lexi. Leaning in, he gave her a loving kiss on her forehead. "I just need to put you down for just a second, ok? This will only take a minute and then we'll get the fuck out of here."

"Ok," she replied, not understanding what was going on.

Gently setting her down on her feet, he waited for her to find her balance before facing Valentina. Reaching for the gun tucked into his waistband, he flicked off the

safety and pointed the weapon at his former partner.

“Make them clean,” she ordered, straightening her posture.

“Only for you,” he replied.

Wanting to make it as quick and painless as possible, he fired off two shots from his gun; one round aimed at her upper left arm, and the other at her left calf. He hated to shoot her, but it was a necessary evil. If she went back to his father without a scratch on her, she would pay dearly.

Falling to the ground, Valentina screamed an obscenity. Even though they weren’t mortal wounds, they still hurt like a bitch. Lucky for her, he was an impeccable marksman. Just a few stitches and she would be as good as new.

“GO!” she yelled.

Not needing to be told twice, he tucked his gun back in his waistband and turned back towards Lexi. Scooping her up into his arms, he ran the rest of the way to the Lexus.

Glancing over his broad shoulder, Lexi kept her blurry gaze on Valentina. She had given them the most precious gift, and she would never forget it. She only wished she had the chance to thank her.

Making his way to the passenger side of the car, he opened the door and gently eased her into the leather seat. Grabbing the seatbelt, he wrapped it around her rounded body and buckled her safely in. Letting his hand drift over her midsection, he was relieved to feel his daughter kick against his palm. Both of the girls he loved so dearly were safe. He could finally breathe again.

Source Creation Date: June 23, 2025, 5:33 am

Closing the passenger door, he raced to the driver's side. Hopping his large body into the sedan, he closed the door behind him and laughed to himself. Sitting in the center console was the key fob, exactly where he expected it to be. Maddox was the biggest moron for always leaving his fucking keys in the car.

Pushing the luxury car's ignition switch, he gave Lexi a warm smile before tearing down the driveway towards the road. Time was of the essence; he had to create as much distance as he could. They would be running for the rest of their lives, but it wasn't anything they couldn't handle together.

"Where are we going?" she asked calmly, moving her gaze to look at Kade.

"I have a safehouse in Georgia that only I know about. I don't have any ties to that area, it won't even be on their radar. Once we get out of town, we'll find another car and head to Macon. We can stay there until our daughter is born...then we can go over our options. But know this, I will do anything to protect you. Anything," he replied.

Melting into her seat from sudden exhaustion, she hummed a reply. She knew they were far from being safe, but was comforted to know that he meant it when he said he would protect them. After everything they had experienced together, she finally had the one piece that was missing in their twisted relationship. With every fiber of her being, she now trusted him completely.

"I love you, Lexi. I love you and I love our daughter. More than anything in this fucking world. I'll never let anything ever happen to either of you," he said confidently, pulling onto the main road.

Nodding her head, Lexi smiled through the pain brought on by the flexing of her facial muscles. He had made declarations of love to her before, but this time was different. He finally believed his own words...and so did she.

“I know, Kade,” she replied, reaching over to the gear shift and covering his large hand with hers. “I love you too, and I’m so happy to be yours.”

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

One year later...

Opening the door to his home, Kade stepped inside the humble single wide trailer. Walking two paces into the living room, he set his metal lunchbox down on the thrifted coffee table with a smile on his face. Breathing in the delicious aroma of a home cooked meal, his stomach growled, and his hunger spiked. He loved that Lexi was getting some good use out of the crockpot he had bought her. He couldn’t wait to taste her latest culinary creation.

“Daddy’s home! Where are my girls?” he asked, his dark eyes scanning the empty living area.

“I’m just changing Loella, we’ll be out in a second!” Lexi called out from the far bedroom.

“Sounds good, Sweetheart,” he replied, heading towards the old blue couch lining the trailer’s rusted wall. Flopping down with a groan, he melted into the worn sofa. His body was sore from installing drywall for over nine hours, but he wouldn’t have it any other way. The under the table job provided enough money for them to have a roof over their heads, and food in their bellies. He couldn’t ask for a better life than the one he was living.

Walking out of the bedroom with her nine-month-old on her hip, Lexi's face lit up as soon as her tired eyes settled on her love. She didn't think she would ever get sick of the giddy feeling she felt every night when he came home from work. It still shocked her how much her life had changed, how much their love had changed, since escaping his father. She couldn't imagine her life without him.

"Look, Loey! Daddy's home!" she said, her voice full of cheer.

Clearing the small space, she laughed as Loella flexed her tiny hands open and closed as she noticed her daddy. It was a new habit that their daughter had picked up, and she still thought it was the cutest thing she had ever seen. Loey was a daddy's girl through and through. She always turned into chopped liver as soon as he came home.

Giving his girls a warm grin, Kade stretched out his arms. Gently taking Loella, he puckered his lips to give Lexi a much-needed kiss.

Making sure their daughter was secure in his grasp, she bent down to press her lips against his. There was something so incredibly sexy about him holding their baby, it was an immediate turn on. She was looking forward to putting Loey down early tonight. They had celebrating to do.

"Hey handsome," she purred.

Not to be outdone, Loella let out a high-pitched squeal to get her daddy's attention.

Chuckling under his breath, he winked at Lexi before turning to his little princess. Slapping a goofy smile on his face, he soaked in her cuteness. It was a good thing she was a splitting image of her mother, though he had no doubt that she would be making his life a living hell in about sixteen years or so. He knew the boys would be beating down his door to get to her.

“And did my girls have a good day?” he asked.

Smiling at her daddy, Loey brought her fist to her mouth and began to gnaw on her chubby knuckles. With a mouthful of drool dripping down her chin, she babbled a reply. Teething was hard work.

Taking a seat next to him on the couch, Lexi nodded her head. Every day being free with her family was a good day, as far as she was concerned. Things were settling down after their move to Lansing, Kansas only six weeks prior. She finally felt in her bones that they were safe. She was excited to enjoy their happily ever after.

“We did! I gave Loey a bath and then she had some tummy time. We went to the store to get some groceries. Oh, and I texted Lilly for a little bit. I invited her and Justin over for dinner tonight. I hope you don’t mind?” she asked.

Shrugging his broad shoulders, he moved Loella onto his right knee. Bouncing her gently, he watched in amusement as his baby girl laughed from the movement. “No, I don’t mind, just as long as they don’t stay all night,” he replied, giving her a suggestive look. “But speaking of dinner, what are you making? Whatever it is, it smells so damn good.”

Beaming with pride, she straightened her sitting posture. She always felt accomplished whenever he complimented her cooking. “Beef stew! I’m going to start the cornbread in a few minutes, but that shouldn’t take too long.”

“God that sounds good! I swear you’re trying to fatten me up,” he said.

Reaching over to touch his stomach, she lifted the corner of her lips into a sly grin. True, his body had changed a little since their daughter was born, but he was still ridiculously fuckable. “Dad bods are hot,” she replied.

Source Creation Date: June 23, 2025, 5:34 am

Lifting a dark brow, he eyed the beautiful brunette next to him. He wondered if it would be bad manners if they cancelled their dinner plans with the neighbors. Not that he cared about the social faux pas.

“Oh, yeah?” he asked.

Nodding her head slowly, she made a show of licking her lips. He was so fun to tease. Especially lately, now that their sexual encounters weren’t nearly as frequent as they used to be.

“Very,” she replied. “In fact, I’ve been thinking about your naked dad bod all day.”

Narrowing his dark eyes, he clicked his tongue against the roof of his mouth. It wasn’t fair that she had the ability to make him lose his mind with the tiniest bit of flirting. “Oh, you have, have you? My...aren’t you a naughty mommy. Can we put Loey in her jumper for a few minutes?” he whispered.

Shaking her head, she moved to take their daughter. Sitting the squirming baby on her lap, she let out a sigh. She would love nothing more than a quickie in the bathroom, but their time was running short.

“I wish we could, but they will be here soon. Why don’t you go get cleaned up?” she suggested.

Grumbling an annoyance under his breath, he slapped his hands on his thighs. Leaning in to give her another kiss, he reluctantly stood from the couch. It was worth a shot, he hoped they could have some fun once they were in bed for the night.

“Yeah, ok. I’ll be right back,” he replied, heading to the bathroom to wash his hands and face.

Admiring him as he walked away, she snuggled her cooing daughter. Things were as close to perfect as she thought they could be. Neither Demetri nor Nikki had made an appearance since the night they had fled. As far as anyone was concerned, they were just a normal, young family of three. Perhaps four, if the squinter of a line on the pregnancy test was right. She couldn’t wait to tell him the amazing news.

Losing herself in the excitement of possibly being pregnant again, she held Loey close. Despite the odds, she thought that they were excellent parents. They could handle another baby. Especially if he or she was just as adorable as their little fighter.

Kissing the top of Loey’s bald head, she jumped slightly as she heard a rapid knock on the metal front door. Standing from the couch, she placed her baby on her hip without a second thought. Lilly and Justin were always a little early, it was a good thing that at least the stew was ready to eat.

“Be right there!” she called out.

...

Splashing cold water on his face, Kade blinked at his image in the bathroom mirror. Grabbing the hand towel from the metal rack by the sink, he quickly wiped the water from his skin. Replacing the towel, he froze in place as he heard a feminine yelp piercing the air.

Registering the alarming sound, his eyes widened in fear. Bounding from the bathroom he ran through the small trailer. Finding Lexi’s limp body lying on the porch just outside the front door, he let out an anguished growl. As he came closer, he noticed that she was bleeding from her left temple. The wound reminded him of the

one she had given him at the cabin. Looking at her torso, he took comfort in the soft rising and falling of her chest. Thank God she was still breathing.

Turning his attention towards the porch, his face dropped as he noticed four of his former Skulls standing with their guns drawn. In the center of the group was Cyris, who no doubt took over after Maddox's death. Held tightly in his free arm was Loey, her little face scrunching from the confusion of the moment. Seeing the fear flashing in her eyes made him burn with rage.

"Hey, Kade," Cyris offered smugly. "Long time, no see."

Turning his gaze from his sweet daughter to the cocky meathead, he hardened his masculine features. "You fucking son of a bitch, give me my daughter!" he hissed, hunching his shoulders in anger.

Shaking his head with a sick smile on his face, Cyris pulled back the hammer of his handgun. It thrilled him to see terror crack through his hard exterior. Kade deserved every ounce of heartbreak for breaking a cardinal rule. He was honored to be the one who would send him to hell.

"She's ours now, and so is your sleeping bitch. Don't worry, though, we'll take really good care of them," he replied.

Balling his hands into fists at his sides, Kade couldn't contain his fury. If this was how he was going to die, then he would go out fighting for his family. "I'll kill you, you fucking prick!" he yelled.

Pulling his fist back, he lunged towards Cyris. Before he had a chance to contact his face, he was roughly grabbed by Toku and Jinx. Twisting his body to and fro to break their hold, his eyes widened as he watched in horror as Cyris carried out his orders. Turning his focus on his crying daughter, his chaotic life flashed before him. The last

thing he heard was the rough, rapid sound of gunfire before his entire world faded to black.

Part Two

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

Nearly 4 Months Later...

Clutching a bloodied bundle in her left hand, Lexi silently followed Cyris as he led her down the dark corridor. Keeping her gaze centered on the back of his tattooed head, she readied herself for the meeting that lay ahead. Although she dreaded seeing Bloodbayne's deformed face, it was a necessary evil. Once he had his confirmation, he would let her see Loey. She hated his twisted game but hated herself more for playing it.

Don't, Lexi, Nikki said from the back of her mind. Quit blaming yourself. I'm the one that killed him, yeah? I'm the one that kills them all. I do that so you don't feel like shit. So stop feeling sorry for yourself and get on with it.

Taking her alter's words to heart, she lifted her chin and squared her shoulders. Never in her entire life did she think she would ever be grateful for the little bitch in her head. She had been her saving grace on multiple occasions over the past few months.

Reaching the end of the suffocating hallway, Cyris stopped his hulking body. Standing in front of the heavy metal door, he turned to look at Lexi over his leather clad shoulder. Arching a shaved brow, he motioned towards the cement floor.

Source Creation Date: June 23, 2025, 5:34 am

“If you’re gonna puke again, do it now,” he ordered. “Bloodbayne’s gonna be pissed if you ruin another one of his rugs.”

Trying to look unbothered, she narrowed her green eyes. As if she cared about Bloodbayne’s feelings or his precious carpet. She wished her morning sickness would kick in. It would please her immensely to see his disgusting face recoil as she vomited what was left of her lunch all over his Serapi wool rug.

“I’m fine,” she replied.

Reaching for the silver doorknob, he offered a warning. “Yeah? Well, you’d better be. I’m not cleaning up that shit, again.”

Taken aback by the asshole’s words, a thoroughly amused look flashed over her face. This was brand new information for her. Now she really wished the baby would make her violently sick.

“Wait...he made you clean it up?” she asked, trying her best not to laugh.

Pausing a moment before opening the door, Cyris nodded his head. He was really starting to hate the little slut. Bloodbayne promised him that once Kade was dead, he would be second in command after Valentina. But once he found out she was carrying yet another spawn, he delegated him to be her bitch instead of leading the Skulls. He should have killed her when he had the chance.

“I know, it’s so fucking hilarious, huh? But I swear to God, Lexi. If you do that again, I’m going to punch that fucking baby out of you, got it?” he said bitterly.

Hardening her fine features, she bristled with instant rage. He threatened her with that at least twice a day and it was growing old. She ought to tear his windpipe from his throat and be done with it.

“I’d love to see you try,” she hissed through gritted teeth.

Laughing at the angry spitfire, he brushed off her weak dare. Times like these he could understand what Kade saw in her. He had to admit, she was kind of hot when she was pissed. Giving her a condescending smile, he pushed open the door.

“After you, darlin,” he said, holding the slab of metal so she could pass through.

Squeezing past him, she crossed the threshold of Bloodbayne’s newly acquired Manhattan office. Quickly ignoring her meathead shadow, she focused her attention on the scarred shell of a man sitting behind his gilded desk. Waiting for him to acknowledge her, she put on a faux air of confidence.

Good girl. Don’t you dare show him any weakness, Nikki said.

Signing his name on the document before him, Bloodbayne cleared his throat. Dropping his pen onto the desktop, he lifted his clear blue eyes towards Lexi. Dragging his gaze up and down her form, he straightened his bony back in the leather chair. Finally, he thought to himself. She had kept him waiting long enough.

“Alexandria,” he purred, urging her forward with a flick of his hand. “Lovely as ever. Come closer, my girl. I expect you to have a present for me?”

Raising her rounded chin, she stepped towards the crime boss. Paying no mind to the handful of Skulls that lined the perimeter of the room, she nodded a reply.

“I do,” she said.

Clapping his hands together, he flashed her a devilish grin. Even in her delicate condition, she was proving to be a useful tool in the expansion of his territory. He knew he had done the right thing by not killing her, just yet.

“Splendid! Let me see.”

Wanting to rid herself of the disgusting parcel in her hand, she tossed the bloodied bundle onto his desk. Knowing her stomach would turn the moment he opened the soiled newspaper, she dropped her eyes to the floor. She didn't need to see what Nikki had been forced to do.

Eager to have his confirmation, Bloodbayne unceremoniously ripped into the wet paper. Peeling away the sticky newsprint bit by bit, he let out a dark chuckle as his macabre gift came into view. Once again picking up his pen, he poked at the human tongue and uncircumcised penis with the writing instrument.

“Good girl,” he praised. “Very good girl. Did you make a good example out of poor Miguel, here?”

Breathing in the rancid smell of death and decay, she instinctively snapped her mouth shut. Swallowing down the bile rising in her throat, she could only nod. Nikki had bowed out as soon as the grisly deed was done, leaving her to deal with the politics that came with the aftermath. Lucky for her, the cocaine kingpin's men were terrified to the core and didn't need much persuasion. Her alter must have done one hell of a job on handsome Miguel.

You have no idea, Nikki said with a laugh. You're welcome, by the way. Now get your daughter.

Breathing through her nausea, Lexi lifted her watery eyes. Taking another step closer towards the desk, she tried to look as hard and as intimidating as she could muster.

“I did what you asked of me...Tijuana belongs to the Bloodbayne Organization. Now give me my daughter you son-of-a-bitch!” she demanded, her voice low and hard.

Slightly humored by her little display, Bloodbayne leaned back in his chair. Slouching his curved spine to one side, he gave the bitter girl a tiny grin. She was too fiery for her own good. Perhaps she needed yet another lesson so she might finally learn her place.

“Toku,” he began, keeping his intense stare on her flushing face. “Fetch Valentina for me.”

“Yes, Sir,” Toku replied. Moving away from the corner of the square room, Toku quickly spanned the manicured space. Giving Lexi a heated glare, he quietly slipped through the side door leading to an adjacent room.

Source Creation Date: June 23, 2025, 5:34 am

Narrowing her eyes, Lexi refused to be intimidated. They danced this insane waltz every time she came home from a mission. Soon, he would threaten to make an example out of her, just as he had with Kade. It was all just a pathetic show of pseudo power, she knew and he knew it. As long as the 'true' heir continued to grow in her belly, she would always have the upper hand.

Silently staring at her, Bloodbayne kept his composure surprisingly cool and calm. He would love nothing more than to reach across the desk and backhand the smirk from her face. He couldn't physically harm her, though. No, that would have to wait. He would, however, dole out emotional punishment. She had to learn somehow.

Glowing at the fire kissed man before her, she mentally plotted fifty different ways of killing him. Thoroughly enjoying her wicked fantasies, she blinked back to reality once she heard the door open. Turning her head towards the sound, her whole demeanor changed as her eyes settled on Valentina holding her beautiful daughter.

"Loey!" she exclaimed, her face instantly brightening. "My princess! My sweet princess!"

Taking a handful of steps towards her child, she was caught off guard by the sound of Bloodbayne pounding his closed fist upon his desk. Halting her movement, she glanced back at him with a confused look. What the hell was he doing? He knew her daughter was terrified of loud noises.

"No!No!Don't you move!" he barked. "Valentina, bring her tome!"

Startled by the loud sounds filling the space, Loella's face scrunched as she began to

cry. Reaching her tiny hands towards her mama, she squirmed in Valentina's arms.

Holding the wriggling child tightly against her chest, Valentina limped her way over to Bloodbayne. Looking at Lexi from the corners of her eyes, she kept her expression blank. With every short step, the tension in the room grew, causing the Skulls to close in around the brunette in anticipation of what she might do.

Frozen in place, Lexi's heart tore in two as her daughter tried to reach for her. Knowing she wouldn't be able to overpower the four Skulls behind her, she attempted to soothe her baby with a loving smile.

"It's ok, Princess! Shh, shh! It's ok! I love you! Everything is going to be just fine!"

"Mama! Mama! Mama!" Loey wailed.

Urging Valentina closer, Bloodbayne chided himself for breaking her legs as punishment for allowing Kade to escape. Nearly fifteen months later and she was still having problems walking.

"Give her to me!" he demanded.

"Yes, Sir," she replied.

Bending down slightly, Valentina eased the crying child into his spindly hands. Making sure he had a good hold on her, she reluctantly took a step backwards. Lifting her eyes towards Lexi, she felt pain and pity for the woman. She didn't care for her, but she hated to see her being tortured again and again. She didn't deserve this, and neither did that precious child.

Squeezing his fingers around Loey's torso, Bloodbayne held the whimpering baby in his lap. Forcing her to stay still, he kept his beady gaze on her mother.

“Shhh, Loella! Be quiet, child! Be! Quiet!”

Feeling her blood boil in her veins, Lexi moved her attention back and forth between Bloodbayne and her daughter. She didn't understand why he was doing this. It was the first time he was being overtly cruel towards her baby. It scared her.

“Why are you doing this? You said I could have my daughter once I had completed your mission. I've done it! Now give her to me!” she exclaimed.

Clicking his tongue against the roof of his mouth, Bloodbayne slowly shook his head. “Be careful, child. You don't demand anything from me!” he warned, his voice thick with annoyance. “I've changed my mind. Pray that I don't change it further!”

Swallowing hard, Lexi dropped her attention to her baby. It tore her apart to see her so upset. If he would just let her hold her, let her comfort her.

“Please...please give her to me!”

“No,” he replied coldly.

With hot tears welling in her eyes, Lexi growled in frustration. Balling her hands into tight fists at her sides, she dragged her angry gaze towards his scraggly face. “What do you want from me?” she asked.

Getting off on Lexi's palpable fury, he pulled his thin lips into a deformed sneer. “I have a new mission for you. I need you to go to Miami. It's time to clean house,” he said, pinching the crying baby for good measure.

Rushing towards the desk, Lexi attempted to reach for her daughter. Before she was able to, she felt Cyris run up behind her; his rough hands viciously grabbing onto her upper arms.

“Suchspunk!” Bloodbayne chuckled, watching his Skull subdue the brunette.

Squirming against Cyris, she bared her white teeth in defiance. She wanted to kill him; she wanted to tear him apart with her bare hands. How dare he hurt her daughter!

“You bastard!” she yelled.

Lexi! Stop it! You’re not going to win this one! Nikki hissed from the corner of her mind. Think about Loey! He will do worse to her if you don’t stop!

Source Creation Date: June 23, 2025, 5:34 am

Knowing that her alter was right, she reluctantly quit fighting. With a look of total defeat on her face, she focused on her distraught daughter, who was looking more and more like her father every single day.

“And if I’m successful?” she asked, her voice breaking at the seams.

“That’s my girl,” Bloodbayne replied, lifting the whimpering child from his lap towards Valentina. “If you’re successful, I’ll send you on holiday to my estate in St. Lucia for two weeks. Just you, Loey, and Cyris. Consider it a gift of appreciation for everything you have done for me.”

Keeping her eyes glued on her daughter as Valentina gently took her from Bloodbayne, she resigned herself to the grisly task ahead. One day of hell for two weeks in paradise seemed like a fair trade off. Of course there was a chance he was lying to her, but really, what choice did she have?

Watching as the tall blonde cuddled her baby, she let out a pained sigh. After a handful of long moments, Loey finally calmed down, seemingly soothed by whatever was being whispered into her ear. It gave Lexi the assurance she needed. She knew that as long as her daughter was with Valentina, she would be taken care of. Loey could handle another day without her.

Moving her attention back to the Crime Boss, she plastered a frown onto her comely face. Telling herself that everything would be alright, she accepted her fate. She would kill whoever she had to if it meant she would get her daughter back.

“When do we leave?” she asked.

...

Letting her eyes roam over the white lobby of the hotel, Lexi adjusted her mirrored aviator sunglasses. Placing the strap of her brown leathered weekender bag over her shoulder, she paused as she found a young family taking advantage of the free refreshments along the far wall. Sucking in a breath, she watched the mother, father, and two small children; a girl and boy, no more than four or five years old. Both with dark hair and bright smiles on their chubby faces.

The children looked so happy, giggling uncontrollably as their daddy gave them each a chocolate chip cookie behind their mommy's back. Holding his index finger to his lips, the father tried his best to shush the children. It was all for naught however, as the mother quickly realized what was happening. Shaking her head at her husband, she rolled her eyes and joined in with the laughter.

It was an incredibly sweet moment in time, one that Lexi longed for. A bitter reminder of what her life might have been like. Looking down at her wrist, she felt her eyes water as she looked at the charms gracing her most beloved possession.

Don't torture yourself,Nikki chastised.Quit feeling sorry for yourself and try to move on. He's not coming back. He's never coming back.

Blinking back her tears, she turned away from the family. She didn't need the bitch in her head to make her feel worse than she already did. She knew full well that Kade was dead. Cyris threw it in her face every chance he had.

Stepping towards the front desk, she quickly found her asshole chaperone. Walking towards him, she groaned internally as she watched him flirt with the busty hotel clerk. The man was a neanderthal with a one-track mind. What was with the men of the Bloodbayne Organization and whorish hotel staff? It was cringe inducing.

Making her way beside him, she cleared her throat. Thankful that her eyes were hidden behind her glasses, she couldn't help but gawk at the woman's makeup. She looked like a slutty circus clown. She was definitely Cyris' type.

"May I have my room card, please?" she asked.

Frowning at her, Cyris wanted to make it perfectly clear that he wasn't with the pregnant woman. Tossing the key card towards her, he kept his demeanor icy cold. He wasn't about to let her cock block him this time.

"Hey, sis. Room 504. Stay in your room until I come get you in the morning," he ordered. "I'll get you at eight. Be ready."

Grabbing her key card from the counter, she dismissed him with a wave of her hand. He didn't have to say another word, she understood the rules. She would be a good little girl and stay in her room. Not like there was anywhere for her to go, anyways. She knew perfectly well that she was fucked.

"Yeah, yeah. Have funbro," she replied, excusing herself from the horny pair.

Walking towards the elevators, she gave the happy family one last glance. Lifting her lips into a wistful smile, she slipped down the mirrored hallway. Distracted by the domestic fantasy playing in her mind, she was completely oblivious to the pair of dark eyes tracking her as she left the lobby.

...

Pulling her hair into a messy bun, Lexi studied her reflection in the bathroom mirror. Securing her locks with another twist of her scrunchie, she turned her body to the side. Running her eyes down the curvature of her body, she focused her gaze at her lower abdomen. Staring at her pronounced bump, she grinned to herself. With

everything going on, she sometimes forgot she was pregnant.

Placing her open hand over her lower belly, she allowed herself a moment to just be. She should stop feeling guilty about the new life growing within her. This child was a beautiful blessing in an otherwise dark chapter of her life. She was thankful that Kade had given her another gift to remember him by.

Taking in a ragged breath, her thoughts drifted to her lover. There wasn't a second that ticked by that she didn't miss him. While their story had a less-than-ideal beginning, they had truly grown to love one another. It was unlike anything she had experienced, nor would ever experience again. As twisted and sick as it was, he was her other half. She would mourn him until the moment she took her last breath.

"Your daddy was so handsome," she said, rubbing her hand over the front of her black leggings. "I hope you look like him."

Overcome with a familiar sadness, she snapped her mouth closed to hold in a sob. Why was the universe so incredibly cruel? She should be blissfully happy, enjoying life with her little family. Instead, she was manipulated and controlled by a disgusting megalomaniac. What hope was there for her? What hope was there for her children?

Bide your time. We will find a way to escape him eventually. Just do what you need to to survive. We've gone through worse, hmm?

Nodding her head in agreement, she tenderly held her stomach. Allowing her tears to fall from her eyes, she made a silent promise to both Loella and her son. Come hell or high water she would find a way to escape the Bloodbayne Organization. One way or another, she and her babies would have their happily ever after.

Good girl, Lexi. That's the spirit. Now clean yourself up, Room Service will be here any minute. You'll feel much better with a full tummy.

Source Creation Date: June 23, 2025, 5:34 am

Wiping her cheeks with the back of her hand, she sniffled before giving her reflection another once over. Since Kade's death, her alter had softened somewhat. Perhaps because she knew how fragile she had become. It was probably self-preservation on Nikki's part, but she was grateful, nonetheless. Her world would be a hell of a lot lonelier without the bitch in her head.

Letting out a sigh, she moved to leave the bathroom. Crossing the threshold into the modern bedroom, she halted her steps as she heard a knock on her door. Instantly feeling the gnawing pain of hunger growing in her stomach, she raced towards the door. She would feel better after having her dinner of spaghetti and meatballs.

Not bothering to look through the peephole, she reached for the handle. Opening the wooden door without a second thought, she froze in place as her eyes registered the handsome man before her. Dropping her mouth open in shock, she shook her head in disbelief. No, she thought to herself. He couldn't be there. There was no way. What kind of horrible trick was Nikki playing on her?

"Kade?" she whispered, terrified that he would disappear at any moment.

Giving the love of his life a warm grin, Kade reached to cup the side of her surprised face. Nodding an answer, he leaned in close to drink in her beauty. Oh, how he had missed her. Now that he had her again, nothing would come between them. He would keep his word this time.

"Did you miss me, Sweetheart?"

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

Dazed and confused, Lexi stammered in disbelief. Raking her gaze across his handsome face, her mind spun as she tried to make sense of the situation. She didn't understand how he was there. Was she going insane? She must be. There was no other explanation.

"Kade?" she asked. "But...but...you're dead...how...how? I'm going crazy. I...I... this isn't real!"

Leaning in close, Kade met her wide eyes. Getting lost in the surreal moment; he brushed his lips against hers in a chaste kiss. He had practiced this moment for days, knowing he needed to ease her into the fact that Bloodbayne had failed to assassinate him. However, now that he was face to face with her, all of plans were thrown by the wayside.

"It's real, Sweetheart. I promise that this is real," he said, unable to stop himself from kissing her again.

Circling his arms around her, he pulled her flush against his body. Lifting her from the floor, he stepped into the hotel room. Moving to allow the door to shut behind them, he memorized the weight of her in his arms. It had been too long since he had felt her, and even longer since he had tasted her. He needed to make up for lost time.

Wrapping her legs around his waist, she softened into his needy embrace. Returning his hungry kiss, she lifted her hands to play with his dark locks. Twisting her fingers into his hair, she eagerly slid her tongue across his. Within the span of a handful of heartbeats, a myriad of emotions bubbled to the surface, causing a heady desperation to take over. She wanted to soak up as much of him as she could before the hallucination broke.

Moaning against her parted lips, he matched her passion measure for measure. Nipping her with his sharp teeth, he held her tightly against him. Losing all sense of

time, he allowed himself the physical pleasure he had long been denied.

Teasing him with her tongue, she whimpered as her head began to spin. Afraid that he would disappear at any moment, she reluctantly pulled away from his sinful mouth. Opening her eyes, she stared at him in complete awe. Fully expecting him to vaporize before her, she was shocked to realize that this wasn't a dream or a hallucination.

"How...how are you here? They...they told me you were dead!" she said breathlessly.

Taking in much needed air, he gave her a small grin. Studying her beautiful face, he reminded himself to make everything as easy for her to digest as possible.

"I would be dead if Cyris wasn't such a lousy shot," he began, his mind trying to replay the fateful event. "Honestly, I don't remember much, Lexi. I remember Toku and Jinx holding me back. I remember trying to fight them off. I remember Cyris pointing his gun at me and then...then it goes black. When I came to, Lilly was hovering over me, trying to stop the bleeding. She and Justin must've gotten there right after everything had happened. I guess I was lucky that she's a nurse, huh?"

Scrunching her fine features in thought, she tried to piece his broken story with the one Cyris had hammered into her head. They didn't match, she didn't know why she was surprised.

"He told me he shot you in the head and in the heart. That you were dead before you even hit the ground!"

"I'm sure he thought that. I don't know why he didn't bother to check to see if he had actually killed me. All I can say is he's a fucking incompetent moron. They all are. The bullet grazed the side of my temple. It only took a few stitches to fix," he said, trying to downplay the severity.

Noticing a pronounced, red line on his right temple, Lexi moved her hand to trace it with her fingertips. Now he had scars on either side of his handsome face. She couldn't help but feel guilty. They were both there ultimately because of her.

“What about your chest?” she asked, the look of worry painting her face.

Letting out a sigh, he softened his features. He hated seeing her getting so upset. Things had worked out. There was no reason for her to know all the gory details concerning the infection that followed his third surgery.

“He missed my heart, Lexi. I'm fine now! That's all you need to know, ok?” he said, his voice deep and warm.

Nodding slightly, she furrowed her brow. She understood that he didn't want her to worry, but she couldn't stop herself from pressing on. There were too many unanswered questions swirling around in her head.

“But what about the police? Why didn't they get involved? And how the hell did none of this get back to Bloodbayne?” she asked.

Adjusting her weight in his arms, Kade gave a tiny shrug of his shoulders. “I told Lilly and Justin that you and Loey were in danger, and that if they told the cops then you two would be killed. They didn't like it, but they agreed not to say anything. They took me to the hospital and gave the doctors a fake name. Told them they didn't know much, just that I was their new neighbor. When I was finally able to speak to the cops, I pretended like I didn't remember anything. They really didn't give a shit, gotta love small town police, right? They just wrote it off as a home invasion gone wrong...and that was it. I recovered and now I'm here.”

Taking in everything, Lexi's eyes welled with tears. She was so thankful that Cyris was an inept moron. It was no wonder why Bloodbayne was having so many issues

keeping his Organization in check. Without Kade, the Skulls were nothing but a group of bumbling imbeciles.

Wanting to comfort her, he quickly walked towards the queen-sized bed. Gently setting her down on the edge of the mattress, he kneeled onto the floor next to her. Raising his hand, he wiped the tears from her reddened cheeks. He knew it was a lot for her to process.

Source Creation Date: June 23, 2025, 5:34 am

“Shhh...don’t cry, Sweetheart,” he cooed.

Leaning into his touch, she lifted her lips into a tiny smile. “They’re happy tears...I... I just can’t believe you came back to me.”

Quirking his head to the side, a look of amusement washed over his face. “I’ll always come for you...you should know that by now,” he teased.

With a bright smile, she nodded her head. He was indeed a man of his word. How many times had he laughed in the face of death? No matter what, he would always find his way back to her.

Cupping her sweet face, he swiped the pad of his thumb across her skin. Meeting her red-rimmed eyes, he wished there was a way for her to know just how much she meant to him. “I love you, Lexi,” he whispered, knowing the words weren’t nearly enough.

Turning her head, she kissed his open palm. Smiling against his skin, she committed this moment to memory. She never thought she would ever hear him say that to her, again.

“And I love you, Kade,” she replied.

Giving his hand another warm press with her lips, she was hit by the realization that they were far from being out of the woods. As much as she wanted to stay here like this, these tender moments would have to wait. Taking in a sharp breath, she asked the question that filled her with dread.

“What do we do now?”

Eyeing her seriously, he paused for a handful of seconds. They were both in for one hell of a fight. It wasn't anything that they couldn't handle however, now that they had each other.

“We go back to the City and get our daughter. Then we leave the country,” he answered matter-of-factly. “I have connections all around the South Pacific that havenothingto do with Bloodbayne. We can live anywhere. He'll never find us...I swear it.”

Shaking her head, Lexi's anxiety spiked through her veins. The simplistic plan wouldn't work in a million years. They couldn't run for the rest of their lives. Not with two children in tow.

“We can't just leave the country, Kade, they will keep coming for us. Again and again. They won't stop until we're both dead.Reallydead. We have too much to lose, now. We can't jeopardize Loey or the new bab—”

Dawning on her that he didn't have a clue about her pregnancy, she stopped herself from finishing her sentence. She was going to tell him the night of the incident, but obviously never got a chance to.

Arching a brow, Kade physically perked, “What?”

Knowing that in her current position it was difficult to notice, she stood from the mattress. Standing before him, she took his hand and placed it over the curve of her lower abdomen.

“He'svery excited to meet you, daddy.”

Swallowing hard, he glanced back and forth from her face to her belly. Opening his mouth, he found himself at a complete loss for words. How did he not notice this until now? He had no clue she was pregnant; Valentina hadn't said a word to him about this. It turned all his plans inside out.

"He? He's for sure a he? How...when...oh my God," he said, his deep voice shaking slightly.

Searching his shocked face, she prayed that he was happy. She could tell his mind was going a mile a minute. Now it was her turn to answer some questions.

"Yes...he is a boy. Confirmed through amniocentesis. Bloodbayne ordered the OB-GYN to perform one. He didn't want another surprise," she began, wincing as she remembered the fear of having the unnecessary procedure. "I... I'm almost nineteen weeks. I found out the morning everything happened. I was...I was going to tell you after dinner but...well."

Staring at her belly, his mind jumped from emotion to emotion. At the core, he was blissfully happy. He couldn't believe how lucky they were to have another child, and a little boy at that. He loved their daughter with all his heart and knew he would love their son just as much. But in an instant, his blood began to boil. Valentina had told him what Bloodbayne was making her do, how he had turned her into his very own killing machine. The scarred fucker would finally pay for everything he had put her through.

Biting back his anger, he leaned his torso forward. Knowing that she needed to feel comforted in that moment, he pressed his lips against her abdomen. Letting his kiss linger, he made a silent vow that this time, he would keep his family safe.

Grinning down at him, Lexi felt her heart swell. This was better than any of the fantasies she had created over the past four months. The only thing missing was their

baby girl. It added a bittersweet layer.

Almost as if he had read her mind, he pulled his face away from her belly. Slowly standing to full height, he kept his eyes on hers. Reaching for her hand, he gave her a reassuring squeeze. He would secure his family's future. Their nightmare would be coming to an end very soon.

"Pack your things, Sweetheart. It's time to get our daughter back," he said.

"But what about Cyris?" she asked, lifting a brow.

"Don't worry about him, Lacey has it covered," he replied.

Giving him an odd look, she wracked her brain trying to think of who he was talking about, "Lacy? Who the hell is that?"

"The front desk girl. She's distracting him in his room right now, and when they're done, she'll give him a dose of heroin laced with fentanyl. It'll stop his heart before he even gets a chance to enjoy the high," he said confidently.

Source Creation Date: June 23, 2025, 5:34 am

Blinking up at him, she felt a tiny prick of jealousy. His relationship with this Lacey had better not be anything like what he had with the other hotel slut at the Wilde. What was her name? Callie?

“How many hotel girls do you know?” she asked, narrowing her eyes.

Shaking his head, he slapped an innocent look on his face. He didn’t want her to get the wrong idea. True, he had sampled the wares of many different girls, but he wouldn’t touch Lacey with a ten-foot pole.

“My father has used this hotel for years, Lexi. I know everyone that works here...but I know what you’re getting at and no. I didn’t fuck her so you can stop giving me that look. Lacey’s cash orientated not dick orientated. Trust me, she’s getting paid handsomely for this little job. She’ll see it through,” he said.

Giving her critical eyes a rest, she took him at his word. She was being ridiculous, anyway. She needed to be more worried about the difficult task at hand than his sorted past.

“Good. But how do we get back to New York? We can’t fly commercially, I don’t have any ID... driving is out of the question, it would take us days to get there,” she said.

“We’re taking the jet,” he replied nonchalantly.

Visibly scoffing at his confidence, she held in a disbelieving laugh. What world was he living in? “How? The pilots are ordered to only take off if Cyris is with me.”

“They have new orders,” he said.

“From whom? You?” she asked.

Shaking his head, Kade once again placed his hand on her rounded belly. Rubbing his fingers against the black fabric covering her skin, he kept his demeanor as relaxed as possible.

“Not from me, from Valentina.”

Opening her eyes wide, Lexi’s mouth dropped in shock. His admission was a swift punch to the gut. “Valentina?” she exclaimed. “Wait, wait, wait...so Valentinaknewthat you were alive and didn’t tell me? Fucking hell, Kade!”

“Shhh...don’t be upset, Sweetheart. We had to keep this from you, you have to understand, it’s not that she didn’t want to tell you, we just knew it wouldn’t be safe for you, or Loey, if you found out before we were ready to set the ball into motion,” he said, continuing to rhythmically stroke her bump.

Oh, lay off him. Nikki suddenly chirped. Give him a pass on this one. He did it to protect you. Keep those damn hormones in check and pack your shit. Let’s get on with it.

Surprised to hear from her alter, she took a deep breath. In the grand scheme of things, this little detail really didn’t matter. It certainly wasn’t something to get upset about. They had bigger fish to fry.

“You’re right,” she began, her words meant for both Kade and Nikki. “I’ll grab my things. Can you make sure the jet is ready? I want to get this over with.”

Nodding his head, he leaned down to kiss her forehead. She didn’t have to ask him

twice. He was just as eager to put an end to Bloodbayne's hellish control.

"That makes two of us, Sweetheart."

...

Wiggling against the leather recliner, Lexi looked out of the private jet's window. Watching as the cotton candy clouds passed by, she tried to breathe through her anxiety. She felt a little better now that they were in the air, but the real danger still lay ahead. She wished she could just fast forward through all of it. Getting lost in her scattered thoughts, she barely registered Kade as he took his seat in the recliner facing her. It wasn't until he reached over to touch her knee that she jumped back into reality.

"Hey, it's all going to be ok," he said.

Shaking her worries from her mind, she gave him a forced grin. She wished she could believe him, but when had things ever gone their way?

"Yeah," she replied, moving to cover his hand with hers. "So how long until we land?"

Meeting her worried eyes, he gently squeezed his fingers around her knee. He wanted to make all of this better for her, and he would; it just sucked in the meantime.

"About two and a half hours. We should get some rest. I know the bed in the back isn't huge, but we can both squeeze into it," he said.

With a small nod, she turned her faux grin into a real smile. That sounded like a wonderful idea to her, although she didn't know exactly how much rest she would actually get. She wanted to make up for lost time with him.

“Mmm, yes please,” she said.

Giving her a tiny wink, Kade stood from his chair. Grasping her hand, he helped her to her feet. Pausing for a second while they sailed through a patch of bumpy air, he urged her to lead the way with a motion of his hand. “After you, Sweetheart.”

Stepping towards the back of the aircraft, she crossed through the doorway of the small sleeping cabin. Eyeing the full-sized bed, she held in a laugh. She wasn’t sure if they would both be able to fit into it, but she was up for the challenge.

Source Creation Date: June 23, 2025, 5:34 am

Brushing up against her, he slid the pocket door closed behind them. Turning the simple lock, he watched her as she moved to face him. Noticing the amusement in her eyes, he couldn't help but grin. It felt good to see all of her worries melt away.

"Do you want to be the big spoon, or the little spoon?" he asked, perfectly content with whatever she chose.

Taking half of a step forward in the tight space, she pressed her body against his. Moving her hand to the hem of his black tee, she began to pull the cotton fabric upwards. Maintaining eye contact, she leaned upwards, bringing her lips a scant inch from his.

"I don't want to sleep, yet," she whispered, raising his shirt higher.

Narrowing his dark eyes, he gave her a sinful smirk. It excited him to know that she still wanted him just as badly as he wanted her. "I was hoping you would say that," he said, catching her lips in a needy kiss.

Sliding her lips and tongue over his in a game of give and take, she helped him out of his shirt. Reluctantly pulling away to rip the fabric up over his head, she let her eyes fall to his bare chest. Drifting her gaze across his skin, she was surprised to see a handful of new surgical scars. Apparently, the attack did more damage than he had led her to believe.

Noticing the worried look in her eyes, he raised his hand to cup the side of her flushed face. Leaning in, he tried to reassure her.

“Hey...I’m ok,” he breathed.

Giving him a nod, she pushed her concerns to the back of her mind. Tossing his shirt to the floor, she met his eyes. She hoped he wasn’t just telling her that.

“I’m ok,” he repeated, brushing his full lips across hers.

Taking his word as gospel, she returned his soft kiss. A warm shiver raced down her spine as her hands moved to the waistband of his dark jeans. Unbuttoning the fly, she deepened the kiss as her fingers slipped between his boxer briefs and skin.

Groaning as her fingers grazed his hardening cock, he dropped his hand from her face. Wanting to rid himself of the restrictive clothing, he broke away from her parted lips. Quickly pulling the denim and underwear from his lower half, he kicked them from his long legs. Giving her a roguish grin, he gently grasped her hand and placed it around his thick cock.

“See what you still do to me?”

Wrapping her fingers around his girth, Lexi slowly began to pump his length. Watching his face twist in pleasure, she gave him a teasing smirk. “You should take off my clothes so you can see what you still do to me,” she dared, releasing her hold on his cock.

Not needing to be told twice, he quickly set to work. Grasping her white v-neck shirt, he quickly rid the fabric from her torso. Reaching around her, he attempted to undo her beige bra. Fumbling with the clasp, he let out a tiny growl.

“Why...why do they make these things so...fucking hard to—”

Before he could finish his sentence, he finally unhinged the metal clasp. Beaming in

triumph, he helped her wiggle out of the bra. Letting his eyes take their fill of her breasts, he felt his mouth water. He always found her shape to be beautiful, but there was something that drove him wild when she looked like this.

Laughing lightly at his tiny battle with her bra, she stopped herself as she noticed his face change. He had turned into the hungry wolf that always hid inside. It made her belly fill with butterflies. Oh, how she had missed that look.

Wanting to see more of her, he quickly rid her of her yoga pants and cotton underwear. Throwing the articles of clothing to the opposite side of the sleeping cabin, he fell on his knees before her. Raking his gaze over her nude body, he memorized every womanly curve. Her body was in the in-between, he couldn't wait to see it change over the next few months.

"Fuck, you're beautiful," he said huskily, moving to run his fingertips up her bare leg.

Swallowing hard, Lexi's heart beat soundly in her chest. She didn't feel beautiful with the new stretch marks striping her hips but knowing he didn't see her imperfections was the confidence boost she needed. Boldly spreading her legs, she took in a jagged breath as his fingers danced towards her inner thigh. Feeling the jet lunge forward as it accelerated, she reached for his shoulders to steady herself. Grounding her feet, her eyes widened in surprise. Between the motion of the airplane and his wanton touch, she worried she may crumble to the floor.

Holding his body still, Kade waited patiently for her to gain her bearings. Arching a dark brow, he motioned towards the mattress with a flick of his head. He was hoping to worship her from this angle, but it would probably be safest if they moved their tryst onto the bed.

"Why don't you lie down?"

Looking over her shoulder, she hummed a reply. Eager to begin, she let go of his shoulders and stepped towards the bed. Pulling back the scarlet comforter, she climbed on top of the firm mattress without a second thought.

Standing to full height, he quickly followed behind. Waiting for her to move herself towards the center of the full-sized bed, he eased himself onto the foot of the mattress. "Lie back and spread your legs for me," he said, his voice thick with desire.

"Mmm...yes,Sir,"she replied.

Doing exactly as she was told, she fell back onto the mattress. Parting her legs wide, she cheekily let her right-hand trail to herexposed cunt. Keeping her eyes glued on his serious face, she began to toy with herself.

Clenching his jaw, he watched her play for a handful of long seconds. If they had more time he would draw this out, ordering her to make herself cum again and again. Unfortunately, time wasn't on their side and his patience was wearing thin.

"Stop. My tongue should be doing that," he ordered, reaching to lovingly push her hand from her pussy.

"Oh? Is that so?" she asked, amusement dancing across her features.

Source Creation Date: June 23, 2025, 5:34 am

Nodding once, he moved into position. With half of his body hanging off of the bed, he wiggled his hands under her ass. Encouraging her to drape her legs over his shoulders, he pulled her upwards towards his wanting mouth. Too far gone in his own need for release, he bypassed all pleasantries. Parting his full lips, he quickly slipped his tongue between her silken folds.

With a loud gasp, she arched against his lewd ministrations. Staring blankly at the ceiling of the aircraft, her mind focused on nothing but the blissful pleasure he was giving. There was an urgency with every lick and nibble. It was almost too much, and then not nearly enough. It felt as if he wanted her to know just how much he had missed her.

Squeezing his fingers into her flesh, Kade held her still. Circling the tip of his tongue upwards, he let out a masculine moan as he found her clit waiting and ready for him. Swallowing her arousal, he hovered his mouth over her hardened bud. Covering the top of her cunt with his opened mouth, he pulled it between his sharp teeth. Giving her a moment to adjust, he slowly brushed his tongue over her sensitive clit.

Moaning into the air, she closed her glassy eyes. Concentrating on the wicked movement of his uneven tongue, she begged again and again for more. Reaching down with both hands, she threaded her fingers into his hair, giving a sharp tug as the ache began to grow deep within her core.

Spurred on by the erotic sounds filling the space, he ramped up his efforts. Sucking on her tender clit, he swirled the flat of his tongue around and around. Counting to ten in his mind, he changed the pattern, marking an “x” across her pink flesh. He knew that always did the trick.

“Ohfuck!” she exclaimed, lifting her hips in response.

Smiling against her wet pussy, he hummed an approval. It was good to know that nothing had changed between them. He loved knowing that no one would ever have this hold over her.

Not caring if her voice was seeping through the thin walls, Lexi spat a series of lewd expletives. Squeezing her thighs against the side of his head, she felt her muscles tremble as her release began to build. Opening her eyes, she lifted her head from the mattress to watch him as he brought her to the edge of ecstasy.

“Ahhhh...fuck...so close,” she whimpered. “So...close!”

Wanting to feel her shatter, he continued to tease her. Alternating the speed and pressure of his tongue, he felt his own need spike through his veins. Imagining her pussy wrapping tightly around his cock, he let out a low growl. He couldn’t want to be inside her.

Dancing along the cliff of her orgasm, her racing heartbeat filled her ears. Rolling her hips, she pressed her aching cunt against his mouth. Panting hotly, she pleaded with him to let her fall.

Thoroughly pleased that she was asking for his permission, he nodded his head between her thighs. Keeping his attention where it needed to be, he flicked the tip of his tongue over her clit in rapid succession. Over and over again until she seized around him.

Crying out as her release consumed her, she yanked on his dark locks. Riding out the sharp waves of pleasure, her legs trembled over his broad shoulders. Dropping her head back down upon the bed, she turned into a whimpering mess. When was the last time she had cum so hard? She couldn’t remember, her mind was a total blank.

Waiting until her last spasms had subsided, he released her sensitive clit from his teeth. Pulling his mouth away from her perfect cunt, he gave it one last kiss before lifting his head. Licking her juices from his lips, he watched her chest rise and fall as she recovered from her release.

“Fuck you taste so good. I don’t think you realize how much time I spent craving you,” he said, untangling himself from her legs.

Scooting herself towards the head of the bed to give him room, Lexi raised her torso with the help of her elbows. Watching him intently as he crawled over her, she smiled as the effects of her afterglow ebbed through her body.

“Probably the same amount of time that I fantasized about your cock sliding in and out of me,” she replied cheekily.

Settling himself between her spread thighs, Kade placed his arms on either side of her torso. Making sure not to crush her with his weight, he met her green eyes. It was such a turn on to hear her bawdy admission.

“Is that so?” he asked, leaning down to nuzzle her jawline.

“Mmmhmmm,” she replied, shivering as the skin of her arms pebbled in anticipation.

Mindful of the swell of her lower abdomen, he moved his right hand between their warm bodies. Using his knees to hold the bulk of his body, he grabbed onto the base of his throbbing cock. Pulling away from her neck, he let his hungry eyes take in her heady expressions as he dragged his tip through her folds.

“Well now you don’t have to fantasize, you can have this cockanytimeyou want,” he said.

Moaning as he briefly touched her still thrumming clit, she lifted her hips from the mattress. Spreading her legs wider, she reached upwards to claw her hands around his shoulders. Encouraging him to lean against her, she dug her nails into his skin. He was always so careful with her when she was pregnant, but months' worth of frustration was bubbling to the surface. She wanted him. All of him.

"Then give it to me, Kade...now," she ordered.

Slightly taken aback by her demand, he curled his lips into a wolfish grin. He liked it when she was feisty. Placing the head of his cock against her warm entrance, he teased her by barely slipping inside.

"Oh, you want this?" he asked, trying to ignore just how good his tip felt.

Nodding her head, she scratched her nails across his shoulders. Furrowing her brow, she hissed a reply. He should know better than to test her right now.

"Yes! Yes, give it to me!"

Holding his straining cock steady, he narrowed his eyes. Moving his face down to hers, he barely brushed his lips over hers. "Then beg me, Sweetheart," he replied.

Pressing her lips into a fine line, she lifted her hips higher. Whimpering as the motion caused more of him to inch inside, she silently cursed herself. He had her right where he wanted. Any willful defiance left in her body quickly crumbled away.

Source Creation Date: June 23, 2025, 5:34 am

“Please,” she whispered. “I need you...please.”

Loving the desperation in her voice, he claimed her lips once again. Wanting to reward her for giving in so quickly, he obliged her desire. With a slow roll of his hips, he sheathed himself to the hilt, groaning against her mouth as his body registered the grip of her silken walls.

Gasping into the kiss, she dug her nails deeper into his flesh. Welcoming the intensity of having him fully inside of her, she urged him to move with an internal squeeze of her wet pussy. He felt better than she remembered, so much better.

Nipping at her lower lip, he tried to center himself. He hadn't even begun and already his body was begging for release. He hoped she wouldn't mind a fast and frantic fuck; he was strung too tightly for anything but.

Using his knees as leverage, he began to thrust into her sopping cunt. Withdrawing his cock halfway, he quickly pressed inside with a sharp arch of his hips. Again and again, drawing in ragged breaths with every move of their mouths.

Smiling wickedly into the kiss, Lexi eagerly met his fast thrusts. Pushing back with each withdrawal, she bent her shaky legs. Anchoring the soles of her feet against the mattress, she rocked her lower half from side to side, knowing the added friction would drive them both insane.

Breaking the passionate kiss, Kade pulled his head back to study her beautiful face. Clicking his tongue against the roof of his mouth, he shook his head in faux disapproval.

“Naughty girl,” he said, fully enjoying the sly move of her hips.

“Very...now fuck me...harder,” she demanded.

Spurred on by her words, he nodded once. Trusting that she could take the quick pace, he did exactly as she wanted. Ramping up the speed of his thrusts, he tilted his cock as he slid in and out of her perfect cunt. Watching her blissful expression as she writhed beneath him, he couldn’t help but smile. She was perfect. Absolutely perfect.

Catching his cocky smile, she took a mental picture. He looked just as happy as she felt. It only heightened the pleasure growing within her. Squeezing her satin walls around his thick girth, she relished every hard press of his cock.

Listening to the erotic sounds filling the cabin, his release began to rapidly build. With the unmistakable ache of his orgasm taking root, he let out a low groan followed by a warning. As selfish as it was, he wouldn’t be able to wait for her this time.

“I can’t...I can’t stop...you...you feel too good.So fucking...good!”

Meeting his chaotic thrusts, she rolled her hips as much as he would allow. Grinning from his admission, she raked her nails from his shoulders down his upper arms. She wasn’t surprised in the least, it had been so long for him. It shocked her that he was able to last this long.

“Don’t stop...it’s ok...cum...I want you to cum,” she breathed.

Locking his eyes on hers, he swallowed hard. Her words were music to his ears. Allowing his body to fall apart, he shouted an expletive as his orgasm took over. Rapidly thrusting in and out of her cunt, he let out a deep growl. Freezing in place, he grit his jagged teeth as his milky white cum spurt into her used pussy.

Studying his chiseled face as he fell apart, Lexi fluttered her inner walls around him hoping to prolong his release. She absolutely loved watching him cum. It made her feel like the most powerful woman in the world to know that the great Kade Volkov could shatter because of her.

“Mmmm, that’s a good boy,” she praised.

Gulping in air, Kade took a moment to savor the high. Blinking his dark eyes, he let out a small chuckle as he came back to reality. Leaning down, he placed a sweet kiss upon her lips.

“Thank you, Sweetheart...fuck that felt good...do you need me to get you off, again?” he asked.

Shaking her head, she moved her hand to brush the hair from his eyes. “I’m ok, handsome,” she said.

Arching a brow, he leaned his head to the side. “Are you sure? My cock is spent, but my tongue can go all night.”

Laughing lightly, she gave him a wink. She knew firsthand just how truthful that statement was. “I know, and I will definitely take you up on that offer later, but I would love it if we could cuddle now.”

“Yeah, of course, Sweetheart,” he replied.

Easing his cock from her pussy, he gently rolled off of her. Reaching down to grab the comforter, he pulled the fabric over their naked bodies. Helping her onto her side, he spooned his large form behind her. He was thankful the bed wasn’t very large, maybe she would actually stay put instead of wiggling away once he fell asleep.

“Get as much rest as you can. I’ll make sure to wake you up before we start to descend,” he promised, nuzzling against her.

Letting out a yawn, she tried not to think about the difficult task before them. In that moment, she simply wanted to enjoy what was left of their uninterrupted time together. She would worry about Bloodbayne once they touched down, and not a moment before.

“Yes, Sir,” she said sleepily.

Draping his arm around her, he snuggled her close. Kissing the crown of her head, he once again made a silent promise to her. He was over being afraid of his deranged father. He would kill the fucker for everything he had done to his family.

“I love you, Lexi,” he whispered.

Source Creation Date: June 23, 2025, 5:34 am

Closing her eyes, Lexi curled her lips into a tiny grin. Who knew four little words had the ability to soothe every anxious thought from her mind?

“I love you more,” she whispered back.

CHAPTER NINETEEN

Ending his phone call abruptly, Kade lifted his lips into a sly grin. Adjusting himself in the backseat of the Lincoln Town Car, he slid the cell into the pocket of his jeans. Turning his head to look at Lexi, he reached over to gently caress her abdomen.

“Valentina and Loey are at the penthouse. I’ll have the driver head there first so you can stay with our baby girl. My father is in his office with his security detail, it’ll be like shooting fish in a barrel. Val and I won’t have any problem taking him down,” he said confidently.

Blinking at him, Lexi couldn’t help but scoff. He couldn’t be serious, like hell she would stay out of the fray.

I guess it’s sweet that he wants to protect you, but no. We need to see this through. You’d better shut that shit down real quick! We are due our revenge, Nikki demanded.

Agreeing with her alter, she shook her head in defiance. Straightening her back against the leathered seat, a serious look washed over her face. “No, I’m coming with you,” she said.

Dropping his smile, he stared silently at his love. A searing snarl echoed from the

back of his mind, no doubt coming from Demetri. He didn't know how the bastard had slipped through the mental prison he constructed but today was not the day. Blocking him from his consciousness, he took in a cleansing breath as he readied himself for an argument.

"Lexi, you know I can't let you do that," he said, letting his dark eyes fall to his hand spanning her bump. "There's no way I can put you, or our son, in harm's way."

Letting out a small laugh, she rolled her eyes. It was a little too late for that. "In the past two months I've been shot at, punched repeatedly, thrown against a wall, and forced to kill five men. Trust me, you're not putting us in any more danger than we've already been in. You don't have to worry, I can handle myself, Kade."

Swallowing hard, he bristled as he listened to her painful admission. Hearing what she had gone through was almost too much to bear. He would make sure Bloodbayne suffered for what he had done.

"Yeah well, the difference is that I'm here now. You don't need to fight," he said.

Covering his large hand with her own, she gave him a firm squeeze. "I know I don't need to fight, but I want to."

"No, you need to be safe with Loey," he said sternly.

Narrowing her eyes, her blood ran molten hot. Why was he so stubborn? He wasn't going to win this tiff. She was going with him and that was that.

"I'm going with you! You can't tell me no, not on this. Not after everything we've been through because of him. We will kill him together, and then take over the Organization together," she said, lowering her voice.

Slightly taken aback, he mulled over her words. He had no idea that she wanted to take over the Organization. That had been his original plan, but he assumed that now that they were a family of four, she would want to go back to the normal life they had been living before everything went to shit.

“Are you sure you want to run the Bloodbayne Organization?” he asked, lifting a dark brow.

Shrugging her slight shoulders, she furrowed her brow in thought. She had toyed with the idea of overthrowing Bloodbayne by herself, but didn’t think she could do it alone. With Kade by her side, she knew that it was their shared destiny.

“Well, we will change the name but yeah...I do. The syndicates know me, and even in death, they fear you. We can restore the Organization to what it once was and leave a legacy for our children,” she said, lifting her lips into a small grin. “We aren’t meant to be a squeaky-clean sitcom family.”

Meeting her eyes, he couldn’t help but smile. True, they were never meant to be boring suburban parents, raising perfect little children. The thought of Attending PTA meetings and coaching Little League caused him to chuckle. There were too many skeletons and demons in their closets for any of that.

“No, we’re definitely not,” he replied, pausing for a brief moment. “But I’m asking you one last time to let me handle this. I would never be able to forgive myself if something happened to you.”

Trying to soothe his fears, she softened her fine features. Scooting her unbuckled body closer, she did her best to sell her faith in him. “And I’m telling you one last time that I’m going with you. We will be at risk for the rest of our lives, it is what it is. But I know that you won’t let anything happen to me or our son, will you?”

Pushing out a long sigh, he closed his dark eyes. Removing his hand from her belly, he brought his fingers to pinch the bridge of his nose. Letting a million different scenarios run through his mind, he played around with different outcomes; all of which ended the same way. He didn't like it, but he would let her have it her way. This time.

"I really hate that I can't say no to you," he said, dropping his hand from his face and opening his eyes.

Grinning in triumph, she reached over to take his hand. Threading her fingers between his, she hummed happily. She knew he would cave. "No, you don't," she replied.

Lifting her hands to his lips, he placed a firm kiss upon her knuckles. No, he didn't hate it at all. She would always have him wrapped around her finger. He wouldn't have it any other way.

"I'll call Valentina back and let her know, I'm sure she won't have a problem with the change of plans. Loey is safe with her. We'll stop by the brownstone and grab the weapons she stored for us. Then we will head to Bloodbayne's office. But Lexi, we're doing this my way, ok?" he said, his voice deep and hard.

"Of course. I'll follow whatever plan you have," she replied with a nod. "Now let's get our weapons and pay Bloodbayne a visit. I want Loey to see her daddy before bedtime."

...

Looking out the Lincoln's window, Lexi took in a breath as the driver pulled up to the Manhattan high rise. Giving Kade a quick glance, she motioned to the smartly dressed doorman as he exited the building.

"That's Jimmy, he's the only one that has ever shown me a little bit of kindness. He told me that I reminded him of his daughter once, so that's probably why. He will let us right in," she said.

Remaining quiet, Kade eyed the older man as he walked towards the car. He was thankful that Jimmy had treated her well, he would be sure to reward him once everything was said and done.

Reaching for the handle of the Town Car, Jimmy pulled open the door. Taking a moment to see who was inside, a bright smile lifted his wrinkled face as he recognized Lexi. She sure was a sight for sore eyes.

"Miss Lexi! What a surprise! It's so good to see you!" he said, offering his gloved hand to help her.

Taking his hand, she eased herself from the sleek car. Stepping onto the crowded sidewalk, she waited for Kade to follow suit.

Keeping the door open for the other occupant, Jimmy glanced back and forth between her and the newcomer. He didn't recognize the tall man, but he carried himself in the same manner as everyone else that occupied the thirty-third floor. There was a stench

of sin that couldn't be washed away. Closing the door behind the dark stranger, he led the pair towards the front entrance. Grabbing the silver handle of the glass door, he held it open for them with a friendly look.

Thanking Jimmy with a polite smile, Lexi stepped into the posh lobby and headed towards the front desk. Glancing over her shoulder at Kade, she tried to calm her nerves as he moved to stand behind her. Mentally replaying their plan again and again, she quickly went over every detail. She hoped they wouldn't run into too many complications.

Lifting his hand, Kade gently placed it against her lower back. Letting her handle the situation with the doorman, he offered her as much assurance from his touch as he could. Leaning down, he whispered a word of encouragement into her ear.

"This is going to work, Sweetheart. Don't worry."

Nodding once, she soaked in his optimism. Of course this would work, there was no other option.

Walking towards the front desk, Jimmy took his assigned place. Eyeing the young duo from behind the high countertop, he wondered why they were there. He hadn't received any notification that Bloodbayne was expecting Lexi, or her new companion.

"Would you like me to let Bloodbayne know that you're here, Miss Lexi?" he asked.

Shaking her head, she painted a calm expression over her face. Smoothing her hands down the front of her tunic, she purposefully settled her touch over her small bump. He often bent over backwards for her because of her "delicate condition," as he lovingly called it. She hoped the reminder would help him gloss over the protocols.

“Oh no, that won’t be necessary, he knows I’m here. I’m bringing him a new recruit and he’s very excited to meet him,” she said, keeping her voice steady.

Shifting his brown eyes from Lexi to the man, Jimmy lifted his grey eyebrows. A new recruit, huh? Back in his day they called them Goons. He never understood why a sweet girl like her would be caught up with these buffoons.

“Ok, then! Well, if you need anything Miss Lexi, you just let me know,” he replied, lifting his hand to point towards the hallway to his left. “Elevator one should be free for you.”

“Thank you,” she said, offering him a smile.

Looking back at Kade, she motioned towards the hallway with a flick of her head. Knowing he would follow quickly behind, she made her way to the elevator. She was relieved that Jimmy didn’t call Bloodbayne or insist on escorting her to his floor. Step one was a success.

Giving the Door Man a curt nod, Kade trailed behind her. Hitting the call button for the elevator, he moved to stand beside his love. Waiting for the doors to open, he hardened his features. The fun was about to begin, and he was chomping at the bit.

Perking as a metallic “ding” echoed through the lobby, she swallowed hard as the silver doors to the lift opened. Making sure it was empty of any occupants, she stepped inside the claustrophobic space. “Ready?” she asked as Kade entered the elevator.

Taking his place by her side, he pressed the button for the thirty-third floor. Waiting to move until the door fully closed, he unzipped his black military jacket. Pulling the cotton fabric open, he reached into the gun holster attached to his side. Taking his Beretta M9A3 from its leather confines, he met her eyes as he readied the sleek

weapon.

“More than ready, Sweetheart,” he said, grabbing his suppressor from his jacket pocket with his free hand. “Still have your blade?”

Lifting her hand to her belly, Lexi patted the hidden hilt of her Stiletto tucked under the wide band of her maternity leggings. It was the one place she could conceal it. Bloodbayne’s men never touched her abdomen when they searched her. She didn’t understand why, but not much ever made sense when it came to the Bloodbayne Organization. They were probably too afraid of somehow harming the “rightful” heir. Whatever the reason, she would use their idiocy to her advantage.

“Yeah, I’ll be able to get to it,” she replied.

Attaching the matte black silencer onto the end of his gun, he nodded his head. He hated that she only had one weapon on her but took comfort in the fact that it was the one weapon she was highly proficient with.

“Good girl,” he began, keeping his intense gaze on her beautiful face. “I’ll give you five minutes, that’s it. Please don’t do anything crazy until I’m with you.”

Laughing lightly, she turned towards him. Leaning up, she moved her lips within half an inch of his. “When have I ever done anything remotely crazy?” she asked.

Holding in a hearty laugh, he gave her an amused look. He could think of a dozen instances off the top of his head. “I love you,” he said, his deep voice filled with adoration.

Source Creation Date: June 23, 2025, 5:34 am

“I love you more,” she replied, pressing her lips to his.

Returning the tender kiss, Kade committed the moment to memory. This would be a day long remembered. He couldn’t wait to tell their grandchildren all about it, someday.

Listening to the beeps as they passed each floor, Lexi reluctantly pulled away. Ready or not, it was go time. “Close the doors immediately behind me. Your father keeps his security detail near the elevators so we need to make sure they don’t see you,” she said.

Nodding in agreement, he pressed his large body against the side of the elevator next to the floor control panel. Adjusting the Beretta in his hand, he clenched his jaw in anticipation. Looking up at the LED screen situated at the top of the door, he counted the floor numbers as they continued upwards.

Straightening her posture, she took a step towards the entrance of the lift. Plastering a blank look over her face, she prepared herself for what was to come.

If you can’t handle this, just say the word and I’ll slip in. I know you want this kill, but I’ll gladly see it through if you chicken out, Nikki purred from the back of her mind.

“I’ve got this,” she whispered.

“Yes you do, my love,” Kade replied, unaware that she wasn’t talking to him.

Looking at him from the corner of her eyes, she gave him a cheeky grin. He had such confidence in her, it made her love him even more. Opening her mouth to reply, she lost her breath as she felt an unmistakable flutter in her lower abdomen.

Noticing her expression switching on a dime, he arched a brow. With immediate concern, his entire body stiffened. “What’s wrong?”

Moving her hand to her bump, she lifted her lips into a bright smile. This was the first time she had felt their son. He had impeccable timing, just like his Daddy.

“He moved!” she said happily.

“Yeah?” he said, widening his dark eyes.

Wishing they had more time to enjoy the milestone, she nodded her head. Giving him a knowing look, she gave her stomach a loving pat. “Don’t worry, he knows you’re here. He’ll give you a kick when we’re done, I’m sure!”

Fighting the urge to stop the elevator, he took comfort in her words. He couldn’t wait to feel his son kick, he always loved feeling Loey move when she was in the womb.

“Good. Take care of him, Sweetheart,” he said.

“Always,” she replied.

Regaining her self-assured stance, Lexi lifted her chin as they climbed the last handful of floors. With time closing in, she offered him one last smile before centering her attention on the metal doors.

“Here we go,” she muttered.

Jumping slightly as the elevator came to an abrupt halt, she sucked in a deep breath. Releasing it slowly, she waited as the doors to the elevator opened onto the thirty-third floor. Stepping out of the lift without a second thought, she shivered as the sliding doors closed behind her. Starting the five-minute countdown in her mind, she glanced to her left and right. Flanking both sides were a total of four security guards, all of whom stood to immediate attention.

“Hi, boys,” she said, hardening her expression. “Bloodbayne’s expecting me.”

Eyeing her critically, Taron stalked towards her. Shaking his bald head, he moved to stand in front of her. His Boss hadn’t said a word to him about any meeting with the little bitch.

“He didn’t say anything about you stopping by,” he said, a deep frown etched into his chiseled face.

Staring up at the intimidating man, she arched a sculpted brow. With every quick heartbeat, a burst of adrenaline rushed through her veins, causing her senses to sharpen. She was primed and ready, the assholes better not get in her way.

“I just got the call, he probably didn’t have time to tell you, yet. No matter, I’ll see myself in,” she said, pushing past him.

Reaching out towards her, Taron grabbed onto her upper arm. Yanking her backwards, he growled a warning. “No, you won’t.”

Trying to pull away from his hold, she gave him a scathing look. Acutely aware of the other three men closing in, she pulled back her lips into a sneer. “Don’t you touch me!” she hissed.

Squeezing his fingers around her bicep, he chuckled darkly. As if she had any

authority to tell him what to do. “Listen here you little cun—”

Before the hired thug could finish his sentence, she abruptly turned her body towards him. Pulling back her free arm, she pushed her opened hand upwards towards his face. Contacting his chin using the base of her palm, she forced his head upwards in one swift motion.

Moaning in sudden pain, Taron released his hold on her arm. Losing his balance, he fell backwards against the hallway wall. Blinking his watery eyes, he stood in stunned silence for a handful of seconds, too dazed to realize what had just happened.

Source Creation Date: June 23, 2025, 5:34 am

Shaking her arm, she moved out of his reach. Looking back at the other security officers, she narrowed her green eyes. If they knew what was good for them, they would leave her be.

“If Bloodbayne finds out that any one of you laid a finger on me, he will cut off your cocks and shove them down your throats. Until I have this baby, I’m off limits,” she spat.

Freezing in place, the three men looked at Taron as he recovered from the surprise hit. Her threat carried weight; they weren’t about to step in unless they were specifically told to.

Lifting his hand to rub his pained jaw, Taron righted his hunched body. Moving away from the wall, he fought the urge to grab her by the throat. She was lucky she was knocked up, it was the only thing keeping her alive.

“As soon as you have that thing, your ass is mine,” he said.

Holding in a laugh, she made a show of rolling her eyes. Kade would take care of him soon enough. Not wanting to spend another moment surrounded by idiots, she started back down the hallway towards Bloodbayne’s office.

“Yeah, yeah,” she muttered, lifting her hand to give him the middle finger as she walked away. “Now if you’ll excuse me, I have a meeting to attend to.”

Spitting a curse, Taron followed quickly after her. Keeping a small distance, he said a silent prayer that she really had been summoned. There would be hell to pay if she

was lying.

Looking over her shoulder, she hissed another warning. She didn't want to waste all her energy on the jerk, but she would if need be. "Don't come any closer," she spat.

Reluctantly obliging her, he kept his strides short. Wiggling the stiffness from his jaw, he focused his intense gaze on her every move. Semi-confident that she wasn't reaching for any concealed weapons, he backed off a little more.

Reaching the door to Bloodbayne's office, she grabbed onto the metal doorknob. Twisting it open, she boldly entered the large space. Taking a handful of steps inside, her eyes searched around the room for the disfigured crime boss. Finding him pacing in front of the wall of floor to ceiling windows, she walked towards him.

Caught off guard by Lexi's entrance. Bloodbayne halted his shuffled steps. Narrowing his blue eyes, he looked back and forth between her and Taron as he stumbled behind her. Just what the fuck was going on?

Noticing the livid look on his Boss' face, Taron cleared his throat nervously. Coming to an abrupt stop, he motioned towards her with his hand. "I... I tried to stop her, Boss...she...she says you asked her to—"

Stomping his foot against the marble floor, Bloodbayne silenced his fumbling mouth. Giving him a scathing look, he felt his anger spike. Partly from his seemingly ineffective security, and partly from the girl barging in when she was supposed to be in Miami. She'd better have one hell of an excuse for being back so soon.

"Search her and leave us," he growled.

Nodding his head, Taron all but ran towards her. Doing exactly as he was told, he began the process of patting her down for any weapons. Swiping his hands over her

limbs and torso, he purposefully missed her pregnant belly. With Bloodbayne staring directly at him, he didn't want to be accused of accidentally hurting little Junior.

Patiently waiting for him to finish, she kept her narrowed gaze glued on the scarred fucker. Imagining all of the ways she could kill him, she felt a pleasurable giddiness consume her. She couldn't wait to hear him beg for his miserable life.

Finishing his search, Taron stood to full height. Confident that she wasn't packing anything, he turned towards Bloodbayne. "She's clean."

Lifting the glass of bourbon to his nonexistent lips, Bloodbayne took a drink. Swallowing the liquid, he winced as if trailed a line of fire down his throat. He didn't know if he was too sober, or too drunk for whatever nonsense that was to come.

"Good, leave," he barked.

Nodding once, Talon excused himself from the pair. Rushing towards the door, he slipped from the office with a silent thanks to God. He really needed to find a new career, these mobster games were starting to get old.

Waiting for the door to fully close, Bloodbayne glared at the brunette. Pushing out a sigh, he slowly made his way over to her. "Where's Cyris?" he asked.

Shrugging her shoulders, she gave him the honest truth, "Miami."

Gripping the glass in his gnarled hand, he inched his way closer. Taking in her peculiar body language, he surmised something was amiss. Her stance was too wide, her eyes a little too wild. It reminded him of how his son held himself before he broke his spirit.

"And why aren't you there with him?" he asked, downing the rest of his liquor.

Balling her hands into tight fists at her side, she stared at him as he moved to stand before her. Taking on an air of nonchalance, she debated on whether she should remove her blade.

“Because I don’t want to be. You’re not running my life anymore, Bloodbayne. I’m here to take it back! I’m here to take it all back,” she said, her voice low and hard.

Pushing out a deep laugh, he shook his bald head. Pulling back his free hand, he let his arm swing, viciously backhanding her across the face. The act of violence caused a loud “smack” to echo against the walls.

“Stupid little cunt! I own you! I own all of you!” he bellowed, motioning to her stomach. “You’re not taking anything from me!”

Wincing from the slap, she righted her stinging face. Standing her ground, she wrangled her racing heartbeat. Realizing that her cheek had split from his ruby ring, she pressed her lips together as a trickle of blood ran down her skin. She was hoping he would do something stupid like that.

Source Creation Date: June 23, 2025, 5:34 am

“Actually, I’ll be taking everything from you,” she hissed, her body shaking slightly from the adrenaline coursing through her. “Your money...your power...your Organization...your life. I’m taking it all!”

Scoffing at the screaming kitten, he turned away from her and headed towards his desk. He was unimpressed by her little display and didn’t appreciate the way she was speaking to him. It seemed as if he had been too soft with her. She needed a reminder of her place.

“Oh? Is that so? You and what fucking army, Alexandria?” he asked, plunking his empty glass down upon the desktop.

Stepping around the ornately carved desk, he pulled out his high back chair. Sitting down on the leather seat, he waited for an answer. Expecting a bitchy retort, he was distracted by a series of loud sounds coming from behind his office door. Sweeping his gaze from the bleeding bitch to the noise, he stilled as his semi-inebriated mind tried to make sense of it.

“Right on time,” she said under her breath.

Curling her lips into a wicked grin, she stood firmly in place. Kade really did have impeccable timing. In less than thirty seconds, he was already wreaking havoc. Various masculine yells, solid thuds, and sharp crashes came from behind the door. Even without being able to physically see the fight, she knew exactly what was happening by the sound of breaking glass and muzzled bullets whizzing through the air. Locking her eyes on Bloodbayne, she memorized the terror seeping through his expression. Now the fun was really about to start.

“What the fuck is going on?” he wondered aloud. “Who is that?!”

Reaching under her tunic, she slipped her fingers under her waistband. Grabbing the hilt of her Stiletto, she pulled it from the fabric. Gripping it in her hand, she offered a smug reply. “My army.”

Widening his clear blue eyes, his breath hitched as he heard a pair of heavy footsteps make their way towards his office. Springing into action, he reached for the desk drawer to his right. Ripping it open, his deformed hand found his Desert Eagle at the same time the door was kicked open.

Busting into the office with his Baretta raised, Kade scanned the space. Finding Lexi only a handful of steps away, he took immediate comfort in the fact that she seemed relatively unharmed. Stalking towards her, he pointed his gun directly at his father.

Consumed by a mixture of fear and rage, Bloodbayne lifted the gold-plated pistol towards Kade. How the hell was his son alive? The bastard had more lives than a cat. He knew he should have personally handled his assassination.

“Well, well, well...what a pleasant surprise,” he hissed through gritted teeth. “Look who came back from hell.”

Scanning her gaze across Kade’s flushed face, Lexi exhaled a ragged breath. He was bruised and bloodied from a few good licks but otherwise seemed fine. She was relieved and thankful to finally have him back by her side.

Glancing at her from the corner of her eyes, Kade hovered his finger over the trigger of his gun. Giving her a small nod, he turned his attention to his father. There were plenty of bullets still left in the chamber, he wondered how many it would take to completely decimate his decrepit face.

“You’ll be taking my place there soon enough,” he replied.

Shaking his head, Bloodbayne laughed at his inherent arrogance. Moving his gun to the left, he pointed the barrel directly at Lexi’s lower torso. “My boy, you know better than to threaten me,” he snarled.

Clenching her jaw, Lexi pressed her thumb on the side of her hilt. Slicing through the air, the five-inch blade unsheathed itself. Daring him to pull the trigger with a searing look, she gripped her Stiletto in anticipation.

Hardening his masculine features, Kade kept the silenced muzzle of his gun on his father. Aiming the barrel at his chest, his thoughts drifted back over the years. Replaying all the sick and sadistic abuse he suffered, he channeled the acute pain. Using it to override the miniscule part of him that would always be terrified of him.

“It’s not a threat,” he said, his tone low and menacing. “I am going to kill you.”

Unamused by his display of faux bravado, Bloodbayne hissed a sharp expletive. Tired of wasting time listening to his empty vow, he pulled the trigger of his Magnum without a second thought.

Instinctively wincing, Lexi froze as he shot his weapon. Waiting to feel pain that never came, her mouth fell open as she heard a series of empty “clicks” coming from the golden gun. Lifting her lips into a shit eating grin, a laugh bubbled from her throat.

Well would you look at that, Nikki said from the corner of her mind. Kade told you the truth. Maybe I was wrong about him. Guess he’s worth keeping around.

Silently agreeing with her alter, she looked at Kade. His handsome face twisted with a rage she had only seen once before, right before she had hit her with the car back at

the cabin. It was a look that made the hair on the back of her neck stand up on end. With bated breath, she watched him retaliate against the cowardly attack.

Unleashing his pent-up fury, Kade let out a low growl. Without hesitation, he popped off four quick rounds from his gun. Within the span of a single heartbeat, they hit their target like a surgeon's blade. Lodging themselves deep within Bloodbayne's shoulders, the old man screamed as he fell back into his oversized chair, nearly toppling it to the ground.

Lowering the Baretta to his side, he gave his father a tiny smirk. Relishing the pained sounds escaping his twisting mouth, he studied his bloody handiwork. He had made sure not to hit anything too critical, he wanted to save that honor for his love.

"Valentina removed the bullets from your clip. You know, you should've been kinder to her," he tsked, walking towards the desk.

Unable to pry himself from the high back chair, Bloodbayne writhed in pain. Gasping for air, his mind reeled from his words. Of all the people he had surrounded himself with, he trusted Valentina the most. Her betrayal was more painful than the oozing wounds in his shoulders and upper arms.

Following her love as he worked his way around the desk, Lexi studied Bloodbayne. He looked so old, so frail, that she almost wanted to laugh. She couldn't believe she was ever afraid of him. He was just a pathetic old man. Nothing more, nothing less.

Standing next to the chair, Kade lifted his free hand. Wrapping it soundly around his father's thin neck, he yanked the injured man from his seat. Squeezing his fingers into his fire kissed flesh, he roughly dragged him towards the wall.

"Come, Sweetheart. It's time for you to play," he said, glancing over his shoulder.

Source Creation Date: June 23, 2025, 5:34 am

Spitting strained curses, Bloodbayne tried in vain to pry his hand from his throat. Somehow staying on his feet, his gnarled body twisted to and fro. Fighting with all the energy still left in his wilting muscles, he begged for his life.

“Kade!” he choked. “I’ll give ...you... anything...anything...you want!”

Reaching his destination, Kade grit his sharp teeth. Lifting his father a couple of inches from the ground, he viciously slammed his curved back against the cement wall. Leaning his livid face close, he met his terrified blue eyes.

“Yes you will...your death will give me everything I’ve ever wanted,” he said.

Holding him securely in place, Kade looked over his shoulder at Lexi. Motioning her closer with a quirk of his head, he took in the excitement brewing behind her wide eyes. She was always so radiant right before a kill.

“He’s all yours, my love,” he purred.

Keeping her focus on his reddened face, Lexi squeezed the metal hilt in her hand. Clearing the space, she stood in front of the bleeding, pleading man. Listening to his strangled words, she lifted her blade and began the process of cutting the buttons from his pressed, crimson stained shirt. As each button flew off, the old man winced.

Barely able to move his dangling arms, Bloodbayne tried to swat her hand away. His feeble attempt was countered by his son’s large hand pressing harder into his neck. Feeling the weight of intense pressure in the back of his eyes, he stopped wiggling and kicking. His number was up, fighting against the inevitable was useless.

“You’ve kept my daughter away from me for one hundred and sixteen days,” she growled, ripping the tucked in shirt from his slacks and yanking the fabric open. “I think it’s fitting that I give you one hundred and sixteen cuts, don’t you?”

“I...didn’t! That’ssss...that’s....nottt...true!” he protested.

“SHUT UP!” Kade yelled, trying to keep his own anger in check. He had no idea his daughter had been without her mother for that long.

Lifting her Stiletto, Lexi’s eyes trailed over the sharp blade. Preparing herself for the euphoric high coming her way, she once again met his scarred face. His skin was starting to take on a purplish hue from the pressure being applied to his throat. She knew she had to hurry, she wanted him to feel as much pain as possible before he slipped into hell.

“I counted! I counted every single day!” she screamed, remembering the heartache from not having her daughter. “And now you will count. I know you will count in that pathetic little mind of yours!”

“No! Please!” Bloodbayne squeaked.

Tired of hearing his strained voice, she made her first cut. Stabbing her blade into his lower abdomen, she twisted it from vertical to horizontal and back again.

“That’s one! That’s for making me have that amnio! I could have lost my son because of you!” she hissed.

Opening his mouth to scream, Bloodbayne’s vocal cords refused to respond. Slowly blinking at the livid woman, he watched in helpless terror as she claimed her pound of flesh. Absorbing the searing pain of every quick stab and slash, he writhed in pitiful agony.

Stopping her verbal count at ten, Lexi continued to mentally tally her wicked cuts. Consumed by her revenge, she stabbed the old fucker again and again, taking pleasure from the sounds of her blade slicing through skin, muscle, and bone. Carving her revenge, she let out a dark laugh as she felt his blood splatter across her face.

It's a badge of honor, Lexi, Nikki said. You're doing fabulous, Sweetie! Keep going!

Spurred on by Nikki's encouragement, she ramped up her attack. With her forearm beginning to burn, she slashed over and over until there wasn't an inch of unmarred flesh on his torso. As her counts neared their goal, a sense of peace melded with her bliss. She found comfort in knowing that the disgusting man would never hurt her, or her family, ever again.

Keeping his dark eyes on her, Kade stayed silent as he soaked in her impassioned movements. She was wild and feral, unlike anything he had ever seen. He was so incredibly proud of her. It made his desire for her spike to new heights.

Reaching one hundred fifteen, Lexi sliced her blade one last time across his mangled chest. Finally losing her grip on the slippery hilt, she let her weapon drop to the floor. Taking in gulps of air, her chest heaved from the physical exertion. This was the one part of pregnancy she hated, her stamina never stayed for long.

Furrowing his brow, Kade cleared his throat to gain her attention. "Lexi? Why did you stop?" he asked, feeling Bloodbayne's pulse weaken against his touch.

Shaking herself from her thoughts, she turned her attention to him. She was exhausted and had accidentally cut her own hand a few times in her frenzy, but that's not why she stopped. He was the one that deserved this kill, not her.

"He's yours, Kade. You end this," she replied.

Shocked by the tender gesture, he blinked at her. That wasn't their deal. That was never part of their deal. "What? Why?" he asked, confusion dancing over his strong features.

Ignoring the dying man as he gurgled in his own spit and blood, she gave him a knowing look. It was sweet of him to want to give her this moment, but he was the one that deserved it. She hoped it would offer him closure, so that he could become the man he was destined to be.

"He's been abusing you since you were born, Kade. He nearly succeeded in taking everything from you, including your life. What he did to me is nothing in comparison. You finish this. You kill him."

Taking in her truthful words, Kade swallowed hard. A flood of memories tore through his mind, painful images that he had long suppressed. Their emergence stirred up years' worth of maltreatment caused by the husk of the man wheezing before him. Nodding his head, he accepted her precious gift. Just when he didn't think he could love her any more, she always found a way to surprise him.

"Thank you," he said, his voice almost a whisper.

Source Creation Date: June 23, 2025, 5:34 am

Grinning at him, she took a step backwards. Shaking her stinging hand, she waited for him to rid himself of his father's steely grasp. He could finally be his own man, now. It was what they had both hoped and wished for.

Lifting his Baretta, Kade placed the barrel of the silencer against his forehead. Studying his aged face for a long moment, he slowly pulled the trigger of his gun. Lodging a fraying bullet into his brain and putting an end to the misery he had been settled with for his entire life.

Dropping the limp carcass to the floor, he turned to look at his beautiful brunette. Taking in a cleansing breath, all the weight pressing upon his shoulders evaporated, leaving him with a sense of relief he had never experienced. For the first time in his life, he was free. Finally free.

Securing his gun in its holster, he cleared the space to his other half. Scooping her up into his arms, he twirled her in a loving embrace.

Laughing as he spun her, Lexi closed her eyes. Thanking the universe for granting them their wish, she enjoyed the blissful moment. They would never have to worry about Bloodbayne tearing their family apart ever again. She couldn't remember the last time she had felt such elation.

"It's over, Kade...it's finally over," she said.

Squeezing her tightly, he came to a slow stop. Holding her against his torso, he held in a happy sob. He almost didn't believe it, he didn't think it was possible to feel so complete.

“Let’s clean up and go get our daughter,” he said, his deep voice shaking at the seams.

Pulling her head back to look at his handsome face, she nodded in agreement. She couldn’t wait to see Loey’s face when she saw her daddy.

“Yes, let’s,” she replied.

...

Mindful of her bandaged hand, Lexi opened the glass door to the penthouse balcony. Stepping out into the starry night, she smiled as she saw Kade resting in a teak patio lounge. Cradled against his chest was a sleeping Loey, to his right sat an

unusually relaxed Valentina. Their hushed voices going over the details of the transfer of power.

Trying to be as quiet as possible, she walked towards the trio. She didn’t want to disturb her daughter, it had taken hours for her to finally fall asleep. Loey had been so excited to see her daddy. She kept touching his face, saying “Dada, Dada,” as if she didn’t think he was real. It was a tender scene that had made her weep with joy.

And to think, he was worried that his daughter wouldn’t remember him, Nikki said.

Laughing to herself, she could almost feel her alter roll her eyes. Saying a silent “goodnight,” she closed the door in the back of her mind. Something told her she wouldn’t be hearing from Nikki again for a long while. It was almost bittersweet.

Taking a seat on the lounge chair flanking Kade’s left, she arched her brow as the pair’s conversation trailed off. “I hope I’m not interrupting anything,” she said, keeping her voice soft.

Turning his head, Kade moved his attention from Valentina to Lexi. Looking at her lovingly, he shook his head. She was his equal in every sense of the word now, he couldn't wait to fill her in on the details of their new Empire.

"Not at all, Sweetheart. We were just going over how to handle the transition of power. Val is going to call the syndicates tomorrow and alert them. They should have no problems accepting the change. But if they do well, we can handle it. Can't we?" he said, adjusting the blanket covering his sleeping princess.

"We certainly can," she replied confidently. Sweeping her gaze to Valentina, she softened her face. "Thank you for everything. We couldn't have done this without you."

"No, you couldn't have," Valentina agreed, lifting her scarlet lips into a smirk. "But honestly, I should be the one thanking you. I was trapped and didn't know how to get out. I'm grateful for what you and Kade have done, and I want you to know that you both have my loyalty."

Taking in a breath, she gave the striking blonde a warm grin. Perhaps it was foolish, but she believed her with every fiber of her being. She was thankful to have her help as they rebuilt the Organization. It felt good to have someone capable in their corner.

"And you have ours," she replied.

Taking comfort in her words, Valentina decided to take her leave. Slapping her hands on her knees, she slowly stood from her comfortable chair. Dancing her blue eyes back and forth between the pair, she let out a sigh.

"Well, I'm going to make one last call to Geno and then I'm heading to bed. He and his crew should have the office cleaned by dawn. Have a good night you two, I'll see you in the morning," she said.

Almost in unison, Lexi and Kade wished her a good night.

Watching their new Underboss as she left the balcony, he waited for the door to close before he spoke his mind. Moving his dark eyes along the City's skyline, he snuggled his snoring baby close.

"We did it, Lexi. We fucking did it," he said, soaking in the surreal moment. "I can't believe how lucky I am! I'm madly in love with a dynamic woman, I have a beautiful daughter and a son on the way. I finally have the Organization that was dangled in front of my face for years...I have everything I've ever wanted. And it's all because of you. I wouldn't have any of this if it wasn't for you. Thank you so much for loving me. Thank you for loving every broken, terrible piece."

Turning his face to meet hers, he lifted a hand to cup her cheek. Gliding the pad of his thumb across her skin, he memorized her beauty in the moonlight.

"Thank you for saving me," he added.

Nuzzling against his touch, Lexi closed her eyes. Breathing in the sweet moment, she committed every second to memory. There were still incredibly tough times ahead, but at least they wouldn't have to fight a battle alone ever again.

"We saved each other, Kade," she said, raising her eyelids to meet his intense gaze. "I love you so very much."

Giving her a full smile, he leaned towards her. Pausing as she met him halfway, he continued to caress her cheek.

"And I love you, Sweetheart. Now and always," he promised, claiming her lips in a passionate kiss.