



Sinful Submission

Author: *Stephanie Nicole Norris*

Category: Erotic, Romance, Billionaire Romance, Adult, Dark

Description: Three men. One woman. When danger and desire collide.

They thrive off the thrill of the chase, unapologetic in their pursuit to always hit their mark – or get their woman. Businessmen by day, hitmen by night, these frat brothers live, work, and kill together. They're dangerous, raw, and too ruthless for their best friend's little sister, who should be off-limits to them, especially with an enemy who is always circulating in their orbit. They could get her killed if they aren't careful. Yet, one by one, they each get sucked deeper into her intoxicating web as the morally gray lines begin to blur and they realize that the only way to move forward is to succumb to their desires ... and share her.

Resort tycoon Titan Valentine is a merciless, beautiful monster in a tailored suit who dances the thin line between power and danger. Santari Lake mistook his quiet commanding presence for survival, but she didn't realize she'd become the flame he aches to be consumed by. Every time he holds back, it's not mercy... it's foreplay. And when she finally offers her submission, he loses the hold on his control completely.

*For the best reading experience, this dark why choose trilogy must be read in order

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...48 hours earlier

The bass hammered through Club Fetish like a drumline while I tracked Santari's every move. Her body rolled with the music, that rich mahogany silk skin shining amid the red and purple lights draping her overhead. Metal catwalks crisscrossed above the dance floor while my Omega Theta Tau brothers strolled and danced to the music. Usually, those fools would keep my attention occupied with their theatrics. Especially the twins Damien and Draven, who loved the challenge of pulling gorgeous women. And Lil Mike, who was being his usual self – elbowing Osirus and motioning to women they'd stopped to dance in front of. But my gaze was stuck on the Goddess in the middle of the dance floor, as were the attention of other men.

My jaw clenched as I watched three different vultures edge closer to Santari, their eyes hungry, their drunken stupor apparent.

Smoke drifted through laser beams cutting across the room, shining its light on different areas of gyrating bodies. I brought my glass to my lips, letting the bourbon coat my tongue. The burn didn't ease the tension coiling in my muscles, and I knew I would need a night of unhinged sex or murder to relax me.

"You look ready to slaughter someone," Cruz said, materializing at my shoulder.

I narrowed my eyes on the men closing in on her.

"I might." I knocked back the rest of my bourbon, the ice clinking against my teeth as I slammed the glass on a nearby table. It cracked, and Cruz yanked it away before I could shatter it completely.

“For fuck’s sake,” he muttered. “Either kill someone or dance with her. You’re costing me money doing this shit.”

“As if you give a fuck.”

The music shifted to a darker tune with a heavy beat that made the floor vibrate beneath our feet. Santari moved through the crowd, her straight black silk press hair whipping around when she spun. It brushed across her shoulders and the bang covering her forehead created mystery over her eyes.

“She’s got half the club ready to risk death tonight,” Cruz said, nodding toward the bar where men stared openly. “More than usual.”

I cracked my neck. “Let them try.”

“Is that what you’re waiting for?”

“I’m waiting to see how far she pushes it.”

There was intention in the way she moved, how her hips waved, how she poked her ass out, and flipped her hair before training her eyes back on me. My dick grew stiff in my jeans.

Fuck.

I was trying to let her have a good time by not crowding her space, but I was losing the battle. And somehow, I felt like that was her intent.

“Storm is not himself,” Cruz said. “He’s been pacing at odd hours of the night — standing by the pool, staring off into space.”

“I noticed. Did you talk to him?”

“Briefly. He would mumble under his breath and walk off before we could discuss it.”

“And what was in his mumblings?”

“He thinks he made a mistake but can’t pinpoint where or how.”

This took my attention off Santari, and I cut my eyes at Cruz.

Storm, Cruz, and I were The Paradox—businessmen by day and hitmen by night. In our line of work, mistakes couldn’t be made, and I abhorred them.

“What kind of mistake?”

“Motherfucker, didn’t I say?—”

“Find out what it’s about.”

“I’ll let him figure it out. He’ll let us know if it concerns our operations when he does.”

I locked my jaw, nostrils flaring as I glanced at Omega Theta Tau then back at Santari.

She lifted her arms overhead, and the hem of her black bandaged dress rose just enough to reveal her red panties. From across the room, I could tell her nipples were hard as they pressed against the tight fabric, and that was enough to make my feet move.

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I shoved away from the wall and eased through the crowd as her daring eyes drew me close like a silent spell. Steady on me, her eyes drove down then up, and when our gazes locked, her floating scent tingled my senses and warmed my blood. It was sweet serenity wrapped in lemon. Her mouth curved when I reached her, those full lips beckoning me to suck them in my mouth and devour her whole.

I grabbed Santari's hips and yanked her against me. The heat of our connection slammed into my libido, sending my dickaching to be inside her. But I had yet to penetrate her wet pussy. I was waiting for her to starve for me just as much as I starved for her.

"I think you want my attention." I leaned and bit her earlobe, then nibbled down her neck.

"It's about damn time you noticed," she purred, her southern drawl dripping like honey with an edge of erotism.

"You know I've kept my eyes on you all night."

"Then what took you so long to get over here?"

"I was trying to give you space to have fun."

"I have fun when you don't give me space."

She turned in my grip, pressing her back against my chest and rotating her ass in my crotch as the music pulsed around us. Her hands reached up, her fingers sliding over

my waves as she moved to the beat. The friction intensified my arousal, sending sparks through my system like a fireworks show.

“You’re making a scene,” I growled in her ear, tightening my grip on her hips. “And you know I’d kill these motherfuckers if they dared to touch you.”

She turned her head, those doe eyes and long lashes looking back at me.

“Good. I like it when you get territorial. Now show them who I belong to.”

My hand slid up her side, feeling the rapid beat of her heart through her ribs. “You’ve been torturing me all night,” she purred. “Making me dance alone.”

“I like watching you move.”

A laugh vibrated through her back into my chest. “That may be so, but I know you were counting caskets, too.”

I smirked and bit into her neck. Santari gasped and moaned, her body trembling against me.

The music shifted again, a sexy R&B beat that dragged our bodies deeper against one another. “Fuck, you’re gonna make me tear you apart.” Santari turned to face me, her arms sliding around my neck.

“Do it.”

A snarl pushed through my mouth. “Don’t fuckin’ test me.”

“I will if I want to.”

“That’s a bad idea.”

“Why?”

“Because you know I’ll do it.”

“You’re a businessman. People here know you own the five-star, upper-echelon Primal Luxury Resort. I might get away with calling your bluff.” She pressed closer, challenging me. The swell of her breasts against my chest made it hard to think straight.

Movement flickered in my peripheral. One of the men from the bar was drunk enough to be stupid. His hand shot out toward Santari’s arm, and I throat-punched him, then bent to meet up with his eye level as he crouched and wheezed in agony.

“Touch her, and no one will ever find a piece of you.” I smacked his face. “Respond, motherfucker!”

His eyes watered, and he nodded frantically. I smacked him again, this time with a backhand. “I can’t hear you!” I grabbed his throat and lifted him.

“Titan.” Santari’s voice was low and sultry. She pressed against my back but couldn’t reach my earlobe, even in high heels. She glanced up from the side of me, tugging on my biceps. “Not in the club.”

I slapped him upon release, and he slid across the floor, gagging and scrambling backward—the urge to follow and finish what he started burned in my blood.

Santari’s fingers dug into my arm. “Take me home.”

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I turned to her, seeing the same dark hunger in her eyes that I felt. She wasn't afraid of the violence in me, and that made her more dangerous than anyone else in the room.

"Now," she demanded.

We burst through the exit into the Miami night. The humidity was lighter than earlier, but the sudden absence of the club's heat made Santari shiver. "You can't protect me from everyone, you know."

I pushed her against my bike, caging her between my arms. "Watch me."

She reached up, and her fingers trailed over my jaw. "I don't know why your badassery turns me on so much, but I love it."

"And you have no idea what you do to me."

"Show me."

A group stumbled out of the club behind us, drunk, and laughing. Santari's lids lowered as she pushed off the bike.

"Take me home, Titan," she said again. "Before I make you fuck me right here."

I swung onto the bike, feeling her slide on behind me as the motor roared to life under us. Her thighs pressed against mine. She fit perfectly behind me. Her arms tightened around my chest, and we rode off into the night.

My head broke through the surface of the water, and I took in a breath, resting my feet on the pool floor.

Opening my eyes, droplets blurred the silhouette standing on the pool's edge, but it didn't hide his broad shoulders, muscular torso, or the tattoo sleeves on both arms.

I dipped my head back and wiped my eyes then lifted to stare at him again.

...Titan Valentine.

I still couldn't believe he was mine, and that he had agreed to be with me in such an arrangement. When it came to polygamy in the world, it was mostly made up of several women and one man. But in our world, it was only me and three of them - Cruz, Storm, and Titan.

Three dark, intense, and incredibly gorgeous men who each played a significant role in my life.

I was living a dream. Some would call it a fantasy. But I called it serendipity. I couldn't be whole without them. They were the pieces to a full puzzle, and I wouldn't have it any other way.

I'd found that out over the last few months. My, how time flew. I didn't come to The Omega House with the intention of falling in love with them. In fact, I came furious because of the death of my brother, Revere Lake – for short, they called him Rev.

But things had changed so quickly that for anyone else, it would have left their heads spinning. For me, coming here gave me understanding and fulfillment like I'd never imagined.

All my life, I'd known something was missing, and no one man could seem to satisfy

me in a way that made me complete. The longer I stayed, the clearer it became where I belonged.

Still, even knowing this, Titan was holding back. While we agreed verbally, sexually, and mentally, he was still holding back, and I wanted all of him.

The metal wheel rolled against Titan's thumb and a flame ignited from his flip-top lighter, illuminating his goatee and suckable lips. His skin was smooth, his body hard like a candy bar dipped in chocolate and I wanted to suck him deep in my throat.

Arousal hit me below, my pussy thumping like a palpitating heartbeat. I bit my bottom lip, watching him like he had watched me most of the night. His gaze was fixed on the blaze, and I wondered what connection he had with fire as he always went somewhere else whenever he stared into a flame.

"What's on your mind, Santari?"

His gaze blinked once and then those dark eyes were on me, and he closed his fist around the flame, effectively snuffing it.

"Wondering where you go when you see fire."

"Why do you want to know that?"

"Because I want to know you, Titan."

"You don't think you know enough?"

"No."

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His brows rose. “Your curiosity can put you in danger.”

“Says who?”

“Says me.”

“And how will danger find me when you’re around?”

He smirked. “I am the danger. Haven’t you realized that by now?”

My pussy thumped, and my nipples hardened. I’d decided long ago that none of their demons would send me running. Instead, I’d find a way to become their master.

“Then I’d rather be in trouble,” I said.

We stared at each other, and he sucked his teeth.

“I’ve been trying to take my time with you?—”

“And I wish you wouldn’t.”

More staring, and I had to wonder if his body was thumping up a storm like mine.

In the distance, a tune sounded, and I realized it was my phone.

“Leave it,” he said.

“Under one condition.”

His nostrils flared. Titan didn't like orders. He hated to be told what to do, and I knew when I pushed his buttons, he would snap, which was what I was banking on. There was something about his madness that drove me wild. This wasn't the first time I'd recognized my arousal to his violent nature but there was nothing I wanted to do about it but let it engulf me.

“Take those clothes off and get in the water with me.”

“If you're going to give me orders, you must be prepared for my retaliation.”

My skin warmed even under the water's cool ambiance.

“I'm prepared.”

He stripped down, removing the jeans and boxers in one shrug off his cut hips. His dick bounced out – a dagger with a hook's edge and I wanted that dick inside me so bad, I burned for it.

Seconds later, the water splashed, and he was under the blue chlorine pool, his perfect posture and agile strength sailing toward me with submarine silence and athletic poise.

He circled me once, twice, and the anticipation of his undertaking drove my arousal to new heights.

I reached to grab his shoulder, and my touch sent him quickly rising before me, my ass in his grip as he lifted me out of the pool to wrap my legs around his neck.

“Oh!”

The warmth of his mouth was inches from where I needed it most when he suddenly stilled. His teeth grazed my inner thigh, sending fire racing through my veins, but there was a new tension in his grip.

Through my desire-filled haze, I lifted my head and followed Titan's gaze to the shadows by the pool house where Storm stood partially concealed, his usual confident posture was replaced by a more restless, uncertain energy that I'd noticed a few times recently.

Titan's teeth sank deeper into my flesh, drawing a moan from my throat, but I felt the immediate change in his focus. Even in this intimate moment, Titan's mind was processing Storm's unusual behavior. That was Titan - constantly scrutinizing, and always three steps ahead.

The sight of Storm watching only heightened my need. These men were mine as much as I was theirs. But the uncertainty in Storm's posture pulled at something in my gut. In our world, uncertainty usually meant danger was circling.

Titan's fingers dug into my thighs as he lowered me back into the water but kept his eyes locked on Storm. The cool liquid shocked my heated skin, but I couldn't tear my gaze from Storm's expression. Even in the shadows, the tightness in his jaw was visible.

"What is it?" Titan's baritone made me shiver. The question hung in the air as Storm shifted his weight, something so unlike his usual measured movements.

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“We need to talk.” Storm’s voice was as uncertain as his posture, but there was an edge to it I’d never heard before.

I pressed closer to Titan, with water lapping at my breasts as his arm curved around my waist. The hard planes of his body against mine had the power to distract me, but my concern was starting to edge out my desire.

“Later,” Titan said, but Storm shook his head.

“Now.” That single word made a knot form in my throat. Storm never pushed against Titan’s decisions unless it was critical.

Titan’s fingers gripped my ass, and he shoved me against his still hard erection. “Go inside, Goddess.”

“You’re saying one thing, but your actions are saying another.”

He dropped a kiss on my mouth and bit my bottom lip, arousing me with the sting from his bite. “Go inside.”

I tossed my legs around his waist and hunched against his dick. “Whatever it is, I want to know.”

A low growl rumbled through him. “Not yet.”

I knew that tone. I’d gotten under his skin with my hip bucks, but whatever this was between him and Storm was taking precedence. Still, as I climbed out of the pool, I

hoped something wasn't seriously wrong in our carefully balanced world.

Water dripped from my body as I padded through the mansion with my phone clutched in my hand after lifting it from the poolside table. There were three missed calls from Gina, but I knew the only reason she'd called back-to-back was likely because I'd left the club early.

I clicked her name and pressed the phone to my ear, moving to my bedroom windows overlooking the pool. Through the floor-to-ceiling glass, I could see Titan and Storm in an intense discussion. Storm's body was rigid with tension. Titan's stance was solid and unwavering.

"Girl! Finally!" Gina's voice burst through the line. "I've been trying to reach you all night."

"I was swimming."

"Swimming? Chile, after that scene at Club Fetish? I figured you and Titan would be breaking furniture by now."

A tickle ran down my flesh as heat flushed my skin at the memory of his mouth between my thighs minutes ago. "We got... interrupted."

"Who would Titan let interrupt y'all? I saw how he handled that drunk asshole. That was sexy as fuck watching him defend you, by the way. It got my pussy wet, that's for sure."

I laughed and pressed my forehead to the cool glass, unable to tear my eyes from the men below. Storm was pacing now, his hands cutting through the air as he spoke. Titan stood still as stone, but I recognized that deadly stillness. He was processing, and analyzing Storm's unusual behavior.

“You should’ve seen the rest of these thirsty ass men watching you dance,” Gina continued. “Though something felt off about one of them.”

“What do you mean?”

“This one guy – clean cut, expensive suit, definitely didn’t fit the club scene. He watched you differently. With more intention than the others.” She paused. “He followed you for a bit when you went to the bar.”

“Probably just another dude wanting attention.” But something tickled the back of my mind – a shadow I’d caught more than once tonight.

“Nah, this was different. He wasn’t trying to get your attention. Just... watching. Taking notes on his phone. Then I saw him outside when you and Titan left.”

Below, Titan’s hand shot out, gripping Storm’s shoulder to stop his pacing. I could see the muscles rippling through his arm even from here.

“You’re being paranoid,” I said, but my eyes were locked on the scene unfolding by the pool. “Probably just some wannabe player.”

“Girl, I know players. This wasn’t that. He had that energy like your men – like danger packaged in designer clothes.” She paused, then squealed. “Oh! Speaking of designer, let me tell you about this fine-ass man I met after you left.”

My lips curved, but I was half listening as I watched Titan and Storm below. Gina’s attention span was legendary when it came to attractive men, so I wasn’t surprised by her change of subject.

“Do tell.”

“Chile, this man is everything! Over six feet easily, built like a linebacker, wearing these capri shorts and crew neck strict around his muscles that had me ready to risk it all. The scent drifting from him screamed money honey, honeeeeeey!”

I chuckled, watching as Storm yanked away from Titan’s grip and stalked toward the pool house. “You’re about to leave with him, aren’t you?”

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“You know me too well! He’s taking me to this rooftop lounge in South Beach. Apparently, he’s got connections and can get us in anywhere.”

“Be careful, Gina.”

“Please, I invented careful. Besides, I know what real danger looks like after watching Titan handle business tonight. This is just fun danger.”

I pressed closer to the glass as Titan’s gaze lifted to mine through the window. Even from this distance, the intensity of him aroused me to my core.

“There’s no such thing as fun danger.”

“Says the woman fucking three of the most sinfully gorgeous men in Miami.” She laughed. “Oh shit, he’s here! Gotta go, boo. Don’t do anything I wouldn’t do!”

“That leaves me a lot of options,” I murmured, just as she hung up.

I sent her a text right behind our call:

Send me a picture of the license plate asap.

A few minutes past then a notification came through of Miami plates. I saved the image to my phone and stayed at the window, watching my men below. Storm’s agitation was a juxtaposition to Titan’s measured tranquility. Something was wrong – it had been wrong for days now. But as much as I wanted to run down there and demand answers, I knew better. When they were ready to reveal whatever this was,

they would.

Still, as I turned from the window, I couldn't shake the feeling that our world was about to tilt on its axis. And maybe I was ready for whatever chaos came next.

After all, I'd chosen to live this life with them. And there was nothing in this world that could make me walk away from what we'd built now.

I stripped off my wet swimsuit and strolled into the bathroom, taking a hot shower before climbing into bed. I would wait here for Titan to come and finish what we'd started, and I hoped for the sake of the pulsation between my thighs that he would be livid enough to fuck me senseless.

Present day

The twin turbo-charged V8 engine revved as I leaned into a curve to turn on Oceans Drive. It was my first ride on the Mercedes AMG Solar Beam, a luxury sports bike known for its sleek exterior as much as its aggressive horsepower.

It was an extension of me—powerful steel with a multilayered interior. I wanted to test this baby out with Santari—and I would. But the ride from the showroom floor was mine alone, as I needed to bond with the machine before I whipped her around on it.

The vibration in my pocket came from my cell phone, and I tapped the earpiece to connect the Bluetooth speaker.

“I'll call you back in five.”

“Meet me at the house, now!”

The order came from Storm. I'd had just about enough of his shit. He knew I hated fuckin' orders. And yet, the nightmares plaguing him wouldn't let him rest.

"This better be fuckin' good."

"It's San!"

His response held fear that threatened my soul. Storm feared nothing, so this made my gut tighten, and my jaw lock.

"What about her?"

When he spoke, his voice was a phantom hallow.

"She's been taken."

Terror hit my soul like a tormenting devil, and I screamed into the line.

"What the fuck are you talking about?!"

"Meet me now!"

I disconnected the line, and the Mercedes AMG lurched as I cranked back on the throttle. The tires squealed on the pavement when I cut through traffic, narrowly missing an SUV. At red lights, I sliced between cars with my head down and focused on getting to The Omega House to find out what the fuck was going on.

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Tires screeched behind me, and I glanced in my side mirror to see Cruz's Hellcat burning rubber as he swerved into my lane. We clocked each other simultaneously, and by the way he rode my ass, I knew Storm had called him, too.

Seven minutes later we whipped into the estate's driveway together, parking side by side, and launched toward the house.

"The fuck's going on?" Cruz barked.

"I'm about to kill this motherfucker, that's what." I shoved through the door where Storm paced the grand foyer, his hands trembling. This was a man who never showed weakness reduced to visible trembles.

"Where the fuck is she?" Cruz snarled.

Storm's eyes were wild and unfocused. "Gone."

I stalked across the floor in three strides, grabbed Storm's collar, and slammed him against the wall. "What the fuck does that mean, Storm?"

"I fucked up. Fuck. I fucked up." Storm's voice cracked.

Cruz yanked me off Storm, but his own rage was barely contained. He pointed at Storm. "Start talking. Now."

Storm put some space between us and began pacing again.

“The job we did with Rev.” Storm’s words tumbled out. “I lost my university access keycard that night. I didn’t realize until later. I’ve been looking everywhere, retracing steps?—”

“Your fuckin’ access key? The one that gets you into every part of the building?” I lunged again, but Cruz tightened his grip on me. “You’ve been searching for weeks without telling us?” My insanity was kicking in. I could feel the violence in my soul bellowing to the surface. My skin warmed, and I balled my fists, aching for brutality, throbbing with hostility.

“I didn’t think...” he paused. “I thought it was misplaced, not in the hands of anyone who would bring harm to her – or any of us. But this afternoon, when I got to my office, something was waiting for me.” Storm pulled out the missing access keycard with a crumpled piece of paper from his pocket. “This was on my office desk.”

I snatched the note, and Cruz read over my shoulder:

“Found something you lost, Professor. What else might you lose?”

“Who the fuck wrote this?” Cruz barked as I cut my eyes from the paper back to Storm.

“I have no fuckin’ idea. But it must be someone connected to our hit. It’s the only thing that makes sense.”

I jerked out of Cruz’s grip, and my fist connected with Storm’s jaw, sending him staggering. “You stupid motherfucker!”

Cruz caught Storm’s next stumble, pinning him to the wall. “How long was she alone?”

Storm angrily pushed back against Cruz. “Get off me, nigga!”

“Force me, motherfucker!” Cruz spat.

“Look, I knowy’allare pissed, and you have every right to be, but neither of you motherfuckers will get another chance to lay hands on me,” he angrily pushed at Cruz’s hold, “You understand?”

“Let him go, Cruz,” I snarled. “I want him, one on one.”

“Oh yeah, fuck you too, Titan!”

“Let him go!”

Cruz released him and slammed his palm against the wall next to Storm’s head, then barricaded himself between us.

“The fuck out my way.”

“We’re not fighting!”

“Yes, the fuck we are!” I grabbed Cruz’s shoulders, and he grabbed me. The strength between us was the force of a stone wall, neither able to overpower the other.

“Stop this shit!” Storm screamed.

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Cruz and I took our hands off each other and turned on him, nostrils flaring with rage burning between us.

“Every minute counts. We’ve got to find San!”

“I can’t fuckin’ believe you let someone take her!” I barked.

Cruz cracked his neck, his voice a menacing growl when he spoke. “How long was she alone?”

“She works on campus. She’s been alone most of the day. But I’ve been texting her own and off all day.”

“How can you be sure it was her you were texting?” Cruz asked.

“And more importantly,” I added. “Do you have any idea how long she’s been gone? Was it all day? Midday? What?” I shouted.

“It’s been less than an hour now. I saw...” His eyes widened and his color paled.

Cruz grabbed his shoulders and shook him. “You saw what, motherfucker?!”

“When I got the note, I went looking for her. Her car is still on campus grounds – her personal items are still in her office. I made security show me the cameras. She’s there. I saw them take her.”

“Fuck!” I tightened my fist and worked overtime not to swing at him again.

Cruz paced like a caged animal, and while we didn't want to fight amongst each other, Storm had put us in a position to take his head off his shoulders.

Cruz stopped suddenly and turned back to Storm. "Why didn't you tell us your access keycard was missing?"

"I didn't realize it was left at the scene. I thought I'd find it later but became restless because something felt off. I knew I'd fucked up somewhere, and that's what's been keeping me up at night."

My nostrils flared. "Why the fuck would you bring your keycard to a hit, Storm? You're smarter than that!"

"I'd planned to swing by the school later that night, and I meant to leave the card in the truck, but I must've kept it on my person because when I searched for it, I couldn't find it."

"Santari is your main priority. You've known all this time that your keycard was missing. You've known something was off, yet you didn't keep your eyes on her when she needed you most, and for that, I should snap your fuckin' neck."

"Titan—"

"You had one job, motherfucker," I continued, ignoring Cruz's caution. "And that's to protect her at all costs!" My next words came out in a snarl. "Instead, you let your mistake walk right in and take her."

Storm's head dropped. "I know."

"You know?" Cruz laughed, the sound echoing ominously from his throat. "Oh, he knows, Titan. That makes it all better."

I gritted my teeth as my mind cycled through scenarios. This was the worst possible thing that could happen. Santari was at the mercy of whoever this fucker was, and her words from the previous day's came back to haunt me.

"You can't protect me from everyone."

My gut tightened, my shoulders tensed, and a knot formed in my throat. What if they beat her, tortured her, raped her? Bile rose in my throat as her face filled my thoughts. I blinked and her face changed to her brother's – Rev. Blood spilled from his gut as he grunted and took his last breath. Every muscle in me clenched and my jaw locked. Santari was right. I couldn't shield Rev. And I couldn't keep her safe. He was gone, and so was she – by the hands of our enemies. How could I call myself her protector when I had failed to....

"Titan!"

I blinked and cut my eyes at Cruz and Storm, staring at me with dark, narrowed eyes.

"You didn't hear me calling you, nigga? We need your head in the game. Snap out of it now!"

My footsteps took me across the room to a community computer station.

I tapped along the keys, entering the dark web, where I could break the rules and gain access to the university's security system.

The security feed loaded, and multiple screens appeared from different angles of the university grounds.

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“Which building?” I asked, fingers hovering over the keys.

“Anderson Hall. Administrative building. Second floor.” Storm moved closer. “Her office is near mine.”

I typed in the location parameters, rewinding through the footage. The timestamp showed two forty-seven when Santari walked down the hall, her hips swaying in that fitted pencil skirt that ignited my libido. She disappeared into her office.

“There.” Cruz pointed to a man in a suit entering the frame at three fifteen.

The man knocked on Santari’s door. She opened it, and her body language instantly changed.

“Sound?” Cruz demanded.

I shook my head, scanning through more angles. “No audio.”

The suit grabbed her collar and dragged her into the hall then pressed a gun to her side. Santari fought – landing a solid right hook that made pride surge through me even as rage clouded my vision. But then a second man appeared behind her with a cloth. He said something that caused fear to ignite her eyes. She nodded then walked with them out of the frame.

I clicked to outside cameras and watch them cover her face with a cloth then load her into a black SUV with dealer plates.

“Chloroform.” Storm’s voice was hollow. “It’s a professional job.”

“Run those plates.” Cruz was already on his phone. “I’ll have my street contacts watching for that vehicle.”

I expanded the view to the parking lot cameras, tracking the SUV’s exit route. “They turned north on Collins.”

“There are multiple traffic cameras along there,” Storm said. “We can?—”

“Shut the fuck up,” I snarled, not taking my eyes off the screen. I drew in a breath. I knew it wasn’t the time to fight, but it didn’t mean I didn’t want to break Storm’s jaw.

My fingers flew across the keyboard, accessing the city’s traffic system. The SUV appeared on three cameras before disappearing into a blind spot near the port.

“They’re keeping her close to water.” I stood, and my mind drew a mental blueprint of the area. “There are warehouses, shipping containers, and abandoned buildings with dock access.”

“I’ve got contacts at the docks,” Cruz said. “I’ll make some calls and see who’s noticed any unusual activity.”

Storm moved to another computer, pulling up files. “I’ll dig through everything on our mission with Rev to see if it leads me to someone - any fuckin’ one.”

I spoke through clenched teeth. “Good. I’ll take the north side of the port and work my way down. Cruz, you start south and move up. Storm, coordinate from here - feed us any intel you find.”

“They’re professionals,” Cruz said, checking his weapon. “They won’t leave obvious trails.”

“Then we make our own trails and led them to us.” I headed for the door. “We find who has her, then paint the streets red.”

Storm’s voice was steel when he spoke. “I started this. Let me help end it.”

“You didn’t start shit. The motherfucker who came for us and took our brother started it. And you will help us end it.” I turned back to him. “Find us a target. When we locate her, we’ll need you for extraction.”

Cruz fell into step beside me as we headed out. Storm was already working the computers behind us. “If they touch her...”

“They already have by taking her. Let’s make them beg for death.”

Two engines roared to life in the driveway - my Mercedes, Cruz’s Hellcat, and Storm’s voice was in our earpieces as we split off in different directions. Somewhere in this city, Santari was waiting. And the stupid motherfuckers who had taken her didn’t know they’d just invited hell into their homes.

The rough brick of concrete scraped my cheek when I came to. The chloroform had left my mouth cotton-dry and my thoughts fuzzy around the edges.

I had been taken.

Alarm hit my soul, making my pulse spike and my heart ricochet. Someone had stolen me right out of my office like it was nothing.

I fought the urge to panic and mentally counted down from ten, using some of the

meditating methods I'd learned in therapy.

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Ten... nine... eight... seven...

My breathing stabilized, and my thoughts went from shuffling to focusing on what this could mean for me. There were two reasons for my kidnapping. Either I was being trafficked, or my men had enemies in high places.

Fear tried to grip my chest again, but I began counting. After taking deep breaths, I stilled as much as possible, kept my eyes closed, and listened.

There were three distinct voices, all of them male. Nearby, heavy footsteps paced, slapping across the floor in marching strides. Mildew and oil mixed with the scent of salt water and rust was making my nostrils burn.

“... should’ve grabbed her days ago...”

“...waiting for the right moment...”

“...send the message soon...”

The voices came from different directions. They weren’t the same professionals that grabbed me. At least not the kind I was used to. These men moved too loudly and spoke too freely. Nothing like the deadly silence that followed my men.

My wrists were bound behind my back with zip ties, but they hadn’t bothered to bind my feet. I shifted slightly, testing the restraints. The plastic dug into my skin, but I’d learned a thing or two living with three hitmen.

The memory of Titan teaching me to escape restraints flooded back. His hands were on my wrists, his voice low in my ear:

“Rock your hands back and forth, Santari. Create space, then snap down hard.”

The memory of his touch sent heat racing through me even in this odd moment. The way Titan’s fingers would grip my wrists, teaching me where to apply pressure and how to twist just right to break free made heat trail down my skin.

My nipples hardened in spite of my situation. Everything about that man lit me up like a forest fire. I imagined those dark brown eyes promising violence as soon as he found out I was gone. He and Cruz were probably tearing the streets up looking for me – while Storm was running sequences on the internet like a spider web trying to find me.

“Check on her.” Footsteps approached, snapping me from my thoughts.

I kept my breathing steady, playing unconscious. A hand grabbed my shoulder, rolling me onto my back. The movement gave me the leverage I needed. I snapped my hands down hard against my lower back, feeling the zip tie crack.

My eyes flew open as I drove my knee up into the man’s groin. He doubled over with a grunt, and I slammed my forehead into his nose. Blood sprayed across my face, hot and thick. The feeling sent surprising arousal straight to my pussy.

“Fuck!”

I scrambled to my feet, taking in my surroundings. High ceilings and wooden beams were overhead. Shipping containers were stacked against far walls. Two more suits blocked the only visible exit, but there had to be others. There were always other exits.

The one I'd hit staggered up with rage twisting his features. Blood poured from his nose, staining his white collar. These weren't street thugs – they wore tailored suits and expensive watches. Someone was paying good money for this operation.

“You little bitch.”

I bared my teeth in a feral grin as my fight or flight kicked up a notch. “Is that the best you got?”

The first punch came fast, but I ducked, letting his fist crush into the stone wall behind me.

“Oooooooooou you little bitch!”

His howl of pain ignited my arousal - the sound making my pussy throb. It was the same reaction I got from watching Titan hurt people at the club who dared to touch me.

But the other two were on me before I could bolt. They slammed me face-first against the wall. One grabbed my hair, yanking my head back. The other pressed close, his expensive cologne making me want to gag.

“Not bad for a professor's pet.” His hot, stank breath was on my neck. “But playtime's over.”

A dark, ominous laugh escaped me, and the captors didn't know it, but I frightened myself at the sound of it. “You have no idea who I belong to.”

The hand in my hair tightened. “Oh, but I do. And your boyfriend can't help you here.”

Hearing his response let me know a few things: I was not being trafficked, these were my men's enemies, and whoever was running this operation hadn't told the bastards they'd hired to do their dirty work exactly who my men were—The Paradox.

“You mean,boyfriendssss.” I pushed back against their hold. “And you're wrong about a few things – the men coming for me are my kings. You just declared war on their kingdom. And you'll be the one who needs help when they arrive.”

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The one holding my hair pushed my forehead into the wall. “Shut up, bitch.”

“Make me.” I slammed my head back, hearing the cartilage in his nose crunch under my headbang.

“Aaaaah you fuckin’ cunt!”

His grip loosened, and I spun around, landing a solid kick to his partner’s knee. The crack was satisfying. These men were strong, but they didn’t have the training my lovers did.

The third one, however, the one whose nose I’d broken – caught me with a backhand that sent me sliding across the floor. My vision blurred as he stalked over to me, grabbed my throat, lifted me like a dangling rag doll, and pinned me to the wall. His fingers dug into my flesh, and for a moment, I saw stars.

“Enough!” He squeezed. “You want to play rough? Fine. But remember... you asked for this.”

I met his eyes, refusing to show fear. Instead, I was powered by my need to survive, and the same hunger I saw in my men’s eyes before they took a life was the same way I felt – thirsty for blood.

“Look at you.” He shook me. “You think your bravery will save you? It won’t. You’re a caged bird.”

“Your men aren’t coming no matter what you say. At least not until we summon them

into the trap that you're going to help us provide." He released my throat, stepping back.

"I'm not helping you do shit, motherfucker."

"As if you have a choice."

A new ziptie was produced and tied around my wrists – tighter this time. He shoved me toward a metal chair. They weren't taking chances after my little display.

The chair was bolted to the floor—industrial strength type shit. Someone had planned this part carefully, but the difference between their amateur handling and the professional setup nagged at me.

Blood dripped from my split lip as they secured me, and instead of pain, I felt arousal spike through me. I could recognize a transformation brewing. Before Titan, Cruz, and Storm, violence turned my stomach, or at least I'd indoctrinated myself with that belief for so long that I naturally believed it. Now, violence made me wet, as was apparent by the way my pussy thumped. Deep down, a revelation was rising – I'd always wanted to let my sinful nature spill into the world. Holding back never felt as natural as letting go.

I remembered the first time I saw Titan truly unleash his sin. The way his muscles rippled as he broke a man's jaw for touching me. How he'd pushed me against the wall after, his dick hard against my ass as he growled "mine" in my ear.

"Stop fucking smiling." The one with the broken nose snapped, drawing me back to the present. Blood still stained his shirt.

"Why? Scared?"

His hand whipped across my face, and pain throbbed in my head. I grimaced and locked my jaw, holding steady as the sting magnified before slowly subsided.

Through the grimy windows, I caught glimpses of more shipping containers, and seagulls could be heard nearby. Every detail was a breadcrumb for when my men came hunting.

One suit who stood in the background watching pressed a burner phone to his ear. "She's awake." A pause. "No, she's...feistier than expected." Another pause. "Understood."

I tracked their movements as they talked in low voices. The one I'd kneed in the groin limped severely. The one with the broken nose kept touching his face. The third one continued to wail and moan from me cracking his leg.

They thought they had me under control, tied to this chair like a sacrifice. But they didn't understand what I'd become. Living with three killers changed you. It opened doors in your mind that you locked long ago.

The sun was setting through the dirty glass, and somewhere out there, Titan was hunting, Cruz was connecting the dots, and Storm was zeroing in. The thought sent shivers down my spine. They would come for me with fire in their veins and death in their hands.

I shifted in the chair, testing my bonds. The zip ties were tight, but not impossible. I could feel the plastic digging into my wrists, creating raw patches that would make escape harder.

"You really think they'll find you?" The uninjured one who watched us asked, lighting a cigarette. The flame pulled me into another zone. It reminded me of how Titan played with fire and how much I wanted to know why. "This place isn't on any

map.”

“They don’t need maps.” I met his gaze steadily. “They just need to follow the pussy ass niggas walking around like they own shit.”

He blew smoke in my face. I didn’t flinch. “Those are some big words from a woman tied to a chair.”

“As are the words coming from a dead man walking.”

Slap!

The sting settled in my jaw, and I grimaced again, but seeing the fear in his eyes was worth it. These men were used to victims who cried and begged. They didn’t know what to do with someone who smiled through the pain.

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Hours passed. The sun sank completely, leaving us in shadow, broken only by harsh fluorescent lights. My captors took shifts watching me, but their attention wavered. They were getting tired and sloppy.

I kept testing the restraints, working the plastic against my raw skin. Kept logging details – the limp of the injured one was growing worse. The broken-nose guy's breathing whistled. The third one's moans were now whimpers as he sat balled up against the wall.

I could almost feel them, my men out there, that primal energy that made them such perfect predators, layering me like a blanket. Titan would come with Cruz and Storm, three horsemen bringing apocalypse to anyone who got in their way when getting to me.

But I wouldn't wait helplessly. I'd show them I belonged in their world of shadow and blood.

My thoughts drifted to Storm. He liked to call me princess, which I adored. But when I'd asked why not call me a queen, he'd said:

“Queens have power, but they also have responsibilities. Princesses get to do whatever the fuck they want.”

I loved his explanation, but at this moment, I recognized that I wanted the responsibility of a queen and the privilege of a princess congruently.

I'd show him I deserved it – I'd show them that their queen had claws of her own.

The Mercedes AMGroared down dock row as I scanned every warehouse, every corner, and every shadow. Three hours of searching and nothing. No sign of the black SUV. No whispers from street contacts. Nothing but the growing rage building inside me.

“Warehouse thirty-nine clear.” Cruz’s voice crackled through my earpiece. “Moving to forty.”

“Copy.” I cut the bike’s engine outside warehouse thirty-seven, killing the lights. “Storm, what do you have?”

“Traffic cams lost them after Collins,” Storm replied. “But I’m running background on every dock worker with access to these buildings. Cross-referencing with Jeremy McAllister’s known associates.”

I slipped off the bike, checking my weapon. The familiar weight of the Glock against my palm did nothing to calm the storm in my gut. Every minute that passed was another minute they had her.

The memory of her on the security footage hit me again – how she’d fought back and landed that punch. Pride and ragewarred in my chest. Santari was no victim, but that wouldn’t stop me from killing every motherfucker who was responsible for her distress.

Movement caught my eye. A dock worker stumbled drunk between containers. His security badge marked him as senior staff, which meant he had access to all areas.

I blended into the shadows, letting him pass before stepping out behind him. One hand over his mouth, the other around his throat, and I dragged him into the dark.

“Listen carefully.” I kept my voice low, deadly. “Nod, if you understand.”

He nodded frantically.

“Black SUV. Dealer plates. Three men in suits. Came through here a few hours ago. Where?”

I loosened my grip enough for him to speak. “I-I don’t?—”

My hand tightened. “Wrong answer.”

“Wait! Wait!” He clawed at my arm. “There was something about warehouse forty-nine. It wasn’t supposed to be occupied, but lights were on earlier.”

“Who has access?”

“A new company. It was leased last week. I just process paperwork.”

“Give me a name.”

“Phoenix Holdings or... something. Please...”

I released him, letting him drop to his knees. “If you’re lying, the next time you see me, will be the last time you see anything.”

“I’m not! I swear!” He scrambled back. “Just don’t kill me, man.”

“Cruz.” I tapped my earpiece, watching the dock worker run off. “Warehouse forty-nine. Phoenix Holdings.”

“I’m on it.” Keys clicked in the background as Storm worked. “It’s a shell company that was registered last week. But the payment was traced to an account I recognize. It’s?—”

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Static burst through the line.

“Storm?”

Nothing.

“Cruz?”

Silence.

I drew my gun, scanning the shadows. Someone was jamming our comms. Which meant someone knew we were here.

The first bullet crackled past my head before I registered the sound. I dove behind a container, counting the shots. There were three shooters.

They weren't the same ones from the university. These moved with silence and intention.

I returned fire, catching one in the shoulder. He dropped with a grunt that told me he was wearing body armor—most likely high-end gear.

More bullets pinged off metal nearby. They were trying to box me in. It was a good move, but they didn't know these docks like I did.

I slipped between containers, using the maze-like layout to my advantage. One shooter followed, that was a mistake on his part. I caught him around the corner and

drove my elbow into his throat – he gasped, it was the last sound he would ever make.

His partner got two shots off before my bullet tunneled through his eye. It was a clean kill—professional courtesy of The Paradox.

The third had better sense. He fell back to cover, which was smart but not clever enough.

I circled wide, using the shadows to my advantage. His breath gave him away—it was too fast and shallow, a tell-tale sign of his location.

“It’s nothing personal,” he called. “Just business.”

I stepped out behind him and pressed my gun to his head. “Everything about her is personal.”

He froze. “You don’t understand.”

“No.” I grabbed his collar and slammed him against a steel column. “You don’t understand. Every breath you take without telling me where she is, is a breath I let you have.”

“I can’t do that.”

I broke his finger. The scream echoed off the shipping containers.

“Where is she?”

“They’ll kill me!”

Another finger snapped.

“They’ll kill me slow,” he gasped.

I leaned close and let him see the devil in my eyes. “Do you really think they’re your biggest problem?”

The sound of a gun being racked behind me caught my attention. I spun, using my captive as a shield. Cruz stood there with his weapon trained on a shadow I hadn’t seen.

“We got a runner,” he said.

“Take him.”

Cruz’s target bolted. It was his choice, not that it would get him anywhere. The shot caught him in the leg and sent him collapsing to the ground.

I turned my prey around to face me. He’d used the distraction to draw a knife. He was on the edge and doing whatever he thought would give him an advantage, which was understandable but nonsensical. I grabbed his wrist and twisted until the bones ground together. The blade clattered to the ground as he sank to his knees.

“This is your last chance.”

He spat blood. “Fuck you.”

I slammed his head against the container. Once. Twice. On the third hit, he went limp.

“Damn.” Cruz dragged his man over. “You getting sloppy in your old age? It usually only takes you one hit.”

“Old age?” I raised a brow at him.

“Is that all you heard?”

“I needed him conscious, but he’s weak.” I zip-tied the unconscious man’s hands. “You good?”

“I lost three of mine, but...” He gestured to his bleeding target. “I’ve got a live one.”

I knelt by the wounded man. He was young, wearing an expensive suit. His fresh face gave me the impression that this was his first field assignment.

“Please...” He clutched his leg. “I don’t know anything...”

“That’s not the right answer.” I pressed my thumb into the bullet wound. His scream was music to my ears. “Let’s try again.”

“I just... follow orders...”

“From who?”

“I can’t... they’ll...”

“They are not here.” I dug deeper. “I am.” I motioned toward Cruz. “He is. And we’re you and your boss’s biggest problem.”

Cruz’s phone buzzed. He checked it and cursed. Storm’s voice came through my earpiece.

“I’m back online,” he said. “Someone tried to breach our security system. I traced it to warehouse forty-nine.”

“Cruz, did you check warehouse forty-nine?” I asked.

“No. I was enroute when these niggas got my attention.”

I took my attention to the man whose collar I had clutched in my fist.

“It seems your friends wanted our attention.” I stood, wiping blood on my jacket.

“Cruz, get them somewhere quiet and make them comfortable.”

“My pleasure.” He grabbed the runner’s collar. “I’ve got just the place in mind. But where are you going?”

Images of Santari filled my mind – in the pool, in my bed, moaning when my mouth was between her thighs.

“Titan, I know you hear me talking to you, nigga,” Cruz barked.

I strolled quickly to my motorcycle and kicked the bike to life.

“Titan!”

This was too easy. The shell company, the location, and the attack were all designed to draw us here. I revved my bike and drove off with Cruz’s profanity flying against the wind at my back.

“Storm.” The comms crackled. “Do you copy?”

“I’m here.” His voice was tight. “Whoever breached us used military-grade software.”

“Can you trace it?”

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“I’m working on it. But Titan... there’s something else. That account I recognized... It’s?—”

Static again.

“Storm?”

Nothing.

I rode the machine with my focus on Santari. When I got a block from warehouse forty-nine, I parked in the shadows and killed the engine. The warehouse loomed ahead like a haunted industrial complex - dark and quiet. Too quiet.

My phone buzzed. It was an unknown number. The text contained a single image.

Santari was tied to a chair and there was blood on her lip. But her eyes... they burned with an energy that matched my own. She was different, and the intensity of her stare ignited the fire inside me.

Someone had put their hands on her, which was my biggest fear come to life. I would make their families pay for it for generations to come, as long as there was breath in my body.

A second text came through:

Warehouse forty-nine. Come alone. She dies if you don't.

The timing of the message led me to assume they thought they had time before I arrived. But I was in their backyard and would show them why men feared The Paradox.

I checked my weapons, touched the lighter in my pocket, and retrieved a special gift I had for them from my seat's storage. Fire always made everything better.

And I had an idea that made my dick hard.

I crouched in the shadows of warehouse forty-nine, watching flames crawl up the east wall. The accelerant caught fast as the rising blaze of orange climbed the foundation. It was beautiful and awe-inspiring, and I was captivated by its power.

Three men guarded the entrance. They hadn't spotted the fire yet. They were too busy scanning the docks for approaching threats. But the real danger was already here.

With my lighter in hand, I sparked it again, and the growing flame danced hypnotically.

I put the blaze to the second accelerant line, watching it flare quickly. The fire raced along the building's foundation, climbing higher and cracking the structure as it ignited. The spark drew the guard's attention, and shouts erupted as smoke billowed.

"What the fuck?"

"Call it in!"

"Get the hoses?—"

The first guard's head exploded in a red mist before he could finish. I was moving before his body hit the ground, my aim finding the second man's throat. The third

managed half a scream before my knife opened his jugular. But it was clean. Quick. And now for the fun part.

Inside, smoke already filled the first floor and fire was crawling along the walls. Three more hostiles scrambled for the stairs. One turned, saw me, and raised his weapon, but I caught his gunhand and drove his face into a burning support beam.

“Aaaaaaah!”

His flesh sizzled, his screams muffled by charred wood. The sound was better than any symphony.

“Where is she?” I twisted his arm until his bones snapped.

“Fuck you!”

I pressed harder, letting the flames singe his cheek. “Wrong answer.”

His partner tried flanking me, but his sloppy footwork gave him away. I kicked out and broke the cartilage that supported his knee.

“Aaaaaaah fuuuuuuuuck!”

He fell, and I dragged my first victim’s face across the burning titanium, leaving strips of flesh behind.

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“Last chance.”

“Please...” Melted skin slurred his words. “She’s not here! They knew you’d come...”

“Who knew?”

But his eyes had rolled back, his consciousness fleeing. He was useless now, so I snapped his neck and dropped him into the spreading flames.

The one with the broken knee tried crawling away. I grabbed his collar and hauled him up. “Your turn.”

“Wait! I can help!”

I slammed him into a burning wall. His clothes ignited immediately. The screams echoed off the iron barrier.

“Either talk or burn.”

“They moved her! Hours ago!” He thrashed as flames climbed his legs. “It’s a trap!”

“I know.” I held him against the fire until his back blackened. “But you’re still going to burn.”

More shouts came from above. I cracked my neck, too hype to wait for them to come to me.

I took the stairs three at a time, the smoke thick but not blinding. Not yet. On the second floor, storage, shipping crates, and old furniture would make for the perfect kindling.

A bullet whined past my ear. There were four shooters using crates for cover. They were better trained than the ones outside. But it was still not good enough.

I dove behind a brass desk as they opened fire. I counted the shots and tracked muzzled flashes through the smoke, pinpointing their positions. I took in a silent, deep breath and waited.

When the first magazine emptied, I moved low and fast, as flames spread across the floor behind me. The nearest shooter never saw me coming. I shoved my knife into the back of his neck, cracked his spine, and twisted the blade as blood oozed from his mouth. As he fell, I used his body as a shield, pushing forward.

“He’s here! He’s?—”

The speaker’s head snapped back, and my bullet tore between his eyes. His partner broke cover, panicked, and decided to flee. I gripped his arm and drove my knife through his palm into a burning crate. His scream harmonized with the crackling flames.

It was music to my ears.

The last one tried running, but if he expected to flee from me, he should’ve been gone long ago.

I had him before he reached the stairs and pushed him to his knees. Smoke wreathed us like a demon’s breath as I pressed my gun to his temple.

“The girl. Where is she?”

“I don’t know! We were just told to keep you busy but ensure you didn’t make it out of this building!”

“By who?”

“I never saw his face! Please!”

The building groaned, the support beams weakening.

I zip-tied him to a metal pole and let him watch flames approach. His begging followed me to the third floor, where I found more resistance. There were six men with body armor and automatic weapons. Finally, someone worth killing.

They’d set up a crossfire zone. That was decent premeditated thinking. But they hadn’t counted on the fire.

Or me.

I triggered the last accelerant line, causing flames to erupt between us and breaking their firing lines. In the chaos, I moved.

The first two died before they realized I was there. The third got a shot off – it tore through my jacket but missed the mark before I stabbed him in the eye. He fell to his knees screaming while I was on to the next.

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The fourth guy took a knife in the throat, and the fifth tried hand-to-hand, which made me proud.

I caught his punch and drove my knee into his gut. As he doubled over, I grabbed his head, slammed it into a burning beam, and held it there while he thrashed.

“Who sent you?”

His screams said nothing useful. I let him drop and turned to face the last man standing. He had better form than the others with military training in his stance.

“Just us now.” I cracked my neck again. “Do you want to die quick or slow?”

He rushed me with good technique, using a three-strike combo, followed by a leg sweep that I blocked, countered, and drove him back toward the flames.

“He said you’d be good.” Blood stained his teeth as he grinned. “He said you’d come alone because you were too stupid to trust your team.”

I smirked. “He was right about coming alone. But it’s not that I don’t trust my team. It’s that I didn’t need them to take down YOU, pussy.” I caught his next punch and crushed his hand. “My bloodlust powers my thirst for violence. And that’s why your entire team is dead.”

“It doesn’t matter.” He spat blood. “She’s already dead.”

Rage ripped through my veins. I slammed him through a burning door and held him

down as flames lit up his clothes. “What did you say?”

His laughter turned to screams as the fire ate his flesh. “You’ll never... find her... in time...”

I left him burning and swept the rest of the floor. It was empty. No Santari. No clues. Just smoke and death and flames climbing higher.

The building shuddered, and the structure began to fail. I headed for the window, recognizing my escape route. Behind me, the military fuck’s screams finally stopped.

The foundation groaned, the interior snapped, and the floor tilted.

I picked up speed and shouldered through the glass as the building collapsed. The fire escape caught my impact, and the metal was hot under my hands.

Smoke and flames belched from broken windows as I slid down the rails. Above, warehouse forty-nine folded in on itself. It was a funeral for the idiots who thought they could trap me.

I hit the ground running and disappeared into the shadows as sirens approached. I eyed my bike where I’d left it and ran through the dark to approach. And while I hadn’t planned to leave the building with anyone alive, the military fuck’s words echoed in my head.

Never find her in time...

Anger moved through me like a living, breathing organism.

I stroked my lighter and watched the flame dance. Whoever this was thought they could separate us, isolate me, wear me down, and kill me.

They didn't understand that I was someone whose dominance intensified with action the same way fire consumed as it spread. Taking Santari was the biggest mistake they'd made. I was just getting started.

I pulled out my phone and dialed Cruz. "It was a setup."

"No shit. Where the fuck are you?" He cursed. "Never mind, I see the smoke."

I gritted my teeth and watched flames reach for the stars. "I lost my earpiece in the chaos. Tell Storm to dig deeper on that account. They know too much. This is personal."

"I'm fuckin' you up when you get back."

"Sure, sure."

I sparked my lighter again and let the flame calm my rage.

"Fuck!" Cruz yelled.

The warehouse collapsed completely, sending sparks into the night sky. But the murder I bestowed didn't extinguish my internal fire. Instead, it fueled my insanity.

"What the fuck is wrong with you, man?"

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I sucked my teeth and grunted, glaring at Cruz's narrowed eyes.

"There's nothing wrong with me. What the fuck is wrong with you?"

He glanced at Storm. We were back at The Omega House to regroup and come up with a better game plan. But Cruz had a chip on his shoulder that needed to be addressed.

"Why would you go to warehouse forty-nine alone?"

I squinted. "Is that's what you're bitching about?"

"Titan, don't fuck with me, nigga. Now is not the time. You knew that was a trap. We both did. Why would a sane man go running towards a trap? Alone, no less!"

"Who said anything about me being sane?"

He slammed his hand down on the tabletop. "Stop fuckin' with me!"

I frowned, taking in his dipping brows and deep-set angry mask.

"You know the answer to that."

"No." He folded his arms. "Enlighten me, because we were supposed to be tag teaming motherfuckers."

I laughed, the sound dark and chaotic. "Is that it? You're mad because you didn't get

to kill anyone?”

“Oh, I killed a few outside but that’s not the point.”

“Then what is?”

“We’re a team, nigga! What if something was to happen to you while you’re inside a burning fuckin’ building?” he screamed. “I can’t find you in darkness and smoke, motherfucker!”

“You weren’t supposed to find me. There’s always a method to my madness.”

“Got damn it, Titan!”

I can’t lie, his anger surprised and confused me.

“What the fuck is this really about?”

He turned in a full circle, planted his hands on his waist, and dropped his head. When he looked back at me, his expression was reminisced of a bull going into battle.

“We. Are. A. Team,” he spat. “You can’t just decide to take on a fight of this magnitude alone! I thought we were passed this?”

“Oh, are you going to get all soft on me and shit?”

His jaw locked and I saw the muscle in his face jump. Laughter bolted from my gut, and I glanced at Storm who hadn’t said a word but stared at me in disbelief.

“You motherfuckers are trippin’ me out. Look,” I reined in my mirth. “We don’t have time for this. We’ve got to come up with another plan to find Santari before the sun

risers. Every minute counts.”

“You think we don’t know that?” Cruz’s eyes were daggers on me.

If I didn’t know any better, I’d think Cruz wanted smoke. But not my kind of smoke. I smirked at the thought.

“You think this is funny, nigga? We just lost a brother! Do you think we want to lose another one?”

I stared at them both as a revelation dawned. It all made sense. I glanced between Storm and Cruz and narrowed my eyes. I wanted to be annoyed as fuck. But instead, I understood the impact that Rev’s death had on us all. They were processing his death differently than me. Where they wanted to make sure we stuck together, I’d rather run into the fire to protect them. After all, we were all together when Rev died weren’t we? So, to me, it was sometimes better to go at it alone and it had nothing to do with not needing them or wanting them there.

But there was another thing driving my decisions...

“You and Storm know me by now. You’ve got to give me grace.”

“What – No!” They said simultaneously.

“You have to.”

“The fuck we don’t!” Cruz shook his head. “Not when it comes to this.”

“Okay, enough of this shit. Let’s get back on topic or I’m walking out this door to go look for Santari myself.”

“You still don’t get it,” Storm said.

I rushed my hand over my head repeatedly. Now, I was annoyed.

“For fuck’s sake.”

I turned and strolled to the door.

“We are not your father or your mother, Titan!”

My footsteps paused, and my body stiffened.

A slew of profanity dropped from Cruz’s mouth.

“We won’t abandon you like they did.”

“We never will,” Storm added.

“So don’t do it to us.”

I locked my jaw, my heart ricocheting like a drum. There it was... that thing that sat so deep in my soul it often times ruled my choices. I was used to being left to fend for myself. It was the story of my life. While my father’s side of the family lived and thrived heartily in St. Louis, I had no idea if my mother was even still alive. I could find out, but my disdain for the way she left me halted my curiosity about her.

Storm, Cruz, and Rev were the only ones who knew my truth. I’d gotten close to spilling my trauma to Santari, but she was so pure and untainted to me that I’d left it alone. When it came to her, I knew she’d changed by being around us, but I also knew when it came to the darkness that lived within, that was something that lay dormant inside you until you fed it, stroked it, and pursued it until it was second nature.

I turned back to them, watching them watch me.

“What are you motherfuckers saying? You love me or something?”

Storm’s facial expression changed. His jaw relaxed, and his lips curled into a smile he tried to fight. Then, he burst into laughter, breaking the tension between us as Cruz shook his head but held back a smirk.

“You raggedy bitch,” Cruz said.

I guffawed, and Cruz joined in, neither of us could contain our seriousness. He strolled to me and slapped my shoulder.

“For the record, yes, we do! Now tighten up and stop running off to kill motherfuckers by yourself.”

I shook my head. “I know that’s why you’re really mad.”

“Titan.”

“In all seriousness, the last motherfucker I burned said, we’d never make it to her in time.”

All smiles dropped and their eyes widened.

“They wanted to get me alone to delay something. Maybe time to move her or whatever they’ve got planned. They also were supposed to kill me. Whoever this is has a vendetta towards me.”

“Towards us,” Storm added.

We glanced at him. “If I needed to take out four professional killers, and I only succeed with getting one the first time, I wouldn’t be stupid enough to try it like that again. I’d take someone they loved, disorient them, and pick them off one by one.”

Cruz shut his eyes. “Like when they came for me at the gym.”

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Storm nodded. “Exactly. Rev was the start when it was supposed to be all of us.”

“And now they’re trying to finish what they started. But they knew you would go alone to warehouse forty-nine,” Cruz said. “It’s definitely fuckin’ personal.”

“This means the person behind the McAllister contract was aiming for us and used McAllister like a casualty of war,” I murmured.”

“What I was trying to tell you when our comms kept getting intercepted was, I recognized the shell account that rented out warehouse forty-nine,” Storm said. “It’s the same one who sent our offshore payment for the McAllister contract. They’ve been playing us the entire time.”

This new revelation left us silently in our thoughts until Cruz spoke again.

“So, what’s the plan?”

“We find out who’s behind Santari’s kidnapping and that will lead us to who’s behind Rev’s death. The fools we tied up at the dock, where are they?”

“At The Pit.”

I turned. “I’ll be back.”

My skin was hot where those idiots’ rough hands had dragged me from the warehouse. The new location was just as stank and unbecoming as the last and my thoughts were fuzzy from being chloroformed again after my refusal to oblige to their

redirection. But what I could focus on was the image of Titan on those monitors, moving through warehouse forty-nine like death incarnate.

The screens covered an entire wall of this makeshift control room. Feeds from multiple cameras showed different angles of the warehouse, and I couldn't tear my eyes away as Titan emerged from the shadows. The way he moved—dominant and lethal—made my pussy wet, my clit throb, and my nipples sting as they knotted.

“Your boyfriend's putting on quite a show.” The one they called Bones sneered from beside me. He wore an expensive suit that reeked of cigarettes, and his nose was still swollen from where I'd headbutted him earlier.

“I told you he's not my boyfriend.” I shifted in the metal chair they'd tied me to, testing the new restraints. “He's one of my kings.”

“What are you – a madam? And where is his palace? That fancy resort?” Bones laughed, but there was tension in his voice as we watched Titan snap another guard's neck on screen. “He's just a businessman playing gangster.”

A smile curved my lips as Titan pressed one of their men's faces into the flames. The screams echoed through the speakers, highlighting a symphony of agony that made my pulse race. “You don't believe that no more than your friend does over here.”

“Shut up.” But Bones' eyes were glued to the screen, watching his comrades fall one by one.

On the monitor, Titan moved like smoke between the flames, each kill more brutal than the last. Pride surged through me as he took on three men in rapid succession. My arousal was at an all-time high and I needed to be fucked by him so hard that my flesh ached from his rapid plunges.

“Look how he moves.” I couldn’t keep the arousal from my voice. “Like he was born for this. Born to kill motherfuckers like you.”

“I said shut up!” Bones’ hand flew across my face, but I laughed through the stinging pain. Who was he kidding? He was scared shitless.

“You’re all going to die.” I met his eyes, letting him see my growing appetite for his demise. “He’s going to find this place, and when he does...” I licked the blood from my split lip. “I’m going to watch him tear you apart. Do you know what’s going to be even worse?” I laughed. “He won’t be alone. I mean,” I teased them, “Can you imagine dealing with a guy like him at all, never mind with a team?” I shook my head and whistled. “Call the coroner. Have ’em on standby.” I laughed again, unable to control myself.

Another guard, whom they called Aaron, shifted uncomfortably. “We should move her again. If he traced us to warehouse forty-nine, he could find us here.”

“He won’t find us. It was meant for him to trace us to warehouse forty-nine.” But Bones’ voice shook as Titan set another section of the warehouse ablaze. “This location is secure.”

I laughed again, the sound echoing off the walls. “Nothing is secure from him. Or them.”

“Who is them?” Aaron asked.

“The Paradox.” I savored the words, watching fear flicker in their eyes. “Haven’t you figured it out yet? If the grim reaper had a team, it would be the men coming for you.”

“Enough!” Bones grabbed my hair, yanking my head back. His other hand slid down

my neck, across my collarbone. “Maybe we should show you what happens to mouthy bitches who?—”

I lunged forward and sank my teeth into his nose, holding on as he screamed and staggered back, but I was determined to tear his nose off his face.

He dragged me like a rag doll, then I was hit over the head with something that sent stars spinning behind my eyesight. It was the only thing that made me release his nostrils.

“You fucking bitch!” His fist lifted but I rolled and missed his first blow. That pissed him off even more because he lifted a brick from the floor and drew back to knock my lights out.

“Stop!” Aaron grabbed Bones’ arm. “We need her intact. She’s no good to us beaten half to death.”

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“Did you see what she did to my face?”

“I saw!” Aaron’s voice was pitched. “But the boss was clear. She’s leverage. Nothing more.”

Bones snarled but lowered the brick then released it. Blood still poured from his ruined nose as he stormed from the room.

I raised my eyes to the monitors again. Titan had reached the third floor now, leaving a trail of bodies and flames in his wake. The fire he’d set was spreading fast, eating through the warehouse like a living thing.

“He’s beautiful, isn’t he?” I whispered, more to myself than Aaron. “The way he burns everything he touches. The fire is an extension of him. He doesn’t burn, only everyone else.”

“You’re as crazy as he is.” But Aaron kept his distance, watching the screens with growing unease.

“Crazy?” I smiled. “No. I just finally found where I belong. In their world of love and violence.”

On-screen, Titan grabbed the last man and held him in flames. The screams were perfect—a lullaby of agony that made my skin tingle.

“Your boss made a mistake.” I never took my eyes off Titan as he sprinted to the emergency exit and the cameras feed was cut as the building collapsed. “He thought

separating us would weaken him and make him vulnerable.”

“But all he did was give Titan a reason to have some fun. And the sad part is it won’t stop with you. Your family is now an unfortunate casualty of war.” I tsked. “It’s such a shame.”

“The boss knows what he’s doing.” But Aarons’ voice lacked conviction as he typed on the keyboard to access cameras from across the street. He watched in utter horror as warehouse forty-nine folded in on itself. “This is all part of the plan.”

“Is it?” I turned my smile on him, letting him see Bones’ blood on my teeth. “Because from where I’m sitting, all I see is a lot of dead men.”

Movement caught my eye—Bones had returned with his nose packed with gauze. The sight of his ruined face sent satisfaction coursing through me.

“The boss wants us to move to location three.” He glared at me. “Now.”

“Already?” Aaron frowned. “But we just got set up here.”

“He’s not taking chances. Not after what happened at forty-nine.” Bones grabbed my arm roughly. “Get her up.”

I chuckled as they cut the zip ties.

“What’s so funny, bitch?”

I met Bones’ eyes, still giggling even as blood dripped down my chin. “You still think you’re in control. That’s what’s funny.”

“Shut up!” He shoved me toward the door, but I kept taunting them with my laugh.

“You don’t get it, do you? Your boss has lost what little control he thought he had.” I smirked. “This is about survival. That’s why he’s moving us again. And make no mistake about it, none of you will survive what’s coming.”

Bones’ hand tightened on my arm as he dragged me through dark corridors. “We’ll see who’s laughing when your kings find your body.”

“That’s your problem.” I didn’t resist as they pushed me into another black SUV. “You still think you’re in control. Tsk.”

The engine roared to life as Aaron slid behind the wheel. Through the windshield, I saw smoke reaching for the sky where warehouse forty-nine had stood. My men didn’t know how close they were, but I had confidence that they would soon.

My kings were coming.

Bones shifted uncomfortably in the passenger seat, probably remembering the feel of my teeth in his flesh. The memory made me smile wider.

“You know what the funny thing is?” I opened my eyes to find him watching me in the mirror. “I used to be afraid of violence. I used to think there was something wrong with people who craved it.”

“There is something wrong with them,” Aaron muttered from behind the wheel.

“Says the man holding me hostage while trying to murder others.”

“This is different.”

“How?”

“If it wasn’t for?—”

“Shut the fuck up, idiot!” Bones yelled.

My brows rose, and I started putting the pieces together. This was personal. It wasn’t random, it wasn’t about money or madness. It was revenge for something.

“What difference does it make if you’re not going to let me live?”

“Who said that?” Bones shot back.

“Come on now. I’m not stupid. Your boss wants them dead, right? So, let’s say he gets what he wants. What will you do with me?”

Bones and Aaron eyed each other.

“Exactly,” I said. “So, if you’re confident that things will go as your boss plans, why not tell me the full truth? What is this all about?”

“She’s got a point,” Aaron said.

“She’s got no point, stupid. And even if she did, we aren’t privy to all the details.”

I laughed and shook my head. “Rookies. You’re not even leaders, just rookies doing someone else’s bidding. How pathetic.”

The SUV turned onto a quiet street lined with warehouses. They were different from the docks but similar enough. They really weren't very creative.

"Almost there," Aaron muttered, more to himself than us.

I closed my eyes again, relaxing against the seat as I thought of Titan, Cruz, and Storm. I shivered with anticipation as the SUV rolled to a stop. Bones grabbed my arm again, but I didn't resist as they led me into another brick building.

"Get comfortable." Bones shoved me into another chair. "You're going to be here a while."

I smiled at him as Aaron secured new zip ties around my wrists. "No. I won't."

The certainty in my voice made them both pause.

I licked my lips and sat back, closing my eyes to mentally prepare for my men's arrival. This time, I wouldn't just watch.

I would participate.

Blood dripped from my knuckles as I drove my fist into the man's face again. He was spent, his body weak and shuddering as I added a pair of brass knuckles and sent my fist flying into his jaw again. Teeth flew from his mouth on impact, but his agonizing screams didn't breach the door of The Pit, a chamber beneath the earth where we handled our messier business.

"One more time," I growled, removing my blade. "Who sent you?"

He spat blood, his eyes wild with pain and fear. The zip ties cut into his wrists, where he hung from a hook in the ceiling, and his toes barely scraped the floor.

My phone vibrated in my pocket. It was another unknown number. I usually ignored calls during sessions like this, but something made me check the screen.

“Don’t go anywhere,” I told my guest, stepping away to answer the phone. “I’m not done with you yet,” I answered. “Speak.”

“I know where she is.” The voice was young, nervous. “The woman you’re looking for.”

My grip tightened on the phone. “You have ten seconds.”

“My name is Aaron. I’m one of the men holding her. But I want out. I’ll tell you where to find her if you guarantee my family’s safety.”

I sparked my lighter, watching the flame dance as I considered his offer. “Why should I trust you?”

“Because I saw what you did at warehouse forty-nine. I know what you’ll do to all of us when you find us. And you will find us, it’s just a matter of time. I’d rather my wife and kids survive this.”

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He was a wise man, and more intelligent than his colleagues.

“Talk.”

“Not over the phone. But I’ll guide you to her. When you get to the location, I’ll make sure you find your way through. All I ask is that my family stays out of it.”

I glanced at my bloody friend hanging from the ceiling. “How do I know this isn’t another setup?”

“Because I’m not stupid enough to fuck with a man who burns people alive for fun.”

That made me smile.

“You’ll have to fight your way to her. I can’t help with that part - they’d know. I can only point you in the right direction.”

“Give me a way to contact you.”

“I can’t, man.”

“Do it, or all bets are off.”

There was hesitation in the line, then Aaron rattled off a few digits.

“Tell me where she is.”

“Do you and your Paradox or whoever you are promise not to come after my family?”

“Where did you hear that name?”

“Your queen mentioned it. She keeps telling us we won’t survive a run-in with you, and I’m inclined to believe her. I can admit when I’m in over my head.”

Knowing Santari was taunting them made my dick hard. She was becoming like us by the day, and I didn’t know if that was a good thing, but my erection thought so.

“Is she unharmed?”

He hesitated again.

“Motherfuckeeeeeer?” I growled.

“Look, I’ve tried to keep the guys off her as much as possible, but she’s feisty as a motherfucker. She fights, and she bites, so she’s got some bruises, but she’s okay, I promise.”

I locked my jaw and closed my eyes, inhaling the murderous insanity that moved through me.

“Where is she?”

“Do I have your word?”

“Where is sheeeeeeee?!”

Aaron gave me an address. “I’ll take this as your promise.”

“Keep your phone on. I’ll contact you when we’re ready.”

I ended the call and dialed Cruz.

“What?” he answered.

“Get back to the house. I know where she is.”

“What the fuck you say?”

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“One of them cracked. I’m meeting you there in ten minutes.”

I turned back to my guest, who had been watching the exchange with desperate hope in his eyes.

“Please...” he wheezed.

“Unfortunately for you,” I ran my finger over the indenture in my knife, “I don’t need you anymore.”

His screams surrounded us when I opened a fresh wound in his chest, but I quickly put him out of his misery. I never let them suffer more than necessary once they outlived their usefulness.

When I arrived at the house, Storm and Cruz were waiting, and tension radiated from them as I explained Aaron’s offer.

“It’s a trap,” Cruz said immediately.

“Of course, it’s a trap.” I pulled up the location Aaron had sent. “But it’s also our best lead.”

Storm studied the building schematics I’d pulled up. “An old manufacturing facility. There are multiple entry points and lots of ground to cover. Security will be heavy if they’re expecting us.”

“They’re always expecting us.” I traced potential approaches on the map. “We go in

hard and fast. No subtle shit this time.”

“About fuckin’ time.” Cruz checked his weapons. “I need some action now.”

“I know that was why you were really angry earlier by the way,” I said.

“Shut the fuck up, nigga.”

Laughter boasted from me, and we spent the next hour planning and plotting every angle and contingency. Storm would take high ground with a rifle, picking off external security while Cruz and I breached from opposite sides. Aaron would guide us through the interior—assuming he wasn’t lying about helping.

“What if he is?” Storm asked as we geared up.

“Then we kill everyone, and I burn the place down.” I checked my lighter fluid levels.

“The usual.”

The drive over was silent with each of us sinking into that familiar headspace where violence lived. By the time we pulled up two blocks from the target, the hunger for blood pulsed through my veins.

My phone buzzed. It was Aaron’s signal. Game time. I put my Bluetooth in my ear and answered.

“Don’t fuck this up, Aaron.”

“I won’t.”

“Stay out of my ear unless you’ve got something useful to say.”

“I will. I promise.”

With his rifle, Storm blended into the shadows while Cruz circled wide to his entry point. I approached from the east, staying in darkness until I reached the first guard post.

There were two men in professional stances holding high-powered rifles. I slipped my hand around their mouths one at a time and cut their vocal cords. They died quietly and efficiently, drowning in their own blood. There was no time for creativity tonight. I needed to be quick because once the gunfire announced us, I had no doubt they would attempt to move Santari. I snatched the badges from their necks and moved forward.

“In position,” Storm’s voice was barely a whisper in my earpiece.

“Same,” Cruz confirmed. “There’s no movement from my side.”

I sparked my lighter once – giving Storm my signal. Storm’s rifle whizzed three times, signaling Cruz, and at the same time external security dropped.

“I’ve got eyes on you both. Move, now,” Storm said.

Cruz and I moved simultaneously.

At the side entrance, I swiped one of the badges, and it blinked red. The second one clicked green, and I entered silently like an apparition. Cruz took the back loading dock, his entry masked by Storm’s rifle, which would take out any guards in the watchtower.

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“Left,” Aaron’s voice directed through my phone. “Third door.”

A guard rounded the corner and raised his weapon when he saw me, but my bullet took him in the throat before he could squeeze his trigger. Blood splattered the wall behind him as another rushed to check on the noise. He joined his friend on the floor with a matching hole in his chest.

Gunfire erupted from Cruz’s direction—he’d found company. The sound of his Glock mixed with pained screams told me he was enjoying himself.

“The storage area ahead,” Aaron guided. “You have heavy presence.”

I slipped my knife free, and my blade gleamed in the dim light. The first guard never saw me coming; I slit his throat, let his body drop, and gave my attention to his partner, who reached for his radio but suffered from my blade’s invasion in his heart. The third managed to lift his weapon, but I was quicker, sending a bullet tunneling between his brows.

“Go up one level. The northwest stairwell is clear,” Aaron said.

Storm’s rifle whizzed in rapid succession. It was music to accompany my hunt. More men fell as he cleared my path, his bullets sifting through the windows to meet his targets. Cruz’s gunfire had gone quiet, but the lack of cursing meant he’d found his rhythm.

The stairwell held three fresh corpses, and blood pooled beneath them. Storm was also finding his rhythm, knocking off hostiles before I neared them. So far, Aaron

seemed to be holding his end of the bargain but trust only went as far as the next bullet.

The second floor opened into a maze of curves, dark corners, and dead ends. These men had chosen their ground well, but it wouldn't save them. They were positioned to have perfect kill zones, but much like the men at warehouse forty-nine, they were unprepared for The Paradox.

Blood flowed as I carved through their defenses, each kill driving me closer to Santari while feeding the violence in my soul. Their bullets ignited the room, but I was already sliding my blade into their flesh by the time their machine guns powered.

"She's in a secure room," Aaron's voice crackled. "East wall. But they have concentrated security there. At least eight men."

"Copy." I switched lines and buzzed Cruz.

"You good?"

"Always," I said. "Meet my position. I'm coming up on Santari, but she's heavily covered. Storm, watch the exits."

"I'm behind you." Cruz materialized from the shadows, with fresh blood darkening his shirt. "These motherfuckers can't shoot to save their lives. Literally. Who hired them?"

"We'll find out eventually."

Gunfire filled the hall as we pushed toward the secure room. Guards dropped while trying to mount a defense. Their training meant nothing against our rage as Cruz and I sprayed the walls in DNA.

When silence filled our space, I scanned for movement. “Storm, status?”

“Still clear up here. But headlights are approaching from the north. A convoy of vehicles.”

“It’s time to move.” I faced the security door. “Aaron. Code.”

Numbers lit up my phone screen. I punched them in, and the locks disengaged.

Santari sat tied to a chair inside with defiance burning in her eyes. The sight of her bruises ignited fresh rage in my blood but watching her stare down her captors with such fire made my dick throb. She’d grown stronger in here - darker.

Cruz and I snapped the necks of the two guards who’d frozen – surprised by our entrance.

Their bodies hit the ground and Cruz whistled. “That was too easy.”

“You got here quicker than I expected.” Santari grinned as Cruz cut her free. He drew her into a hug and held on tight.

“You didn’t doubt us, did you, Goddess?” I said, checking the corridor.

“No. But I expected your arrival by dawn.”

“We would never rest until you were safe,” I said.

“Can you walk?” Cruz asked.

She moved from his embrace, and grabbed a fallen guard’s semiautomatic weapon, and steadied her grip. “Yes.”

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I approached her, slipped my hand up her face, tilted my head, and squinted... then spoke to her in my mother's native tongue – Yoruba.

“You’re feeding the darkness. Are you sure that’s what you want?”

Santari laid her hand on top of mine. “Whatever you’re saying, the answer is yes.”

I bit my bottom lip, arousal moving through my loins like a building orgasm. “Storm, get us out.”

“Take the south loading dock. I’ve got the approach covered. Those vehicles just parked up north.”

“Excellent.” I sparked my lighter. “Time to welcome our guests.”

“Hold up.” Cruz took the semiautomatic weapon from Santari.

“Hey!”

He grinned, took a nine-millimeter from a dead guard, and handed it to her instead.

“Let’s start small.”

She leaned into a hip. “With all those motherfuckers out there!”

I laughed and shook my head. “You’ll get your chance to use the big guns. But Cruz is right. Let us handle the high-powered weapons for now. The nine still gets the job

done.”

She glanced between us and twisted her lips. “Fine. But because I trust you.”

We chuckled, and Aaron spoke in my ear. “My work here is done. Remember our deal.”

I disconnected the line, and we quickly moved to exit the building. Gunfire erupted from the stairwell as we descended. A guard burst through a side door with his weapon trained on Cruz’s back. Santari gripped her gun. She was focused, her arm steady as she aimed.

“Not tonight, motherfucker!” The words left her mouth as she squeezed the trigger. The bullet tore through his forehead, splattering his brain in a streak against the wall. She didn’t flinch, didn’t hesitate—just turned to face the next threat like she’d been killing her whole life.

My dick was stiff as shit, watching her embrace the violence. As we moved, I emptied my high-powered weapon, then dropped it and reached with both hands for the nines in my shoulder holsters. My arms were spread out above her head, taking down enemies on both sides of her and Cruz. These men were no match for our lethality. When I ran out, Cruz covered us, and if we both emptied simultaneously, Storm’s rifle whizzed like fat raindrops falling from the sky.

A brief break in the commotion gave me a moment I needed. I grabbed Santari’s arm and yanked her into a dark corner, pinning her against the wall. Her breaths came fast, her pupils dilated with adrenaline as she stared up at me.

“You like that?” I growled against her ear. “Taking a life?”

“Yes.” Her voice shook with need as she ground against me. “It felt... right.”

I bit into her neck hard enough to mark her. She moaned as her fingers dug into my shoulders. “You’re one of us now,” I whispered. “There’s no going back.”

“I don’t want to go back.” Her hand slid between us, gripping my dick through my pants. “I want more.”

A snarl vibrated from my gut.

“Aye!” Cruz’s voice boomed from in front of us. “If y’all are done fucking around, we got company coming in hot!”

I pulled back just enough to see Santari’s face—flushed with arousal and splattered with the blood of our enemies. “We’ll return to this later,” I promised, letting my hand slide up her thigh. I gripped her there, then pushed her forward and smacked her ass, and we proceeded to make our exit.

“Easy...”

Cruz’s fingers probed the bruise darkening my bottom lip, his touch was gentle and caring.

“Take a deep breath,” he said.

I inhaled, wincing at the stinging cut. Steam filled the master bathroom in my bedroom as Storm ran hot water in the oversized tub. The scent of lavender bath salts relaxed me, knowing the water would soothe me but not give me what my body craved.

“They didn’t break any bones,” Cruz said. “But you’ll be sore for a few days from being confined for over twelve hours.”

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My skin still ached where the hands of my captors had gripped me during the ordeal. The violence was a constant part of my memory now - both what had been done to me and what I'd done in return.

That guard's head exploding from my bullet... the wet splatter of his brains across my face...

"I killed someone," I said.

Cruz's hands stilled on my skin. "Yes."

"I liked it."

His gaze dropped to the bruise on my shoulder, his nostrils flaring. "We know."

"Does that make me?—"

"It makes you ours," Storm said from the doorway. I turned to look at him. Storm had stripped down to his boxer briefs, his muscled chest bare and shoulders broad. "Let me wash you up, Princess."

I stood, letting Cruz help me out of my torn clothes. The fabric was stiff with dried blood - but not mine, primarily others'.

Candlelight casted shadows across the walls in the dim lighting of the bathroom. My hands shook slightly as I stepped into the water, but Storm steadied me with a firm grip on my elbow.

The heat enveloped me as I sank down, drawing a moan from my throat. Storm slid in behind me, pulling me back against his chest while Cruz knelt beside the tub. Only Titan remained a part, watching from the shadows in silent thought.

“Where did you learn to shoot like that?” Storm’s hands worked soap across my shoulders, washing away blood and grime.

“Cruz taught me.”

Storm’s chuckle vibrated through my back.

“I taught you the basics,” Cruz said. “That headshot was all you.”

Pride bloomed in my chest, along with a sinister thrill that I tried to dismiss. Still, the memory of the kill made heat shoot to my pussy and I bit my bottom lip. Storm must have felt the change in my breathing because his hands stilled.

“Your pulse is racing.” His voice dropped lower. “You’re excited.”

Cruz leaned in, his lips brushing my ear. “How does it make you feel now that you’ve had time to process this?”

I grabbed Cruz’s jaw and pulled his mouth towards me. “Powerful.”

Our lips crashed, and he inhaled my tongue while Storm’s hand rubbed and tweaked my nipples.

“Mmmmm...” I purred, knowing all too well it was Titan’s favorite sound.

Like clockwork, he emerged from the shadows, his gaze dark and drawn to me like a moth to a flame. I pulled back from Cruz, my pussy thumping like an aroused whore.

“I need you,” I said, my eyes on Titan, but I was talking to all three of them.

“You’ve just gone through a serious ordeal,” Storm said. “Don’t you think you should relax, get some rest, and then we can circle back to?—”

“No.” I was adamant about what I wanted. And rest wasn’t it.

“He’s right,” Cruz added, “don’t be hardheaded.”

Laughter bubbled from my gut, but it didn’t sound like the light, airy sound I usually gave. This laugh was an undiluted, deep, edgy sound that surprised even me.

“She’s consumed by it.”

My eyes flipped back to Titan, and we all knew what it was that he spoke about - violence. His baritone was deep and wolfish as he continued.

“The thrill is in her blood now. Let’s give her what she wants.”

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The anticipation aroused me to my core, Titan hadn't given me that dick yet and my pussy immediately tingled at the thought of it.

"She's going to sleep for a week,"Cruz added.

"It's what she needs."

I stood from the bath, and Titan's eyes followed the water as it washed over my brown skin, dark nipples, and drizzled between my thighs.

I propped my foot on the edge of the tub, and Cruz angled his head and covered my pussy with his mouth.

"Oh...."My temperature ignited, and behind me, Storm bit my ass. "Oooooou..."My eyes faltered, but I kept Titan in my sight. He watched them pleasure me, and I knew his dick was hard behind those jeans.

Smack!

Storm slapped my ass and spread me from behind and swiped his tongue up and down, flicking against my anal. I shivered and moaned as he sucked and bit into my flesh while Cruz slurped and filled his mouth with my clit.

"Oooh, yeeesss."My hand covered Cruz's head, my hips bucking as I rode his and Storm's tongues from the front to the back. My eyes faltered lower when Titan spoke again.

“Don’t break our connection.”

I stayed with him, our gazes locked intensely as pleasure filled my body. I knew he was enjoying my arousal. Titan was meticulous that way. He’d stay back and let my pleasure hit a high, then come in and snatch my soul with his fingers or his mouth. But I wanted his dick, and I was ready to be taken by him.

“More,” I said, begging him to join us, yet he remained still. “More!”

Simultaneously, Storm and Cruz pulled back, and Cruz slapped my ass.

I shook my head. “Stopping is the opposite of more.”

Cruz chuckled. “Get your greedy ass over there to him,” he said. “We know what we’re doing.”

He didn’t have to tell me twice. I left the water, my strides quick, almost emergent, as I slid across the floor to Titan. He caught me by my throat, and his mouth hovered right above my lips.

“Grrrrrrrrrggggh....”

My heart banged as he barred his teeth like an animal, and while I heeded his warning, I wasn’t afraid of his undertaking. I quickly unbuckled his belt, unzipped his jeans, and rushed like a malnutrition teen needing their next hit. I shoved his pants off his cut, muscular hips, and his dick dragged up my belly, pressing so hard it could leave a punctured wound there. I grabbed his stiff erection and jerked him up and down, hungry at the feel of the grooves of his muscled veins.

“Titan.”

Behind me, I heard water spill, but I was too lost in Titan's gaze to shift my attention. He drew me closer, bringing our lips so close, our breaths mingled, and our mouths teased. His tongue slipped out, and he licked up my mouth, then turned me around to face Storm, who was inches in front of me.

"I'm sorry."

I frowned, confused by Storm's apology but kindled when Titan's hand slipped around my waist to my clit.

"Storm... I—" My thoughts were muddled. "What are you talking about?"

Titan spread my pussy lips, dipped, and entered my wet pussy from behind.

"Oooooooh!" I shut my eyes, gritted my teeth, and my head fell back against Titan's chest - stimulated by the pleasure that consumed me.

"Open your eyes and pay attention to Storm," Titan commanded.

I choked on a breath, opened my eyes, and attempted to give Storm my attention. Storm pinched my chin, but his face remained serious.

"I'm sorry for not protecting you like I should have."

I shook my head. "Storm. You don't have to apologize. It's not your fault that... aaaaaaaah! Sssssss!" Titan long stroked me, deep and hard. His arm gripped my abdomen, and he positioned his feet on both sides of mine to keep me from opening my legs. The intense intrusion of his thick, heavy dick in this tight position made me lose my mind.

"Fuuuuck!" I screamed, shaking and trembling as heat raced around my body.

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“That’s such a nasty mouth,” Titan said, drawing his soaking dick low and high, repeatedly plunging into my pussy.

“Oooh! Shit! Fuck!” I grabbed Storm’s shoulders, and he held me steady.

“Take deep, slow breaths, and don’t run,” Storm coached.

Titan slowed, and I sucked in a much-needed breath. “Okay.”

“You promise not to run?” Storm asked.

“I promise. I promise.” I nodded as pleasure ripped through me, igniting every nerve inside me.

“Titan, don’t stop.”

“Focus, and I’ll stay.”

I put my attention on Storm, who was now smirking. “Oh, you think this is funny? It won’t be funny when I tease you by sucking your balls to the back of my throat and leaving you clinging to an orgasm, huh?”

His gaze darkened, and he placed both hands on either side of my head while Titan stroked me slowly.

“I’m going to make you pay for that threat. But first, whether you think I’m at fault, I am. And it won’t happen again.”

“Okay, now shut up and make me pay for my threat.”

Titan released me and withdrew his dick, leaving me bereft and on the heel of a protest when Storm snatched me up. My legs wrapped around his waist, and he carried me into the bedroom, where Cruz sat naked on the edge of a wide bench. These niggas were so fuckin’ gorgeous and built like demigods. How lucky was I that they were all mine?

Storm sat me on Cruz’s lap, and Cruz’s big hands gripped my hips and lifted me enough to position me over his dick.

While I waited for him to slide me on top of him, Titan reappeared with a bottle of lubricant that he drizzled down my belly, letting it run over my vagina. He slipped his hand between my thighs and rubbed my clit as I shuddered and moaned, while another rough hand – Storm’s, massaged the oil into my ass.

“Ooooooh, yes, baby...” My hips rotated as I bucked and trembled as the pleasure from their fingers massaged me.

I was so aroused, and our connection was so strong that when Storm moved his hand, Cruz entered me with a thrust that made my toes curl and my ears pop.

“Aaaaaaah ssssss, ooooh got damn.” Shivers wreaked havoc on my body as I slid to the base of him.

“Fuck!” Cruz barked.

He laid back, and I propped my feet on both sides of him, steadying my weight in a backwards cowgirl position.

“Ooooh shit.” I trembled and gritted my teeth. But I maintained my balance, leaning

back to plant my hands on both sides of the bench. Cruz immediately took control, his grip tight on my hips as he dragged his dick in and out while bouncing me back and forth.

“Ooooooh!”

My trembles intensified, and I didn’t recover before Storm leaned over me and slid into my pussy from the front.

“Fuck! Fuck! Fuck!”

Storm sucked in my nipples, and Cruz bit into my neck as their fucking intensified.

I moaned, bucked back and forth, and let my head hang back when a shadow covered me.

I turned my head towards Titan as his hand slid around my face and gripped the back of my head.

Desire darkened his brown eyes, and my arousal ignited even more if such a thing was possible. I opened my mouth and stuck out my tongue, and he grabbed his dick and popped his heavy erection repeatedly against my lips.

“Don’t tease me,” I whined. But he did it, anyway, smirking and getting satisfaction from my moans and purrs. “Titan...”

Cruz fucked me harder, as did Storm. “Oh! Shiiiiit! Fuck! Fuck! Fuck!”

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My body tightened, convulsed, and I squirted, drenching them both simultaneously.

“OH!” Trembles rocked me. “Shit!” I shut my eyes tight as they slid in and out of me with beating force. “Oooh!”

The pleasure was all-consuming, but I wanted my throat clogged, and Titan was pissing me off.

“Titan!”

His dick slid across my tongue, and I sucked him to the back of my throat. Immediately, I came again, my pussy pulsating like a heartbeat.

“Mmmm...” He was so delicious, and the control he had on the depths of my throat was shocking, to say the least. I knew without a shadow of a doubt I’d never deep-throated a dick like this before. But Titan managed to push past my tonsils without me gagging while blocking my airways, and I craved my imminent demise because of it.

I moaned and sucked, tingled and shuttered, twisted and bucked, bounced and fucked.

The elevation I experienced was so all-consuming that I forgot I was holding myself up when I reached for the base of Titan’s dick and yanked him deeper into my throat.

Storm kept me gripped at my waist, holding me steady while Cruz kept hold of my hips. They didn’t miss a beat as I was determined to pull my nutrition out of Titan.

His clutch on my head tightened when he spoke.

“You’re such a greedy girl, aren’t you?”

I responded with a “Mmhmm” while working his shaft long and deep, fast then slow. Saliva spilled from the corners of my mouth when he grunted.

“Fuck!”

His hips bucked, and he sprung back and forth like a yo-yo.

“This pussy is so fuckin’ tight,” Storm moaned, and I inadvertently flexed a Kegel. “You know what that shit does to me,” he warned, yet it was like my body had a mind of its own.

Titan attempted to pull back, but I gripped his balls and forced him to come into my mouth.

“Shiiiiiiiit!” His head fell back, and I sucked, slurped, and pulled every bit of his nut from his throbbing dick. It hit the back of my throat, filled my mouth, and I swallowed and held tight until I was sure I’d emptied him.

On top of me, Storm removed himself, and I shifted, causing the position I was in with Cruz to switch to doggy style. I opened my mouth for Storm’s nut, and he squirted on my lips, around my face, and on my tongue as Cruz banged into me.

“Aaah! Mmmm...!”

I pulled Storm by his erection and covered his dick with deep suckles as pleasure rocked through me from end to end.

“Ooooh...” he moaned and grabbed my head, hips rocking as he rose to his toes. “Damn it, girl!”

I was tantalized by their flavors and so aroused that when Cruz’s dick popped out of my ass, I turned to get my fill of him too.

“Fuuuuuck!” He gripped his dick and added his semen to my tongue, and I sucked him down just as I had done my other lovers.

Their moans, grunts, and curses only heated me more, and while I knew I would be sore, I didn’t give a fuck. I just wanted them. All of them. Over and over and over again.

It was my bladder that woke me in the middle of the night. My eyes fluttered open, but I was tempted to hold it in and go back to sleep. Damn, I was sleeping soundly. But unfortunately, I had to pee badly. The muscular arm draped over my waist belonged to Storm. I didn’t want to wake him or Cruz, who was facing me with my thigh draped over his waist.

The only person missing was Titan. And why was I not surprised? I stretched, slipped from their grasp, and went to the bathroom.

After emptying my bladder, I washed my hands and stalled at the mirror after seeing my appearance.

I looked like I’d been freshly fucked, and there was sticky nut up under my chin. I giggled and covered my mouth. I didn’t want to wake my men, but this was just too funny.

I turned the knob, washed my face, and threw some Listerine in my mouth. I stood there momentarily, gargling when my thoughts drifted back to Titan. Where the fuck

was he? And most importantly, why?

I spit the mouthwash out and went in search of him. I didn't have to look far. In his master bedroom, all was still, and his bed was empty. But his bathroom door was ajar, and steam curled from the cracks.

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I removed Storm's shirt and padded to the door, slipped inside, and opened the sliding glass shower door.

Titan's muscular body combined the perfect mix of strength and power. With dark mahogany smooth skin, toned biceps, a taut ass, and large hands and feet, the only thing that could make him more perfect was a big dick. He turned to me, and there it was... wagging like a third leg and built like a Samurai weapon ready for war.

His brows raised in surprise, then dipped in question while I ogled the magnificence of his erection.

He glanced towards the door and then back to me.

"Are you having nightmares?"

I held back my smirk because I came to chastise him for leaving me and he thought I'd awakened from a bad dream.

"Why do you care?"

Confusion twisted his features. "Santari?"

"Are you fuckin' someone else?"

His nostrils flared, and he grabbed me and drew me into the shower, sliding the door closed behind us.

“What the fuck is this about?”

His baritone made my pussy throb, but I had to stay focused.

“Why are you still holding back from me?”

He stared at me for a long, quiet moment. Too long. I folded my arms, and he smirked.

“I’m not holding back from you, Santari.”

“So, you’re going to lie in my face?”

“I’m not holding back.”

I pushed his hard chest, but it didn’t move him.

“Don’t lie to me.”

“Are you having nightmares?”

“You haven’t answered my question. Are. You. Fuckin’. Someone. El?—”

He snatched me off my feet, and I yelped as he pinned me against the wet shower wall with his torso. My legs instinctively wrapped around his waist, and my arousal was at an all-time high.

A deep growl moved through his body and vibrated my belly.

“Don’t ask me that again.”

“Why? You sure as hell haven’t answered it. Or is that my answer?”

“To ask me something like that is to say you don’t trust me. Is that the case, Santari?”

I stuttered but recovered. “Don’t try to turn this around on me. I have been trying to give myself to you on a silver platter, and you have been holding back. What’s up with this dick? Is it mine or not?”

He spoke through gritted teeth. “I’m not fuckin’ anyone but you.”

“That’s just the thing. You’re not fuckin’ me either because if you were, I would be filled with?—”

His dick entered my pussy and spread me wide in one long thrusting stroke that knocked the wind from my lungs.

“Ooooooh!”

I gasped and grabbed his shoulders, digging my nails into his flesh as pleasure rocked through me, followed by drenching heat.

“Aaaaaah! Ssssss! Fuck!”

My skin stung when his palms landed against my thighs, moving to my hips where he gripped me, branding his fingerprints on my skin.

“Oh my God!”

“Nah... don’t beg for Him now.”

He pulled out of me slowly, then powered back inside me, and my toes curled so tight they could turn into bunions at any moment.

“Go ahead,” he drawled. “Keep talking shit, lover.”

“Oooh shit. I was... just saying...”

“What?” He leaned forward, dipping, digging, driving his heavy dick to my cervix and back again.

“Titan!”

“You can handle it.” He dropped his mouth to my lips and sucked in my tongue, and I

moaned as he churned me slowly. I shuddered and tightened my legs and arms around him, adjusting to the power he wielded in his strokes.

“Mmmm...”

We pulled at each other’s lips, our mouths smacking and sucking each other as hot heat filled us, and pleasure consumed me. His tongue slid up my lips, and he bit my chin, and his strokes maintained a deep rhythmic flow.

“Uuuuuuh... ssssss,” I hissed. “Oh, Titan... baby...” whimpers fell from my lips.

A bite into my neck pulled a deep snarl from his gut, and suddenly, his speed was increasing again.

“I’ve been trying to take my time with you.”

His balls smacked against my ass as he stroked me.

“My intent was to pleasure you, to let you feel the spark before the burn, not to hold back. Do you understand?”

I whimpered and nodded.

“I can’t hear you, lover.”

“Yes. But I want all of you, Titan. You’ve taken your time enough—oooooh...” My eyes rolled as he pumped me hard, his speed now a piston pipe gutting me through and through.

“Yes! Yeeeeeeessss! Yes, baby, yeesssss!”

Tears sprang from the corners of my eyes as his desire became hungrier, his drive heavier, and his new intention to fuck me a part bolder.

Echoes of our wet bodies spanked as he bounced me while pummeling my core.

“Fuck! Fuck! Fuck! Yeeessss!”

He shifted into a grinding pump and lifted me an inch.

“Open your legs.”

I dropped my legs from his waist, and he pushed my thighs back and my knees to the base of the wall, then used his dick like a battering ram.

“Oh! Oh! Ooooo! Sssssss oh! Yes! Shit! Fuck!”

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Another snarl from him, and I was about to cum all over his dick.

“This pussy is so fuckin’ good. Fuck!”

He pivoted and stroked side to side, dipped, dug, and drove that daggered hook deep into my core.

“Titaaaaaan! Baby! Baby! Baby!”

He stepped forward and sucked in my lips, grinding and pumping, making my ears pop, and my body seized when my orgasm tore through me.

“Aaaaaah!” I shut my eyes tight. “Oh!”

My heart felt like it would fall out of my chest.

“Open your eyes.”

“No.”

Titan bit my neck, sucked my throat until it stung, and fucked me relentlessly. Sure, I had asked for it, and no, I didn’t regret it but got damn, he had really been holding back. And I was happy I’d pushed him into giving me what was mine.

His bite became more intense, and his drive was eager to stay the course and keep me shoved against the wall.

Stings and popping sounds from our flesh mixed with our moans, his grunts, and my purrs.

“Oh, I’m about to cum again!”

He slowed, and I slapped his shoulder. “No! No!”

He pulled his mouth from my neck to look at me.

“You signed your name on the dotted line saying I was yours and you were ours, did you not, Santari?”

I frowned. “What the fuck type of question?—”

“Answer me.”

“Yes! Of fuckin’ course!”

“Don’t ever accuse me of fuckin’ someone else again. You hear me?”

“I swear to God if you don’t stop playing with me!” I slapped his shoulder and his chest, and he laughed - a dark, sinister sound right as his strokes powered again, and I came on his dick - again.

“Ooooooh fuck yes!”

“You have no idea how far my obsession for you goes.” He nuttled inside me, and it took restraint not to jump from his arms and take it down my throat.

“How far?” I moaned, my body humming with euphoric bliss.

“You’re about to find out.”

My lips curved into a smile. “You know I wanted that nut in my mouth.”

His mouth inhaled my lips and tongue, and he tightened his grip on me.

“Next time. I’ve been waiting to fill you with my cum for months.”

Our tongues swept together, and we vibrated against the shower wall, our bodies tingling and our souls clinging to one another.

As much as I wanted to sleep in, there were some things I needed to investigate. So I rose, brushed my teeth, oiled my skin, and dressed. But I couldn’t leave her. Strolling to the bed, I grabbed one of the wingback chairs and positioned it next to her sleeping form. Santari was stretched out with one leg peeking out the duvet, and the rest of her was snuggled under. She was my beauty, and I was one of her beasts. And I wondered if she knew I would always be there for her – even if the terms of our contract ended.

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“All you had to do was ask,” she murmured. I smirked, and my thoughts took on a naughty visual of what she could be dreaming about. She shifted, drew her leg inside the cover, and lifted her eye to my side of the bed. The absence of my body made her turn, and we locked eyes.

“Good morning, beautiful.”

Her smile elevated her entire face, and she tossed the covers off and crawled to me. I lifted her onto my lap and sat back, and she cuddled against my chest.

“Good morning, handsome. Why are you up?”

“Why?”

“Yes.”

“I need to head to the resort.”

Her head popped up, and our gazes reconnected. She studied me.

“What’s at the resort?”

“Business.”

She twisted her lips. “Already?”

“I thought I gave you what you came looking for.”

“And yet I still want you.”

We stared, and I grinned. “What do you want from me, girl?”

“Your presence.”

I licked my lips, wrapped my hands around her neck, and drew her mouth to mine. The second I tasted her tongue, I knew I shouldn’t have. I moaned as she purred, and she shifted on top of me.

“Santari.”

She unzipped my pants and freed my hard dick, pressing her folded legs onto my thighs as she lifted and rubbed her wet pussy back and forth against the head of my dick.

“Fuck, woman.” I gripped her thighs and dragged her back and forth, teasing her like she teased me, but I was weak, and she knew the power she had over me.

“What were you saying about the resort?”

A growl moved through me. “There is business I need to attend to.”

Her lips feathered my mouth. “Oh yeah?”

My hands left her hips and went to her neck. I bit her lips and spread her mouth with my tongue as she sat on my dick, spreading her pussy.

“Ah! — Fuck!”

I slapped her ass and gripped her bottom but let her fuck me at her own pace.

Santari's hair fell over my face, and I sank my mouth into her neck, bit down her flesh, and sucked in her nipples - one after the other.

“Ooooh...”

She bucked and dropped back and forth before going into a bouncing frenzy. My grip on her ass tightened, and I lost my ability to leave control in her hands. Lifting and dropping, banging her from below caused wet, heated friction between us that made us moan down each other's throats as our tongues fought for dominating suckles.

My dick curved into her pussy, dragging against her walls and springing off her G-spot repeatedly.

“Ooh! Oooh, aaah!”

“Yes, lover, ride this dick. Bounce on it. Own it like it's yours forever. Make me cum.”

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“Aaah!” Her head fell back, and her legs quaked as she rode me while I slammed her against me.

“Shit!” She trembled. “Titan!”

“Give me that orgasm, baby.”

Hot cream slid down my dick, and I came right behind her.

“Oh! - Grrrgggh....”

We moaned, and I held her tight. Santari fell into my chest, our mouths crashed, divulging into hungry kisses.

“I don’t want you to go,” she whispered against my lips.

“And I can’t keep my eyes off you.”

“So you’ll stay?”

I growled. “No. You’re coming with me.”

Traffic was gridlocked on Ocean Avenue, and by the time we reached Primal Luxury Resort, the entranceway was no different.

Inside my Range Rover, Santari sat in the passenger seat, legs crossed in a two-piece bikini top and skirt - driving me wild with her mocha skin on display. Shades sat

across her eyes, and her hand rested on my thigh. That slight touch was enough to calm and ignite me simultaneously.

Cars inched forward, and a black Mercedes S-Class was approached by the valet.

“You know, it was sexy as hell watching you burn down warehouse forty-nine.”

I turned my attention to Santari. “So, they did have cameras in the building – like all the others.”

“And they thought they would torment me by watching you fall.” Her lips spread into a sensual smile. “But you had other plans, and I was so proud of you.” She bit her bottom lip, but her red lipstick didn’t taint her white teeth.

“Proud, huh?” I reached over and pinched her chin.

“Proud, aroused, stirred. You awakened something inside me.” She squeezed my thigh. “And before you decide that’s not a good thing, it’s the best thing that’s ever happened to me.”

“Why is that?”

“Because it’s authentic. Sometimes, violence is needed. Suppressing that for the sake of being a do-gooder is bullshit.”

I cracked a smile and took my gaze back to the Mercedes. “Don’t make my dick hard.”

She gripped my shit through my jeans. “Too late.”

Her laughter made my heart skip a beat, but the sight of a familiar face speaking to

the valet made my gut tighten and my jaw clench.

Ron Valentine nodded and smiled at three men in designer suits – semi-younger replicas of him in different shades of brown. The spike in my pulse was usually reserved for two things – violence or pleasure. This feeling, however, was lodged in unfamiliar territory. I felt neither violent nor desire but puzzled, curious, annoyed, and perhaps something else I didn't want to tussle with – optimistic. The thought of it put a bad taste in my mouth. Fuck Ron and his sons. There was no reason to...

“Lover...”

I blinked and glanced at Santari, who was staring at me quizzically.

“Yes?”

“You went stiff. And not in the way I wanted you to. What's wrong?” Her brows dipped.

“How exactly did you feel me go stiff?”

“Our souls are mixed. I feel everything you feel.”

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I stared at her. She'd become my obsession in such a short time, but I never needed to question how that could've happened the way it did. I was sure most things in life happened by design. That was another reason I hated the optimism I felt seeing my estranged family stroll into my hotel. Optimism for what? Questions I'd never ask? If my life was meant to be different, it would be, and I was okay to live with that.

“Who are they?”

I glanced back at her to see that her attention had followed mine. I inhaled and released a deep breath.

“The one in the front with the salt and pepper beard is Ron Valentine.”

Her brows arched. “Your father?”

I locked my jaw, nostrils flaring. “Unfortunately.”

“And the others?”

“Appear to be successful men who'd grown up with everything I'd been denied.”

I was annoyed by the bitterness of those words, but they were true, nonetheless.

She gasped. “Your brothers.”

The valet moved the car, and we inched forward. When the attendants saw me, they sprinted to the Range and opened mine and Santari's doors.

“Close her door.” I glared at the valet on her side, and he nodded and quickly shut Santari’s door. I glanced at her, left my position, strolled around the car, opened the door, and drew her close.

She giggled. “You didn’t have to scare the man.”

“He’s not scared.”

She glanced at him, and he stood back, waiting for us to clear the space.

“He’s scared shitless.”

I grunted, and we entered the lobby. Ron’s voice was loud, like an announcement speaker. He was a comedian, and I imagine he thought everything was a fuckin’ joke.

“Do you want to talk to him?”

“No.”

“I think you do.”

“Why? I’m merely shocked by his presence.”

“What do you think he’s doing here?”

“Probably on business or vacation. That’s why most people come here.”

She nodded. “Remember how you said you don’t believe in coincidences?”

“Is this the part where you throw my words back in my face?”

“What kind of soulmate would I be if I didn’t? Especially the good things.”

“That was about me and you reconnecting as friends and now lovers. It had nothing to do with anything else.”

“That’s not true, and you know it. You believe everything happens for a reason. You can’t lie to me, Mr. Valentine.”

“Don’t use that name here.”

She gawked. “The fuck? That’s your name, and this is your shit. You should boast about it. They are not the only ones who are rich and powerful, and I just knooow they’re not wielding no dick like that weapon between your legs.”

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I guffawed and pulled her close. “Woman.”

“You know it’s true.”

“It could run in the family.”

She gazed at me closely. “You want to meet them? Your chance is now.”

“Fuck ‘em.”

We’d just about cleared the expansive lobby when I glanced back, and Ron’s eyes were on me. His brows dipped, curiosity etched in his features. I turned and kept walking, stopping only once we’d reached my private elevator.

I tapped in my code, the doors opened, and we moved inside, turning to face the closing doors.

Ding!

A hand shot through the crack, and the doors paused and opened, revealing my father.

He stared at me, and I stared at him, but neither one of us spoke. Beside me, Santari slipped her hand against mine. Our fingers linked, and she squeezed my fingers lightly.

“This is a private elevator,” I said.

I tapped in my sequence, and the doors began to close again.

“Wait!” Ron stuck his arm through and entered the crane, followed by his sons.

I locked my jaw and glared at him.

“I said, this is a private elevator. The public bank of elevators is down the hall on the left. When you exit, make two lefts, and you’ll be there.”

He stared at me in bewilderment, like he’d seen a fuckin’ ghost.

“What is your name?” His voice held notes of maturity and broken huskiness. With his question, his sons glanced from him to me and stared as they, one by one, became curious about our exchange.

Santari’s finger squeezing kept me balanced because, without it, I would’ve snapped by now.

“Can I help you with something?”

The tallest of the sons, who I knew was Christian Valentine from my research, spoke. “Father?”

Ron ignored him, unable to take his eyes off me. “You look exactly like your mother – Jidenna.”

The name hit me like a bullet to my chest, and I lost all my composure.

“Get the fuck off my elevator, Dad.”

Surprised reshaped the look in their eyes, but Ron wasn’t affected by my venom.

“What’s going on?” Xander asked.

“I’d like to know the same,” Elijah added.

“If you want answers, get them from your father. But none of you should ask me a motherfuckin’ thing.”

The elevator doors shut, and we ascended, moving between floors as they wrestled with confusion.

Xander grabbed Ron’s arm. “Dad, is there something you want to tell us?”

We reached the top floor in record time. The doors opened, and I pulled Santari in front of me as we exited.

“Titan.”

I froze. Hearing Ron call after me was shocking to my core. I turned back to him.

“You don’t get to address me.”

He left the elevator and stepped into the hallway followed by his sons.

“Titan, listen, we need to talk.”

“You don’t get to address me, fool!” My eyes went wild, and fury burned in my chest.

“I’m thirty-five years old! You’ve known about me since birth, and I know you have, so don’t lie!” I dropped Santari’s hand and balled my fists, but she cupped my right fist with her hands in an attempt to keep me tethered to sanity.

“If you never saw me here, you wouldn’t have wanted to talk! All these years that have gone by you haven’t wanted to talk. So what the fuck could you possibly have to say now?”

“I know, and I tried to reason with your mother, but?—”

“I don’t give a fuck about your excuses!” I shook my head. “Got damn it!”

I spun on my heels as rage boiled through me.

“But you need to know I wanted to be there for you.”

“When? Was it when Jidenna dropped me off at the nearest shelter’s doorstep because she’d decided she couldn’t raise a child alone? Or maybe it was when I was shoved from foster care to foster care with people who only took me for a check and abused me instead? Or perhaps it was when Nigerian authorities locked me away in a place you would hang yourself in because I was caught stealing food?” I moved closer to him, my anger brimming in my veins. “You’re a liar. You never gave a damn about me, and as far as I’m concerned, you can go to hell.” My nostrils flared. “Now... get the fuck out of my hotel!”

His eyes widened, and Xander, Christian, and Elijah glanced at each other. Christian spoke to me.

“You’re our brother?”

“Don’t act like you didn’t know.”

“They didn’t,” Ron said. “Nobody knew but me.”

I shook my head. “Well... now your dirty little secret is out, Dad.” I turned back to Santari but spoke to them. “Fuck out of my hotel.”

“This is your hotel?”

I mocked him. “This is your hotel?” Glaring, I scoffed and tsked.

“Unlike you, I don’t hide myself. The name is scribed on every branded item in this motherfucker!” I pointed to a sign right beside the hotel door.

Your luxurious stay is complemented by Titan Valentine, owner and CEO of Primal

Luxury Resort.

They were bewildered, their eyes wide as the truth settled in their souls. I walked off, ushering Santari before I exploded.

“We should talk!” Xander shouted at my back.

I slowed. “You’ve got fifteen seconds to get on the elevator and return to the first floor, or you’ll be stuck in the hallway.”

With that, I opened the door to the presidential suite and left them to their own devices.

Titan stood with his back to me, looking out the windows to the beach beyond the hotel. At the bar, I fixed him a glass of Cognac on the rocks, then strolled to him and lifted it as an offering.

Glancing at me, then at the glass, Titan sighed, took the liquor, and pulled me into an embrace.

“Are you okay?”

I slipped my hands under his shirt, caressing his back and muscular torso.

“I’m... aggravated.”

I nodded. “I’m sorry.”

Our eyes met. “Why are you sorry?”

“You were pained by that interaction. I hate to see you in pain.”

He stared at me, and something ran through his thoughts before he dropped a kiss on my forehead and looked back out the window.

“I’ve experienced pain that goes beyond that interaction, trust me.”

Sorrow knotted in my belly. “I’m sorry about that, too.”

“It’s fine.”

“It’s not fine.”

He looked down at me again. “Okay. It’s not fine. But, I’m here in the present with you. So, technically, it’s fine. I don’t have to live in the past.”

“While you’re not physically living in the past it is something that haunts you, isn’t it?”

“I do the haunting. Nothing haunts me.”

“Do you think your past has anything to do with how you rule your present?”

He peered at me. “Are you asking if being abandoned is the reason I rain hell on Earth?”

I ran my tongue across my teeth. “Sure.”

He chuckled. “Maybe. Not entirely, but somewhat. I had to build a fortress around myself as a kid because people take advantage of kids, they abuse them in a lot of ways, and someone has to teach these types of people a lesson.”

“That someone is you, I guess.”

His gaze went back to the beach, and I took his silence as his answer.

“Was it your foster parents?”

“It was everyone I came in contact with until Cruz, Storm, Rev, and you.”

My hands stilled, then I hugged him tighter. “I’m sorry.”

“Stop apologizing.”

“But I am.”

“There’s nothing for you to be sorry about.”

“You didn’t deserve what happened to you.”

“You don’t know what happened to me.”

“From what you said I can read between the lines.”

He glanced at me, his jaw locked, and his thoughts shuffled again.

“What happened to your mother?”

His nostrils flared at the same time sorrow moved through his faraway gaze.

“I don’t know.”

“You never met her?”

“Not in a way you would meet your mother.”

I remained quiet and let him consider what to share.

“When I was younger, I sought her out. When I found her, she was in a drug house in Nigeria. To answer your question, she saw me, but she didn’t. She thought I was there to serve her. She....”

A knot formed in my throat. “I’m sorry I asked.”

“It pains me that you’re sorry for things outside your control. I’ll tell you this. I left the country when I was a young teenager. By then, I’d learned some of the worst horrors of mankind. I never looked for Jidenna again. I don’t know her status. I don’t care to know. But you’ll be the first to know if I ever change my mind. Okay?”

“Okay.”

Silence filled our space, and I wished I could take his pain away.

“How did you meet my brother?”

That brought a tiny smile to his lips.

“Rev knew I was a loner. He watched me as much as I watched everyone around me, including him. At school, he would try to get to know me in class, but I didn’t speak unless it was a part of the lesson being taught.” He chuckled. “That motherfucker wouldn’t let me be. One day, a classmate decided to test me and see if I was pussy or not. He and his “bad boys” group took my silence as a weakness. I was outside leaning against a tree, watching the street, and lost in my thoughts when a small can of pork beans flew at my head. I caught it before it hit me, turned, and slung it back. It knocked the little nigga on his forehead, and he started screaming like a bitch.”

I smirked as pride rose in my chest. “Why am I not surprised?”

His brow arched as he looked down at me. “What? I wasn’t always a force to be reckoned with.”

“Yes, you were.”

“Okay, you got me.”

We chuckled, and he continued.

“You can say my circumstances created a monster, but I can’t deny there was always one developing inside me. A part of my circumstances is why I don’t take hits that involve kids – and I don’t trust anyone.” He pinched my chin. “Except you... and The Paradox.”

“Now.”

“Yes, now.” His gaze went back to the beach. “Rev caught the entire interaction, and when the little nigga’s friends circled me, here he comes...you fuck boys don’t want smoke, do you?”

“They turned to see him approaching with Cruz and Storm by his side. They must’ve been hell at the school because them little niggas dispersed so quick, it was like they flew out of there.”

I nodded. “That sounds like my brother, Cruz, and Storm.” I watched him close. “Sounds like you, too.”

He looked down at me, seeing my eyes fall. “Hey.” He lifted my chin, and we locked eyes. “Rev would be proud of you.”

“For killing someone? Maybe not.”

“For defending yourself.” He sucked his teeth. “I understand you’re embracing the violence. But don’t get it twisted – you’re not violent for the sake of being a menace. You shot someone?—”

“Killed... someone.”

He stared at me, and I held his gaze.

“Okay. You killed someone because that person was a threat to you. To us, not because you’re evil. So yes, he would be proud that you stood up for yourself. And he’d love it that you’re embracing the violent nature that will keep your guards high. One of the things he worried about most was you getting caught in the crossfire because of his actions.” Titan gritted his teeth then released a deep breath. “He would’ve burned the city down to find you if he was here.”

I smiled. “Like you?”

He smirked. “Worse.”

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“I don’t think it can get any worse than that.”

“You really enjoyed watching me in action, didn’t you?”

“Yes. My pussy has never been wetter.”

Titan drove his tongue across his teeth then bit his bottom lip. “Don’t talk like that, or I’ll take you down, and I need to handle some business.” He faced me and grabbed my throat, dropped his mouth onto mine, spread my lips with his tongue, and inhaled me in hot suckles that melted my bones.

My body ignited, and our tongues flicked and sucked.

“Mmmmm. Don’t go,” I murmured. I burned under his heavily lidded gaze. He kissed me deep, and I slipped my arms around his neck.

“I’ll return shortly, lover.”

He released me and left me teetering on the edge of desire. I turned and watched him go while my hormones raged for his strokes.

“I’ll return shortly, lover.”

But that wasn’t the case. Whatever business Titan was handling must’ve been important because I spent the day watching Netflix, meditating, working out on his elliptical machine, and scrolling social media waiting for his return. It didn’t feel crazy that I missed him in such a short time. I had it bad for him, and I was okay with

that. I just hoped he was, too.

Titan's mysteriousness had always sparked my curiosity. I hoped he would let me in more than he did in the past. And while he revealed enough that I knew his parents abandoned him when he was young, that he spoke the native language of his Nigerian mother – Yoruba from time to time, and that his tattoo sleeves were mental depictions of his rise into the man he was today, I still wanted to know where he went when he disappeared into the night and when he stared into the flame of fire.

Maybe I was greedy, but I wanted all of him in every way imaginable. I had told him this, but I don't think he understood, and I planned to make it known again.

4:36A.M.

I rose from the sheets and took note of the empty bed. Frowning, I took my eyes around the room to find Titan's silhouette standing before the floor-to-ceiling windows, hands behind his back, his strong physique outlined by the moon's glow. I could feel his energy throbbing like a big dick, and it powered me, sending tingles to my nipples and clit.

Easing out the bed, I went to him, sliding my hand up his bare back while the other slipped into his boxer briefs and removed his dick.

“Whatever is troubling you, let me help.”

I stroked his erection as it stiffened in my grip. Titan's gaze dropped to mine, and his brown eyes appeared to transform in the moonlight. Seeing the shift in him made my heart rate increase. From dark brown orbs to deep black irises so obscure I couldn't connect with his soul.

“Show me the way to your heart,” I said, stroking his dick.

A deep vibrating hum trekked from him before he spoke.

“The way to my heart goes beyond the parallel of the contract we agreed on. Are you sure that’s what you want, Santari?”

His voice was the deepest I’d ever heard it before. I stared into his gaze, looking to connect with the man I’d grown to want in ways that went past sexual desire, but he was hiding from me.

“Titan?”

When his lips curled, it was otherworldly, and the dimples that were otherwise hidden because of his rare smiles made an appearance.

“You ask for Titan as if I am someone else,” he said. His smile dropped and he became expressionless. “Who do you see?”

“I’m not saying that you’re not Titan. Clearly, you are, you just seem...” I squinted.

“What?”

We gazed at each other and a shiver slipped down my spine. “To answer your question, yes, I do want more. I think you know this even if I haven’t verbally said it before.”

“Why do you feel like you have to ask me for more? You don’t feel us growing closer by the day?”

I hesitated. “Yeah, but... you disappear sometimes. You hold back. I thought... that you would give me all of you.”

“And yet when I show you me in my entirety, you don’t seem to recognize me.”

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I inhaled a deep breath. “You’re right. I’m sorry.”

“Don’t be sorry. Be open – be willing... I’m not sure if you really want me, Santari.”

My heart squeezed. “Don’t say that again.”

“I’m. Not. Sure. If...”

“That’s a fuckin’ lie and you know it!”

He cocked his head to the side. “I don’t know. I think you want surface level Titan. Not?—”

“Got damn it, Titan!”

“A filthy tongue for a filthy mouth.”

“You’re damn right. Let me show you what a filthy mouth do.”

I squatted and sucked his dick to the back of my throat. A snarl moved through him as I dipped forward and back, taking as much of him in and tightening my mouth.

“Ggggggrrrrrgggh...”

He planted a hand on the back of my head and rocked his hips, driving across my suctioning tongue as I moaned.

“Mmmm...”

Heat filled me, and tingles traveled through me like a marching band. I sucked off his dick and spoke against his shaft.

“I don’t want surface level Titan.” I licked up his thick veiny dick. “I want to know your soul.” I sucked his head. “I want to understand your dark corridors.” I turned my head and coasted down his erection with hard suckles. “I want to connect with your fire. Let me unburden you.”

He snatched me off my feet, tossed me over his shoulder, and carried me out of the bedroom.

Metal touched the base of my feet as I was positioned against something cold and hard.

“You’ll warm up soon,” Titan said, sensing my light tremble.

The dark room went from black to navy, and it was enough to give me a view of my surroundings. Black furniture, a sofa, a huge bed, and several pieces of equipment were stationed against the walls around me. But I was in the middle of the floor, and the metal I felt was from a different piece of equipment that Titan had released me on.

“Did you mean what you said?”

My eyes fluttered to him, standing before me. “Yes.”

He came closer, so close I could feel the warmth radiating from his body. At my waist, he strapped a thick belt across my stomach and connected it with a latch.

At my throat, he slipped another latch and connected it, but he left my arms and legs free.

“I’m going to set you on fire now, Santari.” My eyes widened. “I want your submission. Do I have it?”

“Yes.”

“Are you afraid?”

“No.” But my voice was trembling like a freezing whore on the street corner.

“Are you lying to me?”

I didn’t respond because he would surely hear my teeth chattering if I did.

He left my line of sight, but I felt him circling me like prey. When he paused, he was behind me, his lips hovering at my right ear.

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“Do you trust me?”

“Yes.”

He moved to my left ear. “The safe word is SIR.” Again, he circled me then left my view again. When he returned, he took a cloth and covered my apex and pussy. With the other hand, he lifted a spray bottle.

“Close your eyes.”

I hid behind the darkness of my eyelids, my heart rocking as he sprayed my neck, my arms, my thighs, my legs, and my chest, but he avoided the solution’s direct contact with my nipples and pussy.

“You can abuse me if you need to,” he murmured, “but that won’t stop my progression. Only the safe word will. Do you understand, Santari?”

“Yes.”

He put aside the bottle and removed the cloth. Our eyes locked and I watched him massage some type of oil on his skin. He stepped away, I heard running water, then he returned wiping his hands with a cloth.

“You can use the safe word now if you want to back out.”

Silence sat between us for what felt like minutes, and then... a match was lit. I inhaled, thought of my meditation methods, and attempted to put my thoughts in that

space when the fire touched my skin.

A trail of heat followed a flame that raced across my shoulders and spread to my chest, circling my breasts but leaving my nipples untouched.

“Oh!”

It was the weirdest sensation. Instead of feeling burned, I felt light sparks that aroused me more than the harm I expected.

“Mmmm....” I moaned and tried to move, but the belt across my belly and latch across my neck held me in place.

In front of me, Titan stroked his dick and watched with the intensity of a starved animal.

“How?” I asked.

He moved towards me, lifted my legs, and spread me, pushing his weight against the back of my thighs. His dick spanked against my pussy, and I moaned and bucked, throwing my pussy forward but again was held back by that damn belt.

His lips ushered into a smirk, and while the fire spread across my flesh, he dipped, entered me, and sucked in a nipple simultaneously.

“Aaaaaah! Oooooooooh...”

I shut my eyes tight and mistakenly flexed a Kegel when I heard him growl.

“Titan!” Opening my eyes, I finally saw him again. All of him, those brown eyes mixed with black that carried the reflection of the flames, spread across me.

He drew back and in again, stroking me carefully before throwing his thrusts and banging my body against the metal.

“Ah! Oh! Fuck!” I reached for his neck and tightened my hands around the column of his throat. I tried to shake him, but he only fucked me harder, more relentlessly, and his suckles turned into bites.

“Oooh shit! Shit! Shit!”

My body jerked against the equipment with each pummel, and when I thought he would slow down, he leaned back, turned my legs to cross in front of us, and folded them like a pretzel.

“Ooooooh fuck!”

Our skin slapped as he fucked me, digging, grinding, and rocking into my pussy while the flames took on new life. When the solution on my knees connected with the solution on my chest, the flame traveled across my leg to my ankles, and as if it was nothing, he sucked in my toes and continued to bang my pussy to smithereens.

“Shiiiiiiiiiiiiit! Titan! Baby! Fuck! Oh! Oh! Fuck!”

I stung all over, the burn from our bodies’ slaps, mingling with the heated sparks that popped from the flames on my skin, had me ignited in such a way that I felt like I was transforming.

“What the fuck are you doing to meeeee?”

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His gaze went wild, but he didn't let up, only drove his tongue down the sole of my foot while digging deep with upsurging strokes to my cervix.

“Ooooooh!”

I slapped him, and he fucked me harder. So much so I thought the equipment piece would rip out of the screws that held it to the floor.

“Shit! Oh! Have mercy! Mercy!”

His snarls came from the deepest part of him as he ignored my shouts for mercy and instead angled his progression and continued to bully my pussy.

My vision went in and out as I became dizzy.

“Titan!”

“If you need reprieve,” he fucked harder, “you have the safe word.”

I locked my jaw and allowed myself to be consumed because nothing could pry me from the full onslaught of pleasure I felt. Call me crazy, but while I wanted mercy, I didn't. It was a wild craving that I didn't recognize in myself. I was indeed changing, becoming his entirely as he became mine.

Titan bit my toes, sucked off them, then slipped his tongue into my mouth.

“Mmmmm,” I moaned as he stroked, inhaled me, and applied pressure repeatedly.

“I’m going to cum on this dick so hard,” I murmured against his lips right as my orgasm dropped, and I sprayed his dick, my clit thumping and pussy pulsating madly.

“Oh! Oh!” My eyes widened then crossed. And I convulsed so hard I almost choked from the restraint across my throat.

“Ggggggggrrrrrgh....”

Slaps between our wet skin resounded like a standing ovation as I soaked his dick.

“Ah!” I jerked as he pummeled me, my eyes rolling, and body on fire, literally. The flames moving around us were hypnotic but somehow non-threatening. I didn’t know what the solution was he used, but it had some magic inside it because we burned but didn’t corrode.

“Again,” he growled, removing his dick.

I immediately grappled for him, not wanting to be untangled for a second.

Holding my knees at the side of me, he secured a latch across both legs to keep them high and my pussy exposed.

Then he dropped to meet up with my dripping wet pussy and sank his tongue inside me, slurping me up, flicking and sucking my clit like a Slurpee.

“Ooooooweeeeee Titan!”

“Grrrrrrrrgggggh...”

His full mouth covered my full pussy as he lapped at my wet flesh like a thirsty mutt.

“Ooooooooo! Shit! Yeeeeeeesss! Oh fuck!”

The fire ignited the tingling sensation running through my entire body – from my head to my toes. I wiggled and grabbed Titan’s head, pushing and pulling – directing his suckling up and down like clothes on a washboard.

“Aaaaaaah fuck!”

He gripped my ass tight, curved my bottom, and sucked me deep. My toes curled, and I came hard in his mouth, vibrating, jerking, and moaning as my clit twitched against his flicking tongue.

“Shit! Shit! Shit! Shit! Titan!”

“One more time,” he snarled, sucking off me and biting into my thighs.

Fear followed by thrill, gripped my heart as he left my view, and when he returned, it was behind me. A vibrating sound surrounded us, and when his dick entered my pussy from behind, an anal bead vibrator entered my ass.

“Ooooooh! Fuck!”

I jumped forward but was held in place by his latches.

“Tsk.. tsk...” His hand covered my face, and he unlatched my neck. Pressure sank into my throat as he took a deep bite into me, his tongue sucking my pulse while he banged my pussy in strong strokes from behind. With each surge, the vibrating anal bead surged, and it dawned that it was connected to the base of his dick, so every time he entered me, so did the bead enter my ass. Hot tingles raced through my body, and I released control of myself to him. To be fair, he’d taken that control like only a pussy whisperer could.

It was impossible to hold back, I came for the third time, shaking, convulsing, and moaning as he churned me over and over.

“Titaaaaan! Oh! – Santari...”

He rocked me so thoroughly that I barely noticed when the flames subsided. I’d wanted him in every way imaginable and he’d given all of himself to me. I wanted to make sure he got the same from me. So, I moved my hips as much as I could, dropping back against his strokes as he snarled, moaned, and spoke Yoruba in my ear.

“Fuuuuuuuuuuck!” He shouted, filling me with his cum without his driving missing a beat.

My teeth chattered. “Tit – Tit – Tit - Titan! Babeeeeee!”

“You’re such a bad fuckin’ girl,” he said. “I could fuck you like this forever.”

“Aaaaaaah... oooooou... pro, pro, promise me you will.”

He pulled out of me, returned to face me, and unlatched me quickly. I fell into his arms, didn’t even try to hold myself together and he carried me off as our mouths crashed passionately.

“Hold your breath.”

Titan held me as we submerged into the warm water – resting, waiting, relaxing in his embrace. When we surfaced, it was just far enough that our noses and eyes broke through, leaving us content with the massage from the hot tub jets.

My consciousness faded in and out. And vaguely, I witnessed his care as he washed my body and caressed my pussy and ass with soft pressure.

When I woke up it was to him watching me, and I was thankful that this time he hadn’t disappeared but continued to hold me until we met again.

Soft lips pressed into my mouth, and I opened and let him consume my tongue.

“I’m never leaving...”

He smiled against my lips and his deep chuckle vibrated against my belly as my stomach growled.

“Your body disagrees.”

“I don’t have to leave to get food.”

The ringing of the phone on his nightstand indicated someone was at the front door and I drew back.

“Are you expecting company?”

He stared at me. “Who would I ever invite into this space other than you and The Paradox?”

I shrugged. “Your family, maybe.”

His gaze turned into a glare, and he scowled. “I don’t have a family.”

“Your estranged family.”

“I don’t have a family,” he repeated.

I sighed. “They seem to want to get to know you.”

“Santari.”

“Titan.”

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We had a stare down. “Your family that cornered you in the elevator.”

His nostrils flared. “They are not my family, and why the hell would I ever invite them up here?”

“I mean, it’s pretty obvious they want to get to know you.”

“And you got that from that little interaction yesterday?”

“Well, yes.”

He squinted. “Are you ill?”

I pursed my lips. “If it’s true that your brothers never knew about you then it’s not entirely fair that they don’t get to have their brother in their life.”

He snarled. “Fuck them. I didn’t get a lot of things, who gives a fuck what they want?”

“Baby, calm down please.”

The ringing kicked up again and Titan snatched the phone to his ear.

“I’m coming.” He ended the call and turned back to me. “That’s the delivery service. Not unwelcomed visitors whose lives I would never fit into and vice versa.”

He rose from the bed and walked toward the room’s exit.

“You don’t need to fit into their lives,” I said at his back. He paused but didn’t turn around. “You just need to be. If they are willing to spend time with you and you with them, you can create the world around you to be what you wish. It doesn’t have to look one way or the other. It can be completely different from their world and your world because it will be one you create together. That won’t get in the way of who you are or what you do, and the same goes for them.”

He stood there another second then disappeared from the doorway. It wasn’t my intention to pressure Titan to make a decision when it came to his family. But deep down I felt he wanted a relationship with them. I couldn’t explain why I felt that way, but I did.

Seconds later, the smell of Cuban foods permeated the air, and I threw the covers back and scrambled from the bed.

“Is that—”

“Your favorite food?” Titan asked, standing in front of a tray of dishes as I slid to a stop in the dining room.

My eyes grew and I smiled. “Yes!”

He removed the top to one of the cloche’s and I squealed. “Cuban Empanadas! Did you cook this?”

“Of course I did. But I was out of lemonade, so I had some delivered.”

He poured a glass, and I skipped to the table and paused before sitting. “Wait. What time is it? This is lunch.”

“It’s three pm.”

I gawked. “Are you serious?”

He laughed, deep and heartily. “Why are you so shocked?”

“Because you let me sleep the day away!”

“You were exhausted, lover.” He drew me into an embrace, his mouth sinking into mine as I moaned.

“Well... when you mention that, sure.”

I sat and he pushed the chair underneath me then took a seat across the table. I said a quick prayer and ate at a rate that had him smirking.

“Famished?”

“You have no idea.”

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He watched me enjoy my food and I couldn't come up for air long enough to ask him why he wasn't eating. But I made note of it.

"I saw you meditating yesterday," he said. "What do you get from practicing? Does it soothe you?"

I grabbed a napkin, wiped my mouth, and took a sip of the lemonade he poured.

"Initially, I began the practice after my brother's death. It lessened my anxiety and anger. But now a days meditation keeps me grounded and focused."

He nodded. "How did you see me? You were gone most of the day?"

"I always see you. I'm watching even when you think I'm not."

Heat moved through me. Just the mention of his watchful gaze aroused me to no end.

"Who taught you how to properly meditate?"

"A therapist."

"Hmm."

"When you were young, did you have nightmares?" I countered.

"Yes."

“How did you get past them?”

“The fire helped me control my pain, and I became unbothered by what might lurk in the dark once I gained control of the shadows.”

Silence lingered between us. But through that stillness I had a revelation.

“Now you are the fear that comes out of the shadows,” I mused.

He didn’t respond, only stared at me, and I’d come to understand when Titan did that, it was because no further comment was necessary.

I murmured, more to myself than anything. “It was never just about the fire but the control of the shadows...”

“Is that why you asked me if I was having nightmares when I came to you the other night?”

“I asked because I know what taking a life can do to a person if they are ill-prepared.”

I watched him watch me with neither of us speaking for a minute.

“Are you having nightmares, Santari?”

“If I was, would you help me become one with the shadows so I’m no longer afraid?”

“Yes.”

His questioning gaze lingered on me.

“No, I don’t have nightmares. But I would still like for you to show me, just in case.

Will you do me that favor?"

"I have an idea." He pushed back from the table. "How about you teach me how to meditate so I can practice remaining grounded through my anger and anxiety, and I'll teach you how to become one with the fire so you will never be afraid of anything ever again."

My body tingled, my excitement palpable.

"Yes. Hell, yes."

With my hand in his, Titan led me to his master bathroom. "Let's begin."

He turned on the sink and squirted a clear gel into my palm.

“What’s this?” I asked.

“Hand sanitizer. Alcohol-based. It’s going to be our fuel.” His voice was steady and commanding. “Pay attention.”

He distributed the gel evenly across my palm, his finger trailing methodically over my skin. “Fire needs three things to exist—fuel, oxygen, and heat. We’re providing the fuel. The air gives us oxygen.”

I nodded, mesmerized by his lesson.

“And this—” he pulled a match from his pocket, “—provides the heat.”

“I’m going to hold actual fire?” My heart raced with anticipation rather than fear.

“You’re not just going to hold it. You’re going to control it.” Titan’s eyes locked with mine. “The flame will burn the alcohol, not your skin—if you respect it.”

He struck the match.

“Don’t flinch,” he commanded, bringing the flame closer to my hand. “Your instinct will tell you to pull away. Ignore it.”

The match touched my palm, and flames spread across my hand much like it did last night in the blue room. The scorch I expected to feel once again was not there. It was

heat without burning. Power without pain.

“Oh fuck,” I gasped, staring at the blue-orange flames dancing above my skin.

“Keep your hand flat. Don’t close your fingers, or the fire will burn you,” Titan instructed.

“It didn’t burn me last night with all the folding you did.”

He smirked. “That’s because you were completely covered with my solution, except for key areas, and my solution is a bit different than this sanitizer. We’re using the sanitizer for the purposes of this lesson but when you become more confident with the flames, I will provide the pro lesson.”

Excitement and thrill raced through me. “Okay.”

“You should feel the power of the flame. Acknowledge it. But don’t fear it.”

I watched, transfixed, as fire crawled across my palm. It was alive, dangerous, and beautiful.

“Now turn your hand slowly,” he said. “The fire wants to rise. Control it.”

I rotated my wrist, gasping as the flames crawled towards my fingertips regardless of my hand’s position.

“It’s alive,” I whispered.

“Yes. It’s a living breathing thing. Its direction depends on the one wielding it,” Titan said. “In a few seconds it’ll burn out. When that happens, the alcohol has been consumed.”

Sure enough, the flames diminished, then disappeared, leaving my skin tingling but unharmed.

“Again,” I demanded, my eyes wide with exhilaration.

Titan’s mouth curved slightly. “It’s your turn to be my teacher,” he drew me close, his lips hovering over my mouth. “Then maybe we’ll circle back to this lesson.”

I puckered and kissed his lips, drowning in his mouth’s caress. A tingle slipped through my vertebrae, and I squirmed and sighed.

“Yes, Sir.”

His gaze darkened. “Santari.”

I giggled. “Okay. I’m on my best behavior.”

I led him to the bedroom, pointing to the floor beside the bed. “Sit cross-legged.”

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He lowered his massive frame to the carpet, surprisingly graceful for a man his size.

“Back straight,” I instructed. “Hands resting on your knees.”

“Demanding,” he commented but complied without resistance.

“Now close your eyes.”

“I prefer watching you.”

“Titan,” I said firmly. “Close them.”

His eyelids lowered, then he peeked up at me and I giggled.

“Titan!”

His smile was gorgeous and interestingly made his features wickedly sharp instead of soft planed.

“Breathe in through your nose,” I directed, settling myself opposite him. “Fill your belly first, then your chest. Four counts in.”

His chest expanded as he inhaled.

“Hold for seven,” I continued, watching the tension in his shoulders begin to release.

“Now exhale through your mouth for eight counts. Push every bit of air out.”

Titan followed my instructions, and his exhalation was smooth and carefree.

“With each breath, feel yourself sinking deeper into the ground,” I murmured. “Let the earth support your weight completely.”

We breathed together in silence for several minutes. His face softened, his jaw unclenched.

“Thoughts will come,” I said. “Don’t fight them. Acknowledge them, then let them float away like leaves on water.”

“There are many leaves,” he murmured, eyes still closed.

“There always are,” I replied. “That’s why we practice.”

After ten minutes, I whispered, “Bring your awareness back to your body. Feel the floor beneath you. The air on your skin.”

Titan’s eyes opened slowly, his gaze sharper yet somehow calmer.

“What did you feel?” I asked.

“Calm,” he answered, his voice rougher than before. “Relaxed, even.”

I smiled. “Again?”

“Yes,” he said. “But this time, let’s combine our lessons.”

Titan produced a small bottle from his pocket and handed it to me.

“More sanitizer?”

“Apply it to both our palms,” he instructed. “We’ll meditate with fire.”

I squeezed the gel onto our hands, my heart racing as he struck a match. Flames erupted across our palms simultaneously.

“Breathe,” I reminded him. “Four in, seven holds, eight out.”

We sat facing each other, fire dancing in our open hands, our breath steady and synchronized. The flames cast flickering shadows across his face, highlighting the angles of his cheekbones and the intensity of his focus.

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“This is incredible,” I whispered.

“The fire lives and dies on our palms while we remain,” Titan remarked.

Our eyes locked as the fires slowly extinguished, leaving only the scent of alcohol and burning.

“Again,” he said, his voice husky with desire.

I squeezed more sanitizer onto our palms. He lit the match and flames erupted.

But this time, he leaned forward as we burned, capturing my mouth with his. The kiss was deep, consuming—fire meeting fire.

When he pulled back, the flames on our hands and the one inside me continued to burn.

“I think I prefer this kind of meditation,” Titan murmured against my lips.

I laughed softly. “We’ll make a spiritual man of you yet.”

“Spiritual, no,” he corrected, extinguishing the flames with a twist of his wrists. “But centered in my power? Yes.”

He pulled me into his lap with my hands still warm from the flames. “I believe we have more lessons to exchange.”

He flipped me on my back and sank his mouth between my legs.

I adjusted Santari's leather jacket, making sure every inch of her skin was covered. Protection was paramount for what we were about to do.

"The wind will slice through any exposed skin at high speeds," I said, tugging the collar higher on her neck. "You're gonna need everything buttoned up tight."

Santari turned, her daring eyes filled with anticipation. "I've been on motorcycles before."

"When?"

"My dad let me ride when I was five, and my mom killed him when we got home."

I chuckled as her lips spread wide.

"I'm afraid this will not be like your daddy's ride, sweetheart."

"No?"

"Not a chance."

We moved through Primal Luxury Resort's expansive lobby, and my eyes scanned the area out of habit. Hotel staff nodded as we strolled, stepping aside as we passed. The manager approached us in quick strides, straightening his tie.

"Mr. Valentine, we've parked your motorcycle at the front entrance, away from the other vehicles."

I nodded. "The keys?"

He handed over a small black box. “Inside, sir.”

I nodded my dismissal and guided Santari toward the revolving doors. The thick Miami humidity swamped us immediately, but my attention was captured by the gleaming silver and black Mercedes AMG Solar Beam parked at the curb. Its sleek frame looked ready to devour the road, and my muscles flexed as I remembered the way it navigated under my direction.

“Damn,” Santari whispered as we approached. Her fingers trailed along the machine’s contours. “She’s beautiful.”

“Seven hundred horsepower in a bike that weighs less than me,” I said, opening the box to retrieve the keys. “German engineering at its finest.”

The rumble of another motorcycle engine cut through the ambient noise of Ocean Drive. My head snapped up, eyes narrowing as a matte black Ducati Panigale roared up the hotel’s curved driveway. The rider brought the Italian machine to a stop beside my new purchase and removed his helmet.

Christian Valentine’s face emerged, his eyes fixed on me rather than the bike.

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“Didn’t I kick you out of my hotel?” I asked, bristling at his unexpected appearance.

Christian smirked, hanging his helmet on the handlebars. “You invited me to leave. I did. Now I’m back.”

“How convenient you happened to bring your bike from St. Louis.”

“I shipped it ahead of time,” Christian got off his bike, patting the Ducati’s tank. “Miami roads deserve proper machinery, not a rental. And I never left the city, I just switched hotels.”

Santari stepped forward, her posture deliberately casual but her eyes alert. “You ride often in St. Louis?”

“Every chance I get,” Christian confirmed. His gaze shifted between us. “Some of my best thinking happens on two wheels.”

“What do you want?” I asked bluntly.

Christian gestured toward my Mercedes. “I saw you heading out with this beauty. I thought maybe we could ride together—get to know each other without the old man around.”

The mention of Ron made my jaw tighten. “I don’t need family bonding time.”

“I’m not offering therapy, just a ride,” Christian countered. “Unless you’re worried that fancy German engineering can’t keep up with Italian craftsmanship.”

I studied him, noting the challenge in eyes that were the same shape as mine.

Irritated, I responded. “You’re trying to race me?”

“If that’s what it takes to get you to spend ten minutes in my company, then yeah.” Christian straddled his Ducati again. “Four miles down Ocean Drive to South Pointe, then back. That should give us enough time to see what these machines can do.”

“There’s traffic,” I pointed out, looking at the steady stream of cars crawling along Ocean Drive.

Christian grinned. “That’s what makes it interesting. One million says I cross the line first.”

My eyebrows raised at that. The money meant nothing to either of us—this was about proving something. But was it worth my time?

“If you want to lose that bad, that’s all you have to say.” I pulled out my phone and dialed Cruz, cutting my eyes to Santari.

“What’s good?” Cruz answered. The ambient noise in the background said he was already out.

“Are you close to Primal?”

“I’m ten minutes out, why?”

“Head this way. I’m about to take this fool’s money.”

Cruz’s voice dropped. “Everything straight?”

“Yeah, just get here pronto,” I replied before ending the call.

Santari placed her hand on my arm. “You know I can ride with you, right?”

“And you will—after I handle this. I can’t put precious cargo on my back while riding this fool into the ground.”

She stared at me, then nodded slowly. “Alright. But you better win.”

I arched a brow. “If I didn’t know any better, I would think you thought you were fucking a loser.”

“First time for everything,” Christian interjected with a smirk.

I cut my gaze at him. “Your confidence is dinner for my gut, but I like the cockiness. Keep it up.”

“Ditto. It must run in the family.”

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I glared at him, my nostrils flaring. Biting back a curse, I revved my engine. Cruz arrived fifteen minutes later, his red Hellcat purring as it pulled to the valet stand. He stepped out, his eyes immediately landing on Christian with suspicion, then Santari, before turning to me.

“So, this is the money?” Cruz asked, approaching our group.

I nodded. “Cruz, meet Christian Valentine. Apparently, he rides.”

“As in your brother, Christian Valentine?”

I spoke through clenched teeth. “Chill with the family dynamics, motherfucker.”

He smirked. “Awww, how sweet of you to be getting to know your family,” he teased.

“Fuck you, bitch.”

His guffaw was loud and ridiculously boisterous.

“Cruz...” Santari chided.

He slapped my shoulder. “I’m just fuckin’ with him, damn. Wouldn’t be right if I didn’t. Besides,” he reigned in his laughter, “it’ll make for a great story later, I’m sure of it.”

Cruz extended his hand, which Christian shook firmly. “You’re from St. Louis, right?”

The corporate lawyer?”

“Sports and entertainment law,” Christian corrected. “You got quite a reputation yourself. Club Fetish is legendary, even in the Midwest.”

Cruz’s expression remained neutral, but I caught the slight surprise in his eyes. “I get that often.”

I pulled Cruz aside while Santari engaged Christian in conversation. “I need you to keep Santari with you during this race. Don’t take your eyes off her—not for a second.”

“Are you expecting problems?”

“No, but until we put the nail in the coffin of the motherfuckers responsible for her kidnapping, I’m taking no chances.”

Cruz nodded. “I got her. But don’t bury that nigga. Try to keep whatever this is light, aight?”

My grin was mischievous. “Bury? You speak like I’m the Grim Reaper.”

“Then we have an understanding.”

I winked and grabbed Santari, drawing her to me and growling into her mouth as I sucked her tongue.

“And just like that, my pussy’s wet,” she murmured.

I smashed her lips with mine, then released her. “Be good,” I said, putting on my helmet. “Or don’t.”

She smiled, and Cruz pulled her between his stance, wrapping his arms around her and sinking his lips into her neck.

She moaned and bit her bottom lip, winking at me.

Christian glanced from him to Santari to me but didn't comment on his thoughts. That was a good thing because I gave no fucks about his thoughts anyway.

We established the rules: four miles down Ocean Drive to South Pointe Park, then four miles back. The first to return to Primal Luxury Resort won the million. Cruz and Santari would stay behind and watch this play out from afar.

Miami afternoon vibrated around us as we prepared our bikes at the hotel entrance. Traffic moved in its typical stop-and-go rhythm along Ocean Drive. Tourists weaved between colorful Art Deco buildings and palm trees, completely unaware of the high-stakes race about to unfold.

"On Santari's count," I said, straddling the Mercedes and starting the engine. The machine hummed between my legs, its power waiting to remind me why I chose it in the first place. Santari strolled over and stood between our bikes. I winked at her, and she blew me a kiss as I revved my engine.

Christian adjusted his gloves. "There's still time to back out if you're nervous."

I didn't dignify that with a response; instead, I focused on the road ahead and analyzed the traffic patterns and potential paths through the congestion. This was my town, and there was no way he would emerge victorious.

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Santari raised her arm. “Three... two... one... GO!”

I twisted the throttle, feeling the front wheel lift slightly as the Mercedes shot forward. Christian’s Ducati launched with equal ferocity, both bikes weaving immediately to avoid a taxi pulling away from the curb.

Beeeeeeep!

The driver raised his middle finger and cursed us to hell, and I laughed, the thrill already brewing inside me like a raging storm.

The Miami heat pressed against me as we accelerated, slicing between cars like they were standing still. Christian took an aggressive line, squeezing between a tour bus and a parked Bentley with inches to spare. I countered by hugging the center line, overtaking three cars before a red light forced a decision—brake or risk it.

Christian chose risk, blasting through the intersection as cross traffic began to move. I followed, ignoring the blaring horns and expletives from startled drivers. The Ducati’s taillight remained ahead, taunting me as we approached seventy miles per hour in a thirty five zone.

Ocean Drive unfolded before us—a gauntlet of obstacles. Convertibles with tops down cruised in the left lane. Tourists darted across crosswalks. Valet attendants dashed between parked luxury vehicles. Each required split-second decisions and instant calculations of speed and trajectory.

Christian handled his bike with unmistakable skill, threading the Ducati through

impossibly tight gaps in traffic. I matched him move for move, the Mercedes responding to my slightest touch as if it was an extension of me.

We approached a delivery truck blocking half the road. Christian swerved right, nearly clipping a row of parked cars. I went left, accelerating into oncoming traffic for three heart-stopping seconds before cutting back into my lane ahead of him.

Our bikes shot past outdoor cafés, the patrons' heads turning in unison at the silver and black blurs. A police cruiser parked outside one of the hotels flashed its lights, but we were gone before the officer could react.

South Pointe Park appeared ahead. It was the halfway mark. Christian braked hard, executing a tight turn that sent his backtire sliding. I matched his maneuver, using my weight to control my slide as we came around for the return journey.

For a brief moment, our eyes met through our visors. I saw something familiar there—not just the physical resemblance, but the same intensity, the same instinctive understanding of risk and control that I felt in myself.

The return leg became a chess match at ninety miles per hour. The traffic had thickened, forcing even more creative navigation. Christian found a rhythm, leaning his Ducati at impossible angles to slip through gaps I thought was too narrow for any vehicle.

But I pushed the Mercedes to its mechanical limits, feeling the engine's vibration intensify as we approached triple digits on a clear stretch. A bus pulled out unexpectedly, forcing us onto the sidewalk for thirty terrifying yards, sending pedestrians diving out of our path.

Christian handled the detour flawlessly, his back tire kicking up sand as he rejoined the street. I followed, grudgingly impressed by his control.

As Primal Luxury Resort came back into view, we were dead even. I hunched lower over the handlebars, squeezing every possible ounce of acceleration from the German machine. Christian matched me, both of us threading through the final stretch of traffic like needles through fabric.

We crossed the invisible finish line simultaneously, tires smoking as we braked hard in front of the hotel. I could see the shock on Cruz and Santari's faces as I removed my helmet, my heart pounding against my ribcage. Christian did the same with sweat glistening on his forehead as he grinned.

"Tie," Cruz announced, stepping out in front of us.

"Bullshit," I countered. "I had the edge."

"In what universe?" Christian laughed, but there was no malice in it. "I was ahead by half a wheel."

Santari's eyes were wide. "That was insane! You two were flying!"

Before I could respond, a silver Audi swerved aggressively toward the curb, the horn blaring from an obvious angry driver. The car screeched to a stop, and a red-faced man in an expensive but ill-fitting suit launched from the driver's side.

"What the fuck is wrong with you assholes?" he shouted, stomping toward us. "You nearly killed my girlfriend back there! Racing like fucking maniacs!"

Christian stepped forward, his posture shifting subtly into a defensive stance. "Back up, man. Nobody got hurt."

"Don't tell me to back up!" The man jabbed a finger into Christian's chest. "You know what? I'm calling the cops right now. Let's see how those fancy bikes look

getting towed away.”

Christian shoved him back with enough force to create distance but not enough to be considered assault. “Touch me again and you’ll regret it.”

The man stumbled, then redirected his rage toward me. “Fuck you!” He flipped us off. “You think Ocean Drive is your personal racetrack?”

He charged forward, his arm cocked back for a punch. I let him come—let him think he had a chance—before stepping slightly to the side. My fist connected with his jaw in a clean, swift swing that transferred maximum force with minimum effort. He dropped immediately, unconscious, before hitting the pavement.

“Fred!” A woman’s voice cut through the aftermath.

I turned to see blonde hair rushing from the Audi’s passenger side. Her face was contorted with rage, and her eyes were fixed on me.

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“You fuckin’ animal!” she shrieked, lunging with outstretched hands, with her nails aimed at my face.

Santari intercepted her with a right hook to her jaw. The woman folded instantly, collapsing beside her boyfriend in an unconscious heap.

A guffaw slipped from my gut, and Cruz shook his head and whistled. We both stared at Santari with lust in our eyes.

Valets and guests gawked at the two bodies on the pavement, then at us, then back at the bodies.

“Damn, girl,” Cruz murmured, his eyebrows raised at Santari.

“What?” she replied, shaking out her hand. “That bitch had it coming.”

Christian gazed at Santari with newfound respect, then burst into laughter. “Now I see why you keep her around. She’s exactly your speed.”

I fought back a smile but grabbed Santari and drew her close by her throat. “Now, why would you turn me on in front of these people like that?”

She licked up my face, and I bit her bottom lip and sucked in her tongue.

“My suite is on the fifteenth floor of the Fontainebleau,” Christian offered. “There’s plenty of space, and the bar is fully stocked.”

I mounted my bike, and Santari mounted behind me. “Some other time.”

“There’s still a million dollars at play,” he added.

I sucked my teeth. “Not for long.” I revved my engine. “Hold tight,” I told Santari as we accelerated away from Primal Luxury Resort, leaving two unconscious bodies and questionable onlookers in our wake.

The Following Day

Through the floor-to-ceiling windows of the penthouse suite, I watched Santari cut through the private pool’s water with smooth strokes. The morning sun caught the droplets that flew from her arms, making them sparkle against her rich mahogany skin. My need to keep her close hadn’t diminished since the warehouse but watching her move with such freedom, eased the tightness in my chest.

The laptop screen glowed with information about Aaron—the man who’d helped us find her. His file painted a mundane picture: He was a mid-level staffer at Santari and Storm’s university, married for fifteen years, and had two kids in private school. Nothing about his portfolio explained his connection to professional killers.

My fingers tapped the keyboard as I dug deeper. Bank records showed regular deposits from shell companies. Each one led to another dead end, but the pattern was clear. Someone with resources was covering their tracks.

Santari emerged from the pool with water streaming down her curves. The sight of her wrapped in a towel made my dick throb, but business had to come first.

She entered and disappeared around a corner, then strolled to my side minutes later, dressed in a strapless shirt and mini skirt.

“I’m going to make a quick run,” she said, kissing my face then turning to slip away. I grabbed her ass and pulled her back to me.

“Where are you going?”

Her mouth curved into a sexy smile, and her tongue touched the corner of her mouth.

“To the store a few floors down.”

“Tell me what you need, and I’ll have them bring it up.”

“That’s just the thing, my love, I want to go myself.”

I stood up. “Okay. Let’s go to the store.”

She placed her hands on my chest. “Nooo. Sit down, please, and finish doing what you were doing.”

I stared at her inquisitively. “Should I be concerned that you want time away from me?”

She gawked, her eyes rising. “Don’t be ridiculous. I’m just going to the store. It won’t take me long.” She frowned. “Is security not tight in your hotel?”

“You know it is.”

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“And can you see every move I make even from this spot you’re in?”

“That’s not the point.”

“Actually, it is.”

“When I found out you were kidnapped, I punched Storm in his jaw for taking his eyes off you.”

She gasped and took a step back, but I leaned forward, locking her between the counter.

“That means if I take my eyes off you, and something happens to you, I’ll have to let him return the favor – and not only is that shit never happening, but I won’t let anything happen to you on my watch. Do you understand, Santari?”

She framed my face with her hands and kissed my lips.

“It was not his fault. Please don’t fight like that again.”

“It was a rare occurrence.”

“You know that hurts me to hear, right?”

My brows dipped. “How do you think I hurt to find out unknown enemies had captured you?”

She swallowed and nodded. "I understand."

"Trust me, you don't. The last thing I was thinking about was hurting Storm. Besides, he's a big boy. He can handle himself."

A saddened expression filled her eyes. "You guys aren't supposed to be fighting. You..."

"Calm down." I pressed my forehead against hers, closed my eyes, and reopened them. "We would never hurt each other intentionally. I had a moment. That's it. I only told you so you'll understand that neither I, nor Storm, or Cruz can lose you again."

"No one can get to me here, so why are you worried?"

I inhaled a deep breath, my nostrils flaring. "Fifteen minutes."

She kissed my lips and quickly left the suite. I switched to the security monitors and followed her progress to the elevator, and then the store.

My phone buzzed, and I glanced at the screen lying face up in the corner next to the laptop. Storm sent his latest intel on Aaron's movements. Aaron had the same routine every day. He went to work, returned home, and had occasional stops at a coffee shop. There was nothing suspicious. But men like him didn't help kidnappers out of nowhere. Someone had leverage on him or something worth hiding.

The elevator dinged, and Santari emerged with grocery bags from the store downstairs. The sight of her doing something so ordinary while I was searching for the people responsible for taking her was what normal living with us was like. I took the bags off her hands and sat them on the counter.

“See, it didn’t take me long, did it?” She said, putting away groceries.

I growled, and her soft laugh aroused me. “Someone went through a lot of trouble to hide their tracks.” I clicked through more records. “The guy who assisted us in finding you is just the surface.”

She approached me, sliding her hands over my shoulders. “You’ll find them.”

“I already have.” I pulled up Aaron’s address, memorizing the layout. “Tonight.”

Her fingers dug into my muscles. “Want company?”

“No. This requires... finesse.”

She laughed, the sound risqué and ravenous. “Since when have you done anything with finesse?”

I drew her hand to my mouth. My teeth pinched her palm as I bit. “Since I need information more than blood. For now.”

Santari got cozy on the couch, reading a book while I pieced together fragments of data. Hours passed when the Miami sunset spilled through our window in shades of fire. This was perfect timing for what I was about to do.

I changed into dark clothes and checked my weapons. No guns tonight. Those were too loud for a family neighborhood, and I only used my silencer for more intense situations. But my knife was sharp, and my hands were enough for the rest.

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“Be careful,” Santari said as I headed for the door.

I paused, drinking in the sight of her. The woman who’d killed her first man smiled through the blood. Who’d walked into the darkness and welcomed her change naturally set my soul on fire.

“You mean the other guy, right?”

She pursed her lips, tossed her book, left the couch, and ran to me, jumping into my arms. Our mouths crashed together, and I inhaled her tongue as heat moved straight to my dick.

“Santari...”

“I said be careful.”

I sucked off her lips. “I will.”

She gyrated, and I squeezed her ass, slapped it, then sat her down on her feet. “Change of plans. Get your things. I’m taking you home.”

She frowned. “I am home.”

I smirked. “Your other home – The Omega House.”

Her eyes brightened. “Okay.” She rushed to grab her purse, and we left.

At The Omega House, Santari entered with a tune on her lips. I turned my lips up and whistled. Storm was the first to enter the living room from the kitchen. With his hands behind his back, he strolled to Santari and produced a bouquet of red and black roses.

“For me?” Santari crooned, taking the roses and sticking her face in the petals.

“Forever only you.”

Her face darkened from a blush, and distant footsteps took my attention to Cruz when he entered with an apple in his hand.

He glanced from me to Santari and back to me with a scowl.

“Where the fuck are you going?”

“Damn, nigga, where’s your fuckin’ fruit basket or some shit for Santari? Instead of being like Storm and bringing gifts, you come in here questioning a real nigga.”

“Motherfucker.” He glared at me. “I got this. You ain’t got to worry about that. Where the fuck are you going? Don’t bullshit me.”

“I’m not going to kill motherfuckers so calm the fuck down. I’ve got a lead. I’ll be back. Keep your eyes on my Goddess.”

“Nigga, I’m going with you.”

I glared at him. “Do you really wanna fight? Cause I’m not arguing with you.”

“Damn, it’s like that?”

Storm dropped his head back. “Isn’t it obvious Titan wants you to stay here with

Santari because he doesn't believe I can keep her safe?"

Santari's eyes widened, and she looked at me. "You don't believe that do you, baby?"

My nostrils flared, and I pointed at Cruz. "See what you've done." I turned to leave.

"Titan."

I paused with one foot out the door and looked back at Storm.

"I promised it would never happen on my watch again, didn't I?"

"Storm, Cruz, Santari, listen... time is of the essence. I've got to do this now. No one is blaming anyone for shit. Just... stay together, aight?"

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Santari strolled to me, her eyes searching mine as if looking for answers.

“I’m fine.”

“I know.”

“Nothing’s going to happen to me again.”

I gritted my teeth and spoke through them. “I know.”

“Do you? You seem worried, and I want you to relax.”

I faced her. “I will relax when the person responsible for taking you, murdering Rev, and trying to pick us off one by one is dead.” I peered at her. “You understand me, lover?”

She sucked in a breath. “If you’re going to kill someone, take Cruz with you.”

“Thank you!” Cruz shouted.

“Y’all are driving me crazy.” I left the house and jumped in my Range, pulling away from the curb before Cruz could jump in my passenger seat.

The Miami nightcloaked me in darkness, and I blended with the shadows as I drove to Aaron’s suburban home. A soccer mom minivan was in the driveway. A basketball hoop hung over the garage. This nigga was living the American fucking dream – or at least he pretended to be.

I parked three blocks away and approached on foot. I would've taken the Solar Beam, but the engine would wake the entire neighborhood.

The security system was basic—a standard issue from some corporate provider. It was child's play to bypass, and the back door's lock took seconds to pick.

Inside, the house was dark except for the soft glow of nightlights. Family photos lined the walls—Aaron with his wife and kids. Their smiling faces taunted the violence that had brought me here. While children were off limits, I would leave their father's head on the kitchen table for them to find if he didn't give me what I came for.

Movement in the kitchen took my attention to a shape outlined against the fridge's light.

Aaron.

I stayed in the shadows, watching him pour a glass of water. When he closed the fridge, he saw my reflection in the back door's window.

The glass shattered on the floor, and his eyes widened with recognition and fear.

“We had a deal,” he whispered.

“If I was here to kill your family, they'd already be dead.” I kept my voice low and controlled. “Sit.”

He sank into a kitchen chair, trembling. “What do you want?”

“The name of your boss.”

“I can't?—”

“You can. And you will.” I stayed in the shadows, letting his imagination fill in the darkness. “Who hired you?”

“Please.” Sweat beaded on his forehead. “They’ll kill me.”

“I’ll kill you slower.” I stepped forward, and the moonlight rode the curve of the blade in my hand. “And then I’ll start with your wife.”

“You promised not to hurt them.”

“I promised not to hurt them if you helped us find Santari. Now I’m making a new deal.” The knife sparkled. “Tell me everything, and your family stays breathing. Lie to me...” I let the threat hang.

“You don’t understand. These people - they’re connected. They’re powerful.”

“More powerful than me?”

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He swallowed hard. “They know things about you and your operation.”

That made me pause. “What operation?”

“The hits. The Paradox.” His voice cracked. “They’ve been watching you for months. Planning.”

I feared no man, and yet, having this information made me wrestle with that emotion. I kept my face neutral, my anger intensifying with this news. “Who?”

“I don’t know names. They contacted me through?”

“You’re lying.” I moved faster than he could track, pressing the knife to his throat. “One more chance.”

“Please...”

I increased the pressure until blood brimmed around the blade. “Names.”

Footsteps creaked upstairs. Aaron’s eyes darted to the ceiling, and real fear replaced his nervousness.

“My daughter,” he whispered. “She sleeps badly. Please.”

I eased the knife back a fraction. “Start talking.”

“They’ll kill my family.”

“I’ll kill your fuckin’ family!”

More footsteps.

“Daddy?” a child’s voice called out.

Aaron’s face crumpled. “Okay,” he breathed. “Okay. I’ll tell you, but nothing more after this.”

I stepped back into darkness as his daughter appeared in the doorway, rubbing her eyes.

“What broke?” She blinked at the shattered glass.

“Nothing, baby.” Aaron’s voice shook. “Go back to bed. I’ll clean it up.”

She padded away, and Aaron slumped in his chair. “Give me a minute to check on her. Then... then I’ll tell you everything.”

“If you step out of this room, your next breath will be your last.”

He froze. “Your friend,” he said. “The one who died. His name was Rev, right?”

My hand tightened on the knife. “How do you know that name?”

“Because the man who hired me knew him, too. He knew all of you.” Aaron’s eyes held real fear now. “He was supposed to be part of your team, right? But you chose Rev instead.”

I glared at him, and my gut tightened as understanding dawned. “Give me his name.”

“Ronan.” Aaron whispered the name like a curse. “He said you owed him a debt of blood. He said killing Rev and taking her was just the beginning.”

The name hit me like a physical blow. Ronan - the frat brother we’d passed over when forming The Paradox. The man who pretended that everything was all good.

“He’s created his own team,” Aaron continued. “He calls them Pandora’s Box. Four killers, just like your Paradox. They’ve been studying you, learning your patterns. The warehouse was supposed to be the beginning of the end for the Paradox. But even after all their watching and planning, they couldn’t plan your response. You’re better than they expected.”

“What are their operations, and where do they run from?”

Aaron swallowed hard. “They’ve got four centers. The main one is an old factory in the industrial district - that’s their headquarters. They run drugs through a warehouse on the east side. They have a weapons storage facility down by the port. And they launder money through Club Velvet.”

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“Keep talking.”

“The drug operation’s their biggest revenue stream. High-end product for rich clientele. The weapons facility supplies their hired muscle. And the club...” He glanced upstairs nervously. “The club makes it all look legitimate.”

“And Ronan runs all of this?”

“Him and his team. Each one manages different aspects. But they’re expanding, getting more ambitious. The warehouse hit was supposed to prove they could pick a part your team and show everyone they’re the stronger crew.”

“Give me the locations of the old factory, the warehouse, and the weapons storage facility.”

“I don’t know the exact addresses, but I can tell you the zones and the neighborhoods. Just... please, when I finish, never come back here again.”

I studied him, reading the truth in his terror. “Draw me a map. Now.”

His hands shook as he sketched locations on the paper I provided. When he finished, I memorized every detail.

“If you’re lying, you won’t hear from me again, but your family will.”

“I’m not. I swear.” His eyes darted upstairs again.

“Please, that’s all the information you need.”

I slipped into the night as my mind spun with a plan of action to combat this enemy. Ronan had built more than just a rival team—he’d created an empire. Four operations centers, a network of hired muscle, high-end clientele—and he’d tried to copy our entire operations by his team each owning legit companies.

Ronan had caught us off guard as we did what we love to do - a hit. We were focused on the hunt while being hunted. The chaos caused Storm to lose his keycard, which gave Ronan and his team access to Storm’s university - and Santari. It was a clever way to discombobulate us - but we remained focused. We were more competent and thorough. The Paradox was built on trust, brotherhood, and mutual respect—not anger, fear, or retaliation. But we were coming with the hand of retribution.

And since he wanted our attention, we would give it to him—The Paradox way. One center at a time until there was nothing left but ghosts.

I woke up to familiar voices speaking in deep but hushed tones and followed their voices until I was standing quietly in front of a door slightly ajar.

“Ronan.” Cruz slammed his hand on the table. “Four operation centers? The twisted motherfucker’s been building this since Rev’s death?”

“According to Aaron, Rev was their first strike, but they’ve been planning our demise since we excluded him from The Paradox.” Titan’s voice was measured, but I heard that wicked embodiment underneath.

“Four killers,” Storm added. “Like we used to be.”

“Each center is its own operation,” Titan said, marking locations on a map between them. “The east side warehouse runs their high-end drug distribution, targeting rich

clientele only. The weapons facility by the port stocks hired gun groups in Miami. Club Velvet launders it all clean through legitimate accounts. And their main base in the industrial district coordinates everything.”

“This motherfucker thinks he’s smart,” Cruz said.

“Each operation has its own legitimate front,” Storm murmured. “Copying our playbook but sloppy. Getting ambitious.”

“The warehouse hit was meant to prove something,” Titan continued. “To show everyone they could cripple us. But they made one critical mistake.”

“They underestimated our power,” Storm murmured.

I pressed closer to the door, barely breathing as Titan continued.

“I was never supposed to survive warehouse forty-nine. They meant to pick us off one by one to show that they were the better team.”

“Titan,” Cruz growled. “What’s the plan? I know you’ve got a damn plan.”

“We’re a man short,” Storm said quietly. “We have been since Rev. They think it makes us vulnerable.”

“And what do you think?” Titan snarled.

“I believe in us, but we have to consider that we’re outnumbered.”

I didn’t consciously decide to move. My body acted on its own, pushing the door open. Three heads snapped up, but I kept my chin high as I entered.

“I’ll be your fourth.”

Titan’s eyes narrowed. “No.”

“Hear me out.”

“There’s nothing to hear.” He straightened to his full height. “There’s no way you can be a part of this.”

“I’ve been a part of this since they killed my brother and kidnapped me!” I moved closer, letting them see the resolve in my demeanor. “I’ve killed. You’ve each trained me in different ways. I’ve proven myself.”

“This is different,” Cruz said, but I heard his voice waver.

“How?” I planted my hands on the desk. “I’m already a target. Why not make me an asset instead of a liability?”

Storm shifted uncomfortably. “You don’t know what you’re asking.”

“Don’t I?” I met each of their gazes. “I’ve seen what you do. How you move. How you kill. I can move with Storm’s precision, Cruz’s adaptability, and Titan’s fire.”

“This isn’t a game,” Titan growled.

“Do I look like I’m playing?” I stepped around the desk, facing him directly. “You’ve seen me embrace everything you are. Why hold me back now?”

His gaze bore into mine. “Putting you in puts you at risk. Santari, I will not put you at risk.”

I sighed and placed my hands on his heart. “I’m sure I can be beneficial to your operation without being at risk.”

Titan’s thick brows rose, and Cruz spoke up.

“Expand on your thought.”

“Women are usually assets in certain spaces. Spaces that make them invisible but important.”

“Like Club Velvet,” Storm said.

I nodded. “Exactly.” I turned my attention to Titan. “I know you’ve got a plan already. You tell me, where can I be used? Where can you all keep your eyes on me, and I remain safe?”

His nostrils flared as he inhaled deeply. Glancing at all of us, Titan’s gaze dropped to the map, and he moved some schematics around.

“If they are expecting us, they’ll think we will be emotional,” Titan said, marking points on a map. “To rush in without thinking because they took Santari.”

“So, we do the opposite.” Cruz grinned darkly. “Strategic. Calculated. Hit them where they least expect.”

“And where’s that?” I asked.

“Their resources,” Titan replied. “We cut off their supplies, weapons, and escape

routes and force them to regroup at one spot.”

My fingers traced the map. “That’s brilliant. What do we do then - torture?”

“Death.” The simplicity of Titan’s statement sent heat pooling between my thighs.

Titan studied me. I saw the battle in his eyes - the need to protect warring with the recognition of what I was becoming.

“If we do this,” he said finally, “there’s no halfway. You become one of us completely.”

“I already am.”

He turned to Cruz and Storm. “Thoughts?”

Cruz pushed off the desk. “She’s full of fire. I say we test her out.”

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“She’s progressed faster than any of us expected,” Storm admitted. “I agree, but we should make sure her marksmanship is damn near perfect.”

Cruz reached for my hand, and I linked our fingers. “We love you,” he said, “this is real life. When we started this thing between us, it was more about exploring the sexual escapism and desires as friends turned lovers.”

Storm grabbed my other hand, and I gave him my attention.

“Things have changed,” he said. “Our dedication and love for you knows no bounds. You’ve mentally transformed but having you physically in our realm connects the last piece of The Paradox we lost with Rev but created with you. It’s different, yet similar, but it makes you our precious jewel.”

“And it’s dangerous,” Titan said. My eyes went to him. “This goes far beyond sex and desires. We’ve arrived at the heart of it all – not just love, but abandon – obsession – war. This is a point of no return. To move forward is to be one with us as we are one with you – in life and in death.”

I squeezed their fingers, then released them and eased closer to Titan. “Let me prove myself to you.”

“It’s not about that.”

“Okay, then let me calm your fears. Let me unburden you.”

Those words connected with him. They were the exact words I’d spoken before I

took on his fire in his blue room.

“I am ready. I love you all as much as you love me. In life, and in death, and everything between.”

He glared at me, and then his gaze turned soft. “Let’s train.”

Training intensified after that. Hours on the range became days. Storm added to the lesson’s I’d learned early on with Cruz. I perfected my shot, hit moving targets, and gage wind and distance. Cruz showed me how to adapt to any weapon and any situation. Titan taught me to embrace the pleasure of dealing death.

A week into my new role, I stood in the training room, facing all three of them. Sweat gleamed on my skin as I moved through combat forms. They wouldn’t spar with me at first, afraid of hurting me. Now, they came at me with heavier force, testing my limits.

Cruz lunged, his fist whistling past my ear as I ducked. I caught his arm, and spun past him so fast his momentum punctured the wind, but Storm was already moving. His kick touched my ribs, and I moved at the last second but still felt the sting.

I rolled with the impact, coming up with a knife. The rubber blade bent against Storm’s throat as Cruz regained his footing.

“Better.” Titan’s voice held approval that stimulated me. “But you’re still revealing your next steps.”

“Then show me how to fix it.”

His eyes darkened at the challenge. He moved like lightning, disarming me before I could blink. But I was ready. I turned quickly, my body pressing against his body, as

my fingers found the pressure point in his wrist.

The knife clattered to the floor, and his free hand fisted my hair, yanking my head back. The position exposed my throat, but it also ground my ass against his hardening dick.

“Dangerous girl,” he growled.

“Your dangerous girl,” I purred.

Cruz’s dark laugh echoed around us. “I didn’t think you could make my dick harder than you already have but damn it, you did it,” he said.

“I would have to agree with you there,” Storm added.

I felt their heat and saw the hunger in their eyes. The violence had aroused all of us—as it always had.

Titan’s teeth grazed my neck, and my pussy throbbed.

“Yes,” I breathed. “All of you. Now.”

Clothes disappeared, and the training room dissolved into an echo of moans when we all came together.

Titan lifted me by my waist. Cruz and Storm hiked my thighs on their forearms, stretching and exposing my pussy.

“Fuck!” I arched and shuddered as pleasure moved through me behind the pressure of Titan’s thick dick in my ass.

Cruz swallowed my tongue as Titan bit my neck and sucked me hard against my palpitating pulse.

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Simultaneously, Cruz and Storm's mouths covered my breasts, each flipping their tongues across my nipples and sucking them deep.

"Aaaaaaah shit...."

My eyes rolled, and I trembled, grabbing Cruz and Storm's heads as pleasure filled me.

I loved when they held me up and banged into me from all sides.

Storm was the first to drop, and when his wet tongue sucked my clit, Titan went deeper into my ass.

"Ooooooh fuck, fuck, fuck!"

Another shudder slipped down my vertebrae.

"Aaaaaaaah! Yes, yes, mmhmm, Titan-Storm! Fuck!"

Cruz went to join Storm, but I cupped his jaw and brought him back to my lips. We kissed, and he caressed my breasts, then his mouth traveled down the other side of my neck to my collarbone.

I turned to Titan and stuck out my tongue. His growls were as deep as his dick, rocking back and forth, sending spirited tingles through my body.

He sucked in my tongue and spoke against my mouth. "Mine," he snarled, driving

deeper. “Say it.”

“Yours...” I purred at Titan, turning my face towards Cruz.

Cruz’s hands pinned my wrists above my head as he pushed into my pussy at a punishing pace.

“Aaaaah! Fuck! Yours!” I trembled as he let go of my hands and grabbed my breasts, my body shaken to the core from his deep strokes.

My fingers tapped at Storm’s head and his eyes flipped up to mine.

“Yours...” I purred, completely overtaken by their love for me.

Cruz’s and Titan’s dicks moved in and out in opposite strokes, leaving me suspended in absolute pleasure while Storm sucked my clit.

“Oh! Fuck! Shit! Oooooou!”

I was consumed with desire, an unadulterated rapture. I couldn’t get enough – I didn’t want enough, and as a result, they fucked me over and over.

“Ooooooh, fuck, yes!”

When I came, they didn’t slow down; they switched positions.

Storm was in my ass, Titan in my pussy, and Cruz’s teeth marked me everywhere his mouth landed.

I twitched and bucked, screamed, and dug my nails into their skin. We burned and stung, our flesh banging from their forceful thrusts.

“Oh! Ooooh! Aaaaah! Ssssss!” I hissed, and my ears popped.

Titan’s springing strokes banged and pinged repeatedly off my cervix, tingling the soles of my feet and curling my toes. His mouth dropped to my nipples, bit me hard, and he fisted my neck in a tight grip.

I gagged, and my eyes watered as he fucked me mercilessly and painstakingly rough.

Behind me, Storm ground in my ass and placed soft kisses up my back. His one arm was wrapped around my waist as if holding me steady while Titan drilled me relentlessly.

My body vibrated in hard, quick successions with every heavy stroke that battered me. Cruz’s teeth marks stung my flesh, igniting the fever that filled my veins.

Titan stretched one of my legs back past my ear. Storm grabbed my ankle and continued to hold me steady while he pushed in and out of my anal.

“Oh! – Shit! – Fuck! – Santariiiii – San – Grrrrrgggggh!”

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Their barks and moans pulled my orgasm down, and I drenched their dicks and balls.

“Aaaaah – ssssss – ooooh, yes, yeeess!” I purred, rocked into a dizzy spell. My orgasm didn’t slow them down.

Their plunges magnified, their beats drilling, their bites deepened, the sex was thrilling. But my heart felt as if it would smash through my chest at any moment. Delirium hit me hard, and I shouted.

“SIR!”

I didn’t know if my safe word used with Titan was meant to be used in this space but using it pulled Titan from the onslaught of dick he rammed into me. Cruz had a mouth full of my thigh between his teeth, and I grabbed a fist full of his dreads and used our safe word.

Cruz eased up, and Titan removed himself, released my neck, and grabbed the sides of my face, assessing me.

“Don’t apologize,” I said in case they planned to. My jaw trembled, and I sucked in a breath, grabbed the back of Titan’s head, and pulled his mouth to mine.

“Santari...” he murmured as I bit his lips.

“I’m okay.” I smiled. Storm remained steady, grinding softly but taking note of our interaction.

“I just needed a moment.” I exhaled a deep breath, but my pulse was rocking all over. “Shit!” I laughed a bit chaotically. “I always wanna be fucked like this with y’all. Don’t ease up on me because of this. When I need a moment, you’ll know it, okay?”

Titan and Cruz glanced at each other.

“Don’t do that. I’m ready for you now. Come back.”

“I’ll take your direction... this time.” Titan pinched my chin. “Cruz.”

We switched again, and I was stretched out on my side, with Cruz pounding into my ass, Storm in my pussy, and Titan in my mouth.

Living this experience with them was the thing made of dreams. Their drive only kindled me more, igniting the power I felt to bring them all to their climaxes, to hear their grunts, groans, moans, and curses when I weakened them.

This was my playground, and I wanted them forever, and no force of power would take them from me – even if I had to take down Pandora’s Box myself.

It wastwo days later when I checked my phone and found six missed calls from Gina. I called her back while Titan, Cruz, and Storm gathered at the pool to discuss detailed plans.

“Girl!”Gina’s voice burst through the line. “Where have you been? I’ve been trying to reach you for days!”

“Sorry, girl. I’ve been busy training.”

“Training?” She paused. “What kind of training are we talking about?”

I eyed my reflection in the mirror, noting the marks the men had left on my skin. The woman staring back at me was different from the one Gina knew—harder, darker, and more dangerous.

“The kind that changes you,” I said finally.

“Damn.” She whistled. “That’s cryptic as fuck. You gonna explain or keep being mysterious?”

I chuckled. “First, you tell me what you’ve been up to. Did you get that grant to expand your salon?”

“Maybe.”

I squinted. “Did you or did you not?”

“I did get the grant.”

“That’s great!”

“But!” she shouted. “I’m not expanding right now.”

My excitement waned. “Why, what happened?”

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“I need it to pay some bills around here. My mortgage has gone up, and it’s the relief I need to make my life a little bit more seamless.”

“Gina, if you needed money, why didn’t you tell me?”

“Girl, what did you think me applying for the grant meant?”

“That you were trying to expand, and you wanted to see if you could get free money, not that you were in need.”

“I have ambitions to expand, and I’ve got a five-year plan to get there, but right now, this is where the money is needed.”

I sighed, sat in a chair, and crossed my legs.

“Do you need more money?”

“I could use more. But I’m good for now.”

“Are you sure?”

“Girl, I’m not about to be taking big money from you like that anyway.”

I scrunched my nose. “Why?”

“Would you take it from me if the tables were turned?”

“Yes.”

“Lie again.”

I cracked a smile and laughed. “Okay, you got me, but that’s not the point.”

“It’s exactly the point.”

“Okay, what if I said I have a way for you to make some money?”

“I’d say... I’m listening.”

I snickered. “Okay. I’m doing a part-time gig at Club Velvet soon, and I could use your help.”

“Club Velvet? A gig? Oh, you have been holding out fa sho!”

I bit my bottom lip but held back my laugh.

“Why you been holding out on me like that, Santari?!”

“I’m trying to let you in on it now if you’ll be calm and let me finish.”

“I can’t believe you.” She made noises with her lips, and I giggled deeply.

“Please, with the theatrics.”

“Okay. I’m listening.”

“There’s a masquerade party happening at Club Velvet, and I’m going to be a bottle girl. If you want to assist me, you can be a bottle girl. We’ll be serving drinks to the

most important men in the building. The ones with heavy pockets. So tips will be big. You will make cash on hand, and the gig pays five figures for three hours on top of that. What do you say?"

"I say... hell yeah."

I laughed.

"But also, shit, are you broke, too? What's up?"

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“Oh girl, no. But I wanted to try something spontaneous, so this is it.”

Honestly, I hated lying to Gina. She was my girl. But I couldn't very well tell her that we were getting ready to go in and poison these niggas to cripple Pandora's Box's money operations. That would freak her out, and then she'd wonder what I'd gotten myself into. And if only she knew, it was more about what had gotten into me. I smiled as Gina continued to talk. She was down, and I was ready for us to make our debut.

“First, you've got to come over and get our makeup and hair ready. I've got our costumes.”

“Oh, you just knew I was going to say yes, huh?”

“If you didn't, I would've hired somebody to help.”

“Mmhmm. Okay. I'm there, girl. When do you need me?”

“Tomorrow night.”

Gina's expert hands transformed my reflection into a stranger. Golden-brown contacts replaced my deep brown eyes, a curly wig covered my natural short black shoulder-length hair, and her perfectly applied makeup changed the entire structure of my face.

“You look nothing like yourself,” she said, admiring her work. “Club Velvet's masquerade night was the perfect choice for this.”

“You look just as fabulous. We’ll blend in well.”

“Let’s do it!” I high-fived her, and we loaded into Cruz’s Hellcat.

Riding beside us on his Mercedes Solar Beam motorcycle, Titan watched our surroundings while Storm trailed us in his dark blue Mercedes.

Traffic in Miami was like most nights—heavy, loud, and joyous. But Gina was the only one smiling and hanging out the window in our crew. The rest of us were focused on the mission and what needed to be done.

The red glow from the club’s sign washed over us as we approached the side entrance. My silver dress shimmered against the light, and even I had trouble recognizing myself in the mirrored walls.

“Remember,” Storm’s voice came through my earpiece. “They run standard security only. There is no facial recognition. Your biggest concern is the inner circle—they may know your face, so keep your mask on.”

Titan’s voice came through next. “The money flows through five key players,” he said. “They’ll be in VIP sections three and four. Reynolds always drinks scotch. His two processors stick to vodka. The other two handle external transfers - both bourbons.”

“And how long will the poison take to kick in?” I touched the hidden pocket in my dress.

“Thirty minutes,” Cruz added. “They’ll be long gone before symptoms start, unless they’re weaker than we expect. The medical examiner will call it heart failure.”

Gina turned to me. “Do we have table assignments?” She adjusted her Venetian-style

mask.

“Gina’s got Reynolds and his first processor in section three,” Cruz said, watching the back entrance. “Santari, you’ll take the second processor and the transfer team in four.”

My lips curved into a smile, and I relayed the message to Gina. I’d been eager for this since we chose Club Velvet as our first target. The chance to dismantle Ronan’s empire piece by piece, starting with his money men, invigorated me.

“Stay focused,” Titan growled through the earpiece. “One mistake can cost us the surprise, and I’ll have to burn this place to the ground.”

“I know, baby,” I said, winking at him, watching from a dark corner across the street. “We got this.”

I gave Gina an earpiece where she could only hear my voice so we could communicate inside.

The club’s bass vibrated through my body as we slipped through the door. Masked figures filled the space, making our own masks seem perfectly natural. The targets arrived within minutes of each other, moving to their usual sections.

I recognized the second processor by his expensive watch - the one thing Storm said he never took off. The transfer team settled into their usual corner, already signaling for service.

Gina and I moved like we’d worked the club for years. Our laughs pitched through the space as we took drink orders and served them. Gina thought we would work three hours so we weren’t in a hurry, but when we needed to book it - I’d make sure to drag her out of here. It was easy to blend in. We started with clean drinks and

would slowly worked our way up to the poisonous ones unbeknownst to Gina.

I leaned close to the processor, letting my hand brush his shoulder as I nodded at his request.

“Vodka martini,” I purred, pitching my voice higher than usual. “Excellent choice.”

Through my second earpiece, I heard Gina working her section. “The Macallan twenty-five? A man of taste.”

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“First round delivered,” Gina murmured. “And I got a four-hundred-dollar tip, heffa. These niggas are loaded.”

I laughed. “I told you so.”

“Yes, the fuck you did.”

“The orders are coming fast. I just finished my second one.”

Our targets drained their glasses, signaling for more. By the third round, we’d crossed over into an hour of service and the processor’s laugh was too loud, while the transfer team’s movements grew unsteady.

“They’re hitting their limit,” Storm warned. “Time to wrap it up.”

“One more round,” I said, watching them sway slightly. “Meet me at the bar, Gina.”

The bartender topped our trays with their drinks, and Gina was too busy fast-talking and flirting with the guy next to her to notice me pouring the poison into the glasses. It was the perfect setup.

The poison was odorless and tasteless. Mixed with alcohol, it was untraceable.

The final drinks went out as the club reached peak capacity. The bass covered any sounds of distress as the first target - one of the transfer team - clutched his chest.

“The exit routes are clear,” Cruz confirmed.

“Gina, we’re cutting our time tonight and I’ve already got our money - let’s go.”

Gina and I slipped away as our victims began to fall. By the time anyone realized something was wrong, we were walking toward the extraction point, and the server uniforms they’d supplied us with inside were abandoned in the staff room.

Gina hopped in Cruz’s Hellcat and Titan waited at the corner with his bike purring in the shadows. I slid behind him, pressing close as my arms wrapped around his waist. His scent aroused me, and the danger of the night soaked my pussy.

“You’re such a bad fuckin’ girl,” he growled as I squeezed my thighs against him.

“Wait until you see what else I can do.”

We rode through Miami’s neon-lit streets, leaving disarray in our wake. By morning, Ronan’s money operation would be crippled. His key players would be dead, and their systems exposed with the first center dismantled.

Back at The Omega House, we went over the next mission.

“Their ventilation system has three main access points,” Storm said, marking locations on the warehouse schematic. “Here, here, and here. The atomized compound must hit all three to fully contaminate their storage areas.”

I studied the layout spread across the desk. The east side warehouse looked simple from the outside, like just another industrial building. But inside, it housed Ronan’s high-end drug operation.

“The processing equipment is on the second floor,” Cruz added. “That’s where we introduce the blue agent. Everything they try to process becomes visible once it gets into their machinery. There’s no way to hide it.”

“What about security?” I asked.

“It’ll be heavy at the entrance points.” Titan’s finger traced the perimeter. “But they’re focused on protecting products from theft. They don’t expect chemical warfare.”

“What’s our timeline?”

“We have three hours until shift change. That’s our window.” Storm held up three metal canisters. “The atomized compound goes in through the ventilation. It takes thirty minutes to fully permeate. By the time anyone notices the smell, it’ll be too late.”

Cruz lifted a vial of electric blue liquid. “This goes into their processing tanks. The reaction is instant – it turns everything it touches into something that looks like cheap street shit.”

I examined the third substance, a fine powder, in a sealed container. “Is this to contaminate the equipment?”

“That’s the endgame.” There was satisfaction in Cruz’s tone. “It gets into the machinery’s gears and spreads through the whole system. They’ll have to replace everything.”

I nodded, mentally drawing the route. “Where do you need me?”

“You’re with me on ventilation,” Titan said. “Cruz handles processing. Storm runs interference on their cameras and security systems.”

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My cell phone beeped with a notification, and I took it out and read Gina's text.

"Thanks for the quick gig! Cruz's Hellcat is smooth as hell. I could get used to riding shotgun..."

"Heffa, don't get comfortable in my man's shit."

Teary-eyed laughing emojis came next.

"Damn, you're stingy!"

"You bet your ass I am."

Laughing emoji.

"You're welcome and have a good night!"

I took my attention back to my men who were waiting for me. "I'm ready."

An hour later, I crawled through the warehouse's underbelly with Titan close behind me. The service tunnels stank of mildew and rat droppings, but they led straight to our targets.

"The first access point is ahead," Storm's voice crackled through our earpieces. "The guards are changing rotation in three, two, one..."

I reached the grate, and Titan's hands steadied me as I worked the screws loose. His

breath brushed my neck as I leaned forward to place the canister, making me suppress a shiver.

“Focus,” he murmured, but I heard the smile in his voice. He knew exactly what he was doing to me.

“One down,” I breathed, sliding backward against him. “Two to go.”

We moved like shadows through the tunnels, placing the second canister on the opposite side of the building. Above us, Cruz would be reaching the processing floor.

“I’ve accessed the processing tanks,” Cruz confirmed. “The blue agent has been deployed.”

The last access shaft was tighter, barely wide enough for our shoulders. Titan’s chest pressed against my back as we squeezed through with his hands guiding my hips.

“The camera loop is in place,” Storm reported. “You’ve got four minutes to reach the final point.”

Sweat trickled down my spine as we maneuvered through the confined space. The final canister clicked into place just as Storm’s voice cut through.

“There’s movement on your level. Three hostiles approaching ventilation control.”

I froze, feeling Titan still behind me. A maintenance check. Now.

“Options?” I kept my voice low.

“There’s a utility shaft to your left,” Storm directed. “It’ll take you to the loading bay. It’s clear for the next two minutes. Go. Now.”

We moved silently, my body sliding against Titan's as we navigated the narrow passage. Every brush of contact charged me, but we maintained focus. The mission came first. Pleasure would come later.

"All the canisters are active," Storm confirmed as we reached the exit point. "Cruz is clear. The processing equipment is compromised. The timers are set."

We regrouped three blocks away, watching through Storm's tablet as the warehouse erupted into disorder. Workers fled the contaminated areas, and products turned vivid blue in their hands.

"By morning, every buyer in Miami will know their product is tainted," Cruz grinned.

"Their reputation is finished," Storm said. "No one will trust their supply again. And there's no evidence of tampering they can trace."

I felt Titan's heat at my back, his hand sliding around my waist. "Two centers down."

"The weapons facility is next, right?" I turned my eyes up at him.

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“You’re having so much fun with this.”

“I am. And I’m ready for more.”

He nodded and sank his mouth into mine. “Fuck, I can’t get enough of you.”

“How many times do I have to tell you not to?”

“You don’t. Yet I still can’t believe how wild you drive me.”

“Well, believe it. It’s never going to change.”

He sucked my tongue, making me aroused as I jumped into his arms.

The Miami heat was thick and still as I studied the port facility’s layout. Storm had identified their weapons stash, hidden behind a legitimate shipping operation on the third floor. Above it were water tanks for the building’s fire suppression system. It was another perfect setup.

“The maintenance chief is on board,” Cruz said, checking his phone. “I got him through the same connections we used at Club Velvet. His team’s been looking the other way on their operation for months.”

“What changed his mind?” I asked.

“Money.” The baritone in Titan’s voice made my nipples tingle. “Plus, proof they’ve planned to eliminate his whole maintenance crew once the weapons shipment

cleared.”

Storm pointed to the blueprint. “He’s giving us a ninety-minute window. He said a ‘routine inspection’ of the suppression system is scheduled. During shift change, there is minimal personnel.”

“What about the tanks?”

“Already modified.” Cruz grinned. “I added extra salt content this morning. When that hits their stash...”

“Everything corrodes,” I finished. “Weapons, ammo, all of it.”

“They’ll try to salvage what they can,” Titan said. “But by the time they realize the extent of the damage?—”

“Their whole stockpile will be worthless.” Storm pointed to the water’s projected path. “The chief also agreed to ‘accidentally’ miss some areas during cleanup. Let that salt water really soak in.”

I felt Titan’s heat as he moved behind me. “What’s going on in that pretty head of yours?”

“I’ve never been this excited watching people destroy themselves.” I leaned back against him. “They killed my brother. I want to murder them.”

His hands gripped my hips. “The ones responsible will have their day. This I promise you.” He kissed along my temple, and I closed my eyes and exhaled. I’d been filled with anxiety, grief, anger, and frustration since finding out about my brother’s death. Now, we were so close to ending the people responsible that I could taste it. I needed it to be soon because although my men had done everything to help me through this

grief, my heart could only begin to settle when we'd avenged Revere.

We prepared over the next hour. Storm monitored security feeds while Cruz coordinated with the maintenance chief. Titan and I positioned ourselves to observe, ensuring no unexpected variables interrupted the plan.

Right on schedule, the "inspection" began. The water pouring from above was supposedly a simple system test. But this water had an extra bite, seeping into every weapon, crate, and round of ammunition.

Through binoculars, I watched Pandora's Box's people scramble to protect what they could. But they had no idea that every attempt to dry things off only worked the salt deeper into the metal.

"Listen," Storm's voice came through our earpieces as he patched us into their security frequencies.

"What the fuck happened?" a voice raged. "Who authorized this inspection?"

"It's standard procedure, sir. The chief?—"

"I don't care! Do you know what this is going to cost us?"

"Damage control is already working on it, but?—"

"But nothing! First, the club incident, then the warehouse contamination, and now this? I'm about to kill all you motherfuckers!"

I held back a smile, feeling Titan embrace me tighter. They were cracking, turning on each other just as we'd planned.

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“Time to go,” he murmured against my ear. “Let them tear themselves apart.”

The Next Night

The underground reports rolled in as we listened in on their channel frequencies.

Their money handlers were dead at Club Velvet. The drug warehouse product was unsellable. The weapons stash was destroyed by salt water at the port. They took three devastating blows in rapid succession, and Ronan still had no idea who was dismantling his empire. That was the difference between us and them. Where they had come in, aiming at us hot, and taking what belonged to us, we planned a meticulous attack that crippled their entire operation while remaining hidden until we were ready to be seen.

I spread the blueprint of Pandora’s Box’s main facility across my desk. The industrial district location covered four floors, and each section was marked with Storm’s precise notations about security measures and access points. This was their fortress. Their sanctuary. The place they thought was untouchable.

“Their internal communications are a mess,” Storm said, laying out surveillance transcripts. “They’re pointing fingers, questioning every supervisor and every worker. The weapons facility manager disappeared an hour ago - probably running before they could blame him too.”

Cruz’s dark laughter filled the room. “This is the time to strike. While they’re still reeling and trying to figure out who fucked them over.”

“Most of their hired muscle jumped ship after the weapons stash went down,” I said.

Storm pulled up his tablet. “The ones still loyal can’t arm themselves properly. And with their accounts frozen after Club Velvet, they can’t hire more.”

I felt wicked satisfaction rip through me.

“This is what we wanted. The face-off. They can’t call for help. It’s us versus them.”

Cruz and Storm met my gaze, and I saw the same wicked hunger in their eyes.

“This is going to be so fuckin’ good. My dick is already hard,” Cruz said.

I laughed, and Storm shook his head. “This nigga got a hard-on for everything.”

My laughter cranked, and Cruz nodded and bit his bottom lip.

“It’s because of the terror. It ignites my sweet fuckin’ tooth.”

Cruz kissed the tip of his fingers in a chef’s kiss, and I doubled over, thoroughly amused.

“I love this motherfucker to death,” I grabbed his shirt and jerked him back and forth before pushing him.

“Awww, you wanna give me a kiss?” He puckered his lips and made kissing noises, and I couldn’t contain my laugh.

“Fuck. Off.”

He continued his kissing theatrics. “I love you too, nigga. Now, let’s get down to the

details so we can have lunch.”

Storm shook his head, hanging on to a smirk.

“What?” Cruz turned his attention to him. “You want some love, too? Come here.”

He grabbed Storm and puckered his lips.

“Get yo ass off me, nigga.”

Cruz humped his leg, and Santari entered the room and sauntered up to me.

“I love seeing y’all like this.”

I wrapped my arms around her shoulders and drew her back into my chest.

“Stop playing, nigga!” Storm pushed Cruz as he laughed.

“Aight, aight. How’s their security system looking?”

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Storm shook his head. “I have complete control of their system, but for now, I’m letting it roll like usual so we can see all their movements. It’s complex but exploitable. I can program targeted commotion on their lights, locks, and emergency protocols and set it all to trigger with one command.”

“You’ll need to be inside with us,” I said. “Can you manage both?”

“Giveme two hours to preset everything. I’ll build in secondary programs and control it all from my phone while we move.”

I nodded as my mind plotted our approach. “We go in three-man. Make them think they’ve got the numbers’ advantage.”

Santari turned to face me, but I spoke first. “Not you. Not yet.”

Her eyes narrowed. “After everything we’ve done, you still don’t think I can be an asset to this operation?”

“After everything, Santari, you deserve to be their destruction.” I pulled her closer. “Let’s let them think they’ve trapped us. Let them think they’ve won. Then you will show them exactly who they’ve been fucking with.”

Understanding dawned in her eyes, followed by that wickedness I’d watched grow inside her. “Where do you want me?”

“Do you see these areas?” I pointed to the maps. “This is where they’ll be, and we’ll make sure to corner them there if they choose to move toward us. I won’t give you a

signal. You were made for this, and when the time is right, you'll know it."

"Their own cameras will catch it all," Storm added. "Every moment of their downfall will be recorded on their own system."

Cruz studied the blueprint. "What's our time frame?"

"Tonight," I said. "While they're still fractured. While the confusion is fresh."

"I'll have the programs ready in two hours," Storm reiterated.

I kept my eyes on the blueprint, but I slipped my hand up Santari's throat, feeling her pulse race under my fingers. "Make them pay for everything they took from you, and we'll make them pay for thinking they could touch what's ours and get away with it."

She barred her teeth and bit into my wrists, hungry for blood. "With pleasure."

The industrial district wrapped us in shadows as we approached Ronan's fortress. Storm's phone glowed briefly as he initiated the first sequence. Inside, lights would fail, security doors would activate at random, and their own system would turn against them.

"The cameras are looping," Storm confirmed. "The back entrance is clear."

Cruz moved first, and I followed, with Storm close behind me moving as silent as the night through the service door. The corridors stretched dark and empty—their personnel had been cut to the bare minimum after the weapons facility disaster. Voices echoed from above, angry and desperate.

"What do you mean the system's locked? Override it!"

“I’m trying! Nothing’s responding!”

Storm’s smile was sinister, and he triggered another sequence as we moved. Emergency lights flooded the second floor, strobing red and white, disorienting anyone inside.

We climbed to the third floor, where the real power lived. Their command center, their private offices, their illusion of control. We were about to shatter it all.

“There’s movement ahead,” Cruz said. “Four guards.”

They never saw us coming. We emerged from the dark like their worst nightmares, efficient and lethal. No guns yet. This needed to be intimate.

My knife sliced through the first guard’s throat as Cruz snapped the second one’s neck. Storm whipped out a cord and strangled the third. The fourth managed half a shout before we took him down.

“Boss, we’ve got company!” The radio on one corpse crackled. “Shit, they’re here! The lower level is dark. We need help!”

Cruz burst into laughter. “Bitch ass niggas calling for help, how fuckin’ embarrassing.”

“Give ‘em a break, Cruz, they’re scared,” I mocked.

He shook his head, disgusted as we moved.

Storm clicked his phone. More lights died, and more doors were sealed.

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“Let’s keep pushing them up,” Cruz said. “Forcing them where we want them.”

We moved through their fortress like death itself, eliminating resistance and herding the survivors. Each floor and corridor brought us closer to our true targets.

When the topfloor stretched before us, we knew we’d reached their inner sanctum. Through the glass walls of their conference room, I saw them - Ronan and his three killers. Pandora’s Box, trapped in their own web.

“There’s nowhere left to run,” Cruz murmured.

Storm initiated the final sequence. Every exit was sealed, and every escape route was blocked except for the spot where Santari waited in the wing. In the conference room, Ronan’s face twisted with rage as he realized what was happening.

I pushed through the doors with Cruz and Storm flanking me. “To have once called you brother reminds me that I’ve made reprehensible mistakes in life.”

Ronan’s eyes turned into a mask of fury.

“We’ll make sure to never do that again.” I glanced at Cruz and Storm. “Won’t we, fellas?”

“Damn right,” they agreed.

“You...” Ronan’s rage twisted his features. “You’ve been behind everything.”

“Did you really think you could kill our true brother, kidnap our woman, and live to talk about it?”

“Tsk... I thought even you knew better than that.” I glanced at the others. “But I see you’ve got back up. So, you’re feeling... safe, is it?”

“Fuck you, nigga!”

My eyes widened, and I smiled. “Fuck me?” I pointed at myself then glanced at Cruz and Storm. “I think he’s mad.”

Cruz grunted, his face creased in lines of anger. “I say we put him out of his misery.”

I nodded. “I say you’re right. What do you think, Storm?”

“It’s now or never.”

I chuckled. “You wouldn’t believe Storm’s the lesser violent one out of the three of us, and yet, he’s about to kill the fuck outta y’all.”

Ronan’s teams spread out - the biggest one on the left side of him carried a mountain of muscle. He moved with surprising speed as another coiled like a cobra, ready to strike. The third carried himself with a fighter’s confidence. Their positioning blocked the exits behind them as if we would be the ones to run.

“We’ll just see about that,” Ronan mocked.

The mountain rushed Cruz first, closing the distance with impressive speed. Cruz ducked the initial swing, turned quickly, with a fierce grip and toss that sent him crashing into a control panel. Sparks showered as circuits shattered.

Storm engaged the fighter as they weaved between machinery. The fighter grabbed a loose pipe from a workbench, swinging it in lethal arcs. Storm caught the pipe mid-swing, using it to yank his opponent off balance, and slam him into an electrical box.

The cobra came at me while Ronan circled. His kick swept low, but I vaulted onto a maintenance platform, catching his follow-up punch and driving his face into a junction box. He staggered back with blood streaming from his nose, as Ronan moved beside me.

Cruz's opponent had him pinned against some industrial shelving with his massive hands reaching for his throat. But Cruz's fingers found a wrench, and the heavy tool connected with the man's temple. They crashed into storage drums, sending them rolling across the ground.

Storm's fighter cornered him near the hydraulic press, whipping the pipe at a fast pace. Storm ducked one swing, then two, caught the pipe and twisted it, forcing it back against his attacker's throat. The fighter struggled against Storm's control, and it was a beautiful thing to witness.

The cobra recovered, coming in fast with a flurry of strikes. I lifted my foot and kicked his chest, cracking his ribs on impact with my steel toe boots.

"Aaaaaaaah fuuuuuck!"

I wrapped a set of chains that lay nearby around my fist and sent a punch to his face that sent his head snapping back, knocking him out cold. Ronan charged me, driving his shoulder into my spine before I could regroup.

We crashed into a control panel, destroying the monitor's station, but I responded quickly, flipping to my feet. I seized a handful of exposed wire and whipped, wrapping Ronan's arm and splitting his flesh open.

“Aaaaaaaaaah, motherfucker!”

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His screams filled the room as I dragged him to the center.

The mountain man attempted to knock Cruz into a guardrail, but Cruz headbutted him, grabbed a handful of the man's tactical vest, and used it to swing him face-first into an exposed pipe joint.

Storm's opponent finally wrenched the pipe free, and victory flashed in his eyes. But I knew Storm had been waiting for exactly that, his boot connected with the man's knee. As the fighter stumbled, Storm grabbed a fistful of his dreadlocks and slammed his head into the press controls. Hydraulics whined as the fighter tried to regain his footing, but he slipped and fell into the controls again.

Rage twisted Ronan's features. "All you had to do was invite me into The Paradox. You know I would've been good for the team. Better than all of you!" His laugh was dark and hollow. The exits his men had attempted to block opened, and five more men entered.

"You're outnumbered!" Ronan spat. "And you'll never make it out of here alive!"

Five shots crackled through the space like rolling thunder, and all five men who entered hit the ground.

Santari emerged from the shadows with a nine-millimeter gun still raised. She was dressed in a fuckin' black leather catsuit that hugged her curves and made my dick hard. Her knee-high boots brought her height just below my nose, and I struggled to take my eyes off her, even for a split second.

“Now, who’s outnumbered, bitch?” she shouted.

We moved as one. Cruz grabbed the mountain man’s head and twisted sharply, snapping his vertebrae. Storm drove the pipe through his opponent’s chest, pinning him to the nearby machinery.

I locked my arm around Ronan’s neck, forcing him to his knees near the hydraulic press. His eyes bulged as Santari approached, her stilettos echoing as she climbed onto the machinery’s base. She drew the zipper down over her breasts, exposing her cleavage and slipping her hands inside. When she removed a small bottle of hand sanitizer, it stimulated every nerve inside me. She drenched her hands in the liquid, produced a match, and lit her hands on fire.

Cruz and Storm’s gazes darkened while terror filled Ronan’s eyes.

“Ronan...” she purred, turning my dick into a brick. “What I’m about to say won’t matter in a few seconds because you’ll be dead. But I want you to know anyway. I’m about to set you on fire.”

I didn’t think I could fall more in love with her but using my words as a replay for death in this moment solidified our union in ways I didn’t know was possible.

“Don’t worry. You won’t fight it because first, I’m going to break your jugular, and when it’s all said and done, I’m going to fuck my men while you burn to ash.” Her dark laughter sent chills down my spine, and I wanted her so bad I was about to nut where I stood. Fuck, I needed to be inside her.

I met her gaze and nodded, releasing my hold. Her leg swept up in a perfect arc, the razor-sharp heel puncturing his throat. She drew her leg back and grabbed his head with both hands, starting a fire in his hair that spread bit by bit down his skin to his clothes.

She released him and he crumbled to the ground, eyes wide. Santari stood over his body with power radiating from every inch of her. “That’s for killing my brother, you son of a bitch.”

The flames on her hands died and she turned to us and drew the zipper to her catsuit down to her hips.

“Storm,” I said, “cut the camera feed.”

“It’s already done.”

We peeled her out of her catsuit, and she jumped in my arms as I spread her pussy with a deep juggernaut thrust.

“Ooooooh fuck!”

“I love you so fuckin’ much,” I growled against her mouth, sucking her tongue and biting her lips.

“Sssssss,” she hissed. “I love you, too.” She bounced against my erection like she owned this dick, making my toes curl. “Thank you for believing in meeeeeeee!”

“Shit! Fuck, woman...”

I spread her ass with my hands, and Cruz entered her ass from behind.

“Aaaaaah! Yes! Shit! Fuck!”

Congruently, we moaned, grunted, and fucked as Ronan’s body below us – burned.

Two months later

I slipped out of my Range Rover and tossed the keys to the valet. It was hot as fuck today, but I didn't mind the sun's burn so much as others. When Cruz, Storm, Rev, and I created The Paradox, it wasn't meant to become a name known in the underground world. However, after we eliminated Pandora's Box and took down their entire operations, The Paradox, unintentionally, built a network of allies, ranging from mafia dons to influential politicians. The same people we'd bid on to take contracts in the past were the ones in our pockets.

Did we trust them?

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Hell no. But just mentioning The Paradox put fear in their adversaries' hearts, so the allies were more than happy to play by our rules.

We'd maintained our anonymity from the beginning. The only way to contact us was through a series of encrypted digital messages.

Santari had taken over Rev's position. As Storm determined which messages might need our attention, Santari had the final say on which hits we would take. I would put together the master plan to fulfill the missions while Cruz had the necessary connections in place to help us execute.

We were the perfect team – in pain, brutality, and love.

Ronan's closed casket funeral was held on a Tuesday afternoon when the sun was high, and humidity levels were heavy. The brothers of Omega Theta Tau didn't know what Ronan had gotten himself involved in, but they understood that his nefarious actions had gotten him killed. At the same time, they were somber and angry. We were resolute and firmly committed that his death was necessary. And if - for any unfortunate reason someone wanted to retaliate, be it friend or foe, we would unkindly help them meet their demise, too.

The door to Primal Luxury Resort opened and I crossed the lobby, but I stopped in my tracks as my eyes landed on three motherfuckers sitting comfortably in the back corner of the seating area.

I cracked my neck as I walked over to them with a scowl.

“What the fuck are you doing here?”

Christian, Xander, and Elijah Valentine glanced up at me – all three dressed in tailored suits and expensive jewelry.

“Brother!” Christian announced loudly.

I glanced around the space then back to him. “Keep your fuckin’ voice down, nigga, what the fuck?”

He frowned. “What? You’re not ashamed of me, are you?”

I inhaled deeply. “Christian, what the fuck are you doing here?”

“There’s still a million dollars on the table, brother.”

I smirked but quickly dropped it. “Stop calling me brother, motherfucker.”

“Why?” Xander added. “You are our brother, correct?”

I looked at Elijah. “Are they always this fuckin’ annoying?”

He smirked. “More so.”

They chuckled. “Look,” Christian started. “Whatever your relationship is with our father?—”

“There is no relationship with your father, and you should know that.”

“Okay.” Christian nodded. “Fair enough. If you never want a relationship with him, that’s your right. But we never knew about you. If we had, we would’ve reached out long ago.”

Xander spoke up. “Don’t punish us for something outside of our control.”

I cut my eyes at them, then turned my head and rubbed my temples.

“What the fuck do you want from me? Our worlds are miles different. We can’t just kumbaya, niggas.”

They laughed, and I rolled my eyes and smirked.

“Y’all are killin’ me.”

“We’re not asking to kumbaya, but damn, get to know us.”

“Not in your world,” Xander said.

“And not in ours,” Elijah said.

It reminded me of something similar Santari had said.

“There’s space and opportunity for us to connect in whichever way we like. Consider it before you push us away.”

I turned my back on them, took a step, then turned back to face them.

“This has to be on my terms.”

“We’re okay with that.”

“And don’t ask me for no hugs, motherfuckers.” I turned and left with their howls of laughter at my back.