



Claimed By A Blue Eyed Menace

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Category: Urban

Description: She was promised to power. He was born to kill.

Parker Whitmore was raised in a world where image is everything and loyalty is law. As the poised, sharp-tongued daughter of a respected businessman with criminal ties, she always knew her future would be strategic—but never did she expect to wake up married to Sebastian “Shooter” Mosley, the city’s most feared, unhinged enforcer. Cold-blooded and deadly with an icy blue stare that silences rooms, Shooter is the last man she ever wanted.

What begins as a forced arrangement rooted in power quickly spirals into something neither of them saw coming. Shooter is used to obedience, not attitude. But Parker’s fire drags him into obsession. And Parker? She swore she’d never fall for a man who solves problems with bullets. But when he touches her, her world tilts—and her rules start to crumble. In a marriage built on control, secrets, and enemies at every turn, they’ll have to decide if love is worth falling into or if it will be the very thing to destroy them.

Total Pages (Source): 34

Page 1

Source Creation Date: July 22, 2025, 4:44 pm

I never wanted to marry Silas Mosley.

When my father, Antwon Whitmore, sat me down in his office, his dark eyes filled with expectations I had spent my entire life trying—and failing—to outrun, I knew my fate had been sealed.

He spoke of legacy, of power, of the importance of alliances.

Of duty. Of bullshit.

“You are a Whitmore,”

he told me, as if that explained everything. And in this world, it did.

The Whitmore name was a currency, a weapon, a crown.

We built empires with our last name, forged futures through cold, calculated moves disguised as business deals.

And my engagement to Silas Mosley had been one of those moves—two dynasties coming together to ensure control over the streets, underworld, and industries that most people never even thought twice about.

Drugs.

Guns.

Oil.

Private security firms.

Things that operated in the background of society, quietly influencing everything from politics to power shifts in global markets.

The Mosleys were kings in their own right, just as my father was.

And in this world, a contract was binding.

Even if that contract came in the form of a wedding ring. I was expected to smile. To accept. To do what was required of me.

Silas was handsome but corny in the way niggas born into wealth often were.

He knew how to wear a suit, how to turn on a smile that made people believe he was someone worth trusting.

But I knew better.

I had spent enough time around his kind to recognize the lies beneath the charisma.

A son tied to a gangsta.

I tried everything to get out of it.

I pleaded, I bargained, I threatened.

My father remained unmoved, his face carved from granite as he reminded me, You were never meant to choose, .

Then, Silas turned up dead.

It happened in the silence of the night.

A single bullet to the skull, execution-style.

No witnesses.

No suspects.

No hesitation.

One moment he was alive, a living, breathing problem I had been trying to untangle myself from, and the next... he was a corpse in a pool of blood.

The news broke before dawn, whispered through the city like a ghost. By the time the sun rose, every major power player in Havencrest knew: Silas Mosley was dead.

Just my fucking luck, right? For the first time in months, I could breathe.

But I should have known it wasn't over.

Two days later, I sat in my father's study, watching the tension gather like a storm between him and Silas's father, Seth Mosley.

They were friends or something like it.

A bond built on blood and loyalty.

"The alliance stands,"

Seth said, his voice thick with anger. “A promise was made.”

My father’s mouth was a hard, unforgiving line. “I agree, but Silas is gone. There is no one of his stature to replace him in this deal.”

Seth’s fingers curled into a fist on the polished mahogany desk. “Something can be arranged,”

he said smoothly.

I straightened. A cold chill slithered down my spine. My father smirked, leaning into Seth, his voice quieter when he asked, “What are you suggesting?”

Seth’s gaze flicked to me. Unreadable. Calculating. Then, he leaned back, exhaling sharply. “My youngest will take Silas’s place.”

I froze. Oh, hell no. The possibility slammed into me like a physical force, my heartbeat roaring in my ears.

“Please tell me you have another son I don’t know about, Seth,”

my father grimaced, fingers clenched into a tight fist.

Sebastian “Shooter”

Mosley wasn’t like his older brother.

He wasn’t laid back.

He couldn’t switch the gangsta off.

He wasn't easygoing.

He wasn't the type to stand in the spotlight, flashing his wealth and power for the underworld to admire.

No, Shooter was something else entirely. Cold. Silent. Ruthless. The kind of nigga people spoke about in hushed tones, as if saying his name too loudly might summon him.

I had seen him only a handful of times over the years, always lingering in the background watching me like he was stalking his prey.

I hated it.

I mean, yes, he was handsome—no, he was fine as fuck.

A six-foot-four, two hundred and fifty pound chiseled devil with icy blue eyes, tatted on damn near every part of his caramel skin and an expression that never wavered.

Unlike Silas, who was groomed to be a king, to sit on the throne of Seth's empire, Shooter was never meant to rule.

He was always meant to play the background, but he was still a Mosley.

And in their world, that meant he was next in line to claim what belonged to his brother.

The funeral for Silas was lavish.

Over the top.

The way only the powerful and the criminally connected could manage.

Hundreds of people came to pay their respects, men in tailored suits, women draped in jewels that glinted beneath the cathedral lights.

The air was thick with the scent of lilies and the murmured condolences of those who had profited from Silas's existence.

I felt none of it.

I was numb as hell.

I stood near the front, my father beside me, accepting words of sympathy from strangers who barely glanced at Silas's casket.

But I damn sure wasn't thinking about the man being lowered into the ground.

I was thinking about the one standing in the shadows, watching me.

Always watching me.

Shooter had arrived late, his presence consuming every inch of space without a single word.

Dressed in a sharp black suit, his tie loosened just enough, observing.

Watching me.

His eyes—colder than I remembered—held me captive.

There was no sympathy there.

No grief. Just a quiet, unnerving intensity. People whispered about him. Stole nervous glances in his direction.

I understood why.

He looked like the kind of nigga who knew how to kill with his bare hands.

And I was sure he did.

I forced myself to look away, to ignore the way my pulse jumped beneath his gaze.

But I should have known better.

When the service ended and I turned to leave, he was there. Standing too close. Close enough that I could feel the heat of him, the raw power coiled beneath his stillness.

“,”

he said. My name was a weapon in his mouth, slow and deliberate.

I swallowed hard, lifting my chin. “Sebastian.”

His lips twitched—barely. Not a smile. More of a flicker of something unreadable. A shiver crawled down my spine. And for the first time in my life, I realized—I had spent so much time hating the idea of being with the wrong Mosley brother. Because Silas had been somewhat dangerous. But Shooter? The man with the cold, blue eyes? Shooter was deadly.

Page 2

Source Creation Date: July 22, 2025, 4:44 pm

I woke up in the morning, gasping. For one blissful second, I thought it had all been a nightmare—the funeral, the whispers, Shooter. Everything. Then my eyes adjusted to the dim morning light filtering through my bedroom window, and the illusion shattered.

Silas was still dead and I was still promised to his brother. I sat up too fast, my head spinning. My silk sheets were tangled around me, evidence of a restless night filled with half-remembered dreams. The air in my room was thick, suffocating, and I needed out. I shoved the sheets aside and stumbled toward the ensuite bathroom, gripping the sink as I met my reflection in the mirror.

I looked like shit.

Heavy bags sat under my eyes, my usually flawless complexion dull and pale.

My long hair was a matted mess.

Now, I wasn't some naive little bitch.

For the last twenty-six years, I had been raised in a world where business and blood ran side by side, where deals were sealed with handshakes and quiet threats rather than love or sentiment.

I had always known my marriage would be strategic, that my choices were nothing more than carefully arranged steps in a game I had never wanted to play.

But not like this. Never like this.

I turned the faucet on, splashing cold water on my face as I tried to ground myself because there was no way in hell I was marrying Shooter Mosley.

Leaving my room, I slipped into my silk robe and slippers and took the staircase down to the dining room.

My father was seated at the head, reading the morning paper as if everything was business as usual.

And, for him, it always was.

As if I hadn't been pawned off to the deadliest man I'd ever met less than twenty-four hours ago.

Hell no, I didn't have an appetite.

“Daddy, tell me this isn't happening,”

I said finally, breaking the silence.

He didn't look up from his paper. “You know it is.”

My grip tightened around the stem of my untouched mimosa. “Silas is dead. The deal should be void.”

He sighed, folding the paper neatly before setting it beside his plate. “The contract was never about Silas Mosley. It's about securing our future, strengthening our position. That hasn't changed.”

I stared at him, waiting for something—anything—that resembled fatherly concern. Some acknowledgment that I wasn't just a bargaining chip to be passed off to a

Mosley, no matter which one it was. I got nothing.

“So that’s it?”

I said, voice razor-sharp. “I just... go live with Shooter and everything will be fucking peachy?”

My father’s expression hardened. “Watch your mouth, Alize Whitmore.”

“Watch my—”

I laughed, but there was nothing amused about it. “You’re out of your damn mind if you think I’m marrying him, Daddy. He’s... crazy! I won’t do it.”

“You will.”

His jaw clenched. “The Mosleys are expecting compliance. You will give them that. While I am overseas, I don’t wanna hear no shit either, . End of discussion.”

I pushed my chair back abruptly, the legs scraping against the polished floor. My father didn’t stop me as I stormed from the dining room. He didn’t need to. Because the moment I stepped into the hallway, I ran straight into a wall of muscle and expensive cologne.

Shooter’s large frame towered over me, his frame relaxed but undeniably dominant. He had been waiting for me. Of course, he had. My breath hitched before I forced myself to meet his gaze. Those icy blue eyes studied me, unreadable, calm. Too calm. I wanted to claw that calm right off his face.

“You,” I spat.

His lips twitched, like he was almost amused by my fury. “In the flesh.”

My hands curled into fists at my sides. “You’re out of your damn mind if you think I’m gonna marry you.”

Shooter closed the small distance between us with the ease of a man who had never heard the word no and accepted it. “You don’t have a choice.”

“Look, I don’t care what my father agreed to,”

I snapped. “I don’t agree, and that shit should matter.”

Something dark flickered in his gaze, but it was gone before I could name it. He studied me like I was a puzzle, something to be solved and claimed in equal measure. “You think this is about what you want?”

he asked quietly.

I hated the way his voice sent a shiver down my spine. “That’s usually how marriage works,”

I shot back.

Shooter hummed, his fingers twitching like he was resisting the urge to touch me. “This marriage was decided long before you or I had a say in it.”

“Then let’s un-decide it,”

I challenged.

“Not an option.”

I glared up at him, frustration and panic warring beneath my skin. “Why? Why are you doing this? You never wanted this arrangement before. Why take Silas’s place?”

His gaze sharpened, his presence suddenly suffocating. He leaned in just enough that I could feel the heat of him, the quiet, leashed power coiled beneath his skin. “Because I can,”

he murmured. I sucked in a sharp breath. Shooter tilted his head, studying me. “You can scream, threaten, cuss me out. Whatever you need to do but it won’t change a fucking thing.”

“Muthafucka,”

I whispered. He smirked. I hated him. I hated him more than I had ever hated my father for putting me in this position in the first place. Shooter wasn’t just accepting this arrangement. He was reveling in it. I forced myself to stand tall, even as my entire world tilted beneath my feet. “You think you own me, don’t you?”

His gaze dragged over me slowly, possessively. “Not yet.”

I turned on my heel and stormed off before I did something reckless—like slap the smirk off his perfect face. His voice followed me, soft and lethal. “The wedding is in three days.”

A chill crawled down my spine. I had three days to stop this. To get out. Because if I didn’t... I’d be Mrs. Sebastian “Shooter” Mosley.

Page 3

Source Creation Date: July 22, 2025, 4:44 pm

I never asked to be born.

That was the first thing my father ever taught me: life is a privilege, not a choice.

You take what you're given, and you carve out your place, whether you want to or not.

My mother, his snow bunny mistress and best kept secret, didn't have a choice either.

With eyes matching mine, she died the day she brought me into this world, bleeding out on a hospital bed while my father stood there, watching.

Waiting.

Maybe even deciding right then and there if I was worth the price she paid.

He never said it out loud, but I knew what he thought.

I was a curse.

The bastard son. The unwanted one. I learned to live with the shit.

Silas was the golden boy.

The heir.

The one people loved, trusted, and feared in just the right way.

He was charming when he needed to be, ruthless when it counted.

He could talk his way out of anything, into anything, and he was supposed to be the one to carry the Mosley name forward.

And then there was me.

I was the insurance policy.

The one who handled the shit Silas wouldn't dirty his hands with.

The one who didn't hesitate.

While he was level-headed and handled things properly behind the scenes, I put bullets in the heads of the men who thought they could fuck with our family.

While he played Mr.

Powerful, I handled the dirt beneath the surface—the bodies, the threats, the whispered names of men who wouldn't live to see another sunrise.

Silas was the king, and I was the knife at his side.

But now this nigga was dead.

And my father decided it was my turn to step up, to take my brother's place in ways I never wanted.

I was my own boss; fuck I look like helping my Pops run his shit? But nonetheless, I had to start with cuffing Parker Whitmore.

I had always thought Parker was fine as fuck.

Bad from head to toe with her thick ass.

From a distance, of course.

She wasn't mine to touch, wasn't mine to look at too long, not when she was promised to Silas.

But I noticed her anyway—the way she carried herself, all uppity but low key ratchet as hell.

Parker was the kind of woman who had been raised on power and expectations, but she had never let them define her.

And that was why this marriage shit was gonna be a problem. I knew it from jump. She wasn't the kind of woman who fell in line easily, but she would. She didn't have a fucking choice.

I ran a hand over my jaw, my patience wearing thin as I sat at the Whitmore family's dining table, listening to Parker's father drone on about business, about arrangements, about everything except what actually mattered.

His daughter.

My soon-to-be wife.

“She can be a handful,”

Antwon said finally, sipping his coffee like we were discussing a minor inconvenience rather than his daughter's entire future.

I smirked, leaning back in my chair. “I expect that but I can handle her ass.”

He sighed, setting his cup down with a quiet clink. “She doesn’t understand the weight of this. She thinks she can refuse. That she has a choice.”

“She doesn’t,”

I said flatly.

“No, she doesn’t,”

he agreed. “But she’s stubborn. She’s never had to sacrifice for this family before. Spoon-fed. A princess in her right.”

His gaze met mine, assessing. “Make no mistake, . While I am away, your father and I are expecting everything to run smoothly on the business side of things. Silas is gone and well, it’s on you.”

I arched a brow. Who the fuck did this old nigga think I was? I knew what came with this shit and I was prepared to handle my business. As far as Parker went, she wasn’t some delicate little thing, easy to manipulate. She was a fighter, and that meant I had my work cut out for me. I leaned forward, elbows resting on the table. “Let me be clear about somethin’, Ant,”

My voice was calm, steady, but there was no mistaking the edge beneath it. “I can handle whatever comes my way. Your daughter? Won’t be an issue. She’s gon’ be my wife. That means she falls in line. She does what I say. She learns her place. And if she doesn’t?”

I tilted my head. “I’ll teach her.”

Antwon's expression tightened, but he nodded. "Understood. Take care of my baby girl,."

He leaned back in his chair, lacing his fingers together. "You have my word. She'll be ready for the wedding."

Ready.

Like she was something to be packaged up, wrapped in a pretty bow, and presented at the altar. She'd hate that but she'd learn. I pushed back my chair, rising to my feet. "Three days,"

I said simply.

Antwon nodded once. "Three days."

I didn't look back as I let myself out. Parker thought she could fight this. She had no idea who she was fucking with.

Page 4

Source Creation Date: July 22, 2025, 4:44 pm

I g l a n c e d a t my phone, ignoring the calls and texts from my girls, wondering what was going on. All they knew was that I was getting married in three days to one of the Mosley brothers. They knew what that entailed, but I couldn't bring myself to even speak on it. Not to mention, they weren't allowed at the wedding.

My father couldn't stand my friends; they were “ghetto”

and “beneath me”, according to him. Little did he know, we were all the same, but I was better at hiding it since high school. Truth be told, I needed my girls at a time like this, but I couldn't bring myself to pick up the phone.

I was stuck. Sick to my stomach. Writing in my journal like that was really going to help. The ink bled across the pages in frantic, angry strokes as I poured out the words I couldn't say out loud.

This isn't happening.

I don't belong to him.

I had been writing those same words, over and over, trying to convince myself that I could manifest them into truth. But no matter how many times I filled the pages, the reality wouldn't change. Shooter was everything I feared, everything I loathed in a nigga. He wasn't interested in love or partnership. He wanted ownership. And I refused to be owned.

My phone buzzed against my nightstand, snapping me from my thoughts. I hesitated, my chest tightening. It was past midnight. No one should be texting me right now. I

reached for it, my breath catching as I read the message.

Come outside.

No name. No context. Just two words. I placed the phone down, ignoring the spike of unease in my gut. Maybe it was a mistake. A wrong number. Then, the phone vibrated again.

Now, wifey.

My breath hitched. This wasn't a mistake. I knew, deep in my bones, who it was before I even saved his number. I clenched my jaw, my pulse hammering as I swung my legs over the side of my bed. I wanted to ignore him, to pretend like I hadn't seen it. But something told me Shooter wasn't a nigga who liked being ignored.

Grabbing my robe, I slipped into a pair of slippers and crept downstairs, moving as quietly as I could through the Whitmore estate. The house was silent, cloaked in the kind of stillness that only came in the dead of night. My father probably off smiling and grinning in the faces of politicians.

When I stepped outside, the night air kissed my skin, warm and humid. And then I saw it. A black Hellcat sat at the end of the driveway, its windows tinted so dark I couldn't see inside. I swallowed hard, my heart slamming against my ribs as I approached. The passenger door unlocked with a soft click. I hesitated before pulling the door open and sliding into the leather seat, the scent of weed smoke and expensive cologne wrapping around me like a noose.

Shooter sat in the driver's seat, one hand draped lazily over the steering wheel, the other resting against his thigh. His blue eyes cut through the darkness, pinning me in place.

I forced myself to meet his gaze, refusing to show an ounce of fear. “What do you want?”

His lips twitched, like he found me amusing. Like this was a game. “Glad you decided to listen,”

he said smoothly.

I folded my arms. “I could’ve ignored you.”

A low chuckle rumbled in his chest. “But you knew better.”

My jaw tightened. “Say what you need to say.”

Shooter exhaled, his amusement fading. “I wanna make something clear.”

He turned to face me fully, his presence suffocating in the small space. “This marriage is happenin’. Whether you want it or not. And since we’re doin’ this, we’re doin’ shit my way.”

I stiffened. “And what exactly does your way entail?”

“You obey me. Follow my rules. Be a good lil’ wife.”

I scoffed. “Excuse me?”

He continued, “You don’t fuck around with no other niggas. You’re by my side when it matters. And everything you are—your mind, your body, your soul—belong to me now.”

His voice was low, edged with something dark. Something final.

I stared at him, my pulse hammering. He couldn't be serious. But the deadly calm in his eyes told me otherwise. A slow, bitter laugh spilled from my lips. "Y'all are all insane if you think I'm gonna accept this shit."

Shooter tilted his head, studying me like he was debating something. Then he smirked. "I don't need you to accept it. I just need you to understand it."

I sucked in a sharp breath, anger curling hot in my stomach. "What if I paid you off?"

His smirk didn't fade. "I'm serious,"

I snapped. "You know I'm good for the money. I can pay you whatever you want and then disappear."

Shooter leaned in, the air between us shifting. His voice dropped to a near whisper. "I don't want your money, ."

A shiver ran down my spine. "I want you. So, I'm gonna have you."

My breath caught in my throat. I stared at him, trapped between rage and something far more dangerous. He sat back, his point made. "We gettin' married in three days."

I swallowed hard. Three days. Three days until my life as I knew it was over. And no amount of money, power, or fighting would change that. A deal had just been made with the craziest nigga I knew.

Page 5

Source Creation Date: July 22, 2025, 4:44 pm

I t o o k a long drag of my blunt, the smoke curling around me as I drove away from the Whitmore estate. The low purr of my car's engine was the only sound against the silence, the tinted windows shutting out the rest of the world. My mind kept circling back to Parker.

She had looked nervous as hell sitting beside me, but she hid it behind that smart mouth and pouty lips. I smirked, the memory playing in my head. I liked my women soft, obedient, sweet on the tongue. Parker was none of those things. She was fire and resistance wrapped in designer silk, with a mouth that knew how to cut deep.

She was also fine as fuck. That body? A problem. That defiance in her eyes when I told her I wanted her? A challenge. One I was looking forward to winning. By the time I pulled into the underground garage of my building and parked in my private space, my blunt was finished.

I killed the engine, I sat there for a second, letting the quiet settle before stepping out. The second I walked into my penthouse, I knew I wasn't alone. I smelled the liquor before I saw him and rolled my neck and shoulders. My father sat in my living room, the lights dimmed low, a crystal decanter of Hennessy on the table. He held a glass in his hand, swirling the dark liquid lazily. Another glass sat beside it, ready to be filled. I closed the door behind me and took my time removing my hoodie.

“Didn't realize I was havin' company.”

My father smirked, taking a slow sip. “Your security slippin'.”

I didn't respond. I knew damn well my security was tight. If he was here, it was

because he wanted to be. I stepped forward, my gaze cold. “What up?”

He leaned back, watching me with the same sharp, assessing stare I’d grown up under. “We need to talk.”

“About?”

“Business.”

I inhaled deeply before exhaling slowly. “It’s handled.”

He studied me. “Is it?”

I sat down across from him, legs spread wide, one arm resting on the back of the couch. “What’s the real reason you’re here, old man? I know it damn sure ain’t about Parker.”

He chuckled low, setting his glass down. “You know why I never looked at you to take over, Sebastian?”

My jaw tightened. I truly hated when muthafuckas called me by my government. “We both know why, but what’s done is done now, right?”

His expression didn’t change, but I saw the flicker in his eyes. The grudging acceptance. The truth that neither of us could ignore. “What’s done is done,”

he said, leaning forward. “But if you gon’ wear the crown, you better be ready for the weight of it.”

I met his gaze, unblinking. “I was born ready. Regardless of who you stuck your dick in, I’m here and I got this.”

Silence stretched between us. Then he reached for the decanter, pouring whiskey into the other glass. He slid one across the table to me. “To more wealth and power,”

he said, raising his glass.

I picked mine up, eyeing him as we both took a slow sip. This wasn't a moment of fatherly approval. This was a transaction. A silent agreement. He didn't have a choice but to acknowledge me now. And I would make damn sure he never regretted it.

He didn't linger. He never did. After finishing his Hennessy, he stood, straightened his suit, and gave me one last look, like he was sizing me up, measuring whether I was worth the name I carried. Then, without another word, he left.

I sat there for a long moment, the taste of Hennessy sharp on my tongue, my mind running over every unspoken thing between us. The tension, the resentment, the guilt, the years of being kept at a distance while Silas was molded into the perfect heir. Now the golden boy was dead, and the bastard was left to carry the weight.

I let out a slow breath before downing the rest of my drink. The city stretched out beyond the floor-to-ceiling windows of my penthouse, a sea of lights blinking against the dark. The world outside was sleeping, but I never did. Not fully, anyway.

So I did what I always did when my thoughts got too loud. I worked them out. I made my way to the private gym on the lower level of the building. The weights were already lined up, the bench press waiting. I stripped off my shirt, the cool air hitting my skin as I wrapped my hands, flexing my fingers. My muscles ached from tension, from all the shit sitting heavy on my shoulders.

I pressed play on the sound system, and Duffle Bag Trappy's latest EP filled the room, the bass vibrating through the floors. Then I got to work.

Breath after breath, pushing the weight, feeling the burn, letting my body drown out the storm in my head. By the time I was done, my arms were tight, my chest burning, sweat slicking my skin. My body felt lighter, but my mind was still tangled. I rolled my shoulders, exhaling deeply before heading back into the penthouse to shower.

The water was scalding, just how I liked it. I let it run over me, washing away the sweat. My hands pressed against the cool tile as I let the steam rise around me, my thoughts circling Parker. The way she looked tonight. The way she covered her fear with attitude. The way she sat in my passenger seat, arms crossed, chin lifted like she wasn't already mine. Still thought she could outmaneuver me.

After drying off and throwing on a pair of boxer briefs and sweats, I made my way to my master bedroom. I sat down, rolling a blunt and lit up, taking a slow drag as I leaned back in my chair, staring at the ceiling.

The wedding was in three days. In three days, Parker Whitmore was gon' be mine. And no matter how hard she fought, she'd come to understand one thing real soon. There was no getting away from me. This shit was just the beginning.

Page 6

Source Creation Date: July 22, 2025, 4:44 pm

I f e l t l i k e I was suffocating in this fucking dress. The lace of my wedding gown, delicate and hand-stitched, felt like a noose around my throat. The diamond tiara nestled in my pinned-up curls sparkled under the soft lighting, but it might as well have been a crown of thorns. I was beautiful. A princess ready for her fairy tale but this shit wasn't a fairy tale. This was a prison sentence wrapped in money and power.

The mirrors in the bridal suite reflected a picture-perfect bride, but all I saw was a woman trapped. My hands clenched at my sides, the weight of my engagement ring—a new one, picked by Shooter—burning against my skin. It might've been the biggest rock I'd ever seen, but it was truly nothing special.

A knock on the door made me flinch. “Ten minutes,”

came my father's voice, cold, clipped and impersonal.

I swallowed hard, my heart hammering against my ribs. I turned away from the mirror, forcing myself to breathe. This wasn't how it was supposed to be. I should've had a father who actually gave a damn about my happiness. I should've had a mother to help me, to wipe my tears, and to tell me I was making the wrong choice. But my mother had run away when I was a toddler, unable to take this life anymore.

And now, I was standing here, dressed for a wedding I never wanted, about to marry a man I feared, resented, and—God help me—found devastatingly attractive.

The church was filled with power players from both sides of the family. Criminals disguised as businessmen. Women draped in designer gowns, whispering behind champagne flutes. The weight of a legacy built on blood and wealth pressed down on

me with every step I took down that fucking aisle.

Shooter stood at the front, a picture of control. His black tux was sharp, perfectly tailored to his tall, muscular frame. The crisp white shirt beneath it was unbuttoned at the collar, like he couldn't be bothered to play the perfect groom. But those blue eyes—cold, dark, and piercing—never left me. I gripped my bouquet tighter, my pulse pounding. He looked good. Too damn good. But his presence was suffocating.

The priest droned on, and I barely heard a word. My vows were spoken on autopilot, my lips moving but my heart numb. Then Shooter's deep, measured voice cut through the haze.

“I do.”

The words settled over me like a death sentence. A shiver ran down my spine as he slid the diamond wedding ring onto my finger, his grip firm, possessive. He didn't smile. Didn't even pretend as I slipped the wedding band my father purchased for me to give to him on Shooter's finger. And when the priest finally said, You may kiss the bride, Shooter did something I wasn't expecting.

He gripped my chin, tilting my face up, and brought his lips so close to mine that it tickled. He grinned and whispered, “Good girl.”

The ballroom was decorated in gold and ivory, elegant and extravagant, filled with people drinking, laughing, and celebrating. Of course, I played my part flawlessly. I smiled, mingled, and danced. I let Shooter's hand rest possessively on my waist as we made our rounds, greeting family members and business associates.

But resentment simmered beneath my skin. I was trapped, and everyone who knew knew. Shooter never let me stray too far. He watched me, those cold blue eyes tracking my every move. At one point, I felt the weight of his gaze from across the

room, and when I turned, he lifted his glass in a silent toast. A warning. A promise. I scowled and turned away. But my pulse betrayed me, thudding hard against my ribs. I couldn't wait for this day to be over with.

T h e r e c e p t i o n e n d e d late, and I was exhausted. Not just physically, but mentally and emotionally. Shooter and I rode in silence, and I was glad. I didn't have shit to say. I knew my clothes, shoes, and other belongings had been dropped off during the ceremony, and I would be given my phone back once settled in.

My hands twisted in my lap, the wedding ring on my finger like a fucking shackle. This nigga sat beside me, his arm stretched along the back of the seat, relaxed. Confident. Like a man who had won.

When we finally pulled up to his penthouse, I barely waited for the limo to stop before pushing the door open and stepping out. Shooter followed at his own pace, his presence a force behind me. The moment we stepped off the elevator, I rolled my eyes at the guards on standby and turned to Shooter. "I want my own room."

His lips twitched, but his expression remained unreadable. "You'll take whatever I give you."

I lifted my chin. "I'm taking the guest room."

He didn't argue. Didn't push. He just stared, that unreadable blue gaze locking onto mine before he finally spoke.

"Lock the door if it makes you feel better."

His voice was low, taunting. Like he knew it wouldn't matter. Like he knew, eventually, I wouldn't want it locked at all.

I swallowed hard and turned on my heel, walking away before he could see how much he got under my skin.

Page 7

Source Creation Date: July 22, 2025, 4:44 pm

The morning after the wedding, I woke up after a couple of hours of resting my eyes feeling more alert than I had in weeks. It was a new day. A new chapter. And my wife was still locked away in the guest room, probably thinking she could ignore reality a little longer.

I let out a low chuckle, sitting up and rubbing a hand over my face before swinging my legs over the edge of the bed. Rising up, I made my way to the bathroom, taking my time under the hot spray of the shower. I let the water beat against my muscles, thinking about the day ahead. Today was about setting the tone. Parker needed to understand what it meant to be a Mosley, what it meant to be mine.

After throwing on a black fitted tee, black jeans, fresh Timbs, and my chains, I grabbed my Glock, checked the clip, and tucked it into my waistband. Business was waiting. And so was my wife. I knocked once on her door, then used the key above it to unlock it. She was still in bed, wrapped up in the covers like a damn burrito, her dark curls spilling over the pillows.

“Time to get up,”

I said, voice rough from the first words of the morning.

She groaned, shifting beneath the covers but not making any real effort to move. “Go to hell.”

A smirk tugged at my lips. “Already been there, baby. Get dressed. You’re coming with me.”

Parker peeked out from beneath the covers, eyes narrowed, voice still husky with sleep. “For what?”

“You’ll see.”

I walked out before she could argue, making my way to my home office. I dropped down into my chair, rolling up a blunt while I waited. Forty minutes later, she walked in. Annoyed. Beautiful. Her long legs were on full display beneath a fitted black dress, and her skin glowed even under the dull lighting.

I exhaled a slow stream of smoke, letting my gaze drag over her before I leaned back in my chair. “Took you long enough.”

Parker folded her arms. “I’m only coming because if I stay here, I might actually break something.”

“Try it and see how that works out for you,”

I said smoothly, pushing up from my chair. “Come on.”

The moment we were in my car, I laid down the law. “You’re my wife now, so let’s get some shit straight.” I gripped the wheel with one hand, the other tapping lightly against my thigh. “You’re gonna act like it. That means no fucking around with other niggas, no embarrassing me, and you keep all that ratchet shit to a minimum.”

Parker let out a sharp, humorless laugh. “Oh, so I have to be your obedient little wife now?”

I glanced at her, amused by her sarcasm. “You’re catchin’ on.”

She rolled her eyes. “This ain’t the 1800s, . I might’ve been forced into this marriage,

but you can't force me to play the role you want."

I smirked. "Keep tellin' yourself that."

The rest of the ride was quiet, tension simmering in the space between us. She was fighting this with every ounce of strength she had, and I respected it. Hell, I liked it. But at the end of the day, it didn't change a damn thing.

When we got to breakfast, the spot was quiet, filled with the kind of people who didn't need to look over their shoulders but did anyway. Power sat in every corner booth, concealed behind designer suits and hushed voices. Parker sat across from me, posture rigid, arms folded as she scanned the menu like she was reading a death sentence. She ordered a fruit bowl and a cappuccino without looking up.

I smirked, setting my menu down. "That's all you gettin'?"

"I'm not hungry,"

she said coolly, placing the menu back on the table with a little too much care.

I nodded to the waiter. "Get her somethin' more than that. Eggs, toast, bacon."

"I don't eat bacon."

"Fine. Whatever bougie shit she eats."

I waved the waiter off before settling my attention back on her. "You should eat."

She met my gaze, eyes flat. "Don't pretend like you care."

I chuckled, leaning back in my chair. Silence stretched between us as she lifted her

cup to her lips, sipping slowly. Her fingers curled around the porcelain, nails perfectly shaped, polished, unchipped. Every inch of her was manicured, perfected, controlled—except her mouth. That was wild and reckless. I like that shit.

“Tell me somethin’,”

I said after a beat, dragging my thumb across the condensation on my water glass. “What kind of man would you have married if it wasn’t for this arrangement?”

She tilted her head slightly, gaze unreadable. “Why does it matter?”

“It doesn’t.”

I shrugged. “Just curious.”

She exhaled, setting her cup down. “Someone who didn’t force me into a marriage. Someone who respected me.”

I smirked. “Respect is earned, not given.”

She rolled her eyes. “How original.”

The waiter returned, placing a plate of eggs, toast, and avocado in front of her. Parker eyed it like it had personally offended her before lifting a piece of toast and tearing off the smallest bite possible.

I shook my head. “You always eat like a damn bird?”

She chewed slowly, setting the toast down like she was done with it already. “You always pry into people’s lives like you give a fuck?”

I let her little jab roll off me, watching her closely. “You ever been in love?”

She blinked, clearly not expecting that question. “What?”

“Love,”

I repeated, picking up my coffee. “That shit people write songs about. You ever had it?”

Her shoulders tensed, but she covered it up well. “I don’t see how that’s relevant.”

“So that’s a no.”

She clenched her jaw. “I didn’t say that.”

“But you didn’t say yes either.”

I grinned, leaning forward. “Come on, Mrs. Mosley. Tell me. You ever been in love?”

She met my gaze, eyes sharp, defiant. “Once. When I was younger.”

“What happened?”

She lifted one shoulder in a half-shrug. “Life.”

I narrowed my eyes. “That’s vague as hell.”

“So are most things in life.”

A slow burn of frustration coiled in my chest. She was being difficult on purpose.

Playing this little game of hers, giving me breadcrumbs, trying to see how much patience I had. I drummed my fingers against the table, watching her carefully. “You’re testin’ me, Parker.”

She sipped her cappuccino, completely unfazed. “Am I?”

“Yeah,”

I said, voice low, amused, but laced with warning. “You wanna see how far you can push me. You wanna see if you can get a rise out of me.”

She tilted her head, faux innocence dripping from her voice. “And am I succeeding?”

My jaw ticked. For a split second, I could feel it—the urge to shatter that calm, collected demeanor of hers. To grab her by that delicate throat and make her feel the weight of the world she just got trapped in. Something must have flickered across my face because for the briefest moment, she went still.

Her fingers tensed around her cup. Her breath caught. Fear flashed in her eyes. I let the moment stretch, let her feel it. Then, just as quickly as the moment came, I reined it in.

I relaxed, rolling my shoulders back, forcing the smirk to return. “Nice try, baby. But you’re not ready to meet the monster yet.”

She exhaled slowly, blinking a few times before masking the fear with defiance again. “Maybe the monster isn’t as scary as you think,”

she challenged, though her voice wasn’t as steady as before.

I chuckled, tossing my napkin onto the table. “Or maybe you should pray you never

find out.”

She swallowed, looking away. I picked up my cup, taking a slow sip, letting her sit with that.

I d r o v e i n silence for a minute, my hand gripping the steering wheel like it owed me money. Parker sat to my right, arms folded, legs crossed, that dress still hugging her curves perfectly. Her mouth had been slick all through brunch, and if we wasn't in front of people, I'd have reminded her who the fuck was running shit but I let her be.

“Listen, I'm not one of your little soldiers, Sebastian,”

she snapped finally, breaking the silence. “The barking of orders? That needs to stop.”

I smirked. “Ain't nobody barkin', Parker. But you better learn the difference between my tone and your options.”

She rolled her eyes, turning toward the window. “You got serious issues.”

I was about to say something slick when my phone lit up on the dash. The name flashing made my jaw tighten. It was Ren, my right hand. I picked up on speaker. “Yo.”

His voice came through urgently. “There's a situation. That barber—Dewayne? The one we paid to keep quiet? He went on a fuckin' podcast. Started runnin' his mouth about what he seen at the warehouse last month. Ain't say names, but it's too close.”

Parker's head turned slowly. I could feel her watching me. I inhaled through my nose. “Where he at now?”

“The shop far as I know. Want me to—”

“Nah,”

I cut him off. “I got it. Text me the addy.”

The call ended. My hand stayed locked on the wheel, vision narrowed as the anger set in. I didn’t speak. Just made a hard right turn, tires screeching against the asphalt.

“Where are we going?”

Parker asked, her voice low but cautious.

“Handle somethin’,”

I said, my tone flat.

“What kind of something?”

I didn’t answer. Fifteen minutes later, we pulled up to a run-down barbershop tucked behind a liquor store in the Southside. I killed the engine. “Don’t get out this car for shit,”

I told her.

Parker gave me a look. “What are you about to do?”

Ignoring her, I got out of the car and walked inside like I owned the block. The bell above the door dinged, and Dewayne looked up from the chair, clippers in hand, eyes wide.

“. Yo, I ain’t mean—”

I raised the Glock and popped his ass in the chest twice. He screamed and let out ragged breaths.. “No, no, no. I ain’t say your name. I swear—”

I didn’t give a fuck. “You went on a podcast, my nigga,”

I said, stepping closer, pressing the muzzle against his lips. “Talked about shit you ain’t built to speak on.”

“I... was drunk. I was—”

Dewayne’s brains splattered the mirror as I let off another shot to his dome. His body dropped like dead weight, shaking the floor. Blood pooled under him instantly, hot and steaming. I didn’t blink. Just exhaled slowly as I turned and walked out of the barbershop.

I wiped the barrel of the gun clean with a cloth from my pocket as I trekked back to the car. Parker’s eyes locked on me through the windshield. Sliding into the driver’s seat, I turned to her. She was pale, lips parted, and her whole body was pressed up against the passenger door like she was trying to create space between us that didn’t exist.

“Did... did you just... kill—”

“You don’t get to feel sorry for him. He chose his fate.”

She stared at me, eyes filled with something between fear and confusion as I drove off. I kept my eyes on the road and lit a blunt. All that shit she was just talking at the restaurant. Parker wasn’t ready for a nigga like me but she would be. Eventually.

Page 8

Source Creation Date: July 22, 2025, 4:44 pm

It had been a full week since I became Mrs. Mosley, and I had done nothing but lay around, watching TV and writing in my journal like some caged bird waiting for its chance to escape. The penthouse was luxurious, filled with the finest furniture, floor-to-ceiling windows overlooking the city, and a kitchen that probably cost more than some people's entire homes. But it wasn't home. It was a fucking prison.

Shooter had been busy, handling business. After what I witnessed at the barbershop, I had done everything in my power to avoid going anywhere with him. The next time he told me to get dressed, I faked a headache. The time after that, I claimed my cramps were too bad. He didn't argue or force me but I saw the way he looked at me, like he was giving me space but wouldn't allow it for much longer. But tonight... tonight, I needed a fucking break.

I was curled up on the couch, flipping through channels with my phone in my lap when it started ringing. I glanced down. Mecca. I sighed before answering. "What?"

"Bitch, don't 'what' me. It's Saturday. And not just any Saturday—it's Kalea's birthday, and you already know what that means."

Her voice was filled with excitement, and in the background, I could hear the music bumping.

I groaned. "I don't know, girl..."

"Nope. Don't even finish that weak-ass excuse you were about to give me,"

she snapped. "You been MIA all damn week, acting like a housewife all of a sudden.

We haven't seen your ass. You owe me and the girls a night out.”

I sighed, glancing at my reflection in the mirror across the room. My hair was up in a messy bun, my oversized tee swallowing my frame. I looked like a woman who had given up. Sasha must have sensed my hesitation because she went in for the kill.

“, listen to me. I get it. You married the big, bad wolf or whatever, but bitch, you need to breathe. One drink, a little dancing, and some fun ain't gonna kill you.”

Shooter's voice flashed in my head. “Keep all that ratchet shit to a minimum.”

But he wasn't here. He was off somewhere handling business, probably doing something bloody and illegal. And I was supposed to just sit here like a damn Stepford wife, waiting for him to come back? Fuck that.

“What time y'all heading out?”

Mecca squealed. “That's my girl! We're leaving in an hour. You got time to get fine as fuck, but don't play around, okay?”

I rolled my eyes but smiled. “Yeah, yeah. I'll be ready.”

The moment I hung up, I felt that old familiar rush of adrenaline—the one I used to get before a night out. It had been too long since I had dolled myself up, slipped into a sexy dress, and reminded the world exactly who the fuck I was. I tossed my phone onto the bed and headed straight to the bathroom. If I was going out, I was going out looking right.

After a hot shower, I stood in front of my mirror, naked, studying myself. My body was still toned, my curves still lethal. I wasn't about to let this marriage dull my shine. I styled my hair into soft curls that framed my face perfectly. My makeup?

Flawless. A smoky eye, long lashes, and a glossy nude lip that made my pout look downright sinful.

I slipped into a black bodycon dress that hugged every curve like it was made just for me. The hem stopped just below my ass, and the neckline dipped low enough to be dangerous. Diamonds glinted against my brown skin, and when I stepped into my red-bottom heels, I knew one thing for certain—I looked good as fuck.

Shooter might've thought he had me on lock, but tonight, I was free. The real challenge was getting out of the penthouse. He had goons stationed everywhere, but I had already studied them like a damn science project. And right now, my best bet was Marcus, the youngest and most easily distracted of his security team.

I found him near the elevator, standing post with a serious expression. I smiled sweetly. "Hey, Marcus."

He turned, eyes widening slightly as he took me in. "Uh, Mrs. Mosley."

I almost rolled my eyes at the name. Instead, I tilted my head, playing innocent. "So, listen... I just wanted to let you know I'm heading out for a little bit. To the movies."

Marcus frowned. "Uh... does, uh... does Shooter know?"

I placed a delicate hand on his arm, letting my fingers trail lightly. His Adam's apple bobbed. "Of course. I wouldn't just leave without telling my husband, now would I?"

My voice was soft, sweet, dangerously convincing.

Marcus hesitated, then looked me over again. I knew what he saw. A bad bitch in a tight dress, looking like trouble. "You just going to the movies, right?"

I smiled, touching his chest lightly. “Mhmm. Just a simple girls’ night. Nothing crazy.”

He exhaled, nodding. “Alright, alright. Be careful out there, Mrs. Mosley.”

I bit back my smirk as he swiped his keycard and let me pass. That shit was too easy. I stepped into the elevator, and as the doors closed, my smirk stretched into a grin. Freedom. When I climbed into the awaiting black SUV, my girls screamed.

“Bitch, look at you!”

Retia grinned, reaching over to grab my wrist and shake it. “I knew you weren’t about to sit up in that penthouse and rot.”

Kalea, the birthday girl, clapped her hands. “You came! I was not about to celebrate without you, bitch.”

I laughed, my earlier tension slipping away as I settled into the seat. “Of course I came. Y’all know I can’t resist a turn-up.”

Mecca, the quietest of the group, side-eyed me. “Your crazy husband ain’t gonna pop up at the club and snatch your ass up, is he?”

I waved a dismissive hand. “Shooter is busy. He ain’t worried about me right now.”

That was partly true. But I already knew when he found out, it was going to be hell to pay. But tonight? Tonight, I was outside.

The driver pulled off, the bass from the speakers vibrating through the car as the city lights blurred past us. For the first time in days, I felt like me again. Let’s see what the night brings.

G y p s y B a r & L o u n g e was packed, the air thick with the scent of expensive perfume, liquor, and the bass of a trap song vibrating through the walls. The lights were low, casting everyone in a sultry glow, and the energy was just right.

I leaned against the bar, sipping on a strong margarita while my girls huddled around me, laughing and talking over the music. The tequila burned, but in the best way, loosening the last bit of tension in my shoulders.

“This is what I’m talkin’ about!”

Mecca shouted, throwing an arm around me. “Girl, I was worried about you, but you came out and showed the fuck up.”

Retia smirked, her nails clicking against her glass. “Mmmhmm. But , real talk. you been lookin’ stressed. What’s up with that?”

I exhaled and swirled the ice in my drink. “What do you think? I’m married to a Mosley. It ain’t exactly sunshine and roses.”

Kalea arched a brow. “Yeah, we peeped that. And Shooter?”

She whistled low. “That nigga ain’t normal.”

A bitter laugh slipped out. “Tell me something I don’t know.”

Retia frowned, taking a sip of her drink before nudging me. “But real shit, though... is he, like, hurtin’ you?”

I hesitated. Not yet. But he was definitely playing the long game, asserting control in ways that didn’t require his fists—just his presence, his demands, his goddamn blue eyes on me like a predator waiting for its prey to wear itself out. I forced a smirk.

“Nah, he’s just... intense.”

Mecca snorted. “Intense? Girl, that nigga is fuckin' scary.”

I rolled my eyes, even though I knew she wasn't lying. “Let’s not talk about him tonight. We’re supposed to be turning up.”

“Period,”

Kalea agreed, raising her glass. “To me, bitches!”

I clinked glasses with them, knocking back the last of my margarita. The liquor spread warmth through my veins, making me forget, for just a moment, who I belonged to now. We made our way to the dance floor, bodies swaying, hips rolling, the music taking over. I was mid-spin when I felt a presence behind me.

“Damn, ma. You always dance like this?”

A deep voice, smooth as honey but with a dangerous edge. I turned and tilted my head up, meeting the dark gaze of a man who looked like trouble in a tailored shirt. He was tall, caramel-skinned, with broad shoulders, a sharp jawline, and a smile that promised toxicity.

I smirked. “Depends on who’s watching.”

His lips curled into something wicked. “Lucky me, then.”

I raised a brow. “That so?”

He nodded, stepping closer but not touching. Just enough for me to feel the heat radiating from his body. “Yeah. Lucky you, too. ‘Cause I was just about to leave, but

then I saw you.”

I shouldn't have entertained him. But I was lit, tipsy, and reckless. “So what, you gonna stand there and admire, or you gonna dance?”

I challenged.

He grinned, stepping into my space, hands skimming my waist as he moved with me. He smelled good—like expensive cologne and bad decisions.

“What's your name, ma?”

I smirked, letting him spin me, but before I could answer, I caught Retia's expression shift from carefree to something worse. Then I felt it. A shift in the air. A slow, creeping chill that curled around my throat like an invisible hand. I turned my head to see Shooter at the entrance of the lounge, clad in all black, blue eyes locked on me with a look so lethal it made my breath hitch and my stomach drop. If looks could kill, I would've dropped dead on the spot.

Kalea grabbed my wrist. “,”

she whispered, voice urgent.

Mecca , standing beside her, wasn't even trying to be discreet. “Oh shit, bitch. You fucked up.”

I swallowed hard. My pulse spiked, adrenaline roaring through me like a warning siren. My feet refused to move, even as the fine-ass man in front of me took one last glance at Shooter before stepping the fuck back. Smart.

Shooter's steps were slow, deliberate, as he prowled through the lounge, the crowd

instinctively parting for him like he was Moses and they were the Red Sea. His eyes never left me. Cold. Dark. Deadly. My breath caught when he stopped in front of me, so close I could feel the heat of his body, the restrained fury radiating from him like an open flame. For a long, thick moment, he didn't say anything. Just stared down at me, jaw locked, lips pressed into a hard line. Then, Shooter finally spoke with his voice deep and low.

“Let's go.”

Two words. No argument. No negotiation. Just a command.

I hesitated—big fucking mistake—because the next thing I knew, his hand was wrapped around my wrist in an iron grip, and he was moving. Dragging me through the club, through the gawking crowd, past my stunned girls who knew better than to get involved.

The bouncer at the entrance barely stepped aside in time before we were outside, the night air hitting my skin like a slap. Shooter didn't stop. Not until we reached his choice of car for the day, which was a black Maybach parked illegally at the curb like he wished someone would try him.

Then, without a word, he yanked open the passenger door and all but shoved me inside. The door slammed shut, and seconds later, the driver's side opened, and Shooter slid in.

The car was silent, except for the sound of my rapid breathing. I forced myself to look at him, my mouth parting to speak— but one glance at his face had my words dying in my throat.

His jaw was clenched so tight I thought his teeth might crack. His grip on the steering wheel was white-knuckled, his tattooed fingers flexing, betraying the restraint it was

taking not to snap.

I wasn't sure which scared me more—the storm brewing in his icy blue eyes or the fact that he hadn't said a single word since dragging me out of the club. But one thing was for damn sure. I had fucked up.

Page 9

Source Creation Date: July 22, 2025, 4:44 pm

Parker sat in the passenger seat with her arms crossed and her bare leg bouncing like she was trying to burn off the nerves crackling beneath her flawless skin. She was bad as fuck in that tight little dress, her makeup perfect, her perfume thick in my nose—something soft, feminine. And I was fucking vexed. She hadn't said a word. Neither had I. Didn't need to.

My fingers flexed on the steering wheel, still feeling the phantom grip of her wrist in my palm. She thought she was slick. Thought she could lie to my guard, sneak out, parade her pretty ass for other niggas. Parker had no idea who she was fucking with.

I pulled up to the penthouse, shutting the engine off with one smooth movement. For a moment, neither of us moved. Then Parker exhaled sharply and pushed the door open. She stomped ahead of me, those heels clicking against the marble floors when we stepped inside. She didn't even stop in the foyer. Went straight for the kitchen, yanking open the fridge like she had something in there that could cool her attitude.

I shut the front door, slid my gun from my waistband, and set it down on the console table by the entrance. Rolled my shoulders. Tipped my head side to side.

I was calm but my patience was hanging by a fucking thread. "Let me ask you somethin'."

My voice was low, even. She ignored me, twisting the cap off her water bottle and taking a slow sip. I took a step further into the kitchen and her ass still didn't look at me. "So you don't know how to listen and follow rules, huh?"

I asked, leaning against the counter, arms folded. "Tellin' my guards whatever the

fuck you want, sneakin' out, runnin' around like you ain't got a husband?"

Parker let out a sharp, humorless laugh. Finally turned to me. "You're far from what a husband is, Sebastian."

My eyes locked on hers. "I've been your husband since I claimed you, Mrs. Mosley."

Her jaw tightened. "You're my captor. Big fucking difference."

"You say that like you ain't get up there and say them vows with me."

She scoffed, shaking her head, taking another sip of water. "I was forced last time I checked."

I stepped closer. "You're mine, Parker."

Her nostrils flared. "You don't own me, ."

I arched a brow. "Don't I, though?"

Parker tried to step around me, but I moved too fast. Blocked her path. She let out a frustrated breath and tried again, but I backed her up until her spine hit the fridge. Her breathing changed. Not from fear but from something else. I caught that shit immediately. I tipped my head, inhaling her. Watching the way her chest rose and fell, how her fingers tightened around that water bottle.

I leaned in. Not touching her but mouth was close to her ear when I murmured, "Chill the fuck out and be a good little wife before I have to tie you up."

Parker shivered and I liked that shit. Smirking, I pulled back, my eyes scanning her face, my tongue sliding over my bottom lip. "Oh, you'd like that, huh?"

She swallowed hard. Her pulse jumped in her throat. I tilted my head, watching her. Watching her reaction. “That’s what’ll make you follow the rules, Mrs. Mosley?”

My voice was low, taunting. “You want a nigga to tie you up and eat that pussy until you beg me to stop?”

I let the words linger, heavy and thick in the space between us. “Until you obey me?”

Her lips parted. A slow blink. I could see the war in her eyes. Pride. Anger. And something darker, something she wasn’t ready to admit. Parker yanked the water bottle up, taking another sip. But her hand shook just the slightest bit. Then, with a sharp inhale, she shoved past me. Not hard. Not enough to move me. But enough to make a point.

She turned at the kitchen entrance, her brown eyes locking with mine, pure fire in them. “I’ll never obey you.”

I chuckled, slow and deep, shaking my head as I watched her storm off. “Keep tellin’ yourself that, Mrs. Mosley.”

I watched Parker disappear down the hall, her back stiff, her head held high like she had the upper hand. Like she had actually won something. I wasn’t tripping. She could stomp around all she wanted, roll her eyes, and throw her little tantrums. But at the end of the day, she was still mine, and she was still here.

I exhaled sharply, dragging a hand down my face as I turned toward my bedroom. The day had been long as fuck. Between handling business, securing Silas’s old position, and making sure our operations kept running smoothly, I barely had time to breathe. And then I checked Parker’s location.

Saw her ass was in a bar, a lounge, most likely shaking that fine ass in some tight

little dress while thirsty niggas tried to get at her. I damn near lost it, speeding to that location like I had a death wish at the same time Antwon called me “checking in”. And when I got to the bar? Saw her dancing and smiling in some nigga’s face like she wasn’t my fucking wife? The rage that tore through me was something I hadn’t felt in a long time.

I pulled my shirt over my head, tossing it onto the bed as I stepped into my bathroom. I turned the shower on, letting the water run hot as steam curled through the room. My hands went to my belt, undoing the buckle, my mind still reeling, still processing.

Parker didn’t respect this marriage. Didn’t respect me. She was still fighting. Still trying to figure out how far she could push before I snapped. I stepped under the scalding spray, letting the water beat down on my exhausted body. Closing my eyes, I tipped my head back, inhaling deeply as the heat worked into my muscles.

I had to find a common ground with her. Because if she kept pulling the shit she pulled tonight? I was gon’ tie her ass up for real.

Page 10

Source Creation Date: July 22, 2025, 4:44 pm

The sharp buzz of my phone yanked me out of my sleep. I groaned, rolling over in bed, eyes still heavy with exhaustion. My body ached from a mix of too many drinks, too much dancing, and too much stress.

The events of last night came rushing back in fragments—dancing with my girls, that fine-ass man stepping to me, then the air shifting like a cold front hit the club when Shooter walked in. The look in his eyes. The way he dragged me out of there with just two words. I squeezed my eyes shut, inhaling deeply through my nose. I can't believe this is my life now.

The phone kept ringing, vibrating on the nightstand like it had all the authority in the world. I reached for it without opening my eyes, knowing it was probably one of my friends calling to get the tea. But when I squinted at the screen, my stomach tightened.

Daddy.

A sigh pushed through my lips. Of course. He probably heard about last night. I hesitated before answering, already knowing how this conversation was about to go. "Hello?"

"You really thought I wouldn't find out?"

His voice was cold, clipped. "What the hell were you doing at some bar last night, ?"

I exhaled, pushing myself up in bed, my back hitting the headboard. "Having a life, Daddy."

“A life?”

His voice sharpened like a blade. “You’re a married woman now.”

A lump formed in my throat. There it was. The gut-punching truth I had been avoiding since the moment that man slid a ring onto my finger. I was really married. To Shooter fucking Mosley. My silence didn’t go unnoticed.

“My daughter, sneaking out of her husband’s home to go shake her ass,”

my father continued. “How do you think that looks?”

I scoffed, throwing my legs over the side of the bed. “Like I was enjoying my damn self for once.”

“You embarrassed yourself,”

he bit out. “Embarrassed me. And do you have any idea how furious Shooter was?”

My jaw clenched. “Oh, I have plenty of ideas.”

The tension from last night still lingered in my bones. The car ride home had been suffocating, thick with unspoken threats. The way he had looked at me in the kitchen, backing me into the counter, inhaling my scent like he was trying to brand me. I quivered at the thought.

“I don’t know what childish game you think you’re playing,”

my father said, voice low and dangerous. “But you will fall in line, .”

I shot up from the bed, pacing barefoot across the cool hardwood floors. “Or what?”

I challenged. “You’ll hand me off to another man like I’m a goddamn business deal?”

His silence was an answer in itself. My chest rose and fell with shallow breaths. “You don’t care about me,” I said, voice shaking. “You never have.”

A slow exhale came through the phone. “I do care about you, . That’s why I did what I did.”

I let out a humorless laugh. “You sold me.”

“I protected you,”

he corrected sharply. “Do you have any idea what kind of enemies you would have inherited if this marriage fell apart? If we broke our deal with the Mosleys?”

I stilled. “Shooter is a lot of things,” he continued, voice tight, “but he won’t let anything happen to you. And that’s more than I can say for anyone else in our world.”

My head throbbed with frustration. “I don’t need a protector. I need my freedom.”

“That was never an option,” he said.

And just like that, I felt the walls of my reality closing in on me. I was trapped. Caged. Bound to a man I didn’t want, in a life I never agreed to. I sucked in a sharp breath, blinking rapidly. “I have to go.”

“...”

I hung up. The phone slipped from my fingers, landing on the bed with a soft thud as I pressed my hands to my face. I barely had time to gather myself before a knock sounded at the door. Sharp. Impatient. I closed my eyes, inhaling deeply through my

nose before slowly exhaling. Of course, it was Shooter. His ass wouldn't just be walking in this room ever since I'd hidden the key.

Pulling my robe off the chair, I slipped it over my nightgown, tying it snugly around my waist before padding over to the door. My fingers hesitated on the handle for a fraction of a second before I unlocked it and pulled it open.

Shooter stood on the other side, tall and imposing, his frame filling the doorway as he held a shopping bag. His piercing blue eyes dragged over me, slow and heavy, making my skin prickle. I stiffened, gripping the lapels of my robe tighter. He was fresh out of the shower, the scent of soap and cologne clinging to him as he adjusted the towel wrapped around his chiseled waist. Tattoos everywhere.

His gaze lifted from my body to my face, and something flickered in those cold, unreadable eyes. Then his lips parted. "Get dressed."

His voice was low, rough. "We got a brunch to attend."

I frowned. "Brunch?"

His head tilted, that slow, lazy blink of his making my stomach knot with unease. "Brunch,"

he repeated, handing me the shopping bag. "Where you smile, act like a good little wife, and don't pull no stunts."

I crossed my arms over my chest. "And what if I don't feel like playing the role today?"

Shooter exhaled through his nose, his head lowering slightly as his gaze locked onto mine with a dark amusement that sent a chill up my spine. "Oh, you gon' play the

role,”

he murmured, stepping closer, his presence filling the space between us like a shadow. “Unless you wanna find out what happens when you don’t.”

My pulse kicked up. He didn’t raise his voice. Didn’t touch me. But the weight of his warning wrapped around my throat like an invisible collar. I swallowed hard, my fingers curling into the sleeves of my robe. Shooter’s lips twitched, a smirk playing at the corner of his mouth.

“Good girl,”

he murmured, voice dark and edged with something I couldn’t quite place. “Be ready in thirty.”

Then, without another word, he turned on his heel and walked away, leaving me standing there, my heart hammering against my ribs.

Good girl.

The way he said it crawled over my skin, lingered in my ears. I exhaled sharply, shaking off the unease creeping up my spine. Fuck him. Fuck this whole situation.

Brunch. A public performance where I had to pretend my world hadn’t been flipped upside down, where I had to sit beside a man I despised and let people believe we were a happy newlywed couple. My stomach turned at the thought.

I closed the bedroom door and peeked inside the shopping bag. I pulled out a white and gold Balmain dress. The realization sent a hot pulse of irritation through me. Of course, he’d pick shit out for me like I was some doll to dress up. Still, I had twenty minutes, and I wasn’t about to let him have another excuse to bark at me. I grabbed

the dress, a pair of heels, and moved to get ready.

By the time I emerged from my room, I was flawless. Face beat. Edges laid. Dress hugging me in all the right places. If I had to play the part of a Mosley wife, I'd at least do it looking damn good. Shooter was waiting in the living room, dressed in a tailored all-black ensemble—black button-down, black slacks, AP gleaming on his wrist, Cuban shining around his neck. He had one hand in his pocket, the other holding his phone as he scrolled, but the second I stepped into view, his blue eyes lifted.

They dragged from my heels up my legs, over my curves, lingering at my chest before meeting my gaze. Something flickered there. He slipped his phone into his pocket, taking a step toward me. “You look good, wifey,”

he murmured.

I rolled my eyes, brushing past him. “Let’s just get this over with.”

His hand shot out, fingers wrapping around my wrist, stopping me mid-stride. I stiffened. “Watch that tone,”

he warned, voice low.

I turned slowly, meeting his gaze. “Or what?”

His grip tightened just enough to make a point. “Or we gon’ have a long fuckin’ day,
,”

he said smoothly, those sharp blue eyes slicing into me. “You wanna start it off on my bad side?”

I didn't answer. Didn't breathe. His smirk deepened, like he could feel my pulse kicking against his fingers. Then, just as easily as he grabbed me, he let go. "Let's go, Mrs. Mosley."

The way he said my name—his last name—made something in my stomach twist. I ignored it and followed him out the door.

The car ride was tense, silent except for the faint sound of rap music playing through the speakers. I kept my gaze fixed on the window, watching the city roll past, refusing to look in Shooter's direction. But I could feel him watching me. I wasn't sure what pissed me off more—the fact that he'd forced me into this shit or the fact that a part of me was aware of just how good he looked sitting there, one hand on the wheel, the other resting against his thigh, fingers adorned with expensive rings.

I shifted in my seat, arms crossed. "You can stop staring,"

I muttered.

Shooter chuckled, low and deep. "Who said I was?"

I side-eyed him. His smirk widened, and he shook his head, turning his attention back to the road.

The rest of the ride continued in silence, tension thick in the air between us. When we finally pulled up to the upscale restaurant, a valet was already waiting. Shooter barely put the car in park before stepping out, walking around to my side to open the door.

I hesitated for a beat before taking his outstretched hand, ignoring the way his fingers curled just a little too tightly around mine. He leaned in slightly as I stepped out, voice dropping to a quiet murmur only I could hear. "Behave."

I lifted my chin, meeting his gaze head-on. “We’ll see,”

Shooter smirked, his grip tightening for half a second before he released me. I smoothed my dress, inhaled deeply, and followed him inside.

The restaurant was filled with all the right people—powerful, wealthy, untouchable. Politicians, crime bosses, socialites. This wasn’t just brunch. This was a gathering. Shooter led me through the tables with an easy confidence, nodding at familiar faces, gripping hands in brief greetings. He was respected here. Feared. And I was on display. A few people whispered as we passed. I caught fragments of conversation.

“That’s the new Mosley wife?”

“She’s gorgeous. Wonder how she feels about Silas’s death.”

“Shooter’s different. That girl’s gonna have a time with him.”

Shooter pulled out my chair at a private table near the back, waiting until I was seated before lowering himself into the seat beside me. I forced a smile as drinks were poured, as conversations started, as my father greeted me with a proud nod across the table. I wanted to vomit but I played the role.

I smiled, laughed at the right moments, and let Shooter’s hand rest heavy on my thigh under the table. And as the afternoon wore on, one thing became painfully, undeniably clear. There was no escaping this. No waking up from this nightmare. I was really married to a Mosley.

Page 11

Source Creation Date: July 22, 2025, 4:44 pm

Brunch was a power play. A gathering of people who ran this city in different ways—some in suits, some in the shadows.

I sipped my Remy, barely listening to the conversation at the table. My hand rested on Parker's thigh beneath the table, an anchor, a warning. She was playing the role, smiling when necessary, nodding at the right moments, but I could feel the tension in her body, the way she wanted to shrink away from me.

Good.

She needed to understand that this was her world now. My world. And in my world, I set the tone. My phone buzzed in my pocket, and I glanced down at the name. I exhaled sharply and stood, sliding my chair back. Parker looked up, a flicker of confusion crossing her face as I leaned down, my lips barely brushing the shell of her ear. "Don't move."

She tensed, but I was already walking away.

I weaved through the tables, past waiters carrying silver trays, until I reached a private alcove near the back. Leaning against the wall, waiting, was a man I had no patience for today—Carlo DeLuca.

He straightened as I approached, smoothing out his tailored suit, a snake dressed in designer. "Mosley,"

he greeted, smirking. "Figured you'd be too busy playing house to handle real business."

I stared at him blankly, pulling a blunt from my pocket and lighting it. “Fuck you want, Carlo?”

He grinned like we were friends. “Just making sure things are still running smoothly now that Silas’s gone. He and I had a good thing going with the security firm. I don’t know if you got the mind for this the way he did.”

I let the smoke roll from my lips, my expression unmoving. “Business is runnin' just fine,”

I said coolly. “But you already know that.”

Carlo tilted his head, his smirk deepening. “Do I?”

He took a step closer. “See, I’m not convinced. You’ve been real busy elsewhere instead of locking down shit that actually matters.”

I let him talk. Let him dig his own grave. “But that’s fine,” he continued. “Because maybe you’re not built for all this. Maybe you should focus on being a husband, let the real men take care of things.”

I didn’t move. Didn’t blink.

Then Carlo chuckled, shaking his head. “And speaking of being a husband... Parker Whitmore? Jesus. That’s a lot of woman for a man like you. You sure you know what to do with all that?”

I took another slow drag of my blunt as Carlo’s smirk widened. “I mean, if you ever need someone to take her off your hands—”

My gun was out before he could finish the sentence, the muzzle pressing right

beneath his chin. The smirk vanished, and the color drained from his face. The restaurant was still loud, full of laughter and clinking glasses, but in this little corner, the world had gone silent.

“Say that shit again,”

I murmured.

Carlo swallowed hard, eyes darting to the side, as if looking for an exit. There wasn't one. “You're crazy,”

he whispered.

I pressed harder. “Say... it... again.”

His breath hitched. “, come on—”

“You don't speak on my wife.”

My voice was even, unbothered, but the weight of it settled deep in the air between us. “You don't look at my wife. You don't fuckin' think about my wife. Understand?”

Carlo nodded, hands slightly raised. “Yeah. Yeah, man, I got it.”

I let the moment stretch, let him feel the weight of my words. Then, slow as hell, I lowered my gun, tucking it back into the holster beneath my jacket.

Carlo exhaled shakily, running a hand down his face. “My bad, man,”

he muttered. “I was just—”

“Goin' back to the fuckin' table,”

I finished for him.

He didn't argue. Didn't make another joke. He just turned and walked away. I exhaled, rolling my shoulders back, pushing away the irritation thrumming in my veins. I turned—and that's when I saw her.

Parker was standing just a few feet away, eyes wide, lips slightly parted. She looked shaken, breath shallow, and when I took a step forward, she took one back.

I tilted my head. “What are you doin'?”

She swallowed hard, then spun on her heel, disappearing toward the bathrooms. I smirked and leaned against the wall, waiting for her to come out. She flinched, stopping short. I took my time letting my eyes drag over her, taking in the heave of her chest, the way her fingers trembled slightly as they gripped the edge of the door.

“You were just... gonna blow his head off?”

she breathed.

I stepped closer, caging her in against the wall. “You think I'd let a muthafucka disrespect me like that?”

My voice was low, lethal. “Or you?”

She blinked rapidly, like she wasn't sure if she should be afraid or insulted. I leaned in, inhaling the faint scent of her perfume. “You're my wife, Parker,” I murmured. “That means no nigga speaks on you. Looks at you. Tries you. Unless they wanna die.”

She exhaled sharply, turning her head away. I let the moment sit, let her feel me there, pressing in on every inch of her. Then, just as fast, I stepped back, offering her my hand. She hesitated. I smirked. “Be a good little wife.”

Parker clenched her jaw, eyes burning into mine, but after a long second, she placed her hand in mine. Good girl.

I led Parker back to the table, pulling her chair out for her before reclaiming my seat. Brunch resumed as if nothing had happened. Conversations continued. Toasts were made. And Carlo? He was back in his seat, looking real fucking uncomfortable. I picked up my glass of Remy, held it up slightly, and locked eyes with him as I took a slow sip. He got the message. Parker sat stiffly beside me, still rattled, but she played her part. And me? I just smiled.

Brunch finally ended. The plates were cleared, and the waitstaff moved swiftly to erase any evidence of the gathering. Most of the guests had long since filtered out, but we remained—me, Parker, my father, and the woman on his arm.

She was young for his ass, early thirties at best, with warm brown skin and curves for days. She clung to my father’s arm like she had a purpose, batting her lashes and smiling at all the right moments. But my father? He wasn’t thinking about her. His sharp, assessing gaze was locked on Parker.

“Silas always did have good taste,”

Seth remarked, lifting his glass to his lips, voice laced with something unreadable.

I felt Parker stiffen beside me. I didn’t like that shit. She wasn’t my brother’s. Had never been his. She was mine. Parker, to her credit, kept her composure. She crossed her legs, her silk dress shifting over smooth, toned thighs, and lifted her own champagne flute like she wasn’t fazed. But I knew better.

My father smirked, setting his glass down. “So, tell me, Parker, what exactly do you think you can bring to this family?”

Parker tilted her head slightly, a slow smile curling her lips. “I wasn’t aware I had to submit a résumé,”

she quipped.

A muscle ticked in my father’s jaw.

I exhaled sharply, my fingers curling against my knee. “Watch it,”

I warned under my breath.

But Parker? She didn’t listen. She turned toward my father, eyes glittering with defiance. “I bring class, intelligence, and a last name worth something,”

she said smoothly. “And from what I can see, this family could use a touch of that.”

Silence. Thick. Tense. The woman on my father’s arm cleared her throat, shifting uncomfortably. My father leaned back in his chair, lips pressing into a tight line. “That mouth of yours is gonna get you into trouble, girl.”

Parker smiled sweetly. “So I’ve been told.”

My jaw clenched. I caught the warning in my father’s eyes before he turned his attention back to me. “You need to get a handle on that. Soon.”

I leaned back, feigning ease I didn’t feel. “I got it.”

He arched a brow. “Do you?”

I exhaled through my nose, annoyed. “Yeah. I do.”

He studied me, unimpressed. “See that you do, boy.”

Then he stood, adjusting the cuff of his blazer.

I didn't move. Didn't flinch. He gave me one last look before walking off, his little girlfriend trailing behind him. I waited until he was out of sight before turning to Parker. She wasn't there. I spotted her a few feet away, stomping toward the back exit, her heels clicking. Fucking hell. She was trying to test me. I stood, shoving my chair back, and rushed after her.

She was already standing beside my car, arms folded across her chest, looking straight ahead when I walked up. Unlocking the doors, we both slid inside and slammed the doors shut.

Silence.

I let it stretch, let it simmer, my hands gripping the wheel as I stared at her. Slowly, Parker turned her head to look at me, eyes bright with challenge. I studied her, my jaw tight. “Why do you keep fuckin' playin' with me?”

She smiled. Not a real one. A dangerous one. “Because I won't make this easy for you.”

She tilted her chin, her voice soft but firm. “You should just choose another wife and let me go.”

I exhaled a laugh. A low, humorless sound. Parker tensed. I didn't say a word. Didn't react. I just smiled back. Not a happy smile. A promise. Her breath hitched. I started the car, gripping the wheel, and pulled off, my mind already working, already

plotting. She wanted to play games? Fine. I knew exactly how to make her submit.

Page 12

Source Creation Date: July 22, 2025, 4:44 pm

S e v e n t y - t w o h o u r s .

That's how long Shooter had been fucking gone. No texts. No calls. No security stationed outside. Nothing. At first, I was thrilled. The penthouse was mine. No overbearing, controlling husband watching my every move. No menacing blue eyes pinning me in place. No orders. No threats. Just freedom and not being cooped up in the guest bedroom.

I wasted no time taking advantage of it.

Hair done? Check.

Nails flawless? Check.

Shopping spree? Absolutely.

I met up with my girls, spent time at the mall, and even slid into a bar, sipping on overpriced drinks while laughing at their stories. And through it all, I waited. Waited for Shooter to storm in, that lethal energy wrapping around him like armor, ordering me to get my ass up and go home with that deep, no-nonsense tone. But he never did.

By the time I stumbled into the penthouse drunk, half-expecting to be dragged out by my wrist, I realized he wasn't coming. And that's when the excitement started to slowly fade.

By the second day, my mind started to wander. Where was he? What was he doing? Probably out somewhere being the ruthless criminal he was. Hurting people.

Ordering his goons around like he was king of the world. Making moves. But not once had he called me. And that shit bothered me.

Not that I cared. I didn't. But I was his damn wife. Didn't I deserve some kind of check-in? It wasn't like I wanted him to show up and start barking orders, but this silent treatment? Like, I didn't even matter? Like I wasn't even on his mind? Annoyed, I turned on my shows, curled up on the couch, and ignored the way my stomach twisted.

By the third day, I woke up pissed off to still be in an empty penthouse again, sunlight stabbing through the floor-to-ceiling windows like a damn crime scene. My head pounded. Where the hell is he? I rolled over, grabbed my phone, and started texting every twenty minutes.

Oh, so you just not coming home?

No call, no text?

I'm your damn wife, Shooter.

You got me fucked up.

I waited. Nothing. I called. No answer. Now I was really mad. I threw the covers back, stalking toward the bathroom. I turned the water on hot, steam rising instantly, and stepped under the spray, sighing as the heat washed over me. I shouldn't care. I didn't care. I was just irritated. He had me all tied up in this damn marriage, treating me like a possession, but now he wanted to disappear? Oh, hell no. The least he could do was argue with me. Something.

I sighed, squeezing my eyes shut, letting the water rush over my face. Fuck him. I reached for my body wash, lathering up, and just as I started rinsing off, I felt it.

My breath caught. Slowly, I turned my head toward the doorway of the bathroom. And there he was. Leaning against the frame like he owned the whole damn world, arms crossed, blue eyes dark and unreadable. Dressed in all black jeans, a black sweatshirt, and chains glinting around his thick neck. His skull pulled down just enough over his head.

And that's when I did a double take and narrowed my eyes on his neck. Hickeys. Bright. Obvious. Undeniable. A sharp pain hit my chest. My stomach twisted, my heart raced, and I hated it. "You gotta be fucking kidding me,"

I snapped, grabbing my towel and wrapping it around my body, my hands shaking.

Shooter didn't blink. Didn't react. He just looked at me. I stepped out of the shower, gripping the towel tight, fury bubbling in my chest. "So that's where you've been? Out with some bitch?"

Silence. I scoffed, shaking my head, heat rising to my face. "You disappear for three damn days and come back like this? No call, no nothing? You really think I'm some dumbass who's just gonna sit here and..."

Shooter reached for the hem of his sweatshirt and pulled it off, tossing it onto the floor along with a black wife beater. I froze as my throat went dry. Because damn. His body was all muscle; cut, powerful, tatted from his face to his neck to his hands. The cross inked over his chest stood out against his golden-brown skin, and the deep ridges of his abs flexed as he reached for his belt.

He unbuckled his belt, popped the button on his jeans, and stepped toward the shower... my shower... kicking off his sneakers. I stood there, staring. Shooter stripped the rest of the way down, completely unfazed by my anger.

This man was beautiful in the scariest fucking way. Broad shoulders. Thick arms.

Chest and abs like they were carved from stone. His V-line was deep, disappearing into the dark trail of hair leading to his thick, veiny dick between his long, tatted bow legs.

Focus, . Wait. Did this nigga step into my shower like I'm not even standing here? I clenched my jaw. "Hello! You have your own damn shower!"

Still nothing. He let the water hit his body, steam rising, those blue eyes finally locking onto mine as he ran a hand over his face. He looked good. Too good, and I hated that I even noticed. I folded my arms, shifting my weight. "You're an asshole, you know that? You're just gonna ignore me?"

He didn't respond. Didn't even blink. He just grabbed the bar of soap and started washing himself as if I weren't even worth a response. Like my rage didn't matter. And that made me even more pissed off. Infuriated. I hated that I felt this way. That I cared enough to be mad.

That the thought of him being with another bitch made my chest tight. That my heart was racing for reasons I couldn't explain. I turned on my heel and stormed out of the bathroom, slamming the door behind me. I needed to get a grip. Shooter wasn't mine. I wasn't his. This marriage wasn't real. But if that was the case, why the hell did it feel like he had just played me?

I yanked my lotion off the drawer, aggressively squirting a dollop into my palms before rubbing it over my arms. My skin was still damp from the shower, but I needed to hurry up and get dressed before he walked out of that bathroom.

I was still heated. The nerve of him coming home after three damn days with hickeys on his neck and not saying one word? Acting like I didn't even exist? I massaged the lotion into my legs, my hands working faster as irritation burned in my chest. Fine. If he wanted to play this game, I could play too.

I pulled on my black sports bra and matching high-waisted leggings, tying my sneakers tight before grabbing a hoodie. I was hitting the gym—needed to sweat this shit out before I ended up throwing something. Just as I was about to head for the door, the bathroom opened and steam rolled out first.

Shooter stepped into the guest bedroom, completely bare, water dripping down his chest, gliding over every ridge of his muscles like a fucking tease. Dick looking like a third leg, bouncing against his thigh. My breath caught, and it took all of my willpower to tear my gaze away.

Snap out of it, I told myself, turning toward my dresser as he walked out. Still... not... saying... shit.

Oh, he really had me fucked up. Storming into the master bedroom, I sneered, “So, that’s how it is now? You just come and go when you feel like it? Ignore me? Walk around here like you're King Tut?”

Silence.

I narrowed my eyes as I watched Shooter disappear into the walk-in closet and reappear with just boxer briefs and socks on. He held a crisp fitted black tee, looking unbothered as hell as he slipped it on along with a pair of black designer jeans. I closed my eyes, inhaling deeply through my nose. This silence was making me crazy. “You’re not gonna say nothing?”

I tried again, folding my arms as I faced him fully. “Not even an excuse?”

Still nothing. Shooter fastened his belt, grabbed his iced out watch from the nightstand, and slipped it on, along with a platinum Cuban link like this was just another morning. Like he didn’t owe me a damn explanation. Like, I wasn’t his wife.

My fingers twitched. “Sebastian...”

He sprayed cologne and then moved to the other side of the room, kneeling in front of the safe. With a smooth twist of the dial, it clicked open, and he pulled out his gun along with a huge stack of cash, thick and neatly wrapped in rubber bands. He turned and tossed it on the bed before he tucked his gun in the back of his jeans.

My lips parted, but before I could say anything, Shooter stepped closer. Towering over me as he took me in from head to toe. I swallowed, my breath hitching slightly under the weight of his stare. His blue eyes flicked down my body, dragging slowly over my fitted workout set, lingering on my bare arms, my waist, my hips.

Then his lips curved into a smirk. It was the first reaction I had gotten out of him, and my stomach flipped. But before I could even process that, he turned and walked out. Just like that. Not a single word. I heard the front door shut in the distance, leaving me standing there in his bedroom, staring at the fat stack of cash on the bed.

What the fuck is going on?

Page 13

Source Creation Date: July 22, 2025, 4:44 pm

I barely held back a smirk as I slid into the backseat of my Lambo, the door shutting with a solid thud behind me.

Parker's ass was pressed. I saw it all over her face. The way her eyes had darted to my neck, clocking the hickeys like she had a right to be mad. The way her lips had parted, ready to go off, only for me to strip down butt ass naked and step into the shower in the en suite guest bathroom like she wasn't even there. I could eat, shit, shower and sleep anywhere in that fucking house. It was mine.

She hated it and hated the silence even more. She hated that I'd been gone for three days and not knowing what the fuck I was up to. Good. Her ass needed to learn. I was her problem now. Her headache. And I'd break her down piece by piece until she fell in line.

Truth was, I hadn't been doing shit but handling business and teaching her a lesson. And yeah, I needed to get my dick wet, so I hit up one of my old hoes. But the crazy part? I ain't even enjoy the shit like I should've. The whole time, I was thinking about Parker. That smart ass mouth. That attitude. That body. The way she looked at me when she was mad like she wanted to swing on me and fuck me at the same damn time.

This marriage wasn't just a game to me. She was mine and she was gon' learn what that meant.

Pulling out of the garage, I reached for the blunt I'd rolled up when my phone lit up in my lap. The number was unknown. I answered on the second ring. "Talk."

“Boss—it’s Gino—I—I ain’t know who else to call,”

the voice stammered, frantic, panicked.

I narrowed my eyes, my gut already tightening. Gino wasn’t built to panic unless shit was really sideways. “What’s the problem?”

I asked, my tone flat, trying to stay calm..

“The shipment... the guns... we—we got fuckin’ hit! Couple crates gone. Some niggas are dead, man.”

I sparked the blunt with one hand and pushed my whip with the other. “You still at the spot?”

“Yes, sir,”

he rushed out.

“Aight.”

I hung up before he could say another word. The streets blurred past me as I gripped the wheel tightly, my trigger finger already itching. I called Ren on the way. “Hit on warehouse seventeen,”

I barked before he even said hello.

He huffed, already knowing it was about to be some shit. “Say less.”

By the time I pulled up behind the warehouse, Ren was already waiting in his matte black Jeep, engine humming low, headlights off. He hopped out, a semi-auto in one

hand, another piece tucked into his waistband. We moved around the back, staying low, our steps silent across the gravel.

I could see Gino pacing near the loading docks, jittery as fuck, his head snapping around like he was waiting to get popped next. He spotted us and jogged over, damn near tripping over his own feet. “They—they got two of the crates. They left out the back in a black Escalade.”

“You see their faces?”

I asked coldly.

He shook his head, sweat pouring down his face even though it was cold as hell outside. “N-no. Masks.”

Ren sighed, disappointed. “Niggas always get bold with masks.”

I lifted my chin toward the warehouse. “Anybody still inside?”

Gino swallowed thickly. “One. Damen’s still breathin’ but barely.”

I nodded once. “You got anything else to tell me?”

I asked, voice low.

He shook his head frantically. “No, boss. I swear.”

I stared at him, the weight of the silence making him twitch harder. This nigga was trembling, looking nervous as fuck. My gut told me something wasn’t right. I hated snakes, and I hated weak men even more. Gino had been a part of my warehouse crew for years and I never thought I’d see the day his ass would try to play me.

“I can smell a setup a mile away. You know that?”

I asked, pulling out my Glock and thumbing off the safety. “You done disappointed me, Gino.”

He stumbled back, hands up. “P-please, Boss! I—I’ll fix it! I’ll-I’ll bring—”

Boom.

The bullet tore through his forehead before he could finish. He dropped like a ragdoll, blood pooling under him, soaking into the dirt.

Ren reappeared at my side, casual as hell. “Cleanup?”

I stared at Gino’s lifeless body.

“Yeah,”

I said, shaking my head. “Get the drop on the niggas who hit my shit and send this nigga home to his mama in a body bag. Let her deal with this snake ass muthafucka.”

Ren nodded. “Say less.”

We made our way inside the warehouse, the stench of blood and motor oil thick in the air. Bullet holes riddled the walls. Empty crates were scattered everywhere. I crouched down by one of the busted crates, running my fingers through the sawdust and splinters.

“Can’t believe this nigga,”

I muttered. “Gon’ set up my shit to be hit? Worst mistake.”

I stood, sliding my Glock back into my waistband. We left the warehouse without looking back, the blood of traitors still wet on the ground behind us.

My stomach was damn near touching my back as I pulled up to a breakfast spot and ordered a spread with steak, eggs, pancakes, the works. As I waited, I found myself ordering something for Parker, too. I knew she probably hadn't eaten shit all day, just sitting around being mad, writing in that little journal of hers or plotting on how to piss me off next.

The cashier handed me the bags, and I peeled off, heading back to the penthouse. When I stepped off the elevator and into my space, the first thing that hit me was the music. Loud as hell. Some R&B song about niggas not being shit, and I smirked before even seeing her. Oh, she's still mad.

I walked into the kitchen, setting the food down just as Parker came storming in like she was ready to fight. She was in a cropped tank and some tiny ass shorts, her hair up in a messy bun wild, skin still dewy from a fresh shower. And she was looking at me like I was the problem.

I took my time pulling out a chair, sitting down, rolling up a blunt while she stood there, arms crossed, lips pursed. The tension was thick. I licked the blunt slow, sealed it, then finally met her glare.

“You gon' sit down, or you just gon' keep mean-muggin' me?”

I muttered.

Her eyes narrowed. “Three... fucking... days.”

I sparked the blunt, inhaled deeply, and let the smoke roll from my lips. “So, you can count.”

Her jaw clenched. “You left.”

“And?”

She sucked her teeth, stepping closer. “You had hickeys on your neck.”

I exhaled, watching her. “You were out shakin’ your ass with your little friends.”

Parker scoffed. “I’m your wife.”

I smirked. “Act like it then.”

She was fuming. “You left,”

she said again, voice tight. “Didn’t call, didn’t text. Just vanished. Then you come back like nothing happened?”

I took another hit. “Pretty much.”

She let out a bitter laugh. “You’re a fucking asshole.”

I shrugged, gesturing to the food. “Eat.”

She glanced at the bags, hesitating. Her body betrayed her, stomach growling loud as hell, and she looked so pissed about it. I chuckled. “Come sit down, Parker.”

For a moment, she stood there, still mad, still trying to hold on to it. But then she sighed, snatched a plate, and sat across from me. I smirked to myself. Good girl.

Page 14

Source Creation Date: July 22, 2025, 4:44 pm

I sat across from Shooter, still mad, still pissed, but my hunger was louder than my pride. The food smelled too good, and my stomach had already betrayed me once. I wasn't about to let it happen again. So, I snatched the plate, piled some food on it, grabbed a fork, and started eating, all while keeping my eyes locked on him.

Shooter was leaning back in his chair, relaxed as hell, watching me like he knew he'd won this round. Like he had all the patience in the world to wait me out. It made my skin itch.

I cut into my steak, chewing slowly before speaking. "You got rules for me,"

I said, my tone sharp. "I got rules for you, too."

Shooter lifted a brow, smirking. "That right?"

"Damn right,"

I said, setting my fork down. "If you're gonna be disappearing for days, I at least deserve to know where the hell you are."

His smirk didn't waver. "That's not how this works, baby."

I narrowed my eyes. "I'm your wife, remember?"

I shot back, throwing his words from earlier in his face. "Or does that only count when it benefits you?"

Shooter chuckled, low and deep, shaking his head as he cut into his own food. “You really think I’m bouta give you a play-by-play of my whereabouts?”

I glared at him. “Yes.”

He chewed, swallowed, then wiped his mouth with a napkin, taking his time. “Nah.”

I huffed, reaching for my orange juice. “Of course not.”

“But,”

he said, tapping his fork against the plate, “I will make sure you’re informed if I plan to be gone for more than a couple days. That fair enough for you?”

I studied him, trying to see if he was just bullshitting me. “Fine,”

I muttered. “But if I call, pick up the damn phone.”

He nodded once. “Long as you don’t call me with no bullshit.”

I scoffed, rolling my eyes. “Whatever.”

Shooter leaned forward slightly, eyes sharp. “And since we’re setting rules,”

he said, voice dropping an octave, “I got one more for you.”

I tensed. “What?”

“You pull that shit again—sneakin’ out, lyin’ to my people, tryna make me look stupid?”

His gaze darkened, something dangerous flickering in those blue eyes. “There will be consequences, .”

A chill ran down my spine, but I lifted my chin, refusing to back down. “You don’t scare me.”

His lips twitched, like he was amused but also done with my mouth. “You’ve been warned,”

he said simply, going back to his food like the conversation was over.

I clenched my jaw, gripping my fork, but I didn’t push it. For now. We ate in silence for a little while, the tension still thick, still charged.

I could feel it between us, stretching, pulling. Then, my eyes landed on the half-smoked blunt sitting beside him.

I reached for it, slow and deliberate, and Shooter’s gaze lifted, watching me. I picked it up, rolled it between my fingers, then brought it to my lips to light.

His jaw tightened. I inhaled deeply, the smoke burning in my lungs, and exhaled just as slowly, blowing it out, feeling my body relax almost instantly. Shooter licked his lips, his eyes darkening, heating.

I smirked. “What?”

“You tryna piss me off or turn me on?”

His voice was low, thick with something I felt in my gut.

I took another hit, holding his stare. “Well, since I can’t stand you, do the math.”

Shooter let out a low chuckle, shaking his head as he dragged a hand over his jaw. I passed the blunt back, but he didn't take it. Instead, he kept looking at me like he was deciding something. Plotting. Then he sat forward, resting his elbows on the table. "I need you by my side tomorrow night."

I frowned. "For what?"

"A meeting,"

he said simply.

I stared at him, waiting for more. "A business meeting?"

Shooter nodded. "Your kind of business?"

His lips curled at the edges. "Our kind of business, Mrs. Mosley."

A shiver ran down my spine, but I played it off. "And what exactly do you need me there for?"

Shooter leaned back again, tapping a finger against the table. "It's about optics,"

he said smoothly. "Niggas in my lane? We don't just build power. We maintain it. And a man who has everything—money, respect, fear—also has a wife at his side. A woman who shows that everything in his world is under control."

I arched a brow. "So I'm just a prop?"

Shooter chuckled. "Nah, baby,"

he said, his voice like silk laced with poison. "You're my queen. And tomorrow

night, you gon' act like it.”

I scoffed, shaking my head. “You really think you can just parade me around like—”

“Like my wife,”

he cut me off, his tone firm, unwavering. “Exactly like that.”

I sat back, crossing my arms. “And if I say no?”

Shooter smirked, tilting his head slightly. “Then I’ll make you come.”

Heat flared through me, unwanted, uninvited. I hated how my body reacted to him, how he got under my skin so easily. I exhaled sharply. “Fine,”

I muttered. “Whatever.”

Shooter nodded like he already knew I would. But then he grinned, slow and smug. I grabbed a piece of toast and threw it at his head. He caught it midair, laughing. I hated him. I really fucking did.

After finishing my food, I leaned back in my chair, satisfied and full, watching Shooter as he wiped his mouth with a napkin, like he wasn’t the most aggravating man on the planet. Then, casually as hell, he stretched his arms over his head and said, “I’m bouta take a nap. When I wake up, we goin' shoppin’.”

I blinked. “We?”

Shooter stood, rubbing his chin, his blue eyes glinting with something unreadable. “Yeah, we,”

he said, like I was slow. “You need shit, don’t you? Them clothes from your old life ain’t sittin’ in my crib.”

I narrowed my eyes. “I could just go by myself.”

His smirk was taunting. “Nah. I wanna be there.”

I frowned. “Why?”

Shooter didn’t answer. Instead, he pushed back from the table, his tall frame moving with ease, and sauntered toward the hallway that led to the bedroom. I tried not to watch him. I really did. But damn it, he was too fine. Tall, built, moving like he knew he was the baddest man in the room. His tattoos peeking out, his chains glinting, and my traitorous eyes followed the way his slacks sat on his waist like he was sculpted from stone.

God, I hated him. Shooter stopped at the entrance of the hallway, like he felt my stare. He turned his head slightly, smirking without even looking at me. “Try not to miss me too much while I sleep, Mrs. Mosley,”

he said before disappearing into the bedroom.

I rolled my eyes so hard my head almost fell off. But I was fed, satisfied, and my mood was better. Now I knew what that stack of money was all about and I planned to blow it all and then some.

Hours later, the late afternoon sun streamed through the massive penthouse windows as I stood in front of the mirror, putting the final touches on my look.

Shooter hadn’t told me where we were shopping, but I was going to make sure I was seen while doing it. I slipped on a fitted nude jumpsuit, one that hugged my body like

it was painted on. The fabric clung to every curve, the neckline dipping just enough to tease, but not enough to give it all away.

I paired it with an oversized cropped denim jacket, my wrists and fingers adorned with gold jewelry. My hair was styled in big curls, framing my face perfectly, and my makeup was soft but sultry—neutral tones, glossy lips, and lashes that could cause a small breeze when I blinked.

Shooter was already in the living room when I stepped out, dressed in all black yet again, his usual ice around his neck and wrists. I knew the second he saw me. His eyes dragged over my body slowly, taking in every inch, every curve, like he was committing it to memory. He didn't say shit. Didn't even nod in approval.

I lifted a brow, smirking. “We leaving or what?”

Shooter's jaw flexed. “Let's go.”

When we stepped off the elevator, he decided on the car he wanted to push for the day. The ride was smooth, the engine of the black Lamborghini purring beneath us as we sped through the city streets. The interior was luxurious as hell, and I made sure to get comfortable, leaning back against the plush seat, my long nails tapping against my phone screen as I browsed online for what I planned to cop.

Shooter glanced at me before refocusing on the road. “So,”

he said, resting one hand on the wheel, “what's your favorite color?”

I frowned at the randomness. “What?”

“Your favorite color,”

he repeated. “What is it?”

I studied him, but he looked unbothered, waiting for an answer. “Green.”

Shooter nodded. “Favorite movie?”

“Step Brothers.”

He smirked a little. “Figures.”

I squinted at him. “What’s that supposed to mean?”

“You look like you enjoy corny ass movies,”

he teased, a glint of amusement in his eyes.

I gasped. “Corny?! That movie is a classic.

Shooter laughed under his breath. “I hear you.”

I crossed my arms and shook my head, muttering under my breath, but secretly, I kind of liked that he was asking me shit. “Okay, my turn,”

I said, turning to face him. “What’s your favorite color?”

Shooter took a moment before answering. “Black.”

I smirked. “Obviously.”

He cut me a warning look, making me laugh. I rested my elbow on the car door. “Alright, what’s your favorite movie?”

He glanced at me, then back at the road. “Casino.”

I blinked. “That mafia movie?”

He nodded. I tilted my head. “Makes sense. You are a criminal, after all.”

Shooter smirked. “A very successful one.”

I rolled my eyes, but I couldn’t deny there was something about his confidence, the way he owned his world, that was...intoxicating. Even if he was annoying as hell.

We rode in silence for a moment, the hum of the car filling the space between us. Then, Shooter glanced over at me again. “You was hella excited to marry Silas, huh?”

His question caught me off guard. I scoffed, “Hell no. Marrying someone off should be illegal. I didn’t ask for any of this.”

Shooter didn’t press, but I could feel his eyes on me. After a beat, he smirked. “You ready to drop a bag on my dime, wifey?”

I turned to him, grinning. “Oh, absolutely.”

Shooter chuckled, shaking his head. “Of course you are.”

I crossed my legs, my diamond anklet catching the light. “Gotta make up for all the bullshit I’m going through. Speaking of, who was the bitch?”

I asked, keeping my tone light, but the heat in my words was undeniable.

Shooter smirked, like he’d been waiting for me to ask. “Not important.”

I scoffed. “Not important? You came home with her suck marks on your fucking neck, Sebastian.”

He chuckled, gripping the wheel tighter as he switched lanes smoothly. “That what’s been eatin’ your ass up?”

I rolled my eyes. “Nigga, please.”

Shooter glanced over at me, the corner of his mouth lifting. “, if you want the dick, all you gotta do is act right. I’ll get you right.”

My whole body tensed. I turned and glared at him, but the way his voice had dipped, low and full of heat, sent a slow, infuriating shiver down my spine. “You’re disgusting,”

I muttered, looking back out the window.

I clenched my jaw, battling my thoughts.

I refused to be turned on by him.

Absolutely refused.

But my body had other plans, and that realization made me even madder.

The rest of the ride, I fumed in silence, staring out the window, arms crossed, trying not to think about anything he said.

Shooter just smirked, turned up the trap music, and let the heavy bass shake the car as we sped through the city.

Page 15

Source Creation Date: July 22, 2025, 4:44 pm

The mall was busy as hell, people moving in and out of stores, the scent of designer cologne and fresh leather mixing in the air.

I wasn't really a mall type of nigga.

I preferred having shit brought to me but today was different. Today was about Parker.

I walked beside her, my presence commanding space, my eyes sweeping the area for any sign of bullshit.

Parker was in her element, flipping her curls, looking around with a little smirk on her face like she was about to run up every last dime I had.

I let her.

“Where are we starting?”

she asked.

I chuckled, shaking my head. “Lead the way, Mrs. Mosley.”

She tensed up a little at that, but she didn't argue.

Not too long after that, I sat back in one of the plush chairs outside the dressing room, legs spread, hands resting on my thighs, watching as Parker strutted out in yet another dress. This one was hunter green, tight, hugging her curves in a way that made my

fingers twitch.

She did a slow turn in the mirror, studying herself. “Too much?”

I tilted my head. “Too much for who?”

She met my gaze in the mirror. “For the meeting.”

I leaned forward, resting my elbows on my knees. “Parker, you’re my wife. Ain’t no such thing as too much.”

Her lips parted slightly, but she didn’t respond. Instead, she turned back to the mirror, smoothing her hands down her hips, acting like my words hadn’t affected her. But I saw the way her breathing changed. Yeah, I was in her head.

She tried on a few more dresses—black, blue, red—but the green one stuck with me. It was bold. Attention-grabbing. Just like her. “That one,”

I said when she came out in it again. “That’s the one.”

She glanced at me. “You sure?”

I nodded once. “Yeah. Get some shoes to match, too.”

She grinned like she’d just won something and disappeared back into the dressing room. As I waited for her, my phone vibrated in my pocket. I pulled it out, seeing my father’s name flash across the screen. My jaw flexed.

“Yeah?”

I answered.

“You ready for tomorrow?”

His deep voice cut through the noise of the mall.

“I wouldn’t be in this position if I wasn’t.”

He chuckled, low and knowing. “Good. Just don’t let distractions knock you off your game.”

I already knew what the fuck he was implying. My eyes flickered toward the dressing room where Parker was. “Don’t worry about me.”

He barked out a laugh before it faded into something more serious. “Just handle shit tomorrow. And keep your woman in line.”

The call ended before I could respond.

I sucked my teeth and slid the phone back into my pocket, my jaw tight, my mood already shifting. And then, I saw him. Some Carlton Banks looking nigga standing too damn close to my wife.

Parker was by the register, shopping bags on the counter, smiling up at some tall-ass dude with locs, looking real friendly. Too friendly. He said something that made her laugh, and then, like he had lost his fucking mind, he hugged her.

I was already moving. The second I reached them, I grabbed the back of his head and slammed it against the counter. The sound of his forehead cracking against the glass echoed through the store. The dude hollered, clutching his face, stumbling back.

“, what the fuck?!”

Parker shrieked.

I stepped forward, grabbing his shirt and jerking him toward me. His eyes were wide, blood trickling down his forehead.

“You know who she belong to?”

I growled.

“Man, I didn’t—”

I slammed his head down again, making sure he understood. “!”

Parker yelled, shoving at my arm.

The sales associate gasped. “I-I’m calling the police!”

I turned my head, eyes locking onto her. “Go ahead,”

I dared. “Call ‘em.”

Her face drained of all color. She didn’t move. I looked back at the nigga in my grip.

“You know my wife?”

He nodded frantically. “Y-yeah, from college, man, I ain’t know she was—”

“You know now.”

I released him with a shove. He damn near tripped over himself trying to get out of the store. Parker stood there, jaw clenched, breathing heavily, face red with embarrassment. I smirked. She snatched her bags off the counter and stormed out. I

followed her, catching up easily as she stomped through the mall, heels clicking angrily. She didn't get far.

I grabbed her arm and spun her around, backing her up against the wall in one of the quieter hallways. She glared up at me, breathing hard. "You're fucking insane."

I braced my hands on the wall, trapping her between my arms. "And you're fuckin' stupid if you think I'm gon' let some nigga be all up in your face."

"He's just an old friend, Sebastian!"

I leaned in closer, inhaling the scent of her perfume, feeling the heat of her body. "I don't give a fuck what he was. You don't have no niggas in your face. You hear me?"

Her nostrils flared. "Or what?"

I smiled, slow and dangerous. "Or I'll air this bitch out."

She swallowed, but I saw the defiance still burning in her eyes. I dragged my gaze over her face, down to her lips, then back up. "Get it through your head, Parker. You mine and I don't share."

Her chest rose and fell fast, her fists clenched. I let the moment stretch, let my words settle deep. Then, I took a step back, giving her space. "Come on,"

I said, adjusting my watch. "We got more shoppin' to do."

She stood there for a second, jaw tight, body tense, then let out a sharp breath and pushed past me, leading the way. I chuckled to myself as I followed. This woman was gonna be the death of me.

Twenty minutes later, Parker was still pouting. She sat on one of the plush benches inside the designer suit store, scrolling on her phone, her expression tight, her lips slightly pursed in a way that told me she was still fuming. It was funny as hell.

I leaned back in the fitting room, smirking to myself as I shrugged on the black designer suit the associate had brought out for me. The fabric was smooth, fitting like a damn glove. I straightened the jacket, adjusting the cuffs, then slid my feet into the sleek black loafers that completed the look. Damn, I looked good.

I stepped out, hands in my pockets, my chains peeking out against the crisp black button-down I wore underneath. My reflection in the large mirror across the room confirmed what I already knew. I wasn't just some street nigga. I was a problem—the type of man who could handle business in a boardroom or put a bullet in a motherfucker's skull without breaking a sweat.

Parker must've felt my presence because her scrolling slowed, and when she finally lifted her eyes from her phone, her gaze lingered. She tried to play it off, but I caught it. The way her eyes moved over me, from my broad shoulders down to my chest, then lower to my waist, and finally to my shoes. The way she shifted in her seat, like she was suddenly uncomfortable.

I tilted my head, grinning. “Go ‘head and say it.”

She blinked, her face hardening. “Say what?”

“That I look good as fuck.”

She scoffed, rolling her eyes. “You look decent.”

I chuckled, walking toward her with slow, calculated steps. She sat up straighter, but I didn't stop until I was right in front of her, towering over her as I peered down.

I bent slightly, dropping my voice. “You’ll get the dick in due time. I told you, all you gotta do is act right.”

Her mouth parted in outrage. “, I swear to God—”

I cut her off with a smirk, standing back up. “Don’t swear to Him, swear to me, baby.”

She scowled, folding her arms. “I don’t want your community dick ass.”

I barked out a laugh. “You lyin’.”

She huffed, turning her head, staring off like she was bored. I shook my head, amused as hell. Parker could fight it all she wanted, but I saw the way her body reacted to me, the way her breathing changed when I got too close. She might’ve hated me, but her body sure as hell didn’t.

I turned back to the mirror, adjusting my jacket. “Yeah, I’ll take this one,”

I said to the associate who was standing awkwardly to the side, acting like he wasn’t witnessing the most charged interaction of his life.

The man nodded quickly, his hands clasped in front of him. “Of course, sir. Would you like any other colors?”

“Nah, this one’s good.”

After I changed back into my regular clothes, we finalized the purchase and hit up a few more stores. Hours later, we walked through the exit of the mall. Parker still had an attitude, her pace brisk like she was ready to be done with me for the day.

I let her walk ahead, taking my time, knowing damn well that no matter how much space she tried to put between us, she wasn't going nowhere I didn't allow her to go. When we reached the car, she slid into the passenger seat without a word, her arms still crossed.

I grinned as I started the engine, the deep rumble of the Lambo filling the air. "You good?"

I asked, amusement laced in my voice.

She stared out the window. "Peachy."

I chuckled, shaking my head as I pulled out of the parking lot. Yeah, she was mad, but I was enjoying every second of it.

Page 16

Source Creation Date: July 22, 2025, 4:44 pm

By the time we made it back to the penthouse, I was exhausted and starving. Shopping had drained me—not because I didn't enjoy spending his money because I definitely did but because keeping up my attitude while fighting off the way my body reacted to Shooter was damn near a full-time job.

I kicked off my heels the moment I stepped inside, flexing my sore toes against the cool marble floor. "I'm starving,"

I groaned, heading straight for the kitchen. I yanked open the fridge, hoping to find something, but it was practically empty. "Shooter, why is there nothing to eat in this damn house? I'm sick of takeout."

He strolled in behind me, pulling out a bag of weed and breaking it down on the counter like he didn't have a care in the world. "Shoulda said somethin' while we were out,"

he muttered, rolling the bud between his fingers before dumping it into a grinder. "I don't cook."

I shot him a glare over my shoulder. "Obviously,"

I grumbled under my breath as I pulled out my phone and opened the Instacart app. If this was gonna be my life, I needed food in this house. Eating takeout every day was not it.

While I placed an order for groceries, Shooter finished rolling his blunt. He sparked it up, inhaling deeply before exhaling a slow cloud of smoke into the air. "Didn't take

you for a smoker,”

he mused, watching me as I hit place order.

I shrugged, still tapping through my phone. “I had to hide it from my father, so I never made it a habit. But here and there... yeah.”

An hour later, the groceries were delivered, and I was in the kitchen, fully in my zone. I had an R&B playlist going, the smooth vocals of Summer Walker filling the space as I moved through the immaculate kitchen Shooter clearly didn't use.

Fried catfish sizzled golden brown in the pan, the garlic mashed potatoes were whipped to perfection, and the asparagus was roasting in the oven with a drizzle of lemon butter. The scent filled the penthouse, warm and mouthwatering.

Shooter leaned against the counter, watching me with his arms crossed, his silver chains catching the light. “You can really cook, huh?”

Didn't take you for the domestic type.”

I flipped a piece of catfish and glanced at him. “You don't know shit about me, Shooter.”

He smirked. “I know you fine as hell, got a smart-ass mouth, and can cook...”

He pushed off the counter and stepped closer, his voice dropping. “And that you keep looking at me like you want me to bend you over this counter.”

I sucked my teeth, turning back to the food. “Never that.”

I focused on plating the food, pretending like the heat creeping up my neck wasn't

from his presence behind me. The way he looked at me? Like I was something he was going to have, whether I fought it or not? It was dangerous. And the worst part? I liked it.

By the time the food was done, my stomach growled in anticipation. I slid the plates onto the kitchen island, and the scent of fried catfish, mashed potatoes, and roasted asparagus filled the air. Shooter took a seat at the island, his eyes roaming over the food as if he was about to devour me instead of dinner.

“You did your thing,”

he said, his voice low, like he was actually impressed.

I slid into the chair across from him, setting my glass of Hennessy down before I served us both. “Don’t act surprised,”

I shot back, then smirked. “I’ve got layers, you just don’t know how deep they go yet.”

Shooter raised an eyebrow as he poured the drink into his glass, swirling it around before taking a sip. “Guess we’ll see about that.”

I didn’t know why, but the way he said it made my pulse quicken, like he was waiting for me to slip, to show him something he could use against me. But tonight, I wasn’t playing his game. I reached for the catfish, biting into the crispy, golden skin, the flavor of the seasoning mixing perfectly with the flaky fish.

We ate in silence for a minute, only the clinking of silverware on plates and the soft music filling the room. The tension between us was palpable, but neither of us was ready to break it yet. I sipped my lemonade slowly, letting it burn down my throat. My mind kept drifting back to what Shooter said earlier—about me looking at him

like I wanted him. And I did. That realization gnawed at me.

“You’re quiet,”

he said suddenly, his voice rough, as though he was watching me closely. “What’s on your mind?”

I shifted in my chair, leaning back, trying to act like I wasn’t analyzing everything he had just told me. But I couldn’t lie—I was processing it all, trying to make sense of the man in front of me. “I don’t know,”

I said softly. “A lot, I guess. You act like you don’t care about anyone, but I can tell there’s more going on behind your eyes. Like... maybe you’ve been hurt before.”

Shooter’s gaze softened just a fraction, but it was enough for me to notice. “Everyone’s been hurt, .”

His voice was quieter now, almost reflective. “That’s just part of the game.”

I nodded slowly, unsure of what to say next. I was treading water, not sure if I should keep digging or leave it be. But I couldn’t deny the pull. Something was compelling about him, something that kept drawing me in despite how much I told myself I hated him.

“Why you fightin’ me every step of the way?”

Shooter asked, his tone suddenly sharp again, breaking my thoughts.

I met his gaze, unwilling to back down. “I’m not fighting you,”

I said, my voice steady. “I’m adjusting to this shit and trying to figure you out.

This... situation ain't easy."

He smirked, the arrogance in his eyes returning. "I don't make shit easy for anyone."

I felt a flicker of something in my chest, something I didn't want to acknowledge. Something that told me I was getting too close to him for comfort. But before I could say anything else, Shooter grabbed the blunt from the ashtray, lighting it up again, exhaling the smoke into the air between us.

I grabbed my lemonade, taking another sip to calm my nerves. The silence between us was thick, but this time, it didn't feel as uncomfortable as it had before.

"Tomorrow night's the meeting,"

Shooter said suddenly, his voice low. "Just play your part and everything will be good."

I looked at him, eyebrow raised. "And if I don't, it'll go bad?"

"It can't go bad, so do what you want with that information."

I frowned but didn't say anything. It was clear to me now. Shooter's world was complicated, and whether I liked it or not, I was a part of it. We sat in silence again, the weight of his words hanging between us. But this time, I didn't mind the silence. I could tell that we were both starting to understand each other. Just a little bit.

T h e n i g h t w a s slowly winding down, and the effects of the weed and shots after dinner settled in. I felt buzzed but relaxed, the kind of high where everything felt smoother, and the world seemed a little more... manageable. The tension between Shooter and me was still thick, but for once, it didn't feel like I was walking on eggshells. I was full, I was lit, and I was ready for some peace.

“I’m going to take a shower,”

I said, standing up from the island where we’d been sitting, chilling.

“You want a back rub first? You’ve earned it after all that cooking.”

I rolled my eyes, the corner of my mouth lifting in a slight smile despite myself.

“Sure, and while you’re at it, kiss my ass,”

I shot back sarcastically.

He chuckled, but I wasn’t interested in his teasing. I needed a moment alone, some time to unwind. So, I made my way down the hallway to the guest bedroom, my mind drifting.

The silence of the penthouse wrapped around me as I entered the massive bathroom, the soft glow of the lights in the mirrors giving the room a calm, almost spa-like vibe. I turned on the water, hot enough to steam up the glass, and stood there for a moment, letting the sound of the rushing water fill the space, shutting out everything else.

As the steam enveloped me, I stepped under the shower, the water hitting my skin like a warm blanket, washing away the day’s tension. My mind drifted, and for the first time all night, I let myself think about him.

The way he’d looked at me like he was just waiting for me to slip, waiting for me to give him a reason to make me bend over. I hated the way it made me feel, but I couldn’t ignore it. My body responded to him in ways I couldn’t control, no matter how much I tried to bury it.

I turned the hot water higher, the heat making me flush as I tried to focus on the feeling of the water running over my skin, trying to drown out the thoughts of his

blue eyes and that body of his that looked like it was chiseled from stone.

My mind kept spiraling back to that moment when he'd leaned in, close enough for me to feel his breath on my neck. His touch had been just a whisper, but it had sent shivers straight through me. The pull of him was undeniable, even if I hated myself for admitting it.

No, I scolded myself, slapping my hand against the wall of the shower. You're not gonna let him get to you. But the more I told myself that, the harder it was to ignore the heat between my legs.

I took my time, finishing my shower, scrubbing away the last of the guilt and trying to force the tension from my muscles. When I stepped out, the steam lingered in the room, and I could smell the light scent of lavender from the soap on my skin. I felt refreshed, but still... unsettled.

Wrapping myself in a towel, I walked over to the closet. For some reason, I couldn't bring myself to look at the clothes I had bought today. Instead, I grabbed a simple two-piece silk short set. It was smooth, cool to the touch, and soft against my skin.

After slipping into it, I gazed at myself in the mirror, admiring the way it clung to my curves. My reflection stared back, but there was no peace there. I was still wound up from the night. Still trying to shake off the electricity that seemed to spark every time I thought about Shooter.

The silence of the house stood out now. It was... too quiet. I wandered into his bedroom and realized he wasn't there. I frowned, walking into the living room. The space was empty, aside from the dim light from the city filtering through the windows. There was no sign of him anywhere.

Where the hell did he go? I cursed aloud, irritated. Not only had he left without

saying a word, but I also had no idea where he could've gone. My heart rate picked up just slightly. Was he going to see her again? The thought made my chest tighten, but I shoved it down.

I stormed back into his bedroom and over to his dresser, glancing at his things, trying to figure out if I could find any clue about where he might've gone. But of course, nothing gave me an answer. I pulled out my phone, dialing his number, but it went straight to voicemail.

“Where the fuck are you, Shooter?”

I muttered, my fingers tapping nervously on the glass screen. It was pissing me off more than I realized.

I tossed my phone back onto the bed and made my way back to the living room, then to the kitchen. He couldn't just vanish like that. Not after everything today. As I walked back to the large windows, staring out at the city lights, I caught myself pacing back and forth, irritation building. Where the hell had he gone?

Page 17

Source Creation Date: July 22, 2025, 4:44 pm

I had to get out the crib before I walked into the guest bedroom and bent Parker's ass the fuck over. I was posted up in Ren's garage, a bottle of Henny in one hand, a blunt burning between my fingers. We had the garage door half open, letting the night air creep in, the city buzz low in the background. Business talk. The usual.

I glanced down at my phone, the vibration pulsating. When I pulled it out, I saw Parker's name flash across the screen.

Enjoy your time with that bitch.

I chuckled, shaking my head. She was pissed—obviously—but something about it amused me too. I could see her sitting there, fuming, probably pacing back and forth in my penthouse, all upset because she thought I was with someone else. I couldn't lie, it was entertaining to know she cared enough to get worked up. She just didn't know how to handle me yet.

I stuffed my phone back in my pocket just as Ren's phone rang loud as hell against the concrete. He glanced at it, frowned, then answered. "Yeah?"

He listened, his whole posture changing. Tightening. I crushed the blunt in the ashtray, already feeling the shift in the air. Ren stood up slow, his smile cold as fuck. "We got the drop on these niggas,"

he said, voice low. "Them niggas who hit the shipment? They holed up at an abandoned motel on the east side. Three cars deep."

I felt my heart slow, like my body was already preparing for what was about to

happen. I rose to my feet, smooth and deliberate. “Let’s get it then.”

Ren grinned, grabbing his gun from the table while I grabbed my two Glocks with extended clips. After he locked up his crib, we climbed into the black Tahoe he kept for when shit needed to get grimy and scrubbed clean immediately after.

When we pulled up two blocks from the motel, Ren killed the lights. We sat in the dark for a minute, watching. Plotting. Three beat-up rides parked out front. Two dudes on lookout, smoking blunts, and posted sloppily. Amateur ass niggas.

I rolled my window down just enough to let the night air cut through the tension. “You take the two outside. I’m sweeping the rest,”

I said, my voice flat.

Ren nodded with no hesitation. “Say less.”

We moved like shadows, slipping through the darkness. Ren peeled off toward the front of the motel while I circled to the back, sliding a Glock into each hand.

The back door wasn’t even locked. I kicked it open without hesitation, the wood splintering loud as fuck. The room inside erupted in chaos—niggas scrambling for guns, yelling, furniture toppling. Too slow.

Two quick headshots dropped the first two trying to reach for weapons. Another tried to lunge at me with a rusty blade. I put two in his chest, the force knocking him clean off his feet.

The screams started next door but I didn’t give a fuck. I stalked through the rooms like a reaper, every step deliberate, controlled. Kicked open another door. Found another one trying to climb out of the window. I grabbed him by the back of his

hoodie and slammed him into the wall so hard the plaster cracked.

“Please! Please, man, it—it wasn’t even personal!”

he stuttered, blood dripping from his forehead.

I pressed the barrel to his mouth, forcing his head back. “You steal from me, you make shit personal.”

His eyes widened right before I pulled the trigger. Blood sprayed across the peeling wallpaper like a fucked-up painting. I didn’t even blink. Gunfire cracked from outside. Two shots. Then silence. Ren was always efficient as a muthafucka.

I made my way back to the center room where a big bodyguard-looking nigga was trying to rally. He aimed at me, and I dropped low, rolled, and came up firing. Chest shots. He staggered back, falling over the shitty coffee table, dragging it down with him.

I stood there, breathing steadily, surveying the wreckage. There were bodies everywhere. Blood soaking into the motel’s nasty-ass carpet. The air thick with gunpowder and death.

Footsteps crunched behind me and Ren wiped blood off his knuckles with a towel like he just finished washing his hands instead of ending lives. “All clear,” he said.

I nodded, scanning one last time. None of them deserved mercy. None of them got it.

Sirens blared in the distance as we quickly snatched up guns, drugs, and money and then doused the place with gasoline we brought for the occasion. I lit the match and watched the flames roar to life. The fire crackled louder, the black smoke curling high into the sky. Leaving nothing behind but blood, ash. Ren knew how to handle the

Tahoe. My mind was at ease.

The drive back to the penthouse felt long as hell. I parked the car and sat there for a minute, letting the quiet of the garage settle around me. I pulled out a blunt, lit it, and took a deep drag. The smoke filled my lungs, giving me a temporary sense of calm. I had to get my head right before I walked back inside.

I finished the blunt, took one last drag, and flicked the ashes into the ashtray. I was ready. Time to deal with whatever was waiting for me inside. I stepped off the elevator, dapped up my security, and walked into the penthouse. The place was quiet, too quiet, like it was waiting for something to explode. I didn't have to look far to see Parker standing there, her eyes narrowed and her arms crossed. The second she saw me, she crossed the room like she was on a mission.

Her hand hit me hard across the face, the sting sharp and immediate. I didn't flinch. I didn't even blink. But damn, the way she looked at me after—like she had something to prove—made the fire in me burn hotter.

“You're not playing by the rules, Sebastian,”

she snapped, her voice a mix of anger and frustration. “Tell me who the bitch is!”

I didn't say anything at first, just stared at her, letting her words sink in. Then I reached out and grabbed her wrist, pulling her toward me. Before she could say another word, I grasped her throat, my grip tight but controlled. “Are you fuckin' crazy?”

I growled, my voice low and dangerous. “Don't you ever put your fuckin' hands on me.”

She gasped, but her eyes only burned with more anger. I held her there for a moment,

watching her pulse jump under my fingers. I could feel the heat between us, the tension thick in the air.

I released her from my grip, tossing her backward onto the couch. She didn't fall, though—she landed with grace, but the fire in her eyes never faded. I walked past her, heading toward the bedroom. My footsteps were heavy, but I couldn't help the smirk creeping onto my face. I knew she was pissed, but I also knew she was lying to herself about why she cared.

“I still wanna know!”

she yelled after me, her voice sharp.

I didn't turn around, just kept walking. “Why the fuck does it matter to you?”

I asked, my voice casual as I stepped into the bedroom.

“Why the fuck wouldn't it matter?”

she shot back, her words dripping with frustration.

I knew why. I already knew. But I wasn't going to give her the satisfaction of saying it. Instead, I kept walking, moving past her as I peeled off my clothes to take a shower.

She was still yelling, but I could tell it wasn't just anger. There was something else in her tone, something deeper. I could feel her eyes on me as I moved through the room, the way her gaze followed me. When I looked at her again, I caught the way she was watching me—like she couldn't decide whether to hate me or want me.

She was wearing that damn silk two-piece set, and even though she was mad as hell,

she still looked fine as fuck. Her curves were on full display, and the way she was fuming just made her even more irresistible.

I shook my head, letting out a low chuckle as I moved toward the bathroom. “You should get that anger in check,”

I said, my voice calm but with a hint of amusement. “You too pretty to be frownin' all the fuckin' time.”

Parker didn't say anything after that, but I could feel the heat in the room as I walked into the bathroom. I didn't look back at her. I knew she was still standing there, fuming.

After I got out of the shower, I tossed on a pair of basketball shorts and stepped into some Fendi slides. Then, I went to see her mad ass. The guest bedroom door was cracked, and I pushed it open. I stood in the doorway, watching her for a second. The way she sat on the edge of the bed, her legs crossed under the thick, fluffy blanket, her bonnet perched on top of her head, was almost too much to ignore. She was eating ice cream, spooning it slowly into her mouth, her face tight with frustration, lips pursed, brows furrowed. She didn't even notice me standing there.

I couldn't help but watch her for a moment longer. Even mad, she looked good. She was perfect in her imperfection. I knew she was still pissed about me being out, and I could tell she was probably stewing over the bullshit text she sent me earlier. I didn't respond to it, but now... well, I had something else on my mind.

I made my way over to her quietly. She didn't hear me approaching until I was right next to her. Without a word, I reached down, grabbed the bowl of ice cream from her hand, and set it on the nightstand. Her eyes snapped up, surprise and irritation flaring in her gaze.

“What the hell?”

she started, her voice thick with annoyance.

I didn't let her finish. I moved fast, grabbing her by the throat, just enough to keep her still. She gasped, eyes widening, but she didn't pull away. Not that I expected her to. I leaned in, close—too close. My lips brushed against hers, then took over, deep and demanding. I kissed her like I'd been starving for her lips. Like everything about her just made me want to claim her in the most primal way. I felt her body tense, but she didn't push me off, didn't break the kiss. She let me in, gave herself to me for those few seconds.

Then, just as quickly, I pulled back, leaving her breathless and confused. I didn't even let her catch her breath. I stood up, looked down at her, the way she blinked up at me, like she was waiting for more. Her lips parted as she frowned, still confused, still caught in whatever spell I'd just cast on her.

“Why did you stop?”

Her voice was soft but full of question, her body still leaning toward me, wanting more.

I chuckled, the sound low in my throat. “Get some rest, wifey,”

I said, my voice a little too calm, like I hadn't just completely turned her world upside down.

I turned to leave, but before I could make it to the door, I heard the pillow flying toward me. It hit me in the back, a weak attempt at defiance, but I didn't even look back. I just walked out, knowing exactly what I had done. Got her all excited, got her confused and pissed off, and then left her wanting more. Parker was exactly where I

wanted her.

Page 18

Source Creation Date: July 22, 2025, 4:44 pm

I stared at the ceiling in the dark, the silence of the penthouse settling around me like a heavy blanket. My mind wouldn't shut off. Every time I closed my eyes, all I could see was him—Shooter, towering over me, that kiss... the way he made me feel.

My heart was still pounding in my chest, and no matter how hard I tried to block it out, I couldn't. I should be pissed off, and I was, but damn it, I couldn't deny that I was also turned on. And that pissed me off even more.

It had been almost a year since I'd last had any kind of intimacy, and now I was here, tangled in my own thoughts, wondering why the hell his kiss was still so vivid in my head. He'd barely given me the chance to process what happened, and yet here I was, lying in this massive bed, trying to convince myself that I didn't care. That I didn't want him to come back in here and finish what he'd started.

God, why did he have to be so damn fine? Why did he have to kiss me like that?

I turned over onto my side, gripping the pillow tight, trying to ignore the ache between my legs. My thoughts kept drifting back to him—the way his lips felt on mine, the fire that ignited in me as he took control. I hated myself for letting him do that. I hated myself for wanting more. I shouldn't even be thinking about him like this. He was my husband, yes, but this wasn't supposed to be happening. I was supposed to be fighting him, not falling for him.

But every time I tried to remind myself of why I shouldn't want him, a part of me couldn't help but remember the way he looked at me. The way his eyes bore into me with that possessive hunger. The way he kissed me. I couldn't deny that it stirred something in me. Something I'd buried deep down, something I wasn't supposed to

want.

I thought about getting up and going to his room. I knew I'd find him there. He was probably lying in that massive bed of his, maybe watching TV or just relaxing. Would he be asleep? Would he want me to come in? I could almost hear his voice in my head. I'll get you right.

And damn it, I did want it. I wanted him. I hated myself for it. I'd barely even gotten to know him, and yet he already had this hold on me. It was sickening.

I squeezed my eyes shut, but all I could see was him again—his strong hands, the way he touched me, the way he kissed me like I was the only thing that mattered. My chest tightened as frustration built up. This wasn't supposed to happen. I wasn't supposed to feel this way about him. I was supposed to be angry, not wanting him.

I rolled onto my back and stared at the ceiling once again, fighting the urge to get up and just go to him. I wanted him to come to me. To take control. But then I'd be playing right into his hands. I couldn't give in to him that easily. I couldn't let myself get attached. But... God, I wanted him.

I exhaled sharply and rubbed my face, trying to clear my head. This wasn't me. I didn't fall for men like this. Especially not men like Shooter. He wasn't some nice guy I could trust. He was dangerous, unpredictable. And here I was, lying in bed, wanting him like some desperate, needy woman. What was wrong with me?

I pushed the blanket off my legs and sat up, rubbing my temples as my mind raced. Should I go see him? Should I confront him about what happened? No. That was too risky. If I went to him now, it would be like I was begging for him, like I couldn't control myself.

I leaned forward, elbows resting on my knees as I tried to calm my racing thoughts. I

was pissed off. Pissed off at him, pissed off at myself for even thinking about him in this way. He had no right to make me feel like this.

But no matter how hard I tried to ignore it, the attraction was there. The desire. The tension between us was palpable, and it only seemed to grow stronger with each passing minute. I sighed heavily, sinking back into the bed, trying to get comfortable. But no matter how many times I shifted, I couldn't get rid of the tight knot in my stomach. The frustration. The need.

I had to be stronger than this. I had to stop letting him get to me. But as I lay there in the silence, I couldn't help but think of his face, his body, his kiss. It was like a damn drug, and I was hooked. I closed my eyes, the darkness taking over, and I drifted off to sleep... still pissed off, still unsatisfied, and yet... somehow, deep down, I knew I was going to end up playing his game. And I hated myself for it.

The following evening had rolled in slowly, and as the sun began to set, I was still trapped in my thoughts. The day had been just like the others—spent alone in the penthouse, on the phone gossiping with my girls and then filling the silence with journaling and the sounds of the TV.

Shooter had been gone all day, leaving me alone to stew in my thoughts about the kiss we shared the night before. It was still eating at me. That kiss. God, the way he kissed me. How could I even think about him like that? He'd barely given me a chance to process it, and yet I couldn't shake the image of his hands on me, the heat of his mouth against mine.

I had spent the whole day trying not to think about it, but here I was, counting down until it might've happened again. And that other bitch—whoever she was—still loomed over my thoughts like a cloud.

But tonight... tonight I was going to take control. I had made up my mind. I was

going to show up looking so damn sexy that not even his wandering eye could drift away from me. If he thought he could have another woman, then let him see exactly what he was missing.

I slipped into the green dress Shooter had bought me the day we went shopping, the one that hugged every curve of my body and made my skin look like it was glowing. The gold heels clicked against the floor as I walked toward the mirror, and I paused for a moment, taking in my reflection. I wasn't going to pile on makeup tonight. No heavy foundation, no dramatic eyes. Just me. My natural beauty, the light freckles that dotted my face, the soft curve of my lips.

I styled my hair differently and left it bone straight with a buss down middle part. I knew I had the kind of beauty that didn't need all the layers of makeup to hide behind. I was going to let him see the real me—fierce, unapologetic, and absolutely stunning.

I stood back from the mirror, admiring the way the dress fit me, how the gold jewelry he'd picked out accented the look perfectly. I wasn't going to let him forget me tonight, not after what he'd put me through. I wanted him to be so damn mesmerized by me that he wouldn't even think about that other bitch. Hell, I was about to make him regret every second he spent even considering her.

Suddenly, I heard the knock on the door, his familiar deep voice calling out, "Yo, . Let's go. We gon' be late."

I walked toward the door, taking a deep breath as I opened it. Shooter stood there, looking as good as ever, dressed in his sharp suit and tie. His eyes flickered over me quickly, but the second his gaze landed on my body, I saw the change. His expression froze, his jaw tightening as he took me in, looking me up and down like he was seeing me for the first time.

For a brief moment, I saw a flash of something in his eyes—something primal and possessive. But it was gone just as quickly as it appeared. I knew I had his attention, though. I could feel it in the air between us. I ran my fingers through my hair, letting it fall over my shoulder, and then I popped a mint into my mouth, the cool flavor a sharp contrast to the heat simmering between us.

“You ready?”

I asked, my voice smooth, almost teasing.

He didn't answer right away, and I could tell he was struggling to hide his reaction. His gaze stayed on me for a beat longer than it should have, before he nodded, gruffly, “Yeah. Let's go.”

I smirked, knowing damn well that I'd just thrown him off balance. I followed him out the door, my heels clicking against the floor, my body in sync with the rhythm of his steps. But this time, it wasn't just the sound of our footsteps that filled the silence. It was the tension, the charged energy between us, like something was about to snap.

Shooter kept glancing at me as we made our way to the elevator, but he didn't say a word. The way he looked at me like he couldn't decide whether he wanted to pounce or strangle me only made me feel more powerful. I wasn't some damsel in distress, waiting for his attention. No, I was going to make him want me.

We stepped into the elevator, and the doors closed behind us. The air inside felt thick, like we were trapped in our own little world. I could feel his presence, strong and overwhelming, as he stood next to me. Finally, he broke the silence. “You look good, wifey.”

His voice was low, almost like a growl. He wasn't looking at me anymore, but I could tell the words were loaded with something deeper.

I raised an eyebrow, the corner of my mouth lifting in a smirk. “I know I do,”

I said, leaning back against the elevator wall, feeling more confident with each passing second.

He gave a sharp nod, his lips pressing into a thin line. He didn’t say anything else, but I could feel his eyes on me, burning into me, as the elevator descended. I wasn’t going to let him have all the control tonight. Tonight, I was going to take my power back and when we walked out of the elevator, the night was mine.

Page 19

Source Creation Date: July 22, 2025, 4:44 pm

The drive to the private airstrip was quiet, but the tension in the car was thick. Parker was still playing her little game, trying to make me sweat in that damn dress. She knew exactly what she was doing.

From the moment she stepped out of the bedroom, she'd had my full attention and my dick hard. She knew it too. But I wasn't about to let her think she was winning. I had patience. I could play the long game.

When we pulled up to the jet, she stilled for half a second before showing her surprise. I caught it, though—the way her lips parted slightly, the way her fingers twitched on her lap like she wanted to grab her phone and take a picture but held back. Parker had been expecting a car ride, maybe a blacked-out SUV. Not this.

“Get out,”

I said smoothly, stepping out first before rounding the car to open her door.

She slid out, her legs crossing so perfectly in those high heels that I had to suppress a smirk. As soon as she was steady on her feet, she placed a hand on her hip and looked up at me with that defiant gleam in her eyes.

“So we're taking a jet?”

she asked, tilting her head slightly. “Just to get to a damn meeting?”

I chuckled, reaching for the small of her back as I guided her toward the stairs leading up. “I don't do business like regular niggas, Parker.”

She scoffed, but let me lead her. “Or maybe you just like showing off.”

“You say that like you ain’t impressed,”

I countered, my voice dropping just enough to make her shift slightly in those heels. She rolled her eyes but didn’t argue. That was as close to an admission as I was gonna get.

I let her step onto the jet first, watching her ass in that green dress as she walked ahead of me. The cabin was sleek, modern—black leather seats, a fully stocked bar, dim lights setting the mood just right. I caught her taking it all in before she turned and flopped down onto one of the plush seats, crossing her legs.

I took the seat across from her, spreading my legs and leaning back, watching her as I loosened my tie slightly. She looked too damn good, and she knew it. But she wasn’t the only one who knew how to play this game.

A flight attendant came over, offering drinks, but Parker shook her head. I, on the other hand, asked for a glass of whiskey. “You sure you don’t want anything?”

I asked her, swirling the dark liquor in my glass as I studied her.

She licked her lips slightly before replying. “I don’t need to be drinking before a business dinner.”

I smirked. “Since when are you the responsible one?”

She leaned back, stretching her arms over the back of the seat. “Since I realized I gotta keep my head on straight around you.”

I let out a low chuckle, shaking my head. “Good girl.”

The jet engines roared to life, and as we ascended, I could see Parker gripping the armrest slightly before catching herself and relaxing. She wasn't scared, just a little thrown off by the sensation of taking off. It was subtle, but I caught it.

“You ever flown private before?”

I asked, watching her closely.

She arched a brow. “You know who my father is,”

I smirked at her response, taking a slow sip of my drink. Parker exhaled, shifting slightly. “I think you like thinking you can impress me with all this money shit.”

I tilted my head, setting my glass down. “Nah. You come from money. If I wanted to impress you, I'd be doin' somethin' else entirely.”

Her lips parted slightly, but she quickly recovered, sitting up straighter. “Like what?”

I let the silence stretch between us, letting her feel my gaze on her, the weight of my attention. She swallowed, and I knew I had her. “You still thinkin' about last night, huh?”

I asked, my voice lower now.

She tensed for half a second before scoffing. “No.”

I leaned forward, resting my elbows on my knees. “Lyin' ain't a good look on you.”

Her jaw clenched. “I don't think about things that don't matter.”

I grinned, slow and knowing. “So if I kissed you right now, you wouldn't feel a

thing?”

Her lips parted, but no sound came out. She blinked rapidly, like she was trying to think of a comeback but coming up empty. I chuckled. “Thought so.”

She sucked her teeth, grabbing a bottle of water from the small fridge near her seat. “I don’t know what you think you’re doing, , but you’re not—”

“Not what?”

I cut her off, still watching her like a hawk.

She let out an exasperated breath. “Not getting in my head.”

I just smiled. “Baby, I been there.”

She shot me a glare before twisting the cap off her water and taking a sip, trying to act like my words hadn’t gotten to her. But I knew better.

We rode in silence for a while, the tension thick in the air. Every now and then, she’d shift, cross her legs, and adjust the way her dress fell over her thighs. And every damn time, I clocked it. She was feeling this just as much as I was. She just didn’t wanna admit it.

I let her sit in it, let her mind wander, let her frustration simmer while I finished my drink. I wasn’t gonna rush it. She wanted to play hard to get? Fine. But I was gonna keep her right on the edge, wanting more, until she broke first.

After about an hour, the pilot’s voice crackled over the speakers, announcing our descent. Parker exhaled, checking her reflection in her phone camera. “So, who exactly are we meeting?”

I leaned back, watching her. “A supplier. Big player. He moves heavy weight in both drugs and artillery. We make a deal tonight, and my crew is set for the next couple years.”

The jet touched down smoothly on a private strip, and as the doors opened, I stood and straightened my tie. Parker watched me, something unreadable in her gaze. I held out a hand. “You comin' or what?”

She hesitated for half a second before sliding her fingers into mine. I grinned. “Good girl.”

She pulled her hand away instantly, scowling. “Don't push it.”

I just chuckled, leading her off the jet. The night was just getting started.

The ride to the supplier's estate was smooth, quiet, and wrapped in a thick layer of tension that was becoming a familiar thing between me and Parker. The limo's interior was all black leather and dark-tinted windows, with a chilled bottle of champagne in a silver ice bucket. Parker hadn't said much since we stepped off the jet. She kept her legs crossed, fingers idly toying with the gold diamond bracelet on her wrist. She was lost in thought, but I knew her well enough by now to know what was going through her head.

She was still thinking about that jet ride and about the words I'd said that got under her skin. Good. I let her sit with it, just watching her as the limo cut through the winding road up the hill toward the estate. I knew the moment she saw the house because she straightened up, those pretty brown eyes widening just a little.

The supplier wasn't just rich. He was old rich. His estate sat high on the hill like a king's castle, overlooking the city lights below. It was the type of place you only got if you had power, connections, and a lifetime of making the right kind of enemies.

The long driveway was lined with towering palm trees, leading up to a mansion that looked like something out of a damn movie—Mediterranean-style architecture, massive double doors, and warm golden lighting spilling from tall windows.

The limo slowed to a stop at the circular driveway. As soon as we stepped out, two heavily armed guards were waiting at the entrance. Both were big, dressed in all black, their gazes sharp as they took us in.

“Sir, we’ll need to check you for weapons,”

one of them said, voice clipped and professional.

I didn’t move. My grip on Parker’s lower back tightened slightly as I leveled the guard with a slow, easy smirk. “That’s not happenin’.”

The two men exchanged a glance. One of them shifted slightly, already prepared to escalate the situation.

Before anything could pop off, the mansion doors swung open, and the man of the hour stepped out. The supplier, Vincenzo Ricci, was a man who’d built an empire long before I ever came into this game. He was tall, broad-shouldered, and dressed in an all-black suit, his salt-and-pepper hair slicked back. He had two stunning women draped on his arms—one blonde, one brunette, both of them dressed in expensive silk dresses with diamonds shining at their throats.

“Ah, Sebastian,”

Vincenzo greeted, his deep voice carrying over the tension-filled air. “I see my men are being a little overzealous.”

The guards instantly stepped back, lowering their hands. He smirked, eyeing me with

something like amusement. “Come in and bring your lovely wife.” Parker stiffened beside me for half a second at the word wife, but she didn’t correct him.

Inside, the mansion was even more impressive. High ceilings, grand chandeliers, and floor-to-ceiling windows overlooking a marble courtyard with a fountain in the center. Expensive art lined the walls, and the scent of something rich and seasoned filled the air.

Dinner was already set in the massive dining hall. A long table covered in fine china and gold-rimmed glasses. Vincenzo motioned for us to sit, taking his own seat at the head of the table while the two women on his arm took the seats beside him.

Parker sat beside me, her posture poised and elegant, playing her role perfectly. I let my hand rest on her thigh under the table, feeling the way she tensed before forcing herself to relax. Wait staff moved swiftly, pouring wine and serving dishes that looked like something straight out of a five-star restaurant. I wasn’t here to eat, though. I was here to talk business.

“You’re a bold man,”

Vincenzo started, swirling his wine in his glass. “Your brother, Silas... he wasn’t half as confident as you.”

I smirked. “My brother was a businessman above anything else. I’m a different breed.”

Vincenzo nodded approvingly. “That, I can see.”

He took a sip of his wine before setting the glass down. “So, tell me, Sebastian, what is it exactly that you want from me?”

I leaned back in my chair, keeping my expression unreadable. “Partnership. You got the product, I got the infrastructure to move it. Drugs, artillery, high-grade shit. You let me push it through my channels, and I promise you, your profits will triple.”

Vincenzo studied me for a long moment. “And why should I trust you? You’re young. This game eats men alive.”

I let out a low chuckle. “Because I ain’t afraid to get my hands dirty. And because I always deliver.”

The tension at the table thickened, but I didn’t waver. I met Vincenzo's gaze head-on, letting him see exactly who he was dealing with. After a long pause, Vincenzo grinned. “I like you.”

Parker shifted beside me, and when I glanced at her, I could see it—she was impressed. She didn’t say it, but her body language gave it away. The way she sat a little straighter, the way her eyes flicked between me and Vincenzo, like she was seeing me in a new light.

Dinner continued with casual conversation. Vincenzo's women laughed at his jokes, the wine kept flowing, and by the time dessert was served, the deal was practically sealed.

After dinner, we moved to the grand living room, where business talk resumed. Money was discussed. Numbers were thrown out. Terms were negotiated. And through it all, I made sure Vincenzo understood exactly who he was dealing with—I wasn’t some desperate man looking for a handout. I was a boss, and I moved like one.

By the end of the night, Vincenzo leaned back in his chair with a satisfied smirk. “I’ll have my men handle the rest. We’re all good.”

I nodded, knowing I'd won. On the way out, as we walked toward the limo, I leaned down, my lips brushing Parker's ear. "You played your part well tonight,"

I murmured. "Think you deserve a treat."

I felt her body react—just a slight shiver, the way she sucked in a tiny breath. But then, just as quickly, she rolled her eyes. "Whatever, ."

I chuckled, knowing damn well she felt every word. She could front all she wanted, but we both knew the truth. I was getting under her skin and she liked it.

Source Creation Date: July 22, 2025, 4:44 pm

The private jet was quiet, the hum of the engines the only sound filling the space between us. We were on our way back to the city, the night still stretching long before us. The meeting had gone better than I expected. Watching Shooter operate in business mode—without having to kill someone to prove a point—had been... something.

I hated how much I'd admired it. The way he spoke, his confidence, the way he moved and controlled the room without raising his voice, without breaking a sweat—it was sexy. And I hated that it was sexy. Hated the way it made my body react, the slow burn that curled in my stomach as I watched him handle a room full of dangerous men like he'd been doing it all his life.

I wasn't supposed to find that attractive. Shooter was a menace. A violent, dangerous man who had no business making me feel like this. And yet, my body didn't seem to care. I sat across from him in the jet, my legs crossed, my arms folded, my mind a mess. The flight attendant had already come by to offer drinks, but I waved her off, knowing alcohol wasn't going to be enough to settle what was happening inside me.

Then, Shooter pulled out a blunt. He sparked it, the flame from his lighter illuminating his sharp, unreadable expression. He took a slow drag, his lips wrapping around the tip before exhaling a stream of thick smoke into the air.

Before I could stop myself, I reached across the space between us and plucked the blunt right from his fingers. His blue eyes flicked up to mine, unreadable and dangerous. I didn't look away. Lifting the blunt to my lips, I took a deep inhale, letting the thick smoke fill my lungs, hoping—praying—it would calm the heat coursing through me.

Shooter didn't say a word, but the look in his eyes spoke volumes. It was the same look he'd had when he slammed my college friend's head against the counter at the store. The same look he had when he wrapped his hand around my throat before kissing me into oblivion. The blunt was already working its way through my system, but that look? That was what really had me feeling lightheaded.

Slowly, deliberately, Shooter leaned forward, rising from his seat across from me and moving to the one right next to mine. The private jet was spacious—plenty of seats, plenty of space—yet he chose to sit right next to me. I took another slow pull from the blunt, pretending like my pulse hadn't just skyrocketed. Shooter said nothing. He just watched. The weight of his stare burned through me. His scent—that expensive cologne and the faintest trace of smoke—wrapped around me, making it impossible to focus on anything but him.

I felt his head dip slightly, the warmth of his breath fanning against my neck. I inhaled sharply. His lips never touched me, but it didn't matter. The heat of him was enough to have me damn near trembling. Pussy dripping. This was a game. A dangerous, silent game. Shooter wanted me to break first. And damn it, I did. I let out a breath I didn't realize I was holding and whispered the truth I hated more than anything.

“I hate that I want you.”

The moment the words left my mouth, Shooter chuckled low. Dark. Deep. Like he already knew. Because, of course he did.

The second the jet landed, the tension between us was suffocating. Shooter knew exactly what he was doing—watching me like a predator who had all the time in the world to pounce. Like he knew the second we got back to the penthouse, I was going to break.

The ride from the private hangar to the penthouse was quiet. I refused to look at him, and he let me stew in my own frustration, one hand on the wheel, the other lazily draped across his thigh. He had that damn smirk on his face the entire drive.

By the time we stepped off the elevator and into the penthouse, I was done pretending. The second the door shut behind us, I was on him. I shoved at his chest, grabbing at his shirt, pulling him toward me with a hunger that I couldn't suppress any longer. My mouth crashed against his, and he didn't hesitate to kiss me back, his large, tattooed hands palming my ass, dragging me against his hard, unmovable body.

He kissed me slowly at first, like he was savoring the moment. It pissed me off. I deepened the kiss, nipping at his bottom lip, trying to take control, but he pulled back slightly, his blue eyes flashing with amusement. "You good?"

His voice was low, teasing.

I glared at him, my chest heaving. "Shut the fuck up."

He chuckled, slow and deep, like he had won. Like he had me exactly where he wanted me. "You think this is funny?"

I snapped, my hands still fisted in his shirt.

"A lil' bit,"

he admitted, gripping my chin between his fingers. "Watchin' you fight yourself? Watchin' you give in? Yeah, baby, that shit funny as hell."

I was about to curse him out when something ugly bubbled up inside me, something fueled by jealousy and frustration. "You really be with her, don't you?"

I spat, pushing at his chest again. “I know it. The second I’m outta sight, you go runnin’ to that bitch.”

Shooter’s amusement faded. His grip on my chin tightened as he backed me against the nearest wall, his entire body pressing into mine. “Ain’t no other bitch, Mosley,”

he murmured, his voice deadly calm. “Ain’t never been. And if you want the dick that bad, all you gotta do is ask nicely.”

I clenched my jaw, hating how my body reacted to his words, how my thighs clenched involuntarily at the possessiveness in his voice. “I hate you,”

I whispered, my voice shaking with frustration.

Shooter smirked, his lips brushing my ear. “Nah, baby. You just hate how bad you want a nigga.”

I wanted to fight it. I tried to fight it. But I couldn’t. I broke. I grabbed his face, crashing my lips against his, giving in completely. Shooter suddenly pushed me away, stepping back with that goddamn smug look on his face. His hands slid into his pockets, his stance lazy, completely unfazed while I was standing there, breathless, body on fire, needing him.

“Be a good girl,”

he said smoothly, tilting his head as he eyed me up and down like he knew he had me. “Ask for it nicely.”

I clenched my fists at my sides, my whole body trembling with frustration. I was this close to losing it. “You are such a—”

“Ah.”

He cut me off, shaking his head with a knowing smirk. “That ain’t nice, baby. Try again.”

I wanted to scream. I wanted to slap that cocky expression right off his face. But more than anything, I wanted him, and he knew it.

I squeezed my eyes shut for a second, blowing out a sharp breath, forcing myself to calm down. Then I opened them and let my lips curl into the sweetest, most seductive smile I could muster. I tilted my head, stepped forward, and ran a delicate finger down the center of his chest.

“Please, Shooter,”

I murmured, my voice soft, breathy. “Give me the dick.”

His jaw flexed. He didn’t move at first, just stood there, watching me, his blue eyes dark and hungry. Then, faster than I could react, he scooped me up, his strong arms locking around me as a small gasp escaped my lips. “Good girl,”

he murmured, smirking as he carried me down the hall, straight toward the bedroom.

Page 21

Source Creation Date: July 22, 2025, 4:44 pm

Parker clung to me, her nails digging into my back as I kicked the bedroom door closed behind us. She tugged at my shirt, nearly ripping the shit off in her impatience. I tossed her onto the bed roughly, and she bounced with a soft gasp, eyes blazing with defiance.

“Better be careful what you ask for,”

I warned her, stripping off the rest of my clothes without breaking eye contact. Her heated gaze traveled down my tatted chest, my abs, then locked onto my dick with unmistakable hunger.

She licked those plump lips and smirked up at me as she peeled off her dress. “You talk too much. Show me something.”

Her words snapped my control. I lunged, gripping her thighs and yanking her down to the edge of the bed. Keeping her heels on, I ripped the flimsy lace panties off her smooth body like they were nothing, exposing her dripping pretty ass pussy. She hissed, arching into me, daring me to back up my words. I knelt between her thighs, looking up at her wickedly. “You gon’ beg first.”

Her eyes flashed, stubborn as always. “Never that.”

I chuckled darkly, running my tongue slowly along her inner thigh, feeling her muscles tremble under my touch. I knew exactly how to break her. She tried to hold it together, glaring down at me as I teased closer, finally dragging my tongue from the bottom to the top of her pussy—slow, deliberate. Parker’s breath hitched, but she bit down on her lip, refusing to give me the satisfaction.

“Oh, we gon’ see how long you last, baby,”

I murmured, before burying my face between her thighs, eating her like she was my last meal. Her legs jerked, thighs squeezing tight around my head. I slid two fingers deep inside her, stroking her spot just right while I sucked and flicked her clit with merciless hunger.

“Oh shit... fuck! !”

she cried out, hips rolling, desperate for more, but still fighting me, still holding back from begging.

I felt her orgasm building, her pussy clenching around my fingers as she tried to push my head away, still trying to play tough. I looked up, smirking. “Say please.”

She glared down at me, breathless, shaking her head. “Fuck you.”

I pulled away abruptly, making her growl in frustration. “Fine. You wanna be stubborn?”

Before I knew it, Parker pushed herself up and flipped us around, straddling me and gripping my dick tightly in her warm hand. She leaned down, lips brushing my ear seductively. “Maybe you’re the one who will beg.”

She sank down onto me, tight, warm, wet—taking all of me in one swift move. “Shit,”

I groaned, gripping her hips roughly. “That’s how you feelin’, huh?”

She began riding me slowly and deliberately, rolling those hips in circles, squeezing and milking me like she was born for it. Her nails scraped down my chest as she

watched my face carefully, eyes dark with triumph.

“Who’s gon’ beg now, ?”

she taunted breathlessly, increasing her pace, grinding down, hitting all the right spots. Her titties bounced beautifully, and I palmed them roughly, rolling her nipples between my fingers until she whimpered, nearly breaking her rhythm.

“I ain’t beggin’ for shit,”

I growled, flipping her over again, her squeal echoing in the room as I pressed her onto her stomach, gripping her hips and pulling her ass up toward me. “But you will.”

I smacked her ass sharply, making her moan and arch back toward me. “Keep that ass up just like that,”

I commanded, driving back inside her roughly, hitting deep. Parker screamed into the sheets, gripping them tightly, her body shaking as I pounded her relentlessly. “Talk that shit now,”

I growled, wrapping her long hair around my fist and pulling her head back as I fucked her from behind, strokes punishing, deep, owning her completely.

“Fuck, ,”

she gasped, voice breaking, losing control completely. “Right thereeee... pleaseee. Keep fucking me just like that.”

“You beggin’ now, huh?”

I smirked, driving harder, deeper, knowing I had her exactly where I wanted her. Her

pussy squeezed me tight, legs trembling as her orgasm crashed through her.

“Yesssss! Please don’t stop,”

she cried, collapsing forward slightly, ass still up, taking every thrust I gave her. But just as I thought I won, Parker surprised me again, pulling away suddenly and shoving me back onto the bed with a fierce shove.

She climbed back on top, this time facing away from me, reverse cowgirl. Her ass bounced beautifully as she fucked herself onto me, taking complete control again. “Fuck, baby,”

I groaned, gripping her hips, guiding her, losing myself in her wetness, the rhythm she set—fast, reckless, wild.

“Who’s winning now?”

she shot over her shoulder breathlessly, her voice thick with pleasure.

I grinned, thrusting up harder, matching her move for move, determined never to yield. “I don’t ever lose, but you gon’ scream my fuckin’ name again.”

We battled it out, each of us desperate to claim victory, bodies slick with sweat, breaths ragged, curses flying. The headboard banged wildly against the wall, neither of us slowing down. Finally, she threw her head back, climax hitting her again with wild force. “Fuck, ! Damn youuuu!”

I couldn’t hold back anymore, slamming into her deep one last time, letting out a rough groan, emptying myself deep inside her. We collapsed together, panting heavily, limbs tangled, bodies slick with sweat and satisfaction. Parker lay on my chest, her breathing still ragged. After a long silence, she glanced up at me, a smirk

playing on her lips.

“I still didn’t beg,”

she murmured.

“Lyin’ ass,”

I chuckled darkly, brushing her hair back from her damp face.

She rolled her eyes, but didn’t argue, curling deeper into my chest. “Whatever.”

I tightened my arm around her, satisfied, possessive as fuck. “Get used to it, Parker. This dick right here? It ain’t goin’ nowhere. And neither are you.”

She looked up at me, that stubborn fire still sparking in her eyes even as she softened. I smirked, pulling her close again. I didn’t say another word—didn’t need to. She knew damn well she wasn’t going nowhere. Not after that shit right there. Parker Mosley was mine, body, soul, and everything else. Whether she liked it or not.

Page 22

Source Creation Date: July 22, 2025, 4:44 pm

I woke up sore and satisfied. My body ached in the best way possible, a deep, slow throb between my thighs that made me squeeze them together beneath the silk sheets. My mind was still foggy, replaying that raw, passionate, toe-curling sex we had last night. I'd never tried out-fucking a man before but something about Shooter's cocky ass made me want to try. I'd be damned if it didn't feel good to try.

Nothing could come close to that type of sex. I wasn't a virgin. There had been two men before Shooter, both carefully chosen under my father's watchful eye. One had been a calculated business arrangement; the other, an acceptable distraction. But sex with Shooter was different.

I turned my head, expecting to see him beside me, but the bed was empty. The spot where he'd laid was still warm, but he was long gone. My eyes flicked toward the bedroom door just as he stepped inside, already dressed, already in business mode. Black button down, dark-washed jeans slung low on his hips, some designer shoes, and those chains gleaming around his neck. His icy blue eyes swept over me, lingering on my bare skin peeking from beneath the sheets, and the smallest smirk tugged at his lips.

"Morning, wifey."

I rolled my eyes and stretched out, purposefully letting the sheets slide lower down my body. His gaze darkened slightly, but he didn't make a move. "You really just got up and left?"

I muttered, my voice still raspy from sleep.

“For your information,”

Shooter started to say, as he fastened his watch, glancing at me in amusement. “I went to grab breakfast. Figured you needed the rest after how I had you last night.”

My cheeks burned. This nigga was so cocky and arrogant. I flipped onto my stomach, propping my chin on my hand as I watched him. “You’re not even gonna come back to bed and give me more?”

Shooter chuckled, shaking his head. “Nah, baby, you got shit to do.”

I scoffed, pushing up onto my elbows. “What?”

He tucked his gun behind him and shot me a look. “You got a mission for today.”

I arched a brow. “A mission?”

He smirked, leaning against the dresser. “Laundry, cleanin', and cookin'. Wifey duties.”

I sat up fully, gripping the sheet to my chest. “Excuse me?”

“You heard me.”

He reached for his cologne, spraying it across his wrist before rubbing it against his neck. That warm, spicy scent hit my nose instantly, and I almost forgot I was pissed. Almost.

I folded my arms. “First of all, I ain’t no damn maid. And second, what if I wanna come with you?”

Shooter paused, his eyes narrowing slightly. He hadn't expected that. "You tryna tag along all of a sudden?"

he asked, sounding both amused and suspicious.

"Yeah. Maybe."

He let out a short laugh. "Nah, . Not today."

I huffed. "Why not?"

"Because you don't need to be out in the streets with me today."

His voice was final, leaving no room for argument. "Stay here, be good, and do what I said."

I rolled my eyes dramatically, yanking the sheet over my head like a child. Shooter laughed under his breath and walked out.

I laid there, fuming, before finally dragging myself out of bed. If I had to be here all damn day, I might as well make myself comfortable. I threw on a silk robe and padded to the kitchen, opening the fridge and pouring myself a glass of orange juice. That's when I felt him behind me. Before I could turn, Shooter's hands were on my waist, his body crowding me against the counter. His heat, his scent, his overwhelming presence wrapped around me, making my pulse skyrocket.

"Poutin' ain't gon' change shit,"

he murmured, his minty fresh breath ghosting over the shell of my ear. "You ain't comin' with me today."

I exhaled sharply, gripping the edge of the counter as he pressed against me. “You act like you’re hiding something,”

I muttered.

His lips curved against my skin. “Nah, I act like I want you to do what the fuck I say.”

I sucked in a breath as his fingers trailed up my sides, brushing beneath my robe. My whole body responded instantly, and I hated that he had me like this. “Just ‘cause you got the dick last night don’t mean you need to go crazy over it yet,”

he teased, his voice dripping with amusement.

I whipped around, glaring up at him, but before I could snap back, his hands were around my throat and his lips were on mine. Quick, deep, and possessive. Then, just as fast, he released me, smirking. “Be good, wifey.”

And with that, he was gone, leaving me breathless, pissed off, and already wanting more.

I ended up making breakfast more out of frustration than hunger. Bacon sizzled in the pan, eggs fluffed up as I scrambled them, and the toast popped up golden brown. I wasn’t even thinking about eating—I was thinking about him.

Shooter had the audacity to wake up, look that good, kiss me like that, and then just leave me with chores like I was some 1950s housewife. Arrogant. Cocky. Annoying. I hated that he’d managed to get under my skin. Hated that last night was all I could think about. And even worse? I hated that I wanted more. I plated my food and sat at the counter, mindlessly picking at it. By the time I finished eating, I had no excuse not to do what he left me to do.

First was laundry. I gathered up our clothes—his smelled like weed and cologne, which pissed me off more than it should have—and threw everything into the high-tech washing machine. Then I moved on to cleaning the already immaculate penthouse, wiping down surfaces, fluffing pillows, and mopping even though there wasn't a speck of dust anywhere.

And the whole time, my mind was stuck on him. Every single thing reminded me of him. The lingering scent of his body wash in the bathroom. The slight indent of where he had sat at the breakfast bar. The gun he'd left on the nightstand, a stark reminder of who he was and what he did.

By the time I was done, sweat clung to my skin, and I felt like throwing myself onto the couch and never moving again. But I still had to figure out dinner. I opened the fridge, searching for something to cook. After a minute, I settled on some salmon, pulling it out to defrost while I grabbed a bottle of water and leaned against the counter to catch my breath.

And that's when the buzzer rang. Frowning, I walked to the security panel and flipped on the camera. My breath caught in my throat. My father. He stood by the elevator, dressed sharp as always in a dark tailored suit, his presence commanding even through the screen.

I hesitated for only a second before pressing the button to let him up. A moment later, the elevator doors slid open, and he stepped out, his sharp eyes scanning the penthouse before settling on me.

“.”

“Daddy.”

The tension was immediate. It had been two weeks since our last phone call. Since

he'd been overseas handling oil business. Not that I expected much. My marriage to Shooter wasn't about love—it was about power. About keeping the Whitmore and Mosley families connected in wealth, influence, and control. I swallowed down my emotions as he approached, his gaze assessing me.

“You look well,”

he finally said, his deep voice carrying that authoritative weight it always had.

I forced a smile. “Thanks, I guess.”

His eyes swept over the space again before settling back on me. “How's married life?”

I let out a short laugh, crossing my arms. “Oh, you know. Just thrilling.”

His gaze sharpened. “. ”

I sighed, rolling my eyes. “I'm doing fine, Daddy.”

“Good,”

he said, nodding approvingly. “That's what I want to hear.”

I should have known that was all he cared about. Not how I was actually feeling. Not how I was adjusting. Not what my life looked like now. Just that I was doing my job. He took a step closer, his expression unreadable. “This marriage is about securing our family's future. Keeping the power where it belongs. I trust you've learned to understand that by now?”

I pressed my lips together, my fingers tightening around my arms. “I understand.”

“Then don’t fuck it up with that smart mouth of yours.”

His voice was calm but firm. A warning.

Anger simmered in my gut, but I kept my expression neutral. “I won’t.”

“Good girl.”

I hated how those words made my stomach twist, but not in the way they did when Shooter said them. My father reached into his suit pocket and pulled out a black card, holding it out to me. “I upped the limit on your credit card but I’m sure Shooter has kept his word and is taking care of you.”

I stared at it for a second before taking it. “Yeah. Mm-hmm,”

I said, my voice flat.

He cupped my chin, forcing me to look at him. “I love you, . I’ll call you soon.”

Then, just as quickly as he came, he pressed a kiss to my forehead and turned, striding back toward the elevator. The doors slid shut behind him and I was left standing there, gripping the card in my fingers, my emotions a tangled mess. I didn’t know whether to scream, cry, or laugh. So I did none of the above.

Nothing about that visit sat right with me, but it wasn’t anything new. His love had always come in the form of power moves and dollar signs. Not affection, not real concern—just control.

I dropped the card on the counter, shaking my head as I pushed off toward the bedroom. I needed a shower. I stripped down in the bathroom, turning the water up as hot as I could stand it before stepping in. The heat eased the tension in my muscles,

but it did nothing for the thoughts running rampant in my head. Shooter. That was my biggest problem.

I leaned against the tile, letting the water run over me as I exhaled. I had never felt like this about a man before. Not the two I had been with before him, not any of the ones who tried to impress me over the years. Shooter was different. Dangerously different.

Last night had been everything I didn't know I needed. Raw. Intense. Passionate. But I hated that I wanted more. And even worse? I hated that I was sitting here in this penthouse, bored out of my mind, waiting for him to come back like some desperate housewife. Oh, hell no. That wasn't me.

I turned off the water, stepping out and wrapping myself in a towel before heading to the bedroom. I wasn't about to sit around all night twiddling my thumbs. If Shooter could go about his day doing whatever he pleased, then so could I.

I threw on a pair of fitted lounge shorts and a cropped tank top, comfortable but still cute. My hair went up into a messy bun, and I swiped on some coconut oil, letting my skin glow. Then, I grabbed my phone and hit the group chat.

What y'all bitches on?

It didn't take long before the responses started rolling in.

MECCA: Ummm, where you been??

RETIA: Right, you been ghost. That nigga got you locked in a cage or sum?

I rolled my eyes, smirking as I flopped onto the bed.

No, I been chilling. But I'm tryna drink and catch up. Y'all pulling up or what?

KALEA: Say less. I'm bringing the Casamigos.

RETIA: And I got the hookah.

Bet. See y'all in an hour.

I tossed my phone on the bed and headed back to the kitchen. Wine. Snacks. Music. That's what I needed. A Saturday to unwind with my girls, sip some wine, talk some shit, and remind myself that I was still that bitch with or without Shooter Mosley in my head.

Source Creation Date: July 22, 2025, 4:44 pm

As I drove through the city, smoke rolling from the cracked window, I thought about waking up next to Parker's ass. Her smooth leg draped heavily across my waist, her thick thigh pressed against me like she hadn't planned on letting go. Her messy hair was spread out across the pillow.

Last night flashed vividly through my mind, every filthy word, every scream of my name, every time she tried to prove she could dominate me. I smirked, tugging on my goatee. Parker was one stubborn-ass woman, but that shit only made me want her more. Her smart-ass mouth, that defiant spark, the way she challenged me at every turn. She drove me fucking crazy—but damn if she wasn't worth every headache.

Shit, a part of me wanted to turn the fucking car around and slide right back between those sheets to remind Parker exactly why she belonged to me. But business always came first, especially over pussy—no matter how good that pussy was.

This meeting wasn't just politics and bullshit—this was power, influence, and money. My father had been pushing this deal for months, knowing we needed a politician firmly in our back pocket. Councilman Jacobs had been playing hard to get, trying to flex his weak-ass moral code. I chuckled. Everybody had a price and today I planned to find his.

I pulled up to the sleek high-rise building that housed our downtown offices. Stepping out, I flicked away the blunt, adjusted my clothes, and headed inside. Security nodded respectfully as I passed, tension filling the air as the elevator took me straight to the top floor.

I pushed open the door to the executive suite, already spotting my father and Jacobs

seated at the conference table. Seth's sharp eyes landed on me instantly, narrowing with annoyance. "You're cuttin' it close,"

he barked coldly.

I stared back, unfazed, sinking into a chair and spreading my legs arrogantly. "I'm here, ain't I?"

His jaw tightened, but he didn't press the issue further. He knew better than to challenge me too openly in front of outsiders. Jacobs shifted nervously in his seat, already looking uncomfortable. Good. That's exactly how I wanted him. I stared the councilman down, taking my time, letting silence stretch. He fidgeted, sweat already dotting his forehead.

"What's the hold up, Jacobs?"

I finally spoke, my voice low, dangerous. "You been draggin' your feet. We got money on the line, nigga."

Jacobs swallowed hard, trying to appear confident. "Mr. Mosley, I respect your family and all, but this zoning deal...there are concerns from the community—"

"Fuck your concerns,"

I cut him off sharply. "We pay you to keep the community out our business, not bring their problems to our table. You want your pockets lined, don't you?"

He hesitated, glancing towards Seth for help. He remained silent, letting me handle this. My father's gaze never left me, watching to see if I'd handle this like the boss he figured I could never be. "You gotta understand,"

Jacobs stammered weakly. “The people—”

I slammed my hand down on the table, startling his bitch ass. “The people don’t run shit. You either ride with us or we find somebody else who will.”

The councilman visibly shrank under my stare, eyes dropping submissively. I leaned forward, my voice dropping lower, more lethal. “And I promise you, you don’t want me lookin’ for your replacement.”

Jacobs wiped his forehead, nodding quickly. “Understood, Mr. Mosley. I’ll...I’ll make sure it’s approved by Monday.”

I sat back slowly, a sinister smirk spreading across my lips. “Good. Now get the fuck out.”

Jacobs scrambled up, nearly tripping over his own feet as he hurried from the room. Once he was gone, Seth leaned back, lighting a cigar, eyes locked on me. “Could’ve gone smoother. Next time don’t make us wait on your ass.”

My jaw flexed again, but I kept my voice coldly respectful. “You wanted it handled. I handled it. Quit trippin’.”

Seth stared at me long and hard before a faint smirk appeared. “You always been a hothead but at least you’re consistent.”

I stood up, straightening my shirt. “Anything else? I got shit to do.”

Seth waved dismissively, already turning away. I stepped into the hallway, the tension pulling slightly from my shoulders. Sliding into my car, I fired up another blunt, exhaling slowly as I drove back toward the penthouse. My phone vibrated in the cupholder. It was a text from Parker.

My girls are coming over, and there's nothing you can do about it.

I exhaled sharply through my nose, gripping the steering wheel tighter. This girl stayed testing me. I tapped out a quick reply.

Keep the ratchet shit cool.

A response came instantly.

Handle your business, and I'll handle mine.

I grimaced, shaking my head. She had no idea who she was playing with. When I got home, I was going to remind her exactly who ran shit. I climbed into my Ferrari, music bumping, blunt burning. At the next red light, I felt eyes on me from the side, the uncomfortable weight of a gaze full of hatred and fury. Slowly, I turned my head and caught sight of a tricked-out Challenger pulled up next to me.

A young nigga was glaring hard, jaw clenched like he'd been waiting his whole life for this moment. The window rolled down, and the dude barked, voice filled with raw aggression. "Mosley, huh? You thought you were just gon' ride around after you smoked my brother, Gino, and sent him to my mama's house like that? Nah nigga, you gon' pay with your fuckin' life!"

My eyes narrowed sharply. Before I could even reply, he whipped out a pistol, raising it toward my head. My reflexes kicked in instantly. I ducked, pressing the accelerator hard as glass exploded from the bullet hitting my back window. "This dumb muthafucka,"

I muttered, gripping the wheel with one hand as I swerved wildly, peeling off through traffic.

Adrenaline rushed through me as my heart slammed against my chest. Cars honked, tires screeched, and pedestrians jumped out of the way. I glanced into the rearview mirror—the Challenger was tailing close behind, weaving recklessly through the cars, desperate to keep up.

I kept one hand firm on the wheel while reaching for my Glock from my waistband and the silencer from under the seat. Smoothly, I screwed the silencer into place, bullets already loaded. I refused to die over some reckless-ass nigga trying to avenge a weak-ass brother. Hell nah. I'd send him to be with his brother instead.

I turned sharply, pulling into a tight, secluded alleyway. Just as expected, the Challenger skidded in behind me, tires kicking up dirt and gravel. I jumped out immediately, heart thudding with anticipation, gun cocked and ready. The hothead climbed out too, pistol waving around like a rookie, eyes wild with rage.

“You fucked up killin’ Gino, muthafucka! Now it’s your turn!”

I didn’t hesitate. I didn’t talk shit, didn’t give him a chance to breathe another threat. My finger squeezed the trigger without a second thought. One precise shot straight between his eyes dropped him instantly, his body collapsing into a heap of worthless flesh.

My jaw clenched tightly, nostrils flaring as I stood over his twitching corpse. A dangerous silence filled the alley. My blood boiled as I pumped more bullets into him, the silencer muffling each shot. “This what you wanted? You and your bitch ass brother in hell now,”

I muttered coldly, my chest rising and falling heavily.

I spat directly on his lifeless body, disgusted, before tucking the Glock into my waistband. I quickly scanned the area, making sure no witnesses were lingering

nearby. Shit was clean enough for now, but I wasn't taking any chances. Sliding back into my truck, I pulled out my phone, dialing Ren as I drove out of the alleyway.

“Yo,”

I barked as soon as he answered, “got some trash need pickin’ up ASAP. Alley off Kingston. Tell them niggas make it quick.”

“Say less but uh...”

his words trailed over, further adding to my annoyance.

“Spit that shit out, nigga!”

“We got another situation that needs your immediate attention.”

I ran a hand down my face, jaw clenched tight. “Goddamn, it ain't even noon yet,”

I muttered to myself, before aggressively flooring the accelerator and speeding off into yet another storm of chaos.

Source Creation Date: July 22, 2025, 4:44 pm

I n e e d e d t h i s. The second my girls started rolling in, the heavy cloud of everything finally lifted.

“Bitch, I can’t believe your ass actually let us through the door,”

Mecca said, stepping in first, carrying a bottle of D’USSé in one hand and a bag of snacks in the other. Her jet-black weave was bone straight and stopped at her waist, her edges laid to perfection. “Thought yo’ jail warden ass husband was gon’ have us banned.”

I rolled my eyes, snatching the bottle from her. “He is not my jail warden.”

Retia, who was right behind her, snorted. “Girl, yes, the hell he is.”

She walked in with a fresh set of nails that had to be at least three inches long, white French tips that she used to pop open a bag of Flamin’ Hot Cheetos like she was born to do it. “Don’t act like you don’t know that man is probably gon’ pop up in here if we get too loud.”

I smirked, knowing damn well they weren’t wrong. Shooter was controlling as hell. But today? Today was about me. “Y’all act like I’m miserable or something.”

I flopped down on the plush sectional, pouring myself a drink. “I’m fine.”

Kalea, the last one to step inside, raised a brow as she shut the door behind her. “Oh? So that little text you sent us, all pressed, was just for fun?”

I glared at her as she kicked off her heels and curled up next to me. “Exactly.”

They all burst out laughing, and I shook my head, sipping my drink.

The penthouse smelled like lavender and my expensive-ass candles, but the second Retia sparked up, the scent of weed started weaving its way through the space. I didn’t even care. This was my time to unwind, to stop thinking about Shooter and all the ways he was starting to get under my damn skin. But of course, I couldn’t escape him for long.

“So...”

Mecca drawled, leaning forward on the couch. “How’s married life treatin’ you?”

I made a face. “Pass.”

“Uh uh, bitch. You can’t pass on that,”

Retia said through a mouthful of chips. “We need the details. And by details, I mean, is that dick dickin’?”

Kalea burst out laughing, nearly choking on her wine. I rolled my eyes, but my body betrayed me. Heat crept up my neck as flashes of last night hit me all over again. The way he touched me. The way he made me feel. The way I couldn’t stop wanting more.

I reached for a Cheeto to distract myself. “It’s fine.”

Mecca sucked her teeth. “Uh uh. That little blush? You ain’t slick.”

“I’m not blushing,”

I said quickly. “Y’all are tripping.”

Retia exhaled a thick cloud of smoke and narrowed her eyes at me. “So you mean to tell me, you locked up in this penthouse, livin’ with a fine-ass, rich-ass, dangerous-ass nigga like that, and you don’t got nothin’ juicy to tell us?”

I hesitated because I actually did have plenty to say. I could tell them about the way Shooter handled me last night like he had all the time in the world to ruin me. The way his hands fit perfectly on my body, the way he made my toes curl, the way I woke up aching for him again, only for him to get dressed like nothing happened and tell me to do laundry like I was some little housewife. I could tell them that I hated how much I liked it, but I wasn’t about to give them the satisfaction.

“Married life is... an adjustment,”

I finally settled on.

Kalea side-eyed me. “That sounds like some PR-approved response.”

Mecca leaned in, smirking. “Translation: that man got you open.”

“No, he doesn’t,”

I snapped, too quickly, making them all holler in laughter again.

Retia grinned, passing me the blunt. “So what’s the deal? You in love already?”

I coughed mid-inhale. “Hell no.”

“Uh huh.”

She took the blunt back, nodding like she already knew the truth. “That’s what you say now.”

I sucked my teeth and reached for my drink again, refusing to engage. The conversation eventually moved on to gossip—who was messing with who, which girl we went to school with was now suddenly a ‘soft life’ influencer, and how one of our old flings was apparently in jail.

The music played low in the background, some old-school R&B setting the vibe, and the wine kept flowing. It was exactly what I needed... and then my phone buzzed. I glanced down at the screen, my stomach flipping the second I saw Shooter's name.

I hope your little playdate going well.

I narrowed my eyes, my fingers twitching over the keyboard.

Mind ya business.

Seconds later, three little dots appeared, and then came his reply.

I will when you learn how to act.

I scoffed. That man was insufferable. But my body? My body didn’t seem to care. It was already humming at just the thought of him. I exhaled, shaking my head. Nope. I wasn’t about to do this with him right now. I threw my phone onto the couch and turned my attention back to my girls, forcing myself to let it go.

“O h h h , I w a n n a dance with somebody...”

Mecca was screaming the lyrics at the top of her lungs, swaying with a wine glass in one hand and the karaoke mic in the other, while the rest of us cackled and cheered

her on.

“Bitch, you sound terrible!”

I laughed, clutching my stomach as I doubled over.

“I don’t care!”

she yelled back, completely unbothered, flipping her long hair dramatically. “I wanna feel the heat with somebody!”

Kalea and Retia were on the couch, weak with laughter, swaying drunkenly to the music while I danced barefoot in the middle of the living room, wine glass in hand. The penthouse was a vibe.

The liquor was warm in my system, the music was loud, and I was actually having fun—something I hadn’t felt in a minute. We had been drinking since noon, snacking on fruit and junk food, talking shit about old flings, and now, karaoke had turned into a whole performance. Mecca passed me the mic, and I grinned, already feeling myself.

“Hold up, let me get my song together,”

I slurred, scrolling through the options. “We need something real.”

Kalea leaned over to look. “Oh shit, you pickin’ Monica? You know that’s our shit!”

I smirked and clicked on “So Gone,”

stepping back with my drink in hand as the opening beat played. By the time I hit the chorus, everybody was singing along, belting out the lyrics like we had real

heartbreak to sing about.

“So gone, over you, you, you, you!”

We were loud. We were drunk. We didn't give a damn... until Shooter walked in. The energy shift was immediate. His presence was like a heavy weight settling over the penthouse, shutting everything down in an instant. The door clicked closed behind him, and the only sound left was Monica's voice still playing in the background.

I turned, my buzz still thick, and locked eyes with him. He stood there, arms folded, leaning against the wall like he owned the place—which, technically, he did—but the way he was looking at me? Like I was the only thing in the room worth noticing? It did something to me.

His blue eyes dragged over me slowly, taking in my messy bun, my oversized off-the-shoulder sweater that had slid down one arm, exposing my skin, and the way my thighs were peeking out from my tiny-ass shorts. And then he smirked. The bastard.

“Uh... we should probably go,”

Kalea mumbled, already sliding into her heels.

Retia cleared her throat and grabbed her purse, stumbling slightly. “Yeah, um, we love you, . Be safe, okay?”

“Nooooo...”

I whined, narrowing my eyes at them. “Y'all serious right now?”

Mecca snorted, swaying a little as she passed by me, whispering, “Bitch, your husband just cleared the whole vibe. We out.”

I turned back toward Shooter, fuming. He hadn't even said anything yet, and my girls were already running scared. They wobbled their way toward the elevator, drunkenly giggling and throwing a few "he's so fine though"

comments my way before disappearing behind the doors.

The second they were gone, I whirled back to him, seething. "What the hell is your problem?"

I snapped, somewhat slurring my words. "You just had to show up and ruin my damn girls' day, huh?"

Shooter didn't say a word. Just stared. His arms were still folded, his broad frame leaning against the wall while his cold, unreadable gaze stayed pinned on me. I could still feel the liquor humming in my veins, making me bolder, making my words sharper.

"You think you can just walk in here, and shit stops moving?"

I stepped closer, my lip curled in frustration. "You always think—"

"You done talkin' shit?"

His deep, lazy drawl cut through my rant, shutting me right the hell up. I huffed, crossing my arms as I glared at him. Shooter tilted his head, like he was amused by my little tantrum, and then, just as smoothly, he lifted a hand and summoned me with two fingers. "Come here."

I stayed right where I was, defiant, even though my pulse was already racing. His gaze darkened. "I won't say it again, Mrs. Mosley."

The way that rolled off his tongue made my stomach flip, made my body react before my mind could catch up. I threw back the rest of my drink, slammed the empty glass onto the table, and slowly walked toward him, making sure my sway was extra damn bold, even as my heart pounded.

The second I was close enough, his hand shot out and wrapped around my throat, pulling me in so fast my breath hitched. His grip was firm, controlling, his thumb pressing just enough to remind me exactly who I was dealing with. His blue eyes burned into mine, his voice low and dangerous.

“You wanna sleep off that liquor?”

he murmured. “Or get put to sleep instead?”

I didn't even hesitate. Before another second could pass, I launched my arms around his neck and crushed my mouth to his, kissing him hungrily, furiously, like I hated how bad I wanted him. Shooter didn't miss a beat.

He caught me, owned me, his grip on my throat tightening before he lifted me off my feet. My legs locked around his waist as he turned, claiming my mouth like he was trying to punish me for every ounce of attitude I gave him.

I clawed at his button-down, trying to get closer, trying to take more, but he was already in control, kissing me deep, teasing me with his tongue, making me need him even more. My body was on fire, my mind spinning. I couldn't wait to have him inside me again.

And something about the way he carried me off toward the bedroom, his lips still owning mine, told me he was about to give me exactly what I wanted. My heart thudded rapidly in my chest, anticipation pooling deep between my thighs as his strong grip tightened around me. He kicked open the bedroom door effortlessly,

striding inside like he owned every inch of this penthouse—me included.

He tossed me onto the mattress, my body bouncing against the soft sheets. I barely had time to catch my breath before he stood over me, those icy blue eyes heavy with lust and possession. My mouth went dry. This man was dangerous, and yet I couldn't help but provoke him. "Don't think this means you run shit,"

I breathed defiantly, propping myself up on my elbows and gazing up at him. "Just because you got some good dick doesn't mean—"

He grabbed my ankles suddenly, pulling me roughly to the edge of the bed, silencing me mid-sentence. Shooter's hands were everywhere, gripping my thighs, spreading my legs apart, his touch firm and unyielding.

"You love talkin' shit,"

he growled, voice low and husky, eyes burning into mine. "Let's see how much mouth you got left after I fuck the attitude outta you again."

My breath hitched, heart slamming into my rib cage. Heat flushed my entire body as I met his gaze with a challenging stare while peeling off my sweatshirt. "Prove it."

A slow, dangerous smirk crept onto his lips as he peeled off my silky shorts, tossing them carelessly aside. My pulse quickened as he kneeled between my thighs, his breath hot against my skin. I shivered, anticipation almost unbearable. His tongue traced a slow, torturous line up my inner thigh, teasing me mercilessly. I squirmed beneath his touch, pride slipping as my need for him grew unbearable.

"Shooter, stop playing,"

I demanded, voice shaky.

“Ask nicely,”

he commanded roughly, gaze locked on mine as he hovered inches from my aching center.

My stubbornness flared, fighting the submissive instinct he effortlessly drew out of me. “I’m not begging you, Shooter.”

He chuckled darkly, gripping my hips, pinning me down. “Oh, you gon’ beg tonight. And you gon’ mean every fuckin’ word.”

Before I could snap back, his mouth descended on my pussy, tongue circling and tasting, claiming me with ruthless expertise. My back arched instantly, a sharp moan escaping my lips as he devoured me hungrily, relentlessly. His tongue plunged deeply, expertly teasing my clit with each heated stroke. I writhed beneath him, nails clawing desperately at the sheets.

“Oh, my Godddd!!! Shoooooter, fuuuuckkk!”

I moaned helplessly, gripping his head tightly, pressing him closer. My thighs trembled violently, pleasure building until it bordered on agony.

“Exactly,”

he growled again, lips glistening with my wetness. “Tell me whose pussy this is.”

Stubbornness cracked beneath raw desire. I gave in, pride dissolving instantly. “Yourssss. Fuck, it’s yours.”

His grin was triumphant as he rose swiftly, stripping off his shirt and pants with ruthless efficiency. My eyes roamed hungrily over his sculpted muscles, tattoos, and

the massive, throbbing dick that he freed from his boxer briefs. My mouth watered, craving him more than I cared to admit.

He crawled over me, capturing my wrists, pinning them firmly above my head. His dominance was clear. There was no room for defiance tonight. I struggled playfully, but his grip tightened, his face inches from mine, hot breath mingling with my own. “You done bein’ a fuckin’ brat?”

he rasped against my lips, pressing his cock against my slick entrance, teasing, torturing me further.

“Fuck you,”

I hissed defiantly, challenging him again.

He smirked darkly, his eyes flashing with menace. “Nah, babygirl, I’m ‘bout to fuck you.”

With one powerful thrust, he buried himself deep inside me, stretching me completely. I gasped sharply, nails digging into his shoulders, pain and pleasure fusing into something electric, consuming. “You still wanna talk shit?”

he growled, setting a punishing pace, his hips slamming into me, every thrust hitting that spot perfectly.

“Oh my God,”

I whimpered, head thrown back. Shiiiiittt...“

His rhythm was merciless, possessive strokes filling me up, marking me as his with every thrust. He leaned down, his mouth claiming mine roughly, tongues tangled in

desperation. I bit his lip, drawing a hiss from him that only made him fuck me harder.

“This is what you want?”

he asked, his voice deep and ragged, dripping with possessiveness.

“Yessss,”

I cried out, surrendering completely. “Fuck your pussyyy!!”

“That's right,”

he snarled against my throat, sucking, biting, marking my skin. “Don't ever fuckin' forget this shit mine.”

He flipped me effortlessly, flat on my stomach, and drove himself deeper inside me from behind. Slowly. Deliberately. His slowing it down only drove me crazier, and he knew it. Shooter gripped my chin, turning my head as my eyes rolled backwards. “Don't fuckin' play with me, ,”

he groaned roughly.

“Okayyyy!”

I screamed, fingers clutching the sheets desperately, pleasure nearly blinding me as my face hit the pillow. “God, Shooter, don't stop!”

He gripped my hips and lifted me up, pulling my back against his chest as his strokes became faster and deeper. His mouth brushed against my ear, voice low and deadly. “Cum on this dick, . Right fuckin' now.”

His command sent me spiraling, my orgasm hitting like a violent storm. My vision blurred, body shaking uncontrollably as I shattered completely, gasping his name over and over, pussy clenching tightly around his dick. He groaned harshly, burying himself deeper with raw, possessive thrusts as he came, his warmth spilling inside me, sealing his claim.

We collapsed against the sheets, chests heaving, sweaty bodies tangled. Shooter's grip around me was still firm, possessive, letting me know there was no escape. He brushed my hair from my damp forehead, lips grazing softly along my neck.

“Keep testin’ me, ,”

he murmured, voice thick with satisfaction. “You already know how this shit gon' end every single time.”

Breathless and trembling, I tried to regain composure. But damn if he wasn't right. No matter how much I fought, how much I challenged him, Shooter always won. He always had me right where he wanted me.

Source Creation Date: July 22, 2025, 4:44 pm

Three Months Later

Fucking the attitude out of Parker had become routine. I'd be lying if I said I didn't look forward to the shit. The way she tested me, pushed me and defied me only to end up clawing at my back, climbing the damn walls, and screaming my name when I finally put her in her place. It was a game. A wild, twisted game of cat and mouse where she swore she hated me, swore she didn't need me—but every time I touched her, every time I had her pinned beneath me, her body told the truth.

She was falling. Hard. And I'd be a damn fool if I didn't admit to myself that I was falling too. At first, shit was about making her submit. Breaking her down until she realized there was no escape, no fighting me. But now? Shit was different. She was different.

She was softer with me when she thought I wasn't paying attention. I'd catch her watching me sometimes, her sharp brown eyes studying me like she was trying to figure me out. She started doing wifey shit without me having to tell her. Cooking and cleaning without rolling her eyes. Calling me asking how business is going. Telling me to be safe and shit. Giving me back rubs after a long-ass day. And in return, she got exactly what she needed.

Attention. Protection. Dick. Good, thorough, keep-her-ass-in-line dick. She didn't admit it, but I knew. The way she melted for me. The way she sighed when I kissed her. The way she let me wrap her up in my world. Parker was really mine now. Shit, her ass had me sitting in the middle of one of the best restaurants in the city, on an actual date.

Not one forced or arranged for the sake of appearances. I wanted to take her out.
“Damn, you look good,”

I muttered, watching as she picked up her glass of wine. She was wearing this tight ass black dress that hugged every curve, showing just enough skin to make a nigga homicidal if someone else looked at her too long. Diamond stud earrings. No makeup on, and I swear, that’s when she was the prettiest.

Her lips curled into a smirk, brown eyes glinting in the dim candlelight. “I know,”
she teased, bringing the glass to her mouth.

I shook my head, amused, letting my eyes roam over her. Her legs were crossed, one bouncing slightly as she smirked at me over the rim of her glass. Parker knew she had me hooked, and she loved it.

“You been on your best behavior lately,”

I noted, leaning back in my chair.

Parker arched a brow. “Oh? You finally noticed?”

I chuckled. “Thought I was gon’ have to beat some obedience into you.”

She rolled her eyes, but the way her lips twitched told me she liked hearing it. “I just figured since I’m stuck with you, I might as well make the best of it,”

she said, playing with her fork. “Besides... you’ve been less of an asshole lately.”

I smirked. “That right?”

She shrugged, feigning nonchalance. “You let me have my friends over. You let me spend your money even though I got my own. You don’t bark orders as much.”

I let the silence stretch between us before leaning forward, my voice dropping. “And what you been doin’ for me, Mrs. Mosley?”

Her breath hitched, but she covered it with a sip of wine. I watched her throat move as she swallowed. Watched the way her fingers tightened slightly on the stem of her glass. She was trying so hard to act unaffected but she was.

“You get fucked the way you want,”

I reminded her. “You get your little freedom. You get gifts. You get my time. What do I get?”

Parker licked her lips. “You get me,”

she murmured, tilting her head. “And isn’t that what you wanted all along?”

I stared at her, my jaw ticking. Because she was right and I wasn’t letting her go. Not now. Not ever.

The food was good, but the company was better. I wouldn’t tell her the shit but I liked our conversations like this. No yelling. No fighting. Just her—raw, unfiltered, giving me pieces of herself I knew she didn’t give to many. She toyed with the stem of her wine glass, her manicured fingers tracing over it absentmindedly. Then, with a sigh, she leaned back in her seat.

“I never wanted to get married,”

she admitted, swirling her wine. “Not to your brother. Not to you. Not to any man.”

I stayed quiet, watching her. She met my gaze, her expression unreadable. “I don’t believe in marriage. Never have. The idea of being tied to one person forever...” She exhaled, shaking her head. “It always felt like a prison sentence to me.”

I studied her for a moment, my fingers tightening around my glass. “And now?”

She sighed, dropping her eyes to the table. “Now... I don’t know.”

Silence stretched between us before she spoke again, softer this time. “I care about you, Sebastian.”

Something in my chest tightened. She lifted her eyes back to mine. “This... forced marriage... It was a lot. And look, I know we’re not perfect. We fight, we fuck, we piss each other off. But... I appreciate you.”

I stayed silent, letting her talk. “You protect me,”

she continued. “You push me to want better for myself. And I know it’s not just about keeping me in line—it’s deeper than that now. Underneath all that crazy, I can tell that you genuinely want me to win.”

I smirked. “Damn right.”

She let out a soft laugh, shaking her head. I leaned forward, resting my forearms on the table. “What do you want, Parker?”

She hesitated. I studied her. “Nah, like, real shit. If you could do anything, what would it be?”

She bit her lip, eyes flickering with something wistful. “I went to college for fashion.”

That caught me off guard. “Word?”

I smirked.

She rolled her eyes. “Don’t start.”

I chuckled. “I mean, it makes sense. You do dress your ass off.”

She lifted a brow. “Did you just give me a compliment?”

I shrugged. “Don’t let it go to your head.”

She smirked before sighing, swirling the wine in her glass. “I put my degree on the back burner for years,”

she admitted. “Wasn’t in the right headspace for it. And honestly? What was the point? I knew my father was gonna marry me off eventually. Figured there was no use dreaming about a future I had no control over.”

I leaned back, nodding. Made sense. She’d been raised to be a trophy. A chess piece in a game of power and wealth. But that wasn’t her. Parker was too sharp. Too wild. Too strong-willed. I fucked with that about her. “Whatever you wanna do,”

I told her. “I’ll help you with that shit.”

Her eyes flicked up to mine. “All you gotta do is ask nicely, baby,” I added with a smirk.

She laughed, rolling her eyes. “Of course I do.”

I shook my head, watching her. She was really getting to me. This woman, the one I

was supposed to see as just a business arrangement and something to keep, was creeping into places she shouldn't. And my father's warning echoed in the back of my mind. Don't get too attached. Don't fall hard for her. But looking at her now? I knew it was too late for that shit.

Parker snapped me out of my thoughts with a soft, drawn-out moan. My eyes cut to her immediately. She was eating a piece of cheesecake like it was the best thing she'd ever tasted, eyes fluttering closed, lips slightly parted, savoring every bite. The fork slid between her lips, and she let out another quiet little moan that made my dick twitch.

I clenched my jaw. This woman. "Keep moanin' like that,"

I muttered, my voice low and rough, "and I'mma fuck you right here on this table."

Her eyes popped open, amusement flickering across her face as she chewed slowly. She swallowed, then smirked, tapping her fork against the plate. "Yeah, right,"

she teased. "So people can die in here looking at all this ass?"

I chuckled, shaking my head. "Glad you finally caught on to how I don't play about you."

Parker licked a bit of whipped cream off her finger, her eyes locked on mine, completely unbothered. "Took me long enough."

I leaned back in my chair, watching her. And fuck if I didn't like that shit. "Hurry up and finish that shit,"

I told her, voice low and full of lust.

She arched a brow. “Why?”

I smirked. “So I can eat my dessert at home.”

Her lips parted slightly as my words sank in. Then she rolled her eyes, feigning annoyance, but I didn't miss the way her thighs pressed together. I grinned, signaling the waiter for the check. Her pussy was calling me.

Three (More) Months Later

S o m e h o w, a l i t t l e over six months had passed since my life got flipped upside down. And despite my smart-ass mouth and his ruthless, controlling, demanding ways, we'd found a strange rhythm. A dangerous chemistry.

I still talked my shit, still pushed his buttons, but he had a way of shutting me up when he wanted to. And I hated how much I was starting to enjoy that. I'd been spending more time with my girls, and I finally started working on something that was just for me. Something I'd put off for too long. My brand—Parkmore Clothing Co.—was officially in the works. I'd started small, sketching original designs, focusing on high-quality streetwear, with my first drop being a line of graphic tees. Shooter had backed me immediately.

“You really wanna do this shit? Bet. Make it happen,”

he'd said. “I'll invest whatever you need, get you connected with manufacturers, help you push that shit, whatever. I gotchu.”

I'd rolled my eyes at him, even though my heart did something stupid at how quickly he backed me. “You know I don't need your money, Shooter,” I'd said.

“I know that.”

He smirked. “But I like spoilin' and supportin' my wife.”

And he did. Shooter spoiled me like he was trying to ruin me for any other man in

this world. Not that there would be another man. And not that I was thinking about shit like that. Because I wasn't... right?

But despite Shooter's support, my father wasn't happy about it. When I brought up my brand over dinner one night, his response was short, clipped. "You don't need to work, . Your job is to be a wife."

The words sat heavy on my chest long after we parted ways. My job. Like I was an employee of this damn marriage and not a grown woman with dreams, with goals. I'd let it go—on the surface, at least. But deep down, it made me even more determined to make Parkmore successful. To make something that was mine.

It wasn't just my clothing line that had changed in these three months. I'd changed too. I was at Shooter's side more now. When the situation called for it, I happily rolled with him to business meetings, brunches, and dinners. I learned how to move in his world, and I learned quickly.

I learned to sit beside him and keep my chin high while he handled business. I learned not to ask questions I didn't really want the answers to. I learned that sometimes his deals were sealed with words, other times with bullets, and it wasn't my place to question which way it went.

And surprisingly... things had been good. When we weren't clashing, we were vibing. Shooter took me out, spoiled me, and made sure I had everything I wanted. We fucked like we hated each other, then laid in bed afterward smoking and watching movies like we didn't. We were building something, whether I wanted to admit it or not. But the one thing that never sat right with me?

Seth Mosley.

Every time Shooter's father came around, something about him put me on edge. He

had this way of looking at me that made my skin crawl—like I was a piece on a chessboard he was still trying to move into place. And I could tell Shooter noticed. The last time Seth had dropped by the penthouse, he'd barely acknowledged me, instead pulling Shooter aside for a hushed conversation in the study. When Shooter came out, his jaw was tight, his whole body stiff with whatever was said.

I didn't ask. Because if there was one thing I was learning, it was that when it came to the Mosley men, there were some things I didn't want to know. And something about Seth Mosley told me that whatever secrets he was keeping? They were deadly.

The gym on the lower level of the building was quiet, just how I liked it. I had my AirPods in, music blasting, blocking out everything except the burn in my legs as I pushed through the last few reps of squats. Sweat trickled down my back, my muscles were screaming, but I needed this. The gym was one of the few places I could clear my head lately... until I wasn't alone anymore.

I caught the movement in the mirror first. A shadow in the reflection, lingering by the entrance. I ignored it at first. People came and went. No big deal. But something about the way the man stood there, watching me, sent a chill through me. Slowly, I straightened, pulling out an AirPod as I turned to face him.

He was old—maybe seventies—but it wasn't just age that made him unsettling. His skin was weathered, his eyes sunken, darting around like he was either paranoid or high as hell. His clothes were tattered, like he had nowhere to be, yet somehow, he'd gotten into this building.

And the way he was staring at me... it was like he knew me and had been waiting for me.

I wiped sweat from my forehead, forcing my voice to stay steady. "Can I help you?"

The man tilted his head, a slow, jerky movement. Then he smiled. It was the kind of smile that didn't reach his eyes. The kind that made my stomach tighten with unease.

“The weight of the dead rests heavy, don't it?”

I frowned. “What?”

His eyes flicked to the dumbbells, then back to me. “You can lift all you want, but some things? Some things can't be carried. Some things shouldn't be carried.”

I took a step back. “Look, I don't know what you're talking about, but you shouldn't be in here.”

He chuckled, a dry, rasping sound. “Neither should the ghosts, but they always find their way back.”

Okay, this is some bullshit. I turned to grab my towel and water bottle, done with this creepy-ass interaction. But before I could leave, something small and black sailed through the air, landing on the bench beside me. A USB drive. I stared at it, then back at him.

“The truth lies within,”

he murmured.

And then he ran right out of the gym and right out of the building. I stood frozen, heart pounding, the USB sitting there like some kind of omen. I didn't know what the hell just happened. But I did know one thing—I was pissed my workout got interrupted for this weird-ass nonsense.

By the time I stepped into the penthouse, the eerie feeling from earlier still clung to

me like a second skin. I tossed my gym bag onto the floor near the hallway, rubbing a towel over my damp neck. I needed a reset. A long, hot shower. Comfortable clothes. Wine.

I stripped and stepped into the shower, letting the scalding water wash away the lingering unease. My mind kept circling back, though—back to that man, his words, the USB.

The truth lies within.

What the hell did that even mean? The more I tried to shove it to the back of my mind, the more it clawed its way forward.

By the time I was wrapped in one of Shooter's oversized hoodies, fuzzy socks on my feet, and a glass of red wine in my hand, I still couldn't shake the curiosity. The USB sat on the coffee table, taunting me. I sighed, setting down my wine and grabbing my laptop from the couch. I plugged the USB in, fingers drumming against my thigh as it loaded up.

There was only one folder, so I clicked it open to see a bunch of audio files without labels. No dates. Nothing. I hesitated for a moment before clicking the first one.

At first, there was nothing but static. Then, a deep voice came. I instantly recognized it as Seth's.

"Things are in motion. The walls are closing in on him. The boy is a loose end."

My stomach tightened as I clicked the next file.

"Let him think he's in control. Let him think he's untouchable. When the time comes, we cut the head off the snake."

I clicked another.

“Shooter, listen to me. This is business. No room for sentiment. Your brother’s made his bed, and now he has to lie in it.”

My breath hitched. They were talking in code, but it was clear. Seth was plotting to kill Silas. And Shooter knew about it. I covered my mouth, my stomach twisting into knots. I played them over and over, my pulse hammering. This wasn’t just some vague conversation. This shit was premeditation. I gasped, my hand flying to my mouth as I slammed the laptop shut.

My mind was spiraling. Racing so fast I could barely catch a thought before another crashed into it. I squeezed my eyes shut, gripping the edges of the laptop like it was the only thing tethering me to reality. My heartbeat pounded against my ribs, loud and uneven.

Silas wasn’t perfect, but he was still Shooter’s brother. And Seth—his own father—was plotting his murder like it was just another business move?

Does Shooter know the full extent of it?

Was he in on it?

I shook my head, trying to reject the idea, but the files—the proof—were still sitting in front of me like an open wound. Shooter was ruthless. Controlling. Demanding. But was he capable of killing his own blood? Would he?

I thought back to the way he spoke about Silas sometimes—frustration lacing his tone, shaking his head like his brother was just another problem to handle. But murder? I wanted to believe he wouldn’t cross that line. That there were some things even a man like Shooter wouldn’t do. But then I remembered how coldly he handled

business. How quick he was to pull the trigger without a second thought. And maybe that's what scared me the most.

If Shooter really was a part of this, if he really had a hand in killing his own brother... then who the fuck was I really married to? And what the hell was I supposed to do now?

Page 27

Source Creation Date: July 22, 2025, 4:44 pm

The warehouse was buzzing with tension as men moved in coordinated chaos, unloading crates from the trucks and stacking them in their designated places. The sharp scent of metal and oil filled the air, mixing with the faint musk of sweat and cigarette smoke. I stood near the entrance, eyes scanning the floor, watching every damn movement like a hawk.

Ren was posted up beside me, arms crossed, his usual smirk absent as he observed the process. “Shit’s moving slow today,”

he muttered under his breath.

“Yeah,”

I said flatly, my gaze locked on the crew. “They better pick that shit up.”

It was rare that I actually had to be down here managing a shipment, but after the bullshit that went down a few months ago—the ambush, the bodies, the missing product—I wasn’t leaving anything to chance, especially now when I was locked in with Vincenzo.

I walked deeper into the warehouse, hands in my pockets, my presence alone making some of the guys move faster. That’s how it was with me. They feared me more than they respected me, and that’s exactly how I liked it. Then I heard it.

“Man, somebody need to get some pussy or somethin’. Maybe he wouldn’t be up in here actin’ like a fuckin’ warden.”

Laughter followed. Not much, but enough.

I stopped mid-step. The floor beneath me felt like it had gone dead silent. I slowly turned my head, my eyes locking onto the motherfucker who had something to say about me. Ellis. Mid-twenties, been working under me for about a year now. I let his ass live after he fucked up an order a while back. Maybe he thought that meant he could speak freely.

The crew caught on to the shift in the air real quick. The laughter died. The only sound was the low hum of the ventilation and the distant noise of crates being moved. Ellis had his head turned to one of the guys next to him, smirking like he really said some funny shit.

I stepped closer, slow, deliberate. “Yo, E.”

My voice cut through the warehouse, sharp and unforgiving.

His smirk faltered. He turned his head toward me, trying to play it cool. “Yeah, boss?”

I closed the distance between us in three strides. Before he could even blink, my hands shot out as I snapped his neck. His body instantly slumped, and everybody’s eyes grew wide.

“Anybody else got a fuckin’ death wish?”

My voice was calm, quiet, but the realness in it was unmistakable. Heads shook. Fear flashed. That’s what I thought. “Get the fuck back to work.”

My voice echoed through the warehouse, snapping everyone out of their frozen states. They scrambled, moving with urgency.

I stepped back, flexing my fingers before sliding my hands into my pockets like nothing had happened.

Ren was already heading toward the back exit, shaking his head with a smirk. “Had a feelin’ you was gon’ do that.”

I followed him out into the cold air, inhaling deeply before pulling a blunt from my pocket. He lit it up first, took a slow drag, then passed it to me. “You good?”

I took a pull, letting the smoke curl in my lungs before exhaling through my nose. “Straight.”

Ren wasn’t buying that shit. “You ain’t been yourself. What’s up?”

I passed the blunt back, my jaw tight. I wasn’t about to sit here and talk about my feelings like some soft-ass nigga. But Ren had been my right hand for too long. He knew when shit was off. “...Parker.”

The name left my lips low, almost begrudgingly.

Ren raised a brow. “What about her?”

I rolled my shoulders. “She’s been actin’ different.”

“How different?”

“Quiet. Moody. Been keepin’ her distance, and not in a way that’s just her usual attitude. We ain’t even fought in like a week.”

Ren snorted. “And you like fightin’ with her, huh?”

I shot him a look. He didn't get it. That's what we did. Parker's smart-ass mouth and our little power struggles were a thing. A rhythm. I'd fuck the attitude out of her, she'd swear up and down she hated me, then she'd fall asleep on my chest like I wasn't the worst nigga alive that she knew about.

But for the past week, she hadn't been arguing. Hadn't been teasing me. And we sure as hell hadn't fucked. She buried herself in her T-shirt line like she was trying to distract herself from something. I took another hit of the blunt, my eyes narrowing as my mind turned over the possibilities.

Maybe it was nothing. Maybe she was just PMSing. Maybe she was just too focused on her business. But my gut told me otherwise. I flicked the blunt away, watching it land on the pavement before grinding it out with my boot. Whatever it was, I was gettin' to the bottom of that shit tonight. Even if I had to tie her stubborn ass up and fuck the answers out of her.

I gritted my teeth, my jaw tight as I yanked the driver's side door open and slid into my new Bentley. I slammed it shut, gripping the steering wheel so hard my knuckles cracked. "Hold shit down,"

I told Ren through the open window. "Make sure everything moves smoothly."

Ren gave me a look, his sharp gaze picking up on my mood like always. "You aight?"

I exhaled through my nose as I dapped him up. "I will be."

I didn't even wait for his response. I threw the car in gear and peeled out of the lot, my mind racing faster than the engine roaring beneath me.

Something was wrong with Parker. I could feel it deep in my gut, that same instinct

that always warned me before shit went left. Her ass had been avoiding me like she was scared to even be in the same room. That wasn't my Parker. My Parker was mouthy, wild, and never afraid to test me. Whatever this was, it wasn't just mood swings or business stress.

I tapped my fingers against the wheel, my jaw ticking as I thought over our last few interactions. Every time I tried to touch her, she brushed me off. Every time I asked what was up, she'd say "nothing"

and change the subject. The more I thought about it, the more it pissed me off. If something was wrong, why the fuck wouldn't she just say it?

By the time I pulled up to the penthouse, my pulse was hammering. I stepped out, slamming the car door behind me, taking the elevator up with my body thrumming with tension. The second I stepped inside, I knew something was off. The air was cold. Stale. There was no music playing or candles burning. No scent of her perfume lingering in the air.

I took another step inside, my chest tightening as my eyes darted around. It was too quiet. Way too fucking quiet. I stormed into the master bedroom, flicking on the light. My stomach turned at the sight in front of me.

Her closet doors were wide open. Empty hangers swayed slightly, a few designer bags still lined up neatly on the shelf, but her everyday shit? Gone. Her shoes? Gone. Her jewelry? Gone. My heart pounded in my chest, but my blood stayed ice-cold.

I inhaled deep, then hollered out, "FUCK!"

The sound bounced off the walls, but there was no one there to hear it. No Parker to come running in with some slick shit to say. I yanked my phone out, pulled up her location. Off. I switched to tracking her car. Still parked in the garage. My pulse

pounded in my ears as I called her cell. That shit rang once then went straight to voicemail.

I clenched my jaw, pacing the length of the kitchen as my mind churned. I hit record on her voicemail. My voice was low, laced with warning. “You better call me back before I start tearin’ the whole fuckin’ city apart lookin’ for you.”

A pause, then, “You already know what it is, Parker. Don’t make me come find you.”

I hung up, gripping the phone so tight I nearly snapped it in half.

The silence in the penthouse pressed down on me. I needed to do something. I stalked into the living room, my eyes locking onto her laptop sitting open on the coffee table. Something about it made my gut twist. A USB was plugged in. And right next to it, lying perfectly in the center of the table, was her wedding ring. A cold chill skated down my spine.

I stepped closer, my breathing even, controlled. A small, yellow sticky note was slapped onto the laptop screen. Parker’s handwriting.

“It’s one thing to be a shooter, a killer, but it’s another thing to kill your own flesh and blood. Fuck you. I’m out.”

I stared at the words. The pressure in my chest turned from ice to fire, blazing through my veins. I crumpled the note in my fist, breathing hard through my nose. Then, slowly, I reached for the laptop and clicked play. The recording started with static at first and then I heard my father’s voice. Seth was talking in code. Talking to me.

My stomach clenched as I listened to the words I already knew were coming. The words I spoke back to him confirmed what needed to be done. The words that sealed

my brother's fate. I ran a hand down my face. She fucking knew.

I let out a chuckle, one with no humor, shaking my head as I reached for the USB. Then, I crushed it causing metal and plastic to crack under the force of my grip, the pieces scattering onto the floor.

My jaw ticked as I exhaled, slow and deep, staring down at the shattered evidence. Parker ran. But I'd find her. And when I did? She was never running again.

Source Creation Date: July 22, 2025, 4:44 pm

“W h a t d i d T h e Dream say on that song? Fuuuck that niggaaaa!”

Mecca’s voice rang through her apartment as she held up her wine glass like she was making a toast. Her bright yellow acrylics caught the dim light, and the gold rings on her fingers clinked against the glass as she sipped.

I let out a weak laugh, shaking my head. “You really ain’t shit.”

“I’m just sayin’,”

Mecca said, settling back into the couch, her silk bonnet slightly askew. “Ain’t no way in hell you should be stressin’ over a man who had a whole-ass plot to kill his own brother. That’s some Game of Thrones shit, P. And you married to that?”

I sighed, pressing my fingertips into my temple. “I didn’t know, Mecca. I had no fucking clue. And now that I do... I feel like I’ve been sleeping next to a damn monster. He’s a menace for real.”

Mecca rolled her eyes dramatically. “Girl, we been knew Shooter wasn’t no choirboy, but his own brother? Nah. That’s some next-level demon-time shit. And you did the right thing leavin’.”

I stared down into my wine glass, swirling the deep red liquid, my stomach still knotted with everything I’d learned. Leaving had been the only option. Staying there, pretending I didn’t know the truth, pretending that I could still lie in the same bed as Shooter wasn’t possible.

“I just... I don’t get it,”

I admitted, voice barely above a whisper. “Silas was family. Blood. I keep asking myself what he did to deserve that. What could possibly make his own father and brother decide he had to die?”

Mecca shook her head. “Baby, these rich, crime-world motherfuckas don’t think like us. They don’t got no real loyalty, no real love. It’s all about power, about makin’ sure they hold the crown.”

She exhaled sharply. “And you? You was in the middle of it like a damn chess piece.”

That hit me harder than I expected. I knew Mecca had a way with words, a way of making me see things for what they were, but hearing her say it like that made my stomach twist even more. “Yeah...”

I whispered, swallowing a lump in my throat. “A chess piece. That’s exactly what I feel like.”

Mecca scoffed and topped off my glass. “Well, bitch, you off the damn board now. No more playin’ house with a killer. No more, Mrs. Mosley.”

I let out a humorless chuckle, but my chest felt hollow. No more Mrs. Mosley. Six months ago, I would’ve laughed in somebody’s face if they told me I’d actually start to fall for Sebastian “Shooter”

Mosley, that underneath all his possessive, controlling ways, there was something I started to love. Now, I didn’t even know what was real anymore. I took a slow sip of my wine, letting it warm my chest, but it didn’t do shit to calm the storm inside me.

Mecca side-eyed me. “I know that look.”

“What look?”

I muttered, playing dumb.

“The ‘I’m still lowkey in love with this ain’t-shit-ass nigga’ look.”

I groaned, flopping back onto the couch. “Girl, shut up.”

“Nah, I’m serious. You might’ve run, but your heart ain’t caught up yet. I can see it all over your face. That nigga had you wide open, P. And that’s okay... for now. But you gotta let that shit go.”

I rubbed my temples, feeling the weight of her words. “I know I do,”

I admitted. “But it ain’t that easy.”

Mecca snorted. “Nobody said it was easy. That’s why you got me, hoe. I’m ‘bout to make sure you detox from that nigga.”

I laughed despite myself, shaking my head. “You so stupid.”

“And you so lucky to have me,”

she shot back, grinning. “Now, let’s go over the plan. You stayin’ here for now, right?”

I nodded. “Yeah. I need time to figure shit out. I left the penthouse, blocked his number, and I know he’s probably losin’ his damn mind right now, but I don’t care. I can’t care.”

Mecca arched a brow. “Oh, you can care. You just won’t.”

I sighed. “Semantics.”

She smirked. “So what’s next? You gettin’ back into your fashion shit or what?”

I exhaled slowly. “Yeah... yeah, I think so. I put that dream on the back burner for too long. Parkmore Clothing Co. was supposed to be my thing. I lost focus for a while, but it’s time I get it back.”

Mecca’s eyes lit up. “That’s what I’m talkin’ ‘bout! See? That’s the energy I wanna hear. No more lettin’ these rich crime bosses dictate your future. You ‘bout to be a whole CEO, bitch.”

I laughed, shaking my head. “You know, you really need to be somebody’s motivational speaker.”

“Girl, I know,”

Mecca grinned. “I’d have these hoes’ lives together in seconds.”

I finally started to relax, sinking into the comfort of knowing that Mecca had my back, that I wasn’t alone in this. I knew Shooter wasn’t gonna let me go that easy—hell, he’d probably already flipped over half the damn city looking for me. But for the first time in a long time, I felt like I had control over my own life again. The problem was, I wasn’t sure how long that control would last because, knowing Shooter... he was coming for me.

F o r t y - e i g h t h o u r s .

That’s how long it had been since I walked out of that penthouse and left Shooter

behind. And honestly? I thought maybe he was giving me space. Maybe he knew I needed time to process. Maybe, for once in his controlling, possessive life, he was letting me breathe.

That's why, when Mecca said she was throwing a little party at her spot tonight, I was all in. I needed to let loose, needed to drown the fucked-up reality of my life in liquor, weed, and loud-ass music. I needed to forget about blue eyes that haunted my dreams, about the way my body still craved a man I was trying to erase. So, with a red cup in hand, I danced in the middle of Mecca's apartment while the bass of some ratchet song made the floor vibrate beneath my feet.

“Ayeeee, this my shit!”

Mecca hollered, swaying her thick hips to the beat.

“Don't hurt 'em, sis!”

Kalea cackled.

My girls were turned up, liquor was flowing, and the air was hazy with smoke. Wall to wall men. It was a vibe. A reckless, wild, I-don't-give-a-fuck vibe. Which was exactly what I needed.

A fine-ass dude named Devonate had been on me all night, feeding me drinks and sweet-talking in my ear like he was trying to manifest me into his bed. Normally, I wasn't the type to entertain dudes like this, especially not when I was drunk. But tonight? Tonight, I didn't give a damn.

I threw my head back and laughed at something slick Devontae said, letting my body move against his as we danced. His big hands slid down to my waist, and I let him pull me closer. He smelled good, like expensive cologne and bad decisions.

“You mad beautiful, ma,”

he murmured in my ear. “Your man stupid as hell for lettin’ you outta his sight.”

I smirked. “I don’t have a man.”

“Word?”

He grinned, then licked his pinkish lips. “Then lemme change that.”

I chuckled, shaking my head. “You tryna wife me up already? Damn.”

“Can you blame me?”

He spun me around, hands gripping my hips. “You fine as hell, got that boss bitch energy. I like that shit.”

I was about to say something slick back when the front door crashed open so hard that the music seemed to cut out instantly. Screams rang out, cups spilled, and people scattered as men stormed inside. Big, mean-looking men with cold expressions and even colder intentions.

“What the fuck?!”

Mecca shrieked, jumping back as one of them knocked over a table like it was made of paper.

“Who the—”

Before I could even finish my sentence, rough hands grabbed me. “GET OFF ME!”

I screamed, thrashing, but they were too strong.

“Yo, chill out!”

Devontae barked, shoving through the chaos, reaching for his waistband. Bad move. One of the men swung on him so fast I barely saw it happen. He hit the floor, knocked out cold before he could even pull his gun.

“PARKER!”

Retia shrieked, running up to them, but another man grabbed her, keeping her back.

“LET ME GO, MOTHERFUCKAS!”

I screamed, twisting, kicking, scratching—anything to break free. But I was drunk, disoriented, and weak. I couldn’t fight the grip of the two men hauling me toward the door. One of the men pulled a gun, and suddenly, the whole party was seconds away from turning into a bloodbath.

“EVERYBODY FALL THE FUCK BACK!”

the guy holding me barked.

“PUT ME THE FUCK DOWN!”

I screamed, still struggling.

“Sorry, Mrs. Mosley,”

the man growled, voice like gravel. “Boss wants his wife home.”

My stomach dropped. Oh, fuck.

The last thing I saw before they threw me into the backseat of a black SUV was my girls fighting like hell to get to me. Then the doors slammed shut, and that's when I smelled his cologne. I looked up, breath shaky, and met ice-cold blue eyes.

Shooter sat there, legs spread, jaw tight, watching me like a predator that had just reclaimed its prey.

“Got somethin’ you need to get off your chest?”

he asked, voice low, dangerous.

My heart pounded, rage bubbling through my drunken haze. “You crazy muthafucka,”

I spat, hands shaking as I tried to sit up. “You just kidnapped me?!”

Shooter's lips curled into something that wasn't quite a smile. “Nah,”

He leaned in, his voice a dark promise. “I'm just takin' my wife home.”

The car sped off into the night, taking me straight back to the last place I wanted to be. Straight back to him.

The car ride was silent and not the kind of silence that felt comfortable, but the kind that felt suffocating.

Shooter sat next to me, his jaw tight, his fingers tapping impatiently against his thigh. His energy was so dark that it seeped into the air, filling the space with an unbearable tension. I kept my eyes forward, staring out the window, heart pounding as my

thoughts ran wild.

This was different. He had always been intense, always been possessive, always had a dangerous edge to him. But this? This silence? This unshakable, simmering fury rolling off of him? I hated it, and for the first time since I'd known him, I was truly scared.

I wasn't sure if it was because I was still drunk or if it was because I had never seen him like this before. Either way, fear wrapped around my ribs, tightening with every passing second.

By the time the SUV pulled into the underground parking garage of the penthouse, my nerves were frayed. The second the car stopped, Shooter swung the door open and stepped out, but I hesitated. The driver turned to look at me, but Shooter's voice cut through the tension. "Get the fuck out."

I swallowed hard, my throat dry, and slid out of the car. My legs felt shaky beneath me as I followed him inside, my heart hammering with every step. The moment we were inside the penthouse, the air changed. Shooter didn't say a word or give me a second to breathe. He slammed the door behind us, grabbed me by the arm, and pinned me to the nearest wall.

I gasped, my breath leaving me in a rush as my back hit the cold wall. His body caged me in, towering over mine, his grip firm but not painful. His scent wrapped around me, but for the first time, it didn't feel like something I wanted to sink into. For the first time, I wasn't sure if I was safe. His blue eyes burned into me, unreadable and furious.

And then, before I could stop myself, the words slipped out. "Are you gonna kill me too?"

It was a whisper. A whimper. And it destroyed whatever restraint he had left.

His grip tightened just enough to make me suck in a sharp breath. His jaw clenched, nostrils flaring as his eyes darkened with something lethal. Then, just as quickly as he grabbed me, he let me go.

I staggered slightly, my heart racing as I pressed my palm to my chest, trying to steady my breathing. My whole body was tense, waiting for his next move, but Shooter just took a step back and tilted his head at me.

“If I wanted to kill you, ,”

he said lowly. “You’d be dead already.”

My stomach twisted violently. His words weren’t a threat. They were a fact. I stared at him, my pulse hammering in my throat, my body still pressed against the wall as if it could protect me from him. Then, he gestured toward the living room. “Go sit down.” I hesitated, eyes darting toward the door. He scoffed. “Try it, and I’ll make you regret it.”

I believed him.

With slow, shaky steps, I moved toward the couch, lowering myself onto it hesitantly. My fingers curled around the fabric of my sweatpants as I tried to regulate my breathing, tried to ignore the way my hands trembled. Shooter rolled his neck, letting out a long, controlled breath before making his way to the bar. He grabbed a bottle of Remy, poured himself a shot, then downed it in one go.

The silence stretched, and I hated how uncertain everything felt. How every moment stretched into something unbearable, how I didn’t know if I should be bracing myself to fight or preparing to beg for my life. Shooter didn’t look at me right away. He just

poured himself another shot, then turned slowly, leaning against the counter as his icy gaze finally locked onto me.

I swallowed hard. The weight of his stare was suffocating, and he didn't say a single word. He just watched me, and I sat there, waiting. Dreading. Wondering what the fuck was coming next.

Source Creation Date: July 22, 2025, 4:44 pm

I d r a g g e d a hand down my face, exhaling slowly through my nose. The silence between us was thick, like smoke curling around the room, choking out the space between us. Parker sat on the couch, arms crossed, legs pulled up under her, but her body was rigid.

I was pissed and frustrated. For two fucking days, I let her have space. Two fucking days, I let her think she could just up and leave me, block me, disappear like what we had—what we were—meant nothing. And to top it off, she left that damn USB sitting in my living room like a motherfucking bomb waiting to go off. I knew we were about to have it out, and honestly, I was looking forward to it.

I rolled my neck, popping the tension there, before fixing my eyes on her. “You done playin’ house with your little friend?”

My voice came out even, but there was a razor-sharp edge to it.

Parker scoffed. “You really kidnapped me, Sebastian.”

I huffed out a dry laugh. “Yeah? And?”

I leaned against the bar, rubbing a slow hand over my beard. “You really thought you could run from me? That’s what you thought?”

Her jaw clenched. “I needed space.”

“You needed space,”

I repeated mockingly, shaking my head. “You needed space, so you left me a USB with a post-it like that shit wasn’t gon’ send me over the fuckin’ edge.”

Her lips pressed together, but she didn’t back down. I pushed off the bar, stepping closer. “You don’t run from me, Mrs. Mosley. That’s not how this shit works.”

She let out a sharp, bitter laugh. “Oh, back to this. Can’t leave, can’t have my own thoughts, can’t fucking breathe without you controlling it.”

I narrowed my eyes, my blood heating. “You can breathe just fine, but what you can’t do is act like what we got ain’t real.”

She sucked in a sharp breath but recovered fast. “It had potential until I found out who the hell I was married to.”

That made me laugh. A slow, humorless chuckle as I stared her down. “You knew exactly who the fuck you married.”

I tilted my head, watching the way her throat bobbed. “You just didn’t think you’d ever have to face the truth.”

Her nostrils flared. “The truth?”

She shook her head, gripping the fabric of her sweatpants. “The truth, , is that you killed your own brother.”

Silence.

Her words hung between us, venom laced in every syllable. I let the weight of them settle, let her sit in the silence of what she said before I moved. I dropped down in front of her, elbows resting on my knees, blue eyes locked onto hers. She flinched,

but she didn't move away.

“You think I wanted to do that?”

My voice was low, quiet. Deadly.

Parker held her chin high, but there was uncertainty in her eyes. “I don't know what you wanted.”

I inhaled slowly, rubbing a hand over my jaw. “You think Silas was innocent?”

She hesitated. “I get it,”

I said after a moment, nodding slightly. “Silas had a good act. Always been good at playin' the part of the golden boy. The “better” brother. The one who didn't get his hands dirty.” I let out a slow breath, my tone darkening. “But you don't know him like I did.”

Parker shifted. “Then tell me. Tell me what the fuck he did that was so bad you had to take him out.”

I studied her face, searching for something—anything—that would tell me if she was actually ready to hear the truth. Fuck it. I sat back on my heels, rolling my shoulders before speaking.

“Silas was workin' with the Feds.”

Her eyes flickered, but she said nothing, so I kept going. “He was buildin' a case against me. Against my father. Against our whole fuckin' operation.”

My lip curled. “While you were sittin' here thinkin' he was some innocent

motherfucka, he was workin' with them to bring our shit down.”

Parker's brows pinched together. “Why?”

I shook my head, exhaling sharply. “Because Silas never wanted this life.”

I leaned in, lowering my voice. “He wanted to destroy us. All of us.”

She swallowed hard. “You're telling me your own brother wanted you in prison?”

I nodded once. “Me and Seth.”

My jaw ticked. “The night before I handled it, I found out he had a whole deal lined up. He was gon' testify, Parker. He was gon' sit in that little box in court, point his finger, and put us in a fuckin' cell for life.”

She went still. I didn't let up. “You think I wanted to kill my own blood? You think I wanted to be the one to pull that trigger? “But what the fuck was I supposed to do? Let him put me away? Let him hand over everything niggas built?”

She stayed quiet, her fingers tightening in her lap. I dragged my hand down my face. “It wasn't about choices, Parker. It was about survival.”

She inhaled shakily. “So you had to kill him?”

I met her eyes, standing up. “Yes. And the fact that you really think I'd put a bullet in you? That shit burns me up more than anything else.”

I shook my head. “I'd kill for you, Parker but I wouldn't kill you.”

Her breath hitched. I kept my gaze locked on hers, making sure she felt every word. I

exhaled through my nose. “How’d you even get the fuckin’ USB?”

Parker bit her lip before shifting on the couch, tucking her legs under her. “Some creepy old dude came into the gym,”

she admitted, rubbing a hand down her thigh like she was trying to wipe the memory off her skin. “Talking crazy. In riddles, almost. Something about death. Didn’t make sense, so I went to leave, but then he threw the USB at me and ran out.”

She shook her head, eyes narrowing slightly. “Shit was weird as hell.”

“Describe him.”

She studied me, like she knew I already had the answer. “Older. Like, at least late sixties, probably even seventies. Tall, but he had this slight hunch. Balding, some grays, and his eyes...”

She trailed off for a second, like she was trying to find the right words. “His eyes were...wild. Like, he’d seen too much shit. You know what I mean?”

Yeah. I knew exactly what the fuck she meant. I inhaled slowly, exhaling through my nose as I walked back to the bar. I poured another drink, my fingers tight around the glass.

“Who was he?”

Parker asked, watching me closely.

I threw back the liquor, the burn doing nothing to cool my rising anger. “No one you need to worry about.”

Parker scoffed, leaning back into the couch. “Oh, so now you don’t wanna give me answers?”

I turned my head to look at her. “I’ll handle it.”

She rolled her eyes. “Right.”

Then, sighing, she rubbed her temple. “I need a damn drink.”

I huffed out a humorless chuckle, shaking my head. “Nah, you’ve had enough.”

She sat up straighter, eyes narrowing. “Says who?”

I leveled her with a look. “Says me.”

She sucked her teeth but didn’t argue. I moved from the bar and walked toward her, scooping up the wedding ring that still sat on the coffee table. The sight of it, abandoned like that, had been fucking with me since I walked in the other day. I held it between my fingers, the weight of it heavier than it should’ve been.

Parker eyed me cautiously as I lifted her left hand. Her fingers were still trembling, whether from fear or anger, I wasn’t sure. I slid the ring back onto her finger. “You’re my fuckin’ wife,”

I told her, my voice firm but low. “Don’t ever forget that shit.”

Her lips parted slightly, eyes flicking up to mine. “What now?”

she asked, her voice quiet but steady.

I knelt down in front of her again, tilting her head, my gaze dark and unreadable.

“Now, you don’t worry about shit. Just know I wouldn’t put you in harm’s way.”

I brushed my fingers down her jaw. “You just need to trust your husband.”

Parker exhaled shakily, her lips parting, but I didn’t give her the chance to say anything. I kissed her, and she let out a muffled sound as her fingers gripped my shirt. My hand slid up her thigh, gripping her hip as I deepened the kiss, my other hand slipping up to grasp her throat. I growled against her lips. “Missed your mean ass.”

Her breath hitched, her fingers tightening on me. For a second, I thought she’d let me have her. Thought she’d let me claim her the way I needed to after these last two long ass days. But then she pushed me back, her breath ragged, lips swollen.

“You’re in the dog house, sir,”

she murmured, a smirk tugging at her lips. “No pussy for you.”

I licked my teeth, fighting the urge to drag her ass to the bedroom and remind her who she belonged to anyway. Instead, I stood up, watching her as she slid off the couch. She stretched her arms over her head, her body flexing in all the right ways. “Also, you need to replace Mecca’s front door,” she added, sauntering toward the hallway. “And get my shit back.”

I let out a short laugh, shaking my head as I watched her disappear down the hall. She was back. And fuck, I loved that shit.

But as much as I wanted to sit back and enjoy my wife, my mind was already moving. I poured another drink, the amber liquid sloshing slightly in the glass as I set the bottle down with more force than necessary. The burn in my throat was a welcome distraction, but it didn’t do shit to quiet the war raging in my head.

This situation needed to be handled. The old nigga who slid that USB to Parker was still breathing, and that was unacceptable. The question was—do I handle it alone, or do I bring my father into this shit? I exhaled slowly, rolling my neck as I stared at the half-empty glass in my hand. One thing was for sure—somebody had to die and soon.

I tossed back the rest of my drink and let the warmth spread through my chest before setting the glass down. My mind was running a mile a minute, and I needed to turn that shit off before I drove myself insane. The only thing that ever shut my brain down completely was Parker.

I pushed off the bar and stalked down the hallway, already knowing she wasn't in our bed. That shit didn't sit right with me. The second I stepped into the guest room, I was hit with the soft scent of her body wash and that damn perfume she always wore—vanilla and something sweet, but still sexy as fuck. My dick jumped as I spotted her curled up under the covers, dead-ass comfortable in a bed that wasn't hers.

She knew better. I didn't say a word as I walked over and yanked the blanket back. Parker groaned in protest, shifting away from me, but I was already scooping her up into my arms. “,”

she grumbled, wiggling, trying to fight me off even though she knew damn well she couldn't.

I tightened my grip. “You got me fucked up if you think you sleepin' anywhere but our bed.”

“Sebastian, put me down!”

she huffed, smacking my shoulder.

I ignored her, carrying her out of the guest room and straight into the master bedroom, kicking the door shut behind me. I walked to the bed and tossed her onto the mattress, smirking as she bounced slightly.

She sat up quickly, shooting me a glare. “You so damn—”

I cut her off by grabbing her ankles and yanking her to the edge of the bed. Parker gasped, her hands flying back to brace herself, her thighs parting slightly in surprise. But she didn’t close them. Didn’t even try. She was pouting, her lips pressed together like she wanted to argue, but I could see it in her eyes. The anticipation. The way her breath hitched. The way her body already knew what was coming.

“There’s no runnin’ from me,”

I told her, my voice dark and full of promise. I slid my hands up the backs of her thighs, locking her legs in an unbreakable hold. My fingers dug into her soft flesh possessively. “Don’t ever do that shit again.”

She swallowed, her breathing uneven.

And then I was gone, disappearing between her legs, dragging my tongue across that sweet, perfect pussy I missed so fucking much.

Source Creation Date: July 22, 2025, 4:44 pm

We'd barely left the bed, only getting up when absolutely necessary—food, water, a quick shower before diving right back in. It was toxic. Insane. Intense. Shooter was like a drug I couldn't quit, and even though my head was still fucked up from what I'd learned about Silas, my body was tuned into him like he was the only thing keeping me alive.

I lay sprawled across his chest, tracing slow circles on his inked skin while some romance movie I put on played in the background. I wasn't even really watching it, just letting it fill the space while I listened to the steady rhythm of his breathing.

Shooter's hand rested on my hip, lazy but firm, like even in his half-asleep state, he had to keep me close. The possessiveness wasn't just about control—I understood that now. It was about keeping me safe, keeping me his.

My eyes flicked up to his face, his sharp jawline relaxed for once, his lips slightly parted. He looked at peace, but I knew better. His mind was never still. "What's this shit you got on?"

he mumbled, eyes still closed.

I smiled a little. "It's a classic romance."

He huffed. "Ain't no classic. It's some corny ass shit."

I gasped, sitting up slightly to look at him. "Corny?"

"Yes, corny,"

he muttered, cracking one eye open. “Ain’t no way in hell this shit realistic. Dude met her two days ago, now he talkin’ ‘bout some I’d die without you?”

I smirked, shifting to straddle his waist, resting my hands on his chest. “Sounds familiar.”

He grunted. “Don’t play with me.”

I leaned down, brushing my lips over his. “What? I’m just saying, didn’t take you long to—”

Before I could finish, he gripped my ass and flipped us over so fast my head spun. I let out a breathless laugh as he pinned me to the bed, his full weight pressing me into the mattress. “Say it again,”

he murmured, his voice dropping an octave, his blue eyes locked onto mine.

My heart pounded. “You fell fast, Mr. Mosley.”

His lips twitched like he wanted to deny it, but we both knew the truth. Instead of answering, he kissed me, deep and slow, his fingers tightening around my throat just enough to make my breath hitch. When he pulled back, there was something different in his gaze, something serious that made my stomach tighten.

“I gotta be gone for a couple days.”

Just like that, the heat between us shifted.

I sat up, my fingers curling into the sheets. “For what?”

His jaw clenched, and he sat up too, running a hand down his face. “I gotta handle

this shit.”

The USB. The recording. Silas’s betrayal. It all came back to me. Shooter might’ve been laid up with me for the last couple of days, putting me through the mattress and cuddling, but his mind had been working. Plotting. Calculating. Some shit was about to go down.

I exhaled slowly, searching his face. “Please be safe.”

His hand cupped the back of my head, pulling me in for a slow, lingering kiss that had my stomach flipping. When he pulled back, he brushed his thumb over my bottom lip. “I gotchu.”

I nodded, not pushing for details, because I didn’t want them. He shifted, standing up from the bed, and started pulling on his clothes. My chest felt tight watching get dressed, watching him slip back into the cold, ruthless version of himself that the world knew him as.

When he was done, he pulled his phone from his pocket. “Guards are back. Ain’t no more you bein’ here alone.”

I sighed. “Shooter, I don’t—”

“I don’t give a fuck what you want,”

he cut me off, his tone sharp.

I swallowed, my throat tight while I watched him, my mind spinning with everything that had happened, everything I had learned. This was my life now. And no matter how crazy, no matter how twisted... I trusted him. I had to.

H o u r s l a t e r , I woke up to an empty penthouse and a hollow feeling in my chest. I wasn't used to waking up without Shooter anymore. I stretched out on the bed, inhaling deeply. His scent still lingered on the sheets, but it wasn't the same. Sighing, I sat up and rubbed my face. My stomach let out a loud growl, reminding me I hadn't eaten all day.

After a quick shower, I slipped into a pair of soft, high-waisted lounge shorts and a cropped hoodie, keeping it cute and comfy. My hair was piled into a messy bun, and I swiped on some lip gloss because even if I was just lounging, I liked to look good.

Padding barefoot into the kitchen, I opened the fridge, grabbed what I needed, and then went to open the front door. "Y'all hungry?"

I asked Marcus and Dru, the security guards.

Both men exchanged looks before Dru cleared his throat. "You cookin'?"

"Yeah."

I arched a brow. "Y'all eat, right?"

Marcus looked nervous as hell but nodded. "Yeah, we eat."

"Cool."

I got to work, moving around the kitchen with ease. I missed having my hands busy, missed the normalcy of doing something as simple as cooking. As the food sizzled on the stove, I picked up my phone, hesitating for a second before dialing Mecca. She picked up on the second ring.

"Look who finally decided to call. You know, I was thinkin' about blockin' your ass

after what happened.”

I sighed, already smiling. “Mecca, I’m sorry—”

“You should be, bitch. I almost got my wig snatched off and my damn door—”

“Is already replaced.”

She paused. “How you know that?”

“Because I know Shooter,”

I muttered, flipping the food in the pan. “I figured he’d handle it.”

Mecca sighed dramatically. “Well, yeah, it’s fixed. And some nigga dropped off a fat ass envelope. I ain’t ask no questions, but that shit was heavy. So, I ain’t even mad no more.”

I laughed, shaking my head. “I bet you ain’t.”

“You damn right.”

She sucked her teeth. “I still can’t believe that shit, though. Your crazy ass husband really sent the goon squad in my house like I was harborin’ a fugitive.”

I rolled my eyes. “Mecca.”

“Nah, for real! They bust in like the damn FBI! And I had on my cute pajamas too, had me out here lookin’ crazy in front of these niggas.”

I snorted, biting back another laugh. “You are so dramatic.”

“And you are so whipped,”

she shot back. “Don’t even try to deny it.”

I sighed, stirring the food. “I don’t even know what I am at this point.”

“Girl, please.”

She scoffed. “I know exactly what you are. A married woman. So just accept it and stop playin’.”

I didn’t respond right away because the truth was... she wasn’t wrong.

Source Creation Date: July 22, 2025, 4:44 pm

The interior of the Maybach was thick with the scent of burning weed and the low hum of music vibrating through the speakers. I exhaled slowly, watching the smoke curl and disappear as I kept my grip steady on the wheel, eyes locked on the dark, empty road ahead.

Ren, sitting in the passenger seat, flicked ash from the blunt and glanced over at me. “So, you really think you know who dropped off that USB?”

My jaw flexed. “I know who it was.”

Ren studied me for a second before nodding, passing me the blunt. I took a slow drag, letting the smoke settle deep in my chest before blowing it out in a controlled stream. “And you think he did it just to fuck with you?”

he asked, eyes narrowing.

I gripped the steering wheel tighter. “Nah. He did it ‘cause he thought it was the right thing to do.”

Ren snorted. “Man, ain’t no right or wrong in this shit. Just power moves.”

“Exactly,”

I muttered, my mind already spinning with everything that led up to this moment.

The last two days, I’d barely stepped out of the penthouse. I’d spent every second either buried inside Parker or lying in bed with her warm body curled up against

mine. But in the quiet moments, when my body wasn't keeping me distracted, my mind had been replaying that conversation with my father over and over. The conversation that sealed Silas's fate.

The room smelled like cigar smoke and aged liquor, a combination that had been ingrained in my childhood, tied to every memory I had of my father. Seth sat behind the heavy oak desk, his fingers steepled together, his expression unreadable.

I stood across from him, my stance loose, but my mind sharp as hell. "You sure about this shit?"

I asked, voice even.

Seth scoffed, taking a slow sip from his glass. "Boy, you don't get to question me like I ain't been runnin' this shit since before you could walk."

I stayed quiet. I already knew his mind was made up. Silas had fucked up. He'd been caught slipping, thinking he was smarter than the family that made him, and he wasn't.

"You know what happens when niggas get too close to the feds, ,"

my father continued, voice low. "They gotta go."

I knew that, but knowing it and making the call to kill my own brother were two different things. I kept my face blank, even as I felt the weight of eyes on me. Not just my father's. I glanced toward the hallway just past the office door. My uncle Rob was somewhere in this house.

Sick as hell, retired from the business, but still listening. Always listening. I didn't trust that shit. Seth must've seen something flicker in my expression because he

smirked, leaning back in his chair. “You worried about your uncle?”

I didn’t answer. Seth chuckled darkly. “That old muthafucka is too weak to do shit. And even if he wasn’t, I ain’t worried about him.”

I wasn’t worried. At least not about him doing anything, but about what he knew. It didn’t matter, though. The deal was sealed that night.

Silas would be dead by sunrise.

I clenched my jaw, the weight of that memory settling heavy in my chest. And now, almost seven months later, I found out that conversation had been recorded by Uncle Rob.

“Shit ain’t adding up,”

I muttered under my breath.

Ren side-eyed me. “You think it was personal?”

I shook my head. “If it was, he woulda came to me first. This ain’t about revenge. It’s about... morality. Gotta be.”

Ren let out a sharp laugh. “Nigga, ain’t no fuckin’ morality in this shit.”

That was the truth, but Rob had always been different. He stepped back from the life years ago, but my father still let him live under the same roof, still had people watching over him, taking care of him. I needed to know why he recorded that conversation.

The loud vibration of my phone cut through the heavy silence. I glanced at the screen,

seeing Seth's name flashing.

I answered. "Yeah."

"You on your way?"

my father's voice came through, cold and impatient.

"Yeah,"

I said, my grip tightening on the wheel.

"Good. 'Cause I'm ready to kill this bitch nigga."

I inhaled deeply through my nose. "Relax. I'm on my way."

I hung up, my fingers drumming against the wheel.

Ren glanced at me. "This some real fucked up family drama, my boy."

I exhaled slowly, staring out at the dark stretch of road ahead. "Tell me somethin' I don't know."

The gravel crunched under the tires as I pulled up to the small, isolated cabin, the headlights cutting through the thick darkness of the woods. Seth's car was already parked out front, engine off. He'd been here for a minute. Ren shifted beside me, checking the clip on his gun before tucking it back into his waistband.

"You sure you don't wanna just let your Pops handle this?"

I gave him a sharp look. He exhaled, shaking his head. "Right. You gotta do

everything your way.”

I stepped out of the car, the cold night air biting at my skin as I adjusted my jacket. I pushed open the door without knocking. The inside of the cabin was dim, the only light coming from a single overhead bulb swaying slightly. And there, in the center of the room, sat my uncle Rob. This nigga was tied to a wooden chair, wrists bound with thick rope.

His head was tilted downward, strands of graying hair hanging in his face, but I could see the faint rise and fall of his chest. He was alive, but I couldn't say for how long with my father pressing a gun against his temple. His expression was unreadable, but his grip on the gun was steady. Too steady.

“Yo, relax,”

I muttered, running a hand down my face.

Seth didn't even blink. “Took your sweet ass time gettin' here.”

I stepped further into the room, Ren right behind me, his presence solid, quiet.

Rob let out a rough chuckle, lifting his head slightly, his dark eyes locking onto mine.

“Bout time you showed up, boy.”

I ignored him for a second, focusing on my father. “Put the gun down.”

Seth cocked his head. “You come all the way out here to babysit, or you come to finish the job?”

I exhaled sharply. “Put the gun down.”

For a moment, it felt like a standoff. Then, with a muttered curse, Seth lowered the piece, but he didn't holster it. I turned my full attention to Rob, taking in the deep lines on his face, the slight tremor in his hands. The man was old. Weak. But his eyes still held something sharp. Those killer eyes we were all born with. Mie just happened to be blue.

“You wanna tell me why the fuck you did it?”

I asked, voice low.

Rob smirked, the corner of his mouth twitching up. “Did what? Live too long?”

I stepped closer, letting my presence fill the space. “The USB, old man. You gave it to some Old Man Wells and had it sent to my wife. Why?”

Rob licked his cracked lips, then sighed. “Because somebody had to.”

Seth let out a harsh laugh. “This nigga think he a martyr or some shit.”

Rob turned his gaze on Seth, something bitter in his expression. “You got all this money. You spent decades buildin' this empire, burnin' down everything in your way. And for what? A legacy of death?”

Seth's jaw flexed. “A legacy of power.”

Rob scoffed. “And look where it got you. Your own son had to put a bullet in his brother's head.”

A muscle in my jaw ticked. “He was workin' with the feds,”

I said, voice tight.

Rob nodded, like he'd been expecting me to say that. "And that justified it? That justified blowin' his brains out like he was just some random enemy?"

I didn't respond, but my jaw tightened. He let out a slow breath, eyes flicking back to me. "You really wanna know why I recorded it?"

I stayed silent. He tilted his head slightly. "Because I ain't got much time left, boy. Ain't got long before this old body gives out. And before I go, I wanna know that all this shit dies with me."

Seth's expression darkened. "What the fuck does that mean?"

Rob gave a slow, tired smile. "It means I don't want this empire livin' past me. Past you. Past . I want it dismantled. Burned. Everyone who built it, everyone who thrived from it—I want 'em to pay. Just like I paid. Just like Silas paid."

The air in the room shifted. The weight of his words settled over us like a thick, suffocating fog. Seth took a slow step forward, lifting the gun again, pressing it right under Rob's chin. "You always were a bitch-ass nigga,"

he muttered. Rob didn't flinch. Didn't even blink.

I stared at him, trying to see the angle. Trying to understand. "You ain't ever had a problem with how we ran things before,"

I said, watching him carefully.

Rob exhaled through his nose. "You know how many bodies I buried for this family? How many muthafuckas I killed to protect what we built?"

He let out a humorless chuckle. "And for what? So I could die alone in a fuckin'

wheelchair while y'all kept the cycle goin'?"

Seth's grip tightened on the gun. "You shoulda just kept your mouth shut, old man."

"Maybe,"

Rob said, his voice quieter now. "But I just... I wanted to leave this world knowin' somethin' changed. Knowin' that this shit ended."

I stared at him, my mind running through every possible angle. Every possibility. This wasn't about Silas. This wasn't even about us. This was about guilt and about a man too old and too broken to live with the weight of his sins.

Seth pressed the barrel harder against Rob's chin, his patience running thin. "I should kill you right fuckin' now."

Rob closed his eyes for a brief second, then opened them. "Maybe you should."

The room went silent. And in that silence, I knew. He wanted to die. He was done fighting. I reached out, gripping Seth's wrist and pushing the gun away. "Nah."

Seth snapped his glare toward me. "Sebastian—"

"No,"

I stated firmly.

Rob smirked. "Look at you. Always the level-headed one."

I turned my gaze back to him. "Why the fuck you bring my wife into this shit?"

His smile faded. “Because I knew she was the only thing that could make you stop and think before you followed your old man into hell.”

I didn’t respond. Because deep down, I knew he wasn’t wrong. The cabin was silent except for the heavy breathing of Rob. I stared down at my uncle, his frail, pitiful body slumped in that chair. The ropes were digging into his wrists, but I didn’t give a fuck. If he wanted to die so badly, then fine. He could rot right here.

“No meds. No nurses. No nothin’,”

I said, my voice flat, final. “If he wanna die, he can do it on his own time.”

Seth scoffed, his grip tightening around the gun still in his hand. “The fuck you mean, boy?”

I cut my gaze to my father. “I mean, we leave him here. Let him fade out slow, like the fuckin’ coward he is.”

Seth’s face twisted in fury. “Nah. Fuck that.”

I could already see him gearing up, chest rising and falling like a bull about to charge. He wasn’t having it. He wanted blood. “He dies NOW!”

my father barked, stepping toward me.

I squared my shoulders, jaw locking. “That ain’t your call.”

“The fuck it ain’t!”

Seth snapped. “Everything I built, everything I sacrificed, and you wanna leave this motherfucka alive? After what he did?”

I didn't back down. "Let him suffer."

Seth's lips curled in disgust. "You gettin' soft, ."

The words barely left his mouth before the shot rang out. The crack of the gunshot echoed in the small cabin. Rob's head snapped back, his body jerking once before going still. Blood trickled down from the hole dead center of his forehead. Seth and I both turned at the same time as another shot was fired.

Seth stumbled back, clutching his chest as blood bloomed across his shirt. I whipped my gun out, aiming it straight at Ren, who still had his arm extended, his gun smoking.

"The fuck are you doin'?!?" I roared.

Ren's expression didn't change. If anything, there was something dark and menacing in his eyes as he lifted his weapon again—this time, aimed right at me. "You don't get it, do you?"

Ren murmured, voice low, eerily calm.

I didn't lower my gun. "Get what?"

Ren exhaled, almost like he was disappointed. "I'm tired of this shit. Tired of playing the loyal soldier. Tired of watchin' you get handed a throne you don't even want."

My blood ran cold. "Nigga, you better watch what the fuck you sayin'," I warned.

Ren's grip on his gun didn't waver. "I been by your side for years. I bled for this family. Put in work for this family. And for what? To play second to a nigga who don't even care?"

I stared at him, my pulse thudding in my ears. Ren shook his head. “I earned my spot. You just happened to be born with the right name.”

Betrayal cut through me like a blade, sharp and deep. I took a slow step forward, gun still raised. “So what? You gon’ take me out? Step in my spot like this shit yours?”

Ren tilted his head slightly. “If that’s what it takes.”

I gritted my teeth. “We was brothers, LaRenz.”

His expression didn’t change. “Nah, I was your flunky but not anymore.”

Seth coughed behind me, struggling to lift his head. Blood dripped from his mouth as he glared at Ren with all the hate in the world. “Kill that...muthafucka,”

he rasped.

Ren’s gaze flicked to him, and that second—that hesitation—was all I needed. My bullet tore through the side of Ren’s head. His body swayed for a fraction of a second before dropping like dead weight.

But I didn’t stop. I emptied the whole fucking clip into him. Every last bullet. The room smelled like blood and gunpowder. Ren’s body was riddled with holes, blood pooling beneath him in a dark, thick puddle. I stepped back, chest heaving, my fingers still tight around the gun.

I turned to my father, who was struggling to breathe. He was slumped against the floor, his face pale, blood soaking through his clothes. He let out a low, weak chuckle, looking up at me. “You handled it.”

I swallowed hard, my throat tight. “Yeah.”

Seth coughed again, the sound wet, rattling. His eyes, sharp even in death, pinned me down. “Don’t let this shit...take you under, boy.”

I stayed silent, my jaw locked so tight it hurt. He smirked, his lips barely moving. “You always was...a cold motherfucka...”

I exhaled slowly and grabbed the bottle of Gin off the table then tossed it against the wall. Then, I grabbed the lighter from my pocket and flicked it open. I watched the flame dance for a second before tossing it into the dry wooden fireplace. The fire caught instantly, spreading fast. Smoke curled toward the ceiling, and I took one last look around the room. At the betrayal. At the end of an era.

I dragged my father with me, throwing his arm over my shoulder to keep him steady. He grunted, but I didn’t give him a chance to protest or say something I didn’t want to hear as I half-carried, half-dragged him toward the door. Then, without another glance back, I stepped out into the night.

Source Creation Date: July 22, 2025, 4:44 pm

The soft hum of the city night seeped through the windows as I lay sprawled across the bed, the faint glow of my laptop screen illuminating the room. I had spent the last few hours eating, drinking, and laughing with my girls on FaceTime, talking shit. It felt good to have a sense of normalcy, even if a part of me was still waiting.

It had been three days and I hadn't heard from Shooter once. I wasn't worried, though. Not really. I knew him. Knew what he was out there taking care of business. And I knew it wasn't anything pretty. If it took this long, that meant blood had been spilled. I just needed him to make it back to me in one piece.

At some point, exhaustion got the best of me. I shut my laptop, curled up beneath the silk sheets, and let sleep take over until I felt him. Soft lips brushed against my cheek. Slow, deliberate kisses. A warmth I hadn't felt in days pressed into me, surrounding me. My body stirred before my mind fully caught up, my senses kicking in.

The scent of expensive cologne filled my nose, pulling me from the depths of sleep. My lashes fluttered, and when my eyes finally adjusted to the dim light, there he was. A slow, relieved smile spread across my lips as I reached up and threw my arms around Shooter's neck, pulling him close.

“You're home,”

I breathed out against his shoulder, feeling the warmth of his skin through his hoodie.

Shooter wrapped me up in his arms, holding me so tight I could barely breathe. His grip was possessive, needy, like he had missed me just as much as I had missed him.

“Yeah, baby,”

his voice was low, husky. “I’m home.”

I pulled back just enough to look into his piercing blue eyes, searching them for any sign of pain, any hint of what he had been through these past few days. But all I saw was that same dangerous, unreadable man I had fallen for.

“You missed me?”

I whispered.

His lips twitched, the corner of his mouth lifting into a smirk. “I can show you better than I can tell you.”

I didn’t get a chance to respond before he was climbing onto the bed, his hands already gripping my thighs, spreading me open beneath him. His lips found mine, rough and demanding, stealing my breath, my thoughts, my everything. I melted under him. Let him consume me.

And when he finally sank into me, our bodies reconnecting after days of distance, it wasn’t just sex. It was him claiming me again, him reminding me exactly who I belonged to, erasing every ounce of space that had separated us.

Three days apart might’ve seemed small to some, but with Shooter, it felt like forever. I’d tried to act unbothered, tried to keep myself distracted—but nights alone without his body pressed into mine left me restless, craving his rough hands, his demanding mouth, the dangerous heat of him taking me over.

“Fuck, ,”

he groaned against my lips, voice raw, heavy with need as he buried himself to crook of my neck, dick deep inside me. His hands gripped my waist beneath him, and I

could feel a vulnerability he rarely allowed himself to show. “Missed the fuck outta you, baby.”

My breath hitched as I clawed at his back. Shooter pulled back, and I could see the tiredness. The exhaustion, but also the hunger in his gaze, was relentless, demanding everything I had. “I missed you, too,”

I whispered softly, arching my back to bring him even deeper. “More than I wanted to admit.”

He pulled back slowly, deliberately, then thrust forward again, a slow, intense rhythm that had my eyes rolling back. Every stroke was methodical, each movement powerful and possessive, his lips never far from mine, kissing me slowly, deeply—tasting me like he was savoring something rare, something irreplaceable.

I moaned softly into his mouth, my hands sliding down his muscular back, feeling every tight muscle flex as he moved. The heat radiating from his body, the weight of him pinning me to the mattress, was both comforting and intoxicating.

He smirked softly, thrusting a little harder, causing my breath to catch. “You know I’ll always come home to you, right?”

He rolled his hips expertly, filling me with each deep stroke, grinding against me in a way that had my thighs trembling. My nails dug into his skin, leaving my mark on him the same way he was marking me, owning me completely.

“Fuuuckkk. You... you better,”

I breathed, wrapping my legs around his waist to pull him deeper. “I swear, Shooter—”

He silenced me with another bruising kiss, rough yet tender, tongue sliding over mine until I was dizzy. His hand traced down between us, fingers finding my clit, gently circling, driving me right to the brink. “Never leavin’ you alone long enough to forget who owns this pussy,”

he rasped, lips brushing mine with every word, his thumb pressing firmly against my swollen nerves. “You know exactly what it is.”

My hips rose to meet each of his strokes, my breath coming in quick gasps as pleasure surged through my entire body. Shooter felt every shudder, every tremble, and he slowed just slightly, torturing me deliciously, eyes locked on mine. “Yesssss... please... please, don’t stop.”

“Say that shit, Mrs. Mosley,”

he commanded, voice deep, dark, and low, caressing every syllable against my skin. “Who do you belong to?”

I met his gaze defiantly, lips curving into a slow, wicked smile. “You,”

I moaned softly, no hesitation this time. “I’m all yours, Shooter.”

A deep, satisfied groan escaped him, and his pace quickened, slow and deliberate, becoming urgent, desperate, passionate. His thrusts were deeper, harder, each stroke claiming me more completely than the last, as if he was embedding himself permanently inside me, never to let go again.

“Fuck. I love hearin’ you say that,”

he growled, hands tightening around my hips, bruising me in the best way possible. “Nobody ever gon’ take you from me, . Nobody.”

“I don’t want anybody else,”

I gasped, my body tensing, thighs shaking as he pushed me toward release.

His mouth captured mine fiercely, swallowing my cries as pleasure crashed through me, intense and overwhelming, leaving me shuddering uncontrollably beneath him. He groaned my name roughly, his hips jerking, thrusting deep one final time as he came, filling me, owning me—sealing every promise he made.

We lay tangled together afterward, chests rising and falling heavily, our bodies slick with sweat, hearts beating in perfect sync. Shooter brushed the damp hair from my forehead, placing soft kisses against my skin, uncharacteristically gentle as he held me tightly, protectively. I wanted to ask what happened while he was gone, wanted to know everything, but before I could even get the words out, he turned me in his arms, cupping my chin so I had no choice but to meet his gaze.

“I meant what I said. I’ll always come home to you, .”

I pressed my lips to his, smiling softly to myself. “I’m holding you to that, Mr. Mosley.”

Page 33

Source Creation Date: July 22, 2025, 4:44 pm

A Month Later

The warmth of Shooter's body was wrapped around me when I stirred awake, his slow, steady breathing against my neck. I stretched lazily, blinking up at the soft morning light creeping through the penthouse windows. Shooter groaned slightly, his grip tightening as if he could keep me there forever.

“Where you goin’?”

he murmured against my shoulder, his voice thick with sleep.

I smirked, shifting just enough to turn in his arms. “I gotta pee.

“What time is it? We got a brunch to get to.”

Déjà vu hit me hard. I thought back to the first time he told me we had a brunch to attend, back when I was still fighting him every step of the way. I had given him the hardest time, dragging my feet, throwing attitude, acting like I was being forced into some arranged marriage.

Now I just sighed dramatically and stretched. “What’s the dress code?”

Shooter chuckled, squeezing my hip. “Dress your ass off like you always do.”

I grinned. “Say less.”

An hour later, I was stepping out of the penthouse in a form-fitting, burnt-orange

sweater dress that hugged every curve just right, paired with gold heels and matching accessories. My hair cascaded in soft waves down my back, makeup flawless. Shooter was in a crisp black suit, looking every bit the powerful, dangerous man he was. We were a problem together.

Outside, an awaiting limo was parked, sleek and polished. The driver opened the door for us, and as soon as we slid inside, I noticed the setup: two chilled glasses, an open bottle of champagne, and a small plate of fresh strawberries. My eyes cut to Shooter suspiciously. “Okay... what are you up to?”

His smirk was slow and knowing as he grabbed the bottle and poured us both glasses. “Damn, can’t I just wine and dine my wife?”

I scoffed playfully, taking the glass he offered. “You can, but you being extra smooth right now. What’s the occasion?”

Shooter clinked his glass against mine before leaning back against the seat, his powerful presence filling the space. “Ain’t no occasion. Just wanted to let you know I really fuck with you.”

He took a sip, watching me over the rim of his glass. “Our future lookin’ real bright, baby.”

Something warm bloomed in my chest, but I couldn’t help myself. I arched a brow. “Damn, are you getting soft on me?”

Shooter shook his head, a deep chuckle rumbling from his chest. “See? This why I don’t be sayin’ shit. You always got a smart ass mouth.”

I grinned, sipping my champagne. “And yet, here you are. Still stuck with me.”

His blue eyes darkened, gleaming with something possessive.

Eventually, the limo slowed, and I glanced out the window in confusion. We weren't at some fancy restaurant or private club. Instead, we were parked in front of a commercial building, and standing outside were my girls, my father, and Seth, sitting in a wheelchair.

I turned to Shooter. "What's all this?"

Instead of answering, he stepped out, walked around to my side, and opened the door for me. "Come on."

Still confused, I let him help me out. My girls were all grinning, looking way too excited, and my father was watching me with something unreadable in his eyes. Shooter pulled something from his pocket and placed it in my hand. It was a set of keys.

My breath caught. "Sebastian... what—"

His gaze burned into mine. "It's yours."

I blinked, looking from the keys to the building, realization dawning on me. "This... this is mine?"

Shooter nodded once, his expression unreadable. "Your name's on the paperwork. Full ownership. No more talkin' about it, no more dreamin' about it. You want a store? It's yours, baby."

Emotions swirled inside me—shock, gratitude, disbelief. I pressed a hand to my chest, suddenly overwhelmed. "You... you really did this for me?"

Shooter smirked. “Told you before—whatever you want, all you gotta do is ask nicely.”

Before I could even process it fully, the moment shifted. Shooter dropped down on one knee. My heart stopped. Gasps and whistles filled the air as he pulled a velvet box from his pocket and flipped it open. Inside sat a massive pear-shaped diamond, gleaming under the morning sun. It wasn’t just the ring, though. It was the way he looked at me.

His voice was low, raw. “... I appreciate you. And even though we started this shit as business, I want it to be more. I want us to be partners, baby—in love, life, and loyalty. For real this time.”

Tears pricked my eyes. I glanced over at my father and Seth, two men who had once seen this marriage as nothing but a power move. Now, they both looked proud. Honored. Shooter’s grip on the box tightened slightly, his intense gaze locked onto mine. “This ain’t about business no more,”

he said, his voice rough with emotion. “This is about us. So...”

He smirked slightly. “You can have me if you ask nicely.”

That inside joke hit me hard. I let out a watery laugh, wiping my tears before giving him a slow, teasing smirk. “Ask nicely.”

His voice was deeper, rougher, as he said, “Nah but Alizé Whitmore... will you marry a nigga for real this time?”

I squealed—actually squealed—and nodded. “Yes! Yes!”

Shooter didn’t waste a second. He slid the ring onto my finger, then stood, sweeping

me up into his arms as he kissed me deeply. “You ain’t goin’ nowhere,”

he murmured against my lips.

I laughed, wrapping my arms around his neck. “I wouldn’t even try. You’d find me.”

As soon as the ring was on my finger and Shooter lifted me in his arms, my girls lost their damn minds. “Oh my GOD!”

Mecca screeched, practically bouncing on her heels. “Bitch, that ring is everything! I love it!”

Retia fanned herself dramatically. “I told y’all this would eventually happen! This some forever shit.”

Kalea was grinning, hands on her hips. “So, uh... your homeboys got rich brothers or cousins or somethin’? ‘Cause—”

Shooter smirked and I rolled my eyes, but before I could respond, my father stepped forward. Everything quieted just a little. He looked at me first, then turned his gaze to Shooter. “You love my daughter?”

His voice was calm, steady, but there was weight behind it.

Shooter didn’t hesitate. “I do.”

My father studied him for a long moment before nodding once. “Good. I guess all this shit worked out for the greater good.”

Then, to my shock, he pulled Shooter in for a dap and a brief, firm hug. When he pulled back, he turned to me. “, I know what I said before about you wanting to run

your own business, but I'm proud of you. I hope you can forgive me for how this all started. It was never personal, baby, just business."

I swallowed, emotions thick in my throat. "And although I don't agree with it, I'm kinda glad it happened. I've really never been more sure of anything in my life. I'm good with Shooter. I'm happy."

My father nodded slowly, eyes glistening with something deep—pride, love, maybe a little acceptance. Then he sighed, shaking his head with a small chuckle. "Well, hell... looks like I just gained a son for real."

Seth, who had been quietly observing in his wheelchair, finally spoke. "Yeah, , you aight with me."

He nodded and I gave a light smile back.

The tension broke, and suddenly, everyone was laughing again. That's when I turned to my girls, tossing my hands up. "Alright, which one of y'all is gonna be my maid of honor?"

Chaos erupted.

"I BEEN here since day one!"

Mecca shouted. "It gotta be me!"

Kalea scoffed. "Girl, bye! You wasn't even likin' Shooter at first. If anyone deserves it, I do!"

Retia held up a hand. "Excuse me? I was the only one tellin' to stop fightin' her feelings! Where's my credit?"

I rolled my eyes as they started arguing for real, but deep down, my heart felt so full. As we all stepped inside the commercial space, my girls immediately started going crazy with ideas. Mecca was already snapping pictures. “Oh, this space is perfect! We could put the register over here, put some mannequins by the front window—”

“, we have to do a whole aesthetic layout,”

Retia added, eyes gleaming. “Like, imagine sleek black fixtures, some gold accents, and soft-ass lights to give it that luxury boutique feel.”

Kalea was walking around, arms crossed, deep in thought. “And we need a whole separate dressin’ room section, a vibe-y ass mirror setup for try-ons, and a little lounge area with complimentary drinks, ‘cause baby, we sellin’ an experience.”

I grinned, shaking my head at their enthusiasm. “Y’all done turned my store into a whole empire in five minutes.”

“Duh, bitch.”

Mecca smirked. “You think we gonna let you do this shit basic?”

I laughed, but my heart swelled at how invested they were. Meanwhile, on the other side of the room, Seth and my father were deep in conversation, their voices low, their expressions serious. I knew that look. They were talking business.

I looped my arm through Shooter’s, leaning into his side as I nodded toward them. “What happened to your dad? Why is he in a wheelchair?”

Shooter’s body tensed slightly, his gaze dark and unreadable as he turned to me. “What happened to not askin’ questions you really don’t wanna know the answer to?”

I sighed, chuckling as I nudged him. “Fair enough.”

But the truth was, I was curious. Curious about everything.

This man—my man—was a killer, a strategist, a boss bred from generations of crime, yet somehow, I trusted him with my life. This wasn't the life I had imagined for myself, and yet, I wasn't scared. I finally knew what being with Shooter really meant. Loyalty. Protection. Bloodshed.

And I wasn't naive—I knew that this world would always come with violence. That there would be nights I'd be lying awake, wondering if he'd make it home. But I also knew he'd always fight to. And maybe that's what made all of this real.

I was about to plan a real wedding to a man I had gone from tolerating... to wanting... to loving. I turned to Shooter, looking up at him as he watched the room, his presence strong, his energy powerful. He caught me staring and smirked. “What?”

I shook my head, a soft smile on my lips. “Nothing.”

He tilted his head. “Nah, tell me.”

I exhaled, leaning into him a little more. “I love you.”

Shooter's gaze softened just slightly. “I love you, too, Mrs. Mosley.”

Source Creation Date: July 22, 2025, 4:44 pm

I a i n ' t n e v e r pictured myself on no damn honeymoon. That was some fairytale shit I didn't think gangstas like me got to live. But there I was—on a private island on the coast of Belize—watching my wife sway through white sand in a silk robe that barely covered that body I couldn't get enough of. And her little baby bump? That shit had me grinning like I ain't have bodies buried across five states.

Parker was glowing. Skin smooth and gleaming under the sun. Belly just poking out enough to remind me that I did that. Planted something real in her ass. And it was crazy because even with all the blood I got on my hands, she still chose to love me. Or maybe she ain't had a choice—after all, I claimed her from the beginning.

“You gon' stare or come rub this baby oil in?”

she called over her shoulder, looking back with a smirk that made my dick twitch.

I walked over slowly, lazy with it, eyes raking down her thighs. “You askin' or beggin', ma?”

“I don't beg, remember?”

she teased, lying back on the lounge.

I chuckled. “That right?”

The waves crashed behind us. Gulls cried overhead. The scent of coconuts and grilled lobster wafted through the salty breeze. I lowered myself to my knees, pulled her robe open, and palmed that stomach first. I kissed just under her navel before I slicked oil

across her soft skin with slow, circular strokes.

“You good?”

I murmured against her belly.

She nodded, breath hitching when I slipped my hand higher, brushing over a nipple on 'accident.' “Sebastian...”

“What?”

I said innocently, kissing her collarbone. “I’m just followin’ orders. Rubbin’ the oil in.”

Her laugh was low and husky. “You’re trouble.”

“Nah, trouble is the nigga over there on the deck starin’ at you like he tryna memorize how your ass move.”

She froze, brows furrowed. “What? Where—”

“Don’t worry about it,”

I growled, rising to my feet.

“, don’t start nothing!”

But I was already moving. Nigga was leaned against the bar with sunglasses on, sipping some overpriced island drink and staring my woman like he ain’t know she was spoken for. And maybe he didn’t. But he was about to learn.

I stepped to him and he barely had time to react before I cracked him in the face so

hard he dropped his drink and his shades. Body hit the deck hard, drawing stares from everybody.

His boy rushed over. “Yo, it’s not that serious!”

I just looked down at the dude on the deck holding his bloody nose and said, “Next time you look at a man’s wife, make sure you ready to get fucked up over it.”

I turned back toward Parker, who had her face in her hands, laughing despite herself. Security rushed over—our security. I waved them off. I was good.

Back on the sand, Parker was shaking her head when I approached. “You embarrassed me,”

she said, eyes dancing. “Again.”

“Nah,”

I said, brushing my thumb over her lip. “I protected what’s mine.”

“That’s what you call it?”

“Parker,”

I said, voice low. “Every muthafucka gon’ know that you’re mine. That ring on your finger? That baby in your belly? Your heart? All of that shit is mine. And anybody breathe your name wrong, stare too long, blink outta place gon’ find out exactly what it means to be claimed by a nigga like me.”

She stared at me like she could see all the ugly behind the love, and loved me anyway. I pulled her close, kissed her slowly, and let the whole damn island know what was up.

I had everything I ever wanted. Power. Territory. Respect. But this? This woman curled against me on a beach I owned, carrying my baby and making me crash out behind her—that was the one thing I didn't know I needed until I had it.

The past few weeks hadn't just been about love and lust either. I'd been expanding shit—quietly but aggressively. New routes. Cleaner fronts. Fewer weak links. Parker didn't know the full details, and I wasn't about to dump that weight on her, but I'd been moving in silence, setting up an empire that wouldn't crumble like the ones before me.

I'd even been working on shit with my father too. Slowly. This nigga was old and stubborn, and so was I, but after everything that went down, we saw each other clearer. I wasn't tryna be his clone, and he finally understood I wasn't here to be his shadow either. We had a long way to go, but at least now, we were talking more like father and son instead of just businessmen. Parker made all that happen and I respected the fuck out of that. I loved her.

This shit might've started this shit with a mission to control her, to tame her, to break her into the kind of wife I thought I needed. But now, I just needed her for real. I needed her love and loyalty and her ass wasn't going no fuckin' where.