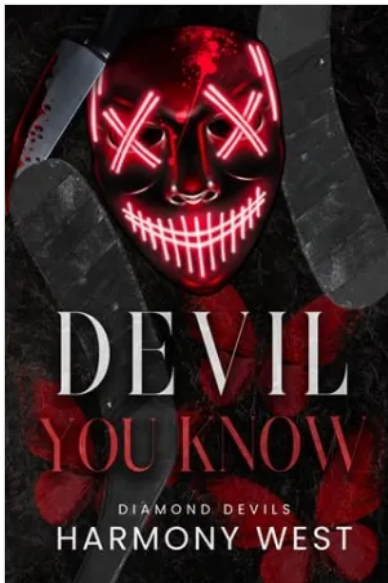




Devil You Know (Diamond Devils #3)

Author: *Harmony West*

Category: Suspense Thriller

Description: Juliet

Only a psycho would fall for a masked stranger. But that's exactly what I am.

We met at a haunt, where he chased me down and made me feel things no stranger should. I confessed too much to him, and now he's going to make all my darkest fantasies come true.

He follows me back to campus, but I can't afford to have a stalker. Not when I need to take justice into my own hands. I'm not stopping until I've gotten my revenge on every single one of them, and I won't let anyone stop me.

Trey

In the dark, I haunt her. But in the light of day, she doesn't know I'm the man beneath the mask.

Juliet Hayes is just as insane as I am—the little psycho who hunts monsters. And I'm all too happy to help her. We'll rip our demons apart together.

I'll be the unhinged Romeo to her psycho Juliet.

Total Pages (Source): 30

Page 1

Source Creation Date: August 7, 2025, 1:59 am

Trey

Don't ask Father where the bodies are buried.

At ten, I'd lost track. The housekeeper, the gardener, the tutor, the nanny?—

But there was one I'd never forget.

Mother took my hand and led me outside to the stars. We lay in the grass, the ground cool against our backs as Mother pointed out the constellations. Orion, Aries, Ursa Major, Cassiopeia. "As soon as I found out I was pregnant with you, I wanted to name you Aries."

Her hand flattened over her belly as if she'd transported back to those days. Before I was born and became Father's greatest disappointment.

"Why didn't you?" Aries was a much better name than Trey. I wished that had been my first name, not my middle name. I wished I'd been named after the stars.

Her lips flattened together, so hard I thought they might bruise like her eye. She told me she'd hit it on the edge of the table when she'd bent down. "Your father liked the name Trey better. It's a family name."

"But you didn't."

Father may have expected her to feed and bathe me, but every decision made about how to raise me was his. My name, my education, my hobbies, my punishments.

Even when he was too busy with the housekeepers and tutors, he always made time to tell Mother and me everything we did wrong.

Under the stars and moonlight, crickets chirped and fireflies flashed. My chest clenched as the warm night air hugged my bare arms and legs. I wasn't ready for summer to be over. Wasn't ready to be away from Mother. "I don't want to go to boarding school next week."

She knew I didn't want to go. I'd been telling her so since Father made the announcement after last semester ended. My private school wasn't good enough. I needed an education at the best boarding school in the country, hundreds of miles away.

Mother squeezed my hand. There was nothing she could do. "I know. I don't want you to go either. I'll miss you very, very much."

"I'll come back, right?"

Her head tilted toward me, her familiar green eyes as soft and warm as her smile. "Of course you will. This will always be your home. Wherever I am, that's your home. You'll come back for the holidays, and we'll eat so much food and open so many presents."

I nodded and blinked away the tears. I'd give up all my presents if it meant I got to stay with her. "Who's going to count the stars with you?"

We didn't have friends out here on the island. Even at school, I'd learned to keep to myself. Get too close to someone, and the next day, they'd be gone. That's what it was like for anyone who got too close to my father, and I'd learned not to be their friend before they disappeared like all the others.

I didn't want to imagine how lonely Mother would feel without me.

She squeezed my hand again before pulling me to my feet. "Don't you worry about me. I'll be just fine. Let's go to bed, okay?"

"I think you should get glasses." I pointed at her eye when she tilted her head, confused. "So you stop running into things and hurting yourself."

Tears glistened before she turned away from me and held out her hand. "Come on."

She tucked me into bed and read me the next chapter of our book. A story about a prince locked in a tower who wanted to be good but couldn't figure out how. Every night, I listened to Mother read with my fists clenched, hoping he'd figure it out and reveal the answer to me.

But he didn't figure out the answer by the end of the chapter, and Mother closed the book to sing me to sleep.

I shut my eyes, but sleep didn't come, even after Mother kissed my forehead and whispered goodnight.

A shiver skittered down my spine in the silence. The three-story home with nine bedrooms was Father's pride and joy, but inside was cold and lifeless. Fear gripped my throat every night I lay in the darkness alone. Every time a floorboard creaked as I crept down a hallway. At night, I didn't count sheep—I counted ghosts. Ghosts made by my father's hand.

The housekeeper, the gardener, the tutor, the nanny ?—

An ear-splitting scream echoed through the silent house.

I should've leapt out of bed and run to see who it was, what happened. But I was frozen, spine rigid and fists clenched around my blanket. Eerie silence fell, not even the tick of a clock breaking the quiet.

Until another shattering scream.

Heart racing, I crawled out of bed and crept to my door, easing it open with an almost imperceptible creak. Father didn't like when I left my room at night, not even if I was thirsty. But I had to find out who screamed. I'd spent too many nights ignoring the screams, and the next day, Father would tell me we wouldn't be seeing the housekeeper or the gardener or the tutor or the nanny anymore.

Grunts came from the opposite end of the hall. A small, flickering light trickled from Mother and Father's room. Mother liked to light candles before she went to bed. She said she didn't like the dark. I didn't either.

As I snuck down the hallway, a shadow broke through the light and I stopped, holding my breath until my lungs burned.

The shadow was tall and broad-shouldered. Father.

He'd yell at me if he saw me out of bed at night, or worse. But what if he hadn't heard the scream? It could be Mother, and she could need our help.

I had to be like the prince in that story. I had to be brave, for her, even if it meant not being good.

With every careful step, I cringed at the slight creaks beneath my feet, but Father didn't barrel out to find me in the hallway and shove me back to my room.

Finally, I reached the threshold. Beside the flickering candlelight, Mother lay in her

bed on her stomach, her face buried in her pillow and hair splayed out all around her like she was underwater. She wasn't moving.

In the corner of the room, Father moved quietly like he was trying not to wake her. He was gathering up towels, but his hands were leaving prints. Bloody prints.

"What happened?"

Father whipped around, eyes wide. I'd never seen him afraid before, and it only lasted for a flash before his gaze returned to its usual quiet fury. "Go to bed, Trey."

"Is Mother okay?" I'd never seen her sleep on her stomach before.

We both fell silent until Mother's head slowly turned. My heart squeezed in precious relief.

She managed a small smile beneath her bloody nose. "I'm fine, Trey. Go to bed, okay?"

"But—"

"Listen to your mother." Father's sharp tone made me flinch. He stomped to the laundry chute and threw the bloody towels into it. "Get back to bed."

"You're bleeding, Mother."

"It's just a nosebleed," Father snapped. "We all get them."

"Then why is there blood on your hands?"

"There isn't." Father held up his hands, wiped clean of the blood. "That's your

imagination running wild again.”

My imagination ran wild a lot. Father didn't like that.

But I wasn't imagining the blood that had been covering his hands. Why would Mother scream if it was just a nosebleed? Why wasn't she getting up and escorting me back to bed like she normally would?

“Your mother's fine.” Father strode over to the door. I backed up, heart leaping to my throat and bracing myself for his hand, his belt, his foot, his fist. He gripped the door and loomed over me, rage like I'd never seen burning in his empty eyes. “Get to bed now .”

I'd awoken the beast. The one that lay dormant just beneath the surface, never fully asleep and always ready to be unleashed at any moment. His next move would be the belt or his fists, so I nodded and backed away, turning on my heel to get out of there.

“And Trey? Don't tell anyone what happens at home. Family matters are family business only. Don't talk about your mother or me or anyone else who steps foot into this house. Understood?”

When I nodded again, he dismissed me with a wave and I took off. Climbed into bed like he ordered, heart thumping, and naively thought that Mother must be okay like he said because she didn't scream again.

At fifteen, all I wanted was to stay at boarding school. At least there, I wouldn't be locked in my room at night. Or during the day when words came out of my mouth that Father didn't like.

Fuck you. Fuck this. Fuck all of it.

An angry man raising an angry kid. Shocker.

Up on the top floor, sounds from the first story were muted. That was why he liked to keep me up here, so I wouldn't be around to fuck up his business meetings or hosted dinners or whatever the hell he got up to.

Some nights, Mother managed to break away and free me from my cage. Most nights, she didn't. Most nights, she took the beatings he doled out.

I never questioned why she didn't leave. I knew why.

He'd do way worse than hit her.

The question isn't why do we stay? The question is how do we ever leave?

One more night. Then I'd be heading back to boarding school. Tomorrow. I could last a few more hours in this hellhole. I'd made it fifteen years.

I climbed into bed and squeezed my eyes shut, waiting for sleep to come. My mind had nearly slipped away until a shout came from outside.

I bolted upright, scrambling out of bed and pressing my face against the window, trying to peer out into the darkness.

Small beams of light darted back and forth across the dark, perfectly manicured grass. Flashlights. A search party.

What the hell were they looking for? Who?

Shouts that I couldn't make out. Flashlights that disappeared into the trees that lined the edge of the property for miles before making way for the cliffside and the

awaiting ocean waves.

A figure in the dark. Two? Maybe more. They didn't have flashlights, but they put the car in neutral and rolled down the driveway in silence before turning the engine over, leaving the headlights off to avoid detection.

Someone was fleeing the island. Only wish they'd taken me with them.

Neither of my parents ever came up to explain.

The next morning, dawn had barely cracked over the horizon when Father was barking at me to wake up.

I blinked dry eyes at him. He never came into my room. Never spoke to me unless he had to.

"Get up."

I straightened and yawned. "My flight isn't until afternoon."

"Your mother is dead."

My spine went rigid. I couldn't have heard him right. He wouldn't tell me my mother was dead the way he might deliver news of a flight delay or overcooked chicken. "What are you talking about?"

His eyes hardened. They've always been cold, lifeless. Nothing more within that shell of a man. "She's dead, Trey. You need to get up."

My pulse picked up speed. Mind buzzing. Panic mounting. This couldn't be real. "What happened?"

“She drowned.” He stomped to my closet, tired of waiting for me to roll out of bed and get dressed.

“Is she the one everybody was searching for last night?”

He stiffened. He didn’t like when I revealed how much I knew about what went on in this house. “Yes.”

Unbridled rage slowly came to a boiling point in my chest.

My mother went missing while I was locked up in my room. They searched for her, only to find her dead. Drowned.

While I slept soundly, anticipating the hours until I could leave her behind.

My legs leapt out of bed of their own accord. I could’ve put my fist through his skull. A bullet through his chest. “You shouldn’t have locked me in here! I could’ve helped look for her. I could’ve saved her.”

My knees were about to buckle. The weight of my new reality finally settling over me like a boulder and crushing me underneath.

If I hadn’t been locked up here like a prisoner, I could’ve been out there searching for my mother. I could’ve found her before she ended up in the water. Could’ve jumped in and pulled her to safety. Or died with her. That would’ve been better than living without her. The only person who ever loved me.

“You couldn’t have done anything for her.” Father tossed pants and a jacket to me. “Now put on your suit.”

I fisted the stiff fabric reeking of mothballs and dust, the details of my suit blurring as

the tears stung. “For what?”

“Her funeral.”

Page 2

Source Creation Date: August 7, 2025, 1:59 am

Chapter 1

Juliet

We're going to make you scream tonight.

Damien Vanderbilt's promise didn't strike fear—or lust—into my heart the way he hoped. I can't be scared and they all know it, even if they've made it their mission tonight to change that.

Isolating me on a sixty-nine-acre haunt with a massive haunted house at the center, a spooky hayride that wouldn't frighten a six-year-old, and a group of scare actors hired to jump out at visitors are nowhere near enough to make me scream.

If one of these masked men actually succeeds in scaring me, I'll marry him.

The Devils aren't even paid scare actors, yet they're still running around in masks at the haunt to terrorize the masses. Pretty sure that's their kink. Too bad nothing's scared me since I was fifteen.

A shame, really. Horror movies with raunchy sex are the biggest turn-on.

Mechanical notes of coyote howls and a cackling witch crackle over the speakers. I roll my eyes.

In the corn maze, Sienna loops her arm through mine. She's already vibrating, more from fear than excitement. She screams every time a scare actor jumps out at her, no

matter how ridiculous their gory makeup.

“Why did you even want to come tonight? We both know you’re a baby.”

She scowls at me. “I am not . And you and the guys promised it would be fun.”

“Right. You’re definitely not planning to fuck Luke in the haunted house with his mask on.”

She blushes because of course she is. I know my best friend.

An errant ear of corn crackles beneath my foot, and Sienna whips around. “Did you hear that?”

“Relax. This is the least scary haunt I’ve ever been to.” In the September night air, children shriek, scare actors shout, and classmates scream before bursting into fits of laughter.

Massacre Manor should be my shit. If a single inch of it was remotely frightening.

Footsteps thunder up behind us. Sienna tries to duck with me to the wall of corn, but a rock-solid body breaks our joined arms apart as he sprints between us.

A gas mask covers Damien’s face. Behind him, Knox, Finn, and Luke follow. Knox and Finn in matching gas masks, and Luke in a dark gray mask with red devil horns.

Sienna presses a hand to her chest. “You scared the shit out of me.”

“You’re easy.” Damien’s mask tilts as he turns to me. “Now we just need to scare the psycho.”

I don't hate the nickname they bestowed upon me last semester. "Good luck with that. You're about as scary as a puppy."

"Careful." He steps closer, like looming over me with his ridiculously giant, six-foot-seven frame will be enough to make me tremble. "I bite a lot harder."

I laugh. He has no idea how hard I can bite back. Nothing about Damien's empty threats worries me.

"Run, sweetheart," Luke purrs to Sienna.

She grins and holds out her hand to me before we bolt. I match her smile. This is why we came here. To be chased in the dark by masked men. Even if only one of us is going to get fucked by one tonight.

We race down between the stalks of corn, sticking to the right because that's how you escape a maze as simple as this one. It's not fucking rocket science.

Next to me, Sienna laughs, and behind us, the Devils howl like they're werewolves under the full moon. They're a bunch of idiots but loveable in a weird way. Fuckable, maybe, but almost certainly too vanilla for my taste, even with three of them.

Those three couldn't handle me. Their little nickname for me doesn't even come close to covering it—I'm way more unhinged than any psycho they know.

By the time my calves start to burn, Sienna is huffing and puffing. She's never been an athlete, and I gave up running after what happened.

My Docs and fishnets weren't made for running. Good thing I opted for a skirt, but my black lingerie isn't doing shit for keeping my tits in place. I swear they're about to hit my fucking chin if we run any faster.

“I have to stop!” Sienna drops my hand and bends at the knees, heaving.

Cool autumn air curls around my cheeks. My favorite weather. My favorite time of year. Spooky season is when I feel most at home. “We really need to get you in a gym. Spending every night in Luke’s bed hasn’t built up your stamina by now?”

Sienna flips me off, not bothering to look up.

“Ladies!” Knox is getting a brotherly sort of enjoyment out of chasing us around. He’s boyish and charming and not at all my type. Damien is like a Rottweiler—he might bark, he might even bite, but underneath, he’s a softie who just wants your affection. Finn is practically nonverbal, and I need a vocal man.

Four masked men chasing me through a corn maze in the dark should be the pinnacle of arousal for me, but there’s no adrenaline or lust pumping through my veins.

“Can’t hide from us,” Damien croons.

“Keep your hands off Sienna,” Luke warns his friends.

“Don’t worry. Juliet’s enough for the three of us.” Laughter follows Knox’s words, and my eyes roll up to the constellations.

More like I’m too much for the three of them. They’re all attractive enough that they’ll eventually find a girl who will want all of them. But that girl isn’t me.

Sienna finally straightens. “We better keep?—”

Before she can finish, her green eyes go round as saucers and she points behind me.

“What?”

A large, veiny hand lands heavily on my shoulder with an iron grip.

The scream that rips through the night comes from my best friend before I'm yanked back into the corn stalks. "Juliet!"

I thrash in my abductor's hold as he drags me with ease, the hard stalks smacking against my legs and face. The arm he has wrapped around me like a viper squeezes hard enough to bruise my ribs. "Fuck! Let me go!"

"That's not the safe word." His low, seductive purr makes liquid heat pool low in my belly, words distorted by the mask covering his face.

The scare actors are allowed to touch us unless we use the safe word. Red . Which is a stupid choice because too many words sound like it. If he thinks I'm going to give in and use it, he can think again.

"Where'd Juliet go?" Luke asks.

"I don't know!" Sienna's genuinely terrified, voice coming out high-pitched and screechy over the chaotic rustle of the corn. "One of the actors took her!"

Honestly, I have to credit him for his dedication. He obviously gets off on this shit. Too bad for him, he picked me.

When we finally clear the corn maze, he shoves me to the ground. My ass hits first, teeth clacking together.

Finally, I get a good look at him. Tall and fit beneath a black, long-sleeved shirt and dark pants. Not bulky and massive like Damien but still intimidating. The neon-red mask with X's slashing over his eyes and mouth covers every inch of his face, fully concealing his identity. He could be another Devil from Diamond University, or he

could be a random scare actor. Either way, I'm not afraid in the slightest.

"Ooh, that was so scary." I stand, brushing the grass and dirt from my ass. "I'm shaking in my little boots."

The echo of his chuckle beneath the mask as he saunters toward me liquefies my stomach. Something about being approached by a masked stranger in the dark gets my heart thumping with anticipation, my thighs clenching together. "I'll have you shaking from head to toe, pretty girl."

He has no idea how good that sounds. Or maybe he does. Maybe his kink is hooking up with the random girls he chases at the haunt.

"Sounds hot," I drawl, taking a step forward that throws him off. "I'm in."

He halts in his tracks, and my stomach dips with disappointment. He can't handle a girl like me either. No man can. "In that case. Run, little demon."

Little demon . Even better than psycho . "What?"

The masked scare actor takes a single step forward, his movements completely silent. How a man this large can move without making a sound is mystifying. Maybe even a little, tiny bit frightening. Almost. "If you're in, then run ."

A smirk rolls across my lips. I'm always up for a challenge. He'll have his work cut out for him tonight. "If you catch me, you fuck me."

Beneath his mask, I bet his mouth falls open. But I don't wait around to find out. I spin and take off, heading away from the corn maze and deeper into the darkness, aiming for the dimly lit barn guarded by scarecrows without eyes and wrapped in fake crime scene tape. Inside, lights flash and visitors screech.

His footsteps slap against the ground behind me. I almost laugh. The masked man chasing me thinks he's going to make me scream, but I'll be the one who makes him scream.

"Better run faster, little demon," he taunts. "You know what happens when I catch you."

My manic laugh coils through the night air. I may not be a runner anymore, but I trained for years. I was the fastest on the team, running for miles every day. It made me special. Made me a target. "You won't even come close."

The flashing lights from the barn cast an eerie glow on the dark grass and hay stacks piled up beside the peeling red walls. Mechanical tracks of moaning ghouls and revving chainsaws split the night air. I'll lead him into the barn and?—

Something solid catches on my foot and I go down, hands flying out in front of me at the last second to catch my fall. My palms smack against the unforgiving earth first, every inch of me aching as the pain lashes through my joints. "Shit!"

A heavy body lands on me, cementing me into the ground hard enough to leave an imprint. I can barely breathe as I gasp for air, lungs bruised from where he squeezed me and tits sore from bouncing. The dirt and grass are cool beneath my exposed skin, almost soothing.

Against my back, the masked man still breathes normally. Definitely fit. Probably an athlete. Fucking athletes. Yet I can't help but salivate over the delicious way his body is flattened against mine. His massive hands pressed to the ground on either side of my head, his chest and abdomen crushing me, and his long, hard erection digging into the thin fabric of my skirt over my ass. My thighs clench.

The edge of his mask brushes through my hair as he leans down to my ear. "I hope

you keep your promises, pretty girl.”

A lump catches in my throat. If you catch me, you fuck me . But he wouldn't let it go that far, would he?

Will I?

Yes, of course I will. This is what I've fantasized about since discovering I have a mask kink.

He pulls on the side braid I swept my hair into this afternoon and jerks my head up. I clench my teeth against the pain as he nearly tears the hair from my scalp. “What the fu?—”

“Get up.” Keeping his grip on my hair, the masked man yanks me to my feet.

Once I'm upright, I aim an elbow at his ribcage. He flinches, but his grip on my hair doesn't slip. He's committed. We're not allowed to assault the actors, but I don't care. They may be allowed to touch us, but no one said anything about shoving us to the ground and nearly yanking our braids from our scalps. “Let go of me.”

“Scared, little demon?” he taunts.

Did he overhear the conversation with the Devils earlier? Does he know my reputation and now he's determined to be the one to scare me? I smile. “Not even a little bit.”

“That's a shame.” His free hand brushes an escaped strand of dark hair off my cheek and sets my whole body on fire. “I like when they scream.”

My pulse is thundering in my ears now. Sienna would chastise me and call me an

idiot if she knew what I was considering doing with a masked stranger in the dark right now, but I don't care. I can't remember the last time someone's touch made my heart skip, my thighs tremble, my core hot with anticipation. "I like when someone makes me scream."

Without another word, he scoops me up and tosses me over his shoulder. His arm pins my legs to him, my skirt riding up dangerously, potentially flashing my panties to anyone who might see us in the shadows.

I pound against his back with my fists, even as my heart flutters at the ease with which he carries me. With anticipation of what he has planned for me. "Put me down!"

The mechanical tracks and screams and laughter from inside the barn grow louder, drowning out my shouts and the masked man's hurried steps.

"Put me down !" I repeat, and just like that, he does.

He drops me, and my back collides with the sharp needles of the haystacks. "Better?"

I gasp, the pain and shock vibrating through me as the dusty, earthy scent fills my nose. "Bastard!"

He lands on me before I can get another word out, shoving me harder against the hay, the sharp points digging into my scalp and thin crop top.

I push as hard as I can at his chest, the fabric smooth and unexpectedly soft over the hard, warm muscle underneath. He doesn't budge. I'm a buzzing fly he doesn't even notice as his focus drifts down to my torn fishnets.

His hand inches slowly up my thigh, the tips of his fingers catching on the nylon

threads, and with every centimeter, I hold my breath. My entire body is on fire from the slight graze of his skin against mine, the pressure little more than the brush of a featherlight kiss.

He doesn't stop until he reaches the edge of my skirt and my heart is thumping.

This is really happening. And not at all how I expected tonight to go. I give his chest one last shove with my little remaining strength. "Get off me."

"No."

That one word churns the acid in my stomach. This is so fucking stupid. I don't know this guy. I couldn't even point him out in a lineup. He could do anything to me right now and get away with it.

When he speaks again, I can almost hear the smile underlying his words. "Now are you afraid?"

Yes . I'm scared shitless now.

Yet that doesn't make me want to keep fighting him or escape. I want him to keep going.

My palms drift from his chest to his shoulders, pulling him closer and whispering, "Yes ."

"Good." His voice drops, low and serious. The taunting, amused edge to his tone gone now.

He flips up my skirt, revealing the flimsy, black panties underneath. Beneath his mask, the guttural moan he emits makes me shiver. Primal, animalistic. He's

completely lost his self-control now. We both have. We're not scare actor and victim anymore. We're a masked man and his little demon about to fuck in the haystacks in the dark, where anyone at this haunt could stumble across us.

I bite my lip. We need to hurry. I don't want anyone interrupting us.

Nails digging into his shoulders, I wrap my legs around his back and tug him closer. His erection collides with my panties and I cry out. I don't bother biting it back. No one will hear us above all the chaos in the barn.

"Fuck ." He groans as he grinds his cock against me, the friction from his pants and my panties sending electric shocks of pleasure through every limb.

"Oh my god!" I tighten my legs around him, hanging on like he's my lifeline as he keeps grinding into me. "That feels so fucking good. Don't stop."

His neon-red mask looms over me, muscles rippling beneath his polyester sleeves as he rocks. He's not even fucking me, but the friction against my clit drives me wild. My panties are soaked as every thrust makes the fabric rub against the flood between my legs.

He chuckles as I writhe beneath him, back to the cocky masked man who doesn't doubt for a second that he can make his little demon scream. "How far are you going to let me go?"

I grip those delicious bulges on his arms, the muscles rigid beneath my palms. I want to rip his shirt off, dig my nails in, and leave scars all over his skin as he fucks me into the hay. "This is one of my fantasies. Getting chased and fucked by a masked man in the dark."

"Yeah?" His mask tilts, amused. His voice alone is nearly enough to make me

combust. Low and smooth like melted chocolate. “What else?”

“I want to be asleep and taken advantage of,” I pant. I don’t care if he knows my darkest, most depraved desires. I’ll never see him again. Who cares what a stranger knows or thinks of me. “I want to be held at knifepoint and taken against my will. Cut before he licks the blood off my skin.”

I’ve never confessed any of this out loud before. To anyone. Marcus was the first I told about wanting to try breath play, wanting to fall in and out of consciousness while getting fucked, and look how that turned out. It was fine, enjoyable even, but I knew after hooking up with him a few times that he wasn’t doing it for me. An inexperienced frat boy who didn’t know how to handle a girl like me.

But I have a feeling the masked man grinding his cock against me would know exactly how to fuck me. Would know exactly how to make me come and scream and keep me returning for more.

For some reason, he stops rocking into me and leans down. Even though I can’t see his eyes boring into me, a delicious shiver races to my toes. “So you’re the one.”

Now I’m confused as hell. “The one what?”

“The one I’ve been searching for.”

My heart catches in my throat until he thrusts his hips forward again and the thundering muscle crashes against my ribcage, my head tipping back as a moan escapes. Pleasure bursts through every vein, coming to a boiling point. There’s no chance I’m about to come already. No way. Not possible.

Except as he keeps grinding against me, the pleasure builds and builds. My grip on him tightens, my legs pinning him to me, and my eyes start to water as the

overwhelming pleasure mounts. “ Fuck . Don’t stop.”

“Are you really going to come with my cock rubbing your clit?” His taunt almost makes me want to stave off the orgasm, to show him he’s not nearly as irresistible as he believes, but I don’t care enough about wounding his ego to resist.

Especially when he drives into me harder, his erection massaging that bundle of nerves and making firecrackers burst in my brain. I moan, unable to bite back a retort.

“You really are the perfect little demon, aren’t you?”

The praise makes an unexpected bubble of delight rise in my chest. Perfect . No one has ever called me that. After what happened, I was certain no one ever would. No one could ever love my darkness.

With a thrust of my hips, I smack my pussy against his cock. He lets out a sharp groan, his hard length twitching in his jeans and thumping against my clit. I cry out and he finally flattens his body over mine, pinning me into the hay as he dry-humps me.

The pressure from his weight on me and his cock creating friction between my legs sends pulses of pleasure up from my clit and through my body until it grips every muscle in a stranglehold.

My mouth flies open as a scream rips out, throat aching as the orgasm barrels through me. Pleasure crackles in my head, eyes crossing and the stars above us colliding in a beautiful, chaotic dance. Each wave of pleasure tears a new scream from my throat, my heart pounding harder than it has all night. Maybe in my whole life.

“That sound is so fucking beautiful,” he pants. “Scream for me, little demon. Scream your little black heart out.”

I do. With every throb of my pussy, every burst of electricity through my veins, I keep screaming. My screams of pleasure blending with the screams of fear throughout the haunt.

He keeps thrusting against me as the orgasm eventually ebbs, my pulse still thundering, bruising my ribs from the inside. Holy fuck . Did that really just happen? I just came from a masked man dry-humping me in the haystacks. His cock grinding against my clit was all it took to send me tumbling over the edge.

If this is a dream, I hope I never wake up.

The masked man pushes the upper half of his body off me as his cock continues rubbing against the sopping mess between my legs. Even with his mask concealing his eyes, I know his gaze stays trained on me as he reaches for the button on his pants.

A soft buzzing fills my ears.

I could tell him to stop. I could use the safe word. Red . No matter what I've consented to before this, he's still a scare actor and I'm a guest.

But I bite my lip and keep my mouth shut. Fuck the safe word. Fuck using my brain. I'm thinking with my libido and I don't give a fuck. I want this masked man to make me scream again before I see stars that don't belong to the sky.

"Juliet?" From the darkness, a soprano voice calls out behind my masked man.

Fuck .

Before I can say a word, he scrambles off me, leaving me soaked and aching—in both pain and lust—on the haystacks. Cool air covers me in his wake, making

goosebumps spring up along my exposed skin. “Until next time, little demon.”

“Wait—”

But he doesn’t stop, disappearing into the shadows. Every limb longs to race after him, to shove him to the ground this time before I whip out his cock and slide it into me, riding him until we’re both roaring into the darkness.

I don’t know his face or his name. I’ll never see him again or relive that fantasy. Never again hear someone call me the perfect little demon. Never get to ask him what he meant when he said I’m the one he’s been searching for.

I jump to my feet, fixing my skirt and plucking hay needles from my hair and clothes.

“Hey!” Sienna waves to me, the Devils trailing her. She rushes forward, green eyes wide. “Are you okay? I’ve never heard of one of the actors doing anything like that before.”

I shake her off. “I’m fine. It’s all part of the fun.”

They have no idea exactly how much fun I had with the masked man who abducted me in the dark.

“Tell me that asshole didn’t manage to scare you,” Damien grumbles.

“We didn’t even get to hear her scream.” Knox pulls his mask off to reveal his pout.

I wipe away the creases in my skirt before searching for the masked man in the shadows. But he’s long gone. A smile sneaks across my lips. “Actually, he did.”

Page 3

Source Creation Date: August 7, 2025, 1:59 am

Chapter 2

Trey

If I'm a Devil, my father is the Grim Reaper.

At my side, his loafers click across the pavement and his lip curls at the helmet in my hands. He hates the bike, but his money paid for it. Bribery when his gardener threatened to sue him for poor working conditions and harassment, and I needed to lie through my teeth and deny the allegations.

He straightens his tie, leading the way to the athletic building that houses the rink. "You're lucky I didn't disown you with the mess you made."

The mess . He means the attempted murder. At least, what should've been an attempted murder charge. Maybe two. Prison time. I made sure to use a dull knife so Novak would be spared, but damn did it feel good to cut open that asshole's throat. In that moment, it was like I was dragging the blade across my father's neck. But no matter how much of a jackass Novak was, he didn't deserve to pay the price of my father's deeds. Violet didn't either.

Mine is the kind of father who's got enough money to throw at any problem and make it go away, which is how I managed to skip prison time for probation. How I managed to get back on the Diamond University campus and its hockey team. How he manages to make people vanish and get away with it. How he manages to get away with beating his son within an inch of his life.

I was certain the night I dragged that knife across Novak's throat was going to be my death sentence, but Father spared me. Left me broken, bloody, and bruised on the floor for nearly twelve hours until I was finally able to stand. I wish he would've ended it. Dumped my body with my mother's.

Hurting Violet, hurting Novak, was my ticket out. Prison or death. I didn't care which—only that whatever fate awaited me would free me from my father's grasp.

But I should've learned a long time ago. No one ever escapes him.

I shrug, adjusting the heavy bag on my shoulder filled with all the hockey shit I was hoping I'd never have to touch again. The only part of hockey I can stand is the fighting. I'll happily knock a two-hundred-pound motherfucker to the ice, but I couldn't give less of a shit about the score on the board. "You said I needed to make captain. By any means necessary."

"Discreetly, Trey. With a single brain cell in that dense head of yours. Not with a dull knife in front of half a dozen witnesses."

"Next time you want my competition eliminated, be a little more specific. Or, better yet, handle it yourself." We both know how skilled he is at that.

"I don't have time for your childish insolence." His dark eyes flash. Somehow, there's always a vacancy to them. Flat, lifeless. Like he's a body and a brain but nothing more. "Let's find your coach. I've got far more important matters on my plate than the politics of a college hockey team."

"Thought you were Head of Athletics."

"What was that?" His eyes flash, and I bite back my words.

His title is merely that. He outsources the actual job duties to his subordinates but still manages to take home a hefty salary. One of those open secrets that everyone knows, but no one does shit about it because he uses his businesses to donate generously to the teams, especially the Diamond Devils.

Men like my father don't suffer consequences for their actions. They get away with their crimes for a lifetime because money and influence make you untouchable. Above the law. Above nature.

An image flashes of the little demon from the haunt by my side as I slash my father's throat, both of us laughing as the blood splashes our faces and pools at our feet. Her beaming at me with his blood on her teeth as she launches herself at me and I fuck her in the crimson puddle beneath us.

But even though she nearly let me fuck her out in the open on the haystacks, she's not as crazy as me. If she knew how deranged I am, she wouldn't have let me do what I did to her.

Vanderbilt and Rockefeller were talking a big game about how they were going to scare the psycho who can't be scared. Obviously, I had to join in. Give her a night she'd never forget. But I'm the one who can't shake off the memory of her tight little body writhing beneath me, her skin covered in ink I wanted to memorize, piercings lining her ears and sparkling in her nose and splitting her brow that made me want to explore the rest of her, her glorious tits and ass barely covered by the black crop top and tiny skirt, the heels of her boots digging into my spine as I rubbed my cock between her legs until she was shuddering and screaming.

Fuck, that was the best sound I've ever heard. Better than the screams of terror from all the easy prey that night. I'm great in bed, but I've never made a girl come by grinding on her before.

Juliet Hayes . I'll find her again. Give her another night with the masked man, but this time, I'll fuck her when I catch her.

Inside the rink, Father claps a hand on my shoulder before reaching out to shake Coach's with a grin. The grin that manages to convince anyone who doesn't know him that he's charming and friendly. Trustworthy.

Coach grins back at him as they shake hands. He knows who signs his checks. Father could easily have him fired. "Charles! How are you?"

"Fantastic, as always. Just wanted to make sure Trey here made it to practice on time. Had some transportation issues this morning." He lies like he breathes air.

Coach's gaze drops to my fat lip, but he doesn't say a damn word because who is he to question whether the Head of Athletics punched his son in the mouth yesterday? "Glad to have you back, Trey."

I suppress a laugh. Not a single person on this team is happy to see me, including Coach. I might've been a decent defenseman, but I'm not a team player. Definitely not the type of guy who wants to deal with anybody while I'm sober, especially a bunch of roid-raging frat boys in helmets.

But Father was his university's hockey captain, so I'll follow in his footsteps. I'm not his son—I'm his clone. Except when he remembers I have a brain and a mouth of my own. One that he has to turn off and shut up.

Father's hand on my shoulder squeezes. "Since it's Trey's senior year, we expect he'll be captain."

Coach's smile starts to wane. "That's up to the team."

“I’m sure you can persuade them.” Father claps me on the back, the smile never slipping from his face even when he wants to strangle Coach for daring to defy him. “Trey will prove his worthiness.”

Coach nods. “I’ll be sure to discuss it with the team.”

Father’s smile sours, and I’m happy to get the hell out of there when he tells me to hit the locker room. No desire to watch as my father rips Coach a new asshole. I’ll be captain. No question about it.

In the locker room, I trade my leather jacket and bike helmet for my hockey gear. Haven’t missed this shit one bit, but taking out my rage on some giant, bumbling idiots will help quench my bloodlust. For a little while.

On the ice, skates roar and shouts echo. Most of the Devils hardly pay any attention to me. They only care that they’ve got another ruthless player on their team, especially now that they’ve lost Novak. But a few of the Devils are targeting me more than the puck.

Luke Valentine, Damien Vanderbilt, Knox Rockefeller, and Finn Ashby. They’re still loyal to Novak, even with his ass off campus in the NHL. Valentine resents me for what I did to his little friends. That’s clear by the glare that never leaves the back of my head while he guards the net. Good thing he’s our goalie—he might be pissed enough to wipe me out. I don’t need another concussion. All the head trauma is probably why I’m as fucked up as I am.

When Coach disappears, the three Devils hone in on me, the puck forgotten. Vanderbilt skates right for me, not bothering to hide his intentions as he slams into me.

I’m flat on my back in seconds, teeth clacking together and head swimming. Fuck .

Pain rips through my back and limbs, rattling my brain. These helmets don't do shit for mitigating the pain. They only keep you alive, and what good is that?

“Fuck off, Vanderbilt!” When I climb back onto my skates, fury boils in my veins. The excuse I've been needing to tear the lid off the screaming kettle and let it rip.

Vanderbilt is the biggest motherfucker on the team, at least six-seven and built like the Hulk. I don't give a fuck. Let him knock out my teeth, break a few bones, and bench me for the season.

I swing at him and Vanderbilt drags me to the wall, slamming me against it. My vision blurs as the guys shout and chant around us.

My fist collides with his throat and he chokes, bending just enough for me to send my knee into his abdomen.

Rockefeller and Valentine separate us, holding both of us back like charging bulls. Ashby gets between us, hands up.

I shake off Rockefeller's hold. “Don't fuck with your captain.”

“You're not our captain,” Valentine snarls.

“We'll see what Coach says about that.”

Vanderbilt straightens and points his stick at me. “Daddy's money can't buy everything.”

The rage hasn't lessened—it's only boiling faster. “His money's got nothing to do with it. Whatever I want, I get.”

I might not give a fuck about captain, but I want the title if they plan on keeping it from me.

“What the hell’s going on? Get your asses moving!” Coach’s shout sends the other players back into position.

Valentine and his cronies ignore Coach’s order. Rockefeller nods at me. “Were you the guy who grabbed Juliet in the corn maze?”

I shrug. “So what if I was?”

The four of them exchange snickers beneath their helmets. “You’ll never manage to get a girl like her,” Vanderbilt says, amused.

“I already have.”

The four of them laugh, even Ashby, the Devil I’ve never heard utter a word. Valentine shakes his head. “You have no clue who you’re dealing with. She’s unhinged. She’ll give you a run for your fucking money.”

He’s wrong. My little demon is already putty in my hands. A snap of my fingers and she’ll be spreading her legs, slipping on my jersey, and cheering for me from the stands.

“Like I said. Whatever I want, I get.”

In the parking lot, I slip on my helmet and kickstart my bike, engine roaring. Made sure to get the loudest one I could find so Father will grit his teeth every time he hears me ripping around campus or up his driveway.

“Lamont!” Coach half-jogs toward me, gripping a clipboard as he holds out his other

hand to me. “Congratulations. You’re our new captain.”

I shake his hand. “They chose me?”

His lips flatten, emotionless gaze telling me everything I need to know. “Something like that.”

That’s what I thought. “See you tomorrow.”

Engine whining, leather gloves twisting the handlebars, I take off for the dining hall.

In front of me, an incredible ass sways on the sidewalk, covered by a thin, skin-tight black skirt. Her top stops just above her ass, revealing a sliver of inked skin. Can’t tell from this distance what it is, but I’m going to trace the lines of that tattoo until I have it memorized. Dark tights cover her legs, disappearing beneath her skirt. Exactly where I want to be. Her long black hair mixed with streaks of crimson swishes with every step, practically begging me to pull it. Tug it while she’s blowing me, her tears mixing with her saliva.

I’ll oblige her. I’ll do every dirty thing she craves. Everything she whispered to me that night when I had her pinned down, writhing beneath me.

She doesn’t flinch at the roar of the engine as I rev it beside her, slowing until I match her pace and flip up my visor. Her blue eyes land on me, electric and piercing. Vicious.

I won Juliet over with my mask on, and now I’ll convince her to respond to me the same way with the mask off. I’ll get her to fall for me and make the Devils eat their words.

“Trey Lamont.” My name leaves her mouth in a taunt. A singsong like she’s not

scared of me in the slightest.

She should be.

Juliet Hayes knows my name, but she doesn't know the identity of the man beneath the mask. "Have we met?"

My little demon rolls her gorgeous eyes and keeps walking, hips swinging. I need to grab that fucking ass and take it while I fuck her into the dirt. "Your reputation precedes you."

"What reputation is that?"

"That you're fucking deranged." A little snicker curls at the edge of her mouth. She likes that I'm fucking deranged, but she can't admit it.

"I've heard the same about you." The psycho . I want to find out exactly how psychotic she is.

"You haven't heard anything close to what I've heard about you." The sun beams down on her, turning her black hair shiny. "Tell me: how do you get away with trying to kill a guy in front of multiple witnesses? Now that's impressive."

Something's off about her tone. Can't tell if she's being sarcastic or if part of her secretly wants to know my methods. Maybe she's plotting a murder of her own. Just hope it's not mine. I'd rather not kill her. She'll be much more fun to play with. "Let me give you a ride, and I'll tell you all about it."

That makes her stop in her tracks. I've got her now. Girls either fall for the hockey helmet or the bike helmet. Doesn't take much. "On the bike?"

I grin. "On whatever you want."

"I don't ride bikes." She bats her lashes before striding down the sidewalk again. "Or hockey players."

Little does she know, she almost did.

"You can use my helmet." I don't give a shit if I have to go without it. Splattering my brains on the concrete at seventy miles an hour will be a great way to go.

Juliet flips me her middle finger. "Fuck off already."

My bike tire hits the sidewalk as I snatch her arm, teeth clenching. Her fucking attitude is starting to piss me off. I'd like to fuck it out of her mouth.

Her eyes widen for a split second before she schools them back to neutrality. Refusing to let me know I scare her.

The touch is electrifying. By the spark in her eyes, she feels it too. Two demons sent from hell to find each other.

A glint of white gold on her finger catches in the sunlight. A slithering serpent. "Nice ring."

My little demon flashes me a sickly sweet smile. "Careful. She bites."

"I bite back."

She jerks away from me, the warmth of her arm disappearing from my palm and our connection breaking with it.

Without another word, she spins and launches a kick at my bike so hard it wobbles beneath me, the metallic thud rattling my brain.

Valentine wasn't lying—she is a fucking psycho. My hands grip the handlebars hard enough to splinter them. "Nobody fucks with my bike."

I'll have her on her knees buffing and cleaning it before she blows me. She'll swallow two loads and promise to be a good girl before I let her stand back up.

"Nobody fucks with me ." She backs away, keeping her eyes on mine. "Be careful. You don't want to start shit with me. I'll bring hell raining down on you."

I grin. "Do it."

My little demon saunters away.

With my mask on, she wanted to fuck me, but without it, she wants nothing to do with me.

Juliet glances back only when someone shouts her name. A brunette waves over her head, half-jogging to catch up with her. Valentine's chick. She frowns at me when she notices who's lingering on his bike beside her friend.

I flip my visor back in place before twisting the throttle and taking off, rear wheel squealing as the front nearly comes off the pavement.

My little demon will be more difficult to catch than I thought.

Page 4

Source Creation Date: August 7, 2025, 1:59 am

Chapter 3

Juliet

“Was that Trey Lamont?” Sienna’s eyes are wide with horror. She’s cozy in ripped jeans and a black sweatshirt with the number twenty-two stitched across the front in crimson for her Valentine.

My best friend loops her arm through mine to walk with me to the Village, the dining hall we planned on meeting at before Trey Lamont got in my way. “Yep. The Devil himself.”

Trey is a black speck in the distance now. His leather jacket creaked with his movements as he grabbed me, his warm, calloused hand coiling around my arm like a viper.

I liked him better before he flipped the visor up and revealed his identity. A mysterious masked man, just like the one from Massacre Manor I nearly let fuck me into the dirt.

Sienna’s green eyes narrow before she pinches my arm. “Stop falling in love with him!”

“I’m not!”

I’ll admit I’ve had a morbid curiosity about Trey Lamont since Violet Harris told me about the horrors he inflicted on her and Wes last year. Since I read the articles

praising him as an accomplished athlete. According to the Devils, his father has managed to wipe the internet of any mentions of Trey's criminal activities and probation sentence. Probation . For trying to kill a guy. And assaulting a girl.

I'm not sure whether to admire him for getting away with it or laugh in his face for failing. For thinking he's some sadistic killer when he's clearly not. Just a frat boy with an anger problem.

I need a real psycho.

"I know you have a sick fascination with Trey Lamont, but you need to stay away from him," Sienna warns me. "He's dangerous, and you might be into that in movies, but real life is different. You deserve someone who can actually love you the way you deserve."

I snort. Sienna is my best friend, but she doesn't truly understand my depravity. She thinks that just because she found love I should want that too. Love—whatever the fuck that is—is the last thing I'm looking for. "The way I deserve or the way I want? Because those are two very different things."

"No, they're not. You want someone who treats you like the only person in the world he cares about. You want someone borderline obsessed, who would do anything for you. Who would do anything to make you happy. That's what you deserve too."

I twist the serpent ring on my finger. Damn, maybe my best friend knows me better than I thought. I want a man who's absolutely whipped for me. Obsessed, can't think about anything else, would maim, mutilate, and murder for me.

"Don't worry about Trey Lamont." I flash my best friend a reassuring smile. "Or any guy, for that matter. I'm making a chastity vow."

“For how long?”

“A whole month. A week minimum.”

Sienna laughs, shaking her head.

No man could ever handle me. No man could ever love my darkest corners. And if I ever dared to give one a peek behind the curtain, he'd run screaming. As he should. Every time Damien or Knox call me a psycho, they remind me that my heart, my soul, is too black and fractured for anyone to accept or understand, let alone love.

Luckily, I don't need that shit. I just need to get fucked. “But would it really be so bad to bone him?”

Sienna's mouth falls open. “Yes! He's unhinged, Juliet.”

I can't lie—Trey is the most gorgeous man I've ever seen. Chestnut hair that sweeps just above his brows, piercing green eyes that slice right through me, mouthwatering muscles rippling on his arms and back, a sharp chin, regal nose, prominent cheekbones, and a devilish smirk across full, devastating lips. But maybe there's nothing deeper beneath the surface of the spoiled, entitled, violent rich boy. Maybe he's not an unhinged psycho—maybe he's a grown man who throws temper tantrums. Not worth my time, even to get laid.

Brandon's taking me on a trip. In my head, he's Brandon now, not Mr. Williams. Not Coach. I slipped at practice the other day, and a few of the girls shot me raised eyebrows.

Sneaking out has been my daily habit for months now. My parents have no idea I'm not up in my room most nights. How would they? They're either attending late-night business dinners, asleep in anticipation of early-morning meetings, or abroad on

business trips. Their careers are just starting to take off after years of struggling to make ends meet, and I'm fifteen. I don't need a babysitter or a parent, apparently. Surely I can take care of myself by now.

That's okay. Brandon takes care of me.

Lately, he's been different, though. Weirdly distant. He hasn't been sneaking small touches during warmups or lingering outside of the locker room or pulling me into his office as much as he used to.

Paranoia had a grip on my heart until he caught me before last period with a big smile and told me to meet him out front tonight at ten because he had a special trip planned for us.

When he said us , I thought he meant just the two of us.

Except he opens the rear passenger side door and there's another girl in the backseat.

Jealousy flares in my gut. What the hell is she doing here? Why is she so damn beautiful? Soft strawberry hair that falls in loose waves down to her waist, a sprinkling of freckles across her cheeks, and perfectly shaped eyebrows that she doesn't have to pluck or draw. She's perfect, and I hate her.

I round on Brandon. "Who the hell is she?"

He smiles easily. "A new friend."

"Just a friend?"

Even though his smile usually comforts me, now it contains a hint of condescension. He lowers his voice. "Of course. You know you're my special girl."

Stupidly, relief fills my chest. “Good.”

“Can we go now?” His tone is gentle but firm. Just like it is every time he instructs me on where to put my hands.

“I guess.” I slide into the backseat, the familiar scent of pine from the air freshener flooding my nose, and he shuts the door.

The girl is silent beside me. She’s like a scared kitten. Stiff, wide-eyed, and jittery. Most people aren’t this scared of me. At least not right away.

“Hey. I’m Juliet.”

“Autumn,” she murmurs, so quiet I almost can’t hear her.

When Brandon slides into the driver’s seat and turns on the engine, I ask, “How do you two know each other?”

“Family friends.”

Autumn shifts. Is he lying? She doesn’t object, though.

“Where the hell are we even going?”

Brandon chuckles, headlights guiding us down the dark road. “It’s a surprise, remember?”

“How long until we get there?”

He glances in the rearview mirror at Autumn. “She’s impossible, isn’t she?”

I fold my arms over my chest, not liking that he's making me the odd one out. "I'm a delight."

"You are," he agrees easily. "You know you're both freshmen."

"Yeah?" I shift my focus to Autumn and ask about her classes.

She offers one-word answers whenever possible, but at least she's talking. I talk about classes and softball, and Autumn just barely relaxes, calmer when she's talking about her dog and her little brother.

By the time the clock on Brandon's dashboard says it's past eleven, we're both yawning. "When are we going to be there?"

"How about you two take a nap? Then we'll be there when you wake up."

I roll my eyes. I'm fifteen, almost sixteen, but sometimes Brandon talks to me like I'm a kid.

Eventually, we both fall asleep. The last thing I remember is the tires rattling over a long bridge suspended above inky water before drifting back to sleep.

Maybe planting a camera in the bedroom of the biggest psycho on the Diamond Devils hockey team makes me an idiot.

I warned Trey Lamont not to start shit with me or I'd bring hell raining down on him.

Do it .

He'll learn better than to taunt me. He brought this on himself.

Though every rational brain cell tells me to drop it and avoid the entitled rich boy, I want to study him the way I study serial killers in my psychology classes, and admittedly, my free time. Why did he hurt Wes and Violet? Why did he make a spectacle of his murder attempt in front of multiple witnesses? Surely, he's smart enough not to be that sloppy.

My curiosity will kill me.

When I'm satisfied the camera is concealed, I pluck the container from my bag and set it on his desk, gently tipping it on its side before opening the lid.

Hesitantly, the tarantula crawls from his little enclosure. He's so cute skittering around the notebooks strewn across Trey's desk.

"Scare the shit out of him," I whisper. "I want to hear him scream from my dorm."

I head for the door and try not to let my gaze linger on his room. On the pair of boxers discarded on the floor, on the messy black bedsheets that are all too inviting, on the knife forgotten on the cluttered desk. Part of me itches to pocket it, but that'll raise his suspicions. I need to get out of here before Trey returns and discovers me. He may think I'm actually interested in him beyond studying him like a bug under a microscope.

As I sneak out of his room, my phone buzzes.

Sienna

Are you on your way back to the dorm?

Juliet

Yep. I'll be there in ten minutes.

"Hey there, psycho." Damien blocks the front door with arms crossed, muscles bulging, and a shit-eating grin.

Knox towers over all of us, ass planted on the counter and feet swinging like a kid while Finn's shoulder leans against the fridge.

They're all gorgeous, I'll give them that.

"I liked you all better in masks."

Knox pretends to stab a knife into his heart. "Ouch. My mother tells me I'm pretty."

"Where do you think you're going?" Damien asks.

"What are you doing here in the first place?" Knox hops down, stepping closer with a huge grin. "I don't remember you agreeing to a night with us. Unless you changed your mind."

"Sorry to disappoint, boys. I'm only here on business."

Knox lifts a brow. "What business is that?"

"Murder," Finn supplies.

The other Devils laugh at his deadpan joke. That might be the first word I've ever heard from Finn's mouth. "I wish. Just some pranks between enemies."

Damien straightens. "Who's your enemy?"

“Trey Lamont.”

All three of them exchange sadistic smiles, and Knox claps a hand on my shoulder. “You gotta let us in on this prank war then.”

“Why are you even letting him live here if you don’t like him?”

Damien’s mouth sours. “We didn’t have a choice. His dad pays for the house. We either had to let him live here or move out.”

I shake my head. Forced to buy his son’s acceptance. The puck bunnies may happily fall to their knees for Trey Lamont, but among everyone else, he’s either hated, feared, or both. “That sucks.”

“Yeah,” Knox agrees, “so let us know when you want help.”

“I’ll take you up on that sometime.” I brush past them and wrench open the door.

“Don’t be afraid to take us up on our other offer too,” Damien calls to my back.

On the sidewalk in front of the house, a brunette lingers, turning on her heel and heading in the other direction when she spots me. I roll my eyes. A desperate puck bunny waiting for the Devils to make an appearance or invite her inside.

The night air is cooler tonight. I hug my chest, trying to warm my fingers beneath my arms. In a few weeks, I’ll be forced to trade the mini skirts and crop tops for warm leggings and long sleeves. I’ll miss the flash of my tattoos when they’re covered up. Dark wisps of clouds drift across the full moon, and paranoia claws up my spine.

Someone’s eyes are on me.

I dart a glance over my shoulder, then the other before shaking off the delusion.

My phone buzzes again, but before I can check it, a crunch comes from my right.

Off the sidewalk, just beyond the woodline, a man watches me. His neon-red mask makes my heart skip.

The scare actor from Massacre Manor.

No fucking way. How the hell did he find me? I grind my teeth. “You followed me to my college campus? Are you insane?”

Why am I asking? Of course he is.

Spiders scurry down my back as his low chuckle echoes beneath the mask with every slow step he takes toward me. “Only as insane as you are, pretty girl.”

“Except I’m not a fucking stalker who follows a girl to her college campus.” Although I am a girl who plants a camera in a Devil’s bedroom so I can spy on him. Maybe that makes me a stalker too. But this masked man doesn’t need to know that.

“You want me here.” His silent steps are bringing him closer and closer. How does a man this large move so quietly? My legs are itching to run, but I don’t want to give him the satisfaction. Not yet. “That’s why your heart is pounding. Why your palms are sweating. Why your thighs are clenching. Why you’re soaked for me.”

I hate how he’s already keenly aware of the effect he has on me. “My panties are bone-dry.”

“They’ll never be dry when I’m around.” He takes one more step toward me.

That last foot is my final straw. I spin on my heels and take off, Docs slapping against the concrete. He's a silent shadow behind me, and his speed makes my chest clench.

The campus is practically deserted at this time of night, but there are still a few lights on in the library. I aim for the door. If I can get inside the building, there will be witnesses and?—

An iron grip jerks me off my feet by the shoulders before smacking my back against the brick wall. The brick rubs my exposed skin raw and my hands fly out, punching and shoving to get him the hell away from me as my heart hammers and chest heaves.

Getting chased through the dark by a masked scare actor at a haunt was one thing. Him stalking me to my college campus and cornering me is another.

“Shh.” His whisper makes every hair on my arms and neck stand on end, yet somehow lulls me into complacency. He's fucking nuts, but I want him. Want him to take what he aches for. What I ache for.

We're both fucked in the head. Me more than him if I'm salivating for his cock between my legs again.

His calloused palm lands on my exposed thigh. I want those callouses rubbing against my nipples, the hard ridges grinding my clit.

No, I need to stop being so fucking crazy. That's exactly what has gotten me into every mess in my life. I shove against his hard chest, an unmovable boulder beneath my palms. “Get the fuck off me!”

He doesn't listen. His breathing turns ragged as he slides his hand up my inner thigh, every skin cell he brushes vibrating. In my ears, my pulse echoes.

The second his palm cups the space between my legs, my thighs clamp together. You catch me, you fuck me . He's here to pick up where we left off.

I send my knee up to his groin as hard as I can, not caring about the damage I'm doing to his balls.

"Shit!" He springs away from me, bending and clutching his aching, rock-hard dick.

My laugh echoes off the brick wall, nearly drowning out his groans. "Told you to get the fuck off me."

Before he can recover and retaliate, I spin in the opposite direction and take off. I don't want him to know which dorm building I'm in. If I disappear into the woods, I'll lose him. He doesn't know this campus like I do. I'll follow the walking trails back to the dorm and get inside the building before he's even found his way out of the maze of trees.

My boots crash over leaves and branches, the darkness making navigation that much more difficult. I can't follow the trails—that will make me easy prey. I'm not that dumb, and he should know by now that I won't be easy prey to catch.

A mix of certainty and arrogance swells in my chest. I'll disappear into the night like a ghost and he'll be left wondering how the fuck I eluded him so easily. I wish I could be a fly on the wall and witness the stunned expression on his face when he realizes I've vanished and removes the mask.

Except I don't want to know the face beneath the mask. I like the mystery.

A sliver of moonlight breaks through the treetops and I let it guide me between the trees until a shadowy figure emerges in front of me.

Every muscle in my body stops moving. My breath catches in my lungs, each cell freezing.

That can't be him. How ? How the fuck did he manage to intercept me? To anticipate where I was headed?

“Leave me alone.” For the first time since he met me, there's a tremor in my voice.

I really am afraid of him—not because of what he might do to me, but because of how well he already seems to know me.

That's the most unsettling thing about him.

I only manage one step in retreat before he's on me, throwing me up against a tree. My spine collides with the bark and I cry out as the pain lashes through me.

With heavy hands on my shoulders, he keeps me pinned, his body pressed fully against mine so I can't bring my knee up to traumatize his balls again. His heat warms my frozen skin, nipples peaking beneath my flimsy bra but not from the cool night air. His hard torso flush against mine is delicious enough to make me drool.

Jesus, Juliet. Get it the fuck together.

In an impossibly low voice, the masked man murmurs, “We didn't get to finish what we started.”

“And we won't,” I purr. “You touch me anywhere else and I'll castrate you.”

His brief chuckle turns my core molten. “I'd love to see you try, demon.”

His stupid fucking nickname for me shouldn't make butterflies flutter in my stomach.

I've always known something was wrong with me—many things, in fact—but ever since this masked man waltzed into my life, I've become acutely aware of how truly fucked up I am.

From his pocket, he pulls out a knife, flipping the blade open with a seductive stroke of his finger. The blade glints under the moonlight, and a rare lump catches in my throat.

I want to be held at knifepoint and taken against my will. Cut before he licks the blood off my skin.

What the fuck possessed me to tell him that? Those were just my sickest, darkest fantasies—not anything that was supposed to become reality.

But that's why he's here. To make my fantasies real.

Fuck. Me.

I'm such an idiot. If Sienna knew where I was right now, what trouble I've gotten myself into?—

Shit, Sienna . I told her I'd be at the dorm in ten minutes. She'll send the entire campus security team to hunt me down. Maybe that's for the best. Then they'll chase my masked man off campus and prevent him from returning.

Except he's already my masked man, and no matter how insane it makes me, I don't want him to leave.

I want to find out what he has in store for me in these woods.

With a tilt of his head, the masked man presses the blade of the knife to my throat. It

bobs as I fail to swallow down the hard lump lodged there. Fuck, fuck, fuck— “You better not kill me.”

“Or what? You’ll haunt me?”

“Yes. I’ll haunt your ass so much, you’ll wish you never met me.” I’ll make his life a living nightmare beyond the grave. Death wouldn’t be enough to stop me.

“Don’t worry, demon.” Beneath his mask, I bet he’s wearing a cocky grin. “I’m not going to kill you. No fun in that. I want to play with you, and our game has only just begun. On your knees.”

My heart hammers against my ribcage. “Forget it?—”

“ On your knees , pretty girl.” His harsh command is accented by the bite of the blade against my skin.

I wince at the sting, a tiny rivulet of blood trickling down my neck. This guy is so fucking sick. Twisted, fucked in the head.

A nightmare incarnate.

I sink to my knees. The hard earth digs into my exposed skin, cold seeping through every vein. He doesn’t drop the blade from my throat, and I’m forced to crane my neck back to look up at him, to keep him from accidentally cutting me deeper. Or maybe it wouldn’t be an accident at all.

When I told him my most depraved fantasies, I figured he’d run like all the rest. Discover I’m too deranged for him. A bigger psycho than he could handle. Maybe I’ve met my match.

And now I'm well and truly fucked.

"Good girl," he purrs.

"Fuck you." I don't give a shit if he has me at knifepoint. I'm not going to roll over without a fight, even if I can only fight with my words.

One hand drifts to his zipper and he pulls it down. Oh my god . "If you use your teeth, I'll use my knife."

He already said he won't kill me, but if I bite him, he could hurt me. Or change his mind. Leave my body in the woods to decay until they find me. For all I know, he might get off on dead bodies.

Maybe if I bite his cock hard enough, I'll be able to get away while he's writhing in agony. Surely, nearly biting it off will hurt worse than a knee to the groin?—

He nudges the knife against my neck, a sharp reminder of the threat. "Quit thinking about it."

"Stop reading my mind," I spit. "It's disturbing."

His laugh is something out of a horror film, coiling around my ears and twisting them. I'll hear that laugh in my nightmares. Or maybe my wet dreams. "You have no idea how disturbing this is going to get."

Even with a mix of fear and adrenaline pumping through my veins, even as every sensible brain cell and survival instinct tells me to run, to get the hell away from this masked man as fast as I can...part of me wants to know what he tastes like. Part of me wants this to happen, and that part of me is winning.

“Pull out my cock.”

At his delicious, sultry command, my hands curl into fists. “You’ll regret this. You have no idea how disturbing I can get.”

He has no fucking clue what I’m capable of. He’d shit his pants if he knew. If he forces me to blow him at knifepoint, I’ll get my revenge. Karma is a bitch, but I’m a monster.

The masked man grabs my hand and plants it on the hard ridge of his cock through his jeans. “I can’t wait to find out. Now take out my cock, pretty girl. I won’t ask nicely again.”

“You haven’t asked nicely at all,” I grumble, but at the sting of the blade against my throat, I reach into his boxers, brushing past smooth skin to?—

Jesus . I can’t fit that in my mouth. Or anywhere else.

I wrap my hand around the tip before stroking down his hard cock while it springs free from his boxers. Every rock-solid inch is wrapped in velvety smooth skin, soft and hard at once. Inviting and intimidating.

He groans as I stroke down, his length twitching in my hand and reminding me of that night at the haunt when his cock struck my pussy and I nearly combusted. What kind of unhinged psycho did that haunt unleash? “That’s a good girl.”

My teeth grind together. “I’m not. This is called doing what it takes to survive the deranged sociopath wielding a knife in the woods.”

His hand fists my hair, tugging so hard tears sting my eyes and I let out a yelp. “You’re my good girl.”

“I’m not your anything.” For a brief second, I wish he’d take the mask off so we could make eye contact while I glare at him. He can see me clearly, but he’s still a mystery to me. “And I’m definitely not good.”

“Then be my bad girl, little demon.” He jerks his hips forward, nearly hitting my face with his cock. “Down your throat.”

I can’t believe an insane masked man is about to make me blow him in the middle of the woods. He has no idea the hell I’ll unleash on him. I almost smile at all the revenge fantasies that race through my mind.

Even on my knees and with his knife on my neck, I keep my shoulders back and chin high. “This is your last chance to walk away. If you don’t, you’ll regret it.”

His blade digs harder against my throat, and I squeeze my eyes shut, trying to pull away from the pain, but he keeps me firmly in place with his fist in my hair. “If you don’t swallow every drop of my cum, you’ll regret it.”

My eyes spring open. “I am not ?—”

He drops my hair only to tug my chin down before he shoves his cock past my lips, the slightly salty taste of his hot, smooth skin gliding across my tongue.

My jaw comes unhinged as I swallow his girth and new tears spring up as the ache builds. This is how people get lockjaw.

His shaft rubs over my tongue as he groans loud enough to wake the whole campus, the saltiness of his precum hitting the back of my throat. The hand gripping the knife smacks against the tree above my head so he can brace himself while the hand in my hair guides me, forcing me to swallow every inch he slides into my mouth.

I could bite down now while he doesn't have the blade against my neck, but I don't feel like getting stabbed and bleeding out tonight. Not before I make him pay for this.

I'm not swallowing his cum. I've never done it and I never will. I don't even like giving blowjobs. At least, not until now.

I shouldn't be enjoying any second of this. I should be plotting my escape, figuring out a way to get this masked man's dick out of my mouth and running from him without getting killed.

Instead, I dig my nails into his thighs and dart out my tongue when he pulls back, leaving only the tip in my mouth. He hisses through his teeth and I grin around his cock. He thinks he's the one with the power here, but he's not.

A clatter above my head like he's stabbing the tree with his knife. "Fuck. That's my bad fucking girl."

That's right. That's what I am. Bad. Way, way worse than he realizes.

My tongue swirls around his wide girth, salivating over him. His taste, his groans, the feel of his cock wrenching my jaw apart.

The hand in my hair yanks me back, my skull colliding with the bark. I cry out, the pain making my head spin.

He takes advantage of my open mouth and rams back in, his hips thrusting back and forth like he's sprinting to the finish line. His heavy breathing and the rustling of his jeans with every thrust fill my ears.

I shove at his thighs, trying to push him off, to get him to ease up, but it's like I'm not even here. Simply a mouth for him to fuck. I shouldn't be getting off on him using

me like this, but the warmth pooling between my legs tells me that if he were to fuck me, I would be unraveling around him in seconds.

His cock drags over my tongue, smacking the back of my throat over and over. My stomach lurches, aching as I gag with each punishing thrust. Tears burn before spilling down my cheeks, saliva trickling out from my mouth and down my chin.

I need to bite him. Need to somehow get him to stop before he breaks my jaw?—

“I’m going to come.” His warning is low and guttural, and a delicious shiver coils down my spine.

I punch his thighs, my silent warning that he better not come in my mouth, but he ignores me. He doesn’t pull out or stop fucking my mouth until hot liquid shoots down my throat.

My garbles echo around us as his cum threatens to drown me, hot and salty as it burns its way down. He stops thrusting, groaning out a loud “Fuuuuck” to the night sky as he fulfills his promise to make me swallow every drop.

Ropes of his cum spurt down my throat, suffocating me until he finally pulls out.

I gasp, hands smacking against the cold ground as I heave, simultaneously trying to drag down air and rid my throat of his salty taste. “Fuck. You.”

He tsks, grazing the tip of his knife down my spine. “I thought you were tougher than that, pretty girl. A little cum won’t kill you. Or a lot.”

My stomach churns, nausea building until I puke. My limbs go weak, and I wipe my mouth with the back of my hand before collapsing against the tree. I don’t have it in me to run anymore. To try to escape the masked man with the knife.

He doesn't take off. Not yet. He's enjoying the aftermath of what he's done to me. "That smart mouth sure can swallow a cock. Might not even need to take your pussy or ass if you keep blowing me like that."

I flip him off and finally stand on shaky legs. He's not going to take anything else from me tonight.

But before I can run or open my mouth, he drags the dull edge of his knife across my collarbone. I freeze. God, I can't fucking wait to make him pay for tonight. For making me his prey, when I'm anything but.

"Get home safe, pretty girl." He retreats a step, pointing his knife toward the woodline. My knees nearly wobble with relief. "Before another masked man finds you in the woods."

Page 5

Source Creation Date: August 7, 2025, 1:59 am

Chapter 4

Trey

In front of the hockey house, a puck bunny waits for her invite. At least until she spots me coming and spins to head in the opposite direction, brown hair swinging. Guess she's not brave enough to try her luck with the Devils yet.

Inside, Rockefeller blasts metal from his phone while he shovels cereal into his mouth from a bowl damn near overflowing with milk.

Of the Devils my father has forced me to live with, Rockefeller is the most annoying. Vanderbilt the most insufferable, Valentine the most irritable, and Ashby the most tolerable, only because I still haven't heard the guy say a fucking word.

Novak stayed here last semester. This is where the best players on the team live, and according to my father, where the captain of the Devils belongs.

I'd rather live in a fucking shack alone than with these assholes.

"Where've you been?" Rockefeller asks.

I halt in my tracks. None of them has ever cared to know where I go or what I'm up to. "Getting blown by a good girl on her knees."

He grins. "Lucky son of a bitch."

Don't know why he's acting like we're buddies, but I shrug it off and head for my room. Whatever he's up to, I'm not in the mood. He'll spoil the high from the best blowjob of my life. Not that she did much—swirled her tongue around my cock, tasted and swallowed me until I took her the way I craved. The way we both did. I didn't need her to do anything. Just open that pretty mouth and take my cock like the demonic little psycho she is.

When she ran from me, the blood pumped straight to my cock, the agony from her knee colliding with my groin forgotten. I made sure she paid for that one. But I didn't expect seeing her tears and saliva mix and drip down her chin to turn me on as much as it did. Once I had her head pinned against that tree and fucked her mouth like I was trying to bruise her throat, it took every ounce of willpower not to come in three seconds.

I resist grinning at the memory. Juliet on her knees before me. Her tongue gliding up my cock. Her gags and violent lurches with every hard thrust. Her promise to get revenge.

Can't wait to see what she has planned for me. I can't think of a single game I'd rather play more.

Rockefeller follows me to my room, and I grind my teeth. "What are you doing?"

"Nothing."

I briefly shut my eyes and force a slow breath out through my nose so I don't punch him in his stupid face. He lingers while I unlock my door and head inside, then peeks into the room while keeping one foot beyond the threshold. His eyes dart over the ceiling and walls like he's bracing for them to cave in.

"Dude, what's your deal?"

He grins. “You might’ve had a visitor earlier.”

“Like who?”

“Let’s just call her a . . . beloved psycho.”

Only one girl who would dare to step foot in this house could fit that description. Either one of the Devils let my little demon inside or she broke in.

My cock throbs in my jeans, already aching for her again. Blood pulses through my veins at the image of her inching open my bedroom window and crawling inside. What did she do in here? Take or plant something? I didn’t think this girl could pique my curiosity more than she already has, but now I’m dying to know everything about her.

I search the room, waiting for a trap to spring up. But there aren’t any mouse traps or rotten banana peels. Nothing on the desk or in my dresser or closet or shoes. Nothing?—

Until I lift the sheet on my bed. A massive tarantula scuttles to my pillow.

I grin and lay my hand down until he crawls into my palm and I scoop him up.

“What is it?” Rockefeller calls.

When I turn to show him the spider, he jumps, eyes going wide. “Oh hell no!”

He slams the door, shutting me and my new pet in my room while I laugh. “I think I’ll name you Fluffy. You’re my new pal now, huh?” I slip him back into the container she must’ve transported him in. I’ll get him some better shit soon.

If she thinks a tarantula is enough to scare me, she's going to really need to step up her game.

From the other side of my door, Rockefeller shouts, "Did you kill it?"

"I'm not killing it! He's my new pet."

"You're both crazy!" he calls, footsteps fading as he gets as far away from Fluffy as he can.

"Exactly," I murmur to Fluffy, watching him scuttle around his home looking for a place to hide. "That's what I like about us."

Tonight wasn't enough. I need more of Juliet Hayes. A lot more.

In the darkness, the bedroom door creaks open. My stomach twists into a nauseating knot, heat warming me until the blanket becomes an insufferable cocoon.

The familiar shuffle of flats. She slips them off at the edge of my bed as she does every night before the mattress dips under her weight.

I pretend to be asleep. I always pretend to be asleep. It's never enough to make her go away. I just want her to go away.

"Trey." Her whisper makes bile rise in my throat. I squeeze my eyes shut tighter, willing the monster in the dark to disappear. "You forgot your goodnight kiss."

No. No, no, no. I don't want her slimy lipstick on my mouth. On my neck. On all the places she isn't supposed to be kissing me.

Her cold hand grazes my cheek like a ghost's. I dare a frantic glance at the door she

closed behind her. But my father isn't coming to save me, and my mother is dead.

She slips her frozen hand down, ice spilling over my spine. "Give me a kiss."

I lurch awake, heart pounding and back coated in sweat. All these years later and I still want to puke my guts up at the memory of that woman. That vile fucking monster my father called his girlfriend, who claimed to have previously worked as a nanny. As a caregiver of children, when she was nothing more than a predator in disguise.

Bleary-eyed, I stumble into the bathroom to splash cold water on my face. The nightmares never go away, no matter how fast I run or ride or hide. A swipe of cool water on the back of my neck helps, but the relief is only temporary. She'll keep haunting me like she has since that day she showed up at our house when I was fifteen.

I check on Fluffy in his new home, a massive tank beside my TV stand. He's got everything he could possibly need—peat moss for burrowing, flower pot for hiding, rocks for climbing, water dish, and temperature and humidity gauges to make sure he's comfortable. Hope Juliet didn't think she'd be getting him back. At best, we can share custody, but he's mine just as much as hers now.

On the TV stand, an unfamiliar, tiny bead of red light blinks. I rub my eyes before shuffling closer.

Is that a fucking camera?

I smirk, tracing a finger over the discreet lens. Juliet's spying on me. Fluffy was merely a distraction from the real reason she broke into my room. She's not as uninterested in the version of me without the mask as she pretends.

In that case, I better give her a show.

Page 6

Source Creation Date: August 7, 2025, 1:59 am

Chapter 5

Juliet

While my masked man had me on my knees in the woods, I had to open my big mouth and vow to get my revenge. But how the hell am I supposed to do that when I don't know what this motherfucker looks like beneath the mask? I don't even know his name, so it's not like I can hunt him down. I'll have to wait until he shows his masked face again. Somehow, I'll get that knife from him and get my revenge.

On my way back to the dorm, I grab a coffee. I'll need the caffeine to stay awake while I study for tomorrow's exam until the early hours of the morning. I glance around the dark campus, making sure my masked man isn't following me or lurking somewhere to ambush me, paranoia my constant companion since that night in the woods.

A few yards away, a girl in scrubs squeals and races toward a man leaning on a brick wall, waiting for her. "Craig! I missed you!"

He grins and picks her up when she jumps into his arms, letting out an oof when he stumbles back.

I freeze. Under the row of lamps that light up the campus, I catch his profile. Then the rest of his face.

A bulbous nose, wide-set eyes, and a salt-and-pepper beard to cover his aging skin. He's stocky with a buzzcut and a sickening, cocky smirk, gut sloping over his too-

tight jeans and shiny leather belt.

He may be six years older than the last time I saw him, but I'd recognize him even in a nursing home.

Craig . Now he has a name.

I move slowly into the shadows, ducking around the corner of the dining hall. Heart in my chest, I glance back. They haven't seen me.

With a trembling hand, I snap a photo of them.

When the girl kisses him, my stomach turns. How can a man like him have a girlfriend? Doesn't she see the sickness in him?

If she hasn't yet, she will. Men like him can only hide for so long. Then they have to let their fangs out.

Craig sets her down and takes her hand, meandering to the parking lot. "How were your classes?"

His voice alone makes bile rise in my throat. Hey, there. No need to be shy.

I shove the memories down, forcing myself to concentrate even as my heart gallops and anxiety seeps into every pore.

"Clinicals." A bite of irritation in his girlfriend's voice that he doesn't pay enough attention to what she says to remember a damn thing that comes out of her mouth. Of course he doesn't. He doesn't care what comes out of her mouth—only what goes in it. "They were fine. But guess what? I heard about this spooky carnival that we have to go to! It sounds so fun!" She bounces, the excitement obvious in her huge grin.

“It’s called Carnival of Terrors and everyone goes in costume! I was thinking we could go Friday night.”

“You bringing Amelia?”

“I don’t know. It might be a little too scary for her.”

“Huh. I don’t know. Maybe.” His interest is waning, and panic drums in my chest. Who the fuck is Amelia?

“I’ll ask her,” the girlfriend adds quickly. “I’m sure she’d love to go.”

The smile returns to his face. “Sounds good.”

They reach his car, and he doesn’t bother opening the door for her. I wait until the headlights are out of sight before emerging.

I didn’t think I’d ever see any of the monsters from that night again, and now I’ve finally found one. Craig .

Maybe he’ll lead me to the others. Maybe I can finally find them all, and make them pay for what they did to me.

Brandon leads us into a huge house that feels more like a museum than a home. Towering ceilings, golden decor, pristine furniture without a speck of dust. Decadence and wealth beyond my wildest imagination.

Our footsteps echo across the shiny floor, and beside me, Autumn folds deeper into herself.

“Where the hell are we?” The annoyance is building to a breaking point now. Tonight

was just supposed to be me and Brandon, him taking me on a special trip. Now it's me, Brandon, and Autumn in some weird house.

He doesn't answer, which only pisses me off further as he leads us to a room and eases the door open. He gestures for us to lead the way, and when we do, he follows and locks the door behind us.

My stomach goes leaden.

A few cots line the open room with little else. No decorations on the blank, white walls. No windows. No warmth.

On the cots are two men, both of them completely naked except for the white towels to cover the space between their lower backs and their knees.

"What the hell is going on?" I whisper, retreating a step. But Brandon is there, a wall behind me as his hands land on my shoulders.

He gives me and Autumn a reassuring smile that only makes my chest clench. "You two are going to massage them. Like you do to me."

Panic seizes every muscle in my body. Like you do to me. The massages that Brandon told me I couldn't tell anyone about. That people wouldn't understand our relationship and we had to keep this secret between us until I graduated.

Now I'm learning that Autumn gives him those massages too. They're not special. Not something he and I share alone.

And now he wants us to touch these strange, gross men.

I grab Autumn's hand. She grips mine back, surprisingly strong for a girl so quiet, so

timid. “No. We’re leaving.”

“Relax, Juliet. You’re getting paid. It’s just a job. Every man wants a pretty girl to give him a back rub. They’re high-paying customers, trust me.” He winks and that familiar feeling of disgust comes creeping back. The one I push away every time his hands brush against my body, every time I catch his gaze lingering too long on one of my teammates, every time he slips off his shirt and asks me to massage his shoulders. The disgust I shake off because he tells me he loves me and how special I am and makes me feel wanted in a way no one ever has.

The man with the dark beard and bulbous nose turns to smile at me, an eerie smirk that makes my heart hammer impossibly harder. “Come on over. We’re friendly.”

Beside me, Autumn vibrates with fear.

No part of me wants to touch either one of these men, but it’s clear by Brandon’s intimidating stance in front of the door that Autumn and I aren’t getting out of this room until we do.

“I’ll do it,” I mutter. “But don’t make Autumn do it.”

Brandon shakes his head, smile slipping away. “No. They want you both.”

I’m in a fog while I go through the motions, letting my mind carry me anywhere else, anywhere outside of this room while my hands roam over clammy skin.

At the cot across from me, tears stream down Autumn’s face.

Sienna stuffs her toothbrush in her overnight bag before swinging it over her shoulder. “I’m spending the night with Luke.”

Her side of our dorm is a sharp contrast to mine—florals and pastels to my muted monochrome. Her decorations are hockey memorabilia and photos of family and friends. Mine are a severed hand pencil holder and lenticular prints of vintage portraits that change to bloody vampires and skeletons when you move.

“You’re not walking there, are you?” I ask.

Marcus may be locked up for what he did to my best friend last semester, but we’ve learned our lesson: Don’t assume any corner of this campus is safe. Especially not while a crazed masked man is running around making girls blow him at knifepoint.

I still haven’t told Sienna about my masked man. We may be best friends, but Sienna and I have always had our secrets. Not to mention she’d call me insane and sic the Devils on me to follow me like bodyguards if I told her the truth. By the way, remember the scare actor who dragged me away at the haunt? Yeah, I almost let him fuck me, and he followed me to campus and made me blow him while he held a knife to my throat.

No. Not gonna happen. I’m keeping my mouth shut about this one.

“Luke is driving me.”

Three rapid knocks at the door make her jump. I laugh. I love my best friend, but my god does she scare easily. Somehow, that makes me love her even more. She’s the soft center to my hard shell. The scared little bunny to my feral black cat. On the surface, we might seem like total opposites, but we make it work. I couldn’t ask for a better, more loyal best friend. And I know if shit went down, she’d save my ass. Just like I’d do for her.

Luke better hope he doesn’t hurt her. I’d commit murder for less.

“Speak of the devil.”

A giddy grin blooms across Sienna’s face. I’ve never seen my best friend in love like this before. They are sickeningly sweet together. I’d barf if she wasn’t my best friend.

Sienna practically skips to swing the door open and throws herself at Luke before he can get a word out. He laughs, lifting her off her feet and squeezing. They kiss and whisper to each other for so long, I let out an exaggerated groan. “You have an audience. I already ate too much today and anything could trigger my barf reflex.”

My best friend doesn’t even look back as she flips me off over her shoulder. Luke winks. “Don’t be surprised if you don’t have a roommate for a few days. She might be tied down to my bed.”

Sienna squeals and smacks his arm. “Don’t tell her that!”

I leap out of bed and charge for the door, not giving a shit that I’m in nothing but a t-shirt and panties, no bra. Luke doesn’t have eyes for anyone other than Sienna. “If you make me puke, I’ll make sure I projectile vomit all over you.”

He chuckles and starts to pull Sienna away before I stop them.

“Wait!” I was planning on casually bringing up the subject, but now I don’t have a choice other than blurting it out before she leaves. “Do you recognize this girl?”

I show Sienna the photo on my phone of Craig and the girl in scrubs. If she’s a nursing student, there’s a chance Sienna might know who she is.

She squints at the couple in the dark, the lamp behind them emitting just enough light to display their features. “Oh! Yeah, that’s Lindsey Rothwell. Why did you take a picture of her and her boyfriend?”

“Because he looks a thousand years older than her.” The lie rolls off my tongue so easily, Sienna believes it.

She shrugs. “He’s in his forties, I guess. Some people are into age gaps.”

Craig is into bigger age gaps than either of them realizes.

“And some people are into masked men.” Luke grins down at Sienna, and she blushes.

“Ew. Thank you. You can leave now.” I slam the door behind them.

I drain the rest of my coffee before settling into the chair at my desk. I search Sienna’s followers for Lindsey Rothwell and quickly find a public profile of a pretty girl who posts nearly every day. Selfies, group photos with other smiling nursing students, mirror photos to show off her outfits.

I don’t have to scroll long to find him. Craig is present in only a few of her selfies, and it’s clear by the way she doesn’t tag him in the photos that he told her not to.

A young girl is featured in a ton of her posts. She’s not tagged either, but the captions tell me this is Lindsey’s sister, Amelia.

Amelia . My stomach drops. She can’t be older than thirteen.

Clearly, Lindsey isn’t the only one Craig is interested in. From the way the light dulled in his eyes when Lindsey said Amelia might not be going with them to the carnival, he may not be interested in Lindsey at all.

My empty hand curls into a fist. I could kill him. I could fucking kill him.

Under a photo of Lindsey kissing Craig's hairy cheek, a few comments call them a cute couple and one in particular stands out from an account called craigslist16. Your so beautiful . A misspelled you're followed by a string of emojis with hearts for eyes.

Yep, that's the guy.

Heart in my throat, I click. What if his account leads me to the rest of them?

His account is public. Bold. His profile picture is him holding up a fish, and his bio is sparse: Beer. Trucks. Fishing.

He doesn't post much, only a few photos that have been swiped through filters. A beer can, fishing gear, a truck covered in mud. Then there are the few photos of him with his arm around another woman with captions referring to her as his wife. One he posted as recently as yesterday.

No wonder Lindsey doesn't tag him in photos.

Does the wife not know? Maybe she doesn't keep tabs on who her husband is following on his social media or concern herself about where he goes after dark. Or maybe she knows and just doesn't give enough of a shit to do anything about it. Easier to stay with a cheater than leave.

But Lindsey obviously knows. Craig is way worse—a literal criminal—but they're both shitty.

I scroll all the way to the bottom, and thank god, there's no sign of any kids.

Relief relaxes my tense shoulders and sends a rush of air out of my lungs.

No sign of the other men from that night. I should've known better than to expect it

would be that easy.

But I know where Craig will be Friday evening. He'll tell me everything I need to know.

Now I just need to figure out where to find this Carnival of Terrors.

When I prop open my laptop, a loud groan echoes.

My spine stiffens. What the fuck? That sounded like porn. I don't watch that shit on my laptop—I watch it on my phone like a normal person.

My screen displays the camera feed from Trey Lamont's bedroom. He's... holy shit . He's fucking naked .

Splayed out on his bed, arm tucked behind his head, Trey groans as he rolls his fist over his long, stiff cock. Even through a camera feed, its length and girth make my mouth go dry.

He has something wrapped around his cock. Thin black fabric?—

Panties. Panties that look all too fucking familiar.

I jump up. No, there's no way he could've gotten them. I dig through my top drawer, searching for the pair of panties I wore to the haunt before I dig through my laundry basket.

They're not in here.

He took my fucking underwear. Somehow, he broke into my dorm and stole them, and now he's jerking off with them.

My hands curl into fists as I round on my laptop, as if he can possibly see me seething through the camera. Did he break into my dorm and steal my panties before or after I broke into the Devils' house? Those are my favorite pair and now he's ruining them. Even if he somehow gave them back, I'd never be able to look at them the same.

His low moan sends a shiver skittering down my spine. "That's it, Juliet. Ride my cock like a bad girl."

My mouth falls open. He's literally jerking off with my panties to the thought of me. I'm sure it's not the first time a man has ever jerked off to fantasies of me, but at least I don't have to know about it, let alone witness the act.

In my chest, my heart thumps harder, warmth spreading to the space between my thighs. Something is wrong with me. I shouldn't enjoy seeing Trey Lamont masturbate with my panties, shouldn't enjoy hearing him moan my name, but my body's involuntary reaction tells me I'm enjoying every second of this.

Too bad he's a psychopath. From this angle, Trey's face looks perfect for riding.

If I was there, he'd jerk off with my panties wrapped around his cock while I grinded my pussy against his face, his tongue lapping at me wildly as he savored my taste flooding his mouth.

My clit throbs. I want to stroke my palms over the hard ridges of his abdomen, across the defined pecs on his chest, down to the V-shaped lines above his groin?—

No . I don't want Trey Lamont. I want my masked man in the woods, and I'm projecting my fantasies onto Trey simply because of his gorgeous, naked, writhing body.

Still, no matter how much I tell myself to stop, my hand slides down my panties. My breath catches when my finger scrapes over my clit.

On his bed, Trey shifts, and I bite my lip, worried he's about to stop. Instead, he braces himself on one hand and thrusts into the other, still gripping his cock and my panties. "Fuck," he hisses. "Spread those legs. Good girl. Fucking take it."

Jesus Christ . His mouth is obscene and I shouldn't love it as much as I do.

My finger involuntarily rubs a circle over my clit and I bite back a moan. This is wrong. I shouldn't be getting off to an unhinged psycho like Trey Lamont getting off to me. I need to stop. He needs to stop. He needs to drop my fucking panties?—

"You love my huge cock breaking you in half, don't you? I'm going to make you my little cum slut."

The hand that isn't buried in my panties curls into a fist. The hell he is. I'm not going to be his anything. "Fuck you."

"God, you're so fucking wet. I can't wait to spill every drop inside you. Clench that tight little pussy on my cock. Take every inch."

"Stop jerking off with my panties!" I shout as if he can hear me. As if my finger isn't dipping into the wetness between my legs waiting for him.

"I'm going to come inside you." His voice breaks with the warning as he thrusts his hips faster and harder, his mattress squeaking. That bed would be so loud if it was actually me he was fucking on that mattress.

My clit starts to burn as my finger rubs frantically, heart and blood pumping frantically as the pleasure builds. I can't stop watching him fuck his hand, even if I

wanted to. I'm mesmerized by the delicious curve of his ass and the bulging muscles on his arms as he thrusts and groans.

"Come on my cock," he pants. "Scream for me."

Scream for me . Those three words shouldn't be my undoing, but electricity pulses from my clit until my pussy is clenching and the pleasure barrels through me.

I cry out, bracing myself against the desk before my trembling legs can collapse beneath me. "Fuck, yes," I gasp. "Fuck me like your bad fucking girl."

A sharp groan that's almost a shout echoes from my laptop as Trey collapses onto his mattress, pumping his cock violently as he catches every drop of cum in my panties.

I grit my teeth. Yeah, they're fucking ruined.

My heart hammers as the orgasm begins to ebb. My pussy still aches, unsatisfied from not being filled. One orgasm wasn't enough to satiate me. Not after watching Trey Lamont pretend to fuck me.

On the screen, he straightens until he's perched on his knees and examines his handiwork. His cum drips from my panties and a grin that would give any sane woman nightmares spreads across his face.

When his sharp green eyes find mine, my heart stops. "Hope you enjoyed the show."

He can't possibly see me watching him. Still, my heart thunders like I've been caught. Like he can see me as clearly as I can see him. Like he knows I was getting off to him just as he was getting off to me.

He found the camera. He gave this little performance on purpose because he knew I'd

be watching. Clearly, I need to work on my stalking skills.

Trey stands and saunters toward the camera with that devastating grin. “Thanks for the new pet.”

He nods to the corner, the edge of a tank barely visible in the lens. Inside, a tarantula crawls into a flower pot.

I should’ve known he’d make a pet out of the spider I planted to scare the shit out of him. Admittedly, I’m glad he didn’t kill the poor thing. We bonded on our journey breaking into Trey’s room, and I was worried about his fate when I left him behind.

Knowing he’s taking care of a spider shouldn’t make my heart squeeze. Just a little.

With a twisted smile, the Devil holds up my panties dripping with his cum. “You’re next, Juliet.”

Page 7

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Chapter 6

Trey

Rachel finds me at the kitchen table in the morning, strawberry blonde hair drifting behind her and a huge grin on her face. My stomach twists like it does every time she finds me.

I've still got half a bowl of cereal left, but my appetite is gone.

She takes the empty seat next to me at the enormous table, and I brace myself for her hand grabbing my knee or fumbling with the button on my jeans, but she reaches into her pocket and pulls out what looks like a thermometer before sliding it across the table to me.

For a few seconds, I stare at the pink rectangle without any clue what I'm looking at until I spot the tiny word that tells me everything I need to know.

Pregnant .

My heart drops. She's pregnant. My father's new girlfriend—the woman he replaced my mother with before her body was even cold—is pregnant.

I'm going to have a sibling. One who isn't my mother's child.

They're moving on with a new baby. A new life. Like my mother never existed at all.

“I’m ten weeks. I got a genetic test done already. It’s a boy.”

A boy. A brother.

“Do you know what this means?” Rachel beams, oblivious to the turmoil in my head.

“I’ll have a brother.” Has she told my father yet? He barely wants me, let alone another kid. Starting over with a new baby when I’m nearly old enough to move out? He won’t be happy.

She shakes her head, grabbing my hand. I want to sear off every inch of skin she touches. “You’ll have a son.”

Classes. Practice. Eat. Shit. Sleep. Repeat.

The life my father designed for me has turned me into a zombie. I’ll obtain an economics degree I couldn’t give less of a shit about, attend an MBA program, and take over his businesses when he finally kicks it. That day can’t come soon enough.

Normally, I wouldn’t be caught dead anywhere near the campus library, but that’s where my prey is. I need something to distract my mind, and Juliet will be the perfect distraction.

A group of girls flash me wary glances before giving me a wide berth from where I’m leaning against the brick wall. I don’t give a fuck what anyone thinks about me wearing a mask on campus in broad daylight. The best girls are into it.

The hairs on the back of my neck stand up, and I glance around campus. Someone’s eyes are on me, but there’s no one watching.

Paranoia. That’s all.

When the library door swings open again, a pair of dark boots hits the concrete. Long legs wrapped in spiderweb fishnets, tiny skirt barely covering her ass, and glorious tits nearly bursting through the seams of her flimsy top. Her tits bounce with every step. No bra. Just the way I like her.

I hope Juliet viewed her camera footage this morning. Better yet, I hope she got to experience the whole show in real-time. Her panties are stained and crusted with my cum now, but they're still waiting for her in my room if she wants to wear them.

She's in those same fishnets that make my mouth water and a tiny skirt like she wants me to imagine every dark and twisted thing I'll do to her when I get my hands on her next.

Since that night at the haunt, I haven't been able to stop thinking about Juliet Hayes. No woman has ever consumed my mind before. Not in a good way, at least. I want to make her whole body shiver again like I did that night.

Before I can cover her mouth and grab her, she spots me lingering in the shadows. Her blue eyes narrow, and she charges at me, finger pointed. "You motherfucker?—"

Briefly, I wonder how the hell she figured out the identity of the man beneath the mask, but then I remember what the masked man did to her last time in the woods. My grin comes back tenfold. I'll be fucking her mouth like that again.

I keep my arms folded and let her charge me.

As soon as she's within reach, my hand strikes like a viper, encircling her wrist and crushing her to me. Her screams are muffled against my chest as I drag her behind the library where no one will see what I do to her.

She writhes and kicks the entire way, my rage boiling more with every strike she

lands. I'll punish her for every one of them.

As soon as we're concealed, I slam her against the wall, shutting her up. "Quiet, little demon. We both know you want this."

To my surprise, she's not fighting anymore. Now that we're hidden in the shadows, a seductive smirk blooms across her face. "You're right. I do want this."

My chest squeezes. A foreign feeling. I'm used to women wanting me. They've wanted me since I was fifteen. But none of them has ever made me feel like this. Like she does. All she has to do is look at me and I'm not Trey Lamont anymore. I'm her masked man. Her unhinged psycho. The Romeo to her Juliet.

She takes a single step toward me but not to shove me away or run in the other direction. She unbuttons my jeans before slipping her hand into my boxers, stroking over the hard, dripping erection already waiting for her.

Fuck . No woman has ever had this effect on me before. For the first time, I don't know what the fuck to do with her.

My cock twitches in her palm, and that makes her grin wider. Her smile turns my knees weak. She's deranged, unhinged, psychotic. Just like me. "That's a good boy."

My eyes fall shut. Can't help it. The pleasure as she strokes from my tip to the base of my shaft is too good. Every cell in my body wants to thrust into her hand, make her jerk me off faster, but I want to see what she does with it. If my little demon knows how to handle a cock. So far, so fucking good.

A soft click. My little demon's hand drops my cock, slipping out of my boxers.

My eyes spring open, jaw clenching. "I didn't tell you to fucking stop."

In her hand, a knife glints. My knife.

She got it out of my pocket while my eyes were shut. While she stroked my cock to distract me. I can't believe it fucking worked.

"Told you I would get my revenge." She points the blade at the ground, a devious grin twisting her lips. "On your knees."

I could wrench the knife from her grasp. Strike her hand and force her to drop it, send it skittering across the pavement and leave her unarmed and vulnerable. Who knows what she'll do to me. Stab me. Slice that knife across my throat like I did to Novak. But she'll mean it.

Still, I sink to my knees. We'll see what my little demon has planned for me. If she kills me, at least I'll be dead. At least I'll die by her hand, not my father's.

Juliet looms over me, tits rising and falling with every heavy breath. She caresses my neck with the edge of the blade. A lover's caress. My throat bobs, the knife moving with it.

"You're going to pay for what you did to me in the woods." She angles the knife, the tip digging into my windpipe. My jaw clenches against the sting, but I keep still. I'm not afraid of her. She's not done with me yet. I'm far more useful to her alive than I am dead.

"What are you going to do to me, demon?"

She shakes her head, her long, dark hair mixed with shocks of red swaying. "This is about what you're going to do to me."

The kiss of the blade leaves my throat, cool air replacing it. But I don't move from

my kneeling position before her.

Juliet reaches under her skirt, cutting through her fishnets.

“What are you?—”

She presses the blade to my neck again, blue eyes blazing. “You got to come in my mouth—now I get to come on yours. Lick me.”

The command leaving her lips makes my cock twitch. Behind the mask, I grin. Good thing my lips are covered. She might change her mind if she knew commanding me to eat her pussy was nothing close to a punishment. “What will you do to me if I don’t?”

She presses the blade harder against my throat. I wince against the sting. Yes, cut me. Make me bleed. Hurt me. Make me feel something. “I’ll make sure you can never stick your dick in anything again.”

I chuckle. “At least let me fuck your pussy with it before you chop it off.”

God, I can’t fucking wait to feel her tight walls clenching around me.

Before she can protest again, I grip the backs of her thighs and tug her to me. She yelps, the knife digging in and a trickle of blood traveling down my throat. But I don’t give a fuck about the pain as I slide my hand between her legs to find her bare, exposed pussy. No panties.

A growl rumbles in my throat. In my jeans, my balls ache, desperate to pump every drop of my cum inside her.

“Don’t stop until I tell you to.” Her voice is husky with the demand.

“Oh, demon.” My manic laugh makes her stiffen. “I won’t stop until you’re dripping down my chin.”

Before she can say another word, I tip my mask up just enough to reveal my lips and shove my face between her legs. My mask pushes against her as my tongue sweeps out, stroking between her soft lips.

Her sweet arousal floods my taste buds, and I can’t help but groan. She sucks in a shuddering breath, hand fisting in my hair. “ Yes .”

This is her revenge. Forcing me to my knees after I forced her onto hers. The sweetest revenge I’ve ever tasted.

My tongue strokes up her slit again until I find her sensitive, swollen clit. Her thighs quake around my head.

“Good boy,” she drawls. As if she’s the one in control because she’s wielding the knife.

But my tongue between her legs has turned her into a wet, trembling mess. I may be the one on my knees, but she’s worshipping me.

My tongue darts out, striking her clit as hard as I can to punish her. Her grip on my hair tightens as she cries out. I’m going to make her come so hard, she regrets every word she’s ever uttered to push me away. Every fist and kick she’s ever aimed in my direction. I’ll make her come just as hard as she made me come that night in the woods. Then she’ll regret ever forcing me to my knees because she’ll never be able to forget how good I made her feel.

I slip my mask back over my lips to keep my voice distorted. “So wet for me.”

She shifts the knife against my throat. A reminder. “Stop talking.”

“But that’s what gets you off, isn’t it? Listening to me tell you everything I want to do to you.” I stroke up her wetness with a finger and she moans. “Hearing me call you my little demon. My bad girl. Praising you for how hard you make me come.”

“N-no,” she chokes out, “your voice has no effect on me whatsoever.”

“Then why are you already dripping down my chin before I’ve even made you come?” I lift my mask back up and don’t bother brushing her arousal off. I want to taste her long after she removes her pussy from my mouth.

She grinds on my face. A silent command. I’d laugh if it wasn’t so damn sexy. My hands reach up to squeeze her incredible ass as she rolls her pussy over my tongue.

No girl has ever ground against my face like this before. Usually, I don’t even bother eating their pussies. All I care about is getting my cock inside a hole. But I’d let Juliet ride my face for an hour if that’s what she wanted.

When her wetness is dripping down my neck, I can’t hold myself back anymore. I latch onto her clit, sucking the swollen nub into my mouth. She convulses and cries out. “ Fuck !”

My finger slides inside her, then another. Her tight walls clench around them, already on the brink of her orgasm. How many orgasms could I give her before she passed out? As soon as her body could no longer bear it, I’d slide my cock inside her and fuck her hard until she jumped awake as another orgasm barreled through her.

“Don’t stop,” she pants.

After I slide my mask back into place, my thumb circles her clit. “I love hearing you

beg, demon.”

“That wasn’t a beg—it was an order.”

I grin before flicking her clit and making her jump. “You’re not the one in charge here, pretty girl. I’ve got you right where I want you.” I thrust my fingers up into her, hard. “You’ll come as soon as I command it.”

“No, I won’t?—”

“Come for me. Now .”

Just as the words leave my lips, Juliet’s cries echo off the brick wall, her thighs shaking violently as her pussy walls pulse over and over around my fingers. I lift my mask one last time to suck hard on her clit, riding out her orgasm as she soaks my hand. A groan vibrates in my throat at the wetness coating my fingers and palm. I love how fucking soaked I make her.

My cock strains in my jeans as her cries fill my ears. She writhes, trying to escape the intense pleasure, but I’ve got her pinned and she’s not going anywhere.

I slip my mask back into place. “Such a bad fucking girl, coming on a stranger’s face. I could be anybody.”

“Oh my god.” Once her pussy stops pulsing around my fingers, she pulls away from me, breathless.

Finally, I pop my soaked fingers out of her and stand. She’s still holding the knife, but now it’s trembling.

Juliet points it at me, tits heaving and eyes hooded with lust and suspicion. “Who are

you?”

I’ll tell her. Eventually. For now, I like our little game of mystery. “Call me Romeo.”

Page 8

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Chapter 7

Juliet

Call me Romeo.

Somehow, the masked man knows my name. He knows who I am, and I still have no clue who he is.

From the bleachers beside me, Sienna jumps up and cheers. Other than a group of giggling puck bunnies, we're the only ones in the bleachers. Sienna slipped on Luke's jersey before dragging me to the rink with her so she could cheer for her boyfriend during his practice. Now I'm stuck in the last place I want to be, making every effort to avoid glancing in Trey Lamont's direction.

I've been avoiding him like the plague since he found the camera planted in his bedroom. He'll never let me live that one down. Not after his little performance with my panties.

The Devils' coach sends them to the locker room. Thank god. As soon as Luke returns, I can get the hell out of here.

Sienna plops back down onto the bleachers, smile wide. "Did you see Luke block that shot?"

"Unless it was a cumshot, I'm not interested." I turn off my phone, the screen displaying Lindsey's social media. I've been checking on her and Craig every day to

make sure they're still going to the carnival tonight. Fifteen minutes ago, she posted a photo of the costume she'll be wearing: slutty police officer.

After tonight, she'll see the irony.

Carnival of Terrors is overrun with masked carnies who terrorize the guests while wielding fake chainsaws and axes. Rides, candy, clowns, music, and booze—what could go wrong?

Sienna whacks my arm. "You better not be interested in his cumshots either. Are you coming to the Sigma Chi party with us?"

"Nope. Just you and the Devils tonight."

"Why not?" Her voice is laced with surprise. This is the first party I've ever skipped. Usually, I'm the one dragging her to the frat and sorority houses, not the other way around.

"I have a ton of studying to do. Big exam on Monday."

Sienna frowns. "You're skipping a party to study ? On a Friday night?"

"Yes, so tell Luke he better stay sober tonight so he can look after you."

She chews her lip like she's wondering whether she should push or let it go. "You're sure?"

"Yep." I won't miss this opportunity tonight. Who knows when I'll get another one.

When Luke emerges from the locker room, Sienna pulls me down the bleachers. Finn, Damien, and Knox are quickly swarmed by puck bunnies.

Behind them, Trey saunters out. My breath catches, the memory of his groans and pants as he came into my panties filling my ears.

A blonde gloms onto him right away, and a hot prickle burns the back of my neck. She needs to get her fucking hands off him.

“You okay?” Sienna’s brows crease.

I peel my eyes away from Trey and the blonde puck bunny. They don’t exist. “I’m fine. Go get your man so we can get the hell out of here.”

Luke is already beaming as Sienna races toward him and jumps into his arms.

Trey shakes off the puck bunny’s grasp, pushing through the whole giggling group of them. His intense green eyes are lasered in on me.

Shit .

My heart hammers harder with every step he takes toward me until he’s so close, he could graze my jaw with his thumb.

He towers over me, every inch of him hard and sharp. As much as I can’t stand to admit it, he’s the most gorgeous man I’ve ever seen.

Another thing I hate about him.

“Hey, stalker.” His cocky smirk is infuriating.

I cross my arms. “I don’t know what you’re talking about.”

“Did you enjoy the show from that camera you hid in my room?”

“What camera?” Heat blooms across my cheeks at the memory.

“First you hide a tarantula in my bed—I named him Fluffy, by the way—then you plant a camera in my room to spy on me. Now you’re coming to my practices.” A wolfish grin spreads across his incredible, pouty lips. “Someone’s a little obsessed.”

I shrug and nod at the group of fangirls behind him. “Must’ve been one of your puck bunnies.”

His grin only widens. Playing dumb isn’t working on him. “Seems like you’re one of my puck bunnies.” He’s so cocky, so certain. I want to smack the smugness off his face. “You want to be my girl.”

I scoff. “Not even kind of.”

A step closer to me and I can feel his body heat radiating, blood still hot and pumping from practice. “What would you say if I told you I want you to be my girl?”

My blackened heart somehow flutters. “I’d tell you you’re barking up the wrong tree.” I glance at my friends behind him, hoping they don’t get the wrong idea about us from this conversation. From standing close enough to feel his breath caress my cheek. “I don’t do relationships.”

“Why’s that?” His hand darts out, the back of his fingers stroking down my cheek before vanishing from my skin as quickly as they appeared. My breath catches in my throat, and I can’t drag air in.

I step back, needing space between us before I do something stupid. “I’ve been disappointed by men enough times to set my expectations accordingly. I don’t bother with relationships because I know exactly how it will end up.”

That smug, taunting smile slips from Trey's lips. His green eyes grow hard and serious in a way I haven't seen before. "What's his name?"

My spine locks up. Even after recounting my trauma for my parents and the school administration and the police, I can't bring myself to confide in Trey about any of it. Brandon, the bridge, Autumn, three men, screams, blood — "It doesn't matter."

He catches my arm when I spin away from him, pulling me back. "It matters to me. He hurt you, and I'll hurt him." Somehow, even though he barely knows me, the sincerity in his words makes my heart squeeze. "I'll protect you."

Those three words should mean nothing from his mouth. I'd more likely need protection from him.

Yet...an unfamiliar feeling flutters in my chest. One that I can't quite name. "I don't need your protection."

Sienna glances around, finally remembering I exist after getting enveloped in her Luke Valentine bubble. I stomp for the exit. If Trey wants to get laid, he has a dozen puck bunnies he can choose from.

I smack the door open, but it doesn't swing shut behind me.

"Let me take you out tonight." Trey falls into step too easily beside me, no matter how fast I walk.

"I already have plans."

"What plans?"

"None of your business."

“You committing a murder or something?”

My heart nearly stops. “No!”

“What are you hiding, Juliet Hayes?”

“Me ? You’re the one with shit to hide.” I try to force my racing heart to slow. He doesn’t actually think you’re committing a murder tonight. He has no idea what your plans are. “Tell me your secrets. Tell me why you attacked Violet and Wes.”

Since Violet told me about what Trey did to her and Wes last year, I’ve been dying to prod him for answers. To poke at his brain and try to understand his reasons.

His mouth twists. He doesn’t like this change in subject. “Who can really say—nature or nurture?”

“ You can. Even psychopaths have their reasons.”

He lifts an amused brow. “You think I’m a psychopath?”

“I’m still making my assessment. Superficial charm, check. Grandiosity, likely. Lack of remorse or guilt, seems that way. Criminality, check. Promiscuous sexual behavior, very much so.” I narrow my eyes at him, and he grins. “But there are other factors I’m not sure about yet—pathological lying, poor behavioral controls, lack of life goals, impulsivity, irresponsibility, parasitic lifestyle?—”

“Let’s just say yes.” He scowls.

“So why did you do it?”

Silence falls between us. For a moment, I expect he’s not going to answer. He’s

happy to play the game until it gets too real for him.

Without a word of warning, he tugs me to a stop and pushes me up against the wall of the athletics building. The air leaves my lungs in a whoosh, my ass and shoulders aching from slamming against the brick. Reminding me of my masked man pinning me. “The knife was dull. I knew where to cut so he wouldn’t die—just enough violence to put me in prison. A better prison than the one my father built for me.”

I roll my eyes so hard, they hurt. Does he honestly expect me to believe that? “Must be hard to have a father who bails you out of trouble.”

His jaw clenches, and my insides liquify. I’ve really pissed him off now. “You have no idea what my father is like. What he’s capable of.”

At the intensity in his eyes, a lump lodges in my throat. Maybe there’s someone more dangerous and unhinged out there than Trey Lamont.

“What about Violet?” I glance toward the door of the athletics building, bracing for the Devils and Sienna to come out and find us here.

His eyes flutter briefly shut. “Novak said we needed to get justice for his sister. I believed him. I was used to shitty people getting away with their crimes”—His throat bobs—“so I took all that pent-up anger out on Violet. Then on Novak when he stood in my way because he was falling for the villain. He was falling for the girl who killed his sister, and I know what it’s like when you’re convincing yourself to fall for the person you shouldn’t. For the person who ruined your life.”

I want to prod more, but I know exactly how he feels and I don’t want to be forced to share my trauma either.

But whoever ruined Trey’s life can get fucked.

“They said you spiked her drink, though. Violet may have pushed Chloe, but you were the reason she passed out in that pool.” My rage boils at the injustice of it. Trey spiking Chloe’s drink and letting Violet take the fall, supposedly getting her back for an offense when he knew he’d been the villain all along.

“That’s what I told Violet.” His eyes harden. “One of the other Devils, Brody, admitted he spiked a few drinks that night. Chloe’s and Violet’s were among them. I decided to take the fall for everything so I’d get locked up. Anything to get away from Charles.”

Brody . I’ll have to ask Luke about that name. Make sure he’s a real person, that Trey isn’t just making him up to explain everything away. “Who’s Charles?”

“My father. He must’ve paid the administration enough to cover everything up. He has connections. Got the charges dropped.”

“And what about the incident in the bathroom with Violet?” I fold my arms. “With the knife?”

He can’t exactly explain that one away.

“Unfortunately for Violet Harris, I have a predilection for blood.” His grin is sickening, pulled straight out of a horror film. “I’d hoped to find a girl who enjoyed it the same.”

My thighs shouldn’t be clenching. I shouldn’t be into the same fucked up shit as him.

But I am. And he fucking knows it.

I slither out of his hold. “Good luck finding her.”

His chuckle haunts me as I speed back to my dorm. “I already have.”

“Open your eyes.” The man with the dark beard and bulbous nose pants the words over and over, but I keep them shut.

I won’t let him take anything else from me. He won’t get to see the fear and horror in my eyes. That’s what gets him off most.

He’s sick and all I want to do is puke. My hands over my ears do nothing to muffle Autumn’s screams from the other cot, where another sick man has her pinned.

Open your eyes.

Open your eyes.

Open your eyes.

When it’s over, he coughs. Coughs . Such a human act for an inhuman monster.

But the nightmare isn’t over.

His eerie smirk turns to the other man in the room. The one who hurt Autumn. “Your turn, Ned.”

Since Trey has his bike, I don’t feel bad for stealing his Camaro.

The car is a bit too flashy for a getaway vehicle, but it’s not my license plate on the back, so what do I care? Even if the police somehow use surveillance footage to capture his plate and track him, his father will bail him out again. Then neither of us has to suffer any consequences for tonight.

Night has long since fallen by the time I reach the Carnival of Terrors, but the parking lot is still packed. The spooky carnival is decorated with pumpkins, witches, and clowns. Masked workers stalk around the grounds, jumping out at passersby, revving fake chainsaws, and slashing at each other with phony knives.

With my mask and axe, I blend right in.

My hair is tucked safely behind my veil, the cool autumn air slipping between my legs under the white dress splattered in fake blood.

Visitors gasp and laugh at my outfit, calling me corpse bride or vampire bride or ghost bride as I feign a threat with my axe.

Everyone thinks it's a costume, but he'll know the real reason I'm wearing it.

Red lights flash from the carnival rides. Laughter and delighted screams mix with the thump of spooky music. I wave my axe anytime anyone gets too close, slashing at the air and eliciting laughs.

That motherfucker is here somewhere. What if he leaves before I find him?

A high-pitched squeal captures my attention. Waiting at the front of the line for the House of Horrors is a bouncy brunette in a cop costume, the top cut low to display everything but her nipples. Beside her, a stocky, middle-aged man allows her to hold his hand while his expression contains nothing but boredom. He didn't bother to dress up.

Relief rushes through me. They're alone. Amelia must've stayed home. Judging by the misery on Craig's face, he's not at all happy about the last-minute change of plans, and Lindsey is doing her very best to ignore it.

My grip on the axe tightens. “Found you.”

Before I can reach them, they slip inside the House of Horrors.

I cut past the line, waving my axe and shouting, playing the part. The carnival worker standing at the front of the line barely pays me any attention as I charge past him.

Inside, groups squeal and scream as mechanical corpses and werewolves pop out at them. I navigate over the tipping floors and precariously maneuver through a revolving barrel. Most of the guests skip right past the maze of distorting mirrors, unimpressed by the uncanny changes in their reflections.

In the corner wedged between two walls of mirrors, Craig has Lindsey’s leg propped up while he grinds against her, kissing her neck.

She squeals and slaps his shoulder playfully. “Craig! What if somebody sees us?”

He must not give a shit as he thrusts his hips forward and grunts, sliding inside her. She tips her head back, emitting an exaggerated, high-pitched moan pulled straight out of a porno.

“What would your wife think if she could see us right now?” She moans again and I cringe. How does he not find that annoying as hell? “Fuck me the way your wife won’t let you fuck her.”

With that, he pulls out and spins her, lifting her dress and smacking her ass as he pumps his cock, ready to do all the things with her that he can’t do with his wife.

His spit hits his stubby cock just as the blade of my axe brushes against his throat.

“Fuck me, Craig!” Lindsey wails, eyes blessedly closed.

Craig bursts out laughing, cheeks flush with alcohol. Lindsey turns with a frown only to squeal and yank her dress down when she spots me. “Oh my god!”

She laughs and races for the exit into the dark corridor with neon-green stripes that offer a disorienting effect, making the hall seem infinite, like you’ll never escape.

And maybe some of them won’t.

Craig follows Lindsey slowly, still chuckling as I nudge him in the back with my axe. From the niches in the corridor, carnies jump out at Lindsey, making her scream and giggle as she rushes down.

I point my axe toward an empty niche.

“In here?” Craig slurs, following my instructions like he still expects this to be part of the experience.

Once we’re concealed and the screams and shouts of the carnival workers and guests mute us, I press the sharp edge of the axe into his groin.

“Whoa!” His eyes go wide and he tries to jump away, but he’s not going anywhere. “What the fuck? Is that real?”

“Where is Brandon Williams?”

“Br-Brandon? Williams?” He stumbles over the name in his booze-and-sex-induced haze. “I...I don’t know him.”

“Yes, you do.”

He starts to struggle, desperate to escape the axe threatening his most prized organ. “I

don't. Get the fuck off me, crazy bitch."

I laugh, and he stiffens. "Oh, Craig. You have no idea just how crazy of a bitch I am. And you're to blame."

I drop my axe to the leg of his jeans and slash. He shouts and leans forward to grasp the wound until I bring the axe up between his legs.

He screams, louder and higher than I've ever heard from a man, and blood seeps from the injury, staining the denim. " Fuck !"

Guess he won't be using that again.

Adrenaline pumps through my veins, the flood of dopamine nearly enough to make me float. I've wanted to do this to him for so long. Fantasized for years about what I would do to the men who hurt me and Autumn that night. How I would make them suffer for every second of torment they inflicted.

It's better than I ever imagined.

I press the bloody axe to his throat as he clutches at his groin. "Where. Is. Brandon. Williams?"

"Fuck, fuck, fuck!" Craig shakes his head, tears and snot streaming into his beard. "Last I heard he was staying with Ned, okay? That's all I know, I swear!"

"Ned who ?"

"Ned Miller!" His snot flies as he sputters, smacking the floor. "I don't know anything else! Please !"

Ned Miller.

Your turn, Ned.

Could he be the same Ned from that night? Maybe if I find Ned, I find them both.
“Tell me where they are.”

“I don’t know! I really don’t!” he wails. “Some farmland. In the middle of nowhere. Up in Massachusetts, I th-think. Or Vermont. Or something! I don’t know!”

Beneath my mask, I smile. “When I pay them a visit, I’ll let them know who sent me.”

“Who the hell are you?” Craig screeches, the blood dripping down to our shoes.

“You know who I am, Craig.” I press the edge of the axe against his throat, and I can practically feel his heart stop beating. “The girl who got away.”

Confusion is finally replaced with recognition in his beady eyes. Then true terror.

“He-he said you died!” His lip quivers. Then he squeezes his eyes shut as I dig the axe in, a trickle of blood slithering down his neck. “ Please, please, please. ”

His whispered pleas so much like my own that night.

I press harder on the axe and he gasps at the pain. “See, Craig, it doesn’t feel good when someone ignores you while you ask them to stop, does it? Now open your eyes.”

He keeps them clamped shut.

“Open your eyes.”

Open your eyes.

Open your eyes.

Open your eyes .

Finally, he does. Just as I bring the axe back and swing.

His head falls at my feet with a sickening thud before the rest of his body drops, blood seeping out into the corridor now. I drop the axe, arms shaky and weak, as I pick up Craig’s head by the hair and throw it.

A group of girls squeals as his severed head hits the floor in front of them and rolls.

They scramble around it, avoiding touching his flesh or blood with their heels.

“Oh my god!” the redhead shouts as another leads her away by the hand. “That looked so real!”

I leap out into the corridor before anyone can discover the dead body is indeed real.

A masked figure in a dark hoodie watches from the entrance. A neon-red mask with X’s slashing over the eyes and mouth.

My heart stutters. But no, that could be anyone. Anyone could have the same mask as my masked man, my Romeo, and there are dozens of workers and guests alike in masks tonight.

With his index finger, the masked man traces an X over his heart. Like a promise. A

promise to keep my secret.

No, it can't be him. My masked man wouldn't follow me all the way here.

I race down the corridor and out of the House of Horrors until it hits me?—

Fuck . I forgot the axe.

Heart hammering, I chew over my options. There's no time to go back for it. Who knows how long it will take before someone realizes the blood and severed head are real. Who knows how long it will take before Lindsey realizes she can't find Craig and goes looking for what's left of him. Lungs burning, I hurry to the parking lot and Trey's stolen car.

While I sneak between vehicles, I glance back over my shoulder to make sure no one's following me. No sign of Lindsey or a mob.

A pair of heavy hands grabs me.

I scream, rattling my mask as someone pulls me with an iron grip, dragging me across the parking lot. I thrash in their hold until my ass collides with a bike resting on its kickstand.

In front of me, my masked man looms, hands flattening on the seat of the bike behind me. My heart slams against my ribcage, lungs heaving and sucking down cool night air. "What the fuck?"

His hoodie is gone. A black shirt stretches to his hips and wrists, the material snug over the muscles bulging at his biceps. He reaches into his pocket and pulls out a small plastic bag with something short and pale inside. A yellowed nail on the end.

A severed thumb.

Craig's severed thumb.

He must've used the axe to chop off another piece of that asshole's body. How much did he chop up while the guests egged him on? After, he must've discarded the bloody hoodie.

"Why did you do that?" I whisper.

He shrugs. "Trophy."

With that, he stuffs the thumb back in his pocket and grabs my waist, hoisting me up onto the seat of his bike.

His erection digs into the space between my legs as he towers over me.

I tug him closer, even though we can't kiss with both of our faces covered by masks. But neither of us moves to take them off.

"You're going to get fucked now, demon." He yanks me closer, his zipper smacking against my clit and making me whimper.

Adrenaline and arousal and fear pump through my veins. Every inch of me is aching for him. Finally . "Do it."

He growls low in his throat before yanking his zipper down. The usual screams of delight echo from the carnival. No alarms have been pulled. Yet.

I need him to fuck me before we're interrupted.

My hands squeeze his hips to pull him closer, but he grabs them and slams my palms down onto the seat. “Don’t. Move.”

“I’ll move if I want,” I spit back, spreading my legs for him.

He hisses at the sight of my damp panties, dragging a finger slowly up my center. I whimper, the sound foreign to my ears as my mask echoes it back to me.

“Always so ready for me,” he murmurs, adoration lining every note. “Did killing him turn you on?”

“I didn’t kill anybody.” I don’t give a shit what he saw—hell if I admit to any of it. “And no, killing someone wouldn’t turn me on.”

Although it did cause an adrenaline rush, which definitely tends to lead to horniness.

“So this is all for me then.” He pulls out his cock. My mouth goes dry. Even though I’ve seen his cock in all its glory before, the thought of having him inside me stops my heart.

This is finally happening.

“All for you,” I taunt, “if you can prove you’re worthy of it.”

“We both know I already have. Now I’m finally taking what’s mine.” He grips the back of my neck while the other hand slowly eases his cock inside me.

The stretch burns as his tip slowly sinks inside, and I cry out behind my mask. I knew by the length and girth that it would be a tight fit, but—“Fuck!”

He groans as he slides in deeper, my pussy stretching to acclimate to him. “You feel

so fucking good.”

The intensity brings tears to my eyes, and instinctively, my knees attempt to clamp together, but I’m not escaping him now. I can’t move while he keeps me glued to the bike. The ache between my legs is already building, heart thumping wildly.

His hands land on mine flat against the seat, pinning them there as he goes deeper. The stretch is insane, and the pleasure shoots through me as he eases in further and further, the heat from his body radiating.

Carefully, slowly, he rocks back, pulling out until only the tip is left inside me, before he slams back in.

“Oh my god!” My pulse pounds in my ears and neck, the pleasure rattling my brain.

“You feel so fucking good , demon,” he growls. “Exactly how I imagined you. Gripping my cock so tight. You’re going to squeeze out every drop.”

Beneath us, the bike wobbles and squeaks, threatening to tip, but even though I don’t know my masked man’s name or face, I trust he would catch me.

In the distance, the low melancholy wail of a siren builds.

Every muscle in my body tenses, and my masked man groans, thrusting harder into me. “That’s it. Clench that sweet pussy on my cock.”

My pussy pulses involuntarily at his words, making him slam into me faster. The bike rocks dangerously, the squeaking of the leather seat and the metallic thuds echoing in my ears, but I’m filled up with too much pleasure to give a shit.

“You’re insane,” I gasp.

“Just as much as you,” he pants. “That’s why you love it.”

As much as I don’t want to admit it, he’s right.

Over his shoulder, I catch a glimpse of movement in the dark parking lot.

I freeze, peering around him to find a woman a few yards away turning on her heel when she realizes I’ve caught her watching.

Whatever. So she got a little show in the dark. Both of our faces are covered, so who cares?

“What the fuck are you looking at?” His hand wraps around my throat, yanking me back so I’m forced to keep my focus on him. “Your eyes will only be on me when I’m inside you, little demon. Got it?”

“Maybe you should fuck me harder so I can’t get so easily distracted.”

That pisses him off, sending him into a frenzy of punishing thrusts just like I wanted. Pleasure rockets through me, head growing lighter with the rush of it. I grin before an uncontrollable moan echoes beneath my mask.

Shouts from the carnival are raising the alarm as the wail of the siren grows louder. Everyone will be leaving the carnival soon, paramedics and police rushing in, and we’ll get caught fucking on this bike.

“Hurry .” I wrap my legs around his waist, opening myself up to him and he takes full advantage of it.

“Fuck that. I’m taking my time whenever I’m inside you.”

The bike squeaks beneath us, and my heart hammers to the point of bursting, the ache between my legs building with every hard thrust.

I dig my nails into the bike seat and I can't hold it back anymore. With another unforgiving slam into my pussy, I split in two, shouting into the darkness as the ecstasy unravels me.

Pleasure pumps relentlessly from my toes to my scalp, and I can't do anything but moan as he drives his cock into me at a furious pace, chasing his own orgasm until he collapses against me.

The bike stops rocking as his cock throbs, spilling every drop inside me like he promised.

I grit my teeth. Fuck . His fucking cum is going to be all over Trey's front seat. Thank god I'm on birth control so I won't have Romeo's baby.

The siren is ear-splitting now, car doors at the edge of the parking lot slamming shut and engines starting up.

"I need to get the fuck out of here." I try to shove him off me, but he pins me to him as he continues giving me every drop.

Once his cock stops throbbing, he finally pulls out of me, a raw ache following. Every muscle in my body will be screaming at me tomorrow.

I can't believe we just did that. In the middle of a parking lot. After I just killed somebody.

Before I can take off, he grabs my throat again. His grip on my airway makes my thighs clench. "Your darkness and mine? They match."

I nod. Neither of us can deny that after tonight. He watched me toss a man's severed head before cutting off a thumb for a trophy of his own. We're both absolutely deranged, and there's no sense in denying I'm not just as psychotic as he is.

"I can't get caught," I whisper, his grip on my throat preventing me from fleeing. I can't get caught before I find Ned and Brandon.

I need to find them all. I need to make them all pay.

Without a word, my masked man shoves me in the direction of Trey's Camaro. His cum slides down my leg, but I ignore it while I race for the car and jump inside, starting it up with a roar of the engine and getting the hell out of the parking lot. At the exit, an ambulance screams past me in the opposite lane, heading for the carnival.

My heart pumps erratically, the terror that they'll somehow catch me building.

But once I hit the highway, no one pursues me. After five miles, my racing heart finally begins to slow. The only vehicles around me speed past, the single headlight of a motorcycle behind me. I might actually get away with it.

I slip off the mask and toss it onto the passenger seat as a grin blooms across my face, so wide my cheeks hurt.

Craig is dead. Ned and Brandon are next.

Page 9

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Chapter 8

Trey

In the silence of our massive kitchen, the ghosts of the island wrap their hands around my throat, constricting so hard, I can barely get the words out. “Haven’t seen Rachel in a few days.”

The last time I saw her was when she showed me that pregnancy test. I’ve been wracked with anxiety and dread every second since. Not even my dreams are safe—she visits me in my nightmares, belly protruding as she tells me to kiss her. In the next, a baby crying in my arms as she fucks my father in the other room.

I’m not stupid enough to get my hopes up that she’s finally gone for good. Father’s known what’s been going on with us for months, and he hasn’t broken up with her. Why would he now?

“She had to visit a doctor.” He shuffles through a manilla folder on the counter before stuffing it into his briefcase and clicking it shut.

He knows about the pregnancy then. Maybe he thinks I don’t know. Maybe he doesn’t realize the baby is mine, not his.

“She told you about the baby?”

Father’s coal-dark eyes flash to me as he swings his briefcase off the table. “No, I found the test. But that’s none of our concern anymore.”

My racing pulse skips a beat. He sent her away to raise the kid alone? I'm going to have a son out there, and he won't even know me. I don't want her in my life for a second longer, but I don't want to abandon my son either.

When I open my mouth to object, my father cuts me off, "She's not pregnant anymore."

"She had a miscarriage?" A confusing mix of relief and concern fills my chest.

I'm not going to be a father. I could collapse to my knees in gratitude. I wouldn't be nearly as shitty of a father as mine, but I wouldn't be a good one. Not at sixteen. Maybe not ever.

Despite everything she's done to me, I can't shake off the prickle of worry for Rachel. No one crosses my father and gets away with it.

"No. I instructed her to terminate the pregnancy." Father strides for the front door like we're discussing little more than some inclement weather.

Rachel would've been a terrible mom. She can't be trusted around kids. But now that she's not pregnant, Father might let her come back. Panic grips my chest. "When will she be back?"

Father reaches for the doorknob, his squeaky loafers coming to a halt. "She won't be."

"What—"

"Don't ask about her again, Trey." He whirls on me, gaze blazing. "We're done with her. You won't be seeing her anymore, and I don't want you to ever speak of her or this again. Understood?"

He slams the door behind him without waiting for my answer.

The same way he reacted to my questions about my mother's death. Don't ask about her again. We're done talking about this.

I'll never know if Rachel really did terminate the pregnancy, or if he killed them both.

If there's one fate worse to my father than death, it's prison. So that's what he'll get. I'll make sure of it.

Craig's hacked-off thumb is in my bag on the passenger seat. Father should be off the island today, so that gives me plenty of time to plant the severed appendage.

Even if he manages to scrape together a believable alibi, they can nail him for paying others to do his dirty work. Won't take much effort to withdraw a suspicious amount of money from one of his accounts.

Juliet managed to clean all the cum off the front seat after parking it in my usual spot in front of the hockey house. In the dead of night, she managed to steal my Camaro and take off with it. Didn't take long for me to catch on and follow her on my bike. When we ended up at a carnival, her wearing a mask and wielding an axe, I needed to find out what the hell she was up to.

Watching her toss that decapitated head without an ounce of mercy made my knees weak, my blood pump, my cock twitch. The memory of it alone gives me a semi.

Not sure who the guy is, but I know she had her reasons. Maybe he was the scumbag who made her swear off men. The name she refused to give me. Craig .

Took every ounce of willpower to drop the axe after chopping off his thumb. I

could've spent another hour carving him into pieces.

Except she asked him about someone else before she took his final breath. Brandon Williams . If Craig isn't the guy she was after, why did she kill him? Why is she looking for a guy named Brandon Williams?

The fucker must have it coming if she's willing to risk everything to find him.

After that, after I salivated over the way she ended a man's life without hesitation or remorse, I got to take her the way I've wanted to since I chased her through that haunt. She clenched so hard around my cock, like she couldn't get enough of me. Her screams echoed behind the mask while she came, pulsing over and over and making it impossible to stave off the orgasm any longer.

Can't wait to do that to her again. Maybe next time we'll both be covered in blood.

As expected, Father's Rolls-Royce isn't on the island. No other vehicles in the driveway. This palace isn't home, and I'll make my trip inside quick. Too many ghosts and monsters haunting this place to make me want to stick around.

Inside, my boots clomp across the floor, echoing off the empty walls and high ceilings. In the basement, he keeps a few chest freezers full of meat from animals he's shot. Bear, deer, boar. He's made a few trips abroad for the exotic animals, their taxidermied heads mounted on the walls. The bigger, the better.

In the furthest freezer packed full of meat, I dig down and tuck Craig's thumb into the corner. Maybe I'll leave it here; maybe find somewhere more obvious. I'll know when the time comes.

Little does my perfect demon know, she just handed me my ticket out.

On my way back up the stairs, I check the time on my phone. I'm late for practice, but Coach can't call and bitch me out while I'm on the island. Father made sure no one would have service out here. Only way to call anybody is through the landline in his office.

When I swing the basement door shut behind me, another creak follows.

I whirl, but there's no one in the kitchen with me. Am I hearing shit now?

The whole first floor reeks of bleach and detergent. Must've had the cleaners in here recently. Wonder if there were any blood stains he told them to keep their mouths shut about.

Another creak and I'm certain it's coming from the stairs this time.

I fumble for my knife and sprint for the staircase that leads up to the second floor, heart hammering?—

The sleek black staircase, polished to perfection, is empty. But someone's in here with me.

I'm halfway up the stairs when a pair of loafers clicks onto the landing above me.

"Trey, what are you doing here?" Father barks.

My stomach dips with disappointment. I'd rather deal with an intruder than my father. Quickly, I slip the knife away. "Just hanging out in my own house."

The line between his brows deepens as he descends the stairs, brushing past me. I nearly gag on his cloud of musky cologne. "When you're attending school, you need to stay there. I'm paying good money for you to live on that campus."

He's never wanted me here. He's made that clear by sending me off to boarding school and summer camps any chance he got.

For years, he's been keeping secrets. But it seems like he may have a new one.

What the hell is he hiding now?

At the Sigma Chi party, Valentine is tracking me like a spider on a wall. I waggle my fingers and wink at him. That wins me a deeper scowl, but it works. He finally drags his glare from me and focuses his attention back on his little toy dancing with my little demon.

In a frat house filled with tipsy, giggling puck bunnies who would happily suck my cock all night, the only one who's captured my attention is Juliet Hayes. I can't shake off my insatiable need for her. Tiny black dress that hugs her every curve, dark tights, and signature Doc Martens. Her hips sway seductively as she sips from her plastic cup, maroon lipstick staining the rim.

A mere few days after mutilating a man's genitals and severing his head, she's already dancing carefree at a party.

Craig gave Juliet a name that night at the carnival. Ned Miller . In Massachusetts or Vermont. Not the most helpful information, considering there are countless Ned Millers in the world. Hours upon hours of searching for Ned Millers in Massachusetts and Vermont eventually narrowed down the possibilities until I finally found a remote lot of abandoned farmland, most recently purchased by a Ned Miller.

I've got an address. One that will lead her to Ned Miller and Brandon Williams. This time, she's going to take me with her.

I'll happily be her accomplice, her partner in crime, if she'll only let me.

Tonight, I'll gift her the address, after the fun little night I have planned.

Before Valentine can spot the smirk flickering across my lips as I watch our girls dance together, I slide on my mask and slip out of the room.

Music thumps, sweat building in the air. Parties used to be the only place I wanted to be on this fucking campus, but now all I want is to drag Juliet out of here and take her somewhere quiet. To a place where the only sounds will be her melodic screams.

Not just the puck bunnies swarming me now. From my spot behind the frat bros sucking at beer pong, the horny girls with the mask kinks grab me like I belong to them, squeezing my biceps and ass. One dares to reach for my mask.

"I'll break your hand before you can take it off."

She withdraws like I burned her.

Before we got kicked off campus last year, Brody loved spiking drinks. He didn't discriminate—girls and guys alike would black out from the concoctions he gave them. Taught me everything he knew. The bastard had it down to a science. An art form. Only guy I knew who was anywhere near close to being as fucked up as me. My father paid his way out of trouble too. We don't need a lawsuit on our hands.

Pounding comes from the bathroom door down the hall. A frantic girl in dark clothes with black and red hair beats on the door and desperately tries the knob. "I'm going to puke!"

Even though I tower over the girls surrounding me and there's only ten feet of space between us, Juliet doesn't notice me as she covers her mouth and sprints through the bodies and out the door into the night.

“Thank god she didn’t puke on us,” a redhead squeals, mouth twisted in disgust.

I shove past them, not caring when the redhead bumps into a football player’s back and knocks his drink out of his hand. “Better go hold her hair back.”

A blonde giggles. “What a gentleman.”

Juliet’s retching guides me to her in the darkness. She’s hunched on her knees by the bushes behind the house, a trickle of yellow light leaking through the window above her head.

My fingers graze the back of her hot neck, the skin there so delicate. So mouthwatering. I sweep her soft hair into my hand. I’ll pull it later while I’m fucking her mouth and making her puke again from my cum.

When her stomach is finally empty, she collapses onto her ass and peers up to find her hero.

Except her eyes widen. I’m not her hero—I’m her villain.

“ You .” Even drunk and weak, she manages to fill that single word with venom. “Did you do this? Did you fucking drug me?”

Beneath the mask, I grin. “Don’t worry. You’ll love what I have planned for you, little demon.”

She’s so beautiful when she’s unconscious. I could watch her sleep every night.

Before I play with her, I cover Fluffy’s tank with a blanket. No need to scar him by letting him witness what Daddy does to Mommy.

Juliet doesn't stir when I lift the dress away from her skin and flick open the blade of my knife with a soft click . I slice through the thin fabric like it's made of little more than air, the satisfying rip already sending blood pumping to my cock.

The shredded dress slips off her body, revealing heavy breasts lolling to the side, nipples covered by pasties. I stroke a hand down between her tits slowly, savoring every inch of her smooth skin all the way to her panties.

"You are perfection, Juliet Hayes." I kiss at the camera behind me, blinking at us.

She'll come so hard when she watches this later. Witnessing every depraved act I did to her body while she was blissfully unaware. She won't be able to deny the effect I have on her as she watches her unconscious body respond to my every touch.

I trace the tip of my finger across the flesh just above the hem of her panties. She doesn't stir. My mouth floods with saliva from my longing to be inside her, but I need her warmed up for me first. Need her sopping wet so I can slide in and out with ease.

Silently, I peel the pasties from her nipples, revealing the pale pink buds. Blood thrums in my ears as my balls tighten, on the verge of pain. I've never been this fucking turned on before. There's something about her asleep and unaware beneath me that gets the adrenaline pumping faster. Knowing she'll awake to overwhelming pleasure before she even realizes who's wringing it from her.

My thumb grazes over her nipple until it's pointed beneath my touch. Even asleep, her back arches slightly, craving more. I smirk at the camera. "See how well you respond to me? Such a good, good girl."

This part of the video will make her hands curl into fists, her teeth grinding together as she cusses me out and calls me a bastard. I can't wait for her to watch our video for the first time.

My lips brush over her nipple before my tongue flicks out, circling that sensitive nub. “ Fuck , you taste so fucking good. I’m going to devour every inch of you.”

When I suck her into my mouth, a drowsy whimper emanates from her throat. I suck harder, pulling her tit up until dropping it, relishing in the way her flesh wobbles with the movement. I can’t wait to watch her glorious tits bounce as I fuck her.

I move back and forth between her tits, unable to get enough of them as I lick and suck and bite, leaving hickeys for her to find when she wakes. “I bet you’re already so wet for me, pretty girl.”

Grabbing her hips, I tug her to the end of the bed and flash a smile at the camera. “Should I ruin this pair of panties too?”

My mouth latches onto her thigh, her skin silky soft and mouthwatering. She’ll find more bruises here when she wakes up, from my mouth and fingers. I nip my way up to her panties before grazing my nose over her clit, breathing her in. Beneath my palms, her thighs tremble.

“You want my mouth, don’t you? You want me to lick your pussy, make you come so hard you wake up just long enough to watch me slide my cock inside you before you pass out again.” I curl a finger in her panties, tugging them to the side to reveal her perfect pussy. Bare, pale pink, and glistening. I can’t help the groan that escapes. “Oh, little demon. You’re so ready for me. So ready to get fucked.”

I can already anticipate her shouted Bastard ! The thought makes me grin before my tongue darts out, her sweet arousal flooding my taste buds. My cock strains in my jeans. If she’s this responsive to me while unconscious, she’ll be dripping for me when she’s awake.

“Not another day will go by that I don’t fuck you with my tongue.” I lick up to her

clit, swirling the tip around the sensitive bundle of nerves.

She hisses, thighs clamping involuntarily against my head. Her moan is louder this time. A murmured attempt to speak.

“What’s that, pretty girl?” I tease. “You want me to suck your clit? Want me to make you come?”

I wrap my lips around her clit and suck hard. Her pelvis jerks up, body desperate for more even as her mind has no idea what’s happening. Maybe she’s having a wet dream about me. I’ll make her tell me all about it when she wakes up.

Then I’ll make it come true.

”You’re the girl I’ve been waiting for. Searching for. Just as unhinged and depraved as I am. A girl who loves mixing pain with pleasure.” I bite at her clit before sliding a finger inside her, those tight, wet walls clamping down. “Who wants to be taken like this. Who fantasizes about everything I plan on doing to her. Every single, fucked-up thing.”

I switch between licking and sucking her clit as I pump my finger inside her before sliding in another. My jaw starts to ache, but I don’t care how long it takes. I’m going to fulfill her every fantasy, make her come while she’s blissfully unaware of what’s happening to her.

Her pussy pulses around my fingers. She’s getting close. “That’s it, pretty girl. Come all over my face.”

As if my words command her, her pussy pulses again once, twice, before spasming violently. A flood of arousal coats my fingers as I pump them wildly. Her eyes don’t fly open, but her back arches and her moan fills the quiet room.

When she's awake, I'll make her moan my name.

I keep sucking her clit until the pulses of her pussy slow and her walls relax as she sinks back onto the bed.

My fingers slide out of her and I saunter over to the camera, holding them up for display. "Look what I do to you. Even in your dreams."

The taste of her arousal makes my eyes roll as I lick my fingers and suck every drop of her off them.

Grabbing my mask from my desk, I stride back over to her motionless body. I flip her on her side and yank her panties down just enough to reveal the flesh of her glorious, round ass and sink my teeth in.

A hiss escapes her, but she can't fight off my love bite.

I flip her on her back again and slip my mask on. My palms caress the smooth skin of her thighs, spread open for me. "Time to ruin your panties, little demon."

I pull my cock free of my jeans, the head already swollen with need and a bead of precum glistening. I'm aching to pump her full, but that will have to wait until I fulfill my promise to ruin another pair of her panties. Soon enough, I'll make sure she won't have any left. No need for an extra layer between us.

A groan escapes when I grind my tip against the soaked fabric. The thin piece of cotton is all that separates us. I rub my cock against her, memories of the night at the haunt flooding back. Of the night at the carnival on my bike. The way she wrapped her legs around me and yanked me close. The way her body shuddered and the screams escaped past her lips as the orgasm wracked through her.

My balls tighten, cum desperate to shoot out and coat her. After I ruin her panties, I'll make sure the rest of her body is doused in it. Marking her for exactly what she is. Mine .

She murmurs something, but I can't understand what. "Say it again," I pant, pumping my cock and ready to lose myself.

The whispered word comes again, still indecipherable. Then?—

"Trey ."

At my name on her lips, pleasure explodes through me, cum spurting and shooting out onto her panties, painting them from black to white. I brace a hand against her hip as I groan. "That's my good fucking girl. Say my name."

My heart pounds with every stroke, with every drop of cum that stains her panties. I drag air into my lungs, and I've barely lost the erection when the blood and adrenaline start pumping again. I need to paint the rest of her body. Need to be inside her. Need to fuck her so hard she can't walk the next day without remembering exactly who was inside her.

I slowly push her panties to the side, keeping as much of my cum clinging to the fabric as I can. I want it to dry there. Become a permanent stain. I want to mark her forever. "Now, just like I promised. You're next."

Chapter 9

Juliet

Above me, the ceiling sways back and forth as I slowly stir to consciousness.

Between my legs, a raw ache builds, my thighs slick. My tits sway up and down.

Heart hammering harder with every bleary-eyed blink, I finally discover what woke me.

My masked man. His neon-red mask a stark contrast to the dimness of the room. Still fully clothed as he fucks me.

I mumble something that's supposed to be what the fuck , but I can't form the words, the effects from the spiked drink he gave me still lingering.

My pussy pulses as he thrusts into me, his groan echoing behind his mask. One hand holds up my leg, gripping my thigh so hard I'll find fingerprint bruises there tomorrow. His thumb rubs my clit and makes pleasure zip all the way to my scalp. "You love my cock inside you, huh, pretty girl? You're soaking the bed."

Pleasure shouldn't be bolting up my spine at his groan, his words. At the sight of him fucking me. Who knows how long he's been inside me.

I want to be asleep and taken advantage of. Why the fuck did I have to tell him that? Why does it feel so fucking good? This is what I fantasized about with Marcus but a

million times better. My most depraved wishes actually brought to reality this time.

He chuckles when he notices me stirring to consciousness. “Welcome to your fantasy, little demon.”

My first thought is bastard , but the name I mumble is “ R-Romeo .”

His hips stutter at the name. The name he told me to call him. The unhinged Romeo to my psycho Juliet.

But for some reason, his thrusts grow harder. Punishing. Like that’s not the name he wants to hear from my lips while he’s inside me.

His cock is enormous, nearly splitting me in two. Arousal slides down my skin to soak the bed, just like he said. I didn’t expect the next time he fucked me to be while I was asleep, but I guess I should’ve after I opened my stupid mouth and confessed my darkest fantasies to him.

Despite the pleasure pumping through my veins and my pulse picking up speed, my eyelids grow heavy again. I’m going to pass out.

No . I’m not ready. As fucked up as this is, I want to come with him inside me. I want to see the fantasy through to the end.

“You’re going to wake up later with my cum all over you.” His voice is raspy with desire, on the verge of release.

“F . . . fuck . . . off,” I manage.

I don’t doubt he’s dying to paint me in his cum. Dying to leave every inch of my skin sticky with it. He’s so deranged, beyond fucked up, and I should be running for the

hills.

Yet no part of me wants to run.

Trembling and weak, I manage to wrap my leg around his waist long enough to tug him closer before it falls to the bed again.

That's all the encouragement he needs.

He scoops up my limp body and tosses me further up the bed, giving me no time to recalibrate, no time for my head to stop spinning before he's on top of me again, slamming back inside me.

My mouth falls open, a cry escaping. A mix of pain and pleasure. He leans over me, bracing himself as our flesh smacks together, his mask filling my vision. The wetness between my legs dampens the sheet beneath my ass as the pleasure mounts each time his pelvis collides with my clit.

I try to say his name again but only manage to get out “ Ro— ” before he covers my mouth with his hand.

“Shut up, beautiful.” He keeps pumping into me, relentless. The ache is starting to burn now. I'm going to be waddling by the time he's through with me. “Don't say another fucking word. The only thing I want to hear from these lips are your moans and screams.”

With the other hand, he squeezes my tit. I wince. He already knows exactly what I like—a healthy dose of pain mixed with pleasure. Being fucked like I'm little more than a toy built for him.

I'll get my revenge. Use him exactly the way he's using me.

My thighs start to shake when I can't take it anymore, the pleasure cresting to the breaking point.

His sinister chuckle sends a shiver down my spine. He can already sense it. "That's it. Come for me again. Let me hear how loud my cock makes you scream."

I try to bite back the scream, try not to give him the satisfaction, but my body is nearly entirely out of my control now. A sound that's half-moan, half-wail rips from my throat, drowning out the slap of our bodies colliding over and over as he thrusts into me.

"Oh, fuck," he groans. "I love that sound. I live for that sound."

My tits bounce faster as he picks up speed, chasing his orgasm as mine barrels through me. Pleasure bursts like fireworks behind my eyelids, too heavy to keep them open any longer. My heart will be just as bruised as my insides from slamming against my ribcage.

Slick sweat coats my back, the sheet beneath me a mess with our bodily fluids.

He gives one of my bouncing tits a hard, echoing smack, and I wish I could smack him, but my arms are weighed down by anvils. The pleasure tugs me back under the surface again, the tide coming in to drown me.

When his cock suddenly jerks out of me, my eyes fly open at the sharp pain. He gives one tug on that intimidating, glistening length before a shot of hot cum darts out, splattering onto one of my tits. Then between them. Into my belly button.

My teeth grind together. I'm going to get him back for this. I can't fucking wait.

He doesn't stop until he's pumped every drop of cum from his cock, nearly every part

of my body sticky with it. Fucking bastard . Wait until he discovers what kind of hellion he's unleashed.

“You're...dead,” I grind out before the current starts to pull me under again. I can't keep my eyes open much longer as my pulse starts to slow, back to a steady, lulling rhythm.

When he climbs off the bed and straightens, I brace myself for what he's going to do to me next. But his hand doesn't reach for me—it reaches up, brushing the bottom of his mask. “It's time you found out whose cock you love having inside you.”

My chest squeezes. Is this another one of his games, or is he really going to reveal his face?

I'm not sure I want to know. Not sure I can stomach finally identifying my masked man. What if this reveal ruins everything? What if I'm horrified by the face beneath the mask?

Slowly, he pulls the mask up, my heart pounding with every agonizing inch.

A sharp chin. A devilish smirk across full, devastating lips. A regal nose and prominent cheekbones. And a pair of electric green eyes just beneath dark brows and a swoop of chestnut hair.

My heart stops.

Trey Lamont.

Motherfucker .

A buzzing sound rattles my eardrums before I register the tiny, needle-sharp

vibrations on my arm. An eerie glow from a laptop is the only source of light in the room. The screen displays a video of a sleeping girl on a bed, naked save for a pair of panties.

You are perfection, Juliet Hayes . The voice from the video is all too familiar. The man on the screen kisses at the camera, and my hands ball into fists.

Nearly my entire body is sticky with sweat, and my ass cheek and arm sting. When I manage to lift my head, I spot the trail of dried cum. My stomach turns. His mark is all over me—my chest, my tit, my stomach, my thigh, my pelvis. He has my wrists tied to my ankles, rendering me unable to escape even if I wanted to.

He's hunched over my arm, the mask long discarded to reveal the sharp, devastating slopes of his cheeks that end at a serrated jawline and hard chin. His wolfish green eyes are entirely focused on my skin, the tattoo gun in his hand buzzing.

On the screen, he peels the pasties from my nipples and grazes his thumb over one. See how well you respond to me? Such a good, good girl.

Goddamnit. He's right.

My nails bite into my palms. If this is how he wants to play the game, I'll give him a worthy opponent. He'll regret ever starting this shit with me.

Trey Lamont. He's been the man beneath the mask this whole time. Held me at knifepoint while he forced me to my knees and made me blow him. Threw me down onto a stack of hay and dry-humped me until I came. Fucked me on his bike after witnessing me kill a man. Drugged me and somehow got me back to his bedroom, where he's been holding me for god knows how long. He fucked me, left his cum on my body, and now he's tattooing me.

They said he was psychotic, unhinged, but I underestimated him. I thought there was no way he was as deranged as I am. But maybe I've finally met my match.

I grit my teeth. "Get . . . off me."

He chuckles but doesn't bother looking up from his handiwork. "I'm almost finished. One more letter."

What the fuck is he writing? I blink a few times, clearing my eyes of the haze. Little demon .

Just another way for him to mark me as his. Bastard.

On the screen, he licks my nipple. Fuck, you taste so fucking good. I'm going to devour every inch of you. I bet you're already so wet for me, pretty girl . He tugs my motionless body to the end of the bed. Should I ruin this pair of panties too?

I still don't understand his fascination with me. Was that night at the haunt really all it took? He found a girl who was at least half as fucked up as he is, memorized the whispers of her darkest fantasies, and decided to make them come true by whatever means necessary? Decided I'm the one he's been searching for and now he'll hunt me forever?

The craziest part is I'm not terrified by the prospect. An impossible, manic smile sneaks across my lips, but I force it away.

In the video, he sucks on my thighs and grazes his nose over my clit. You want my mouth, don't you? You want me to lick your pussy, make you come so hard you wake up just long enough to watch me slide my cock inside you before you pass out again. He tugs my panties to the side. Oh, little demon. You're so ready for me. So ready to get fucked.

“Bastard!”

He chuckles. “I knew you’d say that.”

Not another day will go by that I don’t fuck you with my tongue . Watching him tease my clit with his tongue makes warmth pool low in my belly. I shouldn’t be getting this turned on by watching him have his way with me while I’m passed out, but I want him to fuck me all over again.

The drowsy version of me murmurs something unintelligible. What’s that, pretty girl? You want me to suck your clit? Want me to make you come?

He fulfills his promise, and now, I groan involuntarily.

You’re the girl I’ve been waiting for. Searching for. Just as unhinged and depraved as I am. A girl who loves mixing pain with pleasure. Who wants to be taken like this. Who fantasizes about everything I plan on doing to her. Every single, fucked-up thing. He licks and sucks my clit while fingering me, and I’m completely turned on all over again. That’s it, pretty girl. Come all over my face.

Apparently, I do, back arching as my moans echo from the laptop. Heat crawls up from my chest to my cheeks as I watch how easily I respond to his every touch, every command.

He leaves my body once I’ve come down from the orgasm and saunters over to the camera with a shit-eating grin, holding up his glistening fingers. Look what I do to you. Even in your dreams .

Then he returns to my unconscious body, turns me onto my side to display my ass to the camera, and bites down on my exposed flesh.

My hand jerks to smack him, but the restraints are too tight. “Asshole! That’s why my ass hurts.”

He lets out his horror-villain laugh. “No, your ass hurts because I tattooed my bite mark. So you can keep it forever.”

Oh my god . Fury flares inside me. Of course he did. He won’t rest until every inch of my body is a reminder of him. “ Fucker . I’m adding you to my list.”

Another laugh.

In the video, I’m on my back again and he’s slipping on his mask. Time to ruin your panties, little demon . He pulls out his cock and rubs it over my underwear. I murmur something, but I can’t decipher what. Say it again . Another whisper, and then, finally clear— Trey .

My face is officially on fire. What the fuck? I had to moan his fucking name ? Seriously?

Now, he grins at my obvious embarrassment, the version of him on the video shooting his cum onto my panties while he groans. That’s my good fucking girl. Say my name. When he’s finished, he pushes my panties to the side, already getting hard again. Now, just like I promised. You’re next.

“Turn it off,” I bark.

He shakes his head, attention returned to finishing the tattoo on my arm. “Why would I do that? We’re just getting to the good part.”

He sinks his cock inside me and starts thrusting, and I watch as I slowly come to, realizing what’s happening. He makes me relive the fantasy all over again until the

video finally shuts off. I already want to do it all over again. I'll have to find a way to get that video from him to rewatch later.

Finally, he's finishing the n on my new ink. "Why are you tattooing that on me?"

"Because you're mine." He says it so simply, like it's a fact I should already be well aware of by now. "Tell me what they mean."

He nods at the rest of my inked skin. The serpent, the bat, the skull, the scorpion, the spider, the grim reaper, the knife dripping with black blood. My favorites are the spiderweb on my lower back with a heart at its center and the skeleton couple in an embrace on my arm. In love even in death. Unafraid of each other's bones, of the deepest parts of their souls.

"They don't mean anything. They're just fun."

"What about Autumn?" He inks the final curve of the n, and my spine goes rigid. "On your shoulder."

My first tattoo. The one most deserving of being the first. I bite back the sting of tears that materializes every time I hear her name or see her face in my memories, my nightmares. "She was a...friend."

Finally, his gaze flicks up to meet mine. My heart freezes and I wish he'd keep his eyes somewhere else. Wish a single glance from him didn't melt me. "What happened to her?"

The words nearly get stuck in my throat. "She was murdered."

Flashes of images. A white dress stained with blood, the crimson liquid pooling at my knees?—

I squeeze my eyes shut, forcing the memories away before grounding myself back here, now, with Trey.

He doesn't waste time with pointless apologies or ask for gruesome details. He nods at the ink on my naked body. "What about the rest?"

"They look good." I try to force sarcasm back in my tone, push away the nightmares. "At least, all but two."

He doesn't take the bait. "You wanted these on your body for a reason. For the pain. And the armor."

My heart squeezes. How the hell does he already understand me so well? Words die in my throat. If I try to speak now, I'll cry.

"It was the asshole at the carnival." His green eyes have gone cold, hard as stone as he peers at me for confirmation.

Right. Trey has seen too much, knows too much. I can't hide from him anymore. "Him, and all of them. The tattoos cover up every place they touched."

The pain of inking my skin replaced the ghost of their touch. But not for long. I can still feel their fingers, their sweat-slickened palms brushing my arms. Brandon's rubbing my shoulders, pressing against the small of my back, pulling my hand where he wanted it, slipping into my shorts and up my skirts after practice.

But the permanence of the ink is some small way I can reclaim my body. I choose my tattoos, I choose where they go, I choose when I'm touched, I choose the pain. I choose—no one else. I'm the one in control.

Trey Lamont inking my arm and my ass with tattoos I didn't choose should enrage

me. With every man since Brandon, since that night, I've wanted to gain back my control. I've wanted to be the one initiating, the one on top, the one who decides when the night is over.

But something is different with Trey. I'm still not entirely sure what. I don't know him well enough to trust him and he doesn't know me well enough to trust me—he shouldn't—but a crazy part of me believes that he understands me. In a way no one else ever has.

Trey's jaw clenches. He doesn't even know what they did to me, not really, and he looks like he could burn them alive. He rattles off a string of numbers and a town in Massachusetts.

"What?"

"Ned Miller. That's his address."

My chest squeezes with hope. I've been searching in vain to find Ned's address, becoming increasingly frustrated each day at the impossibility of the task. "You're sure it's the right one?"

He shrugs. "Guess we'll find out when we pay him a visit."

"We?" He's delusional if he thinks he's coming with me. I'm not letting anyone screw this up for me. Or go down for my crimes. Not even a psychopath like Trey Lamont.

"Who's Brandon Williams? Why are you looking for him?" His jaw clenches. "Did he hurt you the way Craig did?"

I shake my head. "Worse. He was my coach."

I'd had a crush on him since I was thirteen. He was the cute, young coach fresh out of college, and I was the newbie on the cross-country team. But I was fast, and according to him, that made me special. The other girls begrudged me for his blatant favoritism. So when the friendly hugs and occasional grazes of his hand against my arm turned to sitting on his lap at fifteen, I was so fucking happy. I was in love. I thought we both were.

But I was his secret. I could ruin him, and if I told anyone, they'd ruin me. Make sure I was ostracized, labeled a slut, kicked off the team and out of school. That's what he told me to keep me quiet. I needed to believe that it was my fault too—that a child was responsible for a grown man's actions.

I know better now. But sometimes, the memory of that love is even more painful than the memory of his betrayal. The years of believing what we were was one thing, something beautiful, when it was something else entirely. Nothing but ugliness.

Now, my touch will be the one that ends him. The one he takes with him to his grave.

"He gained my trust, made me believe he actually cared about me, and then he gave me to them."

"Them?" Trey's brows furrow impossibly deeper.

"There were three of them that night. Brandon brought me to them."

"Craig and Ned?" he asks. When I nod, he adds, "You said there were three. Who was the other one?"

The monster's towering physique fills my mind, ironed button-down entirely too formal for the acts he was about to commit. "I don't know his name. They weren't exactly forthcoming with their personal information."

Trey doesn't flinch at the bitterness in my voice. He doesn't flinch at any part of me, even the darkest parts. "I'm going with you. I'll help you."

I scoff. "Ha, no. I'm doing this alone."

He squeezes my wrist, just below the restraint. "You need my help."

"I don't need anything from you," I spit.

Instead of biting back as usual, he falls silent. He drops the tattoo gun and starts cleaning the fresh ink. "Something similar happened to me. With my father's girlfriend."

"You?" I cringe as soon as the shrill word leaves my lips. Maybe I shouldn't be surprised. Hypersexuality is a common result of childhood sexual abuse, and Trey is clearly into the same fucked-up shit as I am. Both of us are searching for someone who can match our darkness. Both of us want control.

But we also both want someone with whom we can relinquish it. He may act like all he wants to do is tie me up and have his way with me, but I bet he'll love it when I do the same to him.

He nods, his hand surprisingly gentle as he blots the tattoo dry with a towel. "It started when I was fifteen. Right after my mother died."

Despite everything he's put me through, everything he put Wes and Violet through, every fucked-up, villainous thing he's done, my heart squeezes at the thought of a younger version of Trey being taken advantage of. Losing his mother so young. Vulnerable and unprotected.

"After my mother died, Father replaced her almost instantly." His tone sours. "She

moved in, and in front of him, she'd act motherly. I think she thought that would please him, even though he didn't give a fuck about me. But he worked a lot, and when he wasn't around, things were different."

That familiar feeling causes a sharp pain in my chest. There are a million things I want to say to him—tell him whatever she did wasn't his fault and call her the worst names I can think of. But I keep my mouth shut and let him say what he needs to.

"Then at night, she started coming into my room. She'd wrap an arm around me and lay on my chest." He clears his throat, the memories still painful. "Some nights, she'd fall asleep there. My father would walk in on us, but he never said anything. Just shut the door. Then it was kissing. Give me a goodnight kiss, Trey . Her lipstick would smear all over me; she'd shove her tongue in my mouth. Then she put her hand down my pants. Guided my hand down hers. Then it was her mouth?—"

When his words start to get shaky, I finally interrupt him. "You don't have to keep going." I strain at the restraints on my wrists and ankles, wanting to sit up. Comfort him somehow, even though there's nothing I can do or say to take away his pain.

He grabs my hand and plants a soft kiss on my palm that somehow makes my heart soar. "Then she started climbing on top of me. She made me think it was normal, told me I was lucky to be a young guy who gets with the hot older woman he's crushing on. I was lucky ." He spits the word, and I want to ask her name just so I can add her to my list. I'll add his father too for witnessing his son's abuse and doing nothing to stop it. A maniacal laugh leaves his throat. "Sick part is, at first, I liked the attention. And my body liked what she was doing to me, even if my mind didn't."

"Yeah," I breathe. "I know exactly how that feels."

"I know you do." Finally, his fiery gaze meets mine. "I had a feeling the night we met there was a reason you were almost as fucked-up as me. Then I knew for sure the

moment I saw you kill that motherfucker.”

He’s right—our darkness matches. “So what happened? With...”

“Rachel.” Her name is like venom spewing from his mouth. He swallows audibly. “I got her pregnant.”

“Oh my god.” My heart stops, bile rising at the thought of Trey being forced to impregnate a woman against his will. A woman who was parading around pretending she was interested in the man of the house when she was really interested in the boy. “Did she have the baby?”

“No. My father forced her to get an abortion.”

“Did he finally break up with her then?”

He shrugs. “I assume so. I never saw her again, and no one’s seen her since.”

“So she disappeared? Like adopted a new identity and started over somewhere?” Rage burns in my veins. She could still be out there, adding more victims to her roster.

“Or my father took care of it.”

He says it so casually, so nonchalantly—“What do you mean ‘took care of it’?”

Trey gives me a long, hard stare. “I mean, I’d be shocked if she survived him. I’m surprised he’s let me live this long. I was sure he’d kill me just like my mother.”

My tongue twists, unable to form words as horror sweeps over me. It’s awful enough that his mother died when he was so young, let alone that his own father might be

responsible. “You think he killed your mother?”

“I don’t have any proof. But he held her funeral the day after she died. He claimed she drowned, but an autopsy was never done. He was covering something up.”

I can’t even imagine living with the weight of something like that. Knowing your mother died and never getting answers about what really happened.

“Autumn was there with me.” I force the words out, heart hammering. “She was killed that night. That’s why I want to find them all.”

Maybe I could somehow live with what they did to me, but I can’t live with what they did to Autumn. They can’t live.

“That’s why I want to help you.” Trey stands, flicking open his knife and cutting the ties keeping me trapped.

If he can’t get vengeance for his mother or make Rachel pay for her crimes, he’ll help me get revenge. For Autumn. For me. For every other girl who could fall victim to them.

But this is my revenge to seek. Alone.

Once I’m freed, I sit up, weak and stiff and ass stinging. I nod at Fluffy’s tank covered by a blanket in the corner, breaking the tension. “Thank you for shielding Fluffy from the debauchery.”

Trey manages a half-smile. “No need to scar him.”

I flick at the crusted cum on my chest and frown. My tits and thighs are bruised with hickeys, my pussy sore and still wet. No matter how fucked up it is, I’m glad he did it

all.

“You know I’ll have to get you back for this.” I hold up my arm to display the red skin around the new tattoo, then gesture to my cum-covered body. “And this.”

He flashes a wicked grin. “Can’t wait.”

“Where the hell have you been? I’ve been blowing up your phone!” In our dorm, Sienna paces in front of me like a scolding mother, except she’s wearing adorable pink pajamas with puppies and it’s impossible to take her seriously.

Behind her, Luke dwarfs her twin-sized bed, failing to cover his amused smirk with his hand. He loves when she gets riled up. He’s in gray sweats, his shirt discarded on the end of Sienna’s bed, and god, he could at least put a little effort into sparing my eyes from his half-naked body.

From my bed, I shrug. I managed to get a shower before the ambush, at least. “I hooked up with someone.”

Technically true. Although Sienna would lose her shit if she knew all the depraved details.

She stops pacing and folds her arms, and my eyes drop to her fuzzy slippers. “The last time anyone saw you, you were running outside to puke.”

“Yeah, then I felt better and I got laid.”

My best friend grabs my arm, mouth dropping open, and I wince. “Is that a new tattoo ? Little demon ? What the hell does that even mean?”

I jerk out of her grasp. Yeah, definitely not explaining that one. “It’s a reminder to be

the demon on everyone's shoulder."

Luke's head tilts. "Shouldn't it be devil?"

"No," I spit.

"I need you to at least check in and not disappear on me anymore, okay?" Sienna drops the scolding tone, her voice softening with concern.

"Yes, Mom."

She plants her hands on her hips. "I'm serious."

I sigh. Sienna's just looking out for me. She knows how crazy and reckless I can be. I can't blame her for freaking out. I'd be doing the same thing if the roles were reversed. "I know. I will from now on. I didn't mean to make you worry."

"Thank you." She finally gives me a small smile, but her gaze continues to study me like she's waiting for something more. Like she's searching for my secrets. "You promise there's nothing else going on?"

I could tell her. About all of it. What I did to Craig. My plans for Ned and Brandon. What the masked man in the woods did to me. How he turned out to be Trey Lamont.

But I'm used to keeping secrets, and if I go down for my crimes, I'm certainly not taking my best friend with me.

"Yep. Nothing going on."

Page 11

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Chapter 10

Trey

After weeks of being forced to share the ice, locker room, and hockey house, the Devils are finally backing off. They're bored of me now that I'm not giving them more reasons to target me. Juliet is plenty to keep me busy.

Halfway through practice, my father perches in the bleachers behind the puck bunnies, making them giggle.

Why the hell is he here? Did he find that fucking thumb? He couldn't have found it buried under all that meat.

My grip on my stick tightens, and Vanderbilt shoulder-checks me from behind, nearly knocking me off my feet.

So much for backing off.

Rockefeller flies toward me, and I brace myself for impact, but he doesn't make contact. He screeches to a halt before a collision. "Don't let him throw you off your game."

"I didn't." I'm ready to snap my stick across my knee. "He came out of nowhere."

"Not Vanderbilt." He nods to the bleachers. "Him. You're a good player when your dad's not around. When he's here, you're fumbling, missing shots, letting the puck

fly right past you. Don't let him get in your head."

"Yeah." I grit my teeth, heading for the locker room when Coach blows the whistle. Easier said than done. If I could keep my father out of my head, I would. Out of my whole fucking life.

My entire existence has revolved around appeasing him. Being the son he commands me to be to avoid the repercussions of being anything less. Trying to predict his moods, avoid what might set him off. When I was a kid, my life and my mother's revolved around him. He was the sun, and he made sure we knew we were lucky to orbit him.

Part of me wishes Juliet was here in the locker room waiting for me. Puck bunnies are a regular feature—on their knees, spread open on the sinks, in the showers. Nothing is better than a post-practice gang bang when the blood, testosterone, and adrenaline are still pumping.

But for the first time, the thought of sharing a girl has my jaw clenching.

Cold water shoots across my face, taming the semi forming at the thought of Juliet on her knees in here, waiting with her mouth open and tongue out for me. Upright and bent at the waist, ass on display and spread for the taking.

By the lockers, the team shouts to each other and talks shit, riled up from practice. Even worse after a game. As soon as I'm through the door, I try to sneak out without my father noticing me, but I should know better by now. There's no getting anything past him.

"Heard you made captain." His hand lands on my shoulder, and his smile is just for show as we head out the door.

My teeth clench. Like he's not the one who blackmailed Coach into giving me the position. Pissed off most of the team, especially Valentine. All of them deserve it more—work harder, care way more about our time on the ice, but I got the spot they wanted. That I don't give a shit about. "Funny how that worked out."

He glances around us before shoving my shoulder. Shit . He knows. He knows about the thumb and my plans. "Where the hell were you on Friday?"

My brain scrambles. Friday? Where was I supposed to be on Friday? "Probably on the ice or in the gym. Or getting shitfaced at a party. Memory's a little foggy. You can understand."

Father takes a dangerous step closer, voice dropping when a few of the Devils burst out of the door, laughing and shouting to one another. "So you weren't at a carnival the same night a man was killed by one of those masked carnival workers? You wouldn't know anything about that?"

My spine stiffens. The flashing lights and laughter at the carnival, her back to me as she moved like a shadow in a bloody white dress toward the couple fucking in the maze of mirrors, his screams mixing with those echoing through the House of Horrors as she brought that axe between his legs, the decapitated head she tossed into the corridor, leaving what remained of his corpse to bleed out on the floor. A mask shielding her identity from anyone who might've noticed her. Spotting me, the only witness, before she fled. Fucking her against my bike, adrenaline and lust pumping through our veins as we chased our pleasure with each other's bodies.

How the fuck did he find out about my little trip? I should've known it would only be a matter of time. Somehow, he always uncovers every secret eventually. "Nope. Hadn't heard about it. Don't exactly keep up with the news. Sucks, though."

Craig's girlfriend has been interviewed by police and media multiple times since she

reported finding his body, all too happy to be in the spotlight while her scummy boyfriend's body rots.

She was so drunk that night, though, her memories are shaky. First, she was certain the masked carnival worker was wearing a wedding veil, and then in her next recollection, the culprit was a witch. Then a zombie or maybe it was a vampire. Her testimony is shoddy at best, and the police have interviewed all of the workers who were on the clock that night, but none of their fingerprints or DNA match what the police found on the body.

Luckily, the media has been more interested in the gory details of his murder—severed head, missing thumb, mutilated genitals—and his fall from grace as a married, churchgoing man who was having an affair with a college student before his untimely death.

And without any leads, the police are facing down a cold case.

Unless my father gives them some ammunition.

How the fuck he would manage to scrounge any up would be a mystery to me, but I wouldn't put it past him.

“Hey, Mr. Lamont!” Rockefeller shouts, cheeks still flushed as he saunters past with Vanderbilt, Valentine, and Ashby. “How's it going?”

Father flashes his best winning smile. All the Devils love him. So do all the puck bunnies. If they only knew. “Great, Rockefeller. How 'bout yourself?”

Rockefeller beams. “Living the dream.”

Jesus, he's insufferable.

Father's smile is forced when he turns his attention back on me. "Your priorities are hockey and class. Don't come home until you graduate. Got me?"

"What about winter break, Papa? We're not going to celebrate the holidays together?"

He scowls at my sarcasm and turns on his heel to head back to his Rolls-Royce. "I'll be in Dubai, and I'm certain you'll be on some beach with your parade of puck bunnies."

At my age, that's where he would've been. He never wanted a son—he wanted a clone.

I didn't mention the carnival to him when we ran into each other on the island. I turned off all the GPS shit on my phone. So how did he track my location?

My pulse starts to pick up speed. I'm not the only one hiding shit.

"Why would you think I was there?" I call after him. "At the carnival."

He pauses with his hand on the door handle, his flat brows and pursed lips giving nothing away. "Stay out of trouble, Trey."

For a few seconds, I wonder where the fuck I am and what the fuck is wrong with me.

Mouth dry, limbs weak, spine stiff. Above me is my bedroom ceiling. I'm at the hockey house, the soft sheet of my bed beneath me, long overdue for a wash. But this is more than the usual fatigue and soreness from hockey.

Something's wrong.

“Oh, good. You’re finally awake.” A figure saunters to the edge of my bed, dark leather clinging to her every mouthwatering curve. She’s wearing my mask.

My cock twitches, and an unfamiliar twinge makes my eyes nearly bug out of my head. I’m naked, and beneath my torso, something glints in the darkness?—

“You pierced my fucking cock?”

“I did it while you were unconscious. I told you I would get my revenge.” Even beneath the mask, I can hear her smirk. Juliet’s finger glides up my shaft, making blood pump to my cock and an ache build in my balls. She stops at the piercing, tracing it. “This is for me.”

I jerk, ready to get my hands on her and show her that every inch of her is for me , but my wrists strain against scratchy rope. She’s tied down my wrists and ankles, just like I did to her that night after the Sigma Chi party. She must’ve drugged me somehow too.

She said she’d get her revenge. I was an idiot to think she wouldn’t find some way to one-up the tattoos on her arm and ass. She pierced my fucking cock. Jesus . At least I’ll make her scream with it.

“Get this shit off me.” I jerk at the ropes again, but I hardly budge.

She doesn’t obey me, which only fuels my rage. I fight against the restraints, accomplishing nothing more than rubbing my skin raw and tiring my already drained limbs.

Juliet hums and finds my knife in the pocket of my jeans she picks up off the floor. She flips the knife open and trails the dull edge up my thigh, goosebumps springing up in its wake.

She's going to cut me, make me bleed. Who knows what else. My little demon is capable of much worse than I ever expected.

I love that about her.

My heart thuds, and a smile crawls across my lips. "Do your worst, demon."

"Trust me, devil," she purrs. "I will."

"I'll enjoy giving you your punishment for this."

She snorts. "So funny you still believe you're the one in control."

But I never have been. Not with her. Since that night at the haunt, even when I was the one chasing her and pinning her down, she's been the one in control. Controlling my cock, my mind. I haven't been able to stop thinking about her. Dreaming about her. Following her. She consumes my every waking thought.

"What are you going to do with me?" I taunt. "Come all over my cock?"

"Maybe." She shrugs, and the rage boils again at the possibility of her leaving me like this, aching and needing to come. The knife trails up to the sensitive skin above my pelvis. I bite back a groan. "Maybe I'll untie you if you give me what I want."

"Anything." I gasp out the word, fighting against my need to be inside her.

Her little laugh behind the mask is music to my ears. "Such a needy boy." She flicks my cock, making me yelp, and I try to break out of my restraints again. Useless. "Why did you pull me out of the corn maze that night? Why me?"

Though she saunters around campus with a strut in her step, a vulnerability softens

her words. She's not used to being the girl who gets chosen. Not anymore. Not after those monsters forced her to hide beneath a hard shell, to gnash her teeth and claw at anyone who dared to get too close.

"Overheard the Devils talking about how you couldn't be scared. That you wanted to be. I knew if those idiots couldn't do it, I could." I grin, wishing she'd take off that damn mask so I could see her pretty face. Study those gorgeous blue eyes and never take my gaze off them. "I had no idea how much you'd like it."

At the innuendo, she trails the knife down to my thigh, the blade biting into the skin there. I hiss through my teeth, beads of blood rising to the surface beneath the sharp edge.

"Why did you say I was the one you'd been searching for?" With the flat edge of the blade, she skims back up, over my tensed abdomen and up to my collarbone. My pulse hammers harder with every inch.

How could I not? She grinned when I told her to run, told me if I caught her, I'd fuck her. Let me dry-hump her in the haystacks and whispered sweet nothings in my ear about how she wanted to be chased and fucked by a masked man in the dark, wanted to be asleep and taken advantage of, held at knifepoint and taken against her will, cut before the blood was licked off her skin.

Those were her fantasies, and she was mine.

Now that I've managed to get my hands on her again and again, she's better than I ever imagined. I fight against my restraints, needing to touch her. "You told me all your darkest fantasies. Every depraved, unhinged thing you wanted me to do to you. I knew my girl would love the pain. The fight. We were made for each other."

She goes quiet, trailing the blade over me gently. Letting my words sink in. With

every silent second that ticks past, the panic bubbles that this dark, twisted passion is one-sided. With the panic comes a simmering fury. I can't be the only one who knows how perfect we are together. I won't let her believe anything less.

"Take the mask off." To my surprise, she obeys my command, the pressure from the knife never lifting as she discards the mask and drops it to the floor.

Her cheeks are flushed a soft pink, the piercings in her brow and nose glimmering. Those striking blue eyes combing over every inch of me like I'm the devil from her dreams. "You saw what I did at that carnival. I have much worse planned for the rest of them. You don't want to be made for someone like me."

Frustration builds in my limbs. She actually believes that. Believes someone as beautiful and twisted and brilliant and scarred as she is couldn't possibly be someone worth wanting. "You've seen a fraction of what I'm capable of, little demon. If either of us is broken beyond repair, it's me. But you don't have a choice in the matter now. I've found you, and you're mine. I'm never letting you go."

"You'd have to catch me first." A coy smile plays on those delicious lips. I'm going to devour them.

"As soon as I break out of this little trap," I grind out, "I will."

Her laugh makes more blood pump to my erection. So hard it's nearly painful. A reminder of the fresh piercing, the skin at my tip still red and swollen. "Good luck, devil."

"Since you pierced my cock, I'll pierce your tongue. Can't wait to feel that when I'm fucking your mouth."

Without a word of retort, she presses down with the knife on my chest, and the pain is

red-hot this time.

I try to flinch away from her but can't get anywhere. " Fuck ."

She's fucking crazy. Psychotic. Unpredictable.

She thinks that's enough to make me run. She has no clue that only makes me want her more. Makes me more convinced how right we are for each other.

"Finally, a woman insane enough for me," I pant as she cuts down, a little curve to the tail at the end. A J for Juliet. "Carve your whole name into me. I hope it doesn't heal. I hope I'm scarred with your name forever."

My little demon shakes her head. "You're nuts."

I grin. "That's why you're crazy about me."

She turns and drops the knife shiny with my blood back on the desk. My chest twinges with disappointment. The pain made me come to life. Connected me to her in a way only two dark, scarred souls could be.

"I told you everything you wanted to know. Now untie me."

She tsks, a smile sliding across her face. "I'm not finished with you yet."

Juliet slowly shakes off the leather jacket, revealing a leather corset barely containing her incredible tits. My wrists strain against the rope, my palms aching to grab them and squeeze. To twist her nipples until she cries out as I slam inside her.

Next to go are the skin-tight pants. When she's down to her corset and panties, she grabs the knife and climbs onto the bed, swinging a leg over me and settling onto my

lap. Between her legs, my cock jerks, the warmth of her pussy through her panties enough to drive me wild.

She leans down, still grinning, and I'm not sure which I'd rather stare at—her face or her tits—until her mouth gets dangerously close to mine.

I turn my head, and she freezes, smile slipping away. “What?—”

“I don't kiss.”

She frowns. “Why not?”

With my mask, the issue hasn't come up before. “It's pointless. It does nothing for me.”

“It's because of her. Isn't it?” The Dominatrix persona slips away to reveal the softer part of Juliet, layers beneath her hard shell. The part she doesn't like to show to anyone.

I've confessed too much to her now. She can sense my lies just as well as I can sense hers. “Yes. She'd make me kiss her.”

Every time a girl has kissed me since, the memory of Rachel's slimy lipstick smearing across my lips has turned my stomach. Now the only place I want a girl's lips is around my cock.

Before, most girls whined when I refused to kiss them, but Juliet doesn't say another word. She only nods, straightening and planting her hands on my chest, the cool metal of the blade pressing against my skin as she continues to clutch the knife. What other plans does she have for that fucking thing? Before I can ask, she grinds her pussy over my shaft, careful to avoid the tip. I hiss through my teeth, wishing I could

dig my fingers into her hips.

This, we both enjoy. This, we could do all day.

“Fuck,” she breathes. My little demon grinds her clit against me, tipping her head back as her eyes fall shut and small moans escape.

“That’s it, pretty girl. Use me. Just like I’ll use you. Come over and over on my cock.”

“I’m going to. I’m going to use you and leave you begging for more.”

“Make me beg then, baby.”

She’ll never make me beg for her, beg for anything. But I’ll love watching her try.

Once I can feel the dampness through her panties, she drops the knife on the bed beside us and strips out of the corset, tossing it to the floor. My mouth waters when her tits drop and swing in front of me. She gets on all fours like she’s materialized straight out of one of my wet dreams and pushes her tits in my face. “Suck.”

Even though I’m dying to obey her command, I can’t help but taunt her. “What happens if I don’t?”

The sting of the knifepoint digs into my arm, back in her palm. “You don’t want to find out.”

I bite back a laugh. It’s actually cute, watching her pretend she’s the dominant one here. Without another word of protest, I wrap my lips around her nipple and suck it into my mouth.

She groans, arching further into me and forcing me to suck her deeper. I lap at her sensitive skin. I want her soaking for me. Want my cock dripping as her pussy swallows me. Want her eyes bugging out when the tip hits her cervix and she's still got more to take.

"Now the other one." She's already breathless.

I suck her other nipple, trying to lift my hips so I can grind against her, relieve the building ache, but her body is too high above me. Just out of reach. I growl and suck her nipple harder, making her gasp. "Ride my cock now."

"I will," she snaps. "When I'm ready."

"You are ready. You're dripping for me."

"By the time I'm finished with your mouth, I better be." She stands, the mattress shifting as she slides the panties down her legs and kicks them off.

She climbs back onto me, but instead of grinding against my cock this time, she slides up my body, leaving a trail of arousal up my torso. Getting me back for the night I let my cum dry on her. Too bad she has no idea how much I fucking love it.

When she finally reaches my chin, she stops. "I'm going to ride your face, and you're going to make me come with that tongue, devil."

"Then get the fuck up here, demon."

She doesn't hesitate. The next second, she's planting her pussy on my mouth. She's not gentle about it. Not self-conscious and timid the way most girls are. I'd laugh if her thighs and pussy weren't suffocating me.

My tongue glides up her slit, the wetness already rubbing against my chin. Her moan is sharp as I hit her clit, flicking my tongue against it as her back arches and she rests her weight on me. Fuck, I never thought I could be this into a girl riding my face before.

I slide my tongue between her tight walls, groaning as her sweet taste floods my taste buds. She's always so wet for me. Can't hide the effect I have on her every time.

Her hips sway back and forth as her ass cheeks graze my chin. She rides my face like my tongue is her own personal sex toy. That's it, baby. Ride my tongue. Get your orgasm and then give me mine .

Waiting to get my cock inside her is a worse punishment than when she was digging that knife into my flesh. I'd rather she cut the whole alphabet into my skin than make me wait another second to come inside her.

"Suck my clit." She pops her pussy off my tongue, returning to drag that soft bud against it. "Make me come."

I flick the tip of my tongue against her clit instead, soft grazes that make her jerk and cry out before she half-screams in frustration, fists striking the bed on either side of my head.

"Say please, pretty girl."

"Do it."

Another flick of my tongue has her gasping. " Beg ."

Cool metal brushes against the bottom of my shaft. A warning bell chimes loud and clear in my ears.

“Do it or I’ll cut your cock off.”

“But you haven’t even fucked it with the new piercing yet.”

When there’s a slight sting on that sensitive underside, I hiss. “Careful, demon. You’re going to regret what I do to you after this if you keep that up.”

Before she can protest or do a hell of a lot worse, I suck her clit into my mouth. She drops the knife, letting out a sound that’s halfway between a sigh and a moan as she sinks into me. “That’s a good boy.”

I hate the nickname almost as much as it turns me on.

My fingers fumble over the mattress, searching for the discarded knife so I can cut myself loose and fuck her the way she deserves. But it’s nowhere in reach.

Her arousal drips down my chin, spilling over and sliding down my neck. Fuck me . How am I supposed to just lay here and not fuck her while she drenches my face? The knife was a prelude—this is the real torture.

“Mmm.” The sound rumbles from deep in my throat, making her quiver. She loves hearing how much I salivate over her, relish her. Nothing turns her on more.

She gasps. “ Yes . Don’t stop.”

Between my lips, her clit pulses. She grinds her pussy against my face harder, and with a gush of arousal, she cries out. She collapses against me, thighs shaking and clit pulsing as I keep sucking while the orgasm wracks through her.

I go hard at her pussy, devouring her and licking every inch until her cries turn to whimpers and the spasms of her pussy slow.

“Oh my god.” My little demon slides off my face, gasping when she spots the wetness coating my chin and neck. She caresses my cheek. Almost tender for a girl who just had a knife against my cock. “Good boy.”

“Let me fuck you now.” I hate how raspy the words come out. Horny and desperate to come. Desperate for her. Every inch.

Her long, dark hair with shocks of red sways as she shakes her head. “I think I’ll fuck you instead.”

My spine stiffens. Where the hell does she plan on sticking that knife?

But she keeps her hands flat on my torso as she glides down, her pussy rubbing against my shaft. Thank god.

“Sit on my dick, Juliet.”

She giggles. “I love making you beg.”

“I’m not begging,” I snap.

The taunting smile doesn’t leave her lips as she rocks back and forth, dragging her arousal over my cock until it’s slick and dripping like my neck. “You’re going to come in two seconds, aren’t you?”

“You’re going to wish I would after I’ve fucked you raw.” My words come out in a pant, heart thundering as my balls clench, needing her to slide my cock inside her pussy now. If she keeps grinding on me like that, I’ll bust before I’ve even gotten inside her. “You won’t be able to walk tomorrow.”

She rocks back just enough that her pussy is off my shaft. I bite back a whimper. Her

nail glides up the wetness glistening on my cock, flicking the tip and the piercing, sending a bolt of electricity through me. “Fuck!”

“I think I’ll take my time up here. Go slow enough that I’ll get mine, but you won’t get yours.”

“Oh, I’ll get mine. Deep inside you. Your pussy will swallow every drop.”

“You need time to heal. Fucking too soon will hurt. Or you could get an infection, and then what use would you be to me?”

“I don’t give a fuck about the pain.” I watch with hot desperation, adrenaline pumping, as Juliet slowly grinds against my shaft. She bites her lip, eyes squeezing shut as a moan falls from her mouth.

Her wetness is magical against my shaft, but I need to be inside her. The edging turns to agony as her hips move faster, ass smacking as she rocks back and forth. My balls start to clench, the cum ready to burst out.

But my blood goes cold when she reaches for that damn knife again.

Humming an unhinged lullaby, she skims the dull edge of the knife up my torso and stops at my chest. Next to the J she’s already cut there.

“What the fuck are you doing, demon?”

“Having fun.” She moans, grinding against my cock faster, careful to avoid the piercing and swollen tip.

Despite the knife pressed against my chest, I can’t help but enjoy the way she rides me. Normally, I want to be the one on top, in full control. With everyone that’s come

before her, watching a woman ride me has reminded me of those nights with Rachel. Brought those nightmares rushing back.

But not with Juliet.

“I’m giving you a tattoo just like you gave me.” She slices the blade over my skin, drawing a U .

My body jerks to get away, survival instincts kicking in. “Agh! Fuck .”

But I don’t tell her to stop. I don’t want her to. The pain mixing with the pleasure sends sparks through every cell in my body like I’ve never felt before. I can’t hold back anymore. I slam my hips up, desperate to get inside her no matter how bad it hurts.

Somehow, she keeps her hand steady, carving an L on my chest. I bite down hard on my lip to stop the pained groans from escaping, the taste of copper mixing with her arousal still coating my tongue.

When she slices an I into my skin, I hiss through my teeth, the blood dribbling down my chest.

Her moans mix with my groans, the slap of skin on skin, and the wet slide of her pussy against my cock, creating a beautiful, twisted symphony.

She carves the final letters. E and T . When she’s satisfied with her handiwork, she brings the knife to her lips, nicking one when she grazes the blade over them to taste my blood.

“You’re so fucked up,” I pant, the fear and pain and adrenaline and arousal all making my head spin. “I fucking love it.”

Her unhinged grin lights me up. “I know.”

She trails the handle of the blade down between her legs, rubbing it against her clit while she rocks her hips. Her head tips back, her moan nearly rattling my bones.

“Come for me, little demon. Let me feel it. Clench those tight, wet walls on my cock.”

But before she can obey my order to slide my cock inside her, she jerks forward, a cry ripping from her throat as her pussy spasms. Her thighs shake with the orgasm, and I keep grinding my cock against her, my own orgasm nearly to the brink. “Trey .”

Normally, I don’t give a fuck hearing a girl moan my name. But her...

My chest squeezes pathetically, the echo of her crying out my name filling my head. Trey . Trey . Trey .

I’ll give anything to hear her call my name again.

My heart pounds, pleasure building as she unravels on top of me. I love how hard she comes with me. “Take my cock like my bad fucking girl.”

Juliet drops the knife, and it slips down onto the mattress, within reach. But I don’t try to grab it. Not yet.

Sweat coats my back as I continue thrusting my hips, desperate for the same release.

Her hands drop onto my chest as she pants, coming down from her orgasm. No . I need to come at the same time. Need to feel the pulses of her pussy while I shoot my load deep inside her.

“Okay,” she sighs. “I got mine.”

Then she slides off me, my throbbing, wet cock left cold without the friction from her body warming it. Wordlessly, she jumps down off the bed, reaching for her leather pants.

White-hot fury lances through me. “Get the fuck back over here. I’m not finished with you.”

She shrugs. “I’m finished with you. For tonight, anyway.”

I yank at the restraints, determined as fuck to get out of them now and fuck her as hard as I can. “Juliet.”

“Ooh.” She cocks her pierced brow at me. “I like when you growl my name like that. Do it again.”

“Juliet!” Her name is a shout this time as I slam my fists against the mattress. “Get on my cock now or I promise you, you will fucking regret it.”

She slides her corset back on, the rage boiling over with every article of clothing that covers her up. “I’m doing this for your sake. You’ll thank me later.”

I grab for the knife and start to saw at the rope connecting my wrist to the bed. The second I’m off this mattress, she better run like hell.

She half-skips over to me, not giving a damn about my efforts to cut myself free, and plants a chaste kiss on my new piercing. “This was so fun. Bye-bye.”

I shout her name, raging and spitting as I saw at the rope and thrash in my restraints. But the door clicks shut behind her, and by the time I’m finally free, she’s gone.

Page 12

Source Creation Date: August 7, 2025, 1:59 am

Chapter 11

Juliet

“Tell me you love it.”

Ned. Ned, Ned, Ned. His name is Ned. Don’t forget.

“Come on, honey. Just tell me how much you love it. Three little words.”

Ned. Smelly Ned. Bad-Breath Ned. Slimy Hands Ned.

Covering my ears doesn’t block out Autumn’s cries. Hoarse now. Fading. That makes the sound worse.

“Tell me you love it.”

While Sienna sleeps in her bed, back to me, I hunch over my laptop and punch in the address Trey gave me for Ned Miller.

220 Miller Road . Must be family property. Deep in the mountains, on an isolated plot of land with an old farmhouse and a shed, where he can hide from civilization and no one has to know about his extracurricular activities.

The trek up the mountain could be hazardous, but the path to get there is straightforward.

Thank god Trey managed to track down the address.

None of the other Devils batted an eye when I showed up to the hockey house and told them I was giving Trey a sedative. Hell, Damien and Knox carried Trey to his bed after he passed out on the couch. They did offer to help me when I planted that camera in his room, after all.

“What exactly are you going to do to him?” Knox asked. Damien had already disappeared from the room, not giving a shit about what I had planned for his teammate.

“Nothing he hasn’t already done to me.” Not exactly true, but Knox would flip if he knew all the devious things I had planned for the unconscious Devil.

Knox blinked a few times at my sickly sweet smile before he shivered. “Gotta admit—you creep me out, Juliet.”

“That’s what I like best about you, Knox.”

I managed to tie Trey down and pierce his cock and still had at least a solid hour before he finally stirred awake to keep playing our twisted game. Getting revenge on him and giving him a taste of his own medicine—grinding against him, flicking that piercing on his cock—made me come harder than I ever have in my life.

I liked seeing him at my mercy almost as much as I like being at his mercy. Almost.

His groans of pain and pleasure, his barked orders, his smooth skin and hard muscle beneath my palms, the trickle of his blood from the letters I cut into his chest. JULIET . So he’ll be reminded of me every time those wounds sting, every time he glimpses the letters in the mirror.

Despite every deranged thing we've done to each other, he's right. We understand each other like no one else does. His darkness matches mine.

In her bed, Sienna snores softly. She's barely been sharing the dorm with me this semester, spending most of her time getting laid in Luke's bed. Now that their relationship isn't taboo, they've been throwing themselves at each other like rabbits in heat, but she has clinicals bright and early tomorrow, so she can't afford to be up all night with him.

She'd slap the shit out of me if she knew my plans for tonight. Are you kidding me, Juliet? What are you thinking? That's so dangerous!

I scrawl a note for her on my desk before standing in front of the full-length mirror at the foot of my bed, removing the piercings from my brow, nose, and ears. Next the rings on my fingers, even my beloved serpent. I tuck all the jewelry into a drawer so Sienna won't get suspicious before removing my makeup, wiping away every trace until I'm bare-faced. Uncomfortably youthful.

A new white dress slips over my head, the top stiff and hugging over my tits but the skirt flowy. He liked me in white. Tonight, that will be the last thing he sees.

While I kill Ned, I'll make Brandon watch. So he'll know exactly what's coming.

At least, he'll believe that's what I have in store for him. But his fate will be much, much worse.

I grab my jacket and mask before tossing the handwritten note on Sienna's desk.

Good luck with clinicals. I won't be here when you wake up but don't freak out. Just going out to have some fun.

Chapter 12

Trey

Ned Miller's property is eerily silent, tucked away in the mountains off a winding, narrow dirt road.

Took longer to get here than I expected. About halfway through the trip, the gray sedan that followed me off campus was still behind me. Couldn't have been a puck bunny—no way any of them wanted to ride my dick that badly. After some unnecessary turns and nearly getting myself lost, I finally shook them.

Definitely not paranoia anymore. Someone's following me. Since the start of the semester, it seems.

Can't be my father. He has better shit to do, and he'd hire someone to tail me before he lifted a finger to do it himself. Someone else is keeping an eye on me, and I better figure out why before they link me to a few corpses. Or Juliet. I won't let her suffer more than she already has.

Frosty air nips at me as I swing my car door open, my face shielded by my mask. Hunting knife on one hip and pistol holstered on the other. Beneath my fleece, my chest itches, the name my little demon carved into my skin beginning to heal. JULIET . I hope I wear the scar of her name forever.

Snow flurries fall in lazy spirals from the white sky, blotting out any other color from this cold, monochrome world. Different planet up here in the mountains. In Diamond,

the air is still warm enough for sweaters and hoodies.

My boots crunching over the thin layer of snow is the only sound as I near the two-story, ramshackle farmhouse with a shed nearby and a chicken coop around back.

Juliet didn't breathe a word to me about her plans, and I wouldn't have known she was here if I hadn't tracked her phone. She turned it off halfway through her journey, remembering that cell phone signals could place her in the area the day Ned Miller and Brandon Williams wind up dead. Luckily, I knew there was only one place she could be headed.

Now where the fuck is she?

Gloves protect my hands from the icy wind and prevent me from leaving my prints as I circle the house, pressing up against the windows to peer inside, to strain to hear a confrontation.

Nothing. The only sign of life inside is the ignited wood in the fireplace and the smoke puffing out of the chimney.

A chill drifts down my spine and I spin around. But there's no one out here with me. No sign of Juliet or the men she's here to slaughter.

She shouldn't have fucking come up here on her own. She might've been able to handle Craig at a carnival when he was drunk out of his mind and didn't suspect a masked carnival worker would actually hurt him, but ambushing two grown men in the middle of nowhere is in another league.

The chicken coop is dark, a tall, patchy fence surrounding the little home to protect the vulnerable birds from the predators of the night, but the place hasn't been used in years.

This isn't a home—this is a hideout.

In the darkness, indents in the snow catch my eye. A closer inspection tells me they're definitely prints.

I'm no expert and it's nearly impossible to make them out clearly in the dark with the snow still falling, but they sure as hell don't belong to a deer or a human. At best, a dog's paw prints, maybe a coyote. At worst, a bear.

My chest clenches. Juliet . Where the fuck is she? Doesn't she know that she shouldn't go wandering onto some psycho's property without telling anyone where she's headed?

If those motherfuckers think they're going to lay a single finger on her, I'll rip their hands from their bodies before stuffing them down their throats.

I don't bother sneaking anymore—I rush past the house, past the front porch with its roof nearly caved in, and to the dark, silent shed.

When I peer through the window, the interior is so dark, I almost can't see anything.

Shadows slowly start to morph into shapes. A deer hanging from the rafters, head down. A bucket on the floor with a drain nearby to clear away the blood. A workbench with a long knife, gloves, and bones.

A flash of movement at the center followed by a shout?—

In a wooden chair about two sizes too small for him, a man is limp, arms hanging down. Blood oozes from somewhere, pooling on the concrete floor beneath him.

Which one is he—Ned or Brandon?

Someone in a white dress and a neon-pink mask, the twin to my own, holds up a bloody knife.

My chest swells with pride and my smile grows beneath the mask. My little demon.

The man in the chair wails, “Who are you?”

“You know who I am, Ned. You know why this is happening. Now, I’m going to remove your fingers and toes one by one unless you tell me what I need to know. Where the fuck is Brandon?” Her cold demand makes my heart thump.

So Brandon isn’t here. Did Craig give her false information, or did Brandon manage to take off before she got here?

My hands curl into fists. This wasn’t supposed to happen. We were supposed to find both of them here, kill them both and find the final man who hurt her that night. The man who killed her friend.

Now Brandon is missing and who the hell knows where he went. Who knows if we’ll find either of them.

Ned lets out a pathetic moan. He can’t even face his fate like a man because he isn’t one. He’s less than human. He’s scum. “I don’t know!”

“He was here.” Juliet paces in front of him, her pink mask and white dress out of place. Eerie. “So where the fuck is he now? You know.”

Ned shakes his head with great effort, tears and snot running down his face. Did she drug him? Or has he lost enough blood to grow this weak, to struggle to move? I love that she’s rendered him this fucking useless before I even showed up. Maybe she was right—maybe she really doesn’t need me. Maybe I underestimated her.

“No,” he whines. “ No , I don’t, I swear. I didn’t do anything wrong!”

She scoffs. “You didn’t violate two underage girls?”

He stiffens, and the tears start flowing. “I didn’t! I wouldn’t hurt anyone.”

“They always love to deny it.” Juliet shakes her head. “Some take their vile secrets to the grave with them. But I know your secrets, Ned. And you’re not getting away with it.”

Sobs wrack his shoulders now as he struggles to keep shaking his head. “I didn’t touch any of them.”

Any of them . My jaw clenches. He’s still in denial, but he’s already incriminated himself.

Juliet quits her pacing, focusing on his face, melting like candle wax with drooping jowls. A predator who’s gotten away with his crimes for a lifetime. “How many girls were there, Ned?”

“I didn’t—” His protest dies on his lips when Juliet stabs the knife into his thigh, yanking it out as his screams nearly shatter the dilapidated shed and blood seeps through his worn jeans.

Eerily calm, she returns to her pacing as he writhes, his blood dripping from her knife. Mixing with the blood stains of every animal he’s ever slaughtered in here. “I know you did. I was one of them.”

His drooping, weathered face is ghostly pale now. He’s losing blood quickly, and he won’t stay conscious much longer. But she was smart—stabbing, not slicing. A severed artery would have him bleeding out in minutes. A stab wound will cause

internal bleeding. A slower, drawn-out death. Gives her time to extract the truth from him in his final moments. To make him feel a fraction of the suffering he inflicted on each of his victims.

“This is the last time I’m going to ask you nicely to tell me where Brandon is.” Juliet grazes the tip of her knife over his knuckles. “Which do you choose: keep your finger, or your secrets?”

Fresh tears spring to his eyes and his whimpers fill the shed again. So pathetic and infuriating, I want to rip out his tongue. “Please?—”

She brings the knife down, Ned’s screams echoing off the walls and covering the sound of bone being severed as a finger hitting the floor.

While he continues screaming, Juliet sighs. “This could be over so quickly for you, Ned. You wouldn’t have to suffer like this if you’d just tell me what I need to know.”

He’s panting to the point of hyperventilating, and when he stays silent, Juliet brings the knife up again.

“Franklin!” Ned screeches, eyes round and wild. “He’s in Franklin!”

Juliet drops the knife slightly but still keeps it raised above her shoulder. “In Massachusetts?”

“Rhode Island,” Ned bleats. “He...he said he could blend in more in a city.”

Ned pants, chest heaving as the blood loss makes him struggle to remain upright.

My hands nearly puncture through my gloves when I clench my fists. That motherfucker got away. We’ll have a hell of a time finding him in a city full of

people.

Juliet stares at Ned silently, assessing whether to believe him. “Give me the name of the other man who was there that night. The one in the other room. Who killed the girl I was with.”

Panic fills Ned’s eyes. “I don’t know! I swear!”

She tsks, shaking her head and turning her back to him. “That’s a shame.”

Is she leaving to let him bleed out slowly? Or to find another weapon? Something more fun than a knife to end him with.

Before I can figure out what she’s got planned, Ned pushes to his feet with the last of his strength and grabs a meat cleaver off his workbench.

My heart hits the ground. “ No !”

Both of their gazes dart to the window, spotting me. Juliet whirls just in time to find Ned closing in on her, cleaver raised in the air.

He was fucking faking it. He wasn’t nearly as weak and defeated as he let her think.

I race around the back, to the only door into that miserable fucking place of death and decay. My footsteps are muted by the pounding in my ears.

Inside, through the decrepit wooden walls, Juliet screams.

No. No, no, no . He can’t get his hands on her. He can’t use that meat cleaver on her or?—

Once the door is in sight, I sprint faster than I ever have in my fucking life.

Five feet, four feet, three, two?—

A hard thud and a sharp blade punctures the wooden door, stopping me in my tracks.

The fucking meat cleaver.

I shove through the door, nearly tearing the thing off its hinges.

Juliet is on the floor, scrambling away from Ned hobbling toward her, mask off and eyes round with fear.

My little demon, afraid of nothing.

Terrified.

Her mask is across the room. So is her knife. He must've knocked the weapon out of her hands when she screamed.

“Stop.” Despite the fear and adrenaline coursing through my veins, my pistol is steady in my hands.

Ned turns, a snarl on his ugly face. He's not going to survive this. Even if he managed to kill us both, those wounds are a ticking clock. But he'll do whatever he has to do to take us down with him.

He takes a single staggering step toward me before I pull the trigger.

For a second, I'm not sure I shot him, despite the high-pitched ringing in my ears. Until he presses a hand to the seeping wound in his abdomen. The bullet embedded in

the splintered wood behind him.

He shrieks, the bloodcurdling cry of a dying animal as he sinks to his knees.

I charge past him and drop down next to Juliet, examining her for any injuries. “You’re okay. You’re okay now.” I hold her face in my hands as the tears pour and murmur every word to her that I wish someone had said to me after my father’s beatings, after his girlfriend’s assaults, after my mother’s death. “I’m here. You’re so fucking brave. Strong. Beautiful. I’m so proud of you. You’re not going to let him stop you. He’s nothing—you’re everything.”

She nods, eyes shining. I help her to her feet, and she limps as I guide her toward the door. That motherfucker hurt her. I’m going to make him suffer as much as I can in his final moments.

“Wait for me in my car. Turn it on, get warm. I’ll be out in a minute to check on you after he’s dead.”

As soon as I nudge her toward the door, I turn back to Ned bleeding out on the floor. I may be too late. He’s already slipping in and out of consciousness, screaming on and off through the waves of pain.

Juliet charges past me, black and crimson hair flying behind her. The meat cleaver raised high in the air. “Tell me you love it, Ned.”

His scream is cut short when she brings the cleaver down on his neck.

The heavy thud is followed by the sickening, dull thunk, thunk of his head rolling slowly until it comes to a stop.

Above him, Juliet’s chest heaves, meat cleaver limp in her hand. Dripping with his

blood.

A few seconds of silence tick by before she rounds on me, and for a moment, I brace myself for her to charge me with the meat cleaver next.

Until she drops it and launches at me, throwing her arms around my neck as I lift her and squeeze. She's so soft and warm in my hands, but strong too. Brave and powerful and insane. I'm obsessed with every crazy bit of her.

"Thank you," she murmurs into my neck.

I clutch her to me as hard as I can, never wanting to let her go again.

That was too close. Way, way too fucking close. I almost lost her, and I've never been more afraid of anything in my life. "Anything for you."

When she finally retreats from my hold, her brows furrow and she smacks my arm. "What the hell are you doing here anyway?"

"Saving your ass. And helping you get rid of a body." I nod at the dead man at her feet. "I want in."

She tosses the bloody meat cleaver onto the workbench with a clatter. "In on what?"

"On finding the rest of them. And making them pay."

Her eyes roll. "I already told?—"

"You nearly got killed." My sharp tone silences her. "You obviously need me."

She crosses her arms, chewing her lip as she mulls this over. For the first time, she

doesn't protest. She knows I'm right. She would've died tonight if not for me. If I hadn't tracked her here, if I hadn't protected her, she'd be dead. She can't do this alone, and she doesn't have to.

"I'm not letting you do this alone anymore." I close the distance between us, hands landing on her hips. She's forced to crane her neck to meet my gaze. "You've found your devil, little demon. You've found the black heart that matches yours. We don't have to set the fires on our own anymore. We can burn it all down together."

Her eyes shimmer, and I swipe away a tear that trickles down her cheek.

"We're in this together. You and me now."

"Together." A little smile slips across my demon's perfect mouth until she finally nods down at the corpse at our feet. "So what were you saying about getting rid of a dead body?"

Chapter 13

Juliet

Trey fucking Lamont.

That psychotic stalker just had to go and save my life. Now I'm indebted to him and practically swooning.

He kneels beside the cooling corpse, meat cleaver poised over Ned's hand until he brings it down with a sickening thud. He slips the thumb into a small plastic bag. "Way easier. Can't believe I've been using a knife this whole time."

"I've been thinking of upgrading to a machete."

Trey nods to the open door behind me. "I'm thinking we just leave the door open and wait for the bears to get him. Gonna be way easier than trying to bury him in frozen dirt or burn him in these temperatures."

I fold my arms. "And what if a bear doesn't happen to wander by?"

"Pretty sure I saw some prints a few yards from the house. If a bear doesn't get him, coyotes will. Food is more scarce this time of year, and they'll smell a dead body from a mile away. They'll definitely want that deer."

Right. Easily explainable. Ned accidentally left the door open while he butchered his kill, only to get ambushed by a bear. Who knows when anyone will come looking for

him anyway. Maybe no one will. Who could give a shit about a man like him?

I pull out my phone. “I’m looking up Franklin, Rhode Island.”

Our next stop.

We won’t be able to find Brandon tonight, but it’s a start.

Except there aren’t any search results for Franklin, Rhode Island. My heart starts to pound as my eyes drift to the body on the floor, blood still pooling around him and head completely severed. Unable to say another word.

Rage bubbles up from my chest to a boiling point. “He fucking lied .”

Trey finally slips his mask off, frowning. “What do you mean?”

“Franklin, Rhode Island doesn’t exist .” I show him the phone screen, seething as my blood pumps with searing, blistering fury.

With his dying breath, he told more lies.

The line between Trey’s brows deepens. “Maybe he really didn’t know where Brandon was. He just threw out a town to get the torture to stop.”

My jaw aches as I clench my jaw. I shake my head, digging into Ned’s pockets. “No. There’s no fucking way he didn’t know. There’s no fucking way I’ve come this far to be stopped here.”

Hot, angry tears blur my vision. I can’t have finally gotten my revenge on two of the monsters from that night only to come to a dead-end before finding Brandon or Autumn’s killer.

They can't get away with what they did to her. What they did to me. They can't hurt anyone else.

I already have blood on my hands. What's a little more? Especially when they don't deserve to take another breath.

I refuse to come this far only to let the universe stop me. I'm finishing what I started.

When my search of Ned's pockets turns up empty, I scream, pounding my fists on his lifeless corpse.

Trey doesn't pull me off him or try to calm me down. I love that about him. He doesn't try to tamper down my crazy or tame me—he embraces my insanity, encourages me to be my most savage.

When I've finally regained my composure enough to speak, I tell him, "I need to find Ned's phone."

Before I can stomp past Trey out the door, he grabs my hand. Mine slick with blood, and his the same. "I'll come with you."

He hangs onto my hand like a life raft as we make our way over the thin layer of snow, like witnessing my near-death rattled him more than he cares to admit. More than I care to remember.

We slip inside, the door unlocked, and stay quiet despite the lack of occupants. Even with the woodstove still burning, the air is damp, stale, and reeks of mildew.

Trey feigns a shudder. "It's like his ghost is already haunting this place."

I smack his arm, even as a chill races down my spine. "Shut up. We need to find a

phone or something. Craig said Brandon was here. They must be communicating with each other.”

“Before you decapitated them, at least.” An amused smirk pulls at Trey’s lips. “You really have a thing for chopping people’s heads off, don’t you?”

“Only when it’s deserved.”

“You sure Brandon isn’t hiding out here somewhere?”

“Positive. I watched Ned drag the deer into the shed alone. I’ve already done a sweep of the house. Brandon must’ve been here at some point, but he’s gone now.”

Trey’s lip curls, just as infuriated as I am by this roadblock. “You look upstairs; I’ll search down here.”

Before I drop his hand, I lean on my tiptoes to plant a kiss on his cheek. To thank him for saving my ass and keeping me alive for tonight. For everything.

But then I jerk back, realizing what I’ve done. “Shit. Sorry.”

I kissed him. That was the only boundary he gave me, and I broke it.

My shoulders sink with relief when he gives me a rare, sincere smile. “It’s all right. I liked it.”

For some reason, his admission nearly makes me want to burst into tears of joy. He wouldn’t let any girl kiss him. Not until me.

So you’re the one. The one I’ve been searching for. He knew even then. He knew the night we met what we would become to each other.

Then he points down and ruins the moment. “You can kiss somewhere else, if you want.”

I roll my eyes and jerk away from him, heading for the stairs. “You’re not getting a blowjob right now.”

“On the way home then!” he calls to my back, and I flip him off before I head upstairs, the old wooden steps creaking under my weight.

As much as I hate to admit it, he’s right—I need him. How the hell did I think I could get away with killing four men on my own and not leave a mess behind? I’ve never killed anyone before. I may have always known I was capable of it, but there’s a big difference between knowing what you’re capable of and actually doing it.

When Ned came at me with that meat cleaver, fear like I’d never felt before washed over me. I was dead—I was certain of it. He’d gathered the last of his strength to end my life, and the only reason I survived him was because Trey Lamont, my masked man, followed me here.

But I couldn’t let Trey be the one who killed him. I didn’t care about the pain blooming in my temple from where I’d hit my head in my rush to get away from the monster trying to kill me. I didn’t care about the vertigo or the fear that had a serpent’s grip on my heart. I only cared about seeing my revenge through to the end.

As far as I’m concerned, we put him out of his misery too quickly. His death was too merciful. I’ll make sure I don’t make that mistake with Brandon or Autumn’s killer.

Trey wants to help. Since he hasn’t opened his mouth about Craig, I can trust him to be my partner in crime.

At this point, I’m not sure I have a choice. Without him, I may not make it out of this

alive.

You're okay. You're okay now. I'm here. You're so fucking brave. Strong. Beautiful. I'm so proud of you.

My heart catches in my throat. All the words I needed to hear in that moment. Words I've been needing to hear for a lifetime.

You're okay. You're okay now. I'm here.

We're in this together. You and me now .

I'm the one he was searching for, and I think I was searching for him too. I didn't even realize I was searching for him until I found him.

Ned only has two bedrooms and a bathroom upstairs, the shower curtain open to reveal the wall stained with rust. One bedroom is minimal, little more than a bed, a dresser, and a lamp, everything covered in a layer of dust. Maybe it's Trey's ghost comment or the dead body cooling a mere few yards away, but this place gives me the creeps.

The other bedroom is more lived in, a messy bed, half-open dresser drawers, an overflowing hamper, dirty socks on the floor, a cluttered nightstand, and a collection of blank CDs strewn in front of the television.

My stomach twists. Something tells me I don't want to know what's on those discs.

In the corner, his desktop hums. A shake of the mouse would stir his computer to life. The acid in my gut churns. What horrors lurk on that hard drive?

On the edge of his desk, a phone is half-buried under a notebook.

I should be jumping for it, figuring out a way to get into the device and find what I'm looking for. Figure out how to find Brandon. But my feet are frozen.

What the hell am I going to find on that phone? Whatever I find, I won't be able to unsee it.

Heartbeat echoing in my ears, I force my feet to shuffle forward, chest rising and falling faster with every inch closer.

Finally, I snatch the phone and turn it on.

The screen prompts me to enter the passcode when the face recognition is declined. Shit.

"You found his phone."

Trey's voice behind me makes me jump. "Jesus! Don't sneak up on people like that. Especially after they've just decapitated someone."

He smirks. "Thought you couldn't be scared, little demon."

"Not by you." I thrust the phone into his chest. "I've got it. Let's go."

But he doesn't follow me back to the stairs. "Should we look through the computer?"

"There's nothing on there you'll want to see. Trust me."

His face darkens, gaze fixated on the monitors like he can extract the images and videos from that computer and somehow avenge more victims.

I love that he cares so much. Cares about strangers he's never met. Cares about me,

even more than he cares about himself.

“If anyone comes looking for him, they’ll find it. They’ll know what he was really like. And if anyone suspects it wasn’t actually a bear that ripped his head from his body, they’ll know why he’s dead.”

At my side, Sienna shuffles in her Uggs down the hallway, bags under her eyes and hair unbrushed. She barely had time to get dressed and brush her teeth when she rolled out of bed fifteen minutes ago. The nursing program is no joke, and it’s clearly taking its toll on her. Between early mornings for clinicals and late nights with Luke, my best friend has turned into a zombie. Unfortunately, that doesn’t stop her from interrogating me at ten in the morning.

“You’re going to be late to class,” I remind her.

She yawns before taking another gulp from her coffee and glaring at me. “Don’t try to change the subject. Where did you go the other night?”

“I told you I went to have fun.”

“With who ?”

“Why does it have to involve anyone else?”

Sienna grabs my arm and yanks me to a stop, sending my notebooks and phone to the floor. “Sorry!”

“ Shit .” I scramble for the phone. Ned’s phone.

When it turns on, I let out a sigh of relief. Thank god. This is my last chance to find Brandon. The bastard didn’t program his face ID into the device, and I haven’t been

able to crack the passcode yet, but I'll be dead before I stop trying to get into this fucker's phone.

"Why do you have a second phone?" Sienna frowns until her eyes nearly bug out of her head. She glances around us before stepping closer and lowering her voice. "Oh my god! Are you dealing drugs?"

"Jesus, no."

"I know you're keeping secrets from me." Sienna lifts her chin, resolute. "I'm not leaving until you tell me what's going on."

No way in hell can I tell Sienna who this phone belongs to or why I'm trying to crack the passcode. "It's not my phone," I blurt. "It's Trey's."

Sienna's brows furrow as her eyes dart between me and the phone. "Why do you have Trey Lamont's phone?"

God, I'm starting to lose track of how many secrets I'm keeping from my best friend. "It's part of this...game we play." When she opens her mouth to ask for more details, I add, "Trust me, you don't want to know."

"When the hell did you start spending time with Trey Lamont?" Her mouth falls open as realization dawns. "Oh my god. Juliet. Tell me he wasn't the guy you hooked up with the night you got drunk at the Sigma Chi party."

"Did I not just say you don't want to know?"

She squeezes my arm and shakes me like a ragdoll. "Why didn't you tell me? You've been fucking a psycho and you didn't say a word about it! I'm your best friend!"

“I didn’t tell you because you were so obvious about hating him. I didn’t need a lecture.”

She rolls her eyes. “Oh, please. I didn’t lecture you when you were hooking up with Marcus. I just want to make sure my best friend is safe and happy.”

“Yes and yes.” At least, I’m safe most of the time. Just not when I travel to dangerous men’s isolated properties to kill them.

“How’s the sex?” Sienna smiles conspiratorially.

“Absolutely feral.”

She laughs. “That’s not surprising. Anyway, I just want the best for you. I’ll support you no matter what.”

I wonder if she’d say that if she knew what other extracurriculars I’ve been up to. “Thanks.”

She nods at the phone in my hand. “I know someone who can help you get into his phone.”

“Who?” My heart leaps with a tiny ray of hope.

“Finn.”

I groan. “The Devil who doesn’t talk?”

“Exactly, but he’s good at stuff like this. He helped me out last semester. It’s worth a shot. I bet he’d love to help you mess with Trey.”

“Oh, I know he would. All three of them.” Too bad getting Finn to help me would mean involving another person in this mess. “Maybe I’ll ask him.”

“You should.” Sienna checks the time on her own phone and gasps. “Shit! I have to go. Text me when you’re done with class. We desperately need girl time.”

“Deal.” The word is barely out of my mouth before Sienna takes off, soft brown hair streaming behind her.

In my Human Sexuality class, the professor engages the class in a conversation about gender roles. My attention keeps flickering back and forth between the professor sitting casually on her desk at the front of the room and Ned’s phone, screen still locked. Entering the wrong passcode too many times will temporarily disable the device. As much as I don’t want to enlist Finn Ashby’s help, I may not have a choice.

A few minutes after the professor turns on a video and shuts off the lights, a tall student sneaks into the classroom, heading for the back row with me. The only other student in the row with us has his head resting on his arms, soft snores barely audible over the video playing at the front of the room.

The student sneaking into the room takes the open seat right next to me, his familiar leather scent wafting up my nose and making me feel weirdly comforted. At home.

“Miss me, little demon?”

“You’re not in this class,” I hiss, as if he isn’t well aware. The professor at the front of the room doesn’t give a shit, completely entranced by the video about sexual development throughout the human lifespan while most of the students yawn or nap.

“You get into that phone yet?”

“Not yet.” I glance at the professor. Luckily, she’s completely oblivious to our

conversation at the back of the room. “But Sienna told me to ask Finn to help.”

Trey’s predatory green eyes narrow. “What the hell can he do for you that I can’t?”

I smirk. I love seeing him jealous. “Hack into a locked phone. Now, go.” I elbow him. “You’re distracting me from my class.”

“I’m not going anywhere.” He leans close, growling the words inches from my ear. “I told you I’d get you back for what you did. How you left me like that.”

Even though the rage ripples off him, I can’t help but smirk. It felt so fucking good leaving him tied to his bed wanting more that night. Striding out the door as he was on the brink of an orgasm so he could know what it feels like. The same way he left me aching and needing more after he held me at knifepoint in the woods. “How do you plan on doing that? We’re in a classroom full of people.”

“None of them will see.” His hand lands on my thigh, inching up my leggings. My skin grows hot. “But they might hear you.”

I try to shake him off without drawing attention to us. “Get the fuck off me.”

He tsks. “You knew this was coming. You knew exactly what the consequences would be when you walked out that door.”

He’s right—I was well aware of what the repercussions would be for orgasm denial. I can pretend to fight him all I want, but we both know I’m anticipating his every move, every brush of his skin against mine. How is he going to one-up me this time? Especially when we’re in the middle of class.

I can’t wait to find out.

“Do your worst, devil,” I challenge. He pushes past the waistband of my leggings before I can shove him away, wedging his hand between my clenched thighs. My panic rises as his touch makes warmth spread to my core, and I warn in a whisper, “Trey?—”

“Shh. Don’t want the whole class to hear you come on my hand, little demon.”

As his finger finds my clit through my panties, I bite back a moan, glancing past him to the student with his head on his arms, still asleep. No one else to witness what we’re doing unless they turn around to find us. Unless I make a sound that gives us away.

His finger strikes my clit, and I bite down on my lip so hard, a bead of copper hits the tip of my tongue. “Stop it,” I hiss, trying to push him away. But he only leans closer, putting more pressure on the hand between my legs.

“I love when you pretend to fight me.” His hot breath hits the shell of my ear, goosebumps dancing down my arms. “It makes me want to fuck the fight out of you.”

“ Devil .” When I spit the word, he rewards me by sliding a finger inside my pussy.

I hiss in a breath, tight walls clamping around his finger as he curls it and pumps, the pleasure mounting. My heart thuds faster. The professor’s gaze is glued to the video playing at the front of the room, but what if she glances back to check that we’re all paying attention? What if she spots me with a hand clamped over my mouth to mute the moans threatening to escape? What if Trey doesn’t stop his delicious torment and makes me come loud enough for the whole class to hear?

My nails bite into my palms. Asshole .

Even when the pleasure mixes with a sting as he thrusts in a second finger and my

eyes water, I can't stop him. I don't want to. My brain may still have an ounce of logic remaining, but the rest of my body has completely given in to him.

"You see how easily your body responds to me? You know how well we fit together. How perfect we are for each other."

This time, I don't bother objecting or biting back a retort. It's getting harder and harder to continue denying the truth. We're both matches lit from the same flame, ready to burn the whole world down with us.

"The little demon who's finally found her devil." His whisper makes an unstoppable trickle of warmth glide down my spine.

"You...aren't my...anything," I pant as his fingers keep up their merciless stroking, creating a mess in my panties as the pleasure comes to a boil and I squeeze my eyes shut. I won't be able to stop him from making me come, from making me scream loud enough for the whole class to hear.

"I'm your devil," he repeats, yanking up the sleeve of my black sweater to reveal the tattoo on my arm. "And you're my little demon."

He pops his fingers free so suddenly, I freeze. He can't be stopping. Not while my heart is hammering, thighs clenching, pussy pulsing and aching for release.

But that's exactly what he's doing. Punishing me for doing the same to him in his bedroom. Leaving me aching for a release that's just out of reach. "What are you?—"

"Get on your knees, Juliet."

"What?" I hiss.

He smirks in the darkness beside me with his legs spread and hands waiting on his thighs. “Get on your knees, take out my cock, wrap your pretty lips around it, and swallow every drop.”

My cheeks burn at the thought of giving him head right here in the middle of a fucking classroom. “There’s no way in hell I’m doing that.”

To my horror, his mouth falls open and he lets out a sharp moan.

A few students ahead of us stir, glancing back as my heart pounds against my ribcage. Thank god, the professor doesn’t hear anything from the front of the room as the video continues blaring from the speakers. My classmates shrug off the sound and return their attention to their phones or naps.

I send my elbow into his ribs. “Shut the fuck up!”

“Only if you crawl under this desk and blow me, pretty girl.”

Holding up a single finger, I let him know exactly how I feel about his disgusting, humiliating order, but when he opens his mouth again, I grit my teeth and slide to the floor.

As screwed up as it is, a dose of anticipation floods my veins while I shuffle under the desk, hidden from view, and stroke my hand over the bulge waiting for me in his pants. A groan rumbles low in his throat, but he manages to keep quiet this time. Somewhat. Most guys are damn near silent in bed or all they do is pant in your ear, but every sexy sound that emits from Trey Lamont’s mouth leaves me aching for more.

“In your mouth.” His low command makes my thighs clench.

Teeth grinding, I pull his zipper down and tug his cock out from the opening at the front of his boxers. He's rock-hard in my palm, and I press my thumb against the precum at the head, smearing it down as I stroke him. His cock throbs, needing more.

"Fuck you," I whisper. I can't let him know I'm enjoying a second of this, even if I am. Every single second. Even if I'm dying to get him in my mouth as much as he is.

"Yes, demon. Fuck me with your pretty little mouth."

I squeeze the base of his cock hard—too hard, making him wince and reminding him of who's really in charge here—and wrap my lips around his tip before my tongue darts out, flicking at the piercing. God, I can't wait to ride him and feel that piercing hit deep inside me.

He drops his head back, hand gripping my hair and tugging, nearly ripping the strands free from my scalp as my eyes water.

My teeth scrape the underside of his tip, just enough to remind him of who he's dealing with and what I'm capable of.

"Careful." To remind me of who he is and what he's capable of, he drives his hips up, cock and piercing hitting the back of my throat.

He coughs to cover up my gag so we don't attract more attention. Tears trickle down my cheeks now, but I don't wipe them away. I'll let them drip down and mix with my saliva, just like he wants.

I need to get this over with before he makes me gag again and we get caught.

Trey shoves my head down, forcing my mouth to bob along the length of his rigid cock. My abdomen lurches with a gag, but his cock in my throat muffles the sound.

He's going to suffocate me. They'll find me on the floor with his cum in my mouth, drowned in it. "That's my bad fucking girl."

With a hard grip at the base, I bob my mouth up and down, dragging my tongue over his shaft as I coat his skin with my saliva. I suck my cheeks in until my jaw is aching, hoping that gets him off faster.

I've never wanted a man to come in my mouth so much before, and I'm not sure if it's the fear of getting caught or the anticipation of his hot, salty taste on my tongue.

The vein on the underside of his shaft pulses, and I brace myself for his cum to shoot down my throat. I suck harder, move faster?—

Above our heads, the lights flick on.

I freeze as the sound from the video at the front of the room stops. My hand drops from his cock as I try to scramble away, but Trey holds me in place under the desk, pumping into my mouth so hard, all I can do is suck in air through my nose and grip his thighs like I'm on the edge of a cliff.

"You're not stopping until I'm finished." His growl makes arousal and fear pump through me in an overwhelming mix until his piercing hits my throat and the cum spurts out. I'm forced to swallow all of it, the salty taste coating my tongue. I can't help but whimper as I reflexively gag and struggle to breathe. "That's it. Every drop."

At the front of the room, the professor says something about an assignment or an exam. I don't know what the hell she's talking about until she dismisses us and Trey finally releases his hold on me.

I'm left panting under the desk as he tucks his cock back into his pants and zips up his fly. He grabs my arm, squeezing just above the Little demon tattoo. "Don't ever

question what I am to you again.”

His chair screeches as he stands and leaves me cold and aching for his warmth. He saunters back down the row, pounding his fist on the end of the table and stirring my sleeping classmate back to reality.

My jaw aches from blowing him and clenching my teeth.

With bleary eyes, my classmate blinks at me under the desk. My cheeks warm and I pat the disgusting ground. “There it is! Found it.”

I scramble out from under the desk, pretending to shove an invisible earring into my lobe and rushing out the door before anyone can speculate more.

Despite the wet ache between my legs, I can’t help the smile that crawls across my lips as I step out of the classroom.

The little demon who’s finally found her devil.

Chapter 14

Trey

At the hockey house, the place is silent. The house is where we sleep and fuck, not much else. Practice, games, workouts, classes, studying, and eating keep us out of the house most of the time. At least when Valentine's girl doesn't spend the night or the other Devils don't bring a puck bunny home, I can get some fucking shut-eye.

I'm about to pass out on the couch when the door slams, heavy footsteps heading into the living room. I hope for Ashby so I can ask him about Ned's phone, but it's Rockefeller.

He gestures over his shoulder with this thumb, that dumb grin on his face. "Some weird chick was just hanging around outside our door. Hot but weird."

I sit straight up, heart thumping. "What did she look like?"

"Didn't get a great look at her."

My jaw clenches. "You just said she was hot."

He shrugs. "She was wearing a long coat, but it looked like she had a great ass and tits underneath."

"What color hair did she have?"

“I don’t know. Red, maybe? Or it might’ve been brown. Hard to tell under the hood.”

The brunette I spotted lingering in front of the house the night I chased Juliet into the woods. I wrote her off as a puck bunny, but she took off when she saw me coming.

The gray sedan that was following me to Ned Miller’s property. The eyes I’ve felt on me all over campus. Could they all be the same person?

Maybe she hasn’t been staking out our house for the other Devils at all. Maybe she’s here for me.

I jump to my feet, rushing for the door.

Rockefeller flashes me an amused grin. “You got another stalker? Don’t tell Juliet.”

“What else?” I half-shout. Eye color, height, posture. I need to know all of it.

“I don’t know. She was kind of tall, I guess. Or maybe shorter.”

“That’s real helpful, Sherlock,” I grumble. I peer through the peephole, but there’s no one in front of our house.

A gush of cool air hits my burning skin as I swing the door open and scan the sidewalk.

But whoever she is, she’s already gone.

From the penalty box, I scan the bleachers. Paranoia makes every hair on the back of my neck stand up. Someone is following me, and I need to figure out who before they cause trouble for us.

Father must've hired them to tail me, to keep an eye on his troublemaker son. But if I'm being followed, they could find out what Juliet and I have been up to. They might already know.

She trusted me to help her get rid of Ned Miller's body. She's trusting me to help her find the two monsters still breathing. I won't let anything come between her and vengeance. Certainly not my father.

Up in the bleachers, Valentine's girl bounces and cheers when he blocks the puck from our net. Beside her, Juliet catches me watching her and smirks before flipping me off.

But she's in my jersey. She's in my fucking jersey .

Plenty of puck bunnies have worn my jersey before, but I never gave a shit. Only enough to brag that they wanted me more than any other asshole on the team.

But Juliet? Wearing my jersey and letting everyone at this game know she's mine? I want to make her strip down to nothing but my jersey before I fuck her in it.

After the game, I barely register our win as the guys hoot and holler in the locker room. The place reeks of sweat and ass, the mild scent of soap from the showers mingling with the body odor.

Rockefeller claps me on the shoulder, nothing but a towel slung low across his hips. He's got a big, goofy grin on his face. "So what'd you have to do to win her over?"

Behind him, Vanderbilt slips on a too-tight shirt with a scowl. "Must've cost him a few Gucci purses."

My hand curls into a fist, ready to deck him. "Juliet doesn't care about shit like that."

“How did you manage that one?” Valentine slips around the corner, arms folded as he leans against the lockers with brows creased. “I knew she had some kind of morbid fascination with you, but I thought it was more like a scientist studying a cockroach under a microscope, not a crazy but cool girl who wants to fuck a deranged psychopath.”

I shrug. “Must have something to do with my massive cock.”

Even though he’s not my biggest fan, Vanderbilt snickers. Rockefeller barks out a laugh.

Even Valentine chuckles before covering it with a cough. “You better not hurt her.”

“What if she’s into that?”

His eyes narrow at my smirk. “Don’t hurt her in a way she isn’t into.”

“Relax, Valentine. I like this one. I plan on keeping her.”

“Make sure of it. That girl? A lot of people care about her. You? Not so much.”

I slip my shirt over my head, wet hair dripping onto my shoulders. He’s right. No one in this world gives a shit about me. Except Juliet.

And if my father fucks this up by sending someone to keep tabs on me, if he comes between me and my little demon, I’ll kill him.

“If you notice anyone lurking outside our house or following me around, let me know.”

“You mean Juliet?” Valentine asks. “Hell no. I’ll let her do whatever she wants to

you.”

“Yeah, I’m not protecting you from her psycho ass,” Vanderbilt says.

“Of course you’re not. She’d have you on your knees begging for mercy in seven seconds.”

Vanderbilt smirks. “She’d have me on my knees begging for something.”

I take a lurching step toward him, but Rockefeller plants a hand on my shoulder before I can swing at our teammate. “Relax.”

“I’m not talking about Juliet. Someone else has been following me.” I nod to Rockefeller. “You saw her. So let me know if any of you spot someone suspicious lurking around.”

Valentine fucks off back to his locker while Vanderbilt rolls his eyes. “Paranoid much?”

Irritation stiffens my spine. “I’m not being paranoid.”

Rockefeller chuckles before clapping me on the shoulder. “We’re all being followed by puck bunnies, bud. Welcome to minor hockey stardom. She just better hope Juliet doesn’t find out about her, or she’s dead.”

Page 16

Source Creation Date: August 7, 2025, 1:59 am

Chapter 15

Juliet

Brandon hands us white nightgowns, and Autumn and I take them with shaky fingers. My stomach churns with nausea, legs weak and trembling.

He's going to make us sleep here. After everything those men did to us between these walls, he expects us to somehow close our eyes and turn our brains off for the rest of the night.

The tears on Autumn's face have dried, her hair a mess, and I can barely stomach looking at her. But the only other options are looking at Brandon or the floor, and I refuse to let him see how much he's broken me.

I slip out of the white dress I wore for him, now covered in disgusting fluids, and toss it as hard as I can at his face. He catches it with ease and I slip on the nightgown while Autumn does the same. She's a robot beside me, each movement stilted and awkward without a hint of emotion on her face.

The thin fabric reeks of mothballs, but at least it's clean. At least our torment is over.

I'm going to kill him for this. For all of it.

Brandon takes us both by the elbows, and I jerk away from him. "Don't touch me!"

Before, his touch was a strange, confusing mixture of nauseating and comforting. His

touch made me special. Now, it's nothing but repulsive.

A crease forms between his brows, mouth curving down. An expression I've never seen on his face before.

One that scares me.

Brandon's grip on my elbow is sturdy as steel this time, unshakable as I try to jerk out of his hold. Autumn lets him guide her without protest. She's done fighting.

Wordlessly, he leads us out of the room and down an empty hallway, our echoing footsteps the only sound until he drops Autumn's elbow to turn the knob on another door.

Run, I mouth to her. For these few seconds, she's free. At least one of us will escape.

But she only stares at me with empty eyes, and she doesn't budge.

She's too late.

Brandon opens the door to reveal another man waiting inside, preparing a lineup of tools beside a workbench. The buttons on his shirt are open halfway down, revealing the plane of his chest. Before he even speaks or turns to face us, I know he's different from the other men. His slacks and shiny shoes would be a costume on them, but they're a second skin on him.

When he finally turns to face us, he rolls his sleeves up to his elbows and gives us a close-lipped smile that, in any other situation, I might mistake for warm.

But the tools beside his workbench are sharp, glinting under the singular fluorescent lightbulb above his head.

“Welcome.” That one word is enough. Enough to make my mind scream at me to get the hell out of here.

I try to wrench out of Brandon’s grasp, but he shoves me and Autumn into the room, keeping the door shut from the other side as I scream and try to pry it open.

“Fuck you!” The shout tears through my throat.

When we’re dead, I’ll find him in hell and kill him all over again. Make it long and insufferable.

Someone pulls on my arm, and I jerk away like a feral cat, but it’s not the man in the room with us.

It’s Autumn.

Her eyes are round with fear as the man pulls her toward him with a twisted smile.

My heart lurches as I grab for her hand. “Don’t touch her!”

But I’m too late. He tugs her toward him harder, her cry like a kitten caught in a predator’s jaws, its mother too far away to save it.

When he’s got her fully encased in his arms, the man gives me a sour smile that turns my stomach leaden. “Pay attention. You’ll do everything she does.”

I can’t watch what he does to her. I drop to my knees and cover my ears, but I can’t drown out the sounds of her gags, her heaves, her cries.

But none of it compares to her screams.

They rattle my eardrums, worse than something from a horror movie, and all I can do is rock and hum and cover my ears and squeeze my eyes shut, the tears still flowing out because there's nothing I can do. I can't help her. I can't stop him.

My eyes are still glued shut when I realize Autumn's screams have stopped. When I feel the warm liquid seeping around my knees.

I dare to open my eyes.

A crimson pool flows around my knees. Stains my white nightgown.

Blood. Autumn's blood.

And she's not screaming anymore. She's not Autumn anymore.

My heart pounds harder than it ever has in my life as I slowly straighten, trying not to make even the smallest sound.

At his workbench, the man is busy with Autumn's body, arms and hands moving methodically, but I focus my gaze on the door. I don't want to see it. Don't want to witness what he's done to her.

When Brandon brought us to this room, he knew we wouldn't be leaving it alive. He left us here to die. To be murdered.

I need to get the fuck out of here.

The only other escape is a tiny window. But in the time I'd waste pushing it open and crawling out, he'd catch me.

That only leaves the door. Where the other men wait somewhere on the other side.

Autumn . Fresh tears blur my vision, but I blink them away. I'll cry for her later. I'll break into a thousand pieces knowing what happened to her, but right now, she'd want me to escape. She'd want me to run.

Before the man can spot me, I lurch for the door and yank it open.

A shout and a pair of footsteps thunder after me. They're hunting me. They won't let me leave this place of horrors alive.

But I'm a runner. I'm fast. The fastest on the team.

That's what Coach liked about me. That's what he told me, anyway. But what he really liked was that I was a vulnerable girl with absent parents and no one looking out for her. No one to stop him.

Another set of footsteps joins the man's behind me, both of them shouting at me to stop.

But I reach the front doors, yanking one open and bursting out, surrounded by darkness and no one to help me.

I race for the woodline while the men shout into the night. Autumn's blood trickles down my legs, my heart drums in my ears, and my bare feet scream as I sprint over rocks and dirt and branches, disappearing into the woods.

If they find me, I'm dead.

"Did you manage to get into Trey's phone?"

For a second, I'm sure I must've misheard Sienna over the din of the hockey fans shouting to each other and the players from the stands after the game. But then I

remember the lie I fed her. Right, Trey's phone. Not Ned's phone. "Not yet."

"Ask Finn when they leave the locker room." She nods to the Devils leaving the ice, eager to strip off their gear and hit the weight room for a postgame workout.

I spot Finn's jersey amongst the players. Right winger. I'm slowly learning the positions as Sienna repeats them to me every game. Most of my knowledge about hockey I've acquired against my will.

At this point, I don't have a choice but to ask Finn for help. I'm obviously not getting into Ned's phone on my own, and who knows how long Brandon will stay wherever he is. Who knows how long it will take him to grow suspicious of his friend's silence and take off. "Yeah, I'll ask him."

As most of the crowd makes its way out of the exits, a brunette remains seated, chin lifted, purse on her lap, and eyes trained on the Devils. On one Devil, in particular.

The back of Trey's hair is damp, sticking to his neck with sweat. He smirks when he spots me watching him and gestures to his own chest before mouthing, Nice jersey .

Why the hell is the brunette watching him like that?

He disappears into the locker room with the rest of the Devils and the brunette stands, descending the bleachers and heading for the exit. Her burgundy wool trench coat and shoulder-length, layered haircut tell me she's not a student or a puck bunny. Something about her face is artificially youthful. Botox, probably. But by the slight lines around her mouth and eyes, she must be at least in her forties. Her nose turns up at the end, brown eyes soft, lipstick a matte pink, the rest of her makeup elegant but minimal, freckles across her cheeks that make the dark shade of her hair seem unnatural, and a mole near the corner of her eye that somehow makes her more regal.

I nudge Sienna and nod to the woman. “Do you recognize her?”

Sienna tilts her head, lips pursing. “Hmm. I think I might’ve seen her around before? She looks vaguely familiar, maybe? Definitely not a student, though. Maybe one of the moms.”

I jump to my feet, rush down the steps, and march over to her before she can slip out of the building. She can’t be Trey’s mom back from the dead, so who the hell is she?

“Juliet—” Sienna calls.

Her shout catches the woman’s attention. She glances back and moves faster when she spots me. Oh, hell no.

“Wait!” But she’s out the door before I can catch up, and by the time I burst out of the exit, she’s disappeared into the crowd leaving the dark campus.

By the time I give up searching and head back inside, most of the Devils have emerged from the locker room. Trey, Damien, and Knox are swarmed by puck bunnies while Luke and Sienna are wrapped up in each other. Finn manages to extract himself from the group. Sometimes, he seems to like the attention; other times, it’s the last thing he wants.

I race to him and grab his arm, and he grimaces. “I need a favor.”

His brows furrow and he stares down at me wordlessly. Jesus, it’s going to take a special girl to deal with his silence.

I thrust Ned’s phone toward him. “Can you get this phone unlocked for me?”

He shrugs and takes it at the same time Knox appears behind him with his usual

goofy grin, clapping a hand on his friend's shoulder. "Whose phone are you trying to break into?"

"Trey's." I return my attention to Finn. "So are you going to do it or what?"

Finn is my last hope. I need to get into Ned's phone and find texts or emails or something between him and Brandon. This is my only tether left to finding him.

Wordlessly, Finn shoves the phone into his pocket.

I glance at Knox for a translation, and he smiles. "That's his way of saying he'll do it."

The Devils are absolutely trashed after partying to celebrate their victory. Nearly all of them are stumbling home, even typically graceful Finn. Knox has fallen twice, and Damien has hip-checked a car's side mirror and a lamppost, which he then proceeded to scold for five minutes. Sienna leans almost all of her weight against Luke, who isn't exactly stable himself.

I'm not used to being the only sober one in the group. One of two.

Beside me, Trey is steady on his feet. We held onto the same plastic cups all night, eyeing each other as we both refused to drink. I wasn't in the mood to get drugged, and apparently, neither was he.

Sienna's drunken smile falls away as she narrows her eyes at Trey, his hand wrapped protectively around my waist. Uh oh. I love my best friend—she's the sweet puppy to my feral black cat. But when she's drunk, the teeth come out. "Do you even know what her favorite color is?"

Trey lifts an amused brow before gesturing to my typical monochrome outfit. "Gonna

have to go with black.”

“We all could’ve guessed that,” Knox crows.

Sienna rolls her eyes. “That was an easy one. What’s her favorite number?”

“Got to be thirteen.” Luke fakes a shiver running down his spine. I flip him off.

“You know, I don’t think we’ve gotten around to discussing that very important information,” I tell her.

Without hesitation, Trey says, “Seven.”

I nudge him with my elbow. “How did you know that?”

My favorite number is completely unimportant information and yet Trey knowing the answer somehow feels important.

“What was the name of her childhood dog?” Sienna challenges.

“Is this an interrogation?” I blurt.

“Max,” Knox guesses.

Damien runs into another lamppost, but it barely fazes him. “Bella.”

“She’d definitely name her dog something cute like Teddy,” Luke says. “Ironically.”

“All of you shut up,” Sienna calls. “This is Trey’s test.”

He snorts. “Her parents didn’t let her have a dog.” Wow. He’s a better stalker than I

realized. “She’s lived in Wakefield all her life, she was the fastest runner on her cross-country team, she’s majoring in psychology, her middle name is Anne, her birthday is February twenty-seventh, and she wants to be a school counselor when she grows up. How did I do?”

“Great, actually.” Sienna brightens, satisfied as she flashes a smile my way. Trey is officially bestie-approved.

My skin tingles. Even if Trey learned all of this information by stalking me, no man has ever cared enough to know this much about me before. Even Brandon barely knew specifics about me when he was manipulating me into believing he cared about me. Marcus definitely never gave a shit. All any man has ever cared about is what’s beneath my clothes, not what’s in my head or my heart.

I poke his ribcage. “And your major is economics, your favorite color is red, your middle name is Aries, and your birthday is July third.”

He grins down at me, squeezing my hip. “You’re almost as good at stalking as I am.”

“Better,” I whisper.

Sienna can’t stop smiling, a knowing glint in her eyes.

When we reach the Devils’ house, Luke fumbles with his key until I snatch it from his hand with a huff and unlock the door myself. The Devils manage to squeeze their giant, stumbling bodies over the threshold.

“Everyone drink water,” I bark.

“Sorry, sweetheart,” Luke tells Sienna as he ambles into the living room and flops face-first onto the couch. “I can’t make it to my room. Too far.”

“That’s okay.” She flops onto the couch next to him, flinging her arm across his back and curling close. “Me neither.”

Trey smacks my ass with a hard sting before growling in my ear, “Get in my bed.”

I whirl and smack his ass as hard as I can, biting back the wince as the sting travels through my palm. I should’ve known a hockey player would have rock-hard glutes. “You get in your bed.”

A wolfish grin spreads and I don’t have time to object before he’s scooping me up and tossing me over his shoulder, heading for the hallway. I rain punches down on his back that he barely seems to register. “Put me down!”

“Is this consensual?” Sienna shouts. Even nearly passed out, she’s keeping an eye out for me.

“Yes!” Trey shouts.

“It’s consensual,” I admit. Whatever the hell Trey Lamont plans on doing to me in his room, I plan on letting him.

In his room, Trey doesn’t bother flicking on the light. I gasp when he drops me onto his bed, reminding me of the night we met at the haunt. Briefly, he leaves me there to search for something.

When he returns, his neon-red mask covers his face.

I grin.

“On your knees.” His command is low and distorted by the mask.

Outside the bedroom, he can get fucked if he thinks I'll obey his orders. But behind closed doors, when it's just us, I'll happily drop to my knees whenever he commands it. The carpet scratches my skin through my fishnets. "I've missed your mask."

His hand cradles my jaw. "Open up, little demon."

I do as he instructs. He unzips his fly and pulls out his hard cock, pushing it past my lips like he's been waiting all night to do this. I don't have a chance to tease his tip with my tongue or ease my mouth down his length slowly. He thrusts in, his shaft dragging along my tongue until the pierced tip hits the back of my throat.

My eyes sting as he pumps his hips over and over, holding my head in place with a firm grip on the back of my skull.

"This mouth is mine," he growls.

When his thrusts become more staccato, I dig my nails into his thighs, bracing for his hot cum to hit my throat. Instead, he jerks out of me, his throbbing, glistening cock standing erect as he pulls me to my feet. He spreads my legs and drags a finger over the space between my thighs.

I retreat from his touch. "I'm on my period."

"And?" His brows furrow in a mix of frustration and confusion. "That's extra lube."

Without another word, he carries me into the bathroom before setting me down and turning on the shower. "Take your clothes off."

Period sex isn't particularly kinky, yet I've never done it. Marcus's face scrunched up in disgust whenever I informed him it was that time of the month, while Brandon lost interest every time he discovered the pad in my underwear. A natural cycle of my

body that they somehow managed to shame without a single word.

Trey isn't like any man I've ever met before. He's deranged and unhinged and violent and dangerous. He's damaged and empathetic and loyal and protective. He accepts me just as I am.

You love him! I can practically hear Sienna squealing the words.

But even as the truth of those words sinks in, I can't bring myself to open my mouth and say them out loud. How the hell do you say words like that to someone like Trey Lamont? Who knows if people like us are even capable of love. This feeling between us is something else entirely. Something far more twisted and dark and insane.

Once I've removed my clothes, Trey yanks me toward him, his finger coiling around the string between my legs. His hard stare never leaves mine as he slowly eases the tampon out. "This comes out," he breathes, popping it free. "And I go in."

In a blink, he discards the tampon and pulls me into the shower with him. Steaming water rains down on us, soothing the knots in my shoulders and back. He's so mouthwatering like this, water soaking his hair, rivulets racing over my name carved into his chest and down his pecs.

His throat bobs as I trace a finger over every letter of my name, and he does the same to the Little demon tattoo on my arm. The scars we left on each other. How he marked me as his, and I marked him as mine.

Water races over the hard muscles at his shoulders, biceps, and abdomen. His long, intimidating erection still rock-hard and ready for me. My finger travels down from his chest to trace the lines of his abs until he sinks to his knees in front of me.

I shove at his shoulders. "What are you doing?"

“Tasting you,” he drawls like I’m stupid.

“You know that being on your period means blood comes out of there, right?”

He gives me a sideways grin before sliding a finger inside me. “The man you want isn’t afraid of a little blood.”

I gasp as his tongue strikes my clit, and he slides a second finger inside me, pulling the digits back to reveal a streak of blood. There’s no logical reason this should be so fucking hot. Yeah, I definitely have a blood play kink.

He moans when I start to stretch around him, his fingers sliding in and out of me with ease. The pleasure mounts and my pussy starts to clench until he pops his fingers out and swipes them back, back?—

I squeeze my ass, knowing exactly where this is headed. “What the hell do you think you’re doing?”

“I told you I’d be taking you here.” His other hand smacks my ass in emphasis, the crack loud and echoing in the shower.

“No, you didn’t.” I’m honestly shocked he hasn’t tried it already.

“Then I’m telling you now.” He spins me, flattening me against the wet wall of the shower with a hand on my back while the other swipes more blood up to my ass, swirling it around the hole before he tentatively dips a finger in.

I hiss at the stretch, trying to escape the invasive finger, but he keeps me locked in place.

“Relax.” He swirls a finger around my clit, the pleasure mounting again and

distracting me from the uncomfortable stretch. “That’s my girl. I’m going to fuck your tight little ass and you’re going to scream for me.”

Panic thrums through me. If I can barely take his finger, how am I going to take his cock?

Except with every swirl of his finger over my clit, the pleasure builds and my clenched walls relax around him. He drags more blood from between my legs, from my thighs, and pumps his finger easily into my virgin hole.

Then a sharp sting on my ass cheek makes me yelp.

He’s biting my ass. The same bite mark he tattooed on my skin forever.

“Bastard.”

He chuckles as he rises and bends over me, every naked, wet inch of him pressing against my back as he rubs at my clit and the head of his cock eases into my ass with a burning sting. “Scream as loud as you want, little demon.”

“Just do it,” I grit out, the mix of pleasure and pain bringing tears to my eyes. I brace my hands flat against the wall as he eases his cock inside me inch by inch. “Oh, fuck .”

He dips his fingers inside my pussy for more blood to coat the rest of his shaft. He was right—extra lube.

I cry out as he pushes in further, but the pleasure from the pressure on my clit keeps me from shoving him off.

When he rocks back and thrusts in, a scream rips from my throat.

“I fucking love that sound.”

I’m going to be so sore there tomorrow. Yet my pussy clenches, eager for more.

He growls in my ear as the slap of wet skin colliding fills our ears over the steady drum of the shower. “You take me so well, my bad fucking girl.”

“You’re worse than a devil. You’re evil incarnate.”

“That’s what you love about me.”

He says the word like it’s no big deal, but I stiffen.

“Yeah, pretty girl.” His breath hits my ear, goosebumps rising on my arms despite the hot water and steam. “I know how you really feel about me. I know how much you want me, how you spend every second thinking about me, how you can’t get enough of me.”

I gulp. For the first time since we met, he’s left me speechless. I can’t deny it, but I can’t confirm it either. I can’t say anything at all.

Even with his cock continuing to thrust inside me, his voice softens. “It’s exactly how I feel about you.”

Tears blur my vision, and I’m not sure if it’s from the overwhelming pleasure or joy or fear. Fear of what loving Trey Lamont could mean. Of the power it gives him over me. Of the pain he could cause. Fear that, at some point, this incredible, twisted thing between us is going to end. That I might wake up tomorrow and he won’t be here to chase me in a mask and fuck me into the dirt. Won’t be by my side telling me how brave and strong I am. That I won’t be able to find him in a crowd and know that he can read my mind with a single glance. Fear that, someday, our little game will end.

“It’s okay. You don’t have to say it.” His fingers drift over my shoulder, thumb massaging the space beneath my neck. For once, soothing instead of lustful or punishing. “I know.”

He’s always known. He’s been able to read my mind since we met. Anticipate my every move, predict exactly what I would do or say, understand the parts of me that I don’t always understand myself. The darkness that matches my own. The one I’ve been searching for.

His mouth latches onto my neck, making my knees weak as his fingers continue their merciless assault on my clit and his other hand pinches my nipple.

I cry out, thighs trembling and hands squeaking down the wall, too weak to keep myself upright.

Just when I think I can’t take anymore, when I fear his cock is going to tear me in half, pleasure like I’ve never felt before rockets through me, every muscle in my body clenching as my pussy pulses and my clit throbs beneath his touch. My eyes roll, the wall in front of me going black.

“ Fuck , Juliet.” He slams into me over and over until he finds his own release. He collapses against me, the feeling of his cock throbbing in my ass foreign and strangely satisfying as he spills every drop. “ Christ . That’s my girl.”

We’re both panting, glued to each other as we come down from our orgasms. He eases out of me slowly—not wanting to hurt me for once—and I gasp at the unfamiliar empty feeling.

He spins me, grinning as he pins my back against the wall. I wince, my ass already sore. But I can’t wait to do it again. He strokes a tender finger down my cheek. “You did amazing.”

“I know,” I tell him, breathless.

“Next time, I’m fucking your ass while you ride my knife handle.”

When I open my mouth to object, he shuts me up with a kiss. One that steals my breath away and sends my heart soaring up to my throat. His lips explore mine, tasting, biting, tugging, before he slides his tongue against mine, savoring me.

Trey smacks my ass, making me wince until a noise makes both of us pause.

A rattling sound. Like someone trying to turn a doorknob.

Chapter 16

Trey

I yank the shower curtain open. “Fuck off!”

Luckily, the door is locked, so whatever Devil is fucking with us can’t get in. These drunk motherfuckers need to get better hobbies.

I jump out of the shower into the humid air, the mirror over the sink covered in a thick layer of condensation, and wrap a towel around my waist. Water tracks behind me as it streams down in tiny rivers, wet hair dripping onto my shoulders.

Behind me, Juliet clutches the curtain to her, lips pursed at the disturbance. At least they had the decency to wait until we both came.

When I open the door, no one is hovering on the other side. They left my bedroom door inched open. A quick glance tells me they left the rest of the room undisturbed. Fluffy is usually a good deterrent, even in a tank.

Apparently, in my hurry to get my cock in Juliet’s mouth, I forgot to lock the bedroom door behind us.

While Juliet scrambles to redress, I stomp out of the room. “Which one of you bastards is fucking with us?”

On the couch, Valentine and his girl don’t even stir, fully passed out. Rockefeller

shovels cereal in his mouth from his perch on the counter while Vanderbilt stuffs his face with eggs like he hasn't eaten for a week.

"Don't know what you're talking about," Rockefeller mumbles around a full mouth.

"Someone was just in my room." I'm done with this shit now. "Who was it?"

A door squeaks and Ashby slinks out, a phone in his hand. He scans the room before slipping the phone into his pocket.

"Were you the one who was trying to get into my bathroom?"

His eyes are flat, like I'm an idiot for even suggesting it.

"None of us want to see your cock." Vanderbilt nods at Juliet who emerges from my bedroom, wet hair sticking to her dress. "No matter how badly we might want to see those tits."

Juliet flips him off. "You're all perverts."

I take a dangerous step toward him. "Talk about her again."

He smirks but keeps his fucking mouth shut. Wise.

Ashby closes the distance between him and Juliet, handing her the phone. She frowns down at it until her eyes light up. "Oh my god, you got into it!"

He only nods and stuffs his hands into his pockets. I wish they all kept their mouths shut as much as he does.

"What are you looking for?" Knox calls. "His dick pics or something?"

What the fuck?

A smirk spreads across Juliet's face as she pins me with mischievous eyes. "Finn got me into your phone. One point for me."

Right. Playing this off as another part of our game. Smart. "Good one. Let me help you find the dick pics."

My heart thumps as we both try to play it cool, swiping through Ned's phone to his texts. A few phone numbers without names attached. Juliet clicks through each of them before finally finding texts with a message from Ned that says, Hey Bran?

Juliet's breath catches. Bran must be Brandon.

The Devils have long since lost interest in our little game, raiding the fridge and stuffing their faces.

Brandon and Ned have developed their own language that takes some decoding. Careful word choices for plausible deniability. But finally, we find a clue.

Whispering Pines Campground.

Brandon

Cabin's not bad.

He sent the text the day before we showed up at Ned's place.

"We've got him," I murmur.

Juliet's already searching for the location. She won't let him slip out of her grasp

again.

“Let’s go to bed,” she purrs, taking my hand.

I glare at the Devils. “Stay the hell out of my room.”

“Tell your sister that.” Rockefeller shovels another spoonful of cereal in. “She said she was going to knock. I didn’t think she’d be barging in.”

My blood goes cold, and in my hand, Juliet’s palm stiffens. “What are you talking about?”

He lifts a brow. “She came knocking and asked for you.”

“I don’t have a sister.”

Rockefeller stops mid-chew, and the other two Devils finally turn to face us. “Well. That’s what she said.”

“What did she look like?”

“Was she wearing a trench coat?” Juliet asks.

Rockefeller’s brows furrow as he tries to remember. The dude is useless. “Maybe? Definitely a long coat. Looked like an older sister. I guess she didn’t really look much like you, though. Just assumed it was a half-sibling or step-sibling situation.”

“It’s not.” I grit my teeth, the hand not holding Juliet squeezing into a fist. “What was her name?”

He shrugs. “Didn’t say.”

“Give us something, Knox,” Juliet snaps. “What did she look like?”

Rockefeller glances at the other Devils for help. “Uh . . . brown hair.”

“Shoulder-length?” she asks.

All three Devils nod.

“Did she look like she had Botox? Forties? Brown eyes?”

Who the hell is she thinking of? For once, I can’t read her mind. I’m in the dark. My chest tightens. Now that I’ve gotten used to her in the dark with me, I don’t like being here without her.

Rockefeller rubs the back of his neck. “Uh...”

“Yes.” The first word I’ve heard Ashby utter all night, resolute.

“Pale skin? Freckles across her cheeks?”

“What’s going on, Juliet?” I shake her hand, still clasped in mine.

She chews her lip, lowering her voice. “I saw a woman watching you at the game. Something just seemed...off about her.”

The eyes I’ve felt on me around campus. The sedan that followed me.

“Oh shit!” Rockefeller half-shouts. “Do you think it’s that girl you warned us about in the locker room?”

“He’s full of shit,” Vanderbilt grits out. “Nobody’s following him around except that

psycho.” He nods to Juliet. “He’s paranoid.”

My heartbeat echoes so loud in my ears, I almost don’t hear myself ask, “What color lipstick was she wearing?”

She blanches. “How do you know she was wearing lipstick?”

“Juliet.”

“Pink.”

“Did she have a mole? Right here?” I point to the corner of my eye, hoping with every pulse of blood through my veins that Juliet will deny it.

Because it can’t be her. It can’t be. She’s dead.

My little demon’s blue eyes widen. “Yeah, she did.”

Fuck . I can’t swallow around the lump in my throat. “So it is her.”

“Who?”

“She’s alive.” She’s alive, she’s alive, she’s alive. Fuck . “Rachel.”

Rachel is still fucking out there. I assumed my father took care of her years ago. Made our problem go away forever.

But he let her live. Let her live long enough to come back to haunt me.

Now she’s somehow found me again. She’s been following me for god knows how long. She dyed her hair from its signature strawberry blonde to brown so I wouldn’t

recognize her from a distance.

Why is she showing her face again? And what the fuck does she want from me?

In the passenger seat, Juliet shivers despite the heat blasting from the vents. As soon as I whispered Rachel's name, Juliet flew out the door and shouted for the bitch to show herself. But by then, she was long gone.

I made a reservation at the campground as soon as it opened this morning—we couldn't risk Brandon taking off again, especially without any clue about where he might head next. According to the owner, the water is shut off for the winter, but we're welcome to stay in a cabin.

An unusual silence has settled over me and my little demon since we left campus. She can't stop thinking about everything she's going to do to Rachel, and I can't stop thinking about everything I'm going to do to Brandon.

The pieces of shit who hurt the one we love. We'll make them suffer exactly the way they deserve.

Despite her trembling thighs and chattering teeth, Juliet's eyes blaze like blue fire. "We'll find her next. We'll make her pay too. She won't get away with what she did to you, Trey. I promise."

"I know." I grab her hand and kiss her fingers, her delicious amber scent coiling up my nostrils. I'd inhale every inch of her if we had the time. When this is finished—all of it, every one of them wiped off this earth—that's all I'll do. Spend every second of my life wrapping myself up in her, breathing her in, counting my blessings for finally finding my perfect little demon.

When we finally reach the campground and park beside the cabin reserved under my

father's name, I nod to Juliet's outfit. "Why is it always a white dress?"

Before we left campus, she ditched her usual jewelry. Weird seeing her without the white gold studs and hoops. The tattoo I inked on her arm is obscured by the lace sleeve of her dress, soft and innocent for a girl so hard and vicious. I'd love her in any color, but I miss her in black. This is her costume—not her.

"That was his favorite color on me." She keeps her chin high, shoulders back. But she's still shivering. "When I kill him, I want him to see the girl he hurt. And I want him to know that he didn't bury that girl—she's a fighter, and she's the one who will bury him."

Despite the surety in her tone, Juliet is still shivering, her normally fiery blue eyes round and soft, glued to the single light shining from the lone occupied cabin.

For the first time, I can see her the way he must have—a frightened, vulnerable girl with no one to protect her.

Hot tears sting my eyes as my hands tighten around the steering wheel hard enough to rip it from the dashboard. He put her through hell, and she shouldn't have to face him all over again. She deserves so much fucking better than the shit hand she's been dealt.

"You don't have to go through with it." In the darkness, she doesn't speak. Not sure she even hears me or if her mind is somewhere else entirely. The same place she used to go when he was hurting her. When they each took their turns. "You can stay in the car, and I'll handle it. Autumn would be proud of you for coming this far. She'd understand."

Juliet isn't just doing this for herself—she's avenging a girl whose life was stolen. Stopping the monsters from sinking their claws into more victims.

Slowly, Juliet turns to face me, the same bright tears glistening. The rage returned. There's my girl. My little demon. "No. I need to face him. For Autumn, and for me." Her hands clench into fists on her lap as she returns her attention to the cabin. "He made me so afraid. In his final moments, he'll be afraid of me."

Chapter 17

Juliet

I'm dead.

There are at least four of them, and they're all bigger and stronger than me. They're all willing to do the unthinkable. They won't stop until they find me and silence me forever.

Boots and sneakers clatter over the brush as the men try to find me in the darkness among the trees. The dark is the only thing keeping me alive right now. The dark the only difference between life and death.

My heart pounds impossibly harder as their footsteps and shouts approach. They're only a few yards away now.

The air is fresh out here, far from the pollutants of suburbia or city life. Like honeysuckle and newly sprung grass. Unfairly clean and enticing for a place that hides so many horrors.

I retreat a step, the heel of my bare foot slipping and splashing into a shallow stream behind me.

The cool water hits my skin, and my chest seizes, the splash undoubtedly loud enough to alert them about exactly where to find me.

Before I can gasp or scream, a hand covers my mouth.

My heart stops.

But the hand isn't rough or clammy or smelly. The scent is sweet, soft, like a vanilla candle.

"Did you hear something?" a man shouts.

"Over there!"

They would've heard my gasp or scream. They would already be sprinting in this direction if the hand covering my mouth had been a second too late.

"It's okay." The faintest whisper in my ear.

A woman's voice.

My heart kickstarts back to life. Is she a prisoner here too? How did she survive them?

"I'm going to get you to safety. But you have to keep quiet."

The footsteps are approaching, but we're frozen, still hidden in the shadows. For now.

"We're going to run to my car, and I'll get you home." Her voice is barely audible, even with her mouth a mere inch from my ear. "You have to promise not to scream. We can't let them find us."

She could be one of them. A woman sent to lure me back into their trap.

But my only choice is to trust her. My only chance at escaping with my life.

I nod, and when the woman slips her hand from my lips, I keep my mouth shut.

She takes my hand and leads the way along the stream, guiding us as silently as possible between the trees and away from the men searching for me before we break past the treeline and back onto the short, perfectly manicured grass. A stunning estate with the ugliest secrets.

“Run.”

She still doesn't let go of my hand as we sprint for a car waiting on an empty road. Or is it a driveway? I can't tell. This place is like another world.

I barely notice the pain lancing through my bloody, dirty feet as they slap over the grass. But the shouts aren't approaching. They haven't spotted us. Yet.

The woman swings the back door open. “Curl up on the floor!”

She eases the door shut behind me as quickly and soundlessly as she can, putting the car in neutral and allowing it to silently roll down the slight incline without turning on the engine or the lights. Without giving us away.

For a second, my chest squeezes painfully. We have to go back for Autumn. We can't just leave her here.

But there's no saving her now.

When the woman finally turns on the engine, the car quickly picks up speed. Nausea churns in my gut. I want to vomit, but I can't ruin the suede interior after she saved me from Autumn's fate.

“It’s safe.” Her voice is louder, warm and comforting. “You can come up here now.”

I crawl to the passenger seat on shaky legs. Trembling harder than they have after any meet or race.

“If you tell me where you live, I’ll take you back to your parents.” Her jaw is tight, knuckles white from where she grips the steering wheel. “You need to tell them what happened to you.”

My stomach twists. There’s no way I can tell them what happened. How can I explain how I ended up here? Explain what I’ve been doing with my cross-country coach for months? He said everyone would hate me if they knew. I’ll get kicked out of school, and our family will be ostracized. My parents will never look at me the same if they know.

“Do you know who brought you here?” she asks.

“My coach.” The words are hoarse leaving my throat. I can’t bring myself to say his name.

The woman nods and clears her throat like she’s fighting back tears. “You need to tell your parents what he did.”

I can’t bring myself to argue. To ask any questions about who she is or where we just fled or who those men were. I can’t form the words. Can’t get my mouth to open or my tongue to move.

Maybe I should be screaming or sobbing, but numbness washes over me. I don’t know when I’ll ever feel anything again.

The tires rattle over a long bridge suspended above inky water just as they did when

Brandon brought us here.

Somehow, the trip back home passes in a blink. A rush of air leaves my lungs when we pull up in front of the familiar property. A breath I've been holding since I escaped that house.

She really brought me home. I'm safe. I'm alive.

All I manage is a quiet "Thank you."

The woman merely nods.

I open the door, and under the harsh overhead light, I can tell for the first time how beautiful she is. A delicate nose, soft lips, dark hair, and kind, glistening green eyes. "Are you going to be okay?"

She escaped them too. She must've gone through the same horrors. Maybe worse.

My rescuer blinks away the tears before they can slip out. "Tell your parents everything. So they can help you."

She doesn't drive away until I knock on the front door.

My feet ache, knees and legs tremble, arms leaden, but I'm here.

The door squeaks open. My father wipes the sleep from his eyes, brows pulling together when they land on me. On my disheveled hair. On my bloody dress. His confused, alarmed voice: "Juliet?"

Followed by my mother's scream.

Trey's smile is soft. One I've never seen from him before. One that makes my heart skip. Fierce pride radiates from his green eyes as he brings my hand to his lips. The brush of contact lights me on fire.

Despite everything he's done to me, every opportunity we've taken to one-up each other and get revenge in our sick, twisted ways, I somehow feel safer with him than with anyone else. Safer than I've ever felt in my entire life. Like as long as I have him by my side...

"I'll be okay," I promise, before slipping my hand from his and opening the door.

"Be careful, Juliet." His warning before the door shuts behind me settles deep in my bones. The way he says my name...it haunts me in the best way.

I clutch my flimsy jacket to me. The more skin I can have exposed, the better. The less he'll be able to resist.

My heart pounds harder with every step in the darkness over the dirt trail. Beneath my Docs, the tufts of grass whisper. A ghostly finger trails down my spine when I step into the glow of the light casting from the window.

You're okay. You're okay now. I'm here. You're so fucking brave.

I force oxygen in through my nose, filling my lungs until slowly breathing out. In, out. In, out. Trey is with me. He's right behind me, watching my every move. Just as he has since we met.

You're not going to let him stop you. He's nothing—you're everything.

An unfamiliar feeling swells in my chest, bringing an impossible smile to my lips. A mix of hope and safety and love. As insane as it is, that's what this has to be. Love.

With Trey's reassuring words echoing in my ears, I lift my knuckles and knock.

In the beats of silence that follow, I hold my breath.

Nothing. Nothing.

I knock again, still not breathing, lungs straining for oxygen until I worry I might pass out?—

The jangle of a lock turning and I suck in air.

The knob twists.

And then the door opens.

Silence falls between us when the creak of the door comes to an abrupt halt. His thick brows are furrowed, a demand on his lips to know who the hell is knocking at his cabin door in a vacant campground after dark until recognition dawns.

His dull blue eyes are just about all that remains unchanged. What once was the flat stomach of a runner is now distended over his sweats. A few new wrinkles etched into his forehead and around his mouth, bags beneath his eyes, and a hairline receding to display more of his forehead and temples. A freckle on his chin I don't remember, and he's somehow shorter, no longer the larger-than-life presence of my memories. And were his bare feet always so gnarly? Have I ever seen his feet before? Now I can't remember.

In my memories, he's tall and fit, constantly raking his hand through his full head of hair, and always smiling. A radiant grin that lit up his whole face whenever his gaze landed on me, whenever I slid into the passenger seat of his truck, whenever he pulled over onto the side of the road or took me to our spot, whenever he pulled me

onto his lap and slid his hand under my skirt while insisting I was the one in control.

He's not that man anymore. He never will be again. I'll make sure of it.

This time, I don't get that smile.

This time, I'm the one who gets to smile.

"Juliet?" he whispers. Like he's seeing a ghost. "You...you changed your hair."

I almost laugh. Other than the white dress, I'm unrecognizable from the girl I was when he knew me, especially when I'm wearing my piercings. "Yeah. I got some new ink too. Can I come in?"

He doesn't stand aside to let me in. Instead, he scans the campground like he's looking for the setup. Thank god it's dark enough that he doesn't spot Trey waiting in the car for his opportunity to join us. "What are you doing here? How did you even find me?"

"You said when I was an adult, we could be together. I thought you'd want me to find you."

That's what he promised me, over and over, when I whined about not being able to tell anyone about my first serious boyfriend. Not being able to go on dates or act like a real couple. When you graduate, when you're eighteen, then we can be together. I promise. Now, he doesn't say anything. Because that promise was a load of bullshit. He didn't want me at eighteen. He didn't want a graduate. He didn't want an adult.

When he still doesn't say anything, I add, "Please. Can we just talk? About everything? I have a lot to explain."

I wait seven heart-stopping seconds before he finally nods and retreats to let me in.

My heart thunders with every step I take over the threshold and into the cabin that smells of wood and dust, the air damp and chilly when he shuts the door behind me.

I try my best to fight the smile that's eager to crawl across my face. He knows me as the girl I was; he has no idea what kind of woman I've become. What I'm capable of now. He believes he's still the one with the power here.

He has no idea.

"Coffee?" He points at a half-empty jug.

"Sure. Thanks." Accepting puts him at ease, but I won't drink or eat anything he gives me. I won't take anything from him ever again.

In the other half of the room, a fireplace crackles with burning wood, the only source of heat.

"So where have you been for the past few years?"

"Here and there." He forces a smile as he sets the lukewarm mug of coffee down in front of me. "Are you in college now?"

"Yeah. I'm studying psychology."

"That's good. You were always so smart, even as a kid." The thought of him remembering me as the thirteen-year-old kid he met turns my stomach. "Are you still running?"

"Of course." An easy lie. Running used to be my catharsis. When he stole that from

me, I turned to inking and piercing my body. The pain numbed my racing thoughts, helped drive him out of my mind at least for a little while. Now, I run only when forced or when my boyfriend is chasing me.

Boyfriend . Trey would probably roll his eyes at the word, too casual for what he truly is to me.

“It makes me feel close to you again when I do.”

At that, Brandon’s eyes grow hard. He’s done playing nice. Dropping the act. “You realize it was your lies about me that separated us.”

I tilt my head, feigning confusion. “What did I lie about?”

“You told your parents that I was a...predator.” He spits out the word like that’s not exactly what he was. Is. “That I hurt you. Your parents threatened the school with legal action. As soon as I caught wind of it, I knew I’d go down for crimes I hadn’t committed. So I was forced to leave town and start over like a guilty man without a trial.”

Now my blood is boiling. One hand curls around the mug, the other curls into a fist on my thigh beneath the table, the lace fabric scraping along my skin.

After all this time, he still believes he’s the victim. That he truly did nothing wrong. He’s delusional, convincing himself of his own lies. “You sold me to those men. You sold me to be abused and killed . Me and Autumn.”

They never found her. How could they? I didn’t know where Brandon took us. I didn’t know any of the men who hurt us or the name of the woman who saved me. Brandon skipped town before they could question him further, disappearing and slipping under the radar. They couldn’t find any missing teenagers named Autumn.

She could've been stolen from any part of the world. Maybe Autumn wasn't her real name, but the name they gave her. I'll never know.

Brandon grabs my hand. "That wasn't supposed to happen." His eyes are round, pleading. "No one was supposed to die."

He's lying. Every word out of his mouth since I met him has been a lie. The only language he speaks.

I slip out of his grasp before my knife stabs through his hand on the table, sinking through flesh and cartilage and into the wood.

His scream rattles the tiny cabin.

"Don't touch me." I stand as he tries to grab for the knife. But I catch his arm and wrench it back, back, back until there's a satisfying pop .

Brandon screams again, his shoulder out of its socket.

"You listened to us scream for hours. You sent her to that room to die. Both of us." I grab a poker used to stir the coals in the fireplace and stick it in the flames, returning to him when the tip is red-hot. "Now, it's your turn to scream."

Despite the dislocated shoulder and the sweat beading on his forehead, Brandon manages to rip the knife free from his hand.

Blood coats the blade as he jumps to his feet, whirls on me, and lunges.

Chapter 18

Trey

The bastard locked the door.

As soon as I heard his scream, I grinned and strolled to the cabin to give my little demon a hand.

But now she's the one screaming, and my heart drops. Flashbacks of that night in Ned Miller's shed come racing back. Almost losing her. I won't let that happen again. None of these motherfuckers are going to lay another finger on her.

I scramble to a window, but it doesn't budge. The next is locked too. My pulse is ready to beat out of my neck when I finally find a window that squeaks open and heave myself inside, landing with a hard thud on the wood floor. A few of the nails in my tool belt scatter, but I don't have time to grab them.

On my feet, I sprint out of the sole bedroom to find Brandon wielding a knife and Juliet a long poker. With both hands, she swings it and manages to smack the knife from his hands, sending it flying and skittering across the floor.

She takes the opportunity to lurch forward and stab him with the poker.

He screams over the hiss of burning skin.

I grin and stride toward the knife resting against the wall. The blade is bloody, but a

quick scan over Juliet tells me it's not her blood.

That's my girl.

Brandon's wild gaze darts between me and Juliet, unsure which one he should fear more. "You?"

I freeze. But he can't know me. That's impossible. He's never met me.

"Me." I nod at Juliet. "Hers."

She bares her teeth in a maniacal grin. "He's my devil."

"What the fuck is going on?" Brandon simpers over the burn on his chest and the stab wound on his hand, unsure which one hurts more.

As I slowly close the distance between us, his eyes widen. Realizing which one of us is bigger, stronger, faster.

He attempts to make a break for it, but I grab him. He screams, his shoulder out of place as I drag him and shove his ass into a chair.

Juliet keeps the hot poker trained on him, the threat imminent, while I wrap one of his hands under the arm of the chair and reveal my tool belt.

"You know what's going on. Did you really think you'd be able to hurt her and get away with it? Her?" Not my little demon. Not my strong, brave, beautiful demon. "Not a chance."

Brandon's throat bobs, but his sinister eyes blaze with ire. "I didn't hurt her. She wanted every second of it. Did she tell you that part? How she threw herself at me

and then cried assault?”

Beside me, she stiffens. I bet Rachel would say the same. Groomers think because they didn't pin us down and force us, what they did wasn't wrong.

We'll show him how wrong he is.

“She told me everything I need to know.”

I hold a nail to Brandon's hand and reveal the hammer from my tool belt. He whimpers, a frightened, pitiful sound.

“This is for trapping me in that house,” Juliet purrs, before I smack the nail with the hammer.

He bellows, jerking in the chair in a desperate attempt to escape. But his hand nailed to the chair, my elbow against his throat, and my knee in his gut keep him in place.

He's sobbing by the time I've nailed the other hand to the chair, red-faced with snot dribbling out.

“She told me how you took advantage of a vulnerable girl with no one around to protect her.” I raise my voice to be heard over his cries. “How you manipulated her into believing she was the one who started it, that she was the one to blame, that you actually gave a shit about her, even though every second of it was all for you. How you handed her over to monsters like you. You didn't give a fuck about her, you hurt her, and that's the biggest mistake you've ever made.” I slam my elbow into his throat, making him choke on his sobs. “You underestimated her. But that's a mistake you'll never make again.”

Beside me, Juliet blinks away tears. We understand each other like no one else ever

has. I don't need to walk in her shoes because I've lived it too.

We both grew up with monsters in our closets, but now we're slaying them. Together.

"Never," she agrees.

From the tool belt at my waist, I pull out a machete with a soft hiss. The blade long and imposing. Sharp enough to hack through brush. To turn flimsy skin into ribbons.

Brandon's feet scramble uselessly in an attempt to escape the impending threat. "Please, don't! Please don't kill me!"

I tip my head back with a laugh loud enough to make him freeze. Juliet beams at me like I'm the one she's been searching for too. "Don't worry. I'm not going to kill you."

His eyes dart between us, terrified and confused. I can practically hear his heart pounding.

I hold out the machete to Juliet. She tosses the hot poker and accepts the new weapon with a wicked grin. My heart soars as her fingers wrap around the handle.

"She is."

Chapter 19

Juliet

I start with the eye first. I carve it from his skull, his screams my melody just as mine were his. His and Craig's and Ned's. I leave the other eye in place so he can see the rest of my vengeance coming.

Next are holes in his ears. In his nose. A slash over his brow.

"This is for every piercing and tattoo I got to numb the pain of the memories you gave me." I draw the knife across his bicep, and he wails. "For everything you let them do to me that night."

I slice through his flesh in every spot I inked on my own body. Every place he touched.

He hollers and writhes, blood pouring and pooling at my feet.

"You have no idea how long I've been waiting to do this. How many times I fantasized about all the ways I could hurt you worse than you hurt me."

Sneaking into his house at night and drawing a blade across his throat while he slept. Setting a fire that he couldn't escape. Cutting off his balls and letting him bleed out slowly.

The world would tell me I should want to be a better person than the monster who

hurt me. But I want to be worse. I want to inflict hours of suffering before his inevitable demise, so the final memories he takes to his grave are nothing but pain and misery. That's what he deserves.

Sometimes, reality is better than your fantasies.

“ Please , Juliet. Stop.” His pleas for his life are his new mantra. I ignore him, just as he ignored our begging and pleading.

Another slice across his skin, crimson liquid blooming in its wake. “You will never hurt another girl again. You will never hurt me again.”

His skin has paled, the blood loss bringing him close to the end. I don't have much time left.

But I'm not finished with him yet.

“Tell me his name.”

“Who?” he pants. His breaths are shallow, chest heaving.

I place the machete against his throat. “The man who killed Autumn.”

The final monster from that night. I won't be able to sleep again until I've avenged her.

Autumn didn't deserve what happened to her, but they do. I need to find him. The murderer.

Breathless, Brandon sputters, “Ask him.”

“Who?”

He nods at something over my shoulder.

At Trey.

My spine goes rigid and I turn slowly. Behind me, Trey is wide-eyed, uncertainty etched into his face. His usual cocky assuredness gone.

How the hell does Brandon know him? He didn't ask who Trey was when he stormed into the cabin. He said you . Like they'd already met.

“What is he talking about?” I snap.

“I don't know.” Trey shakes his head, genuinely as confused as I am.

I press the blade harder against Brandon's throat and turn back to face him. “Tell me his name!”

But Brandon's eyes are shut. His chest isn't moving.

“Fuck!” I bring the machete down on his shoulder with both hands, but his eyes don't burst open. He doesn't stir.

He's dead.

My coach is dead. The man who started it all. Who led me down this path of pain and destruction.

Dead before I could get the name of Autumn's killer. Of the man who tried to kill me.

“No!” I stab the machete into his chest, his stomach, his arms, anywhere I can reach until Trey finally rests his heavy hands on my shoulders. The same way he did that night at the haunt but not to drag me away this time.

“You stopped him,” Trey murmurs in my ear. “Brandon’s gone. You did it.”

“I didn’t!” My voice cracks on the wail. “He’s still out there! He killed Autumn, and he’ll get away with it!”

Trey increases the pressure on my shoulders just slightly. Reassuring. “He won’t. We’ll find him. We’ll figure out a way.”

I blink away the tears, chanting Trey’s reassurances in my head. We’ll find him. We’ll figure out a way . We’ve come this far. There’s no way I’m stopping now.

As long as I have my masked man by my side, we’ll avenge Autumn. We’ll stop the man who killed her, even if it takes a lifetime to find him. I will never give up.

My arms are trembling by the time I drop the machete. Turns out, stabbing and killing a man is exhausting work.

Trey picks up the machete and hovers it over Brandon’s thumb. He severs it with a satisfying thud .

When he slips the thumb into a plastic bag, I kick the eye next to my toes, sending it flying across the room.

Brandon’s slumped, lifeless body is real. He’s gone. Finally . My chest already feels lighter, a thousand pounds lifted off me.

He can’t hurt me anymore, or anyone else.

“Ready to burn this place down?” Trey straightens, pocketing the thumb.

We’re both covered in Brandon’s blood, my white dress ruined. Just as I hoped.

“Yes.” We brought plenty of lighter fluid and gasoline to make sure there’s not a trace of Brandon left when the fire department shows up.

Trey’s boots echo in the silent cabin as he closes the distance between us and grips my face with slick, bloody hands before crushing his mouth to mine.

Shock freezes me until I melt into him. Our lips move together like a choreographed dance we’ve done a hundred times.

He tugs me closer until my body is flush against his, slipping his tongue into my mouth and wrenching a moan from my throat as my limbs turn to jelly.

My unhinged Romeo. My masked man. My devil.

Mine .

I’m breathless by the time he finally pulls away. He’s beaming again. He kissed me. We’ve fucked and killed together, so a single kiss shouldn’t be this mind-blowing, but it is. He trusts me in a way he hasn’t trusted anyone since Rachel hurt him. Little by little, we’re both healing. Together.

“You know how fucking proud of you I am?” His deep, warm voice makes a balloon of joy inflate in my chest.

Trey Lamont is proud of me. Proud of me for getting the revenge I’ve fantasized about for years. The unhinged man who needs to be imprisoned or institutionalized is proud of me.

And I couldn't be happier.

I clear my throat and force a healthy dose of sarcasm into my voice. "Thank you for helping me. Even if I didn't need it."

He snorts and bends to grab the abandoned knife I used to stab Brandon's hand. He cleans the blood off the blade with his shirt. "Right. You don't need me for anything, do you?"

"Exactly," I challenge as he approaches me with that knife and a wicked grin.

"We'll see about that."

Before I can anticipate his next move, Trey drops to his knees in front of me. "What are you?—"

With a flash of the knife, he slices me open.

I cry out as a bright red line blooms across my thigh, the pain shooting from my leg to my brain.

Knife still clutched in his hand, his tongue laps up my blood greedily. He groans, sending a shiver down my spine. "Mmm. You're fucking delicious."

He knows this is what I need. A distraction from the agony of missing my chance to avenge Autumn. From the fury that Brandon died before I could force the name from his lips. How his final words were a lie that Trey would somehow know the name of Autumn's killer.

I gasp when he cuts a twin slice into my other thigh, sucking at the wound like a man dehydrated after days in the desert.

I want to be held at knifepoint and taken against my will. Cut before he licks the blood off my skin.

Even with a corpse mere feet away, he's determined to make all my fantasies come true. Each one I whispered to him that night at the haunt when we were nothing more than a masked man and his all-too-willing prey.

He flips the knife, blade pointed at the floor and his grip at the bolster. I gulp as he trails the long, intimidating handle up my bare leg. Even with the flame in the fireplace snuffed out to nothing but coals, I'm burning up.

With the butt of the handle, he presses against the space between my legs, pushing down hard when he reaches my clit.

I gasp, jerking forward as my hands land on his shoulders.

"You're going to ride it." His voice is gravelly, and my blood boils. A threat or a promise, I'm not sure.

"Yes." The word escapes in a breathy gasp.

My panties are already slick for him. From the moment he pinned Brandon to that chair and nailed him to it. The way he defended me, handed me that machete, and watched with glee as I tortured and killed a monster. His fury and violence turned me on more than I could acknowledge in that moment.

We shouldn't be doing this right now. Not with Brandon's blood cooling at our feet and mere hours until daybreak. We've still got a whole cabin to burn to the ground.

But the adrenaline and arousal pumping through my veins has taken over my brain. My only thoughts now are of Trey and getting his mouth back on me, getting his

fingers, tongue, cock, and knife handle inside me.

He massages my clit with the butt of the handle, eliciting a whimper from my throat. His low chuckle makes every hair on my body stand on end. “You’re going to take every inch.”

A brief moment of panic grips my chest. How the hell will I take every inch of that long handle? It’s not pliable the way his fingers and cock are.

But when he nudges the cool metal at my entrance, the hesitation is replaced with anticipation. He can’t actually give me every inch with his hand gripping it anyway. “I will.”

He yanks off my panties before his tongue flicks at my clit, pleasure bursting through me as he eases the knife handle inside.

“Oh god.” I clench his shoulders harder, nails digging in.

“We’re only just getting started, demon.” He sucks on my clit as he pushes the handle in deeper, my arousal dripping down to his fingers. “That’s my bad fucking girl.”

Somehow, his words of praise make me want to take the handle anywhere he commands.

When his fingers hit my pussy, I let out a sigh of relief and relax, stretching around the handle.

Until he somehow nudges more inside me.

I glance down at the blade that connects us, horror seizing me when I spot his bare hand wrapped around the blade. “What the hell are you doing?”

He grins at me as a trickle of his blood drips down to his wrist. “Making you come. Now ride it.”

“I’ll destroy your hand.” Maybe if he had done this to me that first time in the woods when he was still nothing more than a stranger in a mask, I wouldn’t have cared about hurting him. Hell, I fantasized about biting his dick off. But now...

His jaw tightens along with his grip on my thigh. “You can cut my hand off, for all I care. As long as I can still use it to make you scream.”

Fuck . How the hell am I supposed to argue with that?

Hesitantly, I pull my hips back, keeping my hands on his shoulders to steady myself before I sheath the handle inside me again. I wince, more pain than pleasure until he wraps his lips around my clit again and sucks.

I gasp. “Don’t fucking stop.”

The knife handle is slick now, but it’s still hard to take. Trey’s growl vibrates through my clit before he smacks my ass with a jiggle. He releases my clit and nearly pulls the handle out of me.

“What are you?—”

He glides his bloody hand down the handle, leaving behind a glistening trail of his crimson blood.

Impossibly, my pussy clenches around the end of the knife handle still buried inside me.

“Ride it again,” he commands. “Faster.”

“This is so fucked up,” I pant, even as I rock my hips and take the handle inside me again. Heart pounding, neck slick with sweat, I’m more turned on than I’ve ever been in my life.

“Watch.”

For once, I obey his command without retort, both of us watching as my pussy swallows the knife handle covered in his blood.

“Who knew I had a blood play kink.” I rock my hips faster, the pleasure building as he moves the hand gripping my thigh to rub his thumb against my clit and drive me to that pinnacle of pleasure.

“I could’ve fucking guessed,” he growls. “You were fucking made for me, little demon.”

He’s twisted, but I’m just as twisted as he is because I love everything he’s doing to me. Everything he’s ever done to me.

As fucked up as it is, as fucked up as we are, he’s right. We’re made for each other. A psycho Juliet and her unhinged Romeo. A little demon and her devil. A match made in the pits of hell.

“Come for me, demon.” His needy plea only makes the pleasure build to an unprecedented height. “Come for your devil.”

“Fuck!” Sparks of pleasure burst in my head as I cry out. I arch forward, unable to keep rocking my hips as the orgasm seizes me. Trey pumps the handle inside me, making me see stars as he sucks my throbbing clit.

My eyes cross, thighs weak as I brace myself on his shoulders, completely at his

mercy as he thrusts the handle inside me over and over.

By the time the final wave of the orgasm ebbs away, my thighs are shaking, the knife handle completely soaked as he finally withdraws it.

He tucks his hand away, refusing to let me see the damage I've done. Sienna is a nursing student. I'll ask her to bandage him up when we get back to campus. She probably won't even ask what the hell I did to him. That's for the best. She wouldn't want to know.

Trey pockets my panties as he stands and unsheathes a bottle of lighter fluid. He waltzes over to Brandon's body and starts to douse him with the liquid, the pungent, chemical scent stinging my nostrils.

Heart still pounding from the orgasm and adrenaline, I grin. I can't wait to watch that motherfucker burn.

After Brandon's body is soaked with lighter fluid, Trey approaches me with a sadistic grin that makes my heart lurch.

"Why are you stopping? We need to make sure the whole building burns."

His lupine green eyes are practically dancing. "It will. After I fuck you. Take your dress off."

I roll my eyes. "I'm not taking my clothes off; it's cold in here." I turn and grab the back of the small loveseat in front of the fireplace and bend over. "Just fuck me."

"I'm not fucking you in that." His brows dip low as he takes another step toward me. "Last chance, demon. Take your dress off. Now."

I straighten and flip him off. “And I told you?—”

Before I can react, Trey jerks the bottle up, spraying the front of my dress with lighter fluid.

I gasp as the acrid stench hits my nose. “What the fuck ?”

He drops the bottle to reveal a box of matches from his toolbelt. I stop breathing when he pulls out a match and strikes it, a small flame igniting.

So small yet so dangerous. Deadly. Terrifying.

Just like me.

His hooded gaze rakes down my drenched dress. “Take it off. Now.”

Take my dress off or he’ll throw that match at me next.

“You should be locked up in an asylum somewhere,” I snap as I peel my dress off.

He grins as he watches me strip. “Our future retirement home.”

God, he’s probably right.

When my dress is finally off, drafty air bites at my exposed nipples, but my skin is still buzzing with warmth.

“That’s my girl. Now bend over.”

“Put that fucking match out first.”

“Bend. Over.”

I roll my eyes, even as the anticipation of his cock thrusting inside me makes my swollen clit throb. Grabbing onto the back of the loveseat, I bend over, displaying my bare ass and pussy to him.

A sharp smack on my ass is followed by the clatter of his toolbelt dropping to the floor and the purr of his zipper. When I turn to watch, he’s got the lit match between his teeth as he grips my hip and guides his cock inside me, the piercing foreign as it grazes my entrance. My blood thrums with anticipation.

His words come out breathless, mumbled around the match. “You’re going to take every inch.”

I hiss, still aching after stretching around the knife handle. I’m going to be sore as hell tomorrow. Yet I’m eager for that ache between my legs and the reminder it will bring.

My nails claw at the soft fabric as he rocks back and thrusts into me. Hard. The pierced tip hits a spot deep inside me that sends a zing of pleasure up to my scalp. I tip my head back with a moan. “Oh, fuck. I’m glad I pierced it.”

“Better come quick, baby.” Without another word of warning, Trey grabs the lit match from his teeth and flicks it toward Brandon.

The body ignites in a whoosh, fire spreading so fast, every muscle in my body seizes with panic.

I’m going to fucking die in here. Die by smoke inhalation, if I’m lucky. Die getting fucked while the corpse of my coach burns mere feet away from us.

Trey doesn't give a shit as he continues pumping into me.

"We need to get out of here!" I shout, and he groans as my panic makes my walls clench around him.

"After you come." He thrusts harder, faster, the smack of skin on skin mixing with the hissing flames.

The air is already growing suffocatingly hot. "We're going to fucking die!"

"And what a way to go," he groans.

Yeah, Sienna was right. Trey is beyond fucked up, and I'm more fucked up for choosing him. She warned me, and I ignored her. I got what was coming to me.

I moan and clench my pussy on him. A fake orgasm is all I need to get the hell out of this cabin that's about to burn down around us as soon as the flames reach beyond Brandon's body.

Trey strikes my ass so hard, I cry out. He leans forward and pinches both my nipples in punishment. "You can't fucking fake it with me."

Shit . I squeeze my eyes shut, willing that climb to the crest of pleasure to hurry as the stench of a burning body floods my nose.

I scream when his pierced cock hits my cervix, pleasure and pain mixing together so intensely, I can barely stay upright.

My screams echo off the walls as he delivers every punishing thrust, gathering up my hair to yank my head back until I'm gazing up at the ceiling.

Despite the chilly night air, the radiant heat from the blaze is burning me up, but it's Trey's cock thrusting inside me that sets me on fire.

I should be completely overcome by fear. Too afraid for my life to feel anything else. But clearly, fear is what gets me off because with every thrust of his cock and every twist of my nipples and every pinch to my clit, the pleasure barrels through me, faster and faster.

"You're going to come." Not a threat or a command this time—an inevitability. He knows my body almost better than I do now.

"Yes," I gasp, because I can't deny it anymore. Every increasingly fucked up thing he does to me makes me come harder than the last. We both know it, and there's no use denying it anymore.

"Spread those legs. Good girl. Fucking take it." He pants through the eerily familiar words. "You love my huge cock breaking you in half, don't you? My little cum slut." Oh my god. The same words he uttered in front of the camera while he jerked off with my stolen panties. "You're so fucking wet. I can't wait to spill every drop inside you. Clench that tight little pussy on my cock, pretty girl. Take every inch."

I hate that the mere combination of his words and low, growling voice is enough to push me over the edge. I hate how much I love it.

Another stinging smack on my ass and a few more words are all it takes. "Come on my cock. Scream for me."

I do. I scream loud enough to bring the whole fucking building down around us before the fire does.

My vision blurs, eyes crossing as my heart hammers erratically and the fireworks of

pleasure crackle in my head.

With a sharp groan, he slams against me once more, spilling inside as his cock throbs over and over.

We actually just did that. My masked man, my stalker, my unhinged psycho, just fucked me in front of a dead, burning body.

As soon as Trey pulls out of me, I barely have time to cringe as his cum follows. He throws his jacket around me and tugs me close, the lust and hunger replaced with affection and adoration.

I lose myself in his warmth, his heart thundering against my ear.

When he finally pulls back, he grabs my chin, forcing my gaze on his. I've never seen this much intensity in his eyes before, and it makes my heart skip. "I love you, little demon. So fucking much."

Love . My heart soars, everything about tonight forgotten. All that matters in this moment is Trey. My devil. The one I've been searching for all this time, without even realizing it.

"I love you too." I swallow around the hard lump lodged in my throat. "More than I ever thought I could love anyone."

His hard gaze softens just slightly before he kisses me, tasting and savoring until jerking me away. "Stop distracting me. I need to burn this place down."

I grin as he grabs the lighter fluid. "Because I'm the one who started this."

Trey douses Brandon's body with more liquid, the flames rising. The sickly sweet

stench of the burning corpse turns my stomach. We need to get the hell out of here.

I slip my arms into the sleeves of Trey's leather jacket and zip it up to my chin before we grab canisters of gasoline. Trey pours his inside the cabin and then we get to work outside, leaving a liquid trail by the door and on the walls of the cabin before he flicks another match. Another. And another.

When the cabin is engulfed in flames, he takes my hand. Both of our palms sticky with blood. "I feel bad for the destruction of property," I admit.

The campground owner shouldn't suffer for what Brandon did.

"They have insurance. By the time the fire department discovers it, there won't be any evidence of what started it. They'll assume it was the fireplace." He pats his pockets until he discovers with relief that he still has Brandon's severed thumb.

"What do you do with the thumbs anyway?" My lips purse. "Please tell me there's no cannibalism involved."

"No cannibalism. Just framing my father for the murders." He leads me to the car, the cool night air a reminder that I'm still alive. I survived Brandon.

But he didn't survive me.

"You actually think that will work?" I ask.

Trey's father has no ties to any of the men we've killed. Why would he be the one who murdered them? But Trey is linked to me, and they'll connect me to Brandon.

Dread pools low in my stomach. The police won't believe Trey's father killed the men—they'll believe Trey did.

“He’s killed before. Once they start digging, they’ll find the truth. About everything he’s done.” Trey sounds so certain, I keep my mouth shut.

But I don’t think it will be that easy. His father bailed Trey out of trouble. Surely, he can find a way to keep himself out of prison too.

If his father is even half as awful as Trey has described, he’ll let his son go down if it means sparing himself.

Trey opens the passenger door for me. Behind us, smoke drifts to the night sky, the flames licking up the cabin almost beautiful in their destruction.

“We’re not far from the house.” His throat bobs as he stares out into the darkness, as if he can see his home from here. “We’ll go there, plant the thumb, and if he’s home, I’ll ask him why the hell he let Rachel live.”

Page 21

Source Creation Date: August 7, 2025, 1:59 am

Chapter 20

Juliet

On the ride, Trey holds my hand with his bandaged one, wrapped up with the dressing from a med kit he started keeping in his car after I stole it and made it my getaway vehicle.

He shifts uncomfortably behind the wheel, dreading the impending confrontation with his father. Rachel is still out there, and justice needs to be served. Trey deserves his closure too.

Heat blasts from the vents, a quiet, crooning tune from the radio that neither of us can hear breaking through the tense silence.

In the dark, the tires rattle over a long bridge suspended above inky water.

My stomach drops at the familiar sight. The familiar thud, thud, thud of the tires.

Every muscle in my body tenses as dread washes over me. No . There's no way. It's not possible.

"You live here?" I whisper the words, almost not daring to breathe them into existence. To acknowledge the reality.

Trey turns to me with a frown, his handsome face almost dreamlike as the memories come barreling back. "Yeah. On the island."

The island .

When the tires stop rattling over the bridge and dig through dirt and gravel, a monstrous palace emerges amongst the perfectly manicured grass until it gives way to the woodline.

The huge house that's more like a museum than a home. Inside are towering ceilings, golden decor, pristine furniture without a speck of dust.

My lungs shrink. I can't breathe. Can't speak. Can't move.

This is where Brandon brought us that night. This is where Autumn died.

The man who killed her, the final monster still alive, is Trey's father.

We come to a stop in the driveway, his headlights flicking off as he puts the car in park. Concern etched around his mouth and the corners of his beautiful, heartbreaking eyes.

He squeezes my hand with his bandaged one, despite the pain it must cause him. "Juliet. What's wrong?"

Honeysuckle and fresh grass. Towering trees and a murmuring creek. My bare foot splashing, a hand over my mouth, running like phantoms over the yards between the woods and the car. Between danger and safety.

"You were fifteen, right? The night your mother died?"

He goes rigid beside me. "Yes. What's going on, Juliet?"

"Tell me about it. The night she died. What do you remember?"

His gaze drifts from me, brows descending over troubled eyes as his memories carry him back to that night. “I was about to fall asleep. Then I heard a shout. A few people were outside searching with flashlights. Two people without flashlights hopped in a car and left.” His throat bobs. “I didn’t know who they were searching for until my father woke me up the next morning to tell me my mother was dead. He said she drowned, but I don’t believe him.”

Trey witnessed what happened that night. The men searching for me, my rescuer and me running through the dark, our escape from the crime scene.

Trey’s mother died when he was fifteen. The same age he would’ve been when I was trapped here.

The woman who saved me that night . . .

She was Trey’s mother.

Maybe Trey is right—maybe his mother didn’t drown at all. Maybe his father killed her when she returned home, when he discovered what she had done.

I’ve finally found the man who tried to kill me. The man who killed Autumn.

Charles Lamont.

And I’m in love with his son.

Chapter 21

Trey

Juliet is frozen beside me. I shake her shoulder, but even that doesn't pull her out of her trance. From whatever place her mind has taken her to.

"Tell me what's wrong." Desperation makes my voice quake. I've never seen her like this. Not even in the moments she thought Ned Miller might kill her.

She clasps her shaking hands together, but she can't tear her eyes away from the house.

"This is where Brandon brought us that night." Her voice is so small, almost inaudible.

I can't have heard her right. Here? The house where I grew up, the center of her nightmares? No . No, I can't have gone this long without knowing. Without knowing all the atrocities my father committed within these walls. "Brandon brought you here?"

She nods.

I grab her chin, forcing her to look at me. Anchoring her back to this moment, here with me. Safe. "Are you sure ?"

Her beautiful blue eyes water as she nods. "Yes. I remember the bridge. I remember

the house and the woods and the grass and the driveway. I remember the rooms where they took us.” The words wobble, her entire body on the verge of a sob. “I remember the creek, the feeling of the water on my foot. Your mom, Trey?—”

She breaks, a sob racking her body as she collapses into me, her hair reeking of smoke and death. I hold her as her shoulders shake.

“What about her?” My heart thunders with the question, unsure whether I want to know the answer.

“She’s the one who saved me that night. I’m sure it was her. She had green eyes just like yours. I never thought ...” She shakes her head. She never thought that the woman who saved her that night could’ve been my mother. “She got me off the island, and that’s why she died. He killed her for it.”

I pull Juliet onto my lap, rocking gently as I cradle her. So soft and vulnerable and fractured in my hands.

A lump lodges in my throat that I can’t swallow down. I knew it. I knew my father killed my mother. But I didn’t think I’d ever learn why.

She sacrificed herself for Juliet. She kept my little demon safe, at the cost of her own life.

Somehow, beyond the grave, she made sure to bring us together. We were meant to find each other. To give each other the answers we both needed.

Juliet’s tears soak my shoulder. “If she hadn’t been killed, your father wouldn’t have met Rachel. You wouldn’t have been abused. You were hurt because of me.”

I squeeze her to me as hard as I can without hurting her. The pain in her voice nearly

fractures me. “None of this shit happened because of you. None of this is your fault.” My heart breaks that she could believe that for even a second. Tears blur my vision, and I can barely choke the words out. “I’m proud my mother gave her life for you. For the girl I love.”

She sobs into my neck, clutching me like I’m her life raft. And she’s mine. Since we met, we’ve kept each other from drowning.

We keep each other afloat. Alive.

“She was never going to survive that house,” I whisper. “He hurt her. Over and over again. He would’ve killed her someday, and he didn’t need a reason.”

My father killed Autumn. Intended to kill Juliet. The housekeeper, the gardener, the tutor, the nanny ? —

Who knows how many others he’s killed.

I’ve always known my father was a monster—but I never realized he was a predator too.

That’s why he didn’t care what Rachel did to me. That’s why he allowed it to continue, right under his nose. Because they shared the same sickness.

This is not my home. It never has been. This is a house of horrors.

As Juliet’s sobs ebb to hiccuping gasps, I cradle the back of her head. Her dark hair soft beneath my palm, as soft and fragile as she was the night my father hunted her. The night he tried to take her life. “We can turn around right now. I don’t want you to face him again if he shows up.”

Odds are, he's still monitoring me. He probably already knows I'm here. Only a matter of time before he shows up.

I won't let him get his hands on Juliet.

She pulls away from my shoulder and shakes her head. "No. We've come this far. We'll plant the thumb, call the police, and frame him, just like you planned. I'll tell them who he is, what he did."

As much as I want to take her back in the opposite direction as far away from him as we can get, she's right. This may be our last chance. He needs to pay for what he's done. All of it. Far more than I know. The bodies have to be on this island somewhere. He's too sick to not want to hang onto his trophies.

"You need to hide in here," I tell her. "I'll stash the thumb, call the police, and come right back out. Then we're getting the fuck off this island, and we're never coming back."

To my surprise, Juliet doesn't object. Only nods as she slides off my lap and back into the passenger seat, numb as dried tears stain her cheeks. She doesn't want to go inside either. Too terrified to face her nightmares all over again.

"I'll be right back." I squeeze her hand with the promise. "I love you."

"I love you," she whispers, the words fragile and broken.

He did this to her. My father. Just when I thought I couldn't hate him more, I find out what he's done to the one person I've loved since my mother. The only person I've ever loved like this.

When I finally let her go, I rush into the house, Brandon's severed thumb burning a

hole in my pocket as I aim for the basement?—

And stop dead when an airy, sickeningly familiar voice calls my name. “Trey!”

I turn slowly to find a brunette perched on the kitchen island, legs crossed under her short skirt.

A half-empty bottle of wine sits beside her, glass clutched in her hand as she brings the wide rim to her mouth. Her pink lipstick smears the glass and turns my stomach.

The trench coat Juliet mentioned is tossed over a stool. Shoulder-length brown hair, pale skin, brown eyes, freckles across her cheeks, a mole at the corner of her eye. A tight white dress splashed in a pink pattern she mistook for figure-flattering.

Next to the hand she uses to prop herself up are two small plastic bags. Each with a severed thumb inside.

My heart drops. She found them. She fucking found them.

I brace for her to attack me. Scream at me. Something. But all she does is continue to sip wine with a coy smile like she fucking lives here.

“I’ve missed you,” she purrs, and I want to rip out her throat. Destroy her voice box so she can’t ever speak another word to me.

After all these years, I’m finally face-to-face with her again. The woman who haunts my nightmares. Who took the vulnerable, fractured, angry kid my father had already created and shattered him.

Rachel .

I lean against the wall, arms crossed, even as my heart hammers. “He kept you alive. I’m surprised.”

Her smile spreads, and my stomach revolts at the sight. “Why? You remember how good I am.”

Bile stirs in my gut. The last thing I need is an image of her and my father in bed together. Her willingly fucking a man she knows killed his wife and hurt so many others. “I remember how sick you are.”

Rachel’s tinkling giggle is like something out of a horror movie. “Oh, please. You came like a faucet with me.”

Bile rises, threatening to spew out. She’s repulsive. She deserves to be burned and buried with the rest of them.

She ditches the wine glass for the bottle, tipping it up and throat bobbing as she gulps. Then she has the gall to wink at me. As if I won’t rip the lid from her eye.

“Why the hell did he let you come back?”

She shrugs. “After your little incident, he needed somebody to keep an eye on you. I’m the one he trusted most. And he and I eventually started to miss each other, of course. No one fucks quite like your father does. I almost enjoy fucking him as much as I enjoy fucking you.”

My stomach turns so violently, I nearly gag.

I straighten from the wall, tipping my chin up. I’ve fantasized for years about giving her a piece of my mind, about confronting her for every sick thing she did to me. Now, I’ve finally gotten my chance. “Touching you disgusted me. You made me

want to rip off my skin.”

Her mouth sours, eyes darkening.

“Was the pregnancy even real?”

“Of course it was,” she spits. “I showed you the test.”

“Did you terminate it like he said?”

What if that was a lie too? What if a kid with my DNA is out there somewhere? The thought makes my head swim, chest constrict?—

She barks a sharp, mirthless laugh. “Obviously. I wasn’t pushing out a fucking baby.”

Relief washes through me. “Good. You’d be a shitty mother.”

Rachel’s eyes narrow in the split second before she aims the empty wine bottle at my head and hurls it.

The glass shatters on the wall beside me and I duck out of the way.

But she doesn’t move to attack me. Only uncrosses her legs and swings them like a schoolgirl flirting with her crush. “So what the hell are you doing with that little whore?”

“Don’t talk about her like that.” My teeth clench so hard, my jaw’s on the verge of snapping. She’s been following me and Juliet around, seething with envy. Waiting for her moment to strike. “Why did they bring her here? How did Brandon even know my father?”

All of it is a scattered puzzle that I still haven't put together. Juliet deserves to know the answers, and clearly, Rachel knows plenty.

"You still haven't figured that out?" She smirks. "Your father and Brandon were fraternity brothers. A dumb slut at one of their parties accused Brandon of some bullshit, tried to press charges. Your father and grandad got him out of trouble. Your grandad had the police department in his pocket. She should've known that before she tried starting shit with one of Charles's friends. She learned her lesson."

My mind buzzes. Brandon and my father have been hurting innocent people for a long time. "He told you all that?"

"He didn't have to. I was at that party." She flashes a winning smile that makes the knot in my gut coil tighter. "Delta Gamma."

Of course Rachel was a sorority girl. Probably followed my father around like the puck bunnies follow me.

"Brandon's life would've been fucked if it hadn't been for your father. So he did whatever your father wanted. Eventually, Brandon brought him girls he coached or met online. Girls no one would care if they were never seen again. Forgettable girls."

Fury boils through every limb. "Juliet isn't forgettable."

The smirk slips from Rachel's lips. "She's getting you involved in murder. She's going to ruin your life, you know."

"The only people who tried to ruin my life are you and him." My fists shake with barely contained rage. "What about Craig and Ned? Why were they here that night?"

Rachel rolls her eyes, tired of my questions. "Because men will pay good money for

girls, and your father knows how to run a lucrative business. He's much smarter than you realize. Did you actually think you would get away with pinning murders on your father with no motive?"

"They're all connected to him. They were all in this house, doing despicable things to innocent people." I shrug. "Maybe he was tipped off that one of them was going to turn on him."

Rachel snickers. "You haven't changed much, huh? Just bigger muscles now." Her gaze rakes over me and it's like being dipped in a vat of oil.

"Why didn't he marry you?" My question throws her. Rachel's coy facade slips away. "If you met in college, why did he pick my mother over you?"

Her mouth sours. "He didn't. I rejected him."

A lie. The truth is a bitter pill she refuses to swallow. How much of what she's told me can I believe?

I guess it doesn't matter anymore. Craig, Ned, and Brandon are dead.

The only monsters left are my father and the one in front of me.

"Where is my father?"

Her gaze drifts to the window, the smirk lifting her mouth, lips smeared with slimy pink lipstick. "Probably taking care of your little girlfriend."

Chapter 22

Juliet

Behind me, headlights flicker as a vehicle bumps over the bridge.

My heart leaps into my throat. Only two people could be in that vehicle: Rachel or Charles.

I glance desperately at the front door, willing Trey to burst through. But he doesn't. He doesn't come to save me this time.

I've finally run out of luck.

I scramble into the back, ducking down onto the floor and curling into a ball.

It's dark. Whoever is in that car won't suspect that Trey is harboring someone in his backseat.

But what if it's Charles and he discovers Trey planting the thumb inside that house? What if he hurts him?

I can't let his father get his hands on him. I won't.

As soon as he goes inside, I'll slip in after him. I'll have the element of surprise.

This time, he'll be the prey, and I'll be the hunter.

I wait with bated breath as the tires roll to a stop. A door creaks open. Slams shut with a metallic thunk .

The crunching footsteps over the dirt and gravel are close until they fade away.

I need to get to Trey. Who knows what will happen to him in that house.

Silently, I straighten and turn, ready to sneak out of the car when I spot something through the window.

A face.

Someone watching me.

I scream as I register Charles Lamont's dark, feral eyes pinned on me.

He opens the door and claws for me as I scramble back, heart in my throat, and reach for the door handle on the driver's side.

Frigid air strikes my face as I fling the door open and burst out?—

But before I can take another step toward my escape, my back slams against the hard steel, air whooshing from my lungs.

I don't get a chance to scream before a cool metal cylinder presses against my temple.

The barrel of a pistol.

“Walk to the house.” His grating command curdles the acid in my stomach.

I managed to escape Charles Lamont once. But not this time.

Terror like I've never felt before makes my knees tremble. Makes my heart pump so hard, I'm afraid it will give out altogether. "Why are you doing this?"

"Because you tried framing me for murder, you little bitch." He smacks the barrel harder against my temple, and my heart flutters with the terror that he'll pull the trigger any second.

If he does, at least Trey will hear the blast. At least he'll have a chance to escape. To get justice for me and his mother and Autumn and every other innocent person his father victimized.

Somehow, he found out about Trey's plan to hide the thumbs and implicate his father in the deaths of those three horrible men. But he blames me.

If I'm going to die, I'm going down swinging.

I spit at him, spraying his face. "You are a murderer."

He jerks me forward by the shoulder and moves the barrel of the gun from my temple to the middle of my back. "Walk."

He doesn't lead me through the front doors. Around the side of the house, a hidden door blends in with the siding, leading directly into an all too familiar room.

I choke on a sob. The workbench is still in the same place. A tiny window, barely big enough to squeeze through.

The door automatically locks behind us. No knob to turn from the inside.

"I'd been hoping we could pick up where we left off." He drops the gun from my back, and for one stupid split-second, my heart leaps with hope that I might still

escape him. “Don’t make a sound. Or I’ll shoot my son.”

He killed his own wife. He’s beaten Trey countless times. I don’t doubt he would shoot his own son. Kill him.

With that, he leaves me in the room where he killed Autumn, opening the door I once escaped through. This time, ensuring the door is locked behind him.

Chapter 23

Trey

Juliet .

Why the fuck did I leave her out there? I should've insisted she come with me. Should've insisted that we couldn't be apart. Not on this island. It's not safe. For either of us.

Through the window, I spot the Rolls-Royce in the driveway next to the Camaro.

Rachel isn't wrong. He's here. When did she spot his car pull in? How long has she been sitting on that bombshell, waiting for the perfect moment to detonate it?

I spin on my heel and lurch forward, pulse racing, when my father strides casually into the room.

Rachel brightens. "Hi, Charles." Her high, sweet voice is sickening.

But Juliet isn't with him. I'm about to ask where the hell she is when I clamp my mouth shut.

What if Rachel was wrong? What if he didn't spot Juliet in my car? I told her to hide and he'd have no reason to examine the interior when he saw I wasn't in the driver's seat. If I open my mouth now, I could put her in more danger.

My father folds his arms and fixes me with stern brows. “Tell me about these thumbs, Trey. I thought I told you to stay out of trouble.”

Trouble . As if two severed thumbs are nothing more than a college student getting into a little trouble. “I know you killed my mother.”

I’ve been wanting to say those words to him for years. Make the accusation and measure the microscopic ways his expression changed. But I never had proof. A true motive.

Now I do. Now I have Juliet.

She might not know exactly what happened to my mother that night, we may never know, but we know why.

Before he can deny it, I cut him off. “I know you killed a girl here years ago. I know you made all those people disappear.”

“So you’re trying to punish me?” His eyes cloud. The monster unleashed. “Is that it? Your own father?”

Disgust boils in my veins. I don’t owe him a fucking ounce of filial loyalty. “You killed your own wife. You let your son get molested. I don’t really give a fuck what happens to you.”

Father and Rachel both laugh at that. Two villains made for each other.

“ Molested ,” Rachel crows. “You’re the one who came inside me, honey.”

Bile rises in my throat at the memory. Her on top of me, hands on my chest, lips on my mouth—“Shut the fuck up!”

Father shakes his head as he rolls up his sleeves. “I told you, Trey. I was only giving you one more chance. And now you’re out of chances.”

He lifts the hem of his button-up to reveal a pistol at his waist. My heart stops when he pulls it from the holster and points the barrel at me.

This is it. He’s going to kill me. I only hope Juliet manages to get away when I’m bleeding out on the floor.

Tears blur my vision not for me, but for her. For what might happen to the girl I love when I’m gone.

From her perch on the kitchen island, Rachel’s spine goes ramrod straight. Her laughter cuts short like a ghost has wrapped its hand around her throat.

She sinks down to the floor, inching toward him with her hands up. “Put the gun down, Charles,” she soothes. “You don’t want to kill your own son.”

She doesn’t actually care whether I live or die—she doesn’t want the trauma of witnessing a murder right in front of her eyes. More likely, she doesn’t want to miss a chance to violate me again. She still thinks I could want her after everything. Thinks I ever wanted her in the first place.

My father swings the gun in her direction, and she halts in her tracks.

A tiny sliver of relief breaks through the crushing terror. For a few heart-stopping moments, I’m no longer his target.

“Who the fuck do you think you’re talking to?” His voice is eerily flat, a simmering rage on the verge of explosion.

She cowers back, holding up her hands as if they'll protect her from a bullet. "No, please! You don't want me dead. I can help you. You need me."

"I told you to keep him out of trouble," he barks. "You failed. There are two dead men's thumbs in my kitchen. You're useless to me."

I shout over her when she begins to plead again. "How did you kill my mother?"

At least I'll die with the knowledge of what really happened to her, and Juliet can still get away.

He keeps the gun trained on Rachel while his gaze drifts back to me. "The same way."

Silence falls over us as I glance at Rachel, but she's confused too.

Her mouth falls open, but I don't hear her scream over the earsplitting explosion as the gun fires.

My head rings for what feels like minutes when I finally open my eyes to find Rachel slumped on the floor, eyes unblinking and unseeing as blood pools in her hair.

"You killed her." My mouth forms the words, but I don't hear them. More disbelief and shock than horror or sorrow.

My hands curl into fists. I should've been the one to kill her. I'm the one who deserved to take that shot. Just another thing he's taken from me.

He should've protected me from her years ago, but he didn't. He's only removing her from our lives now for his sake.

“You really shouldn’t have killed Rachel, Trey.” He nods at the thumbs in the plastic bags. His chilling voice sends a shiver down my spine. “Or those men.”

Dread washes over me. He’s going to frame me for the murders. All of them.

I should’ve known he’d be a step ahead of me. He’ll continue to get away with his crimes, and I’ll be the one behind bars.

A scream rips through the night, and we both freeze.

Outside, a girl in a leather jacket sprints through the darkness.

My heart plummets to my feet.

Juliet .

A sick smile slowly inches across Father’s face. “Good thing I’ve got a full magazine.” He racks the pistol, loading another round in the chamber. He’s got a ten-round magazine. Nine bullets left. “Time to finish what I started.”

Fuck that. He’s not getting anywhere near her.

I lunge for him.

But before I can grab the pistol, he swings it up and brings it down on my temple.

My vision goes dark as I hit the floor, head swimming and the entire world spinning.

Juliet .

Juliet .

Juliet .

In the distance, a shot fires. Followed by another.

Another. Another.

Four altogether.

Bile rises as I manage to prop myself up on my elbow, the world slowly coming back into focus as an aching throb pounds in my temple.

Blood still flows from Rachel's head on the floor. Chunks of skull and brain matter splatter the wall and counter behind her.

I retch, vomiting up the contents of my stomach before finally pushing myself onto shaky feet.

I stumble for the front doors, still open after my father's exit.

In the driveway, the Camaro sits low to the ground. The bastard shot out the tires.

He doesn't plan on letting us leave this island alive.

We'll die, and we'll take his secrets with us.

A small beam of light bobs across the yard. The flashlight on my father's gun as he searches through the darkness. Just like the night my mother saved Juliet from Autumn's fate. From her own fate.

Now I need to be the one to save Juliet. Before my father fulfills his promise to finish what he started.

Page 25

Source Creation Date: August 7, 2025, 1:59 am

Chapter 24

Juliet

My lungs heave, aching for air as I hobble through the darkness.

That night, it was Autumn's blood trickling down my leg. Tonight, it's mine, a gash in my shin from where I crawled out of the window after breaking it, using my shoe to smash through the glass. A shard embedded itself in my skin, now my only weapon.

I smashed the glass as soon as I heard that gunshot. I don't know who shot who, but I do know Trey didn't have a gun on him, and his father did.

He could be wounded, alone with his serial killer father, bleeding out and needing my help.

I hope my scream buys him some time. I hope it's not too late.

No . I shove the bubble of panic down. We're going to make it off this island. Alive. Both of us.

His mother didn't save me, didn't sacrifice her life, just so I could bring her son back to this island to suffer the same fate.

Unlike all those years ago, no one shouts for me. No one calls my name into the darkness. No one jeers about what they'll do to me when they find me.

Another gunshot pops off somewhere behind. Two. Three. Four.

My chest clenches. Someone is dead. There's no way they could survive five bullets.

Please. Not Trey ?—

A lone flashlight scans the yard. But Trey's voice doesn't call out to me. He's not the one searching for me.

He's not the one who fired that gun.

I slap my hand across my mouth, covering my sob. Not Trey . Not the devil to my demon. Not the Romeo to my Juliet. My masked man. The one I've been searching for. Whose darkness matches mine.

We can't have come back to this island, we can't have come this far, only for me to lose him too.

My heart shatters as my hand lands on the rough bark of a tree, knees growing too weak to keep me upright. The flashlight approaches, and I stumble back into a shallow pool of water.

Just as I did that night. But this time, Trey's mother isn't here to save me.

No one is.

The beam of the flashlight gets terrifyingly closer. Another shot fires to scare me out of my hiding place, making my ears ring even from this distance.

Trey is dead. And I'm next.

A hand clamps over my mouth.

My heart stops as I whip around to find my assailant?—

A familiar pair of lupine green eyes. A finger held up to the full, devastating lips I ache to kiss again.

Trey .

I fling my arms around him, weak with relief, vision blurry. He's alive .

Relief barrels through me, and all I can do is sob silently into his shoulder.

I haven't lost him.

His temple is swollen, but he's not bleeding. He hasn't been shot.

But if he's not the one with the gun, who was his father shooting?

When I open my mouth to ask, Trey's finger against his lips instructs me to keep quiet.

Another shot makes me jump. A hollow thud like the bullet struck a tree.

Trey takes my hand and silently guides me out of the water.

An eerie voice calls into the darkness, "Come out, come out, little girl."

Page 26

Source Creation Date: August 7, 2025, 1:59 am

Chapter 25

Trey

In the shadows, we manage to escape my father. For now. His search will keep him occupied while we call the police.

Juliet aims for my car, but I pull her toward the house. She shakes her head wildly, jerking my hand in the direction of the Camaro. Desperate to get the hell away from my father and the fuck off this island.

Behind us, among the trees, my father fires another shot. The crackling burst is deafening out here in the silence.

How many has that been now? Eight?

“He shot out the tires. There’s no service here. We have to go upstairs and call the police from the landline.”

She curses under her breath and limps beside me while we race for the house. Blood trickles from her leg.

I grit my teeth, hating that she’s in pain and there’s nothing I can do to help her. “What happened?”

“Broken glass.” She winces with every step. “I had to smash the window to get out.”

I squeeze her hand. “My brave girl.”

She glances back over her shoulder with wild eyes as we ascend the stairs to the front doors. “He didn’t shoot you?”

“No. He shot Rachel.”

“She was in there?” Her wide-eyed gaze lands on my temple. “Did she hurt you?”

I shake my head. “He pistol-whipped me after he shot her.”

Despite the dizziness nearly sending me back to my knees, I sweep Juliet up into my arms, carrying her into the house.

A shot fires, and I jump. From the treeline, my father shouts my name.

“Run!” Juliet screeches.

My heart leaps into my throat, and I race into the house. As we race past the kitchen, Juliet spots Rachel’s body resting in a cherry-red pool.

“At least one of them is dead,” she hisses.

“Only wish I’d been the one to do it.” I’ll get him back for that too.

Rachel’s mistake was believing she wouldn’t suffer the same fate as my mother. That a monster like him could ever be placated, appeased.

There’s no escaping him while he still breathes.

Up the stairs, I charge into my father’s office. He kept the only landline in here,

ensuring that he was in charge of any communications that came in or out. Just another way to control us.

I set Juliet down on his chair, her whole body shaking, and dial 911.

When the operator answers, I blurt, “My father is trying to kill us. He’s already killed someone. You need to send someone right away?—”

A small, almost imperceptible creak.

My father enters the room, gun-first. Barrel pointed at me.

This is it. This is the end of the road.

“Put the phone down, Trey.”

At least the police will have a recording of this call. At least they’ll know who the real villain is.

The operator’s demands for an address and a name go unanswered as I do what my father says. “You don’t have to do this.”

He lets out a merciless sound that’s somewhere between a laugh and a scoff. “I should’ve done this a long time ago. You’re no son of mine.”

I step around the desk, putting distance between me and Juliet, even as she clings to me. He only has one bullet left, and I won’t let him end us both.

“You’re right. You’re no father of mine. I’m nothing like you.”

“Don’t!” Juliet shouts.

Right before my father pulls the trigger.

The blast makes my ears ring, the warm trickle of blood flowing down my arm before my brain registers the pain. Registers Juliet's screams.

My father pulls the trigger again. Nothing more than a hollow click .

He's out of bullets.

I swipe at the place on my bicep where my shirt and skin have been shredded, blood leaking where his bullet grazed me.

He missed.

Adrenaline and survival instincts push the agony aside as I lunge at my father.

The gun goes flying, smacking against the wall with a clatter. My father strikes me in the throat, making me bend at the waist as a grunt of pain escapes.

He brings his knee up into my nose.

The burst of sharp, agonizing pain makes my vision go dark, and I hit the ground. Hard.

Before my vision clears, he's on top of me, fists raining down on my head, chest, face, wherever he can strike. Like so many times before.

I'm bleeding. Weak. And I can't fight him off.

This time, he really is going to kill me.

The pain, the blood loss, is too much. Pulling me under.

My survival instincts ebb as my body accepts its fate.

Let him keep his attention on me, let him kill me, so she can escape. So she can live.

Past his shoulder, a demon with dark hair streaked with fire emerges, her body wrapped in black leather. A shard of glinting glass in her hand.

My little demon sent from the pits of hell to save me, in more ways than she'll ever know.

She brings the glass around his neck and slices it across his throat.

Everything stops. The fists, the shouts, the agony.

Silence falls over us as his fists disappear, the assault abruptly ending as he clutches at his neck.

Crimson blood seeps through his fingers, his gurgles obscene.

“That’s for Autumn.” Her words and hands are shaky, but she’s unwavering. Bleeding, bruised, and trembling, she’s still the strongest person I know.

Despite the blood gushing from my nose and arm and the pain splitting my head, I kick my father off me. He lands on his back on the floor, choking on his own blood.

I take the shard of glass Juliet offers me.

“Trey.” My father gurgles out my name as I press the tip of the glass to his throat.

And slice.

“That’s for Juliet.” Another bright red slash. Never deep enough. “That’s for me.”

I bring the bloody shard high above my head. Beneath me, his eyes are wide.

Finally, I witness fear in my father’s eyes.

I won’t remember him as the monster who hurt me, who killed my mother, who killed Autumn, who hurt the woman I love.

This is how I’ll remember him.

I stab the glass into his throat, leaving it there to suffocate him. To drown him in his own blood. To suffer in his final moments of life. “That’s for my mother.”

Page 27

Source Creation Date: August 7, 2025, 1:59 am

Chapter 26

Juliet

On campus, the student body buzzes with gossip and whispers, everyone outside enjoying the sun during the unseasonably warm, late-autumn afternoon.

My phone buzzes with a text from my mother.

Mom

Our flight just landed. See you soon!!!

Even though I got out of the hospital yesterday, they ended their business trip to London early to be with me. I'm not exactly eager to share all the details of the past few months with them—at least, the details that don't incriminate me or Trey—but with my devil by my side, I know I'll be brave enough to get through it.

With all the wounds we sustained, the lack of defensive wounds on Trey's father, the shots fired from his gun, and the only fingerprints on the trigger belonging to him, the police believed our story of self-defense. They took the severed thumbs in for DNA testing and discovered thousands of images of sexual abuse across Charles Lamont's various devices. Now, they're looking for the bodies of missing people linked to Charles Lamont, but they haven't uncovered any yet. The entire university is shaken that the Head of Athletics could have done something so heinous.

"Is that your parents texting you?" Sienna nods down to my phone. She's sunbathing

in the grass beside me, the straps of our tank tops pulled down, the hems of our shorts barely longer than our underwear as we soak in as much vitamin D as we can before winter settles in.

Next to her, Luke is flat on his back, shirtless with his arm shielding his eyes. He's already enviably tan, and his nudity only rubs it in. But neither of them left my side in the hospital, and Luke helped the nurses keep Trey in his bed every time he insisted on seeing me, despite the bullet wound on his arm.

"Yep. They're on their way."

"Can't wait to meet the parents," Trey drawls from his perch against the oak tree.

He's in jeans and his leather jacket, bike helmet by his side. He's not ready for the world to see the rest of his bruises, but he can't hide the black eye or the bruised nose.

His hand is still bandaged, even after a nurse at the hospital stitched up his wound. We left out the details of how that particular injury happened.

On his other side, Fluffy basks on a rock in the transportable container Trey moved him to. Finn was the only one brave enough to take care of him while we were gone.

"I can't wait for Juliet's parents to meet that creepy fucking thing," Luke calls. "And the spider too."

Sienna half-heartedly kicks him with the heel of her bare foot. "Thank you for protecting my best friend," she tells Trey.

"She saved my ass," he corrects with a smile in my direction.

We saved each other. I wouldn't be here without him, and he wouldn't be here

without me. I don't want to live another day of my life without him by my side.

"Sorry for doubting you," Sienna says. "And for interrogating you while I was drunk."

"No problem."

"I still don't like him," Luke grumbles.

Trey nods and doesn't bother defending himself. He knows his father briefly succeeded in making him his clone, and he hates that version of himself just as much as Luke does.

Sienna squeezes my hand and lowers her voice so only I can hear. "I just want my best friend to be happy and with a man who deserves her."

I smile at her. "I am, and he does."

"Do you think she really killed him with a piece of glass?" A deep, familiar voice makes all of us turn.

Three of the Devils approach, all wearing t-shirts with their team logo. None of them has spotted us lying out in the sun yet.

"Nah, I heard it was a gun. She shot him, like, five times."

"Peanuts." Finn's ocean-deep voice still surprises me whenever I actually hear it.

"What do you mean peanuts?" Knox asks. "Like she killed him with peanuts?"

"Peanut allergy."

“Has anyone told you that you three are a bunch of gossips?” I call. “And yes, it was the piece of glass.”

The Devils finally spot us, a huge smile breaking across Knox’s face as he strips off his shirt and tosses it directly at Luke’s head.

Luke shouts in protest, throwing it back. “Your sweat and BO are all over it.”

Damien strips off his shirt and does the same. He claims the empty spot beside me, and Trey stands, ready to rip him in half. “Glad you’re still with us, psycho.”

“Thanks.”

Trey picks up Fluffy’s container and saunters across the grass, planting himself in the few inches of space between me and Damien, forcing his teammate to move over. Damien grumbles and scrambles away when Trey plants Fluffy beside him, but Trey doesn’t give a shit as he wraps a hand around my waist and tugs me closer.

He lowers his head to my ear and strokes a finger down the ink he tattooed on my arm. “My little demon.”

“Yours,” I whisper.

“So what happens now?” Sienna asks.

“I’m selling the place,” Trey tells her. I suppress the shiver that races down my spine. I hope I never have to go back to that island. Even if all the monsters that roamed it are gone, the ghosts remain. “And it looks like Coach is in line for Head of Athletics.”

“Where are you going to live?”

He smiles down at me. “Whatever apartment Juliet wants.”

My chest inflates with anticipation of a future in which Trey and I are living together after graduation. Countless nights of wild sex and debauchery lie ahead of us. “Penthouse suite,” I correct. “Only the best for your delicate, little princess.”

His grin stretches from ear to ear. “Only the best.”

Damien groans. “ Jesus . You two are almost as gross as the step-siblings now.”

Luke flips him off and Sienna narrows her eyes. “We’re not step-siblings.”

“Anymore,” Damien mumbles.

“Shut the fuck up, Vanderbilt.” Luke’s voice devoid of emotion makes me laugh.

Beside Luke, Knox hisses through his teeth. “Who the hell is that ?”

A girl hurries past us down the sidewalk. She’s already captured Finn’s attention, and Damien perks up, freezing when he spots her too.

A curtain of platinum blonde hair that’s almost white floats behind her. Flawless alabaster skin, hunched shoulders, and sleeves pulled to her wrists and leggings reaching her shoes, completely covering her. The opposite of me.

“She looks familiar.” Damien’s practically salivating next to me.

“You saw her last semester, idiots.” I roll my eyes. “In the dining hall.”

After they’d finished drooling over me and Sienna, they set their sights on the angelic beauty who seems entirely too pure and delicate for them.

“I want to see her again,” Damien murmurs, enchanted. “Without clothes.”

Finn hums his agreement while Knox groans, “ Fuck yeah.”

“You’re all so gross.” Sienna’s nose scrunches up. “You need to get laid.”

“And we know just the girl to do it,” Damien agrees.

God bless her if the Devils get their hands on her.

Trey isn’t paying attention to the conversation. His focus is entirely fixed on me, finger grazing idly over the tattoo inked on my arm, gaze tracing the features of my face like he’s memorizing every inch.

Grateful that I’m still alive for him to touch, to see, to breathe in. Grateful that he’s still alive next to me.

So am I.

Chapter 27

Trey

My father chose a cemetery for Mother on the mainland. The one thing I can be grateful to him for—I never have to return to that wretched island.

He's rolling over in his grave now that his only heir is selling off everything he ever owned. His entire estate. I don't need or want any of it. The money from the sale alone will be enough for me to find my own place, start fresh somewhere with Juliet. A place that isn't tainted with so many horrors, the subject of both of our nightmares.

The heavy weight on my shoulders that has been my constant companion my entire life is gone. Disappeared with my father's final breath.

Now that I have Juliet by my side, holding my hand and loving every part of me—even the darkest parts—an unfamiliar feeling floats up in my chest.

Hope.

Under the bright sun, Juliet presses her hand against the tufts of grass that have grown over my mother's grave. He buried her here alone, no family around. Nothing more than a name and some dates. She was so much more than that. At one time, she was everything. All that I had.

"Thank you," Juliet whispers to my mother, swiping away silent tears. "For saving my life."

Her gratitude for my mother makes me love her that much more. Part of me regrets that my mother will never get to see the two of us together, that I'll never introduce Juliet to her as my girlfriend, that she won't attend our spontaneous courthouse ceremony whenever we elope.

But another part is certain that she knows exactly the love and healing we've found in each other.

My little demon presses a sweet kiss to my cheek before leaving me alone with my mother to say my goodbyes. For now.

I'll never be able to thank her enough. Never stop being grateful for the sacrifice she made that night for a fifteen-year-old girl she didn't know. She was well aware of what would happen to her for taking that risk, for saving a girl's life, and she did it anyway.

The warmth from the sun kisses my cheeks, and I let my eyes fall shut for a moment, pretending that the warmth is from my mother's hands. "Thank you for keeping her safe. I'll take it from here."

A whisper of a breeze. My mother telling me to go. To take care of the girl I love. The girl she saved so that I might one day meet her and fall in love.

The girl who would, in turn, save me.

I join Juliet back in the parking lot, her ass resting against my bike, metal shining under the bright sunlight, and her red helmet clutched in her arms. I swear she's almost as in love with the bike as she is with me.

Blinking away the tears, I grin at her and grab my own helmet. "You ready for our first official date?"

She cradles my cheek before mirroring my grin. Her touch heals me in ways she'll never know. "I'm ready."

We're hitting an escape room before we go axe-throwing. Then, if we're up for it, we might swing by a rage room and destroy some shit. Perfect first date with the perfect little demon.

"Kind of weird that we're just going on our first date when we've already killed together, fucked each other's brains out, and now share custody of a pet."

"So weird." Juliet slips on her helmet. "Absolutely crazy. Just the way I like it."

I swing my leg over the bike and take her hand to help her climb on back. "Am I fucking you on the bike tonight, or chasing you into the woods and taking you against a tree?"

Either option works just fine for me. As long as I have Juliet, I'll do whatever she wants me to do to her. I'll show her how grateful I am for her every second for the rest of our lives.

She wraps her arms around me, squeezing close. "Who says I'm letting you fuck me? It's only the first date."

Chapter 28

Juliet

Darkness encases the woods as I barrel between the trees, boots crashing over the fallen branches and crunchy leaves.

My heart thumps, chest heaving as I struggle to see the path ahead of me. A bright, full moon attempts to break through the canopy of tree limbs above my head, but the thunderous footsteps behind me are closing in.

The cool night air freezes in my lungs as I leap off the path to hide amongst the trees.

But I'm too late.

A hard body pummels into me, slamming me up against the bark of a solid oak and knocking the wind out of me.

I gasp, spine colliding with the unforgiving wood as a blade hisses free from its holster and kisses my throat. I freeze, my heart the only muscle moving in my body as a heavy hand lands on my shoulder to pin me in place.

"Would you look at that," he croons beneath the mask. "A devil catching his demon."

Hot anticipation bubbles in my stomach. I'll never tire of this game we play. "If you catch me, you fuck me."

I don't have to see beneath the mask to know he's grinning.

Trey keeps me in place while he carves our nicknames into the bark above my head, the scrapes in the silent darkness careful and deliberate.

Demon and Devil .

My devil. His demon. I wouldn't want to be anything else.

Cool air wraps around my cheeks and the exposed skin on my neck, making the adrenaline pumping through my veins that much hotter.

His knife drifts down, grazing just beneath the hem of my skirt. An outfit not at all appropriate for the season but exactly right for our night's activities.

With a quick flash of the blade, he nicks my thigh. I wince at the sting, but the pain is quickly replaced with arousal as he drops to one knee and lifts his mask enough to reveal that perfect, pouty mouth.

His tongue emerges, glinting in the little light from above our heads as he licks up my blood.

Heat stirs low in my belly at the sight until he drops the knife again, the familiar cool metal of the handle grazing between my legs. My heart leaps into my throat as he presses the handle down onto my clit. I can't help the moan that escapes.

"Ride it," he commands, pushing my panties aside and nudging at my entrance.

"Make me," I taunt.

He rises, a shadow above me blotting out any light from the distant stars and moon

overhead. Wordlessly, he eases the handle into me as I gasp and dig my nails into his arms in an iron grip.

Slowly, I stretch around the unforgiving handle and he stops moving. “ Ride it.”

This time, I do as he says, rocking my hips and riding the tip, taking more and more as my walls stretch to accommodate its rigid length. Tears from the mixture of pain and pleasure prick at my eyes.

Watching me writhe before him forces a groan past his lips. The sound alone sends a spike of arousal through my veins and I rock faster.

In the darkness, our pants and moans mix, my back scraping against the bark of the tree as I ride the handle. Above our heads, the full moon and constellations of bright stars barely breach the canopy of trees, the only witnesses to our depravity.

“Such a bad fucking girl,” he murmurs, reverent. “All mine.”

When his impatience gets the best of him, he pops the knife handle free. I whimper as he slips it back into his holster, the pleasure ripped away from me all too soon. “I need you.”

“I know, demon.” He tugs down his zipper with a delicious purr. “I’m going to give you every inch.”

His tip is already dripping with precum when it nudges at my entrance, the familiar hot, smooth skin of his shaft making my mouth water with anticipation.

“Fuck me, devil,” I snap. Now I’m the impatient one.

Beneath his mask, he chuckles, but he doesn’t argue or tease me any longer.

He thrusts in slowly as I moan and clutch at him, my tight walls stretching to accommodate his girth and length.

At first, he's gentle. Loving. He kisses every bit of inked skin he can get his mouth on, leisurely drawing back and thrusting back in. Tender enough to make my eyes sting.

My nails dig into his bare arms. "Faster."

"Careful," he warns. We both know what my taunts could do to him. To me. He'll fuck me hard and fast until I'm raw and waddling tomorrow.

Good. That's what I want. I want the reminder of what he did to me tonight every time I move.

"Fuck me so hard I can't speak. Fuck me so hard I can't even think about anything other than your cock slamming inside me."

That's all the permission he needs. Finally, his thrusts grow harder, unforgiving, merciless.

Exactly what I need.

I moan louder as every pump of his cock makes pleasure sing through my veins. His cock is splitting me in two, driving all thoughts from my head and words from my tongue.

He knew the night we met that I was the one for him. Now I'm certain of it too. Our dark, depraved souls were always meant to find each other.

His heavy hand wraps around my throat. The blood flow slows, my head growing

lighter. Somehow, that only makes the pleasure grow.

“You’re going to pass out, pretty girl,” he purrs. “And when you come back to me, I’ll still be inside you, fucking you like the little demon you are.”

Between his cock spearing me and his hand restricting my airway, I can’t gasp out a single word.

The world starts to grow black as he squeezes my throat until his neon-red mask is the last thing I see.

When I come to, he’s still fucking me, his panting heavier and the space between my legs growing raw. “Welcome back to your fantasy, pretty girl.”

“Trey.” My nails bite into his biceps, careful to avoid the gunshot wound still healing.

He’s right. This is my fantasy. Every second of it.

He chokes me again, the lack of blood flow making my head grow deliciously lighter until I’m out.

When my eyes open again, he’s spun me, my front pressed against the tree this time. The bark is rough against my cheek and the palms I manage to flatten against the wood, arms weak.

He’s somehow wedged the blade of his knife in the bark, the handle sticking out.

“We’re going to fill every hole this time.” His whisper in my ear sends a shiver down my spine, a shot of fear mixing with the adrenaline. The way he knows I like it.

A few heaving gasps and I manage to catch my breath enough to speak. “Do your worst, devil.”

A low laugh. The one that makes me fall for him all over again every time. “I intend to. Ride the handle, demon.”

I do as he instructs, sliding back onto the handle of the knife and gasping at the stretch around the unforgiving metal. I rock my hips back and forth as shocks of pleasure burst in my head. My heart is pounding hard, so close to that brink.

Behind me, he spits, coating his cock before he nudges the tip at my back entrance. “Relax,” he soothes when I clench up.

I stop moving my hips as he slowly eases inside me, the pain and pleasure mixing as his movements force me further down the handle.

His long, gravelly groan nearly makes the orgasm barrel through me. “Such a good fucking girl.”

He strikes my ass with a loud, echoing smack before he slips two fingers into my mouth. Filling every hole just as promised while he drives his cock into my ass.

I cry out around his fingers, digging my nails into the bark as he thrusts into my ass over and over and forces me to ride the handle. The metal spears into me, and I’m not sure which is more painful or pleasurable—the knife or his cock.

“I love you, little demon,” he murmurs, the pleasure climbing to that inevitable crest. “I love the way your darkness matches mine.”

My pussy pulses around the handle, that edge of pleasure inevitable now. I manage to gasp out his name before I tumble off the cliff. “Trey !”

I scream his name around the fingers in my mouth as his cock and knife send me hurdling over the edge.

The orgasm makes every muscle in my body turn to liquid and my pussy spasm wildly. Wave after wave of pleasure crashes over me as his cock, fingers, and knife all pump into me, pounding every hole.

“ Juliet ,” he hisses, thrusting into me one last time, hard, as he comes with me.

Trey Lamont is every bit as fucked up as I am. Broken and bruised and twisted. I never thought I’d find my match, the blackened heart that mirrored my own.

But together, our dark, fractured souls are whole.

Source Creation Date: August 7, 2025, 1:59 am

Trey

With the money from my father's estate finally sitting in my account, Juliet has been scouring the market to find our next home. Something temporary until she figures out where she'll land a job after graduation.

Whatever she decides, I'll follow wherever she goes.

In the meantime, I've already been in touch with attorneys and financial planners to open a local shelter for women and children who need a safe place away from people like my father. A haven my mother and Autumn deserved.

Tonight is Massacre Manor's last night before it closes for the season. Juliet and I are volunteers this time, both wearing our masks and terrorizing the masses together.

No one needs to die tonight, but a few screams never hurt anyone. That's why we're all here, isn't it?

Juliet and I stalk across the dark haunt hand in hand, the unhinged couple giving the guests a night of terror they won't soon forget. My little demon's maniacal laughter echoes in my ears as we race through the haunted house and the dimly lit barn.

"I'm glad I found you," she murmurs, squeezing my hand.

"I'm glad I caught you." I'll never be more grateful for anything in my life. That my mother's sacrifice wasn't in vain.

Juliet laughs at every scream we elicit as we jump out at guests and chase them across the grounds.

When she's breathless and panting, I grin beneath my mask. "Better run faster, little demon."

She takes me up on the challenge, and the guests are forgotten as we race around the haunt, the only two souls in the world.

When we find ourselves alone in the corn maze, she slows.

The same place I found her that night. Vanderbilt, Rockefeller, and Ashby all determined to scare the girl who couldn't be scared. The girl I scared, and she liked it.

She still does.

I stop as she continues strolling between the walls of towering corn stalks, the sweet, grassy scent surrounding us. The air is colder than the night we met, wrapping around my hot neck and sinking into the fabric of my jeans, but we'll warm each other up.

"This is so fun," she pants. "I want to do this every year."

When I don't respond, Juliet turns to find I've stopped several feet behind her.

She takes in our surroundings, head swiveling, and I grin beneath my mask. She lifts her mask, blue eyes bright and dancing. Her smile already a mirror to my own. "Say it."

So I do. "Run, little demon."