



Numb: Poetic's Pain

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Category: Suspense Thriller

Description: Numb is a raw and emotional story about trauma, redemption, and the unexpected power of love to awaken what's been buried deep.

Tatum Reese is a fearless top reporter at Media Frenzy. Tatum has been secretly investigating Hollywood icon, Carol Peterson, a beloved actress who is hiding a dark history. After years of pursuit, Tatum is led to one of Carol's victims, Poetic Pain, an emotionally scarred but gifted filmmaker.

Poetic lives in isolation, haunted by his past unwilling to build a future. He refuses love and family. With the encouragement of his therapist, he confronts his trauma and comes in contact with Tatum. Tatum is looking for a headline, not a relationship, but as the story unfolds, so do their feelings for one another.

Jealous obsession, painful reckonings, and buried secrets threaten to destroy them as Tatum gets close to Poetic and the truth. In the end, Tatum has to learn that the next big scoop doesn't carry more weight than compassion, and Poetic has to choose healing over hatred.

Total Pages (Source): 28

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Source Creation Date: August 7, 2025, 12:20 am

I was sitting in my office trying to wrap my head around the therapy session I just had. It had been years since I been going to Dr. Phoenix Barrel, who happened to be one of the best that ever practiced in New Jersey. I guess I could say she helped in a way, but it was just some things that could never be changed. The sound of my office door just opening caused me to look up.

“I’m sorry Mr. Pain, I tried to keep her from coming back here.” My receptionist Taylor spoke in a scared tone.

“What the fuck you mean you tried to keep me from coming back here! This is my fiancé’s place of business or did you forget Taylor. What are you fucking him too?”

“Kayla don’t start and Taylor you good. Go ahead back to your desk and clear my schedule for the rest of the day.”

“OK, Mr. Pain.” The minute she closed the door I looked at Kayla with a mean scowl.

“What the fuck are you doing here?”

“You didn’t come home last night Poetic.”

“And what’s it to you Kayla? You act like we are happily married or some shit. I hate that you keep forgetting this shit is only for TV and my image. So, miss me with the bullshit Kayla.” I snapped.

The way folks wanted to be in Hollywood was crazy to me. They never knew what

went on behind the curtains. They never knew the shit some of us been through all they cared about were our reputation, if we were married, if we had kids, and our sexuality. A couple years ago Kayla and I were seen out to dinner and the blogs lit it up. I wasn't the marrying type but my publicist and manager thought it would be a good look to get engaged. I never had any plans on it, but it damn sure did bring my followers up and brought a lot of business to my newly opened studio in New Jersey called P&P Studios.

"I swear you always act like this is about you. What about me Poetic? This is about my reputation as well."

Kayla kept fucking up in the blogs, driving drunk, starting fights and calling people out. One big ass troublemaker in the modeling industry. Although she was fine as fuck her attitude was ugly as hell and she was a fucking devil in a red dress. Her horns were always out which was why her career was in jeopardy. She thought I needed her, but truth be told she needed me more. Yeah she was good for my image, but if it was up to me I would be single for the rest of my life. A woman was the reason for my life being so dark. I hated them, they were beautiful, they were good enough to get this dick but nothing more nothing less. My mama basically pimped me out to Hollywood for money and a reputation. I was the biggest kid star growing up.

I started with pamper commercials, then baby food, modeling baby clothing. Then I was on the hit TV show, "Camera Kids". Then I was on the sitcom, "What about the kids?" My life has always been in the camera life. It was all fun and I loved it. I was born in this shit until one day at ten years old everything went black. The day I met Carol Peterson, the biggest celebrity in the world, she was known for working with all kid actors. The fact that so many kids worked with her, I knew for sure I wasn't the first kid she had did this too. My mind drifted back to the first time it happened to me.

I was sitting back on the big blue comfy couch in the back of the studio. My mama

had just dropped me off. I was told I was here to film another episode of Camera Kids. What puzzled me the most was the other kids from the show weren't here yet. All that was in the whole studio were me and Carol. She walked in and stood in the doorway with a glass with some brown stuff in it. Then she walked over to me and sat on the couch next to me.

"Hello Poetic, how are you?"

"Hey Ms. Carol! Where are my friends at?" I asked.

"They will be here soon. I asked your mama can I have a private meeting with you to talk about some new acting for you. Do, you want to be the best Poetic?" I looked at her with bright eyes knowing that I had to be the best or mama wouldn't be happy with me, so that was all I knew.

"Yes ma'am."

"OK, well in my eyes you already are. I just need for you to do a couple of things for me. I need you to keep this meeting private and don't tell a soul what happens in here. Not even your mama, remember you want to show her you're the best at all times."

I nodded my head, not even knowing what was next, I just knew I didn't want no one to be mad at me. Carol placed her glass on the table then got real close to me. She then placed her hand on my private and I looked at her like she was crazy. She began to move her hand up and down and it was a feeling I had felt before but with me touching myself. I had never experienced a woman touching me like this. The fact that Ms. Carol was a very pretty lady made things even worse.

"Do you like that Poetic?" She whispered in my ear. I didn't say shit I didn't even move. I was so confused, and my mind was going all over the place." She continued

to rub until I wet my pants. At this point, I wanted to cry because I had just wet myself in front of a beautiful older lady.

“Poetic, what the fuck is wrong with you? You don’t hear me talking to you?” Kayla snapped breaking me from my thoughts.

“Kayla get the fuck out, go home and leave me alone.” I yelled scaring the fuck out of her causing her to mean mug me.

“Poetic don’t fucking talk to me like that. I hope to see you home tonight.” She sassed while heading out of the door. I hated the daydreaming and the nightmares. Dr. Phoenix always believed that if I told my story and outed Ms. Carol, I would most likely feel better and the nightmares would stop, but I just couldn’t do it. The last thing I wanted was folks to think I was some kind of freak and fucked my way up in the business. I was a firm believer that every dog had its day, and Carol Peterson would for sure have hers. I’ve even thought about killing her ass, but I couldn’t seem to face her no matter how ruthless I was out in these streets. Plus killing her would be easy I needed her to go to jail and get tortured and rot, but it seemed like the parents never told. Most of them cared more about the money than their kids’ lives and there were so many of them that were like that. Money was definitely the root to all evil, especially when it came to you selling your own kids out for a buck.

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I was sitting at my table drinking a cup of Café Bustelo coffee, extra French vanilla creamer and two Splenda's. The coffee was made to perfection and the way it hit the back of my throat was well needed. It was the pick me up I needed for a busy day story hunting. I was Tatum Reece, one of the best, non-giving a fuck reporters in the state of New Jersey. I told stories, I found stories, I could all together end your career if need be. I was the one you called if you wanted your shit to reach all angles of the world. I hated to toot my own horn but I was that girl. The sound of my phone vibrating on the table brought me from my thoughts. I looked at it and it was the private investigator Louis that I used from time to time.

“Yes, Louis what could I do for you?”

“Hello Ms. Reece, I found some shit on Carol Peterson. Where would you like to meet?”

“Louis, I have to head in the office today so how about we do dinner tonight?”

“OK, no problem text me the address and time when you get settled.”

“Going out to dinner, what if I wanted to do something with you tonight?” I looked up and there Mario was all in my conversations like always.

“Ear hustling are we?” I sassed.

“I hate that you always treat me like a fuck Tatum.”

“That's exactly what this is Mario, nothing more nothing less.”

Mario wanted me so he claimed, but he hated my job and always worried about what his family and friends would think. I never have a good outcome with relationships because of my job so I just don't worry about them. Sex from time to time then my toys the other times and I'll be just fine.

"You always saying that dumb shit Tatum until another bitch is involved."

"Mario you can do whatever you want, just know when another bitch gets involved your days of fucking me will be over. I don't do confrontation, so when you ready to settle down just let me know ahead of time."

"You know what I'm getting out of here. I don't feel like dealing with your shit today."

"Bye Mario, lock my door on your way out." I said and went back to enjoying my coffee. My mind drifted back to Carol Peterson's sick ass. I had heard shit about her over the years, but nothing concrete, nothing I could blurt out at the moment. I couldn't afford to get sued so I was just going slow with this one because I knew for sure this would be my big break story.

After finishing my coffee, I made my way up to my room, and stopped by my full-sized mirror that sat in the hall right next to my room. I looked at my curly tresses all over my head. I knew I was looking crazy as fuck after the night that I had with Mario, too bad I knew what we had was just about over. No matter how good the dick was, I just couldn't deal with him anymore. After looking at myself once more I headed to my closet to see what I wanted to wear. I decided on a casual look which consisted of me squeezing these thick thighs in a pair of dark blue stretch jeans, with a white button-down shirt, a brown blazer, and on my feet, I figured my Steve Madden leopard Alston booties. Once I had everything laid out I headed to the shower to take care of my hygiene. So, ready to get this day started.

A half hour later I was in my car bopping my head to GloRilla, “Let Her Cook.” I had to listen to this every day before I walked into Media Frenzy. I hated working here and one day I wanted my own shit. I made the most money here and most of the time Josh let me do my own shit even if it meant he had to take the slack from the people ahead of him. I gathered my purse, laptop bag, and my phone and made my way in the building. All eyes were on me, they hated me because I was good at this shit. The crazy part was they all knew it, but still continued to hate me. I was always taught by my mama that if they ain’t hating you ain’t popping. That thought made me giggle and I needed to pay her a visit this evening when I was done work.

The minute I sat my bag down Josh was screaming my name. I let my eyes furrow while sucking my teeth before I got my thoughts together and headed to his office. I already knew what this was about, I also knew what he was going to say. I also knew he had to put on a front because the head office was on his ass. I took a deep breath before I entered his office. The look on his face told me all I needed to know.

“Hello Josh! What can I do for you?”

“Please tell me you don’t have someone following Carol Peterson.” I looked at him with a raised brow before I spoke.

“I have everything under control Josh.” I said in an honest tone.

“Tatum, I don’t want no problems with that sick bitch. I can’t afford no lawsuits and you know this.”

“I know Josh and trust me, I have it covered. And once I’m done, this will be the biggest story of our careers.”

“I’mma hold you to this and if you fuck this up you know you’re out of here. I promise you that, and not because I want you too. But because I have no choice.” I already

knew what it was, so it wasn't no reason for me to say anything. I just hoped when I made it to Louis's tonight, he had some good news for me.

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I was sitting in Capitol Grille having lunch when I received a message that I had been getting followed by a private investigator. I was sick of this shit. I had paid so many people to keep my life private and out of the blogs, but it seemed like muthafuckas didn't know how to do their job. The bitch that rattled my feathers was that fat bitch, Tatum Reece. The fact that she had been on my ass for years and she still had a job was crazy to me when I thought I had Media Frenzy in my back pocket. Helen Ross and I went way back and I made sure she always had money in her pocket. She just had to do what I said and things would always work out for her. Which is why I was waiting for her to show up so we could discuss this once again. The smell of White Diamonds and cigarettes invaded my nostrils as Helen walked over to the table.

"Helen," I spoke.

"Carol, what could I do for you this afternoon?" She said while sitting across from me. I made sure we were in the back of the restaurant where no one could see us.

"Let's cut the small talk. Why does Tatum Reece still have a fucking job Helen?" I snapped.

"Carol, I have nothing on her to fire her. I told you before that you need proof she's the one behind all of this. You have so many people that have it out for you. What makes you know for sure it's her." Helen said pissing me the fuck off.

"Because she's the only person that has the balls to come up against me. The only reporter that gambles with her own life. She just don't give a fuck which is how I know it's her. So, I'ma tell you this one time and one time only, you need to get rid of her or you will come down with me. I don't care what you do or how you do it find

something on that fat ass bitch.”

“I’ll try my best but you know it will take time. How do you know it’s not Porsha Pain doing this?” She asked saying a name I hadn’t heard in a minute. I didn’t think Porsha was behind this because we had an understanding years ago and she forever kept her mouth shut.

“What made you say her name of all names?”

“Cut the shit Carol, it has been shit said about you two for years. Porsha just stays quiet. Hell, she could be tired of being quiet, or how about that fine ass son of hers?” Helen asked, talking about Poetic Pain, one of the child stars I mentored and watched grow. The way she sounded saying his name instantly made my pussy wet. I knew I shouldn’t have been thinking about him but I always did. I missed him like crazy but I knew I had to pull away when he was sixteen because shit was getting hot for me.

“Don’t mention Poetic ever again, he is living his best life and not paying me any mind.” I snapped irritated at Helen’s dumb ass.

“Helen you heard what the fuck I said, and you know how hard I’m coming. What will Steve and your kids think when all of this comes out?”

“Carol don’t threatened me. I had nothing to do with whatever ya sick ass had going on. So, don’t think I’m scared because I’m not.” Helen sassed, causing my blood to boil.

I knew where this was going and the minute, she was headed out of the restaurant, the quicker a hit would be ordered on her ass. Once she was out of the way I knew Josh would be next in line for her job. I would just have to smooove things out with him and I was sure money would be the answer. I just had to make sure I played my cards right with him, because I knew how much he loved Tatum since she was his top

earner.

“Helen you can leave, and I wish we could have worked this out better than this.” I said with so much venom in my voice. I knew she was scared from the way she jumped up and headed out of the door. I swear these folks were going to learn not to play with me.

I sat there in deep thought trying to figure this all out. I had gotten off with so much shit over the years I was going to make sure I continued to get away with it. Everything in my past would be buried with me if I could help it. I picked my phone up and pulled up an escort service and looked for a sweet young tender roni that could take my mind off of the bullshit for the night. Once I set everything up, I ordered a lamb chop meal and a steak meal since I was going to clear my house of all the help so me and my date could be alone.

While I was waiting for my food I made sure to set up a meeting with Josh for the end of the week since I knew Helen would be gone by then. I also needed to set up a date with Porsha to make sure she and her son remained quiet. I paid Porsha more than enough money over the years to keep her fucking mouth shut. I wish she would fuck me over like that. Poetic I know for sure ain't gone say shit he living his best life right now and the last thing he needed was for some shit to get out that rocked his world. I knew I did some shit I wasn't supposed to over the years, but the boys loved it and their parents loved the money.

I know one thing for sure if it ever came down to me going down, I'm bringing every last person that helped me over the years down with me and I meant that shit. This would be the biggest scandal ever which is why I just needed to take this shit to my grave. I sat in deep thought til a waitress came over I then put my order in to go and waited until it was ready. Then I contacted my date to let him know where to meet me at. I had to be discreet especially since I knew someone was on my ass.

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I knew what this was between Poetic and I, but I was starting to catch feelings. I saw the pain in his eyes and I knew his past was dark. I just didn't know exactly what happened. I tried to find out plenty of times, but he wouldn't say anything. I even wanted to know who he went to for his therapy sessions and I couldn't even find that out. His money was super long so he was able to cover everything up. The sound of the room door opening brought me from my thoughts. I looked up and Poetic was coming in.

"Hey, you," I said with a smile on my face.

"Kayla what are you doing in my room?" He asked with a mean mug on his face.

"I haven't seen you in a couple of days and was wondering if we can sleep together tonight."

"Did I say I wanna fuck tonight, Kayla?" He barked.

"No," I said in a sad tone.

"Well get the fuck out!" He yelled with so much hatred in his voice. I had no idea what this man went through, but the fact that I felt like he wasn't attracted to me bothered me bad. I was one of the prettiest models in New Jersey, men were practically falling at my feet, but the one I wanted didn't want me. I jumped up so fast and made my way to the guest room with tears in my eyes. I really didn't understand it wasn't like we didn't sleep together sometimes. I guess it was only when he wanted it. When I hit the hallway I ran right into Ms. Trish, the housekeeper.

“He doesn’t mean to be so mean. He just has a lot going on.” She said just above a whisper.

“Mind your damn business and go clean up something.” I snapped.

“That’s why he will never love you, your spirit is mean. I’m trying to be nice and comfort you and you wanna be a bitch.” She rolled her eyes and walked off.

“Say something else and I’ll get you fired, you old hag.”

“You can try if you want. I’ve been around since Mr. Poetic was little, if anyone gets fired it’ll be you from this fake ass engagement.” She sassed right before sticking her middle finger up and walking off.

I knew she was right she was the only thing from his past that he loved. I didn’t even see him fucking with his mama like that and I heard his daddy died when he was five. So, I knew if it came down to it he would throw my ass right out the door real quick since our arrangement wasn’t real. I hated that I started feeling him, all I needed was for my portfolio to build and more endorsements, but my dumb ass got caught up. Which I’m so confused about since his ass is so mean to me.

I laid across the bed and felt my phone vibrate and saw it was my Auntie Carol. I hated that she called me while I was here, she knew Poetic hated her and he didn’t know I was her niece and I wanted to keep it that way. Carol was my auntie on my pops side who I didn’t talk to at all. She hit me up right after she saw Poetic and me in the blogs and she paid me to keep an eye on him. She never told me why or what went down and since I was already in this for a reason I agreed to since it got me some extra money. I hurried and picked it up and talked very low.

“Why are you calling me?” I whispered.

“I wanted to know how everything was going over there?”

“We are fine, now don’t call me anymore. Stick to the agreement.” I said right before hanging up the phone not giving her a chance to say anything else. We weren’t supposed to have any communication it was supposed to be just like we didn’t know each other. My heart was beating super-fast happy as hell he didn’t walk in on me talking to her. I needed a shower and some music to ease my mind so I was going to do exactly that.

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The smell of bacon invaded my nostrils and awakened me from my deep slumber. I hurried and washed my face, brushed my teeth, and headed down to the kitchen where Poetic was sitting at the table having breakfast. I looked around and noticed there wasn’t any for me.

“You didn’t make sure she made enough for me?” I asked with a mean scowl on my face.

“Ms. Trish had everything made for me when I got up. You can go ahead and make something for yourself, she doesn’t have time she has to clean my house.” He chuckled, causing my blood to boil.

This bitch must have told him about our words last night. The fact that the help had so much leeway around here pissed me off. I lived here with this man, and I couldn’t say shit to his help. Sometimes I wished I wouldn’t have signed up for this. I definitely wished I didn’t start to like this asshole so much. I really needed to get this wedding on and popping because one thing for sure if I became the wife I would get it all especially since he don’t mess with his mama. Every time I thought about throwing in the towel something else comes to mind making me realize I have a lot to lose if I leave this job unfinished. I didn’t say anything to Poetic or Ms. Trish’s old

ass. I just made my way back to my room so I can handle my hygiene then make myself disappear for the day.

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I woke up in a not so good mood, so I felt like I needed an emergency session, so I called Mrs. Barrel. I paid a good penny for her, but I felt like it was worth every dime, especially since she was available for me at any time.

“Hello Mr. Pain welcome.” Mrs. Barrel spoke as I walked into her office.

“Hello,” I spoke back.

“So, how has things been going?” she asked.

“For the most part ok, but I woke up not feeling myself. I feel like I’m having less nightmares, but today for some reason I feel off.”

“The less nightmares is good to hear, but what’s with this not so good feeling? Have you tried to talk to your mama?”

“No, haven’t gotten that far yet.”

“Why not, you know you and your mama need to sit down for some closure, Mr. Pain.” I knew she was right but I wasn’t ready for all of that. I just didn’t know how to face the woman that was supposed to be my protector but sold me out for some money. I honestly wouldn’t even cry if she died today or tomorrow, that was how much hatred I had in my heart for her.

“I don’t think we will ever have any closure. I don’t care if I hear her out nothing can ever change her actions.”

“I know you will never forget, but forgiving may help you along the way. Now when I say forgive, I don’t mean you have to let her in your life. I mean forgive so you can go on with your life. I know right now you don’t see anything good going good in your life but your work, and businesses, but one day you’ll meet someone that’s good to you and start a family.” When she said that I paused. I didn’t think I was capable of being anyone’s parent ever. Hell, I didn’t think marriage was in the cards for me either.

“Did I say something wrong Mr. Pain?” She asked.

“I don’t see a family in my future doc. I’m too fucked up for that.” I said being honest.

“Poetic, I don’t want you to ever believe you don’t have any good in you because you do. What happened to you was not your fault. You were a vulnerable little boy with no one around to save your life. So, this is not on you and your heart is only cold right now because of what happened to you.”

“What if I bring kids into this world and something happens to them like that. I know for sure I would do my best to protect them with all my might, but what if I don’t live long and they end up with my mama the one who let me get hurt. The one who was supposed to be my protector.” I said with a drenched face, as the tears were falling uncontrollable.

I hadn’t cried like this in a minute at a session, but these were pinned up feelings I had been having. The fear of not wanting kids made me not have sex often. I’m seriously scared to bring life into this world. I knew Kayla thought I wasn’t attracted to her but that wasn’t it. I just didn’t trust myself enough not to get her pregnant so I just didn’t sleep with her. She wasn’t someone I saw a future with but it was still ok to have her around sometimes to keep my mind off of things.

“Can we talk about something else for now?” I asked getting tired of crying.

“Yes anything you want, let’s talk about your business. Are you still not hiring child actors?”

“No, I haven’t brought myself to do it, too scared of putting someone’s child’s life in danger.”

“Mr. Pain you have to understand that what happen to you is not your fault. You’re not the monsters that hurt you, if anything those kids would be in the best hands because you will want to keep them safe.”

This was why I loved this lady, she pulled everything out of me and made me wanna change, it was just hard for me. I’m still trying to get a hold of all these feelings, it seemed like the older I got the more this shit bothered me.

“I understand what you saying doc and I have to do one thing at a time at my own pace.”

“OK, well how about we start off by assigning something to you after each session and then we talk about it the next time you come in.”

“I think I can do that doc.” I managed to get a smile out, which was a shock to me after all the damn crying, I was doing. Crying for a man is labeled as a sign of weakness, but I need this it always makes me feel better once I leave. It has me in deep thoughts, but it makes me feel better.

“Alright, that’s exactly what I want to hear Mr. Pain.” Me and Mrs. Barrel talked for about another half hour and I walked out of the office in a better mood.

* * *

After my session it was time for me to head into the studio. I thought back to how I had been treating Kayla for the past couple of days. So, I decided to send her some flowers and have Ms. Trish cook us dinner. Once I did the flower order on my phone and shot Ms. Trish a text on the work phone, I started my 2025 Mercedes Benz AMG SL, this was one of my new babies I purchased as soon as I opened the studio. I swear life was great for me, if you were on the outside looking in, but in real life, I was hurting and if I could trade all of this to get this demon off my back and this hatred out of my heart I swear I would.

After dodging in and out of traffic for about twenty minutes I was now pulling into the gates of my massive studio. I had it built to my liking my staff didn't need to go anywhere. They could even stay here while filming. They had room, food and board for however long they needed to work. I punched the code into the keypad that opened the gate. Then started my journey down the long trail that lead to the door to get in the main lobby. I was so amazed how the studio turned out, especially since I had started it in the dark times of my career. Once I made it to the door one of my men walked up to the car to go park it for me.

"Hello Mr. Pain," he spoke.

"Hey Jasp, don't park it under the tree."

"OK sir no problem." I hopped out grabbed all my belongings then made my way inside the studio. I looked up and Taylor was sitting there with such worry in her eyes.

"Good morning Mr. Pain, you have someone here that wants to talk to you." I gave Taylor a mean mug because she already knew how I felt about pop ups.

"Good morning Mr. Pain." A sweet soft voice could be heard on the other side of me. I turned to look her way and caught an instant attitude.

“Tatum Reece, what do you want?” I snapped. I never had no run ins with her, but she was everyone in Hollywood’s nightmare. The bitch would tear your life apart for a good story and I had no clue what she wanted from me. I just knew I wanted no parts of dealing with her. I knew I was going to have to have this conversation because she would do some dumb shit to piss me off and the last thing I needed was drama.

“I was wondering if I can speak to you in private.”

“You do know the professional way would have been to call and set an appointment like everyone else.”

“I know, but I’ve been trying to get an appointment with you for months.” She lied. I knew that wasn’t true because Taylor never mentioned her name.

“So, you just gone lie in my face?” I chuckled.

“I don’t have no reason to lie Mr. Pain,” she said. I didn’t comment on that because I already knew how reporters were.

“Taylor I’m going to my office I’ll call when I’m ready for you to send her back.” I said while heading to my office. I made it in my office, closed the door, took a deep breath then sat everything I had in my hands down. I didn’t want to talk to her, because I didn’t know what she wanted. There was things in my life that I didn’t want anyone to know about and I had a feeling one of these days I wasn’t going to be able to hide it forever. I sat at my desk and bowed my head and said a quick prayer. Once I was finished I called Taylor and told her to send Tatum back. I heard a light tap on the door and told her to come in. I sat behind my desk and waited for her to have a seat.

“Thanks so much for meeting with me Mr. Pain.”

“You got, ten minutes, now what can I do for you?” She looked at me and rolled her eyes, but I didn’t give a damn. While she was getting her words in order, I couldn’t help but to take in her beauty. Tatum was fine as fuck, milk chocolate skin color, thick all over like I preferred my women, face so natural, hair was curly and complemented her full chunky face. She was beautiful, but her job was a fucked up one. I just didn’t understand how you could tear people’s shit apart for the hottest story to make a buck.

“I’ve been following a story for a couple of years and I know for sure that you worked with the person for years. So, I wanted to know if there was anything you can tell me about Carol Peterson.” The sound of that name caused my blood to boil and me to see red, but I knew I would have to hold my anger in. I didn’t need Tatum to suspect something and then start digging.

“I can’t tell you nothing about that woman and your ten minutes is up.” I said in a calm tone.

“Mr. Pain, please, anything you can say will be confidential and will only stay between the two of us.”

“Listen and listen loud and clear. If I knew anything I wouldn’t tell you shit. You get a thrill out of fucking up people’s life don’t you? You love to feed off of folks’ business. What you got going on in your life? Are you married? Do you have kids? How is your relationship with you and your parents?” She sat there and looked at me with the meanest mug ever.

“Excuse me Mr. Pain, but this isn’t about me.” She spoke in a soft but irritated tone.

“Exactly, you don’t want me in your business so you should stay out of other folks’ business. This meeting is over Ms. Reece, you can go ahead and leave.” I said while getting up to open the door for her.

I had a feeling this was going to be about some bullshit I didn't even want to talk about. No words were spoken as she got up and sashayed right out of my office. I stepped out the door and watched her walk away until I didn't see her anymore. I must say the way her ass jiggled all the way out the door had my dick brick as fuck which was crazy to me. I disliked this chick but was pretty much attracted to her. I shook my head while walking back in my office and closing the door. I've seen Tatum plenty of times on the news or in the newspaper and magazines, but never in person. I must say she looked great in person, but if she kept fucking with people, she was gone end her pretty little life sooner than it should be ended. The sound of my phone vibrating on my desk brought me from my thoughts. I looked at the screen and saw it was Kayla calling.

"What's good Kayla?" I asked soon as I answered.

"Hey Poetic, thanks so much for the flowers, they're beautiful and I can't wait til dinner tonight."

"You're welcome, Kayla, and I'll see you later." I said right before hanging up the phone. The minute I sat down, my mind started to wander. Not only did Tatum say she had been following Carol for years she came here to ask me questions. Now I'm wondering if she knows anything, what made her come to me. Now at this very moment so many things were running through my head and now I was starting to revert back to that young teen that always asked why me. I sat at my desk in deep thought, throat dry as the Sahara Desert, palms sweating and thoughts all over the place. I bowed my head and said a prayer like always. It seemed like meditation, and talking to Mrs. Barrel had been everything I needed these past couple of years.

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Talk about pissed off, Poetic Pain had me fucked up if he thought he was going to talk to me any kind of way. He so lucky I didn't have anything about him and Carol Peterson's sick ass. See, I had been following Carol for years because of my brother. Trent Reece was my world, and his life was cut short at the age of sixteen. He was an up-and-coming star, and Carol Peterson got her claws in him. I couldn't say what happened just yet, I had to wait til I got all my facts straight. I had my brother's suicide letter that told me all I needed to know, I just needed someone else to tell their story, since my brother was no longer here to tell his.

My mama told me to leave it alone because she didn't want to relive the nightmare, but I couldn't, I needed to do this for my baby brother. I had Louis following her and he found out some things like her fetish for young men. She paid for their services online under an alias and would even meet them in disguise so no one would know who she was. I was sure they knew who she was though being one of the biggest actresses in the world. I just knew she paid so many muthafuckas off. I couldn't wait to bury this bitch. I knew the way Poetic reacted that it was something he was trying to cover up and I was going to do whatever I had to do to get in good with him so I could find out everything I needed to know. I wanted this bitch to pay for everything she did to my brother.

A light knock on my office door brought me from my thoughts.

"Come in," I yelled, and my boss Josh walked in.

"Hey Tatum, have you heard the news yet?" He asked.

"What news?"

“Helen Ross was found dead in her home this morning.” I sat and looked at him with my mouth wide open in disbelief.

“What the hell happened?”

“They think it was a heart attack, but her husband wants an autopsy done.” I knew it wasn’t no damn heart attack since Louis saw her at lunch with Carol. This shit had Carol written all over it, see Helen was Josh’s boss and Carol was pushing her to have me fired. But Helen wouldn’t dare do no such thing since I was her top earner. I didn’t know what their connection was, but now since Helen was gone, I was going to do my research. I also was going to see if I could get dibs on that autopsy as soon as her husband got his hands on it.

“Damn that’s crazy I wasn’t expecting that. Why do you think the husband wants an autopsy?” I asked.

“Because he isn’t buying she had a heart attack. She has never had heart problems. He also said she had been acting weird lately and he want to get down to the bottom of this. So, you know I need you on this as soon as the results come back from the autopsy.”

“What do you think happened?” I asked to see where his head was.

“Carol Peterson has something to do with this. She had been fucking with Helen for months trying to get her to fire you and me, but Helen wasn’t having it. I don’t put shit past rich folks. They’ll do anything to keep shit covered up and I’m starting to believe everything you told me about that sick bitch. I just need you to be careful because as you see shit getting crazy out here.” Josh said being honest.

I knew for sure I was going to have to watch my back. I wasn’t worried about that too much because I knew how to hold my own. I also had a couple of hitta’s by my side.

I could have had Carol killed by now, but I wanted that old bitch to suffer like all the young men who lives she fucked up.

“You know I’m a be safe, but I need you to do the same.” I said in a serious tone.

“I wish that bitch would try something.” He chuckled causing me to do the same. I knew Josh was about that life just like me, so I knew he would be alright, but Carol had money out the ass and I was sure if she wanted a muthafucka to disappear she would work on it. I talked to Josh a little more then decided to head out for the day. I needed to see my mama and give her a big hug since it had been a minute. I shot her a text and told her I would be there with dinner and some wine.

* * *

I walked in my mama’s house and was met by the big picture of me her and my brother. We lost our daddy a couple of years before we loss Trent’s daddy who died in the army. He wasn’t home much but when he was, he spent all of his time with us. I missed him and my brother so much. I hated how my mama was like a lonely old woman who lived alone since they both left. I wanted her to go out on a date and have herself a good time, but she never would. I made it to the living room and there she was sitting on the couch watching Law & Order reruns.

“Hey there lady!” I spoke with a huge smile on my face.

“Hey baby,” she said while getting up to give me a big hug.

“Come on to the dining room I brought us some Chinese.”

“OK, I hope you got me some shrimp egg foo young.”

“And you know I did with extra gravy and shrimp fried rice.” Once we made it to the

dining room, mama already had the table set. I just needed to get the glasses for the wine. I made it back to the table and mama had already opened everything and fixed us a healthy plate.

“So, how has work been?”

“Work is work, how are you?”

“I’m good just been going to bingo with Tracy and Sheila. I’ve been on a dating app too.” She eased in really fast.

“Say what?!”

“Yeah, Sheila put me on, she’s been going out on dates and having her a good time.” I was all for her dating, but I didn’t know how I felt about online dating, but at the same time how could I fuss at her about dating and having a good time then complain about how she’s doing it.

“That’s good to hear mama.”

“Tatum cut the shit. I know you and I know you ain’t feeling online dating. I’m a be ok Shiela makes sure Semaj checks them all out.” I looked at her and burst out laughing. I should have known. Semaj was Sheila’s son that was a cop, Semaj and I went to school together. We used to be tight, but his wife swore I wanted him so our friendship kind of died down. I still made it my business to check on him every now and then. I made a mental note to reach out to him to make sure he was keeping me updated on whoever he was checking out for my mama.

“I feel better knowing someone is checking them out. How has bingo been?”

“I knew damn well you wasn’t feeling it, and bingo is fine. I hit a couple times last

week.” It got quiet and nothing could be heard but chewing so I knew the questions about work were coming back up.

“So, how’s the big story going?”

“I’m still working on it.”

“I still don’t want you to do it, but I know how much it means to you. Just promise me you get that sick ass bitch put away for a long time.”

“That’s always been the plan mama, and I know you don’t want to bring all that hurt back up. But I feel like this will be our closure.”

“I guess you’re right.”

“I went to go see Poetic Pain the other day and I could tell something happened to him as well, but he won’t talk. I know something had to happen with him he was one of her first child actors. I just don’t know how to get him to talk.”

“Tatum, promise me you’ll let that young man talk on his own time. Please don’t find out that man’s business and spread it all around. This is a touchy subject and that young man has a lot to lose he’s so successful. If those horrible things happened to him, I’m so happy to see that he’s come this far and didn’t let it take over. I wish my baby was stronger than what he was.” My mama said in between sniffles.

I stopped eating and got up and sat next to her and hugged her. We held each other and cried for what seemed like forever. We both needed this every once in a while. I knew this was a touchy topic, but we always talked to each other about it. I wasn’t going to rest until that bitch was in jail for life. After talking to my mama some more I decided to send Poetic Pain an email apologizing for popping up and asked him could we go on a lunch date. I knew I was pushing it but hell it didn’t hurt to try. I

figured I would tell him the story about my brother to see where his head was after that.

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I was so upset when I heard that Helen's dumb ass husband wanted an autopsy. I had to put out a lot of money to make sure the shit said she had a heart attack like they suspected. Her ass was overweight and didn't eat right so I'm not understanding why he felt strongly about it not being a heart attack. I felt like everything wasn't going my way these days and I was pretty much over it. The sound of my phone vibrating on the table brought me from my thoughts. I picked it up and all that could be heard was breathing on the other end.

"Who the fuck is this?" I yelled. For the past couple of days, I had been getting these strange ass phone calls, and the shit was pissing me off. I felt like someone had been following me too. I had a feeling it was still Tatum Reece's fat ass, but something felt different about the phone calls.

"Ms. Peterson, will you be needing me to do anything else?" My butler, Charles asked.

"No Charles, you can head out. I'll be ok for the rest of the evening."

"Will you be needing any late-night company?"

"No, I'm ok you can go." I said in an annoyed tone. I haven't dealt with Charles in that way in years. He knows I dealt with younger men, and his ass definitely was too old for me.

"Alright, you know where I'm at if you need me."

"I said you can leave Charles!" I snapped while shaking my head. Once Charles left, I

decided to lay on the couch and watch TV. I already knew my security details were already in place, and they knew not to disturb me so I would be good for the night. I made a mental note to up my security detail at the office and my home. I also needed to figure out who the hell was calling me.

* * *

I woke up in a good mood today. I checked my calendar, and I didn't even have a lot booked which meant today would be a good day. I kept getting phone calls from different magazines wondering why me and Poetic Pain haven't collab in anything since his studio had opened, it was the newest, biggest and most lucrative one that was around. No matter how much they were right I just couldn't, all because of his bitch ass tendency's. I thought by now he would have grown and put our past behind us so we could get this money. After all this strange shit that been going on and I get rid of Tatum Reece, maybe I could get his mama to talk to him about working with me just one time. I walked into the lobby of my office and noticed some black roses sitting on the desk.

"Good morning Ms. Peterson, I was just about to put these on your desk." My secretary Nola said.

"Where did they come from?" I asked with a frown on my face. Black roses meant death in my eyes and I wasn't feeling this.

"A delivery man brought them in when I was coming in this morning." I looked in them and pulled the card out. I opened and what it said caused my eyes to widen.

Your time is coming to an end.

Lol, get ready to endure everything you dished out.

The funny part is you have no clue who I am.

I hurried and placed the card in my pocket and headed to my office.

“Ms. Peterson, what do you want me to do with the roses?” Nola yelled out.

“Throw them out Nola!” I snapped and continued to walk to my office in a fast pace. This shit was making my nerves bad as fuck. This shit had Tatum written all over it and enough was enough it was time to have a meeting with this fat bitch so I could show her not to fuck with me. I knew I couldn’t have her killed just yet since I had just got rid of Helen’s ass. The sound of a knock on my office door brought me from my rant in my mind. I opened the door and two detectives walked in.

“Hello Ms. Peterson, you’re a hard person to get in touch with.”

“Hello Detective Diggs and O’Bryant. What can I do for you both? You two know the type of life I live.”

“We wanted to talk to you since you were the last one to see Helen Ross besides her loved ones.”

“Yeah, Helen and I had lunch and discussed some business like always and that was it. You know we have been long time associates since she owned the biggest media company and I’m one of the biggest female actresses. We both know many people and are always talking business. I thought she had a heart attack, while would you guys need to investigate that?” I asked trying to see where they were with this. Diggs was by the book while O’Bryant seemed to run his mouth at times. So, I knew if I wanted to know something he would for sure help me out.

“That’s the same thing I said but apparently her husband has us doing unnecessary work.”

“O’Bryant!” Diggs snapped. “Ms. Peterson we just doing our job. So, after you and Mrs. Ross were finished with your conversation, what happened next?”

“Nothing, she wanted to hurry up home with her husband and I headed home since I wasn’t feeling well.”

“Do you have anyone that can collaborate your story?”

“Now Diggs, you know I have workers and security at all times, you can ask any of them. Now I would love to get my busy day started if you’re done with your questions.”

“We’re done Ms. Peterson, but we will be back if anything else comes up.”

“I’m sure nothing won’t Diggs.”

“I sure hope it doesn’t.” He spoke in a sarcastic tone.

“Oh Diggs, if anything else does come up maybe you should go speak to Ms. Tatum Reece. I’ve been hearing her days were limited at Media Frenzy.” O’Bryant laughed so hard, before he spoke.

“That would’ve been some dumb shit if she would have did that. Tatum is the main one that keeps that place open.” I was so tired of them praising that tubby ass bitch.

“Now can you guys just go. I told you everything you both needed to know.”

“Alright Ms. Peterson, I guess we will see you around.” Diggs said while turning to leave out with O’Bryant right on his heels. I sat at my desk and picked my phone up to call Nola’s desk.

“I need you to set up a meeting with Tatum Reece for me. Tell her the only place I’ll be coming is here nowhere else.”

“OK, boss lady, I got you.” Nola said right before disconnecting our call. I sat in deep silence looking at the note that was in the roses. Something deep was brewing and I just couldn’t point my finger on what it was. I’ve kept my life private all these years, but someone is working hard as hell to expose me and I was going to do whatever it took to get them smooth off my trail including Tatum Reece.

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Things had been going good for the past twenty-four hours with Poetic and me. We had a lovely dinner movie night, and the sex was amazing. Then this morning I tried to wake him up with some head and he went crazy on me, and I was in shock from the way he talked to me. Everything was always hot and cold with him, and I just didn't know how to take him at times. I decided to go into the studio to take some pictures since it was almost spring and I needed to get some new pictures to some magazines for spring and summer, it was almost swimsuit time and I wanted to be in any new swimsuit edition magazine. So today we were doing some spring shoots and then when I came back, we would be doing the swim wear.

“Hey Kayla! What’s up ma.” Tony my photographer asked.

“Hello, Tony, are you ready?”

“I’m always ready for you.” He smiled showing off them pretty ass teeth. Tony always liked me, but I never mixed business with pleasure. I never wanted it to get messy. Plus, I had my mind on trying to make Poetic see me in a different light. I smiled back at Tony then went to change my clothes to get ready for this shoot. Once I was done changing my clothes I decided to send Poetic a text.

Me:

Hello, I hope you have a good day.

Poetic:

Hey, thank you and you do the same.

He didn't apologize but I'll take it. I made my way back in the room where Tony was at to get ready for this photo shoot.

"Did you get the pictures I sent the other day?" I asked.

"Yeah, come on and let's kill this shoot." He said while getting his lights and camera prepared. I just stared at him while he got everything situated. One thing about Tony was he did his thing from private photo shoots, to weddings, parties anything you needed him for. We actually started working together straight out of school and we've been working ever since. He was a cool guy like I said, I just didn't mix business with pleasure. I got in to place so Tony and I could make magic like always.

A few hours later we were finished and ready to head out.

"When you gone be ready to start the swimwear shoot?"

"I was thinking about me and Poetic doing some shots together so let me get back to you on that one." He chuckled while shaking his head.

"What's so funny," I asked.

"You and that cat acting like y'all got something going on. I wish you know your worth and find someone that really wants to be with you. You're so beautiful and worth somebody giving you the world. You too good to be someone's project." Tony had never talked to me like this before. I guess this was something he needed to get off his chest.

"Whatever me and Poetic got going on is between us and if you can't keep it professional when you're talking to me, we don't have to do business anymore." I said while heading out the door without even saying another word.

I was pissed at what he said, and I knew if we kept going back and forth it wouldn't have ended well and the last thing I wanted to do was mess up our friendship and business relationship. Once I made it to my car and hopped in, I sat for a second and I wasn't even going to lie, I was so in my feelings I needed to head out tonight. I needed some me time, which consisted of me getting dolled up and going out for some dancing and plenty of liquor. I just wanted to enjoy my night and erase everything that happened today that put me in a bad space. I was ready for life to be uncomplicated and maybe Tony was right, but at the same time, I had feelings for Poetic and I wasn't sure if I could walk away from him.

* * *

I don't even know how I got in the house I just know, I had been walking back and forth from the living room to the kitchen giggling. I was feeling great and had a time tonight, all I wanted was to forget about how my last twenty-four hours went, and I did just that. I was torn up off the Don Julio. I had called my friend Shelly up and I swear my girl always understands the assignment.

"Are you good?" Poetic's voice could be heard from behind me. I looked at him and smiled and walked over to him. I looked in his eyes and saw so much hurt, but at this very moment, I wanted to make him feel good. So, I kissed his lips aggressively causing him to pull back.

"What's wrong, I only want to make you feel good? Are you gone let me make you feel good?" I said, while slipping my hand down his pajama pants.

"Chill out Kayla, I'm good ma."

"Why won't you just let me take care of you?"

"I said I'm good Kayla. DAMN!" He yelled while pushing me and causing me to fall

to the floor.

“Don’t nobody want no drunk ass pussy. Now go to the guest room, clean ya self-up, and take ya drunk ass to bed.” He snapped while leaving my drunk ass sitting on the floor. I was so sad again I didn’t even get up I curled up on the floor and laid my drunk ass there in tears. I didn’t even care if I fell asleep there or not. I was in my feelings and I wasn’t moving a damn place.

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I had trouble going back to sleep after I found Kayla's drunk ass walking back and forth between the living room and dining room. I had heard her talking to herself from the kitchen and that's what made me go see what was going on. Plus, one of my guards had told me that she had arrived and she seemed to be drunk. I knew I was fucking her head up with how I'd been treating her. Shit, I never know when I'm going to lose it. The night before we had a beautiful night, dinner and sex, but when she tried to wake me up with head, it triggered me. It had sent me back to a memory when Carol sucked my dick for the first time. She had come in my hotel room and woke me out of my sleep with head. Don't get me wrong I like head, but only when I'm already engaging in sex. That waking me up shit I'm good on that. Then her trying to fuck me while drunk that was a trigger for me as well since cognac was always Carol's drink of choice. I felt bad after I laid in the bed for a couple of minutes. I had went to check on Kayla and saw she wasn't in the room. I went back downstairs and she was curled up in a fetal position sleeping. I walked over to her, picked her up, and headed to the guest bedroom.

"I'm sorry, I didn't mean to make you mad." She said through slurred words.

"You good ma, no apology needed. I'ma take you to the room and help you get ready for bed and we can talk about this tomorrow." I knew I couldn't get into details why I acted the way I acted sometimes, but I needed to tell her something. I also needed to have a meeting with my agent and publicist. It was time Kayla and I had a breakup. I couldn't keep hurting this girl this way. I had to end this fake ass relationship so that way she could go on with her life. I knew she could have any man she wanted, and I wasn't the one for her. I had my own shit to deal with, not to mention, I wasn't feeling her in that way. Yeah, I liked her, she's beautiful sexy and about her shit. I just knew I would never be the relationship type. So yeah, Kayla and Poetic were not

going to be y'all couple goals in Hollywood. After I laid Kayla in the bed, I took her clothes off and left her in the panty and bra set she had on. I then covered her up, kissed her forehead and left out of the room. I made my way back to my room and laid in the bed looking up at the ceiling hoping that sleep would take over me real soon.

The next morning my alarm went off and I eased out of the bed and headed to take care of my hygiene. I needed to send emails to everyone I needed to have a meeting with. I then had to head to the office to meet up with a client. After my shower, I decided on a gray Nike sweat suit and a pair of gray and white Dunks. I never dressed down but today this was how I felt. After I sprayed some Gucci Guilty on I grabbed my phone and everything else I needed and made my way down to my kitchen to grab my smoothie that Ms. Trish always had made for me. When I made it to the kitchen she was in there and so was Kayla.

“Good morning, Mr. Pain, here is your Green Machine.” Trish spoke while handing me my smoothie. I felt Kayla’s eyes on me which caused me to smile.

“Good morning, you look handsome as always.” Kayla smiled.

“Thank you beautiful!” I smiled. I headed out the door, but before I walked all the way off I turned back at Kayla.

“Kayla, meet me for lunch about twelve thirty. I’ll text you the place when I figure it out.”

“OK, will do.”

“Khary and Malcolm will be joining us.” I mentioned pertaining to my publicist and agent.

“Alright, I’ll be there.” I could tell she was worried the way her demeanor changed. I had to put that in the air because I needed her to know this wasn’t what she thought it was. I knew if I mentioned them she would know this was business. Since I felt like dressing down today and didn’t feel like being in straight business mode. I decided to hit up my driver to give him the day off today I felt like driving myself around in my black on black 2025 Maserati. I opened the front door, and my car was already parked in front of the door waiting for me. I hopped in, turned some Rod Wave on, and peeled off with my office being my first destination of the day. I had a busy day but I made sure to squeeze Dr. Barrel in after the meeting with Kayla. I needed my therapy sessions just like I needed the air I breathed. I hated that I had to depend on them, but that was the only way I functioned in everyday life.

Thirty minutes had gone by and after dodging in and out of traffic I was now pulling up to the gate of my studio and punching the number in waiting for the gate to open.

“Good morning Mr. Pain.”

“Good morning Jasp, what are you doing at the gate?”

“Tyree called out today his baby was sick, sir.”

“OK, and who’s covering your post?” I asked.

“Sisco is there, sir.”

“Alright, thanks for always making sure shit is straight here.” I spoke. I was so pleased with Jasper and the work he did for me. When I tell you that man did all types of jobs for me. I truly appreciated him.

“Your welcome boss, no thanks needed. You’ve always been good to me and my family. So, I am forever grateful and will always do my best here at P&P Studios.” I

gave him a head nod and made my way into the gates and down the long ass path to reach the door to enter the studio. I made it up to the door and there Sisco was waiting to park my car.

“Good morning sir, it’s nice to see you.”

“Hey Sisco, thank you for joining us today.”

“No problem at all, I was free today. My mama has the kids for me.” Sisco worked for me as needed he was a fulltime daddy since his wife had passed from cancer a couple of years ago. I was surrounded with so many men that were good fathers and here I was hoping to never be a father so scared of bringing something so precious into this cold ass world. I shook my head annoyed by my thoughts.

“Oh ok, how are the kids?” I asked with a smile on my face.

“They are fine and getting big. I’ve been meaning to thank you for the gifts you sent on Sincere’s birthday.”

“No thanks needed. I told you I wouldn’t miss no birthdays or holidays after Lisa passed and I meant that.” I assured him while getting out the car and gathering my things. Sisco opened the door for me and I hopped out, I gave him the keys so he can go park the car.

“I know what you promised and I still can’t thank you enough.” He smiled. I made it my business to treat all my workers and their families good. They were my family as well and they made sure to keep P&P running nicely and for that they all will be appreciated.

“You don’t have to thank me the work you do here is enough. Now go ahead and park my baby and don’t scratch it.” I chuckled knowing we always played like that.

“I wouldn’t dare do that. Hell, I can’t afford to get no scratches fixed.” He chuckled. I entered the office and a guy was sitting on the couch in the lobby.

“Good morning Taylor,” I spoke to my receptionist.

“Good morning Mr. Pain, your first client is here.” I walked over to him to introduce myself.

“Hello Mr. Dashawn Taylor, it is a pleasure to finally meet you sir.” He stood up and pulled me in for a one arm hug.

“What’s good the great Poetic Pain? I am one of your biggest fans.” He chuckled.

“Dashawn if you don’t cut it out.” I chuckled. Dashawn was a known actor. He would be on and off with his appearance, but when he got to work he killed it every single time. He called me a month ago and told me he would be in Jersey and would love for us to collab while he was here and this was something that I would not pass up. Me and him could make some magic and great money while he was in town. I was surely looking forward to this. I was ready to start filming as soon as next week if he was ready. This meeting was for us to discuss and brainstorm exactly what we wanted to do.

“Man, I’m so serious you’ve become one of my favorites in this industry.” He smiled.

“Well, here we are. Two of the greats about to collab, please come on and follow me to my office.” I was smiling from ear to ear. I was so happy about this collab actually happier than I’ve been in a long time about work.

“Taylor, I need you to set up a lunch date for me, Kayla, Khary and Malcom. Send them all a text to let them know. You can set the reservation for Flemings Steak House, call and let them know I need the meeting room in the back. I don’t feel like a

whole bunch of fans in my face today.”

“Alright Mr. Pain and I’ll forward all emails and voice messages after your meeting with Mr. Taylor.”

“OK, no problem.” I said while heading to my office with Dashawn right behind me. Once we made it to my office I walked in, laid my stuff down, and walked straight to my refrigerator.

“Would you like something to drink before we start?”

“I’ll take a water.”

“OK, cool, have a seat and make yourself comfortable.” Dashawn did as he was told and I grabbed us both a water. I also grabbed my laptop, a pen, and notebook.

“OK, let’s get to it.” I said while sitting down.

“So, I wanna do a cop series like New York Undercover . I think it should be called Jersey’s Finest . I know you have the cast and the production while I have the idea.”

“OK, this sounds good to me, so what you thinking as far as cast?”

“I want A dominate black cast but we can have other nationalities. We don’t have many dominate black cop series. Plus, we always have cop shows and they always about the black folks getting arrested, framed or being dirty cops. I want us to be great. As far as having the best arrest record and all of that.”

“So, how big of a series do you want this?”

“We can start out as a mini-series see how it does and take it from there.”

“OK, cool, I’m all for that. Start out with it being six hour long episodes.”

“Alright cool, now let’s use this time to come up with what the first six episodes will be about. Then we can come up with cast members names and all that good stuff.” Dashawn encouraged.

“We can indeed handle that. We can actually do this for the first couple of days. Then we can host a calling cast event. Then filming will start in approximately a week and a half.”

“Which means we will have this on the air in about a month. This is so dope that you have everything right here at your studio. You don’t have to find places to film. You have everything here from restaurants, police stations., hospitals. Man, you did your big one with this. You’re definitely an inspiration for so many young folks.”

“Thanks man, I truly appreciate that. People never know what I went through to get here.”

“I felt that, some of us have some scars that can never heal behind this shit.” He spoke in a sad tone. I could feel how serious the thought he was having felt, but I didn’t know what his scars was and to be honest, I didn’t wanna know because one thing I wasn’t going to do was talk about mine.

“So, what do you think this first episode should be about?” I inquired.

“How about a gang war or drug trafficking?”

“Those can be the first two they can go hand and hand and be connected somehow.” I suggested, causing Dashawn to shake his head. We went on for hours with many more suggestions. I felt like this was the start of something great and I was all for it.

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I was chilling in my living room just lounging around trying to get my day in order. I woke up in my feelings and life was like this sometimes. I had my iPad on my lap going through my email and the minute I was about to respond to one, I received an email from Poetics receptionist letting me know that he agreed to lunch but he only had time today at two o'clock. I looked at the time and it was eleven o'clock and all I could do was shake my head. I knew today I wasn't in good spirits but I needed this meeting with this man. I hurried and emailed her back letting her know I would meet Mr. Poetic wherever he wanted to meet.

I got up off the couch and headed to take care of my hygiene. I needed to find something sexy to show off all these curves today. I felt him staring a hole through my ass last time I saw him. So today I was going to make sure I through it on just to give him the show he wanted. I stood in front of my walk in closet without a thought in the world. I thought about the weather and it was just about the start of spring so nice and warm but not hot. So, my hot pink pencil skirt, a black and white stripe crop button down, and to complete my outfit I went with my Betsey Johnson Carra Dress Sandal with the chunky heel. After I figured it all out, I made my way to the bathroom.

I looked in the mirror and decided I would put my curly hair up in a bun with a couple of curls hanging on each side, to showcase my chunky oval shaped face. I wasn't a make-up girly only did that when I was on TV even then I just wanted a light beat. I was a lip gloss girly nothing more nothing less. Maybe some lipstick on special occasions but me and make up weren't cool at all. I felt like it covered up your true beauty and the real you. Sometimes people looked like other people with make-up and I always wanted to look like myself. The beauty that I truly was. I turned the shower on to the temperature I liked and jumped right in, considering the

mood I was in when I woke up. I felt it changing and I sure hope it was for the better. I knew Poetic Pain had the advantage to get under my skin, and I wasn't in the mood for that. So, I closed my eyes and said a quick prayer I needed Big G up above to make this work out for me.

I looked myself over once more before spraying some Carolina Herrera Good Girl Blush on. After spraying myself all over making sure to spray a lot I needed folks to smell me before they saw me. I then put my lip gloss on and headed out the door. It was exactly a quarter after one and Poetics studio was about thirty five minutes away so I would be making it right on time. The receptionist had told me that he wanted us to have lunch at the studio and she had me tell her what I wanted to eat from Capital Grill since he was having it picked up and brought to the studio.

After dodging in and out of traffic I was finally pulling up to the studio gates. The nice man opened the gate after I said who I was and I then drove up the long ass trail that led to the door. Once I made it in front of the door a nice man came out and grabbed my car keys to go park my car. I was then met by another man that walked me into the receptionist.

"Hello Ms. Reece, you can head back to the meeting room. It's the first room on the left and Mr. Pain will be right in."

"OK, thank you." I smiled making my way to the back. While I was headed back Dashawn Taylor was walking towards me. I didn't wanna be on no fan girl shit, but I couldn't help myself.

"OH MY GOD! Dashawn Taylor," I said in so much excitement.

"Well, hello! Tatum Reece, how are you beautiful?" He spoke showing off his pretty teeth.

“I’m good, I want you to know I’m a big fan.”

“Thank you, I truly appreciate that.”

“Hello Ms. Reece,” Poetic spoke while walking up to us.

“Hello Mr. Pain.”

“You can go ahead in and have a seat Ms. Reece.” Poetic said trying to push me out of Dashawn’s face. I gave him a hostile glare before I turned my attention back to Dashawn.

“It was nice to meet you Mr. Taylor, maybe we can get together for a story before you leave town.”

“That sounds like something I’ll be interested in Ms. Tatum, get my number from Mr. Pain and call me when you ready.” He assured me. After he said what he said I made my way into the meeting room. I looked around the room and thought to myself how much I admired this place. I mean, this young man was doing really well for his self. It was truly hard to believe that he might have dealt with the same thing my brother went through. I had so many questions, like how was he strong enough to go on after what he went through. I really wanted to know his story. I really wanted to know about the pain I’d seen in his eyes and if I saw it, I knew others did.

“Ms. Reece,” he called out bringing me from my thoughts.

“Oh hey, sorry how long were you talking to me?” I asked.

“I called your name twice, are you good?”

“Yes, my fault, I tend to daydream sometimes.”

“Well, if you ready we can start this meeting. The food is on its way.”

“OK, but before we start I want to apologize for how I just popped up last time. I know you are busy and that’s not how things work in this business. I also want to apologize for asking you anything about Mrs. Peterson.” Even with his face contorted with rage he still was fine as hell.

“Why do you always feel the need to bring that lady up in my presence? Why is this story about her so important to you?” He fumed. I stared at him for a minute before I spoke again. I needed to ease in to why I mentioned her name so much without trying to make him uncomfortable.

“The reason I want to talk to you is because I know you were the first kid to ever work with her, and I need to know some things about her before I take her down. See my brother was one of her child actors after you and he endured somethings that lead him to commit suicide. He left a note telling me and my mama the things he had experienced. Of course, we don’t have any proof but the suicide letter and you know damn well that’ll mean nothing with the money and resources she has. I just need someone else to tell their story.”

“I’m sorry to hear about your brother, but I don’t have a story to tell. Now is there anything else you would like to know about me?” I looked at him and smiled. I had to let the Peterson conversation go and think of something else real quick. I needed to get in good with this man so I could make him eventually open up to me.

“I mean, since we have lunch coming and I rather end this on good terms, how about we talk about what’s upcoming?”

“We can definitely do that. Dashawn and I was just talking about getting someone to air the story about our upcoming cop series Jersey’s Finest . Then the great Tatum Reece walked in my office. We need the best to run this story to get the word out. It

don't hurt to run a good story sometimes and not one laying peoples bad shit out there." He chuckled kind of pissing me off.

"I don't always do bad stories so don't do me like that." I sassed while rolling my eyes. A light tap at the door brought us from our conversation. Poetic yelled enter and it was a man dressed in a suit looking like a butler with our food.

"Hello Mr. Pain, I have your lunch."

"OK, Roy you can set it up in the middle of the table." I watched as this man sat all this damn food in the middle of the table like it was six of us here to eat. I had asked for the grilled lamb chops, with asparagus and garlic mash. He placed a nice size tray in the middle of each thing I asked for. Along with a couple of steaks, lobster mac and cheese and broccoli. Then he placed dinner ware and napkins in front of us along with a bottle of red wine and two glasses.

"Will you be needing me for anything else boss?"

"No Roy, thank you for your time and tell Ms. Lola, I said hello." Poetic smiled. This man had been through something but I could tell he had a pure heart. The more I studied him I wanted to know more about him. The good, the bad, and the ugly.

"Wow, you didn't have to order all of this." I spoke after Roy left out.

"I know, but I like to eat and I wanted you to eat as much as you wanted. I hope you came with your appetite and not one of them shy women that like to munch on salad but grub when they behind closed doors." He chuckled.

"Nah, I can eat, hell I know you see all these damn curves." I giggled, causing him to smile at me. Poetic and I ate and enjoyed each other's company for the next couple of hours. I was excited about the upcoming series with him and Dashawn Taylor it

sound like it was going to be a hit.

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I moved back to Jersey for a short time. I had told my wife I wanted to work with Poetic Pain and when I got the option I did. I had a house here in Jersey, it actually was my grandmother's home. So, I knew me my wife and kids would be comfortable here while I did what I needed to do. I was here on business, but I also wanted to end Carol Peterson's pathetic little life.

"Hey baby!" The love of my life, Symphony Taylor walked in the living room.

"Hey, you, how you feeling today?"

"I'm ok, just glad to get a break from the kids."

"I'm glad you getting a break too. How is Donna doing?" I asked referring to my mama.

"She's good. She told me to tell you hello since you haven't answered your phone for her since we've been back in Jersey."

"I'll get up with her one day just not right now." I spoke being honest. I didn't really have a good relationship with my mama. I hated her for taking money from Carol Peterson and moving me away. Instead of getting that bitch put away. When I was old enough, I left home, changed my name, and started a new life. I wanted to erase my past as much as I could. Years of therapy, my beautiful wife and kids keep me grounded. I still wanted Carol's ass put away where she belonged. I'm good today, but man them demons had me fucked up. I turned to drugs and all type of shit before I got my mind right. My kids are what really kept me on the right path. I'll forever love my wife for making me a daddy. I needed her and my kids more then she'll ever

know.

“I know you have to take things one step at a time, but the kids are starting to wonder why you don’t love their nana. I need you to get it together Dashawn.”

“Alright baby, I promise I will, but I have to do it on my own time. As of right now, I’ll have a talk with the kids to explain it to them in some way. Now, enough about that. What we gone do with our alone time?” I asked.

“I think I can show you better than I can tell you, come on.” She said in a seductive tone while standing up and grabbing my hand leading the way to our bedroom.

Sex used to be the last thing on my mind until I met my wife. Yeah, I was fucked up for some time, but my body always yearned for her. When we first started dating, I struggled until I started therapy. My therapist talked me into telling my wife everything and I did just that and now our relationship has been more powerful than anything I’ve ever experienced. Once we made it to the room, she pushed me on the bed and then straddled me. I looked into her eyes and smiled hard as hell. I then reached under the crop top she was wearing with no bra on and started playing with her nipples. She let out a soft moan while grinding on my man hood. I lifted her up a little so I could remove her bottoms. Once I removed hers, I removed mine and the way she looked at my dick standing at attention told me she was ready for me to enter her.

We didn’t get much alone time due to having three kids under the age of ten. So, when we did get free time it was on and just as magical as the first time. Symphony leaned down and took my erection into her mouth without me saying a word. She sucked, slurped, and kissed on my dick just the way I liked. I was enjoying every bit of her head game, but I didn’t wanna cum this way. I wanted to feel her insides.

“Come on baby, I want you to ride it.” I managed to get out in between moans.

Symphony did as she was told and eased her wet slippery walls down on my erection. I bit down on my bottom lip while her eyes rolled back in her head. I guided her hips while I met her stroke for stroke from the bottom.

“Mmm...Hmm... just like that baby, ride this dick.” I coached her turning, her all the way on. The more I talked my shit the faster she moved. We were so in tune with each other I knew I wouldn’t be able to hold this nut any longer. “Baby you gone cum with me?”

“Yesss... baby, I’m going to cum with you right now.” She moaned out in pleasure while the feeling of her juices slid down my dick. Symphony’s body started to shake vigorously while I held her in place.

“Fuck ma, I’m cummin’ right behind you.” I moaned out in pleasure while I shot my seeds in her tunnel. My wife laid on top of me and I held her tight. I swear, I loved this woman with all my heart, and she don’t even have to worry about me stepping out on her she was all I needed and wanted.

Symphony ended up going to sleep, so I got up showered and made my way to the kitchen to make us some dinner. We had a maid and a nanny come over a couple days a week. My wife never wanted anyone to be in our kitchen or anyone raising our kids, but when she had our third kid, she realized she needed some help since I was on the go a lot due to my acting career.

Today happened to be the maid’s day off and the nanny was off because the kids were with my mama. While I cooked I figured I would get on my laptop and look up some more shit on Carol Peterson’s old ass. I knew some shit went down with her and Poetic, but I knew he wasn’t going to talk about that shit. I knew because I was the same way. Even though I’ve told my story to my wife and my therapist. I still have trouble speaking on it with others. I want to one day be able to counsel young folks that went through what I went through, but I’m not at that place in my life yet. I

looked in the fridge and saw everything to make spaghetti, so that's what I was making something quick and fast. I decided to do a side salad and some garlic bread. I sat everything I needed on the counter then sat at the table for a minute so I can log into my laptop. Once everything was open I went to the file I had on Carol Peterson and opened it up. I looked through everything I had so far and was indeed happy with myself. I had been following her since I've been back in town and her not knowing my new name made shit easier the bitch wouldn't see me coming. The sound of my wife walking in the kitchen brought me from my thoughts but not fast enough to close out my computer.

"What are you doing Dashawn?" She asked in concern.

"I'm going to get that bitch for sure this time." I said through clenched teeth.

"Dashawn, please, I don't want you consuming yourself with this day in and day out. I don't want you to revisit your dark past if you don't need to."

"I know baby, and I'll be fine. I need to do this for me and our relationship. I need her behind bars then I could properly love my family." I said being honest. I knew I was doing everything that needed to be done as a husband and wife. I just needed this void closed so my family would have the best version of me.

"You do love us properly." She said in a sad tone.

"Baby, I feel like when I let this lady take over my head I can't give you and my kids all of my attention. So, once I get this done I should be good."

"Alright, I'm gone let this go but if you start getting over stimulated or having nightmares I want you to stop. I'm going to let you do you for now. I just don't want this shit messing up your head." Symphony explained.

“I promise I’m gone be good baby girl. As long as I have you and my kids. I always have something great to fight for. So, if I lose myself you best believe I’ma fight my way back.” I said while pulling her on my lap and nuzzled my face in the side of her neck. I knew my wife hated this for me, but at the same time she understood where I was coming from and that’s all I needed was for her to be by my side; no matter if she cared for the situation or not. I could see the sadness in her eyes, I knew she was scared of me kicking up the past, but this was something I needed to do for me.

“Since you working I’ll get this spaghetti going.” She smiled while kissing my cheek.

“Are you sure baby? I’ll put this up and get to it if you wanna go continue to rest.”

“Nah, I got it. It’s been a minute since I cooked for my man anyway.” Symphony headed to the stove while I went down a rabbit hole with all of this new discovery I had sent to me about Carol Petersons sick ass, her days were definitely numbered.

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Today was the day and I had been twirling my fingers and sitting in deep thought ever since I made it to my office. I had a meeting with Tatum Reece in just fifteen minutes. I didn't know how this was going to work out. I just hope she didn't make me want to kill her fat ass today. I was still kind of shook up about what I walked into last night. I had a room set up for me and one of my young clients and of course I got there first, in disguise like I always did. I had made it to the room and there was writing all over the mirror. I see you still like them young, but this time you pay for it instead of just taking it. Lol! The shit was written in black lipstick. The shit freaked me all the way out. I ended up canceling my client and taking my scared ass home. I just couldn't help but to worry about who the fuck this was. At first I was thinking it was Tatum, but now I wasn't so sure. A light knock on my office door brought me from my thoughts. I yelled, "Come in!" And there she was, my arch enemy walking in with a dumb ass smirk on her face.

"Good morning Ms. Reece, come on in, and have a seat." She mean mugged me all the way to the chair.

"Cut the shit Peterson, what do you want?"

"I want to know why am I always the center of your attention. It's so many other people in the world you can fuck with but for some reason you wake up thinking about me. I don't do bitches especially fat ones." I giggled. Tatum laughed hysterically before she spoke.

"The fat jokes don't bother me at all boo, and I know you don't do bitches; you prefer little boys." I looked at her with my nostrils flared and hands balled into fist. I swear I wanted to knock that smirk right the fuck off her face, but this wasn't the time or

place for that. I was trying to get her off my ass and I had to suck up my feelings and try to be cordial with her.

“Look Ms. Reece, I don’t know what you think you may know about me but you’re all wrong. I’m sick and tired of you trying to spread lies about me. Especially since you haven’t seen anything with your own eyes or even heard anything out of my mouth. So, I’m not understanding why you think you got something on me when you don’t.”

“You don’t know what I got on you Peterson and I know for sure ya ass is scared because why else would you call me in here for a meeting. I’m never going to stop looking into your ass so let’s just put that in the air right quick. I know how you like to tussle when you can’t get your way, but what you need to know about me is I tussle back. Just something for you to know before you send your goons to kill me like you did Mrs. Ross.” I was so pissed I could feel the creases in my forehead. This little bitch had some balls and I wanted to shoot her right the fuck now and if I could get away with it I would have.

“I didn’t do shit to Mrs. Ross, I have no idea where you get your facts from, but you be all wrong, so you need to hire a new PI.” I said letting her know I knew who her private investigator was. I was ready to get rid of his ass as soon as I found out, but I knew I couldn’t just yet. I could tell the way she looked at me she didn’t know I knew who she was working with.

“I don’t know what you’re talking about.” She lied.

“Yeah ok, Ms. Reece, how about we play let’s make a deal. You leave me alone and stop doing all this creepy shit like sending me black roses, calling and breathing on the phone, and leaving me messages. You stop that and your PI will be just fine.” She looked at me for a second before she spoke.

“You got a deal.” She said a little too fast for me, but I really didn’t care as long as she stuck to her end of the bargain I would do the same.

“Alright, well, that’s all I wanted Ms. Reece. Now you can leave.”

“Shit you don’t have to tell me twice. The last thing I wanna be doing is to be sitting across from a snake ass bitch. You have a good day now Peterson.” Tatum spoke harshly. I watched her while she walked out my office. She was sharp as hell every time I saw her. I just hated her ass, always looking for the biggest story to end a muthafuckas life.

Once she walked out, I got up and locked my office door. I sat at my desk and went through my emails to check what other meetings I had for the day. I noticed a commercial about Poetic working with Dashawn Taylor. I heard about him before he was an actor in Atlanta for some time. He came back this way to work in Poetics new studio. I was starting to get a little angry the way folks were lining up to work in P&P Studios and I was on the side lines looking in. I was one of the oldest and wealthiest actresses around. I deserve just as much as anyone else to have a chance to work in the biggest studio in the world. I knew I probably couldn’t get through to Poetic, but maybe I could get in good with someone that’s working with him. I sat in deep thought for a minute then a thought popped in my head. Maybe I could set up a meeting with Dashawn Taylor, just maybe that’ll be my way in with Poetic. I picked up my phone and called Nola.

“Hello Boss lady, do you need me?”

“Yes, I need you to find Dashawn Taylor’s information and set up a meeting with him. Let him know it’s for a new business venture and make sure you let him know a lot of money is in it for the both of us.”

“OK, I’m on it right now.” After I got everything situated I ended up just sitting in

my office quietly debating on if I should set up another date tonight since the last one was ruined. I had already made a deal with Tatum, so everything should be good for tonight. I got online and looked up the same client I had from last night. I knew he probably was mad which is why I still paid him for the night since it was my fuck up. The minute I reached out he sent me a private message telling me he hope I didn't stand him up tonight. Once that was confirmed, I just brainstormed what I should bring up in this meeting with Dashawn Taylor. I needed to say all the right things without him being alarmed about me not going to Poetic myself.

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The last time I saw Poetic was the meeting we had with his publicist and agent. I was not ready for that meeting at all. I did not expect for him to break shit off with me. I mean, he wanted it aired in the tabloids and on all of our social media handles. The shit was so depressing, I couldn't even keep a fake man. The shit was bothering me so bad. I had been crying for days. I had missed my photo shoot with Tony and he had been calling me like crazy. The sound of my front door opening brought me from my thoughts. I looked up and my friend Candace was walking in the door.

"I knew you were in here laying around drowning in your tears. I'm happy that fake relationship is over. I got tired of you pushing me to the back burner."

"Candace what are you doing here? And you can give me back my fucking key now. I don't need you watching my place anymore."

"I ain't giving you shit back. I'm here so you can get out of the pity party and get your shit together. Tony called me and told me you missed your shoot. I thought you were trying to get on a summer cover, and last I checked you need the money since you ain't spending Poetic's anymore." Candace got on my nerves, but she was right. I had money but my shit wasn't long like Poetics. When I was staying with him I didn't have to do anything. I even had my own black card to do any and everything I wanted. Whenever I did work or get endorsements it was as Poetic's fiancé. So, money and jobs were coming in like crazy. Now because of my history it's going to be hard as hell to get back where I was. I hated this for me, I was so mad at myself that I couldn't get Poetic the way I wanted him. I was really falling for his mean ass.

"I know Candace and I don't need you to remind me." I snapped.

“Apparently you do, now when you going to get the fuck up and go make some damn money before you end up in the poor house.” My friend always knew how to get me right. I hated how straight and forward she was but I needed it. She hated the whole Poetic thing and told me not to do it, but I did. She wasn’t fucking with me for a while, but as soon as she heard what happened she came right over. I would forever be grateful for her and her friendship.

“Alright, I’m about to get up and get myself together. Can you call Tony to see if he has any openings today, while I shower?”

“I already called him and told him I’ll have you there by one this afternoon. Now go ahead and get dressed so we can go eat before we head to him.” I looked at her with a huge smile on my face.

“Now how did you know I was going to be ready?”

“Because I was going to come in here and beat ya ass, if you didn’t get your shit together. You know I don’t play about you and your career, and you need to stop playing with it too.” I looked at Candace and she was right. I needed to get my shit together. I really needed to get my shit together because if I didn’t, I would be a poor bitch and that was something I never wanted ever again for myself. I had been homeless, a stripper and doing really bad at a time. So, becoming a model was one of the best things that ever happened to me. I went to shower while Candace straightened my house some.

* * *

“That’s it ma, just like that.” Tony coached as he took numerous pictures of me. I wasn’t even going to lie it felt good today doing what I loved.

“We can rap this up now, I’ll send you the edit copies and then you let me know

which ones you want to send to the magazine.”

“Ok good, and Tony I wanna apologize for how I talked to you the last time. I know you just trying to make sure I’m good and I appreciate you for that.”

“No sorry needed, I shouldn’t have come off the way I did.” He smiled causing me to do the same. I made my way to the back to change my clothes and was met in the doorway by a smiling Candace.

“What ya goofy ass laughing bout?”

“You and Tony giving each other googly eyes. I don’t know why you won’t let that boy take you out.”

“Now you know I don’t mix business with pleasure.”

“Bye, Kayla, I don’t see nothing but a power couple in the making.” I didn’t say anything I just squeezed past her and made my way to the back to get my clothes changed so we can get out of here.

A half hour later I was done and ready to go. Once we got to the car and Candace turned the radio on a story about me and Poetics breakup and my ass got sad all over again. Candace looked at me and then pulled me in for a hug.

“It’s going to get better friend. He wasn’t good for you anyway. Come on let’s go have a drink.” I didn’t say anything, I just nodded my head and let Candace go wherever she wanted to go. A drink didn’t sound bad at all, especially since I was in my feelings. I needed to let this Poetic shit go, but it just seemed like it was going to be too hard to do.

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I knew Kayla's feelings were hurt but I had to do what I had to do; I was tired of living this lie and hurting her at the same time. My publicist didn't think it was a good idea, but I didn't give a damn. I wanted to be done with that fake shit. On another note, shit was going amazing with me and Dashawn's upcoming series. Tatum had placed an article in the next edition of Media Frenzy and the word was now out. We were getting so much support and calls for the cast it was amazing. I couldn't seem to get me and Tatum's lunch date out of my head. We were vibing so good and enjoying each other's company. I couldn't seem to get her sexy ass out of my head and this shit was different for me. It had only been a week and I was thinking about her ass day and night. I kept saying to myself I could never be in a serious relationship with someone like her. I had too much baggage and I couldn't unpack that shit.

"Yo bro, you didn't hear me walk in?" Dashawn asked while entering the meeting room.

"Damn bro, nah, I didn't my fault. What's good with you?" I asked while dapping him up.

"I wanted to check in with you today, no work related stuff just wanted to see if you wanted to go hooping or out for a drink or something." I didn't have any friends and this was one of the things Dr. Barrel and I discussed for one of my assignments. Being an only child and not really dealing with family or friends was one of the things I wanted to work on.

"Sure, why not, I wasn't really doing shit anyway."

“I’ve noticed, you own this whole entire studio, you are the bossman you should be doing other shit with your life. You give lonely vibes bro, get you a wife and kids. I’m telling you it’s the best thing I ever did in life after my fucked up childhood.”

The way he said fucked up childhood had me curious but I wouldn’t dare ask what happen. I felt like he didn’t know me that well to share his business. I chuckled while shaking my head after what he said.

“What you shaking your head for?”

“You sound just like my therapist.” I said wishing that didn’t leave my mouth. I never discussed me going to therapy with anyone before.

“Therapy, huh, I’ve been looking for a good one since I been back in Jersey. How is it? Is it working for you?”

“She cost a pretty penny, but she’s the best. I see my life turning around since I’ve been going to her. I can refer you if you want.”

“I do, what’s her name?”

“Dr. Phoenix Barrel.”

“Oh yeah, I heard about her. Thanks bro, I’ll be sure to reach out to her. Now let’s go shoot some hoops then we can hit one of the clubs over Philly.”

“OK, let me close out these emails then we can head out.” Dashawn sat on the couch in my office and waited for me to get finished with what I was doing. Then we headed out to go have a good time. I couldn’t even tell you when I went out and did some shit other than therapy or work related stuff.

* * *

I was sitting in our section in The Billionaire Lounge with my eyes on Tatum. I had spotted her ever since she walked in the door. The fact that we called ourselves going somewhere we would be out of the way was crazy. The minute we walked in the door and asked for a spot in the back, folks just been walking over to us.

“Why don’t you just ask her to join us?” Dashawn said with a huge smile on his face.

“What you always smiling for.” I asked.

“Man, it’s obvious you’re interested in her. I saw that when you had the meeting at the studio. You had your eyes planted on her like I wanted her. You just didn’t know my heart belonged to one woman.”

“It isn’t even like that, me and her are usually at each other’s throats.”

“That don’t mean you not interested.”

“I guess, how long you been married?” I asked trying to change the subject.

“I’ve been married for three years and together for six. My wife changed my life in so many ways.” He smiled.

“That’s dope, I wish I saw that in my future.”

“Why don’t you see that in your future? I thought you were engaged before?” I didn’t wanna bring this up but I figured what the hell. We had been talking about private shit all day. Plus, I felt comfortable around him, his vibe was cool.

“That was all a scam that my publicist thought would be a good idea, since the media

kept up with the gay shit. They never seen me in a relationship so they just took the first thing they came up with and ran with it.”

“Yeah, those people can be a bit much, but I still say invite her over. You never know what can happen between the two of you. Love is a beautiful thing and you should try it one day.” Dashawn’s phone rang and he answered it; he said a couple of words then hung right up.

“I’m going to head to the bathroom and on my way I’ll tell Tatum to come on over, since my wife is on her way.” I chuckled while shaking my head. I guess it wouldn’t be an issue we were just some friends having a nice night out.

“Make sure you tell the men at the door we’re trying to be lowkey so keep the groupies and the camera men away from our section.”

“They know already, I left some extra cash up there for them to shut it down from letting people in here, so we should be fine. I’ll be a little minute because after I use the bathroom I’ll go to the side door to meet my wife.” Dashawn said while getting up and heading over to where Tatum was sitting. About ten minutes later Tatum was headed my way and we stared each other in the eyes until she made it to our section.

“Hello Poetic!” She smiled.

“Hey, you, what you doing here out alone?” I asked.

“I come here every now and then when I need some time to myself. The question is what brought you out? I never see or hear of you being out.”

“Yeah, I usually stay in. I hate all the attention and people in my face. So, when I do go out I try to go where the people don’t frequent at. That’s why we all the way in the back and Dashawn paid them to stop letting people come in.”

“I see, do you mind if I join you?”

“Nah, come on, I know Dashawn already told you I wanted you over here.” I chuckled.

“He did, but I didn’t believe him.”

“Why wouldn’t you believe him?”

“Because we not working, I didn’t think you cared for me. I just thought you tolerated me when it came to business.”

“I’m not even going to lie, you did rub me the wrong way at first, but that lunch meeting we had kind of changed my feelings about you just a little.”

“Just a little, huh.”

“Umm... maybe more than just a little.” I smiled sliding over tapping the seat so she could sit next to me. Tatum sat next to me and her perfume danced in my nostrils. I swear every time I saw her she looked so fucking good. Today she had on a tight fitting black dress that showcased all of her curves, with a crop red leather jacket. On her feet were a pair of red strappy heels that were laced up her thick legs that happened to be the same red as the jacket. Her curls were all over her head giving her a wild look. She didn’t look like she had on make up just a little red tint to her lips. I was feeling this look.

“Are you good Poetic?” She asked bringing me out of my thoughts of her.

“Yeah, I’m good. I was just taking in your beauty.”

“Why thank you, Mr. Pain! Whatever they did with the mean Mr. Pain leave his ass

right there because I think I'm feeling this one." She giggled.

"I'm not mean at all it just depends on how you handle me. Now what you drinking pretty lady?"

"Did somebody say drinks?" A loudmouth stepped into our section the way Dashawn was holding on to her. I could tell it was his wife.

"Y'all gotta excuse her we don't get out much with three kids under the age of ten." He chuckled causing me to do the same.

"I'm sorry y'all I'm so excited to be out."

"You good, I can totally understand. I don't have no kids but work takes over most of my life." Tatum spoke.

"Well, I'm Symphony and what's your name?"

"I'm Tatum."

"Nice to meet you Tatum and you must be Poetic. The man that been having my baby staying out late and working his ass off." She smiled while holding her hand out for me to shake it.

"Yes, that would be me, nice to meet you, Symphony. I've heard so much about you."

"My baby always talking about me." She smiled while kissing his lips.

"What you want to drink baby?" Dashawn asked.

“Get a bottle of Azul, some shot glasses, and a bottle of pineapple juice. Y’all ok with drinking Tequila?” Symphony asked.

“Yeah, I’m cool with that.” Tatum responded. I didn’t drink much, but I was going to have me a drink or two tonight. I don’t know why I felt so comfortable around Dashawn, Tatum, and Symphony but I did. I was going to use tonight to get out of my comfort zone and have me some fun with some potentially new friends.

Source Creation Date: August 7, 2025, 12:21 am

The sound of sniffing and crying woke me from my deep slumber, I looked up and there Poetic was lying next to me in a fetal position shaking and crying. I tapped him scaring the shit out of the both of us the way he jumped up. He looked around and his eyes softened at the sight of me. The tears were still running down his face and I could tell he was embarrassed.

“It’s ok, I’ll get my things and leave.” I said just above a whisper. He didn’t say shit he just ran off to the bathroom. I saw that we were in a hotel which was a good thing. I had no clue how we got here and who checked us in, but I would think it had to be one of his drivers that knew what type of rules to follow. I hurried and put my clothes back on and made my way outside of the door. Once I made it to the door it was two men standing outside of it.

“Good morning, Ms. Reece. I’m Jasper and I’ll walk you out the back of the hotel where no one will see you. Your car is here in the parking lot.”

“OK, Mr. Jasper, thank you so much.” I said while following him to my car. So much was running through my head, but I knew I had to take my time with this. I knew I couldn’t address this right away. I was going to have to wait for him to reach back out to me. The night we had was amazing we drank, we talk, and vibed with each other. We both were turned from the liquor so we decided to leave the club together. After that I really don’t remember much. The way we were throwing them drinks back. I was sure we were going to be turned. I didn’t know we ended up at a hotel. I felt like I had sex and I was naked when I woke up so I know what went down. I just hated that I didn’t remember how everything went down. Once I made it to my car. I turned to Jasper and spoke.

“Thank you so much and can you make sure he’s ok?”

“He will be just fine. I promise you just give him some time.” He assured me. Hearing him say that I assumed that he knew what was wrong or he had been around some shit that had to do with Poetic Pain. I got in my car and Jasper closed the door for me. I sat for a second trying to rap my mind around what just happened, but I really couldn’t make sense of it at all. I just knew that this shit had Carol Peterson written all over it and I was going to take that old bitch down if it’s the last thing I do. The sadness in Poetics eyes had me sad and I needed to go hug my mama, so that’s exactly what I did. I started my car up and headed straight to see my old lady.

After dodging in and out of traffic for about a half hour I was now pulling up in front of my childhood home. I parked the car and hopped right out. I knocked on the door and she opened it right up. The minute I saw her I pulled her in for a hug and started crying instantly.

“What’s wrong baby?” the woman who birthed me asked while pulling me in the house and shutting the door.

“I went out drinking with Poetic Pain and we ended up at a hotel room.”

“What the hell happened Tatum? Do I need to go grab my gun?”

“No mama, nothing happened that I didn’t want to happen.”

“Well, what happened? What has you so upset?”

“I got woken up by his crying and shaking. Mama I saw a grown ass man in a fetal position crying like a small child in his sleep. The shit hurt me to the core. I know Carol Peterson did something to him, just like she did Trent. I just have to get him to open up about it.”

“Tatum what are you doing? Are you playing with this man for a story?” My mama asked wearing a mean mug.

“I’m not even going to lie, at first that was the plan, but I think I like him.”

“If you think you can handle a damaged man like that then go for it, but just know it’s going to be some hard times baby.”

“I know, I need to take my time with him if I plan to pursue something. I know I just feel so bad that I couldn’t do anything earlier because I’m supposedly not supposed to know what’s going on with him. I wanted to hold him while he cried, but you know how men are.”

“Yeah, I do, but that man there is a different type of man. I know you feel like he’s weak because of the things he went through, but I don’t think so. That man is a strong man. He was able to stand tall and still keep his dream going. Now he’s a very successful man. He just have some darkness that needs to be brought to the light and you may be that person that can do that for him.” I sat and I listened to everything my mama was saying and I never thought about any of this. I just used to think of Poetic Pain as a sarcastic bastard that Carol Peterson took advantage of. But over the past couple of weeks, I’ve noticed a different side of him and I was now intrigued even though I knew it was a darkness in his past that didn’t stop how I was starting to feel about him after our second encounter.

“I don’t know if he will ever want to see me again, he was so embarrassed.”

“Give him his space and if you feel like he’s taking too long, go pay his ass a visit.”

“Do you think I’m crazy for liking him?”

“No, I don’t I think if what we think happened to him he deserves some good in his

life and a happy ending one day. Nobody deserves to live in a dark past.” I swear I loved this woman and her gems she always dropping. I just wish my brother would have talked to her and let her know what was going on. She would have helped him get through it in any way he needed. We were my mama’s life and she would do anything for us both until her casket drops. I didn’t feel like doing anything today, so I decided I was going to stay here.

“Do you mind if I shower and get some rest in my bedroom?”

“Now you know I never mind that. When you get up we can have dinner and a movie night if you feel up to it.”

“Alright mama, that sounds good to me.”

“OK, good now go get cleaned up and get you some rest. I’ll be sure to pray for your friend.”

“Thanks mama I truly appreciate that.” I said while pulling her in for another hug and then heading to my room. I was exhausted and hope that I can get some rest. My mind was all over the place, but I knew I was tired and needed a nap.

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I was laying in my bed when I got an email that shocked the hell out of me. When I saw Carol Peterson's name anger rushed through me instantly. I opened it up and to my surprise the bitch wanted a meeting with me. I smiled because this could be something to work for me and my plan depending on what she wanted. I haven't been around this lady in years so I wasn't sure how this would make me feel or if I could even stand to be in the same room with her. I knew if I went I would have too because she didn't know my real identity.

"You good baby?" My wife asked as she walked in the room.

"I'm ok, but guess what?"

"You're not ok, so why you lying to me?" She said, with her head tilted to the side staring at me. I pulled her on top of me and kissed her forehead.

"I swear you know me so well. I just got an email from Carol Peterson."

"I knew something was up, what that bitch want?"

"She want a meeting with me, but I don't know if I can be in the same room as her."

"Yes, you can and yes, you will, and I'm going with you. So set that shit up." I chuckled, because one thing Symphony Taylor was gone do is be my ride or die.

"OK, baby, I'ma set it up for this afternoon." I said while responding to the email. I truly had no clue what this crazy ass hoe wanted. I just hope she didn't make me kill her ass today.

“Is it set?”

“Yes, baby, it’s set for two o’clock.”

“Alright, I’m going to get the kids together so they can go to your mama’s. Pick us out some hot shit to wear and I’ll be back to start getting ready.” I chuckled while shaking my head. My wife was something else and I loved everything about her. I watched her fine ass while she headed to go take care of the kids.

I saw another email from Dr. Phoenix Barrel about our first session which was this evening, and I felt like the shit was right on time. Since I was about to be face to face with Carol Peterson; to be honest, I didn’t know how I was going to feel in this lady's presence. I knew for sure my wife being with me would help me in every way. So, I wasn’t too worried. I pushed my thoughts to the side, jumped up, then headed to our walk-in closet to take us both out something nice to wear. Of course, I made sure we matched each other’s fly like always. Once I finished getting our things together, I laid them out on the bed then made my way to the shower. I turned the water on to the temperature I liked. Then hopped right in, I had so many thoughts in my head I just let the warm water run down the top of my head. While my thoughts consumed me and the hot water continued to fall down my body, a draft from the shower curtain brought me from my thoughts.

“Do you mind if I join you?” Symphony asked.

“Sure, you don’t even have to ask. Are the kids good?”

“Yes, Nelly is getting them ready then she will drop them off at your mama’s house.” Nelly was our nana that worked a couple days a week. Once Symphony got in the shower she grabbed my washcloth and lathered it with my Dove’s men wash.

“Everything is going to be alright, so let all them feelings go. I don’t need you being

worried or scared. That young boy you once were don't live here anymore baby. We big dog status over here." Symphony spoke light into me causing me to smile. I swear she was the best thing that ever happened to me. I truly appreciated her for all she did and continues to do for me.

"I love you so much, you always know what to say."

"I got your front and your back baby always. We in this forever, right?"

"Yup, forever and always." I said while leaning down to kiss her lips causing her to wrap her arms around my neck. I then picked her up and she wrapped her legs around my waist as we continued to kiss passionately. Once her legs were tight around my waist I pushed her back up against the wall while entering her nice and slow. I bit down on my bottom lip while watching her eyes roll back in her head as I gave her long, deep, slow strokes.

"Mmm...Hmm... this pussy wet as hell for me baby." I moaned out in pleasure while enjoying my wife. Symphony looked into my eyes as I fucked her down. I knew she could see how much I loved her and vice versa. She was definitely made for me. The feeling I had in the pit of my stomach was one I often felt in my wife's presence. The next thing I noticed was the sadness in her eyes while she watched the tears fall from mine while I continued to slide in and out of her opening in a slow motion. Any other man would probably feel embarrassed but not me, sometimes my emotions took over me and I was with the right person to experience this with. No words were spoken we just looked at each other while we continued our sexapade.

"I love you, Symphony Taylor! Are you ready to cum with me, beautiful?"

"I love you more Dashawn Taylor and yesss, come on baby, let's cum together."

I began to hit my wife's spot that I knew all so well. I knew everything about her

body and was always going to aim to please her in every way.

“Ohhh...fuck Dashawn. I’m about to cum baby.”

“Shit... I’m cummin’ right behind you baby.” My body began to jerk and I was shooting my seeds into her opening. After we were finished I waited a while before I placed her on her feet. Once we were standing face to face she stood on her tippy toes and kissed my lips.

“Everything is going to be alright. I got you always.” Symphony assured me. Me and my wife washed each other up over a conversation and just like that I felt better and was ready for this meeting with Carol Peterson. Symphony Taylor was really my best friend, wife, superhero, and my soul mate.

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Ever since the meeting with Tatum Reece, I had been feeling OK. The crazy things that were happening had stopped, so I guess it was her all along. She stopped so I took the hit off of Louis, the private investigator. The sound of my office phone ringing brought me from my thoughts. I picked it up and Nola let me know that Dashawn Taylor and his wife were here. I was shocked when I got his email this morning. I didn't know why his wife needed to come, but whatever worked for him was fine with me. I was trying to make some money. So, he could have had anyone with him and I wouldn't have gave a fuck. The minute I heard a light knock at my office door I got up and opened it.

“Hello, come on in, it's nice of you both to join me.” I said moving to the side to let them both in. Dashawn kind of hesitated, but his wife walked through first and pulled him.

“Mrs. Peterson, it's so nice to meet you. I'm Symphony Taylor and of course you know the man of the hour. My husband, Dashawn Taylor.”

“Hello to you both, you can go ahead and sit on the couch. Can I get either of you something to drink?”

“No, I would like to know why am I here?” Dashawn asked.

“Oh, so right to business I see.”

“My time is valuable, so yes I don't have time to waste. So, what am I here for?” He asked again.

“Alright, so I hear that you and Poetic Pain have a new series about to start soon. I’ve been trying to work with him for a minute, but I can’t seem to get through to him. So, I was thinking maybe you and me can get something started and we can just see if he would be ok with us filming at his studio. That way we all can make money.” He sat and looked at me for a minute while tugging on his beard like he was in deep thought. I had a feeling he didn’t want to work with me, but I was praying he changed his mind if that was the case.

“I never have a problem with making money, Mrs. Peterson, but why couldn’t you just hit Poetic up on your own time and give him a proposal.”

“Like I said he’s not an easy man to get in touch with.”

“I find that hard to believe I moved here from out of town and was able to start working with him right away. Do y’all have some type of beef or something I need to know about?”

“No, not at all unless it’s something I don’t know about. All I know is he don’t like to work with child actors and I work with them a lot. That’s the only thing I can see us bumping heads about, but we haven’t worked with each other in years. So, I’m sure it’s no beef between us.”

“Alright, well we can set up another meeting to discuss exactly what you want to do and I’ll talk to Poetic to see where his head is with all of this. Now if you lying and y’all do have some beef. You don’t have to worry about me working with you, because I don’t do messy at all.”

“I’m sure it’s no beef and I’ll get my assistant to set another meeting up and the proposal will be connected to the email and if you can, I would love for Poetic to be at the next meeting.”

“I’ll see what I can do, but Ms. Peterson, I hope you not playing with me and you just trying to make some honest money.” He spoke in a serious tone.

“No playing going on. I’m too damn old for that and about my business. So, I guarantee it’s all business Mr. Taylor.”

“OK, then we are going to head out. I’ll get back to you as soon as I talk to Poetic.” Dashawn said as he got up with his wife following behind him. I don’t know why his ass was so hostile towards me. I had never met his ass before today in person. I sure hoped Poetic and his mama stuck to the contract that was signed and wouldn’t be kicking no bad dirt on my fucking name. Yeah, just like Helen said before she died it was time for me to set up a meeting with Porsha Pain.

* * *

I was on my way to meet Porsha Pain at her house. She didn’t want to meet me anywhere because she didn’t want anyone to see her out and about with me. Due to her and her son not speaking, she lived about an hour and thirty-five minutes away in Delaware, New Jersey. I didn’t have shit to do, so I figured a ride to go see wouldn’t be a problem. Of course, I had a driver drive me around today because I hated traffic heading into Delaware in the evening. After almost riding for two hours, we were finally pulling up to Porsha’s home. I looked at her home and started shaking my head. Ain’t no way Poetic had all the money and this lady was living in this little ass house. I wonder what happen to the money I sent her ass with when Poetic left from working with me. Her ass should have brought a nice big home I thought to myself. A light tap on the window brought me out of my thoughts. I gave my driver the ok and he opened the door for me. I stepped out of the car with my purse in my hand. The minute I was about to walk up on the porch Porsha opened the door.

“Hello Carol, come on in,” She said before looking both ways; like she was scared or something.

“Bruce, stay out here in the car and I’ll call you when I’m ready.”

“Ok ma’am.” I walked in the house with Porsha behind me.

“Porsha would you relax. I’m only here to have a talk.”

“Whenever you want to talk it’s always something Carol. My own son don’t even fuck with me because of you and truthfully I don’t want to deal with no more of your shit.” I looked at her while laughing hysterically.

“Porsha, as long as you and your son are both breathing you will always have to deal with me. Now tell me what you’ve been telling people lately?”

“Carol I haven’t been telling anyone shit.” She said with so much anger.

“Are you sure?” I asked again.

“I’m positive, now what are you really here for? You could have asked me that over the phone.”

“I’m here because I need Poetic to work with me before people start asking questions.”

“Carol I have no clue how you think that’s going to go down. For one Poetic is not a young child anymore I can’t make him do shit he don’t want to do. Secondly, he hates me, he don’t even talk to me. I haven’t said shit to my son in years so yeah, I can’t help you at all. You had a better chance of talking to Kayla about trying to talk him into working with you.” I didn’t even think of Kayla, it had been a minute since I heard from her. One of the main reasons she was there was because I gave her a couple of dollars to stay over there longer. From the beginning after a month of being there Poetic was driving her crazy and she wanted out. Then last I heard she was

falling for him, so I wonder how things were going.

“You’re right I haven’t talked to her for a minute. I wonder why she hasn’t reached out.”

“Is that all I can help you with?”

“Porsha, I’m under the impression you don’t want me here.”

“Carol I don’t, I’m done talking to you we are not friends. You fucked up my life and I’ll never ever be cool with you because of it.” She had the nerve to say pissing me the fuck off.

“I did no such thing Porsha, you simply let me have your son for some money. So, you fucked your own life up.” I snapped. I was so mad at myself for what I had just said. I hope to God it wasn’t anyone else in the house because no one needed to know what I just said.

“Who do you have in here, Porsha?” I asked in a serious tone.

“Carol I don’t have anyone in here and your paranoid ass can leave now since we don’t have anything else to talk about.”

“I’m about to head out anyway, but if I can’t get some shit in order to work with your son, I’ll be back for you to help me figure something out.”

“I swear your ass is delusional.” She snapped causing me to jump up and wrap my hands around her throat. I squeezed nearly squeezing the life out of her. She scratched my hands and was trying to squirm out of my hold. Once I felt like I had done enough I let her go and she dropped onto the floor gasping for air.

“Porsha you better learn how to talk to me like you got some sense. I’m not the one to play with and you already know this.” I snapped.

“Carol, get the fuck out of my house! You need to understand that if something happens to me my son will know it has to do with you. I don’t have no family or friends I deal with. I stay here in this house all alone with no company. My one and only sister keeps in touch that’s it that’s all. So, yeah they already know if something happens to me to come lock ya crazy ass up. Now once again, get the fuck out of my house.” She yelled.

“I’m gone leave today, but I’ll be back sooner or later. I have to make sure you keep your fucking end of the bargain.” I sassed while letting myself out. I had nothing else to say to her ass. She had pissed me off enough I just wanted to get the fuck out of her home and head home. I shot Kayla a text as soon as I got to the car to let her know to meet me at my house in a couple of hours. I had forgot that I had her in my pocket too.

“Ma’am, I thought you were going to call me when you were ready?” Bruce asked when he saw me coming out of the house.

“I know Bruce, but I was just ready to get the fuck out of there. Now come on, let’s go I have to meet someone at my house in a couple of hours and the traffic should have died down.”

Source Creation Date: August 7, 2025, 12:21 am

I was so sick of my Aunt Carol. I don't know what she wanted me for. Everyone knew me and Poetic had called it quits so I wasn't understanding why she didn't know that by now. I didn't even know why she wanted me to spy on Poetic. The shit seemed real weird. The other night she had told me to come to her house and I ignored her now she was sitting in my living room. I knew she was ready to piss me the hell off. I hurried and put my robe on and made my way down to my living room.

"How may I help you Aunt Carol?" I asked while entering my living room.

"Kayla, why didn't you call me and tell me about you and Poetic?" I asked.

"Why did I need to tell you? Celebrity shit is always all over the news and radio, so please don't tell me you didn't here." I sassed.

"You had a job that you got paid for. The minute you left the job you were supposed to call me, because now you owe me money because you didn't fall through with the job." I looked at her and laughed.

"I don't know where you think you getting money from. Hell, I didn't even know what the hell I was supposed to be doing. Plus, Poetic broke up with me. How the hell do you expect for me to stay somewhere I'm not wanted. What is this about anyway?"

"What it was about was none of your business. I just needed you to stay on his good side and you couldn't even do that."

"Alright now, Aunt Carol you can go."

“I’m going to leave, but you have a month to give me my fucking money back, or I’m going to tell Poetic the only reason you were there was because of me. Now how do you think he will feel about that news?” I looked at her with so much anger. I was pissed the fuck off, because where was I going to get money from and if she put me on blast like that I’ll be fucking up my career forever. It already was Kayla the drunk, Kayla can’t keep a man, and Rachel Kayla always arguing with the blogs. The last thing I needed was Kayla the liar that faked a whole relationship for a publicity stunt.

“Whatever Carol, you can go now and next time call first, or you won’t get in here.” I got up and walked her old ass to the door. I couldn’t stand her and hated I even got involved with her. Carol got up and made her way out of my door.

“You got a month to get me my money or Tatum Reece will have your story about how you and Poetic dating was a scam. Goodnight niece, will see you soon.” My aunt said while heading out the door. Now I was sitting on my couch in deep thought. Now how the fuck was I going to give her back her thirty grand. I had so much going through my mind at the moment I didn’t even know how I was going to sleep tonight. I was still dealing with the fact that Poetic broke up with me. Now I’m going to have to deal with worrying about Carol’s old ass telling on me. What the fuck was I going to do? I sat there in deep thought then I thought about it, fuck Carol and the broom her old evil ass flew in on. After I thought to myself I made my way up to my bedroom. If it came down to it I would just go tell Poetic myself. I would break everything down to him from the beginning. Once I made it to my bed, I climbed in my bed hoping for a good night rest.

* * *

After sleeping on my decision, I decided that I was going to go ask Poetic what he had going on with my old ass Auntie Carol. I was trying to be on Poetic’s good side, before I pissed him off. I knew I had to look damn good before I walked in. I turned the water on to the temperature I liked. I had my mind made up I just hope Poetic was

in a good mood today. I needed him to understand that me and him were on the same page and that I hadn't told Carol shit. Hell, truth be told, I took her damn money and never had no plans on telling her shit. I got in the shower and let the hot water run down my body. I grabbed my loofah and poured a generous amount of Native vanilla and sandalwood soap. I usually didn't use stuff like this but it smelled so good, so I decided to use it. A nice hot shower and looking good would always place me in a better mood. After cleansing my body, a couple of times and I felt like I was satisfied. I turned the water off and grabbed my towel. I dried off and wrapped my towel around my waste and made my way into my bedroom to oil my skin before I slipped on this nice little dress that I always felt like I got the most stares from Poetic in. It was an elegant light pink fitted dress mid length. It fit every curve on my body. The top of it had a plunge neck and was embellished in pearls. I decided on my feet to go for my Jimmy Choo Sacaria pearl platforms, along with the matching clutch. I then put my hair up in a messy bun with two strands hanging on both sides. I did a light beat on my face since I knew make up wasn't something Poetic liked. I completed my look with some post pearl earrings and a choker. I looked myself over once more in the mirror and thought to myself damn you look fine. I squirted some Jimmy Choo, I Want Choo and made my way out of the house. I looked damn good and there was no way Poetic would be mad at me after he saw how fine I looked.

Source Creation Date: August 7, 2025, 12:21 am

This week had been a week so far. I had so many meetings schedule and the shit was crazy. The main one I was anticipating but also scared about was the one with Tatum. I was so mad at myself after what happened between us. I was feeling nice, but I knew exactly what was going on. I was the one that had Jas take us to a hotel which she wanted the same thing as me, so I didn't take advantage of her. I just wanted to be close to her, for a moment I just pushed all the crazy thoughts about my life to the back of my head. The way she smelled, smiled and gave me all of her attention had me wanting her in every way. But how could I with this fucked up past I have? I completely embarrassed myself and didn't know how she took it. I hadn't seen her in a week and it was killing me. She had been calling and texting, but I wasn't responding so she emailed me. We were friends and supposed to be way past the emails, but I felt some type of way and wasn't sure how to handle this.

"Good morning, boss man," Jasper spoke while walking into my kitchen.

"Good morning Jas."

"What car will we be taking today?" He asked.

"We can do the black on black Tahoe today. Jas sit down for a second so we can talk." He looked at me with a raised brow causing me to chuckle.

"Are you sure Boss?" I nodded my head giving him the ok. The fact that a lot of my men were older than me and been around since I was a youngin' always made me comfortable to talk to them about anything.

"I just wanted to talk to you about that night. I know I keep stopping you every time

you're trying to tell me something. I think I'm ready to know what it is you want to say to me."

"I just wanted to say you have nothing to be embarrassed about, she seemed like she was truly concerned about your well-being. I also wanted to say the way she keep trying to talk to you should tell you all you need to know. She not running off, she didn't air a story about you. All of those things are factors you need to take into consideration. Not everyone is out to get you son, it's time to let someone in other than the therapist. I want to see you happy you're a fine young man and I saw you come up from a lot of shit. It's ok to love sir, it's actually the most beautiful thing in the world." I sat and listened to Jasper he had been around since I first started he was my mama's driver first, so I was sure he knew everything about me including the shit that went on with Carol. Most of the older workers including Ms. Trish in order to continue to work for me they had to sign NDA's. This was why I knew I had a loyal team behind me, no one ever spoke of my past. Most of them kept their opinions to themselves unless I asked.

"She really gave you that impression?"

"Yes, she even made me promise to look after you and I told her you would be fine to just give you some space. I stay out of your business all the time because I know the subject is touchy. I hate that this happened to you son, but don't keep letting that sick bitch invade your life. Therapy is good, but you also need to overcome somethings to enjoy your life the way you need too. I hate that the old bitch still working and around here like she can't be stopped." Jasper said in an angry tone. I didn't want to get into it about Carol, but I knew this conversation would lead to that.

"Do you think it's too soon if I decided to tell her my story being as though she's a reporter? What if I fuck up and she tells the world about me?" Jasper sat quiet for a minute like he was thinking about what to say before he spoke.

“To be honest son, I think it’s time to come out. Now I know you don’t want it to come out and I know if she is the one to put it out it will be like her betraying you. But she didn’t give me that vibe, I swear she really seems like she for you. I know it’s soon and this is new to you, but what if you don’t take it there and miss out on something so beautiful?” I didn’t say anymore. I just tugged on my beard while in deep thought.

“Go ahead and get the car I need to meet up with Dashawn at The Brunch Spot in Cherry Hill before I head in the office. They allowing us to have a meeting there before they open for business.”

“OK, I’ll get the car ready and boss, he’s another good person. I see you and him being best friends, so it don’t hurt to open to him as well.” Jasper said telling me what I already sensed. I loved chilling with Dashawn and his wife they gave off a family vibe and that was something that I needed. I gave Jasper a head nod letting him know I agreed with him and he walked out of the kitchen. I got up and grabbed everything I needed to get my day started. I felt a little better after having this conversation with him. Now I just had to get up the nerve before this meeting with Tatum took place later this afternoon.

After Jasper was dodging in and out of traffic we were pulling up to The Brunch Spot twenty minutes later. Jasper then hopped out and opened the door for me. I left all of my things all I grabbed was my phone. I didn’t know what this meeting was about, but I knew Dashawn was cool so it would end well. We probably wasn’t eve going to be talking about work shit. I walked in the building and the place was completely empty. I didn’t even smell any food cooking and I didn’t understand what the hell was going on. I walked over to the table where Dashawn was sitting.

“Hey bro, what’s good with you?” He said while getting up to pull me in for a one arm hug.

“What’s up, I’m glad you made it.”

“I’m good bro, but what’ this about why we alone and where the grub at?” I chuckled.

“I told the owner to have his folks come late this is a private conversation. Where is your driver at?”

“Jasper is waiting outside.” I spoke wanting to know what the fuck this was about immediately.

“Alright cool, well I had an interesting meeting the other day. I didn’t put two and two together til my wife brought it to my attention. Now I know this is about to piss you off and we don’t have to talk about it if you don’t want to but I want to lay somethings out about myself first before we even get into that or what the meeting is about.”

“OK.” Was all I said before I sat down.

“Years ago, my name was Desmond Collins and I was the first child actor under Carol Peterson. Let me finished before you go crazy.” He said after I was sure he saw my nostrils flare. I was already ready to leave, but I thought back about what Jasper said earlier and decided to give him a chance to talk.

“Go ahead,” I barked.

“My mama took Carol’s money and we left and moved to Atlanta where I was raised and later changed my name to Dashawn Taylor where I was still able to pursue my acting career without being judged. I hate my mama til this day because of it. I wanted that bitch Carol to pay for everything she did to me and others. So, that’s one of the reasons I’m back in town and the other is to work with you. That has been one

of my dreams for forever. Well, the other day Carol emailed me and wanted me to get you to work with me and her in something new. I started wondering why she just didn't come to you herself. The Symphony brought to my attention probably because she can't because of what she did to you."

"What you mean what she did to me, you don't know what the fuck you talking about!" I snapped and got up to head out.

"Man, you go to therapy, you like Tatum Reece but won't pursue anything, you won't work with child actors. I know what's going on here bro, and I want you to know you're not alone and we can take that bitch down together." He yelled, but I didn't respond or look back I just hopped in the Tahoe and told Jasper to drive.

Once we got on the road and headed to my studio I felt just a little better.

"Boss what happened back there?" Jasper asked.

"Nothing," I lied. I just wasn't ready to hear Jasper tell me what I needed to do, what was right and wrong. I just needed to process all of this and it was a lot to unravel today.

Source Creation Date: August 7, 2025, 12:21 am

It was almost time for my meeting with Poetic and I was ready. The fact that I was missing him was real crazy to me since we had just started out as friends. My mama said it wasn't nothing wrong with liking someone early into the relationship or friendship. I wasn't young and we were grown, so I didn't feel too bad. My mama's conversations had gotten me through this long week and I was ready to sit down with Poetic. I was even ready to tell him how I was feeling about him despite knowing what he's going through. The sound of my office door opening brought me from my thoughts. I looked up and Josh was walking in.

"Good morning! Are you feeling any better?" Josh asked. I had took some time off and told him I had the flu. I was at my mama's catching up and feeling miserable about Poetic. I couldn't tell Josh what happened because he would have wanted me to air a story and I just couldn't do that to Poetic. He's already hurting; not to mention he has a lot going on. I couldn't get the sad look on his face out of my mind; seeing a man of his stature crying made my heart ache.

"Hello and yes I'm good."

"Do you have anything yet with this Carol Peterson story?"

"I'm still working on it, why what's wrong?"

"You've been spending so much time on this. We need a story I appreciate the story about Poetic and Dashawn, but you know the type of stories you do and they keep the ratings up. They love messy and you are the main one that delivers that."

"Josh I have a lot going on but if you give me some time I got you." I said being

honest.

“OK, not a problem and it’s good to have you back in the office.” He said while heading out of the door. I knew what Josh wanted and I wanted to deliver, but I just didn’t know how anymore. I had feelings for Poetic in such little time and I wasn’t sure if I had it in me to do the story how I was going to do it from the beginning. I didn’t care at first how anyone was going to feel especially Carol Peterson, but now I couldn’t even picture hurting Poetic more than he was already hurting. The sound of my phone alerting me that I had a text message grasp my attention. I picked it up and there was a message from my mama.

Mama:

Good morning baby, I know today will be hard. But you got this and remember Trent is watching over us at all times. As long as your angel is around you got this.

Me:

Thanks mama! I love you!

My mama came right on time, she just don’t know how much I needed the text message. I had a couple of hours til it was time to go see Poetic. I had a couple of things to catch up on since I was out of the office for a week. So, I did that to kill some time.

* * *

I was sitting in Poetic’s lobby twiddling with my fingernails. I was a ball of nerves and prayed I didn’t trigger anything to make him kick my ass out of his office.

“Hello, Ms. Reece Poetic, is ready for you to meet him in his office.”

“OK, thank you.” I smiled while getting up and making my way to his office. I headed down to his office which wasn’t far from the lobby. The walk seemed so long even though I knew it wasn’t. I knocked on the door and he opened it. We stared each other in the eyes for what seemed like forever until he spoke.

“Hey beautiful come in.” He smiled and moved to the side to let me in. I could still see sadness in his eyes but he seemed to be in a good mood at the moment. He didn’t cancel our meeting so I assumed he wasn’t having a bad day. I stood off to the side until he told me I can have a seat.

“You can sit down and make your self-comfortable.” He said while sitting next to me.

“I didn’t know what I was going to say once we saw each other again. Hell, I still don’t know what to say or how to start this conversation off. I just really need to know are you ok?” He asked.

“Poetic, the last time I saw you was a lot, but I still feel myself wanting to be around you. I’ve been okay the whole time I just been worried about you. Are you ok?” I asked.

“I’m good Tatum.” I tilted my head to the side and gave him a look letting him know I wasn’t believing him one bit.

“Poetic, I wouldn’t be myself if I didn’t come here today with good intentions and to keep it real with you. I wouldn’t be true to myself. I’m not buying that you’re ok and not being ok is fine. You don’t always have to be strong considering what you’ve been through.” I said just above a whisper knowing this conversation was about to get real.

“Tatum what are you talking about?”

“Poetic, I explained to you what happened to my brother. So, I know what happen to you. You’re an inspiration to so many because you were able to keep going and pursue your dreams while others weren’t that strong. I know this is a touchy topic, I know you don’t want to mess up your image. I get all of that, but at the same time you’re still letting Carol win and I hate this for you.” I said being honest. He didn’t say anything he just sat and listen to what I said. I knew it was starting to hit home when his eyes started watering.

“Why does everyone want to hear my story? Why do people want me to relive that hurt? Why can’t I just go on with life and sweep this shit under the rug? Why is this shit so fucking hard?” He broke down crying causing me to do the same. I got closer to him and pulled him in for a hug and we cried together for what seemed like forever. I then pulled out of his strong hold and stared in his eyes.

“I’m sorry, I brought all of this up. Me and my mama need closure. My brother left us a letter, so we never got to actually talk to him in person about what he went through. We have been suffering with not being able to say anything for years without having proof. I know you’re a big deal out here and you don’t want your business aired out so I understand, but getting this story out is something that I need to do. I love our friendship and the last thing I would ever want to do is hurt you. The sound of heavy knocking on Poetic’s office door brought us both from our thoughts.

“Are you expecting anyone?” I asked.

“Hell, no and I’m going to fire Taylor’s ass for even letting anyone get back here.”

“I’ll go open it while you head to the bathroom to get cleaned up.”

“No, let them knock they will eventually go away.” The minute those words left his mouth the banging continued. Then a loud voice could be heard on the other side of the door.

“I’m carrying too my nigga.” Made Poetic get up to answer the door. He opened the door and Dashawn was standing there with a mean mug on his face.

“What are you doing here?” Poetic asked with his eyebrows scrunched together and a crease in his forehead.

“We need to talk and I didn’t like the way you stormed out this morning.” Poetic moved to the side and let Dashawn and closed the door.

“Hello Tatum, sorry to interrupt.” Dashawn spoke.

“You’re good Dashawn it’s nice to see you again. Poetic we can meet up for dinner if you like at my house.”

“We can do dinner at your house later, but you don’t have to leave. Dashawn can benefit from this meeting as well.” Poetic said shocking the hell out of me.

“Hold on man, don’t speak for me.” Dashawn snapped.

“Nigga, calm down, you said you want to get Carol Peterson together, right?” I didn’t know what Dashawn had going on but I was down to listen to see what they both had to say. We all sat back down, I sat next to Poetic while Dashawn sat across from us.

“Now tell Tatum what you told me earlier.” Poetic told Dashawn.

“How do I know she good people?” Dashawn asked.

“You saw how I reacted to you earlier? Do you think I’m just going to talk to anyone about this. I trust her, now tell her so we can get this all out.”

“Dashawn, my brother went through some shit with Carol Peterson, but instead of

him being strong like you and Poetic. He ended up taking his own life leaving me and my mama all alone. So, truth is I want Carol Peterson to suffer just as much as you two do.”

“Damn, man I’m so sorry to hear this. Yeah, this bitch need to be underneath the fucking jail. So, lets figure this shit out. I was telling Poetic earlier that Peterson hit me up to meet with her about a week ago. I wasn’t going to go but my wife told me to go and she went with me. I moved here with a plan to work with Poetic, but when I realized Peterson was still here I had another plan to take her ass down while I was here. See, she doesn’t know who I am due to my mama taking her hush money and moving away. Once we moved away she changed my name, so I could still follow my dream as an actor. I’m not mad at my mama for changing my name, because that was the best thing she could have done for me. I’m mad at her for taking that bitches money and not getting her ass put away. If she would have been put away she wouldn’t have been able to touch Poetic or your brother.” Dashawn said through sad eyes. The room was quiet for a minute until I spoke up. I knew today was going to be a lot for the both of them, but I admired them both for talking to me and entrusting me with this information.

“Wow, I don’t even know what to say or where to start. I don’t want to be burden and blow your lives up for a story. At first Poetic that was the plan to get in your head and find out whatever I needed to get; to blow this bitches life to pieces. But once I talked to you and got to know you I just couldn’t do that to you. Even though your story and Dashawn’s story is exactly what I need, I just wouldn’t feel right watching you hurt. I hate how she messed up so many lives and here she is still living her best fucking life.”

“I told you she liked you.” Dashawn chuckled causing me to smile.

“This supposed to be a serious moment and here you go.” Poetic smiled.

“This is serious, but that don’t mean we can’t lighten the mood. I used to be just like you until I met Symphony. My wife and my kids are the best thing that ever happened to me after all this bullshit. The one thing I did right was open up to her it helped me in so many ways.”

“How were you able to open up to her and not be embarrassed about what happened to you?” Poetic asked.

“When I realized I can talk to her and not be judged. When she told me she had my back no matter what. She made me feel comfortable around her and that was it for me. I’m still the man of the house a run shit, but the times I need to be vulnerable she allows it. For example, when I received Peterson’s email my world was at a standstill for a second until my wife said. You can do this as a matter of fact we can do this. I’m going with you, so let’s get dressed. See a lot of times men feel like they can’t cry or open up in front of women because it’s a sign of weakness. I don’t pay that shit no mind, I’ll sit on a couch weekly to discuss my life and cry in front of my wife any time as long as it makes my mental straight. I need to have my head in the game at all times to take care of my kids. Now Tatum whatever you need from me I’m down. I just have a couple of stipulations which are, I don’t want my face seen and I don’t want my new name revealed, but I will tell my story. So, in the interview you will address me as Desmond Collins.” Dashawn had me and Poetic all in listening to everything he told us. I was so happy that he turned his life around for the better, it was so refreshing seeing that he didn’t let what Carol did stop him from a great future.

“However you want to do it is fine. I’m greatly appreciated for this.”

“As for me this is a lot. I’ve went on for years with a private life and not wanting anyone to know what happened to me. I hate my mama for taking the money for my silence. Our stipulations were for her to keep her mouth shut and to keep me quiet. So, it went on for years whatever happens is between us. So, it continued til I was

about seventeen. Actually, until I got old enough to refuse her. I hate my mama for her allowing this lady to do this to me. I ask myself all the time why didn't I just runaway. I started to feel like maybe I liked it and that's why I stayed." Poetic said while the tears ran down his face.

"Don't say that man. You didn't deserve what was done to you, it was not your fault." Dashawn spoke. I grabbed Poetic's hand and held it while he continued to talk.

"Dashawn is right, none of this is your fault. I don't need you to get into details at all I just want to ask you straight up. Did Carol Peterson molest you?" He looked at me like he was scared to answer, so I squeezed his hand letting him know it was ok for him to answer.

"Yes, from the time I was ten until I was about seventeen. It started out as touching first, then her putting her mouth on me. Then when I turned thirteen was the first time she actually made me penetrate her." Poetic managed to get out in between sobs. He was crying hysterically hell at this point it wasn't a dry eye in the room. It was like we were having a therapy session.

"Alright y'all I think we had enough for the day. I'll get back to y'all when I'm ready to air the story. Now let's discuss what we going to do with Carol Peterson's nasty ass." I spoke changing the subject just a little. I was starting to get a headache and I had just about enough crying.

"Well, you know our case is old so we may not be able to get her locked up. So, maybe we should look into the escort service she's been using. I also know where she take her tender roni's at. I had been stalking that bitch since I been back."

"Oh My God! So, that's been you all this time. She thought it was me." I laughed while shaking my head.

“Also, you know when the story break I’m sure more people will come out.” Poetic spoke.

“Yeah, people like to feel like they’re not alone.” Dashawn said and we all agreed. This meeting started out to be a lot but the more we all talked it felt like we were getting comfortable with each other. One thing remained the same through the whole meeting and that was we all wanted Carol Peterson and it finally looked like her days were finally numbered. We bounced some more ideas off each other for a little more time. Then Poetic and I decided on still doing dinner tonight after he went to see his therapist.

Source Creation Date: August 7, 2025, 12:21 am

It had been a couple of weeks since the meeting with Poetic and Tatum and I was feeling refreshed. I had been going to therapy ever since that day and I felt like it was time to talk to my mama since all of this was going to come out in the open real soon. After that intense session we had we thought it would be better to chill for a couple of weeks and continue to get things brewing so when we came we came hard enough to put this bitch away for years. We knew she was going to go down for real since Tatum's mama had Trent's boxers he wore that day put up in a safe place where the DNA could still be used. So, his letter, the DNA sample, and our stories were sure going to bring more victims out along with putting her ass away. Poetic and I also decided to do one of our series episodes on what happened to us after the story is released. I was sitting out in front of my mama's house trying to get up the nerve to get out the car. Symphony wanted to come with me but I told her no. I needed to do this one alone. The sound of my phone vibrating bringing me from my thoughts grasp my attention. I looked at it and saw it was Symphony.

My Heart:

Baby, get out the car you got this.

Me:

Lol, how you know I'm in the car?

My Heart:

Because I know you.

I shook my head, hit the lock button, and got out of the car. I stood in front of the door and stared for a moment, then all the sudden it opened.

“Hey son, come on in.” My mama was standing there looking beautiful as always. I swear my baby girl looked just like her. I swear she better be lucky I’m trying to be a better person because of my wife and kids. I wouldn’t be here today if it weren’t for them.

“Hello Donna, how are you?” I asked while heading in the door. She stood there staring at me with sad eyes. She already knew how I felt about her, so that wasn’t new. She would often send messages home by Symphony hoping one day I would give in to talk to her. Between the therapy sessions, long talks with my wife and us coming to close to getting Carol Peterson put away. I felt like it was time.

“Can I get you something to drink?”

“No, I just want to get this over with. I want you to know that I’ll never forget what went down. The only reason I’m going to forgive you is because of my kids. The fact that you took the money and ran instead of making sure that bitch paid for what she did hurts me to the core. Especially when you telling could have saved some other lives, because that bitch kept going she kept hurting people.”

“I’m sorry Dashawn, I didn’t mean for all this to happen.”

“Why didn’t you go report it?” I asked.

“Baby, I was young and dumb back then only worried about money. I was a single mom and never wanted to be broke. Your daddy denied you and went on with his life and left us struggling. So, when you started acting it saved us from being poor and homeless and I never wanted us to go through those things ever again.”

“So, you let your son go through the darkest time of his life so you wouldn’t have to work ya ass off to keep us out of the poor house.”

“I said, I’m sorry son, I don’t know what more you want me to say.”

“I don’t need your sorry and I’m good on you. I’ll never forget but I’ll forgive you for my kids. Now all that getting together and stuff like that it’ll take time but I’ll try for my babies. Are you going to therapy?” I asked.

“Yes, that was one of the things that Symphony made me promise to do in order to see my grandkids. I’m not even going to lie what I did was some crazy shit to do to your kids. I know you’ll never forgive me and I fucked up our relationship, but I’m trying my best to be there for my grandkids the way I need to be. I know I wasn’t your protector and I once again apologize for that. I’ll forever be my grandkids protector if you allow me to be.”

“I’m already allowing you to be in their lives and maybe one day they’ll be able to experience all of us in one room together for a holiday or something. I don’t know when or if it’ll happen but I do know it won’t happen overnight. You have to give me time to process trying to make this work.” I said being honest.

“I owe you that and more so I won’t complain at all or rush you. I’ve been meaning to tell you; you did good with Symphony son. One thing about her is she don’t play about you and your wellbeing and I love that for you. She set me straight the minute she met me she tore me a new ass hole. I thought she was going to beat my ass the way she came over here to talk.” Donna giggled causing me to do the same.

“Yeah, I definitely got the prize when it comes to my wife.” I chuckled still thinking about Symphony beating her ass. I was finally warming up to being here after she told me she was going to therapy and my wife had already checked her about being with me. These things made it easier to be here. Me and Donna talked some more

about whatever came to mind. I knew I would never forget what she did, but I thought about it a little more while being here. I guess it wouldn't hurt to have my mama back in my life. It would still be from a distance. After what she did to me I will trust her to a point, but not all the way around the board.

Source Creation Date: August 7, 2025, 12:21 am

It had been a few weeks and Dashawn had not reached out yet. Then Kayla was ignoring me I was pissed off with everyone right now. I was ready to make some money, but these folks wanted to play with me. I hated this era; they knew nothing about important shit and that was crazy to me. Since Dashawn hadn't reached back out to me I called Nola and asked her to send another email out. If that didn't work I would have to find out where his ass hung out at and then hunt him down. As for Kayla's ass she was family and I already had one of my men on her ass. If she didn't have my money she would work if off somehow. After going through some more emails and adding things to my upcoming roster I decided to pack up and head home. I gathered all of my belongings and made my way out of the office. When I made it to the front one of my men was bringing Kayla in.

"Get the fuck off of me. Really Aunt Carol, you got your goons coming after me like I did something wrong."

"Kayla quiet down in my place of business, take her to my office and we can talk there."

"Nola lock the door and don't let anyone else in here." I said while I headed back to my office. Once we made it there I sent my men out and locked my office door.

"Kayla, sit ya ass down and tell me why I haven't heard from you?"

"Aunt Carol, I don't have your money. Hell, you didn't even give me a chance to get it back to you. What is this obsession that you have with Poetic anyway?"

"Don't worry about what me and Poetic have going on. I just want to know when you

gone give me my fucking money back. I've killed people for owing me less. So don't make me go against the family Kayla."

"How about I snoop around Poetic and find you out some information. I know you have something I can do to pay my debt off. I have a couple of modeling gigs, but I have shit to do with that money."

"Kayla I know damn well you don't make no money from modeling like that no more. Which is why I don't understand why you didn't make shit work with Poetic. Your ass definitely needed him." I said being honest.

"You keep telling me what I needed to do, but the man didn't want me. I keep telling you that. So, tell me what I was supposed to do?"

"You got a pussy; you were supposed to use it and make him want you to stay dummy. Now enough about that. I think I can still use you to spy on him. I want you to set up a date with him and find out about what upcoming projects he has going on. Then ask him when is he going to do something with me just to see what he says."

"I can do that; now can I go?"

"Yeah, you can go, and Kayla don't make me come looking for your ass again, because if you do it won't be pretty."

"I won't make you come looking for me and could you put a word out to some magazines so I can get some work."

"Do what I asked you to do and I got you." After Kayla and I talked some more we all headed out for the night. I headed home and I had my men drop her off where she needed to go. I didn't really have anything for her ass to do, but she could help with the meeting with Poetic and maybe she will find out something interesting.

An hour later I had arrived at my home. I was so tired I hadn't even made it past my couch just yet. I was on my phone jus scrolling on social media to keep updated. I realized that Tatum had been quiet which meant her ass was probably out there brewing something up. I hadn't noticed her PI following me anymore and I was grateful. I was glad she left me the fuck alone because I would've hated to kill her ass. While scrolling I noticed that Helen Ross funeral was over. I couldn't believe her ugly ass husband didn't invite me. I never liked his ass anyway. I had been calling to check on him but he wouldn't answer me. I guess he really thought I had something to do with her death, too bad he will never find out the truth. I had paid a lot of money to keep that quiet and it had seem to be working. The detectives hadn't been back so I assumed the autopsy came back saying she had a heart attack like it was supposed to. So, I wasn't worried his ass could go to hell for all I care. I couldn't even lie since I had that talk with Tatum I had been feeling good. All I needed now was the email from Dashawn saying that me him and Poetic were going to work together. Once that happens everything would be on track and going well for me.

Source Creation Date: August 7, 2025, 12:21 am

The day I went to Poetics office Taylor wouldn't let me in, she said he was in an important meeting that was going to last all day. I asked her can she let him know that I came and would like to meet up with him. It had been a few weeks now and he hasn't emailed called or text. I guess he was trying to be done with me, but I wasn't trying to be done with him. I mean, I was until my auntie said what she said. I was a bad bitch and I had a lot going for myself and could get just about any man I want, so why the fuck was Poetic Pain playing the fuck with me. I had got dolled up and made my way to his house. It was about 8 PM and I knew he was home. I pulled up to the gate and Jasper was there.

"Hello Jas, can you tell Poetic that I'm here to see him."

"Ms. Starks, did he know you were coming here? You know how he feels about pop ups." Jasper spoke pissing me the fuck off.

"I wouldn't have to pop up if he would answer the phone. Now please Jasper can you tell him I'm here." Jasper picked up his phone and left from away from the gate. I knew Poetic was going to be on some bullshit, I just had a feeling.

"Ms. Starks, Mr. Pain said he's busy. He will contact you when he has some free time." Jasper said. I was furious because Poetic doesn't work from home so I knew he wasn't busy. When he has a lot of work to do he stays at the studio. Poetic was starting to piss me the fuck off. He broke it off with me and now just giving me his ass to kiss. I didn't do anything wrong I thought we ended on good terms and were going to remain friends. The vibe he's giving tells me otherwise. I didn't even say shit to Jasper. I just peeled off with my blood boiling. I was going to make my way to P he even kissed that bitch on the cheek. I was fucking furious. He played in my face

and acted like it could never be me and him and look at the shit I just walked into.

“Hey Kayla, what could I do for you?” Poetic asked standing in front of me.

“So, this is what we’ve come too? I can’t even get a private conversation with you in your office.” I snapped.

“Kayla you better quiet down in my place of business, before you don’t get no time to have a conversation with me. Now again what can I do for you?”

“You acting real different towards me Poetic and I see why. What you fucking that fat bitch Tatum Reece?” I was instantly pissed at the thought of him dealing with her when I’m a dime.

“Woah...Kayla chill the fuck out. Come on let’s go to my office.” He said looking both ways to make sure no one heard what I just said. I don’t know why he was worried about that because his team was loyal and they wouldn’t say anything about whatever Poetic had going on. I learned that from experience. We made it in the office and he closed and locked the door.

“Kayla you can have a seat, would you like something to drink?”

“I don’t want nothing to drink, I just want to know why wasn’t I good enough for you?”

“Kayla I got a lot going on in my life and I didn’t need you to add on to it. I really didn’t see any future with you. Didn’t feel any spark with you. I just felt like I needed to end whatever it was we had going on before it messed up our friendship. I at least want to be cordial around you without it being any beef.”

“I am not buying that shit Poetic, not when I see you all cozy with Tatum Reece. I

thought you didn't like that bitch."

"Don't call her no bitch Kayla and what does Tatum have to do with us?"

"You right she has nothing to do with us. I hope she not using ya dumb ass to get the biggest story of the year."

"What's that supposed to mean?" He asked in concern.

"Nothing, you know how she do and when she get her mind set. She'll tear your life apart to find a good story. I just hope that's not the case with you."

"Kayla you really dragging this. How do you even know something is going on with me and Tatum?"

"You were holding hands; you kissed her cheek and you gave her all of your attention standing out there. Poetic I saw something different in you just watching y'all two." I said being honest. I wanted to end this conversation about Tatum before it even started, so I figured I would ask him what him and my aunt had going on.

"I don't want to talk about you and your new love life anymore so let's get to why I'm here." I spoke in a sarcastic tone.

"OK, well what's up?"

"I wanted to know what you and my Aunt Carol Peterson have going on. She seems so obsessed with you and I'm supposed to be here today finding out what you up too and what you working on." Poetic gave me a hostile glare, that I wasn't feeling. What the fuck did my aunt have me walk into.

"Did you just say Carol Peterson is your fucking aunt?" He barked causing me to

jump.

“Yes, but I swear Poetic I didn’t even know you two knew each other. So, please calm down.” I lied.

“Me and you aunt don’t have nothing going on and when you see her tell her that me and Dashawn should be hitting her up soon, so it was no need to send you in here to spy on me. I got her, we gone do some business together real soon let her know it’s going to be a night to remember.” I was so puzzled how when I mentioned my aunt anger came over him then all the sudden he was fine and working with her. Yeah it was time for me to go and Tatum could have his bipolar ass. The shit that I had just witnessed was weird as fuck. This man was about to chew my head off then he was nice. I was done with trying to figure out Poetic Pain. I was going to call my aunt to let her know that things were in motion with her and Poetic then maybe she could leave me alone and help me get some modeling work.

“OK will do and I’m sorry for bothering you today.”

“You good Kayla, I guess you just needed some closure to what we had going on and I was fine with giving it to you. Now find you someone that’s going to be good to you.” He said causing me to think of Tony. I had such a good time with him I decided to call him and set something up with us. I liked Poetic, but I guess he just wasn’t for me.

Source Creation Date: August 7, 2025, 12:21 am

I had been in a good mood and the nightmares were still there, but they weren't happening every night. I found myself talking more and more about my past and it seemed to be helping. I had been spending time with Tatum, Dashawn and his family. I wasn't even going to lie, I needed this. It really made life feel so much better. Dashawn had called me the other day and he told me he had a conversation with his mama. He said it was hard, but it was needed. I just don't know if I made it that far yet. I told Dr. Barrel that I may think about it in the near future but not right now. She said that was fine because she had already seen some progress and she was happy for me. Hell, I had even considered Tatum and I making it official but it had only been a month and some weeks. How would folks view us, was I moving too fast? Will my past mess with our relationship? So many things came to my mind and it always made me hesitate. One thing remained the same though, I was definitely feeling her and wanted to always spend time with her.

"Hey boss, do you need me for anything else?" Ms. Trish asked.

"No Ms. Trish I'm good."

"OK, and I made sure there was plenty of fruit for your lady friend." She smiled referring to Tatum.

"Thank you Ms. Trish I'm sure she will be happy about that."

"Can I ask you something?"

"Yeah sure, Ms. Trish."

“Do you like her?” Ms. Trish smiled. I loved her and she had been the only mother figure in my life since me and my mama separated and I loved her for that.

“I do Ms. Trish, I actually think she’s the one.”

“Good, I’m happy for you. Just be honest with her at all times and allow her to love you and be strong for you on days you can’t. You come with a lot of baggage Poetic so it won’t be easy for her, but don’t push her away and you two will be just fine.” Ms. Trish said while pulling me in for a hug.

“Thank you so much Ms. Trish for everything. I mean it from when I was younger til now. I know you wanted to help me when I was younger, but my mama stopped you. I love you and Jasper for all you both have done for me. You’ve two been around the longest and know everything, but never turned your back on me or even used my hurt for money and I’ll truly do anything for the both of you as long as I live.”

“There is no need for you to thank me, I feel like I should have said something back then. I watched you hurt and I carried that guilt for years.”

“I understand why you did what you did and if you would have said something who knows where I would have ended up and who would have been there to help me. You practically raised me because my mama couldn’t face me because of what she did.” Ms. Trish and I were both in tears; we held each other for what seemed like forever until we heard a ring for the main gate.

“I’ll go let her in and you go get cleaned up.” Ms. Trish said referring to Tatum since she was on her way over we knew it was her. I had sent all my staff home and Ms. Trish was on her way out. So, me and Tatum would be alone. I hurried and went to the bathroom that was down from the sitting room. I washed my face then made my way to the dining room where I knew Ms. Trish was walking Tatum. When I made it there Tatum was standing there looking beautiful like always.

“Hey, you,” she spoke with a huge smile on her face.

“I’m going to head out if you don’t need me for anything else.”

“I’m good Ms. Trish, I’ll see you in the morning.” Ms. Trish left us and I turned my attention to Tatum. I walked over to her and pulled her in for a hug. I then looked her in the eyes and kissed her lips. To my surprise she kissed me back and now our tongues were intertwined. We kissed for what seemed like forever until she pulled away.

“Mmm... what did I do to deserve that?” She smiled.

“I’ve been missing you all day.”

“I’ve been missing you too.”

“Are you hungry? Ms. Trish cooked dinner before she left oh and she got you some more fruit.”

“Yeah I can eat, let me go get cleaned up.”

“OK, I’ll have it at the table when you get back.” I said while leaning in to kiss her forehead. Ms. Trish had made us some stuffed salmon, bake potato, and broccoli. After I fixed our plates I sat them on the table got us a bottle of wine and some glasses.

“This looked good.” Tatum said entering the dining room. I walked around the table to pull the chair out for her. Once she sat down I pushed her chair in and then kissed the top of her head before I headed back around the table to sit down. I didn’t know where all this affection shit came from, but the way she was smiling she likes it just as much as I do. I grabbed her hand and said grace then we started eating.

“So, how was work?”

“It was ok Josh keeps pestering me about a story, but I don’t have anything until our story drop. I’mma need him to be patient.”

“Have you told him about it?”

“No, I don’t trust anyone with this. He will find out the day I air it. How was your day?”

“It was ok, me and Dashawn did an episode for the series. It should be ready to air next month. The plan is to be able to air the whole first series with eight episodes. The finale being the one that’s about us.”

“That’s good to hear. How have you been feeling lately with all of this going on?”

“I’m actually good! I think having friends in my life and talking about it more is making me better. I’ve been in a really good space this past month and I think I owe it all to you and Dashawn. I’mma be honest with you, I never thought me and relationships or friendships would work because I was always scared how people would judge me. You know a weak man ain’t a good man in a woman’s eyes and I felt like I was weak. I felt like I would be no good to anybody, but being around you makes me want to try out a relationship. Also being around Dashawn and Symphony shows me that a man like me is capable of loving and being loved. I know shit is moving fast for us, but I’m loving everything about it and I don’t want it to slow down for nothing.”

“I’m feeling the same way Poetic, so why don’t we just let things fall into place.”

“I’m down with that.”

“Good because I wasn’t going nowhere now let’s eat so we can go shower together then cuddle and watch a movie.” Tatum didn’t have to tell me twice I was all for whatever she wanted to do. This was her world and I was just happy to be in it.

* * *

I swear Tatum was such a breath of fresh air, and I was glad we were getting closer. I laid on my side looking at her as she slept and she was so fucking beautiful. After we showered together we watched a movie and drifted off to sleep. I hadn’t slept this good in years. I noticed her moving then her eyes opened.

“Good morning handsome.” She managed to get out before she yawned.

“Good morning baby, how did you sleep?”

“I slept well.”

“I did too, I said while pulling her close to me and kissing her lips.”

“OH, so I’m getting kisses with morning breath now,” she giggled.

“You can get anything you want baby girl.” I said while climbing on top of her.

“Mmm... what are you doing?”

“What I wanted to do last night, but we both fell asleep.” I said being honest. I started kissing on her neck then eased my way down to her boobs. After showing each one of them some love. I eased back up to her lips.

“Can I make you feel good this morning?” I asked while staring into her eyes.

“Yes, please do.” She smiled as I lifted her legs and placed them on my shoulders. Once they were in place I kissed each of her legs before I dived my tongue inside her opening. I hadn’t ate pussy in so long, but for some reason Tatum had me wanting to do any and everything with her. I wasn’t familiar with her body but I was definitely going to get there. Yeah, I had sex and preferred women, but never really been with anyone that made me yearn for their body; like Tatum did. So, this was new to me and I loved this feeling. Watching her squirming all over the bed trying to get away from me made my dick hard as fuck. I couldn’t wait to slid in her opening, but first I needed her to cum from this tongue lashing.

“OH MY GOD! Poetic this feels so fucking good.” I kissed, licked, and slurped just the way she like.

“You gone let me get this nut up out of you. Are you going to cum for me beautiful.” I said right before I started flickering my tongue in a fast motion on her clit, causing her to lock my head in between her legs.

“Yesss...I’m cummin!” She yelled out in ecstasy while her body jerked. Once her body stopped shaking I kissed her lips then eased my erection in her opening nice and slow. The way I delivered stroke after stroke and kiss after kiss it seemed like I knew her body in and out.

“Fuck, Poetic go deeper baby, go deeper.” she muffled out in a loud moan.”

Tatum had some good ass pussy and she smelled so sweet. I guess it was from all that fruit she eats. I picked up the pace and she begin to tighten her pussy on my dick.

“You trying to make me cum baby?” I asked in a husky tone.

“Yesss, baby, but I want us to cum together. Can we cum together?”

“Well let’s do it together beautiful.”

After we both came, we just lay there trying to catch our breaths in each other’s arms. I was sure this was the start of something great. I just knew it because this was the best I’ve felt inn years.

Source Creation Date: August 7, 2025, 12:21 am

Poetic and I had been spending so much time together, and it was getting close to us having to do the interview. I was feeling him big time, but I was scared about his feelings changing after the interview. So, I decided to go out to brunch with Symphony to ask her how she dealt with Dashawn and the things that happened to him in his past. I texted her early in the morning after I left Poetic's house to see if she could meet me at First Watch for brunch. I wasn't far from there, so I just headed straight there. She told me she would be there half an hour after me so I went and sat down and just ordered a cup of coffee til she got there. I sat deep in thought hoping she could answer some of my questions. I had already talked to my mama, and she always gave good advice, but I figured Symphony would be able to give up more, since she practically lives that life.

"Hey girlfriend," Symphony spoke when she walked over to the table.

"Hey boo, how you been?"

"I'm good mama, like always. So, what's up?" Symphony asked getting right to it.

"How do you deal with this and how do you continue to be happy with Dashawn after all he's been through?" I asked with sad eyes.

"Do, you think you can grow into loving him without judging him? Do you think you can deal with him pushing you away? Do you think you can let him be weak when need be? Do you think you can let him be the man of the house even though you know his weakest points?" Symphony ran down question after question, even though it all sound like a lot. I felt like I got this that was how much I wanted to be with Poetic.

“Yes, I do, but do you think it’s too soon to be having these strong feelings for someone?”

“Chile, you talking to someone that believes in love at first sight. Plus, y’all grown as fuck and ain’t getting no younger. I feel like if you feeling each other go for it. Y’all just have to respect each other, talk about everything and be honest. Always feel open to tell your mate how you feel. Y’all have to be there for each other every step of the way. Communication is the key and if he your person and vice versa everything will fall into place. Men like Dashawn and Poetic are easy to love as long as you’re willing to put in the work to love and nurture them. They may be strong men, but they have delicate hearts. I see the way you two look at each other, I can tell something is there. From hearing your story about your brother, Poetics story, and my husband’s story, I feel you all needed each other.” Hearing her say all of this made my heart smile. I never thought about it in this way, but she definitely made me feel better about the situation and now I feel like I’m ready for whatever Poetic and I are doing.

“You definitely put a lot in perspective, now I feel a lot better.”

“I’m glad I was able to help. Now let’s order some food and talk about this series our men got coming up.” Symphony smiled, causing me to do the same. I waved the waitress down and we both placed our order and continued to talk the whole time. I had a feeling Symphony and I were on the start of a new friendship.

* * *

Today was the day I was telling Josh about the interview I had going on with Poetic and Dashawn. I also was going to tell him about the evidence my mama had. We had set a date for the interview to be live at P&P Studios and I couldn’t wait. After brunch with Symphony, I ended up going to see my mama and then from there I ended the night with Poetic again. The sound of my office door opening and Josh came right in.

“Hey Tatum, the receptionist told me you wanted to speak to me.”

“I do, what we talk about stays between us. I even have a non-disclosure form for you to sign from both of my clients before I can share this with you. So, here they are.” I said while handing the form to him with a black pen.

“You got me signing forms now Tatum.” He chuckled.

“I had to do what I had to do for my clients privacy. This story is big and Media Frenzy is going to eat off of this trust me.” Josh looked at me like he wasn’t pleased, but his ass signed them damn papers.

“OK, so I have a big story that involves Carol Peterson, Poetic Pain, Desmond Collins, and Trent Reece.”

“Desmond Collins was the first victim that was molested by Carol Peterson, his mama took the money and moved him away and later he changed his name. Poetic Pain was the second one and he wasn’t able to get away he was molested from the age of ten to seventeen. Then you have Trent Reece, who she also started touching at the age of ten, but he committed suicide at the age of sixteen and that was my brother. We may not be able to get her to do time for Desmond and Poetic’s assault, but my mama has the last pair of underwear that Trent had on the last time he was with her and his suicide letter. So, that should be enough to bury her nasty ass and I’m sure others will come out once they see the last interview. Which will take place in about a week at P&P Studios where she think she’s coming to do a series with Poetic and Desmond. Desmond doesn’t want his face to be shown, so I’ll be recording his part of the interview else ware.” Josh sat there in deep thought trying to take it all in.

“Wow, that’s some heavy shit. How will you get her to stay there without running off?”

“I’m going to have the police there in case she tries to run.”

“So, you really think they all in for this without canceling?” Josh asked.

“I think they all for it, they even talking about doing one of their episodes for their new series about it.”

“OK, good, this is great work Tatum. How are you and your mama doing with this?”

“We’re ok we both feel like this is the closure we needed.”

“I’m glad to hear this, how did you get them to tell their story, that’s a lot for a man to admit.” I knew he was going to find out sooner or later about Poetic, so I figure I might as well say something.

“Well Poetic, and I have become close, so let’s just say we confided in each other and that’s how it happened, and Desmond came to town to help put her ass away. Once I told them my brothers story and how strong they were to go on with life after this they were all for it. I’m sure if she did this to them there are other kids or adults that’ll come out.”

“She’s a sick ass bitch and I knew it was a reason why I didn’t like her ass. You know Helen’s husband still think she had something to do with her death, but he has no proof.”

“I wouldn’t put nothing past her ass, her money so long she is able to cover all type of shit up. This bitch need to rot in jail.”

“I hear that hopefully, once the story is aired others will come up and that bitch will get exactly what her old ass deserves. That makes my heart hurt that them boys had to go through that then they sad ass mama’s took hush money. Yeah that’s some crazy

shit.” I ran down how the interview was going word from word and Josh and I talked for what seemed like forever until someone came in my office for him.

Source Creation Date: August 7, 2025, 12:21 am

My interview with Tatum was today, so I decided to have Poetic and Tatum come over. Poetic used his camera man and I was fine with that. He explained to me that a lot of his staff knew what went down with him, but they were loyal enough to sign NDA's. One of the main things they had to sign off on is to never open their mouths about Carol Peterson or what happened to him. I know a lot of them felt like they did the wrong thing while continuing to work for him and not opening their mouths, but at the same time Poetic explained to them that it worked out for him. He truthfully believed that if all of this came out when he was younger he may not be as successful as he is now. I kind of understood where he was coming from, but at the same time would he had been living a long life with pain and suffering with no family and friends. I know we became friends fast, but I truly believe he was the brother I needed and we were in this for the long haul now. I sat in my home office for about two hours. I needed some me time and some time to talk to the man upstairs. Through all of this I learned to put GOD first and that was another great thing I learned from Symphony Taylor. The light knocking on my office door brought me from my thoughts.

"Come on in." I yelled, and in walked Poetic.

"What's good man," I said while getting up and pulling him in for a one arm hug.

"How you doing?" I asked.

"I'm good, the question is how are you?"

"I'm good, I just needed some time to process it all and send some prayers up for my strength today. How about you ready for this? I know it's hard for us both, but you'll

be in that bitch's presence." I spoke being honest.

"Yeah, truthfully man, I don't know how I'm going to feel or how this is going to turn out but I believe I got this. Hell, we got this we've come along way and it's time. Plus, I need to get this shit done so I can love Tatum the way she needs to be loved. I need this to run my company the way it needs to be ran, and last but not least I need to be the voice of others." A crept up on my face and I had to pull mt bro in for a hug.

"My nigga, you sound like someone that's in love, someone that's in therapy, last but not least my bro that's ready to live that happily ever after life and I'm fucking with it. I'm so happy for you bro, you don't understand. When we first met I saw the pain in your eyes, but I just didn't know why. Then I talked to Carol Peterson and put two and two together so fast right then and there I knew we needed each other. I really appreciate you for so many reasons, you may not understand but eventually you will. We needed this friendship."

"Oh, trust me I get it now, I never in life appreciated friendship like I do now. I've always believe that things happen for a reason and our friendship happened for this very reason, to finally get this old bitch out of our lives. So, let's get this shit on and popping we got some money to make when this shit is done." He didn't have to tell me twice. Poetic left out and I said one more prayer before I headed out to my family room where everyone was set up for the interview.

* * *

I was sitting here palms sweating nerves all over the place, but one thing about me was I was going to get it together as soon as I looked across at my beautiful wife telling me to breath and I got this. Although they were in my house it was a screen I was sitting behind whereas though they couldn't see me all that could be seen was a dark figure. The count down had begun and it was just about time for the interview.

“Hello viewers for those of you who don’t know I’m Tatum Reece from Media Frenzy and today we have an exclusive interview. Some things we will discuss will be sensitive and not for viewers under the age of sixteen. Today we have childhood actor Desmond Collins who I know for sure a lot of you wondered what happen to him since his career was short lived. Well today we have Desmond Collins himself to tell us all we need to know about his acting career.”

“Hello Desmond Collins, introduce yourself to the audience.”

“Hello everyone, my name is Desmond Collins and I was born here in New Jersey until my mama moved me away to keep me safe. So, she thought that’s what she was doing, but it did nothing but bury something deep inside of me that needed to be exposed.”

“Now Desmond, I know this can be a lot and if you need me to stop and take a break at any time let me know.”

“OK, no problem.”

“Alright, so tell us why did your mama move you away?”

“So, it started when I was about eleven, I think maybe ten and it lasted til I was about thirteen, when it got to be too much and I had to tell my mama thinking she was going to save me.”

“What started at the age of ten or eleven?” Tatum asked and it seemed like my heart was jumping out of my chest because this was the first time I was going to get into details.

“The first time Carol Peterson touched me.” The sound effects of folks’ oh’s and ah’s could be heard, before Tatum continued. I hesitated, but my wife gave me a head nod

letting me know I can continue.

“So, Desmond let me clarified what you just said. Carol Peterson Americans icon, celebrity mogul touched you inappropriately?”

“Yes Tatum, that’s exactly what I’m saying.” Then she did the sound effects again before she spoke.

“I know this can be hard but can you get into details. Those are some pretty heavy accusations.” Tatum spoke.

“Yes indeed they are, but it’s something I can no longer hold on too. I need to get this out to be a better man to my family. I can no longer let Carol Peterson live rent free in my head.”

“Alright, well let’s get into it. Ladies and gentlemen Desmond is going to get into details of what happen the first time then he will break down how it continued in a shorter story. So, please stay quiet and let him tell his story.”

“I remember all so well how excited me and my mama was that I had got accepted to be in Carol’s new series, Camera Kids. I was doing so well then about six months into the series getting out good. She started doing weird stuff that I wasn’t sure about. I was young and I just knew I was a star and we would forever have money and I didn’t have to worry about me and my mama starving. I never knew who my daddy was so it was always me and my mama and we struggled. So, becoming a star was big for me and her. Carol took advantage of that, when she saw that we struggled and she was the best thing that happened to us at that time she went with it. One day my mama was about to drop me off, but her and Carol had a meeting first. I didn’t know what it was for back then, but I remember our lights being off, but when we got back home they were back on. So, now that I think back she must have asked for an advance or something. After that shit got weird. Carol’s exact words were, If you

want to make your mommy happy and keep the lights on you won't tell her about our private time. And I was ok with that because I hated seeing my mama cry because we needed shit." I said, causing Tatum to do a bleep sound to cut out the curse word.

"Wow, so she used your vulnerability and took advantage?"

"That's exactly what she did."

"Ok and what happened after Carol said that?"

"She took a drink out of a glass that had some brown liquor in it. Once she finished her drink she had a blue comfy couch that we always sat on and she sat close to me. Then she looked at me and said, Desmond, are you going to be a good boy and my best actor and keep this meeting between me and you. I looked at her and nodded my head. Carol then unbutton my pants and eased her hands in my underwear and begin to play with my private part. I had no clue what the fuck was going on. I just went along with it because I knew we wouldn't be poor or struggling anymore. I wined a little bit because I was so confused, and Carol said, Desmond, stop crying like a baby. I only have room for big boy actors on my set. You either stop crying or I'll tell your mama you're not going to be a big star anymore. So, I stopped crying and let her do whatever she wanted to do. It started out as her just playing with me. Then her putting her mouth on me. Then when I reached thirteen that's when she started making me penetrate her and I had just about enough after that I couldn't take it anymore." The room was quiet and nothing could be heard but sniffing. I held up pretty good though I had some tears but I was able to control myself.

"Wow, I'm stunned at the news I'm hearing right now. So, you said you couldn't take it anymore, so what did you do?" Tatum asked.

"My thirteenth birthday Carol threw me a big celebrity birthday bash and told my mama she was having a sleepover for me and a couple of the other co-actors and she

had staff watching over us so we would be good, but in all reality it was a night of just me and her. I will not get into details about that night but lets just say I had my first threesome at thirteen years old.”

“Oh, my goodness, this is so heart breaking. So, tell us what happened next what made you tell your mama?”

“After that night I felt horrible and couldn’t get my mind right and Carol’s exact words were, you’re of age now so man the fuck up, do you know how many men would have enjoyed the night we had. I keep telling you stop all that fucking crying or you and your mama will be back in the poor house. That right there showed me how much of a monster she was and if I didn’t stop this shit right now it would keep getting worse. So, when I got dropped off by Carol’s driver my mama was waiting in the doorway for me and the minute she asked, how was my night, and if I had fun, I broke down and fell to the floor crying. My mama had so much worry in her eyes it scared me.”

“Alright everyone we’re going to take a break we will be back in five minutes.” Tatum said turning her attention to me.

“Are you good, do you need a longer break?”

“No, I’m good just want to get this over with.”

“Alright cool, so this will be the last setting. I will asked what happen after you told your mama and what she did with the information. Then I will ask about you and your mama’s relationship. Then you will go into to telling us how you and Symphony got together and how much her and your kids mean to you.”

“Ok, my Media Frenzy watchers welcome back, we took a break and now we are back. Desmond Collins has let us in on some disturbing things that he’s been through

living this Hollywood life. So, how did your mama react after you told her the news?”

“She helped me up and took me in the house and asked me everything that happened. Once I was done she laid me on the couch kissed my forehead told me she was sorry this happened to me. She then grabbed her purse and car keys and told me she would be right back. I assumed she went to pay Carol a visit, then next thing I know a couple of hours later she came back and woke me up. She then explained how we had enough money to move and start over somewhere else fresh and I didn’t have to worry about Carol Peterson again.”

“Desmond Collins, I truly appreciate you doing this interview for me. I feel like this will help so many people that are going through this in silence. So, after all of that you still maintain to live a successful life. You have three children and a beautiful wife. How do they play a part in your happily ever after?” Tatum asked.

“They are my happily ever after, see men are always known to be the strong ones. So, when people hear stories like this they are judged as being weak. One thing about me is I’m going to go to therapy weekly or as much as needed. I’m going to always lead my family in the right direction. And where I lack, my wife has my back, which is why I knew from the beginning she was my person she was the one I needed in my corner through all of this. I’m able to be the man of the house and when I’m having a weak moment she doesn’t judge me she makes me remember just how strong I am. So, never ever think for a moment that you can’t end up having a happy ending after a dark past.”

“Well, y’all heard it here first on Media Frenzy, never think for a moment that you can’t end up having a happy ending after a dark past. Desmond Collins thank you so much for this interview. Media Frenzy watchers thanks for tuning in and we will be back with another exclusive that’s connected to this so stay tune.” Tatum said ending the show. Just like that the interview was over and I didn’t feel bad about it at all.

“You did great baby, and I’m so proud of you.” Symphony said while walking over to me and sitting on my lap.

“Thank you, baby, and once again I wouldn’t be able to do this without you. You’re definitely my rib.” I said causing her to smile right before she kissed my lips. I wasn’t even going to lie this interview was just what I needed it was like a weight had lifted off my shoulders. All the camera men packed up their things and headed out. While me Symphony, Tatum, and Poetic stayed at my house and enjoyed some dinner and each other’s company.

Source Creation Date: August 7, 2025, 12:21 am

I was standing in front of my floor-length mirror admiring how good I looked at my age. I was just about ready to head out. Today was my meeting at P you ruined my life for years. I was so fucked up behind what you did to me. Oh, and after hearing a couple other stories I see ten years of age was when you start touching, then thirteen is when you want to be penetrated. I might not have proof but all three stories sound so much alike it's crazy. You also had a type; sons of single mother's that were struggling, come on now don't get quiet let me know if I'm right. Let me know if you ready to admit to this sick shit that you did."

"Poetic I don't know what kind of sick shit you got planned here but this is not funny! I want my lawyer here now." I snapped over this bullshit they had going on.

"Do you hear that Media Frenzy viewers, she's not even under a rest yet but she calling for her lawyer. How come you need a lawyer Carol if you're not guilty of these accusations."

"I said what I said, I want my lawyer here."

"Media Frenzy viewers I'm going to explain to you why Carol Peterson needs her lawyer, because she's guilty of all of this. I never open up to people or tell them my business, but about five years ago my little brother Trent Reece, took his own life at the age of sixteen, leaving us a suicide letter along with some evidence that makes these accusations against Carol Peterson true. If Poetic don't mind, I would love to read the letter out loud."

"No, I don't mind, go right ahead."

“OK, thank you!”

“Dear mama, if you received this letter, it must mean I’m gone already. I couldn’t face you and Tatum after this. I can no longer stay in this world with knowing the things that I have done. I’m so sorry mama, I should have told you sooner. I was embarrassed and didn’t know how you would take it. I hope once you get this letter and this evidence you use it and get her put away. Mama, Carol Peterson has been touching me since I was ten years old. I really didn’t know what was going on. I just knew we were never going to be poor again because I was a star. I was your star and the way you smiled at me and bragged about me I just didn’t want to disappoint you. Carol always told me if I told anyone she would send us back to the poor house and I knew since daddy was gone you were struggling. Tatum was in school and I wanted her to further her education so once I was gone she would be here to take care of you. It started out as touching, then her putting her mouth on me. Then me penetrating her, and that was the last straw for me. I remember when daddy passed away you got a life insurance policy. So, I figured if I die you would be able to get money for my death. I knew I would rather do that then tell on Carol and she fire me then we lose everything. So, once again I’m sorry but this was the best way. I love you mama and tell Tatum I love her too and make sure y’all get Carol Peterson put away.

Love Trent”

Once Tatum was finished reading the letter there wasn’t a dry eye in the room. Hell, I even had tears in my eyes. This shit was crazy and I guess you can say they got me good. The past couple of months had been crazy and I knew my time was coming to an end but I didn’t know it would be this soon.

“Detectives, I’m ready to leave.” I said while holding my head down. I was ashamed and I wasn’t sure of what kind of evidence they had, but I was sure it was legit because that’s how Tatum Reece worked. Probably should have killed her ass instead of Helen.

“Detective Shields you can get her the fuck out of my place of business.” Poetic retorted. The detective walked over to me and read me my rights.

“Ms. Carol Peterson you’re under arrest for the sexual assault of Trent Reece.” I looked around the room and I saw Poetic and Tatum hugged up and I wonder if they been planning to come down on me all along. I also was wondering who the third person Poetic was talking about. I guess in due time it all will come out.

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Six Months Later...

Carol Peterson was in jail and so many other names had come out over time. She would be standing trial in a couple of months it was so many recent accusations it was crazy. She had already been sentenced to fifteen years for Trent, and ten years for another young man that committed suicide named Donald. So, she already was going to be in there for the rest of her life and that was fine with me. Although me and Dashawn's cases were old our stories helped so many people come out. Our two-part series Numb was doing numbers, and I was grateful for that. I think it was because of it being based on true life events.

"Hey baby, what about this color paint in my office?" Tatum asked while walking into the living room. My baby had decided to move in this big ass house with me. We had been together for eight months now and I was already about to pop the question. We had a dinner party set for tonight and that was when it was going to happen. She thought it was Dashawn and Symphony's anniversary party since their anniversary was a couple of days ago. Dashawn and Symphony had become our best friends and they decided to stay in Jersey so that me and Dashawn can do more projects together. I guess you can say we were partners now.

"Whatever color you want baby, you know what I always tell you."

"Yup, this is my world you just live in it." She giggled while I kissed the side of her neck. After Tatum's big story she took over Josh job and he took over Helen's. Of course, my baby didn't have to work, but she wanted to and I had no problem with that.

“What you wearing tonight to the party?” I asked.

“A black floor length gown, and you wearing your black suit, everything is already laid out.”

“OK, baby I just was checking, we gone be leaving here about seven thirty.” I assured her since it took her so long to get ready. I watched her as she walked away and I was the luckiest man in the world. Tatum had been going to therapy sessions with me. She had met my mama and they had a conversation. I also had talked to my mama as well we weren’t all the way there just yet, but we were working on it. I had even invited her tonight to the party. I had met Tatum’s mama as well and I loved her so much already. I had been living my best life, I had movie after movie being done at my studio. I even decided to hire kid actors now. I had come a long way with a dark past, but if it meant I had to go through the hell to get to the heaven. I would do that shit all over again because Tatum was surely my heaven. I had so many accomplishments lately and not only was Tatum proud of me Dr. Barrel was too. She pushed me to do a lot of things differently then what I was doing and she was right. Having the right people in your corner could be a great start to something beautiful. I had a great relationship and friendship and everything was surely falling into place nicely.

* * *

Tatum and I had walked in the venue and her eyes scanned the room and she was in aww when she realized why she was there.

“Poetic, what is all of this?” she asked in so much excitement.

“It’s Dashawn and Symphony’s anniversary party.” I chuckled while pulling her close to me and kissing her lips.

“Poetic, stop lying to me.” She squealed out of my arms and looked around the room to see all the decorations and to see who was all in attendance. While she was being

nosey I was handed the microphone and was now on one knee.

“Tatum Reece, we met at a time in my life where I wasn’t sure if I could ever be in any type of relationship. Our first meeting was crazy we argued and hadn’t even known each other. That day had me intrigued about meeting the real Tatum Reece and not the reporter chick that likes to mess up lives.” I chuckled causing her to give me the side eye.

“Sike, baby I’m just messing with you. I really need you to know that you complete me and I truly believe I’ve found my person. I was once told by a great couple that I know. That I can still be the man of the house and have a down moment and when I have that down moment let my wife carry me. We supposed to be that couple that meets each other halfway and you do all of that and you’re not even my wife yet. So, with that being said I need you to carry this title and carry it well, Tatum Reece will you be my wife, my person, my bestie and my calm after the storm til death do us part?”

“Yes, Poetic Pain, I’ll be your wife, your person, your bestie and your calm after the storm. As long as you promise me you always let me know when you’re not ok and allow me to have your back always.”

“You got it baby,”

“Ok, well that settles it I can’t wait to be Mrs. Tatum Pain.” She smiled causing the crowd to cheer us on. Today was a day for the books and I couldn’t wait til me and Tatum became one.

The End