



Priest: The Wife. The Mistress. The Ruin.

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Category: Dark Erotica

Description: The Wife. The Mistress. The Ruin.

Miyori was only supposed to spend one night with Priest Vale to pay off her sister's debt. One night turned into obsession.

Now Priest won't let her go.

Hes rich, ruthless, and already married—but that doesn't stop him from taking whatever he wants. What he wants is Miyori: her body, her loyalty, and her obedience.

But the deeper she falls, the more dangerous he becomes.

And love was never part of the deal.

A dark, obsessive romance about power, possession, and the blurred line between love and ruin.

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Page 1

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The air in the room was unnervingly still, so thick that each breath I took felt heavy as I stepped inside. To my surprise, there was no entourage—no bodyguards, no right-hand man like you'd see in the movies. It was just him. Waiting.

Priest Vale.

He sat behind a sleek desk of dark wood and glass. The way his eyes tracked my every movement made my skin itch. I felt like I'd walked into a situation where my fate was already decided.

At around six feet and a few inches, he carried himself like a man who knew his own power—shoulders squared, spine straight, his broad but lean frame draped in a bespoke suit that fit him like it had been stitched onto his skin.

The fabric alone probably cost more than most people made in a month.

Behind his jacket, the outline of his gun holster was just visible, a quiet reminder of the kind of man I was dealing with.

His hair was dark, nearly black, his jaw clean-shaven and sharp enough to cut glass.

His lips were full, his features carved with a precision that bordered on cruel beauty.

But his eyes—God, his eyes—were the most unsettling part.

Not brown, not black, just deep, like staring into the void between stars. He looked like power personified.

My pulse kicked up, thudding too fast in my throat.

He was the kind of attractive that made you forget caution—like reaching for a rose even when you knew damn well it was covered in thorns.

Maya's hushed warnings about him echoed in my head.

“Don't contact him. Don't get involved.” But what else was I supposed to do?

Let him kill her? Let him have her out on the corner, selling pussy to repay him?

No. I'd been cleaning up Maya's messes since we were kids.

And in the back of my mind, I think she knew I would do anything to save her.

She was all I had. When I turned twenty, our parents quietly stepped away, as if they'd finished some unspoken term of service.

They weren't cruel—they left us enough money to survive, half a million dollars.

They were older when they had us, both professors about to retire.

I guess they hadn't thought through having kids in their late thirties.

Eleven years later, the money had bled dry, and I found myself standing before a man who held my sister's future in his hands, piecing together the life their absence had fractured. Maya's drug habit came after they'd left. She'd rebelled.

My palms tingled where my nails had dug into them, the sharp pain the only thing keeping my hands from shaking.

Priest didn't smile. Didn't greet me. Just leaned back in his chair, elbows resting on the armrests, fingers steepled like he had all the time in the world to decide what happened next.

"So you're Maya's sister."

His voice wasn't loud, but it rumbled, vibrating in my chest before it even reached my ears. Like distant thunder.

I swallowed, my throat dry. "I am."

"Why are you here?"

"You know why I'm here," I said, fighting to keep the edge out of my tone and my attitude from showing on my face.

He nodded, just slightly. "I want the words to come from your lips. So there's no misunderstandings."

A knot twisted in my stomach. "My sister owes you money."

A tilt of his head. "Ten thousand dollars, correct?"

I shifted my weight, my shoe scuffing against the floor. "Yes. I can get you the money—I just need—"

"I don't want the money."

My breath hitched.

What the fuck does he want, then?

He stood, unfolding himself from the chair. He removed his suit jacket, then rolled up his sleeves with slow, deliberate movements—like he wanted me to watch. Like he wanted me to see the ink coiled around his forearms, the strength in his hands.

Then he rounded the desk, each step unhurried, until he was too close. The scent of leather and whiskey wrapped around me.

“Sit down.”

It wasn't a request.

I didn't hesitate. The chair creaked under me as I sank into it, my pulse hammering. He loomed over me, his gaze dragging over my face, my body. The maxi dress I'd worn suddenly felt too tight, too revealing, like he could see straight through it.

“Your sister took product on credit to distribute. She ruined half trying to cut it and shot up the rest. That makes her a liability.” There was a pause.

His stare weighed down on me like a physical force.

“I was going to handle it my way. Then she called and said you would handle it. I don't let people who owe me decide how they pay. But then I saw you.”

My nails bit deeper into my palms. “What does that mean, ‘you saw me’?”

“It means I'll wipe her debt.” Another pause, deliberate. “And give you ten grand on top of it to send her to rehab.”

The room tilted. My stomach clenched, because men like him weren't generous without reason—and whatever he wanted in return would cost me. “Why?”

“One night. One time. With you.”

Silence.

My brain scrambled to process what he was saying, but my body understood.

Heat flickered low in my stomach despite myself.

I crossed my legs tightly, watching him watch me.

The corner of his mouth wasn't quite turned up into a smile, but there was a smirk.

He was amused, maybe. Like my shock entertained him.

“One night. One time. With me,” I echoed. “For what?” I needed him to say it.

He didn't blink. “I want you. To fuck you. No strings. No questions. You come to me tonight, and your sister walks free in the morning. Her debt's cleared. Rehab's paid for. Your surrender for her freedom. One night.”

A cold prickle ran down my spine. He made it sound simple, but my gut instinct screamed that it wouldn't be .

He perched on the edge of the desk, arms crossed. The dim light carved shadows along the sharp angles of his face. “Don't overthink it. The answer is yes or no. This isn't a negotiation.”

My throat burned. I pressed my lips together to keep them from trembling. The clock on the wall ticked, too loud in the silence.

“Why?” I whispered.

“Because I want you.” His voice was blunt, unapologetic. “And wanting something has always been reason enough for me. It’ll have to be reason enough for you too.”

How the hell do you respond to that?

“Can I think about it?” My voice sounded small, foreign to my own ears. I wasn’t the type to back down, but this man? He scared me too much to run my mouth.

“You’ve got until midnight,” he said, unmoving. “My driver will be outside your building, waiting. If you’re in the car, the deal’s on. If not...” He shrugged. “I won’t ask again, and I’ll handle your sister as I see fit.” He gave me a long look, then nodded. “You’re dismissed.”

Still I sat there, staring at him.

“Your name doesn’t fit you,” I said before I could stop myself. “Priest? You’re nothing holy.” I spat .

He smiled, slow.

“Why not?” he asked, leaning in close enough that I felt the heat of his breath on my mouth. “I make people kneel.”

His hand slid up my throat, not tightly. It was just there.

“I require devotion. Confession. Sacrifice.” His thumb stroked the line of my jaw. “Sounds pretty fucking priestly to me.”

He paused. Then his voice dropped low.

“You should accept my offer. Let me show you how to pray... at my altar, little

saint.”

I knocked his hand away and stood, my legs unsteady beneath me. I schooled my face, trying my hardest not to show how aroused his words had made me. I could feel the weight of his gaze following me as I walked out of his office, feeling like I’d just met the devil.

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Midnight was the deadline. There would be no extensions, no negotiations. I told my driver—if she's not outside by then, you leave. I didn't know what would come next.

At eleven fifty-seven, he called.

“She's getting in the car,” he said.

I hung up.

I didn't move right away. I sat at the edge of my bed, phone still in my hand, lights low. I stared toward the hotel door, counting down the minutes until she walked in.

Miyori was different. I could feel it in the way she looked at me. Like she didn't care about what I had, only what I could take.

I had only seen her picture, talked to her once for half a minute on the phone before she walked into my office, but there was a part of me already—a small but loud part—that didn't just want to fuck her.

I wanted to ruin her. Break her open and make her useless to other men.

And I couldn't, for the life of me, understand why.

Maybe because she wasn't scared of me the way she should be.

Her knock came at twelve twenty. My heart sped up, banging against my rib cage like it was trying to break free.

I hadn't expected her to show up, even after the driver said she was in the car.

Most women in this city would've jumped at the offer.

Not her. She had looked at me like I was a man she could hate even without provocation, even before I told her what I wanted.

She didn't beg. She didn't cry either. I thought she would at least try again to get me to change my mind and do things her way. But she just—

I liked that.

I opened the door myself.

She was in black tights and a plain black top. No makeup, no heels. But she smelled divine. I wondered if she'd taste as sweet. Her arms were folded like she was holding herself together—or back from slapping me.

"Come in," I said.

She hesitated, then stepped inside.

I closed the door behind her and locked it.

She turned around slowly, eyes scanning the space. I watched her. I didn't speak. I wanted to see if she'd say something first.

She didn't. She stayed near the door.

"You want a drink?" I asked.

She shook her head.

I nodded. “Alright.” I made my way over to the bed and sat down.

I leaned back to watch her. “You don’t have to pretend this doesn’t bother you.”

“I’m not pretending anything,” she said. “It’s just sex. Fucking. It means nothing. It’s just skin and sweat. I’ll forget it even happened.”

I could tell by the look in her eyes it wasn’t that simple. If it was, she would have never needed time to think. I wanted to ask her who she was trying to convince—me or herself.

But I let it go.

She came forward slowly and sat beside me.

“I’m here. We doing this or not?” she asked.

I looked at her for a long moment. Then I reached out and touched her wrist. Her skin was warm, soft. She didn’t pull away.

I leaned in slowly, letting the heat of my breath hit her neck before I spoke.

“I’ll make sure you never forget it,” I whispered, voice low against her ear. “You’re gonna remember every second of this. ”

Then I sank my teeth into the curve of her shoulder—hard enough to mark her.

“You’ll dream about my mouth on you. And hate yourself for it.”

She gasped, body going rigid for half a second. Her breath hitched, her hand flying to her shoulder.

I pulled back just enough to see her face.

Her eyes were wild. Caught between rage and lust.

Good. I liked that too.

“Why in the fuck did you bite me?” she glared at me.

I smiled, slow and unapologetic. I liked her fire.

“Because I fucking wanted to.”

My thumb brushed the fresh mark on her skin, the way her breath caught making my chest tighten.

“You sure you’re ready for this?” I asked, fingers slipping up her thigh slow and deliberate, pausing at the hem of her top.

“You’re shaking.”

“Fuck you,” she whispered, but her pulse jumped under my fingertips when I dragged them down her arm.

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I kept my grip light. She was trembling, but she met my eyes. That mattered.

“Stand up,” I said quietly. She did.

“Take off your top, Lil Saint.” She hesitated for half a second before her hands moved. The black shirt came up and over her head. Her bra was simple, black cotton. She pulled it off.

What a shame—breasts so beautiful should be dressed in La Perla. They were heavy and dark-tipped.

“Now the pants.” Her fingers shook as she pushed them down slowly and stepped out of them.

Her thighs were soft, her stomach curved and plush.

She was beautiful in a way she clearly didn’t think mattered.

I could see it in her body language. She was self-conscious, the way women were when they’d been overlooked too long and taught that their softness was a flaw instead of a feast.

And I wanted to feast—to stuff myself full of her.

I wanted to snatch off the cloak she wrapped herself in and replace it with sweat, with whimpers, with the knowledge that someone saw her and was willing to lie, beg, cheat, steal, and bribe to have her.

It was a gnawing. A pull beneath my rib cage. A compulsion.

My breath snagged in my throat. Heat kicked under my skin, spreading like a brushfire. I clenched my fists just to feel my nails bite into my palms to calm me. Focus. Breathe. But my body wasn't listening.

I drew in another deep breath to compose myself.

I reached out and ran my thumb over her thick bottom lip before I slowly pushed two fingers into her mouth and dragged them in, then out.

She sucked them like she was thinking about something filthier than just my fingers.

Lust-filled eyes. A sexy whine slipped past my fingers.

My dick leaked precum. She could ruin a good man's discipline with her mouth.

I groaned and slid my fingers from between her lips. I groaned, sliding my fingers free. I needed to feel her, fill her, taste her.

"Turn around." She dragged her movements out like she wanted to torture me.

Slowly, she turned, giving me the full view inch by inch.

I sighed, shaking my head. Her ass was perfect.

Round and soft. Her skin was so much a contrast to mine it made me ache a little, made me want to explore every inch of it.

My heartbeat pounded in my ears—erratic, too fast. Pathetic. I could've sworn she heard it.

“Bend over the arm of the couch.” She hesitated. I could feel she was thinking too hard and her pride and need were at war.

Impatience won out in me first. I moved behind her, close enough for her to feel how far gone I already was. My hand flattened on the small of her back, pressing her down slow, firm, leaving no room for second-guessing.

“There,” I said against her ear. “That wasn’t so hard.”

She turned her head just enough to look at me, her mouth twisting. She glared at me. I chuckled, pulled back. I slid her panties down her wide hips, over thick thighs; she stepped out of them. She flinched when I stroked between her thighs, testing how ready she was. She wasn’t. Not yet.

“From this moment on, you don’t tell me no,” I said. “You don’t hesitate. You don’t tell me what to do. You want to pay your sister’s debt. The cost is submission.”

She nodded once. It was not enough for me.

I brought my hand down on her ass—hard. Her body jerked forward from the impact; her breath caught in her throat. I felt it more than I heard it.

“Say it,” I demanded, my palm still resting on the heat of her skin. “I want to hear the words from your mouth.”

She turned her head slightly, eyes glassy, jaw tight. “I submit,” she said, voice barely above a whisper.

I leaned in, mouth at her ear. “Louder.” Her grip on the chair tightened. “I submit,” she said again, and this time her voice didn’t shake. It broke.

“Good girl.”

She had acquiesced, and still—I wanted more.

I wanted her begging. Because that’s what this type of hunger does.

It doesn’t end because you get what you want.

That’s the thing about craving something that isn’t sustenance.

It gets louder. Meaner. Greedier. I had to control myself or I’d keep taking until there was nothing left of her but me.

I leaned down, mouth brushing the dip of her spine.

She whined low in her throat. I dragged my lips down her back slowly.

She stiffened, but I heard the moan slip out before she could stop it.

Her body gave me permission to continue.

My hand slid between her legs. Her thighs twitched, and I found her pussy slick and ready.

I kept going, kissed down to the swell of her ass. I spread the roundness open with both hands. She sucked in a breath. My tongue flicked, sliding between the globes of her ass. She bit down a sound, but her hips jerked away from my mouth.

“Don’t run,” I muttered against her ass cheek. “You take it.” I dug my blunt fingertips into her hips, holding her in place—tongue-fucking her asshole, then her wet slit until my face was covered in her juice and scent, until I was about to cum on myself before

she came.

I stood. I shoved my knee between her thighs, forcing them wide, then stepped between them.

I undid my belt. The sound made her tense. Too impatient, I changed my mind about taking my pants off. I unzipped, pulled my dick through the hole of my boxers and slacks, rubbing the head against her dripping entrance. Her breath caught, but she didn't move away.

“You like this,” I said, voice low, taunting. “But you were nearly silent this entire time, trying so hard to act like you don't need this.”

She said nothing, but her body told the truth. It was tight, trembling, slick, and open.

I grabbed her hips rougher this time, fingers biting into her soft flesh. Then I pushed in. All the way. No teasing. No pause. She gasped, her back arching.

I started to move, fucking her hard, dragging every ounce of tension out of her body one stroke at a time. She kept trying to stay quiet, to hold it together, but her hips met mine halfway every time—like she couldn't help it.

I leaned down, my chest to her back, breath hot at her ear. “You may hate me right now,” I whispered. “But your pussy's clenching and gripping me like it's never been full before.”

She whimpered. There were no words—just heat and shame behind the sound.

“Say it,” I growled, my hand wrapping around her throat—not tight, just enough to keep her head tilted back. “Say you want it, Lil Saint.” I needed to hear her.

She didn't—but her legs spread wider, and her ass pushed back, grinding into me.

I pushed in deeper, each hard stroke driving us both closer to the edge until her hips quivered against mine and a cry ripped from her throat, spilling into the air. My hand tightened around her waist as her walls clenched around me, dragging me over with her.

Her moans turned into breathless gasps. My orgasm hit me like a drug; it was dizzying and unleveling. I fucked into her until I was flooding her pussy.

We froze in the aftermath, sweat-slick and breathless, our pulses racing in sync. I lowered my forehead to the nape of her neck, lips brushing her skin as I whispered, “We’re even, but one more time, please.” “Okay,” she breathed out hard, arching into me.

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I woke up reaching for her.

My hand shot out, grabbing at the empty side of the bed, but met nothing—just cold sheets and silence.

She was gone.

I got up and checked the bathroom.

Empty.

Her clothes were gone. The clock read seven. She'd probably slipped out before sunrise.

Good girl.

That's what I told myself.

Because if I didn't, I'd have to admit she left on her own terms. And I wanted her to stay on mine.

We had a deal. One time.

But she let me take her over and over. And somewhere along the way, she stopped waiting for orders. She started grabbing control, fucking me like I belonged to her, using me. Started moaning my name.

One time. It was supposed to be simple.

She made it complicated.

No—I made it complicated, if I was being truthful. She probably would’ve walked away after that first time.

My phone buzzed.

Lilith’s maid’s name flashed across the screen.

I almost let it keep ringing.

But I knew I had to answer.

“What?”

“She drank all night because you didn’t come,” the old woman said, voice thick. “Around midnight, she woke the house screaming about devils in the walls. I told her you wouldn’t come. But she said you’re hers. You always come.”

I said nothing.

She was right. I was hers—and that was written in blood, not because of love, but because of who my father in law was. Lilith had asked him for me like a child pointing at something in a store window.

And her father had made it so.

That’s how our arrangement started. She wanted. He provided. I paid.

“She took the car,” she added. “I don’t know where she’s going.”

I wanted to say, “I hope she’s driving herself to hell where she belonged,” but instead, I hung up.

I looked at the door Miyori had walked out of and rolled my head on my neck and pushed her to the back of my mind..

Duty calls.

I didn’t have a choice but to go.

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Sebastian had been talking about some dinner at his sister's house he wanted me to go to for two weeks.

I'd finally relented because we'd agreed we were dating seriously.

I met him at the hospital where I worked as a nurse.

Three months ago, he came into the ER with a throat infection and wouldn't let me discharge him until I agreed to go on a date with him.

He was generous with gifts and had mid dick, but he was teachable.

He had some weird tendencies, though. Sometimes his smile didn't quite reach his eyes—like he was holding back something behind his nice guy persona. Sometimes I'd catch him staring at me too long, like a vampire stared at a vein. But all men were strange sometimes.

We pulled into a long driveway of a mini mansion on the outskirts of Tampa. The property was lined with trimmed hedges and stone lions everywhere. When he said his family was rich, I hadn't realized he meant old-money, marble-outside-type rich.

I sighed, low and slow. I liked him. I really did. But we were worlds apart.

Sebastian parked the car and stepped out, buttoning his jacket as he rounded the hood.

He opened my door, his hand extended. I took it.

He pulled me up and into him. His dick was hard against my stomach.

It seemed to always be hard. His arms wrapped around me and slid to my ass, causing a flutter in my pussy.

I slid my eyes up to him. Sebastian looked like a walking problem in a custom suit—tan skin kissed, dark hair always a little too perfectly messy, and those eyes, black-coffee bitter with no sugar.

He held himself like he knew women wanted him.

Thirty, dangerous, and draped in quiet power, he was that ruin-your-life-on-a-random-Tuesday kind of fine.

“Don’t look so scared. You’ll love my sister, and she’s going to love you.”

I didn’t know about all that. But I nodded.

I followed him. My heels clicked too loud on the walkway.

Inside, the air smelled like lemons and something floral—probably the massive arrangements lining the foyer.

A chandelier dripped crystal above us, scattering light across the walls.

Staff in pressed uniforms moved soundlessly through the halls.

My heels sounded too loud on the marble walkway, each click echoing back at me.

A woman came down the stairs slowly. Pale skin. Dark eyes. Silk dress that looked like it wasn’t from this country. And I knew it was Sebastian’s sister.

She met us at the bottom.

“This is Lilith,” Sebastian said. “My sister.” His finger drew small circles on the small of my back. I think he meant to calm me down, but it was doing the opposite.

“Miyori,” she said, tilting her head. “You’re even lovelier than Sebastian described.”

Her voice was smooth. Her eyes—dark and unblinking—made my skin prickle.

“Thank you,” I said, giving her a small smile.

She led us through the house to a back room set for dinner.

Lilith moved like she didn’t touch the ground. But there was something in her eyes that made my stomach twist—something unreadable and quiet and cold.

Dinner was already waiting in the back room on a long table.

A few guests were already seated. Low music played in the background, something classical.

Everybody was dressed so elegantly, and I had on a simple fitted dinner dress.

A few eyes rolled in my direction, judging me. I should have stayed home.

And that thought was cemented when my eyes landed on him.

Priest.

He stood near the far end of the table, sleeves rolled to his elbows, watching me like he’d been expecting this. Like he’d been waiting, a slight sneer on his lips.

My heart slammed against my ribs. Why was he here? Worse—would he say something about what I'd done to Sebastian? I dropped my eyes, curling my nails into the fabric of my dress. I wanted to run. The air thickened. The clink of silverware was suddenly too loud in my ears.

Sebastian's hand settled on my lower back. "Come on, babe," he said, drawing my attention. He led me to the opposite end of the table.

I sat two seats away from Priest, my fingers gripping the edge of my chair. The linen napkin in my lap wrinkled under my clenched fists.

"My brother-in-law is at the head of the table. I'll introduce you after dinner," he whispered. I stayed quiet.

I nodded, throat tight. Brother-in-law. The words slithered through my brain, causing a headache. The wife—his wife—was Sebastian's sister. Priest hadn't said anything about a wife .

Of course. This was my type of luck.

A fresh wave of nausea rolled in my stomach.

Then a memory flashed in my head—his teeth on my neck, my legs wrapped tight around his waist.

My thighs pressed together under the table. I could almost still feel him.

I should've stopped at just the one time—I agreed on that night—but he had rocked inside of me too well. So I didn't.

And now here I was, sitting two seats from his wife's brother, pretending like he

hadn't left me wrung out.

Through the first course, then the second, I barely tasted anything. Priest never looked away. Even though I didn't look at him, I could feel his eyes on me like a finger tracing my spine. The wine turned acidic on my tongue.

Sebastian didn't notice.

By the main course, my lungs felt too tight.

Priest's fork clinked against his plate. Loud enough to know it was on purpose. My shoulders tensed.

I leaned into Sebastian. "Where's the bathroom?"

"Down the hall," he said, distracted. His sister wanted his attention and had it all night .

I stood and walked in that direction.

The bathroom was all marble and gold fixtures, the mirror stretching too wide, too bright. I turned the faucet on, let the water rush over my hands just to fill the silence.

My phone buzzed. I pulled it from my clutch.

Unknown Caller.

I almost didn't answer.

Static hissed, then there were muffled voices.

“How long have you been seeing her?”

Sebastian’s laugh. “Few months.”

A pause.

“Is it serious?”

“Serious? Nah, man. Come on. She’s not that type. I wanted to test the pussy, that’s it. I can’t be serious about some broke girl with a cracked-out sister. You’ve met my parents.”

I didn’t need to hear anything else.

The water kept running. My reflection in the mirror looked the same as always—tired. I wasn’t even mad. I’d heard worse. From better men. Fuck him. Like I said, the dick was mid.

I hung up.

For a long moment, I just stood there, listening to the drip of the faucet .

Then I walked out.

Past the dining room. Past the foyer. Out the front door, into the hot night air.

The sidewalk was empty. The streetlights didn’t flicker in this neighborhood full of mini mansions. I kept walking until the house was out of sight, then pulled out my phone.

Sebastian’s contact disappeared with one tap.

The Uber app glowed in the dark.

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I told myself I didn't care about what Sebastian had said.

But if that was the case, why had four hours passed and his words were still echoing in my head?

It wasn't that I liked him all that much. It was just—I was tired.

Tired of men thinking they were doing me a favor by wanting me.

Tired of choosing wrong.

Tired of having to pretend it didn't sting.

My eyes drifted from the ceiling to the sweating glass of gin on my nightstand and a half-burned blunt resting in the tray beside it. I'd been alternating between them like either one could dull the edge, like smoke and liquor could rewind the clock.

And the worst part about that night was that I was missing sleep—because every time I closed my eyes, I saw Priest's face.

That stupid sneer. He had look so mad earlier, jealous even. That pleased me when it shouldn't have.

The fact that I kept remembering how his hands and mouth felt on me that night made it worse.

He had touched me like I was holy and ruined at the same time.

My pussy throbbed, becoming slick and needy, betraying me.

I slid my hand over my stomach, let me fingers graze lower, across the heat gathering between my thighs, hating how juicy my pussy was just from the memory of him.

Just before I started rubbing my clit, I snatched my hand away. I was not going there.

I didn't need to be thinking about him. He was married.

Of course he was married. The powerful ones always were. They were always cheating too—usually with women who looked nothing like their wives. Months later, and I still couldn't figure out why he chose me.

Maybe it wasn't about me at all. Maybe I was just... convenient. The kind of girl he knew he could use.

The first knock was soft—barely there. I almost ignored it.

I just blinked at the ceiling.

Then came three more knocks.

I sat up.

I grabbed my phone off the floor. No texts. No calls. It was 12:08 a.m.

My pulse kicked.

I swung my legs over the edge of the bed, slipped my hand under the pillow, and listened.

“Miyori ,” Sebastian’s voice came through the door. “Please. Open up.”

I didn’t move.

He knocked again, harder this time. “Come on. I just want to talk. You left without saying anything. What’s wrong?”

My phone lit up and i knew it was him. I let it go dark again.

“Miyori , please. Tell me what I did?”

The knocking turned into pounding.

I got up.

“Miyori , open the goddamn door!”

I grabbed my phone, typed 911 into the keypad, ready to hit call as I made my way to the living room .

“Go home,” I said through the door. “You’re not welcome here no more, and I don’t owe you no explanation.” I sounded so hostile and bitter. I guess his words had actually hurt me.

“Open the fucking door, or I’ll kick it in!”

“Kick my door in if you want to, bitch. I will call the police,” I yelled back.

Silence.

I stared at the door for a second, waiting for him to knock again. When he didn't, then

I took a step back to head back to the room. He was probably gone. Most men didn't want to deal with the police.

Then the banging started again—louder this time. Shaking the wood. My neighbors were going to report me to the leasing office. Anger crept up my spine.

Fed up, I marched to the door, phone still in hand, and ripped it open—

My breath hitched, then hiccupped out.

The person staring back at me wasn't Sebastian.

Priest stood there in a black coat, eyes hard, mouth tight.

I blinked. "You—what are you doing here?"

"I came looking for you a week after that night. I went by your old place. You moved."

My heart kicked up at his words. Shamefully, I had wondered if he thought about me after that night. Now he confirmed it. I didn't know what to do with that... and since I didn't, I pretended.

"You tracked me down?" I folded my arms, faking like I was madder than I was.

"No. I followed you when you left my house, then came back. Couldn't track you. You're too good at hiding." He said it like it was perfectly normal to stalk someone.

"That's not normal—following strange women."

"Strange? I came in you. Know what your pussy tastes like. Know what my name

sounds like on your lips when you cum.”

“Strangers fuck all the time,” I rebutted, even though heat licked up my spine, my nipples tightened beneath the thin fabric of my tank, and my stomach did this low, dangerous dip I hated because of his words.

He didn’t say anything at first—just narrowed his eyes and gave a low, smug hmph.

Then his face shifted. He looked down the hall toward the elevators.

“You should stay away from Sebastian,” he said.

I blinked. “Why?”

“He’s not what you think. I mean it. Just... stay aw ay from him.”

There was a pause. Heavy. Tense.

“He has issues.” His jaw was ticking like he was chewing on his words.

Another pause, and this time, when he looked at me, there was no smirk. I could read the sincerity in his eyes.

“He’s complicated—and that can make your life complicated.”

He was being too cryptic for me. But it didn't matter enough to to question him further.

“I’m not worrying about him. You made sure of that with that shady-ass call.”

He stepped inside, his body colliding with mine.

I shoved him. “What are you doing?”

“Coming in.”

“No, you’re not. Take your married ass home!”

He stepped closer.

“I’m not married the way you think.”

I stared at him.

“I don’t care. You don’t have to lie to me.”

“It’s not a lie.”

I laughed, abrupt and bitter. “ And I’m supposed to believe you because what??”

He didn’t answer. He just grabbed me—one hand under my thighs, the other around my back—and lifted me like I weighed nothing. My heart did that thing it does when you plummet down a rollercoaster.

“Priest—put me down—”

He carried me further into the living room.

Dropped me to my feet, spun me around, and pushed me up against the wall before I could catch my breath.

The impact rattled something loose in me.

The sound of the picture frame shifting above my head barely registered.

All I could focus on was him—how close he was, how hard he was, how thick his dick felt pressing into the soft curve of my ass through our clothes.

His mouth was at my ear, voice low and wrecked. “I missed you.”

I didn’t respond. I didn’t move. Couldn’t. My breath hitched as I heard the metallic slide of his belt being undone—slow. He pulled it free in one smooth motion, then took my wrists and lifted them above my head, pinning them there with one hand while the other looped the belt around them.

My heart was pounding so hard I could barely breathe. I’d never had someone come at me like this—so aggressive, so focused, so rough. And God, I loved it .

“I advise you, don’t let anything I won’t like slip from between them pretty little lips of yours right now.”

He leaned in, breath hot against my skin, then sank his teeth into the shell of my ear—like he was marking me from the inside out.

A gasp shuttered out of my mouth, then the pain disappeared.

The way my adrenaline had kicked up had me feeling shaky.

I took his advice and kept my lips tucked.

I didn’t know what might have spilled out of them.

He tightened the belt one last time before stepping back just enough to look at me.

I couldn't see him fully, not with my cheek pressed to the wall and my arms stretched above me, but I felt him. The heat of his stare. The tension in his body.

And then I heard him drop to his knees behind me.

His hands shoved my pajama shorts down in one smooth motion.

He spread my ass and snatched me into a position that had me bent at the waist. Before I could say a word, his mouth was on me—his tongue stroking my pussy with slow, devastating precision from behind.

I gasped, bucking against his face, but there was nowhere to go. No way to escape it.

“Fuck, Miyori ,” he murmured into me. “You taste so good. I missed this. ”

My knees were already threatening to give out, but he didn't stop. He devoured me like he was starving—tongue-fucking me. His slick long fingers sank into my pussy, going deep, stretching my walls, his lips sealing around my clit as he sucked me toward the edge.

I cried out, wrists flexing in the makeshift restraint, body trembling as the pleasure rolled through me like a tidal wave.

And just when I thought I couldn't take anymore, he stood—hard dick pressing against my bare ass again. He grabbed my hips, lined himself up, and slammed into me with one deep, brutal thrust.

“Fuck!” I moaned, arching back, the stretch and the sting making my whole body light up.

He fucked me hard, my bound hands thudding softly against the wall with each

thrust. Each time he drove into me, I felt him deeper. Felt him claiming something inside me. I could feel my juices leaking down my thighs.

“You feel that?” he growled. “That’s mine. You’re mine.”

“Yes,” I gasped. “All yours.” I said what I knew he wanted to hear and I would have said anything because my orgasm hit me without warning, my body seized and I cried out as the pleasure exploded. My vision swam and tears wet my eyes.

He followed right after, burying himself deep and groaning as he emptied inside me—holding me so tight around the waist I thought he might crack my ribs, and I couldn’t fucking breathe right.

When we finally stopped shaking, he reached up and gently un-looped the belt, kissing my wrists where the leather had left faint impressions.

I turned to face him—hair messy, lips parted, heart still racing, sweat drying on my skin.

He looked ruined. And beautiful. And mad.

He was staring at me like I had offended him in some way. Like I had crossed some invisible line.

I felt thoroughly fucked—but sad, for some reason. Like this was the beginning of a story that would only end in heartbreak.

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Source Creation Date: July 23, 2025, 2:11 am

I couldn't sleep. She was curled up, mouth slightly open, resting peacefully like she wasn't the reason my head was pounding. The reason my chest ached like I had unfinished business.

Why didn't she call me? Why didn't she try to contact me? She changed her number. I had to steal Sebastian's phone just to call her, so she could hear what he really thought about her.

I laid there, naked, dick heavy against my thigh, body still humming from being inside her.

I was trying to figure out in my head what happened next.

How did I keep her? I could lock her up.

Keep her somewhere safe. Somewhere where she could only be mine and she'd be out of danger. She'd probably kick and scream for a while.

But she'd settle. And if she didn't—it didn't matter either.

Restless, I sat up slowly, swung my legs over the edge of the bed. My muscles were tight, still high off her scent. I wandered around her room. Clean. Modest. Quiet. Her drawers were half-stuck. I tugged one open and found a blunt. Old, but intact. I laughed under my breath, held it to my nose.

I was nearly forty, I hadn't smoked weed in nearly twenty years. I grabbed the lighter from her drawer and lit it anyway.

The flame touched the tip, and the burn filled my lungs.

I dropped into her desk chair and started clicking through her emails. Overdue bills. Past due student loans. Donation receipts from when she had it.

She stirred behind me.

"You're nosey," she said in this honey-coated voice that made the hair on the back of my neck stand on end.

I groaned to myself. She could ask me for blood in the right tone, and I'd give her access to my vein. Two nights. That's all it took. I was pussy-drunk. Mind gone. Spine bent.

Weaknesses were not things I could afford to have. Not when my enemies shared a bed with me. But for her, I'd betray God and kiss the devil's ring.

"I paid for your sister's rehab. Why do you have past-due bills? Student loans?"

"None of your business," she said simply. There wasn't any inflection in her tone.

"Then answer me this." I finally turned, eyes dragging over her relaxed body—she was tangled in the sheets.

"Why didn't you contact me? I know you felt what I felt." Thinking about her after that night had ruined my sleep. My focus. She was in my blood by the third time she let me in her. How could she not be as affected? How could she act like that night was nothing?

I stood and began pacing. Her silence hadn't made sense. "Are you gonna pretend it was nothing? Just a night that—"

I stopped mid-step, mid-sentence. Blunt pinched between my thumb and forefinger. "When I saw you walk in with him tonight... I could've killed the both of you. I wanted to."

Her eyes widened, fear flickering just for a second. Good. If she was afraid of me, she'd be easier to control.

But then— She sat up, sheet falling, exposing her pretty titties, there was defiance written all over her face.

"Mr. Vale. I don't owe you nothing, let alone my life. Matter of fact, you owe me. You said once and my debt was paid. We did it way more than once."

I smirked and took a long drag. She had a mouth on her. I liked that.

Bang! Bang! The knock at the door came right on time.

"Stay." I pointed in her direction.

I left her in the bedroom, walked to the door naked. My guy stood there, not even blinking at my undress—he knew better. He just handed me the duffle.

I closed the door. He knew what else to do. I walked back in, tossed it on the bed.

"What's this?" she asked.

"Pay your bills. Move out of this fucking trash neighborhood. Somewhere with security."

She opened the bag. The sheet dropped, exposing the rest of her perfect fucking body. She was as soft as she looked. I licked my lips and watched her.

She sorted through the money, too fast to count it, then looked up at me, her head tilted like she was trying to figure out what my agenda was.

"You're watching me like you expect me to give it back to you?" she asked, voice light but not playful.

I shrugged. "Most women put up a fake fight. Say it's too much. Say they're not that kind of girl."

She gave a dry little laugh. "I won't."

"You understand what this means?"

"Yes," she said simply. Then, "What about your wife?"

I stepped forward, scooped the bag off the bed. It banged against the floor. Fifty thousand dollars had weight to it.

"Leave worrying about her to me. I'll give you security, pleasure, and anything money can buy. In return, I expect peace, your loyalty, and your body when I want it."

I wrapped my hand around her throat, pressing her back into the mattress until the breath hitched in her lungs.

I climbed between her legs. She let out a sharp yelp when my teeth caught her bottom lip, and in that split second of surprise, I took her—my lips claimed hers, tongue sliding deep into her mouth, while my hips thrust forward, driving into her slick pussy.

I felt her heart trip under my palm, fast and terrified.

Mine did the same, syncing to hers and I thought, yeah, that's right.

This is how this is supposed to feel. She would be the closest thing to heaven a man like me ever touched.

So I would find a way to make her mine. To keep her.

I'd break her open and crawl inside her.

My grip tightened on her throat as I sank in deep as I could go. She was so warm inside and soft outside.

The tension that'd lived in my spine for months snapped clean in half. This woman was my release, my sin, my fucking salvation. And for a moment, everything quieted—the noise, the rage, the whole damn world.

All the trouble she was going to bring... The paradise between her thighs made it worth it. Her scent. Her softness.

She moaned for me, a whine that sounded like her soul was slipping out through her mouth. Her walls gripped me like she didn't want me to ever leave.

I wouldn't ever leave.

She was mine now—flesh, mind, and bone. And I wasn't letting go.

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He was gone when I woke up to my alarm blaring. I would've thought I dreamt him being there if my body wasn't sore and his scent didn't still cling to my skin. I stared at the ceiling for a full minute before dragging myself out of bed and silencing my cellphone.

My foot hit the duffle bag.

I sat on the edge of the bed, staring at it like it might bite me.

And it might, metaphorically, eventually.

I shouldn't have taken the money. I knew that.

But the look in his eyes last night—that raw, unflinching determination—made me change my mind.

“No” didn't exist in his world. Saying it wouldn't have saved me from him.

So why leave empty-handed? I'd play my part, whatever that would be, until he got tired of me.

Some women got to live soft lives. Women like me didn't get that luxury. We survived .

I held onto those thoughts all morning.

Through brushing my teeth. Through putting my shoes on. Through packing my

lunch and locking the door behind me.

At work, I moved from patient to patient, checked charts, gave meds—like nothing had happened. Like I hadn't let a dangerous man fuck me against a wall and then pay off my student loans.

I even laughed when my coworker Tasha said something about how tired I looked.

After work, I went to the grocery store. I got home around six.

And Priest was standing outside. Next to a moving van.

He looked at me like it was normal being there. In a suit. In the middle of the night. With movers.

I stopped at the curb. "What is this?" He shrugged lazily. "I told you you were moving. I found you a place."

I started to speak—loudly—then became aware of the movers watching us with half-curious, half-bored expressions and lowered my voice. "Priest. I can't—"

His stride was long and quick as he closed the space between us.

He wrapped his thick fingers around my wrist and aggressively pulled me forward. I slammed into him. His arms came around me like iron vice, locking me in place. My face ended up pressed flush against the hard planes of his chest, his warmth chasing away the slight chill clinging to my skin.

I stiffened, but he didn't let go.

"You can, and you will," he whispered.

I tried to lean back, but his grip stayed firm.

“You really think this is a good idea?” I said, voice tight.

His fingers slid from my wrist to the small of my back—his hand was so hot. “I don’t think. I know.” His lips dipped, grazing the corner of my jaw.

“Don’t act out in front of my men, Little Saint,” he said. “You already said yes to whatever I want when you took my money. In for a penny, in for a pound of flesh.”

A flutter of heat unfurled low in my belly—embarrassing, but involuntary.

I exhaled sharply. “Why does this feel like you own me now?”

His smile was smug and dark. “Little Saint, ownership isn’t the only thing I plan to take...”

My heart sped up. My fight-or-flight kicked in, but I was too proud to beg, too scared to fight, and a body too foolish to run.

He pulled me tighter, like he wanted to fuse us together right there on the sidewalk. I felt his dick on my stomach, every unrelenting inch of him was hard and ready. I hated how my breath caught, the way my clit thumped. There was something wrong with me.

He stepped back and fixed his cuffs. “Go pack what you want to keep. I’ll buy you whatever else. See you inside.” He leaned back in, brushing a kiss just beneath my ear.

Then he turned and walked off, leaving me to follow his orders with my heart hammering in my chest.

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Source Creation Date: July 23, 2025, 2:11 am

“Fuck, Miyori ,” I growled, my voice low and rough, strained from need. “You’re driving me fucking crazy with your mouth.” My head was swimming, my vision tunneling. Every nerve in my body was tuned to her lips, her tongue.

My head dropped back with a groan, my fingers tangling in her hair instinctively. Fuck, her mouth was warm—wet—perfect. Her tongue swirled over the head, teasingly, and I couldn’t help the way my hips jerked up to meet her mouth.

“That’s it, baby,” I panted. “Take it all, Lil Saint.”

She moaned around me, the vibrations shot straight up my spine. I felt my cock throb against her tongue, growing even harder with every suck. Her nails dug into my thighs, anchoring me as she took me deeper. I nearly lost it right there.

“Fuck, Miyori , you’re so fucking good at this,” I gasped. I could barely breathe. Her lips were stretched around my shaft, her throat worked against the head of my dick. She gagged, and her mouth got wetter. "Fucking hell." I was losing control—fast.

She looked up at me, her big eyes gleaming with something wicked, something powerful. And damn if I didn’t love it. She knew exactly what she was doing to me.

My thighs tensed. I could feel it coming, the build tightening in my gut, the heat rising too fast.

“Lil Saint , I’m gonna cum,” I warned, voice barely steady, my fingers curling tighter in her hair. She had it loose today, in a wild curly afro. I tried hard not to snatch the strands.

She didn't stop. She went harder—faster—her tongue was relentless, her lips tight, She sucked me like she hungered. I couldn't hold back.

“Fuck, fuck, fuck!” I shouted, my hips jerking up one last time as I spilled into her mouth. My whole body trembled, muscles locking, breath caught in my throat. She swallowed everything—every fucking drop—and then licked me clean.

When she finally pulled away, her lips were swollen, her dark plum lipstick smeared. She looked like a fucking masterpiece—filthy, nasty, and proud of it.

“Did you enjoy that?” she asked, smirking.

I couldn't even speak. I just nodded, chest heaving, still trying to recover from the way she completely wrecked me.

She climbed onto the sofa. I pulled her into me.

“You weren't home when I got here,” I said when I caught my breath. I had wanted to ask her why when she first got home, but her lips had been a distraction and seeing them wrapped around my dick had taken precedence.

She blinked, something close to annoyance flashing in her eyes. “The nurse who was supposed to replace me was late.”

“You could've texted.”

“I didn't think you were coming tonight.”

“You could have texted me,” I repeated myself, which I hated doing—but would for her.

She rolled her eyes.

“You need to quit that job,” I said.

She snatched her head back like I’d hit her. “Excuse me?”

“You’re overworked. You don’t like saving people anymore. I don’t like that so much of your time is occupied. Stay home. I’ll cover everything.”

She laughed once, softly. “Oh, you’ll cover everything?”

“Yes.”

“And what do I do while you’re off playing mob boss and playing husband at your actual home?”

My eyes narrowed. I hated when she reminded me of the reality of our situation. “You rest. You cook. You wait for me.”

She was quiet for a moment.

She frowned. “I don’t know.”

Her phone rang before I could respond, her sister’s name flashing on the screen. She was calling from the rehab.

“Hey, Maya,” she answered quickly, and I resisted the urge to snatch it from her hand and hang up.

I watched her whole face shift into something softer, more open—and I hated it.

It was irrational. I knew that. Jealousy this deep made no fucking sense.

But I didn't care.

I didn't want her smiling like that for anyone but me. Not her sister. Not her friends. Not a fucking soul. I looked away.

Her voice dropped into that big-sister tone she used whenever Maya called. I tucked my suddenly softening dick back into my boxers.

"No, no, you're doing great. I'm proud of you. Eight months clean is huge. "

She laughed. "I'll send the candles tomorrow."

I leaned into the sofa and tuned her out.

When she hung up, she turned toward me.

"What? Why do you look ready to kill someone?" she asked.

I couldn't tell her the truth. That I was jealous of her sister. Because if I told her, she'd think I was crazy. She'd run.

And if she ran, she'd force me to chase her.

And when I caught her, I wouldn't be kind.

I pushed up off the couch, jaw tight. "Quit your job," I nearly growled, heading down the hall toward the guest bedroom in the three-bedroom condo I'd bought her.

She didn't say anything, but I imagined she had a look of shock on her face.

I didn't turn to check.

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Source Creation Date: July 23, 2025, 2:11 am

The club pulsed with heat and bass, a low thump running through the floor like a heartbeat.

SIR wailed through the speakers:

But I see no evil

Oh, I see no evil

Oh, I see another reason for me to believe in the hero

Can you breathe underwater?

Should I dive any deeper?

What's the name you want me to call you

Whenever I need you?

Priest's hand was glued to the small of my back as he guided me through the VIP section, nodding at the men who glanced our way with too much interest.

He leaned into my ear. "Keep your eyes on me. Not on them. "

I rolled my eyes, used to his jealousy. I did what he said—but really, he was annoying sometimes. What did he think I would do? Run off with someone in the club?

I didn't bother arguing. There was no point.

We stopped near a table where a man in a crisp charcoal suit sat nursing dark liquor, a smirk tugging at his mouth. His eyes swept over me once, slow, calculating, and lingered a bit too long. He looked like Priest.

“Edoardo,” Priest said. “This is Miyori . Miyori , this is my cousin Edoardo.”

I nodded, thinking they must be pretty close for him to be introducing me—while having a whole wife at home.

“Ah,” his cousin stood, looking tall and dangerous like Priest but with a softer smile.

"The little Saint who drives him mad."

“I guess,” I said, not knowing what else to say.

Priest didn't respond. But his hand tightened around my waist.

Edoardo stepped forward, lifted my hand, and kissed the back of it like we were in some old film. I felt nothing—no tingle, no lust. I snatched my hand back, making a show of it for Priests sake.

“Don't do that again,” Priest said flatly .

Edoardo chuckled.

I blinked. The tension between them was almost suffocating now. Here we go.

“Don't look so serious, cousin. Sit, have a drink.”

We sat for a while. Edoardo ordered expensive liquor like he owned the bar and kept talking to me like he didn't care that his cousin was damn near vibrating with anger.

He was arrogant. Charming. Funny. But with Priest next to me, I knew better than to laugh too loud or hold eye contact too long.

Still, I slipped once—just once. I chuckled at a joke I barely heard.

Priest's fingers dragged up the inside of my thigh under the table.

I bit my lip to keep from moaning.

After a few minutes, he stood. "Dance with me."

It wasn't a request. His hand found mine before I could answer.

The floor was crowded, but Priest carved space with his presence alone. He pulled me flush against him, hands on my hips, mouth brushing the shell of my ear as we moved.

"Did you enjoy my cousin's attention? "

I swallowed. "He was just being nice... I was just being nice."

Priest's hand slid lower, squeezing. "You smiled at him."

"I smiled to be polite."

"Not like that."

I didn't say anything, just started swaying with him, pressing my head into his chest.

A part of me wondered when he'd get tired of me so I didn't have to deal with his mood swings. It had been his idea to go out. He knew he couldn't handle it— Another part hoped he never got tired of me.

One minute we were dancing, then suddenly he was dragging me through the crowd and back to the booth. My heart dropped. What in the fuck was I in for now?

Edoardo sat exactly where we left him, legs spread, arms sprawled on the back of the couch. His eyebrow rose, and he sat up straight when he saw us.

Priest dropped into the seat beside him, then pulled me down and situated me to straddle his waist.

“Ride me,” he murmured, low and dark, just for me. “Right here, Lil Saint.”

My breath caught. “Priest, come on. You need to chill...”

“He thinks I’m a joke because of you. He thinks he has a chance. Show him he doesn’t.”

He reached between us. His fingers undid his zipper. My dress was hiked up around my thighs already. He pushed my panties to the side.

The music thumped on, loud enough to hide the gasp I let out when he pushed inside me, stretching me. I was barely wet.

I braced my hands on his shoulders, heart in my throat.

“Move,” he whispered, digging his fingers into my ass deep enough to draw blood.

So I did.

Slow at first—every inch of him thick and hard, filling me completely. Priest’s hands guided me, helping me grind down into him. I couldn’t help it. It started to feel good. My head tilted back, and I moaned.

I could feel Edoardo watching. His eyes felt like fingers crawling over my skin.

“Look at him,” Priest said, voice gravel-rough against my throat. “Let him see what he’ll never have.”

I gazed over my shoulder. Edoardo jaw was tight now. He didn'tmove, didn't blink. Just sipped his drink, one brow lifted like he was witnessing something both obscene and fascinating.

Priest’s hand slid up my spine, then wrapped around one of the two long French braids I had in my head, tugging just enough to sting.

“That’s right, baby. Show him who you belong to.”

I ground down harder. Faster. Shame, lust, pride—all of it tangled in my chest.

Priest groaned low, chest vibrating under my palms. “You’re mine. Every goddamn inch of you. Your pussy. Your skin. Your flesh. Your fucking smiles.”

I didn’t break eye contact with Edoardo until I came.

Priest sped up. At the last second he pulled out, painting my pussy lips and thighs in his cum.

He bit down into my shoulder—hard.

I choked on a gasp, the pain and pleasure crashing together so violently it brought

tears to my eyes. My nails dug into his shoulders.

“Stop,” I whimpered.

He didn’t let go right away. His teeth sank deeper—enough to bruise my flesh.

When he finally pulled back, his lips brushed the skin he’d just brutalized. His voice was low, thick. “Cry if you want,” he murmured. “But I bet you remember this next time.”

I wanted to punch him in his mouth .

His crazy ass gently removed me from his lap. “Fix yourself.” If humiliation had been his goal. He had succeeded. I dropped my head as I fixed my dress.

He turned to stare at his cousin.

Edoardo raised his glass. “Point taken.”

Priest smiled—a rare smile.

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Source Creation Date: July 23, 2025, 2:11 am

The second I walked through the door, I wanted to turn back around and leave.

Lilith was waiting in the foyer, arms folded, a red silk robe hanging off her shoulders like she was trying to look delicate. The fire in her eyes killed the act.

“You’ve been gone for three nights,” she said. “Where?”

I dropped my keys on the table. Shrugged off my jacket.

“Out.”

She followed me into the living room like a ghost with teeth.

“My father noticed. Asked me what you’ve been doing. Who you’ve been doing.”

I opened the bar cabinet. Poured whiskey.

“He’s welcome to ask me himself,” I said. She always mentioned her father as a threat. She wouldn’t rein me in using him.

“You think he won’t?” she snapped. “You think because you’ve got a little muscle and a few men who’d die for you, you’re untouchable now?”

I sipped. “No.”

“You’re embarrassing me,” she hissed. “Sleeping around with trash every other night. I hear about all the women.”

There had only been one woman in three years—Miyori . But I wouldn't tell her that.

I turned.

“Don't question me. This is a nominal situation,” I said flatly. “You begged for this marriage. You wanted me. You got me. And now you want the husband too? Don't push your luck.”

Her lip curled. “You swore—”

“I swore to show up in public. To protect your reputation. That's it.”

She stepped forward. Her breath shook. Her voice dropped. “And I'm your wife.”

I didn't blink. “You're a title on a document. A name I use when I need a seat at your father's table.”

That's when she snapped.

Her hand came fast, slapping across my face, hard. Nails dragged skin.

I didn't move .

She hit me again. And again.

Fists this time. Weak ones. Full of rage.

“You think you can leave me alone with this body?” she screamed, pounding my chest. “With this illness? This pain? And go fuck some stray you picked up on the street?”

I caught her wrist mid-swing. Looked her in the eye.

“You done?”

She yanked her arm back and crumpled onto the couch, crying the way she always did—loud, messy, manipulative.

I left her there. Didn’t say another word.

It was after one in the morning when I made it back to Miyori ’s place.

The key slid into the lock easy.

Inside was dark. One lamp in the corner, low and warm.

She was asleep on her side, curled up under a thin blanket. Soft breathing. Pillow halfway on the floor.

I didn’t say anything.

Took my coat off. Boots next.

Slid into bed behind her, careful not to wake her.

My hand settled on her waist. She stirred once but didn’t open her eyes. Just leaned back, barely—like her body knew mine was near.

I closed my eyes and exhaled.

This was peace.

The only place I didn't want to burn to the ground.

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Source Creation Date: July 23, 2025, 2:11 am

Priest stood at the expensive gas stove he bought me, completely naked like it wasn't insane, frying bacon. Just bare skin, tattoos, and that heavy dick swinging. I sat on the edge of the counter, legs swinging, pretending to sip my coffee while watching him.

I had questions—so many they crowded my throat. But I hadn't asked. Not one. It had been almost a year since we first met, and not once had I asked him any details about his wife. And he hadn't volunteered.

I kept them locked behind my teeth because the moment I let one slip, he might answer—and I wasn't sure I was ready to hear the truth. But he was practically living with me now. Not that I had the right to complain when he had brought everything in this bitch—including me.

In for a penny, in for a pound of flesh. I thought, slightly bitter about it, because really, I didn't have any right to question him .

I ended up asking anyway.

“You do this for your wife too?” I asked.

His hand paused over the pan. “No.”

“Why not?”

“Because I don't.”

He slid the food onto plates and dropped one in front of me.

We ate in silence. I wasn't hungry, but I forced a few bites.

He finished his in five minutes. Pushed the plate aside, lit a blunt. He'd bought the weed and the Swisher Sweets too.

I couldn't take the quiet anymore.

I laughed once. "You've got a whole wife, Priest. Why are you always here now?"

His jaw clenched. "You tired of me being here?" He leaned back in his chair, glaring at me.

"No, I just want to understand what we're doing here. It's been months since you shed up with the moving truck, and honestly, I thought you'd be gone by now."

His eyes narrowed. For a second, he said nothing. Then he finally spoke.

"She begged for our marriage. I haven't even fucked her in four years," he said. "Not once."

I swallowed but didn't speak.

"So what, she just lets you fuck around on her?"

"She doesn't let me do shit," he said. "But she doesn't have a choice."

I stared down at my plate.

"She's sick," he added. "She has some condition that makes sex painful. I didn't know that when we married, but... it is what it is. We haven't lived like husband and wife ever and haven't fucked since the day after the wedding."

I kept my eyes on my coffee. “That still doesn’t make this right.” A man fucking around on his sick wife didn’t sit right with me and he had made me an accomplice.

“I tell you she practically forced me into this fucking arrangement—and that’s your response?” he barked. “You think I wanted this? You think I stood at that altar out of love?”

He leaned closer, voice hardening. “I did what I had to do. Because some crazy bitch got attached and has a father powerful enough to make even me disappear without a trace. But you’re looking at me like I’m the villain?”

His eyes locked on mine. “You want to judge me, fine. But at least judge me for what I actually did. I’m a murderer. A thief. A liar. I’ve buried bodies, destroyed families. I’m not asking you to see me as a good man—just don’t insult me by acting like she’s the fucking victim.”

“Okay,” I said, throwing up my hands. “I’m sorry. The bitch is a diabolical bitch, sorry.”

I had more questions, but I wasn’t about to ask them and have him crash out on me.

Instead, I got up, walked over, gripped his chin and pressed kisses to his face. His cheek, jaw, lips—until the scowl disappeared, until his fingers curled around my waist and I could feel his breathing steady. Priest mean ass loved affection.

“I’m gonna buy you something,” I whispered against his mouth. “A gift.”

He arched a brow.

“A piece of lingerie. You can see me in. But... I’m buying it with your money,” I added. “You’re welcome.”

He chuckled. “You piss me off, then want to spend my money?”

I smiled and batted my eyes at him. “Yes. Il mio re,” I said, my Italian sounding terrible.

My king—those were the first words he ever taught me in Italian. He liked when I called him that while he was deep inside me.

That got a full-blown smile out of him. “Okay,” he nodded.

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Source Creation Date: July 23, 2025, 2:11 am

"Don't walk away when I'm talking to you."

Priest was glaring at me because he had told me he loved me, and I hadn't said it back.

I leaned against the kitchen counter, arms crossed.

"I'm not fucking walking away. I'm standing right fucking here," I yelled back.

"You're overreacting—yet again."

I sighed long and hard. All we seemed to do was fuck and fight.

He moved like a storm. In three strides, I was caged against the wall, one of his hands on my throat, the other digging into my hip hard enough to bruise. His chest was flush against mine, heat and fury rolling off him in waves.

"I tell you I love you," he snarled, lips brushing mine, "and you say nothing. "

I tilted my chin.

"I didn't ask for your love. You've got a whole wife, remember?"

I was exhausted. Life with Priest was a goddamn rollercoaster on fire. But for the life of me, I couldn't end it. Not that he would even let me.

A muscle in his jaw ticked.

"136 times."

I blinked. "What?"

He leaned closer, his voice a rasp, like something inside him was breaking.

"That's how many times I've been inside you in six months."

His grip tightened.

"Don't pretend that doesn't mean something, Lil Saint."

His forehead touched mine, breath ragged.

"You take me raw."

A thumb brushed my pulse point, feeling it jump.

"You ride me like you're starving for it."

His teeth grazed my earlobe.

"You scream my name like it's the only word you know."

I tried to shove him off, but he slammed me back into the wall, knocking the air from my lungs.

"How many times have you almost said it?" he whispered.

"How many times has it been right there—on the tip of your fucking tongue?"

"Sex isn't love," I hissed, though it had been on the tip of my tongue more than a few times.

I'd been doing everything to talk myself out of loving him—but I already did.

I just wasn't stupid enough to let him know.

He didn't need any more power over me than he already had. He was a dangerous, obsessive man who'd burn the whole world down just to keep me already, those three words would turn him diabolical.

If I gave him my love, he would twist it, weaponize it, bleed it dry.

He already did it with sex.

And deep down, I don't think he'd know how to take being loved. Not really. Not without ruining it.

I clamped my lips together tighter, just in case.

He jerked my face to his, fingers digging into my jaw.

"Liar."

His eyes burned like black fire—the type that was hard to put out.

"When you cum, you hold me like you're afraid I'll disappear. When I put my dick in you, you whimper like it's the only thing that keeps you alive."

I shook my head, shaking his hand loose.

"What exactly do you want from me, Priest?" I asked, voice barely above a whisper. "Besides sex and peace? That's all you said you wanted in the beginning—sex and somewhere quiet you could sleep without one eye open. I've given you that."

I realized this was a question I should have asked when he threw that duffle bag on my bed.

He didn't answer right away.

He stepped back and just stood there in the dim light of my kitchen, his black button-up half undone, sleeves rolled to his elbows, his chest rising and falling like something was caged inside him trying to get out.

Then he smiled, but not a real smile.

"I want you to forget who you were before I touched you. I want your mind, your body, your loyalty, your fucking soul, Miyori. I want to be the last thing you think about when you fall asleep and the first thing you see when you wake up. "

His eyes narrowed.

"It was never about sex."

His hand lifted, knuckles grazing my jaw.

"I could fuck anyone. But you—"

He leaned in, lips brushing the shell of my ear.

"You made the mistake of making me feel something. Now I want everything from you."

I didn't know what to say.

My mouth opened, then closed. No words came.

His eyes didn't leave mine.

He watched me like he was waiting for me to run.

Or to surrender.

Before I could do either, his phone buzzed violently on the counter.

He didn't move.

I reached around him and hit the speaker.

He glared at me but answered.

"What?" he snapped.

"Come home. Now."

The voice was ice, and I recognized it as his father-in-law.

"Why?" Priest asked.

"She's threatening to jump off the balcony. Screaming that she's lonely. If you don't get your ass here tonight..."

A pause. "I'll put a bullet in your fucking head."

The line went dead.

Priest didn't blink.

Then slowly, he stepped back and let me go.

"We're not done," he said.

"Don't pretend we are."

He grabbed his coat from the counter chair, eyes still locked on mine.

"Think about what I said. And think carefully, little saint." he warned before he walked away.

The door slammed behind him.

He didn't come back. Four weeks passed with nothing.

No call. No text. No knock on my door.

Just silence.

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Source Creation Date: July 23, 2025, 2:11 am

I shouldn't have opened the door when he came back a month later. I shouldn't have gone anywhere with him.

Every part of me knew it.

But when Priest showed up at my door, looking and smelling good, and asked me to come with him on vacation—I said yes.

With no apology or explanation from him.

Something in me felt I didn't deserve either because this man had a wife, and I made the choice to fuck with him over my better judgment—from the moment I let him in, from the first time I spread my legs for a married man had no right.

I had silenced my conscience so many times that I felt no shame.

Asking for an apology would mean I thought I deserved one—that I saw myself as some kind of victim in all this. But I didn't. I was complicit. Maybe even guilty. I had already crossed so many lines with him. Why not this one ?

So now, to ask why, or expect better from him... it would feel hypocritical. So I packed and grabbed my passport.

It was my first time on a private jet. He didn't tell me where we were going—he just slid his phone across the seat when we got on the plane and showed me the location.

Bora Bora. The kind of place I'd only seen in background photos on rich girls'

Instagram pages.

I blinked, looking between him and the glowing screen. “You serious?”

His lips curved. “You said you’d never seen clear blue water. So I’m fixing that.”

My heart did a flip. This was the sweetest thing anybody had done for me.

Before I could respond, he reached over and brushed my hair off my shoulder, fingers trailing slow down my arm.

I turned my face, kissed him. Not soft. Not sweet.

I kissed him nasty—deep, sliding my tongue in his mouth, clashing teeth.

This was the kind of kiss that left my mouth wet, lips swollen, and his eyes glazed.

He groaned, aggressively brought his hand up to grip my neck, holding me in place.

I pulled away before he could get too worked up, licked my lips, and reached for the silk eye mask on the seat beside me.

“I’m taking a nap,” I said, sliding it over my eyes. “Wake me up when we land.”

He chuckled low but didn’t argue. His hand stayed on my thigh the entire flight.

We landed in the dark and were driven straight to a villa that floated over glowing turquoise water. The place smelled like hibiscus and money. White linen everywhere. A soaking tub big enough to fit five people. Infinity pool. Champagne chilling on arrival.

“I’m not mad at you anymore,” I told him as we stepped onto the deck.

“You were mad at me?”

“I still kind of am.”

“Why?” he asked, like he didn’t know. I felt myself about to catch an attitude—he was trying to prod some type of emotion out of me.

All I said was, “You disappeared.”

He nodded. “And I came back.”

“True. So I’m leaving it in the past.”

“Good.” He kissed my neck.

I let it end there, because my stupid heart still did that flip thing whenever he touched me.

And he touched me constantly.

In the pool. In the bed. Against the balcony railing while the sun came up behind us. He was everywhere—rough when I needed it, slow when I didn’t expect it. Possessive. Hungry. Silent unless I asked something first.

He held me close when he thought I was asleep. Kissed my shoulder like I was made of breakable things. And when he whispered mine against the back of my neck, I started to believe it.

On the fourth day we ate dinner in an expensive restaurant under string lights, drank

wine with names I couldn't pronounce. He fed me lobster with his fingers like we were starring in some luxury ad.

He actually laughed here. Like... belly-laughed. Teased me when I fell getting off a paddleboard. Mocked my fear of jellyfish. Rolled his eyes when I couldn't open the fancy sunscreen he insisted I wear. When I told him I was Black, he reminded me Bob Marley died of skin cancer.

"I like this ponytail," he said, tugging gently at the ends. "The way you screamed about me getting your hair wet had me thinking I was gonna have to cough up a few thousand to get it redone."

I rolled my eyes, but I didn't pull away. Earlier that day, I'd had a fresh silk press before he decided we needed to jump in the deep end of the pool—together. No warning. Just hands around my waist and splash.

Luckily, my hair was bra-strap length, and the weight of it helped. A little gel brought out the curls in my 4C texture, so it ended up looking cute.

"I hate you," I said playfully, nudging Priest's chest with the back of my hand.

We were standing near the fire pit on the beach. A few other couples lingered nearby—laughing, sipping cocktails, not paying us much attention. The ocean was dark and glittering behind us. Music played low from hidden speakers.

Priest's expression changed instantly.

He grabbed my wrist, his nails biting into my skin.

"What the fuck did you just say?" he snapped, loud enough that heads turned.

My stomach dropped.

I immediately knew the mistake I'd made. "I was joking," I hissed, trying to pull my hand back. "Priest—let go."

His grip didn't loosen. "You don't say that to me. Ever. I don't give a fuck if you're smiling when you say it."

People were definitely watching now.

"Priest," I said through clenched teeth. "Don't embarrass me."

His jaw flexed. "Then don't play stupid games."

"Let. Me. Go." I yanked my arm, and he finally released it, his breathing heavy, like a bull .

I stepped back, rage burning under my skin, but I kept my voice low. "This shit is no longer cute, Priest. It's one thing to do this shit in private, but a whole other to do it in front of a bunch of people."

He didn't say anything. His face just got harder.

Fuck him. He could be mad.

I turned on my heel and walked off barefoot through the sand, heat rising in my face from the embarrassment. From the way my chest ached even though I knew better.

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Source Creation Date: July 23, 2025, 2:11 am

I was on the balcony, the cool night air kissing my skin, when Priest found me a couple hours after the scene on the beach. I wasn't even thinking about what happened. I just needed a moment of peace.

The sky cracked open as soon as he stepped out. Rain started falling fast, soaking through my nightshirt, plastering it to my body. I didn't move. I just looked at him.

He came up behind me. "Fuck, Miyori , I'm sorry."

He ran his hands over my waist, up my ribs, gripping my hips like he couldn't believe I was still standing there. "I just get so fucking mad at the thought of losing you. I can't—fuck—I can't take it."

It was the first time he'd ever apologized. For anything.

And like a sick joke, my pussy throbbed .

I didn't say a word, just turned and looked up at him. His eyes were full of it—hunger, guilt, and something that looked too close to love.

The fear was sudden.

It wasn't the kind that makes you scream—but the kind that crawls slow up your spine and whispers ugly truths in your ear.

Fucking with him, I was going to end up locked in some room. Driven crazy. Or dead.

That thought came so clear it chilled me harder than the rain.

And still... I didn't want to let go.

Because then what?

Go back to quiet nights and empty beds? Go back to being broke? I had already let him take pieces of me I can't get back. So like he said, in for a penny, in for a pound of flesh.

He grabbed me suddenly, lifting me off my feet like I weighed nothing, and carried me toward the edge of the balcony where the rain came down hardest. He set me down on the balcony table, instantly we were soaking wet from the rain. He peeled my nightshirt off over my head.

My nipples were already hard from the cold water, and the way he stared at me, like I was his last meal, made my thighs clench.

He dragged his fingers across the stretch marks on my hips, my belly, like he was trying to memorize the feeling of my flesh.

Then he kissed me—messy, open-mouthed, tongue deep, like he was trying to fuck the apology into me first.

He cupped my breasts, thumbs circling my nipples until I moaned. I could feel his dick, rock hard, pressing against me through his pants.

“Please,” I breathed, too turned on to play tough. “Priest... I need you inside me.”

He didn't waste time. Dropped his pants. Took my thighs in his hands and pulled me to the edge, lifting one leg over his hip. He slid in with one deep, hard thrust that

made me cry out.

“Shit,” he groaned, biting down on my shoulder. “You’re so fucking tight.”

I clenched around him, hips rocking, chasing the friction I needed. Rain poured over us. The cold air mixed with the heat between our bodies made every thrust feel dirtier, wetter. Better.

He fucked me like he was punishing himself. Like he hated how good I felt.

“Every time I’m in you,” he grunted, slamming into me harder, “I forget everything.”

I moaned, fingers digging into his soaked shirt, holding on for dear life.

“You’re mine,” he panted. “Say it.”

“Yours,” I gasped. “Yours. ”

My legs trembled as the orgasm built in me, sharp and hot, taking over my whole body.

“Priest—fuck—I’m gonna cum.”

“Do it,” he growled. “Cream on my dick. Let me feel it.”

I broke apart around him, screaming his name like it was ripped from my chest. My legs locked around him and I shook. He hissed, shoved in deeper, and came with a guttural groan, nutting inside me, hips jerking.

We stayed like that—drenched, breathless, holding each other in the storm.

After a minute, he slowly pulled out, still hard. He tucked himself back into his pants and lifted me again, carrying me inside like I was breakable.

He sat me on the counter, chest rising fast, rain dripping from his hair.

“I love you,” he said, pressing his forehead to mine. “I’ve loved you since the second you opened that fucking door.”

I didn’t say it back.

But I didn’t pull away, either.

His hand came up, gripping my jaw, holding me so that I couldn’t look away.

“You don’t say it back,” he murmured, “and I won’t press it. I won’t ask again.”

His thumb traced my bottom lip, and I could feel his restraint vibrating under his skin like a bomb counting down.

“But because I love you. I can’t fucking breathe without you—just know this…”

He leaned in until his mouth brushed mine, he whispered like his words were secret he wasn’t supposed to tell me.

“If I ever feel you slipping from me again… neither one of us will be breathing.”

He threatened me.

Then he kissed me softly.

Source Creation Date: July 23, 2025, 2:11 am

Miyori lay on her side after a shower to wash away the rain, facing away from me, her breath soft and even. But I knew she wasn't asleep. I could tell by the way her shoulders were tight.

I reached out, slid my arm around her waist, and pulled her closer. She didn't resist, but she didn't relax either.

"I hate when you shut down like this," I murmured against the back of her neck.

She didn't answer right away. Just stared out into the dark room. Then, finally, she said, "I can't keep doing this."

My chest clenched. "Doing what?"

"This," she said, turning to face me now. She looked tired. "You being sweet one minute, then flipping the fuck out the next. I never know which version of you I'm going to get."

I tried to speak, but she kept going. "I'm starting to feel like I'm in survival mode. And I don't want to feel like that constantly."

Her words hit harder than any bullet ever could.

I sat up a little, ran my hand over my face. "I know. I know I'm not easy, Miyori. But I'm trying. I am." I grabbed her hand, held it against my chest so she could feel the truth pounding behind my ribs. "I'll change. For you, I will."

She searched my face like she wanted to believe me but didn't know if she could.

So I told her my truth.

"I'm like this because my mother cheated on my father," I said.

"All the time. I didn't understand what it meant when I was little, but I knew something was off.

He worshipped her, but she... she walked around like she didn't give a fuck.

Took what she needed from him. Laughed in his face when he cried.

Made him small. My father was a dangerous man, but for her, he was sniveling. "

Miyori's expression softened a little.

"When I was fifteen, she disappeared. Didn't leave a note. Didn't say goodbye. Just gone. My pops told me she ran off with some guy."

I swallowed hard, fingers tightening on hers.

"I believed him up until the day he died. He had throat cancer. Could barely talk by the end. But right before he went... he told me the truth. "

Miyori sat up slowly, eyes locked on mine.

"He killed her," I said. My voice didn't shake, but something inside me did. "He found out she was trying to take me and leave him for good. Said he couldn't take it. Couldn't stand being abandoned. So he strangled her in the kitchen. Buried her in the woods behind the house."

Miyori covered her mouth.

“I remember seeing the mound of dirt days later, and I had thought the dog had buried something.” I laughed, but it came out hollow. “I never told anybody. But I couldn’t keep it in. Not from you.”

“You didn’t have to tell me that,” she whispered. Her eyes were glassy now. “Priest, that’s... that’s heavy.”

“I had to.” I touched her face, traced her cheekbone with my thumb. “Because I see it in your eyes. You’re getting fed up. And I don’t blame you. But I need you to know why I am the way I am.”

She didn’t pull away. She didn’t say anything at all.

“I didn’t learn love like normal people,” I said. “I learned that if you don’t hold on tight enough, they’ll leave. Or worse, make you feel like nothing. That’s why I love you like I do.”

“That’s not love, Priest,” she said quietly.

“I know. But it’s what I came from.” I leaned in, pressing my forehead to hers. “I’m scared, Miyori. I don’t know how to be soft, but I want to learn. I want to be better for you. Because I can’t fucking lose you. I’ll lose my mind.”

She finally exhaled, long and shaky. “I don’t want to lose you either,” she said, and that’s all I needed to hear.

We lay like that, tangled together, silently.

Me smiling into the dark.

Mostly everything I had said to her about my parents was a lie. But she had believed me.

I was me because I was born this way. But Miyori needed a reason for why I was the way I am. Something she could hold onto to make me feel more human. She needed a story tragic enough to see no evil. To justify the possessiveness. The threats.

My parents had been loving to each other. Sometimes they told me they didn't understand how I was so different from them. Both of them were dead. They died in an airplane crash on the way to Italy when I was fifteen. But there was nobody to tell her different.

And I never would, because she needed to believe I learned this behavior, not that it was just who I was .

So I gave her a reason to pity me. A dead mother. A sob story. A father's final confession.

And just like I knew she would, she swallowed it.

All of it would endear her to me because she thought I was bleeding inside, and she was the type of woman who needed to save someone—like she did with her sister. She was a fixer.

Now she would think that she was the cure for what ailed me.

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Day Five

We split up mid-morning. I wanted to shop. He wanted to make a few calls. No big deal. I kissed him goodbye, told him to meet me for lunch, and headed into town.

The little boutiques were cute—local art, handwoven baskets, overpriced linen. I picked up a coral necklace for Maya and was halfway to the counter when I saw her.

Lilith.

In a white dress. Big sunglasses. Walking slow through the open-air market like she owned the damn sky.

Two men flanked her—one behind, one to the side.

Security. Right beside her was Priest bighead ass.

Knowing he had a wife and seeing him with his wife were two things all together. They looked too happy for me.

I stood frozen behind a rack of sarongs.

They didn't see me .

My stomach was on the ground

This wasn't some random coincidence.

He brought her too.

I felt tears starting to wet my eyes but I wasn't going to cry.

I put the necklace down. Left the store without buying a thing. Walked all the way back to the villa barefoot, because my sandals started to feel like too much.

When I got inside, Priest was sitting on the deck shirtless, reading something on his phone like nothing was wrong.

"You brought her?" I asked.

He didn't even look up. "What are you talking about?"

"Don't play dumb, Priest. I saw you two."

Now he looked at me.

"She's staying at a different resort."

My chest burned. "So you're just—what? Splitting time? Fuck me in the morning and walk her around at night?"

"I didn't plan for her to be here."

"Bullshit."

"She followed me down with her guards. I didn't invite her."

I stepped back, shook my head. "You don't even get how insane this is. You brought me here after disappearing for a month, as some half asses apology and your wife is a

boat ride away?”

“She doesn’t matter.”

“She does when you’re married to her. And it really does matter to her. She followed you to a whole fucking different country.”

His face didn’t change. He was calm. Like I was making a big deal out of nothing. That irked me so bad I decide right then, fuck him.

“I came here with you,” he said flatly. “I’ve been in your bed. I’m staying with you? You think if she matter- ”

I cut him off “I think you are a liar and a manipulator.”

His jaw tensed.

I grabbed my things. Tossed everything into the open suitcase.

He didn’t stop me. That’s how I knew he was lying, If he didn’t have to stay there with her, he would be following me. And now that I knew he didn’t want me there to maybe crash out and fuck up whatever lie he told her.

He didn’t say a word. Not until I was halfway to the door .

“You love me, I’ll see you back at home. ” he said, low.

I turned. “I don’t love you nearly enough to do this anymore.”

Then I walked out.

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Source Creation Date: July 23, 2025, 2:11 am

I knew something was off the moment I entered my kitchen. There was a feminine smell that wasn't mine.

I set my grocery bag on the counter and froze when I heard a sound.

I assumed it was Priest. sixteen days had passed since I'd flown back by myself and I hadn't heard from him.

But when I went back into the living room, sitting on the edge of my couch like she'd been waiting all afternoon was Lilith.

Her legs crossed, hands folded, wearing cream slacks and a top that probably cost more than my rent.

Her sunglasses rested on the table, but she hadn't taken off her jacket. Like she didn't plan to stay long.

I wondered where the fuck she had been when I came in. I looked back toward my bedroom.

Her smile was thin.

I didn't move. "You broke into my house?"

"I walked in. I took Priest's key," she said, adjusting a gold ring on her finger. "Let's not exaggerate."

I leaned against the wall.

“What do you want?”

She looked around slowly, nose wrinkling as she scanned my place like it personally offended her.

“So this is it. The great escape. I expected something more... He brought me a mansion and you this.” She was trying to be insulting and doing a good job at it.

“You’re not welcome here. Anything you have to say, you should say to your husband. I haven’t talked to him in weeks.”

She stood, walked to the shelf by my TV, ran her fingers along the edge of a picture frame.

“I know you’ve been fucking my husband.”

I didn’t flinch.

She kept going. “I know where your sister is, too.”

My chest tightened. I didn’t move. Didn’t breathe.

“She’s still in that sweet little rehab facility in Ocala, isn’t she? The one with the garden out back? The one my husband paid for.”

She turned and looked me dead in the face.

“I also know everyone your sister owes money to. I’ve got names. And numbers.”

“What does this information mean?” My heart was beating a mile a minute. I knew exactly what it meant—but I wanted her to confirm it.

We stared at each other.

“I’m not with Priest anymore,” I said. “We’re done. Threatening me is pointless. I don’t want him.”

She tilted her head. “But he wants you.”

“It was only sex. It’s over. You read too much into our relationship.” I wanted her to understand that I was done.

“Sebastian misses you, you know.”

I rolled my eyes. “That’s not my problem.”

“It is now.” She turned. “You’re going to go back to him.”

I laughed, short and dry. “I don’t like your brother. You don’t even like your brother.” Priest had told me that part.

“I don’t,” she said. “He’s selfish. Weak. Emotional.”

“So why in the hell would I be with him again?”

“Because he wants you. And Priest won’t—once he finds out you’re together, he might even kill the both of you.”

I stared at her, disgust curling in my gut.

“Why not just let me leave your husband alone, and both of you leave me alone to deal with your marriage falling apart?”

Lilith stepped closer.

“I’d rather not deal with the embarrassment of some nurse fucking her way into our world like she belongs there.”

There it was. She saw me as beneath them.

It wasn't a scream. Not a slap. But it kind of hurt.

She blinked slowly.

“I know Priest probably told you I forced him to marry me, that he doesn’t love me. But he doesn’t need to. He’s mine either way.”

She brushed past me, walked into the hallway like she’d lived there for years.

I followed her. She stopped at my bedroom door.

“I wonder how many times he’s touched you in that bed. Or if he took you against the wall like he used to do with me—before the pain got too bad.”

I knew she was lying. Priest didn't lie on his dick. He said he didn't fuck her. I believed it.

My mouth got the better of me.

“He claimed it was 136 times the last time he mentioned a number, so maybe add another 40 to that.”

Her hand connected with my cheek.

My head snapped to the side, her hand print on my face stinging, the sound ringing in my ears louder than it should've.

I staggered back a step, more from shock than the from impact.

Heat rushed to my face. My hand shot up, fingers curling into a fist before I even realized what I was doing. I stopped myself short of hitting her.

She didn't move. She just looked at me—calm, unbothered,

She knew If I hit her back, I'd be the one who ended up hurt. Or dead. And I knew it too. Her bodyguard were probably waiting for her close by.

I lowered my arm. Forced my jaw to unclench. Let the anger sit in my throat like a swallowed blade.

Her smile was slow but sharp.

“Good decision,” she murmured. “You're smarter than you look.”

She turned her back on me again, like I was no threat at all, and walked casually to the living room. Picked up her sunglasses. Slipped them on.

“Call Sebastian,” she said, voice low but firm. “Tell him you're ready to try again. Say you've thought about it and you miss him. Make it convincing.”

I didn't move.

She glanced over her shoulder, the glint of her ring catching the light.

“Or I start calling some of those people your sister owes money to. And don’t call Priest, he can’t save you.”

My hands were shaking so bad when she closed my front door.

Chapter Eighteen-Priest

Lilith sat across from me at the long table, chin lifted like a porcelain doll's. Her smile was soft but her eyes were calculating.

Her father held court at the head of the table, droning on about Miami crews trying to move in on the docks back in the eighties. A story we'd all heard before—hell, half the men at the table had helped bury the bodies.

Lilith fake-laughed at every dry punchline.

Then her hand slid toward mine—twice.

I didn't take it. I hated her. Hated the way she existed in my space like she owned the air I breathed.

"Priest," she said, sweet as poisoned sugar, "tell them about the property we're looking at in Naples. "

"We're not."

She laughed like I'd told a joke. "He's always so modest. He's been working nonstop to give me the beach house I want."

The table chuckled. I didn't.

Gabriele Aiello cut me a look but stayed silent. He'd been cold ever since Lilith's last

breakdown. I didn't know if he was waiting for an apology or a war.

I'd rather give him a war than apologize.

Lilith leaned toward me, her hand brushing my arm like she owned my skin. "You look tired."

"I am." I kept my voice flat.

"You should sleep in tomorrow." Her thumb stroked my skin. "You've earned it."

I shoved my chair back. I was done.

"I've got somewhere to be."

"Priest—" she warned.

I ignored her.

I'd been staying away from Miyori since she left me in Bora Bora—because Lilith had gone to see her. The vacation to Bora Bora had been Lilith's idea. I thought it would appease her after she found out about Miyori . It hadn't.

That's why I was keeping my distance again. But fuck, I missed her. Missed the peace. Her smell. Missed the way she didn't play fucking games. The way her body felt under mine—real, warm, alive.

I turned to leave.

Her fathers voice sliced through the room. "Priest."

I paused. Didn't turn.

“Don't make me clean up a mess that shouldn't exist.”

I kept walking.

The night air hit me like a slap.

I made it three steps before I heard her—the click of her heels, fast and desperate.

“Priest.”

I didn't stop.

She darted in front of me, chest heaving. “You won't see her again,” she hissed. “Do you hear me?”

I said nothing.

Her breath came in sharp little gasps. Then—her eyes went wild. Wet.

“You think you can just walk away from me?”

I moved to step around her.

She pulled the knife.

Slim. Silver. Sharp.

Pressed it to her own throat .

I froze.

“I’ll do it,” she whispered, voice cracking.

“You don’t think I will, but I will.” The blade bit into her neck, leaving a thin red line.

“I told my father—if I die, by my hand or yours—he has to skin her alive. He’ll start with her pretty face, take his time on her fat body. Then he’ll bury that bitch breathing.”

A wild laugh bubbled out of her throat. “And he’ll make you watch. You’ll have to live with it for the rest of your life.”

Her hand shook. Mascara streaked down her cheeks in black rivers, but her smile was wide. Manic. She was as crazy as her mother—my mother’s best friend—who slit her wrists when Lilith was thirteen.

There was something bad in their bloodline.

Something broken that could only be fixed by death.

Sebastian had inherited it too. He killed women, for fun.

He’d have them dress in his mother’s clothes first. Miyori was different than his type.

It made even me cringe to think of why he wanted her. He talked about her all the time.

“I love you,” she said, tilting her head. “Everything I did—I did for you. Even the bad things. Especially the bad things.”

I knew exactly what she meant. She'd killed women before—because of me.

I didn't speak. Didn't blink.

One wrong word, and she'd slice her own throat open right in front of me. And as much as I wanted her dead—as much as I'd dreamed of it—I couldn't let her. Not like this. A part of me still wanted to be the one to kill her. To watch the light leave her eyes.

So I stepped forward.

Her breath hitched. The knife trembled.

I wrapped my fingers around hers, prying the blade free.

She let it go like she'd forgotten she was holding it. Her hand fell limp.

Then she laughed—loud, shrill, unhinged—throwing her head back so far I heard her neck crack.

“I knew you still cared!”

Her fingers latched onto my sleeve, nails biting into the fabric. She dragged me toward the house, humming under her breath.

“Come on, darling,” she murmured, smearing the blood from her neck across my cheek. “Let's go inside.”

Her voice dropped low, sweet and poisonous.

“You can apologize to Daddy so he won't be mad.”

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Source Creation Date: July 23, 2025, 2:11 am

I didn't go looking for them. I had been avoiding the crazy ass sister and brother combo all night.

I just wanted silence.

The house stank of expensive perfume and old men's lies. Dinner guests clustered like vultures, their laughter thick and false. I couldn't stomach the fake smiles, the empty compliments. What I couldn't stand was being away from Miyori .

The floorboard creaked under my suede shoes as I passed Lilith's door. The sound of her and her brother's voices slithered through the crack in her bedroom door.

I should've kept walking.

I didn't.

"I went to the address you gave me. "

Sebastian sounded like he was having a child's tantrum, a brat denied his toy.

Lilith answered coldly, "And?"

"She's not there. She hasn't been back since that night you went there."

There was a pause.

Then—a slam. Glass shattered.

“She’s gone, Lilith.” His voice sounded high and petulant. “You told me she’d be there.”

“I didn’t promise you that,” she said, calm. “I said where. If you were faster—”

"I WANT HER."

The words ripped out of Sebastian. He was spoiled, greedy, rotten.

A dull ache started behind my eyes.

“You said I could have her,” he whined. Like he was talking about an inanimate object and not a person. I was intelligent enough to understand the irony. But he wasn’t me. He didn’t deserve Miyori .

"Stop." Lilith's voice froze over. "You sound like a child. It's pathetic."

I leaned against the wall, my hands curling into fists so tight my knuckles cracked.

My heart pounded.

"Priest's not yours anymore, so you don't want me to have her." Sebastian's voice dripped poison. "He's still thinking about her. I see it. I hear it. She's in his fucking blood." A pause. "And if I don't get her, he will. Then poor, crazy Lilith will be all alone."

Silence.

Then—SMACK. Flesh on flesh.

"Don't hit me! It's the truth!" Sebastian growled, sounding unhinged. "I’m going to

find her... I'll bring her back." His voice dropped. "I'll keep her forever this time."

Lilith didn't argue.

I walked away before I gave in to the urge to peel the skin from their bones with my bare hands.

I needed to find Miyori .

Before he did.

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Source Creation Date: July 23, 2025, 2:11 am

For two weeks, they'd been calling me nonstop.

Sebastian. Priest. Lilith.

I'd been getting voicemails, texts, calls from blocked numbers. I ignored them all. Changed my number twice—and they still managed to get it.

They were driving me out of my fucking mind.

I wasn't at my place anymore. Everything Priest had given me was back at the condo. Even the 2024 BMW.

I'd been staying with my friend Tasha—sleeping on her pull-out couch, keeping my head down. I didn't go out. I didn't answer the door.

There was no way Lilith was going to force me to deal with her brother. I'd rather do anything else.

Fuck the whole lot of them.

My sister would be out of rehab in two weeks .

I had nearly sixty thousand dollars that Priest had transferred to my account.

And I was seriously considering leaving the state. Taking my sister and disappearing into New York.

It was Friday. I took the bus to the grocery store. Tasha was at work.

By the time I got back to her place, the hallway light outside the apartment was out. I didn't think anything of it.

I should have.

I unlocked the door.

I didn't even get a chance to drop the bags—

Before someone grabbed my arm and shoved me inside, slamming the door behind us.

The takeout hit the floor.

I stumbled backward, hands out.

“Sebastian, what the hell—”

“You disappeared,” he snapped, eyes wild, sweat beading on his forehead. “I called you. I fucking called you.”

“Get out. Right now.”

How the hell had he found out where I was?

His hand flew through the air—fast.

The side of my face exploded in heat .

I froze, shocked. “You fucking slapped me,” I said, more to myself than to him.

Before I could get my bearings, his other hand was around my throat.

“I loved you,” he hissed, dragging me backward toward the wall.

He was really choking me—not like Priest did, where I never actually feared for my life.

I could barely breathe. I forced breaths through my nose. My heart felt like it was hiccupping.

I didn’t want to die.

“I fucking loved you, and you threw me away for him? I didn’t even mean what you heard.

I was just trying to keep him away from you.

I saw how he looked at you the moment we entered the house that night.

I had to say those things so he wouldn’t know how important you were to me. He had already taken my sister.”

He shook me.

“And you fell for him.”

Spittle flew from his mouth as he screamed.

The urge to wipe it from my face was as strong as the urge to run.

I scratched at his arms, kicked at his shins, tried to scream—but it came out choked .

I twisted free somehow and bolted down the hallway, slamming the bathroom door shut just in time.

Pure adrenaline kept me upright.

I locked it with shaking hands and backed up.

He was beating on the door, fists thudding like war drums.

“You think he’s gonna save you?” he screamed. “He used you! He’ll never leave my sister!”

I scrambled, pulling my phone from my pocket and dialing the one number I swore I wouldn’t ever again.

Priest answered on the first ring.

“Miyori ?”

“He’s here,” I whispered. “Sebastian. He hit me. He’s trying to fucking kill me. He’s outside the door—he’s not leaving—please—”

I didn’t even finish the sentence.

“Leave this phone on, I’m tracking you. I’m coming,” Priest said. His voice was dead calm. “Ten minutes. Don’t open that door.”

The line went dead.

I curled up on the tile floor. The taste of blood mixed with the smell of Sebastian's cologne turned my stomach sour. My cheek was throbbing, heart pounding like it wanted out of my chest .

Sebastian was still screaming.

Calling me names.

Yelling about Priest.

Shouting that he was the one who deserved me.

“You think he's special?” he roared.

“He took you because I wanted you! I wasn't even going to kill you like the rest. I was going to keep you.”

I didn't move.

What the fuck did he mean he wasn't going to kill me like the rest?

The blood in my veins turned cold.

“You think he's your savior?” he barked. “He doesn't deserve you. I do! I've always been the one—I saw you first!”

But the truth was, he hadn't.

I wanted to scream it back at him. Tell him I met Priest first—as if that would matter.

But my throat was too tight. My voice wouldn't come.

“My sister said I could have you,” he growled. “She gives me anything I want. Now come the fuck out here!”

He banged harder .

Ten minutes passed—ten agonizing minutes of him screaming, slamming fists, rattling the knob.

Then suddenly—

Silence.

And then—

Boom.

The front door slammed open.

There was a struggle.

A crash.

Furniture breaking.

Then—

There was a muffled pew. pew.

Gunfire.

I gasped.

Then I heard Priest.

“Miyori ,” his voice called. “Come out. It’s safe now.”

I flew from the bathroom, straight into his arms.

Sebastian lay dead in the center of the floor, two bullet holes in his head. The smell of gunpowder lingered.

Priest covered my eyes.

“Don’t look,” he said gently.

Then scooped me into his arms like I weighed nothing.

We were leaving just as Tasha pulled into the driveway.

Priest didn’t slow.

Didn’t explain.

He barked at her, “Don’t come inside. Don’t come back until Miyori calls you.”

She froze, eyes wide.

He shoved me into his SUV, got in the driver’s side, and pulled out his phone.

“Clean it up at the address I sent you,” he said to whoever answered. “Everything. Now.”

I was gasping, heart galloping out of rhythm.

My vision tunneled.

The world tilted violently, Priest's face swimming in and out of focus as darkness crept in from the edges like spilled ink.

Then darkness swallowed me whole.

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Source Creation Date: July 23, 2025, 2:11 am

She woke up screaming.

It tore through the quiet like a blade. It was filled with grief that didn't have a place to go.

She bolted upright in the bed, eyes wide, chest heaving. Naked. She hadn't even woken up when I'd bathed her.

I sat in the corner, watching her. Smoke from my cigarette drifted toward the cracked window, curling like ghost fingers. I hadn't said a word in over an hour. Just sat there. Thinking. Regretting. Failing.

"I want you to kill her too. She sent him," she said quietly, voice frayed like old rope.

I didn't respond right away. I was trying to find a way to explain why Lilith would remain alive.

"Lilith isn't Sebastian. Her father actually gives a damn about her. Killing her would start something neither of us can walk away from. "

She laughed, bitter and hollow. "You think I care?"

I didn't.

"That bitch sent her brother for me. And it sounded like death would've been a mercy compared to what he had planned for me."

Her eyes burned. Her body was shaking. There were purple marks on her throat and cheek, and I hated that I hadn't gotten there sooner.

"You knew she was crazy when I met you," she said. "You knew, and you still brought me into this."

"I thought I could fuck you and forget you. Thought it would be just one night. Now I taste you in everything. You haunt the nightmares I can't outrun. Tell me how to cut you out of my fucking veins."

I dragged a hand down my face. "Please... tell me." My voice actually cracked. That had never happened before.

"Do you know how scared I was when you called me?" My voice was lower now.

"I don't scare easy. I've seen shit that would stop most men cold.

But the second you said his name, I..." I swallowed hard.

"I've never moved so fast in my life. I thought I'd find you dead.

I almost fucking cried. Tell me how to get rid of these emotions you've cursed me with.

I've lived most of my life barely feeling anything.

Not real fear. Not love. Not grief. Nothing.

You think I would do this to myself if I had a choice? Tell me how to stop it."

She was on her feet before I could finish. She moved like someone who hadn't slept

in days—like her bones were vibrating beneath her skin. She stopped right in front of me.

“Don’t cry for me,” she spat. “Not if you’re too scared to kill for me.”

“If you can’t get rid of her, you’re useless to me.”

That stung more than I let on. But maybe she was right. Maybe I was only good at causing damage.

“I can protect you,” I said, my jaw tight. “But I can’t—”

I really couldn’t.

If I killed Lilith, I’d have to kill her father too. And you didn’t kill men like Gabriele Aiello and just walk away.

Not even me—with all the power I wielded.

I would be signing my own death sentence.

And worse... I’d be signing hers too.

Her hand slapped over my mouth.

“Shut the fuck up,” she hissed.

Her soft fingers wrapped around my wrist. I let her pull me up and drag me toward the bed. She pushed me down and climbed on top, her thighs already slick as she yanked my boxers down.

Then she sank down on me—hard. Impaling herself on me dick.

No tease. No buildup.

Just heat. Pressure. And a grip so tight, and wet, that my eyes rolled back into my head.

“Fuck,” I growled behind clenched teeth.

She rode me like she wanted to hurt me. Up and down. Over and over. Hard.

The sound of our skin slapping and ragged breathing filled the room. Her nails scraped down my chest, leaving red marks in their wake. Her hair stuck to her sweaty face, eyes wild—caught somewhere between pleasure and rage.

She bounced fast, choking on her own moans.

“Money and dick. That’s the only thing you’re good for,” she snapped, riding me harder. “Not saving me. Not protecting shit.”

I grabbed her hips to slow her down—she slapped my hands away.

“Don’t fucking touch me.”

Her pussy suctioned and clenched around me so tight it felt like punishment.

I curled my fingers into the sheets. Let her use me.

Her breasts bounced. Her thighs quaked. I could feel myself about to lose it.

But then I saw something shift in her eyes—until they were blank and unreadable.

My heart pounded faster. My mind raced with fear and arousal. I could feel her pulling away mentally even though I could tell she was close to cumming. She threw her head back, her mouth open in a silent scream.

Her pussy started getting wetter and wetter. My dick was thumping inside of her.

She reached for my gun on the nightstand.

My reaction time was too slow. I barely blinked once before the cold steel smashed down onto the side of my skull.

Once.

Then again.

The last thing I saw and felt was her—still grinding on top of me—as my world turned black.

Source Creation Date: July 23, 2025, 2:11 am

I woke up to pain.

It bloomed in my chest and spread, I sat up, instinctively reaching for my gun—but it was gone. I blinked through the haze clouding my vision, struggling to orient myself. My ribs screamed with every breath I took.

My vision adjusted.

Standing in front of me, holding a baseball bat like it was an extension of his arm, was Lilith's father. The short fat fucker was looking at me with murder in his eyes. He was surrounded by his guards. Five of them.

For a second, I couldn't believe he was there. No one was supposed to know about this place. This safe house was untraceable. No phones, no records. And yet here he was.

Panic crept in slow and steady. Where was Miyori ?

He didn't wait for me to speak.

"You killed my son," he said flatly. "And from the looks of it—for no damn reason. Looks like that bitch you saved clocked you in the head and ran." Flashes of Miyori bringing the gun down on my head played in the back of my mind.

He turned slightly, gesturing to one of the men behind him. "Get him on his knees."

Two of the men grabbed me. I didn't bother fighting. I was still dizzy, and my ribs

were on fire. The next blow from the bat landed hard on my back, knocking the breath from my lungs.

Gabriele Aiello stepped in closer, crouching just enough to meet my eyes.

“If my son wasn’t such a useless little shit, you would have woken up dead,” he muttered. “I’m not going to kill you for getting rid of him, but I’m going to make you wish you were dead.”

He stood again and struck me across the back again, and again in the side. Each hit sent shockwaves of pain through me. I clenched my jaw, refused to cry out.

“And after I’m done,” he continued, “you’ll go back to my daughter like none of this happened. You’ll forget that other bitch ever existed.”

My knees buckled, but I stayed upright— barely.

He raised the bat again, but before it came down, a scream pierced the air.

“Stop!”

I lifted my head enough to see Lillith run in, her hair wild, face pale. She threw herself between me and her father, wrapping her arms around me protectively.

“Please,” she whispered, looking up at her father with wide, frantic eyes. “He’s mine. I’ll take care of him. Even if he chose her. I don’t want him dead. He’s mine.”

Gabriele stared at her for a long, silent moment. Then he muttered something under his breath I couldn’t catch, dropped the bat with a thud, and walked away without another word. His men following behind him.

Lilith stayed where she was, clinging to me like I hadn't killed her brother

"I won't let you go, I won't let you die," she said softly, her voice trembling. "Even if you don't want me. Even if you love her."

Her fingers trembled against my skin, but I couldn't feel them.

All I could think about was Miyori —and whether she was safe and how to use Lillith's obsession with me to get free.

Source Creation Date: July 23, 2025, 2:11 am

New York felt nothing like Florida.

The winter in New York had me wanting to go back to Florida, danger be damned.

It was so cold here, it didn't just touch you—it slipped into your bones, settled under your skin.

The plus side was that no one looked too long, too hard to recognize you.

New York was a good place for hiding, terrible for everything else. I felt safe.

I had cut my hair short. I wore glasses instead of contacts. The acrylics were gone. I was living under my Mother's maiden name now instead of my fathers, hoping I could stay hidden.

I stopped in front of the high-rise I lived in.

"Ms. Hamilton," Paul, the doorman—a white Italian dude, tall and lithe, in his forties—greeted me with a nod as I stepped into the building's lobby.

"Saw another one of your paintings online. That winged one. I knew it was yours immediately." He made a vague wing-like motion with his hands.

"Damn thing gave me chills." Paul only knew about my painting because he often helped me carry them out after I'd sold them.

I gave him a tight smile. "Thanks."

That painting was the first I'd done in years.

After Priest... after everything, the nightmares wouldn't let me sleep.

I kept seeing a devil with wings torn to shreds, his eyes hollow and angry when I closed my eyes.

I painted it, and it went away. I posted it anonymously.

Just to see what others thought about it.

Someone offered me five thousand dollars for it.

Then they bought the next one.

And the one after that.

Now my inbox was flooded with commissions. I had the money Priest gave me—I never touched it.

I hadn't meant to become an artist. I'd just liked to paint when I was younger. I'd only meant to vent quietly.

I waited for the elevator because there was no way I was walking up fifteen flights of stairs.

The elevator smelled like someone's expensive perfume and old regrets. I leaned against the mirrored wall, catching my reflection. I looked as weary as I felt.

When I opened the door to my apartment, the smell of vanilla, nutmeg, and sugar hit me.

“Maya?” I called softly, slipping my boots off at the door.

“In the kitchen,” she shouted back. Her voice was full of attitude. I smiled a little.

I found my sober sister standing at the oven.

She looked so pretty, healthy, and drug-free.

She was too skinny for my liking—all the women in my family were thick or thicker.

Her size reminded me of her drug days. But I pushed that to the back of my mind.

The only thing she got high off these days was sugar.

She turned to face me, giving me a once-over.

“You went out without telling me again.”

“I’m back and fine,” I retorted.

She clicked her tongue. “Miyori , you’re six months pregnant. You can’t be disappearing.”

“I wasn’t disappearing,” I said, easing out of my coat. “I just needed air.”

“You always need air when you’re thinking about him,” she muttered. She came around the counter, snatched the bag from the corner store from my hands, and gave me that look—the big-sister one, even though she was my little sister.

I rolled my eyes and went back to the living room. We had a luxury apartment, fully furnished when we moved in. I sank into the cloud sofa, wincing slightly at the tug in

my lower back.

“You could’ve at least taken the car.”

“I didn’t want the car.”

She rolled her eyes. “You’re hormonal and stubborn. Bad combo. I’m sick of your ass.”

I didn’t argue. I didn’t have the energy.

She brought me a glass of water and sat next to me. “You know, you could just say you miss him.”

“I don’t want to miss him,” I said, staring at the window, at the city lights, as the ghost of his touch made the hairs on my arm stand on end.

“But you do.”

I looked down at my stomach. My belly was so round now.

I rubbed a hand over it slowly. When I found out I was pregnant, I thought about having an abortion, but I couldn’t make myself.

My mind flashed back to the night I’d pistol-whipped Priest, his crazy ass cumming inside me seconds later.

I hadn’t been taking my birth control because I’d left it at home when I ran away to Tasha’s.

I did miss him, though.

And I hated myself for that.

“You could always call him,” Maya said, reaching over to touch my hand.

I snatched my hand back. To her, he was some kind of savior.

She’d gone from being terrified of him to hero-worshipping him because he’d let her live and paid for her rehab—acting like I hadn’t sacrificed for him to do it.

I wasn’t bitter about it, though. She just irked me when she took up for him.

“Not now. Not ever again. Fuck him.”

I said that. But deep down, I still felt like I was waiting for him to come find me.

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Source Creation Date: July 23, 2025, 2:11 am

Dinner was my idea. Though I made Lilith think it was hers.

The long table was set for four. Like a family gathering instead of what it was.

Her father sat at the head of the table, same as always.

Posture stiff, eyes alert. Two of his men were stationed just outside the dining room like the boogeyman might show up.

I sat at the far end, napkin folded over my lap, wine untouched.

I had twenty of my men stationed around the house, waiting in case I needed them.

Lilith sat between us, twitchy and distracted.

She kept looking at me. Not looking—staring.

I continued talking where I left off.

“I called you because she’s been off lately,” I muttered to her father, like she wasn’t right there. “Maybe you can talk her into taking her meds.”

Lilith’s fork clinked hard against her plate. She didn’t speak. Just looked at me, wide-eyed.

“She thinks you’re going to kill me and says she can’t save me if they have her moving in slow motion.”

“I know he is,” she snapped, eyes wild, lips trembling. “He’s going to kill you. I feel it.”

“Enough,” her father barked.

Lilith stood abruptly, her chair scraping the hardwood as she walked toward the kitchen. Her movements were stiff. She didn’t look back.

Her father watched her go, then turned to me.

“If you leave her,” he said slowly, “I will kill you myself. She’s the only reason you’re still breathing. You’re her husband. Fix her.”

I didn’t respond. Just nodded like a loyal husband would.

Lilith came back a few minutes later, barefoot and calm. Her face was blank. Her eyes weren’t. They were glowing.

She moved behind her father’s chair. Rested her hand on his shoulder.

“Daddy, I love you.”

Steel flashed in her hand, catching my attention.

“I love— ”

She moved her hand in one swift motion, slicing clean across her father’s throat. Cutting off his words.

A sound like gargling filled the room. Blood splattered the white tablecloth. His wine glass tipped, spilled like a second wound. A drop of blood landed on Lilith's cheek.

She didn't wipe it away. Let it sit there like a tear.

She kept screaming.

“He’s mine! He’s mine! You don’t get to hurt him!”

I pushed my chair back hard enough to topple it. My voice broke through the chaos.

“Call the ambulance! Now!”

Guards burst through the doors. One grabbed Lilith and disarmed her. She didn’t fight. Just kept screaming.

“You won’t take him from me! You’re dead now!”

Blood soaked the floor beneath her father’s chair.

One of the guards crouched low, checked for a pulse. Shook his head.

“He’s gone.”

The room fell quiet except for the ragged sound of Lilith’s breathing. She looked hollow now. Empty. Spent.

“Fuck, this is bad,” the guard muttered, glancing at me. “He indulged her every want and she killed him.”

I didn’t speak.

Two officers were the first to arrive. I told them what happened.

“Tell the ambulance to take her to a facility,” I said when the EMTs arrived. “Not a jail. She needs help.”

I watched as Lilith was strapped to the gurney, eyes glassy. As they wheeled her toward the exit, she turned her head sharply.

“Priest,” she whispered.

I paused.

“Priest—please, don’t let them take me.”

I stood there a moment longer. Let everyone in the room see the sadness on my face. Let them believe the concern, the heartbreak.

Then I followed the gurney. Walked past the one that held her dead father. I climbed into the ambulance behind her after she was loaded.

I took her hand. “I’ll always be here for you.” I lied.

She smiled.

And I smiled back.

Like a loving husband should.

Like this wasn’t exactly what I’d spent six months planting seeds for.

It started small. After she saved me at the safe house, I decided to lean into being the perfect husband. I brought her flowers, a new ring. I told her I loved her enough that it didn’t matter that we couldn’t have sex. I made her friends envy her.

Then I started making little comments, never direct. Never too much.

“I don’t trust your father,” I told her once, while stroking her hair in bed. “You know he’s going to kill me, right?”

She didn’t believe me at first. But I didn’t need her to—not right away.

Then came the doubts.

“He’s watching me,” I said one night, pacing the kitchen, tension in my shoulders. “Everywhere I go. I think he’s waiting for the right moment to take me from you.”

I fed her paranoia.

“You’re better without the meds,” I whispered one afternoon, brushing a kiss to her temple. “They dull you. Mute who you really are. You don’t need them. Not with me.”

She nodded and clung to me like I was her anchor .

Weeks passed.

And every time she took a step further into the dark, I was there, steady and reassuring, telling her she was going in the right direction.

“You’re not crazy,” I’d say. “They just want you to think you are. Your father wants to control you.”

When she started skipping doses, I didn’t stop her.

When her father scolded her for doing the crazy shit she did, I defended her—just

enough to keep her loyal, not enough to draw suspicion.

I let her think we were in it together. That I was on her side. That she had to protect me from him.

I knew she would snap eventually.

And that no one would blame me when she did.

Source Creation Date: July 23, 2025, 2:11 am

I didn't stay long after they sedated Lilith.

Within the next week, she'd be dead.

She'd succeed at committing suicide this time—or at least, that's what everyone would think.

My life with her was behind me now. Just another closed chapter in a book full of corpses.

I'd already started getting condolence calls from the upper ranks. The dons, the bosses. None of them blamed me.

They knew Lilith.

They'd all had to clean up one of her messes, or her brother's. The entire Aiello bloodline had been a ticking bomb, and now it had finally gone off. No one mourned the blast.

Some of them sounded relieved.

"Shame about the girl," one of them said over the phone. "But she was always gonna end up a headline. Better her than you."

I agreed.

Politely.

The sun was rising when I pulled into the underground parking garage. The city hadn't woken yet. I felt hungover. I took the elevator alone. I keyed Miyori's code into her condo door.

It was exactly how she left it. Except for the newly hung paintings.

There was the devil with broken wings. A faceless man standing at the edge of a cliff, arms outstretched, wind ripping through his coat.

She had painted me. Over and over. In different forms, but my eyes.

I stepped farther inside.

I'd always known where Miyori was, since the day after that night in the safe house. I knew when she started painting. I knew when she cut her hair. I knew she was pregnant. I left her alone because I needed time to fix my life. To cut every tie that could ruin us.

Lilith. Her father. The whole rotten legacy.

Now they were gone.

Now there was nothing standing between us.

I walked to the window. "I'm coming for you, Miyori."

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Source Creation Date: July 23, 2025, 2:11 am

The Instagram DM notification buzzed on my phone just as I settled onto the couch, my swollen ankles screaming in relief. I almost ignored it—until I saw the headline preview:

"Mafia Princess Slays Father, Then Herself in Psychiatric Ward."

My thumb hovered. Ice slithered down my spine.

Who sent this to me? I almost didn't click on the link.

The article loaded with a blurry photo of Lilith—strapped to a gurney, eyes vacant, blood streaked across her hospital gown like war paint. My stomach lurched.

A knock at the door pulled my eyes from my phone.

I jumped, the phone banging to the floor. Maya. It had to be. We didn't get visitors. She'd gone to the bodega for whipped cream—probably forgot her key again.

"Damn it, Maya," I muttered, heaving myself up with a grunt. My back ached, my balance was shot. I waddled to the door, already rehearsing my lecture about how she needed to—

The air left my lungs.

Priest stood on the threshold. I realized then why I'd just received the article

He seemed taller than I remembered. Darker eyes.

He smelled like whiskey and winter. A black wool overcoat hung open just enough for me to catch sight of his holster.

There was a dark suit beneath—tailored to his broad chest, his lean waist. A thick black scarf was wrapped loose around his neck. He looked beautiful and brutal.

I stumbled back.

He didn't move. Just stared at my belly. His fingers kept flexing at his side like he wanted to touch it but held himself back. That was different.

"I killed them for you, Lil Saint. " he said, voice rough as gravel. "I tried to stay away. Knew I brought you more hell than heaven." His jaw flexed. "But I'm selfish, Miyori . I couldn't let you raise my child by yourself and have them thinking I didn't want them."

He paused .

"I want us to be a family. Me, you, our child... even Maya if you want. She's part of you. That means she matters to me. I want to be different than my parents."

He reached for my hand but didn't force mine into his like the old Priest would have.

"I'm willing to change. Hell, I am changing.

Every day without you felt like I was walking around without skin.

There was no peace. No sleep. I didn't come to force you.

I came to beg you to give me a chance. And you know that's not me. Patience isn't even in my nature."

My pulse roared in my ears as he continued.

“I won’t be jealous anymore,” he said, rubbing the back of his neck. “Well... I will. I just won’t show it the way I used to.”

His gaze dragged over my face. “I won’t punish you for making me feel it.”

He exhaled slowly, like this was the hardest promise he’d ever made. “I’ll just... deal with it. Like a fucking adult. You didn’t deserve how I treated you.”

He raised his hand to his temple, rubbing the side of his head like it suddenly ached. Two pale scars just above his eyebrow drew my attention.

My stomach turned.

I hadn’t meant to hit him that hard.

Without thinking, I reached out. My fingers brushed over the raised skin.

“I’m sorry,” I whispered. “I ruined your perfect face.”

He looked down at me, his expression soft—like I hadn’t nearly cracked his skull open. Like I hadn’t run.

“I don’t blame you,” he said, quiet, like his voice had been dipped in understanding. “You were scared. You thought you had to protect yourself. You could have done worse,” he murmured. “And I’d still be right here, where I’m at. Begging you.”

I felt overwhelmed. I was happy to see him, but that was the only good emotion I was feeling.

Behind him, Maya appeared, a grocery bag in hand. She took one look at Priest, then at my face, and—smiled.

“It took you long enough to find her,” she said, shoving past him. “Come in. You’re staying for dinner.”

Priest didn’t move. He stared at me for approval.

Maya yanked him inside by his coat sleeve. The door clicked shut, sealing us in with the devil’s spawn who—

I stared at my traitor sister.

“What?” Maya shrugged, dumping the groceries on the counter. “Now you can stop moping around pretending you’re okay. You need him.”

Priest’s gaze burned into me. He was waiting for me to confirm or deny.

Outside, snow began to fall.

Source Creation Date: July 23, 2025, 2:11 am

I'd convinced Miyori to come back to Florida before our son was born. That was my first win. She was safe now—with Lilith, Sebastian, and their father dead.

I'd declined taking his seat at the table. Don Genovese's legacy wasn't something I needed. I wasn't hungry for his power or the weight that came with it. I had my own empire, built with my own hands. That was enough. Something I could leave my son.

What I wanted now was something different. I wanted Miyori. I wanted my family. And this time, I was willing to play the long game to keep them.

Miyori had drawn her own line by not letting me move in with her. That was her win.

But she was back in the condo I bought her. Back in my city. She was back where I could see her, touch her, protect her—back where I could remind her, without words, that she'd never really escape me.

She was different now, though. Hypervigilant. Careful. Watching me in a way she never used to. She didn't trust me, not fully. I couldn't press the way I wanted to, couldn't manipulate her the way I'd been able to before.

I think she finally realized she held all the power now. And for now, I would let her.

Because patience wasn't something I'd been born with. But I'd learned it for her. Did that mean I was growing?

I stepped off the elevator with a bag of groceries and heard her before I saw her.

Miyori stood in front of her door, talking to her neighbor. Some asshole in a hoodie and faded joggers. He stood too close, cradling a crying newborn.

She was smiling up at him and I didn't like that.

I watched her for a minute. Let my gaze drag over her, cataloging every inch of her, because every inch of her was mine.

Her hair was growing fast. The tight little beige dress she wore hugged every curve she had— since the baby, her hips were a little wider, ass rounder, thighs softer and thicker.

Apparently, I wasn't the only one who noticed. The neighbor's eyes dropped low—lingered a beat too long on what belonged to me.

I gritted my teeth. The dress she was wearing would be another dress she wouldn't be able to find after today.

When she noticed me watching them, she stopped mid-sentence and stepped away from the guy fast, crossing the hall like she couldn't get to me quickly enough.

Good girl.

"He was just asking about Ezra," she said. "He's got a newborn too."

Ezra. My son. Our son.

I smiled, slow and easy. "No worries. I told you—I'm not like I was before."

And that wasn't a lie. Not entirely.

She stared at me like she didn't believe me, then nodded. "I know you are," she said

quietly. “And... I appreciate it.”

She pushed up onto her tiptoes before I could say anything else and pressed a soft kiss to my mouth, then another until she was feeding me her tongue and I was sucking on it. She tasted like sweet coffee. I groaned—her kisses and sex with her were the only things keeping me sane.

When she pulled away, her eyes lingered on mine like she was searching for something in them.

“I’ll never stop trying to be better for you,” I said, my voice low.

She nodded. “I believe you. Want to stay for dinner?” she asked after a moment, her voice softer than I’d heard it in months. “Maya’s inside.”

Of course, Maya was inside. She was always there. But I couldn’t object. I wanted to go back to the days it was just me and her. Now my son.

But Maya had been the one who put the words into my mouth that day I showed up at Miyori’s front door in New York. She knew her sister better than anyone. Knew exactly what Miyori needed to hear. She texted them to me and I memorized them, delivered them like they were mine.

Maya might’ve thought I was dangerous, but she also knew I was good for her sister in a way no one else could be. I’d kill for her. I’d bleed for her. I’d ruin the world and call it love.

I said yes to dinner.

As soon as I walked into the house, I heard Ezra fussing from the nursery. I didn’t wait for Miyori to move. My son cried, I went. That was how it was now.

He quieted the second I picked him up. My hand spanned his whole back. I stared down at his handsome little tan face.

I would bide my time—for him. For both of them.

Because I wasn't giving up on the three of us. I wasn't done with my little Saint. Not even close. I never would be .