



Scar (Black Hearts MC #8)

Author: *L G Campbell*

Category: Action&Adventure

Description: Elsie

I have watched him, a man who is both beautiful and broken. Like me, he is a prisoner of my father, but the only distinction is that he wears chains. I know that if I'm found anywhere near him, I will face punishment, and if I'm discovered with him, my life is over. Yet everything in me yearns to risk it all for him.

Scar

A sacrifice for the woman I love and for my brother in arms. My life so they can live theirs. I find myself on the brink of breaking, ready to give up everything, until she arrives; my angel.

Both are trapped, controlled, and enduring an unbearable hell. What sacrifices must be made for them to secure their freedom? Or will the risk be too high to pay?

Total Pages (Source): 28

Page 1

Source Creation Date: July 24, 2025, 2:55 am

PROLOGUE

SCAR

3 months ago

Seeing her in that dress—that damn fucking dress—is what sent me over the edge. Laying here getting my dick sucked by... Hell, I don't know her fucking name, but after seeing her dancing with those fucking pricks circling her, I told the first woman I saw to get on my bike. That is how easy it was. Women see the cut, the tattoos, and that's it. They practically throw their panties at me. It's great, but boring. Don't get me wrong, the fucking can be great, and I mean really fucking great. It scratches the itch, but it doesn't satisfy me completely. I've never really wanted a relationship, well not with any of the women I take to my bed. I wasn't opposed to it, but I just knew that I hadn't found the right girl for it. Until Rhea, that is. I don't know what it is about her that intrigues me so much.

I sigh and look down at the girl sucking my dick, just not feeling it. "Darlin', you need to go," I tell her.

She removes her mouth from my dick, making a pop sound from where she was sucking so hard. "What?" she asks, confused.

"It ain't happening," I tell her. "I'll book you a cab," I say as I slide my jeans back up.

She sits back, just watching me. "But we didn't even have sex," she says with a pout

on her face.

“I know, but I’m not in the mood,” I say with a shrug.

“But my friend Stacy said that you were the best fuck she’s ever had. Did I do something wrong?” she asks with a confused look on her face.

I rub my face, sighing. I really do need to calm it down with the fucking. “You did nothing. I just think I’m coming down with flu,” I lie. She sighs in relief and nods before she gets up off the bed. I hand her bag to her and see her out, doing my best to ignore the ol’ ladies and the rest of the club drinking and partying night away. Once she’s gone, I disappear back to my room and strip off.

As I get in the shower, I need the feel of the hot spray on my face and body, trying to get the thought of Rhea out of my mind. It’s obvious that Acid likes her, even if he can’t see it himself yet. Maybe if I could just have one night with her, get it out of my system, then Acid can have her.

I get out of the shower and chuck on a pair of sweats before heading to the kitchen to get a bottle of water, and it’s then that I hear how quiet it’s gone. Changing course, I walk through the bar, deciding to get something stronger than water. When I see Acid and Rhea at the bar, I hear the proposition he makes her, and I can’t stop my feet from walking towards them.

“Does this offer extend to anyone, or is this a private thing?” I ask, exchanging a look with Acid. If he signals for me to back off I will, but I’m not going to miss my chance when it comes to Rhea. I swear, just seeing her big brown innocent eyes go wide has my dick already hardening. Closing the distance, I stop just in front of her, watching as Acid trails kisses along her neck. Her breath quickens and I gently reach out, stroking along the swell of her breasts. “You don’t have to do anything. You want this, then just say the word,” I stated, hoping to comfort her.

Then she breathes the word, the one word that I swear as it leaves her lips has me fighting every feral instinct to fuck her then and there. “Yes,” she breathes, barely making a sound, her body completely overcome with need and desire.

As Acid leads her down to his room, my eyes are glued to her round peach ass. She freezes in the doorway, and it’s then that I feel her body tense.

“You don’t have to do anything you don’t want to,” I remind her.

“No, I do. It’s just, I’m nervous,” she admits. Acid slowly guides her inside and after shutting the door behind us, I graze my fingers up her thighs, feeling her shiver at my touch. I grab the hem of her dress and lift it over her head. A deep rumble erupts from just seeing her plump bare ass. A small thong disappears between her cheeks, and as Acid removes it, my fingers itch to touch her.

I glide my hands around her waist, dipping lower to between her legs as my mouth trails kisses along her shoulder and neck. She’s wet, and my fingers just glide right in and out of her with ease. Fuck, I want nothing more than to bury myself deep inside her. Acid demands a taste, so I withdraw my fingers. Keeping hold of her, my hand lifts and cups her breast, rolling her perfect nipple between my fingers.

Feeling her body come apart as Acid feasts on her makes me painfully hard. On shaky legs Acid tells her to lay on the bed and spread her legs for me to see. I remove my sweats and stand there, a drop of pre-cum leaking at the tip of my cock, just from the fucking sight of her glistening wet pussy. Another growl rumbles through my throat and I drop to my knees. Grabbing her hips, I yank her down to my salivating mouth. Her taste is intoxicating and I eat her like she’s my last fucking meal, tasting everything that she has to give me. Her hips buck and I hold her down, loving the way her legs shake as her orgasm erupts through her. I don’t stop riding out her orgasm. When she’s finished, I look at her from between her legs, heat burning through me at the sight of her.

“I could eat your pussy all fucking day and night,” I state truthfully. Her taste and watching her come apart like that just from my mouth, fucking beautiful.

When she looks between us, innocently asking what now, I want to pick her up, throw her over my shoulder, and fuck her all night long, but I know that can’t happen. I will take whatever I can get of her. She can’t even say the words. Fuck, she’s adorable.

“I will do my best to give you a good blow job. Um, I haven’t done it in a really long time, but if it helps, I will hang my head off the edge of the bed. Apparently, you get better access and you can deep throat me,” she says, her cheeks heating.

What I wanted to say was that I wanted to fuck her. I wanted to feel her squeeze my dick as she climaxed, but instead I smiled. “Whatever you are comfortable with.” She moves her body, hanging her head off the edge of the bed. The tip of my cock touches her lips, and at that moment Acid glides himself inside her.

She has a look of awe on her face, and I just know that she has never been fucked for it to feel good. Never felt pleasure. She looks up at me with those warm brown eyes, now full of pleasure, and opens her mouth, taking as much of my dick as she can. I hit the back of her throat and as she sucks and swirls her tongue, I groan, moving my cock in and out of her mouth, fucking her. Pleasure quickly consumes her body and as she releases me from her mouth, she fixes her gaze on Acid. I watch as both of them become transfixed on each other.

Stepping back, I grab my sweats and leave, feeling like it’s gone from the three of us, to me now intruding on their moment. Hearing her screams as she climaxes, I walk into my room and don’t bother relieving myself. Laying there, I curse myself, my head, and my fucking heart for feeling shit for a woman I have no right in feeling.

CHAPTER ONE

SCAR

Present Day

Day number fuck knows how many. I've not moved from this dark cellar since arriving. As I walk continuously around this room, not seeing daylight or the feel of fresh air on my skin has me feeling like I'm slowly losing my mind. I think back to the girl with red hair: Elsie. I fucking hoped she would come back, and not just for the fact that she gave me some water and an apple. Her scent reminded me of an orange grove, of fresh sunshine and citrus.

I sit down on the mattress on the floor, my thoughts filled with her: Rhea. I don't regret exchanging myself for Acid. Seeing the devastation it had caused her, the pain, I knew I couldn't let her live with that. I wanted her, but the truth of it was she was never mine, and by fucking her I was only fooling myself in thinking I could ever be in with a chance, that she would ever feel the same way for me as she does Acid. I should have stayed away from the start and let them be, let them explore each other together, but tasting her and fucking her was a temptation I couldn't stay away from.

The door opens and light pierces in through the darkness. Squinting my eyes, I use my hand to cover my eyes. I don't need to see her to know that it's her. The scent of her perfume hits me before she is even fully in the room. She creeps in, coming closer this time, the light creating a halo behind her. I blink and my eyes quickly adjust to the dim light as I try to make out her features.

“Elsie,” I say. Her name comes out on a rasp due to my throat being dry and coarse, after not having a drink of water since yesterday. She places a water bottle and a plate down with a sandwich and an apple on it. I’m starving, so I don’t bother checking what’s in the sandwich. I practically leap for the plate and shovel it down, barely chewing.

“Careful, you’ll choke,” she warns in a delicate voice.

I finish chewing, then reach for the bottle of water. Taking a large gulp, the cold liquid soothes my dry throat. I wipe my mouth with the back of my hand before speaking. “Sorry. I’ve not eaten in...” I pause, trying to remember. “I’m not sure. With no natural light, I have no idea on time or days,” I state. Pausing, I chew on another bite. “Wait, you haven’t poisoned this, have you?” I ask sceptically.

I’m so stupid. Why else would she be bringing me food?

“No, I wouldn’t do that,” she answers.

I’m so hungry that I continue eating. “I guess I will just have to take your word for it,” I state between mouthfuls. A moment of silence passes. “Who are you?” I ask.

“I’ve told you, my name is Elsie,” she answers. The room goes silent again.

“You’re not going to tell me more than that, are you?” I sigh.

She shakes her head no, and the only reason I can see her doing that is from the dim light outside the door. “So Elsie, whoever you are. Any chance you could let me out of here?” I ask.

“No, I can’t,” she answers with what sounds like sadness in her tone.

“Worth an ask,” I snort. “Okay what about a light, a ball, or something to read, and a shower. I would fucking love a shower.” I groan.

“You have a bathroom, to the right,” she answers.

“Elsie, I’m guessing you don’t come down here very often, but through there is a toilet and a sink. The tap dribbles water, and with no light, that took me hours to find. I guess I should be thankful the cunt isn’t making me shit in a bucket,” I sigh.

“I-I didn’t know,” she stutters. “I can try and talk to him, see if we can make it nicer for you down here,” she offers, her voice full of hope. “But then he would know it was me coming down here,” she trails off.

“So, he doesn’t know you’re doing this?” I ask.

“No. One of his men Layton, is supposed to be bringing you food and water down every day, but I know he hasn’t done it on some days because I overheard him bragging about it,” she informs me. Her voice is laced with hatred when mentioning his name.

“I know the fucker,” I mutter. Silence passes between us as I finish the sandwich and down the rest of the water. “For what it’s worth, I prefer your visits to his. Your voice is a lot nicer on the ears and you smell a lot nicer, too,” I say with a wink, then I realise she probably can’t see me winking.

“How can you still be happy, when you’re stuck down here?” she asks.

“Not happy darlin’, just refuse to have my spirit broken, and whether I die in here or I get out, I know every single one of my brothers will gut Eugene and his men,” I seethe, feeling the rage I have for him bubble through my blood.

She bends down and grabs the plate. "I've got to go," she says on a hurried breath.

"Wait, when will you be back?" I ask, unable to hide the desperation in my voice. Being locked in here without anyone to talk to, she has become my sanity. I hate to admit it, but the sad reality is that I am hanging by a thread.

"I will come back soon," she assures me before closing the door behind her.

I sigh and lay back down, wondering if she will visit again.

I have no idea how long passes. The sound of the door opening jolts me awake and I'm ready to be on my guard. I watch, waiting, when something is just pushed through the door quickly, then it shuts again. I frown and get up, walking across the space. Even though I'm surrounded by darkness, I've figured out the area. Stopping just by the door, I bend down and feel around with my hands. Finding a box, I bend down and pick it up before I walk back to the mattress. Lifting the lid, I dip my hand in and feel what's inside. A smile spreads across my face as I pick up something and feel for the switch. Light beams across the room; a torch. I aim it at the box and continue to go through it. I swear I nearly cum in my pants when I see a candy bar. Eagerly tearing off the wrapper, I take a huge bite, moaning at how the sweet chocolate ignites my taste buds. I continue to go through it and notice a book, and as I turn it around to look at the cover, I can't help the laugh that escapes me. A fucking romance novel. I place it back and see an envelope. After tearing it open, I pull out the letter to read.

I guess this is like the care packages loved ones send to their relatives in the Army.

Anyway, I'm not sure when I will be able to make it back. Everyone is here right now, and they will know if I go missing for that amount of time, so I've included a notebook and a pen. Slide a note under the door not before midnight and I will come by and pick it up, and I will write a note back to you as often as I can. I have put in a

watch, and I'm sorry it's a 'My Little Pony' digital watch. It was mine when I was little, and it is the only one I could find to give you.

I will try and drop you some food when I can, but you need to hide the boxes, all of it. If they find out... Well, I'm not sure what would happen.

Good night,

Elsie

X x

I place the note down and pick up the 'My Little Pony' watch. Looking at the time, I see that it's 1 am. There is no way it would fit around my wrist, so I slide it into my pocket. I continue to eat the candy bar before I lift the corner of the mattress and place the box under it. It will have to do for now. I pick up the book and start reading while finishing the candy bar.

Hitting halfway through this book, I'm surprised how filthy it is. Is this what women like to read? Shit, and they think men are the perverts. Hearing heavy footsteps approach, I quickly move, turning off the torch and hiding it as best as I can under the mattress. The door swings open with force and as soon as I see the booted feet I know it's that prick Layton. He hasn't come on his own, he rarely does, because he's a fucking pussy that knows without his cronies by his side I would kick his fucking ass, even with months of surviving off nothing. I have enough anger and rage running through my veins that I would fucking destroy him.

"Well, well... I guess I've been so busy the last couple of days, I forgot to bring you some food. Oops, my bad." He laughs, and his two fucking idiot friends laugh next to him. He reaches into his back pocket and pulls out a candy bar before throwing it at my chest.

I don't flinch. Instead, I clench my fists at my sides, glaring at him. I look forward to the day I get to slit his fucking throat.

He steps closer to me, a sneer across his face. "You're nothing but a pathetic little biker boy, who without your club are nothing."

"What are you without your friends there? You ain't even got the balls to come down here on your own," I retort, smiling.

His jaw ticks and his eyes glare with fury as he steps closer. "You don't—" He's made the mistake of getting too close, and I quickly swing my fist forward, slamming it into his face. He stumbles back and his pathetic friends catch him.

I laugh and brace myself, knowing that he will want to kick the shit out of me for it. "Come on then, you piece of shit," I goad, beckoning him with my hand.

"Hold him," he orders as he wipes the side of his mouth. His eyes flare when he sees blood on the back of his hand. His men approach, trying to grab hold of my arms to pin me down, however I move too quickly for them. I retaliate, slamming my fists into each of their faces.

"Come on, you mother fuckers!" I roar with adrenaline. Whether it's my insanity now exploding out of me from being cooped up in this hell hole, or the candy bar that Elsie gave me. I don't know, but I don't give in easily. I know I will end up on the floor getting my ass beaten. After all, there are three of them and only one of me, but if they think I'm going to go down without a fight then they are fucking wrong. One of them manages to land a hit in my gut, knocking the air out of me. That gives the other one just enough time to regain his composure and lands a hit right across my face. I fall to the floor, bracing my weight on my hands and knees.

Layton stands over me, his bloody mouth smiling down at me. "You are going to pay

for that,” he spits.

I look up at him, feeling blood trickling down the side of my face. “Oh no, I’m soooo scared,” I mock before laughing, hiding every bit of pain from him.

He clicks his fingers, and the 2 fucking morons take turns in kicking me, their heavy booted feet stomping down onto my side, my ribs, and even though I manage to lift my arms to protect my face, they still manage to kick it. After what feels like forever, Layton gives them a sharp whistle, like he’s calling off his dogs and they stop. My body is screaming in pain, every muscle and bone hurting.

“Good night. Dream of me.” Layton laughs as he leaves, slamming the door shut behind him.

Laying on the cold, concrete floor, surrounded again in darkness, I groan as I try to move. I try to get to my feet, but I don’t have the strength, so I claw myself back to the mattress. The pain in my body makes me want to throw up. I make it to the mattress and after propping myself up against the wall, I reach behind and pull the torch out. Looking down at my already stained T-shirt, that is now covered in blood, I slowly and stiffly lift it off. After pressing it against the cut under my eye, I clasp the torch in the same hand and reach for the book she gave me to take my mind off my current agony.

I force myself to smile. “Fuck, that was fun,” I mutter sarcastically. Maybe I am going insane, because fuck it felt good to let off some steam, even if that meant me getting the shit kicked out of me.

CHAPTER TWO

SCAR

I'm not sure how long I passed out for. The sound of the bolt on the door opening stirs me awake, and I blink my eyes open and move, which was a big mistake.

"Fuck!" I hiss in pain.

I know it's her before I can focus my gaze. As I smell her perfume, I hear her shuffling around, moving something heavy across the floor. Suddenly, a small amount of sunlight streams in through a tiny hatch window. That's when I see her climbing down off of a box. She looks at me, a gasp escaping her, and I'm guessing I don't look too good.

"Wait there," she says before running out of the room, locking the door behind her. I guess she doesn't trust me yet. Looking around the room, I check out my surroundings, now that it has got some kind of natural light in. It's then that I look up to the small hatch window. I begin to wonder if I would be able to fit through it. It's true, I'm not the smallest of guys, but being in here these past few months, I've lost a lot of weight.

Elsie comes back in with a box of stuff, placing it down before she kneels down next to me. "This may sting a little," she says softly as she pours some alcohol onto cotton. She leans forward and gently presses it over my cut. I look at her, no correction, I stare at her, now seeing her properly for the first time. She gives me a small smile, and it's then that I see her clear milky pale skin is kissed with freckles over her nose.

Her lips are like a perfect bow, but then there are her eyes, rich green eyes with flecks of gold and hazel through them, surrounded by thick long lashes.

“Fuck, you’re beautiful,” I state bluntly.

Her cheeks heat and she blinks. “Um, thanks,” she says softly. “That should help it not get infected.” She smiles before she pulls out a bottle of pain killers and hands them to me. “They are just basic pain killers, but I figured they may help.” She shrugs, and her eyes sweep over my body. Without thinking, her finger lightly dances over the bruises. “What happened?” she asks softly.

“Layton and his dogs,” I state, assessing her. “Just to warn you sweetheart, I may be in pain, but you keep touching me like that and you will make my cock hard. It’s been months,” I warn her, joking. It’s the only defence I have. I don’t want anyone seeing me weak. Her eyes go wide and she shifts back. I smirk. “Don’t panic darlin’, I wouldn’t try anything. That ain’t my style. I like my women to be into my cock, not terrified of it,” I state. “Although some have been scared of it, but as soon as we start fucking, their worries quickly drifted away.” I sigh. Truthfully, I fucking miss pussy. Especially Rhea’s. Fuck, that woman really put some voodoo shit on me.

Elsie clears her throat, bringing my thoughts back to the here and now. “How can you joke at a time like this?” she asks.

I sigh. “Because if I didn’t, it would mean that they won. They beat the shit out of me, they can withhold food from me, but they ain’t ever going to take away the person that I am. I’ve been through worse times and lived to see another day. So, to put it frankly, they can kiss my toned ass.”

Her eyes assess me before she closes the medical box. “Well, I don’t think I would be so cheerful if I was in your situation.”

I lean back, stretching out. “Shit.” I groan in pain, and concern flashes in her eyes. “I’m okay,” I wheeze. “So, tell me why the special visit?” I ask.

“Special visit?” she counters, raising her brow.

“Yeah, it’s daytime. You let in some light, and you don’t seem so jumpy,” I explain.

“Oh.” She smiles, tucking her hair back behind her ear. “Um, everyone is out. Well, they’re away actually, for the weekend. So, I figured I could make things a little easier for you while they’re not here.” There is no one here but us. I could get out of here and run, but then I would put all the club in danger, the ol’ ladies, the kids. Fuck, I couldn’t do that to them. If I am to get out of here, it needs to be with Eugene and his men dying. There is no other way. “I know you could escape right now if you wanted to,” she points out, as if reading my mind. “But I also know that if you did, he would stop at nothing to seek redemption. I don’t know if you have a wife or kids, but I know he would go after them. He would take the things you love and destroy them, just to break you,” she warns.

Gazing into her eyes, I can see deep emotion and worry there. “I won’t be going nowhere,” I assure her. “Not right now, anyway. I ain’t stupid enough to risk their lives,” I answer truthfully.

She gives me a small smile before her eyes suddenly widen and she jumps to her feet. “I nearly forgot,” she says as she disappears over to the other side, picking up another box. She walks back over and drops to her knees. I watch as she opens it and hands me a bunch of pouches.

“What the fuck are these?” I ask.

“They’re protein pouches. I have noticed you are losing more and more weight and well, if you are going to keep standing up to Layton, then you will need your

strength,” she says before pulling more out from the box. “Here is some soap and a wrench,” she says as she places them down next to me.

“What in the fuck would I want with soap and a wrench?” I ask, staring down at the odd combination.

She places the box down and stands. “Ah.” She smiles and holds her hands out to help me up.

I push her hands away. No way am I having a tiny little thing like her helping my ass up off the floor. She huffs and rolls her eyes, like she knows exactly why I won’t accept her help. I manage to make it to my feet and follow her into the bathroom.

“There’s a sink and a toilet. How am I supposed to shower?” I ask. She holds up her finger to signal me one moment before she reaches around for something and pulls it out. A hose and shower head. She uses the wrench to show me how to attach it to the tap.

“Taa-daa, shower,” she gestures.

I start stripping off, ignoring the pain each movement causes. It may be a cold trickle shower, but damn, I can’t wait to stand under it.

“Oh, um...” Elsie blushes, holding out the shower hose to me as she looks away. I take it, but as I try to lift my arm up, pain shoots through my ribs.

“Ah, fuck!” I hiss. “Sweetheart, you’re going to have to hold the shower up for me. I can’t lift my arm,” I tell her. She turns around while keeping her hand over her eyes and blindly reaches forward, trying to grasp the shower head. She reaches out again, but this time her hand lands on my dick and her hand wraps tightly around it as she tries pulling up. “Shit,” I hiss. “Er darlin’, that ain’t the shower hose,” I say through

gritted teeth.

“Huh?” she asks, peering over her hand. Her eyes go wide when she sees what exactly she is holding. “Oh my god! Oh my god!” she says panicked, while still holding my now semi hard dick in her hands.

“Darlin’, unless you plan on finishing me off, could you release my dick?” I ask, feeling amusement for the first time in months.

She drops it immediately and holds her hand away from her. I move the shower hose to her hand that just held my dick. “There, all clean,” I say. “Hold it up, darlin’,” I instruct, but she’s still stood there with a look of horror on her face. “Sweetheart, can you hold the shower up for me?” I repeat.

She snaps out of her thoughts and nods. “Right, yes, um.” She pauses, looking around. “I know,” she says and I turn to see her climbing onto the toilet, standing on the rim of the seat so she’s taller than me. I smile and stand under the shower.

“Do me a favour. If you’re standing up there, don’t go and close your eyes or you’ll fall and hurt yourself.” I hold my hand out for the soap. “You got the soap?” I ask. She places it in my hand and I scrub my body as much as I can before I use the soap to wash my hair and now full fucking beard. I finish up and realise there is nothing to dry with, so I start to put my old clothes back on.

“Oh wait, I got you a new belt. I noticed that your jeans are starting to fall off from where you’ve lost so much weight,” she says.

I turn off the taps and she jumps down off the toilet. I follow her in nothing but my jeans, while having to hold them up so they don’t fall down. She hands me a belt and I quickly take it and slide it on.

“Sorry, I could get you more clothes, but then they would figure out that I am bringing you stuff,” she apologises. Her eyes roam over my body, sympathy flashing through them, probably from noticing all the black and blue bruises on my body.

Once dressed, I ease myself back onto the mattress, and Elsie sits there with the box, handing me out more things. “There are more candy bars, and also this...” She hands me a small switch blade, and I raise my brow at her in question. She eyes me for a second. Both of us know I could use this to escape. “That is for cutting open the mattress and you can stuff it with the things I give you, so they don’t catch it.” She smiles.

I look down at the blade, thinking how easy it would be for me to just hold this to her throat. Not to hurt her, I would never hurt her, but just to scare her enough so I could get the fuck out of here and back to the club, back to sleeping in a bed. Just to see Rhea, even though I know she’s not mine.

As if sensing my thoughts, Elsie clears her throat. “If you leave, I won’t stop you. You can go, but if you do, can you at least hit me? Make it look like I tried to stop you,” she states softly.

I look into her eyes, seeing that she’s deadly serious. “If I run, he won’t stop coming for my club and family. I can’t have that,” I sigh. Just because it’s the right thing to do for them, doesn’t mean that every part of my body isn’t itching to run.

Elsie frowns at me. “You have a chance to run, but you won’t because you are worried about what would happen to your family?” she asks, a look of confusion on her face.

“Yeah, it’s what we do. We are a family. I am a part of the club, and there isn’t anything I won’t do for my brothers or their loved ones,” I affirm. She is about to open her mouth to ask me another question, but I halt her by placing a finger on her

lips. “Enough with the questions from you. There is one question you are yet to answer me,” I state, pausing. “Who the fuck are you?” I ask with a little too much bite in my tone.

She flinches. “I am no one important,” she answers, fumbling.

I look at her, really look at her. “Fuck,” I sigh when I focus on her eyes. “Eugene is your dad, isn’t he?” I ask.

She looks away. “Yes,” she admits, her voice so soft it’s barely a whisper. She moves to stand but I grab her wrist, stopping her.

“Don’t go,” I order, although I cringe at the slight pleading sound in my voice. She doesn’t move for a second, and I think she’s going to go, but she gives me a brief nod before sitting back down.

“I won’t answer any questions that will help you when it comes to my dad,” she states straight away.

I let go of her wrist. “I wouldn’t. They are of no use to me anyway, while I’m stuck in here,” I answer with a smile playing on my lips. Her face softens again and she gives me a warming smile.

“So, for what it’s worth, I’m sorry about your brother,” I tell her, which is a lie. I couldn’t give a shit about her brother. It was an arranged fight that he lost, and he unfortunately lost his life. Maybe if he wasn’t the son of Eugene, then I may hold a small degree of sympathy for him.

She shrugs. “Don’t be, he was horrible.” She sighs. “He bullied me my entire life, broke my arm when I was 9, all because I wouldn’t do his homework.”

“That mother fucker,” I growl. “How much older was he to you then?” I ask.

“I am older than him by two years, but he was always bigger than me. As my mom says, you don’t always get things right the first time. Sometimes the second time is the charm,” she says with a cynical smile on her lips, but her eyes pour with sadness and anger.

“I don’t mean this to cause offence,” I sigh. “But fuck me, your family are a bunch of fucking cunts,” I snap.

She lets out a laugh before she covers her smile with her hand. “Thank you,” she beams.

“Anytime.” I smirk. “What made you decide to come down here and help me?” I ask.

Those big round green eyes land on mine and she nibbles anxiously on her bottom lip. “I heard you that night.” She pauses. “I heard you sacrifice yourself for her happiness.” She wraps her arms around herself, as if she’s feeling exposed. “It moved something in me.”

“Jealousy.” I nod with a broad smile.

She rolls her eyes. “No, it was the way you sacrificed your own life, your own happiness, for her. Even though she doesn’t feel the way you do about her.”

“Alright, fucking hell, rub it in why don’t ya?” I ask, feigning hurt.

“I’ve never known anyone that selfless. To do that to protect her, your brother. I’ve never known anyone in my life to just do that for someone else.” She shrugs.

“Well, I don’t think that’s entirely true. I mean, your dad wouldn’t be keeping me

locked up if he didn't love your brother," I point out.

"My dad didn't love my brother. He just wanted him to continue the business. Keeping you here isn't just about revenge for his son. It's revenge for the embarrassment. It's all about how it will make him look. By keeping you here, it shows that no one can come for him or his family. Even though he doesn't give a shit what happens to us. It's all about image," she rants. Pausing, she opens the box, grabs a bag of candy and starts angrily eating it.

"Er, was that for me?" I ask, pointing to the bag.

She looks down at the bag then back to me, a wince on her face. "Sorry," she mumbles around a mouthful of candy. She hands me the bag and I quickly take it and pop some into my mouth. "It's what they do to me. I stress eat, much to my mom's dismay. She's already locked away any carbs in the house to hide it from me." She tuts.

I frown and look her up and down, seeing nothing but beautiful round curves. "You are going to have to elaborate on why your mom was making you diet, because I don't see anything wrong with the way you look."

She looks away, tucking her hair behind her ear. "You are just being nice because I brought you candy," she says, dismissing me.

"Do I look like the kind of guy that would lie about something like that?" I ask her. She shrugs. "Okay, I'm going to tell you something that I ain't proud of, but maybe it will make you realise that my statement is the truth. I was fucking this woman," I start. She immediately blanches. "She had this weird mole on her ass cheek, and it looked like fucking Elmo. It even had the nose," I add, shuddering at the memory. "I know you are thinking I could have just laid her on her back and fucked her missionary. Well I did, but I just couldn't get Elmo out of my head. I'm as fucked up

as the next pervert, and there is pretty much nothing I won't do, but I felt like I was fucking Elmo and that is not cool. I mean, the guy is a legend. I couldn't violate him in that way," I sigh.

Elsie is laughing so hard she's holding her stomach. I smile, ignoring the feel of my lip splitting open again. She wipes away her tears of laughter. "What did you say to her?" she breathes, trying to ease her laughter.

"I told her the truth, that she had Elmo on her ass, and if she wanted sex from me in the future, she would need to get it removed. It made me limp and flaccid, and no woman has ever made me soft," I point out.

"Oh my god, was she upset?" she asks.

"I mean, of course she was, when you get with this." I pause, gesturing with my hand up and down my body. "You don't want it to end. I was nice, told her she was beautiful in every way, but that birth mark freaked me out. She was fine and she came back six months later with it removed, then I fucked her brains out. She's married now with two kids." I nod.

"Wow," she beams.

I grin. "See, and now you are smiling. My work here is done."

Her eyes go soft and she gives me a small nod. Her phone pings in her pocket and she quickly pulls it out, her eyes going wide. "I've got to go. They're home. Hide it. Hide it all," she says panicked before getting to her feet and rushing out, locking the door behind her.

CHAPTER THREE

ELSIE

Why are they home? They aren't supposed to be home for a couple of days. I quickly step out of the door to the basement and lock it. Taking a deep breath, I try to plaster a neutral expression on my face before I walk into the kitchen, where my mother is already opening a bottle of wine. Her eyes flicker up to mine, nothing but bitter distaste in her gaze.

"I thought you were going for the weekend?" I ask, hating how weak my voice sounds.

"Your father got a call that required us to turn right around and come home," she says before taking a sip of her wine. Her eyes look me up and down. "Why do you look like that?" she asks, her voice laced with her usual venom.

I look down at myself and shrug. "I'm just in my normal clothes."

"Not your clothes, your face. You've done something to your face," she snaps.

My hands automatically go to my face. I haven't put any make-up on today or done anything differently.

She walks towards me, her eyes narrowing as she comes to a stop just in front of me. "You're up to something. I can see it in your eyes, in your flushed cheeks. You better not be embarrassing me or your father. You know how he gets if you do something

he doesn't approve of," she warns.

I give her a curt nod, knowing exactly how he can be, still having the scars as a reminder. She looks me up and down one last time. "Get changed out of that ridiculous outfit. You look like a slut," she spits before sauntering off, drinking her wine.

I close my eyes and take a deep breath as I try to not break, to not let her words destroy me like they used to.

"I don't care if you think they won't be coming this weekend! I want the assurance that I am safe!" my dad barks as he walks into the kitchen with Layton and his minions hot on his heels. I am about to slink away when my dad's eyes land on mine. "Princess!" he exclaims, a smile on his face. I hate it when he calls me that. He only ever does it in front of others. Again, a false show for everyone else's benefit. I plaster on a fake smile as he pulls me into his arms, my body stiff against his. He leans back smiling, but I don't miss the look of warning in his gaze. Do not show him up in front of anyone. He turns to face Layton and the others, draping his arm over my shoulder. "Isn't my daughter the most beautiful young woman?!" he yells, acting the proud father. The tips of his fingers dig into my arm, the continuous warning of what he will do if I step out of line. I play the dutiful daughter and smile. Layton's eyes sweep over my body, his eyes lingering over my breasts.

"She is beautiful, boss," Layton agrees, nodding.

I recoil at his words and the look in his eyes. As I clear my throat, I want to take the attention away from me. "Is everything okay, Daddy?" I ask in that sickly sweet way I know he likes. I want to gag just saying the words.

He gives my shoulder a squeeze. "Nothing, just some silly bikers thinking they can threaten me. Don't you worry, I will stamp them out, just like I always do." He places

a kiss on the top of my head.

I keep my expression one of concern, rather than worry or excitement that they might be coming for him. “Oh, I’m sorry Daddy. Will we be okay? Do you need me to help in any way?” I ask. When in reality, I only want to find out more information. If they are coming for Scar, then I can get a message to him, tell him to be prepared.

“Always thinking of others, that is my little girl,” he praises. “I may need you to help in the office while we are dealing with this, and also keep the guys hydrated and fed,” he says with a smile. I smile back while screaming in my head ‘sexist fucking pig!’ Forgetting that he taught me how to shoot, how to fire a cross bow, how to use a blade in a fight, I could tackle each and every one of his men right now. Instead, I stick to the rules, to the act, to how he wants me to behave, remembering what happens when I step out of those boundaries. “You could make us your famous cookies. I know all of us will appreciate them,” he says, giving me another squeeze. His cell rings and he removes his arm from my shoulder. “What?” he barks down the phone. “You find out what they are planning. I will not have them outsmarting me! Me!” he yells as he walks out of the kitchen. The other guys follow behind like the good little lap dogs they are, all except Layton who stops next to me.

I freeze as I look up at him, hating him with every fibre of my being. He was a friend of my brother’s, and they tormented me. He made me do things no teenage girl should ever be forced to do.

As he reaches for a lock of my hair, I flinch. He smiles, tracing his fingertips along my temple down to my jaw before gripping my jaw tightly in his hands. “I’m going to take you on a date, and you will come with me. It will please your father, and it will please me. Then if you’re a good little girl, I might let you suck my cock,” he whispers quietly in my ear.

“No,” I say through gritted teeth.

He smiles against my cheek. “Keep telling me no. You know how I like it when you try to fight me. When you beg me to stop,” he sneers. I fight everything within me, wanting nothing more than to run in fear, but I stand still, unmoving, my face void of emotion. I’ve learnt over the years that it’s best to just accept it and move on. If I fight or run in fear, it only excites him more. “Good girl. Be ready for 7 and wear something slutty,” he orders before walking out to follow my father.

I don’t move. I wait, making sure that he’s definitely gone. Once I can no longer hear him or see him, I let out a slow breath. Bracing my hands on the counter, I don’t want to go out with him. I do not want to be alone with him. I pray for someone to attack, or for some kind of major issue that forces Layton to work.

I quickly go about making the cookies my father had requested, the entire time my thoughts trailing to Scar down in the basement, hoping and praying for his and my sake that he managed to hide everything I had given him. I didn’t want to think about what would happen if my father found out I was being nice to Scar. He would see it as the ultimate betrayal.

After the cookies are ready and still warm from the oven, just how my father likes them, I carry a tray of them to his office, pausing to knock lightly on his door. Another thing I learned at a young age, do not knock too loudly and interrupt what he is doing. Knock just light enough so not to disturb, but loud enough so he can hear.

“Yes?” he barks. I carefully open the door to his office and see Layton is sat on the small couch, a glass of vodka in his hand. He always drank neat vodka when he was stressed.

I force a small smile on my lips, holding out the tray. “I made you those cookies, Daddy,” I tell him softly.

He stands from behind his desk and walks around, taking one from the top of the pile.

After taking a bite, he moans and smiles, looking down on me with contentment. It's a look that I don't receive often. There was a time I would make him these cookies just to get that look from him. It's only been the past couple of years since I gave up trying, realising that he would never truly look at me with love or affection.

"These are exactly what I need," he says with a grin. He wraps his arm around my shoulders, while I still stand there holding the tray. "Now, I hear that Layton is taking you out. I think that is a fantastic idea. Why don't you go get changed now and then he can take you out?" my father suggests.

"Eugene, I wouldn't want to finish work early, especially with everything going on," Layton says, his lips practically fused to my dad's ass. I silently pray to any god that would listen, asking them to make me ill, make me throw up right now so I don't have to go out. I would even take diarrhoea at this point. I'm sure having the uncontrollable shits would put Layton off wanting to take me out.

"Of course not, you've worked hard today. You've earned an extra break," my father says with a grin.

Unfortunately, no god appears to be hearing my prayers.

Layton stands and knocks back the last of his vodka. "Go change, Elsie. I will wait for you," he orders with a smile and a glint in his eye.

My stomach recoils, but I hold it together and force a smile on my lips, nodding my head. I place the cookies on the side table and leave, walking upstairs to my room. After I shut the door, I close my eyes, willing back the tears, the gut wrenching emotions that constantly threaten to escape.

After a moment, I open my eyes and quickly move to my wardrobe, pulling out a simple emerald green dress. Layton said slutty, and I don't really own anything slutty,

but this is as close as it gets. It's a sweetheart neckline, body con fitted dress, with capped sleeves that stop just above my knees. If I was going on a date with anyone else, I would put more effort in, but I didn't want to go. I slipped on the dress, leaving my hair down. I don't bother reapplying my make up. I just add some of my natural lip gloss and spritz some perfume on before finding my heels. Once I've chucked them on, I grab my purse, put my cell in it, and head downstairs.

Layton is stood at the bottom of the stairs talking to a few of my father's men. Their eyes land on me and I shift uncomfortably. Layton turns around, following their gaze and smiles. His eyes roam over my body, making me want to turn away before he takes a step toward me as I reach the bottom step and slips his hand around my waist.

"See, you can look good," he whispers in my ear. Keeping his arm around me, his hand lowers to my behind and I flinch, wanting to push him off me but I don't. I don't push back, and I don't fight him. It will only make things worse. He parades me past my father's men, like I'm some fucking prized trophy. I'm just a pawn in his scheme to take over from my father. "Get in," he orders before walking around the side of his truck. I open the door and climb in. Once in, he turns to me. "I hope what you are wearing underneath is just as appealing as that dress," he states, heat burning in his eyes.

He drives me to a bar on the other side of town. I am overdressed and feel out of place. People look and stare at me, and I know that is what he wanted. He wanted people to look. He wanted to make me feel awkward because he knows I would hate it. While he loves it, he thrives off the attention. As he guides us to a table, my eyes lock on a group of men in the corner. Rather, it's their jackets that catches my attention. The Black Hearts MC, Scar's club. Layton obviously doesn't notice them. He orders us both a drink, himself a steak, and me a salad. I don't get a choice, and it would piss him off if I told him otherwise.

The waitress brings over our drinks and I take a sip of the white wine, scrunching up

my face. “What wine is this?” I ask.

“A sweet white wine,” he answers.

I hate sweet wine. It reminds me of being a child and trying wine for the first time. “Thank you,” I smile and lie. He nods, happy with my response. His eyes wander over to a table of women to our left, his eyes alight with appreciation. I roll my eyes, although this would be a great distraction for me to go speak to Scar’s club. However, I’m not sure what I would say. One of the women give him a smile and Layton winks at her, loving the attention. I push my chair back and stand. “I’m just going to the bathroom,” I tell him.

“Sure,” he says, not even looking my way. I grab my bag and walk towards the bathroom, right towards the Black Hearts MC.

I try to look at their patches, to see who to speak to. That’s when I spot the President patch. I quickly glance over my shoulder to make sure Layton isn’t looking, to see that he’s busy chatting to the women. As I lightly grab his forearm, feeling powerful muscle underneath, I try not to gasp in fear.

“Not interested,” he growls.

Looking into his eyes, fear prickles along my spine. I open my mouth to speak, but the words don’t come out. His eyes are so cold, so menacing, I’m scared to look away. I’m terrified I’ve made an awful mistake.

“Sc-Scar,” I stutter in a whisper.

His gaze narrows. “What did you fucking say?” he asks, his voice low and threatening.

I swallow, glancing a look over his shoulder to Layton. Seeing him still chatting away, I muster up every ounce of courage. “I have seen Scar, but I can’t talk here,” I tell him firmly, although I swear he can hear my knees knocking in terror. I let go of his forearm and continue to walk down the hall past the ladies. I turn a corner to keep out of view. He follows, but so do a couple of others. I look at their patches, and one says VP Spider, and the other Acid. I look at the one called Spider. “You killed my brother,” I blurt out on a whisper, not meaning to voice that thought. It was the wrong thing to say as the President wraps his hand around my throat.

“Your father sent you?” he hisses.

I shake my head no. “No, no. I’m here on a date. If my father knew I was talking to you, he would kill me,” I rush out. My heart is thumping so loudly in my chest, I’m sure they can hear it. I look to Spider. “I hated my brother and I’m glad he’s dead,” I tell him truthfully. Surprise etches his face, but he quickly hides it. I turn my attention back to the one with his hand around my neck. “He’s okay,” I tell him. “They haven’t treated him well, and he’s lost a lot of weight, but I sneak down and bring him food and water when I can.” I pause. “He nearly had the chance to escape just earlier today, but?—”

His grip tightens around my neck, restricting my airway. “What do you mean he had the chance to escape?” he seethes.

“He wouldn’t do it. Said that my father would just come after you all, and your partners and children,” I rasp. His grip loosens, but he still doesn’t remove his hand from my neck. “Whatever you think you have planned, my father knows about it, or he knows something. He was supposed to be away and came back early because of whatever it was,” I rush out. His face remains angry.

“Give me your phone,” Spider states, holding out his hand.

I hand him my bag, and he pulls my phone out, holding to my face to unlock it. He types away, then places it back in my bag. "I've put my number in there under the name Jane," he states.

"Don't message me. He, he tracks my phone. He has some app or something linked to my phone. He looks at everything I do," I breathe, panicked. "He will know I've added a new number tonight."

"Then you tell him you met a friend in the fucking toilets. That's what you women do, right?" he snaps. I'm not sure whether to answer or not, so I just keep my mouth shut. "When you get to see him, call us," he states firmly before nudging the President. "Ghost, let her go, man," he suggests.

Ghost slowly releases his grip. "If I find out you are lying to us, I will wrap my hands around your throat again, but this time I won't let go," Ghost warns. "If it turns out you've actually been helping him, then I will fucking apologise, but as it stands, I fucking hate your cunt of a father and anything or anyone associated with him," he explains, or at least I think it's a sort of explanation as to why he's just pinned me by my throat.

My hand automatically clasps around my throat. "I understand," I say with a nod. Glancing out the door, I look down the hall. "I have to go, or he will wonder where I am." I pause, looking at them to see if they need anything else from me.

"Go. Call us," Ghost states. I nod and quickly run back down the hall, past the rest of the Black Hearts MC who eye me sceptically as I pass and head back to the table. Our food is already there when I sit back down.

"I'm so sorry, there was a poor girl in the toilets. Her boyfriend got a bit handsy and I was helping her out," I lie as I take a sip of the awful wine.

Layton's eyes narrow as they focus on my neck. "Your neck is all red," he points out.

I place my drink down and clear my throat. "Like I said, he got a bit handsy," I state. Layton's eyes darken and he moves his jacket to the side, placing his hand on his gun. My heart beats wildly in my chest as panic sets in.

"That mother fucker, where is he? I will fucking end him. Doesn't he know who you are?" he fumes, about ready to get up from his chair.

I quickly reach across the table and grab his arm. "No, please don't. He's gone now. One of the bar staff saw to it and he ran off. I'm fine, and I really don't want it to spoil our evening." I smile sweetly, but he still doesn't look convinced, so I say the only thing I can think of that I know will get his full attention. Even though my stomach drops at the thought. "Please, let's just go. Layton, I want you. I want you to help me forget that awful moment," I say in the best sultry voice I can, even though I'm fighting the bile in my throat as I say it.

His eyes darken and he smiles as he lowers himself down fully in his chair and clicks his fingers for the bill.

CHAPTER FOUR

SCAR

It feels like all fucking day I've been pacing, anxious that she was okay, just waiting for them to come down and raid the basement. When night began to fall, I relaxed a little more, hoping that all was okay. I made sure to recover the little window, not wanting anything out of place, giving them no reason to suspect her.

Sat reading with my torch, I check the watch she had given me and see that it's late after midnight. I'm tired, but I refuse to sleep until I know she is okay. The sound of someone approaching the door echoes into the cell, and I quickly hide my things, just in case. The lock quietly opens and she walks in.

I let out a sigh of relief and stiffly get to my feet. As I go to her, I don't think. I just reach out and pull her into my arms, ignoring the pain it causes me. "Fuck, I've been worried all day that they had caught you." She sucks in a sharp breath, and I frown and pull back. My eyes automatically search her, but it's too dark for me to see. Turning around, I hunt for my torch and turn back to face her. I quickly switch it on and hold it out, aiming it right at her.

She is in a tight green dress that hugs her round curves. I pause, looking at the swell of her breasts, not just because they look incredible but because there is bruising all over them. I move the torch up and see more finger marks on her neck and jaw. Her bottom lip is bleeding.

"Who the fuck did this to you?" I ask, trying to detain the anger building within me.

Her eyes brim with tears, and she blinks rapidly and straightens her shoulders. “It doesn’t matter. The important thing is my father doesn’t know. No one knows,” she states, clearing the emotion in her voice.

“Right now, I don’t give a shit about any of that. The only thing I’m concerned about is who the fuck did that to you,” I state with a deep warning in my tone.

She swallows and tries to smile. “I went on a date with Layton as I didn’t have a choice, and then when I was on the date, I spotted your club. I figured they would want to know that you are alive and safe. So, I made the excuse for the toilet and spoke to Ghost, Spider, and Acid, I think. Although he didn’t really talk.” She pauses, exhaling a breath. “Your President doesn’t trust me, which is understandable, and he pinned me by my throat against the wall,” she states.

“Fucking Ghost did this to you?” I growl. I can’t help it. I couldn’t contain my anger any longer.

She shakes her head. “No, no. He didn’t leave a mark, just scared the shit out of me,” she assures me. “Spider put his number in my phone for you to call. No texting as my phone is watched. I had to make up some excuse when I returned to Layton. I said it was a handsy guy and I helped the woman out, hence the number on my phone as well. My neck was a little red from Ghost at the time,” she states. She must see my temper flare, as she holds up her hand. “I’m fine, and it’s fine. I understand, considering the situation. However, Layton noticed. He was going to go back there and hunt the guy down, so I had to think quick and think of the one thing that would distract him,” she finishes, giving me a look.

I tuck her hair back behind her ear. “You fucked him to keep him from finding the club,” I state.

“I didn’t sleep with him. He wanted to, and I said no. So he...” She pauses as she

looks away, humiliation in her eyes. “I said he could have my mouth,” she answers softly.

“And he did this?” I ask, my fingers delicately tracing over the marks.

“He said it’s my fault that he lost control.” She shrugs.

“I’m going to fucking kill him,” I promise her.

She smiles. “Okay, just not until you are out of here safe, okay?” she prompts.

My lips twitch. “Deal.”

Her smile widens and she steps back. She pulls her phone out of her bag and presses call. “Talk to your family.” She smiles, holding the phone out to me.

I take the phone and place it to my ear. I hear the click of an answer but no response. I know it’s Spider making sure it’s me calling. “What’s this? I make the fucking effort to ring and you can’t even answer with an hello?” I mock.

“Fuck, brother!” Spider hoots down the phone. “I have never been happier to hear your voice.” We both pause as I hear voices in the background. “Hold on, let me put you on speaker,” he says. “There are a lot of people that want to speak to you.”

“Scar?” I hear her gentle voice say and my heart aches.

“Hey, beautiful,” I state.

“Oh god.” She sniffs. “I’m so happy you’re okay.”

“I’m good. I told you not to worry,” I remind her.

“Yeah well, we all still fucking worry and that won’t stop until we get you home,” Acid adds.

“Fuck, it’s good to hear all your voices,” I rasp, fighting back the emotion in my chest.

“We will get you back brother, you have my word. We have not stopped fighting for you, and we never fucking will,” Ghost states.

“I know,” I answer, knowing him and my brother. I know they won’t stop until I’m home.

“There is someone new for you to meet when you get home,” Beast yells out in the background. It takes me a moment to realise. “Belle had the baby.”

“Fuck brother, what did you guys have?” I ask.

“We had a little boy, called him River,” Beast answers, a proud tone in his voice. I pause, and that ache in my heart is almost painful, knowing I’m missing this. Missing them.

“Congratulations, brother,” I say softly.

“Don’t give up. We are coming for you, and it will be soon. I fucking promise,” Ghost states firmly.

“I know. Listen, I’ve got to go before Elsie gets caught,” I say, not wanting her to be at risk any longer.

“Okay, go. We will see you real fucking soon,” Acid adds. Before I disconnect, I rub my palm over my chest.

Elsie walks towards me, the torch in her hand and the dim light highlighting the soft look in her eyes. "Are you okay?" she asks.

I swallow and nod. "Yeah, it was good to hear them," I answer and hand her back her phone. "Listen, you better get up to bed before someone finds you," I tell her, wanting to be alone and keep her safe.

She nods. "Yeah, I'm tired," she says quietly. She steps forward, pausing for a minute before quickly reaching up on her tiptoes and placing a soft kiss to my cheek. "Good night," she whispers, handing me the torch before she leaves and locking the door behind her.

I lay down on the mattress and switch the torch off, wanting the darkness to engulf me.

"You think that we don't see you sneaking out? Do you think we are stupid?" my father bellows. I stay where I am, on my knees with my head bowed. I don't lift my head, not daring to look at him. If I do, then it will be extra strikes with the cane. I don't even look to my mother, who is sat in the corner praying. Not praying for me, no. She's praying for my soul, all because I wanted to go to my friend's Halloween party.

My mother rambles words from the sacred book over and over, like she's creating a spell. My father paces back and forth before me. Without even looking, I know his eyes are fixated on me, daring me to look up. I make the mistake, and the too tight rope around my wrists shift, pinching my skin. A whimper escapes me before I can clamp my mouth shut.

"You dare fight the restraints of our one true saviour, our almighty?!" my father roars. The sound of air whooshes past my ear as he cracks the cane across my bare back. I bite down on my bottom lip to stifle my cries. "You are evil!" he yells before

the whoosh of the cane slaps across my back again. “Vile! Spawn! Sent here to corrupt us, to corrupt the innocent! Be gone evil spirits, be gone!” he preaches again. My back feels like it is on fire. The pain is unbearable, and as the metallic taste fills my mouth, I know I’ve drawn blood from biting my lip too hard. The whoosh comes past me again, the cane splitting the skin on my back. I don’t cry out, I don’t whimper, I don’t move. I am frozen to the spot, unable to run or fight back.

Darkness flickers, and suddenly the sacred families stood around, some crying, others praying as my father delivers the almighty’s word. I notice people stood in a line next to him; 5 of them. I push through the crowd of people until I get to the front and see it’s my friend, Edward. He’s stood on a raised step with his family. He looks scared.

“They have been corrupted by evil, and it is flowing through their veins. The only way to save their souls is to sacrifice their vessels. Their bodies will release their souls to the beyond, to our almighty,” my father preaches. Ropes are placed over their necks, and Edward’s mom is sobbing, begging them to stop. His father is void of any emotion. My stomach drops and my eyes go wide as my father signals. The stools they were stood on are kicked out from under them, and they hang, their bodies jerking. Edward kicks his legs out, gripping the rope around his neck as he tries to fight it.

“NO!” I scream, pushing past the crowd. I run up on to the stage and grab Edward’s legs, trying to lift him up, to help him breathe. I’m grabbed from behind, but I don’t let go. I try to hold on to keep him up, keep him alive, but my small 10 year old frame is no match for the two men that are grabbing me. They haul me back, pinning me to the floor. I scream, scratch and kick as I watch my friend and his family die.

I jolt upright, sweat dripping down my back. Panting, it takes me a few moments to realise where I am. I squeeze my eyes shut. “I’m okay, just a fucking dream,” I say to myself. I grab the bottle of water and drink the last few sips that’s left, trying my best to push that nightmare, the memories I’ve worked so hard to forget to the back of my

mind where it belongs.

CHAPTER FIVE

ELSIE

It's been days since I've been able to go down there and see him. I'm not sure if they've fed him or given him water. I can't even ask, as I'm not supposed to know anything. Either my father thinks I'm that stupid that I don't know what goes on in our own home, or he knows I wouldn't dare step out of line and ask.

"Eugene, you promised me a break. I want a bloody break," my mother snaps. My father may be the scary villain in most people's lives, but my mother has a tongue that is as poisonous as a viper.

"It's just not safe," my father sighs back.

"Safe? You have a fucking mini army at your disposal. If they can't keep us safe, then you've obviously hired the wrong fucking people," my mother spits.

My father's face turns to stone as he glares at her. "What about going to the lake house?" he suggests. "Our holiday home is only a couple of hours away."

"And get bitten to shreds by bugs? Fuck off, Eugene," she scoffs, sipping her vodka.

I look up from my book that I am reading. "You could take Layton with you?" I suggest.

My mother's hard gaze snaps to mine. "Who the fuck asked you for your fucking

opinion?" she sneers.

I don't blanch at her words, as she's said a lot worse in the past. "I just figured if you could take him, he could bring his team, and you could make it a pamper weekend away. You could even hold a bridge night. I know the Trenton's are back from their retreat," I state, trying to keep the desperation from my voice. If they go away and take all of the men with them, I could see Scar and check that he's okay. My mother eyes me and I know that I have her attention when she doesn't automatically shut me down with an insult.

"That isn't a bad idea. We can all go," my father suggests.

My mother curls her lip in disgust. She doesn't want me there anymore than I want to go.

"I can't," I blurt out.

My father looks up from his paper. "Oh?" he simply says, not a question of why but a demanding explanation.

"I have a test to study for," I answer, knowing full well that I haven't attended college, nor taken any night classes.

My father raises his brow, calling me out on my bullshit. I think quick on my feet. "I didn't want to say anything, as I-I wanted it to be a surprise for you Daddy," I say in my sickly sweet voice that I know he likes so much. "I have been doing online business studies, so I will be able to help you more with the admin side of things," I say, smiling sweetly at him. Layton shifts from the other side of the room and my gaze flickers to him, seeing a pleased smile on his lips. Of course he would like it, anything that would mean me towing the line working and doing for the family business.

My father's lips tip up into a smile as he gets up from his chair. He stops at my side and kisses the top of my head before turning to Layton and the other men in the room. "You see how smart my girl is! If only your brother had the smarts as well as the brawn, then maybe he wouldn't have wasted his time fighting and then fucking dying. Maybe when you have a son, he can take over the business one day. I'm sure you will raise him right. Just like I have you," he states.

I want to recoil at the thought of my child being born into this vile toxic family. I would rather give my baby up for adoption than raise them to follow in his footsteps.

"Yes lovely, although let's hope they don't take after her for her looks," my mother says with a smirk on her face.

"That settles it, then. This weekend we will go away. I want all men with us in case they choose to attack," my father declares as he looks down on me. "You will stay in the house and keep the alarm on at all times. The shotgun is in my office should you need it," he instructs.

I try not to show the sheer glee of them leaving on my face. I just simply nod. "I won't be going anywhere. I have so much to do," I sigh.

"Good. We will leave Friday and come back early Monday, as I have a meeting Monday afternoon." He nods as he sits back in his seat, picking up his paper. He pauses and looks to Layton. "Get the men packed and ready for Friday," he orders.

Layton nods and walks off. Only 3 days to go until I can see Scar. I warm inside with excitement. I just hope he's okay now.

I watch as they drive off. My father being his controlling self on knowing where we are at all times, I look on the tracker app on my phone to make sure they are far enough away, that even if they decided to return I would have time to leave the

basement.

I grab a couple of bottles of water and a sandwich that I made him, and make my way down to the basement. I unlock it and automatically place the food on a box, before stepping up to remove the piece of wood blocking the little window. “They’ve gone away for the weekend. I’ve set the alarm on the house so if the door goes, I will hear when they come back. I also have a tracker on Dad’s phone so I will remember to check the time.” I sigh and turn to face him, only to find that Scar isn’t moving. “Scar?” I call out. I kneel down next to him and touch him gently. “Scar?” He feels cold to the touch. “Scar?” I call again, my voice fighting the terror that is slowly creeping up my spine. I press my fingers to the back of his wrist and try to feel for a pulse. I sigh in relief when I feel one. “I will be right back,” I tell him.

I run out of the room and up the stairs as fast as my legs can carry me. Quickly opening the fridge, I grab one of my father’s sports drinks and protein shake. I then make him a flask of hot tea before I quickly run up to my room and grab my blanket, then I run into my father’s room and grab a hoodie from one of his draws. As I run back downstairs, trying to carry everything and not fall and break my neck, I make it back to him. Using all my strength, I get behind him, using my body to sit him up a bit. With him laid between my legs, slightly sat up right, I manage to wrestle the hoodie on him. I yank the blanket over him and reach for the sports drink.

“Scar, wake up. I’ve got a drink for you,” I tell him. He groans and I’m relieved to hear him make a sound. “Open your mouth,” I instruct as I place the bottle at his lips and pour. Some of it trickles down his chin, but I hear him taking slow and steady swallows. I sag with relief, not sure what I would have done if he didn’t respond. I make sure he drinks at least half the bottle before I give him some water. Leaving him for a minute, I stroke his hair back from his face as he rests against my front. I wrap my legs around his torso, trying to use my body heat to warm him up. “Please be okay,” I whisper, placing a soft kiss on the top of his head.

His body feels too thin. He needs food, and I mean proper food. I reach for the protein shake. "Scar, open," I order. He does, even though he's semi-conscious. As I pour, I'm not even worried about any that spills. I just want him to get something, anything in him that will help. If he doesn't come around soon, I will have to ring his club. There is no other alternative. My blood boils. Layton is supposed to be looking after him. My father doesn't want him dead. He is no good to him dead.

I run my fingers through his long hair. "You need to wake up, because I'm starting to like you," I tell him. "If you don't wake up, I have no one in my life I care about or cares about me. Well, at least, I think you care about me." I shrug, continuing to stroke my fingers through his hair. "I promise that if you wake up, you can have a proper shower and sleep in my bed," I state.

"Will you be in the shower with me?" his gruff voice mumbles. I gasp, looking down at him, seeing his pale grey eyes looking up at me. Relieved that he's awake and okay, I wrap my arms around him and squeeze. "Fuck, alright easy," he chokes out.

I let him go immediately, smiling. "Oh, thank god," I sigh.

He moves as he tries to sit up, but wobbles. I quickly pull him back so he's still cradled between my legs, with his head against my chest. "Drink some more of this. It will get your sugar levels up before you move," I order. I dread to think what would have happened if I hadn't come down when I did. He was so weak he couldn't stay awake, and if I had come down even a few hours later, he could have been dead. My heart hurts at the thought.

He sips some more in silence before he hands me the bottle, his arm shaking. I take it from him and we stay like that, with him wrapped up in my arms. Eventually, I feel his breathing even out as he drifts off to sleep. I delicately stroke my fingers through his hair, moving it from his face. This big, powerful man has been broken down into a weak and fragile shell of the man he was.

“Scar, are you asleep?” I ask softly. No response. I exhale a breath and place a soft kiss on his head. “I’m so sorry my father did this to you. I need you strong. You are the only person I care about in this entire world, and I don’t want to lose you. So you need to get stronger because I hated my life before I met you. Well, I still hate my life, but you make the days I see you a little brighter.” I shrug as I look down at his sleeping face. His beard is now thick and covers his face, and at the top of his beard you can just make out the top of a scar. I softly trace it with my index finger as I sit with him laid against me for nearly an hour.

Soon, my legs are dead and pins and needles have started prickling along my feet. I try to wiggle to move them but he’s too heavy.

“Ow, shit,” I hiss. I catch his lashes fluttering open and I look down at him and smile. “Hi,” I greet him.

“Your wriggling woke me up,” he grumbles.

“Sorry, it’s just that I’m getting pins and needles,” I apologise.

He smirks. “Come on, you owe me a shower.” He groans as he slowly sits himself up.

“Careful. I don’t want you fainting on me,” I say. Moving quickly, I ignore the pins and needles sensation that is now shooting up my entire leg as I stand in front of him, holding out my hands.

He bats them away as he gets to his feet and stands upright. As he wobbles, my hands instinctively grab him around the waist to steady him. As I press my body against his to support his weight, he looks down at me, his long hair surrounding his face like a curtain.

“Thank you,” he says softly.

I give him a small smile and nod. “Come on, I’m going to cook you some food before you have a shower,” I tell him. I take his hand in mine and slowly lead him up the stairs.

“First time a woman has led me up a set of stairs that hasn’t meant sex,” he mutters.

I roll my eyes. “Well, I’m happy to be your first.”

After leading him into the kitchen, I make him sit on the stool at the island before I go into the fridge and grab some ground beef, onion, and cheese slices. I move around the kitchen, getting all the seasoning and begin mixing it with the ground beef. After making sure the pan is hot, I place a ball of seasoned beef in and use a press to flatten it out into a patty. The smell makes my mouth water.

While it’s cooking, I go to the fridge and grab 2 bottles of water. As I place one by Scar, I can feel his eyes on me with every movement I make around the kitchen. I make another two patties and toast some buns before plating the burgers up. After adding some cheese to the warm and toasted buns—two for him and one for me—I place the plate in front of him with a selection of sauces for him to choose from.

As I take a seat beside him, I point to his plate while taking a big bite out of my burger. “Eat,” I say, pointing to his food.

He eyes me for a second and something warm reflects in his eyes. He nods and grabs one of his burgers and starts eating. He moans at the taste and I smile, watching him eat it quickly, like it may disappear.

I place my hand on his arm. “Slow down or you’ll be sick,” I warn him. He smiles and nods, not even bothering to stop to talk, and I don’t want him to. I want him to eat, to regain some strength, and then I’m going to make him take a shower and then cut his hair and beard for him. After a lot of thought, I had already decided that I was

going to let him go once he was strong enough. Seeing him that weak, I know that if he doesn't go now, he will die, and I don't want his death on my hands. I just need him to hit me and make it look like he escaped and that I didn't help him. Sure, I will miss him terribly, but I would rather miss him, knowing he is alive, than miss him because he's dead.

He finishes his last bite and moans, patting his stomach. I watch as he takes a long slug of his water before he grabs the back of my head and places a swift kiss on my temple.

"Angel, that was fucking incredible," he sighs.

I wipe my mouth with a napkin and smile. "It was just a burger." I shrug.

"The best fucking burger I have ever tasted," he affirms.

"You want dessert?" I ask. "I have some chocolate cookie dough ice cream," I offer.

He shakes his head no. "For now, I'm good."

I nod and stand. After taking his plate, I put it in the dishwasher. "I will show you to the shower," I suggest, waiting for him. He stands, still a little wobbly, but a lot stronger than earlier. I begin to walk towards the stairs and as he reaches for my hand, I turn and look over my shoulder, smiling at him before I lead him upstairs to my bedroom. After closing the door behind us, I watch him look around my room.

"Well, and now you've brought me to your room. Pulling out all the moves tonight, aren't you, angel?" He winks.

I laugh and walk into the en-suite bathroom, quickly switching on the shower and placing some fresh towels on the side for him. "Shower. I will leave the door slightly

open, just in case you feel lightheaded. Call me if you need help. I will go and see what spare clothes I can find. There's a spare toothbrush in the cabinet," I say, pointing above the sink before I then turn to leave.

"Elsie?" he calls. I stop in the doorway and look at him. He exhales a slow and long breath, closing his eyes, as if fighting something. As he slowly opens his eyes, his grey eyes sear through mine, burning me. "Thank you." His voice cracks as he tries to contain his emotion.

My lips curve into a small smile. "Always." I nod.

CHAPTER SIX

SCAR

Standing beneath the hot spray of the shower feels like the most incredible thing I have ever experienced in my life. I use her shampoo and soap, loving that it all smells of her; sweet citrus. I run my hands over my body, feeling my ribcage under my fingertips. Exhaling a breath, I lift my head up towards the shower, letting the hot water cascade over my face.

I'm not stupid. I know that if she hadn't come and got me, I would have been dead. My body aches, every part of me feels tired. With little to no strength to do anything, even having this shower is exhausting me. After switching off the shower I step out, not wanting to risk fucking passing out again. I don't like her seeing me this weak. This isn't the man that I am. I don't want anyone to see me like this.

After wrapping a towel around my waist, I walk to the sink to brush my teeth. I'm thankful the mirror is steamed up and I can't see my reflection. Mirrors weren't needed. I can feel how fucking battered I am, and I don't need to fucking see it. Once I've brushed my teeth—thankful for the freshness in my mouth—I slowly walk out of the bathroom and into her bedroom. She's stood there with a chair in the middle of the room, with a sheet of plastic underneath it and a pair of scissors in her hand.

"Sit," she orders, patting the chair.

"You know this looks like you are about to murder me, right?" I point out, leaning against the door frame to keep myself upright.

Her gaze narrows. “Are you okay?” she asks. I try and give her a reassuring smile, but she sees right through it. She places down the scissors and swiftly moves to me, her eyes searching my face. “Come on, get to bed. I can do your hair tomorrow. This is too much, too soon,” she says as she links her arm with mine. She tries to guide me to the bed, but I refuse to move. Pausing, she turns around and frowns up at me. “Come on,” she urges.

“Cut my hair. I want to feel like me again,” I tell her honestly.

She halts for a moment, as if she is deciding whether to argue with me or not. After giving me a curt nod, she helps me to the chair. I sigh, feeling relieved that I’m not having to hold myself up.

Suddenly, she shoves a drink in my face. “Drink it,” she orders.

I roll my eyes and take it from her, knocking it back in one go. I scrunch my face up in disgust at the taste. “What the fuck is that?” I ask, fighting my gag reflex.

“That is a drink packed full of minerals and vitamins,” she states as she brushes my hair. “And maybe a good helping of sugar to keep your levels up,” she adds.

“Fucking thought so. Too fucking sweet,” I say with a shudder.

I hear her chuckle a soft laugh as she places a towel over my shoulders. “No, don’t move,” she orders.

“Yes ma’am,” I salute. “Please don’t give me a bowl cut,” I beg.

“Aww, damn it, that’s all I know how to do,” she mock whines. I laugh. “I am just giving you a good trim. I like your hair,” she compliments. My hair has always been long, well long for a guy anyway. I sit there while she trims it, and as she moves

around the front of me, the concentration in her green eyes is adorable. Instinctively, my legs open and I grab her curvy hips, pulling her closer so she is stood between my legs. Her hands rest on my shoulders, and as she looks down on me, her gaze is wide and her cheeks are stained a rose pink.

“Is that easier for you?” I ask, my voice rasping with the tension I’m feeling, and I know she’s feeling it too.

She swallows and nods. “That’s great, thank you.” She clears her throat and regains her focus on my hair. I don’t remove my hands from her hips, liking the feel of her beneath my fingertips.

She continues to cut my hair for a while in silence before she breaks it. “So, what’s your real name?” she asks, killing the silence.

“I’ve told you, my name is Scar,” I answer, and she raises her brow at me. “My name is Micah,” I answer.

“Hhm, Micah,” she mumbles.

I despise being called it. “Don’t ever call me that. Scar is my name now,” I tell her sternly. She doesn’t ask why or make further comment, sensing my unease about it.

She continues to cut until she lets out a pleased sigh and leans back. “Done.” She smiles as she looks down at me, still stood between my legs. I watch as she drops the scissors and comb before she runs her fingers through my damp hair. I groan at the feeling of her nails delicately scraping along my scalp. She stops immediately and I open my eyes. Her gaze flickers back and forth, probably trying to decide what I am doing. Truthfully, I don’t know. She inhales and smiles before her hands cup my heavily bearded face. “How about a trim here, too?” she asks.

“You can do whatever you want to me,” I tell her truthfully.

Her cheeks blush again as she smiles and reaches for a pair of clippers. “I won’t get rid of it completely. Just going to cut and tame it,” she says as she switches the clippers on. Her brows furrow in deep concentration as she glides the clippers through my beard.

I know if it was left any longer to grow, I would look like a band member of ZZ Top . My hands are still firmly on her hips, and my fingers twitch, wanting to pull her to me, to grab fistfuls of her plump and round ass, but I don’t. I’m obviously still lightheaded from the lack of food and nutrients, and Elsie is the first woman I’ve been this close to in months. She isn’t the type of girl I could use for one night, because she deserves more, not that anything would happen right now. I’d probably cum with one thrust from where it’s been so fucking long. Definitely wouldn’t be the night she deserves.

She finishes trimming and as she switches off the clippers, she runs her eyes over her work. I watch as she leans in closer and gently blows across my lips, then she swipes her thumb across my bottom lip. My hands tense on her hips, and as her eyes lift from my mouth to my eyes, she licks her bottom lip.

“Sorry, you had a hair on your lip,” she says softly. “Let me wash your hair in the sink and rinse out any loose hairs. You can stay seated,” she assures me. “My fault really. I should have done it before you showered,” she apologises.

I swallow and nod, too focused on my own thoughts and trying to not get an erection. Rage’s ugly ass, Rage’s body part collection, I repeat in my mind as she takes my hand and helps me to stand. Then with one hand, she lifts the chair, and in the other retakes my hand. She lets out a huff as she struggles to carry the chair.

“Let me,” I say, holding out my hand.

She shakes her head no. "I'm not having you exert yourself." She grunts as she walks into the bathroom, setting the chair down next to the edge of the tub. "Sit," she orders.

"You know, you can be quite bossy." I smirk.

She smiles as she reaches for the shower head and switches on the water. For an ensuite, this bathroom is huge, with a deep large tub with a shower head attachment and a separate huge waterfall shower.

"Head back," she orders.

I shift on the chair and lean back. If I thought fighting an erection while she was cutting my hair was hard, then her washing my hair was even harder. As she leans over, her breasts are practically in my face. With the smell of her perfume and her fingertips massaging my scalp, it's no good. I can feel my dick hardening, pitching a fucking tent under the towel. She is unaware of the effect she is having on me, too busy washing my hair to notice. I need to pass out. Fuck, I need to just black out now to save myself from embarrassment.

"Are you okay?" she asks as she rinses the shampoo.

"Fine," I grit through my teeth. She falters what she's doing and steps back, looking at me with concern. My face is set rigid, and every thought in my head is trying to deflate the massive and painful erection.

She presses her hand to my cheeks. "You're burning up," she says, her voice etched with panic. "Come on, under the shower. We need to bring your temp down," she says in a rushed breath. Her face is full of concern, and I mean, she isn't wrong. I need a fucking ice cold shower to control my fucking dick.

I open my mouth to protest, but she's too busy moving around the bathroom in such a panicked frenzy. She grabs my hand and some-fucking-how manages to yank me upright. Her gaze flicks from my face to adjusting the shower temp.

"Come on, I will get in with you," she ushers. I step into the shower, immediately tensing as the cold water hits my body. She quickly steps under it with me. "Oh shit, that's cold." She shivers.

"Angel, you don't need to be in here with me," I tell her through chattering teeth.

"No, it's, it's okay." She shivers. "I don't want you falling and hurting yourself," she says, shuddering.

"You're getting soaking wet," I tell her.

She looks down at her jumper and jeans. "Oh shit, I didn't think." She shivers. I'm unable to tear my eyes away as she removes her jumper. "I was just worried you would end up passing out," she says as she chucks the jumper out of the shower and begins unbuttoning her jeans.

It's at this point I look to the ceiling to avoid looking at her very wet semi-naked body. "I'm good now," I say through gritted teeth.

"Oh, um..." She pauses. "Maybe I was a bit hasty in doing this. I just know it's good for keeping your temperature down." She sighs. I glance down at her, and her wet hair is now stuck to her porcelain cheeks. She anxiously nibbles on her bottom lip while looking up at me, and the temptation is overwhelming. My eyes slowly trail down her body, and if my dick was hard before it's fucking rock hard now. Her voluptuous body is so soft, and I want to trace every curve with my fingers and tongue. She sucks in a sharp breath, and her arms quickly move around her middle.

I frown and grab her wrists, pulling her arms to the side. “Every curve of you is stunning. Don’t ever cover it,” I tell her.

Her gaze finally snaps to the tent I’m pitching, now covered with only a wet towel which just clings to it.

“Oh, um, I’m sorry. I didn’t mean to cause you, um...” she stutters, trying to look away, but her eyes keeping landing right back on it. “It’s like a car crash I can’t look away from,” she mutters.

“Angel, please don’t ever refer to a man’s dick like being in a fucking car crash,” I warn her.

Her big green eyes look up at me. “Do you want me to, um, leave you to relieve yourself?” she asks, gesturing down to my crotch.

I shiver as I remember that we are in fact stood under a cold shower. “Unless it’s going to be your mouth, pussy, or hand relieving me, I’m good. I don’t wank off like a teenage boy,” I grit out.

She tries to push her wet hair away from her face. “Right.” She nods, tapping her chin with her index finger, like she’s genuinely trying to solve an everyday solution.

“Angel,” I growl. Her gaze snaps up to mine. “I’m getting out of the cold shower now,” I tell her.

Her eyes go wide, like she has forgotten where we are. Then she moves and quickly turns the shower off. She steps out of the shower and I ogle her behind, not caring anymore that she’s already seen I’m hard. May as well make the fucking most of it at this point.

She turns with a fresh towel in her hand, and as she holds it out to me, she looks away. I drop the towel that's around my waist and stand there completely naked before her. Taking my time, I don't rush to take the towel she's holding from her, wanting to see if she will chance a look. I want her to chance a look. Suddenly, my head feels light, and I wobble slightly. She turns as if knowing something's wrong, and her eyes land on my dick. They go wide with shock, and I smirk with pride and amusement. My body may be thin, borderline malnourished and covered in bruises, but my dick can still cause that reaction.

I place my hand on the side of the wall to steady myself. She huffs and rolls her eyes, wrapping the towel around my waist, only she accidentally knocks the head of my dick with her hand as she does it.

"Fuck!" I hiss in pain.

"Oh god, I'm so sorry," she apologises, still holding the towel around my waist. "Put your arms over my shoulders and let's walk you to the bed. There are some sweats and a T-shirt there for you," she demands. Her tone stands for no messing, but I couldn't even if I wanted to. My body is still feeling weak. She helps me to the bed, and I sit on it with a sigh, sounding like an eighty-year-old man. "Do you need me to help you dress?" she asks. I glare at her. "Okay." She smiles. "I'm just going to go and get dressed in the bathroom," she states awkwardly, pointing her thumb over her shoulder before she quickly scurries across to her closet. After grabbing what she needs, she then scurries back into the bathroom.

I watch her go, a smile spreading across my lips. After she closes the door, I pull on the sweats, not bothering with a top. I slowly and stiffly climb into the bed, and a deep groan escapes my mouth.

Elsie comes running out of the bathroom, her hair freshly brushed, dressed in a tank top and shorts. "What's the matter? Do you need me to call you an ambulance?" she

asks, panicked.

My eyes instantly drop to her large breasts that are moving freely, barely contained in the tank top. Her nipples pebble, and as I look into her eyes, I quickly pull the quilt over me.

“I was moaning in pleasure. It’s been a long time since I’ve slept in a comfy bed,” I tell her.

She sighs in relief. “Oh, thank god.” She turns the lights off, apart from the small bedside lights. I watch as she rummages around and places another fresh bottle of water on the table beside me, as well as a cereal bar, a protein bar, and some kind of sports energy replenishing drink. She then walks around to the other side of the bed and climbs into bed. After checking her phone, she picks up a huge bucket of popcorn and sets it down between us. “So, what do you want to watch?” she asks as she presses a button on the remote and a TV comes up from the bed frame. Before I can open my mouth, she answers for me. “Oh, I know,” she says as she selects a movie.

I look at the screen. “Beverly Hills Cop?” I ask, looking at her.

She smiles and nods, popping some popcorn into her mouth. “It’s one of my favourites, do you not like it?” she asks as she picks up the remote, ready to turn it off.

I place my hand over hers. “I like it,” I tell her, my eyes feeling heavy.

She must notice, for she quickly moves the popcorn and switches the last of the lights off, surrounding us in darkness, apart from the light from the movie. “Good night, Scar,” she whispers.

“Good night, my angel,” I say before yawning.

CHAPTER SEVEN

ELSIE

I feel warmth at my back, and a heavy weight draped over me. Blinking a few times, I realise that it is Scar. As I look down at his hand wrapped around my waist, I sigh, feeling contented. I jolt when a slight feeling of panic creeps in. I quickly grab my phone and track my father's and Layton's cell. Still hours away, thank god. I sigh in relief. We may actually get to enjoy this weekend before he leaves. My main priority is to feed him, rebuild some of his strength. Carefully, I lift his arm and slink out of bed so not to disturb him. I turn to make sure he is still asleep, and he looks so peaceful. Smiling to myself, I creep out of the room to start making him breakfast.

Pancakes, bacon, hash browns, eggs, orange juice, coffee, syrup, French toast, and even waffles. I carefully carry the overloaded tray back up to my room, and as I push the door open with my foot, I walk in to see him still asleep. After placing the tray down on my dressing table, I walk to him.

"Scar," I whisper, gently stroking his hair away from his face. "Scar," I whisper again.

He groans, stretching his arms above his head, and it's then that I notice he's been drinking some of his water through the night. That's good, I think to myself. He needs his strength back if he is to get out of here. I don't think I could bare to see him suffer any longer.

He rubs his eyes, looking up at me with a soft sleepy smile playing across his lips.

“Sit up. I brought you breakfast,” I tell him softly. He sits up and leans against the headboard, the cover slipping down to his waist revealing his bare torso. Even now, with the outline of his ribs and his collarbone showing, he’s still impressive.

“Looking at me like that, I’m beginning to think you are hungry for something else,” he quips, his voice deep and husky with sleep. I clear my throat and quickly avert my gaze, feeling my cheeks heat with embarrassment. Moving carefully, I grab the tray and place it on his lap. His eyes go wide. “You raid the local diner or something?” he asks.

I smile and tuck my hair behind my ear as I climb back into bed next to him. Reaching over, I snatch a strawberry off his plate of pancakes and take a bite, shrugging. “I cooked it. You need to eat and build up your strength, especially if you are to go home,” I add, my voice breaking at the last part, looking down at my lap.

Scar takes my chin, forcing me to look at him. “Say that again,” he demands softly.

I exhale a breath. I wasn’t going to tell him yet. I’d wanted to keep this time to just us, but truthfully, I’m delusional. My father could come back at any point. They could all return and he will be back down there in the basement, starving to death. I can’t risk that.

“Elsie, look at me,” he demands. My eyes connect with his, and I can’t help it. A tear escapes, trickling down my cheek, his eyes following its path.

“You need to go, you need to go home,” I tell him, removing his hand that still has hold of my chin, keeping his encased in mine, my thumb brushing over his calloused skin. “You stay here, you will die, and I’m not okay having that on my conscience,” I tell him. Another traitorous tear escapes but I quickly swipe it away. Sniffing, I let out a little laugh. “I’ve grown to like you.” He opens his mouth to say something, but I shake my head. “Not like that,” I add quickly, lying to him and myself. “I don’t

have many people to talk to.” I pause. “That’s a lie, I have no one to talk to.” I scoff. “But I can’t be selfish and keep you here, just because I like your company. That would make me no better than my father.”

Looking into his grey eyes, they shine with something I haven’t seen before, like they are lit up with flecks of silver. He surprises me by leaning forward, his hands cupping my face as he plants a chaste kiss on my lips. Smiling wide, like I’ve just told him he’s won the jackpot, my heart warms and breaks all at the same time. He leans back a little, the orange juice and the coffee wobbling on the tray from his movement. His smile falls as he drops his hands from my face.

“If I go, they will hunt me down. They will come for my club,” he states, shaking his head. “Fuck, I got so wrapped up in the thought that I could actually go home, I forgot the consequences if I actually did it.” He sighs as he sits back against the headboard. His gaze remains on mine before he picks up a bit of bacon and starts eating it.

“He won’t come looking for you,” I tell him. His curious gaze assesses me. “I...” I pause. “I haven’t thought it through properly, but you have my word. I will make sure that he won’t come for you or your club. I just need to figure out something that would deter him from doing that.” Scar goes to speak but I shake my head. “No. That doesn’t mean that we wait, and that doesn’t mean that you can’t go. Just leave and don’t look back,” I tell him.

“What about you?” he asks. “Your father ain’t going to believe for a second that I just got out all by myself without your help,” he points out.

I nod. “I thought of that. You need to hit me,” I tell him.

He lets out a laugh and shakes his head. “No. Fucking. Way,” he growls. “I have never laid a hand on a woman, and I ain’t about to start now,” he refuses firmly.

“It’s the only way that they will believe you got out. They are not going to believe a weak, malnourished man Houdinied his way out of the basement,” I point out.

Scar’s lips twitch. “Houdinied, huh? I kind of like that.” He smirks.

I shove his arm. “This is serious! You want to get out of here, and you need to get out of here or you will die. So suck it up and slap me,” I fume in frustration.

“I don’t hit women. The only time my palm is used to slap a woman is when she is bent over my knee, or when she is bent over and I’m balls fucking deep in her. Then and only then will the palm of my fucking hand slap a woman,” he growls. My cheeks heat and my heart beats so fast in my chest, I feel like it’s about to jump right out of my chest at the thought of him doing those things to me. I quickly look away so he can’t see just how much I like the sound of that.

I cough. “Well, just this once you are going to have to have to make an exception to your normal rule.” I look up at him through my lashes, praying that I am masking just how turned on his words made me.

His jaw is tense as his eyes pin me in place. “I will not fucking hurt you,” he grits through his teeth.

I huff out a sigh. “Look, if you don’t sucker punch me?—”

He growls, interrupting me. “Don’t fucking say it like that.”

“Smash my face in? Sock it to me? Give me a beat down? Rough me up? Or knock me the fuck out? Which would you prefer?” I ask sarcastically.

He takes an angry bite of his pancake. “I never had you down for someone that was sarcastic,” he grits out.

I smile before snatching the pancake from his hand and taking a big bite out of it. “I’m just full of surprises. Would it help if I gave you a reason to punch me?” I suggest.

He snatches the last of the pancake from my hand and shoves it in his mouth. “You could hold a fucking gun to my head and I still wouldn’t hit you.”

“Fine!” I huff. “I will just do it myself.” I get up off the bed, walk across the room and grab the heavy ornament of a dog off of my bookcase. My mother got me it and I hated it. The dog’s eyes were beady, and I swear the thing was cursed. I slowly lift it just above my head, preparing to strike or drop it.

“What are you doing?” Scar asks as he removes the tray of food from his lap. I scrunch my face up and brace for the impact of the hit.

Come on, come on, you need to do this so he can get out of here, I say, giving myself an internal pep talk. After I let out a pathetic roar and slam the heavy ornament to my face, I brace myself for the hit, but it doesn’t come. Instead, a firm hand grabs my arm. I open my eyes to see Scar stood there, gripping my arm tightly in his fist. He removes the ornament with his other hand and places it back on the bookcase.

“You do not hurt yourself,” he seethes.

“Do you have a better idea?” I ask.

He pauses for a moment, still holding my arm in his firm grip. “What drugs have you got?” he asks. I raise my brow in question. “What if you just took some tablets and slept?” he suggests.

I roll my eyes as I remove my arm from his hold. “What, I drug myself and then you magically open the door and escape the basement?” I counter. “That ain’t going to

work. What is believable is that I heard banging coming from the basement and then went down to see what it was. I open the door and you hit me, knock me out and run. That is believable. You are just going to have to suck it up and hit me. You are a big bad biker, so just man up and hit a woman,” I snap.

We stand toe to toe, and I refuse to back down. I may hate my mother, my father, and refuse to become anything like them, but I sure as shit inherited their stubbornness, their strong will and refusal to back down. Well, when it came to others that is. With them I just do what makes them happy from fear more than anything else.

Scar’s jaw is clenched, the muscle ticking. He’s pissed, but he’s holding back. “I’m not even going to tell you the shit I’ve done, the pain I’ve caused others, the times I’ve tortured men for hours where they begged me to end their lives. I’ve killed men for hurting women, for raping women, and I will not fucking become what I fucking despise,” he seethes through his gritted teeth.

He’s a good man, a terrifying, dangerous man with a good heart. I knew that the moment I saw him in the basement. If he wasn’t, he would have lunged for me, hurt me in any way he could to escape. I keep my eyes on him and place my palm on his chest, right above his heart. Gazing into his eyes, I can feel his steady soothing rhythm.

“I know you are a good man, and I know that you would never hurt me or any other woman or child, or even a man that didn’t deserve it. This isn’t and wouldn’t be the same situation. This is protecting you. It’s protecting me. If my father found out or even suspected I let you out, let you go free...” I pause, shaking my head. Glancing away, I swallow, fighting back the fear of what he would do. “I, I can’t even begin to tell you what he would do. This is the only way. I would rather take a hit from you, a small moment of pain, knowing that you got out of here, and that you are safe. You stay, you die, and that will cause me a lifetime of pain,” I confess. He looks down on me and I can see the torment in his decision.

Slowly, he reaches over and places his hand on mine. “You are an angel trapped in hell. You could escape this and come with me,” he states softly. My lips part as a shuddery breath escapes me at his words. I want to say yes and go with him, of course I do. To be free of my father, my family and this life, I would take his hand now and run, but I can’t. To do so would be stupid. It would be dangerous; for him, for me, for everyone.

“I can’t,” I whisper.

“You can. My club can keep you safe. We can protect you,” he says, trying to convince me.

I shake my head. “He will come for you, for your club, your family, and kill anyone that gets in his way. It’s not even that he cares about me, it’s the principle. The same way he came for one of you, for my brother. Maybe one day when he’s dead and I am free, I can come and find you and you and me can... I don’t know, go for a drink? Or maybe you could take me for a ride on your bike.” I smile, trying to make light of a tense situation.

“What will you do to make sure that your father doesn’t come looking for me?” he asks. It’s the one question I was hoping he wouldn’t ask. I move to step back, but he keeps my hand firmly on his chest. “Your father will not take kindly to me hitting his daughter, his now only child, breaking the deal and escaping. He will still hunt for me, and he will come for my family,” he states.

I was hoping me brushing it off earlier would be enough for him, that he would just be happy to take the offer of freedom, but I should have known better.

I give him a small smile. “I will distract him. A small sacrifice for your life,” I state, purposely keeping my answer vague, not just for him but for my own sanity, because if I thought about it, he would see my fear, my reluctance, and he wouldn’t allow me

to help him.

He opens his mouth to say something, but my cell rings. I move across the room, seeing my father's name across the screen. I click answer and put him on speaker, so Scar can hear him too.

"Morning, Daddy," I answer in a sickly sweet voice, keeping my eyes fixed on Scar's.

"We are on our way home," he states sharply.

"Oh?" I breathe, my eyes going wide as I look at Scar. "Is everything okay?" I ask.

He sighs. "Layton got word of something, and we need to move our asset. We will be there within the hour."

"Okay Daddy, I will make sure there are food and refreshments ready for your return," I assure him, like the good obedient daughter I am.

"Good girl," he praises. I know he has me on speaker, just another show for anyone that is listening.

"Goodbye Daddy, drive safe," I say before disconnecting. Gazing at Scar, I knew that we were now out of time. "I need to clear up and then you need to knock me the fuck out," I demand.

CHAPTER EIGHT

SCAR

As Elsie ran around clearing up the food, she quickly shoved a waffle and some bacon in my hand, along with a glass of orange juice and ordered me to eat and drink up, ranting that if I was to run from her, I would need my strength. I wanted to protest and tell her I already felt a million times better, but by her face she was in no mood for my arguments. I didn't like it, or the unknown of what she would be facing once I was gone. What the fuck could she do that would cause such a distraction that her father would ease off from hunting me or my club down? It was a question I couldn't erase from my mind. That, and was Ghost and the club on their way to get me? Her father had mentioned about moving their asset. I wasn't stupid. That asset was me.

"Put these on," she orders, shoving a pile of clothes in my hand as she rushes around, erasing any trace of me being in her room. She grabs the tray and turns to face me. "Get dressed, then come downstairs. I have a bag to give you," she orders before swiftly leaving the room.

After quickly getting changed into a pair of black sweatpants and a black hoodie, I put on the pair of trainers she gave me, wincing when they pinched my toes. They had to be 2 sizes too small, but they would have to do until I made it back. I spot a notepad and pen on her dresser and move quickly, writing her a note.

My Angel,

Thank you will never be enough. XX

That was all I wrote. I didn't have the words to say how I felt, and I didn't have the time either. After placing the note inside her pillowcase so she would feel it when she went to bed tonight, I quickly walked downstairs. As I entered the kitchen, I saw she had got out the mixing bowl and laid out my remaining uneaten breakfast. She was making it look like she was cooking it for them. As she looks up, she grabs a bag off the side and hands it to me.

"There's some food in there and a burner phone. I stored Ghost's number in it. When you get around 10 miles from here, call him. Stay hidden through the trees, because my father will send his men looking. As soon as you open that front door, the alarm system will alert him. You leave out the front, pull your hood up, and keep your face hidden so he can see you on the cameras. When you make it into the woods, change your clothes. They are in the bag. Then move as fast as you can, but don't push your body too hard. I don't want you collapsing or all of this will be for nothing," she asserts.

Before she can utter another word, I pull her into my arms and hold her tight. "You need me, you call Ghost," I tell her, knowing she will still have his number stored on her cell. She nods against my chest, and I place a kiss on top of her head before stepping back.

"Ready?" I ask, feeling dread pooling in my gut.

She swipes away a tear from her cheek, smiles and nods.

As I follow her back down to the basement, I'm fighting every fibre of my being. She stops in the doorway and hands me a brick. I look at it and then to her.

"I will turn away. Just hit me over the back of the head with it," she orders, like she's just asked me to do the dishes.

“Fuck, what if this causes you serious damage, darlin’?” I ask, dread filling my stomach.

“It won’t. I trust you,” she answers. “And don’t worry, I cleared the basement of any sign of the things I gave you,” she assures me. I pause, looking down at the brick. “Do it. We don’t have much time,” she orders, turning her back on me.

I lift my arm up, holding the brick aloft her head and squeeze my eyes shut. “I’m so sorry for this, Angel,” I grit through my teeth and slam the brick down. My heart lurches as it connects with her head. Hearing her body crumble to the floor, I drop the brick as horror and guilt swims through me. Bending down, I sweep her hair back from her face and check her pulse. It’s strong and steady. I want to stay with her, make sure she’s okay, but I know I can’t, because I know that if I did, when she came around it would all be for nothing. “Thank you for everything,” I whisper before bending down and placing a gentle kiss on her cheek.

I quickly turn and leave, making my way out the house, doing exactly as she says. The alarm rings out loud, echoing for miles. I move quickly through the thick trees, constantly looking over my shoulder, making sure they aren’t back and that I am not being followed. Once I think I’m far enough away, I open the backpack and pull out the change of clothes; a pair of jeans and a grey hoodie this time. Quickly changing, I shove the other clothes back into the backpack. I pause, smiling when I see a wrapped sandwich with a note attached.

Eat me, I’m delicious!

I place it back in the backpack and continue on my way, wanting to get further away until I stop.

I’m not sure how long I’ve been walking, or for how long. My feet are in agony and my body is tired when I find a large tree. As I sit and lean against the trunk, I open

the backpack and start eating the sandwich. I pull out a bottle of isotonic sports drink she packed and drink half of it in one go. As I pull out the cell, I figure that now is as good a time as any to ring Ghost. After I hit call, he answers in 3 rings.

“Who is this?” he answers bluntly.

“That ain’t no way to greet a brother,” I mutter.

“Scar?” he asks in disbelief.

“The one and fucking only,” I answer back.

“Jesus,” he mutters.

“Look, I’m going to be quick. I’m out. I am currently sat in the middle of some fucking wood. I’m going to keep moving straight, and hopefully come to a road or a building. Something. Tell Cash I left out the front door and ran straight. I’ve not turned in any other direction. Have him work out where the fuck I am, then come and fucking get me,” I state.

“How in the fuck did you get out?” he asks.

“I will explain later, but right now I need you fuckers to come and get me,” I state.

“Of course. Hold tight brother, we will find you,” Ghost says before disconnecting.

I get to my feet, groaning at the pain and keep moving. Light soon begins to fade, and as I make my way through the wood every part of my body protests, begging me to stop, but I don’t. I pause for a moment, hearing what sounds like a truck engine. I am about to crouch down low when the burner phone rings.

I immediately answer. “Yeah?”

“We are here brother, you have to be close,” Ghost states.

“Fucking took you long enough,” I complain as I push forward, following the sound of the truck. I squint when I see the lights of the vehicle through the break in the trees, and two bodies shining torches into the wood. One shines right in my eyes. “Fuck man,” I mutter.

“Jesus, it’s fucking good to see you,” Ghost sighs before disconnecting.

Ghost and Spider are the only ones there, both pulling me into a tight hug, slapping me on the back. I quickly climb into the back of the truck and let out a relieved sigh as my body finally relaxes with pure exhaustion.

“Jesus brother, you must have walked over 15 miles,” Spider points out as he drives.

Ghost turns around in the passenger seat to look at me. “Fuck brother, they starved you?” he asks.

I nod. “Yeah, I’d be dead if it wasn’t for Elsie,” I answer. “She’s the reason I’m here,” I add.

Ghost gives a brief nod. My eyes are too heavy from exhaustion, and he turns back around, not pressing further. As sleep takes hold, my last thought is that I hope she’s okay.

CHAPTER NINE

ELSIE

I open my eyes and my head feels like it's caving in on itself. A groan escapes me and as I look up, I see my father's angry gaze. Not concern or worry. Anger.

"You want to tell me why the fuck you were down in the basement?" he seethes. I blink and move to slowly sit up, and it's then that I realise I've been moved to the living room.

I wince as I touch the back of my head, feeling dried blood where the brick had connected. For someone that didn't want to knock me out, he sure did a good job. "I, I am not sure what happened," I whimper as I turn my expression to a mask of fear. "I heard banging down in the basement, so I went to look. I remember opening the door and looking around, then darkness," I lie, adding in a small sob for effect. Seriously, I should be receiving my Oscar by now.

My father's assessing gaze relaxes for a moment before he nods and turns to Layton, who I hadn't realised had been stood behind me the entire time.

"Kill them," he orders.

Shit! "What? Daddy, not a war, please," I beg. He is about to open his mouth, but I cut him off. "I, I wasn't going to say anything, but in light of what's happened, I feel compelled to..." I exhale as I look up at Layton, forcing a look of love and adoration upon my face. "I've fallen in love, Daddy. I have fallen in love with Layton. I don't

want any wars. I don't want to risk losing him, not when we are only just getting started," I say, choking on a forced sob.

My father freezes as he looks between Layton and me. Layton looks at me, his gaze narrowing. I look at him as I reach my hand out for him and he steps forward, taking my hand in his. He leans down and I pull him into my arms.

"On our date the other night, you made me fall. This hit to my head, this near death experience has made me not want to hold back. I don't want to wait another minute. Just think of us, the power we would have together," I whisper in his ear, purposefully dangling that carrot I know he so desperately wants. He leans back slightly, looking into my eyes. "It's you and me. You can rule and I will be right by your side. My king needs his queen," I whisper softly, wanting to gag at my own words. I know I've signed myself up for a lifetime of suffering by even suggesting this to Layton. I know that once I'm his he will not let me go. A small sacrifice for Scar's life.

Layton smiles, that evil glint in his eye sparking. He roughly cups my face in his hands and places a rough and frankly crappy kiss on my lips. "My fucking queen," he growls. I force a smile, watching as he stands and holds his hand out to my father. "Sir, I'm sorry for the shock you must be feeling. I have felt things for your daughter for a long time now, and I was never quite sure if she felt the same way, but now I know that she does. I would like nothing more than to ask you for her hand in marriage," he states.

I want to be sick. Marriage?! I mean, I knew I'd be his, and I knew he would parade me on his arm and declare to all that I was his, but marriage?! I've done it now. This has gotten way out of hand. I'm so zoned out in my own thoughts that I miss my father giving Layton his blessing. I'm only aware he's said yes when my father crouches down and gives me a tight hug, his hand squeezing my arm. It's a warning not to fuck this up. God, what have I done?

“For my daughter, I will not bring war. Not today. Today we celebrate! Go get yourself cleaned up. Tonight, we will go out to dinner at Farrell’s!” my father exclaims. Not a word of someone checking over my head. Not, are you okay? Nope, let’s get ready and go out to dinner to announce to the world that his daughter has chosen well. In his eyes, at least.

He stands and drapes his arm over Layton’s shoulders. “Come on, let’s have a drink while she gets ready,” my father says as they walk off.

I hear my mom scoff from the other side of the room. “You have no idea what you are getting yourself into,” she sneers, shaking her head. “I always knew you were stupid, but I didn’t think you were this stupid,” she adds. “You should have ran with him when you had the chance.”

My ears start ringing at her words, and I try to mask my reaction. “I don’t know what you’re talking about.” I shrug, trying my best to hide the fear that is now coursing through my veins. Does she know? If she knows and tells my father, I will be in for a world of pain.

She raises her perfect eyebrow at me as she takes another sip of her drink. “Sure, you don’t. I mean, I get it. He is a good looking man. We’ve all wanted to have a roll in the sheets with a bit of rough, but what I don’t understand is why you would throw your whole life away for a man you barely know. You think your father is bad, just you wait my girl. Layton is worse, so much worse. He’s fucked me, you know,” she confesses.

My gaze snaps to hers, my eyes wide.

She nods. “Oh yes, Layton is thirsty for power, and he will fuck anyone or anything to claim his seat at the head of this world. He thought he could control me, but he forgets that I’ve been playing this game for many, many years, and I know exactly

what people like Layton are like. He was simply an enjoyable fuck. Well, he needs some assistance in that department, but still, he's younger and fitter than your father." She shrugs as she takes another sip of her drink. I shudder at the mention of my mother fucking Layton and my father. They are both images I do not want in my mind, now or ever.

I push my shoulders back and settle my face into one of boredom. "I don't know why you are telling me this," I state.

She smirks. "Because I can, and because as much as you hate me, you are more like me than you realise. I had a chance to get away once, to be actually happy, but I didn't. Your father found out and killed him. He killed the man I loved and trapped me here with him, with you and your moronic brother. Forcing me to live a life of misery." She looks down into her glass. "Drinking and medication are the only things worth living for around here. Yet to anyone else, I am the doting wife," she mutters, knocking back the last of her drink.

Nothing like a mother's declaration that she hates you, your brother, and father. Hates the life she's been forced to live because of my father. I felt her hatred my entire life, and she never needed to say it. Just from the look in her eyes I knew she despised me.

I clear my throat and stand. "I'm going to get changed for dinner," I mutter.

"You do that, and take a long look at me sweetheart, because this will be you in less than ten years from marrying him." She nods, wobbling slightly on her feet.

I don't respond and just continue up the staircase to my room. Once inside the safety of my bedroom, I allow my silent sobs to break free. As I place my hand on my heart, it feels like my heart is being shredded. I take deep breaths, trying to calm my emotions, trying to calm my pain. After quickly wiping my cheeks, I stand and walk to my bed. Reaching down, I take the pillow he slept on and hug it close to my chest,

still scenting him on it.

It's ridiculous that I feel more for a man I've known for only a matter of weeks, a man that was forced here against his will, a man that befriended me. He was kind, respectful, and he treated me better than anyone in my life has ever treated me. Hell, he was kinder to me than my own parents. I lay back on my pillow and sigh. As I roll onto my side, I hear a crinkle under my ear. Frowning, I sit up and slide my hand under the pillowcase, my fingertips finding a small piece of paper. I unfold it and read it.

My Angel,

Thank you will never be enough. XX

I smile as a fresh wave of tears fall down my cheeks. As I get up off my bed and fold the note, I place it in between the pages of Romeo and Juliet . A small smile plays on my lips. Not that we are two star crossed lovers or anything, maybe more like kindred spirits. There is certainly no love between us, maybe for me, but it's more a feeling, a connection. Not that I can't deny my attraction to him. I would have to be blind not to appreciate him, even in his malnourished state. Now he was gone, and I will no longer have anything to look forward to, I will have no one to talk to. Now I will be alone.

After deciding on a dress that I know will please Layton, I quickly slip it on before I apply some make-up and style my hair in loose waves. As I stare at my reflection in the mirror, the image of the perfect wife on the arm of the man who will one day take over from my father flashes in my mind. A knock quickly startles me from my daze.

"Come in," I answer. The door opens and Layton walks in. I instantly regret inviting him in. His eyes appreciatively sweep my body, and my stomach lurches at his look. I force a smile on my lips. "I'm ready," I say softly before reaching for my bag. He

reaches out and snatches my wrist, gripping it firmly enough to pinch. I look at him, confused. “Layton, is everything okay?” I ask as my heart thumps in my chest loudly. He takes my wrist and twists it behind my back, locking my body up against his. “Ow, Layton you’re hurting me,” I complain.

His eyes burn into mine, not with desire, but with anger. He leans in, his breath brushing against my cheek. “You think I’m some kind of fool?” he hisses.

I swallow anxiously, my eyes wide. “I, I don’t know what you are on about,” I lie, stuttering. If he was to place his palm on my chest right now, he would feel just how fast my heart is beating.

He smiles an evil smile, while still keeping my arm pinned behind my back. Slowly, he lifts his phone with the other hand, showing me a video on the screen. It takes me a second to realise it’s a video of my bedroom. My eyes widen as it shows me in bed with Scar. I look around my room for the camera.

“You’ve been filming me?!” I hiss.

He yanks on my arm, and I use my free hand to try and push myself away, but his grip is too strong. “You had that cunt in your fucking bed. You helped him escape,” he seethes.

Tears spring in my eyes, but I blink rapidly, refusing to let them fall. “Nothing happened. If I hadn’t helped him, he would have died. He is nothing to you or Dad but a pawn in the game you are playing. He is gone now. I am here, and I have given you everything you have ever wanted. You want to be my father, you want his throne, his fucking power. I have given it to you,” I fume. Pausing, I catch my breath, wondering who this woman is that is speaking. I have never in my life spoken to him like that, and I can see the brief glimpse of shock in his eyes at my assertiveness. He releases his grip on my wrist and turns, walking towards the door. I exhale a breath of

relief thinking that it's over. Slowly, I rub at my wrist, hating the deep red mark from his hold on my skin. The sound of my bedroom lock clicking has my eyes jolting to Layton. He turns, looking at me, his eyes alert with mirth. "What are you doing?" I ask, my voice breaking.

He chucks down his phone and begins unbuckling his jeans as he moves towards me. For every step forward he makes, I step back until I can feel my bed behind my knees.

"We have to go to dinner," I mutter, a pathetic excuse to try and stop what I know he's about to do. I shouldn't have stood up to him like that. Men like Layton don't like a strong woman, and they don't like being outsmarted. He's about to show me exactly what power he has over me.

"Turn around, lift your dress up, and remove your underwear," he orders.

I swallow, my throat constricting with fear. Shaking my head, I force a wavering smile onto my face. "But my father will be waiting," I whisper.

"Your father will fucking wait. I either take what I want now, or I tell your father exactly what happened," he seethes.

I stare at him for a moment, tears brimming in my eyes. He knows what my father would do, and he knows what hell that would be, but right now I have to make a choice between two hells. Keeping my eyes on him, I hitch my dress up and slide my underwear down my legs, kicking them to the side with my heels. His eyes hungrily take in my most intimate area.

"I've changed my mind," he states. "Remove the dress and your bra, and lay on you back with your legs spread," he orders.

My stomach lurches. The only reprieve I would have had if he'd bent me over is I would have been able to look away from him, take my mind to anywhere but here. It's a lot harder to do when he's laying above me. I do as he asked, staring at him with nothing but pure hatred in my eyes. He just smirks as I remove everything and lay on the bed. Staring up at the ceiling, refusing to look at him, I wait. I feel him close by before he runs the tip of his dick through my seam. It takes everything in me not to react as I lay there like a lifeless corpse. He wants me like this, then fine. He can take my body, but he isn't getting anything else from me.

Without warning, he slams himself inside me. Pain shoots through me and I bite back my whimper, refusing to give him anything. He lets out a grunt. "Fuck, you're so much tighter than your mother," he breathes. I fight my urge to gag. He laughs, knowing the reaction his words would cause. He slams himself in and out of me a few times, and I remain as still as my body will let me, keeping my eyes pinned to the ceiling. "Look at me," he growls.

I refuse by keeping my eyes on the ceiling. Suddenly the palm of his hand slaps across my cheek, whipping my head to the side. I gasp and look at him. He grabs my face roughly in his hand, forcing me to keep my gaze on him.

"I said, fucking look at me!" he seethes, still pumping himself in and out of my body. I grit my teeth, refusing to cry, refusing to show any weakness. "That's better. You are mine now, you fucking whore. You are fucking mine to do what I want, whenever I fucking want," he pants.

I don't respond. Instead, I just stare at him, pure hatred pouring from my every fibre. He laughs, then lets out a deep groan as he thrusts himself harder and harder into me. I want him to cum, for this to be over. As I clamp my walls purposefully around him, he lets out a deep growl before removing himself. He leans over me and glides his hand up and down his shaft before he climaxes all over my face. I blink and grit my teeth, watching as his chest heaves.

“I have so many plans for us, my fucking whore.” He smirks before spitting in my face. I blanch but keep my face expressionless. “Clean yourself up, then get your fucking ass downstairs,” he orders before doing his jeans up.

I lay there unmoving until I hear the door close behind him, and only then do I allow myself to break.

CHAPTER TEN

SCAR

“Jesus Christ, I couldn’t eat another fucking bite,” I groan as I pat my full belly. Since I’ve been back, Queenie has done nothing but cook and try and feed me what feels like every five minutes.

“I’m just happy to have you home, and I want you back up to normal strength,” Queenie sighs, squeezing my shoulder.

Ghost had kept most of the club away for a couple of days. He’d said that after seeing the state of me, I needed to rest and fucking eat. One hug from Beast and he would snap me in two. I didn’t protest. I just wanted to sleep.

“How you feeling, tough guy?” Star asks as she pulls the chair out beside me and takes a seat.

I turn my gaze to her and give her a soft smile. “I’m good, now that I’m home, darlin’,” I tell her.

She gives me a small timid smile before placing her hand on mine. “You know I don’t do emotions often.” She pauses. “And I’m not religious in any way. However, I prayed every fucking night that you would be okay. That you would come home.” Her voice cracks with emotion and as her eyes land on mine, my chest aches. “We all prayed. It wasn’t the same with you not here,” she adds as her eyes flicker to Ghost.

I clear my throat and nod in understanding. “Is, er...” I pause. “Is she okay?” I ask.

I don’t need to clarify who I am talking about. Star knows. “Rhea is good. She misses you though,” she adds.

I rub my face with my free hand, not wanting to lose the touch and comfort from Star’s. “Shit, I don’t want to cause trouble for Acid,” I add.

Star rolls her eyes. “You ain’t going to cause shit. You fucking sacrificed your life for him. For them. I mean, he isn’t about to let you hump her till dawn, but he isn’t stupid.”

I smirk. “You sure he isn’t going to let me hump her till dawn?” I mock.

She lets out a laugh. “Good to see some of that old Scar is coming back, and when you have your strength, I know for a fact the bunnies have been giving Ghost a hard time. They miss you. Forget a three-way. I reckon you got your very own hareem waiting for you.” She winks.

I lift her hand and place a gentle kiss on the back of it. “You always know the right thing to say to cheer me up.” I smirk.

She’s about to open her mouth, but Ghost cuts her off. “I know you’ve been near death, and we haven’t seen you in months, but if your mouth touches my woman again, I will cut it off,” he warns.

I can’t help it. I laugh. “Fuck Pres, now that’s a welcome home.” I cough back my laughter.

Ghost’s eyes alight with amusement, but the moment is cut short by a loud rumbling of bikes. His gaze flickers to the window behind me and he smiles. “Looks like the

brothers have had enough of waiting.”

Star releases my hand as I stand and walk to the door. Warmth and anxiety swirls in my gut as I step outside into the parking lot, unable to contain the smile on my face.

“Fuck!” Beast yells, being the first to get off his bike. He strides towards me. “Fuck, brother,” he mutters, concern flashing in his eyes. It’s the same concern I saw in Ghost’s and Spider’s eyes when they picked me up. Beast pulls me into one of his bear hugs, slapping me hard on my back.

I wince. “Easy,” I cough.

He releases me, his eyes filling with fury. “We will fucking skin him alive for what he’s fucking put you through,” Beast seethes. I nod, not giving a direct response.

Cash comes over next, trying his best to mask his concern. He must have been pre-warned from his mom. We clasp hands and pull each other in for a hug. “Damn good to see you,” he affirms, squeezing my shoulder.

Cash steps to the side, and Spider smirks as our gazes meet. “Looking better already,” he points out.

I mock, flicking my hair. “I know.” I laugh, fluttering my lashes.

Spider bends over laughing. “Fucking shithead,” he snorts.

I laugh, but it quickly dies when I see Rage stood there, his face solemn. “You look like shit,” he states bluntly.

I smile and nod. “Months of being starved and beaten will do that to you,” I retort.

“I’m going to kill them. I’m going to remove every inch of their flesh slowly. I will make sure they die a slow and fucking painful death for what they have done to you,” Rage threatens.

Hawk walks up beside Rage and claps him on the shoulder. “Remember what we said about keeping it light?” He smirks, rolling his eyes.

I laugh. “It’s good to see you guys.” Hawk hugs me, smacking a loud kiss on my cheek as he pauses. He laughs as I shove him off. Rage simply pats my shoulder. I’m even surprised by that contact from Rage. He really must care.

Lastly, Acid walks up to me with his hands in his jean pockets.

“We will give you guys a minute,” Hawk suggests.

I don’t turn around or respond. My gaze is fixed on Acid.

“It’s good to see you, brother,” he states, his voice thick, laced with guilt. My lips tip up at the edge as I stand there, the air awkward between us. “What you did for me, for Rhea.” He pauses, looking off into the distance. “Honestly brother, I want to thank you, grovel at your fucking feet for what you have done, while in the same breath I want to knock you the fuck out for such a reckless fucking move.”

“What I’m about to say may make things more awkward, but I’ve got to fucking say it. I did it for her,” I state bluntly. He doesn’t even flinch at my words. Instead, he smiles and nods. “I couldn’t bare it seeing her so fucking destroyed. She was...” I pause, sighing. “It was destroying her. I couldn’t sit back and let that continue. You would have done exactly the same,” I point out.

Acid nods in agreement. “You are right, I would have,” Acid adds. “There is one thing I’ve got to make clear. She is mine, and I won’t share her with you,” he states in

a sharp tone.

My smile widens and I shake my head. “I ain’t back for her. Hell, I knew back then when I made the decision she was in love with you. Not me, and as much as I wish it was me, I ain’t going to do shit, brother. She made her choice, and I respect that.” Acid’s shoulders sag with relief. Neither of us knew how we were going to be with each other, how this situation would play out. “That ain’t to say that if you hurt her, I will make my fucking move,” I joke. Acid laughs as he steps into my space and yanks me into a tight hug. I slap his back.

“Now you’re skinny as shit, can you still handle your liquor? Because we need to fucking celebrate,” Acid states, draping his arm over my shoulder as we walk inside.

“I think one drink and I will be on my fucking ass,” I laugh.

“Excellent! Let’s get fucked,” he yells.

He wasn’t wrong. The drinks were flowing, and Queenie was drafted in to babysit all the kids at Ghost’s and Star’s house, as that was deemed the most secure place. Ghost wasn’t taking any risks since I had been gone, and he’d upped his security on his place. He’d even gotten an electric fence and motion censored cameras around the property. From listening to the other brothers, their place wasn’t too dissimilar.

I was being cautious with my drinking. My body was still not completely back to normal and I was taking it easy. The ol’ ladies all showed up one by one. I didn’t need to turn around to know when Rhea arrived. After I heard her choke back a sob, I turned around on the bar stool, stopping my conversation with Hawk to see her stood there. Tears were brimming in her eyes, and fuck she looked as beautiful as I remember.

I gave her a small smile. “Hey beautiful,” I greet softly. Acid stands beside her,

giving her neck a gentle reassuring squeeze. He whispers something in her ear and she breaks our gaze to look at him, her eyes soft and full of love. She smiles up at him, and if I needed a reminder that she loves him and not me, that confirms it. Acid places a kiss on the top of her head and she nods and steps towards me, wringing her hands nervously in front of her. I can't help but laugh at how nervous she is. What the fuck has she got to be nervous about?!

"Scar, I—" she whimpers. I cut her off by snatching her into my arms and yanking her to me. She wraps her arms around my waist, burying her face in my chest as her body shakes with sobs. Leaning down, I rest my face against hers. Acid may feel uneasy about this, but right now I don't give a fuck. I need this.

"It's okay sweetheart, it's all okay," I assure her. Breathing her in, feeling her body pressed against mine again, I expect the same feelings to arise from before, but they don't. The feelings are different. I love her, but I thought having her close like this, that breathing her in would stir something else in me, too. Leaning down, I place a kiss on the top of her head, and she takes a step back, wiping her cheeks as she beams up at me.

"I am so happy you are here. You're really here," she breathes, like she doesn't quite believe her own eyes.

I return her smile. "I am here." I look past her, checking that Acid isn't about to hand me my ass, because if I hugged Star like that Ghost would most likely have his blade to my throat. Acid gives me a nod, showing that he understands.

Rhea sniffs back her tears. "Er, can we talk?" she stutters.

I nod. "Sure sweetheart, but make sure your man knows. I don't want him getting the wrong idea. I know how excited you are to see me," I say, winking teasingly at her.

She lets out a small laugh. “He knows,” she adds. I nod and gesture for her to lead the way. She walks us over to the couches on the other side of the bar, far away enough from others that they can’t eavesdrop, but in sight to assure Acid that nothing else would happen. She looks down at her hands. “Scar, about us.” She pauses. I burst out laughing and her head shoots up, her eyes wide and her mouth hanging open in shock.

“Sweetheart, there ain’t no us. I thought that was made very clear a long fucking time ago. I know you love Acid and not me,” I remind her.

“No!” she snaps. That has me shutting my mouth. “No, I mean, yes I love Acid, but I love you, too. It’s just a different love.” She sighs, scrunching up her face at her words. “God, that sounds so lame. I mean, I care for you a lot, and maybe if I hadn’t known Acid, if I hadn’t fallen for him, then we would have, you know.” She sighs. “I’m making this so much worse.”

I reach over and take her hand in mine. “Sweetheart, you don’t need to go over this. I know how you feel because I feel it, and sure, if Acid hadn’t already won your fucking heart over long before my dick was buried in you, I may have stood a chance.”

“I, I didn’t love Acid like that before we—” she began.

“Sweetheart, you loved him,” I said, cutting her off. “You just didn’t admit it to yourself, and he did the same. Don’t feel guilty, and don’t feel bad about how you feel. I just wanted you to be happy, and you are happy, right?” I arch my brow. She smiles brightly and nods. “Then I’m fucking happy, but if you change your mind and fancy a ride, you know where to find me,” I tease, breaking the tension.

She laughs and shakes her head. I look at her, really look at her, taking in her soft lips, the way her eyes sparkle when she laughs, and I still feel that pang of pain in the

pit of my stomach. It's just not as painful as it once was. Maybe it's easing because I was away, or maybe it was something else, someone else. My thoughts drift to Elsie, to the way she cared for me, her smile, her gentle touch. I wonder if she's okay. Hell, I pray that whatever she said to her family, they bought the bait.

"Hey, where did you go?" Rhea asks.

I blink, snapping myself out of my thoughts. I smile. "Just wondering if a friend is okay." I shrug.

Rhea eyes me sceptically. "She helped you get out?" I nod. She smiles. "Well, if you speak to her, tell her thank you from me, from all of us."

I don't tell her that I probably won't ever see her again. I just nod.

Star calls Rhea over and she smiles before leaning over and placing a feather light kiss on my cheek. "I'm happy your home," she whispers.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

ELSIE

4 weeks later

Dark circles surround my eyes, my pale skin had somehow managed to look even paler, and my clothes were starting to hang from my body. For once, my mother was right. I should have ran with Scar. Part of me wished and begged that his club would seek revenge and kill my father, mother, and especially Layton. I slowly apply some heavy make-up to hide my dark circles and the fresh bruise on my cheek before I style my hair to try and cover what I could of the mark. Though my mother and father both knew, they must have heard, especially after the engagement party. Layton didn't like that I was talking to some associate of theirs, said I was being too friendly and that I was acting like a whore. He slapped me hard in my father's office, so hard that I fell to the floor just as my father walked in. He took one look at me sobbing on the floor and one look at Layton, said nothing, and then left, closing the door behind him.

When I had walked out of the office clutching my cheek, my mother had merely smirked and muttered 'I told you so' under her breath as I passed. I had contemplated topping myself, figured I could just take the full bottle of my mother's anti-depressants, and then all this hell would be over. I would be free, but something in me still hoped that one day I would be free of them.

Layton walks into my room, never knocking. He walks up behind me and wraps his arm around my waist as he kisses my neck. My stomach recoils. "You look

beautiful,” he compliments as he places a velvet box in front of me. “A gift for my beautiful fiancé.” He smiles.

I look at him in the reflection of the mirror and force a smile before I open it. My huge diamond engagement ring sparkles up at me like it’s mocking me. I hated looking at the constant reminder. As I open the box, a diamond necklace shines up at me. It was beautiful, but I hated it because it was from him.

He takes it from me and places it around my neck. “Now you’re even more stunning.” He smiles.

I swallow and look at him in the mirror, playing the dutiful fiancé. “It’s beautiful, thank you,” I beam.

“Glad you like it. You know that I don’t mean to be so forceful, but if you would just behave like you are supposed to, then I wouldn’t have to discipline you,” he sighs, like I’m the fucking problem.

I grit my teeth and smile. “No, it’s okay. It’s my fault. I will behave better.” My voice is sickly sweet and Layton smiles pleasingly at my tone.

I would give anything to stab you in the balls right now, I think to myself while still smiling sweetly at him.

“Right, I have some business to see to. I won’t be back until tomorrow. Can I trust you to behave?” he asks, like I’m a toddler or some kind of pet.

You’re a fucking prick.

“I’ve got a few appointments to try on some wedding dresses and I’m going to view a venue later this afternoon,” I tell him. He smiles and nods, happy with my answer.

Even though he won't be here, he's happy that it will still revolve around him.

"Keep your cell on you so I can track where you are. You need someone with you?" he asks.

I raise my brow, lifting up the small gold handgun he had got me as a gift for our 4 week anniversary. He knows my father trained me to use a gun, but if he had bothered to get to know me at all, he would also have known that I despise guns. My whole life, I had never wanted to cause harm to anyone, well the exclusion of Layton, and now my father and mother. Hatred for them was growing and growing, and I wondered how long it would take until I finally snapped. I would happily blow this house up with us inside it if it meant ending their lives, mine included. Shaking my head, I quickly rid myself of those thoughts. This place, this life was consuming every part of me, destroying me minute by minute.

"Good, take that with you. We can't afford to put a man on you right now as the business we are seeing to is dangerous," he states, meaning that his life is more valuable than my own. I quickly act concerned and place my hand on his, while wishing that I demanded a man follow me around if it meant I had more chance of him getting killed.

"Be careful," I whisper.

He nods, his eyes searching mine. "I know how we started wasn't the conventional way, but I'm glad you came around to seeing just how right we are. I will be king one day, and the king needs his queen," he says with a deep sincerity. If he carried on beating me black and blue, this queen would soon be dead, but that didn't concern him. Why would it?

I nod. "I've accepted the role I was always meant to take in life, and I'm thankful every day that it is with you." I almost retch at the words leaving my mouth. As I

look down at the gun, I knew that I could just shoot him right now. One bullet between his eyes is all it would take, and I would be free. Except I know I wouldn't. I would be free of him but living my life in jail. There is no way my father would help me, and if anything, he would kill me himself for shooting his right hand man.

Layton turns me to him and cups my face. "You will be my perfect wife, and once we are married I will get you pregnant with my son." He smiles. Has he lost his fucking mind? It was only a month ago he knew I was helping Scar out, then he threatened me and raped me! He now truly believes that I've gone full circle and I am happy to be his woman, and want to have kids with him. Right now, I pray that he's firing blanks, or I'm barren and can't have kids, because I would never want to bring a child into this.

I open my mouth, not sure what to say, but thankfully I'm saved by his cell ringing.

He sighs and kisses me on the cheek. "I will see you tomorrow. Be good," is the last thing he says before walking out of my room.

I sag with relief and finish getting ready to go wedding dress shopping for the wedding I didn't even want.

"You see how the fabric swoops elegantly down, it really flatters your shape." The saleswoman smiles as I look at my reflection in the huge mirror they made me stand in front of. No smile, no emotion. This dress felt like hand cuffs.

I cleared my throat. "It's great, I will take it," I say with a nod, not caring what it looks like. I just know it's a type of dress Layton would approve of and that was all that matters. My life was his.

The woman looks surprised but soon masks it, quickly realising that she's made a sale and to take my money. I quickly change, wanting the dress off of me, feeling like

it was burning my skin. As I hand her my credit card, well Layton's credit card, I'm sure he would get the notification of the transaction and be happy to see that I am doing what I said I would be doing. The woman smiles kindly, and she pauses for a moment, looking at my face. Concern flickers in her eyes and that's when I realise I've tucked my hair behind my ear. Even though I have applied heavy make-up, the dark bruise is still visible. I quickly untuck my hair and give the woman a tight smile.

"Thank you." I smile as I snatch the card from her hand and turn and leave before she can start asking questions.

I walk quickly down the street, heading to my car. As I hear a deep rumble in the distance, I look up and see motorbikes approach. I freeze at the side of my car, just watching them.

Is it him?

My heart, my entire body freezes as I watch them get closer and closer. Waiting, wanting it to be him, needing to know he made it back okay. Even now I don't know if he made it. He could have collapsed and died in the woods for all I know. Hell, my father could have found him and killed him without me knowing. I would just like to see that he's alive. That's all I need.

The bikes turn left to a diner just ahead of me, and it's then that I notice their club patch on the back of their cuts. Black Hearts MC. A sob almost escapes my throat as I squint, trying to see if it's him. I can't tell as the sun burns my eyes. They all enter the diner and I move, not even thinking to check the traffic as I walk straight across the road. Car horns sound but I don't care. I need to know he is okay.

Opening the door to the diner, I see them sat in the far corner. My feet shuffle me forward and as I approach, one of them looks up. "You okay, darlin'?" he asks.

The others turn around, and it's not him. I tense, my heart feeling like it's about to shatter.

"Sorry, I thought, er... I thought you were someone else," I mutter, giving them a small, embarrassed smile. I quickly turn to leave and hit something hard. "Shit, I'm sorry," I whisper, keeping my eyes cast down. I just want to get out of here. The damn of tears felt so close to breaking and I needed to get back to my car.

"Angel?" his deep voice rasps, as if he can't quite believe what he's seeing. I lift my eyes to look up into his, and that damn breaks as a sob rips from my throat. I cover my mouth as tears fall, but my smile is wide. He moves quickly and picks me up in his arms. I bury my face in the crook of his neck, letting the tears fall as I breathe him in.

He's alive. He's here and he's alive. It's not been for nothing.

"Lizzie, you got somewhere private?" I hear him ask.

"Straight out back. Use my office," a woman offers.

I feel him moving, but I don't look up or let go. Fear coursed through me that if I did, I would realise that this isn't real. I hear a door shut and Scar places me down on my feet. Leaning back, I look up at him. He grins and I smile back.

"You're alive," I whisper.

He nods. "I'm alive. Thanks to you," he states warmly.

I sniff, still unable to stop smiling. Reaching up, I wipe my cheeks. "God, your friends must think I'm totally insane," I scoff. "I'm so sorry for losing my shit out there. It was, well it was such a surprise. An amazing surprise." I beam, feeling

happiness for the first time in a long time.

“You got time for a coffee?” he asks.

I nod. “Yeah, I’ve got time.”

“Good, because clearly you’ve been busy,” he states, nodding down to the huge engagement ring on my finger.

I internally groan, not wanting to talk about Layton.

We stand there for a moment, just looking into each other’s eyes. He looks good, healthy. My heart swells at the sight of him, and seeing him here right now makes all the pain, the hell it’s been worth it.

CHAPTER TWELVE

ELSIE

Clasping the hot cup of coffee in my hands with Scar sat opposite me, I want to freeze time. I don't want this small bubble of happiness to end.

His eyes slowly assess me. "So, tell me what you've been up to. You're feeling okay?" I ask.

He nods. "I'm feeling good, and just usual club stuff," he answers.

I nod and smile, glancing a look at some of his club that are sat at a table on the other side of the diner. One of them smiles and gives me a wink, causing me to blush. I laugh and look away. Scar looks over and scowls at whoever it was.

"So, you're eating okay? I was worried you would need serious medical attention, or that maybe long lasting damage had been done," I ramble.

"Angel," he states.

My stomach does that fluttery thing whenever he calls me that. "Yeah?" I answer.

"You going to tell me how you managed to get yourself engaged so quickly? When I'm pretty sure you were single the last time I saw you," he states.

At that moment, my bubble pops and reality comes flooding into the happiness I had

started to feel. I look down at my coffee, putting on my best false smile. “He works for my father. I’ve known him a long time and the timing just seemed right.” The words taste bitter on my tongue as I lie, praying he doesn’t realise who it is I’m engaged to.

He doesn’t react, smile, or even say the usual congratulations.

I push a chuckle out and tuck my hair behind my ear, feeling awkward. “So, the wedding is in 6 weeks and?—”

I’m cut off by Scar lurching towards me, and I flinch away automatically. Squinting my eyes closed, I brace myself for the hit, but when it doesn’t come I slowly open my eyes. Scar’s hand is paused just an inch from my face as I look at him.

“I would never hurt you,” he declares, his voice low and menacing. His hand gently takes my chin and tilts my head to the side. I close my eyes, chastising myself at my mistake. “Who did this to you?” he growls so low I swear I can feel his voice vibrating through me. I swallow before opening my mouth to say something, to lie, say I tripped or something, that I opened a cupboard door into my face, that I had started boxing, but nothing came out. “Tell me, did he do this to you?” he presses.

“I, it, it’s okay,” I whisper.

“Was this the distraction? Marrying fucking Layton?! He was the thing to make sure that no one came after me?” he presses.

“It won’t be forever, and I’m fine. I can handle it,” I manage to force out.

“You are not going back to him,” he grits through his teeth. My eyes widen and I lean back, forcing him to let go of my chin.

“I have to,” I state. “I can’t, I just can’t,” I whisper.

Scar’s eyes are cold, and his jaw is set so tight. His hands are balled into tight fists and as he pushes his chair back, he sends it clattering across the room. I jump and people in the diner gasp. He runs his hands through his hair.

“Fuck!” he roars. I jump again, and it feels like my heart is thumping a million beats per minute. Then he storms out, nearly ripping the door off the hinges as he does.

I watch as one of his club runs after him while another gives the owner a look.

“Okay everyone, I’m closing early, sorry for the inconvenience. I will give a free slice of pie tomorrow as an apology,” the woman yells. The other customers in the diner grumble and mutter their annoyance as they stand and file out one by one.

I grab my bag and jump to my feet. It was a mistake to come see him. Just one big mistake. I move quickly to the door, but one of the club members gets there first, standing in front of it.

“Just give him a minute, darlin’,” he says softly.

I clutch my purse to my chest as fear begins to pulse through my veins. I shake my head. “No, I need to go. If I am here too long, he will know,” I state, my voice wavering.

The guy holds out his hands as if to assure me. I step back and he gives me a tight smile. “You are safe here,” he assures me. “I’m Cash, and Scar is a good brother. He is obviously just working through some shit, and by the sight of that nasty bruise, and the fact that you flinch away, I’m guessing it’s to do with that,” he points out.

As if he is watching me, my phone starts ringing in my bag. I hurriedly rummage to

answer it, but when I see that it's Layton, my hands shake as I answer.

"Hello?" I say, hating how my voice breaks. I cough, trying to hide my fear.

Cash, the biker in front of me, takes my phone and puts it on speaker. My eyes are wide and I shake my head no. He places his index finger on his lips and nods, assuring me they will be quiet. "Why are you at some diner and not trying on dresses?" he snaps.

I had only been twenty minutes longer, that was all. "I came for a coffee and a salad to celebrate," I state.

"Celebrate?" he quips back.

"I found the perfect dress. You will love it," I breathe out, feeling my heart racing.

He pauses, then my phone beeps, stating that he wants to video call. My eyes go wide and I quickly sit back in my seat, ensuring to keep the camera on me, making sure no one is behind me before I answer.

"Hey." I smile at him, desperately trying to stop my hands from shaking.

"Looks quiet," he states.

"Yeah, it's a quiet day for them I think." I shrug, masking my fear. The doorbell chimes with someone coming in, and thankfully you can't see it on camera, but I hear deep murmurings and I know it's Scar returning. I pause, at a loss for words.

"Hey there, darling girl. Can I interest you in today's soup of the day? It's my mamma's recipe, winter vegetable," the owner beams as she tops up my mug. She gives me a wink and I could kiss her.

“Yes, that would be lovely, thank you,” I accept.

“Oh, I’m sorry. I didn’t realise you were on a call,” she feigns innocently.

“It’s my fiancé.” I smile, adding to the performance.

She surprises me by leaning in next to me, smiling and waving at Layton. “Oh, hey there, you have a beautiful fiancé,” she compliments. “And my, aren’t you a handsome devil! Perfect match,” she sings.

Layton’s frown quickly turns into a smile. “That’s very kind of you. Look after her for me, and no bread with that soup. I don’t want her getting fat for our wedding.” He winks. The sound of plates and glasses smashing has me and the owner looking up to see Cash and another brother holding back a very angry looking Scar.

“Oh, do excuse me. The wash boy has dropped the dishes again! Honestly boy, can’t you just wash the damn dishes without smashing them?!” she yells as she walks off, giving me a wink.

“Okay, I will let you go, but be home before it gets dark,” he orders.

I nod. “Of course, I will. I will text you when I get home,” I assure him.

He nods, then disconnects.

I make sure that the call has ended before I place it back in my bag. Only then do I exhale a long breath. I place my head in my shaky hands, trying to regain some composure. I feel him next to me, and his warm hands gently grasp my wrists, pulling my hands away from my face. As I turn my head to look at him, I can see that there is still anger in his eyes, but this time it’s mixed with sadness and regret. He releases my wrist and reaches up, slowly and delicately tucking my hair back behind my ear.

“I’m sorry,” he rasps.

“What are you apologising for?” I ask.

“For my reaction, and for being selfish and not thinking what you would have had to endure for me leaving. If I had known, I wouldn’t have gone. I would have stayed and waited for my club to come and get me,” he rasps.

I smile. “It’s okay, and I know you would have stayed. That’s why I didn’t tell you. If you’d stayed, you would have died. So I may be living in misery right now, but at least we are both breathing.” I shrug with a smile playing on my lips.

His eyes flicker down to my mouth. “I can’t let you go back to him,” he sighs, shaking his head.

“I have to. If I don’t, then my father and Layton will come for me. For you,” I state.

He runs his hands through his hair. “I can’t sit back and watch you suffer like this, like you did for me. Let me help you. I owe you my fucking life,” he says, his voice breaking.

“You owe me nothing but keeping yourself alive. This was always going to be my life. I just brought it forward by a couple of years. I was delusional if I thought my life could ever be different from what it is now. It’s okay. I will be okay,” I assure him. After seeing him, I would accept my life now that I know he is happy. “Go be with the woman you love and start your life with your family,” I state. There’s an awkward clearing of a throat behind him and I look over to see a guy not looking too happy.

Scar smirks. “That isn’t a thing anymore, Angel. She isn’t mine, she’s Acid’s. I’m cool with that.”

“Oh,” I wince. I look to the other guy Acid and mouth the word ‘sorry’ to him. He smirks back at me amused.

“Angel, look at me,” Scar demands. I turn my gaze to him. “You are not going back to him,” he orders, while also making it sound like a threat.

“I have to,” I remind him. It isn’t that simple. If it was, then he wouldn’t have been held for months. Even his club, his President must know that. As if I summoned him, the bells chime above the door and in he walks. His cold glacial stare lands on me and I instantly feel fear creeping up my spine as I remember our last encounter with his hand wrapped around my throat. I am not saying or doing anything that may provoke him in any way.

“He won’t hurt you,” Scar assures me, sensing my hesitation.

I raise my brow at Scar. “Well, I’m not about to provoke him,” I whisper quietly.

Scar’s smile widens. “He will be grateful for that, because his ol’ lady gives him enough shit.” Scar smirks.

Ghost pulls out a chair and takes a seat at the end of our table. “Oh no, please do join us,” I quip sarcastically. I gasp, my eyes widening and I slap my hand over my mouth. “I am so sorry,” I apologise. Scar throws his head back and laughs, but Ghost just stares at me unimpressed and clearly not in the mood. “Sorry, it’s like a disease. The filter between brain and mouth just misfires sometimes. It’s usually what ends up causing this.” I laugh, pointing to my cheek. Scar’s laughter instantly dies, going from amused to pissed in a nano second. Ghost just remains looking at me with the same too tired for the shit glare. “Sorry,” I mutter.

“Ghost, tell her how we can help her,” Scar urges.

Ghost just crosses his arms over his broad chest and lets out a long sigh. His gaze turns to Scar, regret flashing through it. “We can’t,” he states.

“What the fuck do you mean we can’t?” Scar seethes, his anger growing.

Ghost’s gaze, now a little softer comes to me. “I’m sorry darlin’, but we can’t just take you and keep you safe. Your father would figure out it was us within a day, and while I’m not scared of your father or his men, I do have a family to protect. My brothers have a family to protect. Taking you with us today would be like leading a wolf to its prey.” He pulls a cigarette out of the packet and lights it. Shocked, I look around for the owner, waiting for him to be thrown out. Instead, she walks around and places an ashtray in front of him. She gives me a kind smile and walks back off to the kitchen. I’m guessing they know the owner pretty well then.

“I understand, believe me. I’ve lived with my father my entire life. I know exactly what repercussions there are when you cross him. Add Layton into that and you know it will be catastrophic.” I nod in agreement. Scar just scowls as soon as I mention Layton’s name.

“We can’t fucking let her go back to him. Who knows what might fucking happen to her?” Scar argues. Ghost glares at Scar and I shift uncomfortably.

I clear my throat and both of their gazes land on me. “Listen, I don’t want to cause an issue here,” I state to both of them. I stand and take out a large tip for the owner as a way of apology for the inconvenience caused. As I place it on the table, I give Scar a small smile. Leaning down, I place a soft kiss on his cheek. “I will be okay, I promise. Please let me go. If I stay here any longer, he will make my life unbearable,” I whisper softly. “I’ve never been happier seeing that you’re okay,” I add before standing. As I place my hand on his shoulder, I give him a tight squeeze. I smile as I give the rest of the club an awkward wave. “Bye, it was nice meeting you all.” They all just give me a nod, or a chin lift.

I open the door to the diner and part of me wishes he would jump to his feet and stop me from leaving. That in the last thirty seconds he's figured out a way for me to be free, but of course that wouldn't be reality, so I leave and he doesn't stop me.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

SCAR

Every fibre of my being is screaming at me to go after her. The muscles in my body are strung so tight it feels like they could snap.

“We are doing the right thing,” Ghost assures me.

Grinding my teeth together, I fight back the fury that is flowing through me. My eyes land on him. “Keep fucking telling yourself that, because if she ends up dead it’s on you,” I growl.

His cold hard stare pins me in place, but I don’t flinch, unphased by his intimidation. He glides a phone across to me and I look down at it, reading the name that’s on the screen along with a number.

“Her number. You are stored on her phone as Sally,” he states. I frown, wondering when the fuck they got her number. “We will get her out, we will kill Eugene and Layton, and we will make them fucking pay for everything they have done to Acid, to you, and to her. They. Will. Pay,” he says through gritted teeth.

“And your plan?” I counter. “Because I don’t think she will last months. Even if she doesn’t get her ass beaten, I don’t think she can survive months. Not mentally,” I argue.

“Give me 4 weeks and I will have her out, and Eugene and Layton will be in the

fucking warehouse strung up like they're in a fucking abattoir," Ghost says with a smile on his lips. His eyes spark with excitement at the thought. I ain't going to lie, the idea of them both hanging there in our warehouse begging for their lives makes me practically hard. I want nothing more than to make them suffer.

"How long have you been planning this?" I press, knowing damn well he's had something in the pipeline for a while.

His smile widens. "Since I spoke to her back at the bar when you were still in their basement."

I blanch, jolting my head back and raising my brow. "You're fucking shitting me?"

Ghost shakes his head no. "No, I'm fucking not. It would have been sooner if you were still in there, but then obviously the plan changed and you got out. So, I've had to adjust the original plan, but one main objective has always remained the same. Kill fucking Eugene," he states firmly.

I nod, liking that idea, wanting that idea. "So, when do we message her and what? We have to be fucking careful, because if that fucking cunt Layton even gets a sniff that she's in contact with anyone other than this Sally person, then he won't let her out of his sight. He will beat her black and fucking blue," I state, reminding him of the delicate situation we are in.

Ghost sits back in his chair. "Now that's the one part of the plan I am not sure of. You know her better than me, than any of us. You call her, when you think she will be ready to hear from you, but you don't tell her everything. You keep your mouth shut about what's happening," Ghost warns.

"She wouldn't fucking say anything," I argue.

“I know that, but her facial expressions might. We use contact with her as only a confirmation of where they will be, of making sure she is alive. Nothing more,” he adds. He pauses for a moment, just watching me. “I don’t have to tell you that if you are messaging her, then be careful what you say and how you word everything,” Ghost adds.

I roll my eyes as I take the phone and slide it into my pocket “I ain’t fucking stupid.”

Ghost’s lips twitch. I sigh and shake my head, rubbing the palm of my hand over my chest. Seeing her has caused an ache and pain in my fucking chest. “She yours?” Ghost asks.

My gaze snaps to his. “I care about her. She saved my fucking life more than once,” I grit out. I’ve never thought of her as mine. My heart, my fucking mind was only consumed with Rhea, pining after her like a fucking puppy, even though I knew it was a dead end. It had been months. I had accepted Acid and Rhea, and hell, after seeing them together, they were fucking perfect. I’m over Rhea, but I ain’t over the pain of the fucking rejection. As a guy that never put his heart on the line, and never feeling anything with my heart, only my dick, to finally think that I’ve found the one, only for me to discover that she doesn’t want me the same way I want her. It fucking hurt. It’s a new type of pain, one I fucking don’t want to feel again. So, while I find Elsie attractive, while I care about her a lot, there ain’t no fucking way I’m letting my heart feel that way ever again.

Ghost just gives me a grunt in response and stands. He pulls out a large wad of cash from his back pocket and places it down on the table. “For the inconvenience caused, darlin’,” he calls out to Lizzie.

She blows him a kiss. “Anytime, sweetheart,” she calls back. The brothers all file out, following Ghost. I am the last to get to my feet. Lizzie walks over with her cloth in hand and begins to wipe down the table, collecting the money as she goes. “Do me a

favour sweetheart, and let me know she is okay,” Lizzie states, looking up at me. Her eyes are soft and full of concern.

I drape my arm over her shoulders and place a kiss on the top of her head. “Yeah darlin’, I will,” I confirm. I give the back of her neck a gentle squeeze before walking towards the door.

“You don’t get her out, she will die,” Lizzie adds, causing me to pause. With my hand on the door, I turn to look at her. “I’ve been there, you get used to the beatings. It’s everything else that destroys you. It gets to a point that when the beatings come, you pray that they will be the end. You pray that they will finally kill you.” Her voice breaks a little as she clutches the cloth in her hands tightly.

My grip tightens on the door. “Did he pay for what he did?” I ask through gritted teeth, because whoever it was that did that to Lizzie, we would hunt the fucker down and kill that mother fucker.

She gives me a small smile, knowing exactly why I am asking. She nods. “In prison on an 18 year stretch for manslaughter,” she states softly. “For killing my sister.”

I blink. Not her, her sister. “Name,” I demand. She knows the connections, the power Ghost has to take care of shit in prison if it’s required.

Lizzie pauses for a moment, then she sighs. “Daniel Evans from Eastmound.”

I just give her a curt nod and then leave.

Two days later I’m sat at the bar back at the club, staring at the phone Ghost gave me, wondering if I should call her. “You know for that thing to work, you have to pick it up and actually press some buttons,” Star states sarcastically from where she’s sitting behind me at the bar.

I give her a look and knock back the rest of my drink. “I’m trying to decide if I call her, what do I fucking say?” I state, not bothering to go into the details of who it is, as I know Ghost would have told her everything. “What if someone else answers her phone?”

“You could speak in a lady’s voice, like ‘ hi, I’m like calling to speak with erm, your girl, as like we are total bff’s’,” Bambi suggests, turning his voice into a high pitched squeal. I slowly turn my gaze to his. He tenses when he sees my expression. “Or not.” He shrugs sheepishly before slinging the cloth over his shoulder and disappearing as quickly as his feet will take him.

Star snorts with laughter. “I fucking love that kid.” I grunt and pour myself another shot of whiskey, tensing when Star snatches the bottle off me. “How many have you had?” she asks.

“Not enough,” I answer.

She rolls her eyes and as she places the bottle down, she snatches the phone and hits the call button. My eyes go wide, and I try to reach for the phone, but she jumps off the stool and swats my hand away. She puts it on speaker so I can hear, and after 5 rings I think she isn’t going to answer, then the phone clicks.

“Hello?” Elsie’s soft voice answers.

“Hi, this is Sally,” Star answers. I try to get the phone off her, but she keeps side stepping out of my grasp. “From Chic Couture,” she adds. I pause and frown, confused at where she is going with this. “It’s about your wedding dress, are you available to talk?” Star asks.

How in the fuck did she find out the name of the bridal shop Elsie went to?

“Just a second,” Elsie answers.

Star looks at me with a wink. We hear a man’s voice on the other end. “Go on. I don’t want to know baby, but if she starts asking for more money, tell her to go and fuck herself.” Fucking prick Layton.

We hear what sounds like a click of a door and then Elsie speaks. “Hi, sorry about that. I was with my fiancé and you were on speaker, so I had to make sure I moved to a new room. What seems to be the problem with the dress?” she asks politely.

“Are you able to talk to me off speaker, just in case your fiancé would walk back in? I wouldn’t want to spoil anything before your big day,” Star says as she gives me a wink.

“Of course,” Elsie says, pausing for a split second. “Okay, all good,” she states.

Star holds out the phone to me and I step forward and take it from her. Star walks back over to the bar, giving me some privacy but staying close just in case she is needed again.

“Angel,” I say softly. I hear her suck in a shuddery breath.

“How did you? You shouldn’t be calling me,” she whispers.

“This is a burner, so it can’t be traced. I need to know you are okay, and I want you to know that if you ever need me, to call this number,” I tell her.

“I’m...” She pauses. “I’m okay,” she whispers, but something in her voice leads me to think otherwise.

“Meet me at the bridal shop,” I demand.

“Wait, I can’t. I…” she stammers.

“I don’t care when. Make it out to be an appointment, a fitting, anything,” I tell her.

“Um, the morning of the 9th,” she whispers.

“That’s 10 days away,” I point out.

“It’s the only time I can think that it would be okay. They go away, and Mother goes off to one of her beauty retreats, and if they are to believe it is in fact the bridal shop, an immediate appointment wouldn’t happen,” she adds quietly.

“Fine,” I reluctantly agree. “But if anything happens before then, you call, text, anything, and I will fucking be there. Understand?” I growl.

“I will,” she whispers.

“Promise me,” I press.

I swear I can hear her smiling. “I promise.”

“Good, now tell me what you’re wearing,” I tease.

Her laughter sings down the phone to me. “I’ve got to go,” she whispers, her voice lighter than when she answered.

“Fine, see you soon Angel,” I sigh.

“Bye,” she whispers, then disconnects the call.

Exhaling a long breath, I turn around to see Star sat at the bar with a shit eating grin.

“What?” I sigh.

She smiles and shrugs. “I think you like her,” she points out.

“Of course I like her, she saved my damn life,” I counter.

Star shakes her head. “Nope, it’s more than that. You like her, like her.”

I glare at her. “That isn’t what this is. She’s a friend, and I ain’t ever getting involved like that again,” I affirm.

I half-expected Star to press, to push the conversation further like she normally does. Instead, she surprises the shit out of my me by nodding. “Okay. If you say so.” She shrugs.

I raise my brow at her, wondering what exactly her angle is, but she just hops off the stool, places a gentle kiss on my cheek, and saunters off. I look around to see if anyone else witnessed this. Jesus, she must be concussed or some shit.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

ELSIE

These past 9 days have dragged by. I swear, I should receive an award for my acting skills. After walking back in after the phone call with Scar, I told Layton that the dress I'd originally chosen had been accidentally resold, due to the sales assistant not marking it properly. I then told him they were getting in all the dresses that were similar from other stores for me to try on. Layton had kicked off and said I should go elsewhere, but I told him that the store was knocking 20 percent off the price for the inconvenience, as well as free adjustments. He'd then shut up and nodded for me to go.

I had wanted to message Scar so many times, just to talk to him. However, I refrained, not wanting to risk being found out. One more night and I would see him. It was hard to hide my smile when I thought about it. Walking into the kitchen, my eyes landed on Mother who was sat at the kitchen island nursing a bloody Mary. It's midday, so that's probably her fourth drink today. She flicks her gaze to me but then glances back down at her magazine.

"I am going to come with you tomorrow," she states.

My hand tenses on the fridge door. Turning around to face her, I plaster a mask of indifference on my face. "I thought you were busy?" I ask as I place my yogurt on the counter. I can feel her poisonous eyes on me, watching my every move.

"I do, but shouldn't a mother be there when her daughter chooses her wedding dress?"

Plus, I don't like the way they have handled the situation. Clearly you aren't being firm enough, and they need reminding who your father is." She tuts.

I keep my focus on getting a spoon for my yogurt, ignoring my thumping heartbeat in my chest. Hesitantly, I take it out and sit down. "If you want to, that would be great. It would be nice to have your opinion." I shrug as I place a spoonful of yogurt in my mouth. Looking her in the eye, I hold her gaze. If I show even the slightest bit of weakness of anything, she will know I'm lying, and she will make it her mission to come just to ruin it for me.

She picks up her drink and takes a sip. "Excellent, if we go in the morning, I can leave from there and still make my plans," she beams.

Shit, shit, shit! I scream internally while smiling and nodding tightly.

"Great, I will call them and reschedule for the early morning." I nod as I pull my phone from my pocket and hit call. As I press it to my ear, I pray that one of the ol' ladies answers. Just in case my mother snatches my phone from my grasp.

"Hello, Chic Couture," a soft voice answers.

I clear my throat. "Um, hello. I was due to come in tomorrow to find a new dress. I am unable to make the original appointment, but I will be coming in first thing with my mother as she wants to see the dresses, too. Will this be a problem?" I ask.

Mumbling echoes in the background before she replied. "It sounds like there is a slight echo and you're breaking up. Are you on a car phone?" the soft voice asks, and I realise this is a way of them asking if they are on speaker.

"No, it must be my signal." I stand and move over to the kitchen window. "Is that better?" I ask, hoping that mother is believing this whole charade.

Scar's deep voice comes on the line, and I have to fight everything in my body to stop from reacting. "Angel, are you hurt?" he asks.

"No, you won't need to provide breakfast for us," I say as in a way of an answer.

"Good, go with your mother. We will sort the bridal shop, don't worry. You free to come back in the afternoon?" he asks.

"Oh yes, I'm sure I could do that," I answer, smiling. I look over to my mother who is watching me like a hawk.

"Okay, good. Don't worry, I will take care of everything," Scar replies.

"That would be great, thank you. I know we would love to enjoy a glass of champagne." I grin. "I'm looking forward to it."

"Me too, Angel," he growls and disconnects.

I take a breath and smile before turning around to face my mother.

"All sorted. They even offered to provide us breakfast, but I didn't want to bloat while trying on dresses. However, I thought it would be nice for us to have a glass of champagne," I state as I go back to my yogurt.

Mother nods and gives me a tight smile. "Yes, that would be nice, and you are right. Maybe wear your shape-wear tomorrow, because you don't want that chubby stomach of yours poking out and ruining the look of the dresses," she jibes, her eyes flickering down. "Are they a specialist store for bigger brides?" she asks.

I don't blanch at her insults. I'm used to them by now. It's not that they hurt, they do. Her words will always sting, but I'm just too excited and anxious for tomorrow.

“No, it’s not.” I smile tightly before I move to put my yogurt pot in the bin and spoon in the dishwasher. “I’m going to sort some more wedding stuff out,” I say over my shoulder as I walk out, desperately needing some space from her.

The next morning, I’m half expecting my mother to sleep in, as she rarely gets up before 10 am, but not today. She’s right on time as she walks down the grand staircase, dressed in her designer pant suit. Make-up and hair is done to perfection, as always, and her designer handbag is hanging off her arm. She comes to a stop next to me.

“Are you driving?” she asks.

I nod. “Yes, Layton gave me the keys to the Mercedes,” I answer.

“Well, come on then. Let’s go.” She tuts as she saunters out of the house.

I make a silent prayer that all will go smoothly, because if I get caught, she will make my life a living hell.

The drive over was silent except for the radio. When I started singing along, she reminded me how talentless I was and that I should stop singing, just in case the local authorities thought someone was being murdered. Deep inside, I wanted to sing more, sing louder just to piss her off, but I kept my lips tightly shut and concentrated on getting us there in one piece, all while resisting the urge to drive 100 miles an hour into the nearest tree.

I get out of the car and my mother waits for me to walk around the car and open her door for her. I do it and she walks off into the bridal shop, leaving me scurrying behind her heels. Once in, the assistants smile and walk up to us with a tray balancing two glasses of champagne on them. We each take one and my eyes dart around everywhere, wondering where he could be, and also will the assistants give anything

away.

“Welcome back, Elsie. We have some dresses ready for you to try on. Mother of the bride, would you like to take a seat and enjoy our complimentary champagne and hors d’oeuvres.” She beams and Mother nods, her face stern as she happily sits there, drinking her champagne.

The other assistant walks me through to the back where the changing rooms are. She pulls back the curtain, revealing dresses hung up for me to try. “If you get changed, and please give me a shout when you are ready for help fastening them.” She smiles and closes the curtain behind me.

A disappointed sigh escapes me. I thought for sure Scar would be back here waiting for me. After removing my clothes, I grab the first dress when suddenly a hand covers my mouth. A screech escapes my throat, but it soon dies when I see who it is in the reflection. I instantly relax, a smile spreading across my face that it’s him. As I spin around, I wrap my arms around his neck, hugging him tight. His arms hold me close, hugging me back just as tightly. I slowly release my hold and lean back, feeling the warmth of his large hands across my back.

Looking up at him, I smile. “I’m so happy to see you,” I whisper.

He returns my warm smile. “I’m so happy to be seeing so much of you.” He winks. My eyes go wide and it’s then that I realise I’m stood in just my underwear. The dress I was about to try on is in a pile on the floor. I gasp and step out of his hold, quickly bending down to pick it up. However, before I can even step into it, he takes hold of my elbow, stopping me.

I look into the mirror at his reflection, wondering what he could want. Then I see where his eyes are pinned; the bruises on my hips and thighs. He looks away from the reflection in the mirror, then stares down at my breasts. He turns me to face him, and

any other time I would be flustered and enjoy having him looking at my breasts, but not the way he's looking at them now.

With dark fury swimming in his eyes, he trails his index finger along the flesh, over to the swell of my breast, up to just above the cup of my bra. I shudder and my skin prickles into goosebumps.

"He do this?" he asks, his voice low and threatening. I look away, and I can feel it when he sees the bruising along my back. He gently turns me around, his fingers ever so delicately tracing over the marks. "Elsie, you need to tell me what the fuck is going on. The bruises, the finger marks on your intimate areas, then there are these," he rasps, his voice breaking not from emotion, but from trying to contain the rage I know he is feeling. It is the same one I feel, and I see it in his eyes that he is struggling to hold back his emotions. "Elsie," he growls my name in warning. I flinch. "Fuck." He bends down and grabs my clothes before he attempts to start dressing me.

"What are you doing?" I whisper hiss.

"There ain't no fucking way I am sending you back there. You can come to the club, and we will protect you," he rushes out. I place my hands on his forearms, stopping him. He pauses, the seething rage pouring from his eyes.

"If," I pause. "If I thought for one second I could run away to your club and they would never find me, and I would be free, I would. They will find me. My father will stop at nothing. Not all the marks you see are from Layton," I confess.

He grits his jaw so tight I'm surprised it hasn't snapped. "Not helping me calm down," he growls.

"The lashings, they are from him. My father," I admit. "I've survived this my entire

life, and I can and will continue to survive it, knowing that I can still see you. You take me now, that little bit of happiness will be gone, because he will not rest until I'm back, and then you'll be dead," I tell him truthfully.

"Everything okay, ma'am? Your mother is waiting," the sales assistant asks.

Shit. "Yes, be right out," I answer. "Stay hidden. Please don't go," I whisper. As I turn around, I once again remove my clothes and step into the dress, slowly pulling it up my body. The curtain flickers behind me and he's gone. I just hope he hasn't left the shop.

I call the assistant to help me fasten up the back of the dress, then she helps me into a pair of shoes and adds a veil. I walk out and stand on the raised platform in front of my mother, awaiting her verdict.

She sips her champagne, and it's then that I notice the bottle next to her is now half empty. "You took your time," she mutters. "What took so long? Did it take the two of them to squeeze you into that dress?" She smirks.

I clench my fists at my sides. It doesn't matter that the dress is in fact a little big, and it doesn't matter that I thought I looked okay. Glancing down, I know that it's not the type of dress I would ever pick, not that I care what I look like to marry Layton, but the shape of this dress flattered me.

"I will try another dress." I smile at the assistant and her mouth hangs open in shock at the vile words that came from my own mother's mouth.

"You do that. Who knows, they may have something that makes you look less like you're about to eat an entire cake," Mother snorts.

My back stiffens and I keep my head facing forward, my gaze fixed on the dressing

room. I don't dare look at the sympathy or shock that I know will be in the assistant's eyes. She undoes the back of the dress and lets out a little gasp when Scar steps in and practically shoves her out of the way.

I spin around. "What are you doing?" I hiss.

"Let me kill her?" he asks.

I roll my eyes. "No!" I snap.

"I will make it quick. Hell, I can even make it look like another gang did it to get back at your father," he suggests.

My lips twitch as I fight back a smile. "You can't," I whisper.

His eyes go soft. "Fine. I'm not leaving, and we are also not done with our earlier conversation. I will get you out," he says determinedly before stepping back out of the curtains. I drop the dress and shake my head, smiling to myself.

I pause when Scar sticks his head back through the curtains. "Scar!" I hiss.

"Just so you know, you look beautiful in any of them. You will always look beautiful," he compliments, giving me a wink before disappearing again.

"Jesus Christ," I whisper to myself.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

ELSIE

“The last one made you look less fat. I mean, you still need to lose a couple of pounds, but the last dress is the better one. Your father won’t be too embarrassed to walk you down the aisle in that one,” Mother states. I nod, agreeing. Sad, really. I couldn’t care less as I just want this situation to be over with. “Call James to come collect me and take me to my next appointment,” Mother orders, clicking her fingers at me.

I don’t hesitate. James, the good guy that he is, isn’t far away, knowing that she would want him to get her. “He will be here in five minutes,” I tell her.

She nods as she stands. Anyone else would wobble on their feet after drinking an entire bottle of champagne for breakfast, but nope. Not my mother. It will take a lot more than that to get her drunk.

The sales assistant hesitatingly approaches. “Er miss, if you don’t mind, before you go, we would like to redo your measurements and confirm dates,” she states, her eyes telling me that there is much more than what she is saying.

I give her a brief and curt nod. “Of course, that’s no problem.” I smile.

“Just hope you have a measuring tape big enough,” Mother scoffs, causing the sales assistant to wince. I close my eyes and swallow down the anger her words cause me.

The door chimes open and in walks James. A relieved sigh escapes me. I could kiss that man for his timing. “Ma’am.” He greets my mother before his smile comes to me. “Miss.” He nods.

“Hello James,” I greet warmly. He’s always been so kind to me.

Mother walks towards me and does that irritating air kiss thing, then clicks her fingers. “Come along, James. I am running late,” she orders. He opens the door for her and bows before following her out. The assistant moves forward, pretending to be busy while looking out of the window.

“All clear.” She smiles as she locks the door before turning the sign over to closed. “Back of the store staff room. He’s waiting.” She smiles softly.

I move through the store toward the back. Scar is sat in a small kitchen at a little table with a cup of coffee in his hand. He looks up and smiles as he points to the other coffee on the table. I sit, watching as he takes a sip, his eyes flickering up to mine. “Can you last one week?” he asks.

I frown, confused. “What are you asking me?” I breathe.

“It’s set. Well, we’ve brought it forward. One week from today I will come and get you, and then kill your bitch mother, dad, and Layton,” he states bluntly.

“We? Who is we?” I ask.

“The club. It’s been planned for months, then those plans changed thanks to me, then you, but your father needs to pay for what he has done, to me and to my club,” he seethes.

I nod, knowing that he does. For all the pain my father has caused over the years, not

to mention the things he has done that I don't know about. "He is dangerous. He will kill you if he survives," I point out.

Scar leans in close, leaning his weight on his elbows. "Angel, we are fucking dangerous. I am fucking dangerous. You don't have to worry about us. I just need you to know how this will play out. We will take your father and Layton to a secure location where they will be tortured and killed for what they have done. It will be slow, and it will be painful. I will take great pleasure in watching them suffer for everything they have done," he says with such venom in his voice.

"Would killing them not be enough?" I ask.

"Killing them is a mercy, one they do not fucking deserve," he seethes.

I give him a slight nod, understanding. For all that they have done to him and his family, they want revenge. They want vengeance, and I can't blame them for that. I've often thought about it myself, but the only difference is I don't think I could go through with it.

"One week from today?" I ask.

Scar nods. "This time next week you will be free," he confirms.

I bite down on my bottom lip as thoughts rush through my head.

Scar places hand on my chin and my eyes flicker to his. His thumb gently tugs on my bottom lip, freeing it from my teeth. His eyes follow the movement of his thumb as he glides it along my bottom lip.

"You're bleeding," he murmurs softly. He slowly removes his hold on my chin and holds up his thumb, showing me the blood. Then he does something that stirs

something deep inside me. He places his thumb between my parted lips. "Clean it," he orders, his voice thick and gravelly. My eyes stay fixated on his as I swipe my tongue over his thumb, sucking the blood clean off it. As his grey eyes darken, my heart begins to thump wildly in my chest as the atmosphere between us changes from tense to electric in an instant. He slowly removes his thumb from my mouth, while his other hand still keeps hold of my chin. I want to kiss him. I want him to kiss me. I want to feel those lips on mine, but he looks away, dropping his hand from my face. Disappointment swims around my gut and I look down, clearing my throat before tucking my hair back behind my ear.

"Well, I had better get going," I state as I move to stand. "I guess I will see you in a week. Just be careful," I warn before walking out of the staff room and through the store. After I get in my car, I just sit there for a moment, feeling stupid for thinking. Shit, I don't know what I was thinking. The first man to show me kindness and I practically drool all over him. I completely read it wrong, the whole damn entire situation.

A groan escapes me as I rest my head on the steering wheel, wishing the world would just swallow me up. I suppose the only good thing is, if next week does happen, then I will be free to go my own way, to live my life how I want to live it without anyone controlling me. I will never have to see Scar and feel that kind of humiliation again. My heart lurches at the thought of never seeing him again.

Suddenly, my car door is yanked open. I jump as a little screech escapes my throat before a pair of strong hands reach in and grab me, practically yanking me from the car.

Scar.

His body pins me against the car before he threads his hand through my hair at the back of my head, giving it a gentle yank and tilting my head back before crashing his

mouth on mine. My eyes bulge in shock and my lips are stiff at first, until he sweeps his tongue along mine, coaxing me.

I relax into him and kiss him back, grabbing fistfuls of his T-shirt to pull him closer. His other hand is resting at my waist, his thumb stroking under my top, leaving goosebumps in its wake. He suddenly breaks the kiss, and a whimper escapes my lips in protest. As he rests his forehead against mine, both of us panting, I keep my eyes closed, afraid that if I open them, I will find that this isn't real.

"Look at me Angel," he rasps.

I slowly open my eyes and look into his grey eyes, but before he can speak, I get in there first. "Look, I don't think I can handle you telling me it's a mistake, that this shouldn't have happened, so if that's what you are about to say then just keep it to yourself. You can just walk away and not say anything."

His eyes flicker between mine as he leans back and sighs. "I could never regret kissing you," he declares, looking down at me. He slowly moves both his hands and cups my face as he inches his mouth closer to mine. "There is only one regret. That I didn't do it sooner," he says softly across my lips before kissing me again, only this time he's slow, like he's savouring every move of my lips, every stroke of my tongue. "Come back with me now. Don't go back there," he softly demands across my lips between kisses.

I close my eyes and take hold of his hands in mine, placing a soft kiss on one of his palms. As I look up at him, tears fill my eyes. "I can't. He will kill you, he will kill us both. It's one week. That's all, right?" I smile softly as a tear escapes and trickles slowly down my cheek.

Scar's eyes follow it, not saying anything, because deep down he knows I'm right. It's the only way and while he seemed to be okay with that just moments ago, but

now that his mouth has been on mine, now that we both feel something, we both want to explore this something, whatever it is, it's harder. He lifts my hand to his mouth, placing a soft kiss on the back of it before he steps back.

I nod and give him a tight smile before getting back in my car.

He bends down. "Anything happens, anything at all, call me," he orders.

I nod and he closes my door. I don't hang around as the need to get away thumps through me. If I don't go now, I never will, and I will choose to go with him and damn the consequences.

I don't remember driving back to the house. My mind was too busy whirling with thoughts of Scar, of the feel of his body pressed against mine, the feel of his hands on my face, his lips on mine. A flutter of butterflies swim in my stomach, and I exhale a sigh like some love sick teenager. I pause for a moment in my car to compose myself before getting out. They won't be home, thankfully. Even if I could do my best to hide how good I feel, my mother would pick up on it. She's like a bloodhound, trained to sniff out my happiness, ready to destroy it.

I send a quick text to Layton, telling him that I'm home and that I hope he's okay. He replies instantly that he will be home in 2 days now, which has me smiling to myself. Only then he adds for me to not go anywhere and to make sure I wear the dress he likes for when he returns.

Prick.

I reply sweetly while angrily giving my phone the middle finger. I know it's pointless, but it makes me feel better.

Walking into the quiet house, I head straight up to my room. Opening my wardrobe, I

think for a second about packing a bag ready, but then pause, remembering that Layton has a camera in my room. If I start packing, he will see. Pausing for a second, I stare at my wardrobe when an idea suddenly hits me. I head downstairs to grab some trash bags and begin to take clothes off their hangers and put them in the bag.

My phone rings and I look at the screen, my stomach sinking when I see it's him. I quickly answer. "Hey," I greet.

"What are you doing?" Layton snaps down the phone.

I look around my room for the camera. "I'm sorting through my clothes for donation. There was a poster in the town where the bridal shop is stating that they are trying to raise money and help the homeless. I figured I have so many clothes that I could give them some of mine," I lie.

He exhales an exasperated breath down the phone. "And you think that I will just pay to replace the clothes you give away?" he snaps.

"No, of course not," I counter.

"Sure, because when we are married, you will be on a set allowance. I won't have you thinking you can spend my fucking money whenever you feel like it," he seethes. The hairs on the back of my neck prickle, like a warning. He's getting into one of his moods, one of the moods I've learnt to try and avoid. It won't matter that he isn't back for a couple of days because he will keep this stored in his mind, ready to deliver whatever punishment he deems fit when he gets back. I need to defuse the situation and quickly.

"I think you're right," I agree, keeping my voice timid and submissive.

"Of course I'm right," he grunts. I refrain from rolling my eyes, ensuring to keep my

mouth shut. “Maybe if you lost some weight, then I might consider getting you some new clothes,” he adds. I close my eyes at his comment. I’m not a small girl, never have been. My weight has always been an issue with me, and a jab about my weight will always hit a nerve. “I have to go. Anything else you want to piss me off with?” he growls.

“I’m sorry,” I say softly.

“Good,” he states sharply then disconnects, not bothering to say goodbye or anything. I drop my phone on to the armchair and hang my head, sighing. This week needs to go by quickly and the plan that Scar and his club has needs to work out. It needs to.

I need it too.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

ELSIE

Father and Layton came back and thankfully, all seemed calm. I'm not sure what happened in the deal while they were away, but whatever it was pleased them. That's good, because I need them to be in a good mood this week. The only downside was that Layton thought he was being caring and romantic, which led to him wanting sex. I gave it to him, closing my eyes and counting down the minutes until he was done. Thankfully, he never lasted very long, and when he wasn't angry at me he was gentler. Not that it wasn't uncomfortable. Having sex when I wasn't the least bit turned on and dry as the desert down there could never be enjoyable for me. I often wondered if he noticed. I mean, I thought men would notice shit like that, but not him. I faked it when he fucked me, and when he spent 3 minutes rubbing my left labia thinking it was my clit, pulling out my best porn star acting just for it to be over.

One more day. Just one more day and this would be over. Well, I hope it would be. There was still so much that could go wrong, but I couldn't think like that. I had to trust that Scar and his club could take care of this. Looking up at the clock in my father's office for what feels like the millionth time, I worried I was being too obvious. It would be 4 pm soon and then it would be dinner, so I could then excuse myself for an early night. The sooner I sleep, the quicker tomorrow will come. My stomach rolls with anticipation. I feel like a child excited for Christmas Day, but the only exception is if it goes wrong, then either myself or Scar will end up dead.

"You have somewhere you need to be?" my father asks as he looks up from the paper he's reading.

I shake my head. “No, just looking forward to seeing Layton,” I lie.

My father huffs and shakes his head. “Quit what you are doing and go make a start on our dinner,” he orders.

I nod and stand, pausing at the door. “Is there anything in particular you would like?” I ask.

“Beef wellington, with garlic potatoes and asparagus. For dessert I’m thinking a chocolate torte,” he demands. I nod and grit my teeth, knowing full well that I will have to go out to the store to get all of those ingredients. Father quickly notices my annoyance. “If this is a problem, we can discuss it further,” he suggests with a threatening undertone. As he stands, his hands rest on his belt, implying exactly what will happen if I refuse to cook what he demands.

I must never tell him no, never have an opinion that is different from his, and I must never show him any disrespect.

I give him a tight and as always submissive smile. “Of course not. I’m more than happy to make that for you.”

He doesn’t smile, just nods and returns his attention back to his paper. I walk into the kitchen to take stock of what ingredients I need to buy, then move to grab my purse. As my hand touches the front door, my mother approaches from behind.

“Going to the store?” she asks. She turns to grab her coat and shrugs it on. Before I can answer, she walks past me towards my car. “I will come with you. I could use some more vodka,” she states. My feet halt, as she never comes to the store with me. That is a job beneath her. Her jet black hair glistens in the early evening light as she turns and smiles at me, only her hard face barely moves, due to the years of Botox freezing her stone cold face.

I eye her sceptically. She never smiles at me, unless it's at my expense. I walk to my car and after unlocking it, she gets in the passenger seat while I get in the driver's side. My gut swirls as an uneasy feeling brews within me.

We are both silent on the drive to the store, and I start to think that I am overthinking it, that maybe this is her fun side. She knows I would be tense wondering what she is going to say or do. By simply not saying anything, she has me tied up in knots. As I push the cart around the store with my mother walking by my side, she stops and looks at some candy.

"You know, this was my favourite when I was a little girl," she states. I don't comment. "I've craved it for years, wanting it, but if I eat it, if I start treating myself to something this good, it will ruin everything I have worked so hard to build." She sighs. I frown at her confused, wondering when did candy become so deep? Her glacial stare comes to me. "Just like your biker friend. He may make you feel good, so much that you crave him." She pauses and my stomach dips out, my palms become sweaty.

How does she know? Shit, shit, shit!

She takes a step closer to me. "Being selfish ruins lives. It destroys lives, and it will destroy everything I have built for myself," she warns.

The question escapes my lips before I have a chance to stop it. "Why would you care? You aren't happy."

"I care because I have a life where the man in my life buys me whatever I want. I can do as I please whenever I please. Having him around protects me. Do you not think there are people out there that want me dead? Stupid girl, this goes so much further than what you know. Your father may be tough on you, he may be fucking infuriating, but if he dies, then the control that he holds will be gone and that means

none of us are safe,” she says through gritted teeth. “Your biker friend can’t protect you. He will just use you for sex and then discard you like a used condom,” she adds.

My hands ball into tight fists at my sides, and I dig my nails so tight into my palms, I’m sure they must be drawing blood. “You know nothing,” I say through gritted teeth.

She huffs out a laugh. “My dear delusional daughter. You do not understand the lengths I will go to ensure not just my life. The way I like to live my life is protected, and I will keep it that way, even if that means watching you suffer,” she threatens. She pulls out her phone and shows me a video; it’s Scar pulling me out of my car and kissing me.

My cheeks heat, not from embarrassment, but from anger. Rage boils in my chest at the thought of her taking this away from me, taking him away from me. He’s the one thing I have to hope for, the only person to ever be nice to me. She arches a brow as she looks me up and down.

“Well, I think this is entertaining. I don’t think I’ve ever seen you look angry before. You’ve always been a pathetic little pushover. It’s nice to see a little bit of fire behind those eyes,” she gleams with amusement.

I almost open my mouth to chew her out, to finally tell her how much I hate her and wish she was dead, but my surroundings quickly come back to me, realising we are in the middle of the store in front of many people. It’s exactly why she has done this, damage control. By calling the shots, she has me exactly where she wants me.

Her grin widens when she’s knows I’m not going to react. “There she is, the good little mouse.” She smirks as she pats my cheek with her palm. I grit my teeth, grinding them tight as I place my hands back on the cart and continue to shop. At the checkout my mother leans in, just to add salt to the wounds she’s already torn into

me. “Oh, and if you are thinking of suddenly being brave and getting your biker boyfriend to rescue you, then I will show Layton the video. I’m sure he will find a way to deal with you.” She smiles and winks.

On the drive back, I feel like I’m about to rip the steering wheel clean off. My eyes flicker to my glove box where my handgun is, to the gun Layton insisted I carry for protection. Only I’m pretty sure he didn’t mean for me to use it for protection against my mother.

I park on the drive, and after waiting for my mother to get out first, I lean over and take the gun out of the glove box, pausing to check that it’s loaded, even though I know it is, because I have never used it. After removing the safety, I slowly get out of the car. The roaring sound of blood rushing through my ears as I grip the gun tight in my hand pumps through me is the only sensation I feel.

I keep my eyes pinned on my mother, watching as she stops and laughs, turning to face me. “Come on tubby, you don’t want to upset me now,” she says, waving her phone with the video on it.

“Why do you hate me?” I growl.

She turns and walks towards me. Stopping just a foot away, she cocks her head to the side, that sadistic grin plastered on her face like I’m stupid for not knowing why she hates me so much.

“You’re weak and pathetic. I had hoped you would be strong like me. Stronger. You could have taken it all, but instead, you have been a snivelling, ass licking leech. You have brains, you had the chance to take out your father, to be the powerful woman I had dreamt you to be, but no, you pathetic, fat useless cunt,” she spits with such venom, I can feel them bury under my skin. With no control, my finger pulls the trigger and a loud bang echoes around the now dark night sky. Her eyes go wide as

she looks down at her hand touching her stomach, her fingers now glistening with claret.

“I am not pathetic, and I am not fat. I fucking loathe you,” I seethe as tears sting my eyes. She stumbles and as she collapses to the ground, she lifts a hand for me to help her, but I don’t. I just stand over her and watch as she tries to pull herself towards the house for my father. She doesn’t make it far until her body gives up. She releases a final gargling gasp and then her body goes limp. My hands shake and I drop the gun, gasping.

I quickly cover my mouth as the realisation sinks in of what I’ve done. I drop to my knees and roll my mother over, looking into her dead lifeless eyes as they stare back at me. After I wipe my cheeks with the back of my hand, I frantically look around. I get to my feet and hook my hands under her arms and drag her body back into the shadows around the side of the house, out of sight. Moving quickly, I grab my gun and place it inside my purse, deciding to keep it on me should my father or Layton find my mother. I grab the shopping bags out of the car and keep my head ducked as I walk into the house. After heading straight to the kitchen to place the bags down, I then run upstairs to the safety of my room. I walk straight into my bathroom and pull out my cell, hitting call.

“Hello, Chic Coutur—” a soft voice answers.

“Scar, I need Scar,” I say, desperately cutting her off.

There’s some muffling and then Scar comes on the phone. “Angel?” he asks, the worry evident in his voice.

I pace my bathroom floor. “I’m sorry. I’m so sorry. I’ve killed her. I killed my mother. I’m a monster. They will find her and kill me. My father will kill me,” I pant, panicked.

“Fuck!” he snaps.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

SCAR

I feel my brothers' eyes on me as soon as they hear the tension in my voice. Ghost stands in front of me, and as I look at him, I need him to finally get how important it is that she gets out of that house.

"We need to bring our plans forward," I state.

"How forward?" he counters.

"Now," I reply while listening to Elsie break down on the other end of the phone. Killing a person is never easy, but killing your own mother... Now that shit fucks with your head, no matter how much of a bitch she may have been. Elsie ain't no killer. Hell, she doesn't have a bad bone in her fucking body. "Shh, Angel. I need you to calm down. Take a slow breath. Breathe," I say, trying my best to soothe her. I look back up at Ghost and raise a brow, waiting for his response. He sighs and gives me a tight nod before turning around and yelling at everyone to load up. "Listen, just keep calm. We are on our way. I promise we will get you out of there," I tell her.

She sniffs. "You're coming?" she asks in disbelief.

"Of course I'm fucking coming. I'm not about to leave you," I state. "Whenever you need me, I will always come and get you," I remind her.

"I, I didn't think you'd actually do it. I thought you were just saying something nice,"

she answers softly.

Moving quickly, I jump into the back of the van, thankfully already loaded to go. “Listen, I am going to go now. The next time you hear my voice will be when I have you safe in my fucking arms,” I tell her before disconnecting.

“So, are you excited for your first date?” Hawk jokes next to me.

I throw my fist out, punching him in the side of the arm. “Fucking moron,” I mutter.

“Ow, jeez. I was just trying to lighten up the situation. Chill brother, she is good. We are going to get her out, grab ol’ daddy fuck face and that bellend Layton, and then we get to play and torture the shit out of them. I mean, who knew that Christmas would come fucking early this year?” Hawk claps happily.

“Is he going to be like this all the way, or can I switch seats?” Beast groans.

Hawk rubs his palm over his chest like he’s wounded. “Brother, I thought you loved me.” He pretends to whimper at Beast.

“Jesus Christ, what is the matter with you?” Ghost says as he turns around from the front passenger seat.

Hawk shrugs, smiling. “I don’t know. It kind of feels like it’s been a while just us guys, you know? I mean sure, the last time we went in to rescue one of our women Rage nearly died, but man, I miss those days,” he sighs.

“The last time we went to rescue an ol’ lady was Nova, dumbass,” Spider grunts from the driver’s seat.

“Well, I mean, technically we had to help Rhea too,” Cash adds.

Acid lets out a low growl. "Let's not fucking go there."

"From an outsider's perspective, and it's just my opinion, but your ol' ladies sure bring a lot of shit to the club. Not that I'm complaining. I'm just making an observation," Happ points out from the back of the truck.

We all turn to look at him and he holds his hands up in surrender.

"No one asked for your fucking opinion. You want to get patched in, you need to keep your observations to a minimum and your mouth fucking shut," Ghost growls.

"Noted," Happ says with a nod.

"Shit, are we talking about patching in Happ?" Beast asks. "Has it been that long?"

"Been prospecting for 18 months," Happ answers.

"Well, fuck me," Beast mutters. "When are we going to decide this?"

Ghost sighs as he pinches the bridge of his nose. "We will talk about it at fucking church, not in the fucking van when we are on our way to rescue Scar's ol' lady and kidnap the guy that has tortured two of our brothers," he seethes.

"She ain't my ol' lady," I add.

My brothers all give each other a side glance before bursting out laughing. "We ain't just rescuing some pussy, brother. You like her, and that will lead to more, especially if it takes you a fucking age to realise it, then you'll declare her as yours. We are just stating the obvious to speed up the fucking process. We can't be assed to wait around for your thick ass brain to catch up," Acid snorts.

I glare at him but don't comment. He's sort of right. For months I got to know her; her kindness, her smile with that little dimple that deepens when she laughs, the way her eyes expose her every emotion, even when she's trying to hide it, the way her soft curves felt against my body, the hips I just wanted to grab a hold of while I bury my dick deep inside her.

Fuck. I cast a side glance to Acid who is watching me with a knowing grin on his face. He just nods. I take the high ground and flip him off. He just laughs and continues to check over the explosive device he's made for today. Crazy fucker should be on the most wanted list with the number of explosives he's made since he became a club member.

"We are 20 minutes out," Spider says, breaking me out of my thoughts.

I contemplate sending Elsie a text to let her know, but I refrain just in case someone sees her phone. I just hope she's safe.

"I can't wait to use my new bone chisel. I was thinking I could make little ornaments for Dixie," Rage randomly states. I give him a side glance. "You know, like people make shit out of ivory. Except I ain't hurting some poor fucking innocent elephant," he rambles.

"Pretty sure bones aren't bright white," Beast adds.

"Then I can bleach them. Probably best to do that anyway, get rid of any flesh remnants. Don't think Dixie would appreciate it." Rage shrugs.

"How much longer? I'm not sure how much more I can take sitting next to Leatherface," Hawk grunts.

As if a lightbulb goes off, Rage's unhinged eyes light up, but before he can speak

Ghost cuts him off. “You are not skinning the fuckers to make Dixie a fucking purse. Collect parts, fucking make yourself your own Frankenstein if you really fucking want, but I draw the line at you using skin to make a fucking purse. That is seriously fucking unhinged, brother,” Ghost snaps.

The light that sparked in Rage’s eye immediately dims and his shoulder slump.

Ghost sighs. “Look, I promise, you can do whatever you want to Eugene and Layton. I won’t stop you. Take what you want. The only condition is you need to let Acid, Scar, and me take that what we need first,” Ghost offers, placating Rage.

Rage’s lips turn up just slightly at the corners. “Deal, but just make sure they are awake enough for me, or it’s not as enjoyable,” Rage counters.

“We will make sure they’re still screaming ready for whatever you choose to do with them,” I tell Rage.

“Thanks, brother.” He nods.

“We’re here. Everyone stick to the original plan, and for the love of Lucifer, no one get fucking killed!” Ghost barks.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

ELSIE

After washing my face in an attempt to try and get myself together, I hoped that the make-up would hide my breakdown. I'm so focused on what I'm doing in the kitchen, not wanting my mind to think about what I have done or what is about to happen. I can't let my mind even start to think about that, not now. Layton's hands glide around my waist, causing me to jump.

"Hey steady, it's only me. What's got you so jumpy?" he asks.

I clear my throat and turn my head to look at him, trying my best to give him a reassuring smile. "Nothing. I was just daydreaming is all," I lie, praying that he believes it. His eyes flicker over my face for a minute before he grins back and nods.

"Daydreaming about marrying me?" He laughs as he steps back before slamming his palm down hard across my backside, causing me to flinch at the sharp sting of pain it leaves behind. As he opens the fridge and pulls a beer out for himself, I continue preparing dinner as he leans against the counter, drinking his beer. "Where is your mom?" he asks.

My body goes tight as I try to control my reaction. "Not sure. Probably having a bath or something," I state.

My eyes flicker to Layton to see if he's buying the lie that easily dripped off my tongue. He nods and his eyes flickering down to my chest. I groan internally, silently

begging for my father to walk in now and need him for something because I know that look he's giving me and I will do anything to avoid it. He places his beer on the counter and strides towards me as I continue to chop up some mushrooms.

"On your knees," he orders quietly in my ear.

"I can't. Daddy wants his dinner, and if I stop now he won't be happy," I rush out, praying it's enough for him.

His hand wraps around my hand that is holding the knife, and I instantly know it's not enough.

"I said on your fucking knees. You going to deny me?" he growls. I immediately release the knife, wishing that I had just turned and stabbed him with it.

Jesus, I'm turning into a killing monster, I think to myself.

Layton keeps hold of the knife, twiddling it in his hand, A reminder, a threat if I don't give him what he wants. "Now, I've had a really long fucking day, so take my dick and suck it until I tell you to stop," he orders.

My hands tremble as I undo his pants and free his hard less than average dick. I want to curl my lip in disgust at it. At this point, I want to bite the fucking thing clean off, but I can't. I can't cause any suspicion to what is coming. I can do this one last time, once more, and then it will all be over forever. Closing my eyes I take him into my mouth.

"Open your fucking eyes," he grits through his teeth. I quickly do as he ordered, tensing as he presses the cold metal of the sharp chopping knife against my throat. He grips my hair with his other hand and roughly and painfully fucks my mouth.

My eyes water and I can feel the sting of the knife cutting into my neck, followed by the trickle of blood running down. I fight the urge to gag as I feel the salty taste of his pre-cum.

“You’re mine, you fucking pathetic little cunt,” he pants, pressing the blade deeper against my neck. I can’t help the panicked whimper that escapes me. “Your body is mine to do whatever I fucking want to,” he growls, his eyes flaring with arousal and rage.

A click echoes, making Layton pause and look over to where the sound is coming from behind me.

“I don’t fucking think so,” Scar’s deep voice states before the sound of a gun firing shatters the room. Layton’s body jolts and his wide eyes are on me, a dark bloody bullet hole right between his eyes.

I scream and try to scurry back as his lifeless body collapses to the floor.

A hand lands on my shoulder and I scream again, jumping away. Scar holds out his hand. “It’s me, Angel,” he states softly, holding out his hand. I place my shaky one in his as he helps me to my feet, and he lifts me like I weigh nothing and perches me on the counter. He quickly grabs some paper towels and places them against my neck. My body is trembling, my eyes wide as I gaze at his face. “Breathe in, 1, 2, 3. Breathe out, 1, 2, 3,” he instructs calmly.

I try, but my breathing still comes out ragged.

“I, I,” I pant, trying to talk. “I’m...” I pause as I retch. Scar moves quickly and gathers my hair in his hands as he guides me to empty my stomach into the sink.

“Jesus fucking Christ Scar, you were supposed to keep him alive,” I hear a deep voice

chastise.

“I couldn’t keep him alive seeing what he was fucking doing,” Scar growls.

I gasp for breath between the retching, feeling Scar still rubbing smooth circles on my back.

“She okay?” the same voice asks, but softer this time.

“She will be. You call ahead and get Dixie ready. He had a knife to her throat and the bleeding isn’t easing,” Scar orders.

The other guy doesn’t answer directly, just merely growls “Mother fucker,” under his breath and storms out.

“Where are your glasses?” Scar asks. As I slowly stop, I point to the cupboard. He briefly moves away before pouring me a glass of water. “Sip this,” he says, holding the glass in front of me. I stare at him, tears still filling my eyes as I take it with shaky hands and begin to sip the water. He affectionally tucks my hair behind my ear. “That’s it, Angel. I promise when we get back to the club, I will get you something stronger, but right now are you good to go?” he asks gently.

I place the glass down and nod, but as I move to get off the counter, Scar stops me.

“I’ve got you Angel, hold on,” he whispers in my ear. His hands clasp under my behind and I wrap my legs around his waist and my arms around his neck. His hand cups the back of my head, placing a soft kiss on the side of my head. “I’ve got you,” he assures me again. As he feels my body tighten, I worry I’m too heavy for him, but he strides through the house and outside to a van in no time. I keep my face buried in his neck, breathing in his scent to help calm me. The sound of others getting in surround us but I’m clinging to Scar like he’s my lifeline. “Angel, there are going to

be some loud explosions,” he whispers softly in my ear.

No sooner have the words left his mouth, the loud BOOM! BOOM! BOOM! vibrates through my entire body.

“Yeah baby, now that is a freaking masterpiece,” I hear a guy say.

I slowly lift my head and as my eyes connect with Scar’s, his gaze quickly flickers down to my neck.

He places his hand over my neck. “Need to keep this on Angel, to help stem the bleeding,” he says.

I look over his shoulder, and my eyes immediately connect with my father’s murderous gaze. My entire body tenses and Scar knows immediately what caused it.

“Rage,” Scar orders.

“On it,” the scary tattooed looking one says and hits my father hard on the back of the head, knocking him out.

I’m scared to look around the rest of the van, not quite sure if I’m ready to see the other club members. To be honest, I kind of wish they could hit me over the head and knock me out so I could forget this day.

We come to a stop and the van door is flung open, the loud sound making me jump. “Easy Angel, we are here,” Scar assures me. Others climb out first and then I follow. Scar takes hold of my hand in his, helping me step out of the van on shaky legs.

“We will take him round to the warehouse and meet you there,” one of the guys says. He jumps back in the van before it speeds off again.

I look up at him, wanting to know where this warehouse is and what they plan on doing to him. I open my mouth, but then quickly shut it again, realising that I would rather not know. Scar wraps his arm around my shoulders and walks us into the clubhouse. My eyes dart around everywhere as I take in my surroundings, when suddenly a beautiful woman with jet black hair wearing a pair of skin- tight jeans and knee-high stiletto boots strides up to us, her curvy hips swaying with each step she takes. She reminds me of Jessica Rabbit , but the more edgier rock version. Her eyes come to me and she smiles.

“Star, this is Elsie,” Scar introduces us.

She practically shoves Scar’s arm off of my shoulder, replacing it with hers as she walks us further into the club. “Hey sweet, I’m Star. Now, let’s get you a nice stiff drink and then we can get you all fixed and cleaned up,” she says softly.

I look down at myself, only now realising that I’m covered in Layton’s blood. My stomach lurches and I cover my mouth with my hand.

“I know, don’t worry. We will take care of you,” she says with a gentle squeeze on my shoulder. “Go on!” she yells at Scar. “You need to be there.”

I look back at Scar, but he pauses, just watching me, so I give him a reassuring nod that I’m okay and he can go. He watches me for a long moment before he turns and leaves. I mean, I’m sure I am okay. Hell, I have no idea.

It’s then that I realise I recognise her voice. “Chic Couture,” I breathe.

She smiles and nods before opening a door to a small room. Inside there is a hospital type bed, a tray with medical supplies on, and a small woman with black bobbed hair pulling on a pair of surgical gloves.

My feet stop immediately, my body freezing.

“It’s okay, this is Dixie. She is a qualified nurse. Scar asked her to take a look at the cut on your neck as it won’t stop bleeding,” Star informs me, keeping her voice calm and soothing as she speaks. “I will get one of the Prospects to get you a drink. What do you want?” she asks.

“Gin and tonic,” I blurt out, thinking I could down one about now to calm my nerves. Star nods and briefly sticks her head out the door, speaking to someone before she then comes to stand at my side as I perch myself on the bed.

“I’m going to just clean the area, and then take a better look at what we’ve got,” Dixie says. I tilt my head back and let her clean my neck. “Okay, I’m thinking I will need to stitch this. It’s not very deep, because well, if it was deep, you wouldn’t be sat here now, but it is a long cut across your neck, which is why it keeps bleeding,” she says with a nod.

“Breeding?” I repeat, a confused frown on my face.

Her cheeks turn a little pink. “I sometimes say the wrong word. It’s no big deal. It’s just a thing that I do,” she says, shrugging.

“I’m sorry, I didn’t know,” I apologise.

“Don’t apologise. How could you know?” Star asks with a shrug. “Dixie’s little wrong word issue actually makes conversations a whole lot more fun,” Star states as she squeezes Dixie’s shoulder.

“Okay, if you could lay back and tilt your chin up a little,” she instructs. I smile at her misused word and lay back, tilting my chin back.

She's about to start the stitches when there's a knock at the door and a huge guy enters, carrying my gin and tonic. "Sorry, here is the drink."

Star takes it. "Thanks Tiny." He nods and closes the door behind him as Star hands me the drink. "You may want to knock some back before she starts," she suggests. Before she can say anything else, I glug the drink back and then hand her back the empty glass. "I will get you another." She smirks.

"Thanks, and I think that was a double," I wheeze, feeling the warmth from the alcohol trickle through my body. In no time at all, Star is placing another full glass of gin and tonic in my hand. I knock that back as Dixie pauses patiently. "Okay, I'm good." I nod, feeling a little more relaxed with two very strong gins flowing through my veins.

Dixie begins and fuck me it hurts. I squeeze my eyes shut and grip the sheet beneath me tightly in my fists. A hand prises my fingers open, and I peel my eyes open to see Star smiling at me, holding my hand comfortingly in hers. I exhale a breath as Dixie continues.

"You know, the guys always act tough, but I've seen them in here getting stitches done, and I swear they look like they want to whimper like a little baby," Star snorts.

"Well, I'm going to look like Frankenstein after this," I mumble, being careful not to move too much.

"You will look like a freaking sexy as fuck Frankenstein," Star states.

The door opens and Tiny brings in another drink for me. "Thank you," I tell him. He nods and quickly retreats back out the door. Star holds the drink for me while Dixie finishes off. "Is he really called Tiny?" I ask. I hadn't noticed, but this time he had put a straw in. Star lets go of my hand and as she holds the glass in one hand and the

straw in the other, she holds it to my mouth as I take a long suck.

Star smiles down at me. "He is," she answers.

"The man is enormous," I state.

"He is," she agrees.

Dixie soon finishes, placing a large dressing over it. Star helps me sit up and my head spins a little from the gin. I let out a giggle. "Oops."

"Okay, so you need to shower, but you can't get your stitches wet. Are you okay with someone helping you?" Dixie asks.

I shrug, feeling the buzz of the alcohol now in full effect. "I will help her. Dixie, you want to Drop Queenie a message and see if she can rustle something up?" Dixie nods as Star links her arm with mine and leads me to a room down the hall. It's a plain room, not much in it. I close my eyes and breathe it in, knowing exactly who sleeps here.

"Scar's room." I smile.

Star smirks as she walks over to the draws and pulls out one of his T-shirts. "It is. Come on, let's get you cleaned up," Star says as she ushers me into the bathroom. I discard my clothes, not feeling at all self-conscious, which is definitely down to the gin. Star holds the shower head, keeping it away from my neck as she hands me Scar's shower gel.

As I wash my body, the water runs red at my feet. I blink and instantly look away.

"Don't you dare," Star warns. I look at her. "I'm guessing this is the blood of the guy

that marked your body like that?” she says, gesturing to the bruises that are dotted all over my body. I don’t answer. “He deserved to die. In fact, he deserved to suffer more than what he did. I am not sure why his life was instantly taken, because I know for fucking certain if the guys knew he did this to you, he would be in that warehouse right next to your daddy. He would be made to pay for what he has done,” Star states adamantly.

“Scar shot him in the head while he had me on my knees with the kitchen knife to my throat, while he forced me to suck him off,” I confess.

Star’s faced turns to one of pure fury. “Mother fucker,” she seethes. I angrily wipe away a tear that escapes. “If I can give you one bit of advice, from what I’ve learnt from these guys, but especially my man, is that you no longer have to live that life. You will no longer just accept it because you think that is all you are worth. You are worth more, you deserve better, and from this day forward you will be treated as such. I was at a point in my life where I thought that living with it, just accepting that was my life was what I deserved, that it was what my life was meant to be. That was until Ghost came into my life, all bossy and possessive.” She pauses, a small affectionate smile playing across her lips as she talks about him. “He gave me what I deserved, he still does, and I know now that I am too fucking good to ever be treated like that. You are, too,” she affirms.

I’m not sure what to say to her. “I’m not sure if you are giving me a compliment or chastising me,” I state honestly.

Star throws her head back and laughs. “Girl, it’s fucking both because that is my love language.”

CHAPTER NINETEEN

SCAR

As I walk into the warehouse, the stench of copper fills the air. “Jesus, I’ve only been gone 10 minutes,” I mutter. Taking in the scene before me, Eugene has already been stripped naked and is strapped to a table. Normally it’s a chair, but I guess there’s a queue of us that want our time with him. This gives us access to more areas of his body to torture.

Ghost walks toward me, wiping his blood stained hands on a rag. He grins, a sick yet satisfied grin. “Acid is just finishing up, and then he is all yours,” he says as he pulls out a cigarette and lights it.

I smile and shake my head as I begin to remove my cut. As I fold it and place it on the side, Eugene lets out an ear piercing scream. I look over to see Acid working a corkscrew through one of Eugene’s eyes. Glancing down at the table, I see an iron poker and quickly pick it up.

“Bambi, start a fire in one of the drums,” I order. Bambi nods and moves quickly, making a small fire in the old oil drum.

“Interesting,” Spider comments as he comes to stand next to me, eyeing the poker in my hand.

I shrug. “Too many times I felt a burning pain in my gut from hunger when he had me in his cellar. Now that fucker is going to feel what it was like,” I say through

gritted teeth.

“Just be mindful,” he says, nodding in Rage’s direction. I look over and see a grin so wide on Rage’s face. He looks demonic. “I think he is one torture away from jazzing in his pants.” Spider snorts.

“Fucking love that sick fucker.” I huff out a laugh. “I’ll make sure I leave Eugene alive just enough so he can enjoy himself however the fuck he likes.”

“Scar!” Acid calls, gesturing for me to go over. I walk across, looking down at the bloody mess that was once Eugene’s face. His entire body is even covered in sweat. “He’s all yours, brother,” Acid grits through his teeth.

Eugene pants and groans as he looks up at me with his one remaining eye. I don’t flinch when I see the bloodied raw flesh surrounding the empty socket, where his other eye should be. “I’m going to cause you so much pain, you will be begging for death,” I seethe.

Eugene grins. “I will never beg—” His words are cut off when he begins to cough and wheeze.

“Oh, you will fucking beg. This isn’t going to be over quickly. Your pain doesn’t end today. We will be keeping you here alive, for as long as we want. Each day we will bring you a new type of torture, a new pain that you haven’t felt,” I growl. “Do you see my brother over there? The one with a fucking erection bulging in his fucking jeans. He gets off on this shit, and he will be the one that decides what you get each and every day. He will be the one torturing you,” I say before spitting in his face.

I walk over to the oil drum that now contains a roaring fire. After removing my T-shirt, I wrap it around the end of the iron poker before I dip the other end into the searing hot flames. When I see the tip turn to a glowing orange, I remove it and turn

towards Eugene, smiling.

“Unchain his legs and hold them to his chest,” I demand. Acid and Cash step forward, both smiling as they unchain his ankles before they lift his legs and press his feet towards his head, bending him like a pretzel. Eugene starts trying to fight them, knowing what is to come. “Just take a nice deep breath, Eugene.” I laugh as I shove the searing hot poker up his ass. Eugene lets out an ear piercing scream. “Sing those high notes!” I cheer.

The smell of burning flesh tickles my nose. I yank the poker out, and my brothers drop his legs before re-cuffing his ankles. Slowly, I walk back to the oil drum and place the end back into the still burning fire. Eugene is muttering nonsense, dipping in and out of consciousness as his body tries to deal with the pain.

I remove the poker and walk over to him. As I climb up on the table, balancing my feet either side of him, I hold the poker facing down, the burning hot end hovering over his chest.

“You thought we wouldn’t come for you? You thought you were fucking untouchable, that you could do what you wanted to me, to my brother, and get away with it? You motherfucking stupid cunt,” I spit. “I will thank you for one thing though, because without you holding me in your fucking cellar, I never would have met your beautiful daughter.” He mumbles something in response. “Oh yeah, and I really don’t like the way you treated her.” I crouch down over him, holding the poker close to his face, close enough so he will feel the heat of it. “You see, I get fucking angry when you do something to me, to my brothers, but that is nothing compared to the searing hot rage I fucking feel when you hurt what’s mine!” That snaps him out of his daze. His only eye flickers open looking at me, and a slow smile spreads across my lips. “Oh, what’s the matter? You don’t like that?” I tease. I raise myself back up to my feet and hold out the poker to Bambi, not having to direct him in what I want to do. He knows, quickly re-heating the end of the poker before passing it back to me.

“Apologies, it appears I got a little distracted. Now, back to the matter at hand.” I smirk as I drag the burning hot poker across his chest, and the sound of his flesh sizzling under the poker mixed with Eugene’s screams is like music to my fucking ears.

Once I’m done, I jump down off the table and drop the poker to the floor.

“Rage, he’s all yours, but remember, I want him alive. Keep that mother fucker alive,” I warn.

Rage gives me a brief nod as I grab my cut and head for the door. I’ve had enough for one day. It’s late, and there is only one place I want to be right now. As I step out of the door, I hear my brothers’ laughter roaring behind me.

“Fuck, that’s some funny shit,” one of them mutters.

I hear footsteps chase up behind me and I stop and turn to see Ghost. “Just to give you a head’s up, Star called.” My gut lurches as I think the worst. He sees it and smiles, shaking his head. “No brother, all good,” he assures me. “She’s had a few drinks to calm her. Dixie had to stitch her neck, but other than that she’s okay, and fast asleep in your bed.”

I nod, feeling like fucking shit that I wasn’t there for her, but I feel relief because I know Star would have taken good care of her.

“I can’t believe you burned a jazzing cock and balls onto his fucking chest.” Ghost laughs.

I smirk. “I couldn’t think of an insult that was enough. Now he will have to live with that seared into his fucking skin.” I shrug. “Well, for however long we can keep him alive, that is.”

Ghost nods. "In fact, I'm heading back to the club now to pick up Dixie."

I raise my brow. "So soon? You think she will be okay seeing that?" I gesture to the warehouse where Eugene's screams and Rage's laughter erupts from.

"Why I'm going now, because if she doesn't get in there soon, I don't think Rage will stop. I have warned her, plus I've just ordered the Prospects to fucking clear it up. The rest are in control of making sure Rage doesn't over excite himself," Ghost sighs.

"Come on then, you can follow me." I smirk and climb onto my bike. Ghost jumps in the van as he follows me to the club.

It's only a short 2 minute ride to the club, and as I pull up, I make quick work of getting off my bike, not bothering to wait for Ghost. As I walk in, Star is there, her eyes soft as she strides towards me and pulls me into a hug. I awkwardly hug her back, looking over my shoulder as I wait for Ghost to chew me out a new asshole for touching his woman.

Star leans back and looks up at me. "I hope you are making that son of a bitch suffer," she seethes.

"Rage is with him now," I assure her, and that is all that needs to be said because everyone knows he's a crazy mother fucker.

"She's sweet. I like her. Before you go to her though, be warned, because there are marks. I know you already killed the son of a bitch that caused those marks, but I know you are like my man, and you will struggle to contain the pure fury you will feel on seeing them. So, I'm warning you, contain it. Poor fucking woman. It's not enough that she has scars on her back from her father clearly whipping her, but she was then stuck with a vile cunt." She tuts.

“Okay, that’s enough touching my woman,” Ghost demands as he walks in behind Star and pulls her into his arms. He places a hand on the back of her neck, giving her a possessive and reassuring squeeze. We know what Star went through, and Ghost knows that seeing those marks on Elsie would dredge up memories she prefers to keep buried.

I rub the back of my neck. “Thank you darlin’, I appreciate you looking out for her. I would have and should have stayed, but...” I exhale, pausing. “I needed to just?—”

Star cuts me off. “I get it,” she assures me, and as I look into her eyes I can see that she does get it. More than anyone else she would understand better than anyone.

Dixie walks in, barely able to stand up straight while heaving a huge duffel bag. “Shit, you got enough medical shit? I don’t want you wasting all our supplies on that mother fucker,” Ghost warns.

“No, there’s still plenty.” She huffs out a breath before dropping the bag to the floor with a thud. “Just, if you want me to keep him alive, I’m guessing he will be needing a lot of antibiotics, fluids and well...” She pauses as she bends down and unzips the bag, pulling out a few blood bags. “I stole these from the hospital. I had to crap them all over me,” she states. Star laughs and Dixie just shrugs, not even bothered by her errors anymore. It’s a cute no fucks confidence she now carries around with her.

“You should know it ain’t pretty,” I warn her.

Her eyes come to mine and a small smile plays on her lips. “From seeing what he did to you and the old marks on Elsie, I really hope it isn’t pretty,” she states. “Plus, I know my Rage won’t let him off lightly.” She sighs fondly.

“Speaking of, we’d better go before Rage starts amputating limbs,” Ghost mutters.

“I’m coming, too,” Star demands. Ghost pauses as he bends down to pick up the bag for Dixie, looking over his shoulder at Star. She places her hands on her hips and raises her brow at him, challenging him to tell her no.

He doesn’t. Instead, he stands with the bag in one hand and grabs Star’s hand in the other. “I look forward to fucking the defiance out of you later,” he grits through his teeth as he leads her out of the club.

“Ha!” Star laughs. “Casper, all the fucking in the world couldn’t stop my defiance.”

“No? Clearly you have forgotten who your man is,” Ghost growls. Stopping dead in his tracks he yanks her to him and takes her mouth, kissing her dominantly.

As they break the kiss, Star smiles up at him. “I will never stop being defiant, so you’ll just have to deal with my mouth,” she goads.

Ghost growls, nipping at her lip. “I have many ways of dealing with your mouth, darlin’. Maybe when we get home later, I could silence it with you choking on my cock.”

Dixie lets out a loud groan from next to me, catching Ghost’s and Star’s attention. “Can we please just get to the warehouse without you two humping?” she asks.

I cough back a laugh, Star laughs and covers her mouth, but Ghost just glares at Dixie. However, Dixie is unphased, already used to Ghost’s behaviour, and just strolls past them and out the door.

I laugh and salute a wave as I stalk to my room, to my woman.

Quietly, I open my door and in the dim light I see her curled up on the far side of my bed, her breathing deep and even. I remove my clothes down to just my boxers and

climb in behind her. It's then that I notice she's dressed in one of my T-shirts, and fuck I like that. I gently lean over and place a soft kiss on her cheek before laying back down, wrapping my arm around her waist and pulling her close, curling my body around hers.

CHAPTER TWENTY

ELSIE

I slowly stir awake, feeling all warm and cosy. Blinking a few times, memories of where I am come to me. I tense when I realise that I'm buried face to chest with Scar. Both of us are laid on our sides, my leg is draped over his hip, and my other leg is tangled with his. His arm is draped over me holding me close, like he's cuddling a teddy. I close my eyes as I breathe in his scent, wanting to dart my tongue out and lick him to see if he tastes as good as he smells. Instead, I slowly inhale, savouring the heady mixture of the fresh woodsy scent of his cologne and the smell of fresh air leather that just seems to be on him. A small sigh escapes my lips and I immediately tense, worried I have woken him.

His hand flexes on my lower back, slowly moving over the curve of my cheek. He gives it a gentle squeeze and a deep groan rumbles in his throat.

I go to lean my head back to see if he's awake, but the movement tugs on my stitches. I immediately hiss, stopping my movement.

"What's the matter, Angel?" he asks, his voice coming out deep and husky. When I don't answer he shifts, slowly rolling me onto my back, nestling his body between my legs. His sleepy eyes, full of concern search mine. My cheeks heat when I feel the firmness of his body, but also the very hard morning wood that is nestled right at my centre, and all I can think is don't move, don't move. He cocks his head, his lips tipping up at the edges. "You're looking a little flush. You feeling okay?" he asks, knowing damn well why I am flush.

“I’m fine. The stitches just pulled a little and well, being in this position is er, well it’s...” I pause, trying to find the right word. “It’s erotic,” I say, feeling my blush deepen in my cheeks. This just makes Scar smile wider.

“Angel, if you think this position is erotic, give me time and I will blow your fucking mind.” As he says the words, it’s like my traitorous hips have a mind of their own and shift up, looking for friction. A deep groan vibrates from his chest. “That ain’t happening.”

I cover my face with my hands, wanting the ground to swallow me up. “I am so sorry,” I mumble from behind my hands. “I don’t know what got into me. I have never done that before, and I have never wanted or felt the need to do that.”

He pulls my hands from my face, and I’m expecting to see a look of amusement at how incredibly stupid I am for making a fool out of myself. Instead, he looks down at me like he’s trying to withhold something. “You’ve never felt turned on? Never felt like you wanted a man before?” he asks, his voice low.

I’m a little scared to answer, afraid what his reaction might be. What is the right answer? I’ve touched myself, and I’ve read romance novels, but I’ve never looked at Layton and wanted him.

“I—” I pause.

“Don’t ever hold back with me. You can say whatever is on your mind with me,” he assures me, as if he’s reading my mind.

I look to the side, avoiding eye contact with him and breathe the words out in a rush, like ripping off a band aid. “I’ve touched myself, and I’ve read romance novels, but I have never desired a man. I never wanted Layton.”

“You told him no and he still...” Scar pauses, unable to finish the sentence. I can feel his eyes assessing me.

I shrug slightly. “I mean, after a while I stopped fighting it. The more I fought, the more rough he got, and sometimes if I just lay there, he’d hurt me on purpose to get me to react.” I pause, hating how silent he’s gone. “I mean, what I read in those books.” I snort a laugh. “Those ridiculous, multiple orgasms? Yeah, right! I wish they would have been a little honest though, that sex is painful and it’s only the men that enjoy it.” I sigh.

I feel Scar shift, so I brave it and look at him again, watching him as he slowly moves down my body. “I’m going to give you pleasure, right now unless you tell me to stop. Can I give you that?” he asks.

I frown, confused at what he’s doing. “What are you doing?” I ask.

“Do you trust me?” he asks. I look into his eyes and give a small gentle nod. His eyes spark as he glides the T-shirt up to my waist. I immediately tense as I feel his breath tickle across my thighs. His fingers hook under my panties at the sides of my hips, and he glides them slowly down my legs. I shift, helping him to remove them completely, all the while keeping my gaze fixed on a tiny crack on the ceiling. My breathing is rapid and my cheeks are flushed. “You’re fucking stunning,” he compliments softly between placing soft kisses along my lower stomach. He gently pushes my legs apart and I feel him pause for a moment.

I instantly move to clamp my thighs closed. Layton always used to say how hideous my fat thighs were, or how even though I would make sure I was waxed just how he liked it, that even my pussy was a whore’s pussy. That I was lucky I had him, because I wouldn’t get anyone else.

“Look at me,” Scar demands. I look at him, and he has my T-shirt gripped tight in his

fists. “Do you want me to stop?” he asks.

“I, I...” I pause and shake my head no.

“I need you to say the words, Angel. You are in charge of this entire situation, of me. I do what you want me to do,” he states, his eyes searing through mine, showing me that he means every word.

“I don’t want you to stop,” I tell him, my voice barely a whisper. The reason I don’t want him to stop is because he wants to do this, and for yesterday, for what I feel for him, I don’t want to disappoint him. He slowly lowers himself down and I turn my focus back to that small crack in the ceiling as I feel his breath dance across my centre. “Relax Angel,” he says gently as he delicately pushes my legs apart.

My fists clench the sheets, and my heart beats wildly in my chest in anticipation of what’s to come next. I don’t want to tell him I’ve never done this before, although I’m sure he can tell.

Just keep focused on the crack on the ceiling, and don’t ask dumb questions. I wonder what ? —

“Woah!” I gasp as I his tongue connects with my clit. I lean up on my elbows and look down on him. His face is nestled between my thighs, and as he looks up at me, his eyes light with amusement as he does that thing with his tongue again. “Holy—” He adds pressure and pleasure I’ve never felt before shoots through me. “Oh!” I moan. My hips buck and he groans, his eyes still watching me as he fucks me with his tongue. No, he doesn’t just fuck me with it. The man is a magician, or a sorcerer, because whatever he is doing has to be magic. I’m not sure what spell he is casting but I am here for it.

My eyes are hooded and my breath is coming out ragged, and I’m sure I look like a

panting dog as I watch him, but I can't look away, loving the way that his eyes burn as he watches me. My muscles tense, and it feels that with each lick, each stroke of his tongue, my climax edges closer and closer. Reading my mind, my body, he sucks on my clit, working along with the swirling motion with his tongue. I explode, and my legs clamp around his head, my hips writhing as my orgasm takes hold of my body.

“Oh! Oh fuck!” I scream as my climax hits. Scar moans against my centre, licking everything before he slowly lifts his head, his lips glistening with my arousal. “What was that?” I pant.

He gives me a cocky grin and moves up my body until his face is just millimetres from mine, slowly running his tongue over his lip. “Hmm, hmmm. Your pussy is sweeter than honey,” he groans before taking my mouth. His lips caress mine and I can taste myself on him as his tongue caresses mine. I whimper and he smiles against my lips as he slows the kiss. He lays us down, pulling me to his chest.

I sigh as I listen to his heart beating. As I look down, I see his very hard, very erect dick pitching a tent in his boxers. I clear my throat. “Er, you want to, um, you think... I mean, what about your, erm?” I stutter. He laughs and I push myself up and look at him.

His hand tucks my hair behind my ear as he shakes his head. “It will go down in a minute, well until I eat you out again,” he states.

I raise my brow. “Again?” I ask, stunned.

“Oh, I will be doing it again and again and again,” he states with a devilish grin. I don't know how to respond to that. Scar moves me off him and gets out of the bed, holding out his hand for me to take. I place my hand in his without question, and it's only when he leads me to the bathroom that my feet stutter. He turns around and tugs

me to him. “Let me take care of you,” he says softly. His eyes are soft, and his hand is caressing my face.

I lean into his touch, blinking up at him before I nod.

He places a brief but gentle kiss on my lips before he drops his hand from my face and takes half a step back. Leaning over, he switches on the shower before turning his attention back to me. His hands take hold of the hem of my T-shirt, and he lifts it carefully over my head before discarding it on the floor. His gaze burns with heat as his eyes sweep down my body.

I wrap my hands around my middle and look away. It’s different to when I was taking care of him before. We were clothed, and it was me looking out for him. Now I’m stood completely bare to him, feeling like I’m exposing more than just my body. For the first time, I feel vulnerable. Even the life I lived before, with everything I endured, there were things I kept hidden, small things that brought me a tiny bit of joy. With Scar he knows and sees all of me. There is no hiding with him, and I don’t want to.

His fingers take hold of my chin, forcing my gaze to his. “Every day I will tell you that you are beautiful, and every day I will remind you just how perfect you are,” he rasps.

I swallow and blink back tears that sting my eyes. He releases my chin, and I watch as he removes his boxers, revealing his still very hard dick. I swallow at the sight of it. The size of it has my eyes widening.

“Just by that look on your face is going to make me fucking explode,” he groans.

My cheeks heat as I realise I was shamelessly staring at his dick. “Sorry. I know I saw it in the shower back then, but I forgot what it looked like.” Breathe. “It’s just

so..." I pause. "Big."

He chuckles lightly. "Don't ever apologise for complimenting my dick, Angel. Now come on, let me take care of you before I lose what little control I have," he says, taking my hand and leading me into the shower.

I stop before my body hits the warm spray. "I can't get my stitches wet," I state.

He pauses for a moment and nods, releasing my hand before he grabs the shower head and lowers it. I step closer, and after he reaches for his shower gel, he squeezes it across my chest. The cold liquid makes me suck in a breath. His jaw is set tight as he holds the shower head to my chest, while his other hand caresses me, washing my body. As his hands glide over the swell of my breast, his thumb brushes over my nipple, and I shudder. His eyes briefly flicker to mine as he rolls my nipple between his thumb and index finger.

A moan escapes me as pleasure ignites at my core. His hand moves to my other breast, doing the same there. My skin prickles with goosebumps, but not from feeling cold, but from his touch, from the slow building pleasure he is giving my body. His hand glides lower over my stomach, his eyes searching mine for any sign of me telling him to stop. As his finger glides over my seam, I shudder. He pushes one of his fingers slowly and delicately inside me. I gasp, reaching my hands out and gripping his shoulders to steady myself as he adds another finger and expertly moves them, curling them up and hitting the perfect spot.

The entire time he is watching me, his chest heaving, his jaw locked tight. Pleasure slowly and exquisitely builds, and my walls begin to tighten around him. He groans, and the sound makes my walls tighten further. Feeling brave, I glide one of my hands down over his hard body. With our eyes on each other, his jaw is so tight I'm surprised it doesn't snap.

I tentatively wrap my hand around his shaft, and he hisses out a breath as I pump my fist up and down his length, watching as the muscles in his neck contort. Watching him fight to hold back his restraint has me edging closer to my orgasm. My lips part and my breathing becomes ragged as my hand pumps faster, wanting him to come with me. He drops the shower head to the floor, and with his now free hand he grabs the back of my head, crashing his mouth down on mine.

As he moves his fingers faster, he presses his thumb to my clit, and that's enough to have me tumbling over the edge as my orgasm rips through my body. He swallows my moans as he kisses me roughly, possessively. Still pumping his thick hard length, I feel his hips jerk and a deep groan rumbles from his chest as I feel his hot climax coat my stomach. His tongue caresses over mine as he slows his fingers before removing them. My hands move until they are resting on his chest. He breaks the kiss, and while both of us try to catch our breaths, he looks down at my stomach.

I follow his gaze and see his cum is streaked across my stomach. He strokes his fingers through it, moving them down to my centre and gliding his cum coated fingers over my sensitive clit.

His heated eyes sear through mine. "When you are ready, I will be filling your pussy with my cum, over and over again. You will have my cum dripping down your thighs, my scent will be all over you, my seed will claim every part of your fucking stunning body." He moves his fingers back over my stomach, swiping the remainder of his cum onto his fingertips. Then he glides those finger tips across my lips. "Taste me," he growls.

I open my mouth, allowing him to slide his fingers into my mouth. As I suck his fingers, I moan at his taste. My walls clench, and arousal quickly begins to awaken within me.

He's about to say something, but a loud knock radiates through the room. He sighs.

“Yeah?!” he yells.

“When you decide to come up for air, Queenie and Nova have made a huge breakfast to welcome Elsie,” Star’s voice says with amusement.

Scar sighs. “Be there in 10 minutes.”

Star doesn’t say anything else. Scar kisses me one last time before taking my hand to lead me out of the shower. “Er, shouldn’t I finish showering?” I ask, gesturing to my stomach area.

“No,” he states with a possessive tone.

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

ELSIE

I was nervous about meeting everyone else, especially Rhea. Part of me hates her for what she did to Scar. Even though I know rationally none of it was her fault. However, he loved her enough to make a sacrifice for her for his brother. While they got their happiness, he was suffering and almost dying. It occurs to me in that second, what if he still has feelings for her? You don't just sacrifice yourself like that for just anyone.

Scar senses my tension as we make our way down the hall, moving closer to the sound of many voices echoing from the bar area. He lifts my hand to his mouth and places a reassuring kiss.

"They will all love you," he assures me, thinking I'm worried about everyone else. That hadn't even occurred to me until now. My body tenses further as we enter the area, only to see a huge table laid out full with bikers, women, and children. Jesus, there are a lot of people to try and remember.

Thankfully, Star walks right up to me with a smile spreading across her face as she pulls me into her arms. "Relax, we are all family," she assures me, draping her arm over my shoulders before she tugs me away from Scar and begins to walk me around the table to meet everyone. I recognise some of the guys as Star introduces me to each of their ol' ladies. "And this is Acid, and his ol' lady Rhea," she introduces.

My body tenses and Star feels it. I force a smile and nod in greeting. Rhea's eyes

anxiously flicker from her lap to me, and clearly I'm not the only one who was nervous.

"Okay," Star sighs, feeling the tension before she turns. "Oh look, Queenie!" she says with a high pitched awkwardness to her voice while dragging me away to meet her.

The older woman wipes her hand on a cloth before yanking me into her arms. I'm quickly learning they are all huggers. She leans back, holding me at arm's length, her eyes sweeping me over like she's assessing me.

"You are stunning!" she chimes.

I give her a small smile, "Er, thank you?" I answer as a question.

Suddenly I feel Scar's strong hand at the back of my neck, his thumb stroking back and forth. I immediately relax under his touch.

Queenie's eyes are warm as she looks up at Scar. "It's about time," she states softly before her eyes come back to mine. "Thank you for bringing him back," she states, giving my hand a gentle squeeze before she turns around and walks back into what I'm assuming is the kitchen.

I turn and look up at Scar. "What does she mean, bringing you back?" I ask, confused.

Scar pulls me into his arms and places a soft kiss on my lips. "No idea. Come on, let's feed you," he murmurs across my lips, kissing me once more. As he takes my hand and leads me back to the table, I still feel like all eyes are on us, and I find myself trying to hide behind him. Well, until he pulls a chair out for me and then I have nowhere else to hide.

I am very aware I am the daughter of a man that tortured two of the club members. Sure, I helped Scar get out, but that doesn't redeem me completely, and I can understand why I am their main focus right now.

"How are you feeling today?" Dixie asks me from across the table. I look up from my plate and give Dixie a warm smile. She had been so kind to me yesterday, and it's a relief to see another familiar face.

"I'm feeling good." I nod.

"Oh, I think she's feeling better than good. Scar was helping her with her recovery this morning," Star teases. My cheeks turn beet red.

"Fuck's sake, Star," Scar growls next to me.

"What? I'm just saying she has a lovely glow this morning." Star smiles, giving me a wink. I bite my bottom lip to stifle a laugh. "Elsie, you look good, and don't be embarrassed. I was sucking Ghost off only twenty minutes ago." She shrugs. My laughter escapes me, and I quickly clamp my hand over my mouth.

"Jesus Christ, woman," Ghost sighs.

"Star, remember that kids are around," Acid states through gritted teeth, gesturing to a young boy sat next to him who has a pair of headphones on playing some sort of handheld computer game.

"Oh, he can't hear me. Can you?" Star yells. "Hey Olly, Acid ate your mom out last night," Star adds.

"Star!" Rhea gasps.

“He isn’t listening. He’s busy playing his game, and don’t think I haven’t noticed you didn’t deny it.” Star snorts back her laughter.

“Woman, will you just keep that mouth shut and eat your god damn breakfast?” Ghost fumes.

Star pins him with a look. “Oh, I will keep my mouth shut. Along with my legs, too,” she seethes.

“You want some pancakes?” Scar asks, snapping me out of the showdown that is about to kick off.

“Huh?” I ask, looking at him.

He smiles and places a pancake on my plate. “Don’t worry, they are always like this. You’ll get used to it.”

“Woman, you couldn’t keep that mouth of yours shut for more than 5 minutes, and you know as soon as my mouth touches yours, you’ll be an eager little whore wrapping those legs of yours around my waist,” Ghost counters.

I hear a few of the women make a tut under their breath and I wince at his words.

I absently pick up a piece fruit off my plate and eat it, assuming that Scar put it there. Watching Star and Ghost, I hadn’t really been paying attention. Star and Ghost was like a steamy romance playing right out before my eyes, and I can’t seem to look away.

Star’s eyes alight and I can’t tell if it’s from enjoyment or anger. She calmly leans over, placing a gentle kiss on who I’m guessing is her son’s head. We hadn’t got around to introducing me to all the kids yet. She casually stands and saunters over to

one of the guys that has the word Prospect on his cut.

“You are taking me out,” she orders. The guy’s eyes flicker behind her, looking for permission from Ghost. I look back at Ghost and he says nothing as he just sits there, his eyes searing into his woman’s behind. Star clicks her fingers in front of the Prospect’s face, getting his attention. “Happ! Take me away from here,” she demands.

I’m not sure who the guy is more afraid of, her or Ghost. We all sit in silence as we watch the exchange. The Prospect Happ, gives a brief nod and walks towards the door to leave, with Star following close behind him. I look back at Ghost, and his jaw is set tight, his eyes glacial.

“Fuck,” I hear muttered from one of the brothers. Spider, I think. As if knowing what’s coming next, Ghost launches to his feet and storms out of his chair. The sound of chairs scraping back against the floor and booted footsteps echo as all of the brothers follow him out. Scar pauses and places a kiss on my head.

“Back in a second,” he mutters as he follows his brothers.

I sit there a little stunned, my mouth opening and closing, not quite sure what to say. Should we go and make sure Star is okay?

“Go, I will watch the kids. Just make sure he doesn’t kill Happ. He’s close to getting patched in,” Queenie says, sighing.

All the ol’ ladies jump to their feet, but I stay put, not sure if I’m included in this.

Rhea stops beside me. “Come on, Star needs us to have her back.” She smiles.

“Oh,” I say before jumping to my feet. “Is he violent?” I ask, feeling dread pool at the

pit of my stomach.

Rhea throws her head back and laughs. Damn, she is so beautiful.

And she's seen Scar naked, the thought enters my mind. I shake my head to clear the negative thought.

"Oh, Ghost is violent, but not to Star. He would never hurt her, but anyone that touches her or upsets her... Well, then he loses his shit." Rhea smirks. As we make it outside, everyone is stood around. We squeeze through and see Star sat on the back of Happ's bike. "Oh, that ain't good," Rhea mutters.

"Why?" I ask.

"You never sit on the back of another brother's bike, unless it's for a good reason. Right now, I'm surprised Ghost hasn't beaten his ass," she states.

"Jesus Christ Happ, you got a fucking death wish?!" Spider yells.

"Pres' orders are to do whatever his ol' lady tell us. I'm following his fucking rules!" Happ argues.

"Brother, not when you damn well know he will beat your ass for having his woman on the back of your bike," Cash adds.

Star just sits there on the back of Happ's bike with her arms around his waist, glaring at Ghost. All while Ghost is stood there with his hands clenched into fists at his sides, his entire body strung tight. I frown, still a little confused by the whole thing.

"Why don't you just get off the bike Star, and chew him out like you normally do?" Maggie suggests, trying to calm the situation a little.

“What? Like the good little whore I am?” Star asks with a sarcastic smile.

Ghost’s fists relax immediately at her words, and he places his hands on his hips, sighing. “Shit,” he mutters, as if realising something at hearing his own words coming out of her mouth. “Darlin’, you know I didn’t fucking mean it like that,” he explains. “Let go of Happ and speak to me,” Ghost says calmly, yet his tone still carries a small amount of warning.

Happ reads the warning and kills the engine on his bike. Star exhales a breath and releases her hold on Happ and gets off, standing in front of Ghost with her arms crossed over her chest, still with a seething glare aimed at Ghost.

“You don’t ever call me that,” she seethes.

Ghost takes a step towards her. “Darlin’, I fucked up,” he states.

“I am not a whore,” she replies, and her voice cracks a little.

Suddenly I feel like this is a very personal moment for them and we shouldn’t be watching.

That crack in her voice has Ghost softening in an instant. He reaches out and grabs her, pulling her into his chest.

“Everyone fuck off,” Ghost barks and we all return inside.

Scar drapes his arm over my shoulder as we walk back in. “Do you think she’s okay?” I ask him.

“She will be fine. Star has some triggers is all. Although I haven’t seen her react like that before,” he mutters.

As if nothing had happened, we all sit down and begin eating breakfast again. Well, all except Star and Ghost. Everyone is laughing and talking like nothing has happened, and I find myself playing with Star's and Ghost's little boy, Enzo. He is adorable with dark hair and ice blue eyes. His chubby cheeks are currently covered in mushed up strawberries. I push his motorbike toy along the table, making sounds as he giggles and claps his little hands. It then occurs to me that this is the first time I've ever interacted with a baby before. Of course, I've seen babies and children, seen them play and watch TV shows and movies, but no one I know, or rather those I was allowed to know, ever had kids. So I was never around them.

I look around the table and notice the very big difference from my home to here. I was part of a family, I was blood related, yet I was treated like I was nothing. There wasn't any of this. Being an actual family, having breakfast together while laughing and talking. These men, dangerous and I'm sure deadly as they are, they find time for their loved ones, their family. Why couldn't my father be like that?

"Angel?" Scar's voice tickles over my ear.

I blink, realising I had been lost in my own thoughts and look up at him smiling. "Hey." I grin.

"Where did you go?" he asks.

I look around at everyone again and sigh, shaking my head. "Nothing, it's okay. I'm okay," I assure him. He looks at me for a moment before he gives me a brief nod. His eyes are soft as he looks from me to Enzo. "I've made a new friend." I smirk.

"I can see. How's it going, big man?" Scar says to Enzo, holding out his fist for a fist bump. Enzo bumps his little fist to his and I open my mouth in surprise. Scar shrugs. "Been teaching him for a while." Scar winks. "You feel okay to go for a ride?" he asks.

I smile. "I am."

Scar bends down and takes my mouth with his. "Good. I want to take you somewhere," he says across my lips.

CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

ELSIE

Riding on the back of Scar's bike has to be one of the best feelings in the world. He assured me he wouldn't go fast, but it still felt pretty fast to me. I held onto him so tight, I'm surprised he didn't have to pry my hands from him when he pulled into an underground parking lot. After climbing off his bike, I fiddle with the strap of the helmet, trying to undo the clasp. Scar smirks as he replaces my hand with his, helping me. After removing the helmet, he places it on his bike and then takes my hand to the elevator.

"Where are we?" I ask as I look around. I wasn't paying much attention when we rode in.

He pauses to push a button on the pad. "I'm taking you to my apartment," he states.

"You have an apartment? I thought you lived at the club?" I frown.

"I do, well kind of. Before I was in the basement, I got this place to have for my own privacy. I didn't really get to stay in it, and then since I came home, Queenie and the others didn't want me out of their sight. I think Queenie just wanted to feed me up, and the guys wanted me close in case your dad came looking." He pauses. "Also, I don't think I was in the right headspace to be on my own," he states honestly. My heart lurches in my chest at his admission.

I'm about to say something when the elevator pings and the doors open. He leads me

down the hall to his apartment and unlocks the door. Pausing, he holds it open for me to enter first. I walk in and look around. After he flicks on some lights and walks ahead, he opens the floor to ceiling curtains, revealing the stunning view of the rest of the town. The apartment building is right in the centre on a slight hill that overlooks the town.

“This is stunning,” I compliment as I gaze out.

Scar comes behind and wraps his arms around my waist, placing kisses along the side of my neck. “Hhmmm, the view is even more stunning now I have you in it,” he murmurs between kisses. I snort. “Laugh it up Angel, because when the time comes that you are ready, I am fucking you up against the glass for the whole fucking town to see me claim you as mine,” he whispers in my ear, nipping my lobe playfully.

I suck in a shaky breath as my core tingles at the thought.

He smiles against my neck, his thumb lightly grazing over my already hard nipples. “I think my woman likes the sound of that,” he growls.

My woman, my woman! I internally squeal, feeling like a teenager swooning over their favourite boy band member. I swallow harshly, my mouth suddenly feeling dry and force myself to turn in his arms.

He looks down at me, a playful smile on his lips. “I’m your woman?” I ask.

His smile deepens as he tucks my hair behind my ear. “You only just figuring that out?” I shrug and he lets out a low chuckle, shaking his head. “Shit, maybe I didn’t make it clear enough to you. From the moment you walked in and brought me food, the light behind you lit up like you were a fucking angel. I looked forward to seeing you every damn day. Hell, I wished that you would come by even if it was just for you to pass a note under the door,” he confesses, his hands cupping my face.

“Well, I mean you were technically held prisoner in my father’s basement. You were beaten and starving. I could be Freddie Kruger bringing you food and you would probably feel the same way,” I point out.

His grin deepens. “Maybe you have a point, but there is just one thing.” He pauses. “I wouldn’t want to fuck Freddie Kruger.” I roll my eyes. “I wanted you that night you fucking saved me, and I wanted you when your wet body had me in that shower. But I knew up here I wasn’t ready,” he says, tapping the side of his head. “I told myself that I couldn’t allow myself to be with you like that, as it would be just a rebound.” I flinch at those words. He sighs. “You’re not, and you never were. I just didn’t allow myself to feel it. Shit, I didn’t want to allow myself to feel anything. The one time I let myself feel anything I got fucking stung.” I rub a hand over my chest, feeling the pang of jealousy and hurt surge through me. He places his hand on mine and moves it onto his chest. “Angel, look at me.” I sigh before looking into his grey eyes. “I can’t change my past, I can’t change what I felt, and I wouldn’t want to,” he confesses. I tense, trying to pull my hand from his chest, but he keeps it firmly in place. “Because if I hadn’t done what I had done, if I hadn’t felt what I felt for her, for Rhea, then I wouldn’t have found you.” The hurt eases slightly, but the feeling of jealousy increases in my chest. “I had feelings for Rhea, I loved her, I cared for her, and I still care for her, but not like you think.”

I shake my head and close my eyes. “I can’t, I can’t hear that,” I whisper.

“You can because what I feel for you is different. I’m not falling for you, Elsie.” He pauses and I open my now tear filled eyes and look up at him. “I’ve already fallen, and I’ve fallen fucking hard,” he confesses. I feel like the world has shifted under my feet, but he doesn’t stop there. “I love your emerald eyes, and I love how when the light catches them you can see little flecks of gold. I love how you have a light dusting of freckles across your cheeks, and how rich and silky your auburn hair feels under my fingertips,” he says, gliding his fingers through my hair. Suddenly he grabs a fistful and tugs it gently, tilting my head back slightly, but still being cautious of my

stitches. He leans down and brushes his lips across mine. "I love how from the slightest touch, your body reacts to mine." The hairs on the back of my neck stand on end. "I love your soft, plump lips." He runs his tongue along my bottom lip and my tongue reaches out to taste him. He smiles. "I love how you taste, how all of you fucking tastes," he breathes, passionately taking my mouth, instantly duelling his tongue with mine. He swiftly breaks the kiss and rests his head against mine. Our breaths mingle and my heart is beating rapidly in my chest. My core is pulsing, craving him and needing more than just his mouth. "I love how you laugh, how you care so fucking much, how selfless you are." Keeping my gaze on his, my hands begin to slowly move down his toned body to the button at his jeans. "But there is one thing I don't love about you," he adds. My hands freeze and my body stills. "I don't love how you don't see just how fucking perfect you are, but I'm going to fix that. I'm going to tell you each and every day just how fucking incredible you are," he rasps, stroking away the tears that I hadn't realised were falling.

"Make me yours," I whisper.

He stills. "I wasn't telling you this so that you'd fuck me."

I take a step back, so I am out of his hold before I reach down for the hem of the T-shirt and lift it over my head. Throwing it to the floor, I reach behind me and unhook my bra, letting it fall to the floor. His grey eyes almost turn to pools of molten silver as heat burns through them. I thumb the waistband of the shorts along with my underwear and let them glide down my thighs until they pool at my feet. Heat rises up my neck to my cheeks as I try to fight the nerves swirling around my stomach.

"I know you weren't. I'm telling you that I want you. I want you to erase every thought, every mark, every violating memory I have from Layton. I want to only feel you. I want to only think of you," I express. My voice wobbles as it cracks with my nervousness, and when the silence seems to stretch for too long, my arms instinctively move to wrap around my waist, trying to hide myself from him.

“Don’t you fucking dare try and cover yourself up,” Scar growls. I blink and look into his eyes. He lifts the hem of his T-shirt over his head, revealing his broad hard body. Keeping his eyes on me, he kicks his boots off and unbuttons his jeans, sliding them down along with his boxers to his ankles before he kicks them away. His thick and extremely hard length glistens with pre-cum at the tip. “You see what you do to me? Fuck, you don’t even have to touch me and I’m near cumming in my fucking pants,” he says as he stalks toward me. He wraps his hand around his shaft and pumps his hand once, twice, before swiping his thumb over the tip. He stops in front of me. “Open your mouth,” he orders.

My lips part as he glides his thumb into my mouth, my tongue tasting the saltiness of his pre-cum. A deep growl radiates from his chest, and he swiftly removes his thumb and bends down, grabbing me under my behind and lifting me up. I wrap my legs around his waist as he walks us into his bedroom and lays me delicately down on the bed like I’m made of china.

“I thought you were going to fuck me for the world to see?” I ask him as he crawls over my body, positioning himself between my legs. He leans on his elbow and looks down on me, a smile playing on his lips.

“Oh I will, but remember what I said, Angel? I plan on filling you until my cum is running down your thighs. Right now, I need to feel your pussy, and right now I want nothing more than to show you exactly what fucking should be like. Are you ready for my cock?” he asks.

I open my mouth to answer, but nothing comes out as he glides the tip of his cock up and down my wet slit. He lets out a deep moan.

“Oh fuck, you’re ready. I haven’t even touched you and you’re soaking wet for me,” he rasps as he slowly fills me inch by inch. His teeth are gritted tight and I know he’s holding back, trying to be careful, worried he will hurt me. He won’t. I know he

won't.

It already feels a million times better than I've ever experienced.

He pauses once he's fully seated within me, giving my body time to accommodate to his size. "Fuck, you feel fucking incredible," he groans. "You okay?" he asks, his voice strained.

"More than okay," I answer honestly. I rock my hips up a little, a moan escaping my lips. That's a good enough answer for him as he begins to slowly move his hips, rocking in and out of me. He reaches down and cups my breast before bending down and taking my nipple in his mouth, swirling his tongue around my pebbled nub. "Oh god," I moan, rolling my hips to meet his. My nails dig into his back as pleasure begins to build deep within me. "I need..." I moan.

"Tell me what you need," he pants.

"I don't know," I answer honestly. I've never felt pleasure in sex, not in the slightest, but I can feel it building, wanting more but I don't know how to reach it.

He picks up his pace, thrusting inside me. My tits bounce with each thrust, and as the pleasure grows, my walls begin to tighten. Scar groans. "Fuck, I can feel you're already close, Angel." He thrusts harder and faster, a sheen of sweat coating his chest as the muscles in his neck strain tight. "You need to cum for me now, Angel. Cum. Right. Fucking. Now," he growls. He grabs my hips and slams into me, digging his fingers into the flesh of my behind. I feel like I've been struck by lightning as pleasure strikes at my core. My walls clamp around him tightly as my orgasm spreads through my entire body. My back arches in response.

"Oh fuck!" I cry out. Scar continues to pound into me, once, twice, and on the third time he throws his head back, a deep growl escaping him as he climaxes, filling me

with his seed. An overwhelming feeling takes over me in this moment. His words, the love he's shown me, it all overwhelms me.

Scar looks down at me as he sees the tears trickle from my eyes. "Shit," he says, panicked. "I've hurt you. Fuck." He moves to pull out of me, but I tighten my legs around him, keeping him there. He pauses, his eyes searching mine. "Tell me Angel, tell me what's wrong," he pleads.

I sniff and smile, shaking my head. "I'm fine, no I'm perfect. This is..." I pause. "You, everything, I—" Pausing again, I try to gather the words I want to say. "I just love you." I let out a small laugh. "I have never felt this before. This is a surreal and..." I let out another laugh. "Fucking mind-blowingly, eye-opening, heart stopping, jaw droppingly amazing!" I giggle.

His grin deepens. "Yeah, it fucking is," he agrees.

CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE

SCAR

After fucking Elsie two more times in my bed, I didn't think she could be more beautiful, but that was until I watched her riding and taking my cock. Watching her chase the pleasure my cock was giving her, the way she looked down on me with hooded eyes, her auburn hair framing her. Fuck, I'm getting hard again just thinking about it. I wanted to fuck her against the window, hell I wanted to fuck her for the rest of the fucking day and night, but unfortunately Pres rang calling church. I was hoping it was just a check in, because I didn't want no more fucking drama. Elsie and I had gone through our fair fucking share. This was the smooth sailing part, because it had to be.

As we walk through the club, I spot Star with Maggie, Josie, and Belle all sat on the couch talking while the kids play and Belle feeds. "Go sit with them. I won't be long," I tell her, kissing the top of her head. She nods, but I notice the apprehension in her body. "Star, look after my woman!" I yell over, catching Star's attention. I give her a pointed look and she nods. Getting up, she approaches Elsie and hooks her arm through hers before leading her over to the couch. Knowing she's okay, I head into the room where all my brothers are sat waiting.

"Where the fuck have you been?" Ghost snaps.

"I took Elsie on my bike and gave her a tour of my apartment." I shrug.

"Fucking longest tour of a one bedroomed apartment I've ever known," Hawk mocks.

I flip him off, a smirk playing on my lips.

“Alright, fuck. Glad to see you are finally happy and back to yourself, but we have business to take care of, runs that need doing, and deals that need to be made. Now you’ve got an ol’ lady, you’re going to need the money.” Ghost smirks and the brothers with ol’ ladies all mumble their agreements. “We’ve got shipments coming in on Wednesday, then we need to do a drop to the Satan’s where Rip will oversee the distribution to our various clients. I want us all in on this. It’s a big amount and worth a lot of money. We close on this, that is enough of a pay day to sort us for the rest of the fucking year. Plus right now, we currently have no one fucking trying to shoot our asses,” Ghost orders. His shoulders are relaxed with no tension in sight, unlike recent meetings. “Also to add Happ, I want you with us as well,” Ghost says, catching Happ’s attention from the far side of the room.

Happ stands straighter and nods. “Yes, Pres.” He nods.

Ghost reaches beside him and slams a cut down on the table. “But before you come on the run with us, you will need this,” he says, standing.

Happ smiles and walks towards Ghost who is holding out his new cut. We all cheer and slam our hands down on the table as Ghost helps him slides his new cut on. “You’ve fucking earned this patch, brother. You are now our brother in arms, a patched member of the fucking Black Hearts MC!” Ghost roars. We erupt in cheers, hoots and hollers, and Happ grins from ear to fucking ear.

“Thank you, Pres. I won’t fucking let you or my brothers down,” he says with gratitude. I place my index finger and thumb in the edge of my mouth and whistle.

Ghost slaps him on the back. “We know you, brother. Now go find your ass a chair so we can finish church,” he laughs before sitting back in his seat. Once we’ve all congratulated Happ, Ghost continues. “Run Wednesday, now with our new brother

Happ,” Ghost beams.

“So, are we saying this run should be smooth?” Beast asks, a hopeful smile on his face, hoping that we will have time to party while away.

Ghost nods. “Ain’t no reason it shouldn’t be, but fuck, you know our luck brother, and I ain’t about to jinx that shit and relax. We still treat it like we’ve got a target on our back and watch out for anything unusual. Just because no fucker wants us dead right now, doesn’t mean the Feds haven’t decided to come sniffing around again. So, don’t go thinking this is a fucking jolly.”

“Fuck no! Why the hell would we let our guard down and enjoy ourselves?!” Cash says in mock disgust.

Ghost rolls his eyes. “We still need a party for Scar coming home, and now we can make it a joint celebration for Happ being patched in. Does that make you happy?” he asks.

“Actually yes, it fucking does.” Cash nods.

“Good, I aim to fucking please,” Ghost tuts.

“Quick question, Pres. What was that about earlier with Star?” Rage asks bluntly.

We all tense, knowing Ghost can be really fucking funny about Star. His jaw tenses, and for a minute I think he’s about to bite Rage’s head off. “It’s nothing. I was an asshole is all,” he mutters.

“I’ve heard you call her worse,” Rage says, frowning.

Ghost slams down the gavel. “End of fucking church,” he barks before he stands and

storms out. We all exchange a look.

“Problems in paradise?” Hawk asks, shrugging.

“Nah, not them. They ain’t your regular couple. Ghost wouldn’t allow it.” Spider smirks.

We all chuckle. “Ain’t that the fucking truth,” I mutter as we all stand.

“Shit, maybe Star’s getting emotional and shit because Enzo will be one?” Hawk asks, shrugging.

“I don’t fucking know, man. Women are beautiful and complicated creatures. I ain’t going to try and figure them out,” Cash says, shaking his head.

“You know, my mom used to say that if a woman is mad it’s your fault, if a woman is crying it’s your fault, and if she’s happy and satisfied it’s usually because of someone else,” Bambi adds, standing at the side of the door. We all turn our attention to him.

“Jesus kid, that’s a little fucked up,” Spider tuts.

Bambi’s cheeks heat and he nervously scratches the back of his neck. “Yeah well, my mom wasn’t exactly loyal to my old man,” he scoffs, an embarrassed laugh escaping him.

Hawk places a hand on Bambi’s shoulder. “Have you ever made a woman happy?” he asks, smiling.

“Brother, come on. Don’t tease the poor fucker,” Beast says as he tries to pull Hawk away.

“I’m not, just asking. He’s only a kid. How old are you?” he asks Bambi.

“Er, I’m 19,” he stutters, his cheeks deepening.

“Fuck, are you a virgin, Bambi?” Hawk asks. Bambi looks down at his feet. “Oh my fucking god. Kid, we are going to get you laid. We are going to get you the perfect girl to not just pop that cherry of yours, but she will lick it, suck it, and ride it till fucking dawn.” Hawk grins wide.

Bambi smiles at him, his eyes wide. Hell, I wouldn’t be surprised if he doesn’t have a semi just thinking about it. “Seriously?” Bambi asks him.

“Fuck,” I laugh. “You better make sure it’s clear to invite bunnies to the party before you go promising him the night of his life,” I point out.

Hawk turns serious. “Shit, good point. I’m sure I can get the ol’ ladies on board when they realise that we are giving him his dying wish.”

“But I’m not dying,” Bambi argues.

“Do you want to die a virgin?” Hawk counters. Bambi’s eyes go wide, and he shakes his head no. “Right, so I think we’ll have this party Friday when we are back,” Hawk says, patting Bambi’s chest. “Get wanking kid, you’ll need the practice. No one likes premature ejaculation, especially the whores.” Hawk winks.

“Tell Elsie I will be back in a minute. I want to go check in on her old man,” I tell Spider. He nods and I exit the back way, not wanting to explain to Elsie where I’m going.

I jump in the truck, happy that the keys are already in the ignition. No fucker is stupid enough to steal from us. I drive around to the warehouse and walk in, seeing Tiny sat

by the door, flicking through a magazine. He looks up as I enter.

“Give me five minutes,” I tell him as I walk over to Eugene, who is cuffed to a pipe while sat on the ground. His back is resting against the wall with a thin blanket over him and a bucket and bottle of water next to him. His skin is pale and covered in a damp sweat, and his now one and only eye comes to me. Dixie had wrapped a bandage around the now empty socket.

“What do you want? Came to finish the job?” he hisses, sounding like each word he speaks is more painful than the next.

I cross my arms over my chest. “Like fuck am I making it that easy on you. I just came by to make sure you’re suffering. We don’t want you having it too good. I don’t want you to think we are having second thoughts and are being kind,” I spit out.

He smirks. “She got you good, didn’t she? What did she do? Let you fuck her or suck you off?”

Anger surges through me at his malice towards Elsie, and before I can control myself, my boot connects with the side of his face. He groans as his head whips to the side.

“Fuck!” he cries out.

“You need to watch what you say, old man. I have the power to make your life worse than what it is now, and believe me, I can think of many different ways to make you suffer, to make you beg me to end your pathetic existence,” I growl.

He lets out a strangled laugh. “I know what a whore my daughter is. I used to watch as she would just lay it out for Layton, she barely put up a fight. Did she really think her quiet sobs and her quietly pleading for him to stop would actually make him stop?” He coughs, his chest wheezing. He rubs his jaw with his free hand before

looking back up at me again. “She had no idea. Fuck, I had watched him choke a girl to death once while he was fucking her. He was gentle to her. She is pathetic and I should have dealt with her long ago,” he sneers, goading me, trying to make me snap so I end his fucking life. Mother fucker.

I lean down, my face inches from his. “I know what you’re trying to do, old man. I ain’t about to fall for your bullshit,” I sneer.

“It ain’t bullshit.” He smirks.

My hands grip so tight into fists I’m surprised my fingers haven’t broken. I slowly stand, my eyes staying pinned to him. It’s taking everything in me not to wrap my hands around his neck and squeeze the fucking life out of him. He smiles knowingly.

I lift my heavy booted foot and slam it down on his left shoulder, the arm that is cuffed to the pipes. A loud crack echoes around the warehouse, followed by his ear piercing screams. I smile as I look at how his shoulder now hangs at an unnatural angle. He squirms in agony as I hear Tiny come running over.

“Holy shit,” he mutters.

“Leave him. When his fingers start going blue, call Dixie. Don’t give him any pain relief, either,” I state. Patting Tiny’s shoulder I turn and leave, a wide shit eating grin taking over my face as I hear Eugene’s pathetic pleading cries behind me.

CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR

ELSIE

“Will you be back soon?” I ask Scar as he swings his leg over his bike. Each of the women are doing the same, talking with their men.

“I’ve told you Angel, we will be back by Friday. Just stay out of trouble. Star and the ol’ ladies have a habit of getting into shit.” He winks as he pulls me to him, wrapping his arm around my waist. “Now give me those lips,” he demands.

I don’t refuse him as I press my mouth to his, letting him take what he needs. I whimper when he nips my bottom lip between his teeth.

“Be safe, love you Angel,” he breathes across my lips before he gives me one last soft kiss.

I step back. “Love you,” I whisper softly.

His smile deepens, giving me a wink as he backs out his bike. The sound of all their bikes rumbling together as they ride off and out of the compound is like rolling thunder.

“Do not even think about arranging a night out,” Maggie warns Star straight away, pointing a finger at her.

Star shakes her head no, not saying anything before she walks inside. We all give

each other a confused and worrying look. I've been told a few things about what happens when Star is let loose to plan a girls' night. Somehow it always ends up in disaster, yet they all still seem to have a great time. I don't know Star well like the others, but she is definitely not herself.

"Is she okay?" I ask Belle as she stands next to me.

Her gaze comes to mine and she shakes her head back and forth. "I don't know what's going on, but she hasn't been herself for a few days now," she sighs.

We walk over to the other ol' ladies, and Rhea still shifts nervously next to me. Part of me wants to assure her, talk it out with her, but the larger part of me doesn't want to face that or talk about it. I don't think I can stomach hearing about her with Scar. Hell, I know everyone has a past, it's just that usually you don't have to see it every day.

"Okay, we need to sit her down and get to the bottom of it," Maggie sighs. "I have never seen her like this. She's not even excited for the party on Friday, and she didn't even give Ghost shit about having the Bunnies here."

"I didn't want to say anything, but a friend of mine saw her in the hospital with Ghost," Dixie adds. That gets all our attention. Dixie shifts on her feet. "I shouldn't say anything because it could get my friend into trouble or even tired," she sighs.

"We aren't going to get your friend fired. We just want to help Star," Josie assures her, all of us understanding what Dixie meant.

She fidgets on her feet and sighs. "My friend works in the Oncology ward," she states, her face saddened.

"Shit," Belle mutters. "You think one of them has cancer?" she asks, her voice laced

with worry.

Dixie rolls her bottom lip through her teeth, clearly holding something back.

“Dixie, just tell us,” Nova demands.

“My friend works in the women’s oncology ward. She specialises in treating women with cervical cancer,” Dixie explains. Silence descends around us, and I catch Josie blinking back the tears. I reach out my left hand and grasp hers, trying to give her a comforting squeeze. She gives me a small smile of thanks.

“So, what do we do now?” I ask. “Because you all know her better than me, what would she want you to do?” I ask.

Maggie scoffs. “She would want us to carry on and ignore it. Shut us out. Pretty much what she’s doing now.”

I nod. “And what would she do if it was one of you?” I ask.

Belle’s lips twitch. “You mean one of us,” she states, warmly looking at me, and I feel warmth hit my chest. She sighs. “She would be relentless, and she would be dragging our asses down the hospital, probably stalk the doctors until they fixed it.” Belle snorts.

“Don’t forget threatening them. She would definitely get her knuckle dusters out for that.” Josie laughs.

“Well then, let’s go be her Star,” I say, gesturing to the door.

They all smile and nod. One by one we pile into the club and find Star sat on the couch, staring absentmindedly at a spot on the floor. “Hey bitch!” Maggie yells. Her

gaze snaps up to us, frowning.

“What the fuck is going on? I feel like I’m about to be jumped by the fucking Spice Girls ,” Star snaps.

That has me snorting back my laughter. Josie places her hands on her hips and gives Star a stern look. “We know what you are going through, and we are here to harass, to kick some doctors asses to help you get the best medical care, and you can push us away and try and hide as much as you want, but we will still be there breaking down the door. You are not alone,” Josie snaps.

Star’s eyes shine with tears and her lips twitch as she fights back a smile. “I think that is the first time I’ve ever heard you be threatening.”

“Yeah well, you are forgetting I’m British, and if there is some complaining to do, no one will do it better, so just show me to the hospital complaints department,” Josie adds.

We all let out a chuckle and Star laughs and wipes her eyes. “I’m okay. I don’t have cancer,” she says, pausing. “Well, I don’t know yet. I have to wait for the biopsy results,” she admits.

We all move towards her, each of us hugging her. Queenie walks in a moment later and places down a couple of bottles of wine and a tray of glasses. “Finally. I said that you should have told them,” she sighs.

“You knew?” Maggie asks.

“Of course, I looked after Enzo while she had the biopsy. I was sworn to secrecy and if it was anything else, I would have told you, but her and Ghost needed time to deal with it themselves,” Queenie states.

“When do you get the results?” Rhea asks.

Star shrugs. “They didn’t give me a specific date. Just that they would be in touch as soon as they were in.”

Dixie abruptly gets to her feet. “I’m not having that!” she snaps. She pulls out her cell from her back pocket and after pressing some buttons, she puts it on speaker as it rings.

“Dixie, good to hear?—”

Whoever she’s called doesn’t get a chance to finish that sentence because Dixie is immediately snapping at them down the phone. “Giles, listen to me right now. My best friend Star came in for a cervical biopsy.” Dixie looks at Star for confirmation. Star gives her a brief nod. “Right yeah, and she hasn’t had the results yet. She’s stressed, I’m stressed, everyone is stressed,” she snaps.

We all look at her with wide eyes as this tiny little thing speaks firmly down the phone.

“Dixie, you know the hospital’s procedure on these things. I can’t just push her file to the top and give her special treatment. That would be unethical,” the man sighs.

“Giles, let me tell you what is unethical. What is unethical is when a doctor fucks the interns in their office. I wonder what Shirley would think,” Dixie mutters.

We hear clicking on the other end of the line. “What’s your friend’s name?” he asks. We all grin as Dixie gives him Star’s details, and Star sits there, her hands gripping Maggie’s tightly. “Ah yes, well I can confirm there has been pre-cancerous cells found. We can get her in as early as tomorrow and I can perform the procedure myself to remove them,” he states down the phone.

Dixie answers before Star can answer. "She will see you at 9 am," she states before disconnecting the call. Dixie kneels in front of Star and takes her hand in hers.

Star's worried gaze lands on her. "Pre-cancerous," Star whispers, her bottom lip wobbling slightly.

Dixie nods. "It sounds scary, but I can assure you it's a good thing. He will perform a treatment and laser the cells off. It's not the best thing, but it's good news they have caught it before it can progress into anything worse."

Star bursts out laughing, wiping her cheeks. "Worse," she sniffs. "What about Ghost? He will go crazy if he finds out I'm going alone."

"You're not alone. We will all be there with you, every step of the way," Josie assures her.

We all nod. "Even me. I know you don't know me very well yet, so I understand if you don't want me there, but I would like to be there for you the way you were there for me when I arrived," I tell her.

Star nods. "I want you all there."

"Then crack open that wine for tomorrow. We go in support of Star's cervix!" Maggie cheers.

The next morning, Queenie has tasked the two Prospects left behind to stay with her and look after all the babies. She said she's good, but she isn't fucking Mary Poppins. Which I can respect when there are 3 kids under one year's old. Rhea's son Olly has also offered to stay home from school and help. Rhea told him nice try and saw him onto the school bus. Now all of us are sat in the waiting room, each of them wearing the Black Hearts MC cut, stating who they're property of. I am the only one without

one, which is fine. Scar and I are new. Well, if you count months of talking and getting to know each other as new, but actually being together, being free, then I think a week isn't very long.

The nurse comes out and calls Star's name, and we all stand and follow her in. "You can't all be in here," the nurse says. We all cross our arms over our chest, daring her to remove us. She sighs and throws her hands up in frustration. "Fine, do what you like," she huffs.

The doctor comes in and his feet stutter at the sight of all of us. He clears his throat and looks back down at the chart in his hand. "Good morning, Star is it?" he asks. Star nods. "Can I ask that you go with Nurse Brenda and get changed into a surgical outfit? Then I will talk you through the procedure," he states kindly and calmly. From hearing Dixie threaten him that he gets handsy with the interns behind his wife's back, to seeing him now, I would have never of thought it was the same person. Dixie leans in like she's reading my mind.

"He's an utter dickhead, but he is the best," she whispers.

I nod, because his calm and caring demeanour has already put Star at ease. Once Star is changed, she walks past us, her bare behind peeking out from the gown. She jokes, spanking it before she hops up onto the bed. We all stand at the head end to give her some privacy as she places her legs on the cushioned stirrups.

"Okay, I will be using a speculum to open you up, then I will be injecting a local anaesthetic into your cervix." He pauses as we all let out a wincing "ooo," while crossing our legs. "Once that is in effect, I will be using what is called Lletz treatment. It lasers off the cancerous skin cells," he states.

"Cancerous? You said pre-cancerous," Star counters, panicked.

“You have both, but please be assured that this treatment is very successful and it’s unlikely the cancer will fully grow,” he assures her. “Now, there will be an extractor fan going as I am essentially burning cells. I will be doing it by watching the screen there next to your head. If at any point you feel anything, I want you to let me know immediately.”

“Not being funny Doc, but I don’t think I will be able to keep calm if I felt you searing my cervix,” Star quips. The doctor gives her a smile as he begins prepping equipment. The nurse slaps a patch on her thigh. “What’s that for?” Star asks.

“That’s to earth you,” the nurse answers.

“Earth me?!” Star hisses.

“It’s because of the electric laser being used. Don’t worry, it’s completely safe and normal,” the nurse states, trying to assure her.

Star places her hands behind her head and sighs. “You get many women calm when you tell them an electric laser is going to zap at their cervix?”

“Well, no,” the nurse answers.

“Funny that,” Star answers sarcastically.

“Okay, I will just be administering the anaesthetic now. You’ll feel a slight sting and a little prick,” the doctor warns.

“That ain’t the first time, Doc,” Star snorts. We all cover our mouths, fighting back our laughter.

“Don’t let Ghost hear you say that,” Maggie laughs.

“He would make me clarify that he is in fact well endowed, and I’m only used to his very big prick,” Star laughs. She stops and hisses, her face screwing up from the needle.

“Okay, all done. Now just relax and it will be over soon,” the doctor smiles.

“Now we’ve all heard that before,” Star laughs. We burst out laughing and even the grumpy nurse snorts a laugh.

The fan is quite loud as he works, and none of us mention the smell of burning flesh. Well, apart from Star. “Smells like a lovely bit of ribeye,” she mutters.

“Well, I won’t be eating steak again. Now I will just be envisioning your sizzling cervix.” Belle gags.

“Hey, I will have you know that Ghost says my pussy is delicious. He said he could eat it all day,” Star jokes. The doctor’s face tinges pink at her words.

“Shall we play a game?” Josie suggests.

We all look at her. “A fucking game?” Maggie blurts.

Josie shrugs. “Well yeah, you know, to pass the time.”

“What game shall we play? I spy? I will go first. I spy my giant cervix on that screen,” Star teases.

Josie holds up her hands in defence, fighting back her laughter. “I was just trying to pass the time for you.”

“Well thanks, but I’m kind of restricted while the doc has his hand up my chuff, and a

laser at my cervix. Maybe after we can play tag?” Star smirks.

Josie pokes her tongue out at her playfully. I laugh, loving how all of them are here for her, for each other.

After 30 minutes, the doctor smiles. “All done. If you want to get dressed, then the nurse can go through your aftercare.” The doctor stands and nods his head in goodbye as he leaves the room.

Once Star is dressed, given the leaflets, and told to not overdo it, we head back to the club. As Maggie pulls the van into park, she mutters an “uh-oh.”

“What?” I ask.

We all consecutively look through the windscreen to see the motorbikes all lined up, and all the men from the Black Hearts MC stood there waiting for us with their arms crossed. They all look pissed, but Ghost looks murderous.

“Shit,” Star breathes.

Maggie parks the van and Ghost walks over to the passenger side and yanks the car door open. “Before you start, I’m okay. It was fin— Aaaa!” she squeals as Ghost reaches in and lifts her into his arms like she weighs no more than a bag of potatoes. He says nothing and strides inside with Star in his arms.

“Here we go, ladies,” Maggie says wincing, and we all file out of the truck one by one.

Each man takes their woman’s hand and leads them either inside or places them on the back of their bike.

I look to Scar and his face is set in stone. Stopping in front of him I look up. “Hey, you made it back okay,” I say sheepishly.

He says nothing and just places the helmet on my head and fastens it. “Get on the bike,” he orders.

CHAPTER TWENTY-FIVE

SCAR

I'm furious. No, not furious. I was fucking petrified. The first thought to go through my head was that something had happened to her, or that someone to do with her father had got to her. I thought I had fucking lost her.

Trying to remain calm, I sped to my apartment, feeling her hands gripping tight around my waist. I park in my spot, and she gets off, watching as she unclasps the helmet and angrily yanks it off her head.

“What the hell is wrong with you?!” she screeches. “You could have got us killed.” She slams the helmet into my chest before storming off towards the elevator.

I place it on the back of my bike before I storm towards her. The elevator pings and the doors open. She steps in and I'm close behind her. There is another guy about to step in, but I push past him, pressing the button for our floor.

“Fuck off,” I growl. The pathetic weasel shits himself and practically jumps back out of the elevator.

“What the he—” she begins.

I grab her face in my hands, pushing her body against the wall of the elevator and slam my mouth down to hers, silencing her. She immediately melts into me as my tongue sweeps across her. She nips at my bottom lip and I smile against her mouth,

not breaking the kiss as our lips duel. I break the kiss and step back. Her lips are swollen and her eyes spark with flecks of gold. Her chest rises and falls as she tries to catch her breath. I slam my hand down on the stop button, causing the lift to slam to a halt. She doesn't say anything, her eyes just watch my every move as I lower myself to my knees. I glide my hands under her skirt and graze my fingertips over her thick, milky thighs. She looks down on me, her lips parted, watching and waiting for my mouth. I bunch her skirt up to her waist, revealing her black lace thong. My dick is painfully hard and pressed against my zipper. I look up at her as I slowly hook my index finger around her thong, revealing her beautiful pussy. A groan rises from my throat as I yank hard, ripping her thong.

"Scar," she breathes.

Again I silence her, but this time as I dive my tongue between her folds, tasting her, I groan as I press and swirl my tongue around her clit. Her hips buck as she threads her fingers through my hair, gripping it tight. I grip her hips as I devour her pussy.

"Fuck, I could do this all day and every damn day," I groan. She whimpers in response. "Fuck my tongue Angel, take what you need," I order. She rocks her hips against my face, taking exactly what she needs and where she needs it. I groan as I taste her wetness, tasting her sweet nectar.

"Yes! Scar! Fuck!" she cries out. I grip her hips tighter as I bury my tongue deeper so I can taste every damn drop of her orgasm. Her legs tremble with pleasure and her nails dig into my scalp. As her hips slow, I can feel her body relax against me. I take one last long lick, savouring her taste before I get to my feet and pin my body against hers. I tuck her hair behind her ear.

"Don't ever do that again," I rasp. "I thought something had happened to you. Fuck, I thought someone had gotten to you. I thought someone had taken you from me," I confess.

She lifts her hand and her fingertips delicately trace over the scar on my face. Reaching up she places a soft kiss on my lips. "I'm okay. I'm sorry. I'm here and I'm okay," she whispers in reassurance.

"Sir," a voice comes over the speaker. I look up to see a camera and the person on the intercom clears his throat. "Is everything alright, sir?" he asks.

I raise an eyebrow at the camera, knowing full fucking well he would have just seen that we are more than fucking okay. I point to the patch on my cut. "All is fine, but if that footage isn't deleted, I will hunt your fucking ass and your family's asses down," I seethe. Reaching over I release the stop button, and the lift starts moving again.

Elsie lets out a gasp and leans around me. "He won't do anything," she assures him.

I look down at her. "Angel, I fucking will if he even thinks about looking at you, at my woman, my fucking pussy. I will slit his throat while he sleeps," I state firmly.

"Sir, no footage was recorded. Thank you and I hope you have a nice day," the voice says from the intercom again before cutting out.

Elsie bites down on her bottom lip to stop herself from laughing. "I had no idea you were so possessive."

The door to our floor opens, and I take her hand in mine and drag her into my apartment. I don't give her a chance as I practically rip her clothes from her body. Her hands turn just as frenzied as mine as they fumble with my jeans. I help her out and make quick work of removing them for her. We both stand there in front of each other completely naked, our eyes drinking in every curve, every freckle and mole, every scar. She walks toward me, her eyes remaining on mine.

I'm about to reach for her but she drops to her knees. I shake my head. "Angel," I

start, but my words die in my throat as her mouth wraps around the head of my cock, swirling her tongue. I groan as I stroke my fingers through her hair, being mindful to keep my hips perfectly still. She attempts to wrap her small hand around the base of my cock, her fingertips barely meeting as she pumps her hand while bobbing her head, sucking and taking me as deep as she can. I feel my balls tighten as my orgasm begins to build. “Angel,” I growl. She doesn’t listen and continues.

I reach down and lift her to her feet. She opens her mouth to protest, but I grab under her peachy behind and lift her up. She lets out a little scream as she wraps her legs around my waist while draping her arms over my shoulders. I turn and press her against the floor to ceiling glass. The head of my cock lies at her entrance, and her rich green eyes stay on me as I thrust up, filling her. Her head rolls back and a moan pours from her lips. I look at her healing stitches that are no longer covered and place a soft kiss there, claiming it, erasing his fucking touch. I pump in and out of her, feeling her greedy pussy squeeze my cock.

“Fuck, I love your pussy,” I grit through my teeth. I fuck her harder and faster, wanting her to come apart, wanting to feel her pussy clamp around my cock. Her walls begin to tighten. “You going to cum for me, Angel? Cum for me in front of the entire town. Show them who you belong to. That I belong to you,” I pant. She moans as she digs her nails into my shoulders. “Cum for me. I can’t hold back anymore. Cum for me,” I grit through my teeth, using everything within me to keep my climax at bay as I wait for her, wanting to watch and feel her. Her legs tighten as she bucks her hips, her walls clamping around my cock as she milks me.

“Fuck! Oh God! Yes! Fuck!” she screams.

No longer holding back, I let my orgasm go, and pleasure fucking explodes from the base of my spine. I thrust deep inside her, wanting to be buried deep as my cum fills her fucking perfect pussy.

“Fuck,” I growl, slamming inside her two more times. I rest my forehead on her shoulder to catch my breath, feeling her fingers caress through my hair.

“I would never let anyone take me away from you. I would fight, kill anyone that tried,” she whispers in my ear. I lift my head to look at her, and her face is flushed in that post-orgasmic bliss. She continues to stroke her fingers through my hair. “I love you. You are all I ever need, all I ever wanted my entire life. I was dreaming and longing for you before I even knew you existed. Why would I ever give up on the one thing, the one person I’ve dreamed about my entire life?” she rasps, her eyes full of love and sincerity.

“I don’t deserve you,” I tell her truthfully. “You’re too good for me, too good for this life.” I place a kiss on her lips before breaking away and giving her my mischievous grin. “Thankfully I’m a selfish cunt, and I’m not letting you go, not for any fucker.” She lets out a laugh as I walk us to the couch and sit down, still keeping us connected with her straddling my lap. I take her mouth, feeling my dick twitching, ready to go again.

She breaks the kiss and raises her brow. “Already?” she asks, a smile playing on her lips.

I grin as I lift my hands behind my head. “Angel, whenever my dick is buried in your sweet pussy, I am always ready.”

Laying in my bed with Elsie sprawled naked across my body, as my finger glides through her silken hair, I sigh, feeling like all the pain, all the fucking torture of everything in my life was worth it. Just to have her right here. She lifts her head, her sleepy eyes landing on mine.

“Do you have parents?” she randomly asks.

I grunt, smiling. “No, I was formed in a lab by scientists,” I tease.

She playfully smacks my chest. “No, I’m serious. I mean, you know my parents and my family history. I don’t know anything about you. Why you won’t let anyone call you by your real name, or...” she says, pausing with her finger trailing along the scar on my face. “How did you get this?” she presses.

I stroke my thumb along her bottom lip. “You aren’t going to give up until I tell you, are you?” She grins and shakes her head no. I expel a breath. It is never easy talking about them. It’s easier to shut them out. “I was raised in a religious community,” I start. “Not a nice one. It was bad. This...” I pause, pointing to the scar. “It’s from me stealing an extra ice bun,” I explain. She frowns, the hazel and gold sparking in her eyes. It’s something I’ve learnt she does when she’s angry. “I was only a kid. Anyway, some kids got it worse, especially if they thought the devil was in them or evil. Anything really, they would hang them,” I state with brutal honesty. She gasps, covering her mouth. “My friend was one of them,” I add, refusing to let the memory resurface. “Anyway, I don’t talk about it. I don’t want the name they gave me, and I want no memory of it. I especially don’t want my nightmares touching you,” I tell her, hooking under her arms and sliding her closer to me before placing a soft kiss on her lips.

She cups my face in her hands. “I’m so sorry,” she whispers.

I shake my head. “None of it matters now I have you. That life is dead. I don’t dwell. I’ve had darkness consume my life, and I won’t let that happen again,” I assure her.

Her eyes pour with so much love it’s almost too much to bear. “That’s why you always make people laugh. Always keeping even the darkest situations light,” she whispers. I swallow, my throat feeling dry. “I saw past it when I met you. I saw the pain and suffering in your eyes. My beautiful broken man,” she whispers.

I press my lips to hers in a slow and tender kiss. Slowly, I break the kiss and roll her onto her back.

“My angel, seeing into my soul,” I say, giving her a small smile.

CHAPTER TWENTY-SIX

ELSIE

It's been 4 weeks since Scar pinned me in the elevator. I've since tried again to provoke him to get him to do it again, but to no avail. He was happy to continue to fuck me against the glass for the town to see, but he said he didn't trust the little pervert Steve in the control room. When I asked how he knew his name, he shrugged and said that he accidentally bumped into him by going to the security room. He just wanted to make sure there was no video.

"The face you pull and the sounds you make are mine and mine alone," were his exact words.

I wasn't complaining. It was nice to feel cherished, wanted, and desired. There was something empowering when a man looked at you the way Scar did me.

As I put up the final balloon, I stand back and take a look at the handy work. It was decided for the celebration to be postponed, because Star wanted to know she was all clear and in the least able to fuck Ghost senseless. Her words, not mine. So we were having a welcome home / congratulations cookout.

I feel his strong arms come around my waist and I sigh as I lean back into him. He places a kiss in the crook of my neck. "Looks good, Angel," he murmurs. Turning in his arms to face him, he smiles down at me. "Why are you nervous?" he asks.

Reading me like a book, I shrug. "I guess this is the first event where I am a proper

ol' lady, and I just want to make sure I'm not doing anything wrong, and I don't want to show you up," I explain.

He throws his head back and laughs. "Jesus woman, have you met Star? There is nothing you could do that could ever show me up."

I roll my eyes before a loud commotion from across the parking lot catches our attention.

"Now, I've got you some bottles of beer, an entire pack of condoms, and even a digital camera if you want to take photos to remember your big day," Hawk says, clapping Bambi on the back. A few of the brothers behind them cheer.

"What's going on?" I ask.

Scar chuckles. "Bambi is a virgin, and Hawk has arranged for a club bunny to come and help him out."

I look over and see a woman with very little clothing stood next to the van. "Are they? I mean, is she going to?—"

Scar laughs, cutting me off. "Fuck him in the van and take his cherry?" he says, continuing my thought. "Yeah Angel, she is." He smirks.

"Oh my god." I laugh, covering my mouth as they bundle Bambi into the van with the bunny and shut the door. Hawk and the other brothers cheer, and then they turn away. At least they've given him some privacy. As the van starts to rock, I giggle, looking away. "Oh Jesus."

"Damn, that boy doesn't waste a second, does he?" Scar laughs. "Come on, let's get inside before he starts screaming," he jokes.

All of us are in the bar having a drink, and Scar has his arm draped over me while he laughs and talks with Beast. I hear a throat clear beside me and I turn my head to see Rhea stood there. Without meaning to, my body stiffens.

She gives me a small knowing smile. “Can we talk?” she asks.

I nod as I turn back to Scar to tell him, but his attention is already on me. “Go.” He kisses my temple.

I follow Rhea outside to a bench away from the noise of the club and as I sit down, she takes the seat next to me.

She fidgets a little before she turns to me. “I know you don’t like me, and I understand why you may have reservations with trying to be friends,” she rushes out nervously.

“I don’t hate you,” I state.

She smiles and raises her brow. “I slept with Scar, and then I broke his heart,” she states. “I would hate me,” she admits.

I smirk. “When you put it like that, you’re not exactly one of my favourite people.”

She smiles and looks down at her hands. “I want you to know that Scar is special to me, and I never in a million years wanted to hurt him, and I know it’s hard to get past, but I am with Acid now. I love him. So much it terrifies me, and Scar is just a good friend. Nothing more,” she says, as if I need reassuring.

I laugh. “Rhea, I know nothing will ever happen between you, aside from you and Acid being madly in love, and I know that Scar loves me. I trust him. It’s just a mixture of feelings. You didn’t see him in there, and you didn’t see how broken he

was. Admittedly, I hated you for that. I don't hate you now. Scar doesn't hate you, so that has to count for something," I exhale. "And then there is the green eyed monster in me that really hates that you have slept with him. I hate that you've had a piece of him that only I should know about. I hate that he loved you first, when he is all that I have ever loved." I swallow.

Rhea places her hand on mine. "If it's any comfort to you, Scar never loved me the way he loves you. You have a piece of him he shares with no one but you. I've never seen him so happy. He lives and breathes for you. What happened between us was brief, and it was a whole whirlwind of emotions in such a short amount of time." She shakes her head, smiling. "I am a tiny blip of insignificance from his past. Nothing more."

"You're a pretty hot blip though, let's be honest." I laugh, nudging her with my shoulder.

She snorts and rolls her eyes before she holds out her hand. "Start over?" she asks.

I place my hand in hers and shake. "Let's start again," I agree.

She smiles and gets up and I follow her, but we both come to a stop when the van starts violently rocking and a woman starts screaming.

"YES! Fuck me, Bambi!"

Rhea and I both exchange a wide eyed look both before we start laughing and head inside to tell everyone.

"I feel like we are perving," I mutter to Star.

She shrugs and takes a sip of her wine. "It's fine, the boy is becoming a man." I look

around at all of us stood around the van, all waiting for Bambi to resurface as a man. Eventually the door slides open and a thoroughly satisfied looking Bambi steps out. All the men erupt in cheers and whistle. Bambi lets out a laugh and looks away, slightly embarrassed before he holds his hand out to help the woman out of the van. She steps out on shaky legs and rests her hands on his shoulders, kissing him passionately.

“You men need to learn something from him,” she states before walking off.

“Well, who would have thought the 19 year old is a fucking sex god,” Star mutters.

Ghost stands behind her. “You’ve got one god darlin’, you don’t need two,” he mutters to her before slapping her behind.

She smiles and shrugs. “As much as I want to argue and tell him he is full of shit, he’s telling the truth and he knows it.”

Ghost walks over to Bambi and hands him a beer. “You’re a man now. Congratulations.” Ghost pats him on the back and everyone starts moving over to where the fire pit is.

“Pres, thank you,” Bambi says with meaning. “Not just for that, and not that it wasn’t fucking great, but for accepting me when I have nothing,” he tells Ghost honestly. Star squeezes my arm, her gaze warm and soft.

Ghost gives him a chin lift. “Prove yourself as a member, and then we will see about you getting a real cut.”

Bambi’s grin widens. “Yes, Pres.”

Star walks up to Bambi and presses a gentle kiss to his cheek, Ghost watching her

every move as she does. “Jesus Bambi, go shower. You smell like pussy.” Star mock retches.

Bambi laughs. “I know,” he states proudly.

“Bambi, when you’re showered, you’re to relieve Tiny,” Ghost yells back to him. Bambi nods and jogs inside to shower.

Scar stalks his way to me, pulling me into his arms. “You good?” he asks. I know that he is asking about the talk I had with Rhea.

I nod. “Yeah, we’re good.”

He smiles and presses his mouth to mine. “Come on, I want to get you drunk. Then I might take advantage of you,” he teases, winking.

“You don’t need me drunk to take advantage,” I counter as he threads his fingers through mine and walks us over to the fire pit.

He laughs while a low groan escapes his throat. “We will stay for twenty more minutes, then I’m taking you home and fucking you.”

“You can’t leave early when it’s your own party,” I laugh in protest, although I think I would rather do that.

“I will do what I want, and what I want is you naked, wet, and writhing beneath me,” he says, whispering in my ear low enough for only me to hear.

Suddenly, I don’t want to wait twenty more minutes. I want him now. Scar looks down on me with lust and amusement in his eyes. I give him my middle finger for making me feel this way, especially in front of other people. He throws his head back

and laughs before he grabs the back of my head and places a soft chaste kiss on my lips.

“Patience, Angel. In 30 minutes I will have you screaming my name,” he vows.

“30? Why not make it 10?” I challenge.

He turns his body to mine, blocking me from prying eyes. “Don’t tempt me. I will happily bend you over that picnic table and fuck you for all to see,” he threatens in a low voice for only me to hear. I grin as I bite down on my bottom lip. “Jesus, I’ve created a monster,” he laughs. He pauses, holding up his finger before he turns around and clicks his fingers. Suddenly a Prospect turns up with a box, holding it out to me. “Open it,” Scar orders.

I place the box down and lift the lid. My smile instantly widens as I reach in and pull out my very own cut, stating ‘Property of Scar’ on it. I make quick work of getting it on, beaming up at Scar. Leaning in close, his lips brush across mine.

“Now everyone will know your mine,” he growls. “My fucking Angel.”

EPILOGUE

BAMBI

Best. Fucking. Day. Ever! Fuck, she was hot. I've never cum so hard. Granted, before I had only practiced with my fist, but I thought at one point I wasn't going to stop cuming.

After quickly towel drying my wet hair, I head back out the door to relieve Tiny on Eugene's watch duty. I can't wipe the smile from my face as I ride my bike over there. My life had gone from shit to fucking shittier before I found this club. I had nothing, no one. No house, not even any food when Happ had seen me at the back of the diner sifting through the bins for food. He had offered me the chance to be a Prospect, warned me it would be hard work, but it would mean food and some money to save up for a place to stay. Best fucking decision I'd ever made.

Happ had not just given me the chance to earn some money, but he had given me a chance at being a part of a family, and for that I will always be in his debt. I come to a stop at the warehouse and see Tiny's bike sat there. I get off and walk in. Tiny is sat reading one of his books. He lifts his eyes to me as I walk in, a slow grin spreading across his face.

"Well, look at the man that just fucking walked in," he teases, standing to his feet. He towers over me. Fuck, he really is a mountain of a man.

I laugh and give him a bow. "Why, thank you," I mock. He laughs and claps me hard on the shoulder. I look over to Eugene who is just sat there slumped, eating his bread.

“He been alright?” I ask, nodding in the direction of Eugene.

Tiny looks over his shoulder. “Yeah, just complaining, as usual,” he huffs. “Right, I’m going to head off. Want me to bring you back some food?” he asks as he heads towards the door.

“Yeah, that would be great. I’ve built up quite an appetite from earlier.” I smirk.

Tiny laughs as he leaves, letting the door slam closed behind him. I take a seat in the chair and pick up an old magazine that’s been left here for fuck knows how long. Out of all the tasks, I don’t mind doing watch duty. It’s quiet and apart from unlocking him to shit in a bucket, it ain’t that bad.

“I need the toilet,” Eugene grumbles.

I sigh. Just when I thought I was having a good day, I had to take watch duty on the day he needs a shit. I chuck down the magazine and grab the handcuff keys off the hook before walking over to him. Reaching down, I unlock his handcuffs and then help him to his feet. He isn’t in a good way as he struggles to move.

“Don’t take fucking ages,” I warn him. He makes to slide his pants down, or so I thought. He moves quickly and rears up, slamming his head into mine. I stumble back. “Fuck!” I hiss, holding my head. He goes to move, and as I reach for my gun, he lunges for it too. We slam to the floor and I wrestle with him, trying to get it off him.

How in the fuck has he got the strength to do this shit? He’s barely moved for weeks, or is that what he wanted us to think?

His hands grab a hold of my gun, trying to yank it from my grip.

“Let go, you fucking stupid cunt!” I hiss through gritted teeth. At this point, I wish

Dixie wasn't able to fix his dislocated shoulder and had just amputated his fucking arm off instead. He roars like a rabid animal and as two loud gun shots go off, the sound echoes around the room. Eugene's eyes go wide. Fuck, Scar ain't going to be happy about this, but it was an accident. In a split second, Eugene's face changes into an evil smile. He moves and gets to his feet, and it's in that split second that I realise I am the one who's been shot, not Eugene. Fuck.

I place my fingertips to my stomach and shakily hold them up, seeing my wet, shining blood coating them. I pant and my eyes go wide as Eugene's grin widens. He holds my gun in his hand and aims it down at my head.

"They will fucking kill you," I rasp, fighting for my breath.

He shrugs. "They will have to fucking find me first." As I stare back at him, it's then that I know my life is over. I close my eyes, accepting my fate. Being the man worthy of my family, the Black Hearts MC, I will not beg, and I will not cry. I will face my death, ready for Hades to take me. As I open my eyes one last and final time, my breath is already gargling in my throat.

I smile at Eugene, showing no fear or pain. I'm a man Pres and Happ would be proud of. As I let out a laugh, I choke on what I am certain is my own blood. "You're a fucking dead man," I wheeze out.

Eugene lowers the gun, knowing he doesn't need to shoot me to kill me. I'm dying regardless. "No kid, that would be you," he sneers. Before he leaves, I use all my strength to roll over to my side and watch him limp out of the warehouse. The sound of my bike skidding off echoes into the unit as I lay there on the cold concrete floor. My vision starts blackening at the edges as my breathing becomes shallow, and the feeling of death blankets over my body, surrounding every inch of me.

Happ

“Fuck off.” I laugh at Beast as he makes a joke at my expense. My eyes flicker to Tiny, watching as he grabs himself some food. I walk over to him. “All good at the warehouse?” I ask.

He nods. “Yeah, Bambi is there now. I said I would bring him back some food. He reckons he’s built up a large appetite.” He smirks.

I laugh. “Give me the plate. I will take it over to him,” I say, holding my hand out.

“You sure? Remember you ain’t a Prospect anymore.” He grins, eying my patch.

I shrug. “I know, but I want to congratulate the fucker myself and welcome him into manhood.” Tiny hands me the plate, then goes back to make himself one. I walk over to the truck and place the plate on the passenger seat before I drive up to the warehouse. When I approach, I notice Bambi’s bike is missing. I frown, that’s odd. There is a chance he walked over here, but at night I fucking doubt it. I leave the food on the passenger seat and get out, keeping one hand on my gun as I walk to the warehouse. After opening the door quietly, I peer in.

“Fuck!” I run in, seeing Bambi laid on the floor in a pool of his own blood. Dropping to my knees, I pull out my cell. “Bambi, shit.”

“Yeah?” I hear Spider answer. The sound of loud music and people talking in the background echoes down the line.

“Eugene has gone, and Bambi is...” I pause. “He ain’t going to make it,” I add before disconnecting. I chuck my phone down, watching as Bambi’s chest slows. Lifting his head, I pull him onto my lap. His eyes flicker open, and he looks up at me, his lips tipping up slightly at the edges.

“I didn’t beg, and I didn’t cry,” he wheezes. “I was a man,” he adds, his voice straining.

“I know brother, I know. You’ve made me fucking proud to call you my brother. You made the club fucking proud. You hear me?” I croak, my voice breaking at the end.

His smile spreads as his breath comes out in shallow gasps. “My family.”

“That’s right, you are not alone anymore. We’ve got you. I’ve fucking got you. You are not alone, brother,” I rasp, feeling emotion tearing through my fucking soul. A final shallow breath exhales from him and his chest ceases moving. “Fuck,” I say through gritted teeth. I push his hair back from his pale lifeless face as a tear escapes, landing on his cheek. “Sleep tight, brother,” I rasp.

I hear the rumble of bikes skidding to a halt outside. The door flies open and Ghost is the first one in. He stumbles on his feet as he takes us in, as he takes in Bambi’s lifeless body in my arms. Keeping my pained gaze on his, not caring that he sees the raw emotion filling my eyes. My voice breaks as a growl rips from my chest with searing rage and devastation coursing through me.

“We find him, and we fucking kill him,” I grit through my teeth.

The End