The Will and To Want

By : AemmaBella

This novel was inspired by the song "Champion" by Chipmunk;ft chris brown. This story is told in a parallel style, starting in the mid 1800s in Virginia, during slave trades and harsh racism, telling the story of a young girl named Nia who later on plots to escape her master's plantation after certain circumstances push her to her limits. It tells the story of her patience and will to survive and strive for the freedom she rightfully deserves. The second half of the story takes place in the late 1900s in Indiana, during high gang activity and equally high OD rates and drug abuse, telling the story of a young man named James who struggles with domestic circumstances that strain his will to fight for his dream of becoming a rap star. (I know it's cheesy but I promise the story is not corny...well not too corny)The story then hovers around Nia's progress and Jame's progress in each chapter

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Chapter 1: The Will and To Want (For Rhensis contest of a lifetime ROUND ONE)

1845
Dow Late in the eve of a hot summer night when the air was a humid breeze blowing lazily through the thick huddles of trees and little plants and bushes. A small feast had been served to the master and cleaned up properly to his liking, and the late chores that few received were finished, and Dow was finally aloud to rest her swelling feet.
"Bates, I tell ya, I can't keep working like dis all day." said Dow, fanning herself with her small chubby hand and rocking back and forth in a little chair with her toes.
"If ya can walk ya can work, Dow. "said Miss Bates sternly. "I don even know why ya even talking, Lord knows ya wouldn't be saying nothing if master was out here. Yud be quiet as a mouse, all scared and what-not." She perched herself atop a stool near Dow, rubbing her calloused hands together and peeling off loose skin.
"I ain't scared a him!" she hissed, spitting through her teeth in the process. "I's just don feel like hearin' hims say nothing."
"You's scared of a lashin' and ya know it." said Miss Bates with a laugh.
Dow took off her raggedy shoe and threw at her. Aiming for her smart mouth.
Miss Bates ducked and laughed some more.
"You know yo aim is so bad ya couldn't have hit a horse!"
Dow sat back in her rocker, pouting with her arms crossed over her chest.
"Ya need to stop pokin' at me." Dow muttered.
"Ain't nobody pokin' at you. You just need to loosen up and stop all that complainin'."
"I's got the right to complain with this belly hangin' outta me."
"You ain't the first pregnant girl on this plantation, Dow. You'd best remember you ain't special."
But special she was.
She was having the master's baby; a Mr. Jean Cooley of Cooley estates, and he was a very rich man with a very short temper. He sneaked into her cabin one night with lustful eyes and a load in his pants, hunting for a youngin'-preferably a virgin- with toned legs and an ample bosom and a face as beautiful as any white woman, suchlike his wife's. Mr. Cooley was a tall well built man with legs like a horse and a stomach as flat and as hard as a board; his skin was tanned from his hawking duties and the whippings he lashed out to anyone who lagged as little beads of sweat dripped down from his furrowed brow to his chiseled jaw in the noonday sun.
'He's very handsome for a white man.' Dow once thought as she picked her fill of cotton sneaking glances at the man when she could. Lingering eyes wouldn't do her any good, everyone knew what happened when he saw a pretty girl looking.
And she was one of the very few pretty girls on the plantation. With big brown eyes and thick long lashes to frame them she would stare at Mr. Cooley, gawking at his glistening muscles as he flexed right before he whipped one of lazier slaves, their wails would remind her who he was and she would hastily go back to her picking.
"Ain't he a fine sort a man..." said Dow wistfully to no one in particular.
"He a nigger beater is what he is." said her friend Bo."Dow, you best steer clear a him."
She instantly felt guilty for thinking of him that way. She knew he wasn't a good man and Bo had done right by putting her back in her place, they had known each other since childhood and she knew she could trust his words. Bo was usually a gentle soft spoken man and his agitated tone had made her snap back to reality. Her friendship with Bo was a lucky one, most slaves raised together rarely got to stick around long enough to see each other grow up they are always sold to different plantations soon after they are old enough to do their work without being told by their parents. Dow wasn't sure why Cooley never sold her, she wasn't the best gardener or good cook, and her cleaning was always half done. She wondered if it was because of her beauty;

she never considered herself pretty, she thought her arms were too big and her stomach too jiggly and loose. Her mother had started shaving her head when she was nine and she kept shaving it whenever it grew past her shoulders. Her mother would sell it to the master for extra food and toiletries.

But master Cooley always stared at Dow with that look in his eyes, that look most girls try to avoid by stuffing their rags or rubbing dirt on their faces to lower their beauty, and even cut their hair all sorts of crazy ways to keep him away. One time he even peeked over her shoulder just so he could get close to her, he smelled down her neck with his lips brushing her shoulder sending chills down her spine, and then he would suddenly walk off and whip someone shoving her back in her place with each 'snap!' of his whip.

He took her when she was thirteen years old and the night was a cold so she had bundled herself up in blankets and kept her rags on and her petticoat willing herself to stay warm. She heard the door to her cabin open and knew immediately who it was, only one person had a key to unlock her cabin (and all the other cabins), only one person held a Master's key.

Mr. Jean Cooley gently closed the door behind him and lightly stepped through the small cabin to her room. It was a two bedroom cabin and her mate was asleep in her own room dreaming up her fantasies not knowing that her master was walking past her door to take the young girls innocent flesh. "I think I's special nuff." said Dow, rubbing her swollen belly in circular motions.

Miss Bates jumped to her feet and rushed over to Dow with her hand held up. Faster than Dow had ever seen her move Miss Bastes smacked her clean across her face leaving a light hand mark in a stinging patch chubby cheek.

"You ain't special!" shouted Miss Bates with her face so close to Dow's she could smell breath and feel the spit that flew with each word. "Ain't none a us special! We is slave niggas... ain't none special 'bout that!"

Dow saw the tears fall from her friends angry eyes before she turned away and stormed off to her room. She felt her own tears sting her eyes and she quickly wiped them away.

She was not going to cry.

The truth did not deserve her tears.

Chapter 2

1983
Tess Times have changed since the nineteenth century; slavery had ceased and Moors were freed to most careers and were admitted into the same restrooms as the Caucasians.
But, even though times had changed, the struggles had not, and they seemed to have grown even more onerous.
As the years ran on, gangs became an issue, and newly discovered drugs, an even bigger issue seemingly appearing out of thin air, awaited to be smoked or shot into a once healthy vain.
One particular drug nearly destroyed a good family. In the fall of 1983 a young Indiana couple lived happily married for five years, they were the epitome of a happy marriage, and knew they would live on just as gayly as they would through any obstacle that threatened to surpass them. Tess Framp had known she would love her John as long as they both lived and until either one of them died.
But soon after their honeymoon John's mother died of cancer and his father hung himself shortly after. He hadn't been the same since.
One breezy autumn night Mrs. Framp had baked a pie for her good friend Ms. Jameson while her husband lounged around, unemployed and lazy, and watching a seemingly boring baseball game.
John Framp had developed a small heroin problem and every so often he would get his supplies out of a clever hiding spot the even his wife knew nothing about.
But she was very well aware of her husbands growing addiction.
"John, I need you to the dishes tonight." said Mrs. Framp to her husband as he sat in a overstuffed recliner in their living room, with a needle in his hand.
"Do it your own damn self, Tess." grumbled Mr. Framp wrapping his arm with a plastic band.
"Come on , please? "she said, approaching him with her hand outstretched. "Come on give me the needle- I need to go to Ms. Jameson's and give her the pie I promised her-"
"FUCK THE PIE!" he screamed at her as he plunged the needle him into his banded arm. " I ain't gonna do no damn dishes!" He throw the empty needle at his wife and it hit her in the chest.
"John, I just need you to-" she stopped suddenly because she had never seen her husbands eyes look so red and dangerous before in all their five years of marriage. He was drenched in sweat and his veins were so dark she could see the blood working through them.
"How many times have you done that stuff today, John?" she asked as she took small careful steps away from him.
"What does it fucking matter? It ain't like I got anything else to do."
"John?"
"THREE!"
"JOHN!"
"WHAT?"
"You can't survive on those-those things! They aren't natural! You'll kill yourself!"
"You think I care about that? You think I'm afraid a death?"
She didn't answer his question, she could not answer his question- not because it wasn't meant to be a answered but because he asked.
'Why was he doing this to himself?' she thought.
He tipped over their TV, his dark chocolaty face- the one she fell in love with- was now filled with blood and his eyes were wide with wild anger and evil lust.
He looked like a completely different man to her- not the one she married and promised to have and hold- no, he looked like the devil himself. And he was scaring her. Hurting the heart she gave to him with the promise of a lifetime her love.
"Come ere, girl." he said smoothly through a sweaty mouth, his eyes never leaving her chest.
"John...stop. Please." she quietly said, knowing full well that he would not stop.
Not even for her.

He started to undo his belt and she backed away from him until she felt the wall behind her.
He stopped suddenly and looked around the room. 'what are you looking for?' she thought, and then she saw the needle on the small end table where the phone sat. She looked at him and he noticed that she saw the needle and he lunged for it right when she dashed for it.
She tripped over his body when he landed nearer to the table than she did and hit her head on the hard wood of the floor. He snatched the needle off the table and pierced her arm with it leaving her feeling a satisfying dizziness in her head that gave her body a jolt of energy.
She looked into her husband's eyes as he lay on top of her- the needle still plunged into her arm- to see if she could tell if he felt the same thing she felt, but she only saw the redness in his eyes as lust seeped from every pore on his body even in his bloodshot eyes.
She was shocked; she afraid for her life- though she wanted to run and play and love her husband all at the same time- and she wanted her husband off of her, she did not want his sweaty bulk lying atop of her any longer.
She nudged his leg with hers and he seemed to snap back to reality, as far as reality went for him. But he did not move his body, he only braced himself against her pitiful nudges. He pulled the syringe out of her arm and tossed it aside like a used tissue and pinned her arms hard against the floor.
"Get off, John..." she said lazily as her body picked up on what was about to happen. She started kicking wildly and she let out a blood curdling scream.
Then he did something she thought he would never do, what her family thought he would never do to their daughter, what she knew every good man would never do to their wives; the love of their lives, their child bearers, their soul mate. He balled up his left hand lifting it into the air in what seemed like slow motion to her, she could see his wedding band shine in the light from the lamp on the little table, and as his fist moved towards her face she closed her eyes and turned her head to the right. She did not want to see his face when that stranger's fist met her face. She did not make a sound when she felt it, the ache, the cracking of her jaw, the blood seeping through her lips, the ring scrapping her skin when he pulled his arm back for three more blows. She saw her own tooth land in a tiny pool of blood next to her face and when he was done hitting her he turned her over and yanked off her pants.
'I'll never be the same after this.' was her final sensible thought before she plunged into a nothingness, a feeling-less place that left her emotionally plain, and she didn't care. She let him take her, no fight or flight. She let him go without a scream, or a curse to him for causing her so much pain.
Her husband had died the night he first stuck that filthy needle in his arm. He use d to be a beautiful man, so kind and generous, he loved her tenderly taking care as to not cause her any discomfort, he would kiss her in a way she knew meant that he would never leave her for anything in the world. He had the most exuberant spirit, so happy and alive, she could do nothing but love him more and support him like a good wife should. But he was gone now, not one trace of him left behind, his body was alien to her now, too heavy and sweaty. And she knew that if she looked into his eyes she would not see John, she would see darkness.
Her John was gone.
Taken away from her by evil in a needle, evil she craved for as her husband violated her, grunting in her ear like a savage beast. She was not going to let that evil take her like it took her husband; she was not going to become a stranger to herself.
The stranger stole her husband.
Never a stranger.
She will fight the stranger, the evil, before she lets him take her too.

Chapter 3

1845
Dow "I'ma need ya to push now, Dow." said Miss Bates as she guided Dow along in her first birthing.
"I can't!" cried Dow, tears streaming down her cheeks, she knew she was not going to make it, the pain was more that she could bear and there was hardly any blood.
"Dow, I can't get that baby outta ya if ya don't gone and push!" snapped Miss Bates. She pressed down gently on Dow's stomach to help her but that only seemed to cause her more pain.
"I can't, I can't do it, Bee." Dow sobbed. She had broken into a frightening sweat and she was ice cold even though it was a hot and humid night, the wind was uncooperative tonight and did not blow in single gust of wind since she went into labor. Her skin had gone pale and her rags were so heavily soaked they were nearly lucid.
"Oh lord, help her." whispered Miss Bates her worry clear in her short prayer.
Miss Bates was surprised that Dow had not started to curse, she thought she was too exhausted to speak. And although that was partly the case, she did not know that Dow did not want to bring her baby into the world with a curse on her spirit and a dead momma. She could feel her heart struggling to pump and her sight was narrowing.
"DOW! You stay with me now, ya hear?" said Miss Bates. Her palms were shaking and fear had risen to her eyes, she didn't know what to do, and she was scared.
"Fetch a doctor, Bee." breathed Dow calmly.
"I ain't leaven ya here by yerself, I ain'ts that crazy." Miss Bates muttered.
"Get...Cooley..."
"Myra!" called Miss Bates.
A petite plump woman with dark plaited hair and panic in her big brown eyes came rushing into the stuffy little cabin bedroom, sweat dripped off her chin from what must have been a fairly tough run for her.
"Yes ma'am?" said Myra.
"Go get master, and be quick about it." she ordered, for a moment her fear had diminished into a mere little scare, but then the woman left and the fear revived in her face and eyes. "You gone be okay, Dow, you ain't gone leave me here with yer youngin' you know I ain't a fit momma."
Dow smiled a tired smile, and held Miss Bates' hand sweat and all.
"You gone be a wonderful momma, Bee." she laughed pitifully. A small tear escaping from her overflowing eye. Dow had never let a tear fall from her chin, and she promised herself she never would. She felt as if nothing and no one deserved her tears, the very fluid her body produced , but she knew that if she were to die she would die for her own children and fight for her life until she had to die for her child.
Only for her child would she let her tears drip off from under her narrow chin onto her best friend's hand. She shed the tear of joy for their friendship, for her baby, for Bo, and her herself.
'This baby is gonna do something with herself.' thought Dow.
The door swung open and in came master Cooley all sweaty and red from exertion and humidity. His suntanned skinned instantly paled when his eyes found Dow.
"What is going on here!" he hissed. Miss Bates cringed knowing his tone was directed at her.
"She done gone into labor, Suh, she can't push no harder and I cants just puts my hands in there and yank it out-"
He struck her across the cheek.
"YES YOU CAN! That's what the damn doctors do!" he bellowed spit flying from his lips and steam rising from his ears. He started rolling up his sleeves and placing himself in between Dow's legs.
"Get me some water, NOW! I need to wash my hands." he barked.
Miss Bates rushed outside to the well and grabbed a pale full of water and rushed back in. She sat next to him and he dunked his large calloused hands into the cool spring water and rubbed them together as if they had soap on them.
"Get out." he said in a surprisingly gentle tone.

She hesitated for a short second and flinched when he barked the order again. She left.
He sighed and rubbed the bridge of his nose between his index finger and his thumb.
Dow could see that he was clearly tired and must have been roused from a drifting sleep, but she felt very little pity for him knowing that he felt just as little pity for her. He wanted a son from her that was the only reason he stayed and took matters into his own hands. A son. A son they both knew just might very well be a daughter, and something deep in her stomach seemed to know that her master was going to be disappointed.
"Push now, Dow, hard as you can." he said as he pushed down on her belly with one hand and searched her womb with the other.
"I think I got the head, come on keep going. PUSH!" he shouted harshly.
She let one small cry slip from her lips and her vision had gone completely black, her heart began to slow, slow, slow...
Her breathing came out in short gaps and her beautiful baby girl was there in his hands. He looked at her as if she were a dirty rat missing its tail and not his own daughter. He practically tossed the infant to her before he washed his hands in the pale and left her, dying with a baby squealing in her arms, and kicking her little legs in protest to her papa's disturbing her sleep in her cozy little cave.
"Bee..." she said, so quietly she was surprised Miss Bates answered her call.
"Dow?" she said in a quiet whinny voice.
"Take..ma baby..." she held the baby up as high as she could and felt the weight of the infant vanish from her shaking arms. Shh now baby, Miss Bates got you, she heard her friend say. She could no longer see and her heart had slipped into a slow 'pat...pat...pat' rhythm.
"Bee? I'ma need ya to...take care a that baby," she whispered in weak breaths, " keep her away...from...Suh."
"I'ma try my best, Dow."
She felt her friends cool hand on her forehead and felt as sense of ease wash over her, anointing her spirit with woman's touch.
"Nia...that her name...Nia."
Miss Bates shook her head.
"No, Dow, you know I cants name her that." She said in a shaky voice. "I cants do that, I cants, Suh gone lash me good if he sees I done named a baby."
Dow smiled.
"You ain't named nunin', girl, I did...Nia gone be her name."
"No, Dow-"
"It's...his, Bee."
Miss Bates couldn't hide the shock on her face and was about to ask for more details when she heard her friend's breath catch, and then she heard her suck in a shallow breath and breathe out a long quiet sigh.
She had cried most of the time that night and she felt that now was the time to let them shed again. For her friend. For her baby girl, Nia. For the man that knew he was not going to do right by this child.
"Nia, you gone 'come somethin' in yur later days..." she whispered to the infant drifting off the end sentence. Observing the little bundle of wrinkly flesh and spirit.
The baby let out a long loud wail- turning her fat little cheeks red- and kicked excessively with anger. Her hands were balled up in little wrinkly fist so tight they turned blue. Miss Bates poked her pinky through the infant's little fist to loosen her fist so her blood could flow properly.
She kissed the Nia's red forehead and that seemed to calm her little. She hiccuped and squirmed as if she was determined to jump out of Miss Bates's arms and run away. Miss Bates held fast to the baby and walked out the room and out of the cabin to tell the women that Dow had been sent to be with her Father.
"Ya ain't gone have no choice." she finished.

Chapter 4

1984
Tess

"John?" called Mrs. Framp. She was lounging on their ancient mattress struggling to wrap her arm with a thin band of rubber, straining to reach over her swollen belly.
"What!" he shouted from the bathroom where he was cutting himself various times shaving his stubbly cheeks and chin.
"I-I can't tie it." she whined.
He slammed his razor onto the counter and stomped out of the bathroom.
He looked at her quizzically.
"I told you you were getting fat." he snickered.
Her mouth gaped open and she dropped the band. She wanted to say it was his fault she was pregnant; that it was him who mounted her like a wild animal; he who violated his own wife in the most heinous way imaginable. But she couldn't. He would just beat her until she bled and stab her with a needle to help with her pain.
"Just help me, please." she said quietly instead.
He walked over to the bed and plucked the little band out of her lap and gently wrapped it around her arm.
"Thank you."
He smiled warmly at her and kissed her gently on her forehead.
"You want me to shoot it for you?" he asked.
She let her mouth curve into a small smile and said yes.
He opened a small drawer in their nightstand and pulled out a steel rectangular box. He opened it slowly letting the metal squeal as he lifted the lid and he picked out the fullest syringe in the box.
Mrs. Framp had developed her own addiction to the stranger the first time it met her blood. She couldn't help it, it had made her feel different, calm and energized- sexy and conservative- she didn't even care that a baby was growing inside of her. She was aware of the consequence of what she was doing and so she forced herself not to do it as often.
'Only four times a month' she promised herself. And that four grew to six, and then nine, and now she was having her eleventh toxin of the month. Her ninth month. Her final pregnancy month. She knew her baby may very well die during birth but that gave her very little disturbance. Her husband cared even less about his unborn child, even going as far as treating it like a nuisance. A pest. He wouldn't look her in the eye when he spoke to her, and he would only have her from the back. It was as if he was ashamed of her, she held less value as soon-to-be-mother. He never seemed to blame himself for her condition, only her. He blamed her as if she could have prevented it and forgotten what he did to her. Forget the way he looked at her, forget the way his eyes were full of hatred and lust and blood. She was never going to forget. Just like she was never going to let go of her baby if it lived through its birth, even if it became disabled. She would love her baby, and protect him from the stranger. And the stranger's victim.
She hissed after he stuck the needle into her arm. She felt the drug crawl through her veins, up her arm, and down her through her knees.
"Better?" he said as he tossed the needle aside. Mrs. Framp made a note to break him of that habit before the baby comes.
"Mmhmm." she assured with a nod as she slipped into her high.
A loud 'Bang, Bang, Bang!' sounded at the door.
"Police!"
Mr. Framp sat up straight, closed the box and replaced it back in the nightstand.
"Shit! Tess, did you take it out of the house?" he hissed. She saw a shadow pass over him, like a shadow demon. "Did you take it outta the fucking house!"
"Nuh-uh." was all she could force out. She didn't care about whether or not they were caught. She was under

the best high of her life.
'You can go to hell for all I care' she thought. She dared not say it out loud, she knew he would beat her even with the cops at the door.
"Open up!"shouted the cop.
He started to bang on the door as if he meant to break it down.
'I hope he don't hurt himself' she thought with a giggle.
"What the hell are you laughing about?"he snapped keeping his voice as low as he could. "Get off your fat ass and see what he wants!"
He helped her sit up and turned her towards the edge of the bed by her feet so she could put her weight on them. She had become so fairly large her doctor (Ms Tyrene) ordered her to two months of bed rest. Which, in turn, had caused the blood to flow to her feet and cause very annoying swelling on her behalf.
When her feet met the floor she nearly fell because her feet were numb.

"Thank you, honey." she said cheerfully with a dreamy pitch slipping through her lips like a sigh.
Once she felt the sharp pricks of feeling in her feet she stumbled around the bedroom then out the door towards the living room.
When she opened the door the officer was in a linebacker shoulder blow stance. The stance they use to knock a door of its hinges.
"Can I help you?" asked Mrs Framp leaning on the door frame with her hand to her belly.
The officer took the hint and checked his countenance. The woman looked as if she were about to burst and he did not want to excite her condition. "Mrs. Framp?"
"Yes."
He nodded and took a couple of steps back and held his left wrist with his right hand. He was not a handsome man but he seemed like the type of man that has a wife and a couple of children running around. His skin was a nice tanned brown and his mustache-goatee combination made him look all the more mature and young at the same time, and his physique was not bad either from what she saw: nicely shaped arms-not too big but not too small- and he held himself straight up so his chest was raised in a "manly man's" way. And she caught a small tattoo that looked to be a woman's name inside a thinly inked heart on his left bicep.
He cleared his throat.
"I'm sorry to bother you ma'am," said the officer. "but I received a notice from a garbage man by the name of Terry Luis; says hes been stuck on several occasions with needles sticking out of YOUR trash bags. Now he didn't say anything about any ill affects so it might be nothing but a needleLIKE object. But since it has happened various times and reported only on your property I have been issued a warrant entitling me to search your house for drugs."
Mrs. Framp kept her face sedated, struggling to hide the high she was still lingering on.
"Needles you say?" was all she could think to say.
"Yes ma'am. Now please step aside." he said gently shoving past her into the living room. He started his search in the kitchen and another officer she hadn't seen started in the living room.
"Sir, you've made a mistake." said Mrs Framp. "There aren't any drugs in this house. For God's sake I have a baby on the way! Why would we keep needles!"
The officer paused for second to ponder her statement, he shrugged it off and continued his search.
Her heart started to race.
'Where is John?' she thought her palms sweaty; her forehead moistening just the same.
"Can I help you, officers?" said Mr Framp who was standing in the doorway to their bedroom. His eyes lingered on her for a moment, a flash of anger directed only at her, and he nodded ever so slightly as if to say "I hid the stuff." which she was doubting the moment she saw him. Those policemen were taking their time in the kitchen and Lord knew they would be just as meticulous and as careful in the bedroom. She couldn't help the panic that started to rise in her chest. She wanted to scream. Tell them everything: the rape, the abuse, the drugs, the enmity! But she held fast to her revelation knowing that it would only get her and her baby killed if he wasn't convicted. She kept her mouth shut as the men searched the rest of their home, stopping in certain places to sniff the walls like dogs or knock wood with their ears against solidity of it listening for an echo.

This disturbed Mr. Framp; he started twitching and rubbing his hands together.
'Surly he didn't hide it in the walls...' Mrs. Framp thought. She started to feel dizzy and guilty and nauseous all at once. She went to sit in her husband's La-Z-Boy to stop the dizziness.
But the officer stopped her.
"I'm sorry ma'am but we need that chair untouched until we've thoroughly searched this area." He said.
She groaned a weak protest and stood by the front door.
She was surprised they were searching her home so carefully. The neighborhood they lived in was not a bad one, deaths there were usually of naturally causes (or OD depending on the person) or sickness. They made her nervous with their searching and sniffling and knocking. She was afraid some might fall out of the wall or drop from the ceiling and smack them on their heads.
And then they would probably be charged with assaulting an officer.
"Gentlemen, I'm not sure why you're searching my house but this seems a bit over the top!" said Mr. Framp.
The officer two stopped and eyed her husband suspiciously.
"We received a report stating that needles were pricking a local garbage man's hands on various occasions while picking up on your property." said the suspicious officer.
"Needles? What needles! It could be glass for all you know!" her husband was starting to lose his temper, his face was getting red and his eyes were just the same. His skin was glistening with beads of sweat. She had to assure herself that it was very hot and that sweating could not be used as a withdrawal sign.
"Sir, calm down. We are just taking necessary precautions to keep you and this neighborhood safe." said the first officer. She saw the fight her husband was putting up just to stay calm. He was losing.

"Shut the fuck up, Tess!" he barked at her. She flinched and snapped her mouth shut willing a tear not to slide down her cheek.
The officer noticed her flinch and her welling eyes, feeling a more than a little for pity for her,and shot her husband a dangerous glare.
"I think you should watch your language around the lady, SIR." warned the suspicious cop taking a few intimidating steps towards her husband.
What have you been doin', huh? Smack, dope, boy, coke?" The officer wasn't loud but he hissed every word out in a way that would make a grown man nervous. Or frightened.
But of course her husband was on a short-tempered withdrawal and did not take the hint.
"You stay the fuck outta this!" he said pointing a sharp finger at the suspicious officer.
The first officer had Mrs. Framp by the door blocking her protectively from the developing scene.
'Don't do it John' she pleaded in thought hoping that her husband would receive her telepathic warning. She shifting short glances between the three testosterone filled men. All, seemingly, preparing for world war three.
Her husband looked wild eyed and crazy; ready to pounce on the cop any second. The second officer look as if he wanted to beat her husband with his nightstick and shoot out his kneecaps; his eyes slit into a hostile glare. And his posture showed that he was all too prepared for impending attacks. She could see that first officer didn't move in to interfere. Instead, he took a few steps back, closer to Mrs. Framp.
'What do you think is going to happen?' she silently asked the protective cop.
"Watch your tone." warned the suspicious officer. "Or I'll watch it for you."
Mrs. Framp couldn't help but stifle a giggle. She thought the threat was wanting in seriousness. But she had to give him credit for trying; his countenance was somewhat menacing.
"Ha! What are you gonna do? Shoot me in the foot?" her husband said with a snicker.
"I just might..."
The officer pulled out his gun, turned off the safety, and aimed at her husband.
"Dex!" shouted the protective cop. "Enough! You know better."
"This guy's asking for it!" the officer shouted back.
"Put it down!"
"Just fucking SHOOT Me!" screamed Mr. Framp. The smile had been wiped from Mrs. Framp's face as it now held the expression of sheer fear. Her heart was beating too fast and she was sweating too much even for 95 degrees. Her throat was constricting making it harder to breathe and her legs were weak at the knees.

"John?"
"Shut up!" shouted the angry man. His eyes were ablaze with a tired fire and he was sweating just as much as she was. The protective officer pulled out his own gun and shot a single bullet towards the ceiling making Mrs. Framp jump at the loud 'BANG!'.
"Quiet!" he ordered in a somewhat pious tone. "Sir, you're going to have to come with us right now."
"I don't HAVE to do anything." he said in a hostile tone. He started to take a few steps towards the suspicious officer. An ominous smile stretched across his face.
"Don't move!" ordered the officer. "Or I WILL open fire."
"DO IT!"
"Dex!"
"JOHN!"
The protective cop glanced at Mrs. Framp; his loaded gun still aimed at the ceiling. When he saw the look on the woman's face he looked down at her swollen bare feet where she stood in a little puddle of liquid.
"Shit..."
Bang!
Mrs. Framp let out shriek and covered her mouth to hush herself. Her husband was on the floor in pool of his own blood.
"W-what did you do!" she cried. Her stomach was in knots and she felt an ache in her abdomen.
The suspicious officer looked only slightly guilty; not nearly as guilty as she felt he should be.
"Hes not dead, ma'am." he assured her. Holding his hands up in surrender.
"He looks dead you asshole!" she bellowed. Holding her stomach as it continued to knot.
"We need to get you to a hospital." said the protective cop. "Both of you."
He looked at his partner with a stern glare.
"You and me are gonna have a talk later." he said. The guilty officer switched the safety back on and replaced the gun in its holster.
Mrs. Framp let out a long loud screech and doubled over with pain she never knew existed.
"Shit!" hissed the protective cop. "Dex, stay here and call an ambulance for him." He said "Him" as if he were talking about an smelly injured rat and not a drug addicted human being. "I'm taking Mrs. Framp to the hospital. Make sure you stop the bleeding. I'm not covering your ass if he dies tonight."
The guilty officer nodded in compliance as he pulled out his cell-phone to dial nine-one-one.
"Come with me, Mrs." said the protective cop in a gentle pitch. He took her elbow lightly in his hand and led her to his cruiser. "Everything's going to be fine."
She felt that his words were more for his own reassurance than for hers. When they stopped at the cruiser he opened the back door for her and motioned for her to get in.
"What is your name?" she asked out of curiosity as she stared at the bars that separate the cop from his prisoners.
"Alexander Martin."
"Oh." was all she was able to reply in dreamily manner before she fainted.

Chapter 5

1855

Nia

The decade had taken its turn and then our Nia was ten years old. She had grown into an old spirit of infinite love and forgotten expectations; a beautiful face as light as caramel and lovely little hazel eyes that shine like gold in the sun, and her person was so adorably benevolent her "Aunt Bee" would snap at her for sometimes being "Too" kind.
Nia was raised by Ms. Bates and over time their love grew to be a relationship suchlike one that a mother and her daughter would have together. Just because they weren't blood didn't mean they couldn't be soul and Nia had grown to have an exceptional soul; a soul her mother was proud of as she looked down upon her daughter from her fluffy bed in heaven.
Not too long after little Nia turned five did gossip start to spread throughout the plantation:
'Why she so light?' says one.
'She got some a that white in ha.' says another.
'Ya know ha momma was his girl?' whispered she.
And so on until it became known that she was, in fact, the master's daughter. But that did not change who she grew to become, for her father did not have a hand in raising her. But he would watch her, she did not know it, but he would watch her body curve as she picked his cotton, stretch in the sun with limbs as flexible as a lazy cat, wipe the sweat off her brow and sigh so lightly he would strain to hear her sigh's gentle melodies. Around the time Nia turned seven Ms. Bates started warning her. Reminding her that if she ever found herself alone with a man to always take great care and stay cautious. She would tell her that often in secret, and often in different ways each time, whenever she could as a way of planting the words in the young girls memory.
"They ain't too kind ta us out here." she said. "Best ta keep ya eyes open cus they turn on ya and take what the Lord deemed special from ya."
"What the Lord think special 'bout me?" said Nia.
"The Lord think e'erythin' special 'bout you!" she said with a gasp. "Why you gone go an ask me a foolish question like that?"
Nia just shrugged and hung her head.
"I ain't got no momma, and ma pa-"
"Ya ain't got no pa. Ya have a Father right on up there with yo momma." said Ms. Bates. "But that ain't the kinda thing I's talkin' 'bout."
She hesitated for a moment, contemplating on whether or not she should tell her the raw truth.
She chose the truth.
"Ain't nothin' good gone come with out no truth." she sighed.
"What truth?"
"The truth that ya cant never trust no man, Nia."
"What 'bout Bo? He good men whys I cant trust him?"
"He good men I know that...but men gots needs you ain't ready for." she said quietly. "And when you ain't ready your body ain't ready...and I's don't wants you gettin' hurt like that."
The room had filled with an ominous silence. And there were no such things as good omens when the sound dies suddenly.
"I's cant protects you fore'er, baby." said Ms. Bates.
"I know..."
"But whate'er happens..."
Nia nodded her acquiescence and left the room without saying a word.
She never quite fully understood the meaning of her Aunt's truths. But ,as the age overcomes one, more

understanding and difficult times along with intensive decision shall arise among it.

Virginia summers were not the most forgiving in weather; several scorching hot ; and others so wet the servants had to rush out and pick their fills before it washed away or died from the weight of the heavy rainfalls.
Nia- being one of the many slaves to rush out into the rainy weather- had been the last in the field plucking the rest of whatever was left. And although she was not completely alone, and was considered among others to be a little shy, she sang a few of the hymns from the servant's services on they were aloud to hold every Sunday for an hour while she worked her way through the capacious field, and she did not seem the least bit bothered by rain in anyway. Her voice held the smoothest, most richest, and purest melody it brought extensive joy to those who could hear but a light echo of her colorful tune in the far lands. But little did she know of the shadowed figure lurking in the darkness of the farm house just a little ways off away from the plots, watching her intently, as he waited for her to bend over again and again in the hopes of seeing further up her skirts with each curve. The man was young but a man he still was, ogling a youthful Nia as if she were a grown woman. As he watched her pick what seemed to be her final survivor he slowly started making his way out of the shadows; following her to the servant's quarters kitchen where they checked vegetables decent, bad, or close enough to perfect. The kitchen was dimly lit with only one candle, even though the kitchen was smaller than the average it still took at least four candles to have it properly well lit. Nia had memorized the kitchen after so many years of working in it that she hardly noticed the dimness as she started sorting the herbs and vegetables. She did not hear the light footsteps of the man approaching.
"E'enin' , miss Nia." said the young man. Stepping out from under the shadows causing Nia to start when she heard him. "What is it you be doin' in ere all late?"
When squinted into the darkend doorway she could see that it was just Martin, Mr. Bo's younger brother. Although she admitted to herself that he was looking at her rather strangely she did not let it bother her.
She smiled a friendly smile at him.
"Why ya gone go an scare me like that, Marty." she said with a giggle.
"Oh I's pologize, miss Nia, I didn't means ta start you." he assured her with a warm smile. Taking slow steps towards her.
She eyed him more suspiciously as his features brightened as he walked further into the light. He was not as wet as she had been from the pounding rain, but he looked to be perspiring a bit over his brow. His eyes kept shifting to various parts of her body and he would lick his crusty lips as if he could taste her.
"What you come in ere for?" she asked a bit more sharply than she meant.
He jumped a little and promptly warmed his countenance, as if he had not just audaciously observed her unadulterated body.
"I's just come to get somethin' to eat." he said with a short laugh. That was one thing she liked about Martin, he was spiritually a happy person and laughed more than anyone else on the whole plantation. He would often worked in the barn with his brother but he was mostly a handyman for mast Cooley. He was a fairly handsome young man of nineteen years, his frame was slimmer than Bo but he was taller and his arms more toned from all of his laborious chores.
"Ya can ha these." she said. Handing him two slightly bruised carrots. "They's decent 'nuff to eat."
He took them gently from her hand. Their fingers brushed lightly, lingering hesitantly before she let them go. He gazed into her eyes searching for something, something unknown to her. His gaze was filled with obvious guilt as if he meant to do something wrong but thought better of it.
"Nia-"
They heard hurried footsteps approaching and fell silent. Bo rushed in, shoving past Martin, soaking wet and panting.
"Martin, I need you in the barn." he said between pants.
"I-"
"Now! Honeybays havin' her baby tonight."
Bo grabbed his brother's arm and pulled him roughly out the door. The young brother dropping his carrots as he was yanked out of the room. Nia knew that Honeybay was the name of master Cooley's wife's horse. She

was a beautiful honey colored mare with a wavy tail and mane that shone gold in the sun as it began its evening ritual. Nia never liked going into the barn, the horses frightened her and the pigs were smelly, and only did so when she was ordered to feed them.

She finished sorting the vegetables and stored them in the outdoor freezer hole below the master's manor. The pounding rain had turned to drizzles and felt like wet kisses on her skin. As she made her way back to her aunt's cabin she lingered around here and there jumping in puddles and dizzying herself as she spun on her toes with her eyes fixed on the stars as her hands strive to reach them.

"Girl get on in this house 'fore ya ruin ya self." snapped Ms. Bates as she stood in the doorway of her cabin. "I ain'ts got time to take a ya if ya catch a cold."

Nia smiled brightly at her aunt and laughed.

"It feel good aunty!" Nia laughed still twirling in the drizzling rain.

"Come on now. Don't make me say it again!"

She continued to laugh as she ran into the house.

Her dress was soaked down to her slip and her legs and feet were caked with mud

"Take that off and hang it in the washroom." said Ms. Bates.

She slipped off her dress and started towards the washroom. When she rung out her dress and hung it on the line she gazed out the window facing the tremendous farmland out in the distance and the manor only a stones-throw away on her right. She watched the house intently as the house maids turned off one light, then two, then three leaving only two on. One on the first floor and another on the second. She saw a figure in the second story window, it was facing her cabin, she couldn't see its eyes but from the it angled itself it was, indubitably, looking directly at the window she was standing in front of. She nearly jumped when she noticed the figure in the window and she hoped the room was dark enough to hide her. The figure in the window was fairly thick, muscular in a way, too thick to be a woman. But before she could will her eyes to focus on the thick figure Ms.Bates called out to her.

"Come on now, girl. Ya's best to gets some sleep, now, ya know ya ain't no good in them fields when ya ain't gots enough." she said as Nia reluctantly left the window and found her aunt staring at her questionably.

"What is it ya seein' out there?" she said. Started towards the window.

"Nothin', aunty." she said quickly. Then checked her tone before continuing. "I's just was watching them stars. They's beautiful tonight."

"They's always beautiful. Come on, now, child. Ya can watch them stars to morrow night. They be just as beautiful, I promise." said Ms. Bates as she smiled warmly at the young girl. She took her hand and led her to her corner of the room, two other woman and Myra lived in the cabin with them; occupying the two small rooms (two in each) while Nia slept next to the kitchen area on a thick cot by the pantry.

Ms. Bates tucked Nia in, praying with her first before she laid her head on her pillow, and kissed her forehead before turning down the lantern. After Ms. Bates closed the door to her and Myra's room she could not help but wonder whose silhouette had been standing in the window staring back at her. She thought so incessantly about she could not sleep!

Then, as instantly as a snake devours its victims, it came to her. The thick frame. The top floor. No slave was aloud on the top floor of the manor after the lights were ordered to be put out. And no one but the married couple lived in the house.

A long shiver ran through her body, freezing her blood as it rushed cold through her veins.

Frightened by the thought, she quickly shut her eyes painfully tight and willed the revelation away. She would not let herself think of him. 'Not him.' she thought forcefully.

And she suddenly hoped with a fierceness that the darkness had hidden her from his sight.

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