Beauty on the Run

By : thatlonelyone

There's more to Ava's life than what people can really see. Behind her beauty, is the personality of a pure angel. But when her looks become a "threat" to a dark angel, he wants her. He wants to keep her hidden from the rest of the world. He wants her to be cast away from all eyes...he wants her as his slave. Fredrik Ljungberg can't get her himself. He ends up hiring two attractive orphan boys to help him, while offering them a place to stay, and a highly paid wage. Carter and Marshall agree, not knowing what they're getting into. But among the midst of the attacks, Carter and Marshall start seeing the true beauty in Ava. They can't help but fall in love with her. But after seeing the little kindness in the boys, Ava finds herself falling for them.

Published on
Booksie

booksie.com/thatlonelyone

Copyright © thatlonelyone, 2013
Publish your writing on Booksie.com.

Table of Contents

There's No Escape

The Culprit

No Real Escape

Escape From the Bathroom

Home is Where the Support is

The New Kids at School

A Normal School Day

Date Night

Nicely Dressed...Assholes?

to Run Out on a Date

Another Chase

A Much Sweeter Boy

There's Something Wrong with Jed

Get out of my bedroom!

A Fight With My Inner Self

Bad Things Happen When Left Home Alone

The Spying Game

The Disguise in a Kiss

Chapter 1: There's No Escape

They had me trapped. A tall dark-haired pretty faced boy in front of me, and an average heighted brown-haired, another pretty faced, boy right behind me. "Listen here Beautiful, we're taking you with us no matter what you try to do," said the dark haired boy in front of me. He took a step towards me, and I turned around to see the brown-haired boy doing the same.

I was in the middle of a park. Although it's pretty much the middle of the night, someone had to be seeing this, right? But no. The only escape was through the field to my right, and the pond to my left. They both took another step towards me. I only had one way to go.

I jumped into the icy cold pond with my light pink mini skirt and light pink low cut shirt. I turned to see the dark haired boy yelling at his cute partner; "CARTER DON'T LET HER GET AWAY!" Soâ ¦Carter is the brown-haired boy's nameâ ¦

I kicked as much as I could to get him to back away, but he was trailing behind me. He finally caught onto my leg. I couldn't kick him off. He grabbed my other leg and crawled up to bring his arms around my waist, pulling me back towards the shore!

He was a hell of a lot stronger than I was, and I couldn't help but give in. There was no use in trying to pull away from his firm grasp around me. I eventually started swimming with him, until I saw the evil smile on his partner's face. Shit! I got closer and closer to Carter's neck, until I was close enoughâ ¦just a little closerâ ¦YES!

Munch! I bit deep into his neck, almost like a vampireâ ¦but not in it for the blood. "OW SHE FUCKIN' BIT ME!" He cried as he splashed around. His hold was gone and I swam for the other side of the pond. I immediately heard footsteps sprinting, and I could see out of the corner of my eye, the dark-haired boy running around the pond.

My body was numb. I couldn't feel how cold the water was anymore. I stopped in the middle of the pond and looked around me. Carter was just getting out of the water, holding his hand up to his neck. I looked in front of me and saw the dark-haired boy *seriously, what is his name? I can't keep calling him the dark-haired boy!* He was standing there with his arms crossed. "You can't stay in there forever," he called out to me. I looked around anywhere else, and started swimming towards the side, away from both boys.

Immediately after, the dark-haired boy was there, completely blocking me. He was fast. I turned around and saw the bridge that passed over the pond in the middle of the park. Directly under it, I could see a sewer pipe. *disgustingâ ¦.* I scanned around me again and looked at both boys before taking a huge breath. I made myself disappear under the water, the moonlight barely lighting the way. I swam as far as I could before I came up for a breath.

"THERE SHE IS MARSHALL! SHE'S GETTING INTO THE SEWER PIPE!" I knew that was Carter. *So Marshall was the mystery boy's nameâ ¦.

The pipe was starting to descend, and I heard the sound of water falling. I must be coming near a shaft or something, shit. I slowed way down as I inched forward. The falling sound was coming from right in front of me. I could feel the mist from the disgusting sewer water hitting against the walls.

I turned around and there were flashlights pointing into the sewer. Shit, I'm running out of time! I reached around the edge of the pipe to feel a bar. I moved my hand upwards to feel another bar. I realized that these

bars were creating a ladder! I quickly grabbed the bar on the top and swung myself around the pipe.

My knees banged on the side of the pipe creating a loud bang. I felt around with my foot for another bar, and finally I found it. I started climbing a few bars, and crawled over to sit on the top of the pipe. It was the only place to hide for the time being. The only light around me was reflected through the top of the shaft, which must've been a sewer plate or something from somewhere else in the city. I could see the full moon through the small slates.

I waited for a few minutes before I heard footsteps getting closer. They were talking but I wasn't able to tell who was saying what. Their voices blended together so well, and they sounded so alike.

"How fucking far does this pipe go?"

"Does it matter? We're getting paid some pretty good money to be doing this kind of shit anyway."

"I ruined my damn Nikes for this. These shoes aren't cheap dude."

"Trust me, when we get paid, you're gonna be able to buy yourself a million pairs of Nikes."

"Seriously bro?"

"No, but you'll buy a shit ton!"

"Shhh, do you hear that?"

"The falling water?"

"Yeah."

"Yeah, that means we're getting to the end of this pipe."

I could see their flashlights reflecting off of the mist. They were getting closer. I scooted as close as I could to the grimy stone wall behind me.

I felt the vibrations of the pipe as they stepped into the opening.

"Where the hell could she have gone?"

"Maybe she jumped."

"Why the hell would she jump? Seriously, be reasonable."

"Well if you were about to get kidnapped, would you do anything you could to get away?"

"Eh, I guess you could be right. Well there's gotta be a ladder around here or something to get down there, right?"

"You look on that side, I'll look on this side."

Again, I couldn't tell who was talking. Just then, flashlights peered around the edge of the pipe towards the sides. I quietly pulled my legs up into my chest and sat against the stone wall, not moving or making a sound.

I watched as the flashlight on the right disappeared. "Carter there's nothing on this side."

The guy on the right (under me) flashed the light at the bars. "Alright well I got something over here." He put the flashlight in his mouth and then he swung around the edge of the pipe. The light blinded my eyes and I looked away, still hoping that I would remain unseen, but that wasn't the case. "Hey Marshall, I found her."

I peeked through the light to the faces of the two pretty faces. If it weren't for their devilish smiles, I totally would've thought they were cute. Seriouslyâ ¦. *Focus Ava, they're trying to kidnap you!* It was so hard for me to concentrate. They were both so gorgeous!

Just then Marshall grabbed my leg, it caught me by surprise because I wasn't able to kick at him. But then my other leg was grabbed; now I had no choiceâ ¦I couldn't move.

I was dragged off of the pipe and over the shoulder of who I thought was Carter, and they started walking down the sewer pipe.

I watched as the other boy trailed behind us, keeping his flashlight on the ground below him. I'm still not entirely sure who they're bringing me too, but I had a pretty good idea.

Chapter 2: The Culprit

Before I could take a breath, I was thrown back into the icy pond. My lungs instantly filled with the murky water, and I found myself choking as I was pulled back to the surface.

"Come on Ava, you're stronger than that," laughed Carter. He dragged one of my arms as Marshall dragged the other, and they headed towards the closest shore. "Marshall is he still in the limo?"

"Yeah he's where he dropped us off, at least he should be." They continued dragging me to the entrance of the park where I ran in. I was drenched in dirty water. The light pink from my clothes was practically brown with the mud from the pond. My knees were aching from banging them on the pipe, and I could feel myself stumbling over my own feet as I was dragged.

I spotted a long vehicle on the side of the road in front of a well-known cafÃ©; it was obviously closed. They crossed the sidewalk and dragged me into the street, making me stumble over the curb. I fell free from their grasp as I hit the concrete. I instantly tried to scurry away, but these two boys were faster. They grabbed my arms again and picked me up on my feet. Seriously, what was it with these two?

The window of the limo slowly rolled down. I could see the face of an older man, not old oldâ¦but old. He was wearing sunglasses, obviously trying to shield his face. Who would wear shades at night?

"So I see you finally got her backâ¦only took you about an hour and a half gentlemen."

Marshall sighed, obviously upset about it. "Well sir, she bit Carter in the neck, and then took off down a sewer pipe. It took us a bit to be able to follow her."

"Look, I don't care what happened. I gave you a specific time limit and you couldn't even follow that." The man in the car sighed loudly. "How can I count on you again?"

Carter let go of my arm and he walked over to the window. "Sir," he somewhat whisperedâ¦"look, we could've done this a lot faster. We underestimated her this time. Let us prove ourselves to be counted on in the future."

Another sigh came from the window. Carter's beautiful brown hair shielded the man's face as he took off his shades. I could see part of his motions from the sides of the window that wasn't blocked. "Carter, I know you're a good boy, and I know your friend is too."

"Sir please, just let us prove ourselves. We can do this job." Carter's voice grew in intensity. I could hear the anger and sadness, and somehow I felt like it was all my faultâ¦wait a secâ¦it was my fault. But I don't understand why I'm feeling bad right now because I'm seriously not just going to let them capture me!

"Carter, you and your friend will get one last chance. Just get the hell in here so I can get her home and in the shower."

He moved away from the window and the door opened. Marshall pushed me into the car. Sure enough, I tripped over my feet. Carter, however, caught me before my face hit the bottom of the door. He stood me pack up and threw me head-first into the limo.

I crashed into the mini-bar on the other side of the limo, and I heard the glasses clanking into one another. I quickly crawled as far away from the door as I could, and I took a seat on the far side, right behind the

passenger seat and on the other side of the end of the mini-bar.

Marshall was the first boy to climb in. He took a seat on the side of the limo in front of the mini-bar. Carter crawled in next, but then paused in the middle of the limo as he looked over at me holding my knees into my chest.

He slowly crouched his way over to me with a smile on his face. "What are you doing over here all by yourself Beautiful?" I pushed myself as much into the seat and the body of the limo as I could. He took a seat next to me, facing my direction and then put his arm around me. I could see and feel his hand starting to dwindle with my hair.

I enclosed my head into my knees as the limo started moving. I could hear Carter getting comfortable next to me, and I could hear Marshall starting to move towards me.

"Listen here boys," the mysterious voice shouted. The movement beside me paused, and I just barely looked up to see the man in his black shades on the direct opposite side of the limo. "I want her over here by me."

"Aw man," Carter said as he scooted over.

"Seriously Fredrik?" Marshall was scooting over as well.

"Seriously boys. She's going to be mine soon anyway, so I want her near." That's only a little creepyâ¦but what did he mean by *his?* I don't wanna be anyone's! At least anyone's but Jed's. I'm Jed's girl, and that's all I wanna be. I missed Jed so much right now. He probably doesn't even know what's going on right now.

My arm was pulled away from my body and I toppled over onto Carter's lap. I realized that it was Marshall that was pulling me.

"Look guys," Carter's laugh caused me to look up at him with a scowl. "She's giving me a blowjob!"

Marshall laughed, but then the limo shook with anger.

"I SAID BRING HER OVER TO ME NOW!" Fredrik was this mystery man. For some reason his voice sounded very familiar, but right now I just couldn't tell. Marshall pushed me away from him and Carter and I was pulled up into the far seat from where I originally was. Another arm was put around me and pulled me as close as I could possibly get. I couldn't even begin to explain how uncomfortable this was for me.

Chapter 3: No Real Escape

He wouldn't stop fondling me. He was constantly touching me, playing with my hair, stroking my cheek, kissing my head, pulling me close; pretty much you name it he did it. I pushed away as much as I was able too, but he only pulled me back.

We were finally pulled up to a gated lot, and it took me a moment to see that it was a freakin' mansion! Seriously it was a gigantic fucking mansion!

His voice startled me; "Carter, Marshall, you two are taking the downstairs rooms now."

"Are you fucking serious Fred?" Marshall was complaining.

I looked over at Carter who was rolling his eyes. "You're giving our rooms to the princess aren't you?"

I felt his hand that was connected to the arm around me, dwindling in my hair again. He lifted his other hand and caressed my cheek as well. "I have to make sure that she has everything she needs to be happy where she's going to be boys."

I could hear Marshall groaning. "Get a room Fred. We've seen a lot of worse shit, but we're not in the mood to watch you fuck her."

His arm wasn't around me anymore. He was already towering over the boys! How the hell did he do that? He was here in a split second, and then there a split second later? Seriously! "You listen to me boy. I'm letting you keep your job after your shitty performance tonight, AND I'm still letting you sleep in MY MANSION. Now again, you listen to me when I tell you to keep your mouth shut unless you wanna find yourself at the bottom of the lake."

I was trembling in my seat. I couldn't believe what I just saw. This man is like a superhuman or something. With a blur he was right back where he was a few seconds agoâ¦his arm around me and his other hand caressing my cheek. I flinched at his touch.

The limo pulled to a stop and the driver walked around the limo, opening it up for us. I practically scurried out of the car, sprinting across the lawn. I was afraid at this man showing up right in front of me, but then again, he hired those boys for a reason. I heard Marshall and Carter starting to chase after me!

I started running faster; my adrenaline kicking in. I saw the forest in front of me, and that's where I went. I dodged through the branches, I jumped over the stumps and roots! I eve ducked and slid a few times under some low hanging branches, but I was no match for the hill.

I jumped over a root and found myself falling and then rolling, and the tumbling and fumbling! I found myself at the bottom of the hill and I laid there. I felt the sticks jabbing into my back, but I just couldn't moveâ¦.

I heard the footsteps getting closer and closer! And then finally I saw Carter and Marshall standing at the top of the hill peering over the large tree root that divided the normal ground from the small valley.

"Oh shit, is she dead?"

"How the hell do I know? Let's get down there and check it out."

I heard them climbing swiftly down the steep hill. I laid there with my eyes closed as they got closer to me.

I felt one of their shoes kick me. "I think she's dead."

"Dude, she's not dead." One of them got closer to me and then felt for a pulse in my neck. I remained still at his touch, and took small soft breaths. "I told you she's not dead. She's got a pulse and she's breathing."

"Well I'm sorry that I can't inspect that from a distance."

"Well I'm sorry you're an idiot!"

"You're carrying her back right?"

"Hell no! Who the hell do you think I am? You are!"

"What? Who decided that?"

"I did. I carried her out of that sewer pipe while bent over. The least you can do is carry her up the damn hill and back to the mansion. Let's get going, I wanna get some sleep before school tomorrow."

I still remained still, pretending to be knocked out or something. Whoever was to be carrying me bent down and lightly picked me up. My entire body ached. I could feel a little bit of relief as I was set gently (surprisingly) over his shoulder. It took a few minutes to get back up the hill, and after that we were back at the mansion in no time.

I had fallen asleep on his shoulder. I couldn't tell if I was just extremely exhausted, or if it was the pain, but either way I was sleeping on this boy's shoulder.

â ¦I was nice and warm. I wasn't sure where I was, but it felt nice. I was extremely warm! Not too warm though, but warm to where I was able to just lay there comfortably. I moved my body for the first time since I fell down that hill. It was a weird feelingâ ¦almost as if I were in aâ ¦BATH TUB! My eyes burst open and I looked at my naked body just hanging out in the bottom of the tub.

"How in theâ ¦" I looked on the sides of the tub and there were candles lit every here and there. "What in theâ ¦" My eyes screened the floor and I saw my dirty murky stained clothes laying on the floor right under where the large window was. My eyes traced the outline of the wall as it shifted to the toilet, and to my surprise, Marshall was sitting on the toilet smoking a cigarette. My first instinct was to shield myself, but instead I screamed! I scream and grabbed at the tower hanging over the side of the tub! "WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU DOING IN HERE?!" I couldn't help but scream at the boy.

He took another puff of his cigarette as he watched me cover myself with the now soaked towel. He smiled at me and didn't say a word.

I stared at him in anger. I couldn't shake the feeling away, and I could only sit there and scowl at him. Just then Carter walked in through the open bathroom door, handing something to Marshall! What the hell! I blew out the candle next to me and threw it at Carter, hitting him in the shoulder.

"What the hell was that for?" He looked at me surprised, like I should be pissed off right now.

"GET THE HELL OUT OF HERE!" I screamed again! The two boys sat there and laughed at me. "I'M SERIOUS, GET OUT!" They still didn't listen. And then in the blink of an eye, the mystery man, Fredrik was

standing in the middle of the bathroom.

"What is going on in here?" He stared at the two boys, not even daring to glance at me. Of course I'm sure that he wanted too.

Carter and Marshall still had their smug looks on their faces, not willing to believe that Fredrik would do anything.

"Fred calm down. The bitch is only freaking out about nothing right now. She's not taking a liking to us watching her take a bath."

Fredrik turned around to face me. I held the towel tightly over my chest, and hanging over my bottom area. "Well, well, look who's finally awake." I scowled at him. He had a smile on his face I just couldn't read. I wasn't sure if he was actually happy that I was awake, or that fact that I was conscious. I sat there covering myself with the soaked towel.

"I'm sorry Beautiful, I'll get these guys out of here for you okay?" His voice was caring but at the same time annoying. He picked Carter and Marshall up by the back of their shirts, and he pushed them out of the bathroom.

"HEY WHAT GIVES?"

"FREDRIK COME ON! WE WANNA BE HAPPY TOO!"

I was finally alone again. I removed the towel as I got up from the tub. I walked over, holding the towel close to me, and locked the door. I shivered as I walked over to the window, and I closed it tight, locking it as well.

I turned back towards the tub and something wasn't right. I looked around, and then I noticed that the door wasn't locked. What theâ ¦. I walked back over and I locked the door again. Watching it as I tip-toed backwards towards the tub. I watched in horror as it slowly turned.

"What the hell?!" I nearly shouted, and then the door opened. I whipped the towel closed around my body as that Fredrik guy walked into the bathroom.

"What's wrong my love? Are things not to your liking here?"

I continued to scowl at him as I gritted my teeth. "I don't know what I'm doing hereâ ¦" I spoke quietly, but he could still hear me. "I don't WANT to be hereâ ¦. And I DON'T want to stay here."

He smiled at me again. "Well what would make you stay Ava?"

I scoffed. "Are you freakin' kidding me? I don't want to fucking be here you moron! Take me home!" And in a heartbeat, he was standing directly in front of me, towering over me with anger.

"I don't take orders from anyone Ava. And YOUâ ¦are NOTâ ¦going anywhere. I promise you that." He paused and then appeared at the door in the blink of an eye. "You are not leavingâ ¦now finish your bath."

The door slammed shutâ ¦and I mean it SLAMMED. The entire house shook! But the door was locked. I climbed back into the bath tub with tears appearing in my eyes. I need to get the hell out of here as soon as I canâ ¦because I'm not staying in this place with 2 idiots and a nonhuman.

Chapter 4: Escape From the Bathroom

I couldn't see. It was pitch blackâ ¦. But I was comfortable. I felt like I was surrounded by clouds. I rolled over onto my stomach and I realized that I wasn't wearing my bra. I felt myself and noticed that I wasn't wearing ANYTHING! What the hell? I swear to God if he did anything.

But then I opened my eyes and realized it was just a dream. I looked around and noticed that I was still in the bathtub, and that the towel was still covering me.

I stood up slowly, letting the water slide down my body and drip back into the tub. I looked around, noticing the window was still open, and the door was still locked. I could still feel the stinging in my eyes from my tears, but I now knew what this man was like. He wasn't a human, and he wasn't sentimental. He was a monster.

I looked around for my dirty clothes, but they weren't in the bathroom anymore.

I looked around at the candles that were just dimming after all this time. The bath water was dirty and grimy, probably from the sewer that I was in hours earlier.

I continued to look around until I was disturbed by a knock on the door. I glanced around at the locked nob before I spoke; "who is it?"

"It's Carter. Open the damn door so I can give you your damn clothes."

The nerve of this guy. I don't know why he's so rude to me. I walked over cautiously and unlocked the door handle, and then slowly turned it before he burst through the door, nearly knocking me backwards. "A little patience would be nice," I snickered.

"Hey, I'm bringing you clean clothes right now. The least you can do is give ME a little bit of respect."

"Why would I respect someone who's trying to kidnap me and keep me locked up? Seriously, you're a moron if you're going to demand respect from me."

By this time, he was already in front of me, holding me up against the wall. I didn't look scared. I refused to give him the upper hand. I continued scowling at this beautiful looking boy.

"Ava, you might think you have us 'won over' but you really don't. I don't have the same patience as Fred does. I wouldn't mind giving you a giant back-hand across the face. The only problem with that is, Fred would have my ass. But then again, he doesn't always have to know."

His hand was in the air getting ready to strike, and I stared at it as it towered over me.

"Yes Carter, I do have to know. And if you haven't guessed by how long you've been here, I happen to know everything. If you even touch a single hair on her head ever again without my permission, you're going to be in a living hell."

We both look over to where Fred was leaning in the doorway. It was still amazing with how fast he happened to be. Carter released me to the wall as he backed away.

"I was only giving her the clothes that you washed."

"Shut up Carter. I saw and I heard what you said. Now if you don't mind, get out of this bathroom before I throw you out the window."

I watched as Carter backed away in fear. He slowly brushed past the large man standing in the doorway.

"Is everything alright Beautiful?"

I don't know what it is about this Fred guy, but I just wasn't able to speak to him. It was almost like I didn't want him to hear my voice. I nodded my head.

"Why won't you talk to me darling? Is everything okay?"

I was enraged, so I lashed out. "Look, I don't know who the hell you are, or what the hell you want with me. But you're stupider than I thought if you're going to ask me what the hell is wrong."

That made him angry. He shook his head back and forth before he let out a deep moaning chuckle. "Oh Ava, you are just so beautiful, yet so naÃ¯ve. How can you stand there and be upset? I'm about to give you everything you've ever wanted! How could you be upset with that Dear?"

I was disgusted. "Look Fredrik, I'm not just some pet that you can boss around. I'm not going to be your little sex puppet okay! I don't want anything from you, and you will NEVER mean anything to me!" At this point I was yelling, and I didn't care what he would say or do to me.

But in the blink of an eye, he was holding me up against the wall like Carter had done. I could feel the heat radiating off of his body. What the hell is up with this guy? He's obviously not human! But he looks so much like one!

"Ava, I always get what I want. Now get dressed and come downstairs. I have dinner waiting, and if you make ME wait, then you're going to be in a world of trouble. Do you understand me?"

My scowl had faded as fear filled my eyes. He let go of me as he stormed out of the bathroom, once again slamming the door behind me.

Again I could feel the tears, stinging my already sore eyes. I looked down at the floor where my clothes were thrown. They had been cleaned for me, thank God. But even still, I needed to get out of here.

I threw on my panties, then the skirt, and then my bra and tank top. I threw my sweater on covering me and I locked the bathroom door. I slammed the lid down on the toilet seat and I sat on top of it, thinking of what the hell I could possible do to escape.

I could hear faint sounds of rumbling coming from outside. There must've been a storm coming. I looked out the window and it was nearly morning. I could see the clouds, and I could see the lightning in the distance. There was a light grey color setting the mood.

But then my eyes traced the frame of the window. I stood up and walked over to it as I inspected the frame closer. I slid the window up all the way; the cool breeze welcoming me into the morning.

The window was high. I wasn't sure how I was going to get through it. I looked around the bathroom again, seeing a waste basket next to the sink. I grabbed it and turned it upside down, placing one foot on top of it to test the weight. So far so good. I slowly picked my other foot up off the ground and set it next to the foot already on top of the overturned basket.

I peered outside again as I slowly put my head and shoulders through the window. I was quiet as I did this.

I could feel slight raindrops hitting my head as I squeezed the rest of my body through. I crawled a small ways out onto the slanted roof, and then slowly stood up. I looked around and finally moved up to the far top of the mansion. There wasn't any special kind of roof-top, which meant that I would be safe up here.

I stood as far up as I could, and I looked out into the vast countryside around me. I looked to the north, and then I looked to the south. Nothing but trees. Then I looked to the west, and I could see buildings. I quickly noticed that it was my town! The tallest building in my hometown had a large Banana mural on the side of it. And I know that I couldn't mistake that banana for anything else. I quickly walked to that side of the roof. I looked down to see if there was any way down.

But then I heard screaming coming from the bathroom. Shit, they know I've escaped. I need to get down from here NOW!

Chapter 5: Home is Where the Support is

I looked around. There was only so much that I could see. There were only two different ways I could get down. There was the large pool in the backyard, and then there were the large trees that were just close enough to where I could jump onto the branches and climb down. But unfortunately, I don't think I have enough time for that. I had to jump.

The pool was cold, but the air was colder. The morning chill wasn't enough to stop me. I kept running. I made it all the way through the woods and back into my hometown. I was out of the woods and into one of the familiar streets.

It was still super early, which meant that there were no cars or buildings lit up at this time. I had no choice but to run straight home. The old Sawmill library was right in front of me. It was closed so I wasn't able to take my normal shortcut home. I sprinted off to the right and down the street, passing by Hanson's Grocery Store. I turned the corner into a residential area.

I had been running nonstop, and there was only a couple more blocks to go. But I could feel the pain emerging from my side. I stopped running for a moment to catch my breath. Everything became quiet, until I heard yelling. It was faint at first but then it got louder and louder. I was sitting on a bench next to Mason Park.

"THERE SHE IS!" I looked down the street to see a limo speeding over to me with two heads sticking out of the windows. Shit!

I jumped over the backside of the bench and passed the swings and then eventually the slide. I was going in the opposite direction of my house, but I knew a way to get back to that.

I sprinted across the street on the other side of the park and I ran into Beck Florence's backyard. I hopped over the fence into Mrs. Fig's backyard. I hit behind her shed as I heard the limo driving down another street.

But then the limo stopped and I heard both doors open. The sky was getting brighter, and it was making it harder for me to hide.

"I think she went this way Carter, let's move." I could hear Marshall's voice over the stalled engine of the limo.

"Why don't we split up? You go that way, and I'll go this way?"

The footsteps stopped.

"Marshall what the hell, get a move on!"

"Well hold on a secondâ ¦why the hell doesn't Fred do anything? With his powers and shit he can easily find her and bring her back. We shouldn't even have to do this!"

"Shhhh!" They're voices got quieter, but I could still hear then over the still of the night. "Marshall, no one else knows about him. We do this so people won't see him in public."

"Alright Carter, I get it. Let's just find her. We start school this morning and I don't wanna be late. A new school means a new first impression."

"Good point. You go that way Marshall and I'll take this way."

Their steps parted and the limo set off down the street. I was left alone again. This was going to be the only chance I get to get the hell away. I hopped over the fence on the side of Mrs. Fig's house, and sprinted into the street. I sprinted across the street and fence-hopped again into some other person's backyard; doing the same thing to get into the street on the other side.

I turned left down the street, running under all the streetlights. I couldn't hear anyone following me, so I knew I was somewhat safe. I rounded the all too familiar corner and I looked around at the familiar houses. I was finally on my street.

I stopped for a breath just under the street sign. I looked back to where I was running from and I saw the glow of headlights from a street over.

I didn't take a second glance. I continued sprinting down the street. I finally arrived at my front door, feeling around the potted plants on the front step for a key. After my fingernails were covered in dirt, I finally gripped the cold object in my fingers as I pulled it from the soil.

I heard the footsteps reoccur again as I fumbled with the key in my hand. I turned my head as far back as I could as my fingers played with the lock. I saw the silhouettes in the glow of the streetlights. Marshall and Carter were getting closer.

Finally the key stuck and I looked down at the lock, turning the nob and running inside. I slammed the door behind me; locking it instantly.

The house was quiet, but the light was on in the kitchen. I could smell coffee. My mom must've been awake and getting ready for work or something. I walked slowly into the kitchen to see my mother fumbling around with the familiar coffee mug that my father gave her for her birthday.

I got closer and closer to her, and then finally the floor creaked, making her jump in front of meâ¦nearly spilling her coffee down the sink.

She turned around facing me with the mug gripped tightly in her hand. "Ava Lynn what in God's name are you doing in here?" She finally caught her breath as I said nothing in return. "Are you just getting home now?"

I nodded at her.

"Why the hell are you just getting home at this hour? Do you even know what time it is young lady?" She turned back around to finish pouring the pot of coffee into her travel cup. "Seriously Ava. I don't understand who you could possibly be with until this late. Especially on a school night. How on earth are you going to do anything todayâ¦."

"MOM!" I yelled, making her turn around and look at me again. Her eyes were widened behind her black rimmed glasses. "Mom, I was nearly kidnapped tonight."

Her jaw dropped. "What?! Did you call the police honey?! Did you see who it was?! Did you get his name or anything?!"

"MOM!" I yelled again, making her focus. She was standing in front of me now, obviously very concerned. "I lost my phone in the pond at the park."

She snickered. "Are you serious Ava? How the hell could you lose your phone there? What in God's name were you doing in the park at this time? That pond is filthy! What were you doing in there?"

"MOM! Will you please just let me talk?!" She stepped back, staring at me, and then casually turned around, walking back towards the sink. "Mom his name is Fredrik. And I couldn't call the cops because I lost my phone. I was in the pond because it was only place I could get away from the people he hired to try and kidnap me for him."

She turned back around to face me. "You should go into the living room and call the police now Ava."

"Mom you don't understand!"

"Honey, you were almost kidnapped! Normally in that kind of situation you should call the cops!"

"Mom, this Fredrik guy isn't normal! He's some kind of monster!"

"Well of course he is! He tried to kidnap you!"

"No mom, I mean he's a literal monster. He's got like this super speed. He could be 100 miles away from you, and then be right next to you a second later."

"Are you sure he's not a Kenyan or something Hon? Because that would explain A LOT of things."

I sighed, obviously irritated, and I know she could sense that. "Mom, this Fredrik guy is a Calvin Klein model."

She chuckled as she folded her arms across her chest. "You expect me to believe that you were nearly kidnapped by some hot shot Calvin Klein model, with uncontrollable speed? Yeah, okay." She grabbed her travel cup from behind her and brushed beside me.

"Mom this isn't a joke! I'm telling you the truth!"

She took a few steps behind me before she stopped and looked at the floor. "Ava Lynn! You get upstairs and you change your clothes now! Then you get back down here and you clean up the floor."

I rolled my eyes and I stomped angrily up the steps. If my own mother isn't going to believe what I've been through, then who the hell am I going to be able to go to about this? Seriously! Well, all I can do right now is shower and then get ready for school. I totally forgot about school todayâ¦.

Chapter 6: The New Kids at School

I just finished getting dressed. My shower was heavenly. I wasn't being watched as I cleaned myself, and I was in my own personal bathroom. My mother had left for work as she always did, and as usual, she locked the door behind her.

I sat in the kitchen making myself some scrambled eggs. I was starving at his point. I'd been up all night and all I could think about was what had happened over the course of the past 12 hours.

I finished cooking my food and I sat down in the living room to eat it, flipping on the TV. Just then I heard someone coming down the stairs. It was still a couple hours before I had to leave for school, so I figured it was my dad. And I was right.

"Ava, what are you doing up this early? When did you get home?"

I swallowed my bite of food. "About an hour and a half ago dad."

His expression shifted from curiosity, to irritation. "Are you kidding me Ava? What was the time that I gave you last night before you went out with Trina?"

I didn't answer. I rolled my eyes and I looked back at the television, flipping through the news stations.

"Ava Lynn answer me!"

"Midnight dad."

"Yeah, and you didn't get home until an hour and a half ago." His walked away from the living room and into the kitchen. "Ava," he called from the other room, "you know what your punishment is right? No phone for the next week."

I smiled to myself. Too bad he didn't know that my phone was completely desolated.

"I'll be collecting it before I leave."

I continued smiling to myself. "Too bad you'll be collecting it from the pond father," I said quietly to myself so that he didn't hear it.

His head peeked around the doorway. "What was that?"

I looked over at him as I took another bite of my eggs. I swallowed as he stood there and watched me. "My phone is gone dad."

He rolled his eyes as he stepped into the room. He was super tall and dressed up in a tie, like he always did for work. "What do you mean your phone is gone?"

I looked down at the plate on my lap. "Um, I mean that my phone kinda fell out of my pocket at the park last night, and ended up in the pond."

He shook his head. "You've got to be kidding me Ava. This is why we should've never gotten you a phone."

"Dad I've never had a problem with anything before in my life, and you know that!"

"If that was true then you would still have your phone. Do you know how much that phone cost me and your mother?" He walked out of the living room and back into the kitchen.

After him yelling at me for another hour, he finally left for work. I continued sitting on the couch for another hour until it was time for school. I wasn't sure whether or not Jed was going to be coming to get me like he always did, but then I heard the car door from outside. There was a small knock on the front door, and then it opened. I turned to see Jed walking into the living room.

He smiled at me, and I smiled back, getting up from the couch and running into his embrace. I couldn't tell, but I think tears were coming to my eyes just from seeing him.

He pulled away and stroked my cheek with his hand. His smile and his dazzling sapphire eyes calmed me as I continued to smile at him.

"Is everything alright?"

My smile hid it all, and I nodded. I wasn't going to begin explaining to him what happened the night before. All I can do is make sure that he stays beside me at all timesâ ¦at least until I'm sure that everything is okay.

I grabbed my backpack from the floor beside the couch, and I put it over my shoulder. He held his hand out to me and I took it.

We were just walking out the door as, Mikey, my brother came slumping down the stairs. His clothes were all baggy, and his hair was uncombed. This is how he came to school every single day. Only a year younger than me, and still a pain in the ass. Unfortunately, he rode with us.

It was a quiet ride to school this morning. Unfortunately, I had nothing to talk about. If I opened my mouth, the only things that would come out, would be what happened last night. I wasn't going to trouble my boyfriend with something like that.

My brother was sitting in the backseat listening to rap music. I could hear it over the radio in the car. I finally couldn't stand it anymore, so I turned around in the seat and I whacked him in the knee.

"What the hell was that for?" He grumbled at me.

"Turn down your music you butt!"

He did. He turned it down, but I could still hear it.

I glanced over and saw Jed looking at me mysteriously. "What?"

"I dunno, you just seem kinda distant this morning Ava. Are you sure everything's alright?"

I nodded at him, and I continued to look forward. The drive took a little longer this time. There were a lot of kids walking to school today. It was a beautiful morning, so I'm not really surprised.

I rolled the window down, letting the cool air hit my face as we pulled into the parking lot. I took a deep breath, in and out. I breathed in another deep breath, only to choke on it a moment later!

I could believe what I was seeing. I couldn't stop coughing. Jed parked the car, and then started patting me on the back. Once I finished coughing, I took a couple breaths. My brother and my boyfriend were both staring at me, waiting for a response that they would never get.

I watched in horror as I saw Carter and Marshall both walking into the school. You've got to be kidding me!

Chapter 7: A Normal School Day

I held onto Jed's hand tightly as we walked into the school. The bell rang, so I knew we were late. I let go of Jed's hand, nearly rushing down the hallway, but he grabbed my arm and swung me back towards him.

"Are you sure everything's okay Ava? You know that you can tell me anything. You know that right?"

I nodded. "Of course."

He stared at me for a couple seconds.

"Jed, I would tell you if anything's going on. I promise."

He nodded at me. "Okay." I went to turn away until he pulled me back a final time, giving me a kiss on the lips. "I'm gonna be watching those two guys today."

My expression changed. "Why? What are you talking about?"

He chuckled. "Ava, it's not that hard to tell when you get upset about something. And when you saw those two guys walking into the school, I know that something's up." He finally let go of my arm and turned to walk the other way towards his class. I stood there, confused with what he just said to me. He turned back to see me still staring at him. "Ava, I promise that nothing's going to happen to you."

I watched him turn the corner in the hallway and I turned around. I walked a little ways down the hallway to my locker. I opened it and grabbed a few books off the top shelf. I threw them in my bag that I had flung over my shoulder.

I continued to walk down the hallway towards my first class. I walked into the classroom with all the students staring at me. Mr. Parks looked over at me. "Nice of you to join us today Ava."

I nodded as I walked back to my normal seat in the back of the room.

There was something different. The two seats beside me that were normally empty, had two new faces in them. I didn't even need to focus on their faces to tell who they were. Marshall sat to my left and Carter sat to my right. You've got to be kidding me.

I could sense them making faces and talking in codes throughout the entire period. I could feel their eyes on me every now and then. It was so hard for me to ignore them, but I knew that I had to.

There was only a couple minutes left in the class, and I made sure to have my bag packed before the bell rang. I needed to get the hell out of here as soon as possible.

Before Mr. Parks was able to say another word more in the lectures, the bell rang. I quickly scurried out of my desk and towards the door. I was cut off by the two idiots. Carter marched in front and turned around, so he was marching backwards.

"I didn't think I would ever see you again Beautiful," he snickered as Marshall joined him in walking backwards.

"Yeah Beautiful, why did you run away from us?"

I scowled at both of them and I stopped walking, making them stop walking backwards. There was no one else left in the classroom. Mr. Parks walked into his office. I was blocked in by these two idiots.

I took a step backward, and they mimicked my moves. I back into a desk before I gave up. "Listen!" I yelled at them, making them take a half step back. "I'm not going anywhere with you, and there's no way you're going to make me. Especially here at school."

"Did you hear that Marshall?"

They looked at each other. "Carter I think she's underestimating us."

"Now I KNOW that's not true."

"What's going on in here?" I heard Jed's voice coming from the doorway. Carter and Marshall turned around, leaving a gap between the two of them just enough for me to see Jed's face.

A sense of relief came across my body, releasing all the previous tension.

Marshall and Carter turned around. Marshall, who was the more "brute" one, took a step forward. "Who are you?"

Jed folded his arms across his chest. He was taller than both of the boys. "I'm Jed, and I happen to be Ava's boyfriend."

Marshall looked back at Carter in surprise, but then turned back towards Jed with a smile on his face. "Not for long." The two boys laughed awkwardly before splitting around Jed and out the door.

I walked into Jed's arms.

After a few seconds he pulled away, looking into my eyes intensely. "Ava?"

I nodded at him.

"Who are they?"

I stared at him for a few seconds in thought. Did I really want to tell him about everything that happened? "I have no idea," I lied.

He grabbed my hand and then we walked into the hallway, off to our next classes without any more questions.

He kissed me long and hard on the lips before leaving me for his class. I stared at the doorway to my next class, and I just knew that they were going to be in there tooâ ¦I had that feeling.

I opened the door and walked in. The bell hasn't rung yet, so desks were still empty. Again I walked to the back of the classroom and I sat down. I didn't ever sit next to anyone, out of fear that I would be distracted. I cared a lot for my grades.

I stared at the clock on the wall as it neared classtime. So far the two idiots weren't here.

The bell finally rang, and Mrs. Edgar stood in front of the class. "Good morning," she said as she always did. She was a shorter older woman who was very wise, yet funny. She was very entertaining to me.

The class lazily replied back to her, making her tell a joke to us about tired people. I giggled a little bit as did the other students.

She was walking up to the chalkboard as the door flung open. Sure enough, in walked Marshall and Carter.

Carter walked up to the old lady, who looked at them questioningly. His words made me think that he was a completely different person. "Excuse me miss, but would you happen to be Mrs. Edgar for English class?"

She smiled politely and said yes. She then shook hands with the pretty boy. Carter whispered something to Marshall, and then proceeded to walk to the back of the room by me. Again, one boy to the left, and the other to the right.

Maybe Mrs. Edgar would let me switch seats. After all, she understood my distractions.

I sat there for an hour trying so hard to ignore the two boys once again making faces and telling codes to one another. It was so irritating. I knew they'd been talking about me all morning. Why wouldn't they? They were getting paid to kidnap me.

They didn't trap me at the end of class this time. But the next class was the same. Both boys right there beside me.

The final bell rang before lunch, and I was excited to at least be with Jed for a little while.

I scurried away from the two gorgeous boys, and I headed straight to the cafeteria. I didn't care about getting books from my locker this time. I could get them after lunchâ ¦.

I wandered over to my normal table and threw my backpack onto a seat. I sat down next to it as I looked around for Jed's face. Just then two large bags came flying at the table. I nearly fell back off my seat!

"You wouldn't mind if we sat here would you?"

"Carter you shouldn't even have to ask. I'm sure she's okay with it."

"That's so true Marshall! She should be okay with it. I mean, after all, we are all study buddies aren't we?"

I stood up from my seat and I was immediately pushed back down.

"You're not trying to leave us Ava, are you?" I finally saw Carter moving and taking a seat next to me so I could see his.

I tried to stand up again, but I was pushed back down by Marshall. "Seriously Ava, you don't want to hurt our feelings, would you?"

I looked at Marshall's beautiful face and then back at Carter's in disgust. "Seriously guys, you're pathetic."

I tried to stand up a third time, but this time they pulled my arms down. I rolled my eyes as I gave up.

"Come on Ava," Carter said. "We only want you to be our friend."

"Yeah Ava. Why don't you just sit here and have lunch with us!"

I rolled my eyes furiously. I was extremely irritated, and they were sensing it. It's making them grin like the idiots they are.

But my heart almost skipped a beat when I finally heard Jed's voice behind me. "What the hell are you guys doing here?"

Marshall and Carter stood up, and finally, so did I.

"We're just sitting here with our new friend, Jed." He, Carter, said Jed's name with so much emphasis on the D.

"Yeah Jed, calm down. It's not like we're trying to kidnap her or anything." They laughed and they walked away.

Jed set down a couple of trays as I watched Carter and Marshall head over to the long line of kids waiting to get food.

"I don't like them Ava."

I chuckled. "Neither do I." I sat down and starting picking at the burger and fries that Jed grabbed for me. He also grabbed me my favorite drink, root beer. I sipped a few times as I kept my eyes on the two boys.

"Ava stop worrying about them and eat. Worrying is my job," Jed assured me. He scarfed down his food as he always did. I wasn't insulted by it.

I didn't notice Kayla running towards me until she was sitting on the other side of me, practically out of breath.

"Kayla what's wrong?" I asked, a little bit concerned.

She finally caught her breath and threw her bag down. "You will not BELIEVE what just happened to Bridget!"

Oh greatâ ¦gossip that I could care less about. "Why what's going on with her?" I asked as if I cared.

"Have you met those two new guys?"

I rolled my eyes. How could I forget. "Yeah I have, what about them?"

"Well the dark haired one asked her out!"

I nearly choked on my root beer. "Are you serious?!"

"Yeah! It just happened a few minutes ago! He said he was a friend of yours!"

I almost died! "What did Bridget say?"

"What do you think Bridget said?"

"Oh Godâ ¦" I really thought I was going to throw up.

"Yeah, and then guess what else happened!!" It was easy to tell what she was gonna say next with the way she was bouncing up and down, and smiling uncontrollably.

"What?" I asked like I didn't already know.

"The other one, Carter, asked ME out! Isn't that fricken awesome! Now we can finally have that triple date tomorrow night like you originally wanted before I broke up with Trevor and Bridget broke up with Mason and it's gonna be so awesome! What do you think I should wear? Do youâ ¦."

She rambled on, and all I could think aboutâ ¦was you've got to be kidding me. A triple date? TOMORROW NIGHT? With those two idiots there? Fuck. Everything. Seriously.

Chapter 8: Date Night

I hate high school. I didn't like it before I was somewhat kidnapped, but now with Carter and Marshall here, I hate it even more.

I get to watch Carter practically making out with Kayla all day. Same with Marshall and Bridget. The sad truth is though, that they're only doing it to keep closer to me. Which is a shitty reason to break two girls' hearts. AND THEY'RE MY BEST FRIENDS!

I was sitting by myself at our normal lunch table when Kayla came up and sat by me. I smiled at her as she put her bag down. She was aloneâ¦for now.

"Carter said it would be a good idea for all of us to sit together today. Is that okay?"

"Oh yeah sure," I said sarcastically, only allowing myself to actually get the sarcasm.

Jed finally came back from getting our food, and he took a seat on the other side of me. "Where's your psycho boyfriend Kayla?"

I lightly hit him on the arm.

"What?" He asked overreacting.

I cleared my throat as I smiled at Kayla and then looked back at Jed. He could sense my irritation, but I'm glad she couldn't. "CARTERâ¦" I emphasized his name "â¦suggested that it would be a good idea for us all to sit together today. Especially before our triple date tonight."

He rolled his eyes. "I'm not going to be able to go to that Ava. You should know that! I have practice tonight because we play tomorrow."

I scowled at him. "You don't EVER have basketball practice on a Friday night Jed."

"Well tonight I do. I have to be there too because we're playing tomorrow against one of the better teams in our conference."

I sighed as I looked down at the burger sitting in front of me. I guess I'll have to go by myself. Kayla nudged me and I looked up at her, not letting her see the worry on my face.

"Hey, I don't think that Bridget is going to be able to go tonight either. She said she has some band thing to go to tonight. That means if you still wanted, you could go with Marshall and we could still double!"

I nearly died at the thought. I smiled slightly along with her.

Jed cleared his throat, making me look at him. "I think my schedule just opened up."

Kayla perked up. "Well Marshall might still be going with or without B."

"As if that wasn't going to happen," I muttered under my breath.

"What's that A?"

I looked back up at Kayla. "I just said that's awesome that that's going to happen." My fake smile made her smile and she dropped the subject, only to go onto talking about how cute Carter looked today with his hair slightly spiked. I didn't notice.

Then Carter and Marshall finally joined us at the table, along with Bridget. I sat there and watched them all make kissy faces to each other. I seriously thought I was going to be sick.

The bell didn't ring soon enough. Without saying much to Bridget or Kayla, I left the cafeteria with Jed. We were off to our last three classes of the day. And of course, if you didn't already guess it, Carter AND Marshall were in those classes as well.

The school day ended with Bridget completely bitching me out in the hallway.

Elaborationâ ¦: *They were actually spitting spitballs at each other. It was annoying and immature and all of the above. They knew it was annoying me, so they continued.*

But then, Marshall's "ammo" attacked my hair, getting all that wet gross, disgusting slop into my long blonde hair!

After touching it briefly, I turned and looked at him air-fiving Carter from the other side of me. I stood up and I slapped him across the face, making him and Carter both stand up. I grabbed my bag, threw it over my shoulder, and then I ran out of the classroom just before Mrs. Perkins could give me a detention.

So in short, I slapped Bridget's "boyfriend" and now she's pissed at me.

After I ran out of the classroom, I went straight to the bathroom and nearly took a shower in the sink. I did whatever I could to get that disgusting thing out of my hair. It took me a little bit, but it was finally out.

Jed practically squealed out of the parking lot after my brother and I got into his car. In a few minutes, we were sitting in the driveway. I sat there as Mikey happily climbed out of the car.

"Are you sure about this 'date' thing tonight A?"

I looked over at Jed. There was CONCERN written all over his faceâ ¦in his eyes, on his forehead, even in his lips. I nodded. "I know Kayla's the one that's really looking forwards to it, and I want to make sure that this asshole doesn't do anything to hurt her."

His expressions didn't change. "Well you know that I'm going to end up kicking his ass if anything happens tonight."

I smiled. "I know Jed. Just promise me that you'll at least try to be nice tonight."

"Only if you promise to not let them annoy the hell out of you."

I smiled at him as I grabbed my bag. "TouchÃ© Jed." I got out of the car.

"Ava!" I turned around to see him looked out at me. "Hey, I'll be coming back in a couple of hours for that stupid date. I promise I'll be here before they all leave."

I nodded at him and then I walked up the drive. I stopped a few feet from his car.

I felt eyesâ¦. I turned around to look up and down the streetâ¦but there was no one there. I looked back at Jed who was also looking around. He really was the sweetest guy.

I shrugged and continued to walk back into the house. I closed the door tightly behind me and I looked out the side window at Jed pulling out of the driveway and off down the street.

I turned around and marched up to my room.

The phone in my room started ringing just as I was headed towards the bathroom that connected to my room. I was originally going to go pee, but that was going to have to wait.

I walked over to the far side of my room, next to the window, and I picked up the cordless phone seeing Kayla's name scrolling across. "Hello?"

"Hey A, we need to talk."

"Alright, go for it."

I waited as she sighed. "B's really pissed off." I knew that. "She was able to get out of her band thingy or whatever, but now she doesn't want to come altogether."

I sighed. I saw that coming as well. "Alright, well the two of us can still go with Jed."

"Alright, hold on a second." She paused and I could hear her searching through papers. I assumed she was digging around her purse. "Here we go. Alright, so Carter and Marshall set up reservations at this fancy Italian place. Is that okay?"

"A fancy place K? I don't think I can afford that."

"Well that's okay though Ava. Carter and Marshall are going to be paying for everything. Carter says that he knows the owner of the restaurant."

Oh great. I sighed and looked at the clock. "Alright. What's the name of the restaurant and what time do we need to be down there?"

"Um, I'm not quite sure yet. Carter's gonna come over here with Marshall, and then we're gonna come over to your house."

No. There's no way I'm letting them step inside my house. "Kayla I don't think that's a very good idea."

"Why not?"

"Wellâ¦how about we just meet up outside my house then. I'll be ready whenever you get here. Then I'll ride with Jed and we'll follow you guys down to the restaurant."

She paused for a second. "Okay, that'll work I guess. Don't forget to dress up super pretty A. I mean, you're always pretty, but you have to dress fancy. I'm wearing a dress and heels. You better do the same."

She always wanted us to be the same. "Alright," I chuckled. "Call me when you're leaving your place okay?"

"Okay A." She hung up the phone and I put the phone back on its stand. I walked over to the bathroom, finally being able to go now.

When I was finally relieved, I walked over to my large closet and I picked out a fancy yet casual dress, and a pair of matching heels. I laid them out on my bed and then logged onto my computer. I have to kill time somehow.

Chapter 9: Nicely Dressed...Assholes?

Jed wasn't here. I have been sitting on the front step in this fancy dress and heels, just waiting for him. He was supposed to be here hours ago, but yet he wasn't.

I continued staring off in the direction that he normally came from, but I got no luck. I felt my heart skip a beat when a car pulled around the corner. As it neared my driveway, it turned out to be a limo. Crap, there's Kayla with the two idiots.

The sun was starting to fall behind the trees off in the distance, and the chills from the air were starting to give me goose bumps. My hair was pinned up, exposing my shoulders even more. I should've grabbed my sweaterâ ¦although, I didn't expect to be sitting out here all night.

Kayla practically leaped out of the limo and over to sit by me on the step. I watched closely as Marshall and Carter exchanged glances at me.

I was the only one here who knew their little plan to capture me and bring me back to Fredrik. After all, they are his little puppets.

"Hey A, is everything alright? You seem a little down right now."

I looked away from the boys and down the opposite end of the street. Then I looked down at my painted toenails through the front end of my heels. "Jed's not here yet. I don't exactly know where he is."

"Bummer," she said, not really caring at all. "Well you know, we can always text him the directions and he can just go straight there. I mean, we need to leave soon anyway to make the reservations."

I nodded. Great. That means I would have to ride with all of them to the restaurant.

"You look chilly. You want a sweater?"

I looked over at her. "I'm fine K. Really, I'm fine."

She "pssh"ed at me and then whistled. "Marshall, come and give A your Jacket, she's cold."

He smiled innocently at me, and I scowled. Luckily Kayla didn't see.

As he walked over to me, I could hear her trying to make some friendly conversation. "You know A, B didn't really want Marshall to even come along after you smacked him across the face. She was nearly furious when I told her that he still wanted to go."

I snickered. "She has no right to be mad at me K. Seriously." By this time Marshall was standing in front of me, offering his sweater to me. I glared up into his eyes, but he didn't budge.

"I know you want this," he sneered at me.

I scowled and looked away from him, back down the street.

Then he sat down on the other side of me, putting his arm around me as well as the jacket. I sat up straight, making both fall to my lower back.

"Why are you so pissy Ava?" He asked, trying to sound all innocent.

I glared at him again. "Seriously Marshall? I know what you and Carter are doing! It would be best if you didn't even come near me." I stood up and walked across the lawn. I continued to stare off down the street in hopes that Jed would pull around the corner any second now.

But then Kayla strutted over to me. "Hey, seriously what's wrong with you Ava? You seem really bitchy lately, and I don't like it. Why won't you tell me what's going on?"

I turned back at her in a snappy motion. "Look Kayla, there's nothing going on with me! I just want Jed here with me! I don't wanna be stuck with Marshall tonight!"

I looked behind Kayla towards the two boys behind her, and I watched as they acted like idiots. They stared me down as they put each other in head locks and other various holds. They punched their fists a few times as well, all while Kayla continued to lecture me about acting strange.

Finally she was done talking and she turned back around to see Marshall carrying Carter on his back. Kayla started laughing and playing along and ran over towards them. I just turned around and stared at the streetlight on the far end of the street.

She called my name again and I looked back over my shoulder. "Ava we need to get going now! I'll text Jed the directions to the place and where we're going so we can meet him there okay? I promise he'll show up, let's just get going!"

I turned back to where I had been looking the entire time. I heard footsteps coming towards me and I didn't even have to look to know that it was Marshall.

"Hey," he said sweetly. I didn't move. "Look Ava, you might think that we're trying to 'get you' or whatever, but we're not. We're going on a simple date tonight." He slipped his jacket over my shoulders again.

This time I didn't brush it off. "Marshall," I said calmly, "I don't want to do this anymore. I just want to stay home and wait for Jed to come by."

He chuckled. "What do you even see in him Ava? He's not even here like he said he'd be, right?" I remained silent at the thought. "Come on A. We're not going to hassle you tonight. I promise."

I turned around to look at him in the eyes. They were soft and innocent. It couldn't really get much worse, could it?

He held out his arm, and I took it as he escorted me back to the limo. I crawled inside, holding the back of my dress down and I slid over to the farthest side.

Kayla and Carter were practically making out on the opposite side, and I could see Carter glancing out at me as he stuck his tongue down her throat. How disgusting.

Marshall slid in next to me as he pulled the door closed. Kayla pounded on the wall that separated them from the driver, and he accelerated the vehicle into the street.

I let Marshall put his arm around me for once. He was actually trying to be nice right now, and considering what him AND Carter did to me a couple nights ago, I could let them redeem themselves a littleâ ¦. After all, they're still super gorgeous looking

Chapter 10: to Run Out on a Date

We were sitting awkwardly at the table inside the restaurant. None of us were talking, and I found myself staring out the window. Kayla and Carter were lost in their own conversation.

I occasionally glanced over at my "date" and I kept finding him staring at me. It was an awkward date. It really was. I was so uncomfortable. I couldn't sit here anymore. I had already gotten up to go to the bathroom twice now, and we've only eaten the main course. There was still dessert.

I barely touched my salad. I just didn't want to eat. I didn't want to be here anymore. I wanted Jed.

I excused myself from the table for what would be the final time, and I walked out of the restaurant. I know they were going to follow me out sooner or later. I walked far across the parking lot and I stared out into the woods behind the building.

I returned Marshall's jacket, so the chills were hitting my shoulders again. My goose bumps returned, but I wasn't all that cold.

Just then I felt a jacket or sweater being draped over my shoulders. I thought that maybe it was going to be Marshall, so I didn't bother looking. I simply rolled my eyes to myself.

The dark voice lingered on my neck, and the presence behind me grew thicker and stronger. "Hey Beautiful."

My body froze. I couldn't believe it. I didn't think I would ever have to see this man again.

"Why so afraid?" He asked as he played with my hair. The jacket was sliding off of my shoulders, and I twitched to make it fall to the ground. "Let me pick that up for you Beautiful."

I felt him bend down, and I was absolutely terrified of what he could possibly do to me. As he bent down, I took a few steps forward and then turned to face him. I held my purse tightly, hoping to be able to use it as a weapon if I needed to.

"What are you so afraid of?" He said again as he inched towards me very slowly. I continued to walk backwards. But then, from behind him, I saw Kayla coming out of the restaurant with Carter and Marshall.

Carter instantly spotter Fredrik, and he came sprinting over to us. I was still continuing to back up further and further.

Marshall was right behind Carter, but he was glancing at me over and over again. I wasn't listening to their words. But then I felt something behind me. I turned and looked, and as I did, I tripped over a dead log laying on the ground. I fell hard against the gravel.

Marshall was standing over me, offering me his hand to get up, but I laid there. I didn't want to get up. Carter and Fredrik were still talking, smiling and laughing. I just wanted to run. I rolled over on my stomach and crawled up to my feet, getting a head starting run as I took off into the woods.

~~Marshall~~

Crap! She took off again. I hope that this time Fredrik doesn't make us chase after her. We're wearing suits and ties, with nice shoes on, and I don't wanna have to run through the woods.

I wanted to help her up. I wanted to be on good terms with her. But at the end of the day, I know what needed to be done. I walked back over to Carter and Fredrik who were just now realizing that she was gone.

"Where the hell did she go?" Fred's voice boomed over my thoughts.

I shrugged. "I don't know! One minute she was laying on the ground, the next she was gone! She probably went into the woods or something!" I lied. I didn't want to have to run.

Fredrik hissed under his breath. I could hear a faint growling coming from deep inside him. He looked at Carter, and then at me. "Get her, and bring her back here."

"Well what about her?" Carter pointed at Kayla who was standing near the entrance of the building on her cell phone.

"I'll take care of her. You two, go find Ava." Fredrik turned around; his long cloak swirling with him. I looked at Carter.

"Well let's go Marshall! We don't have all God damn night!"

I nodded at him as I made my way over towards the woods.

"She couldn't have gotten very far. She was wearing heels. We need to look for the white part in her dress. It shouldn't be that hard to spot amongst all the darkness in here. After all, it'll reflect in the moonlight."

I looked up at the sky. I didn't realize that it was a full moon out tonight either.

We didn't run, but we scurried through all the thicket and fallen trees. The ground was damp. My feet were still dry, but I could feel it with every step I took. Finally I heard something off to my right and I stopped.

Carter was still moving forward before he noticed that I stopped running.

"What is it?"

"Shhhâ¦." I looked off in that direction, and I saw a faint moving. Carter's gaze followed mine as he spotted it too; immediately taking off running. I followed him closely, hoping that he would do all the dirty work this time.

Carter got faster and faster, and the distance between us increased. I remained at my speedâ¦hoping that he would just catch her and it would be over.

Carter came to a halt. I stopped right behind him. "What is it?"

He sighed. "She's headed towards the river."

"What does that mean?"

He chuckled. "It means we have to split up and catch her down there." He stared heading off to the left, which meant that I had to go a farther distance. "You go that way!" He called after me. I took off sprinting in that direction.

Chapter 11: Another Chase

~~Ava~~

I tripped three different times. I knew they were chasing me and I knew that I needed to get away. I was headed towards the river. That much I could tell by the half covered moon.

I was finally within hearing range. I could hear the water crashing off of the rocks, and I could hear it trickling downstream.

I brushed through some hanging vines, only to trip over a few with my heels. My face hit the root of a large tree. I rolled over on my side, resting my head on the root. I took a few deep breaths before I got myself to my feet. The dress I wore started to rip on the side.

I got through the vines and saw that the river was directly in front of me. I was only a few feet away from the babbling rocky edge, and I could feel a small spray raining down on my face. I scrambled to my feet, limping on the ankle that twisted during that fall, and I inched forwards.

I looked down at the fast paced river. It was wide enough for five boats to be side by side. And I mean big boatsâ¦not those small little ones. I readied for a jump, until I heard my name.

I didn't have to look, but I did anyway. About a football field away to my left, I saw Carter. He was walking towards me at a rushed pace, but still moving slow. I inched forwards a little more.

"Don't you do it Ava!" He was still walking towards me.

"Ava no! You don't know what you're doing!" I looked to the right to see Marshall doing the same thing, except he was a little further away.

I looked between them both, back and forth.

"Seriously Ava, you jump in there and we're swimming after you!"

"Ava that water is filthy and the current will sweep you under!"

"Don't do it Ava!"

"Ava listen to us!"

Without any other thoughts, I climbed slowly down onto the remaining rocks that separated my from the boys. They were still moving slow. I continued to the last and final rock that stood above the flowing current.

"Ava, you can't do that!"

"Ava seriously don't, you're going to hurt yourself!"

"Ava if you jump I'm getting Fredrik to get you, not us!"

That wasn't going to be a problem. Fredrik would have to get out of public's eye before he can officially come to me. That's when I leaped. I jumped as far as I could into the freezing river; my dress flailing in the air

behind me.

~~Fredrik~~

I answered the buzzing from my pocket. "You better have her in custody or I'm gonna rip your head off."

"FREDRIK SHE JUMPED!!"

"What the hell do you mean she JUMPED CARTER?" Anger rose in my throat. I was still standing in the parking lot. There's no way I could get to them from here. I scanned the area.

"SHE JUMPED INTO THE RIVER! SHE'S GETTING AWAY FROM US!"

I shook my head while I finally spotted a dumpster on the dark side of the building. "Carter if you don't want to be dead by the end of the night, then you better Jump in and get here." I slammed my phone shut, shoving it in my pocket as I walked as fast as I could behind the building without being noticed.

After passing the dumpsters, I continued past a back door, and behind a small bush. Those boys were going to pay for letting her slip away again.

While finally in secrecy, I took off, gliding through the trees, not even getting a scratch. In less than a second I was right next to the rushing river. I looked downstream to see Carter taking crap out of his pocket.

I glided swiftly and in less than a half second, I was right behind him. "Carter I asked you to jump in there after her." I kept my calm for now.

He jumped at the sound of my voice and stared at me with wide eyes. "I w-was j-just"

"You were just nothing Carter now don't let her get away! You know I'm not getting myself wet Carter now GO!" The trees in the vicinity of my voice shook. They swayed back and forth out of the corners of my eyes.

Carter threw the items in his hand down at the ground and dove into the water. She was already far downstream, and Carter was very behind. It was going to be a long night.

Carter's items levitated off the ground and flew straight into my hand as I started walking towards Marshall. I grabbed the back of his jacket as he watched intensely at the other boy in the water. I pulled him with me and I spread my wings. I bolted up in the air and I flew over the scene.

~~Ava~~

I managed to see the silhouette against the moon out of the corner of my eye. I couldn't look up. Carter was getting closer to me, but there was a waterfall coming up. It was my only chance to escape.

Looking up, I could see Fredrik's large flying body in the moonlight. He sprung wings! *Okay, that only makes him more fucking creepyâ¦. I'm not into bestiality.* The sight of him made me sick. I could feel my insides turning against the numbing chills of the river. But I kept swimming, and I make myself kick harder.

I was reaching the top of the waterfall, and I don't think I've ever been this excited to slide down it with the rest of the river. It wasn't very high, but it still crashed at the bottom. I've done it a few times before with a bunch of friends, and it's deepâ¦so you won't hit any of the sharp rocks on the bottom.

I could see the cliff's edge through the splitting water. I was almost there! I was getting closerâ ¦I'm almost about to be swept off the cliff! Finally I was there! In the few seconds that seem like they lasted forever, I was finally falling over the edge. I could feel the butterflies in my stomach as I gained speed.

But then out of nowhere I was blasted in the stomach! I could feel the sharp pain sifting through my abdomen. My eyes clenched shut. I felt myself falling again, but I didn't land in the water. I could feel myself landing inâ ¦sand?

I opened my eyes. I looked around and I saw myself on the top of a sand pile at the construction place a little ways outside of town. I was directly on the top of the pile!

I continued looking around. How the hell did I get up here? I could hear the crashing of the waterfall from a ways away. But just as I looked in that direction, I could see him coming back with another person! It was the winged Fredrik carrying Carter in his claws!

Carter was flung right into the side of the sand pile. I could feel it all shifting below me as I sat there on the peak. Carter's back slid down the sand pile, making me shift that way.

I could feel the night air jabbing at my skin. It was freezing out here. Being up this high, the breeze was reluctant. It was stinging my arms like a million small needles aiming to puncture my skin.

I could feel Carter stirring near the bottom of the pile. I looked over my knees to see where he was. I turned and I slid down the other side. I just managed to slip behind a dumpster before I heard his loud voice.

"Carter, you're a fucking disgrace." I could hear footsteps rummaging around. "Why in the hell would you take the time to call me and let her get away?"

"Listen Fredrik, it's kinda hard when I'm already running from half a mile away and then she jumps into the damn river. It's not my fault! Why don't you yell at Marshall? He was there too!"

"Listen Carter, I took you in. I've given you a home. I've given you EVERYTHING! And you can't even do one simple little thing. And I have to rip up a nice suit just to fly my ass over here to you. You're gonna pay for this suit Carter. You hear me?"

"Yes sir," I could hear the distraught in Carter's voice clearly.

I was gazing around, trying not to make any sound. I was trying to stay as still as I could, but then I saw a big gaping hole in the fence. Is there any possible way of getting through that?

His voice made me jump. It was louder than the last time. I had to put in an amazing effort to keep myself as still as possible. "WHERE THE HELL IS SHE NOW? CARTER, MARSHALL SEARCH THIS PLACE! SHE COULDN'T HAVE GONE FAR. AND IF SHE GETS AWAY AGAIN YOU BOTH ARE SLEEPING IN THE CELLAR TONIGHT."

I didn't realize it, but I was shaking. I was slightly shaking. I could hear the footsteps leading away, and then a phone ringing. Someone answered it, and I realized that it was Fredrik's voice. Now was my only chance to get out. My heels clicked lightly over the pavement as I got closer and closer to the fence. I was only a few feet away, but I needed to do this. Finally, I dove through, just managing to scrape my arms on the edges of the rugged fence. I crawled towards a group of damp bushes, and I crawled inside them, scraping my arms a little more.

I heard the footsteps going towards the dumpster. Then I saw Carter peering around it. Marshall appeared seconds later. Carter started walking away before Marshall grabbed his arm. Carter looking at him puzzlingly until he saw Marshall pointing at the fence. A smile formed on Carter's face as he caught the hole in the fence.

I was still too closeâ¦they're gonna find me. Shit, what do I do now?

Chapter 12: A Much Sweeter Boy

I stayed hidden among the bushes. I wasn't going to take any chances. I needed to get away again, and if that meant sitting here and waiting for them to go away, then I will.

I watched Carter and Marshall crawl out of the little hole. I remembered that I completely dove throughâ¦staying low. I could feel my arms starting to burn now that I thought about it.

Carter pointed out behind me and told Marshall to go that way. He himself went the other way. I watched them split up, and then my eyes were caught on Marshall. He was walking towards the bush. He was getting closer!

Shit, I hope he doesn't see me! *I've been swearing a lot latelyâ¦. Why have I been swearing? Seriously though, I don't normally say *shit*. I really don'tâ¦. Shut up Ava! If you keep thinking right now, you're gonna get caught!* I shook my head, wiping away my thoughts. I forgot I was in a bush. The leaves rustled as Marshall walked by, and he stopped. He took a few steps back and stared at the bush.

I could tell he sensed me cause he smiled.

I blinked the tears away from my eyes. I went to get up when he cleared his throat. I looked up at him and he was lightly shaking his head "no."

I looked through the thinning leaves with a puzzled look. He mouthed the words, "you're not really here." He winked at me and then he walked away.

My heart skipped a few beats as I tried to process what just happened. Did Marshall just do what I think he did? Did he seriously just let me slip away from them? I never thought that those boys could be nice.

I stared at Marshall as he ventured farther off into the woods. He looked back at my position and he gave me some sort of wave. I wasn't sure if that was supposed to be a sign or something, but I took it as such.

I crawled quietly out of my little bush, and I slowly made my way towards the street that led to the construction place. I finally got to the shoulder, and I made my way quickly across the street. If I follow this road, it'll lead me straight into town. It wasn't far at all.

~~Marshall~~

I can't believe I just let her get away. There's no way in hell that Carter or Fred could possibly know, right? I mean, it's not like Fredrik can read minds or anything like that.

I'm sick of chasing after this girl. She really is a nice personâ¦*and she really is beautiful. I think I'm starting too-MARSHALL JUST STOP! DON'T EVEN SAY IT!* I continued going through the woods. I stopped when I heard my name being called from a distant place.

It was Carter, and I could hear his footsteps rushing towards me. I stopped and turned around, right as Carter jumped on me and tackled me to the ground.

"Carter what the hell are you doing?"

"Marshall!" He was trying desperately to catch his breath.

"Carter slow down! What the hell are you trying to say?"

"Marshall I think I know where she went!"

I pretended to be surprised. "What?! Where?!"

He grabbed my arm "Come on, follow me!" He ran me back over to where he was looking and he showed me what looked like "heel tracks" in the dirt.

"Carter," I said, not able to hold in my laugh anymore, "that's a fucking deer track!" I pointed at the marks of the deer hooves on the ground, and he punched me in the arm. "What the hell was that for?"

"You're laughing at me dude!" Carter shot me a serious look, and pointed back in the direction that I'd been looking to begin with. I casually walked away from him, still laughing to myself. What an idiot Carter was.

I looked at the bush where Ava had been. I couldn't help but think to myselfâ¦why I had let her go to begin with.

~~Ava~~

The town was quiet, as it always was at night. There was never anything that happened hereâ¦except forâ¦well I dunnoâ¦ME BEING STALKED TO MY OWN SCHOOL! I ran across the park; the same park that I was trapped in a while ago. I hated this place nowâ¦.

I ran my normal way home, and I knew that I wasn't being followed. There were no voices or footsteps, or even vehicles following me this time. Maybe this time I finally got away.

But I didn't turn that familiar corner down my street. I didn't take that familiar route to my front door. Instead, I ran down a few more streets until I saw another familiar house. I wasn't sure what time it was, but there was still a light on in the house.

I looked like crap, but I really didn't care.

I ran up to the front door of that house and I knocked, lightly at first. I waited a few seconds before I knocked again, this time louder. There were faint footsteps that I could hear, and finally the door opened. I looked at Mr. Marks as he smiled when he saw me.

"Ava Lynn, I haven't seen you in a while!" He embraced me in a hug as he ushered me in. "Ava you're soaking wet! Why are you soaking wet?" He turned around and stuck his head into the living room, and I could tell that he was talking to his wife. "Marilyn can you go grab a towel? Ava's here and she's soaking wet." The footsteps in the other room were quick to get up.

About 30 seconds later, she was walking through the doorway with a nice clean dry towel. She wrapped it around me as she embraced me in a hug as well. "Ava! It's been so long since you've been over!" She paused for a second and I could tell both Mr. and Mrs. Marks were wondering the same question.

"They ushered me into the living room, and sat me down on a hard wooden chairâ¦probably so I wouldn't get any of their davenport wet.

"Well," I started, "I was running out of this restaurant tonight because it was just really awkward. They were trying to chase after me, and I ended up falling into the river trying to get away." I had a slight smile on my

face as I told them about how Jed was supposed to be there with me tonight, but never showed up. I could see the horror on their faces as they realized something was up.

"That just doesn't sound like Jed," Marilyn said. "He's very good at sticking to plans." She shook her head. "Do you know where he is Ava? Have you seen him at all tonight?"

I shook my head and I felt a tear coming to my eye. "I haven't seen him since he brought me home from school. He left saying that he would be over in a couple of hours, but he never showed up."

"Oh Allen," cried Marilyn as she turned to her husband, "we have to go out and look for him. Who knows where he could be, or what trouble could be lurking at this hour! We need to go out and get our son Allen." I could see the tears spilling out of her eyes.

I knew she was extremely upset. Not just by the tears, but that fact that Jed always told his parents everything. They always knew where Jed was, and if he wasn't with me, then that means something bad has happened.

Allen put his arm around his wife's shoulder as he pulled her close. "It's alright Marilyn, we'll get in the car and we'll go out and look for him. I'm going to go get Sophia and get her in the car as well."

"Allen there's no need for that. She's a big girl. She can stay here, can't she?"

Allen shook his head. "If Jed's in any sort of trouble, I don't want our daughter sitting here all by herself."

I cleared my throat. "I could always sit with her if you'd like Mr. Marks."

He smiled at me. "Ava, you know how much we'd appreciate that." He tightened his grip on his wife's shoulders. "But I would rather have you come with us as well. That way whenever we find him, we can drop you off at home instead of having you wandering around at this hour."

I nodded at his wise words. Marilyn got up from the couch and walked up the stairs to get Sophia.

Sophia was another little blonde, just like me. She was the sweetest little girl with the greatest manners. She was in the fourth grade, but she had the sweetest relationship with her brother. She always loved seeing me, but she loved seeing her brother moreâ ¦which is understandable.

Sophia slumped down the stairs rubbing her eyes. When she could finally see, she waved at me, with a sleepy smile on her face. I didn't hug her, mostly because I was still wet. I took the towel off, and walked to put it in the bathroom. I could hear something coming from outside, so I looked out the window.

I could see a faint movement from the hedges in the backyard. There's no wayâ ¦there's just no wayâ ¦.

I quickly ran out of the bathroom, shutting off the light and slamming the door behind me. I turned around, staring at the door and walking backwards.

"Is everything alright Ava?" I bumped right into Mr. Marks. I jumped as I turned around and brought my hand to my mouth to keep me from screaming my lungs out.

I nodded at him. "Yeah, I justâ ¦thought I saw something spooky."

We didn't speak as we all filed out of the house. Mr. Marks securely locked up the house as we all walked off the porch steps. We walked over to the SUV in the driveway and piled in. Mr. Marks was the last one to get

into the car.

"Alright everyone, if there's any place you think he could be, you let me know." We all nodded and agreed to his words. "Now, keep your eyes peeled. There's been something strange going on in this town, and I'm not letting my son get involved in it."

Those final words tickled my brain. Mr. Marks says there's something strange going on in townâ¦what could possibly be going on in town? I haven't noticed anything weird going on, but then again, I've had my own weirdness to deal with. Maybe it has something to do with Fredrik. But I'm probably thinking about it too much. We need to find Jed.

Chapter 13: There's Something Wrong with Jed

My alarm clock had been going off for at least 5 minutes. How didn't I hear it? I crawled out of my bed and over to my desk where my clock was kept. I was still in the same dress I had been wearing last night. Why wasn't I changed? What happened last night?

I shut off my alarm clock and walked into the bathroom, stretching my arms and legs. I undressed myself as I got into the shower.

As the water poured down my body, I started thinking about everything that happened last night.

I remembered leaving the restaurant, and jumping into the river, but I don't remember anything about Jed. But then it hit me. I remembered going out with his parents, and his little sister last night, in search of his car. But we found nothing.

I finished up my shower, and I walked back into my room, quickly grabbed the cordless phone off of the desk. I quickly checked the caller ID in search of Jed's number. But the only numbers there were from relatives, calling for my parents, and a call from Kayla.

I quickly dialed her number, hoping she would answer, and she did.

"Hello?" I heard her groggy voice, almost as if she was sick or something.

"Kayla? Are you alright?"

"Yeah I'm fine. Just have a terrible headache today. I'm glad you called me A. We really need to talk."

"About last night?" I pulled on a pair of clean panties, and a pair of comfy pants.

"Yeah actually." She paused for a second, and it gave me the opportunity to put the phone on speaker. "How did you know that's what I wanted to talk about?"

I sighed. "Well, it's probably because I need to talk to you about it as well."

She paused again. "Ava, what the hell happened last night?"

"Believe me K, if I knew I'd be able to tell myself right now." I quickly put on a bra and a large baggy tee shirt from my closet.

"But A, something happened to me last night. I don't know who I was left with, but I ended up being thrown into a sewer pipe. It was so gross! I woke up from that, and I immediately came home. But I don't know who did it, or what happened to you or Carter."

I hopped onto my bed, hearing pawing at my door. I got up and opened the door slightly for Moo to come into my room. "K, I'm right there with ya. I mean, I wasn't thrown into a sewer, but I have no idea what happened either. All I remember was seeing something flying in the sky. It had wingsâ¦devilish wings."

We didn't say anything for a few seconds. I laid there on my bed petting my cat.

"Ava, have you heard anything from Jed? He sent me this really weird text last night at some point. I didn't see it until this morning though."

I sat up. "What? What did the text say?"

"I dunno, it was just a bunch of weird symbols." I heard her clicking buttons. "Hold on A, there's an attachment on this." There was a few more seconds of silence. "Oh my Godâ¦" She didn't say anything else.

"Kay?" There was no response, but then I could hear her sobbing through the phone.

Through choked breaths, I could hear her final words through the phone. "Ava I'll be right over." The phone call ended, and I got up to put the phone back on the desk to charge. I could only imagine what was on her phone.

I couldn't stop pacing. It had been a good fifteen minutes now since that phone call and she still wasn't here yet. I kept glancing at my clock, still pacing.

20 minutes now. 20 damn minutes. Where the hell was she. Just then I heard the front door open. I opened up my door and ran down the steps. I saw my mother hugging Kayla. Kayla's eyes were seriously red. I waited at the bottom of the steps until my mother released her.

She stepped up to me and then looked at me with sorrow. She took out her phone and she unlocked it. She opened up something and then handing me the phone.

I hesitated. I stared into her eyes as I held the phone to my chest. Did I really want to see what was going on? Did I really want to know what the hell was happening? She nodded at me, and I knew it was time to look.

I slowly brought the phone away from my chest. I looked down at the picture that shone brightly on the screen.

It slipped from my hand.

I heard the phone crashing against the wooden floor.

I felt my head spinning like crazy.

The exposed screen of the phone was made visible to my parents.

The screamsâ¦the gaspsâ¦the dizziness.

I felt like I was going to be sick.

Every emotion took over my mind.

The sadness, the happiness, the love, everything was crushed before my eyes.

I felt the stairs immediately behind me.

Hands were reaching for me.

My vision was fading.

The tears were streaming down my face.

Hell was taking over.

But just before my vision was completely gone, I felt the presence of an angel. I saw a mysterious white glow of a person standing behind everyone.

But then everything turned black.

I hope I don't remember anything if I ever wake upâ¦.

Chapter 14: Get out of my bedroom!

My head was pounding. I opened my eyes and it was dark outside. I was in my bed. I could tell because I could see the familiar glowing clock on the desk from where I was laying. It was well past 2 o' clock in the morning.

I felt around for my lamp and I turned it on. The light was blinding but I recovered quickly. I looked down and saw my kitty laying on my stomach. I petted her a few times before something caught my attention.

There was a slight chilling breeze going through the room. I looked over to see my window open.

Just then the doorknob to the bathroom clicked. Moo instantly jumped up and arched her back. I looked down at her and she was growling. I don't think I've ever seen her act this scared.

The bathroom door slowly opened, and I nearly screamed. Before I could even open my mouth, something came up from the side of the bed and covered my mouth. I couldn't barely breathe at this point!

Moo lunged at this thing holding my mouth. I saw her jump on top of it, and then she was gone, almost as if the thing was holding onto her.

The bathroom door opened fully and I saw someone standing there. My eyes widened. I saw Carter's hair gleaming in the dim light of my lamp. I stopped moving.

How the hell did these guys get into my room? And then, I remembered that the window was open.

"Ava, you need to calm down," he said to me.

I could've ripped his head off. He had no right to tell ME to calm the fuck down.

"Ava I can still see anger in your eyes. You really need to calm down."

Well of course there's going to be anger in my eyes! You're in my fucking house! You snuck in through my fucking window! You are covering my fucking mouth!

Finally I closed my eyes. MY breathing slowed, and I made myself "look" calm.

"There you go Ava. We're only here toâ¦TALKâ¦to you. Soâ¦." He paused and walked around my room, looking at little things on my dressers and on my desk. "If we uncover your mouth, you cannot scream. If you do," he pointed a finger in the air almost like he was talking to a little kidâ¦and trying to make himself look more threatening; "if you do, then we're going to have to kidnap youâ¦againâ¦and take you somewhere outside where we can talk in peace. Do you understand that?" He was looking at me now.

I nodded, since it was the only thing I could do.

Marshall's hand slowly slid off of my mouth. I was finally able to breathe normally. Carter opened his mouth, but I was quick to cut him off. "What the HELL are you guys doing in my bedroom?"

Carter cleared his throat. "Did you not just here what I said?"

"I don't care what you said. I want you guys out of my room. Where is my cat?" I bent over the side of my bed, looking for the black and white spotted cat.

I looked up to see Marshall holding her calmly. She was snoozing in his arms. "I didn't hurt her at all," he said calmly. He handed her to me and I grabbed her hastily from his arms.

Carter cleared his throat and I looked back up to him while petting my cat. "Ava, we're here to talk to you."

I nodded. "Well go ahead you moron, I'm listening."

He had a slight smile growing on his face. "You know Ava, I'm not afraid to hurt you. If you continue with your insults, I'm going to use force." He paced back and forth near the foot of my bed. "Ava, why don't you wanna come back with us?"

I giggled, and it soon turned into a bellowing laugh. After about a minute of laughing, I calmed myself down, being careful not to wake up my parents in their bedroom across the hall. "Are you kidding me right now Carter? I don't wanna go back with you because I don't want to! I wanna stay here at home where I actually have a life. Besides, Fredrik is a fucking creeper!"

Marshall snickered. I could tell he felt somewhat the same way.

"He's not a creeper," Carter assured me. "He's just different. You'd really like him if you got the chance to know him."

"I don't want to get to know him."

"Why not?"

"Seriously Carter, you see what he's done to me. We were never introduced to each other. The first second that he was ever around me, he wouldn't stop touching me." I remembered that night in the limo. It was the first time I'd ever been around him, and he wouldn't stop touching me. I didn't like it and it made me uncomfortable. "Besides, he's not even human."

Marshall walked over to Carter and whispered something in his ear. All the while, I was sitting there thinking to myself. I had just woken up from some kind of nap. Why did I fall asleep so early to begin with? What was I doing in my bed?

"Look Ava," Carter's voice cleared through my thoughts. "Fredrik might be a little weird yes, but he's a good guy."

"Not from what I've seen."

"Ava, please just come back with us and get to know him a little more. I'm sure you'd really like him. Not only that, but he can give you whatever the hell you want."

"Carter, listen to me. I'm not going with him. I'm never going to go with him. I don't ever want to be around him again. I wanna stay here with my amazing boyfriend who already gives me everything I want. Please Carter, just leave."

He sighed. "We'll leave now, but we'll be getting you one way or another. Fredrik doesn't kid around when he wants something." He walked over to the window and put one leg out before turning back to me with a smile

on his face. "I'll be seeing you again REAL soon Ava. I can't wait until the next time we see each other." He climbed out of the window and jumped over to the tree.

Marshall was still standing next to the bed. He was looking at me with concern.

"You know, they don't know about what I did." He looked at me apologetically.

I felt a calming presence with Marshall around. I paused. "Why did you do that for me?"

He sighed and then sat down on the bed next to my feet. He sighed heavily before there was rustling on the tree just outside the window.

"Come on Marshall, we need to get back!" Carter's head disappeared again.

Marshall sighed again. "Well, I did that because I can't stand seeing you so upset."

My face puzzled up. "Why does it matter to you?"

He smiled at me. His deep aqua blue eyes could see straight through the baby blue in mine. "Ava, you really are a beautiful girl. And I'm not just saying that to get you on our side. I really do like you, and I'm sorry for everything that we've been putting you through. Carter doesn't like doing this, and neither do Iâ ¦I just tend to show it more than him."

Without having to ask, he explained more then I needed to know. It was nice. I could really tell that Marshall was a good kid. He really was. He was just stuck in a place that he didn't want to be anymore.

"I do what I do because Fredrik takes good care of us. Fredrik is extremely wealthy and he "adopted" us. If it weren't for him, Carter and I wouldn't even be out of those foster homes. We wouldn't be where we are now." He sighed again as he looked down at Moo sleeping on my bed. He stroked the black hair on the top of her head. "I really am sorry Ava. Please don't hold this against me. I do it because I have to. I don't ever want to hurt you."

There were footsteps down the hall. We both instantly looked over at the door. Marshall jumped up and glided over to the window. He resiliently jumped out onto the tree and hopped down. I could see the shadows of Marshall and Carter running through the yard in the dim glow of the streetlight. I saw them race towards the outside of town, and I leaned back against the frame of my bed, still petting Moo.

My bedroom door opened and my father stood in the doorway.

"Ava what the hell is going on in here? Are you alright?"

I looked over at him and rolled my eyes. "I'm fine dad. Why?"

He sighed, "I was just making sure. You gave us quite a terrible scare downstairs tonight, and I thought I was hearing things in here. Are you sure you're okay?"

"Dad," he looked at me, "what happened tonight?"

"You don't remember?"

I shook my head.

"Well baby girl," he walked in and sat down on the bed. "Kayla came over tonight and showed us all something thatâ¦wasn't very pleasant."

I looked back down at Moo and my hand that was softly petting her back. She was still sleeping. I still couldn't remember what I had seen that made me black out so badly.

"Ava, we all saw the picture. Do you remember what it was?"

"Dad, if I remembered I wouldn't have asked what happened." I rolled my eyes. Why couldn't he just say what the picture was?"

He sighed heavily again and then folded his hands on his knees. "Ava, the picture we saw was of Jed."

I looked up at him, and I could tell that it was hard for him to say it. But then I started to remember what it was.

"The picture was of him, beaten up, assaultedâ¦covered in bruisesâ¦cuts everywhere." Then the image came to my mind. I remembered seeing it, and wondering how in the hell something like that could happen to someone like Jed. Jed was a bigger guy. He was super tall, and he was super athletic. There wasn't anyone that I knew that could take him down.

A tear came to my eyes as I remembered the picture. He was tied up. The picture showed him in a pair of ripped jeans and no shirt. His body was completely covered in blood and bruises.

My father looked over at me and I stared out the window. I know who did it. I knew where he was. The problem was getting him backâ¦.

"Baby girl are you sure you're going to be okay?"

I nodded.

"Good. We called the police and showed them the picture. they contacted his parents so they're aware of their son. The police are going to do everything they can to find out where he's at, okay?"

I nodded again, feeling the huge lump in my throat.

He got up and walked over to me, kissing me on the forehead. "You get yourself a good night's rest Ava. We will see you in the morning." He gave Moo a small pat on her small head before walking out of the room.

Jed was in trouble and I wasn't sure how to get him out. I know where he is, but it's harder to get into that place without getting caught. And I know that if I get caught, I'm going to be his slave foreverâ¦. This was turning out to be a very shitty month.

Chapter 15: A Fight With My Inner Self

Taking the bus to school was something I wasn't used to. I never had to take the bus before, mainly because I'd always had a ride. Before I started dating Jed, my father brought me to school. But a couple summers ago, he got a new job that changed his hours.

I was sitting next to Sophia. She's never ridden the bus either. She had her headphones in and so did I. The kids on the bus were very immature, not to mention they were extremely loud.

We were the last two stops on the way to the school. It was a crazy ride, but we made it there without hitting anyone. I walked with Sophia into the building before she veered off in a different direction. I headed straight for my locker.

I stood there and dialed the combination. I pulled the door open and I could see the familiar pictures on the inside. I looked at Jed's senior pictures that he gave me at the beginning of the year. I felt a tear come to my eye as I stared at his adorable face.

"Hey there Ava. How are you doing today?"

I turned around to see Marshall standing behind me. The tear vanished. "What the hell do you want?" I turned back to my locker and fished out a few books that I needed for the first few classes before lunch.

He cleared his throat. "I just wanted to come say hi to you before Carter showed up."

I snickered. "Let me guess, you have to act all tough and irritating when Carter's around huh?"

"Kinda. If I don't then he tells Fredrik, and then he punishes me in ways that I don't even want to describe."

I looked back at him over my shoulder and he was smiling at me. "Well I'm sorry you have to deal with that." I scanned my locker for anything else I was missing. "If you can't tell, I'm in a crappy mood today so I would ask for you and Butthead to leave me alone today. Although I know Butthead isn't going to."

He chuckled. "I will try my best Ava. I'm sorry if Carter makes me do something to upset you."

I smiled to myself as he walked away from me. I held the books in my arms as I stared off into space.

What is going on with you Ava?

I don't know. Why are you asking?

I thought you hated those boys.

I do.

Then why are you starting to like Marshall?

I don't like him!

That is so not true.

Get out of my head.

If I get out of your head Ava, you'll die.

I guessâ ¦I like him because he's actually being nice to me. I mean, if it weren't for him, I would probably be living at Fredrik's house right now.

Ava likes Marshall, Ava likes Marshall!

Hey inner mindâ ¦.

Yes master?

Shut the hell up!

Just then, my books were smacked out of my hands. I whipped my hair back to see Carter standing next to me. "Carter what the hell?" I bent down to pick up my books when he put his foot down on them.

"Carter remove your foot!" I punched at his foot until finally he moved it.

"Jeez, someone's on edge today," he laughed.

I grabbed my books off of the tiled hallway floor and I stood back up. "Really Carter? You expect me to be in a good mood after all the shit you've put me through? You really are an idiot."

"Seriously Ava calm the fuck down."

I turned back towards my locker, placing the books back into my bag. "Get away from me Carter."

He chuckled. "Come on, stop being so mad at me."

"Carter if you don't leave in five seconds I'm going to punch you in the face."

He stood there. I could still feel his presence after I finished putting my books in my bag. I grabbed the bag from my locker and I slammed the door.

I turned back to face him, scowling. He chuckled at me. "You know Ava, you could seriously stop being a bitch at any time."

I couldn't hold back anymore. I clenched my fist and I decked him straight in the face, hitting him on the side of the nose.

He dropped down to the ground. I could see small red droplets coming from his hand. He was clutching his nose. Damn!

Way to go Ava.

Shut the hell up. He deserved it! After everything he's done to me, he still remains an asshole!

You shouldn't be like that.

You shouldn't be contradicting me.

I lifted the bag onto my shoulder and took off down the hallway. Shortly after, I was clotheslined. I fell to the ground right in front of the doorway to the Girl's Bathroom.

I looked up and of course, it was Marshallâ ¦just after I had been getting to like him a little more.

"I'm so sorry Ava! I didn't even see you!"

He held out his hand and I grabbed it, slowly getting to my feet. "What the hell are you doing over here?"

"I'm waiting for Bridget. She's in the bathroom right now."

I almost forgotâ ¦. He was still "dating" Bridget even though he didn't really like her.

I looked over at my scattered books and I scrambled them together. I shoved them back in my bag.

"Well, well, well." I could hear Bridget's cold shrill voice behind me. I finished gathering my books and then turned to walk away, but she grabbed me by the arm. "Where the hell do you think you're going?"

I rolled my eyes and then turned to face her. "Bridget if you don't let go of my arm, then you're gonna get punched in the face. I'm not in the mood to deal with you today."

"Why not? You were able to slap my boyfriend across the face for no reason."

"Bridget I already told you, they aggravated me and I warned them, but they continued to irritate the hell out of me."

"Yeah, like I haven't heard that one before." She rolled her eyes and finally released me. She folded her arms across her chest. "Seriously Ava, I don't ever want to see you around my Marshy ever again."

I couldn't help but laugh. She would be one of those girls who has a stupid pet name for her boyfriend. Marshy? Are you kidding me?

"What the hell are you laughing at?"

I looked her straight in the face as I finally stopped laughingâ ¦. "Bridget, why on earth couldn't you come up with a better pet name? Marshy? Are you kidding me?"

I turned and ran back down the hallway, remembering that I had previously punched Carter in the faceâ ¦making his nose bleed. I really hope I didn't break his nose. I had enough things to worry about.

You punched someone in the face todayâ ¦

Yeah I know I did.

Why'd you do it?

What do you mean why? It's Carter and he called me a bitch.

But you know you like him too. He's also a cutie.

"I just need to calm down. That's all I need right now," I said to myself as I walked down the front steps of the school. The fresh air felt good. The day hasn't even started and I'm already forcing myself to leave the school grounds. I've never actually skipped a day of school before in my life. Who was I becoming?

Ava you know you have to face him sooner or later.

Who

Carter. He's not going to be happy with you.

When has he ever been?

You made matters worse for yourself.

How?

He's going to be more aggressive towards you.

â¦I guess you have a point. I continued walking in the sunshine until I came to my street. A large cloud passed overhead. I looked up, and I could see the storm clouds beginning to form above me. I've never seen anything like itâ¦. It's strange.

What are you going to do Ava? You can't run forever.

I don't know what I'm going to do yet. But heyâ¦.

Yes?

Can you shut up now?

â¦Yes.

Chapter 16: Bad Things Happen When Left Home Alone

I haven't had the entire house to myself in a long time. My parents' work schedules were fixed around my school schedule, so whenever I was home, they were sure to be home.

The house was quiet. Almost too quietâ¦but I could hear the pitter patter of Moo's tiny paws against the kitchen floor. I set my bag down quietly, as if to not disturb the already quiet atmosphere, and I wandered into the kitchen. I found my kitty sipping water out of her bowl in the corner of the room. She saw me and waltzed over to me just as quickly as I had walked into the room.

I picked her up and I headed into the living room. I turned on the television and flopped down on the couch with my kitty on my lap.

I quickly felt myself dozing off. How I could I be tired, I wondered, but I soon fell asleep.

Fredrik's mansion stood in front of me. I could see his silhouette in the large front window. He was staring intensely at a person tied up in a chair. I could see his wings exploding from his back in anger and rage. I could feel the ground moving beneath my feet.

I ran up to the door, kicking it in with just a single touch. I had these mystical powersâ¦. He turned around. He was staring straight through me. Behind him I could finally see him. I saw Jed! Jed was the one tied up in the chair!

Fredrik stared at me with fire in his eyes. His wings spread out all the way across the room. Within half a second he was flying straight at me. His arm was outstretched in front of him, ready to strike me. I could see the claws that replaced his fingers. I turned and I could feel the heat from the searing pain radiating from my lower back. He had struck me.

As I fell to the ground, he passed over me, flying straight through another room, and out a window. The glass exploded in my ears, almost as ifâ¦.

Moo was standing on my stomach. Her back was arched and she was growling towards the kitchen. I picked her up and cradled her in my arms as I got to my feet. I tiptoed across the wooden floor to the doorway of the living room and I peered around the corner. There was no one in the kitchen, but I could see the glare of something shiny on the floor.

I walked closer and closer, and I could finally see the outline of the broken glass. I looked up and saw the broken window above the sink. There was someone in this house with me. I most definitely wasn't alone.

I wandered back into the living room. I wasn't sure where to go next. I still held Moo tightly to my chest. I turned off the TV.

I sat back down on the couch, waiting for some kind of movement, or some kind of sound, but then I heard a crashing sound, almost like a large piece of furniture falling over, coming from upstairs.

I set Moo down carefully on the sofa, and she smushed herself up against me. Without doing anything else I ran into the kitchen and removed a knife from the knife drawer that my mother kept tidy and organized. I then proceeded to climb stealthily up the stairs.

My bedroom door was open. Moo was trailing closely behind me. I had never dealt with anything like this before. What was I going to do when I saw the person? I could see shadows along the wall outside my bedroom.

When I finally got enough courage to step forward, I jumped into the doorway and charged into the room. I looked around, with the knife ready to strike at any moment. Whatever was in here, vanished quicker than a blink of an eye.

I turned around. Moo wasn't in here with me, but the door was now closed. When the hell did the door close? I turned around again, hearing something behind me. I turned to see the window closed, the shades shut, and the curtains drawn. When did that happen?

With the low amount of sunlight coming through the window, I could see the bathroom door was closed as well. I could still make out everything in the room. But there was no movement.

With the knife still tight in my grasp, I moved towards the door. I turned the knob, but then was pulled backwards and thrown on my bed. I immediately started stabbing the air as much as I could. I paused and looked, and there was no one there.

"You needn't not alarm yourself my love." I could hear the voice, but I couldn't see where it was coming from. It was surrounding me.

"Ava I have a surprise for you." The voice was almost ghostly. It send chills down my spine.

The bathroom door clicked, and the light turned on. I still couldn't see anyone.

"Why don't youâ ¦check it out." It was followed by a deep demon-like laugh. I got up from the bed, the knife wielded in my hand, and I headed for the bathroom. I brushed myself up against the wall as I entered; not seeing anything.

I looked back towards my bedroom, expecting to see something, but I didn't. But then I saw something that I knew I was going to see. I saw something in the tub behind the shower curtain; the only place anything could possibly be in this bathroom. With the knife tightly in my hand, I ripped the shower curtain open, and horror filled my senses.

I looked down at him and I bent down immediately to pull him up. Jed was tied up. His wrists were bleeding from the ropes, and so were his ankles. I carefully cut the ropes with my knife.

"Oh my God Jed! Jed are you alright?"

He removed the piece of cloth covering his mouth, which I didn't manage to see until now. "Ugh!" He spat a few times away from me. "Ava!" He reached up and wrapped his arms around me. He climbed out of the tub and tipped me over onto the floor, holding me tightly.

"Jed I'm so sorry! Are you okay?"

He kissed me on my forehead over and over again, occasionally kissing me on the lips. "I'm fine Ava. Really, I'm okay. Those ropes hurt like hell though. Did they hurt you? Any of them?"

I shook my head as we sat upright on our legs. "I'm fine Jed. I was worried about you!"

"That asshole somehow got into my car on Friday night when I went to pick you up."

"Are you serious?"

"Yeah. He held a fricken knife to my throat and made me drive back to his place. Then he tied me up and let me sit in a disgusting musty old basement for three days."

I hugged him tightly around the neck. "Oh Jed I'm so sorry! I never meant for you to get hurt. I really didn't. I'm so sorry."

"Ava, you have nothing to be sorry for."

I wiped the few tears from my eyes as I let go of him. "I know, but I just feel bad."

He gave me a kiss on the cheek and then got to his feet, helping me up a few seconds later. "Ava we need to get out of here. I'm sure he's probably got some stupid trap set up already, but we need to get you to safety."

I nodded as he led me out of the bathroom. He was wearing a torn up bloody white t-shirt, and a pair of (extremely) ripped jeans. I held his hand as we exited the small bathroom back into my bedroom. As we got closer to the door, I heard the bathroom door slam shut.

"What a wonderful reunion," the voice echoed through our heads. "I'm glad you two are happy at last, but it's a shame that I have to tear it apart once again!"

A large gust of wind burst between Jed and I. He was flung unto my bed, as I was flung against the wall in-between the door to the hallway, and the door to my bathroom. I could finally see a shadow stepping in front of the window to where I could see it's contour. I should've realized who it was all along. It was Fredrik.

I watched Jed get up, and get thrown back down onto the bed, over and over and over again. Finally he gave up. I could sense tears in his eyes when he brought his hands up to his face. He covered his face, making it look like he was in pain.

"What the hell do you want Fredrik?" I asked out loud, hearing the shakiness in my voice at the same time.

"Ava you know what it is, that I want."

"You can't have me! You're never going to have me!" I backed up as far as I could against the wall. Tears were escaping from my eyes.

"Well that's a real shame isn't it? I guess someone's gonna have to go then hmm?" And with another swift move, a knife raised high in the air, struck into Jed's back. I watched him scream in agony as my screams matched his! God no! This can't be happening!

Chapter 17: The Spying Game

I could feel my heart breaking as I watched in horror. Jed was on the bed, and he was bleeding badly. I couldn't stand against this wall anymore. I jumped at Fredrik who was smiling down at his hand that dug the knife deeper and deeper into Jed's back.

I was able to knock him over, but he captured me right away. In less than a few seconds, he shattered through my bedroom window, and we were darting higher and higher into the sky. The thunder crashed all around us as we soared through the rain.

â¦

My tears were mixing with the rain. I was contained in his yard, staring out at the woods beyond the black iron bars. I could feel him watching me through the large glass sliding door.

All I could do was cry. I really hope that Jed would be okay. I hoped that the stabbing didn't kill him. I could only hope.

I watched the rain fall into the pool, creating multiple ripples here and there.

Ava stop thinking about Jed. He's fine.

How can you be so sure?

Because if I'm not then it'll only make me sadder.

"Avaâ¦we can finally be together."

I didn't turn around. My thoughts popped like balloons in my head, everything disappearing. The only thing that remained, was the image of the horror on Jed's face as he screamed in agony. I've never seen him like that before. I can still hear his scream piercing inside my ears.

"Ava, we are going to be together whether you like it or not." He glided along the pavement to where he was standing in front of me. I still didn't look at him. Instead I turned my gaze over to the side of the yard where a garden was spread out.

"Ava look at me. You can't rely on others to be there for you anymore. I'm the only one that you need in your life. When you can finally realize that, you'll be happier than you ever have been."

I could feel my heart breaking more and more. I didn't rely on Jed for anything. He was always there for me because he wanted to be. I never asked anything of him except to love me. More tears crept through my bright red eye lids.

He caressed my cheek like he did on the night that he first met me. It made me just as uncomfortable now as it did then. I smacked his hand down as I frowned through my tears. My hand fell back down to my side as he brought his back up.

"Now don't be like that Ava." I could hear a tone in his voice as he finally glided back into the house. I fell down to my knees, holding my head in my hands.

I had been outside this whole time. It was starting to get dark, and I know that my parents are probably worrying right now. I just hope that they had gotten to Jed in time.

The screen door opened and two figures took their place next to me. I sat on the pavement with my knees hugged close to my chest. I was still drenched in rain from earlier, even though the rain was finally letting up. Lightning still struck across the sky every now and then.

"Hey there pretty lady. It was a shame you weren't in school today. We really missed you." A laugh followed his sarcastic comment and I could see Carter's shadow moving with his chuckles.

Marshall nudged me from the other side. "You alright?"

I remained still. Jed replayed over and over in my mind. The scream replayed over and over again in my ears.

Carter put his arm around me. "Ava we have to walk you home. Fredrik doesn't want a kidnapping warrant sent out just yet."

Just yetâ ¦how considerate of him.

Marshall stood up and then stood in front of me, offering me his hand. I placed my head back between my legs, seeing nothing but darkness.

"Hey," Carter said louder. "We have to take you home Princess, let's go." He stood up too, pushing Marshall out of the way in front of me. "Alright Marshall, she doesn't want to get up so we have to make her. You grab that side." My arms were yanked away from my legs. My legs dangled like jello beneath my weight.

Marshall put his arm around my waist, helping to support me while Carter held me up just by my arm.

I finally regained feeling in my legs. I yanked my arm away from Carter and continued walking into the main area of the house.

"Where do you think you're going?"

I didn't turn around to yell at Carter. Instead I headed straight for the front door. I opened it and walked out quickly, trying to make sure that I could stay ahead of them no matter what.

I couldn't tell if they were behind me or not, but I continued walking. I wouldn't stop until I got home.

~Marshall~

I watched her walk out the door. I wanted to chase after her. I wanted to make sure that she was alright.

"Fredrik are you sure she should be out there by herself?"

He laughed. "Marshall, she doesn't need any of us around to walk her home. That's where she's going to go. She's hurting now, but soon she'll be mine and she'll warm up to the idea."

I wasn't so sure about that. With a giant sigh, I finally turned to Fredrik who was eating some kind of meat at the large dining table in the main area of the house. "Fredrik, why is she so hurt today? I don't think I've ever seen her that distant before."

He laughed again, setting down all his utensils hard onto the table. He looked at me and then looked at Carter. "Come over here and take a seat boys."

I followed Carter over to the table and took the seat next to him so that I was farther away from Fredrik.

His chuckles broadened into a wide smile. "Now boys, you might be attending some kind of assembly tomorrow at that school place you go to. Now don't be worried. It's not someone that you really care about you know."

Carter chuckled. "I think I know who you're talkin' about." I was still clueless. I nodded to go along with Carter.

"Do you Carter? Who do you think it might be?"

"Jed?"

His smile grew bigger. "Today I took his life. I don't think I've been happier." He picked up his fork and picked at the meat on his place, cutting out a huge chunk and driving it into his mouth.

Carter was ecstatic. I'm not sure why, and it really bothered me. "Fredrik how the hell did you do it? Do you know how long it took for us to even get him the other night? He is one tough guy! How the hell did you do it?"

He held his hand up and Carter sat back down in his chair, still eager to know. "Carter, it wasn't hard. I had him in Ava's bedroom. He was on the bed facing the door where she was standing, and then I stabbed him with my dagger, forcing it in deeper and deeper." He paused to laugh again. "No one has ever survived a stabbing by my dagger Carter." He pulled the bloody knife out of his pocket and I stared at it.

The blade was very jagged and thick. The end curved into a fine point. The handle was carved out of bone, or something like that. My mouth went dry.

Carter's mouth hung open. "Fredrik I don't think I've ever idolized you more than I do right now."

Fredrik continued to eat his food while smiling and making small talk with Carter. My stomach turned inside my body. I had to go find Ava. I really had to make sure that she would be alright.

"Fredrik," I said loudly. He looked up from his food, and Carter turned around to look at me. "Fredrik," I said again, "I'm going to go find Ava and make sure that she actually does go home."

They both looked confused. "Why the hell would you want to do that Marshall? Why would you want to ruin your nice clothes today in the rain?"

"Well," I paused. What could I say to convince them to let me leave? Then it hit me. "Well think about it this way. If she just saw the love of her life-"

"MARSHALL!!" I flinched at his murderous voice. Fredrik's face flushed red. "Don't you ever refer to anyone else as the 'Love of Her Life.' The real love of her life is me."

I nodded, afraid to continue with my thoughts. "W-Well, I meant, if she just saw someone she was close with, killed right before her eyes, then maybe she might do something to harm herself to try and 'be with' him again."

Carter and Fredrik both stared at me with blank faces. Fredrik's mouth opened, and I waited for his words, my heart skipping a beat. "Marshall, you actually do have a point. Alright you and Carter can go."

"What?" Carter turned back to look at him. "I don't wanna go out there. It's getting dark and it's wet. These are some of my good clothes Fred."

"Carter I am not letting Marshall go out there by himself."

I leaned forward. "Well, I can go by myself Fred. I promise all I'm going to be doing is spying on her. If she tries to do anything, I can handle her." I was practically begging in my mind.

Fredrik sighed. "Fine Marshall. Whatever. Bring your key with you, because I will be locking the door after you leave. I am going to bed soon, as I have been awake for almost a week straight."

I nodded. Fredrik excused himself from the table and put his plate in the sink. "Carter you can clean that tonight." He walked straight past us and up the large staircase to his chamber.

Carter eyed me. "What the hell are you going to do Marshall?"

"What do you mean?"

"I know you have something planned. You're not just going to go spy on her. What are you trying to get at with her? You're not going to get her to like you Marshall."

"You're crazy. I don't like her like that." I couldn't tell if Carter was ever able to tell if I was lying. I really hoped he couldn't.

"Marshallâ ¦you are madly in love with her. I can sense it when you're around her. You're nice to her when we should be mean." Crap, he saw right through me.

"Look," I paused, letting out a huge breath and lowering my voice. "Carter I really do like her. But tonight I really do just wanna make sure she's okay. I feel really bad that she had to watch her boyfriend get killed right in front of her."

I could see a hint of sympathy in his eyes. "Yeah," he looked down at his hands in his lap. "That would honestly be really hard to watch. Alright well you'd better get going before she gets too far and you can't find her." I watched Carter get up from the table and head over to the sink in the kitchen. I grabbed my sweater off of the back of the couch and I grabbed my jacket off the coat rack. Then I headed out the door.

The fog was starting to set in. I ran down the path that led out from the drive way, and I could see something up the road from me. I stopped as the figure kept moving. I darted closer and realized that it was Ava.

I ran up behind her. She didn't even flinch. I could hear her quiet sobs through her chattering teeth. She was moving extremely slow.

"Ava?" My voice choked. She turned and lunged at me!

Chapter 18: The Disguise in a Kiss

~Ava~

I couldn't help but throw myself at him. Marshall was the only person that I felt like I could trust, at least besides Jed. But now that Jed isâ ¦gone, I really need someone.

I fell right into his chest. I could feel my sobs getting harder and louder. He surprisingly wrapped his arms back around me. It was very comforting.

We stood there for a long while. He let me cry and snot all over his sweater. After quite some time, I pulled away to look at his face. His eyes were very apologetic and sad. I could tell that he had emotions for what was going on.

He looked down into my eyes as he wrapped a jacket around my shoulders. I pulled it on and snuggled inside it. The jacket was big and heavy, and I practically drowned in it. But either way, it was nice and warm. I looked down at my feet as I sniffled. "I'm sorry I made your sweater all icky."

He chuckled. "It's really okay. I can wash it any time."

"And thank you for the jacket."

"I figured you'd be cold. You kinda rushed out in your t-shirt and your shorts."

I nodded.

"Are youâ ¦" Marshall paused, and I looked up into his beautiful baby blue eyes. "Are you okay Ava?"

I looked out into the woods. I could hear things making sounds, and I wasn't sure what it was. A soft rumble of thunder sounded in the distance. "I justâ ¦" I wasn't able to find my voice. I felt the tears coming again. I wiped my eyes for a final time. "I just can't believe what I saw."

He nodded and then looked down at his shoes. "I'm really sorry Ava. Please believe that."

I nodded and he looked back at me. "Marshall will you please walk with me and talk?"

He smiled slightly and then nodded. We started walking as the sky got even darker. There were no streetlights out here, but we could still see the road in the darkness and fog.

"What would you like to talk about?" He asked, breaking the silence between us.

I thought about it for a moment. I really wanted to take this time to ask him some serious questions. "Well, can I just ask why you're so nice to me? I mean, why aren't you a dick like Carter is towards me?"

He giggled. "Well Ava, believe it or not, but I like you."

I half-smiled. "Well thanks Marshall, but that's not really what I meant."

He sighed. "I don't like Fredrik. I really can't stand being where I am. I do what I do because I don't have anything to be able to live on my own yet. He's the only job that I have, and the only source of food and

money." He sighed again. "I hate seeing how upset you get when you're around him. When I first tried to help and kidnap you, I couldn't have cared less about you." He stopped walked, and I turned around to face him. "But the more I got to see you, the more I really wanted to get to know the real you. I could see how scared you were whenever you were with Fredrik, and when you finally found out who he really is in his nonhuman form. I really don't want you to be miserable with him for the rest of your life."

I smiled. Through all the pain I had been feeling before this moment, I felt like it vanished. I was actually feeling very relieved. "I-I don't know what to say."

He continued to walk, and I turned to walk with him. "You don't have to say anything. You don't even have to forgive me for everything I've done to you."

I grabbed his hand. I entwined my fingers with him. I felt a lot closer to him than I ever thought I could be. "Marshall, could you at least do me a favor tomorrow?"

"Hmm?"

For once our footsteps were in sync. "Could you please break up with Bridget tomorrow?"

He laughed. His laugh was cute. It wasn't obnoxious, and it wasn't annoying. It was normal and cute for a boy like him. "I can do that. But only if you can do me a favor too."

"What would that be?" I felt a smile forming on my lips.

He stopped me from walking any further, and then he grabbed my other hand. We stood there holding each other's hands in the middle of the dirt road. I could see a faint smile on his lips. "We need to disguise you."

"What?"

"You heard me Ava."

"Well yeah, I heard you, but what do you mean by disguising me?"

"Exactly that."

"Why would we need to do that?"

"I just feel like it would throw Fredrik and Carter off."

I paused and looked out into the fog, thinking about it. It did sound like a valid plan, and I had to admit, anything to get those two idiots off my case would be worth trying.

I looked at Marshall and I nodded. "What are we going to do?"

"I'm not sure yet. But I figured we could take care of it after school tomorrow. How does that sound?"

"Sounds good." He grabbed my hand and we continued walking down the dirt road.

We finally reached the outskirts of town and I could see the faint glow of streetlights. Under the sound of thunder, and under the few strikes of lightning, the rain started to fall again.

He walked me all the way back to my street. He turned me to face him and he put his hands on my lower back. "I'm gonna go back now okay?"

I nodded. "Thank you Marshall for walking me back."

"I want you to be able to trust me Ava. You can come to me for anything."

I nodded again and looked into his chest. He pulled me close into a hug.

"I really do care about you Ava."

I pulled away and looked back up into his face. His baby blue eyes shone bright in the low gleam of the streetlight. He leaned down and he kissed me. I wrapped my arms around his neck and I let it happen. I knew it wasn't the best thing for me to do, especially at a time like this, but I couldn't help myself.

We finally pulled away and he was smiling. It was really cute. I smiled back at him and I gave him another long hug. "Goodbye Marshall," I said as I walked away.

I hurried back to my house. The fog thickened, but I found my front porch. The lights were still on in the house so my parents were still awake. I opened the door and I could see my father pacing back and forth in the living room.

Being back at my home brought even more tears to my eyes.

My father stopped and stared at me, then he eagerly rushed over. "Ava are you alright sweetheart? Where have you been?" He locked me in his embrace, and then my mother came and joined in. "Oh Honey! Are you okay baby?"

I could feel the tears flowing from my eyes like a leaky faucet. I backed away and then looked at them both. "Momâ ¦Dadâ ¦Jed isâ ¦" I looked down at my face and watched my tears fall to the hard wooden floor.

My mother wrapped her arms around me. "We know Honey. We found him when we came home from work." She was sobbing as well. "Honey we need to get to the hospital right away."

My face shot up to look at hers. "You meanâ ¦?"

My father half-smiled. "Well of course Ava, Jed had to go to the hospital. There was no way that he would've been okay if we didn't call an ambulance."

My heart nearly skipped a beat. My father ushered my mother and I out to the car as he locked the door. We filed into the garage and into the big SUV parked inside. We sped off out of the driveway and headed out of town. The nearest hospital was in the next city over, so that's where we went.

Created from Booksie.com

Generated: 2013-05-21 09:44:09