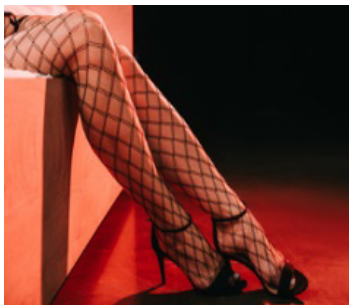


Saving Corky



By: Crystal Steadman

Note from the author

This book is inspired by a dream I had one night. A couple of weeks back, I had a restless night and a recurring dream, so I interpreted it as a sign and began writing. My books are dark.... but this one is going to take on a whole new level of darkness. I hope you guys enjoy the book.

Much Love.

One

I started out on the streets when I was 16 years old — when my parents walked in my room one night and found me in bed with one of my dad's business partners. My parents didn't care that the man came into my room and touched me inappropriately during their party. They were more concerned about their reputation. "A well-respected business executive" like my father couldn't have a whoring daughter like me, bringing his name to shame, so I had to go. And it didn't matter that I had nowhere to go. So, now at 22, I find myself a prostitute with a bad-tempered pimp, and a drug problem. Staying high on anything I can get my hands on just, so I don't have to feel the nasty shit the johns are doing to me or be sound of mind when I'm blowing them off. I'm sitting

in my tiny ass apartment getting ready to head out to my corner for the night and get a john or two.... try to make some money for the night. Rent is due, so as I'm getting ready, I snort a line of coke and fuck that shit is good. Looking at myself in the mirror one last time... making sure I don't have any white shit on my nose, or anywhere else, then I head out to the corner.

"Hey Layla baby, any new business tonight?" I ask the lady and my best friend that stands on the same corner as me.

"Hey Corky girl. No, it's been kind of quiet tonight, but the night is still young girly... and you're looking fire tonight I'm sure you will get a few hits."

"I hope so, Layla baby. I have rent this week, and you know how Martin is about us being late for our rent."

"Yes, well, Martin should take the cut we give him after every night as our rent money." Layla spits out.

"Watch what you say, Layla. He has ears everywhere." I tell her and sway a little on my feet.

"Corky dammit girl, you really need to lay off that shit," Layla says to me.

"Only if I could find another way not to feel I would, Layla."

"Corky girl, why won't you get your GED? Carry your ass to college... and get the hell out of New York, away from this shit." Layla says for the 100th time. She tells me the same shit every night. Since I was 18, and first started prostituting for Martin, our

sleaze-bag pimp. I'm smart enough I could get my GED, and get into a community college, and make something of myself, but would Martin let me go? I'm one of his highest paid prostitutes.

"Corky girl look alive. Here comes some action, Layla says," breaking me out of my daydream.

"Oh, joy!" Here we go. "Hey there, sugar... what'll it be tonight?" I say, leaning into the passenger window. It's a nice-looking older gentleman in his mid-40's not someone you would think you would see picking up a prostitute for an hour.

"I would like to rent you for an hour."

"Rent me?" This guy has done nothing like this in his life. Poor fucking sap. Okay, well We do whatever you want in that time frame and the price starts at \$200 dollars and goes up from there, I tell him."

"That's doable he tells me." Then he just sits there for a minute, like he's not too sure what to do about the information I just gave him. "Okay sweetheart, if you want to do this, then I have to get into your car. Then we will go to a motel or somewhere and that's where the real fun will begin," I tell him.

"Oh, yes, right? Um, get in and then we can figure out where we will go for the night," he tells me, so I open the passenger door and climb in. "Your first time?" I ask him.

"That obvious, huh?"

“Yes,” I smile at him, “but that’s okay. So, what are you looking for tonight?” I ask him, then I kind of glance around his car and find a damn car seat in the back seat of his car. Really, man? “So, you and your wife just had a baby, huh?”

“Oh, um, I’d rather not talk about that, if you don’t mind.”

“Nope, don’t mind at all...” what does having a kid have anything to do with me and my pay, anyway? “Alright, so if you want to do anything tonight, we are going to have to get this car in gear and head somewhere, okay?”

“Yes, okay. Where is the best place to go for stuff like this?” he asks me?

“Any of the smaller motels, I tell him.” And then point him toward motel 8. “You can rent by the hour here and they don’t ask questions,” I tell him.

“So, I guess I’ll walk in there and rent a room?” He asks me, and I try really hard not to laugh at this poor guy, but it’s getting harder by the minute. “Go in there and ask to rent a room for an hour - they’ll give you a key.”

“Okay, I will be right back,” he tells me. Then stumbles out of the car. Hell, I thought I was high. I’m not sure if he is high or drunk, but he is definitely one or the other. This is going to be fun.

He gets back to the car with a key in hand, then we drive around to find the room. Once we found it, we went into the room, then the guy just stood there again... not knowing what to do.

Fuck my life right now. “Okay, sir, what would you like me to do first?” I ask him.

“Um, anything I want, right?” The guy asks me shyly.

“Right.” I say, trying really hard not to get annoyed with this dude.

He swallows enormously, then says “well in that case, can I fuck your ass?”

Ah, shit... didn't see that one coming. “Yes, I guess you can, but you've got to tell me why that's the first thing you asked me to do?”

His head falls back, and his eyes roll to the ceiling, “because my wife won't let me and now that we had the baby, she won't even let me touch her.”

Ah damn, I was afraid that was going to be his answer. “Well, okay then, but we will have to find lube, and do you have condoms? Because if not I will have to go get some before you touch me.”

“I have both... he tells me.” Damn, this dude is full of surprises!

“Okay, well, how do you want to do this?” He asked me.

“I don't normally do ass action. The Johns are rough, so we'll start doggie style. Don't get rough with me or I'll call it off and give your money back.”

“Understood,” he says, smiling at me, and he has a warm smile. You know that kind of smile that makes you believe in them, and that kinda scares me?

I undress myself, then wait for him to get undressed, then climb up on the bed in the doggy style position and wait for him to get his shit together. A minute later, I feel the bed dip, and the guy lines up behind me. Feeling his fingers at my ass with lube on his

hand. He inserts one finger into my anus and moves it in and out, gradually loosening up my muscles.

He places himself behind me, then inserts his penis into my loosened up ass after sticking himself inside me. He holds still for a minute... letting me adjust to him, which I find rather sweet, because like I said, most of these Johns are total creeps.

“Are you okay?” He asked me.

“Yes, I’m good. You can start moving now.” I told him.

The guy is pulling out of me, and I can feel it. I looked at my watch and to my surprise... he lasted longer than any of my other Johns. He lasted a whole 20 minutes. Most of them bastards last 2- 3 minutes. I turn to look at him and ask if he wants to do anything else tonight, but to my surprise he says no, that was all he wanted to do. He hoped by doing it... it would help him get it off his mind and he wouldn’t harbor hard feelings toward his wife anymore.

A little more information than I needed to know, but whatever floats his boat, I guess.

“So, how much do I owe you?” He asked me.

“\$200,” I told him.

“Okay, that’s fear,” he says, then hands me what I thought was a two hundred-dollar bill, but there was more to it. “What’s this?”

“For not judging me,” he replies, then we walk out of the motel room without another word. He drives me back to my corner, then drives off. Hmm, well, that was different.

“You were gone for a little while. How did that go?” Layla asks me.

“Well, he lasted longer than most of our Johns...” I tell her with a laugh.

“Really? I’ve had two Johns to your one girl.”

“They last longer and longer these days.” I say sarcastically. Layla laughs, then hits my arm. “Look alive Corky girl, here comes some more meat.”

“I know I need the money, Layla, but fuck one a night is really enough for me.”

“I know it is, sweetheart, but until you get your head out of your ass and get your GED and do better for yourself, this is the life we are living.”

“I know you’re right, but it still doesn’t make it any easier.” Once I’m done moaning and groaning to Layla, I walk over to the car that’s pulled up on the curb and lean into the passenger window. “What’ll it be, sugar?” I ask the John, and man, this guy is a nasty slob. He has cigarettes everywhere in his car, has one hanging from his mouth, and his hair and clothes look like he has not washed them in days. There is an odor coming from somewhere, but I put a smile on my face and do my job. The coke is really hitting me. I won’t know what’s happening soon. “What’ll it be, sugar?” I asked him again.

“I want the works, so get in,” he says in a gravelly voice.

Of course he does. “All right, then it’ll be \$400 for the works,” I tell him.

He makes some noise in the back of his throat, then opens the passenger door for me to get in, so I assume he will pay the price. Once I'm in the car, he drives off and we end up in an alleyway. I really hate when they bring us to alleyways, but I've got to trust he's not some psycho killer.

The guy kills his engine. He wastes no time pulling his pants off and taking his dick out of his boxer briefs. Either I'm seeing shit or this dude has something on the tip of his dick. Whatever, just go with it, Corky. It's an extra \$400 for the night. I always carry alcohol wipes with me so I can clean the Johns up really well before any part of me touches them. I don't want to end up with something Ajaxes can't even wash off.

This guy must be a regular because he knew exactly what to do when I handed him the wipe. Once he has himself cleaned up, I don't waste either of our time. I start work immediately. Placing the man's penis in my mouth, I suck. I play with his balls a little just to speed this process up, and as predicted, he's coming in 2.5 seconds. Quickest by far. I never allow them to come down my throat. That shits not happening. So, I take the guy's dick out of my mouth and let him do his thing. Once he's done, I straddle his lap, working my pussy as much as I can in this tight area, and try to get him hard enough again, so he can work a condom on and we can finish up.



Later that morning, I'm lying in my apartment counting what I made last night. I ended up with two other Johns after the second one, so that made for a decent night. I walked away with \$1200, not a bad night. Unfortunately, I have to give a share of that to my pimp Martin plus rent, so I will probably only walk away with \$500 of that, but that

still gets me some food in here. I should raise my price, but I don't want to pay Martin more. Or, I could not tell him and hope he won't find out. I'm heading to Martin's bar to give him his cut from last night and the rent money. Since I did well last night/this morning. I knock on his door once I make my way through the bar and to his office in the back room.

"Yea, what do you want?"

I poke my head around the corner of the door. "Hey Martin, I was just bringing your half of the profit and my rent for the month."

"Well, aren't you just fuckin' generous? Put the money on the fuckin' table and leave." I do as I'm told because I don't want the wrath of Martin coming down on me. He has a very mean strike. One time, he beat Layla so badly she couldn't walk for a month. I walk back out of his office and out the door. I head to the store to get a few things for my apartment. Although it's small and unpleasant from the outside, I use the extra money to decorate it and make the inside better. Last month, I got new furniture and recently painted my apartment. Today I'm getting a few items for the bathroom and food for the house. What I don't spend, I will put back into my little savings I have building up. I started it when I first started at 18, so it's growing pretty well. I could actually get a house of my own, but what's the point when there is nothing wrong with the apartment and it's right here on my corner?

Although I own a car, I never drive it since I can walk anywhere. I want to go from here. I get to this little discount hardware store and go to the bathroom supplies. The bathroom needs new hardware, so I start with a new bathroom sink, fossette, and a new towel rack. I splurge a little and get a new shower head. Mine is starting to crud. After

paying for my purchases, I noticed a store on my left. Entering I find towels, sheets, and a quilt. Normally I don't spend more than I just need to... but you know there's just sometimes you have to splurge on yourself now and then.



A little while later, I'm back in my apartment, changing out the appliances I purchased. Once I'm done with that, I step back and look at my handy work. Heading to the laundry unit and throwing some clothes in the washer. Afterwards, I return to my apartment to finish cleaning. As I'm running out of things to do, I decide to take a small nap. To make sure I can sleep for three to four hours before heading to the corner, I limit my morning sleep. Depending on the traffic, usually I work at the corner from 10:30 PM to 5 AM.

I must have been tired because I woke up several hours later and rushed to the laundry area to switch my laundry to the dryer, hoping nobody stole them. When I get in there and check the washer, my stuff was in, they are gone. "Fuck!"

"Corky, I put them in the dryer for you about an hour ago." My neighbor tells me.

"Oh, thank you," I tell him, then walk over to the dryers and find which one my clothes are in, and sure enough, they are all there.

I get them back up to my apartment, then head into my bedroom to change my covers out to my new ones. Once I'm satisfied with that, I go into my kitchen and make myself something to eat. I'm starving. Having eaten, I decided to take a shower with my new shower head. In the shower, using the upgraded shower head to spray myself. I got the one where you can take it off and use it as a hand held shower head. I get it close to

my pussy and it must hit my clit just right, because I've never been more turned on in my life, so I do what any normal woman would do. I get myself off on the shower head, and holy fuckin' shit, that was hot. Hell, who needs a man when you have devices like that? Men don't do shit for me anyway, so why not use my shower head?

Getting out of the shower I dry off. Once I'm done with drying my hair, I look at my clock and it reads 9:30 in the afternoon. Well, shit, I guess I had my nap for the day, so I head into my room and find my outfit for the night. Deciding on this little blue dress that comes up just a little below my buttocks, and a pair of black high heel boots that come up to my knees. I don't wear jewelry because that's just asking for trouble, but I do put on a little makeup and some perfume. Once I'm done with that task, I snort a little coke, then check myself in the mirror, then head on down to the corner where I know my girl Layla will be standing. She's out here more than she is anywhere else. She is one of the few that has a house, but never stays in it because of terrible memories and shit.

"Hey Layla baby, how's the night going so far?" I ask her when I make my way down to the corner.

"Well, I'll be damned. Look what the cat drug out early tonight. What's gotten into you-Corky girl?"

"Today, I felt good about myself. I did a lot of productive stuff."

"Oh, yea like what, Cork girl?"

"I got some new items to spruce up my bathroom, then got some towels and rags for a new towel rack and also bought a quilt for my bed. After that, I washed some clothes and installed the new appliances I bought for the bathroom, then cleaned up,

and took a nap. After the nap, I took a shower, ate then came down here with my best girl.”

“I don’t know why you waste your time in that apartment when you know I have a house big enough for the both of us, and hell, don’t even use it, Corky. I just don’t understand why you won’t just move in with me.”

We have this conversation every time I tell her I’ve done something to the apartment, but I just don’t think I would feel right living with her. Would feel like I was an intruder. “Layla, come on... we have had this discussion already.”

“Look alive, Corky girl. We have some bites. You know they don’t start coming until you come downstairs. Maybe you should start coming out this early every night.” Layla teases me.

“I think it’s all you, Layla, baby.” She just smiles at me, then walks to the car that pulled up in front of her, and I do the same.

Two

“What’ll it be, sugar?”

“You on my face, then on my dick.” This younger guy, around the age of 18-19 says. It kinda throws me. I’ve never had a guy be so straightforward like that, and I sure

as hell haven't had a guy eat me out. They are too damn nasty, but this guy looks clean. College kid, perhaps.

"We can fuck all day long, but I'm not so sure I want you anywhere near my pussy with your mouth."

The guy just cocks his head to the side, "and just way not sugar," he drawls?

"How am I supposed to know where that tongue has been?" I ask him.

"How do you know where my dick has been?" He counters.

"Two things, my friend... one, I can rub that dick with alcohol wipes until I'm satisfied it's clean. Put a condom on it... two, we do what I say, not what you say. Any more questions?"



My night goes by fast with the johns. It's Saturday, so it's a pretty good night... also when we make the most of our money. By the time I finally make it back to my apartment, I'm dead to the world crawling my ass in my bed and don't wake until around 2:30 in the afternoon on Sunday. I don't work today so I check the kitchen to see what I can cook. Not finding much food, as I only bought a few things yesterday. I head to the

bar, giving Martin his share of my profits and went to the store to buy chicken, marinara sauce, pepperonis, and mozzarella cheese. Then I returned home with everything I needed. As I'm approaching my apartment, there are cops everywhere. "What the hell."

I see Layla standing back with tears in her eyes, so I walk up to her and ask her what's going on?

"It's Candy.... Corky. They found her body a block down the road in an alleyway."

My stomach lurches to my throat. We've been hearing about some of the corner girls in the next town being found murdered, but I never thought it would come true to this part of the tracts. "What happened Layla?"

"Someone slashed her throat." An undercover officer tells me as he walks up to us, I presume to ask us some questions. I recognize the officer as officer Adams.

"Well, thank you for that tidbit of information... Deputy Dewey." I say with all the sarcasm I can muster up, because fuck, he didn't have to be so blunt about it.

I can see the wheels turning in his head at the comment about Deputy Dewey. "Ha-ha, figure that one out, asshole".

“Corky, why do you always have to be a bitch when we are only trying to do our jobs?” Adams asks.

“Don’t know... maybe because I just don’t like you.”

“Well, newsflash whore... we don’t particularly like you, either.” One of the other cops says as he’s walking up beside officer Adams.”

“Anyway, what was it you needed, officer Adams....” Layla says, giving him her best smile.

“How well did you know the victim?” Officer Adams asks us.

“For about 5 years. She was very young when she came.” Layla tells them.

“So, younger than Corky?” Adams asks.

“No,” Layla says on a sob. She is taking this very hard. “Are we through here? I would like to get Layla upstairs and get her calmed down.”

“Yes, go ahead,” Adams tells me.

“Come on, Layla, let’s get you up to my apartment.” I don’t realize it, but the two officers follow us up the stairs and try to come into my apartment. “What are you doing?” I ask them.

“We need to make sure the apartment is safe. Corky... the murder happened just right down the road.”

“And it probably happened last night... Adams, there is nobody in my apartment.”

“I’m not fuckin’ leaving until I check it out.” Adams growls under his breath, then pushes his way into my apartment.

“Damn, this apartment is a lot cleaner than I imagined it to be from the outside.” Officer dude-drop says, and I just roll my eyes at him. “Do what it is you need to do, then leave, please. Layla is upset enough without you making it worse. Do-not-touch-anything I grit out.”



Later, after the cops have left, Layla calmed down on the couch watching a movie. I made my way into the kitchen to start the dinner I was going to cook for myself. I make sure I put enough chicken in the pan that it will feed Layla and I.

“Corky girl, I think this is the first time I have been in your apartment. It really looks very nice. Now, if Martin will do something with that outside so it doesn’t look like such a dump.”

“Yea, well, that will never happen, and we both know that.”

Once I’m done prepping the food and getting it in the oven; I walk back into the living room then sit down beside Layla, and we watch tv for about an hour, then I check on the food.

“Umm, it looks and smells so good.” I get Layla and I a plate out, and pile them full of food, then I carry the plates into the living room, and we dig in.

“Oh, Corky girl, this shit is to die for. How come I never knew you could cook?”

“Not something we bring up when we are fishing for johns.”

“Corky girl, has anybody ever told you... you are a smartass sometimes?”

I smile at her... “you tell me that here and there.”

Layla looks at me with her sad eyes. “Cork, promise me you will be careful from now on.”

“I promise you I will watch my back, besides that’s why I wear boots, Layla baby. I always carry a knife with me.”

“Smart girl. Okay, well, I have taken up enough of your time and hospitality for one day. I think I’m going to go home and clean my house for once. You’re making me look like a slob Corky girl, but seriously, you have the inside of this apartment looking beautiful.”

“Thank you, but you don’t have to go if you don’t want to. We can watch something else on TV if you like, or we can listen to music?”

“Are you scared, Corky girl?”

“For you... Yes, terrified.”

“I’m going to be okay, Corky girl... you don’t need to worry about me.” Layla and I end up watching tv for a couple more hours than falling asleep on the couch.



“Look alive, Corky girl, we have live bait.”

I look up and sure enough, a few cars come pulling up, so I walk over to the second car and let Layla have the first one.

“Hey there sugar.” I say as I’m leaning into the car... and fuck, I recognize the john right away. NYPD’s finest. “Come on, man, why can’t you guys just leave us alone and let us do our jobs? Go arrest some real criminals. Hey, I have an idea... how about you find that person who killed Candy?”

“Just get in Corky.” Deputy Dewey orders.

“And what if I don’t, officer douchey mcdouche?” I ask the handsome cop... I’ve had several run-ins over the past few years with him, but nothing in a while until yesterday. I haven’t seen or heard a peep out of him.

He arches a brow at me. “Just get in Corky.... don’t make me cause a scene, then you won’t have any client tail tonight or for several nights.”

“Fine,” I say in a huff. “Layla, I got me one.” I tell my street partner, and she gives me a thumbs up, saying she does too.

“Okay deputy Dewey, spill it. What did you drag me away from potential clients for, and why not Layla or one of the other girls?”

He clenches his teeth but doesn’t say another word. Once I get into the car, and that doesn’t sit right with me. “What in the hell are you doing?” I ask him, then try to get out of the car before he drives off.... but he has already locked the doors, then drives off.

“Where are you taking me, you pervert?”

He cocks his head at me. “Really Corky, I’m the fuckin’ safest thing you have for the night, so watch your tone with me. And to answer your question, I’m taking you to that white van that’s parked just a block away, so we can have a little chat about something.”

“The fuck we are, Adams. You are going to get me killed. Do you not realize the danger you’re putting me in just for being in your car? Martin has eyes everywhere, and he’s not stupid to who you are.”

“Corky, why do we go through this every few months? You know why we come to you. You’re the most popular, um- of your kind, and Martin looks for you to do the most. We just need you to get in better with your boss. Have him tell you who’s selling him the drugs that he’s supplying to these young kids. That’s killing them. Would you like to know the number of daily fentanyl poisoning deaths among children aged 12 to 20? Do you get what I’m saying, Corky, or you just don’t give a shit?”

Do I give a shit? Should I give a shit? I’ve been in this life for so long I’ve had to put blocks around my heart so I don’t break at every little thing I see on the streets. I don’t know if I have the care gene any longer.

“No, dipshit I don’t care mommy and daddy should watch their kids better... is all I’m saying. Now, if you will excuse me, I have work to get back to.” I get the door unlocked and jump out of his moving car like it’s sitting still and start walking back to my street corner, hoping to get a real paying John this time.

I hear Adams yell at me... but I just can’t give a fuck right now, I mean he’s asking a druggie to help get drugs off the fuckin’ street. Where in his head did he think that was going to go?

I get back to my post and stand on the corner for a little while longer when a gentleman in his 40s comes driving up in a beat-up cavalier. “What’ll it be tonight, sugar?” I say as I’m leaning down in his passenger window.

“Can we just ride around for a bit?” The john asks, and it throws me for a minute. Nobody normally asks to just ride around... but hey if he just wants a friend to talk to, who am I to deny him? “It’ll be \$150 for just a ride, and \$200 if you decide you want anything else, and that will go up depending on what you ask for, sugar.”

“Damn \$150 just to talk. Well, alright then.” The john says, then leans over to open the passenger door for me.

In the distance, I can see Adams and his cop buddies watching me. I'd be lying if I said it didn't make me feel a little safe tonight, having them watch us with these creeps.

The john does as promised. We ride around for about an hour, and then he stops in an alleyway. I don't particularly like it when johns does this... it gives me the heebie-jeebies, but this guy seems like an okay guy. He turns around and looks at me, and when he does, I see a change in his eyes. Then I see why. He has a gun at his side.

"Well, shit, so much for being a good guy."

"Take off all your clothes," the john tells me. At first, I just look at him like he's stupid, then he puts the gun to my head. "I said, take off all of your clothes, whore."

"He did not just call me a whore." I take my clothes off like he so nicely requested. "Once they are off, what are you going to do, rape me, then throw me out of your car without pay?"

"You can't rape the willing bitch."

"Well, I kinda became none-willing when you demanded that I take my clothes off, asshole."

“You have a fucking smart mouth on you... don’t you, whore?” He says, then hits me upside the head with the butt of his gun.

“This shit just got fuckin’ real.” My head was bleeding when he hit me, so I’m trying to hold my head... but take my clothes off before he gets madder. The guy seems unsatisfied with my speed, so he tears my dress off and quickly climbs on top of me while laying the passenger seat back.

Resisting him because I’m not intoxicated enough for this... and I know what will take place once he gets what he wants. I become the next victim. “Could he be the one behind the murders of the corner girls?” As I’m fighting him swing for swing. The window on the driver’s side burst, and a hand came through the door to open it. Before I know it, the john is on the ground in handcuffs.

“You bitch... you’re a fuckin’ Newark.”

“I wasn’t... but for this one time, I’m glad the douchebag cops were following me.”

“Corky shut up.” Adams says behind me, and the prick handcuffs me. “What in the hell did I do?” I ask him.

He doesn’t respond, he just halls my ass into the van he was trying to get me into earlier. “Smooth motherfucker... smooth.”

Once the uniform cop drives away with the guy that attacked me, Adams gets into the van and checks my cuts and bruises, then gives me a jacket to cover up with.

“Awe, you care.” I sass.

“Corky, I swear I’m going to strangle you myself if you don’t knock the tough girl act off.”

“Who says it’s a fuckin’ act, dickhead?” Adams rubs his index fingers to his temples like he’s trying to rub a headache away.

Three

"Alright dude, you have me here now. What do you want me to do? I guess I owe you now, since you kinda saved my ass back there.?"

"Kinda, the other officer, snorts. No kinda to it, lady. We saved your ass... dude was going to kill you."

"Is he the one that's been doing all the killings of the street girls?"

"We can't discuss that with you, Corky."

"Right... right brother, hood and all. I get it." Adam speaks up then. "Like I told you earlier, you are Martin's top girl... to say, so we need you to do a little spying for us. Try to get your boss to tell you where he's getting his supply of drugs. So, fourth and so on."

"You realize you guys are signing my death warrant, right... or do you just not care about that at all?"

"What was it you said to me earlier? Nope, I don't give a shit," Adams spits.... And it takes every bit of self-control I have not to assault a police officer.

"How do you expect me to get this information without Martin getting suspicious?"

"You're a clever girl. I'm sure you will come up with the perfect plan. Adams smirks at me..." and that pisses me off.

"Newsflash dickhead, you came to me with this, not the other way around... so either you help me or you can go fuck yourselves."

"Man, Adams, are you sure you picked the right whore? This one has a mouth on her."

"Officer, step out of the van, please.... Adams bites back." Officer dude-drop does as he's told, then Adams turns on me. "Corky, how long have we known each other?"

"For a few years now. You were a rookie officer the first time you collared me about 4 years ago... and I guess you could say I was a rookie prostitute. I was on the job for about 8 months then."

"Corky, you're aware that you're too skilled for this kind of job, right?" Adams says. "People keep saying that to me, but what makes me so much more special than anyone else on the street corner?"

"You have both this," Adam points to his head, "and this," he points to his chest where his heart is. "Whether or not you accept it." He says.

"Yea, well, that doesn't keep food on the table, and a roof over my head, man."

"So, let me help you, Corky. Let me help you get a better place to live, and even a better job. You will see life will be so much better for you. You're still young. The sky's the limit, Corky."

"Okay, Hallmark, enough of the sweet talk."

Adams just rolls his eyes at me. "Okay Corky, I'm going to put this pendent on you. This is going to be my eyes and ears to everything you are doing with Martin. You are going to wear it for a few weeks. At that time... I need you to get in with your pimp. Tell him you want to do more jobs whatever it takes for you to get closer to him, and for him to trust you hopefully enough to spill who his supplier is or to let you do jobs for him."

"Someone like Martin, why can't you boys in blue just arrest him, and have him do the dirty work? Why involve a lowlife like me?"

Because we don't have enough evidence to arrest him, and someone like Martin will never rollover on his dealer. He loves money too much.

"And what makes you think I don't?" Adams looks over at me with his brows on his forehead. "You mean to tell me you enjoy living in a tiny one bed apartment where you have no room to even piss... a job you have to let random dudes touch you in places they shouldn't.... and you like the money? Is that what you're telling me, Corky?"

"Alright Adams, I get your point. But to be clear, the money really isn't all that bad if I was the one keeping most of it."

"It's Dean."

"Huh?"

"My name... it's Dean Adams."

"Okay Dean Adams. Let's get going so I can go home and take care of some things in my apartment before I take a nap and come back out."

"No... you mean so you can get ready to go talk to Martin before your nap, then have to get out here and sock up the night. Besides, you never know Martin might like the idea and put you to work right away."

"Wishful thinking... Dean Adams."

"You're a piece of work, you know that, Corky Sullivan."

Adams gets to work on putting the pedant on my shirt. Adams is putting the rose pedant on my shirt, and it looks normal, unlike in movie scenes where a wire is taped to your clothes.

I head on up to my apartment for the morning. Because by the time Adams and officer dude-drop were done with me, it was well past 5 in the morning. So, I just go home, and get a shower, then I head off to talk to Martin. I prepared myself to talk to my boss for the lack of a better word. Adams convinced me to do this and I can't believe I

agreed. I just hope Martin doesn't read right through me and kills me on the spot. I shake that thought off and get my shoes on, then head down to the road, then make my way to Martin's bar.

"Hey Corky girl, what are you doing here? Layla asks me when I walk into the bar." Shit, what do I say, because I never come to this sleazy bar unless I'm paying Martin, and she knows I've already done that?

"I need to talk to Martin before tonight starts..." I tell her, and to my surprise, she accepts my explanation. "Okay girly, well, you be careful. He's a bear this time of day, she warns me."

"Thanks for the heads up. If you don't see me out there tonight, you know what happened..." I joke with Layla.

"Not funny, Corky girl... not funny." I just smile at her and walk back to where Martin's office is. Once back there, I knocked lightly on his door.

"Yea, what the hell do you want?" Martin bellows, and I almost turn around, and walk right back out the door, but I put my big girl panties on, and walk on in." Hey Martin, I wanted to run something by you real fast before I take my nap and get ready for the night."

"Oh, is that so Corky.... and what could you possibly want to fuckin' run by me?"

Well, this is going to be fun.... Fuckin' Adams. "Well, I was wondering if you possibly had other types of work for me to do, so I could make more money, possibly...." I say with a smile.

Martin looks at me sideways... "and just what in the fuck different jobs could your dumbass do besides work the streets Corky... hell, you don't even have your GED." What's that have to do with anything.... didn't know you had to have an education to be someone's grunt? I Don't voice that opinion out loud though. "Well, I could start out by working the bar a couple nights a week, and then maybe we could go from there?"

"Are you trying to get out of working the streets Corky?" Martin questions me.

"No, Martin, I'm not... but I would like to make enough money to get out of the apartment I'm in, possibly. Possibly get a bigger and a little nicer place."

"Hell, Corky I don't know. Let me think about this for a day or two, and I will get back to you. Now get out of my face and go get some sleep for your actual job."

"Thank you, Martin."

I leave his office quickly. I hope you're listening to me. You arrogant bastard, take your job and pendant and stick them up your rear end. I whisper into the damn pendant on my shirt. Once I get outside, I rip the pendant off my shirt and throw it on the ground. I stomp it for good measure. Let's see how the asshole likes that shit.

I'm back in my apartment, trying to sleep, but I keep replaying Adams' advice to me about getting off the streets. Could he really help me get a place of my own... and even an actual job? Hell, could I actually get my GED and take college courses at my age? Ugh, Corky, stop letting that damn cop get in your head. People like me could have made better choices in our lives... become better people, but we choose this life, so why try to change it now? Why start second guessing who we are, and what we do?

Fucking Adams!

I finally fell asleep sometime later. I wake up to my alarm blurring in my ear, so I get up and get another shower for the night. Once I'm out, I dry myself off, then go into my closet to find an outfit to wear for tonight.

I finally found the outfit I want to wear. I put it on, then go back over to the mirror and doll my face up for the night. Once I have all that done, I do a line of coke, then head my ass down to the corner for the night. When I get there, Layla is already standing on the corner, of course.

"Hello Layla baby, any johns yet?"

"Hello, Corky girl quiet so far, but the night is still young. So, what did you talk to Martin about?"

I just tell her, because what's it going to hurt? All I did was talk to him about working another job. "More work." She doesn't have to know that the asshole... hot as hell cop Adams put me up to it. Fucking dick-headed- ass sucking jerk.

"Look alive, Corky girl, here comes a couple." I look up, and sure enough, two cars pull up at the same time. I take the first one, and I give Layla the second car tonight.

"What'll it be, sugar?" I lean in the passenger window. It's a nice-looking younger gentleman, not our normal Johns, so I instantly feel on edge.

He clears his throat... "I'm-um, I'm supposed to pick up a hooker for the night." The young man stutters around.

"Well, sugar, you came to the right place, but can I ask what you mean you are supposed to pick up a hooker?"

"I'm a pledge for a sorority at the local college, and our task tonight is to pick up an um- hooker."

"Okay well you don't have to say hooker like it's going to bite you or give you some kinda disease. Second, what are you supposed to do with one of us if we agreed to get into your car?"

"Um, well, we were just told to get one in our car for the night. How much do you charge just to sit with me and talk, he asks?" I arch a brow at him.... all you want to do is talk.

"Yes, ma'am... no offense, but I don't want to catch a disease, to be honest."

"Well, kid, I'm okay with just getting in your car, but let me set you straight. We are spotless. We go to the doctor regularly, and we make our Johns wear a condom- and we never kiss them nasty fucks. But that's really not something you need to know because after tonight I don't want to ever see your face around here again, understood?"

He smiles at me and shakes his head. "Yea understood." He tells me.

I got into his car because I kind of like this kid. "So, where to?"

"Could we go to a motel?" he asked me.

"Yes, I think that can be doable."

"Hey kid, you never confirmed how much I charged." I tell him

He looks at me... "shit, right, of course we have to pay. Um, will 400 do it for your time?"

Fuck, this kid must be one of them rich kids. I know I shouldn't take the 400, but that's going to make up for not having any customers late at night. "Yes, 400 will do."

"Good... do I give it to you now, do I wait until we are done?"

"Later is fine." I tell him then we drive off toward a motel. The one he goes to pull into is one of them fancy ass motels. "No sweetheart, this place doesn't charge by the hour... you need to find a Motel 6 or 8, and you will be good."

His face turns red from embarrassment. "Yes, I guess you are right. So, we get to the motel, and what?"

Lord, this kid. "Go tell them you need a room for a couple hours and pay, then we can talk in the motel room or just watch TV. Your frat buddies won't be the wiser."

"Could I take a picture with you just so I can prove to my brothers that I really picked you up? Even though I'm not sure they are going to believe you are a hooker."

"Yes, for the picture, and why would they not think I was a prostitute?"

He clears his throat... "you're beautiful, and you don't dress like the other girls that are on the streets."

"Oh- um, well thank you." We get to the motel, and once the poor guy goes in and gets the room, we go in and sit down on the chairs that are in the room. He picks up a conversation and I've got to give it to him. He knows how to keep one going.

"So, you became a prostitute because some asshole touched you as a child, and because your dad was a businessman, he wouldn't listen to you, so he kicked you out."

"Nailed it."

"I'm sorry," the guy says... and I smile at him. "Not your fault, kid. Okay, well, it's been over an hour. I think you are ready, and I need to get back so I can make some more money for the night."

"How much do you need to make in one night?" He asked me.

"Oh - um, nobody has ever asked me that before," I replied to him. "1500 would be a good night for me."

"Well, here you go. This will give you one night off the streets, right?" The guy asks, and hands me 2000 dollar bills. "I can't take this kid... what if you need it for something?"

"I have a trust fund. Not rubbing that in, but I can afford to do this for you this one time."

"Why would you, though?" I ask him.

He says, "You seem like a really nice person who didn't deserve the life you were thrown into."

I nod at him and take the money. Because let's be honest, anytime I don't have to let some asshole touch me is a win in my book.

Four

Later that night, I plan on watching TV since I have free time. I don't get to do that very often anymore. I found a movie on one of my subscriptions. It's an older movie,

but it's kinda ironic it's a movie about a prostitute. It has Julia Roberts in it. I love watching her act, so I sit, and watched the movie. It would be so cool if a rich guy would come and swipe me away from all this shit that I call my life.

I get a little way through the movie when there is a knock at the door. "Who is it," I ask when I get closer to the door.

"Open the fucking door," Martin barks at me on the other side of the door.

I open the door in no time flat, so he doesn't get pissed at me, and kicks the door in. He has done that to Layla before. "Hey Martin, what are you doing out so late?"

"Well, for starters, where's my cut for the night? I gave you a slide from last night, so you better have both nights Corky or so help me. Also, you start at 10 sharp tonight at the bar. You will still work the streets and I will let you work the bar once a week. If you do good I will give you more jobs to do. But don't expect to come off the streets Corky. Because it's not happening.

"Yes, sir, I understand... and you will not be disappointed in me... I promise, Martin."

"Yeah we'll see." Martin grumbles then walks off.

I do a happy dance once Martin leaves..., and I shut the door. I will have to tell Layla about this, but how much can I tell her.

I finish the movie I was watching, then I try, and lay down, and get some sleep, but there is no use. I am too wired up from the lack of work tonight, so I make my way back downstairs to the corner to see if Layla is still out Hell, she may have taken on a couple more johns for all I know. When I don't see her... I stand on my side of the corner just to see if I will get a few more hits tonight. And just like that, a car drives up.

"What'll it be, sugar?" I ask the guy once I get up to his passenger window.

"The works the guy on the driver's side says..." and fuck, what was I thinking by coming back out here? I plaster a smile on my face... that'll be \$400 for the works I tell the john.

"Well, alright then, get in before someone sees my car."

I comply with the man's request and we make our way to the dingy motel where the young man and I were earlier. "Excuse me, I have to go to the restroom." I tell the guy, then head off to the powder room. I grabbed my bottle of coke to snort, so I could be high enough to forget this night.

After checking myself in the mirror, I walk back out to where the john is lying butt ass naked on the bed. I almost vomited right then and there... this guy is so overweight he snores, sitting up and fuck me, where is his damn dick at? How am I supposed to work with that?

"Come on, honey, I don't have all night." The guy says... eyeing me over his big ass stomach. I walk over to the bed he's lying on... and I put my big girl panties on. "What would you like first I ask him?"

He looks at me like I'm stupid... "I want a fucking blow job first, you stupid ass whore. Damn, the last woman I picked up was so much smarter than you are... she knew just what to do, didn't ask dumbass questions."

To prevent myself from saying something inappropriate, I bite the inside of my cheek and begin working on this unfortunate man. I barely get my mouth around his shaft when he is moaning and writhing like he is fixing to come all down my throat. I

suck a little longer. Right before I think he is going to blow his load in my mouth "so not fucking happening, by the way." I pop his dick out of my mouth. Then tell him to put a condom on so I can finish the job... once he does as I ask, I sit on his dick, and ride his orgasm out.

This guy has the nerves to ask me if it was good for me. Really dude?

"Mm- yes, it was awesome, how was it for you?" I ask him.



It's 10 in the afternoon, and one of Martin's bartenders is giving me a lesson on how to run the bar. It seems pretty simple, but I don't tell the guy that because he thinks he is doing something good, and I just don't have the heart to tell him otherwise.

"Okay Corky, this next customer is yours Mr. Gordon tells me," so I walk over to the customer that just sat down at the bar to wait on him, and I'll be damned if it isn't Adams.

"What'll it be, sugar?" I ask Adams once I make my way over to him... and he looks up at me with a smile on his face. "So, he actually gave you something else to do. Hmm, what was that about me being a dick sucker now?"

"Oh, don't start your shit with me, Adams. What will it be before the bartender tells Martin I'm not doing my job?"

"I'll take a beer.... bud, light."

"Coming right up." I tell him, then walk over to the draft beers and get him the beer he wants. I take it back over to where he is, then go to walk off. "Wait a damn minute, Corky. Come back here. I didn't just come to this run-down bar for a fuckin' drink. I need you to put this back on... and don't fuckin' smash this one."

"Are you fuckin' shitting me right now, Adams? Are you trying to get me killed?"

Adams just looks at me in the way he does, and I snatch the damn pendant out of his hand and put it on my shirt, hopefully with no one noticing. "Now drink your damn beer and leave."

I work my shift out, and to my surprise, it's pretty damn busy. I catch myself looking over to where Adams is sitting, and he stays my entire shift. "That's not weird." Mr. Gordon and I cleaned up for the night. Once we are walking out the door and lock up, he hands me a wad of money. "What's this?" I ask him... surely, he doesn't want something from me tonight right?

"That's your tip money," he tells me.

Oh, thank goodness. "Thank you, sir."

"You're welcome... I will see you tomorrow at the same time?" He asked me.

"No, Martin has me working another job tomorrow." I tell him I don't know if he knows what I do, so I'm not going to just cough up that information just meeting him. I walk off to my apartment... and about halfway to my door, someone grabs me from behind and hurls me up against the wall. Dammit, why do men have to be assholes all

the time? “If you do this, you will pay me my money or I will find out who you are, and I will tell everyone you know you raped a damn prostitute.”

“Shut up Cocky.”

“Adams?”

“Yes, it’s me, smart one. Now shut up and listen to what I’m about to tell you. You have three weeks to get in with Martin. Have him trust you enough that he lets you do more than just the bar.

“Get your fuckin’ hands off me, so I can go up to bed.” Of course he doesn’t. Adams does the opposite of what I tell him. He turns me around to face him, then slams his lips down on mine. I try to push him away because I don’t do the kissing thing, but he is strong, and he’s not letting up. So, before I know it, we are sliding our tongues into each other’s mouths. Adams runs his hands up my skirt and finds my pussy. “Whoa there... buddy, I don’t give this out for free to anyone.” I tease him.

“Um, you want to bet,” He teases back. I really should make him stop, but then again, I want to see how he feels.

“So, Adams, do you do this with all the girls, or is it just me because who I am?”

“It’s Dean... and no there’s something about you. I just can’t seem to get your smartass mouth off my mind, so I’m going to fuck you out of it.”

“Oh-um okay I guess.” Is all I can muster up before Dean has me hiked up higher on the wall, then slams himself inside me... and fuckkk, I can feel every inch of him. Mr. Dean isn’t lacking down there. He pushes himself in and out of me over, and over with punching strokes. I can’t believe it... it must be the why I’m positioned on the wall, but I fuckin’ come for the first time by a man fuckin’ me.

“Fuck Dean... that feels so damn good.” I whimper, and he pumps even faster, if that’s possible. Once he’s done, he pulls out, puts his junk back inside, then walks away.

Well, fuck, I haven’t felt more like a whore than I do right now. Entering my apartment, I feel a sense of accomplishment after a productive day. It makes me feel fantastic. I get another shower, between the sweat from the bar, and smelling like cigarette smoke to what Dean and I just did. I feel a little nasty, so a good shower will help me sleep tonight.



Later that morning, I went to the bar to see if Layla was there. She doesn't disappoint. She is right where she was the other day when I came to see Martin.

"Hey Corky girl, what's up with ya?"

"Just coming to see my best girl. See if you wanted to come and get a coffee with me from that new coffee shop down the road?"

"Yes, that does sound lovely, she says then hops down off her stool." We head out of the bar when a group of guys heads into the bar.

"Hey, don't I know you?" One of them questions, and I think he's talking to me, but when I look up, I see he's talking to Layla.

"No, I don't think so," Layla tells him.

"Oh, yes, I believe we have met," he says, then snickers to his friends. This was the woman I picked up the other night... the one I was telling you that wanted to rock my world, but I wouldn't let her. The boy obnoxiously says.

I'm so proud of my girl at that moment, because she sets that little bastard straight.

“You know you shouldn’t lie to your friends like that in front of the woman that had you on your knees begging for more, because I can tell all of your fuckin’ secrets, so just remember that little boy, and scamper off.”

“Bye... bye now. I say with a hand wave.” We hurt his little feeling, if what he says as we are walking out the door is any sign.

“I thought whores always wore slut dresses. You must not be a good one wearing that trash you have on, but maybe you’re just wearing what you are.”

“Oh, boy Layla, that was a good one. It really hurt my feelings.”

Layal laughs at me. “Let’s go Corky girl, before you get us in trouble.”

Once we are outside, I can’t help but look down at what I’m wearing, and I have my favorite pair of ripped jeans and a white t-shirt on. I thought I looked good, but what do I know? I’m just a dumb prostitute.

Layla and I make it down to the coffee shop without another interruption. We get inside and order our coffees, then find a spot to sit down. I make sure there’s no one around before I get into what I want to talk to Layla about.

“What is it.... Corky girl?” She asks me.

I clear my throat and look around one more time for good measure, then I launch right into my story. “Do you remember the cop that came and talked to you about Candy?”

“The really cute one, or the really Dushey one?” She asks me.

I smile at that. “The cute one.”

“Yes, how could I forget McDreamy?” She tells me.

I roll my eyes at her. “Layla, he wasn’t that cute, anyway. Listen up, girl. He wants me to spy on Martin. He wants me to discover the identity of his drug suppliers, so they can be apprehended, but that’s not the eerie part. Last night, he followed me home and had sex with me against the wall. Layla, I came... I never come from a man touching me.”

“Okay, Corky girl, back up some. You said he wants you to do what on Martin.” Layla whispers.

“You heard me. I don’t know what to do.”

“You do it.” She says, shocking the shit out of me.

“What? Really?”

“Yes, really Corky... if it gets that bastard and the drugs off the streets, then I say go for it. Now back to Mc'Dreamy fuckin' you against the wall outside your apartment. You lucky little girl.”

I laugh at her. “It was hot Layla.”

She takes a paper towel and fans herself like she's hot. “Ah, Corky girl.”

“What?”

“Nothing, girl.”

“You are welcome to take your turn at him.” I told her.

She just winks at me. “Okay, back on track, so I'm going to assume the reason you asked Martin for different jobs was because of the McDreamy?”

“Yes, I wouldn't do it at first, but then there was this creep that held me at gunpoint. And was about to rape me when Adams and another cop broke the window and saved me from that mess.”

“Corky, why in the hell did you not tell me about that?”

“I didn't want to worry you.”

“You are stubborn, boneheaded and a fool.” She scolds me.

I smile at my friend. “Thank you,” I’ll tell her.

“For what, Corky girl?”

“For being the momma figure, I’ve needed all these years.”

“Oh, Corky girl.”

“I’m just telling you how I feel. We don’t have to go all hallmark or anything.”

“Oh, Corky, you have been in this damn life too long,” Layla complains. “So, are you working the streets or the bar tonight?”

“Martin has me working the streets most nights and the bar just one night a week until I prove myself.”

“Well, Martin will have you working other jobs in no time, then. Once he sees how smart you are, he won’t be able to reset you.” Layla tells me.

“You think so?” I ask her, because it really would be nice to do other jobs besides sell my body to nasty assholes every night.

“Yes, I do Corky Girl.”

Five

The next day I'm heading out to meet Layla for our lunch date when officer Adams and dude-drop come up the stairs of my apartment.

“Corky, can we get you to go back to your apartment so we can talk to you, please?” Adams' expression made me do as he asked, without giving him my smart mouth. Once in the apartment, I turn around to face them. “Okay, what do you want?” I ask them. Even dude-drop has a worried face on.

“Guys, what’s going on? What has you both coming up to my apartment wanting to talk to me... and has you both looking worried as fuck?”

Adams clears his throat, then begins. Your friend Layla has been badly hurt, Corky. She is at the hospital right now, but it’s not looking good for her.

I stumble backwards. “That’s not possible. I had coffee with her yesterday.”

Officer dude-drop walks closer to me. “I’m sorry, but she was attacked around 2:30-3 this morning. The perpetrator beat her up so bad her face is unrecognizable. Do you know anybody recently that Layla had a run in with, or maybe a john that could have thought you guys did him wrong?” Officer dude-drop is asking me.

“Why are you asking me these questions? Was Layla not attacked the same way the other girls were?”

Adams shakes his head at me. “No, Corky, this attack was personal. They also left a note addressed to you.”

What the fuck! “What does it say, and how do you know it’s addressed to me?”

Adams hands me the note.

“Hello whore, remember me? Yea, that’s right, the fucker from the bar you dissed. I bit your thinking twice about that now. Just wait until I get my dick in that pussy. You will remember me then.”

P.S. “Yes, Corky, I know who you are. I had fun beating it right out of your whore friend.”

“Oh, FUCK the college kid. Why would he brag about what he did to her, and basically confess to what he did?”

“What college kid, Corky?”

“There were a couple of college kids that came to the corner a couple weeks ago that were doing their last pledge before they were in the sorority... they were pledging. The one I got was a good kid. He didn’t want to do anything, just talk. Apparently, it wasn’t the case for Layla... her boy wanted sex. But that’s not what this is about. We met at the bar yesterday, getting ready to get some coffee and just chat for a bit. When a group of the boys from the college came along and this one kid was being an obnoxious asshole to Layla. Well, Layla told his little secret about the sex. He didn’t like that, so he started talking about us and we just laughed at him and walked out. They are from that big college downtown.” I tell Adams and dude-drop.

“Do you remember the sorority?” Adams asks?

“I’m pretty sure the boy’s shirt said Bata, Delta, Bears.”

“Great job. Corky, will you do us a favor and stay in your apartment for now?”

“Why? Do you think the little bastard is out there waiting on me or something?”

“Or something?” Dude-drop says.

Adams looks at his partner, then looks at me. “There are tons of reporters standing on the corner just waiting for one of you girls to come around so they could swarm you with questions.”

“Well, fuck me.” I whisper. “Well, I’m not staying in the damn apartment while my friend is fighting for her life. So, fuck the reporters and fuck you two. Now leave so I can go to the hospital with my friend that you don’t seem to care about.”

“Yes, I guess you’re right dude-drop says rolling his eyes at Adams. “Go straight to the hospital. He tells me like I would think of going anywhere else.”

“No shit fuck wade.” I tell him then shew them out of my apartment.

“Why do you always have to be such a bitch to us, Corky? We are here just to help you.” Deputy Dewey says. I don’t have time for this shit. I have to get to the hospital to be with Layla. “Are you two done with me now?” Dude-drop rolls his eyes. “Yes, Corky, we are done.

“Good, now get out so I can change clothes and get to the hospital.” I tell them, pushing them out the door because they aren’t taking the damn hit. Once the cops are out of my apartment, I head into my room and change into a little better suited clothes to go to the hospital in. I don’t think they would look too kindly on me if I went into the hospital with jeans that barely covered me up from all the holes, and my shirt wasn’t much better. I head out of the apartment once I get my clothes changed. When I’m outside, I see what the cops were telling me. There are reporters everywhere, so I sneak around the corner out of sight of them. I make it around the building without them seeing me, then I head to the parking garage that’s around the corner for my car. I don’t drive it often, but today seems to be one of the days that requires it.

Once in my car, I head toward the hospital. As I’m approaching the hospital, I call Martin to let him know he will be two prostitutes, short for a day or two and I didn’t know how long Layla would be out. If she made it through this ordeal. Of course Martin is being Martin. “Why the fuck do you have to be at the hospital, Corky? You being there will not help Layla. So you have the day to make sure Layla’s ass makes it through this shit then you get your ass back on the streets tonight. Do I make myself clear, Corky?”

“Yea, loud and clear Martine.” When I hung up on him, I sat in my car and just yelled at nobody. It’s so frustrating that Martin can’t just understand what’s going on and be a normal guy for once in his pathetic life. I shake the thoughts that are in my head off and get out of the car and walk into the hospital. When I get in there, I walk up to the desk and tell the lady I’m here to see the condition of Layla Smith.

“Are you family?” Nurse Judy asks me.”

Crap, I should have none. That would be her first question, but being that Layla has no family that gives a shit. Me lying and saying I’m her sister won’t hurt a thing now will it. “Yes, I’m her sister.” I tell the nurse, and she does something on her computer,

then tells me a doctor will be out to talk to me soon. So I walk over to the little waiting area and wait for the doctor to come out. He takes an hour to come out from the back.

“Hi Ms. Smith?” The doctor asks, coming up to stand in front of me. Smith? Oh right, Layla’s last name. “Yes, that’s me.” I say, standing up and taking his outstretched hand to shake it. “Ms. Smith, your sister has a long recovery ahead of her. She sustained major injuries to her body. Mainly her face. When and if she wakes up, she will have to go through many surgeries to fix the fracture in her face. For now, I have her in an induced coma for her safety. This will help her heal some on her own without feeling all the pain. Once I think it is safe in a week or two, we will start bringing her out of the coma.” The doctor is explaining to me.

Poor Layla. I hope the bastard that did this to her gets what’s coming to him, and soon.

“Can I see her?” I ask the doctor.

“Yes, I will take you back to see her. Now fair warning she has tubes coming out of her and her face is so very swollen and unrecognizable.” The doctor is telling me as we are walking back to the ICU area. Once I get into Layla’s room, I break down. She looks so bad. Her face is swollen ten times its size, and the doctor is right. If I didn’t know it was her, I wouldn’t be able to tell who it was. I walk over to where Layla is lying in her hospital bed and sit down beside her. I picked up her hand and put it in my. “Can she hear me?” I ask the doctor. “We could never know for sure, but it’s always worth talking to your loved ones. It gives you peace of mind.

The doctor leaves the room then, and I turn back to Layla. “Be okay, Layla, baby. I can’t do this fucked up world without you. Besides, who’s going to tell me on a daily basis that I need to get my GED and carry my ass to college. So wake your ass up.”



The next couple of weeks are really hard. I have to juggle working the corner, the bar, and staying at the hospital with Layla. She woke up a week earlier than she was expected to, which is awesome, but then she had to go through many surgeries. She is finally getting to go home. I am moving in with her to make sure she's taking care of herself and to protect her from any danger.

"Layla, are you ready to head home?" I ask her, coming into her room with a wheelchair.

"Hell yes, I am Corky girl. Yes, I am." We make our way down to the car and I help her in. Then we head to Layla's house. She is still pretty weak so when I get her into the house I sit her up onto the sofa. "Do you want anything? A drink, food, tv?" I ask her.

"You can relax." She tells me. She's right, I have been on edge this whole week. It's just so hard being in someone else's house. I've been on my own since I was 16 and now I'm living in someone else's house with them. Don't get me wrong, it's a wonderful house, and big enough for the both of us. Hell, I don't know what my problem is, really.

"Okay, well, if you need nothing right now I'm going to go to the apartment and get the rest of my stuff then I have to work the bar tonight. Are you going to be okay on your own?" I ask her. "I will be fine, Corky girl. Now go do what you need to do."



The bar is a fucking mess tonight we have broken up fight after fight. I guess this is what it's like on the weekends at this hellhole. Adams shows up after about the third fight that broke out tonight and throws the guys out on their asses. "My hero." Once he

has them out, and the bar settles back down, he makes his way over to the bar and sits down on one of the bar stools, then waits on me to make my way down to him.

“What’ll it be, soldier?” I ask Adams once I can finally get to him. He just cocks an eyebrow at me. “You asked me to come here Cocky, so what’s so damn important that you would text me on my personal phone? By the way, how did you get my personal number?”

“I took a card.” I tell him with a shrug. “Anyway, you want to get right to business. I can dig that. I texted you to meet me here because one of my um- colleagues.” I say, looking around the bar for eyes, but nobody is paying us any attention. “She has gone missing, I think. She was supposed to meet me for drinks a couple days ago, but she never showed up, and she hasn’t been on her-“ I pause and look around again. “Her corner.” I told him.

“So, what do you think happened to her?” Adams asks me.

“I think she has fallen victim to the night killer.”

“So, you think the guy has struck again so soon?” Adams asks me.

“Yes, I do, and I think Boston may be a victim of a crime, and I would like you to look into it for me. It’s the least you can do to help me.”

“Corky, I don’t owe you a fucking thing.” Newsflash girl, I helped you get this job in the bar and off the streets for one night a week at least. So you should be grateful instead of thinking someone owes you all the time.

“Newsflash asshole, you put my ass in danger of being killed is what you did. So, yes, you fucking owe my ass.” Adams gets up off his stool just then... then turns and

looks at me. "By the way, next time you check yourself in the mirror to adjust your girls, make sure your pendant isn't on. All the guys at the station got a show."

"You jealous baby?"

"Not over a whore when I can just walk outside and pay for another, just like you." Low blow. "Fuck off." I tell him, and he walks out the door without another word. I hate how his words kind of wounded me. I finish my shift at the bar. Then head home. Well, Layla's home. It's still hard to claim it as mine. But first I want to check the corner. I have a bad feeling.

I make it to the street corner I work on. Once I get there there is an enormous crowd around something, so I walk over toward the crowd. When I get closer, one of the women that's standing there recognizes me and takes me by my arm to haul me backwards. "Sweetie, you don't want to see that." She tells me.

"Who is it?" I ask her, and when she looks at me with pained eyes, my worst fear comes crashing down on me.

"Boston!"

I walk over to where the crowd is... sure enough, crowded around a body and I push my way forward. When I get in front of everyone and look down at the person who's laying on the ground, I know it's Boston because of the tattoo on her left arm. All of us girls went and got a tattoo together a few months back, so that's the first thing I see. I regret looking at my friend because I noticed that someone had slashed Boston's throat from ear to ear. Once again, there is a note beside her body addressed to me.

"Hello, little whorey. Have you figured out who it is yet? Two down, three to go. Can you guess who the next person is? Keep your enemies close and your friends closer."

Your enemies close and your friends closer? Who could this be? Who would we consider our friend enough to let them that close to us? In my haze of thoughts, I hear someone telling the crowd to back the fuck up and give them some room. When I look up, I see the boys in blue on the scene. Right behind them is dude-drop and fucking deputy dickhead- Dewey. I get up and walk over to where they are standing and slap Adam's right on the face. "You were supposed to have looked for her, not let her end up dead on the street for everyone to gawk at her. You are a fucking worthless piss of shit cop." I yell at him, and he just raises his hand up for one of the uniformed officers to come over. "Hey, officer Elliot, can you handcuff Ms. Sullivan and take her into headquarters for me, man."

"Yes, sir."

"What the fuck am I being arrested for?" I yell at him.

"Assaulting an officer Deputy dude-drop pipes in."

"Are you fucking serious, you pansy ass momma's boy?" I yell at Adams as the officer is carting me off to his car.

"Now just hang on their boys, I hear a male voice saying from behind me." Now it makes since Adams saw Martin coming. "You want to explain why you are arresting one of my girls after she found another one dead on the side of the concrete?"

"Your girl assaulted an officer. She will spend a night in the city jail, then she will go in front of a judge and be out by midday tomorrow." Dude-drop informs Martin. "Oh, and don't bother trying to get her out, or calling your higher up buddies, because she's not getting out tonight."

"Well Corky, make sure you get your ass some sleep in that cell tonight for work tomorrow, because there isn't anything I can do for you tonight." Fuckin' dumbass girls. I hear Martin say as he's walking away.

I look over to where Adams is standing by my friend Boston's body, and the asshole is looking at me. "Well, fuck him."

When we make it down to the station, the officer takes me into booking and takes my fingerprints and photo for my profile. I'm sure I have a thick book from over the years. "Ms. Sullivan, I'm going to need you to follow officer Bridges to the changing room so she can strip you down and make sure you have nothing on you. Then give you your jumpsuit."

"Actually, she is going to come with me," Adams says from out of nowhere.

"Um- no, I think I'll just go with officer Bridges." I tell them, then start to walk, but of course the asshole isn't having any of that, and pulls me back by my cuffs. He walks me out of the booking area and into a conference room. "Are you going to really interrogate me?" I ask him.

"Dammit Corky, why can't you just shut the fuck up sometimes?" He yells at me, then practically throws me into the room.

I turned around on him. "What the fuck is your problem? First you arrest me for slapping you, and now you are throwing me in a damn room."

Adams just walks over to me and unhandcuffs me. "Are you okay?" he asks me in a gruff voice?

Am I okay? Fuck, I really don't know how to answer that question. Two of the three genuine friends I've ever had in this messed up world are dead. "I will be." I told him.

"Don't play your tough girl bullshit with me, Corky."

"What do you want with me, Dean Adams?" He looks at me with something strange in his eyes, then he lunges at me, throwing me up against the wall, arms on either side of my head. "Listen to me... and listen good, Corky. Go out that door, hop on a bus, and get as far away from this state as you can."

"I can't do that, Dean. I have no money. Anything I make 90% of it goes to Martin. Besides, this is my home. Why would I want to leave it?"

"Because you dumb- stubborn ass girl. Your people are getting killed on a daily, and that fucking note said you were next. Do you want to die, Corky? Because this sick fuck will find you and he will kill you?"

"Well then, I guess it's a good thing I have you to protect me. Besides I'm working on Martin, isn't that what you wanted?"

Six

“Why are you all of a sudden so worried about my well-being Adams? Do you know something about the killings?” Adams puts his forehead to my forehead. “No, and that’s the frustrating part. All these girls are being killed and I can’t figure the dude out.”

“So, instead of trying to get me to leave or help you put Martin behind bars. Which by the way I don’t think that would ever happen just saying. Use me as bait to catch this fucker. He says I’m next so let me be next. We already have the pendant on me. So, put it to good use. But you better not let me fucking die or I will come back and hunt your ass.” I tell Adams.

“You’re a fucking piece of work Corky. I can’t tell if that is the smartest idea you have come up with or the stupidest.” Adams says, shaking his head at me.

“Was that a compliment?” I ask him.

“I don’t know, Corky let me think about it, this is a big ask.”

“And you don’t think this is good enough cause?” I ask him getting upset with his arrogance. “Can I go home now?”

“Yes, with me. Dean tells me.”

“Fuck no, I will not go to your house. You really want me to die, don’t you? That crap about wanting to keep me safe was just an act, wasn’t it?” Dean walked away from me. “Fuckin’ stubborn ass fuckin’ woman. He mumbles,” walking around and pulling his hair.

My god this guy is losing his mind. “Dean, I whisper.”

“Uh-nope, you don’t get to Dean me. You are coming home with me whether you like it or not. You will stay safe for at least one damn night before I’ve got to release you back out into this wildlife you are living.”

"I have one question. How are you going to explain to the other officers where you're taking your prisoner? Besides, I have to get home to Layla."

"Just leave that to me, and Layla will be fine for one night. Now come the hell on Corky before I strangle you myself."

We made it out of the police present without a hitch, and to Dean's apartment. Dean's apartment is not quite an apartment. It's some kind of industrial building, but it's nice he has it decked out on the inside. The walls are all done in metal, and the ceiling is done in wood. His kitchen looks like the kitchen of a restaurant. I turn in circles a few times, looking at everything. "This is beautiful," I tell him when I come to a stop.

"Thanks." Dean says with a grunt.

I just roll my eyes. "You men just can't take a compliment, can you? Anyway, you wouldn't have some clothes I might fit so I can get a shower?"

"Um- yea, I think I have a shirt and some joggers you can wear. I'll be right back." He comes back in no time with a shirt, joggers, and a towel. "Thank you. Where's the bathroom, boss?" He smirks at me, then points his finger toward the bathroom.

I walk in the direction that he pointed and step inside this huge ass bathroom. "This thing is bigger than my apartment." I yell out the door to Dean and he laughs. "Can I take a bath?" I ask him.

"You can take whatever you want." He calls back. So, I start the water in the bath and let it run while I strip my clothes off. I walk over to the bathtub. Once my clothes are off and I check the water temp before I get in, I have to say having the option to have both hot and cold at the same time is nice. Back at my apartment, I either only get hot or I get cold as hell, but never lukewarm. Once I get my water the way I want it, I step into the water and sink down into the bathtub and sigh out an appreciated moan.

"First good bath in a while?" I hear Dean say, and I turn around to find him in the doorway leaning against the doorframe looking all sexy in his 6'4 body with legs for days, and fuck them abs. His face is pleasant to look at, too. "What do you want, Dean? Can I not take a bath in peace?" My tiny apartment provides me with more peace than my present circumstances.

Even though I don't live there anymore, I still refer to it as my apartment. I live in Layla's house and her bathroom is nice as well, even though I've only taken a hot shower there so far.

"Just wanted to ensure that you're okay and have everything you require. I'm heading to the kitchen to make dinner, then we can relax."

Hoping he will take the hint and leave... I close my eyes. This guy is something else. He has me kissing his fucking feet, doing shit I shouldn't be doing for him, and then a couple months back. Fucking me out against the wall outside my apartment. What was that? Oh shit, why did I have to think about that night? Now, I'm all hot and I open my eyes up to see Dean standing closer to me now.

"W-what are you doing?" I shudder.

"I don't know Corky, you tell me... you're the one who closed your eyes and turned all red faced, then started smiling. What are you thinking about?" Dean asks with a smirk on his face?

"Dean, it's none of your business. Please go back in there," I said, shooing him away. As I flung my hands out, water splashed onto Dean's shirt, soaking it. "Oops."

"Oops... Dean repeats," then looks down at his shirt. "Now Corky, you wouldn't have done that on purpose now, would you have?"

"Na... if I was to have done it on purpose, I would have done this..." I say, cupping water into my hands and throwing it out of the bathtub, slashing it all over Dean from head to toe.

Dean looks at me then looks at himself... "well Corky, this calls for war." He says, coming closer to the bathtub, then he dunks me into the water. I come up spitting and sputtering. "You ass." I say as I'm catching my breath throwing water all over his face. then scrabbles to get out of the bath before he can do anything else, but he grabs me by the waist and swings me into his arms and close to his chest.

"I think this requires a shower..." he says, walking into the shower and turning the water on. It sprays us both. Dean's still in all his clothes, but with the way he is looking at me with his hooded eyes, that won't last very long. He walks us back to the wall and puts both hands on either side of my head. He looks down at me... "So Corky, let's see if I can prove to you just how much I'm not a cocksucker, and whatever else you have called me the last couple of weeks. Oh, and who the fuck is deputy Dewey?"

I laughed at him... "have you never watched Scream?"

"Oh... now it's really on. Now I really have to show you how much of a man I am."

"And just how are you going to show me?" I ask him... trying to act all hard when, in fact, all he has to do is touch my pussy and I would melt right in his hands.

"Big talk from the girl I had pinned to a wall the other night. And all I had to do was stick my dick in you and had you riding me so hard, I felt like I was a bull." Dean smirks at me.

"Oh, don't flatter yourself. I was just playing a part, Dean."

"Um... so you're saying this will do nothing for you then, huh?" Dean says and puts three fingers inside my pussy.

Fuck me, that feels good, but I try not to let him know what he's doing to me. So I keep my eyes open when all I want to do is close them, and sock in the feel of his fingers sliding in and out of me. Or moaning when the presser builds, but then he leans down and takes my breast in his mouth, and sucks, teasing my nipple. I can't help myself. My head falls back, and my eyes close, before I know it, a moan is slipping out of my mouth.

"Hm- Corky, what was that about me not being man enough to make you feel good?"

"Just shut up, Dean, and finish." He chuckles at me, then removes his fingers from my pussy and slides his dick in to replace them... and fuck, he's not lacking. I can't hold back anymore. The way he is working his hips has me shivering all over with need. I buck my hips and ride his dick to my pleaser. Dean moves his thumb down to my clit and starts rubbing it in circles.... Fuck, I can't hold back. My body bows and my head drops to Dean's shoulder, and I cry out his name.

"That's right, Corky choke that dick," Dean groans.

"Fast Dean." I moan out and he doesn't disappoint. Dean slams into me over and over until I'm screaming his name over and over.

When we are done with our shower sex we clean up and I go back over to the bathtub and rerun my warm water then I get back in and relax while Dean is making dinner.

I must have dozed off in the bathtub because the next thing I know Dean is letting me know dinner is ready and the water is freezing, so I get out and dry off. Then I put the clothes that Dean supplied for me on and walk into the dining room where the table is set with food and two plates. I walk over to the table and stand there for a minute to see where Dean is going to sit down at, because you know some men have certain places they like to sit and I don't want to mess that routine up.

"Sit down anywhere you like Corky." Dean says from the kitchen. He can see me from there and can see me contemplating on where I should sit.

I sit in the seat facing the kitchen, because I remember reading somewhere that said men like sitting facing toward the door. "What are you doing in there anyways? It looks like we have everything we need right here." I ask him. It looks like we are having tacos for dinner. I see everything you need to make a taco. The meat, lettuce, tomatoes, cheese, sour cream, and salsa. What more do you need for a taco?

"You can't eat tacos without chips and queso." Dean informs me.

We make our tacos and put a little bit of chips in and bowl with some queso on top and dig in. "What did you put in your taco meat? It's really good." I tell Dean.

"If I told you then I would have to kill you." He says in his teasing tone. I just roll my eyes at him. "Really nothing special. Just a few spices I have in the cabinet then the taco package." Dean reluctantly tells me.

"Well it's better than any tacos I've ever gotten at Taco Bell." I told him. "Thank you." He relays shyly.

Now that we are through eating, would you like me to take you to your room you will be staying in tonight so you can get some rest?" Dean asks me.

"Yes, that would be nice." I tell him, and follow him to the room. When we got into the room he turned around and just looked at me. "What Dean?" He shakes his head at me then moves closer. When he's standing right in front of me he grabs my waist and pulls me to him. I look up into his eyes and swallow the lump that's forming in my throat. My feelings for Dean scares the shit out of me.

Dean leans in and kisses my neck then down to my shoulder blades. Removing my shirt he works his mouth over to my breast and takes the right one into his mouth. I arch my back for him to have better access. As he's working my nibble in his mouth he gets my jockers off of me, and lefcs me up his body then slams himself inside me for the second time tonight.

Before I know what's happening he is walking us backwards toward the bed with himself still inside me. I guess this is him showing me what a real man can do, because you can bet your ass the johns can't do any of this shit.

Dean lays me down on the bed under him, and he's showing another side of himself to me. He's being very gentle and sweet with me. He is taking his time and kissing me in every place he can reach, and if I wasn't mistaken he is making love to me.

After Dean leaves the room I'm staying in I just lay there for a little bit thinking about everything that just happened. I can't let this keep happening. I don't have time for any complications from a guy, especially someone of Dean's background. He is a cop for fuck sack. And I'm a prostitute for fuck sack.

I lay there for another 30 minutes to make sure Dean is in his room for the night, then I sneak to the bedroom door and make sure the coast is clear, and when I see that it is I run to his front door and leave.

I'm not too sure where I am so I walk down the block a little ways then flag down a taxi when a street comes into view. When it stops I climb in and give the taxi driver the address to Layla's house.

When I make it to Layla's house I use my key she gave me to get into the house then I go and check on her. When I see she is okay I go into the bathroom and get another quick shower then I go to bed.



The next afternoon I'm in the bar working my shift when Martin walks in and calls me to his office. Oh, shit, what did I do or not do in Martin's case? "Yes, sir, I say as I walk into his office right behind him."

"I've got another job for you after your shift in the bar. I will give you one of my cars to use when I have these jobs for you. There will be a map of where you will be going. Do not... I repeat, do not open the trunk for anything. Only stop for gas and a bite to eat going. It will take you a day to get there. I prefer you not to stop at a motel, so before you head out, go home and get a shower and a nap. If you do this job well, I will give you more, also Corky. If I can trust you with these jobs, your compensation will be very nice."

"Thank you, Martin. I won't let you down."

"We'll see," Martin says, then shews me back up front to finish my shift. I only have an hour left. Once I get back out-front Mr. Gordan waves me over to him. "Yes, sir."

"Can you please take the order of the big table that just walked in? Marinda's swamped, and Carrie didn't show up."

"Okay, I'm on it," I told him, then headed to the table. Once I'm there, I see its deputy dude-drop and some of the other guys, but not Dean Adams. That's kinda strange. Adams is always with his partner. "Hey boys, what'll it be?"

"Hey whore, how about two pitchers of beer?" I swallow my pride because I need this job. And walk back over to the bar and ask Gordon for two pitchers of beer. Then I take them back to dude-drop and his boys in blue. "Anything else?"

"What time do you get off tonight? Maybe you would like to make a little extra money tonight?" One of the guys say, laughing at me.

I just ignore his stupidity and get back to work for the last hour of my shift. It goes by pretty fast, and I stay so busy I don't even look at my phone the whole time, so I'm a little startled to see that I have three messages from Adams.

Deputy Dewey- When you get far enough away from town, I need you to open the trunk and take a picture of the contents inside."

Deputy Dewey- After you leave your house, I will follow you to your destination. Be your eyes and ears."

Deputy Dewey- Don't worry about the assholes. I will take care of their asses when I see them again."

He is a piece of work sometimes. I don't respond to his messages because I just don't really give a shit what he does at this point. I guess he thinks because we had a night last night that we are a thing. "NOT!"

I head home and take a quick shower, then change into comfortable clothes, and tell Layla what I'm doing. "Are you going to be okay with me gone tonight?" I ask her. I feel bad leaving her, but I can't jeopardize her by taking her.

"Corky girl I'm a big girl I can handle myself. I will stay in the house tonight with all doors and windows locked... phone in hand at all times. Now go before Martin gets pissed."

On my way out, I see a black car parked on the curve that wasn't there before. It must be Martin's. I walk over to the car, hoping that it's really meant for me. That's all I need is to be arrested for attempted stealing.

The car opens right away, and there is a note on the driver's seat. I pick it up and see that it's from Martin, letting me know the map is in the glove compartment and a stash of money is under the seat for gas and eats. How did he know nobody would try to steal the car while it was sitting here... even though it would take a brave soul to steal anything from Martin?

I get into the car, find the map, and the envelope that has the money in it. Before I leave out, I study the map for about five minutes, making sure I know where I am going. Martin wasn't lying when he said it would take me all night to drive there... it's 1 in the morning, so it would take me until sometime next afternoon to get there. I've never driven out of the state of New York before, so this should be fun.

Deputy Dewey- Where is he sending you, Duchess?

Me- Florida. And Duchess! Really Dewey?

Deputy Dewey- It's better than bitch, right?

Me- Eat me Dean.

Deputy Dewey- Mmm.

Me- So, are you really going to follow me?

Deputy Dewey- Yep.

Me- Okay.... I'm not going to really complain this one time, because let's be honest, I'm a virgin at this kind of stuff.

Deputy Dewey- You mean you have never left the state of New York?

Me- Ding... ding, we have a winner.

Deputy Dewey- Just shut up Corky and drive.

He sure tells me that a lot.

Seven

Because of working at the bar and driving, I'm exhausted and have to drive for around 5 hours. So, I park in a rest area to sleep for the night because Martin said no

motels. I recall Dean asked me to open the trunk and take a photo, but what if Martin notices before it reaches its destination?

Me- How do we know me opening the trunk up will not alert Martin?

Deputy Dewey- Corky, there's nothing on the car, not even a tractor. I checked the car when it was dropped off at your house.

Ugh, this asshole better be right, because if he gets me killed, I will come back and haunt his ass. I open the trunk, take a picture and send it to Dean, then I get back in the car to rest.

It feels like I just went to sleep when my alarm goes off, telling me it's time to get up. "Fuck, I'm too tired for this shit."

I check my phone app to locate the closest McDonald's where I can get a bagel and coffee. Although I'm not a big breakfast person, this morning I need some fuel to get me through the rest of my journey. Pulling up to McDonald's, I remember I can't leave the car, so I reverse out of the parking spot and drive through the drive thru. Once I have ordered my food and gotten it in hand, I head on out to my destination.

Martin- How is your trip going? You haven't run into any trouble, have you?

Me- So far, everything is going okay. I stopped about five hours out last night, but I still should get to my destination in record time.

Martin- No more stops until you make your destination. The people you are delivering to are very impatient people.

Me- Okay. Well, I will tell you when I get there and get money in hand.

Martin- You do that. And Corky, don't make me regret my decision.

Fucking asshole. Why do men like Martin think women can't do anything? Or maybe it's just he doesn't think people with my background have much of a brain. But jokes on him because I'm planning to get my GED and enroll in a local community college. Real soon.

"Dean, can you talk me through this?"

"Yes, Corky, I can talk to you." I hear Dean say from the little pendant on my shirt. I should have known his ass could talk back to me.

"Shit Dean, warn a girl before you speak in that thing, and how did I not know that you could talk back to me this whole time?"

"Can't tell you all my secrets Corky, besides I enjoy having leverage over you."

"Oh, you mean them times I told you to fuck off are to go suck a dick... that kind of leverage?"

"Yep, that would be the time, anyway you didn't ask me if I could talk to you just for us to reminisce about the times you were being a bitch to me, so what is it you want Corky?"

Oh, damn, someone's got his panties in a wad. "I was just wondering; do you really think I could get my GED and maybe even take some college classes?"

"Yes," was all he responded, then all conversation died out.

I made it to my destination around 1:30pm. I'm told to drop the package that's in the trunk off at a trash can at a park on Dayton beach. The trash can will be painted pink. I found the pink trash can, dropped the duffle bag in and got back in my car and hauled ass back toward home.

“What happens now I ask Adams.” But he doesn’t answer me. Maybe he stopped following me at some point.

I text Martin to let him know I dropped the package.

Martin- Did anyone see you?

Me- No, there was nobody around the place. I dropped the package.

Martin- Good girl heads home.

“Eye- eye captain,” I say to myself.

I drive a few hours and because I have nothing in the back of the car... I stop at a motel to get a shower and a couple hours of proper sleep. Once I check into the motel, I head to the room, then bring up a pizza place on my phone and order something to eat while I wait on my food. I jump in the shower. As I’m getting out of the shower, there is a knock on the door, so I grab the robe that’s on the shelf and throw it on so I can answer the door and get my pizza. But when I opened the door, to my surprise, it’s not my pizza. It’s Adams

“What are you doing here?” I ask him. But of course, he doesn’t answer me, he just pushes me back into the room, then shuts the door with his foot. Walking me back to the bed, he takes my robe off and pushes me down on the bed. Then he takes his shirt off when there is another knock on the door. “Are you expecting someone?” He asked me with his brow arched.”

“Yes, food now moves, so I can answer the door and pay for it. I’m starving.”

“I got it.” He tells me, then walks to the door himself. Grabbing the pizza, wings, and drink, then paying the pizza driver.

“How much was it so I can pay it back to you?” I ask taking money out of my bag I brought with me.

Adams just looks at me like I’ve grown three heads.

“What?”

“Don’t fucking insult me, Corky.”

I just smile at him. “Right, you want your payment in other ways. All you men are the same.”

“There you go, insulting me again. Yes, I came over here to fuck you, but I don’t expect you to have sex with me because I bought your ass food.”

“And I’ve told you, Deputy Dewey, I don’t give the milk out for free.”

Adams puts the stuff in his hands down and walks over to where I’m standing, grabbing me by the waist. “We both know that’s not true when it comes to me. Now don’t we? Corky girl.” He says, then nips my neck and I yelp in surprise. But then he sucks on the place he bites and I moan.

Damn hormones can’t keep them bitches in check for shit.

I backed away from him. “No sir, not so fast. I’m starving, so I don’t care how tempting you are. I’m eating before anything I say,” then walk over to where the pizza and wings are.

“Are you going to eat, or are you going to make me eat all this delicious food by myself?” I turn and ask him?

He walks over and grabs the biggest slice of pizza, then takes a great big bite.

I left the smallest for you. I'm sure you're used to small things.

"Dean Adams! Was that a joke?"

"Shut up Corky."

I do as I'm told this time because I am starving. So we sit in silence and eat our food. Once my stomach stops growling at me after the second slice of pizza, I pick the remote control up and turn the tv on. I flip through the channels as I'm eating my third slice of pizza. I stop on a classic. Dirty Dancing and finish watching it as I finish my food. Between Dean and I there is no food left to waste. To be honest, small girl or not. I would have eaten all of that by myself.

When we are done, I clean the boxes off the table and put them in the trash can that's in the room. Then I walk over to the bed and get ready to lie down. When I climb in, I see Dead watching me. "You coming?" I ask him and he takes his clothes off, then he climbs in the bed.



The next morning when I wake up, Dean is no longer in my bed so I get up and get a shower then head out towards home.

I turn the music up full blast on my way home. I am jamming to Pearl Jam when Dean's voice comes over the little pendant. "Don't quit your day job, Corky."

"Kiss my ass Deputy Dewey."

"Hmm, I did that last night."

"Should you be talking like that on this thing?" I ask him.

“Nobody has access to the footage without me.” Dean tells me.

Oh well, that makes me feel better. “So, Dean Adams, what do you have planned for the rest of the day when you get home?” I ask him.

“Going to hang out with the boys, play a couple card games and find some pussy.”

Did he just really say that to me? Did he think that was going to make me jealous or something? “I hope you at least pay this one.” I told him. Then I turn my music back up and ride the road of my trip out in silence.

I make it back to town and drop the car with the money back at Martin’s bar and catch a cab back to Layla’s house.

“How was your trip?” Layla is asking as I’m walking in the door.

“It was good.” I tell her as I’m walking into the living area. When I get in there, I sit down on the sofa Layla is sitting on and tell her about the trip.

“So, remember Deputy Dewey?” I ask Layla. “Yes, McDreamy to me, right?” she asks. I laugh at her. “Yes, McDreamy. Anyway, he followed me to Florida, and he asked me to take a picture of the stuff that Martin had me drop off at a park in a trash can.”

“What was in the bag, Corky girl?”

“I don’t know, I was too afraid to look. I took the picture, sent it to deputy Dewey, then deleted the photo right away. I didn’t want to be murdered by Martin for crossing him, so I tried to cover my tracks. But Layla, that’s not the weird part of the whole thing. After I dropped the bag at its destination, I went to a motel to get some food and some proper rest.”

“What did you stop for, girl, finish what you were about to say? Don’t leave me in the dark, girl?” Layla is saying.

I laugh at her. “I was going to finish. Just got a message from Martin telling me I still had to work the corner tonight, but anyway, he followed me to the motel and we had sex again for the third time, Layla. I never had sex with a man without pay more than once before.”

“Oh, Corky girl, you’re skating on ice with this one. Just watch your back with this.”

She’s right. If Martin was to find out I have been letting a cop in my bed, so to speak, he would hang me so fast I wouldn’t have time to blink. “Okay, Layla baby, I’m heading up to get ready to head out to the corner.”

“I’m going to go tonight.” Layla tells me.

“Are you sure, Layla?”

“Yes, Corky girl. I’m sure. I cannot sit in this house another minute. Besides, I’m getting better. You can barely see the buries now and I’m not as weak as I was a week ago, and Martin is breathing down my neck.”

“Alright, well, let’s get dressed and head out to our corner.” I told her. An hour later, we are standing on our corner like we never left. When I changed clothes earlier, I remembered I still had that damn pendant on, so I took it off and threw it in the toilet. I know he heard me telling Layla about us earlier again, but I don’t give a rat’s ass.

“Is it sad to say I have missed this Corky Girl?” Layla tells me. And I get what she is saying when I’m in the bar working. I miss it. Now don’t get me wrong if I had the choice to work the bar full time or work the streets. I’m going to pick the bar all day long.

“Corky Girl looks alive. We got bait,” Layla tells me and I look up to see a red corvette pulling up behind a white mustang. “Is it the night for rich guys?” I ask Layla as we are walking up to the windows. She just smiles at me and shrugs her shoulders.

“What’ll it be, sugar?” I ask the john as I walk up to the window of the nice corvette. “I need a date for the night and tomorrow I’m willing to pay 3000 and to buy you two nice suits of clothes.” The john is telling me and I can’t believe what I’m hearing. I look up at Layla and her mouth is hanging down, so I say her guy is telling her the same thing.

“One second, sir.” I tell him, holding a finger up, then I walk towards Layla. “What’s your guy saying?” I ask her.

“Something about paying 3000 for tonight and tomorrow and he will buy me a suit of clothes for tonight and suit of clothes for tomorrow. Yours?”

“The same.” I told her. “What should we do, Layla? That’s a lot of money?”

“You’re asking me?” Layla says. I just laugh at her. “Fuck, let’s do it.” I told her. “I mean, how many opportunities are we going to have like this? Besides, maybe we will get off lucky and they won’t want sex.”

“True.” Layla says, then we shake hands and walk back to the cars. “Okay, you have a deal.” I told the guy. “Now I need you to feel me in on what we are doing.”

The guy explains to me that tonight we’ll be going to a ball and tomorrow we’ll be having breakfast, lunch, dinner, plus a play with a bunch of Chinese businessmen. “And why exactly do you and your partner need my friends and my help?” I ask him.

“Because these gentlemen, or all the family and their wives, will join them, and neither I nor my brother Dan have wives.” The gentleman tells me. “So, you decide to

rent a couple of prostitutes for the day. Doesn't really sound smart." I told him. He laughs at me.

"You have quite the humor." He tells me. "So, people tell me." I say. Then turn and look out his window. This just seems all so wrong to me, but I guess as long as I have my girl everything will all be alright. We make it to this clothing store that's still open at 10:30 at night. Either that or the guys bought them for the night. I really thought only stuff like this happened in movies.

When we get inside the store, we are greeted by an older lady that stands about 4'5 and weighs about 85 pounds. "Hello, I am Gretchen." The lady says in a strong accent. "Hello, I'm Corky, this is Layla." I told the lady.

"It's nice to meet you." Gretchen says, shaking our hands. "If you please follow me. We will go to the ladies' changing room and I will bring a couple suits for you to try on." She tells us and we follow her to the back of the store.

Layla and I tried on several suits of clothing. We choose formal dresses for the ball and other beautiful dresses for the rest of the day's events. I thought the guys said they would buy two suits, but we ended up with way more, plus shoes and jewelry.

When the gentleman and I get back out to the car, I turn to ask him about the extra clothes. "I didn't factor in the other things we are going to do tomorrow when I said only two suits. He explains.

"It's your money, sir." I tell him and he just smiles at me. "So, Corky, what makes you such a pretty young girl working the streets?" The gentleman asks me. I've never gotten his name. I know his brother is Dan.

"What's your name, sir?"

“Oh, I haven’t told you, have I? It’s Robert ‘Bob’ for short.” He tells me.

“Well, Mr. Robert, my father, was a businessman just like you, and one night he and his business partners had a party at our home and one of them decided I was good enough pry for him to sneak into my room. The night a man was trying to undress me, my mother came into my room, which was unusual since she never checked on me before. He jumped up out of the bed and told my mother it was all me. I called him in there and attacked him. Of course, my parents didn’t listen to a thing I had to say, and I was out on my ass at the age of 16.”

“Have you ever talked to your parents again after that?” The guy asks me.

“Nope.” I told him.

“So, they never tried to talk to you to apologize for being such assholes?”

I just laugh at him. “Did you miss the part where I told you they thought I was a disgrace to their family?” I was only 16 when they threw me out of their home, but I was much younger when they threw me out of their family. I wasn’t like my family. Everyone was so serious all the time and I was this goofy little kid that just wanted to make everyone happy. Everyone calls me free spirited.”

“I’m sorry your parents are such shit parents.” Robert tells me.

“Thank you. So, now it’s my turn for questions.” I told him. He gives me a look, then tells me to go on.

“How old are you, and why hasn’t such a handsome man found his true love yet and had lots of kids?” I ask him.

“I’m 45, and I work entirely too much for a family.” He tells me. After that, we rode the rest of the ride in silence.

Eight

We made it to this mansion looking house. I assume it's where the ball is being held. "May I ask why you would host a ball so late at night? It's 10:30?" I ask Robert.

“Because it’s a Friday night. Most people work during the day, so we have the balls late at night so everyone can attend, and tomorrow is all about wowing our potential business partners. It’s all a game we play.” Robert tells me.

And I can see it. I can also see how much he plays these games. We get out of the car we are riding in at the same time Layla and Dan get out of the car they are riding in. “Oh, Corky girl, you look beautiful. You’re made for this lifestyle. Layla whispers that last part.

“So, do you Layla, baby?” I tell her, swinging her around in a circle. “Are you ladies ready to go in?” Robert asks us.

“Oh, yes, sorry.” I tell him and we head into the mansion. When we get in there, I can’t help myself. I whistle. The house is humongous and beautiful. Someone has decorated it very lovely for tonight’s event. “So, Robert, whose house is this?”

“My brother and I grew up here.” He tells me. “So, your parents’ home?” I ask him and he shakes his head yes. “What’s the ball for? I mean, what charity are you all raising the money for?”

“Violence against women and children. Our parents adopted as babies my brother and me when our mother fell victim to her abusive husband.” Robert supplies me.

Oh, damn, that’s deep. “I’m sorry that happened to your mother. I guess the saying is that just when you think you have it bad, there’s someone out there that has it just a little worse.”

“My brother and I didn’t have it bad, Corky. Our parents were very loving. Corky, my brother, and I were lucky to have loving parents. Even though we sometimes wish to meet our biological mother, we still love the life in which our loving parents raised us. And honestly, what’s not to love? I think to myself.

“You were dealt a bad hand with the parents you were giving, but you make the best of what you have. I can see that in you, I also can see you making a better life for yourself one day. You're very young, Corky. The world is at your hands.” Why do people keep telling me these things? I'm no better than my girls and, frankly, I like being with them. Well, I used to before the killings started.

I smile up at Robert and we walk on into the ball area. Robert stops a few times to talk to a couple older gentlemen before he leads us to a table. “Would you like to dance, Corky?” He asked me. I've never danced before, not to music like this.

Yes, I would be delighted to dance. “I'm a little nervous.” I admitted to him.

“Nothing to be nervous about, Corky. I will lead the way.” Robert tells me, and he does. He is a very smooth dancer. The crowd on the dance floor made it impossible for me to glimpse Layla, despite checking a few times. “Your friend is in good hands with my brother.” Robert whispers.

“Oh, I knew it's just she's been through a lot and I worry about her.”

“You're a good friend to her.” Robert says. “Thank you. I try very hard to be.”

We dance for a few more minutes, then Robert leads me back to our table, then he disappears to get us some drinks and appetizers. Before he can come back, there is an older lady that makes her way to the table. “Hello so where did Robert pick you up from this time?” The lady asks me and of course I'm not one to back down, so I respond with. “5th and main.”

The lady grabs her chest and gasps, then laughs. “Good one. Hello, I am Abagale Army. The mother of your date.” Shit! “It's very nice to meet you, Mrs. Army. You have quite a lovely home.”

“Why thank you, young lady. Do you happen to know where my sons have run off to?”

“Robert went to fetch some drinks and appetizers. I am not too sure where Dan has run off to.” I told her. “Very well. You have a wonderful evening.” She tells me.

I breathe a breath of relief when she is gone. Then I look around to see if I can see Layla anywhere and I spot her on the dance floor, having a good time with Dan. I’ve never seen Layla so carefree. It’s wonderful looking at her.

It’s about one in the morning when we walk out of the ball and head to the car that’s waiting for us to take us to the motel room we are staying in with Robert and Dan tonight. When we get to the Rites motel, Robert checks us in and we head up to the fifth floor. The room is big enough for twenty guests. Robert and Dan take a room each, and Layla and I decide to sleep in the same room.

“So, Corky girl, what are you thinking about all of this?” Layla asks me.

“I don’t know Layla baby, it’s a little weird not having a guy demand we do something with them. And they guys are taking care of us. I guess it’s kind of nice.”

“If it was different circumstances, I could see myself with Dan.” Layla tells me.

“Hey you never know Layla baby. You two looked very cozy out there on that dance floor tonight.” I told her. “If you say so Corky.” Layla says laughing, and we get undressed to get our night clothes on, then we climb in our beds. “Nite Corky.”



The next morning, we are waking up around 7:30 to get dressed for the guys’ breakfast meeting. I’m still not certain why they need women to come to these meetings with them. I can understand the play having us go to that.

When we got down to the lobby where the breakfast meeting was being held, I saw why they wanted women to accompany them. All the other gentlemen have women in their arms. A few even have children with them.

“Ni Hao.” Robert says as he is sitting down at the table. And the gentlemen nod their heads at him.

We order breakfast and the men get down to business.

The morning meeting lasted for about an hour, then we moved onto a golf course. Where we watch the men play golf. “I could not do this every day.” I whisper to Layla and she giggles. “Me either.” She whispers back.

We sit and watch them play golf for another three hours. The other woman never says a word to us, but I honestly don’t care. I noticed Dan looking at Layla a few times and then sharing a smile now and then.

Oh, man, I think Layla has a crush.

It’s finally time to move on from the golf game and to my surprise it’s lunchtime, so we make our way into the golf club’s dining hall and get seated at a big table. We once again order our lunch and the guys talk business the whole time.

When we are done eating our lunch, we make our way out of the golf club and to the car that is waiting on us four to get in it to take us somewhere else for some more fun and business; I assume before the play tonight.

“Oh, my god you two do this every week?” I ask them once we are seated in the car, away from everyone.

“Just about.” Dan says then winks at Layla. We head back to the motel to change our clothes again. Robert informs me we should put something comfortable on this time. I recall the lady fitting us for a pair of white slacks and a shirt, so that’s what we put on this time with a pair of pumps.

We head back out to the car that’s sitting on the curb waiting for us and head off to the other side of town. We must be going to the horse races. It would make sense it was Saturday.

When we get there, we get out of the car and head toward the track. I’ve been to the horse races before, but I have never been this up close and personal with it.

Robert and Dan are introducing us to some of the jockeys, and they are really nice people. Also very short. I knew they were short people, but not that short.

We make our way over to a seating area and that’s where Robert and Dan deposit us while yet again they talk business and place bets with the other gentleman. “They sure look like they are enjoying themselves.” I comment.

“Yes, American men know how to have a good time.” One of the women commented.

“Yes, I guess you’re right. They do know how to have a good time.” I told her. The race starts and I am too engrossed in the horses to pay much attention to the men any longer and before I know it the race is over and we are heading out of the races and back to the motel to change one last time.

Layla and I change into these beautiful dresses. My dress is a gorgeous red that flows down past my feet. It’s a sleeveless dress, but it has a scarf that comes with it, so I throw it over my shoulders. I’m wearing my hair down in a curl. I’ve never felt more beautiful. I almost want to take a picture and send it to Dean Adams, but I refrain from being petty and instead I walk out of

my room I'm sharing with Layla and walk into the living area where the guys are waiting for us to leave.

"Wow Corky, you're looking fire." Layla tells me. "You're not looking too shabby yourself, Layla baby."

"Both of you girls are looking very beautiful." Dan says. "Are we ready to go?" Robert asks us. We walk toward the door and wait for the guys to follow us out.

We make it to the theater where the play is being held and to my surprise; we are going to see the Wizard of OZ in play.

We get into the theater and find our seats. The theater is the kind of place you can order a regular meal like at a restaurant. "Order whatever you like," Robert tells me when he hands me my menu.

I look at the menu and I decide on the hot honey grilled shrimp with a baked potato and broccoli.

As we are waiting on our orders to come out, the play starts. I've never been to a play before. I love the movie the Wizard of OZ.

We are to the part where Dorothy and Toto get swept up into the tornado when our food comes out and our wine glasses are refreshed. I take what I said earlier about not being able to do this everyday back. If I get to eat this kind of food every day and watch plays this good, I would be all for being richer than I know what to do with, but that's not how it works.

"Are you having fun?" I reach over and ask Layla. "So much fun. This play is wonderful, Corky." Layla tells me.

She's right, the play is wonderful. The characters are portraying the movie very well. I've always loved the cowardly lion, and he's not disappointing tonight. I'm almost sad when the play is over. And we have to leave.

Robert and Dan drive us back to the motel and let us know that it is paid up until tomorrow morning and that we should take advantage of it tonight. They have to head back home tonight so they will not be staying in the motel with us tonight. Dan sneaks a kiss to Layla when he doesn't think we are watching, then he slips her his number. I presume that's what's on the sheet of paper he handed her. "You go Layla baby." I think to myself.

Layla and I head up to our room. Once in there, we get a shower then head into the Kitchen area to get some coffee before bed. "So, you and Dan seem to have hit it off pretty well." I comment.

Layla turns all red faced. "Yes, I think we like each other very much. When he is back in town on business, we are going to go out on a real date."

"That's awesome Layla. You deserve to have someone and you never know, maybe he is your Edward Lewis." I told her.

"You never know, maybe Dean Adams is yours." She retorts. "Touché" I say, smiling.

"Night Layla baby."

"Night Corky girl."

Nine

It's been a couple days since I've been home and Lalya and I had our night on the town with the two rich guys, and I'm working at the bar tonight and Martin seems like he's happy today. Smiling and laughing with me, so I must have done something right and the cops must have found nothing in the bag I dropped off worth anything. "So I

thought.” About two hours into my shift, the place is crowded with customers, then the shit hits the fan. The cops are everywhere yelling for everyone to get down. I see Martin trying to sneak out the back, but dude-drop catches up to him first and handcuffs him along with the rest of us. What the fuck is going on?

I notice they are hauling everyone else into a van while they haul me into a car. “What’s going on?” I ask the officer who’s in the driver’s seat. “But of course, the asshole doesn’t respond.

“So, this is how we are going to play this. You cops are going to arrest us for no apparent reason and then not even tell us what we are being arrested for?” The passenger door opens and Adams looks in the back.

“Shut up Corky.”

“Fuck off Deputy Dewey!”

“Call me that one more damn time Corky and I promise you-.”

He promises me what. He sure has been in a mood since we have gotten back from Florida. Before the trip, I’d get at least 10 messages a day from him, then nothing and now this shit. Leave it to me to fall for a trap that got my ass arrested, as well as my boss. I sat back in my seat and just rode the rest of the ride to the police station in silence. It wouldn’t do me any good to talk to either of the cops anyway, they wouldn’t talk back.

We get to the police station and the officer that’s in the driver’s seat gets out and lets me out of the car. We head towards the station doors, and I think Adams will say he’ll take it from there, but he goes to the van with Martin, the other bartender, and the servers.

“Are you going to tell me what they arrested me for?” I ask the cop. But as before, he doesn’t say a word and walks me right into the station and right into a cell. “This is some bullshit.” I say as he’s shutting the cell door.

“Maybe you should have gone on a different career path.” The officer says, then walks away.

What does my career path have anything to do with us all getting arrested? I see the other cops hauling Martin and the others into different holding cells. Martin is right beside the one I’m in, so I walk over to the bars and ask him what the hell is going on. I mean, I think I know, but if that’s the case, then why did all of us get arrested and not just Martin?

“I have no fucking clue you tell me. You’re the one that got isolated from the rest of us, Corky.”

Should have known that was going to come back and bite me in the ass. “I don’t know I asked, and they told me to shut the fuck up.”

“This is some bullshit Martin yells at no one.”

About that time, Deputy Dewey and dude-drop come around the corner. They open up Martin’s cell and haul him out, then down the hall.

“Hey where are you taking him?” I yell at them as they are walking off.

“Don’t worry, sweetheart, you will get your turn soon. Now shut the fuck up, whore.” Dude-drop says looking back smiling at me and I can’t help myself because I just can’t

stand that guy. I lift my middle finger up at him and he just laughs. "In your dreams, bitch."

"That's enough, officer Moony."

Well, now, I know his last name. It should be Moody, because he's a moody fucker.

"Hey Corky, are you okay over there?" Mr. Gordon asks me.

"Yeah, I'm okay. How are you guys holding up I ask them?"

"Would be better if I knew what they arrested me for, Carrie says."

"Same." I told her.

"Well, it's your lucky day, guys. You are free to go." An officer comes back and tells the other three, opening up their door and letting them walk out.

"What about me?"

"I don't know Miss. Officer Adams hasn't given me any orders on you yet."



I haven't seen or heard anything from anyone for hours. Martin hasn't been back to his cell and no officers have come back to tell me anything. I hear a door being opened down the hall and about two minutes later the door to where I'm at opens up and dude-drop comes walking in. "Ah crap."

"It's your turn, whore."

“Why thank you dude-drop.” He arches a brow at me but says nothing. He just walks over to the cell and opens it up. “Where are we going?” I ask him.

“Down to the interrogation room.” Officer Moony opens the door to a room that looks like an office and shoves me into it, then shuts the door. I hear it click so I know it is locked behind him. “What is that dude’s fucking problem?”

I sit in this room for another hour before Adams opens the door and informs me, I’m free to go. “What the hell, Adams? What’s the meaning of this?”

“Keep your fucking voice down, Corky. We had to make it look legit, so you don’t get your ass killed. You know the drop you made a couple of weeks ago. Well, it was drugs. We arrested the guy that picked the stuff up, then he rated his boss out, so we arrested them too. And they rated Martin, so the list goes on. Just get the fuck out of here, Corky, and keep your nose clean.”

“Yes, sir Deputy Dewey.” I say, saluting the asshole.

I walk out of the precinct and Layla is standing there with a beautiful little girl that looks just like her. “Her daughter?” Of course, it is Martins in jail now, so as long as he is there, Layla will be able to keep her daughter.

“Hey Corky girl, are you okay?” Layla asks me. Once I get to the car, she grabs me up in a hug. “They didn’t hurt you, did they?” Layla whispers in my ear.

“No, I’m okay.” I tell her and as we are getting into the car, I see Deputy Dewey and dude-drop walking out of the building. Dean Adams looks at me and nods his head my way. I can’t help it. I flip him the bird and get into the car.

“Oh, Corky girl, you have it bad,” Layla teases me.

“The hell I do.” I tell Layla and she scolds me for my language in front of the kid.

“My bad.” We make our way to Layla’s house. “So, this is your daughter?” I ask her.

“Oh, yes, I’m sorry. This is Izabella Rena Smith, my beautiful baby girl. Thanks to you Corky girl. I get to have her back in my life now. As long as Martin stays in the slammer, she’s mine.”

“Well, from what I understand, you have nothing to worry about with that Layla Martin is going to be in jail for a while then prison he goes.” I told her.

“Good,” Izabella says and I look at her through the rear-view mirror. She smiles at me, and I smile back.

We make it to the house and I head upstairs to get a shower. I’m wired so I’m going to go to the corner and work. I get dressed, and grab my necklace to pour a line of coke on my hand and snort it. Once I have my necklace back in place, I check myself in the mirror to make sure there is no trace of coke on my nose. I really should stop doing the crap, but as long as I’m on the streets I’m going to keep doing the coke so I don’t have to feel.

I make my way downstairs and start toward the door. Layla stops me halfway to the door. “Corky girl, where do you think you’re going?”

“Work.” I respond in a duh Lay tone.

“No, ma’am, you are not. You are going to come and talk to me.”

“There’s really nothing to talk about.” I tell Layla. And she gives me her best momma look.

“Ugh fine.” I tell her, then walk back to the living area.

“What did you have to do when you were in the jailhouse?” Layla asks me.

“They made me sit in a cell for four hours, then took me to a interrogation room and I sit in there for another hour, then Deputy fucking Dewey lets me out finally. When I asked him what was going on he told me to keep my voice down. That they were doing it for my own good.”

“So, what was that at the car?” Layla asks me.

“Our little game we play with each other, I guess.” Something occurs to me just then. “Hey Layla, what would you think about working at the bar now and getting off the streets for good? You have your little girl back now?”

“Do you think you can get me a job there?” Layla asks and I see the fire back in her eyes.

“Yes, I know I can Layla, baby. I will talk to Mr. Gordon tomorrow. He is Martin's right-hand man at the bar.

“Alright, let’s do it then.” Layla tells me, smiling a big ass smile.



It's about two pm the next day and Layla and I are heading to the bar to talk to Mr. Gordon about getting her a job. "I'm a little nervous, Corky girl." Layla tells me as we are walking into the bar.

"Don't be Mr. Gordon loves you. besides before you got hurt, you lived in this bar."

"That's true. Everyone knows me. But Corky girl, why are you not going to work at the bar full time?" That's a good question, it would get me off the streets but with Martin gone I could make all my money and that would be enough to buy a house maybe someday soon.

"I don't know Layla baby. I really haven't thought about working at the bar full time. Let's get you the job first, then we will consider me."

"Hey ladies, what can I do for you?" Mr. Gordon says as we walk through the door.

"Well Gordo, it's not what you can do for us, it's what we can do for you. I have you another floor girl." I told him.

"You're my bartender, which I want to talk to you about coming on full time now that your wrench is out of your way." Mr. Gordon tells me and well, that answers Layla's question about me being on the streets anymore. "I accepted the offer, but it wasn't me I was talking about. For the floor, it was Layla. She would be a wonderful addition."

"Yes, she would be," Martin says. Can you both work tonight? Layla, you can bring Miss Izabella and put her in the office. We have a tv with cable in there.

"Yes, we can." I tell Gordon. "We will be back tonight around 5?"

“Yes 5 works.” Gordon tells us once we settle all that Layla and I head out and go to the school to register her little girl for school. I’ve always known Layla was a mom, but it’s weird to see the little girl in the flesh. “So Layla, how does it feel to have Izabella back?”

“Bittersweet.” Layla tells me. “It’s been so long since she has been in my care. Thanks to Martin, I don’t know how to be a mother anymore. And I don’t know if she likes me or even remembers me.”

“Oh, Layla, baby, that girl adores you.” I tell her and I hope that eases her mind some.

Once we get the girl into school, we get her some clothes and a few things for school to get her started. Then we head home and get ready for our shift at the bar. Layla hires the 16-year-old girl down the road to watch her daughter while she works at the bar. “Are you ready to head to work?” I asked Layla 30 minutes later.

“Your supper is fixed and on the stove, and your bedtime is 10, okay?” Layla informs Izabella.

Izabella just looks at Layla like she’s lost her mind. “Well Layla, look at the time. We need to get to work.

“Yes, you're right Corky girl.”

Layla and I are working our shift at the bar and it’s slammed tonight. I feel a little bad for Layla being her first night at the bar, but she looks like she is kicking ass and taking names out there.

“Hey Lalya baby, how’s your night going?” I ask her when she comes up to grab a few more drinks. “Better than the streets, Corky girl.” She tells me, then heads back out to her table.

Layla looks good out there in her blue jeans and button up western shirt. She’s wearing a pair of boots, and she has her hair in a French braid. I’ve never seen Layla look so free and happy.

“Yo, Corky, I need 6 shots of whiskey.” Miranda tells me coming up to the bar. I grab her drinks, then walk over to a new customer that sits down at the bar. “What’ll it be, sugar?” I ask her.

“Could I get a gen and coke, please?” The woman asks me, and she looks so sad. “Coming right up, sugar.” I get her, her drink, then bring it back and move on to my next customer, and get the girls their drinks they need. That’s the way it goes all night until we walk out the door to go home. Once we get home, Layla goes to check on her daughter and I head to my room. It’s still weird to see Layla interacting with her daughter. I know she’s always been a mom. Hell, she was a mother hen to me all these years, but to actually see her in action is something amazing. Izabella is a special child. She is very smart, like her momma.

I walk into my bedroom to get my things ready for my shower, then I head to the bathroom that’s outside my bedroom. While in the bathroom, I think about Layla and my recent achievements. I decided to go to the Adult Education center tomorrow morning to inquire about taking my GED test. Once I’ve completed that, I may consider going to college. Why not I don’t have Martin holding me back anymore? Now that I have my mind clear of that, I jump in the shower and get cleaned up. Once out of the shower, I walk into the living area and find Layla sitting on the sofa reading a book.

“Hey Corky Girl.” Layla says when she looks up and sees me walking in. “Hey Layla baby, whatcha reading?”

“A little love novel by Danielle Steel.” Layla says, balling up in a ball on her side of the sofa. “I figured you would have gone to bed, Corky girl, after your shower.”

“Well, I have something I want to run by you.”

“Oh yeah, Corky girl, what is it? Let me see if I can guess you’ve finally woken up and are going to go get your GED now that Martin isn’t standing in your way. Did I nail it?” Layla says so excitedly that I know right then that I’m doing the right thing. I just smile at her for a minute. “That’s it, isn’t it?” Layla says leaning in to give me one of her great big hugs. “Yes.” I whisper in her ear. She pulls back and looks me in the eye. “Corky, you don’t know how happy this makes me.”

“Do you really think I’m ready for this?” I ask her. “Girl, that’s a dumbass question if I’ve ever heard of one.” Layla simply says and I laugh at her, because she has been on me to get this done for years. “Okay, I’m going in the morning to the adult education center and I’ll go from there.” I tell her and she squeals like a child that just got a new toy. “Shh, you’re going to wake the little girl.” I tell her, laughing at her. “Oh yes, right? Well, it’s time for bed, anyway. Someone has a big day tomorrow.”

We hug one late time, then head off to bed.



The next morning I’m in my closet looking for something decent to wear, but I really need to go clothes shopping because my clothes include ripped jeans and hooker clothes I will never need again. I will never go back out on these streets if I can help it. I finally give up and go into Layla’s room. “I need something to wear. Can I look through your closet?”

“Of course, Corky girl. Take whatever you need,” Layla tells me, then walks out of her room and into her daughters to get her ready for school.

“So, you’re going to take your GED test today?” Izabella asks me, and I think this is the first time that child has ever talked to me. “Yes, I am, so when I pass, we will have to celebrate. What do you think?” I ask her. “I think it’s not really something for a 20 something to be celebrating. If you wouldn’t have quit school in the first place, then you wouldn’t have to get a GED.” She tells me and it takes everything I have not to sit this little girl straight, because I didn’t have a choice in the matter. I couldn’t continue my education in the private school I was in, and I didn’t have supportive parents to guide me.

“Izabella Rena Smith, you apologize to Corky right now. You do not know her circumstances, why she didn’t finish school and you have no right to judge her.” Layla scolds the girl. “It’s okay Layla, no, she doesn’t know me, but she is entitled to her own opinion.” As we are all walking out the door, Layla pulls me to the side and apologizes to me again. “Corky girl, I apologize for her harshness. It was unwarranted. I don’t know what’s gotten into her. I didn’t raise her to be like that.”

“It’s okay Layla, she’s just speaking her truth and you haven’t had her in a few years. There’s no telling what Martin has put in her head are the things he has done to the poor child. It’s all good. I will let you know how things went today.” I tell Layla and walk to my car. “Good luck Corky girl.” I blow Layla a kiss, then get into my car and drive off.

15 minutes later, I’m sitting in front of the adult education center. I get out and walk in and find a front office, so I walk up to the door and knock on it. Someone from the other side tells me to come on in, so I do. “How can I help you?” The lady asks looking

up from her computer. “Yes, ma’am, my name is Corky Sullivan and I’m here to talk about taking my GED test.”

“Oh exceptional.” The lady says in a genuinely sweet voice. First, you’ll take a practice test to see where you stand. If you pass, you can take the actual GED test on the same day. If you need to study more, you’ll work with a teacher and take the practice test again when you’re ready. Does that sound like something you would like to do today?” The woman explains to me and I’m feeling a little overwhelmed about this all, but I am ready to get it done because I know I won’t if I don’t do it today.

“Yes, ma’am, we can do this today.” I tell her, then she leads me to another room that has computers sitting up along the walls. Once she got me settled on a computer, she let me know that there could be a couple more people coming in and out. If I wanted to avoid the noise of that, then there were some headphones that played soft music through them. I decided for now I don’t want the distraction. I get right to work with the test and an hour later, I’m done with that set of testing. I leave the room and tell the lady, who says the test results will take 15 minutes. She invites me to sit down and promises to tell me the results when they’re ready.

As promised, she comes walking back with a big smile on her face about 15 minutes later. The smile must mean good news, right? “Ms. Corky, you scored higher than anyone on the pretest. Let’s start your GED test in the same room.

Three hours later, I’m walking out with my diploma in my hand. I call Layla and tell her the news as soon as I get into my car. “I told you Corky girl... I told you. Okay, come pick me up, then we are going to get lunch, then go to a couple of colleges to see which ones will take you.”

I’m not sure I’m ready for this, but Layla is so excited so I will not rain on her parade at this point, so I head to pick her up and we head for lunch. We went to a little bar and grill named Rose. It’s a little fancy for my taste, but Layla says we have to eat like

queens today. "Hello ladies, what can I start you off with today?" The server asks us coming up to our outdoor table.

"I would like to start off with a coke and some chips and queso." Layla says, then looks at me to give my drink order. "I will take a Dr. Pepper." I told her. "Do we know what we want, or do we want to wait until after the appetizer?"

"We will wait until the appetizer comes out." Layla tells her. The server walks away, then comes back with our drinks. "So, you finally did it, Corky girl?"

"I finally did it, Layla baby."

Ten

After we were finished with our food, we left and went to the college downtown. Layla and I walk up the steps to the school. “Layla, what in the hell am I doing? Am I ready for this?” I ask her as we are walking into the school. She turns me around and looks at me. “Corky girl, you are the smartest girl I know, so you get your butt in that office and show them who Corky Sullivan is.” She’s so good at pumping me up. So I do as she tells me. I walk right to the dean’s office and talk to a lady named Sue Gallen. Then I’m sent over to the financial aid office and before I know it, I’m walking out of the doors a college student.

I give Layla my schedule. “Oh, Corky girl, my college baby. I’m like a proud momma.” I smile at her because Layla has been the most mother figure I’ve had since I was 18.

We head to the bar and show the guys my good news. “Oh, Corky girl, look at you.” Gordon says coming up and giving me a big hug.

“Thank you, Gordon.”

“So, when do you start Corky?” Carrie asks me. “I start Monday morning.” I told her.

“Right on.” She says. “Well let’s celebrate the good news with a drink, girls.” Maranda says coming up behind me then gives me a hug.



“Good morning ladies and gentlemen, I am Professor Gallagher, and this is English development literature. We will start off today with one of my favorite books. You will have three days to read this book and then tell me in your own words what you thought about the book and the four main characters. Have you guessed what book it is yet?”

“Pride and Prejudice.” The boy sitting beside me says aloud.

“So close, young one. Right Author wrong book. You will read Sense and sensibility.” Professor Gallagher tells us.

Jane Austen is my absolute favorite author. Her books just captivates you in a whole different world. So, my first assignment for my first class will not be too much of a hardship for me. “So, Jane Austen, every reader/writer has a wet dream.” The boy comments.

“Jane Austen is a legend.” I tell him, cocking my eyes to the side, challenging him to say otherwise. He holds his hands up in surrender. “You win this one for now,” he tells me. Right then, the teacher walks by handing us our books. “Are we having a healthy debate already?” He asks us, and I just look up at him and say, “nope no debate. He knows I’m right.” The boy is trying hard not to laugh along with the Professor.

“I can’t wait to see your papers.” The Professor tells us.

Professor Gallagher walks back to his desk and allows us to get started on our reading, but since I have read the book over a hundred times, I skip to the writing. We have laptops for schoolwork, but I’ll stick with my notebook for now since I’m not tech-savvy. I’ll ask Layla’s daughter Izabella to show me the right app for writing papers later. About five minutes into my writing in my paper, I see my computer being sat back down on my table. Hell, I didn’t even see it being taken off my desk. I look over and see the boy smiling at me. “I opened up your words for you. Also, put it as a desktop icon so you can find it easy. That’s why you’re writing in your notebook instead of on your computer, right? Because you had no clue what to do?” He says, arcing a brow at me in a challenging jester.

“What if I just like writing in my notepad first before putting it on my computer?” I ask him.

“Why yes, that would be the easiest thing to do, right?” The boy says, mocking me. “Asshole.” I just stick my tongue out at him and get back to work on my paper and, just to prove him wrong, I stay writing in my notepad.

Before I know it, the bell is ringing, letting us know it’s time to change classes, so I gather my things up and go to head out the door when the boy beside me stops me. “So, what’s your next class?” I grab my schedule out to look. “It looks like I have History.”

“Damn girl, what are you studying?” He asked me. “I’m studying to be a high school English teacher.”

“Ballsy move.”

“Why do you say that?” I ask him, confused.

“Well, really two reasons. One, you seem too sweet to teach high schoolers they would eat you alive, and two, you’re too pretty to be a high school teacher. You would have all the boys walking around with boners all the time.” I can’t help but laugh at him because that was the cheesiest shit I’ve ever heard.

I go to walk out the door and he stops me again. “So, hey what’s your name?” He asked me. “Corky.”

“Well hello Corky I’m Teddy.”

“See you later Teddy. I have to get to my other class before I’m late.”

“Later Corky.”

I head to my locker to get my other books for my next class then I walk into my history class. I found a seat at the top of the classroom.

Good morning class I am Professor Glass. This is your History class. In this classroom you will find we will be doing a lot of papers on our History. If you have any problems with writing essays then you are in the wrong class and frankly in the wrong school. The professor goes on to tell us.

Now that we have that out of the way let’s get your books out and turn to page 1 start out ready that full chapter then at the end of the class I will let you know what your

homework will be. The Professor goes on to tell us and fuck college is going to be a challenge.

By the end of the class my eyes crossed the chapters were 20 pages long. Then the Professor lets us know we have to write an essay on the chapter we just read.

The bell rings for us to switch classes. My next class is Math. I don't understand why I have to take Math, History, and Social Studies when I'm going to be an English teacher, but here I am taking classes that's not going to help me in anything I'm going to be teaching.

We get through our math class then head off to the food court to get lunch. We have an hour for lunch then we take three more courses and or let out for the day. Once my classes are over I have to head straight to the bar to work tonight. I never saw my life going this way in a million years. I always wanted to do this but I never thought I'd have a chance to do this.

Lunch goes by pretty quickly and we are off to our other classes of the day. Once they are over I head out to my car to head to the bar. I get almost to my car when I hear someone calling my name. I turn around to see Teddy heading my ways.

"Hey Corky, I was just wondering if you would like to grab a bite to eat sometime, maybe go over our English class together?" Teddy asks when he gets up to where I'm standing.

"So, why not." I tell him then turn back to my car and walk off without another word. I mean I really like him. I thought he was funny in the classroom but he's a totally different person then I am. I might have myself fooled right now with the whole college thing but let's be real it's going to come crashing down on me soon.

I make it to the bar, and when I walk in, Layla is on top of me asking me how my first day of college went. "It went great. I've already got a guy wanting to take me out for dinner one night.

"Oh, really and what's his name?" She asks me.

"Teddy."

"Hm Teddy and Corky just don't go together, now on the other hand Dean and Corky do." She tells me, smiling at my facial expressions.



It's Monday of the next school week and I'm in my English lit class, bored by Professor Gallagher's lecture on Romeo and Juliet by Shakespeare. How their love story was so tragic and beautiful. "No, they were stupid teenagers who killed themselves for each other. They were selfish assholes even back then.

"You look bored." Teddy comments. Well, damn, I guess I better look alive if even the guy sitting beside me can tell I'm bored out of my skull. Don't get me wrong, I like William Shakespeare's work. Although he's the best of the best, Romeo and Juliet have already been played out. Why can't we talk about one of his other plays, like Julius Ceaser or Plutarch's? "Guess I need to look alive then, huh, before the Professor calls me out." I've learned real fast that if Professor Gallagher thinks you're not paying any attention in his classroom, he is going to call on you every time to answer a question just so he can call you out on it. A girl that sits ahead of us has been called out twice now. I don't want to fall victim to that embarrassment.

"Mrs. Sullivan, give me a line from the play Romeo and Juliet. And if you give me the line of O Romeo, Romeo wherefore art thou Romeo, you will get an F."

“Well damn, there goes my lines.” I say and everyone laughs, including Professor Gallagher. “Let’s see. Deny thy father and refuse thy name; Or, if thou wilt not be but sworn my love, And I’ll no longer be a Capulet. Or here’s my favorite. “A rose by any other name would smell as sweet.”

“Ms. Sullivan look alive from now on in my classroom. Just because you know the work doesn’t give you a pass to not listen to my lectures. It’s what I get paid to do.”

“Yes, sir.” I say and feel a little embarrassed. I really didn’t realize I was being so transparent.

That class was finally over and by the end of the class, we were told we had to write a screenplay of our own. We were partnered up. Luckily, I got Teddy as my partner. We have until next Monday to get this done.

“So, partner, when do you want to start on the play?” Teddy asks as we are walking out of the classroom.

“Meet me at the bar over on Elms street tonight around 5. We will start on it then.” I told him. Since I have to work every night this week, I’ll have to do my schoolwork at the bar.

“That’s where you work, right?” Teddy asks me.

“Yes, that is my place of employment. Is that a problem?” I ask him.

“No, just making a friendly inquiry, Corky. I will see you tonight at the bar.”

I’m such an asshole sometimes I still have the mentality everyone’s out to get me when in fact there are still really nice people out there. I just have to open my eyes.



Later that night I'm working the bar. Mr. Gordon's off today, so I'm behind the bar by myself. Since it's a slow Wednesday night, I get the chance to study. Later, Teddy and a few guys from school arrive, and I have already laid out our books on the unoccupied bar space to prevent any alcohol spills on them.

"Grab you a seat and I'll get you a drink on the house for having to come all the way out here to study tonight." I tell Teddy and head off toward the other end of the bar to grab his drink. Once I have it poured, I head back his way. I give it to him and inform him I've already begun working on the paper. I have finished three pages and they are ready for his review and input. It's time for me to go back to the other side of the bar and take some orders. I shouldn't be long."

"You're good Corky. I will work on the paper some. Then we can collaborate when you have a minute, then we can finish it up tomorrow." Teddy tells me and that makes me feel better about leaving it all on him to do.

By the time I make it back over to Teddy from the evening rush of people getting off work, he has another three pages written, so I read over his work. "That's some great work, Teddy. We might get an A after all partner. Well, I think that should be enough for the night. If I feel up to it when I get off, tonight I will write some more, otherwise we will have this finished before Friday. Go home. I'll see you at school tomorrow." I tell him, and he finishes his beer he was nursing, then leaves.

"Who's the hunk?" Carrie asks coming up to the bar to give another order.

"Schoolmate, we are working on an English project together."

"I think he wants to do more than an English project with you." Carrie says then winks at me.

“Get out of here with that nonsense. My schedule doesn’t allow for crushes at the moment. I’m trying to finish a 4 year career in two and I work all the time.” I tell Carrie and she backs off, but not without her shit-eating grin.

We get back to work and before I know it... it’s time to go home. We lock the bar up so we can clean up, and once that’s done, we head out the door. “Are you going home Corky?” Carrie asks.

“Yes, I have a butt load of school work to get done.” I tell the girls bye, then head to my car. I really need to park that thing where there are street lights. Layla and Mr. Gordon normally walk me to my car, so I don’t worry about it much, but nights like tonight it’s spooky.

Every little sound has me jumping by the time I get to my car. I’m so spooked it takes three tries to get my keys in the door to unlock it. That’s another thing. I have the keyless entry, but I need a battery for the damn thing. I get the door open and go to sit down in the car when someone grabs me from behind by my hair.

“Give me your purse, bitch.” The guy tells me and all I smell is whiskey on his breath, but he has something at my back so I don’t fight him.

“Here.” I told him. He pins me between the back of my car and his body while he looks through my purse and finds my wallet. He’s going to be disappointed because I have no money in there.

“Where’s your money, bitch?”

“I don’t have any. I work at a bar.” Why I gave him that much information I don’t know. It’s not like he gives a shit.

“Well, I’ll take this for payment.” He says, grabbing my pussy through my clothes. “Oh, hell no he’s not.” That shits not happening, I’m not getting raped by some lowlife. I elbow him in the nose, then kick him in the face once he’s down. I notice there is no gun, so I grab my shit off my car and get in and hightail it out of there.

I’m still shaking by the time I pull up at the house, so I sit in the car for a minute or two so I can catch my breath before I go inside and Layla sees something is wrong. I don’t want to answer her questions right now.

I close my eyes for a minute and before I know it, there is a knock on my window and I about scream my head off. “Dammit, Layla, give a girl some warning.” I tell her and she just looks at me funny.

“Are you okay, Corky?”

“Yea, I’m okay. Let’s get you back inside. Besides, shouldn’t you be in bed by now?”

“Corky girl, what the hell happened tonight?”

I look over at her with tears in my eyes because I can’t hold it in anymore. “I was attacked tonight when I walked to my car. He never had time to do anything but I can’t quit thinking what if he really had a gun, what would I have done then? Dammit, Layla, I’m a fucking prostitute and I almost got my ass rapped tonight.”

“Dammit Corky girl, I’ve told you to make sure you park your car with the other girls’ cars when there is nobody to walk with you.”

I’m aware. I’ve never thought something like that would happen. I know it’s stupid, Layla, so don’t say it.”

“Not a word, Corky girl. let’s just get you inside and have a warm bath.” Yes, she’s right. I just need to go inside, take a hot bath and forget all about tonight, just another thing to roll off my back.

Once I get into the bathroom, I run the water as hot as I can stand it, then strip my clothes off and step in once I sink down in the bath. I lay my head back and close my eyes. I inhale, then exhale. It feels so good.



The next morning, Layla and I are getting breakfast ready for Izabella and ourselves when Layla turns to me and tells me she wants me to be Izabella’s godmother. That way, if anything happened to her, I would be the person to take care of her. “Whoa Layla, where is this coming from? There is nothing going to happen to you, Layla baby, so you don’t have to worry about anyone taking care of Izabella but you.” I told her.

“Corky, I’m being serious. I want to draw up some papers and have you sign them and if anything happens to me, then she stays with you. We have family, but they never tried to help us when Martin had me as his pimp and my daughter locked in a room. I contacted the grandparents to take Izabella, but they refused, saying that we need to handle our own situation. It didn’t matter if our child had nothing to do with what my husband did, we just paid the price. So Corky girl, I need you to do this for me.”

“Okay, Layla, we will draw up papers and I will sign them,” I tell her to ease her mind. I mean, nothing will happen to her, so I or that child have nothing to worry about.

After breakfast, we all head out the door. “Corky girl, do you have your books and lunch?” Layla asks. I have a habit of putting my hand on my shoulder to check if I have my bag. When I didn’t feel it, I turned back to get it. But, Izabella already had it..

“Thank you, ma’am,” I say, walking over to get my bag. She just shakes her head at me.

Once I get to school, I park my car and head into my English class. Teddy walks in behind me. “Hey Corky, I worked on the paper a little more last night if you want to look at it and give your opinion of it.”

“Look at you Mr. Teddy.” I take the papers out of his hand and start reading it while we wait on the teacher. It’s funny. I wrote more on the paper last night and what Teddy has and what I have worked well together and we are done with our paper just like that. “Well, Teddy, we are done.”

“Thank God,” Teddy says, and I laugh at him. We give our paper to the professors and he reads over it. “This is some good stuff.” The professor then handed us back the paper, and we got our first A in this class.

Eleven

Classes are going by so fast we are already into our second semester. I have a little more work to do than most of the students at the college. I'm a couple years behind my fellow students. Most college students start college at the ages of 18 and 19 and are

close to finishing by the age of 22 or moving on to the career courses they have chosen. So, I'm taking double the class. So by the time it's time for my shift at the bar, I am almost too tired to work, but I can't give up

"Corky girl, what are you doing awake so early on a Saturday morning? You should enjoy your time off. Go back to bed girl, it's 7 in the morning." Layla's telling me. "I have too much schoolwork to get done and the only time I can get it done is on my days off from work and school. What are you doing up so early?" I ask her.

"Habit I slept little doing the other, so now sleeping 8 hours is too much for me." Layla explains, and I feel her on that. "Well, since we are both up, let's make some breakfast." I told her.

"That sounds wonderful, then I'll go wake Izabella up." Layla says with a smile on her face. "How is Izabella doing?" I ask her.

"I think she is doing pretty well these days." Layla says.

Layla and I get right to work on breakfast, and once I get started on the eggs, Layla runs up to Izabella's room to wake her up for breakfast. After we are done with breakfast, I ask Layla if she would like to take Izabella to watch a movie and get ice cream afterwards. "That sounds wonderful, Corky. Would you like to do that Izabella?" Layla asks her. "I would like that," Izabella tells her mom, and that makes me happy.

So, after breakfast, we clean our breakfast dishes then head up to get dressed. Once we are done, we all meet back in the living room and head out. When we arrived at the cinema, Izabella opted for the Barbie movie.. We get our popcorn and drinks, then head to our movie theater. We get seated in our seats and get ready for our movie. I sit and watch Layla interact with Izabella, and I all of a sudden feel emotional. I lost my mother when I was 16. She threw me out of her house without a backward glance. And in a way, Izabella lost her mother for so many years. Even though it wasn't her fault, it

still has to be tough on Izabella to open up to Layla. The movie starts and I shake off my mood.

“That movie was awesome.” Izabella is saying as we are walking into the ice cream shop. “Yes, it was pretty good,” Layla says, then looks over at me. “Oh, yes amazing.” I pipe in. We walk up to the counter and order our ice cream, then make our way to a table. While we were at the ice cream shop, Izabella's friend from school came over to say hello. Her mom, Emily Moony, also introduced herself to us. After the conversation, Emily convinced Layla to let Izabella stay the night at Kathleen's house for a sleepover. Kathleen was excited to have Izabella join them.. I look over at the table as Layla and I are walking out and sure a fucking enough its dude-drops family, and Deputy Dewey is sitting with them and eating ice cream.

“Layla, I don't think it's such a good idea for Izabella to stay with that girl.” I whisper to her. “We can't judge the little girl or the mom for who the dad is, Corky.” Layla tells me, and she's right. It's not their fault the guy that's in their life is an asshole. I look over one more time as we leave the ice cream shop and see Dean Adams looking at me. I became the bigger person and waved at him, but he just gave me the stink eye. So fuck that asshole.

“What was that about Corky girl?” Layla asks once we get into the car. “I don't know Layla. He has been acting weird since we did that job in Florida.” I told her.

“Did you two talk about something when you two were down there?” Layla asks, and I think back to that trip and the only thing we did was have sex. Then he left my motel room. “No, talking isn't Dean Adams' thing. He came to my motel room. We ate pizza, then we fucked, then he left.”

“Corky!”



It's Monday morning, and I'm feeling pretty good about today. I got caught up on all of my schoolwork yesterday. Then I did a little reading. I haven't read a good book in so long I almost forgot how to read... I think. Now I am sitting in my English literature class waiting for the professor to arrive when Teddy comes and sits down in his usual seat. "Hey stranger." I say and he just nods his head at me. What the hell's that about? I don't have time to care if Teddy is talking to me or not. So, I stay focused on the front until the professor walks in and we get started with class and I don't have time to think anything else about the guy sitting next to me.

English is over, so I make my way down the bleachers and out the door to my locker to change out my books when Teddy comes up beside me and just stands staring at me. "What the fuck's your problem, Teddy?" I ask him. "So you're the bitch that got my teammate put in jail?" Teddy spits. Fuck me, I was wondering if I'd ever run into any of them assholes here. "No Teddy, your teammate did that all on his own when he almost beat an innocent person to death."

"You're such a fucking lying whore." Teddy spits at me and walks off. Well, okay, then there goes one normal friend I've made. A girl looks over from her locker just then. "I wouldn't worry about Teddy. He's all bark, no bite. Hey, I'm Emarie." The girl says holding her hand out for a handshake. "Hey, I'm the whore Corky." That's such a unique name. I love it. By the way, I don't think you're a whore." The girl tells me, and boy does she have a lot to learn. Apparently I do too, because we have almost every class together and I've never noticed her. Now I just feel like a bitch.

"Would you like to eat lunch with me today?" Emarie asks me. I almost said no. I've never had people outside. Oh, Layla and the girls want to have lunch or anything else with me, but I go ahead and say yes. "Awesome, then you can tell me all about being." She looks around. "Well, you know a woman of the night." I should have known there was a fucking catch.

“Oh, you don’t have to talk about it if you don’t want to.” Emarie tells me. Maybe this isn’t a trap. We head on into the food court and get in line to pay for our meals. I opted for a salad and Emarie got a burger. “You know Corky, you’re too skinny already. You should really eat more red meat.” Emarie informs me. “Is that a fact?” I ask her with a laugh. “I mean you don’t want to make all of us girls look bad, do you?” Emarie asks and fuck am I really that damn skinny?

Later that afternoon, when I get to the bar, I ask Layla and the girl if they think I’m too skinny. “Corky girl, you are just right. Where is this coming from?” Layla tells me. “Don’t lie to her.” Miranda tells Layla. “Corky, you could use to gain a few pounds love.” Miranda tells me. “Gees thanks Miranda.” I told her. “You asked sister.” She says, winking at me then getting back to serving her tables. “She’s right, you know.” I hear someone say, and when I turn around, it’s none other than Dean Adams. I just stick my tongue out at him. I haven’t seen him up close and personal in a while. I forgot how handsome he is. He’s this tall, dark and handsome guy. You can tell he’s sun-kissed, and it looks good on him. You can also tell he works out quite often as well. I shake myself out of my thoughts and walk over to him to take his order. “What’ll it be, sugar?”

“I’ll have a beer.” Dean says. “What kind do you want?” I ask him. “I’ll take a Busch light.” He tells me, so I walk over to get him his beer, then bring it back to him. “When do you get off tonight?” Dean asks me.

That’s kind of a weird question coming from him. “Why Dean Adams, are you asking me out?” I tease him. “Why Corky Sullivan no, I have a few things I need to ask you and Layla about a few people you know.” He tells me and his words stings a little.

I nod my head at him. “Well, let me save you sometime, Deputy Dewey. Layla, will you come here for a minute?” I yell for Layla and she comes right over. Once she is in front of me, I let Gordon know we are going to the office for a minute. Gordon arches a brow at me. “Not what you’re thinking, old man.” I tell him, then the three of us walk to

the back room. Once we are in the office, I turn to Dean Adams. "What questions did you have for us?" I ask him.

"I think we might have another missing woman of the night." He tells me.

"Crap!"

"Is it one of our girls again?" Layla asks him. "No, this one is one town over." Dean informs us. "Okay, I'm sorry. What does this have to do with us?" I ask him.

"I need you two to go undercover for me. We have to find this guy and get him off the streets." Dean tells us. "You want us to do what?" I yell at him. "I know Corky. It's a lot to ask of you, but we don't have anyone else to turn to."

"Don't you have female officers? Why can't they do this? It would make way more sense than putting two normal people out there to risk their lives?" Layla tells Dean, poking him in the chest the whole time. I can't help myself from smiling at her. "We don't have anyone that will fit the profile." Dean tells us. "You don't have one cop that will fit the profile?" I ask him and I'm having a hard time believing that. "All the women we have on the force would come to pass more for a male than a female." Dean says, then shrugs. "Pig." Layla whispers. "I didn't mean it to be mean. Our woman, our cops, they didn't get into it to look cute." Dean explains to Layla and I see her soft to him some. Fuck that. He has used me to do his dirty work long enough. Then I become the bad guy. "Sorry Dean Adams, we are not putting our lives on the line this time." I tell him, then grab Layla's hand and go to walk out of the room.

"The girl is only 15, as we all know he only keeps them for a few hours before he slices their throats and throws them away like yesterday's trash." Fucking asshole. That's why he got Layla involved. He knew she wouldn't turn him down if she knew a little girl fell victim to this scumbag. Layla turns around. "What do you need us to do?" She asks him. I was afraid she was going to do that.

“I need you two to pose as prostitutes again on the streets of the town over.” He explains to us. “When do you need us to start?” Layla asks. “Tomorrow?” Dean says. “Give me a few days. I have to find somewhere safe for Izabella to go while we are doing this,” Layla tells Dean, and he agrees. We go to walk back up front and get back to work, but Dean stops me after Layla walks out the door. She looks back and smiles, then keeps walking on up front. “Trader.”

“What do you want, Dean?” I ask him but as per Dean, he doesn’t answer. He just leans in and kisses me, then walks happily right back up front. What the hell?

We finish our shift out at the bar, then we all clean up. As we are cleaning, Gordon asks me what the whole office thing was about earlier? “Deputy Dewey wants us to go undercover for him so he can play detective and find the killer of the night woman. I tell Gordon. “You told him fuck no, didn’t you?” Gordon asks me. “No, he hit Layla with a, it was a child that went missing spill, and she caved.”

“Bastard knew what he was doing,” Gordon growls. “Yep!” I say. “Well, when does he want you to start?” Gordon asks and I tell him two days, and Gordon whistles. “Okay, well, we will cover your shifts here.” Miranda tells us. “And Carrie and I will take turns with Izabella.” She also pipes in. “You guys are amazing.” Layla tells them, and she’s right, they really are. They have become like family to us.

Now that we have that taken care of, now I have to figure out what I’m going to do about school. I can’t miss or get behind on schoolwork, especially if I want to graduate next year with my English diploma.



“This isn’t fair, Ma. I just got you back and now some cop wants you to leave me again?” Izabella is crying to Layla. “I’m sorry, sweetheart, but you’re going to have so much fun with Carrie and Miranda. I promise you and hopefully mom and aunt Corky

won't be gone long." Layla tells Izabella. "Why can't Aunt Corky do this on her own?" Kids got a point. Why can't I do this on my own? "Because, kiddo, it is a dangerous job for just one person, so I kinda need your mom's help." I told her. "And it just has to be my ma, huh!" Izabella yells.

I can't watch this anymore. "Layla, I'm truly sorry, but we need to go." I tell her, and we walk out the door with Izabella right behind us. She shocks the shit out of me when she comes up and hugs me. "You take care of my ma, and you... you hear me?" She tells me. I smile at her. "Yes, I understand." I told her. "Okay, we need to get going. We have an hour's drive." I tell Layla and she gives Izabella one last kiss.

We head out, and when I look over at Layla; she has tears in her eyes. I reach over and take her hand in mine. In no time, you'll be reunited with your gorgeous daughter at home.. "I know. I just didn't want to have to leave her so soon after getting her back."

We ride in silence the rest of the way there. Once there, we head to the motel Deputy Dewey rented for us. We go in and get our keys. We head to our room and order a pizza. Once our pizza gets to our motel room, we eat it then lay down for a few hour nap before we become prostitutes again.



"What'll it be, sugar?" I ask the john, who pulls up in front of me. When I go to get into his truck, I almost vomit. I thought I was done with this shit. Hell, I'm a college student for fuck sacks. I plaster a smile on my face once I'm in the truck. "Where would you like to go to do this?" I ask him. He didn't say many words, but he got the motel. "Are you familiar with this?" I ask him, and he shakes his head no. Just great. Not only did I get drugged back into the game, my first john is a newbie.

I text Layla, because I made her carry her phone. We have to be smart about this.

Me- I have a newbie. How's yours going?

Layla- 300 pound slob. I'm going to be sick. I thought we were done with this Corky girl.

Me- Me too Layla baby me too.

The john gets us to a motel, then he gets out and gets the key. Then we headed up to the room he rented for a few hours. When we get in the room, he turns around and looks at me, then points to his dick. "Use your words, sugar, because I can guess a million things to do with your junk." I tell him, and he cocks his head to the side.

"Suck." Is all he says. I mentally roll my eyes at this dude, but then I get all my stuff I used to clean their junk out of my bag, then I get on my knees and open his fly and pull it out. I get busy cleaning it and when I'm done with that, I wrap it. The john is just looking at me like I've lost my ever loving mind. "Sorry sugar, it is this or no head. I don't know if you have anything or not. Trust me, it feels just as good." I told him.

I got back to the corner an hour after the john took me to the motel. He was a long-winded fuck for someone who's done nothing like that before. Thank god Layla was already back to the corner by the time I got back there. "I don't understand why we have to actually interact with these johns." Layla says.

"I don't know Layla, baby. I really don't know, but what I know is I am not staying out on these streets all night long. I have homework to get done. I was lucky enough my school understood I needed to do vertical for a little bit."



"So, I'm going to throw this out there, but Dean Adams is not Mr. McDreamy any longer." Layla says, and I laugh so hard at her. She must have forgotten he can hear

everything we are saying because of these damn pendants. “Ah, come on Layla baby, don’t be that way,” Dean says into our ears. And Layla’s face goes all red.

“We have been stuck on these damn street corners for over two weeks now and there has been no sign of danger. I’m going home Dean Adams. It’s been fun, but he’s not coming back to this side of town.” The killer dumped the poor girl’s body on the other corner a day after he took her. Something tells me he knew we were here. I know he knows he knows us, and he’s waiting for the right opportunity to get Layla or me alone. That’s why we haven’t gotten out of each other’s sight very often, and when we do, we have our pendant on.

“I know you’re right. I just feel like we gave it one more night.” Dean tells us.

“You’ve said that for the past three nights, Deputy Dewey, and there has been no response out of the creep.”

“Corky!” Haha, I love when I get him riled up. “Whatcha going to do Deputy Dewey, dog!!”

“Corky! Be nice to Dean Adams. He’s under a lot of stress.” Layla says with a smile. “Would you two stop it just Dean or Adams, not Dean Adams, and sure as hell not Deputy Dewey?”

“Sorry Dean, we’re just pulling your chain.” Layla says. “Yeah, Adams, go get your dick sucked and lightning up!” I tell him, and Layla is rolling at this point.

“You know, whore, I hope you need us one day, because we will just make fun of you, then laugh at you and send you on your way,” Moony pipes in. “Ah, what’s wrong dude-drop feeling left out?” I ask the asshole.

“Go home Corky. Thank you two for all the help you have given us the last couple weeks. If I need anything else, I will let you know. Dean tells us, and we say our goodbyes and Layla and I get on the road to home. As soon as our car pulled into the driveway, Izabella was running up to Layla and wrapping her arms around her.

“I’m so glad you and Corky are finally home, ma.”

“We are too, baby girl... we are too. So, now that we are home, what do you want to do today? It’s Saturday, so we can do anything you like,” Layla tells Izabella. “Can we go to the skating rink? I have never been and my friends want me to go one weekend with them, so I’d like to know how to skate.” So, that’s what Layla and Izabella are off to do today and I am off to get some groceries and cook a decent meal for dinner tonight, then get caught up on my schoolwork. My professors email me assignments, so I work on them during the day and take a nap before going out. I’m glad that is over and behind us now, because now that I’ve gotten the taste of not being on the streets, I don’t want to go back there ever again.



It’s Monday and I’m sitting in my English lit class when Teddy comes and sits beside me. “Good morning, Corky. I’ve missed you these last two weeks. Before you say anything, I just want to apologize for being such an asshole to you that day in the hall. I know the whole story of what my teammate did that night now and I will not back that kind of behavior for anyone. I hope you can forgive me and we can go back to being friends.

I cock my eyebrow at him. “We were friends?” I ask him. “I’d like to think so,” Teddy responds.

“I’ll forgive you this once, Teddy, but you won’t get another from me.”

“Understood.” He tells me, then turns around to face the front. “So, where have you been the last two weeks?”

“I had a family thing I had to take care of.” I told him. He doesn’t need to know anything about my personal life.

“Mm, well, I hope it’s all worked out for you. Say we are having a party tonight at our sorority house. You should come and bring a friend,” Teddy tells me and just something about his tone has the hairs on the back of my neck standing on edge.

“That’s sweet of you to invite me, but I have to work.” I told him. Then we fall into silence until the professor walks in.

“Welcome back Ms. Sullivan.” Professor Gallagher comments, then moves to his lecture of the day. “Last couple months, we covered William Shakespeare. This month we are moving on to Emily Dickerson. Can anyone tell me what Mrs. Dickerson was famous for writing? And go!”

“There is another sky.” I told the professor.

“Well done. Ms. Sullivan now gives me a line from the poem.” Professor tells me and I could kick myself in the ass. Why do I always get myself in this position?

“There is another sky,

Ever serene and fair,

And there is another sunshine,
Though it is darkness there;
Never mind faded forests, Austin,
Never mind silent fields -
Here is a little forest,
Whose leaf is ever green
Here is a brighter garden,
Where not a frost has been;
In its unfading flowers
I hear the bright bee hum:
Prithee, my brother,
Into my garden come!"

When I am done, the class claps for me. "Well done." Teddy says, smiling at me. "Thanks." I told him.

"Okay, can anyone else give me a poem by Mrs. Dickerson? And don't make me have to call names out of the room. Ms. Sullivan has been gone from school for two weeks and is doing better than you chumps."

Oh, great, now everyone in this class is going to hate me. “Making us all look bad over here.” Teddy teases me. He seems to have gotten back to his old, flirty self, but I still don’t trust him just yet. It could be someone’s out to get me still, but I don’t believe for one second he just all of a sudden is okay with me.

Twelve

The bell for this class rings, so I grab my things and head out of the room to my locker and Emarie meets me at my locker. “Long time no see girly.” She says, all chipper. “Hey, how’s it going?” I ask her.

“It’s going okay. I’ve kinda missed having you around these last couple of weeks.” She tells me, and I’ve kinda missed her too. She is one of the first friends I’ve had outside of my crazy other life. “Let’s get to class before we are late.” I tell her and we head that way.

“Whore.” A guy says as I’m walking by them. Of course, this couldn’t just stay between Teddy and me. I just kept walking to my table. “They still haven’t given up, have they?” Emarie asks me.

“I guess not.” I tell her and try to ignore the assholes. I really don’t have time for their childish drama. The boy did what he did and went to jail for it. I personally had nothing to do with him going to jail. Which has kinda bothered me throughout all of this. How did they know about Layla and me in the first place? I go to sit down in my chair at the back of the class and something pokes me in the ass. “What the hell.” I ask and get up out of my chair to find a fucking needle stuck to my chair and sticking straight up. For when I sit down, it pokes me right in the ass.

God, please let this needle be clean. I get some paper from my bag and grab the needle, then go to head out of the classroom with the damn thing when the boy that called me a whore stands up and blocks my way. “Whoa there, where are you going?” He asked me. “I’m taking this somewhere to make sure it’s not a used needle that just poked me in the ass. Now move.”

“Can’t let you do that girly, I will not go to jail because of some joke.” The dumbass says. “Newsflash dumb dick for brains. If you wouldn’t have just said anything just now, nobody would have known it was you that did this, now where did you get the damn needle? I need to know what shots I need to get at the doctor’s office to make sure I

don't catch something from your damn prank." I yell at him. "The needle is clean. I got it from Walmart. It's a diabetic needle, I swear." He tells me.

"You better hope to god that's the case Riley because if I catch something I will make it my life's mission to make sure your ass goes under the jail. Contrary to what you and your friends think, prostitutes are clean people. Most of us, and newsflash, I've been out for awhile. And another thing, I don't know where you are getting your information about your friend. I had nothing to do with the prick going to jail for beating and almost killing my friend." Then I realized. These guys are the ones that were with that boy in the bar. That's how they knew who I was. "You were there. You saw how he was with us, so why would you think it was a made-up story Riley? Do you want to see the picture of his work on my friend or the letter he wrote me after words taunting me? I bet you didn't know about any of that, but from what I'm witnessing right now, you're no better than he is."

Despite stumbling back, Riley stands his ground. "Do we have a problem here, Ms. Sullivan, Mr. Gabble?" The professor asks, coming up behind Riley. "I have no problem, as long as Riley here leaves me alone for the rest of the school year." I tell the Professor while keeping eye contact with Riley the whole time. Riley nods his head in agreement, then walks back to his desk without another word. "After class Ms. Sullivan." The professor says and I just shake my head.

The day seemed to drag on after that. School is finally over and I have to head straight to the bar. I have an early shift tonight. There is a party being thrown tonight, so all hands are on deck. I get to the bar and rush right in the back, grab my bar shirt and apron, then head out front and behind the bar. "Oh, will, you're here. I have to run a quick aaron. Do you think you can mind the bar for about an hour?" Mr. Gordon asks

me. "Yes, of course. Go do what you need to. I'll be fine?" I tell him and give him a warm, reassuring smile.

Mr. Gordon kisses me on the cheeks. "I don't know what we would do without you, Corky girl." He tells me and that warms my heart. "Go before I change my mind." I tease him.

"Corky girl, I need a pitcher of bud light and four glasses." Layla tells me, hurrying up to the bar. It might be a Monday night, but it is slammed in here tonight. It is the busiest I have seen since I started working here. "Is there a convention in town or something?" I ask Layla.

She shrugs her shoulders at me. "Must be, but hey I'm not complaining, more tips for me." She tells me with a laugh. "True that Layla baby, true that.

That's the way the night went up until closing. The girls kept coming to the bar all night and asking for drinks. Gordon and I took turns serving them and our other customers, making sure everyone had enough to drink until they left.

"We served the night." Layla says coming up to the bar and plopping down on one of the bar stools and laying her head on the bar. She was already at work by the time I got here, so she's been going for hours. "Well Layla baby, are you ready to go home?" I ask her as I'm wiping the last bet of the bar off. "Let's go," Layla says, getting up off the stool and we head out the door. I park my car under the lights with everyone else now to feel safer after a close call with an attacker.

Layla and I made it to my car. Layla gets in the car easily, but when I try to get in, someone grabs me and slams my head into the car.. Then runs off. "Fuck Corky, are

you okay?" Layla asks, getting out of the car and running round to the driver's side where I have fallen to the ground. "What the hell happened?" I hear one of the girls ask. "Someone attacked her. They throw her head into the fucking car." Layla tells them. I've never heard Layla use words like that.

"Let us look at you Corky." Layla tells me, then removes my hand from my face. Then she gasps, so I know it must be bad. "How bad." I ask her. "You are going to need stitches. Come on, let's get you over to the passenger seat and to the hospital." Layla says dragging me up off the ground.

"Do you know who did this?" Mr. Gordon asks, helping Layla get me into the passenger seat. "No, but I have a pretty good idea." I told him.



I'm finally home from the hospital. I ended up with 7 stitches across my forehead from the car, cutting it open. "So, you want to tell me who you think did this to you?" Layla asks me when she comes over to the sofa I'm sitting on with a cup of hot chocolate for me. "So, I go to school with the friends of the guy that hurt you and they have been starting shit with me the last couple of weeks. I thought I had it under control today, but I guess not.

"Dammit, Corky, why have you not told me about this until now? I could have helped you with this," Layla scolds me, and it's sweet. She is worried about me, but there is nothing she or anyone else can do to help with this. "I can handle it, Layla baby. Paybacks a bitch." I tell her then I get to drinking my hot chocolate she made me. Once I'm done with the hot chocolate, I head on up to get a shower and get ready for bed tonight.

Unknown number- your days are counting down, whore. I hope you don't think because you started working at the bar, you and Layla baby are safe.

Remember to keep your enemies close and your friends even closer or, in your case, your friends away. Have you figured it out yet?

Fuck I am going to have to get in touch with Dean about the messages and attacks.

I make my way to the police station the next morning and ask to see Detectives Adams. "If you will take a seat for me, I will see if he is here." The front desk officer tells me, so I do. About five minutes later, he is walking out of an office from the back. "Hey Corky, what can I do for you today?" Adams asks me and I think he is a little shocked to see me. "I think I need your help." I told him.

"Well, come back to my office and we will talk." He tells me. So I follow him back to his office and once we are in there, I open up my phone to the messages that the unknown person has been sending me. "So, I've been getting these messages, and someone almost attacked me a few weeks ago. I thought it was random, but then I was attacked last night hints the stitches on my head, and then I got the last message last night." I told him. He reads the messages with a frown on his face.

"Corky, why haven't you brought this to me earlier? This is some serious shit." Adams is scolding me. "Look, I didn't come here for you to give me the third degree. I just need to know what I should do about these." I told him.

"Dammit, Corky, do you take anything seriously?" Adams says, walking up to me. I back away from him because this isn't the time for hormones to be involved and every

time he gets close to me, we end up on the floor or somewhere necked. “I came to you, didn’t I, Deputy Dewey.”

“Corky,” is all he says, then he grabs me by the back of the neck then pulls me into him. He leans his head down where our lips are right at each other. “Adams, this isn’t the time.” I tell him, then pull back. “Now you want to be serious.” He whispers, then straightens up. I’m going to have to have the phone for a while so I can have my IT guy to get a hit on who is texting you. It would be wise to get a new phone with a new number. When you do, be sure to text me and let me know the number so I can keep you updated on the progress of cracking who’s texting you.” Adams tells me and hands me a card that has his number on it. Then he walks me to the door.

“I’ll keep in touch, Corky, and you do the same. You need to tell me when someone tries to attack you again,” Adams says. I just shake my head yes and walk on out of his office. I head out to my car and then to the college. I have classes this morning, then I’m free in the afternoon, so I’m going to work early. I got to my English class just in time to get my seat. We have a big test today, so I waste no time getting my tablet out.

Professor Gallagher walks in and shuts and locks the door behind him so no other students can get in while we are in the middle of our test. I look around and it looks like everyone is here, anyway. You have 1.5 hours to write about William Shakespeare in your own words and add one of his famous quotes at the end.. If I catch you doing more than writing on your tablets, you will fill the test with no questions.” Professor is telling us then he looks at his watch and lets us know we can start.

I write my piece on Shakespeare, then I use one of his quotes I think fits my life right now.

“Be great in act, as you have been in thought.”

I read over my paper and once I'm satisfied; I turn my tablet over. We email our work to the Professor and he grades them on the spot. I get a ping on my tablet. So, I turn it back over and check my email. I can't help the smile on my face. I got an A+ and a note from the Professor.

“You have been a gem in this class. You are going to go far. Good luck on your journey to success.”

Professor G.

It takes another 30 minutes for everyone else to finish their paper. Once they are done, we are all let go to head to our other classrooms to do our test in them. Once the tests of the day are all taken, I head out and head to work.

“Hey Corky girl, how were classes today?” Layla asks me. “They were great. I passed all my tests today. I just have tomorrow's test to do, then I will move on to the next chapter in my college life.” I told her. “So, one step closer to becoming a teacher then, huh?”

“Yep.” I tell her, then we get to work. I don't know what's been going on these last couple weeks, but the bar has been slammed.

“Hey sugar, what can I get you?” I ask the gentleman that just sit down. “I'll take a jack and coke.” He tells me. “Coming right up, sugar.” I tell him then walk over to the jack and get it off the shelf and pour the gentleman his drink, then make my way to my

next customer. "What can I do for you, sugar?" I ask Adams. "When do you get off tonight?"

"Why do you need me to do another job for you?" I ask him sarcastically. "No, I want to take you somewhere." He tells me, which surprises me. "Where?"

"Are you always so untrustworthy of people?" Adams asks me. "In the line of work I did, yes Dean Adams, I trust nobody."

"Well, you are just going to have to trust me this one time." He tells me, smirking. I look over at Layla as she is walking up to the bar. "Corky girl, just see what he's offering ." Layla tells me, so I agree to go somewhere with Dean Adams tonight after work.

The bar is so packed tonight I end up having to help the girls with tables along with working behind the bar. It's finally closing time. I'm beat and just want to go home. Hell, it's 2 in the morning. What's open for Adams to show me, anyway? But of course he is a persistent fucker, and he is standing by my car waiting for me. "Give Layla your car keys so she can get home. I will drop you off at home when we are done." Dean tells me, so I hand Layla my keys. There is no sense in arguing the point because I will not win.

We get into his truck and he drives us out of town. "Um, Dean Adams, are you taking me somewhere to kill me?" I tease him. "If you don't shut up, I Just might." Dean growls.

"You know, you asked me why I'm always making jokes. Well, here's a question for you Dean Adams. Why are you always so serious all the time?"

“When you’re in the job, I’m in and see the things I see day in and day out. You forget to smile sometimes.” He tells me honestly. I can’t help myself. I reach over and grab his hand and squeeze it. “So, Dean, are you going to tell me where you are taking me?”

“Away from it all for just one night.” Dean tells me, and we ride in silence the rest of the way to where Dean is taking me. We stop in front of a house that sits in front of the ocean. “Whoa Dean, this is beautiful. Is this yours?”

“I’m thinking of buying it.” Dean tells me. “So, we are at a house that you’re thinking about buying. Why?”

“I want to get a feel for the house and what’s the best way to check it out then by having sex in every room by noon?” Dean says. “And what makes you think I will be up to having sex with you?” I ask him, and of course we both know I’m just talking out of my ass.

Dean pulls me to him. “We both know all I have to do is just touch you and you’re all mine.” He says cockily, and that really pisses me off, because he’s insinuating I’m easy. Just because I was a prostitute doesn’t mean I am easy. “Just a fucking reminder I charge for this pussy.” I tell him, trying to push him away from me, but he doesn’t budge. “You know I didn’t mean what you are accusing me of, Corky.”

“And just what did you mean then, Dean Adams?” I yell at him, and he laughs all the times he wants to laugh.” I punch him in the arm, then he grabs me up and throws me over his shoulders. “You’re fixing to find out what I mean, Corky girl.” He tells me.

Once we get into the house, he sits me down so he can shut the door then he turns me around and pushes me up against the door, and slams his lips to mine kissing me

so forcefully I think he might have busted my lip but I don't have time to check it because he hikes me up high enough so he can slam himself inside me. Hell, I didn't even notice he took my or his pants off.

He pumps in me so fast and hard it takes me no time to come the first time around. And by the time I had orgasmed for the 5th time, we had made our way to the last bedroom in the house. We had sex in every room of the house - the living room, kitchen, dining room, bedrooms, and even the laundry room. I'm so tired I can barely hold my eyes open, but I have classes this afternoon, so I have to go home and get ready for school.

"I need you to take me home so I can get ready for school. I have my last few tests this afternoon." I tell Dean when he rolls off of me. "When do you have to be at school?" He asked me. "2 this afternoon." I tell him, and he looks at his watch. It's 9 in the morning Corky, let's sleep until 12 then I will take you home to get ready, and you should have plenty of time to get to the school before your first test starts." Dean tells me and I don't hesitate. I close my eyes and fall asleep.

Before I know it, Dean's alarm is going off to wake us up. I jump up and make Dean get up off the floor right away so he can get me home.

Thanks to Dean, I'm running into the college and to my first class of the afternoon, which is math. Our math Professor is not the nicest person, so I have to make sure I am not a minute later.

I make it into the classroom just in time. "Close call Ms. Sullivan." Professor Gray tells me. "Yes, ma'am, I'm sorry."

“Just get to your desk so we can get started, Ms. Sullivan.” Fuck, she’s going to give me an F just because I was late. I get to my seat and get a pencil out. The teacher is walking around giving us our sheets of paper. She tells us to leave the paper upside down until she tells us otherwise.

Once she gets back up to her desk, she sets an alarm, then lets us know we have 45 minutes to do our tests. Math is an okay subject for me, so I have to concentrate pretty hard on this test. It takes me the whole 45 minutes to take my math test, but when I turn my paper in I’m feeling pretty okay with it.

As we are walking out of the class the teacher hands us back our paper. I’m afraid to look at it to be honest but when I do I have a big smile on my face. I made yet another A+. Maybe I really am cut out for this college thing.

We have two more classes to go today, then we will be done with our test. We will move on to other classes, and we will be another semester away from our dreams. I shake the thoughts off and head on into my next class and get ready for the next test.

By the end of the next two tests I am on cloud nine. My 4.0 grade is still intact. When I leave the school I head to the bar, and tell everyone the good news. We are done with school for the week and I am off today and tomorrow so when I get to the bar I decide I’m going to celebrate my good news. Layla is home with Izabella so I text her and let her know I’m going to have a few drinks then I will be heading home and we can order some pizza. Pizza is Izabella’s favorite food, so we have it a lot, but secretly it’s mine as well.

I sit down at the bar and order myself a draft beer. “What’s the occasion, Corky girl.” Gordon asks me, and I smile at him and show him my test scores. “What? Girls come

look at this.” Gordon yells for the other girls to come over. “Corky, look at you go girl. See we told you... you were going to rock this shit.” Carrie tells me.

“Yes you did.” I tell her and drink my beer. The door to the bar opens and Dean comes walking in. Fuck he’s beautiful. Lord did I get drunk off of one beer. I shake my head and turn back to the front of the bar and ask Gordon for another.

“Not used to seeing you on this side of the bar, what’s the occasion?” Dean asks me. “I had finals this week and I passed with flying colors, so I decided since I’m off school the rest of the week and today and tomorrow are my two days off I’d have a drink or two. Are you coming or going?” I ask him. “Coming.” He tells me then sits down beside me.

Before I knew it I had been at the bar for over an hour talking to Dean and feeling a little buzzed. “Crap, I need to head home.” I tell Dean. “I’ll take you. I’m not going to let you drive in this condensation.” Dean tells me. “What condensation Dean Adams?” I ask him.

“Corky.” He scolds me and I mock him. “Dean”

Thirteen

Dean gets me out of the bar and into his truck. “What about my car, Dean Adams?” I ask him and he gives me a go to hell look. “Know I don’t understand you. You

don't like it when I call you Deputy Dewey and you don't like it when I call you Dean Adams. I like your name Dead Adams." I told him.

"And you could just call me Dean or Adams?" He tells me. "What fun is that?" I ask him.

"Right, of course. What fun is that?" Dean says. I can't help but laugh at him. I really like Dean, but I know from experience not to get attached to guys like Dean. Because they only see one thing from women like me. Which is probably why he is taking me back to the house he took me to the night before, which made me almost late for my math test. "I thought you were taking me home?" I asked Dean. "I might tomorrow." He tells me.

We get out of his truck and head into the house and this time there is furniture in the house. "Damn Dean, did you buy this house that fast?" I ask him. "I bought the house but no furniture yet because I wasn't sure if I wanted to keep it. When you saw it and liked it, I changed my mind and kept the house." He tells me.

I walk over to where he is standing and lean up on my tiptoes to kiss him. He wraps me up into his arms and carries me to one of the bedrooms and lays me on the bed, then he takes our clothes off.

Dean parts my legs and leans down, kissing me from my belly button to my pussy. He finds my clit and I buck off the bed. "Fuckkk Dean." I cry out.

Dean nips at my clit, and I combust. Bucking and screaming his name. I have never had a guy make me feel the way Dean makes me feel when we have sex, and I've never had a man eat me out the way Dean just did.

Dean stands up, then puts a condom on and slams into me, then just holds there until I adjust to him. When I move, he matches my rhythm. We lay in his bed after making love three times. Dean falls asleep and I watch him sleep. I think I'm falling for him, but I can't be. I have no room in my life for someone, especially someone like Dean Adams. This guy will try to turn me into something I'm not. I don't do romance, and I sure as hell don't do relationships.

I get up out of the bed as slow as possible and gather my clothes and shoes, then I walk out to the bathroom that's in the hall and use the restroom, then get cleaned up and dressed. I do the walk of shame out of his house. I walk a block or two down the road, then get my phone out and call Layla to come and pick me up.

"Corky girl, why did you leave that man's bed?" Layla asks me once she picks me up.

"Because Layla, I don't have time for any kind of relationship and it felt that way with him. For Christ's sake, he bought the house because I liked it." I tell Layla and she smiles at me. "Oh, Corky girl."

"Don't Layla baby." I tell her and she takes the hit. We rode back to the house in silence. Once we are home, Layla heads to bed and I head to the bathroom and get a shower. When I get back to my room, I grab some clothes for bed.



The next couple days have been quiet. Layla and I head back to work today and truthfully, I'm ready. I hate just sitting around and doing nothing.

We get to the bar and get straight to work. "What can I do for you, sugar?" I ask the customer that sits down at the bar and when he looks up, I lose all the blood in my face. Fuck me, Martin is out of jail. "Martin?"

"Yeah sugar, it's me. So I go to jail and you and Layla get off the streets and start working in my bar?"

"It's safer with Layla having Izabella back and the murder out there still." I tell Martin, but I can see in his eyes he doesn't give a shit about why we are working in the bar and not on the streets where he thinks we belong. "I've started college," I say. I'm trying to make conversation with the asshole, but sometimes with Martin, it's like talking to a brick wall. He just gets up and walks back toward his office, and I walk right over to Gordon. "How in the hell is he out?" I ask him. "I don't know," Gordon says, shaking his head.

Me- How the fuck is Martin out of jail and back in the bar?

Deputy Dewey- Oh, now you want to talk to me? If you would have answered my um tymp calls, oh and the message I sent. You know the one that said "Call me ASAP." Then you would have none that they released him on bail.

Me- I don't need your smart ass shit, Deputy fucking Dewey. You should have notified us anyway you could.

I Yell at him. I know this is not his fault, but fuck. We were finally away from him and now he's back and can put us back on the streets without question. I get back to work. As long as Martin is in his office and not out here with us or trying to kick us out of the bar, then I'm going to stay working.

By the end of our shift, Martin still hasn't come out of his office, so maybe he will not make us go back out on the streets. When Layla and I get out to the bar, she turns and looks at me. "Corky, what the hell is he doing out? I thought he was supposed to stay there for a long time."

"I thought he was to Layla." I understand why she is scared Martin can take Izabelle at any time, but I think we have the upper hand this time. We have the cops on our side.

When we get home, Layla goes straight to Izabella's room and lets her know Martin is out of jail, and I hear Izabelle cry out. "He will not come and take me back, will he?" Izabelle is asking her mother.

I walk into the room they are in. "If I have anything to do with it, you will never go back to Martin." I told Izabella. "But you can't promise that he won't come in here and take me right now, now can you Corky?" she growls my name. This kid seems too mature for her age.

I walk out of her room and back down the hall when I hear a knock on the door. Fuck, I hope this isn't Martin. I walk to the door and look out the peephole and see it's Dean at the door. Crap, I don't feel up to his bullshit tonight, so I just walk back to my bedroom and leave him out on the steps.

"Who was at the door?" Layla asks me, coming and standing in my doorway. "Deputy Dewey." I told her. "Oh, Corky, why are you still running from that boy?"

“Because Layla, I can’t do this with him right now.” She just shakes her head at me, then walks out of my room. Then I hear the front door open and close again. Surely he’s not still out there?

“So you’re just going to leave me standing on the front porch.” Dean asks me when he walks into my room a minute later. “Layla.” I squeak. I hear her laughing at me as Dean is shutting the door. “What are you doing? Open my door back up.” I told him, but of course he doesn’t listen, he just walks over to my bed where I’m sitting in all his 6’3 length. “What do you think you are doing?” I ask him scooting up the bed, but he grabs my legs and pulls me back to him.

“Let me go.” I yell at him. But he just smirks at me, then takes my shoes off, then my jeans. “No, you don’t.” I tell him, trying to push him away with my foot, but he shakes his head and grabs my leg so I can’t kick him again. “I say when and if we have sex, Deputy Dewey.”

He gives me his look he always does right before he tells me to shut up, but this time he doesn’t tell me to shut up he doesn’t even say anything at all he just bends down over me and plunges his tongue in my mouth. I want to bite him, but it also feels so good. Why do I always let this guy into my personal space like this? It’s like I have no self control when it comes to him. I say I will not let him touch me again, but here we are fucking again.

“Why did you leave like you did the other night?” Dean asks me when we are done having sex. Really, this is what he wants to talk about. “You want to talk about that right now? Is that really the reason you came over here?” I ask him.

“No, I came to talk to you about Martin.” He tells me and I go stiff. If he is coming over here to talk to me in person, this can’t be good. “What is it Dean?”

“Well, it’s about Martin’s case. The witness who was going to testify against Martin and the other guy got murdered about a month ago. Without the witness, we have no case, so we had to release Martin and the other guy from prison.

“Layla and I have gotten our lives together. He is going to ruin everything for us and what if he finds out I’m the one who got him arrested in the first place?” I voice this concern to Dean.

“I won’t let him do anything to you two.” He tells me and I believe he will do everything he can to protect us, but he can’t help us if Martin throws us back out into the streets. “Just make sure he doesn’t take her little girl from her again. If he does, you can get him for kidnapping, right?” I ask Dean.

“Yes, we can get him for kidnapping the moment he tries to take her. If he tries to take her, you text me and I will be here. But Corky, if he didn’t do or say anything the day he got out of prison, I think you and Layla are going to be okay.” Dean tells me. I want to believe him, but with Martin, anything is possible.

The next day after school, I head to the bar, but when I get there something feels off, so I walk up to Gordon and ask him what’s up. He just informs me I need to go to Martins off. “Fucking great.” I mumble.

I get to Martin’s office before I open the door. I take a deep breath and knock on the door. “Enter.” Martin barks. I open the door and walk into the office. “You wanted to see me, Martin?”

“Yes, I did,” Martin says, looking up from some paperwork on his desk. “So, I go to jail and you think you can take it upon yourself to get Layla off the streets? It was one thing for you to work here a couple days a week, but you took my two highest paid hookers off the street.” Martin says and his voice is getting higher, so I know he is getting madder the longer he is talking to me. “Martin Layla could not stay on the streets having Izabella back and I wasn’t the one who took me off the streets for good, it was Gordon who needed help in the bar.” I’m telling Martin and as I am Martin gets up and walks towards me, then punches me in the stomach and bends down to whisper in my ear. “You listen to me, you little whore. I’m the one who calls the fucking shots, not you. So, here’s what you’re going to do. You’re going to take your ass back out to the fucking streets and work until I say otherwise. Got me?”

I straightened back up and looked Martin in the face and smiled at him. “Actually, Martin, right now I call the shots. If you don’t want to go back to jail for money laundering along with several other things, you will leave this bar and leave town. See, I am the one that has been doing the books and I’ve come across quite a few things over the last couple of months that will have you in prison until you are dead.” I tell him and Martin’s face gets so red I think he’s going to pass out, but to my surprise, he doesn’t say another word. He just walks out of his office and right out the door.

Thank fuck he believed what I was saying because I was just blowing fucking smoke out of my ass, but I had to do something because I wasn’t letting him ruin or progress.

As soon as Layla and my shift were over, we headed straight home for the night. Something just doesn’t feel right to me. I feel like something horrible is fixing to happen tonight. Once we get inside, I shut and lock the door.

“Layla, go check on Izabella and the babysitter, please.” I tell her and she heads upstairs to go check on them. When she gets back downstairs, she asks me what has me so spooked so I explain to her what Martin said to me tonight and how I just felt like something just wasn’t right.

“Do you think Martin will come here and try to take Izabella back and make us go back to the streets?” Layla asks me. I truthfully don’t know how to answer that, but I do know I will feel safer if Dean would come over and scope the place out, so I text him.

Me- Are you working tonight?

Deputy Dewey- Yea, I get off in about an hour. Do you need something, Corky?

God, I can’t believe I’m doing this.

Me: Can you come to the house for a little bit tonight? I’m just having a bad feeling about something, and it could be nothing at all.

Deputy Dewey- Do you want me to send a patrol car over to keep an eye on you until I get off?

Me- No, I think we will be okay until you get off. Besides, I could just be overreacting.

“I have Deputy Adams coming over after his shift.” I tell Layla and we let Tiffany out the door and tell her to run home, then we head into the kitchen and start supper for Izabella and ourselves. We decided on spaghetti and meatballs. It’s one of Izabella’s favorites.

We get dinner done and sit down at the table to eat when there is a knock on the door. I jump a little, and of course, Izabella catches it. "Aunt Corky, are you okay?" She asks me. "Yes, Bella I'm okay." I tell her and get up to answer the door. I look over at Layla, telling her with my eyes to get ready to run with Izabella. She shakes her head at me and I walk toward the front door.

I look in the little peephole to see if I can see anyone standing in front of the door and it's Gordon, so I open the door. "Hey Gordon, what are you doing out this way so late at night?" I ask him.

"I came to check on you girls. I didn't like the way you left tonight. Did Martin say something to you?" Gordon asks. "Yes, he was upset because Layla and I were not on the streets anymore. I'm afraid he is going to make us go back." I tell Gordon.

"I won't let that happen," Gordon tells me and I know he would try hard to protect us girls, but when it comes to Martin, nobody can. "Can I trust you Gordon?"

"Of course you can, Corky Girl. What do you need to tell me?" He asked me. I clear my throat and tell him about Martin. "Do you remember the guy that comes to the bar now and then?" I ask him. "Yes." Gordon says with a question in his tone. "Should I do this? Should I tell him what I did?" "Spit it out Corky Girl."

"He asked me to sit Martin up. I transported drugs for Martin to Florida. The cops had me wired up, so when I got to the drop point, they knew what was in the bag and where to find it. There was also a camera there, so they were able to see who picked the drugs up at that time. The cops apprehended the receiver, and that person ratted Martin out. So when we all got arrested at the bar, that was my fault, and I think Martin might know that.

“Gordon?” I whisper. “Dammit Corky.” Is all he says, then turns around and walks out of our door.

Fuck! Fuck! Fuck!

“Oh, Corky girl, what did you just do?” Layla asks me standing in the doorway. “I don’t know Layla. I don’t know.”

Walking back into the house and locking up tight. I go back to the dining room and eat my dinner. Layla’s pissed at me. “Layla I’m sorry.” I whisper.

“It’s fine, Corky. We just have to be careful with Izabella.” Layla tells me. “I understand.” I told her.

Layla and Izabella head upstairs to get showers and I clean the table, then the kitchen. Once I have that done, I go to walk upstairs when there is another knock on the door, so I walk over and check the peephole. It’s Dean this time, so I open the door.

“Hey.” He says when I open the door. “Hey.” I say. “So do you want to tell me what’s going on?” Dean asks me as he is walking in the door.

“I just felt weird when I left Martin’s office. Just something he said to me made me think he might know why he was in jail and who helped put him there.”

“Are you sure you’re not just overreacting?” Dean asks me. I knew it was a bad idea to have him come. “Look Dean, I was just scared I’m alright now so you can go.”

“Dammit, Corky, I’m tired and don’t have time for this shit.” Dean growls at me and I push his ass right back out the door. “That’s fine. You can fucking leave now.” I yell at

him. "So, you can just go right back to whatever it is you were doing." I tell him, then shut the door right in his face.

God, I feel so stupid for trusting in him. He's a fucking cop and I'm still a nobody. After I see Dean has left, I walk around to all the windows and doors, making sure they are all locked up tight. I might be overreacting with this, but I don't want to take any chances where it concerns Izabella's safety.

I walk upstairs to get a shower when my phone buzzes in my hands, scaring me again. Come on, Corky, get your shit together, girl. I look down at my phone and see a text from an unknown number.

Unknown- Have you figured it out yet, Corky Girl? Your time will come to an end really soon. You should have picked your friends a little better whore.

Fuck, who is this? Hell, it could be a number of people. Martin, Gordon, even though I don't want to think of Gordon wanting to hurt us like that. It could be that damn cop dude-drop, hell it could even be Dean Adams. I mean way not. Get us to trust him, then move in for the kill. It would be what I'd do if I were a psycho killer.

Unknown- It's okay, whore, you will find out soon enough who I am. By the way, you're looking a little chunky with your clothes off.

He's outside shit. How can he see me all the way up on the second floor with the blinds closed? I peek through the closed blind just to see if I can see anyone out there, but there's no such luck. It's pitch black out here. I could have sworn we had a night light in the back of this house, but there's nothing on. I shake myself out

of this funk and walk into the shower where I have the hot water waiting for me. Maybe the freak just made a lucky guess.

Unknown- You know Corky Girl, you shouldn't have sent the pig away so soon. He might have saved your life tonight. 🙄 oh well, I would have just killed him too.

I get out of the shower and find yet another text from the unknown number. He's been watching us all night.

I walk to Layla's bedroom and knock on her door. When she tells me to come in I walk into her room. I walk over to her bed and hand her my phone. "What's this?" Layla asks me. "Text messages tonight from an unknown." I told her.

"Corky, how long have you been getting these messages?" Layla asks me. "For a couple weeks now, but I took my phone to Dean, and he took it for his analysis guys to look at it." Shit, this is my new phone and number.

"Layla, this is a new phone with a whole new number." Layla looks at me with wide eyes. "What do we do, Corky?"

"I'm going to forward these to Dean, but Layla, we have to get Izabella out of here somehow."

"How Corky girl, according to their text, whoever it is, is outside right now?" Layla informs me. "I know I'm thinking." I told her.

We both feel scared at this point, but we need to stick together to avoid being doomed. "Layla baby, I know this is hard, but I need you to help me think of a way to either hide Izabella and to get her out of here and out of harm's way."

“We have an attic, only I know it’s in the house. The access is in my bedroom closet.” Layla tells me. “Good, that’s good. Now let’s make sure the windows are locked and there is no way anyone can look at them and see what we are doing.” I tell Layla then we get to work on locking her and Izabella’s windows and making sure nobody can see in them at all. Then we took Layla’s extra blankets and pillows up to the attic. “I think we should take my laptop up there and put some headphones in Izabella’s ears so she can watch some tv or listen to some music. Maybe help her fall back to sleep and also hopefully drown out anything that could be happening, so she doesn’t try to come down.” I tell Layla.

“That’s a good idea, Corky girl.” I go to my room and get my laptop and headphones that I use for school. And put them up there while Layla goes and gets Izabella out of bed. We put Izabella up in the attic with everything she needs. She has her blankets, pillows, something to keep her entertained for the time being. We also got her some food and water. “Izabella, we need you to stay up here and for you to keep the headphones on and watch tv or listen to music until your mom or I come and get you. Can you do that for us?” I ask her.

“Yes, I can do that but you have to tell me what’s going on and stop treating me like I’m some kid.” Izabella tells me in her I’m too big for my britches tone. Damn, this kid is too damn smart.

“I have a bad feeling something bad is fixing to happen tonight. I can’t explain it but I’ve also been getting bad text messages from someone we don’t know, so for precaution we want you to stay up here where we know you are safe. That way we don’t have to worry about you if we have to fight some bad person off.” I told her. “Does that make sense?” I asked Izabella.

“Yes,” she tells me. Then climbs on up into the attic and puts the headphones in her ears. Then I shut the door and head back into Layla’s room. “I need a drink.” I told her. “Yea me too.” She says and we walk downstairs to the kitchen and Layla gets out two wine glasses and pours us a glass of her white wine. We are sitting at the bar in the kitchen sipping on the wine when there is a knock on the door. “Dean?” Layla asks, and it makes sense I did send him the messages I got earlier.

Layla and I get up and walk over to the door and I look at the peephole, then open the door.

“Carrie?”

“Hey Corky Gordon wanted me to come over and check on you. See how you were doing. He said he came over to check on you and when he left, you were pretty freaked out.”

“Yes, this Martin thing freaked me out.” I tell her, moving out of the way so she can walk in the door. “That’s understandable, Corky. He has been a bully to you and Layla for years, and now you both are doing so good,” Carrie is saying as Layla is walking into the hall.

“Hey Carrie, would you like a glass of wine?” Layla asks her.

“Sure, a glass of wine would be nice.” Carrie says walking over to Layla then grabs the glass she was offering her.

“It’s kind of late for you to be out, Carrie?” Layla comments. You can tell she is very nervous, so I walk over to where she is standing, then lean in and whisper in her ear for her to calm down some.

“Yea, I was still at the bar doing schoolwork when Gordon came in and asked me if I would come and check on Corky because she was pretty bummed out about Martin being out of jail. So I just came right over,” Carrie tells us.

“Why don’t we come into the kitchen and relax, maybe drink a few glasses of wine?” I tell them. So we all head into the kitchen and grab a bar stool.

“So, how much longer do you have in school?” I ask Carrie.

“I will be done with my pre-req classes at the end of this year, then I will start my law degree.” She tells me. “How is school going with you?” Carrie asks me.

“It’s going well. I’m doubling up on my classes so I can be done in two years instead of four.”

“And what are you going for again?” She asks me.

“I’m going to become an English teacher. I love poetry and plays and things like that. So I thought it would be nice to teach that in high school. You know, young hip teacher, the kids would love it, I hope.” I told her.

“Someone that looks like you, Corky. you will have the kids eating out of your hands.” Carrie comments.

“You know you are the second person that has told me that in the last couple months. I guess I just don’t see what everyone else she’s of me.” I told her. Carrie and Layla look at me funny.

“What?” I say, shrugging my shoulders.

“It just amazes us how unaware you are of your own beauty.” Layla tells me and I blush.

“Get out of here with that crap.” I tell them. We are shooting the shit a little while longer when we hear footsteps coming down the stairs. Layla and I look over at each other. Could he have gotten into the house through one of the big windows? Crap, Carrie is in the middle of this now. How do I get her out of here safely without him knowing she is here? Before I can react to anything, I’m thinking Izabella comes down the stairs.

“Bella, what are you doing out of bed?” Layla asks her.

“I heard aunt Carrie and figured everything was okay now.” Bella tells her momma. But is everything okay as long as Carrie is here? maybe... maybe whoever this psycho is won’t do anything to us with her here. I mean, we are the ones he wants, we are the night girls. Maybe whoever this is knows Carrie is just working at the bar until she is through with her college and he won’t hurt her.

“Come say your good nights to aunt Carrie and then go back to bed, please.” Layla tells Bella, so Bella does as she is told. She comes over to where Carrie is sitting on the stool and gives her a hug, then whispers something into Carrie’s here.

"I love hide and seek." Carrie tells her. "I will have to come and find you later." She says to Bella and smiles at her, but the way she said I will have to come and find you later has me a little on edge. I don't know why, but all of a sudden I want Carrie to leave. I know I'm being ridiculous.

"Would you girls like me to make you a drink?" Carrie asks us after Bella gets back upstairs.

"Sure." Layla says. So, Carrie tells us to go sit on the couch, get comfortable and she will bring us the drinks. "Okay, that sounds nice." Layla then drags me to the living room. "Corky, what are you thinking? You have gone quiet on me."

It's probably nothing, I don't know. I'm sure I'm over thinking things as always." I tell Layla.

"Maybe we should ask Carrie to leave and we try to get some sleep." Layla tells me.

"Layla, someone just threatened to kill us. We're going to sleep no time soon." I tell her and I mean really girl.

Carrie comes out of the kitchen with our drinks about that time, then hands us our drinks. "Thank you Carrie, what are these?" I ask her.

"Cosmos." She tells us and I take a sip of the drink and it tastes pretty legit. "This tastes good." I tell her and drink some more of the drink she handed me. I have half of my drink down when I realize Carrie didn't have a drink. "Not drinking with us, Car?" I ask her.

“No, not tonight,” she smiles at me then kinda rubs her belly.

Oh shit, she’s pregnant. “Are you pregnant?” I blurt out, and she smiles at me. My phone buzzes from the other room and I go to get up to go get it, but fuck me, I’m dizzy as shit. “Damn girl, how much alcohol did you put in the drinks?” I ask Carrie, and she giggles at me.

“Feeling drunk, Corky?” She asks me.

“Yea, a bit.” I reply back and try to walk into the kitchen to retrieve my phone. It seems to take me forever to get to it, but when I do, my blood goes cold.

Deputy Dewey- It’s your friend from the bar, Carrie White, that has been sending you the messages. Whatever you do, Corky, stay away from her. She is very dangerous.

“Fuck!” I turn around and Carrie is standing behind me smiling.

