

## **HIS(18+) novel by Siano Blaccq**

### **Chapter 1 SOPHIA WATCHED IN**

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SOPHIA WATCHED IN sheer horror as the nineteen-year-old familiar-looking stranger plunged the knife out of her mum's abdomen while she just stood at the bottom of the stairs watching everything. To say she was scared was an understatement.

They were just done having dinner-their small family; Her dad, mum, and herself she'd just gone upstairs to her room to get a broken doll that she could show her dad when she heard the sound of glass breaking. Clutching her broken doll, she rushed downstairs only to see her mum being stabbed by an unknown stranger and lying dead on the floor.

Her eyes searched for her dad but he was nowhere to be found.

Had he been killed too?

"You rascal!", Sophia heard her dad's voice before he finally came into view. He gripped the stranger's collar and glared at him. "What did you do to my security team? What did you do to my wife?",

"I did what should have been done a long time ago", The killer replied without any hint of remorse in his voice. "And I'm ending this whole bullshit here", The killer took Sophia's father by surprise and stabbed him in the chest and a small gasp left her lips. She watched as her dad's eyes filled with horror and his lips parted when the killer pulled out the knife forcefully and stabbed him again, making him cough blood until he fell with a loud thud on the floor, with life slowly slipping from his eyes.

From what Sophia's eight-year-old instincts told her, her dad sounded as if he knew the young man who had just killed him before that day.

Sophia's sobs from where she stood caught the attention of the killer and he glared at her with his dark and piercing eyes which were devoid of any emotions. He looked oddly familiar but she couldn't place out where she had ever seen him. Not when the whole light in the house was dimmed. The stranger didn't look away from her and it sent cold shivers down her spine.

Was he going to kill her too?

"Soph-", She heard his voice as he calmly walked towards her. She was shaking and her lips were quivering. She knew her end had arrived as well but something told her to run.

When the murderer extended his gloved arms towards her, she ran back upstairs to her room, unsure if it was even safe for her. She hid in a corner and curled herself in a ball as the image of her mum's dead body on the floor and her dad's horror-stricken eyes flooded through her mind while unstoppable tears streamed down her face.

Her parents were gone and she was too young to be an orphan.

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"No please-mama-papa-don't go", Sophia whimpered as she clutched onto the sheets with her fists. Her eyes were clenched shut and tighter than they should've been for someone sleeping while beads of sweat trickled down her face. "Please-",

"Wake up, Soph", Someone shook her shoulders softly and her eyes flew open immediately. She sat up on her bed and began to search her whole room with fear evident in her eyes as she thought her parent's killer was there in the room with her. She hugged her knees as tears streamed down her face. She was a crying mess and her hair was probably sticking out all over her face. "It's okay, my dear. It's just the nightmare", Her grandma pulled her into her arms as she rocked her back and forth.

"Nana-", She cried and looked up at her grandma with her big doe eyes. "He-he-he isn't coming, right? He won't come near us, right? He won't-he won't kill us the way he he-killed Mama and Papa, right?",

"No, my dear", The woman patted her eighteen-year-old granddaughter's back softly. "He won't find us",

Sophia clutched onto her grandma tightly as the images flooded her memory. For the past ten years, she spent every single night of her life having nightmares about her parents' mysterious killer and she kept on wondering who he was. The tone in his voice while he spoke to her dad that night made her feel like her parents knew their murderer and maybe he had an unsettled score with them.

"Here, have milk", Her grandma brought a glass of warm milk to her lips. Whenever she woke up every night after the nightmares, she always drank warm milk to soothe herself and help her calm down.

Sophia quickly drowned the whole glass of milk down her throat before her grandma took the empty glass from her lips and placed it back on the tray by her bedside table.

"It's going to be alright, dear". Her grandma whispered.

"Thanks, Nana", Sophia said too.

"Would you like to go back to bed?", Her grandma asked.

"I'll try today", Sophia whispered as she laid down on her bed and nuzzled herself in her blanket. She knew sleep had eluded her but she couldn't stress her grandma by telling her.

"Should I stay in here with you?", Her grandma asked.

"Yes, please", she croaked out.

With a small smile, Sophia's grandma slid into bed next to her and pulled her in her arms. "Goodnight, dear" " the older woman whispered as she stroked Sophia's hair.

Sophia closed her eyes in an attempt to sleep but instead, all she saw was the dark and piercing emotionless eyes of that killer staring at her and she hated it.

Over the years, Sophia had engraved every single feature of his eyes in her memory because he was someone she wasn't sure she could ever forget. In other cases, it might not be extremely hard for people to forget the face of the person who murdered their parents but Sophia's case was different. Instead of forgetting the unknown murderer, she seemed to remember him more as each day of her life passed by. Who would ever forget the face of the person who made them an orphan?

As she thought about all these, she went down the memory lane of how her life had been for the past ten years since she lost her parents. That night when she ran to her room from the killer, he didn't follow her and a small part of her was grateful while the bigger part of her wished he had killed her along with her parents. At least she wouldn't have gone through the trauma she was going through. With a small sigh, she remembered how she stayed glued to that spot that night until the next day when her grandma took her away from the house while her parents were laid to rest.

Growing up after experiencing such was hard for Sophia but with her Nana, she was able to scale through some parts except the nightmares part. Her grandma made sure she went to school and at the age of eighteen, she was already a college student, so she had to work out her ass by working in a small coffee shop to assist her grandma with a few expenses.

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"Okay then, sir. Goodnight", Sophia smiled at her boss.

"My regards to your Nana", The burly man smiled back at her, and he left the coffee shop.

It was a long day and finally, she was about to close the shop since she was the one given the responsibility to do so. All she needed to do was clean up the tables and she'd go back home to her grandma.

And her nightmares.

Just as Sophia began to clean the first table, she heard the chime sound of the door, indicating that a customer had arrived.

Couldn't the person see the board outside which read 'closed'?

Sophia turned abruptly, ready to snap at the person but her words died on her lips as her eyes landed on the people by the door side.

A lady of about twenty-four or so and two young men of about the same age-maybe twenty-six stood there all clad in black by the door, looking deadly.

Who were they?

"Three cups of coffee, please" " the lady said and they sat on a table at a secluded corner close to the door side. Sophia watched as one of the men dropped a gun on the table in front of him and she gulped nervously.

Looking at the remaining two people's trouser holsters, their guns were strapped there and the aura they carried made Sophia sick in the stomach. She knew instantly that they were dangerous and not people she could even try to mess with.

She scurried off to make the coffee for them and in no time, she was already finished. When she took it to them, they seemed busy. The guy who brought out his gun had a laptop in front of him with his whole attention on it while the lady was talking to the other guy. Sophia saw the snake tattoo on the laptop guy's left wrist and she couldn't help but stare at the other's wrists. Just as expected, they had the same tattoo on their left wrists.

Were they in a cult or something?

Did her parents' killer send them to kill her?

"He's here", The laptop guy closed his laptop and stood up before pushing his gun back to his trousers' holster and Sophia swallowed.

Who was there? Was it their boss who was going to kill her like he did with her parents?

The lady glanced at Sophia and the tray which had three steaming cups of coffee on it and gave her a small smile. "I'm sorry, we're in a hurry. We can't take it again", The lady placed a ten dollar note in Sophia's palm. "Keep the change", She smiled and the trio left from the coffee shop.

Sophia breathed out in relief and looked at the dollar note in her hand. She quickly went to drop the towel she was using the clean the tables. She was scared they would return

so she made up her mind to leave the work for that night and complete it the next morning as early as possible before the coffee shop would be opened for customers.

She quickly strapped her bag across her shoulders locked the transparent doors of the coffee shop and walked down the alley towards her grandma and her house since she moved in with her grandma after her parents' death while their house was sold. She was too traumatized and scared to even live in the same house where her parents were murdered right in front of her.

"Please, I'm sorry",

Sophia halted in her steps when she heard someone's pleading voice coming from where she was about to pass through to go home.

"You fucking gave information to the enemy and you expect us to spare your useless life?", Another man sneered. It was as if he was the one who was being begged to spare the other person's life. "How smart of you, Russo",

"I'm sorry, please won't do it again. Please accept me back", The pleading man continued.

Something about the whole noise didn't settle well with Sophia and a part of her told her to run and follow another way back home but the curious part of her was against that thoughtful side. She had forgotten the saying, 'Curiosity killed the cat'. She moved further until she could catch a glimpse of the people there.

Sophia's throat suddenly went dry when she saw the people there.

They were the trio from the coffee shop and they had an older-looking man on his knees in front of them, begging for his life while a laptop guy pointed his gun at him.

Could he be the one they said had arrived?

A sense of relief flooded through her that at least she wasn't the one they had planned to kill but still, that man's life was in danger and she wasn't sure she could help because they were dangerous people and they were saying something about him betraying them so his death was already predicted to happen.

"Young Miss-", The poor man looked at the lady who had an emotionless look on her face, reminding Sophia of her parents' murderer. "I know you as a nice girl, please save me. Spare my life",

"How dare you even think of talking to our sister?", The second guy slapped the man across the face, and that instant, Sophia fixed the puzzle.

The three were siblings and the lady was the younger one of them. Maybe the laptop guy was the older one? She wasn't sure of that.

"Mr. Russo, we can't do anything to save you as long as Don has given the order that you should be killed for your huge betrayal" " the lady said. She didn't even look or sound like someone who would give out money to someone like Sophia as she did back at the coffee shop.

"Even without Don's orders, this mother fucker is dying right now", the Laptop guy growled and pressed the gun in between the man's eyes. "Last prayer-last wish",

"Please spare Me-I have a fa-" The laptop guy didn't let him finish when he pulled the trigger.

"That was fast", The other guy smiled at the laptop guy who wasn't even smiling at all.

Sophia stared with wide eyes at the lifeless body of the man on the floor as he lay there, in a pool of his blood while his eyes were opened in horror and without realizing it, a scream tore from her lips.