

His Mission

Chapter 1 - His death left me battered and bruised.

C1 His death left me battered and bruised.

I experience pain daily.

The type of pain that burns your mind, your muscles and your bones with an angry flame. The pain seeps its way inside my brain, overtaking the joy and replacing it with a dark shadow. The pain and agony eats me up from the inside, tearing off flesh after flesh. Experiencing pain can tumble you down a dark hole. I try to scratch at the walls to free myself but it's no use, I'm trapped.

"Next time, do as I tell you! No questions asked!" Trevor hisses in disgust, standing over my petite body. His face is burning red, seething with anger. I push myself as far into the wall as I can, my entire body shaking with fear. My heart is beating wildly against my chest, the sound of it echoes in my ears.

Whatever you do, do not look him in the eyes.

He hates it when I make eye contact with him. It's a challenge for him, a sign to show I'm not as broken and beaten as he thinks I am. Trevor's hands curl up into a tight fist and I immediately shrink into myself, screaming out as they crash down onto my body.

"Please stop! You don't have to do this!" I yell, pleading with him. My screams of agony fall upon deaf ears so I give up and lie there emotionlessly, letting him torture me like his little rag doll.

I stare at my reflection in the mirror and sigh, hastily wiping the tears away from my eyes. I refuse to cry. . . That's exactly what he wants. He wants me to suffer and I would never give him the satisfaction of knowing I already am. A clump of my dark brown hair is missing, replaced with tenderness and throbbing of my scalp. My finger trails down my cheek and under my eye where the stinging is turning into a tender blue bruise.

I bite my bottom lip and release a small whimper as I attempt to lift my top to see the damage he inflicted. As expected, the bruises ran up my side but nothing felt broken.

"Why did you leave me like this, Dad?" I whisper, glancing at the photo frame on my bedside table. It's a photograph taken of me as a little girl. My large brown eyes sparkled as I sat on my fathers shoulders, holding tightly onto his hair. His own eyes mirror mine along with a pearly smile that couldn't be flawed. Dad and I were inseparable.

Mum had taken the picture at my sixth birthday party. I remember that day so well, the way my father smiled at me as he sang 'Happy Birthday'. I remember him clutching the

cake in front of him, telling me to make a wish and blow out the candles. He cheered and clapped so loud, it felt like I had my own personal cheerleading squad. Dad died suddenly the following month leaving his only daughter behind with a shattered heart.

Ten years without the man I love and adore.

I shuffle towards my bed and take a seat on the edge. I lift the picture up to my lips, placing a gentle kiss over the glass. It feels cool against my lips and I close my eyes, taking slow breaths. I allow the oxygen to fill my lungs and calm my thoughts.

"Sleep tight, Princess. I love you." Dad would say every single night, tucking me up tightly before leaving the room.

"I love you too," I whisper, clutching the picture frame tightly to my chest.

I walk into college and the crowds for my best friend, Trisha Lockwood. The friendship between Trish and I has always been peculiar to anyone looking in from the outside. I'm relatively quiet whereas Trish is loud and bubbly. My dark hair is the complete opposite to Trish's long blonde locks. She wears pink skirts with cute tops whereas I prefer to stick with jeans and a cute sweater. The one thing I regret every day is not telling her about my stepfather.

I've always feared the repercussions of spilling my secret. What if Trevor found a way to hurt Trish? I could never risk harming my best friend. Trish knew I didn't like my parents but she didn't know the extent of the abuse at home.

Trish and I have been friends since I was a little girl. We clicked from the start, she's wild and I'm calm. I tame her behaviour and she inserts some craziness into my life. A smile flickers across my lips at the sight of her. She's surrounded by three boys which doesn't surprise me in the slightest. She receives enough male attention for the both of us. One of the boys leans towards her ear and lowers his voice so he can't be overheard. Trish immediately giggles and glances up at him with a flirtatious smile on her lips.

I roll my eyes and walk over to them, ignoring the pain flaring up my side from the simple movement. Images of my step father raising his fists last night cloud my mind, making my hands clench into tight fists. I'm not a violent character. . . I'm too scared to fight back. I tried once when I was twelve years old and ended up breaking my thumb. How was I supposed to know I shouldn't tuck my thumb into my fist when punching?

Let's just say my thumb has never been the same after that accident. I chuckle at my own stupidity and shake my head.

"Hey, Em! Share the joke," Trish smiles, walking over to me and linking her arm through mine. The boys behind her appear to be heartbroken at her lack of attention. I shake my head at Trish, giving her a small smile.

"Oh, it's nothing. How was the concert this weekend?" I ask her eagerly, partly wanting to change the subject. Trish winces from the memories before letting out a small chuckle —

"First of all, I was so drunk, I ended up peeing in a bush." She grimaces. I let out a loud laugh, shaking my head. That is typical Trisha behaviour and I wouldn't expect anything less from her.

"How was the music? Did you see your favourite band?" I ask, nudging her slightly.

"The music was awesome. I'm sad you couldn't be there. It was full of boys!" Trish giggles, wiggling her eyebrows in a suggestive manner.

"Did you meet any cute ones?" I respond, ignoring her comment about my lack of presence. I hardly get to hang out with Trish outside of school and a concert would be totally off the cards. Trish nods eagerly, her eyes lighting up —

"Yes! Let me tell you all about it!" She giggles, dragging me towards a nearby chair. I take a seat and Trish intakes a sharp breath before diving into every male she encountered at the concert. Whilst she gushes about a handsome blonde, I quickly scan the room.

My eyes land on a figure at the back of the class who I've never noticed before. He's wearing a grey jacket with the hood pulled over to mask his features. His shoulders appear broad and muscular underneath his clothes. A tuft of dark hair sticks out from under the hood. He scrolls through his phone, looking extremely bored. Your eyebrow raises with interest as you notice his hand that's bandaged up tightly with white gauze.

"Who's the new boy?" I ask, interrupting her and signalling in his direction. Trish glances up and her eyes immediately widen. She leans in closer and whispers under her breath.

"His name is Jake. Don't give him any attention unless you want to start an argument." Trish mumbles.

"Jake? As in Jake Melvin?" I ask her, knowing the name well. All purely through gossip, of course. Trish nods eagerly and steals another glance at him.

"He's beautiful but he gives me the creeps. It's the dark vibes coming from him."

"Yeah, I totally agree." I respond quietly, my gaze fixed on Jake Melvin. He isn't surrounded by any friends but his confidence doesn't crumble. I know he's bad news but that doesn't stop the fact that he's very good looking. With his dark hair, sharp jawline and deep eyes, he probably doesn't lack female or male attention. Not to mention the bad boy vibes radiating from him.

Rumours flew around town about how Jake Melvin is involved in a dangerous gang. He lives with his mum but no-one ever mentioned a father. People usually avoid Jake due to his dangerous reputation, nobody wants to get involved with the wrong side of the law.

Jake slowly lifts his head and raises an eyebrow at me, catching me staring red handed. That's when I'm able to study his eyes, two dangerous pools of blue. They narrow in my direction, flashing with hostility as he silently challenges me to look away. I swallow the lump of nerves in my throat and ignore the way the hairs on the back of my neck stand up.

"I can see why he gives you the creeps." I mumble. His icy stare resembles Trevor, my step father. A chill runs up my spine and my fingers brush over the bruises on my side that continue to throb with pain. I close my eyes, images of Trevor beating me up yesterday flashing through my mind. I bite down hard on my lip in an attempt to stop the tears forming in the back of my eyes.

"Emily?" Trish says beside me, nudging me slightly. I snap my eyes open and give her a reassuring smile. Trish smiles back before turning towards the teacher. You try to focus on the lesson but the war inside your head is hard to ignore. It's impossible to concentrate when all I can feel is the throbbing of my injuries.

All of a sudden, the intense feeling of being watched ripples through my body. I breathe in sharply and turn to the right. My eyes connect with Jake Melvin's dark ones. They narrow with curiosity, burning with an intense flame. He's directly facing me and his fingers rhythmically tap away on the desk in front of him. His head cocks to the right as he studies me with scrutiny.

I shudder from the effect of his piercing stare, an uneasy feeling settling inside my stomach. Jake doesn't blink once, challenging me to break eye contact. The corners of his lips twitch upwards into a victorious smirk as he notices how uncomfortable I'm becoming. I turn my head away from him, a cold shiver runs down my spine.

Whilst I'm trying to focus on the lesson, I make a mental note to myself -

Stay out of Jake Melvin's way.