

Chapter 15 – By Fate I Conquer Cora Reilly

I stifled my fury. “Do you think my father’s death will dry your tears over having lost your father?”

He narrowed his eyes. “I didn’t just lose my father, he was ripped from me in the most barbaric way possible.”

“And you think by being barbaric, you’ll feel better.”

“This isn’t about feeling better, it’s about revenge.”

“But if you kill my father, you don’t hurt him. My father doesn’t fear death. If you want revenge, you need to hurt him like he hurt you.”

“And how could I hurt him?”

I smiled bitterly. If Maddox really wanted revenge, he should hurt me. My father would suffer in the worst way if I paid for his sin of the past.

Maddox tilted his head. “I suppose hurting you would do the trick.”

I didn’t say anything. I wasn’t really sure what I was doing here. I wanted to be freed as soon as possible, but knowing Dad, he’d hand himself over in exchange for me without hesitation.

“You aren’t the person we want. I have absolutely zero interest in hurting you. Your father will pay, not you.” The words sounded final.

“If you kill my father and let me live with the guilt of having been the reason for his death, I pay for his sins.”

“But if I hurt you to make your father suffer, you pay for his sins too, only in a more painful way.”

“I guess I’ll pay either way,” I said softly. “But you’re wrong, physical pain wouldn’t be more painful.”

“Unless you’ve experienced both, you can’t be sure.”

“I guess I’ll find out soon.”

“You won’t experience physical pain while you’re here, but I can’t spare you the grief of being the reason for your old man’s death,” he murmured. He hooked his thumbs in the

pockets of his jeans. "Maybe it's a consolation to know that he deserves whatever we have planned for him."

My stomach lurched as my mind imagined the gruesome details. "Maddox," I said quietly. "Men like you and him always deserve death. At some point, the mutual killing has to stop. If you kill my father, my brother and uncles will seek revenge."

Matteo loved my dad, and Romero respected Luca and was almost like a brother to him. They wouldn't rest until every biker had found a painful end.

"I live for revenge."

"Seems like a pointless life if it's only filled with a desire for revenge."

"Enough for me."

"Will your club brothers and uncle mourn you as deeply as my family will mourn my father? Will anyone miss you as profoundly because they loved you with all their heart?"

He gave me a harsh smile. "I'm afraid I don't have time for more chitchat. Have a good day."

By not answering, he gave me the answer I'd expected. "That's what I thought."

He tilted his head in farewell and turned without another word. I had definitely hit a weak spot. Movement on the porch drew my eyes in. Another biker, much older than Maddox, with shoulder-long black-gray hair watched me. Goose bumps rose on my skin at the look in his eyes.

Maddox passed him by on his way into the clubhouse, saying something to him that had the man look away from me briefly.

But my reprieve was short-lived. Soon his greedy gaze returned to me, and now Maddox was gone. I could only hope my words hadn't driven him away. I had a feeling he was my best bet to get through this unscathed.

Cody kept observing the kennels like a wolf on the hunt. He had his eyes set on Snow White, sensing easy pussy. He'd never had much of an understanding of the meaning of consent.

I stopped by his side on the porch. "Don't you have better things to do than to salivate over the Vitiello girl?"

He scoffed. "I don't spend half my morning gossiping with the cunt."

"I'm trying to gather information from our captive while she's in our hands," I lied. It had been the original plan but whenever I was near her, any carefully laid out plans evaporated.

"What kind of info? How much cock she can take into that filthy mouth of hers?"

"Just stay away from her. We both know your dick has a life of its own."

I strode into the house and was immediately hit with the smell of a wild party. After hours outside in the fresh air, the stench almost made me pass out. Gray had thrown up in an ice bucket and someone else had pissed into a beer bottle. That mixed with the odor of a dozen sweaty bodies was a potent mixture.

I found Earl already up and in his chair at our meeting table, smoking a cigar. He could hold his liquor pretty well after decades of training. A half-naked girl lay on top of the table, fast asleep.

"You left the party early," he said, not bothering to take the smoke out of his mouth.

"I've had enough parties to last me a lifetime, and I still don't think we have reason to celebrate just yet."

"When I was your age, I didn't say no to a party or pussy."

"So nothing changed," I said with a grin.

He chuckled then coughed and finally took out the cigar. "What did the bitch say? Did she cry and beg you to release her?"

I shook my head. "She's too proud. Got more of her father in her than I thought."

Earl's expression darkened. "We'll see how long she keeps that Vitiello arrogance."

Something in Earl's tone made me uneasy. If he disliked someone, truly disliked someone, that person better made sure to stay away from him.

"When are you going to ask Vitiello to exchange himself for his daughter? I want to get this over with and finally get my hands on Vitiello himself."

Earl didn't react, only squinted down at the cigar in his hands.

"That's still the plan, right?" After my initial reluctance regarding the kidnapping, Earl had insisted we'd keep Marcella as briefly as possible. Now he seemed to be having his thinking hat on again, and that was never a good thing.

"It is, but it would be too easy, and that's the last thing I want to give Vitiello, an easy way out of this. He needs to suffer emotionally before we really tear him apart."

I was the last person who wanted to spare Luca Vitiello pain in any form. He needed to suffer as much as possible for ruining my childhood.

"We've gone through plenty of shit but we need to stay on track or we risk getting our asses kicked again. I'm sure the asshole already suffered plenty after he found out we got our hands on his daughter."

"One night. That's what you call plenty of suffering? You pissed your goddamn pants every night for the first three months you lived with me. That's suffering, Mad. Let Vitiello piss his pants from fear for his precious daughter's life. Once he's come crawling, we can still exchange her for him and torture him to death."

Earl's voice made it clear that the discussion was over for him, and he being as stubborn as a mule, I knew it was futile to keep talking.

A man's scream rang out, followed by cursing and Marcella's cry of pain.

"What now?" Earl muttered, annoyed, pushing out of his chair, but I was already on my way out of the room.

I stormed out of the house, my eyes darting to the kennels where the noise was coming from. The dogs were barking up a storm, jumping against the cages, but my eyes were drawn to Marcella's cage. Cody was inside, grabbing Marcella by the arm and shaking her.

He slapped Marcella across the face so hard she fell to the ground with a yelp. I charged down the pathway and into the cage and grabbed his arm, stopping him from hitting her again.

"What the fuck is going on here?" I growled.

Marcella sat on the ground, touching her cheek, which was bright red. From the way she pressed her lips together, I could tell she was fighting tears.

"Answer me," I hissed, giving Cody a shake.

He shook off my grip and clutched the side of his head where he was bleeding profusely from a cut in his hairline. He made a move as if to attack her again but I shoved him against the bars.

"What happened here?"

Why the fuck wasn't anyone answering me?

"The whore attacked me with her fucking shoe," Cody seethed.

I followed his pointer finger toward the high heel on the dirty floor, and almost started laughing.

"That's a Louboutin, not some shoe," Marcella said haughtily, still holding her cheek, but no longer appearing close to tears.

I had no clue what that meant. I owned exactly two pairs of shoes.

I sent her a death glare. "You better shut up."

Cody was a vindictive asshole. Provoking him would not only make her life a whole lot more difficult but also mine if I wanted to make sure she got out of this unscathed. Earl stood on the porch, watching over the events. I wasn't sure what his angle was, so he probably wouldn't keep Marcella safe. It was ironic that it fell upon me to protect my worst enemy's offspring.

"What were you doing in her cage?"

"I was supposed to feed her. The cunt doesn't deserve food, if you ask me."

"Nobody asks you, Cody. Next time you better pay attention before she pokes your eye out," I told him. "Or better yet, let me or Gray handle the meals."

I preferred Cody far away from her. Eventually he wouldn't be able to keep his ugly dick in his pants. I really didn't want to add that kind of shit to my list of sins.

"Whatever," Cody muttered, rubbing his head as he left the cage. The last look he sent Marcella told me I'd have more sleepless nights. He stalked away, muttering insults.