

## 2 | Never in my life

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**He set the world around him on fire  
And made sure no flame touched her**

24

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"Ameena"

25

Even in her comatose-like sleeping state, Ameena was still conscious of the voice that sliced through her dreamy haze.

"Ameena.. gonna be... late"

26

There it was again, rolling over with a groan she dismissed it, burying her face into the warm comfort of her pillows.

"Ameena you have about fifteen seconds to get up before I empty this jug on you."

27

Ameena thought nothing of it, only muttering a half-assed mumbled 'let me sleep to whatever accursed human being which dared to disturb her sleep.

There was long stretched out silence before:

"Okay, can't say I didn't warn you though."

She heard it before she felt it, the tinkering of ice swimming in whatever container that held it then said ice and liquid splashing onto her comforter taking only seconds to drip through the cotton and soaking onto her clothes and skin.

28

With a yelp, Ameena shot up and out of the bed in seconds only to slip on whatever was on the floor and faceplant onto the tiled floor.

29

Ameena groaned loudly, the scent of baby oil filling her nostrils instantly.

30

She heard the sound of laughter, similar to the merged sound of a cat choking and a seal.

31

Her eyes snapped to the source, there he was, bent over, hands on his knees and a large jug hanging loosely in his hand as he gawed struggling to pause for air.

"Fuck you Ron," she started dryly, pushing her self up only to slip again, this time landing on the wet backside of her pyjamas. She glared at Ron, "No seriously, Fuck you."

32

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With narrowed eyes, she begrudgingly bit into the buttered toast he made her, fighting the urge to raise her brows at how perfectly he toasted it.

Ron sat before her on the other side of the kitchen island, pursing his lips as if holding in another round of laughter.

"How the fuck did you even get in here?"

He waved a key between his two fingers before her face, coughing out a breath of laughter before lifting his mug to his lips mulling it.

"I'm really starting to regret giving you my spare, you know that right," she gave him a pointed look to which he responded with feigned innocence.

"Just call me your human alarm clock, another hour in that bed and you could've been late for your shift," he grinned, brushing his blond hair out of his eyes.

33

She knew that was a fact either checking the time, another hour and she wouldn't have the time to 'glow up' as people put it, before stepping onto the busy streets.

34

She grudgingly had to admit he was right. But not out loud because that would only make it look as if she had made his little prank slide.

"Really though? Dousing me in ice water and putting baby oil on the floor? Not cool," she went to stifle the rest of the toast in her mouth.

35

He smirked, "Got you out of bed though."

She glared at him, "You just wait, one of these nights, I'm gonna just creep into your room and empty a bottle of hot sauce on your balls and dick. Then we see how effective that will be on waking you up."

That surely wiped the smirk off his face.

36

He looked at her in horror, hands disappearing under the table, "You wouldn't."

"Just try me."

37

His Adam's apple bobbed nervously, "Um, so, how about you go get ready and tame those curls, I'll walk with you."

She sipped the last of her 'fuck-boy freecaptioned mug and got up.

38

"The frog can never be tamed, why you no know this already?"

39

He made a sound at the back of his throat as she walked away, gathering whatever she left on the island.

It was times like these she was glad for a best friend like Ron, considering he kept her from falling on her ass most of the time. She closed her door and went to her vanity, stepping over the shine of smeared baby oil on the floor which she had to clean later.

40

"Oil!" She heard him shout over the sound of her not usually loud dishwasher, "any plans today before your shift?!"

41

"Oh right!" She pulled out her chair and sat, "I need to drop by the bank."

42

"Why?" She heard him just outside the door.

43

"I have to collect my pay and transfer it into my account," she added a bit of mascara to her eyelashes.

"Oh, then I'll drop you there first instead of walking."

She made a noncommittal sound of agreement as she focused on adding her eyeliner.

...

"Bye Ron, don't miss me too much," she grinned while winking at him before getting out of his car, closing the door behind her. Ron's laughter echoed as he drove off leaving her standing on the pavement just outside the towering building of the bank.

Tall glass doors and flags mounted over the entrance made her slightly intimidated, a weird feeling seeping through her chest, she shrugged it off and took a step forward and another and another until her hand was on the door handle.

44

What she would never expect in all the twenty six years of her life was for a larger gloved hand to cover hers on the handle, pushing the door open.

45

She didn't even get the chance to use her years of kick boxing self defence that was triggered, the other gloved hand snaked around her neck and closed around her throat cutting off every sound that was going to leave her mouth, her back smacked into the owner's hard chest as whoever held her walked forward into the bank.

46

Everything else happened fast. Chaos erupted around the bank as other men in black masks stormed in.

"Now, gentlemen, I wouldn't do that if I were you."

The voice, although automated and disguised into something robotic, sent a sharp shard of fear up her spine. If it wasn't for the hand holding her up, her legs would've given out beneath her.

47

But she didn't know if that was the cause of it, she felt something cold press on her temple.

48

Her heart thudded almost painfully in her chest.

"Good boys, now put them down slowly and kick them over here."

Ameena heard the so-clank of something touching the floor then noisily skittering closer to her feet. She wondered if she had gone blind suddenly, but that was only because her eyes were clenched shut.

49

She hesitantly peeked.

Everyone stood frozen, even the security guards, now that all their firearms were at her feet.

"If I even hear one alarm go off, her head will no longer be in one piece. Got it?" The voice spoke again, this time directed at the guards.

50

Her hand immediately went to the hand around her throat, the instinct to claw at it was too strong, she felt him squeeze warningly, the cold metal pressing into her temple forcefully.

51

"Don't even think about it," that was enough to make her freeze and rethink the suicidal idea.

"Men, you know what to do."

Everyone snapped out of their shocked state, just as two men entered her field of vision, armed with guns and clad in all black, like the masks on their faces.

52

Yelling orders, they moved in a blur clearly professionals having practiced the art of robbing more than once. Ameena could only watch as they gathered the people into a corner and on the floor, everyone down to the last security guard.

Two came out from the door around back, holding another guard and pushing him to the floor with the others.

The one holding her spoke, "Everyone empty your pockets and put your electronics to the side either which you should tuck your heads between your legs with your hands behind your heads," his chest vibrated on her back as he spoke, "failure to comply will result in this cute little thing in my hand getting shot, and you will be shot a er."

53

As one of them walked through the crowd picking up phones and wallets and dumping them into a trash bag, two disappeared behind the tellers section.

No one spoke but the man who held her. Oddly enough her eyes kept locking with one of the men, who was holding a rifle and standing over everyone, more than once.

54

Why was he staring at her?

55

She looked away from the dark empty sockets in the mask. It gave her the chills and somehow the man didn't look like he was going to let her go any soon.

Desperate times called for desperate measures.

She knew that she should've just stood still but the idea of standing here the whole time with a gun pressed to her skull wasn't too enticing.

56

When he least expected it and his hand had loosened considerably less, she flailed, ripping out of his hand, her foot kicking up right into his parts hard.

57

The man doubled over, hands cupping his crotch. Ameena whipped around sending the heel of her boots flying straight for the man's jaw.

58

Her heart swelled as the gun skated over his hand and across the floor, but her victory was short lived. A hand curled into her hair from behind, so tight she was convinced that he would rip her scalp off, she internally screamed.

59

"That wasn't very nice," a voice spoke coldly into the shell of her ear, without the robotic disguise.

60

Ameena bit her tongue to prevent the scream from escaping her lips, "Fuck you." She spat trying to wriggle.

61

The other one got up a er gathering the gun on the floor, rubbing his jaw while staring at her silently.

She didn't expect him to slap her. The force of his hand would've sent her to the floor if it wasn't for the hand in her hair.

62

Her head snapped to the side, eyes burning as a ringing sound filled her ear. This time she couldn't stop the sound, she hardly had time to register before she was staring into the dark hole of his weapon pointed right into her face.

63

Then out of nowhere, a hand was on his shoulder making him lower his gun.

"Don't," a firm voice said making her heart stop, "I'll do it."

64

Whoever was holding her hair let go as she stared wide eyed into a new weapon in her face.

The injured man turned around heading to the rest. "Hurry up and kill the bitch."

65

Ameena opened her mouth to plea for her life, when the man rotated the gun holster, gesturing for her to turn around. "Turn around and shut your eyes."

Pressing her shaky lips together, Ameena obediently turned staring at a high wall with a currency machine hanging.

His presence felt even more domineering as he stood directly behind her, gun barrel pressed over her shoulder blade.

"Why couldn't you just stay still." He muttered, her mouth fell.

66

That voice.

Sure it had been years but that voice...

She would never forget it.

Ameena felt her voice hitch, but she was too afraid to look over her shoulder. "A-Alex?"

He paused, "Bite your finger, this will hurt like a bitch." Ameena opened her mouth to protest but the feeling of the gun pressing into her shoulder cut her short.

67

She bit her finger hard. Seconds later she felt the sharp impact on her right shoulder blade before hearing the gunshot.

68

The last thing she saw was the floor moving towards her, the screams of panicked people mixed with the shouting masked men.

Amidst that chaos, a hand caught her waist slowly lowering her to the floor.

69

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