

Werewolf 331

Chapter 331 Weak

Every time Damion was showing off that he was the one in control of a situation and that your life was in his hands, he would do so with a happy face... yet the initial grin had quickly disappeared, making place for a deep frown. It was clear that the gang leader was beyond annoyed at his prisoner, and that his threat was anything but empty.

This was bad for the teenager, very bad. There was no doubt in his mind that Damion would give the Underdogs the order to starve him out and while a normal human might last for more than a week without food, and an Altered probably even longer than that, Gary's time was far more limited due to his system.

"I didn't take anything from the package!" The high schooler cried, although it wasn't very loud due to lack of power in his voice. "There was another gang, someone who knew about the package. They attacked me, and they took whatever was inside! Someone else betrayed you!"

As usual, Gary tried to hide his lie by mixing it with part of the truth. At least the first part was all true. He didn't know who they belonged to, but it didn't exactly matter now anyway.

"You really don't want to live any longer, do you?" Damion asked as he placed one hand on the metal bar and gripped it tightly. "Do you seriously want me to believe that a lowly Transporter like you just happened to turn into Altered out of nowhere? There's nobody in the world who would have sponsored a scrawny high schooler like you, who was a dime a dozen! Do you think I was born under a rock?!" Damion screamed as he pulled at the bars.

"It doesn't take a genius to figure out that you opened the package which must have contained that new type of Altered DNA, which turned you into this! You had your chance, Greeny, if you had come forward and admitted your mistake, I might have even made you my second Kirk, but what did you do instead?!"

"You created your own gang, made trouble throughout Slough, subdued the Pincers to gather men in an attempt to take me out when the Grey Elephants attacked us! If anything, I have to hand it to you, Greeny, I never believed you would have had the balls, much less the power, to kill Kirk!"

“However, that wasn’t enough for you, no, you still needed to take me down to get rid of the Underdogs! Unfortunately for you, we were prepared! Your actions have caused far worse consequences than you can imagine, and you will pay the price for it!”

Clenching his teeth, Gary was thinking about how to come back from that one. He knew that he wasn't an Altered, but anything he said right now would just be treated as a lie he made up to save his butt. It looked like even the Underdogs didn't really know about what was in that package.

“Kirk... he should never have worked for the likes of you.” Gary mumbled under his breath, but it was too quiet for Damion to hear. ‘It should have been you who died that night, not him.’

“Why are you keeping me alive, then? Since you clearly believe that I took your precious package?” Gary asked, loud enough so that the gang leader could hear him. If Damion wasn't there to find out information about what had happened that day, was his only reason to gloat at the teenager?

Damion's shoulders started to move up and down as he chuckled to himself.

“You got rid of Kirk, an Altered who happened to be one of my most trusted men. What would I gain from simply killing you? No, you'll have to replace him. Of course, after everything you did there is no way to trust you, and since the Altered DNA is already in your body we have to get it out first.

“I've called in a favour, so once those guys are here, the fun can begin. I don't care what we have to do to make it happen, whether it be to take out your brain and replace it with another, stitch two bodies together, drain you of your blood, or place your organs into another!

“Don't worry, they've assured me that even in the case of a failure, they'll reimburse me with another Altered. Those guys seem to be overly happy to experiment with your body and get the rights to your corpse! No matter the outcome, I'll be the one to have that last laugh.”

“Wait...there was more in that package, there is another item that I hid!” Gary shouted, as he watched Damion leave with his warden in tow. “I'm not an Altered, I swear! You saw it yourself, I'm a Werewolf! Whatever you're planning on doing won't work!” Gary insisted, trying to buy himself some more time to figure a way out of here. Unfortunately, his words fell on deaf ears.

For some reason, talking to Gary had gotten Damion really riled up. So much so that his hands were shaking with anger, few of the gang members had ever seen him in such a state.

Currently, the group seemed to be in what looked like an abandoned police station. There were no police whatsoever inside. Eventually, getting to a desk, Damion lit up a cigar and started to smoke it, allowing him to calm down a little, even if it was by a tiny fraction.

Alas, it wasn't long until he heard a knock at the door. "If you come in, I swear on my life, you better have a good reason to, otherwise I'll let you keep that traitor company!"

The man on the other side of the door didn't dare to come in, so instead he decided to talk from the other side. "Sir, I'm terribly sorry, but it's your son. He has arrived, and asked to talk to you, claiming that it was very urgent."

"Tell that damn brat to screw off!" Damion instructed.

Surprisingly, the doorknob could be seen twisting, before the door eventually opened. The adult man immediately got up from his seat ready to pound the man before throwing him into a cell, yet he held back when he saw that the one that had entered the room was Kai.

"What is it with this blasted night?! Does EVERYONE want to get a rise out of me? How is it not clear that I'm not in the mood for any of your damn issues?!" Damion screeched, and the door was immediately shut behind by the Underdog member.

"I heard... I heard that you managed to capture the Wolf Altered, the one that was working with the Howlers." Kai spoke. Damion just puffed out of his nose. Before saying anything on the matter, he went back to his seat, opened the desk drawer and pulled out an old bottle of liquor, hoping it would allow him to avoid another outburst.

"What you heard is correct, but I don't see how this concerns you in any way. Unless you want to help me find the rat that ambushed him in the first place! It didn't seem like he was lying about that one." Damion said, pouring himself a shot and downing it at once.

Standing in front of his father, who returned to his cigar, Kai's heart was thumping incredibly loud. He put his hand in his pocket, grabbing his trusty knife. In his head, he had gone through the worst scenarios he had accounted for, Gary getting captured was among the top of the list. The problem was, with Gary being captured there were only a few ways he could see himself getting out of it, and in the end this was the best one.

"I... I am the one that created the Howlers, to get rid of the Underdogs, and get rid of you!"

Chapter 332 Rot

After Kai had spoken those words, Damion grabbed onto his whisky glass tightly. He didn't move an inch or blink. For most of his life, the blonde teenager had been looking forward to this one moment of revelation, to admit that he was the one to have ruined everything his father had worked for during his lifetime.

Of course, in his ideal scenario, it would have been under far different circumstances, but even now, in the current situation he found himself in, seeing the cold fury in those eyes nearly made it worth it to have lived in his father's shadow for all these years.

"Didn't you hear me?" Kai questioned as he walked forward with confidence. The man, who he had been afraid of for years, suddenly seemed to have grown a little smaller in the room. "I was the one who created the Howlers.

"Me and that Transporter of yours, we've been working together to crush and break down everything you've built up." Kai spoke slowly, making sure to emphasise each and every single word. "And we're not done yet. It will only be over once I manage to take every single little thing you own."

After finishing his narration, Damion gripped the glass so hard that it smashed right there and then. His eyes had gone bloodshot from not blinking. Getting up from his seat, he leaned across the table and stared his son right in the eyes. He expected the teenager to flinch, perhaps try to talk his way out by claiming all of this was some sick joke, instead, the two of them stood there silently.

"YOU... You!... You!!!" Not being able to articulate his frustration, Damion decided to act upon his feelings. The gang leader threw out his bloodied fist straight towards Kai. It made contact and pushed the teenager back a few feet. However, it hadn't connected with his son's face, for Kai had managed to block the attack, lifting both of his forearms up in a cross position. Still, his arms were throbbing. The hit was heavy.

Even though Damion wasn't a particularly large man, he was well-built, had developed muscles, and was just a natural heavy hitter. Someone who could draw out more power than others. A wisdom amongst boxers was that even at the same weight, the punch strength could vary wildly, and Kai certainly felt the weight behind his father's attack.

"I knew you would try to punch me in the face." His son admitted with a grin on his face. "Over the years, I've paid close enough attention to your behaviour, to the point that I might even know you better than you know yourself! All for this moment!"

Slowly, Damion was climbing over the desk, and at the same time he was taking off his suit jacket, revealing his tight white shirt underneath. "You ungrateful brat! I raised you to take over the Underdogs when I was gone, not burn it down to the ground!" With how frustrated the father was, he punched the desk, breaking off an edge piece of it.

His knuckles were a little red, but it looked like his hand was just fine. Damion had large knuckles due to repeatedly breaking them in the past, and they were now solid weapons. Seeing this, Kai got ready, getting into a fighting stance, which made Damion chuckle.

"What is this? Have you been practising how to fight? And here I thought you were just a useless brat? No, don't tell me, you've been practising how to fight, all so you could beat me?!" Damion ridiculed the other, as he charged in and threw out a fist.

Knowing that he probably couldn't take another hit, Kai decided to avoid this one, by going low and on one hand. He then lifted his leg and kicked Damion's side. It was a solid hit, but it felt as if he had kicked a large tree. It was at that moment that the gang leader pinned the leg under his arm with his elbow, holding on tightly, and turned around.

He could see that Kai had thrown out another fist towards his face, which he grabbed. Now with two points of his body to hold onto, Damion lifted Kai's body, and ran forward as fast as he could, heading straight for the door. Just as they were about to reach, Damion jumped up and slammed Kai right through the door. It came flying off its hinge and landing on the floor was not only the door but the teenager as well.

It was a heavy and strong blow that had knocked the wind completely out of Kai. Furthermore, it was safe to say he wasn't going to get up any time soon, and even if he had tried, there were now several gang members around the place that had him surrounded.

"I was wondering what the hell would have made you do this, but now I'm sure of it, it was that bitch, wasn't it? Have you been plotting it ever since back then? I guess I always saw you as just a brat, and that was my mistake." Damion admitted. "I can see that you're a man now... so it's only fair for you to suffer the consequences like one!"

Inside the cell, Gary was still waiting for someone to come in. Judging by his Health, he could tell that it had been two hours. He had thought about what to say to convince them to let him out, or at least feed him. However, the ones coming towards the cell wasn't Damion, instead there were two other members of the Underdogs. They weren't alone either, they were dragging someone by their feet.

"The two of you can rot together!" One of the Underdogs members said as the cell door opened, and they threw a person inside. When Gary went to look at who the person was, he was surprised to see an unconscious Kai who appeared to be badly beaten up and bruised.

Chapter 333 Butting heads

Gary questioned whether his eyes were playing tricks on him. Could it be that the hunger had made him start hallucinating? Was he just imprinting the image of the one person that he believed could bail him out of this situation onto his fellow prisoner?

However, even after a few minutes, that teenager continued to look exactly like his upperclassman. It took some time, but he eventually started to wake up.

"Gary..." Kai mumbled, seeing his friend in the cell. Trying to stand up, he flinched since his entire body was still hurting, especially his chest.

"How long have I been out for?" The blonde teenager asked weakly, slowly looking around the cell. The two gang members who had dragged him in had already left, so only the two teenagers were present.

“Not too long, less than half an hour.” Gary answered. On one hand, he was happy to no longer be alone in his cell, on the other hand, he was now worried about Kai. Unlike him, his upperclassman was a normal human, meaning it would take him some time to heal from a beating that had left him unconscious.

Nevertheless, even in his injured state, Kai started checking out the room, seemingly looking for some way out. He was pulling on the bars, inspecting the lock, checking his pockets for something useful, examining the bricks for any loose ones.

“Please don't come too close to me!” Gary immediately backed off when the blonde teenager came in his direction, some slight fear in his voice. “I... I haven't eaten in a while.”

Fortunately, despite his hunger pains, he could still think rationally. If it had been another member of the Underdogs, he might have lunged at him and taken a bite, but at least for now, Gary was managing to keep himself in check. Still, he had no idea how long that would be the case, and it should be safer if his upperclassman didn't tempt him, especially in his current state.

The high schooler was hoping that given Kai's intellect, he would understand why he wanted to keep a certain distance without having to go too much into detail. Kai just nodded, took one step back and with a big sigh, he sat down on the floor... where he fell into deep contemplation.

‘What the f*ck, Kai, do you have nerves of steel?!’ Gary was left speechless. ‘Shouldn't you at least explain why you were beaten up? Why did they throw you in here? Did they find out that you're a Howlers member as well? Is all of this part of some plan to get me out?’

The Werewolf stared at his new inmate, but all he could see was Kai biting on his nail, looking around occasionally, all while continuing to stay silent. Unable to take it any longer, Gary straight up asked him the obvious: “What happened to you, Kai? How did you know that I was here? What about the others?”

For a moment, Kai stopped what he was doing and turned to Gary. For the first time, he saw him with a very deep frown on his face, and even more surprising was that the blonde teenager directed some animosity at him. “I came here, because a certain someone seems to be dead set on proving that he's incapable of sitting still and apparently gets a kick out of ignoring the most basic orders!”

"I... I'm sorry." Gary stuttered, clearly not prepared to be the target of this kind of aggression. "I know it was stupid of me, b-but I didn't want any of you to get hurt."

"That's great and all, but I had a plan! We were so close to getting rid of the Underdogs once and for all, while reducing the risk to ourselves to a minimum! All I asked for was some time to make sure everything would be perfect! Honestly, I'm not sure whether becoming what you are has made you think of yourself as invincible, or you just had a death wish coming after him on your own."

Kai's words hurt Gary, because he had already blamed himself every which way ever since he had woken up, cursing himself for his impulsiveness. Getting chided further by his friend, especially when both of them were in this cell, didn't sit well with him, especially since he felt that he wasn't the only one to blame.

"I'm not a freaking mind reader, ok?!" Gary snapped back. "How was I supposed to know what your 'brilliant' plan was if you never told me anything concrete?! I thought that we were supposed to be in this whole thing together, but lately I feel like I'm just your discarded pawn who you have no use for right now!"

"I'm not some dog who waits for you to order me to jump and just do it! I know that might have been how our relationship had started, but I believed that we had actually become friends over time. ... that's why I didn't want you guys to do dangerous things any more."

Now, Kai was silent for another reason. He knew that there was some truth to Gary's accusation. He had been afraid that the Howlers' leader might do something irrational due to being left out after the night of the gang war, yet he had vastly underestimated just how crazy Gary was willing to act in regard to fighting the Underdogs.

Furthermore, Kai also couldn't refute that at times he did treat others like pawns, yet unlike what his underclassman seemed to believe, the blonde teenager wasn't willing to sacrifice any of his pieces... which was also the reason he had come here on his own.

"Look, you know my reason for wanting to get rid of the Underdogs. You know I'm committed to this entire thing, but what about the other way around?" Gary continued. "I practically know nothing about you. I was worried that you might hesitate too long or think that we had achieved enough already. What if Damion had escaped while you were still planning things and waiting for the 'perfect' moment?"

“As I said, I'm sorry for ruining your plans. You should know that I'm not exactly the best when it comes to using my head... which is why I usually do what I feel is right. I've seen how much harm the Underdogs do, especially now that they feel threatened, so I wanted to stop them before it got even worse. I knew it was risky, which is why I didn't want to get you guys involved.”

“I've never regarded you as a dog nor some pawn.” Kai spoke up after having let out a deep sigh. “I don't want anyone helping me to feel like that. I don't want to be anything like him, so if I ever give you that feeling in the future, I want you to tell me immediately, ok? Can you promise me to do that, instead of running head-first into a certain death trap?”

Gary kept silent, continuing to listen to Kai, who, judging by his change in tone, was being sincere. He didn't know how serious he was when asking him to make this kind of promise, but the Werewolf had a premonition that it wouldn't be something he could abide by.

“I hope I haven't given the others the same feeling. Speaking of them, they have no idea about this place. I only knew of it, since I am... well, I guess WAS an Underdogs member. Knowing those fools, once they find out what happened to us, they would just end up risking their lives to bail us out... and probably end up in the same state as me, if not worse.

“Now that I think about it, our entire groups seem to consist of suicidal teenagers,” Kai mentioned with a chuckle, and Gary joined in, since he couldn't really refute that possibility.

“Olivia is the only one who's aware of it all, since she was the one to inform me, but I told her to let me deal with things on my own. That's right, sometimes I can be just as much of a fool like my dear leader.

“However, I want you to know that I haven't come here to fetch you as if you were my dog, Gary. Our relationship might have certainly started off a little strange, but I truly see you as someone who would get my back, and in turn I will always have your back as well.

“I wanted to tell all of you once this was over, but you're right, I should have probably informed all of you earlier. You deserve to know the entire truth of why I hate the Underdogs so much, and why I've spent years making plans to do everything in my power to take down Damion Hawk, the bastard who calls himself my father.”

Four years ago, in a luxury hotel that had a nice view over the town of Slough, a blonde-haired teenage boy was holding a game controller in his hands. He was sitting on the floor, staring at a 70-inch TV, courtesy of the hotel, and playing a fighting game.

Next to him sat a teenage girl with black hair who was around the same age as the boy. Just like him, she was holding a game controller in her hands, yet her face was filled with visible frustration.

“Kyle, stop it!” Marie complained, looking at him. “You can't just keep using the same move over and over again! That's cheating!”

“If it was cheating, then why would they put it in the game?” Kyle argued cheekily. “Besides, since you know what I'm doing next, you should be able to stop it!”

Out of sheer frustration, Marie began to mash all the buttons she could, hoping for it to do something, but in the end, the low kick that Kyle's character would repeatedly use, continued to decrease her fighter's health until a large K.O. appeared on the screen.

“Hahaha, I win again!” Kyle jumped up and cheered. When the match came to an end, Marie scoffed at his cheap tactics, yet she was ready for a rematch. She had always been quite the competitive person, but the two teenagers stopped what they were doing when they suddenly heard the sound of the door opening.

Someone had entered the hotel room, and without saying a word they had headed towards the main bedroom, which they locked behind themselves.

Using the remote, Kyle quickly turned up the sound of the game, while sneakily moving over to the door, trying to make as little noise as possible. Marie, seeing this, shook her head, but in the end she was just as curious, so she decided to do the same. The two of them stood next door, eavesdropping on the ensuing conversation.

Inside the other room, a black haired woman in her early thirties was pacing up and down. She looked to be quite panicked, and at the same time she was holding a cold pack to the side of her face.

“Kiki, will you calm down, he won’t be able to find you here. I’ve made the reservation under a fake name, so nobody should know that you’re here apart from me.” The voice of a second woman tried to calm down the first.

The one sitting on the bed was a blonde haired woman who, despite being a few years older than her friend, still looked to be in her twenties. She had been blessed with good genes, which made her quite an eye turner, even though her years as a model were long since over.

She exuded a presence of kindness, like a real life angel. People would often describe her as someone who would instantly lighten up the room just by being there. Her voice alone was usually enough to calm anyone down, and in this instance, once again, it managed to work its magic.

Eventually, the woman called Kiki stopped pacing up and down, and put down the ice pack, revealing a large black eye. Unfortunately, that wasn’t the only bruise plaguing her body, merely the most recent one.

“It will be okay. I promised I would look after you...you know that. I’m so sorry, for bringing you into all of this, this is all my fault.” The blonde haired woman apologised as she stood up and gave her childhood friend a giant hug, which just caused a waterfall of tears to run down her face.

The sobbing continued for a while, and it was then that Kyle started to feel bad for listening in. When he turned around, he saw that Marie had teared up as well. The teenage girl was clenching her fists, trying to stay strong.

Not saying enough, Kyle gently took Marie by the hand, and guided her back to the TV. Both of them sat down, neither one in the mood to continue their game. Marie wiped away her tears with some kitchen paper, the teenage boy had grabbed, for lack of a better alternative.

“This isn’t the first time this has happened, is it?” He asked in a low voice, as he slightly turned up the volume so that their mothers wouldn’t suspect them of having eavesdropped. “Is it getting worse... the hitting, I mean?”

Kyle understood what had been happening, and why Marie and her mother had moved to this hotel. Even though he was young, he wasn’t completely oblivious to these things.

“Yeah... and I’m afraid that it's only getting worse with each passing day. The hitting has become harder. I hate that I can't do anything about it...” When Marie said these words, she started to curl up into a ball and covered herself. She placed her head into her knees as there was more to what she wanted to say.

“It's not just that, Kyle... I'm scared, I'm really scared. Recently, he's been staring at me in a really disturbing way... Whenever he grabbed me, my mum ran up to him and dragged his arms away. However, that only makes him furious, and so she ends up getting hurt even more... I'm scared what happens if Mum dies and not just that... if that does happen... then what happens to me...”

A recurring pattern.

Meanwhile, Kiki Degrace was being comforted by Kyle’s mother. Her childhood friend was the only person she could rely on during these hard times. She had paid for the hotel room and without asking for anything in return, the adult woman had simply handed over the keys, allowing the Degraces to stay in a safe environment. She had promised Kiki to do everything she could to help her, but it wasn’t that easy.

In doing so, Marie and Kyle had become close friends. They had known each other before that and had often played together, but not to this degree. After having spent so much time together, they practically felt like siblings and looked out for each other.

The relationship outside of school then grew to one in school as well, but what Marie had just said now, it was the first time she had spoken these words. It was the first time she had told him how scared she was.

“Marie, I promise I will do everything in my power, to make sure that never happens.” Kyle said as he gave her a big hug, making her cry fully.

Gary gulped hard, because it didn’t take a genius to figure out that this story wouldn’t have a happy ending...

Chapter 335 A Cycle

That night, neither Marie, Kyle nor their mothers left the hotel. The following days, the four of them continued living together. The two women would rotate as for who would accompany the kids to school. This was how the relationship between all of them grew.

However, the teenage boy was no fool, he understood that their happy family life was bound to come to an end eventually. After all, this wasn't the first time something like this had occurred. Nevertheless, he was happy while it lasted, and he knew that he would always find Marie at school, even if things returned to normal.

One day, when Kyle and Marie came back from school together, they found Marie's mother with a large smile on her face, currently talking with Kai's mother.

"Are you sure about this?" The blonde woman Eleanor asked. It was a name that suited Kyle's mother well. Still, at the moment she had a concerned look on her face. Just like her son, Eleanor Hamper had been dreading this day, afraid that her childhood friend might get fooled by that bastard once more.

"You saw his message, Ellie! He told me how he's been going to Anger Management Therapy. According to his therapist he's already doing much better, and he promised me the second he raises his voice, that I will be free to leave him be.

"I didn't believe him at first either, but he showed me the appointments and everything. This time really will be different. He was even crying on the phone. Thank you for always helping out, seriously. I promise we'll pay you back for your help. Let's have brunch over the weekend, and then, once you'll see I'm all okay, you will have some peace of mind."

One could tell that Eleanor's face was still filled with doubt, but in the end she gave her friend a smile. She had tried convincing Kiki in the past not to fall for it, yet it had proven to be an impossible task.

"Make sure to keep your phone on you at all times, and promise to contact me at the first sign that he's up to no good. I don't care what time of day it might be, if he so much as just flinches at you, call me, text me or simply come to me, okay?" Saying this, she grabbed Kiki's hand and looked her straight in her eyes. Marie's mother nodded, and grabbed the few bags filled with her belongings, as well as those of her daughter.

Before leaving, she looked at Kyle.

“Thank you, for being such a good friend to my Marie. During these difficult times, it’s good to know that there is someone else who is looking out for her just as much as I am.” Mrs Degrace praised him, making him blush slightly.

When walking out the door, Kyle managed to catch a glimpse of Marie’s face. Unlike her mother who was all smiles, her daughter’s eyes were wide, and she looked a little shaken. Clearly, she didn’t want to leave this place to return to her father’s side, not believing in his ability to change.

“Mum, we have lots of money, don’t we? Then why can’t we help them? You’ve already been paying for a place for the two of them to live, so why can’t we just continue living like this?” Kyle asked dejectedly.

“Oh, Kai, if only it was that easy.” Eleanor sighed as she ruffled her son’s hair using the name she had wanted to give him, rather than the one his father had insisted on. “Even if Kiki would finally decide to break up with that bastard, he isn’t someone who would just let her go. He would make her life here in Slough even more of a living hell.

“Her best option might be to completely leave the town and run to the other side of the world to escape him, and that requires a lot of money. Even then, I’m afraid that man would just hunt her down. His reputation and ego wouldn’t allow him to become someone who was left by a woman.

“Believe me, I’ve thought long and hard how to help the two of them, but this simply is a problem that money can’t solve. Besides, the money I used to house them... it’s not really ours to use.”

Hearing these words, Kyle understood. Although he might not know all the details, his mother had told him about how his father was involved with the underworld. Part of him used to believe that this might have been the reason Damion had barely ever interacted with him. Then again, that might just be wishful thinking on his part, who had desired a fatherly figure in his life...

The last few times he remembered seeing his father, had been during his previous birthdays, and even that had been for only around an hour, before his father had left to take care of ‘business’. Eventually, he had grown used to being treated like a ‘chore’ rather than a priority in Damion’s life.

Kyle also remembered seeing Marie's father on his last birthday, a burly fellow who might as well have been the picture of the word 'brute'. Unfortunately, he wasn't just an ordinary Underdogs member, but someone in the inner circle.

As for the reason his mother felt guilty, well that was because she was the one that accidentally introduced Kiki into the Underdog world. She had never expected that the two would fall in love, and have a child together, and although they weren't married, the man truly seemed to be obsessed with her childhood friend.

Regardless of his mother's stance, Kyle still started to think if there was a way for them to get out of the whole mess, and he believed to have come up with a couple of possible solutions.

"Don't even think about getting involved, young man!" Eleanor chided her son, recognising his slight smirk as a sign that he just came up with an idea. "This is adult business, and you shouldn't meddle with it. It's far more dangerous than you seem to believe!"

Heeding his mother's stern warning, especially since it was a rarity for her to raise her voice at him, Kyle decided to disregard his ideas. He trusted that she knew best. After all, while he might think himself clever, he knew exactly who he got his intelligence from.

Nothing unusual happened during the next week. He naturally spent time with Marie at school, and she recounted what was happening at her home. The teenage girl still had trouble believing it, but there was at least less anger in her father's voice.

Marie had even been dragged into one of those Anger Management Therapy sessions, where her father had apologised to his daughter, as well as Miss Degrace. From what Marie had been told, her mother had accompanied him a few more times.

Then, on the tenth day, something strange happened.

When Kyle took his seat, Marie wasn't there. He didn't think much of it at first, until class started, and she was still nowhere to be seen. The teenager texted her whether she might have fallen ill, yet he got no reply. After the first period, he went to ask a teacher if they knew anything, only to be told that they were just as clueless as him. There had been no sick note, no call from her parents or anything.

Immediately, Kyle called up his mother, who informed him that she was looking after them, that they had booked the hotel once again. Hearing this, he was slightly elated, though at the same time a bit worried. It appeared that the cycle had just started over again, yet this time it had happened far sooner than before.

Last time, they had been at his side for a couple of months, yet this time barely any time had passed. Kyle wrote Marie another text about how he would excuse her and bring over their homework later.

After school was over, he reached the hotel room... where he immediately dropped his bag the moment he saw Marie.

The teenage girl had a bloody nose and a swollen eye.

Chapter 336 The abusive man

'This... why would he do this?! Anger Management Therapy, my ass!! How dare that scum lay a hand on his own daughter?!?!' Were the wild thoughts going through Kyle's head when he looked at the state Marie was in, and those were just some of the more tame ones.

The teenage boy was aware that Miss Degrace's relationship with Marie's father could only be described as a one-sided, abusive relationship filled with domestic violence. Kyle had already grown used to the cycle of the Degraces falling out with the guy, his own mother securing them housing in a hotel like this, the two of them moving in as well, only for Marie's mother to eventually forgive the bastard who was responsible for all of it, and getting back together.

The only thing that had ever changed in this cycle was the time between each new rotation... yet this time he had done something even more outrageous than the previous times...

Seeing Marie's eye, and nose in pain, and watching his own mother bandaging her up, something was boiling inside Kyle. He had never been a violent child. Despite being Damion's son, Eleanor had done her best to raise him up to be a sensible child, one that wouldn't resort to violence, even in the kind of world they happened to live in.

Not wanting to disappoint his mother, Kyle had never gotten into fights, never wished pain on other people, but after seeing the state of the girl who he thought of as a sister, for the first time ever, the teenager didn't just wish him bodily harm. No, he wanted for him to die in the most brutal way possible.

The blood inside him was boiling, so much that he didn't even know what to say to Marie as he helplessly looked at her. His heart only hurt all the more, when she looked back at him, forcing herself to give him a battered smile, wheezing slightly from the pain in her eye.

“Ellie, you were right... I should have listened to you a long time ago... maybe if I had left him after the first time this happened, all of this could have been avoided...” Kiki Degrace was sobbing on the couch, a bottle of wine in her shaky hands. Kyle had never seen the woman so broken before. No matter what had been done to her, she had always managed to keep up a strong facade, though Kyle believed she had done that more for her daughter’s sake than her own, but not this time.

This time, he had crossed the last line. Marie’s mother seemed completely broken, even ignoring her own injuries that were worse than ever before. So far, it had been ‘just’ a black eye or a bruise, yet judging by the swelling on her arm, this time he had broken a bone.

“Kiki, let’s talk about this later. First, let’s get both of you treated at the hospital. Don’t worry, I’ll pay for everything, and you can stay here for as long as you like.” Eleanor replied, seemingly in her usual voice, yet as her son, Kyle didn’t miss the higher pitch in her voice. Even she seemed taken aback with the level of violence displayed.

“And then what?!” Kiki shouted as she smashed the wine bottle on the floor. “I’ll have to go back to him eventually anyway! It’s impossible for us to escape that bastard! If we stay here too long, he’ll just come looking for us. Even if we run away, the Underdogs will come after us, we will just be forced to be on the run for the rest of our lives! Tell me, Ellie, how am I meant to protect my daughter in front of that monster?!”

Unlike what Kyle might have thought, Kiki Degrace was neither stupid, nor naive. Perhaps she might have fallen for the sugary thoughts of Marie’s father the first time, but certainly not the ones after. No, her choice to get back with him was one out of desperation. The woman knew perfectly well that she was trapped in that relationship, and the consequences if she truly dared to break it off. Her only hope so far had been that something might happen for him to truly change, her sole solace that he had at least never harmed his own daughter... at least until today.

“I have to get out of this, I have to protect Marie, please help me...please...” Kiki was begging her oldest friend. Unfortunately, Eleanor couldn’t bring herself to lie. If she had a way, she would have long since suggested it, so saying anything at this moment would just give the two false hope.

Finishing with Marie's treatment, his mother's eyes gestured for Kyle to take the girl elsewhere, while she tried to calm down her friend. Not saying anything, he carefully helped Marie to another room, where she broke out in tears, just like her mother.

'If only that man would no longer be there...' Kyle thought as he did his best to console Marie.

A few days passed.

After the visit to the hospital, Mrs Degrace had been kept there overnight before being discharged. By now, the swelling had gone down on both of their faces, and neither Marie nor Kyle had talked about that event. Things were pretty self-explanatory, so he just kept her company, doing what he could to keep her from having to remember that day.

Alas, their somewhat idyllic life suddenly got interrupted.

When Mrs Degrace had received a certain message, she had broken out in tears again. Looking at the message, Eleanor had checked her own phone, and to her dismay, she had received the same text. As his mother comforted her friend, once again, Kyle looked over at the content.

The message was from the Underdogs, informing them that there would be a funeral soon. For it to be something so formal, it would mean that either multiple members of the family had died at once, or someone quite important had died. In those cases, attendance was mandatory. This included the entire family.

Kyle would be attending with Eleanor and for Kiki and Marie they would have to come as well. If they didn't, then the other members would be sure to ask questions, putting him on the spot. If that were to happen, there was no telling how he would react. Right now, it was most likely that Marie's father was thinking that the same as usual would occur, as it always had done.

With Marie and Kiki going back to him in due time, yet if they didn't turn up, it would only make matters worse.

“What am I meant to do? Do I go back with him on that day... maybe you could take Marie, at least I can make up some type of excuse.” Kiki suggested.

Eleanor didn't like the sound of that, although she never wanted Marie to get hurt and felt like she should never step foot in that house or near that man again, she was also worried that her daughter was the only thing keeping Kiki alive. Who knows how far things might go if the two of them were left on their own...

In the end, they had no choice, and the day of the funeral had arrived. It was done in a large rented out hall. Everyone was wearing black suits, including Kyle, who was scanning the room.

Part of him was hoping to speak to his father and perhaps say a few words, but he was constantly surrounded by other people. Right now, he was next to several caskets with pictures of the deceased. It seemed like something had gone very wrong, as quite a few people had died, leaving his father in a horrible mood. Kyle understood that today wouldn't be a good time to talk to him now.

As for Eleanor and Kiki, they too had attended, with the latter wearing a veil and heavy makeup to cover up the marking. They were staying in the corner to avoid garnering attention, occasionally exchanging some words with some women, though only ever so briefly.

Meanwhile, the children had been left on their own in a different room. That was until Marie informed Kyle that really needed to go to the restroom. Naturally, he accompanied her there, and waited outside until she was done.

At that moment, Kyle locked eyes with the man he had been thinking about all too much these past few days. The teenager seemed unaware, but his hatred was written all over his face, causing him to pull a certain look. Eventually, noticing the stare, the man started to walk over.

The young man in his twenties had light brown hair, but wasn't overly muscular or anything like that. Still, he had enough strength to overpower a woman and a young teenage girl. Clenching his fist, Kyle started to straighten the look on his face.

“You got anything to say to me, bastard?” The man taunted him. Of course, Kyle said nothing, but as the man turned around and left, he had a few last words. “I can't believe I have a brother like you.”

Chapter 337 A Bad Plan

“Did you just say brother?!” For a second, Gary seemed to have completely forgotten about his own fatigue due to the shocking revelation. Until today, he hadn’t known Damion to have any children at all, yet suddenly he was told that he, at the very least, had two sons.

Were it not for their current situation, the green haired teenager would have never believed Kai to have had any relations to the Underdogs’ leader whatsoever. His upperclassman appeared to have gotten most of his looks from his mother. Perhaps there was some streak of madness he might have gotten from his old man, but if so, he was able to hide it surprisingly well.

“Hang on, so if Marie’s father is actually your brother, then doesn't that make the two of you are... uncle and niece? Isn’t that super weird for the two of you?”

“The first time we met, I just thought of her as the daughter of my Mom’s best friend, and to her, I must have just been the son of her mother’s best friend. Since we were kids, we simply started playing together without a care in the world.

“Over the years, we’ve grown closer together, and I naturally started treating Marie like she was family before eventually finding out that she actually was. Sure, it was weird finding that out, but ultimately, nothing changed about our relationship after we discovered the truth.

“However, as for your other question, Simon isn’t exactly my biological brother, at least not fully. We only share the same father. Damion had him when he was young, and I believe Simon’s mother died giving birth to him. As his firstborn son, he was brought up to take over the mantle in the future.

“Due to her work as a model, my mother managed to catch Damion’s eye. Since she was friends with Mrs Degrace, it was inevitable that her two lives intertwined and from what I’ve been told my half-brother apparently fell in love at first sight. I don't know how, but the two of them ended up together, and she was dragged into this whole life.”

Hearing about this, Gary felt a little sad for Marie. Just because of her father, she had been dragged into the underworld. When he thought about it, the green haired teenager suddenly realised that it was the same for Kai. Neither one of them really had a say in the matter.

Still, since he knew that Marie and Mrs Degrace were doing okay, the story's resolution shouldn't be too bad...

"Simon... I don't recall ever having heard such a name during my time at the Underdogs." Gary muttered to himself. However, it wasn't impossible for him to have never encountered the guy. After all, he had merely been a Transporter.

"As I was saying..." With a pained look, Kai continued his story.

Watching his half-brother walk off, Kyle continued to curse under his breath. The two of them didn't have the best relationship to start with. Given the large age-gap, they had nothing to talk about with each other, and the teenager also suspected his half-sibling hated him.

He wasn't sure whether Simon hated him for the fact that Damion had remarried his mother, or if he perhaps felt threatened that Kyle might have any ambitions regarding the leadership for the Underdogs.

"Hey, Kyle, are you okay? You look a bit flustered." Marie asked, as she came out of the restroom.

"Hmm? My bad, I was lost in thoughts, Marie." Kyle replied. He was happy to see the teenage girl. He felt far closer to her than to that scum who had dared hurt her recently.

The funeral continued without any incidents. After a few of the high-ranking people gave their condolences and the friends and family members of the deceased did the same, the rest of the evening pretty much turned into a meeting between the Underdogs' gang members.

Damion and the rest of the leaders were talking about plans for expansion, and how to avoid the troubles they were facing. They couldn't afford for losses like this one to occur more than once. For a second, Kyle spotted Simon talking with Kiki, their exchange seemed short and in the end the man walked away heading towards the other leaders.

'I wonder...what's going on.' Kyle thought.

Sneaking around, the teenager walked closer towards the others. He didn't quite understand what they were talking about since a lot of it was business talk, but he got the gist of it. Simon seemed to have been given quite an important task to head, and it was one of his first. Damion was all smiles as he patted his favourite son on the back.

"Don't f*ck this up for us, alright!" Damion warned him.

Later that night, Kyle thought that Kiki and Marie would be going back to his half-brother, so he was positively surprised when all of them returned to the hotel room together. While in the large taxi together, it seemed like Kiki couldn't believe it either.

"So what happened, Mommy?" Marie eventually asked.

"I'm not quite sure." Kiki replied. "He said that for now it would be best if we stayed wherever we were hiding. He even warned me not to come back to the apartment for a while. It looks like we're okay."

Although that seemed to be true, Kyle knew that it would just be temporary. Perhaps the reason for him not wanting them to return was so that he could concentrate on the big task that had been given to him. Once it was over, Simon would surely be obsessing over Kiki again.

'I can't..I can't let Marie go back to that damn demon..I can't see her like that again.' Kyle thought.

With the next day being a weekend day, Kyle and Marie were just spending their morning playing games. Her eye was doing a lot better which was causing the teenage girl to play better and for the first time in a while she ended up winning.

"Hey... what is up with you?" Marie asked, putting the controller down. "I never win this easily, so something's clearly on your mind. Just look at your fingers, they're moving in slow motion."

Of course, it was because Kyle had been thinking every day about what he could do to help Marie and her mother. For that, he had been doing a bit of research on his father's gang. He had found out that the Underdogs didn't take to betrayal or failure nicely.

In some cases, there had been members kicked out of the gang, never to be seen again. There were also some shocking stories about what happened to those guys. Some of this he had learned through his mother, and other things he had picked up just by being around his father and his men.

After yesterday's news, he had come up with an idea.

"Marie...I think I know of a way to get that demon off your back."

"Demon?" Marie asked, not sure who Kyle was referring to.

"Simon." Kyle answered, not wanting to admit to either one of the two having any relations with him. "I've overheard that he's responsible for a massive task at the moment. If he messes this up, there is a good chance that my father might kick him out of the gang entirely."

"It might not work the first time, but if he keeps messing up, or maybe even if I can set it up to look like he stole money from the gang, he might lose all of his backing!"

Hearing Kyle talk this way was somewhat frightening for Marie. He had a dangerous glint in his eyes, seemingly obsessed with the idea. She wasn't wrong with her assumption. The teenage boy had spent more time than he would like to admit thinking how to sabotage Simon.

"Don't you think that's too dangerous? Kyle, this isn't like in the movies! What if you get caught? Listen to yourself, you're trying to sabotage your own brother! What do you think he will do if he finds out?" Marie cautioned him.

"Do we have a choice? Do you have a choice?" Kyle countered. "What if he went further that day? I ... I ...might have never seen you again! You or your mother! Your mother told me to look after you, Marie, and this is my chance to!"

Marie wasn't convinced. In the end they were only young teenagers, what would they even do?

“I won’t involve you directly. I’m not asking you to do anything for me, I just need you to tell me one thing. Can you tell me the address...the address of where you were staying with him.”

Thinking about it, the fact that Simon didn't want them to return to the house, most likely meant there was something he didn't want them to see or be involved in. If Kyle could sneak in, and find something to use against his brother, mess up his work or frame him for something in the Underdogs, all of this could be over.

Unsure of what to say, and seeing the intensity in Kyle's eyes, not quite knowing what he was going to do, Marie decided to give him the address.

Chapter 338 A Mistake

Throughout his school life Kyle had been called many things by his schoolmates and teachers ranging from harmless descriptions such as ‘a smart child’, to more outrageous labels such as ‘a genius in the making’. Eleanor Hamper herself had never belittled her son’s intelligence, after all she had been the one to personally teach him outside of school, though she had also never called him something as ludicrous as a ‘talent that only appears once every hundred years’.

The only thing she cared about was that her son would grow up and use his gift to do something that would make him happy, not caring about the opinion of others. This was just one of the reasons why Kyle had loved his mother wholeheartedly.

Because of all the praise he had got, he had strived to stay being the best at everything, to live up to the expectations that everyone had put on for him from the beginning. As such, knowing that his mother, the one person that Kyle cared about the most, was already pleased with him, had done a lot to alleviate that underlying pressure.

At one point, around the time he had met Marie, Kyle had started following his mother's advice and concentrated more on finding a balance in his life, playing games and doing sports now and then. Nevertheless, thanks to his sharp mind, he had managed to stay top of the class, though whenever teachers would volunteer him to participate in special programs, he would decline, treasuring his free time more.

In a manner of speaking, despite having been born as the son of a gang leader, young Kyle had lived the life of a goody-two-shoes so far. As such, he had never imagined that he would ever take the initiative to skip school and do something that was extremely dangerous, if not suicidal.

'Marie and Aunt Kiki are happy staying with us, yet you're the one who's ruining it all!' Kyle thought as he walked straight past his school and continued forward.

As he continued to walk, Marie watched him with a worried look, wondering what to do, in the end, she still had to go to school.

'We won't do anything, right? ...I mean what can he do?' Marie wondered as part of her hoped that Kyle would back out of doing whatever he planned to do at the last second.

Of course, Kyle was heading to his half-brother's address. With it being the middle of the day, he was pretty sure that Simon wouldn't be home, but even if he was he had a plan for that as well. Either way, whatever the case he needed to avoid running into him.

The address wasn't too far from the school, in the first place Slough was only a Tier-3 town. It was far smaller than a city. In about 2 hours, one could walk the entire length and see most of the main part of the town, so it only took Kyle 30 minutes to get there. He stopped in front of an apartment block, it wasn't the worst of areas nor was it the best.

Damion could have easily paid for Simon and the Degraces to live in the best area, yet he didn't. Since Simon was supposed to take over the gang one day, his father wanted to train him from the bottom up. To do that, he should live the same life as his old man had, with no extra privileges, so that he could earn the position as leader of the Underdogs.

Of course, Kyle had experienced a completely different life with his mother. They had luxury apartments, an unlimited spending budget and other benefits. Eleanor hadn't asked much of her husband, yet there had been one thing she had been adamant about. Kyle was not to get involved in the gang business and since Damion already had a successor he had agreed to that.

As Kyle thought about it, he realised that this could be another reason his brother seemed to dislike him so much, because the two of them were completely different. Of course, that in no way excused his behaviour towards his family. Even his father didn't lay hands on his mother, and he was the leader of the gang,

'Marie said that he leaves for work every day at 10 AM and then doesn't get back till late. Usually around 10 PM and more often than not drunk as well. That's when she hears her mother and him arguing.' Kyle recalled.

Looking at his phone, he could see it was fifteen minutes until 10 AM. It made sense, since gang members had their usual daily runs they needed to do, unless it was a special day. Either way, Kyle was going to wait patiently.

Not long after, the door opened up and looking at his phone, Kyle saw that his half-brother was leaving right on the dot. Hiding around one of the hallway corners, he was down the further end of the staircase. He was certain that Simon would use the upper exit, since he had noted that his car was parked at that side.

He waited a few minutes to make sure his half-brother didn't return to pick up anything he might have forgotten, before he dialled a number on his mobile phone. It was the apartment's home phone. He didn't expect anyone to pick up the phone, it was just to check whether someone else might have been inside, but after a few rings no one picked up.

Quickly heading to the door, Kyle pressed his hand against the handle. It was one of the newer types of handles that worked via a fingerprint that could be inputted or a PIN like on one's phone. Of course, Marie had already given him this information, so after putting the sequence of numbers in he went inside.

The door closed behind him, and for the first time he saw the apartment where Marie and her mother would occasionally live with his piece of shit half-brother.

The first thing Kyle did was head to the kitchen and look for a spoon in the drawer, which he then placed on the door handle. This way he would get an early warning if anyone were to come home. Of course, the spoon would be a giveaway that someone was inside, but it was better than him getting caught red-handed, and with a bit of luck his half-brother would choose to ignore it.

—

“That apartment.” Kai spoke weakly, sitting down on the hard ground, with Gary not too far away. “If only I had listened to my mother and not stuck my nose where it didn’t belong, perhaps I could have continued to live a normal life.”

Chapter 339 Decision made

The main room of the apartment was an open plan kitchen/living room all placed into one large area. Honestly, Kyle decided to give the area a quick skim over but he didn't look for long as he didn't expect to find anything in this place anyway.

‘I have to give him some credit, he’s not so stupid to just leave things out in the open.’ Kyle thought as he closed one of the drawers just under the TV cabinet.

To the right, there was a hallway that branched off into several other different rooms, such as the bathroom, their other bedrooms and most importantly the office. Since the last was the most likely place to find out information, the young teenager went ahead and checked there first.

‘I have to be careful, but also hurry in case he plans to work from home and comes back early.’

Entering the office, Kyle saw that the room was a complete mess. There were things scattered everywhere, and even the papers, notes, and more on the desk weren't placed away properly. It was nothing like how he would have kept things, showing how different the two half-brothers really were.

‘Crap, this is going to make it harder.’ Kyle thought. ‘If it was all neat and tidy I could have placed it back perfectly in its place, but from what I can see he seems to be the type of person who even though it looks messy, still follows its own system. If I move something, there is a good chance he's going to know someone was here.’

In the end, he would have to just make do with whatever he could find on the surface. After looking around for a little while, and reading over some of those documents, Kyle managed to find more information than he had initially imagined.

For one, there were several sticky notes posted all over the front of his laptop, with different dates, gang member names and times. Seeing them, and matching it up with other things he had seen on those documents, Kyle was sure that he had hit a gold mine.

'Does he not know that he can keep just track of his notes on the laptop? ... hmmm, maybe he's worried someone might hack it. Oh well, this way made things easy for me.' Kyle smiled as he used his phone to write down his own notes after taking some photos of the important things he had found in the office.

As Simon was already in a somewhat high position he had detailed information on planned attacks with the dates, safe house areas for the Underdogs, establishments the gang was planning on taking over or attack in case of them not cooperating.

'The easiest way is probably if I can sabotage his missions. I just have to find a way to inform the other gangs of what they're planning to do. There even looks to be a whole list of drops that those types of Transporters are meant to do.'

On a particular note Kyle could see the word NIRV written out on the top, though he had no idea whether the scribbled 'parcel' was meant as something to be delivered or get delivered.

There were also a lot of other things Kyle lacked the context to completely grasp. Nevertheless, with just the few things that were clear enough, he was sure he could sabotage him enough to cause a few missions to fail. Then, the Underdogs would undoubtedly start wondering about having a rat among them, at which point he would just have to frame Simon...

Exposing that it was all him, though it might even be a thing that they would figure out on their own. After all, who would suspect that all of it was a thirteen year old boy's doing?.

'The only thing I don't understand is what the big deal was about? Why would he not want Kiki and Marie back for this?' Kyle wondered. 'From what I saw, this just seems like normal everyday business for the Underdogs, it doesn't even look like something that would be a shock to anyone.'

Perhaps the big news was hiding somewhere on his laptop or under the big piles of paper, but in order not to risk himself, he decided to leave everything in place.

Leaving the room carefully Kyle closed the door behind him, using the pair of gloves he had worn. He was smart enough not to leave any fingerprints, though he doubted the police would get involved in this. Sure, it wasn't something the Underdogs should do, but it was best to stay cautious.

As soon as he left the room with the information, Kyle started to question whether this was the right thing to do.

'Can I really do this... if I provide the information to the other gangs... Simon won't be the only one I'm putting at risk. I have no idea how bad things can go... what if they kill him... what if other members die trying to protect him?'

His mind was going back and forth. The people he was caring about were gangsters, who perhaps would have killed other gang members from the other side already, but he didn't know that for a fact. Not everyone had already dirtied their hands...

While deep in his thoughts, Kyle found himself standing in front of a door that had a little sign out front stating that it was Marie's room. Before even thinking about it his body was moving on its own and opened the door to what looked like a bright pink paradise.

"Whoa, what is all this?" Kyle was greeted by countless plushies that were all pink, pink bedsheets and pink curtains. It took a bit of time for the teenager to process this. He couldn't remember a single time having seen Marie wear anything close to pink. The way she behaved around him, playing games and sports with him, gave him a more tomboyish impression of her.

'Is she only that way around me or something?' Kyle wondered.

With his curiosity getting the better of him, the teenager started to look around the room. The bed hadn't been made, it was crumpled a bit and that's when he noticed something else as well. Behind the door there was a large hole. It didn't go right through the door, but it was indented as if someone punched it.

It made Kyle remember why he had come here in the first place, looking back at the bed, he noticed something by the pillow. A corner of what looked like a notebook stuck out. Pulling it out, he could see that to be exactly what it was.

Opening the pages, not caring for whether Marie wanted him to read it or not, Kyle soon found out that it was a diary of some sorts. There were some banal things written in there about how her day was, and it looked like it had been used a lot in the beginning, but less and less as time went on.

'Seems like Marie is also one of those people who try to do this diary stuff, only to give up after a month or so.' Kyle had a slight smirk on his face.

However, it didn't remain for long, as he soon discovered a large shift in tone. After a large gap of blank pages, the next one had countless scribbles all over it, as if someone was writing in anger. The words didn't fit in the guidelines, but based on the words that were being used Kyle could see why.

"I don't understand...I don't understand...why does he get so angry, why does he keep hitting her!"

A few pages later:

"I wish the man was dead! I wish he was out of our lives...why do we keep coming back to this god-forsaken place?!"

The pages looked to be a little wet, and Kyle could imagine they were because of the one writing having cried. The next entry, if one could even call it that, was just the word 'die' filling up the entire page, seemingly traced over enough times to damage the paper. There was pure anger and he knew who it was directed towards.

Alas, the next page was the worst one by far.

"I can't take it anymore... I don't know what to do. This pain in my heart hurts so much... I don't want him to hurt Mommy, and I'm scared. I'm so scared. I feel like I can't breathe when he gets like that..."

I don't know what to do... maybe it's easier... if I weren't there. Without me, Mommy could finally leave him."

After reading the page, Kyle instinctively scrunched it up as he had made up his mind.

'He has to go.'

When leaving the room, Kyle did his best to put it back to how it was and closed the door. As he walked down the hallway, he noticed a faint muffle. Stopping for a second, Kyle wondered if it was the sound of his feet pressing against the floorboards, but as the teenager stood still, he could soon hear it again.

It was faint, but it was also constant, and it seemed to go in and out. Walking further forward, Kyle could hear it even more now. He stopped in front of where the noise seemed to originate from...the bathroom.

Chapter 340 In the bath

With the line of work his family was in and especially his half-brother, Kyle could guess what was on the other side of the bathroom door. He could already imagine that the muffled screams meant they belonged to someone trapped inside. That being the case, it now made perfect sense why Simon had told the Degrares to stay away until he called for them.

'I should just leave, I have enough to get Simon into trouble...' Kyle told himself, already heading to the door, but rather than exiting, now that he was in the main kitchen. He had decided to grab a knife instead.

'No, Dad really cares for Simon... he really does, maybe just a few failed tasks here and there won't be enough to just get him kicked out of the Underdogs. They said that there was something big, and this could be it.'

Heading back to the bathroom door, Kyle stood outside it, he had tiptoed back and could no longer hear the muffled noises. Whoever was inside must have thought that he had left.

'If the person was just locked in there, then there would be banging on the room. I'm ninety percent sure that Simon must have tied them up, but just in case... I also have this.' Kyle thought, looking at the knife.

He had never used such a thing, although he was quite athletic and good at sports, he didn't willingly participate in sports, or any form of combat. If he was to be a gang member he imagined that he would be one of the worst.

Looking down the hallway, Kyle looked at Marie's door again and remembered the dairy, this allowed him to push forward, twisting the door handle and pushing it in. Glancing a peak, Kyle could see what looked like a male figure in the bath.

At first he could just see his knees, so he knew that he was right, that someone was inside. They were close together and in the bathtub. Kyle couldn't see any rope of any kind but this was pretty much the confirmation he needed that they were tied up.

Now, a little braver, he pushed the door further and could finally see the state of the whole bathroom. Stunned by the sight in front of him, Kyle almost dropped the knife, but managed to control himself just in time, gripping it a little tighter.

It turned out that the person was a badly injured man in the bathtub. There were heavy bruises, eyes swollen. On top of that, on the back of the bathroom wall there was blood all over it. That also wasn't the only place there was blood, some of it was splattered on the walls as well. One couldn't imagine what had happened here, or how much pain the man was in front of him.

It smelt slightly metallic inside, as well a little like rotten eggs. Everything was overwhelming for Kyle, and he felt his inside trying to come out from within.

'Calm down... I can't afford to throw up... It's just a game ...you've seen plenty of bloody scenes in games and movies! It's just one of those. You're just an actor of some sort.' Kyle was trying to convince himself.

However, the man who was in the tub, of course noticed that someone he had never seen before had entered. Seeing that it wasn't Kyle, his eyes opened up, having seen a ray of hope. The muffling noises came out again, as the man tried his best to speak but of course none of it was audible.

There were several pieces of tape wrapped around his mouth, merely allowing him to breathe through his nose. The fact the man wasn't using his hands meant they were tied up as well.

Kyle remained frozen at the doorstep.

'What exactly did I think I was going to do? I knew someone was in here but then what? If I free the man, Simon will immediately know that I was here... shit, I can't just turn back now either, the guy has already seen me... what if he tells Simon about it?! What exactly was I expecting to find here? I can't cut the tape from his mouth either.'

Although saying that, Kyle could see that a lot of the tools that were used to injure and tie up the man were still left in the bathroom including the tape. Perhaps he could just untape his mouth, in order to find out why he was here.

At the same time, leaving this person, Kyle felt like if he did his life would be lost.

'He won't be back for a long time...this man shouldn't know me..I can just undo his mouth for now.' Kyle thought.

"Hey, I just wandered in here by accident." Kyle eventually said out loud as he slowly approached the person. "I'm going to cut open your mouth and let you speak. I'm the only one here, so please don't do anything stupid like scream for help, okay? I'm not meant to be in here in the first place."

Understanding what Kyle was saying, the man quickly nodded. Using the knife, Kyle carefully cut off the tape, and then started to pull. It was far more difficult than he thought and seeing the man up close was making everything he was doing a little harder as reality was starting to hit him.

Eventually though, Kyle got the tape off, but not without a little bit of blood getting on his hands.

"Thank you..." The man spoke with a weak voice. "If you could free my arms and legs, we can get out of here."

"Ahm... I don't exactly know who you are, mister." Kyle replied, half acting, half serious. "Like I said, I'm not meant to be here in the first place. Maybe I should call the police and they will come here before he comes back."

"No..no...please." The man started to beg with tears falling down his eyes. Just in case the man was ready to scream at any second, Kyle picked up the tape from the ground again, making sure that he would use it if he made any noise.

However, that's when the man realised something. "Wait, I know you! I've seen you before! Your Damion's other son, aren't you?! Your name's Ken... no, was it Kevin... AH! It was Kai, right? I'm a member of the Underdogs! Please, just call your Dad and tell him that Tim Curdy is still alive and that I'm here, alright?!"

Hearing these words caused great confusion for Kyle, but then something hit him. Given Tim's current appearance it was hard to tell, but the teenager could recall seeing someone with his frame being around Damion in the past. However, he had seen him even more recently, at the funeral. However... it had been in the form of a large picture as one of the deceased.

'What... is going on.' Kyle wondered, needing some time to sort through that information.

Alas, before he could make heads or tails out of it, a metal clanking sound came from the main room.