

Claimed by the Sicilian Mafia

Claimed #Chapter 11 – 20

Read Claimed Chapter 11

Chapter 11

ALEXIA GREEN.

We are in his car as he drives up to the haunted looking mansion that resembles an old palace that probably occupied fifteenth century. vampires a while back.

Volkov doesn't look at me as he gets out of the car, walks around it and comes to open the door for me.

Then like the fake gentleman he's been pretending to be, he holds out his hand for me and I completely ignore it.

As soon as my heels make contact with the ground which happens to be snow, I know deep in my bones that I hate Moscow and probably

Russia too.

Russia is cold and unpredictable.

Russia has looming storm clouds that warn of something tragic happening.

Russia has a man who I'm supposed to seduce when I can't even seduce a ninety-year-old man. One, because that's too gross and two, I'm not exactly the seducing type.

Together with the man beside me whose height makes me feel smaller and miniscule, we walk

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straight to the entrance of whatever the hell is going on in there.

Tonight like every night, Volkov is wearing his signature scowl. The one that says I have too much trauma to smile.

Let's not forget the very expensive, dark as his
heart suit that matches his dark hair and the shirt
that's not buttoned to the collar.

"We get in there, you don't stare. You blend in, you find your target and you carry out the mission without drawing too much attention."

His hand lands on my back as he takes the fur coat off of me handing it to the doorman who ushers us inside.

The house is too grand to be described in words.

The curtains look like they've been imported from someplace fancy like Taiwan or Persia. The chandelier might just be made of real diamonds. Real freaking diamonds.

"Demetri owns all of this?"

Please say no. Please say no.

"Yes."

Volkov answers the question not in the least bit surprised by anything.

"What kind of business is he into if he owns all of
this?"

Clept H

"His profession won't matter when you come face to face with him. All you need to do is distract him for a few minutes

"Distract him while you do what?"

While I take care of business"

I'm panicking. The more I see everything *in*
this house, the more I'm scared of this Demetri guy,

What if he is like a fat politician type of guy who gropes my butt now and then in the name of 'knowing each other better'?

I have worked in fancy restaurants as a waitress, I know how these types of men think.

The butler, the doorman, whoever this slender man is with the Romanesque nose that looked like it was sculpted by Picasso himself but in a bad way, stands outside the tall oak doors his eyes on

Volkov.

"Mr. Vitello, we are honored to have you as our guest."

Volkov's hand caresses my back. The one that's naked and bare to him because this lilac dress he got me showcases my entire back and covers the upper side of my butt.

My nerves are a mess. But what drives me crazy? The feel of a hand that huge tracing the line of my back.

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It's gonna be a long, long night and all I can hope for is that Millie sleeps through it all safe and sound back at the new mansion.

While the butler pushes the huge doors open and my breath is caught up in my throat, the man beside me leans closer to me,

"I'd be a dick if I didn't tell you this but that

fucking dress you are wearing looks so good on you, I'm almost tempted to gorge out all the eyes. that will set their sights on you tonight."

That's his version of a compliment.

And in his world maybe that's his way of saying sorry for dragging you all the way to Russia to use you on a probably deranged man!

I angle my face to the side only to really look at this man and realize that the Good Lord might have given him the face of a glorious mafia killer but the attitude and temper of a three-year-old after being denied candy.

"You are still a dick anyway for making me do

this."

Demetri isn't old or fat. He doesn't even look like

a politician.

He looks even scarier than when Volkov tries to

choke me.

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Demetri looks and sounds like his name. Impeccably tall, hard facial features an example being the jaw that looks like it goes to a gym itself and a bigger muscle build than Volkov, he is the perfect example of what a soldier and a mercenary looks like.

Ooh and he is sporting a buzz cut. A buzz cut that looks as terrifying as the non-existent smile on

his face.

“I don’t think I can do this.”

“It’s too late to back down. You are here, you are

doing it.”

“Why can’t I seduce a guy like him?”, I ask, my eyes lingering on the man who’s laughing with other strange men by the corner.

I recognize his brown hair from television. He’s running for senator in Chicago. His name is...

“Dante Keaton is off...

I don’t want you near

him, I don’t want you talking to him. You ready?”

“No.”

“Good. Go.”

Christian is gone by the time I turn around to stop this madness.

In a throng of businesspeople who I know nothing of, the only right thing to do is obey.

Seduce Demetri and call it a night.

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Easy peasy right?

“Demetri?”

That’s the best I can come up with.

My palms are sweaty, my throat feels parched as Demetri excuses himself from the man he is talking to and turns his focus on me.

He sizes me up, he doesn’t even blink as his eyes lock with mine.

“Nice party by the way. It’s really umm...chic. I’m Kimberly Ramos. You probably don’t remember

me but...”

“Whose whore, are you?”

If I wasn’t too pissed off at his statement. I’d pay attention to his thick Russian accent but he just

called me a whore.

“Excuse me? I think you have me mistaken with
someone else.”

“No women are invited here. And if there are, they came because their men brought them out for company. You do not know me otherwise you would not have talked to Demetri.

So we remain with two choices, no? You are someone’s arm candy for the night but you think you can also get Demetri in your bed tonight if you are lucky or two, you are here for something else, something that concerns me.”

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Busted.

I’m like a deer caught in headlights.

Demetri and his terrible English have me

nowhere left to run and the man who brought me
here...I turn around, I look for Volkov but he is
missing.

Oh no. No. No.

"No one is coming to save you, woman. Demetri has you cornered, any attempts to run
will only quicken your death."

"My name is not Kimberly Ramos. I lied. I was kinda forced into this. You are right I
don't know who you are otherwise I wouldn't have spoken to you or entered your
mansion for that matter and for that I apologize.

I'm not a serial killer, I'm not here to kill you or anything. I've never even touched a gun
in my life so if you can please forget we met, forget this happened, I'll disappear and-",
my words die

down my throat when Demetri throws a glare my
way.

"You are coming with me."

中申率

"This isn't necessary. I have no weapon on me
and I'm not a hired assassin."

"Move."

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One of Demetri's guys pushes my back with the nozzle of a rifle.

The other guy to my right clicks his tongue,

Demetri walks in front of me as we all trek down the red carpeted hallway.

I'm sweating buckets trying to assure myself! won't die in Russia. My knees buckle but I
try to remain positive.

Christian Volkov is somewhere in this mansion.

He'll notice I'm gone. He'll look for me.

But this is the same Christian who brought me here. To sell me to Russians? Oh God,

My mini panic attack halts when at the end of the hallway, a gorgeous brunette appears wearing only mini shorts and a long baggy shirt that barely looks like hers.

Her hair is long and voluminous and so chestnut brown she looks like she jumped out of a fairytale.

Her face is bare of makeup but she looks like a Victoria Secret's model.

"Dee. I was so worried."

Shit.

Dee?

This woman hugs Demetri and jumps in his lap

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gging her legs around his torso like he is not some terrifying ruffian who's about to kill me for

Trespassing.

And Dee? I mean Demetri? Ue kisses her tenderly before he groans.

"You shouldn't be out here, malyshka."

I'm no Russian interpreter but I definitely feel like malyshka translates to baby or somet
endearment of the sort.

"We've already established you are not going to boss me around anymore especially and most especially when they are both here. You invited them? They are going to kill you."

Invited who?

"They are not taking you, what's mine from me."

I cough out the pang of jealousy and confusion from my throat.

Demetri's woman acknowledges my presence and something about her eyes looks familiar.

Like I know her. But from where?

I don't get to indulge my curiosity any longer because a few seconds later, the sounds of gunshots loud like thunder ring from down the

hall.

I'm already on the floor screaming as I watch Demetri take a gun from his waist, hold on to his

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girlfriend tight and scurry down the hall.

His men follow him shouting stuff into their walkies.

And I?

I lay on the floor flat, my hands above my head, my prayers going to God that He saves me and that my life doesn't end like this. Meaningless.

God doesn't save me.

He sends my savior in the form of the devil

himself.

"I expected you to be dead by now, Little Nurse. Get up, our time's up."

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CHRISTIAN VICIOUS VOLKOV.

"Why am I not surprised to see you here?"

I nurse a shot of vintage wine.

Demetri offers the best of the best after all. The

only thing that puts me at ease is that I know the bastard drank the wine too. I watched him do so

making it safe to say the wine isn't poisoned.

Sunshine seems to be managing the conversation with Demetri too well. I see her smile. The same smile that she gives every guy like it's free candy on Halloween.

A minute later, Demetri escorts the Little Nurse out of my vicinity and I would react if it isn't for the fact that Maximo hasn't given me the clear I need to take down any man I want in this room.

The other reason happens to be the fact that I'm occupied.

With him.

"It's a small world, Volkov. What? You think

voll

are the only one who wants to hear what Demetri wants to say?"

Dante Keaton asks, showing his usual smug

bunny teeth that make him think he looks smart.

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The truth of the matter is, Dante Keaton has never been smart. He might happen to be the biggest douchebag I've met and trust me with my line of work, I've met a lot of them.

"I didn't know he was inviting low lives too is all."

Dante chuckles. I take a sip of the piss wine.

What's taking Maximo too long damn it?

"Always arrogant, Volkov but then again what I can expect from a stuck-up Sicilian heir. I was the head of the Chicago mafia before you invaded my turf, maybe our Russian friend recognizes.

who I am and who the thief is."

I made the Chicago branch better than what Dante had and that's a fact.

"I should stick to politics if I were you. Business and greed don't work hand in hand Keaton. I might be stuck up but at least I'm not the one botching business operations all in the name of crying over spilled milk."

His men shot Nico, raided my bar and all for what? Because I sell more load than the weasel in

front of me ever will?

"I'm taking back what's mine. You get the saying. In three months you'll be taking what's yours unless perhaps something were to happen to you and your seat miraculously became up for grabs."

"Is that a threat Keaton?"

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"A threat would be holding a gun to your head. and making sure I don't miss. That's a threat, **this**?

This is advice."

"Volkov? Damn it, come in. You hearing me? They jammed the signals. Jett found Demetri's. men slaughtered. You have to get out of there. It's a trap. Dante Keaton set a trap for all of you. Demetri isn't the one going to kill you all, Dante

Keaton is. Dante..."

The earpiece in my ear loses the signal completely.

I chuckle at the turn of events.

So what? Demetri called us to a regular meeting

and not a genocide and Dante Keaton wants to take advantage of all that by killing every mafia head in this room?

Well played, I didn't see that coming.

"What is it you said about threats?"

My Glock is already up and directed at the dead center of Dante's forehead.

It takes me one bullet to fry his brains out. One bullet to end him and rid the world of an asshole planning to be a senator so he can embezzle public funds properly while shipping weapons into the country unseen.

"I wouldn't do that if I were you. You shoot me and you take the fall for every man that dies

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tonight.”

I underestimated you this time.”

“No. You became too cocky in this game. The secret to success has always been patience. Wait

for the right time, the right place and moment and then poof!TM

Jamie Keoghan, head of the Irish mafia drops like a bug on the floor. Dead, unconscious? I don't give a fuck as the next man that ends up on the floor happens to be the head of the Los Angeles

mafia.

I don't wait for the third man to fall.

I rely on instinct. I point my gun away from Dante's face to the ceiling, shooting the lights

out.

Darkness hovers around the room, gunshots rain like sulfur from the depths of hell.

Nothing worse than a group of panicked heavily armed men who sense death and are too cocky to

accept it.

My hand locked on my gun, I shoot whoever I have to as I make my way down the same path that Sunshine and Demetri went to.

My mind ticks with rage, adrenaline pumps into. my blood like a fix and in a haze of confusion, fury and disorientation, my mind goes back to the child back in the damn mansion a few miles

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from here who is expecting to see her mother

tomorrow.

Little nurse dies and that child falls on me.

I can't raise a child.

Not with these conditions I can't.

The dimly lit hallway crawls with dead men, I'm almost on the verge of giving up and calling it a night when her screams punch the air louder

than the gunshots.

Up ahead, trembling against the ground, hands covering her head as if that would stop a sniper from blowing her brains out, Little Nurse screams and cowers in fear.

"I expected you to be dead by now, Little Nurse. Get up, our time's up."

Her pretty blue eyes turn to face me and I swear any man would be dead from her gaze.

"Vicious? Vic-?"

alone.

She doesn't give me a minute to breathe.

Her shaking body wraps around my waist it hits. me like a gust of wind on an already shitty night.

"You're gonna have to let me go if we have any chance of surviving the night Alexia."

Her sternum shakes against my chest. Her wet cheeks caress my neck. Her legs tremble as they

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hug my waist.

And this stubborn little thing? She refuses to let

1. go.

"Get me out of here, please."

She begs.

She hugs me.

I kill more than four men while she's latched on my upper body like a baby monkey to its mother.

The only difference is this wild monkey is scared as fuck.

Every time I fire my gun, her body only captures mine further. The more she clutches my body, the more my sanity and my blood rush all the way to my dick.

We make it out of Demetri's house with me

covered in blood and Sunshine's hold around my

neck enough to choke me.

"This is the part where you let go and run to the

car."

"No...I don't think I can. One wrong step and they'll kill me. I can't die like this. I can't die here. I can't leave Millie."

"No one is dying. All I need is your little feet running to the car while I cover you. I'm right. behind you, Sunshine. I promise."

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Maybe it's the blue eyes.

Maybe it's the adrenaline and the thrill of having had to shoot my way from Dante Keaton's men

All I know is as I watch my thirse run to the car in five-inch heels. I swell with pride.

'Run like the flash, sunshine. I'm right behind

you."

Ensuring no men follow us, getting rid of the earpiece that has proved ineffective in contacting Maximo, I get in the car.

A few minutes later, Sunshine and I are on the

road.

Except everything on the road looks too blurry. the steering wheel in my hands feel like Jello, Alexia shouting my name feels like a distant wail.

Before my eyes shut down and I black out. I realize two things.

One, Dante Keaton spiked the vintage wine and knowing him, he probably did it with poison.

Two, I'm the one driving. Me blacking out means. my Little Nurse follows me to hell too.

This chapter is unlocked. Enjoy reading!

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ALEXIA BROWN.

The first time I watched Fast and Furious on the
piece of crap Tv I had back then, the movie
franchise had thrilled me.

The car chases, the gun scenes, the totally
impossible stunts that were out of this world but nonetheless made the world seem like
it could be
conquered.

I'm not denying I watched the movies because of Vin Diesel or The Rock but somehow
those
movies made me dream.

Made me dream that maybe if I wasn't a nurse barely have finished my residence, in
some alternate world I would have been a spy or some cool badass chick running from
the cops in street cars and all that.

Well right now?

After having bullets fired on top of me and men dying faster than candles on a
disastrous Tinder date around me, I realized that the Fast and Furious movies lied.

Getting shot at wasn't fun.

Negotiating with Russian men who looked more like the Russian mob wasn't in any way
thrilling

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or all of that spy espionage the movies preached about..

And lastly whatever Vin Diesel or Dominic

Toretto did with his cars didn't apply with cars of
this century or of the real world.

Not at all they didn't.

I'm not going to lie that the whole night had
caught me by surprise.

I'm also not going to lie and say Christian Volkov
didn't save me today.

Because he did. He shot men without blinking without even telling me to get off of him
because I was slowing him down.

Granted this whole night was his fault but after some slash of bad luck, I thought said
bad luck wouldn't catch up to us.

But it did.

One minute my hands were shaking against the car seats, my head leaning against the
passenger window and the next minute...

I don't know when I realized we were goners.

Maybe it was when I asked,

"Do you see them? The black SUV behind us? I—I think they are following us."

Volkov didn't answer which was strange.

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He liked ignoring me but he should have said something. Anything

The next time I called his name, Christian's eyes were already half closed. The hold he had on the steering wheel was already weak leaving me the totally confused driver with the out-of-control

vehicle.

I didn't get to touch the steering wheel because the SUV following us picked up speed and in mere seconds, they were driving side to side with us against the slick tarmac covered by sleet.

"Volkov?"

My attempts to wake Christian up only grew.

futile.

The next time my lips parted to scream Christian's name, the SUV rammed into us swerving us off the road, all the way to the snow, all the way until the car overturned, until my screams sounded like hollow wails and my eyes. flashed before my eyes.

And when life flashed before my eyes all I could think of was of my baby girl.

My baby girl.

Jey liquid hits my cheek, the smell of oil burning. with something dastardly like metal flogs the air and assaults my lungs.

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My throat stings in pain and the urge to exhale the air chokes me.

My eyelids flutter open in panic as I cough out liquid after liquid that looks red in the snow,

Oh God.

Pain bites every part of my body like termites. feasting on nearly dead flesh. Every vessel in my body feels like it's working overtime in trying to keep my heart alive and beating in the middle of all the freezing cold.

I cough some more. More blood expels from my mouth tainting the white snow.

As soon as the realization that I'm coughing up blood hits me in the chest, my hands meet the snow underneath and I attempt to stand.

"Ah-Ah."

“Your leg was jammed up pretty badly, Little Nurse. Any attempt to walk on it risks you never

walking again and I don’t need to be a nurse to

know that.”

My eyes follow his voice.

Volkov. Alive, definitely with torn clothes but

alive.

He stands before me, his back to me,

ahead of what is in front of us.

his eyes

I look around too, memories of what happened

TRAT

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assault every working cell in my brain.

No. No. No.

“We had an accident. Those jerks they...ran us off the road. You were unconscious. I thought we were...how?”

How am I sitting on snow?

How am I alive?

How is he standing?

“Thought I was dead too. Turns out Dante Keaton isn’t a coward after all. Bastard spiked the wine with sedatives instead of poison.”

I don’t understand half of the things leaving his

mouth.

My heart is lurching all the way to my stomach as I examine everything around us. And everything

around us?

Yeah, it's snow alright..

Miles and miles of snow and up ahead the only thing I see is trees that are too frozen with icicles to provide any warmth.

We are in the middle of nowhere Russia.

Millie. What'll happen to...

"Where's the car Vicious? What happened to the

His hand stretches out and he points in the east

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direction.

What happened to the car? It exploded. Its smoke can be seen like a beacon from outer space itself.

I start to panic. My nerves turn erratic.

I never liked snow. I don't like Russia either. I don't like the man who's not facing me either.

"Y-You did this! Your stupid plan with Demetrius, Duncan whatever his name is, caused all of this!

And now we are stranded in the middle of

nowhere. Do you not understand how much trouble we are in right now? Right after I begged

you not to come to Russia?

You've handled situations like this, maybe a

million times but I haven't. You might want to die but I don't because I have someone waiting for

1. me. I should have never agreed to any of this.”

The tears I’ve held back since Demetri and his ‘you are coming with me’ words hit me come flowing down my cheeks.

I would have already been dead if someone didn’t
start the shootout.

Demetri would have chopped me to pieces but it doesn’t matter now, does it?

I’m already dead. Here in this ice desert with this ice—stoned heart douchebag.

My eyes are on the snow, on my leg that has a

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gnashing cut that stings.

A second later the snow on the ground in front of me gets colored by drops and drops of blood as Vicious squats in front of me.

His icy hand clutches my chin, leveling my eyes

ath his fierce ones

“Calm your frozen titties down because no one is dying. Well except me if you don’t remove this crappy metal off my shoulder. little Nurse.”

Shrapnel a piece of the car itself is lodged inside his left shoulder. The blood surrounding it makes

it worse.

I gasp before I even ask what’s obvious.

“You got injured

Teah, no shit I need you to take it out.”

Take it out Taking it out means him bleeding our and I don’t even know how deep it’s lodged in

there

You'll bleed a lot if I do."

"A line blood never hurt anyone.

"Are you seriously quoting the worst line ever said by men when you have a piece of metal matured in your shoulder? A little blood will hurt you. You'll lose a lot of blood if I take it out!

Be sure at me like I spit in his Ervente cigar

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holder. Then he takes a few steps away from me gazing down at me like I'm a pest.

The man doesn't think for a second, doesn't even breathe in preparation for what he's doing; his right hand clutches the shrapnel and he pulls it out in one go smirking.

Smirking at me? At the pain? At the situation?

"Can't carry you with a shrapnel on my shoulder. Let's hope for both our sakes I don't bleed to death before we reach the safe house."

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CHRISTIAN VON VON

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stop the bleedin

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Reut meam getting hypothermia and with the drew, the Sundine Blonde is wearing I'm wurpriced frostbite haut caught up with her yer

had maybe I'm being an ass but her catching

This chapter is unlocked. Enjoy reading!

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CHRISTIAN VICIOUS' VOLKOV.

The wound stings like a bitch.

My hand is applying pressure to it as much as I can but we both know none of that is going to stop the bleeding.

What stings worse than the wound? The snowing. The sleet. The five foot woman who's stubbornly refused my help with her leg injured pretty

badly.

I trudge through the ankle deep snow, stopping against a pine tree under the pretense of taking a breath when she and I know, I'm waiting for her.

It's almost sunrise.

We've been trekking for almost two hours with

no rest.

Rest means risking getting found.

Rest means running into wild animals that might just be hanging around the corner for the next

prey.

Rest means getting hypothermia and with the dress, the Sunshine Blonde is wearing, I'm surprised frostbite hasn't caught up with her yet.

And maybe I'm being an ass but her catching

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frostbite means less weight, less responsibility and karma serving her back for some of that 'I don't need your jacket or your help, I'm fine.

The fur coat is keeping her upper body warm but her lower body?

She's definitely freezing. She's not fine.

By the time she reaches up to me, her mop of sunshine blonde hair is a mess. Snow, branches,

cobwebs. I didn't know cobwebs existed in this

hell of a place but apparently, she found them.

Her small hand clutches the tree, her short

breaths look like her panting from where I'm standing, she winces when she lifts her injured foot from the snow to look at her wound.

The wound on her ankle has advanced to swelling

in her right leg.

"Need help?"

"You asked me that ten minutes ago and what did

I say?"

"You were fine."

"Then I'm telling you ten minutes later, precisely right now that I'm fine."

"You don't look fine to me, Little Nurse."

"A man who fails to take a nurse's advice on not bleeding himself to death shouldn't be the one pointing fingers at who's fine and who isn't. How

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far is your safe house?"

Probably a mile. Can't trace it because Maximo's already gone away from it by now.

She raises her brow,

"Is there even a safe house?"

I almost chuckle. Other women, I would have left.

them to die but this one? She straight up challenges me and that in itself is conflicting.

"You are welcome to walk the other way if you think I'm walking us around a damn ice forest for

the fun of it."

"You could be delaying our deaths under the guise there's a mysterious safe house in the middle of nowhere."

"There's no delaying death. When it comes, you know it, you feel it inside you."

I'd felt it a couple of times. Only, it refused to take me along.

"How do you know there's a safe house? Just answer me this and I'll be quiet. I'll walk for another four hours if need be."

"We are on Demetri's property, the accident. happened on his property. Maximo and Jett are supposed to be in the safe house, if they haven't left yet anyway."

"Wait, you are telling me you have a safe house

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on the property of the man who almost killed Us?"

Demetri didn't try to kill us. Might want to though, but I entertain her all the same.

"Yes. **Don't** we all?"

“No. No, we **do** not all have safe houses in the

middle of the property of some deranged Russian psycho with guns. That’s like saying you have a house built near the white **house**.”

The thing with this woman, she panics when she’s troubled. Talks a lot too.

“You are tired.”

“I’m going insane too in case you haven’t noticed. You are driving me insane by acting like we are in Disney land and not here where nature is against us, our bodies are against us and I think I heard a wolf howl a few minutes ago so let’s add animals ripping us apart to the list of the things killing us today while we are at it!”

I tramp through the snow in her direction, the sound of snow getting crushed echoes in the air.

I tower over her.

Five feet of nothing and she’s been dragging us down the whole trip.

Five feet of nothing and she’s been throwing every thought that **comes** across her mind to me

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without thinking twice.

Five feet of nothing and I’m ensuring she makes it to the safe house whether or not I make it.

She’s just that. A five-foot woman glancing at me with blue bedroom eyes that want to decimate me into a churned burnt crisp.

“No one’s dying.”

“I don’t think that’s your choice to ma...”

“Say it with me, no one is dying when I’m here.”

“No one is dying,” she repeats and punches me in the gut.

My hand reaches out to her cheek. To caress her? To wipe tears that don’t affect me in any way?

No.

I touch her tangled hair, feeling its texture and that texture would feel right fisted around my knuckles as I watched taking her from behind.

I'm losing it.

I'm losing too much blood that the majority of it is directing itself to my cock and leaving my brain with nothing but a few scruples.

"Hop on my back, Alexia. Now."

It's an order.

Not this mellow back and forth chit-chats we've

been having.

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This time T serious.

She's wasting time, I've got no time to toxe

She blinks twice, she licks her lips. Submisive and sexier than before she Breathes out.

"Okay."

One word.

A breathless okay and I cuss inwardly for having brought her to Russia.

Because now?

That safe house will be me and her.

Sunshine and my darkness

Her sassiness and my seriousness.

Her unfiltered words and my impatience for

them.

That combination in itself is worse than Demetri figuring out I'm on his property.

Frankly speaking. I'd much rather duel to the deaths with Demetri Sokolov than be shackled up in one room with Alexia Green for more than a

day.

Chapter 15

ALEXIA GREEN.

Russia is unrelenting.

The winds blow right at us carrying the sheer cold that makes my cheeks go numb. I can't feel my toes either and that might be a sign my body has stopped resisting the cold.

The chances of hypothermia clawing every cell in my body, I loop my arms around his lean neck

the more.

He doesn't speak.

Doesn't even groan at the wound that throbs the more he walks and the more he carries me.

Deep down, being afraid and all, a strange feeling settles in the pits of my stomach maybe because I'm starting to understand this man more than I

should.

He doesn't feel anything because he's not allowing himself to.

Almost as if the very thing supposed to make him feel is hollow. And I know his heart is made of stone metaphorically speaking but right now?

His ugliness seeps into the air and I smell it and it almost makes me want to cry.

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I've hit rock bottom so many times and each of those times I allowed myself to feel. To cry, to

vexa

break something, to shout and call my ex a 'bloody pig' for everything he did.

This man however?

Vicious trudges on in the snow as if he's not about to die.

His jaw is locked too tight like he's crushing his molars inside his mouth but other than that? His face reveals nothing.

No pain, no anger, nothing.

Two steps in, my eyes are on his dark silky hair. The one that now falls to cover both sides of his

forehead.

Has anyone ever touched your hair, Christian? A woman, a friend? Just anyone?

My eyes slowly fall to his cheeks, hardened by years of scowling, probably getting angry most of the time and you'd think someone who was angry most of the time would have an ugly **face** but not

him.

No, he's as handsome and as intriguing as a black cat and I'm not even a fan of cats.

Did your mother caress your cheeks when you were young? Did you allow her to do that in the first place? Were you loved as a kid? How'd you turn out to be like this?

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Chapter 15

How'd you turn out to be Vicious?

"You are not speaking. That makes me believe you are either dead or staring."

His voice startles me adding new hives to my already cold skin.

"I'm not dead and pretty sure you wouldn't want your nurse dead either."

I hold on to his working shoulder. The one that feels like a ton of bricks lined up together and sculptured to mold a mountain of a man.

“There are many nurses out there, little Nurse.”

The way he says Little Nurse every time frustrates me but there’s still something about those two little words that feels fuzzy on the inside.

“Then you should have left me in the car to die if there are many nurses who’d willingly work for you.”

“Are you saying I’m not an easy man to work with?”

“You said it yourself, not me. I’m here and not in Chicago because of you so yeah, I think you are not an easy man to work with.”

“I’m carrying you.”

“You are carrying me out of guilt.”

After you’ve countlessly scared me half to death

Chapter 15.

with threats.

Vicious doesn’t reply. Instead, I feel his back straighten and his eyes glance at something far off.

Covered with snow and next to a huge willow tree, the small cabin blends with everything and if you didn’t look close enough, you’d almost miss.

1. it.

“The safe house”, I exhale.

Christian confirms my suspicions by taking a couple more steps to the small cabin. Thirteen steps later and he slowly drops me on the small stairs leading up to the cabin.

I watch as he taps something by the side of the door and some sort of digital key card asks for a code.

One shoulder bleeding, he uses his other hand to tap in the code and the sound of the door clicking roars louder than the wind.

“Come on.”

The cabin might be ugly from the outside but on the inside, it looks like a modern apartment from Manhattan.

Expensive leather couches, a kitchen blended with the living room that has almost everything including marble counters, a sink, a kitchen island, two cookers and a two-sided fridge.

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Christian barely looks around as he storms inside the small house with his shoes on and a bigger scowl than when he ordered me to hop on his

shoulder.

“Are Maximo and Jett here? You said they would be...”

“They are not. They left.”

“Okay and what does that mean for us?”

“We are stuck here unless I get a signal for this”, he waves a black talkie in the air.

Throwing it on one of the couches he disappears down the small hallway where I’m assuming the

bedrooms are.

He shows up a few minutes later with a duffel bag and a red first aid kit in one hand.

Except this time, the man towers over me

shirtless, a bleeding wound on one shoulder and his suit pants hanging lowly on his torso you can almost see the V lines escaping inside his pants.

If he sees me ogling, he completely ignores it because as soon as he throws the duffel bag in my direction mumbling, ‘Clothes’, he moves right to the kitchen, dripping more blood as he moves.

I take the bag; I open the zip and peek inside to see the clothes.

My clothes feel almost wet, I should be removing

D

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them from my body and wearing the very large sized t-shirts from inside the bag.

Instead, my feet scurry to the kitchen and the image I find there almost pains me.

Vicious sits on a kitchen stool, the first aid kit

opened, a needle in his other hand as he tries to reach his shoulder.

My hands catch his before he can continue with the futile attempt of trying to patch himself up.

“Let me do it.”

I’m almost pleading.

Did the last doctor do this for him or did he just patch himself up to avoid human touch altogether?

“No.”

Ouch.

“I’m the nurse. This is literally what you brought, me here to do.”

“I didn’t think I would get hurt. You were here to treat Maximo and Jett if they got hurt.”

“You are not a superhero Vicious; you could have gotten hurt too. Actually, you did get hurt so why don’t you quit being a *big* baby and let me look at your wound?”

His gaze bores into mine and I almost feel his

Chapter 15

wrath.

His legs, the ones that feel and look humongous trap me between him. I'm standing between his thighs, he either accepts my help or we stay in

this uncomfortable situation for hours.

"I let you look at my wound and you'll end up getting hurt. Any time anyone inflicts pain on my body. I react. I won't think, I'll **react**."

It takes his brown eyes and the fury flashing in his eyes to understand what he's telling me.

I peruse through every moment I've been with

this man.

Every time he's reacted and done something out of the usual norm for a man as evil as him.

Like the time he choked me when we first met. When I told him I didn't know where Rhett was and he reacted by choking me like a madman.

I didn't hurt him then. Or did Rhett hurt him and me not telling him about Rhett's whereabouts provoked his reaction?

The second time he reacted was when he choked me back at the store. After I had just slapped him. after I had hurt him.

Ooh.

"Who stitches you up when you are too wounded to do it yourself?"

Chapter 15

Why do you hurt people when you get hurt? Did someone hurt you? I want to ask all of that but I don't.

"Maximo."

"Do you hurt him when he does it?"

"Yes. He can take a punch or two and you can't."

If he punched me, I'd probably die on the spot.

"We have to stop the bleeding and you need not to hurt me while I'm doing so. That's why I'm going to recommend a distraction."

“A distraction?” he asks surprised.

“Your body reacts that way because you are stuck reliving a memory. A memory of someone probably hurting you so any time a different person hurts you, you think it’s the same person and you react. A distraction keeps your mind from reliving the past and focusing on the

present.

Focusing on me and realizing I’m not gonna hurt you. At least not intentionally.”

His eyes which have already gone wide glaze over my eyes, over my nose and settle for my lips.

The action itself makes the apple of my cheeks

flush and burn with scorching red heat.

“What distractions do you propose

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Chapter 16

CHRISTIAN VICIOUS' VOLKOV.

Talking about the weather after she called me a big baby would have had me snapping her neck in two faster than she could stitch me up.

Telling each other jokes was like pretending I gave a shit about the Arctic wolves in Alaska.

The amount of blood I was losing was messing up with everything. My brain, my sight, my strength.

The only thing that was keeping me sane for every five seconds was her voice, her scent, her

sunshine blonde hair up too close to my face.

So I asked what I wanted since I saw her.

A piece of that ass.

And Rhett?

Yeah the scumbag didn't deserve this woman in

the least bit. Not that I deserve her either but there's no denying there's something to her that penetrates through my skin.

She smells like lavender. She smells like what a woman sent to destroy you would smell like.

All things good, all things seductive and definitely all things that would stray even the mightiest

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Setting

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those tipe swell means

I want to fuck her and be done with das

There, *all*

done. That should stop the bleeding

Chapter 16

from their thrones.

"Just one more, okay? You are doing fine."

She assures,

A look of pity and pride lights her face.

My sanity might be already in the gutter but my ticking brain, the one that calculates and expects things to happen in a certain way is so off its mark. I think I might have lost too much blood to think right.

My hand just found what nirvana feels like.

And it feels like soft, creamy skin, lacy panties and
enticing heat.

Her ass, her thighs, the smell of her arousal isn't the only thing distracting me in this room.

I want to haul her over the counter and rub that goodness between her legs all over my mouth.

I want to turn her over and take her from all the positions her little body can endure.

I want to kiss her and smudge that red lipstick off of her till she understands what being kissed till those lips swell means.

More than that?

I want to fuck her and be done with this

obsession I have with my nurse.

"There, all done. That should stop the bleeding

Chapter 16

until we can get a way out of here. Vicious? I think it's time to let go now."

Half aware, half thinking. I pull my hand away from her dress and her scenery fades away from me before I can assess whether she's done with the

job or not.

"You should take the antibiotics for the pain but make sure they aren't expired."

Then she glances at me for a minute before she disappears to the living room.

It takes about five minutes for common sense to

knock into my brain and remind me that every minute spent with this woman risks the chances of me damning myself to hell and thinking with my dick.

I can't touch her again.

If her ass felt that good, her lips, both lips, might be strappingly better.

I can't let her touch me either because she's the forbidden fruit. Rhett's ex, who also happens to have his baby.

Let's not forget the minor detail that I'm using her as **bait** for Rhett.

Or the fact that she's a civilian who knows.

nothing about the type of work I do. The type of work that contradicts what she does.

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She saves lives

1 enjoy taking lives

She's with me 24/7 because I need her ex. I'll have no use for her once I have Rhett Kingston.

I'll have no use for the child either.

The child who is with Jagger and damn we have to get out of here as soon as we can.

She's changed into a shirt that barely reaches her thighs coupled **with** ankle-length mismatched

socks.

Surprised to even say it but this woman could

wear a scarf on her **head** and she would still look

gorgeous.

"There's one gun under the armchair. The other one is strapped to the edge of the first cupboard in the kitchen. In case you fail to reach that,

there's a rifle under the bed."

"I don't. I don't know how to use a gun-." Her voice quivers.

I take the Glock in my hand and place it on her hand.

"Remove safety, aim, fire."

"No, you don't understand. I am not waiting here for men to come and find me when I barely know

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how to aim straight or use a freaking gun! I'm coming with you."

"I have to get a signal to contact Maximo. Your foot is injured, you coming with me risks us both ending up dead."

"What if you end up dead? What do I do then?"

"You will not."

"Take me with you. Just don't leave me alone."

"You'll be fine. Stay put, wait for me, do not open the door for anyone. You hear me? No one goes in through that door except me. I know the code."

to get inside meaning I won't knock on the door

or ask you to open it for me.

Now, tell me where the guns are Little Nurse."

"Christian, please- "

The first time she said my name. I am tempted to

kiss her.

I'm also tempted to go back to the kitchen with her frame between my thighs and my hand.

caressing her sweet ass.

"Alexia", I warn.

"Under the armchair, strapped to the first cupboard in the kitchen and under the bed."

"Good girl. Do not open this door no matter

what."

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ALEXIA GREEN.

"Good girl. Do not open this door no matter

what."

I should stay. He's right.

I'm injured. Both of us traveling to wherever he's going to get a signal on his walkie-talkie is a big

risk.

I could slow him down or worse, we could both

end up dead.

With all that information in my head, my nerves still swallow me whole and spit me right out.

I'm not a 'good girl'.

And not only am I scared to death but I'm scared of Demetri and his men finding me here and shooting me long before I know how to remove safety, aim and fire.

I don't stay.

I don't follow his rules.

I wait till he leaves.

Twenty seconds later, I walk as fast as my injured leg can to the bedroom. Once in the bedroom, I don't look at the room twice or anything for that

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matter because I kneel on the floorboards, peek under the bed and find a hunting rifle strapped to the bottom part of the bed with tape..

I take the rifle.

Thirty seconds later, I tie a wooden spoon against my injured leg. That should be able to help me walk in the snow without difficulty.

Fifty-five seconds later?

My throat feels desert dry as the night greets me like an old friend.

The gun in my hands feels heavier than the boots. adorning my legs or the snow that's falling harder than earlier.

What's even harder?

Following Christian Volkov in the middle of the night and trying to stay hidden.

The man moves like a lumberjack accustomed to, the harsh weather of Alaska.

Except this place isn't Alaska but a place so much

worse.

Eyes straight, never stopping to rest, his gun set on one hand, Christian Volkov moves like a

machine.

We've been trudging against the snow and the harsh weather for what seems like an eternity and so far, I feel like the amount of sweat my body is

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perspiring is enough to drown an entire island. my back hurts, my lips are chapped and my heart is beating erratically against my chest at the chance of being caught by Demetri, a wild animal or worse, the guy I'm following.

The guy who told me to stay put in his fancy safe house while he made sure we got out of here.

"DiMarco? Shit, come in...Coordinates: the safe house you left with no water and no food! Jagger? Ten-four, come in? Fuck."

Vicious' echoes shake a few birds from the trees.

From where I'm standing, hiding behind a tree with a rifle in my hand, I can taste his frustration.

He stops walking.

He taps his walkie-talkie twice then stops.

I think he's given up.

I should rush back to the safe house before he knows I followed him all the way here.

My feet barely touch the snow before new noises.

fill the air.

It's not me. It's not Volkov.

How do I know? Because I don't speak Russian and the men speaking into the night are definitely. Russian and they are headed this way.

Volkov angles his head in the direction of the

Chapter 17

men's voices.

Like a predator, he waits with his gun barely lifted and his talkie on the other hand

Like a prey, I'm shaking at my hiding spot.

Run, Christian. Hide, Just hide

The idiot doesn't hide.

The noises only get closer and the weather grows angrier. The fear clawing my neck has paralyzed me on the spot.

A few trees get snapped out of the way, the sound of snow getting crushed by heavy army boots resonates in the small space between Volkov and me before everything turns to hell.

Two men appear in front of Volkov,

Big like Demetri. Ferocious like your typical Russian mobsters. They are Demetri's men and they are heavily armed with more guns.

I should have carried the other two guns from the kitchen and the living room.

They are going to kill him.

They are going to kill me.

Buzz cut number one, the one whose hair is blonde and has a gnashing scar on his chin says something to Volkov,

Volkov chuckles and my head swims, all my

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thoughts swirling in one direction. His laugh is as burning as his touch.

Then as if my boss couldn't get any sexier enough, he opens his mouth and speaks Russian.

The first dude, Buzz cut number one, chuckles but his smile is a condescending one.

The telltale pulse of dread travels up my neck.

What happens next happens so fast, I barely have enough time to take my rifle, hold it well and aim it at the two Russians.

One of the men has his gun locked and loaded on Volkov's forehead.

The other guy tells Volkov something between the lines of 'say your last words' and 'time to meet your maker' in Russian.

My hand flies to my mouth.

This is it. This is how he dies and how I'll die. This is how-

Time slows in reverse.

One minute Christian is about to be blown his brains out and the next, he yanks the gun from Buzz cut number one.

Before Buzz cut number two has a chance to react, my boss doesn't blink, doesn't even think as he fires his gun shooting the man between his eyes with his other gun.

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Like he's playing Russian roulette, he aims the second gun at the man who was about to kill him shooting him in the head.

Both bodies fall to the ground like logs. Their blood taints the snow with dark red.

The scream I'm trying to unleash dies down my throat. They are dead. He just—just killed them.

In my moment of getting shaken to the bones by the blood and gore, I stare at Christian who is wiping blood off his talkie like he just killed a bug.

Except right beyond Christian, I see the men. hiding behind the trees, the men who are loading their guns to spray him with bullets.

Oh no, No.

He killed two men but there are like six men
about to kill him.

Vicious might have killed two men in less than a
minute but he can't handle six men alone.

I can't watch him die.

"Remove safety, aim and fire."

His words rack my brain.

I steady the rifle in my hands.

God, I can't do this. I can't kill anyone. I can't
protect him.

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I point the rifle with shaking hands in Christian's direction.

All I have to do is to aim at the target.

I see three men already holding their guns up at a clueless Volkov. Yeah, I can shoot them.

I remove the safety, at least that's what I think it is, I place my index finger on the trigger, I aim at the target and then?

I fire the gun.

Chapter 18

1. ed. Enjoy reading!

CHRISTIAN VICIOUS VOLKOV

"Boss wants you alive but Dante Keaton? He pays us better and he wants you dead, friend."

"The great Costa Nostra heir has been reduced to this. Weak because of grief. Tell you what? We'll put you out of your misery and grant you the wish of seeing your whore of a sister back in hell."

The two men were going to die by my hands as soon as I sensed them.

I was meant to torture them, use them as examples for the other six men hiding by the bushes of some sort.

These two men crossed the line. I reacted and the

men lay near my feet in pools of their own blood for mentioning my sister.

Demetri sent eight men to capture me. Two traitors. Six cowards.

A total of eight men.

That's the math going on in my head, there are supposed to be eight men out here in the night. with me.

My mind didn't predict one possibility though.

And

that one possibility presents itself in a spray

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of bullets heading in my direction and feminine screams piercing the air.

She fires bullet after bullet like a madwoman.

I duck out of the way, but the six men? The six men supposed to deliver a message to Demetri? They all meet the snow one after the other as their shooter reveals herself from behind a tree.

With a grey hat on her head, her hair getting swayed by the wind at the edges, an oversized peacoat eating her up and big boots covering her legs....wait is that a spoon tapped to her boot?

The little minx never lets go of the trigger.

Her screams never stop.

Her terror of shooting without looking at where she's firing only comes to an end when she runs. out of bullets.

"Did I get them?"

You got them alright; you killed them all damn it.

I'm already up on my feet and whatever calmness I had established a few minutes ago dissipates into the air like vapor.

Snow stretches between us, wind hollers between
our distance, my anger fills to the brim.

"You were supposed to stay back in the house."

Instead, she followed me and I couldn't get a

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whiff of her scent, her stubbornness or the lies
flowing through the teeth she's showing me right
HOW.

"You left me all alone. What if they made it to the house and shot me?"

"You shot them. You killed them."

You killed Demetri's men. Any chances of negotiating with that fucker after killing eight of his men are close to none.

Her blue eyes filter past me, her rifle – she had to Take a rifle out of all the guns in the house – drops to the ground as she takes two unsure steps toward me.

"No, I—I didn't. I meant to scare them not-."

"You shot at them with the intent to kill. Not twice and certainly not thrice."

Your bullets might have already killed any non-existent wolves that exist within a mile.
radius.

“I’m not you“, her voice quivers. “I didn’t mean to do that.”

I should be less of a dick.

Yet right now she has me seeing red at her stupidity, her stubbornness and her defiance,

I know she’s not me.

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I’ve touched her ass, I’ve smelled her innocence,

I’ve seen the child this woman has brought to the world.

And everything about her is pure,

Her hands are the hands of a healer, not a taker. Not like mine.

She couldn’t hurt a fly If she wanted to but I don’t make her feel that way.

Making her feel better is the least of my concerns right now.

“This is what happens when you think you know fucking better. The rule was simple Alexia, stay, wait for me but that’s too hard for you to...”

Warm liquid trickles down my neck, touches my shoulder and wets my shirt.

I touch my neck, my fingers come out red.

“Christian-” her pretty voice calls me but the world spins.

Every damn time she calls me ‘Christian’

something shitty happens.

Her hands are already on my coat, covering my chest as the whole world spins.

Her breath hits my chin, I gaze down at her and utter the most ironical statement I have ever

spoken.

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“You shot me in the neck.”

“Your stray bullets...hit me on the neck.”

This chapter is unlo

Chapter 19

ALEXIA GREEN.

“I need the code, Christian. Please just give me the code okay?”

His body lies limp against the wall of the cabin.

The hand that’s covering his neck has turned red, his face is already pale matching the color of the atmosphere, the color of my face; matching the staccato beating of my heart.

“Y–You shot me“, he slurs like he can’t believe it.

I can hardly believe it either because this was not what I intended to do.

There are six men, he was one man.

They are going to kill him.

I have a gun, I thought I could...

I killed the men.

I almost killed him.

My attempts to try to open the door dash into the ground like my hopes, I move away from the

door.

I kneel where the six foot man is trying to hang on to dear life and I sob.

“I’m sorry. I’m so so sorry. You should have never

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come back for me. You should have never taken me as Rhett's replacement to pay his debt because I'm jinxed. I need the code to the door, Christian. You could die if I don't look at that wound. I want

to fix you, please let me let me fix my mistake."

"Cat?"

He hallucinates.

My hand touches his cold cheek.

"Alexia. It's me, Alexia. Your little nurse? Work with me, Volkov. Just this once please, work with

1. me.

It's hard to even admit it but I miss him calling

me Little Nurse'.

Right now in this situation, the nickname doesn't

sound too bad.

"Cat. Catelina's...birthday."

"Catelina's birthday is that the code?"

He nods. He looks like he's fading into nothingness and I don't want him to.

He is my kidnapper but the thought of him dying makes me want to chop my heart out with at

serrated blade.

42.99,"

I'm on my feet, my fingers working fast to input.

the code.

Chapter 19.

Once I input the code, the door lock clicks and I smile with relief,

“Thank you. Thank you!”

Dragging him into the house is almost as difficult

as dragging him across the snow while he was half alive, half conscious.

Christian mutters a couple of things in his

delirium, by the time I drop him on the couch, I’m already panicking trying to salvage as much equipment as I need to patch him **up** and look at the wound.

Is the bullet still lodged in his neck? No, he should have been dead if it did.

Did the bullet slightly graze him? Even if it did he’s lost a lot of blood and for a man his size I’m pretty relieved that his strength is keeping him from joining the eternal pits of hell.

The antiseptics I used earlier to stitch him up are finished

The only close antiseptic I could use right now is the bottle of Martell in my hands. The only thing that was in the fridge.

Maybe while I’m at it, I could drink myself out of this disaster that has my hands shaking and my throat quivering with a fresh bout of tears.

“Okay. We are okay. We can do this. We made it here, getting you better is nothing difficult. Oh

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God, please save him. Help me. Help him-.”

My shaky hand lie on his hand as I try to pry it out from where he is applying pressure to his bullet wound.

His veiny hand doesn’t let me touch him.

His body’s reaction is to fight me even when he’s.

half conscious.

I’m about to beg when the sound of static and a groggy voice filters between us.

“Volkov...Vol...kov. Come...in. Volkov, can you read

me?”

Is that the walkie-talkie?

My eyes zero in on the device in Christian’s other hand.

Oh God. He didn’t leave the talkie after I shot him?

He didn’t lose it?

I grab the talkie.

“Anyone? Anyone there? Can you hear me? Maximo? Jagger? Jett?”

“Where’s Volkov, Nurse?”

The **voice** smooths in like bland music on the radio.

It doesn’t matter though because whether or not Maximo is disappointed that I’m the one.

L

Chapter 19

answering and not his boss is the **least** of my concerns.

“He umm...he’s occupied. We are in Demetri’s property. Some kind of safe, house in the middle of nowhere. Come get us!”

“Where’s Volkov?”

Dying in front of me.

“Injured.”

“Shot?”

“Yes. Do you not hear me right now? We are in Demetri’s property! His men found us, they can find us again. Retrieve us from here, please.”

“Who shot him?”

“Why does it matter? Your boss is injured!”

“He’s dealt with men far worse than Demetri’s

men. No one could have shot him. Riddle me this, Ms Green why are you the one talking to me and my boss is shot? What really happened?”

“I—I shot him. Accidentally. I was trying to protect him and things got out of hand.”

I wait for the line to go dead or for Maximo to tell me he’ll eliminate me and the child that’s with

him at the moment.

The man chuckles.

A two minute chuckle that would be funny if I

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wasn’t scared.

“Is he dead?”

What?

“No. What sort of question i

“Can you fix him?”

Yes, No. I think.

“I’m trying to.”

“Fix him. Demetri will be there by tomorrow to get you both out.”

“Thank you. Thanks so much for...wait did you say Demetri? Demetri’s men attacked your boss, why would he come to rescue us?”

“You are in his property. There’s no way I can take you out of there without him seeing me. The boss understands this.”

“The **boss** is shot! God, the boss is...”

“I understand this is hard for you, Ms Green but every minute we waste here is another minute

Volkov nears his death. Get to work.”

“Okay.”

“Do you need me to stay on the line?”

“Yes, Please.”

I need someone to make sure this is real **and**
that

I’m not in some type of crazy dream with men

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with guns and a Russian psycho out to end us.

“Very well.”

Volkov is practically shaking by the time I get his hand away from his neck.

The wound that meets my eyes is gnashing but not a bullet wound.

The bullet grazed him.

“I didn’t shoot his neck.”

“You aimed for his neck? My day keeps getting
better and better.”

Maximo laughs like the whole scene is comedic and not brutally cathartic..

"It's a graze wound. I can stitch him up."

"I have to warn you, Nurse. He gets grouchy when he gets hurt."

"I know. He's told me. Right now he's too hurt to get grouchy, I think I can do this."

I start cleaning around the flesh. The minute the cotton soaked alcohol touches his flesh, Volkov

flinches.

Then a second later, he continues mumbling,

"Catelina. Cat. Cat."

"Do you wanna hear the child?"

I've already started stitching and my hands still.

Chapter 19

"Millie? You are with Millie?"

"I've had the child with me since I started this call."

I thought she was with Jagger.

Maximo is a hell lot worse because he gives off

broody mercenary vibes.

"Where's um Jagger?"

"Handling business."

"And Jett?"

"Handling business too."

What business?

"How's Millie doing?"

I've missed her terribly. We've never been away from each other for this long.

"She's asleep. She senses you are not here because she has been crying."

“Did you feed her? I pumped some milk for her before I left. It’s not enough but it should have gotten her this far.”

“Fed and changed her diaper. The child’s fine.

How’s Volkov?”

Maximo changed her diaper? And fed her?

I have to get to my baby. And fast.

“I’m down to the last stitch.”

Chapter 19

“Good. Keep him alive. See you later.”

“Wait let me say goodbye to my daughter.

Maximo? Maximo?”

The line goes dead.

I huff in annoyance.

With blood stained cotton wools around me, a

half bottle of alcohol near my knees and bandages all over, I contemplate the thoughts of drowning in alcohol or sleeping on the ground and calling it a night but the man on the couch

doesn’t give me a chance.

Volkov starts shaking again, his hands grab the fabric of the couch in his fists almost tearing it

away.

When the back of my palm sweeps his dark hair

from his forehead, feeling his temperature, it’s

almost high enough to burn my skin.

“A fever? You battled your way here, there’s no way a fever is taking you, you hear me? I won’t let

I hate you but I won't let you die. I won't let you do this to me."

you.

I take off his coat, leaving him with his dark shirt. that's straining to hold his body together.

My hands work on his feet, taking off his army. boots and leaving him with his socks.

I head to the one bedroom in this hell of a place

A

Chapter 19

to get a few blankets to cover him and when I come back to check up on him not only is the man shaking but he's sweating so much so that his t-shirt is soaked and drenched in sweat.

"I have no choice", I whisper to no one.

As fast as I can to get him better, I peel his clothes. away from his body.

Taking off his shirt is the most difficult thing at the moment, lifting his head up is like trying to lift a boulder but I manage it.

I take his pants off too. And his briefs and socks.

I'm not going to lie and say I don't take a look at his body because I do..

His body is a meshwork of perfection and

imperfections.

Tattoos peak from his ribs stopping near his

chest.

Every time he shakes and inhales, sweat coats his body and his scars become as visible as the lump in my throat.

This man has gone through a lot, hasn't he?

What's the meaning of his tattoos? Or the skull tattoo that's inverted on the back of his palm?

I want to touch him. Why? Because I think I can erase his scars?

Chapter 19

Christian Volkov looks like the type of man who doesn't need a woman to wipe away his scars.

I'm not the woman to wipe away his scars too because I'm broken and unworthy.

Taking the blankets, I cover him up.

He stirs on the couch, muttering incoherently,

"You promised! No, find your way to me! Cat? Catelina! No! You are not....not following him. Y-You are my constant. The only good thing. Cat? Cat please."

He calls this 'Cat' person with emotion, my heart tugs at his pain.

Who's Cat?

Why is she not here?

He loved her. You can feel it in the way he calls her out, the way he says 'please'.

He's never said the word 'please'.

Never even thought a man like him could beg.

I sympathize with the man who brought me here to Russia, my hands brush his stubble and his

check.

"You are having a nightmare, Christian. You have to fight the fever."

"Catelina?" His voice softens.

My heart falls to my stomach at the affection he

D

Chapter 19

has for this Catelina.

"No. Not Catelina. Little Nurse."

“Little Nurse?” His voice turns raspy.

“Yes, yes I’m here. It’s me and I’m telling you we are going to make it.”

Come here.”

I shouldn’t move to him.

I should clean up, watch his fever and pray he makes it out alive.

Instead the part of me that feels a tad bit guilty

for his situation wins.

He’s still cold.

He’ll need a warm body to keep him warm.

He’ll need me.

I take off my coat and boots.

I pull the long black shirt above my head, getting
rid of it.

My panties and bra are off of me too and down to
the carpet.

Biting my bottom lip apprehensively, I pull away
the blanket.

I join the naked man on the couch.

I let his hands pull my waist closer to his body.

Chapter 19

Together in a country I don’t want to be in, with a
naked man I loathe, I sleep knowing tomorrow might be worse.

This chapter is unlocke

Chapter 20

ALEXIA GREEN.

"I've lived in an orphanage my whole life. I'm just one of those people who didn't have parents that could love her enough to keep her.

Our warden used to say my parents were rich folks because I was left on the orphanage's door all dressed and pretty in fancy clothes.

I was four years old I think. Funny enough I can't even remember my life before I got to the orphanage.

I can't remember my mom. Can't remember if I had a dad or siblings.

Did you have a family too, Volkov?

Of course you did. You look like you do. A

brother? Parents?

Anyway when I turned eighteen I was kicked out of the orphanage. I was too old to live there I

guess.

And you want to know what they gave me? Fifty

bucks.

Fifty bucks to get myself a job and take myself to college. I thought I was done for but then I met this woman, Lisa Collins.

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Setting

Chapter 20

I'll never forget her. She helped me get a scholarship to med school and I thought my life would be okay from then on.

Except it wasn't the same because I met Rhett. I fell in love with him because he was the first guy to show me love.

I betrayed Lisa, got out of med school, ruined my scholarship because Rhett told me he'd provide me with everything I needed.

And now I'm here. Paying Rhett's debt and giving my baby a life she doesn't deserve because my whole life has always been jinxed.

If you keep me around. I'll ruin everything you've worked for.

I've already shot you. I probably ruined your deal with Demetri too. Let me go. Please."

His nose bumps my forehead, his shaky breath hovers over my lips.

His hands, the ones that feel like steel around my back, bring me closer to his chest the more.

Almost as if he's scared I'll disappear if he doesn't hold me closer to him.

My boobs are smashed against his chest.

I can feel all of him everywhere on my skin.

His legs are tangled with mine, his stubble is tickling my cheek, his hands have me caged, I can

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Chapter 20

feel his length tickle my thighs but I ignore it because he's sick.

I might be sick in the head too for jumping on this couch but I don't regret it because he sounds. calmer than he did before.

"Stay. You promised. Stay. You'll never leave. I'll not allow it."

He's talking to Cat again, isn't he?

"You don't mean that, do you? As soon as you get better, I'm pretty sure you'll choke me for hurting you and lock me up in your dungeon."

"Stay. You are never leaving, Little Nurse", he

murmurs.

But I hear him.

He is delirious with a fever and I latch on his
words the way a kid does with candy for the first
time.

I trust him.

I believe he wants me to stay.

And the feeling that comes with his words, travels. down my spine in a shiver going all
the way to my curling toes.

I hug him. I kiss his neck.

I pray for Christian Vicious Volkov to get better
and get us back home to Millie.

Chapter 20

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He's gone.

The minute I open my eyes, I feel his presence away from me.

Sunlight flitters inside the cabin, the freezing cold bites my cheeks as my eyes wander
to the empty

space next to me.

The empty space that has me feeling a bit more pained than I like to admit.

The mess I left yesterday on the floor is gone and so are his clothes.

Looking around the cabin, I push the blankets away from me and grab every piece of
clothing I own from the carpet.

"Volkov?"

He's not in the kitchen.

What's in the kitchen however is a plate of eggs
and bacon left on the counter for me with a note
inscribed on it.

'Eat."

There was no food last night. Where did he get
the food?

He's not in the bedroom either.

"Volkov?"

Oh God, did he leave me alone?

Chapter 20

I scurry to the door and the voices on the other side stop me.

Russian

They are speaking in Russian and both voices are
so familiar it fills me with dread.

One of them is Volkov.

And the other? Demetri

Demetri's here.

I push the door open, wind slaps my thighs and I shiver inwardly.

Brown eyes spear mine.

Blue—dark eyes take my outfit in.

I'm dressed in a t-shirt above my knees and socks. Nothing fancy but the look that
Volkov gives me is enough for me to wish the ground broke and swallowed me whole.

Demetri looks at me and smiles a full on

demented **smile**.

The woman is awake.”

Demetri is alone. No men. No guards. Just him

alone.

I see two jeeps in front of the cabin. Each of them. heavily barracaded with armor designed to stop

bullets.

“Go inside“, Volkov orders.

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Chapter 20

He’s back to his usual grumpy hot self.

Looking like he doesn’t have a stitch on his neck. or another stitch on his shoulder beneath those clothes.

But more than that?

He acts cold. So cold, my heart grieves.

“You are okay“, I mumble.

“You are supposed to be inside.”

“Give the woman a break Volkov. Yebat, you are as dense than usual, friend.”

Demetri’s Russian ascent sounds less scary than his face. Or than the day he wanted me dead.

“We are not friends“, Volkov quips.

Demetri’s eyes are back on me. Menacing and unyielding.

“I’m getting you and her out of here, that makes us friends, no? She will want to be my friend after

we talk.”

“No“, Volkov answers for me..

Honestly speaking, I don't want to talk to Demetri

either.

He scares the beejesus out of me.

“It's a good thing you are on my property then, isn't it Volkov? This is not Chicago or Sicily, I am not your lackey, I am not Dante Keaton. I call the

Chapter 20

shots here.

Miss Green, can we have that talk now? Meet you at the car right there.”

Demetri doesn't give me a chance to speak back, he trudges out to the snow, all the way to his Jeep. Then the man leans against his Jeep, his eyes on me, daring me to do what he has just asked or else it's over for me.

“Get your coat.”

“I don't want to talk to him. He's the reason we are in this mess in the first place.”

“You fail to do what he says and he kills you. I won't stop him.”

Because we are in Russia because he couldn't care less?

“What does he want?”

“I don't know, Alexia. What did you tell him when you saw him last?”

“Are you insinuating something? You told me to seduce him, he didn't give me a chance to seduce him because he wanted to kill me. I didn't tell him anything. How could you think I...I flirted

with him?”

“Get your coat and boots.”

I get my boots and coat.

Chapter 20

Not because I like it but because speaking to Demetri somehow seems to piss Christian off.

And since I'm pissed off by his attitude it's only fair that he's pissed off too.

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"You saw something you shouldn't have. That means I either kill you or let you off with a warning", Demetri starts, my eyes go wide.

I didn't see anything. Except men firing at us.

"I didn't-"

"You killed my men too."

"They were going to kill us if I didn't."

"I can't kill you. I can't retaliate because your boss. over there will start another pointless war. So

what do I do with you, woman?"

"Let me go? I didn't see anything that's worth mentioning."

"But you saw her."

Demetri's eyes gaze dead cold into the snow

ahead of us.

"The woman? You called her 'malyshka.'"

"Beautiful, baby whatever you Americans call your partners. She is my partner. She is my better half. She is my what do you people say?

Soulmate. She dies and Demetri will wreak havoc

Chapter 20

on the world, on you and your measly life."

'I don't understand. I don't even know who she is.'

“That’s good. Alexia Green. And I want you to keep it that way, forget you saw her, don’t mention her to anyone. Especially and most especially, him.”

We both glance at the man standing outside the cabin, looking at us like he wants to tear us to pieces.

“You don’t want me to tell Volkov about this woman? Why?”

“It’s none of his business. Do we have a deal or don’t we?”

“Only if you get me out of your country and promise to leave me and my boss alone.”

He chuckles, “I’ll leave you alone but your boss and I have business together. The kind of business that won’t end because you don’t want him in danger.”

“Fine.”

When Demetri leaves in one of his jeeps and leaves the other one for us, I walk up to the porch.

Back to the man angrily scowling at me.

“What did he want?”

Chapter 20

“He wanted me to work for **him**“. I lie.

I won’t tell anyone about malyshka. Not that anyone would be interested anyway.

“What did you say?”

“I said no.”

“Good because you are not leaving until you repay every damn cent your ex owes me.”

Yesterday he told me to stay with a different tone. A tone that had my delusional heart pounding hard against my chest.

Today he is telling me I won’t leave but with a completely dead tone that has my insides swirling bitterly.

Did I do something wrong?

Except sleep naked with him all night.

Did I do something else wrong?

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