

Absinthe

The silence drowned both Kash and Brooks, their feet almost touching as their pants were slowly soaked from sitting on the ground. The cold was starting to gnaw at both of them at this point, but they were shaking for another reason besides cold.

Brooks stood up, her eyes more narrow than the alley they were in and felt her conviction start to steel.

"You said he was my dad, Kash. Who was that?" She asked, her fists clenching around the photo. The integrity of it was all but ruined at this point. The blood had become a permanent stain and the gentle mist that was coming down started to make the ink bleed. That wasn't the point anymore, though. Pictures are replaceable, not people.

Kash was silent still, his shoulders starting to noticeably shake as his head slowly slumped between his knees.

"...I was just doing what you asked..." he mumbled, starting to pull at the ends of his now wet, white hair. Brooks watched in more infuriating silence as he continued to mumble, pulling at his hair hard enough for the sound of ripping to bounce off the brick walls around them. "You wanted this... you wanted this..."

The sound of glass shattering broke Kash's crazed mumbling. His head shot up to see Brooks looking at a beer bottle that was broken by her feet. She was breathing heavily, her breath freezing as it made contact with the still air around them.

"...I didn't want this," she gritted, her eyes meeting his. There was still a bit of blood spatter on her face that had dried, but due to the rain, had started to streak down her face once more. "Stop lying to yourself, you know that I wanted my father dead at my feet. We talked about it- we planned it for hours! You made the choice to lie, this is your fault!" She yelled, getting progressively louder as she came to realization after realization. "Is this photo even real? Did you even know my family at all? Who the fuck are you?!"

Kash got up faster than she could react and covered her mouth with a large, calloused hand. This was the closest that they had been at any point in their "relationship". He was unkempt, disgusting almost. His skin was riddled with blemishes and the water laid in droplets around his nose. His breath reeked of absinthe, almost burning Brooks' nose as he got even closer. His pupils were huge at this point, their noses brushing against each other. "...Stop yelling." He stated, his voice at a low rasp as his grip on her face grew tighter. "You wanted this. You are a murderer. The knife has your prints on it, I made sure of it. You are guilty, and I am free."

Her eyes were wider than the moon above them as he rambled on. Looking at him, as that was all she could do, she watched the crows feet dance along the corners of his eyes. His white hair started to peek through his uncut beard and eyebrows.

"Are you ready to talk now? Anything above your speaking voice and we'll have to have a talk again," he chastised, slowly moving his hand away from her face, taking the scent of must with it.

"...Who are you?" She asked quietly, still caught in Kash's proverbial headlights. He smiled, showing off his cigarette-yellow teeth. Kash backed up and began gathering their things, specifically the gloves that she had cast off when they had been backed into the alley before.

"You know...you shouldn't throw things like that," he chided, dusting the broken glass up and pushing it to the side with a booted foot. "Someone could step on it and you wouldn't want that on your conscience... right?"

Something in the air had changed for Brooks. Her hands that hadn't been shaking before began to vibrate uncontrollably. Her entire body screamed at her to run, but all she could do was back up against the wall so close that she could feel every crack in the brick.

"We had talked about doing this for years, Brookie...all the people that we wanted to see pay for their mistreatment of us...for their abandonment..." he rambled, pacing back and forth over the patch of broken glass. The crunch and scrape on the pavement made Brooks' eye twitch, flinching as she shook.

"You wanted this..." he said, bending down and starting to almost play with the glass, dragging it across the ground. "We got to kill a man who was scum- a shit stain on MY WORLD!" He roared, getting more and more excited as he began to throw glass around, haphazardly cutting his fingers and knuckles. "Now all that's left is you...Brooklyn..." he muttered, walking towards her with a chaotic sway to his gait. Foam was starting to peak at the corners of his mouth as he got close to her once more.

"...B-back up, Kash...I don't like this anymore," Brooks stuttered, her hands flush and the back of her head grinding against the wall. Anything to get away from him. She knew that she couldn't outrun him, his legs were longer and in the state that she was in, there was no shot.

"What? Are you scared now... You didn't seem so scared as you plunged the knife into that man's neck. Or when you did it 5 more times after that...or when you asked for my help in the first place."

"You found me...not the other way around, Kash. You...you put those ideas in my head and now I can't get them out, this is your fault!" She cried, tears falling down her face and mixing with the rain that beat down on the tops of their heads and shoulders.

"No...no Brooks...this has always been with you. Murders aren't just created, they're born. You were made for this..." He takes a final step forward and extends his hand, holding a piece of glass.

He walks back a foot or two before opening his arms wide as if he were God himself.

"Now finish what you started."