

Four or Dead by G O A Chapter 1 - 5

Chapter 1

I am standing in front of my full-length mirror trying to decide the best way to hide the scars that litter the skin along my back and neck. Thankfully, the new bruises I had acquired were along my ribs and could easily be hidden under my shirt. My old scars were the ones hard to hide, but I had to try. My father didn't like rumors floating around about us especially since he was a valued member of our community. We lived in an upscale neighborhood thanks to my father's successful company, but it was a version of hell on earth. My father was a monster in these four walls, and a god among men in the real world. I wish I could say that his hatred toward me began because of my mother's death, that he just couldn't stand looking at me and that was why he hurt me. The fact is, he hated me the moment I was born. He hated me the moment the doctor said, 'it's a girl'. He wanted a son to become heir of his company and all the shady activity he did under the name of his legitimate business. Mom didn't give him what he wanted, and because he beat her near an inch of her life the moment they brought me home, she never wanted to get pregnant again. The stress of my father's abuse made it too hard for her to even stand his touch and when he found out that she had secretly taken preventive measure to never get pregnant again, she had signed her death sentence. She died in a so-called accident, but I know that was a lie. She had ruined my father's chance at having a son, and he killed her for it. I would have died in the accident as well if it hadn't been for a Good Samaritan who happened upon the accident early enough to pull me out. Just after I was pulled out of the car the whole thing burst into flames confirming that my mother was dead. My father decided it would be too risky to try to kill me again and playing the grieve in husband and distraught father was too good an opportunity to pass up. This was just for show though, because as soon as I healed from the accident, he took out his anger on me. It started out with a few hits from his belt as discipline, but he would hit me in the back. Then he got creative with his methods of beating me and upgraded to other sorts of items. When I hit puberty though, things only got worse. His friends started to

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take notice of me, and he would leave me alone with them to do with me as they wished. Then he would walk in and punish me again for what I was forced to do. I had hoped that at least school would be an escape from the hell of a life I endured at home, but I wasn't so lucky. It felt as if I was born into this world to become an outlet for people to take their anger out on. See some of these scars were from the many attempts to teach me who was in charge in the halls of my school. The long scar across my stomach was from the group of girls at my school who hated me the moment they saw me freshman year. They had been pushing me around and there was a broken railing on the bleachers, and I collided with it hard enough for it to cut through my skin deep enough for it to require stitches. They had left me there bleeding and in shock until a faculty member found me. Andrea, the typical mean girl and her crew made my life even worse. Then there are the four boys who hung around her, bullies in their own right. The Dark Angels...Asher, Logan, Jayden, and Leo. That was the name of their crew, although I didn't know much about all that. Andrea and Asher had been a thing since as long as I could remember, and although the others hung around them, they didn't stick with the same girl longer than a week. Asher even had a few girls here and there that Andrea pretended not to see. She was more worried about the statues of being with the leader of The Dark Angels than having his loyalty. Now The Dark Angels had their own way off tormenting me, in the way of more sexual harassment. Anything from a smack to my butt to pushing me into a dark corner and grinding against me before taking off and laughing. I had no idea why any of them targeted me since I always tried to keep to myself and avoid interacting with anyone. I didn't have a single friend, and that was because I couldn't trust anyone. "Emma Grace! Hurry up!" My father yelled up to me from the living room. I closed my eyes and sighed, going with my usual jean jacket to cover my scars. I wiped away a stray tear from my cheek before opening my bedroom door and making my way down the stairs. I swallow when I saw my dad leaning against the wall next to the door waiting for me. He looked up when he heard me and smiles at me sweetly, but I know that look is lethal. I walk slowly near him and pulled my back pack onto my back and reached carefully for the doorknob. For a moment I thought he would really just let me go, but as I pulled the door open, I was

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yanked back by the hair and he wrapped it tight in his grip. “Remember the rules, Emma. Keep your head down, and your mouth shut. Got it?” He asked turning his nose and burying it in my hair. I squeezed my eyes shut and tried to think of anything else, and when he finally let go, I stumbled out the door and raced down the front steps. My bike was hidden on the side of the house and I sprinted to grab it and mounted it all in one quick motion. My school was in no way a haven, but I was too scared to stay here a moment longer. One thing I knew for sure was that although the kids at school enjoyed hurting me, my father would enjoy killing me. For some reason I still wanted to live, but that could change at any moment. I mean what kind of life was worth living when it was full of pain? I took my time getting to school so that I could enjoy a bit of peace and fresh air before climbing right back into the lion’s den. The peace was short lived though, and soon my eyes fell on the outer building of my school. Other students were laughing and smiling as they filed into the main entrance, and I carefully parked my bike. I kneeled to lock a chain to it and stupidly turned my back. I should have known there would be no reprieve before the tormenting would start again. Before I even registered the sound of approaching steps my face was crashing into the chain of my bike making me cry out from both shock and pain. I fell to my butt and cradled my face in my hands as my face throbbed with pain. As expected, a stream of blood began to run down from my nose, and I leaned my head back but it had already started dripping all over my clothes. Snickering came from above me and my eyes met Andrea’s and she smirked at me. “Welcome to senior year!” She said before turning and sashaying toward the entrance of the school with her minions in tow. I little out a shaky breath and push myself off the floor and try to keep my head back slightly even though it probably would do little good. First day and I already had blood all over me, great. I heard another snickering laugh as The Dark Angels walked past me in the direction of the front door. “Hey sunny! You got something on your shirt there.” Logan called out with a laugh. Sunny. Not the worst nickname out there but it annoyed me that it meant the jerk didn’t even know my name even though his crew had been targeting me for the last three years. He started calling me sunny because my hair had a tendency to turn a golden color in the sun. So, around the beginning of the year after summer

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break my hair usually turned a lighter color, but that wasn't the full extent of the joke. He often made comments about whether or not my other hair looked the same and if I sunbathed naked to make sure everything matched. It was stupid but he and his buddies found it funny, so I ignored the comments. I let them pass without a reply and waited a few moments longer before walking into the front door myself and immediately heading toward the bathroom. I made quick work of washing my face off and making sure the bleeding from my nose had stopped. Once I was finished, I examined my nose in the mirror and concluded that my nose wasn't broken but there was some slight bruising appearing on the ridges and in the inner corners of my eyes. Thankfully I carried a foundation stick with me for such events, and I quickly covered as much as I could. My father did not allow me to wear makeup, so this one stick was a rare commodity that I had been able to hide from him. I had to use it sparingly, so I hoped that my future confrontations with the devil's spawns would consist of bodily injuries and not face injuries. I am sure you are wondering why I have never fought back or why I don't whine more about pain. The truth is about ninety percent of the time I have a severe injury that makes these small injuries not worth my breath. Right now, I was sporting bruised ribs and bruises to my legs as well that hurt far worse making the injury to my face feel like a paper cut. I have been in pain every day for my life, so I was used to it. A sigh escaped my mouth when I realized there was areas that the makeup wasn't covering well, and I gave up. As I walked closer to the door, I heard voices on the other side and quickly ducked into one of the stalls. Chapter 2 I did my best to quiet my breathing when I saw that it was Andrea and her crew who had come in. "So? Did you and Asher finally make things official?" One of Andrea's friends asked excitedly. What was her name again? Melody...I couldn't remember. I had never really taken the time to learn their names in between the attacks on me. "Of course we did! It was amazing! I mean I knew he wasn't a virgin but that extra experience made it worth it!" Andrea gushed. "So you told him it was your first time? How did he take that?" one of the other girls asked. "Hell no! I didn't want him to be all weird about it, so I didn't say anything." Andrea admitted. "Well now that he has had a taste of you he is going to be all over you to do it again." Yet another girl added. "So? I am happy to do anything for him,

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he just has to ask. I don't want to be one of his throw always. I want him to always come running back to me no matter who he has been with." Andrea said. "Well make sure you are worth his effort. That means we need to go shopping!" The first girl said excitedly. "Some sexy lingerie!" "Yes absolutely! After school yeah? You will have him drooling!" And with that they pranced out of the bathroom leaving me alone finally. Andrea was a virgin? And she didn't tell Asher? Why would she lie about such a thing? She had thrown away such a special thing for a jerk like Asher who happily hooked up with other girls right in front of her. I shook my head and opened the door giving myself another quick look just in time for the first bell to ring. I ran from the bathroom and headed to my first class with barely a minute to spare. When I looked around I found that all the seats were taken except for one in back right in the middle of The Dark Angel's group. Great. I slowly walked toward the seat with my head lowered, but I caught the smirks the boys gave me. I just had to get through this day. "Hey Sunny girl! Saved you a seat, unless you rather sit on this thrown." Leo says hunting out his hips with a laugh that made my insides knot in the worst way. "This seat is fine thank you." I say softly and sitting in the vacant seat without another word. The teacher walked in just before one of the others could get another word in, and finally, their attention drifted from me. Class went by without any interaction from the boys other than a few smirks and looks. I had no idea why these guys focused on me at all because compared to Andrea and the others I was nothing special. I wasn't allowed to even try to look pretty, but maybe that's why they enjoyed teasing me so much because I am so plain. My wavy brown hair almost hits my waist and I have a constant pink blush on my cheeks any time I step outside. My skin is a very light tan and I have a slim figure with no curves whatsoever. That last bit was mostly because my diet was heavily monitored to be sure I was appealing for whatever purpose my father had for me. Andrea wasn't the only one who lost her virginity recently, but at least she cared about the boy who did it. My first time would never be a precious memory for me it caused me to wake up screaming and crying since that day. When class ended I gathered my things quickly and dashed for the door. I finally took the opportunity to unload some of my stuff into my locker. The door slammed suddenly just barely missing my fingers and

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I gasped and stumbled back, my heart pounding and my eyes wide. “Sunny.” Logan says with a smile as he made his way toward me. As he moved closer to me I took a step back and he sighed. “Stop walking away from me Sunny.” I gulped and stopped in my tracks. “Good girl now let’s get to class.” He said wrapping an arm around my shoulder and leading me to the next class which I guess we had together. He led me to a seat and gave the guy in the seat beside me a look causing the guy to scurry away. He took the newly vacated seat with a triumphant smile. Soon Asher walked in with Andrea draped all over him and he took the seat on the opposite side of me. He didn’t say a word to me but I could feel his intense stare on me, even though Andrea was turned toward him from the seat in front of him, going on and on about something I cared nothing about. Something was different from how the boys usually treated me, but I was confused about why. They often played tricks on me, sometimes to an unbearable limit. Now they were going out of their way to be near me, and acting almost...possessive. What game were they playing? When the class ended and I made my way to the cafeteria, I felt the tug of someone following me. Logan and Leo tailed me toward the lunch line as I picked out an apple and milk. “Do you ever eat Sunny?” Leo asks me. “Or are you one of those girls that try to be as skinny as a supermodel?” He raked his eyes down my body and shook his head in disapproval. “You may have the figure but you are far too short to have a career like that.” I don’t say a word and turn my attention back to the line. “She is far too ugly to model anyway. Look at her, she doesn’t even wear any makeup which just makes it worse. It’s pathetic.” Andrea says slamming into my shoulder and moving to stand in line in front of me. Again I said nothing and I kept my head low. “Shut up Andrea.” Leo snaps out. “You don’t have a chance either so just keep your mouth shut if you know what’s good for you!” I swallowed and dared to steal a glance between them. Andrea’s mouth was agape, and she turned to Asher and pouted. “Baby, are you going to let him talk to me like that?” Asher shrugged and walked away with Andrea trailing behind him and whining. “God I hate that girl. Her voice is like nails against a chalkboard. I feel bad for Ash.” I hear Logan say with a groan. Finally, I made it to the end of the line and pulled my money out to pay for my two items, but Leo swooped in thrusting a few bills to the lunch lady. I looked at

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him with confusion. “What you don’t like when a guy pays for your food? Isn’t that what girls fuss over All the time? You know, it’s the gentlemanly thing to do and all.” Leo said with a cocky grin. “Why are you doing this?” I asked, my voice just above a whisper. He looked at me with furrowed brows. “What exactly am I doing?” “I don’t know...following me, buying my lunch...what do you want from me?” I asked him. He smiled. “Maybe I want a favor from you.” I sigh. “What do you want?” He tapped his chin and pretended to consider his options. “How about I just hold on to the favor for now.” I nodded and turned to walk away only for Leo and Logan to each grab one of my elbows and lead me to their table. “W-what are you doing?” I asked frantically trying to pull away from them. “You are sitting with us today. Hey you! Move over.” Leo yelled at one of the girls sitting at the table She quickly moved and Leo sat me in her spot. “Is this the favor?” I asked him loud enough that only he could hear. He leaned in close to me. “When I ask for my favor you will be doing more than sitting next to me for lunch.” I gulped and fell silent, setting my hands in my lap and keeping my head low. I didn’t even touch my food because I was too nervous. It felt like The Dark Angels were setting me up for something and my mind was panicking as the theOries of what it could be ran through my head. I could feel Andrea shooting daggers at me with her eyes, so I didn’t say a word or move at all as the others laughed and joked around me. I didn’t belong here and as soon as the bell rang I grabbed my food and rushed away. I could hear Andrea and her friends laughing and saying things about me making the others at the table laugh as well, but I didn’t stick around to hear a word. I didn’t stop when I heard someone calling out after me. All I did was run and pushed out the side doors and made my way toward the football field and leaned against a wall hidden under the bleachers. ‘What are they planning? Why won’t they just do it?’ I thought to myself.

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Four or Dead by G O A Chapter 2

Chapter 2

I did my best to quiet my breathing when I saw that it was Andrea and her crew who had come in. “So? Did you and Asher finally make things official?” One of Andrea’s friends asked excitedly. What was her name again? Melody....I couldn’t remember. I had never really taken the time to learn their names in between the attacks on me. “Of course we did! It was amazing! I mean I knew he wasn’t a virgin but that extra experience made it worth it!” Andrea gushed. “So you told him it was your first time? How did he take that?” one of the other girls asked. “Hell no! I didn’t want him to be all weird about it, so I didn’t say anything.” Andrea admitted. “Well now that he has had a taste of you he is going to be all over you to do it again.” Yet another girl added. “So? I am happy to do anything for him, he just has to ask. I don’t want to be one of his throw always. I want him to always come running back to me no matter who he has been with.” Andrea said. “Well make sure you are worth his effort. That means we need to go shopping!” The first girl said excitedly. “Some sexy lingerie!” “Yes absolutely! After school yeah? You will have him drooling!” And with that they pranced out of the bathroom leaving me alone finally. Andrea was a virgin? And she didn’t tell Asher? Why would she lie about such a thing? She had thrown away such a special thing for a jerk like Asher who happily hooked up with other girls right in front of her. I shook my head and opened the door giving myself another quick look just in time for the first bell to ring. I ran from the bathroom and headed to my first class with barely a minute to spare. When I looked around I found that all the seats were taken except for one in back right in the middle of The Dark Angel’s group. Great. I slowly walked toward the seat with my head lowered, but I caught the smirks the boys gave me. I just had to get through this day. “Hey Sunny girl! Saved you a seat, unless you rather sit on this thrown.” Leo says hunting out his hips with a laugh that made my insides knot in the worst way. “This seat is fine thank you.” I say softly and sitting in the vacant seat without another word. The teacher walked in just before one of the others could get another word in, and finally, their attention

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or move at all as the others laughed and joked around me. I didn't belong here and as soon as the bell rang I grabbed my food and rushed away. I could hear Andrea and her friends laughing and saying things about me making the others at the table laugh as well, but I didn't stick around to hear a word. I didn't stop when I heard someone calling out after me. All I did was run and pushed out the side doors and made my way toward the football field and leaned against a wall hidden under the bleachers. 'What are they planning? Why won't they just do it?' I thought to myself.

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Chapter 3

When I was finally alone I let the tears fall and I slid down the wall until my knees hit my chest and I buried my head in them. My body trembled as I let out everything I was feeling. I shouldn't miss my next class because my dad would be told and he would beat me for it, but I just couldn't handle this anymore. Why did I keep fighting to live if this was the life I had? I was beaten and raped and tormented! This was it, I wasn't doing it anymore. After a few deep breaths, I let my tears dry and I thought about how to do it. There were so many ways, but I had to be sure it wouldn't go wrong. Jumping wasn't guaranteed sometimes, so that was out. Jumping in front of a car could result in a few broken bones but I could still possibly live, so that was out too. I thought hard and paced as I did until it hit me. My dad had a gun in his office. He had threatened me with it before and as far as I saw he didn't even bother to lock it away, probably because he knew I would never go in there. But I was desperate and I would be dead so what did it matter if I went in? I could do it right there so he would have to clean up the mess of what he led me to. I was never a spiteful person but something about killing myself in his chair and him finding me and having to deal with the fall out of my death made me smile. I wish I could see his face when he found me and how he planned to explain it away. I had to go now though while he wasn't home to be sure I couldn't be stopped. With one last breath to boost my resolve, I stepped out from my hiding place and began walking across the field to the front of the school where my bike was parked. My mind was focused on one thing so I didn't care who saw me leaving and I mounted my bike not even feeling bad when I knocked several over. "Hey Sunny where's the fire?" Jayden's voice rang out from the direction of the front steps of the school. I ignored him and turned my bike around and jumped on. There were footsteps coming toward me so I took off as fast as I could. My focus zeroed in with determination and I pumped my legs as fast as I could not even bothering to wait for cars to pass. So what if they hit me, I would just get back up and keep going until this was done. "Sunny!! Hey, slow down girl!" I

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heard someone yell to me but I don't turn or slow down. I heard a string of curses and the sound of brakes as I weaved through a chaotic crosswalk without looking or stopping. When I finally make it home I don't even slow down before tumbling off my bike and running to my door. "Dammit Sunny slow down will you!" Someone yelled from behind me while I fumbled with my keys. Several foot falls could be heard behind me and someone pulled my arm to make me turn to them. My chest rose and fell as I tried to calm myself. "What the hell was that? You could have been killed! What is wrong with you?" Asher said tightening his grip on my arm. "Let me go!" I growled at him, pulling my arm out of his grip. With one more try, I got my key inside and I burst through the door and headed straight to my father's office. I opened several drawers and slammed them back in place in frustration when I couldn't find what I'm looking for. "Where is it?" I asked desperately under my breath. Finally, I found it in the last drawer and I stood there looking at it for a few moments before I reached in and wrapped my hand around the cool metal. My heart was pounding as I felt the weight of it in my hands. I slowly pull it all the way out and kept my eyes locked on it. "Sunny...Emma what are you doing?" Leo asked and I lifted my eyes to him and pointed the gun at the four boys I had grown to hate over the last three years. "Get out!" I screamed holding the gun and pointing it right at them. I wouldn't shoot them because I wasn't a murderer. I didn't want anyone to get hurt except me. "Ok Sunny we can talk about this..." Leo said softly stepping closer to me. "My name isn't Sunny!" I screamed at him. "Sorry. Emma, just calm down okay?" He said keeping his hands raised and slowly moved closer. "Get away Leo or I swear I will shoot you. Get the hell out all of you! You've done enough! You all have! Just leave me alone!" I screamed tightening my eyes. Shots ring out and I gasped as darkness fell around me.

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Chapter 4

Freshman year

Dad had his friends over last night and they told me everything they wanted to do to me

whenever they had me alone. They said that it would be our secret. My father didn't let

them take everything because he planned on saving me for just the right opportunity. I

could still feel their hands all over me the following morning as I dressed for my first day

of high school.

Middle school hadn't been so bad, and I even made a friend my last year there, and I

couldn't wait to see him. He had been so nice to me my whole last year of middle school

and we had become inseparable. I quietly went downstairs and thankfully dad was

nowhere in sight, so I was able to slip out easily. A car waited for me at the end of my

driveway, and I smiled as one of the most handsome faces smiled back at me.

As close as we were I admit I had a bit of a crush on my friend, how could I not? The

summer break had been time enough for both of us to mature a bit more. He had obviously bulked up and my own form had rounded out a bit more even though

I was

still as slim as ever.

"Hey, you!" He said as I opened the door and climbed in.

He was dressed differently today. He was sporting dark wash jeans and a black t-shirt. I

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was impressed but a little confused because he didn't usually wear such dark colors,
but I brushed it off. We drove to school listening to music blasting from the radio and I
felt peaceful for the first time in weeks. I hadn't seen him in person for about a month as
I healed from some pretty serious wounds. I didn't want him to see me like that, so we
spoke over the phone mostly.
Our school came into view and he parked alongside a dark-colored sports car that three
guys were standing beside. I looked each of them over and noticed they were dressed
similarly to Leo and they dipped their heads at him.
"Do you know them?" I asked him.
"Yeah! We met at the garage I worked at over the summer. They're cool guys." He says
turning the car off and opening his door to climb out.
I followed suit and stood next to my door as I watched him greet his friends. One of
them glanced over at me and smirked.
"So, Leo is that your girl?" One of them asked.
Leo looked at me and swallowed. "Nah."
I knew we were just friends but that hurt. It wasn't what he said but the fact he looked
embarrassed of me for some reason.
"Hello little lady, I'm Logan. That there is Asher and Jayden." He said pointing to the
other guys leaning against the car. "So, since you aren't Leo's girl maybe me and you
can have some fun together."
His arm wrapped around my shoulder and his hand skimmed my arm softly as he

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moved his mouth closer to my ear.

“You smell sweet enough to eat.” He whispered into my ear and my heart stopped.

His words and the feeling of his touch sent panic through me as memories of those men

touching me rushed into my mind. My heart began to race, and I pulled away from him

and stumbled back.

One of the guys laughed. “What the hell is wrong with her?”

“You burned her Logan.” Someone said teasingly but Logan looked angry.

“What are you too good to be touched? Huh? Sorry Sunny but you are not worth my

time.” Logan said and I looked to Leo for help.

His eyes were low, and he pretended he didn’t see what was going on. I stepped back

further and walked away and toward the front steps of the school. Hot tears fell from my

eyes as I walked down the hallway to find my locker.

After that first day, Leo shut me out and started to even laugh at some of the remarks

from other guys. As weeks passed, he started to even join in on some of their pranks.

The only friend I had turned into my worst nightmare. Then this girl started hanging

around them and she always looking down her nose at me. She and her friends started

to join the boys in tormenting me, but they were far worse.

The boys preferred verbal torment and left the more physical acts to the girls.

One day

in the girl’s locker room they saw all of my scars and held me down and used a permanent marker to draw along the raised skin and then took a picture and posted it

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on Instagram. They hashtagged it #slutart and this turned into a whole series of instances where I was the featured muse. You would think going to someone from the faculty for help would save me, but as soon as I stepped into the assistant principal's office, I knew I was screwed. I recognized him from the many parties I attended with my father, and the smile he gave me sent shivers of fear down my spine. He hadn't been one of the men who came into my room, but I recall my father offering it to him during a whispered conversation. I needed help though, so I broke down and told him what had been done to me. He gave me a sympathetic nod and walked around his desk to sit beside me. He rested his hand on my leg and I tensed. "Why don't you show me what they did so I have a better idea of what we are dealing with. Otherwise, it's their word against yours." He said. He had a point I reasoned, and I turned in my seat to raise the back of my shirt slightly. My breaths were erratic as I waited. He hummed behind me and soon I felt his fingers running along the top of one of my bigger scars and down. I jolted under his touch but then his other hand gripped my hip tightly. I knew then that I had made a big mistake. When I suddenly felt his breath along my upper back though I started to feel nauseous. He took in a big breath of my scent before placing a soft kiss on my skin and I clench my eyes shut.

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Before it could go any further though someone opened the door and the principal looked back at the same time as I did. Leo stood in the doorway in shock, and I quickly pulled my shirt down and shot to my feet. He stepped aside and I rushed past him and out into the hall.

The next day a rumor about me sleeping with the assistant principal was all over the school and I knew exactly who started it. The guy I once thought of as a friend had told everyone what he saw. Everyone watched and whispered about me for weeks and the rumor grew bigger with each passing day. Some people had scrawled the words 'slut' and 'whore' on my locker.

My father even cornered me one day and threw me against the wall calling me every name in the book. He told me that only he could give me permission on who to be with and I would be sorry for going behind his back. He covered my stomach and back in bruises that day and I had to stay home for four days to recover. He even had to call a doctor to check on me, but when the school called saying I couldn't miss any more days he got angry all over again.

My grades had not been good because of all of this and to make sure I got caught up he locked me in the closet I slept in for a whole weekend with one bottle of water a day and all the schoolwork I had missed. I was also given my usual bucket to use the bathroom

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in and no food. Thankfully it hadn't been the first time I had gone without eating and my body had been conditioned to not even bother reminding me of how hungry I was.

Hungry. And pain...

Present...

The sound of beeping rang in my ears like a speaker on too loud and I groaned.

My

head was killing me, and I pressed my eyes tighter to try and endure the pain.

"She's waking up." Someone said.

My mind was racing and when I opened my eyes, and everything was blurry I started to

panic.

"Miss Grace please stay calm, okay?" A soft female voice said.

A gentle hand touched me, and I pulled away too quickly and I tumbled off of the bed I

was laying on and fell to the ground hard. The impact made me cry out, but the panic

was too intense that I hardly registered the pain.

Someone cursed and I felt strong hands gripping me but that only made me scream in

protest.

"No! Please no!" I begged.

"Hey, don't worry I won't hurt you. We need to get you back in bed though."

The man's

voice said gently.

I soon felt the fall of the bed beneath me. I blinked a few times, but I still could barely

see anything. The edges of my vision were dark while the rest was extremely cloudy,

barely clear enough to make out shapes of two people standing near me.

"What's going on? Where am I? Why can't I see?" I asked in a panic.

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“Miss Grace I am Doctor Camille. I have been looking after you for the last two days while you have been unconscious.” The figure to the close left me says. I was in a hospital, but how and why?

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Four or Dead by G O A

Chapter 5

“T–two days?” I ask in soft disbelief.

“Yes, dear.

You...suffered from a severe head injury. A gunshot wound that grazed your head almo

st fatally, and a concussion from collapsing and hitting your head on the edge of a desk.” She explained.

I closed my eyes and let out a shaky breath and whimpered softly reaching up and touching my eyelids softly.

“Will my eyes heal?” I ask.

“It may take some time and we can’t say how long the symptoms will last since it’s differ

ent for every individual.” She replied honestly.

I nod.

“When can she be released?” The second person asks.

I am too confused that I can’t place the voice. It sounds like someone I know but my hea

d was too much of

a mess.

“That is another matter we need to discuss. She has significant scaring and bruising ove

r most of her body. We had to contact the authorities and report possible abuse.

They w

ant to interview her guardian

about this and may recommend she stay with a friend until it can be investigated.” The d

octor said and I

shook my head frantically and reach around to grab her hand.

“No please don’t! Please. They can’t ask questions. Please!” I begged.

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She placed her hand on top of mine and rubbed them gently. “Dear someone has been hurting you and it’s our responsibility to make sure you are safe at home. We can’t send you back in this condition if there is someone who can hurt further.”

you

1

I let go of her and fell back on my pillow letting my tears fall. How had I messed up so much that now my whole world was falling apart? It was easy, shoot the gun and it would be done. What happened?

“I can let her stay with me for a while.” The man said.

“She will need to be monitored for any further pain due to her injuries. If she sent home with her eyes still in this condition she will need a lot of help.” The doctor explained to the man.

8

Who is this guy? How could I go anywhere with someone I don’t know well enough to recognize their voice? Why would the hospital even let him? 2

he hospital even let him? 2

“I’ll let you rest for now and come check on you in a little while. Call the nurse if you need anything. Okay?” The doctor said handing me some kind of remote.

“Thank you, doctor.” The man said.

There is silence in the room for a moment before the man let out a sigh.

“W—who are you?” I asked nervously.

“You don’t recognize my voice, Emma?” He asked.

“It sounds familiar, but I don’t remember it,” I said shyly.

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“Maybe it’s best that way. I don’t want to upset you.” The man said taking hold of my hand and I flinched. “I–I’m sorry. Did I hurt you?”

“N–no it’s ok,” I said before relaxing. “Please tell me who you are.”

“Are you sure? I don’t want to upset you.” He said

“Please not knowing is scaring me more,” I replied nervously.

He sighed and tightened his hold on my hand a bit. “It’s Asher.” 6

I gasped and quickly try to pull my hand away from him.

“No...no no!” I said moving further up my bed and making myself smaller.

“Emma please it’s ok. I won’t hurt you I swear.” He said, his voice soft.

No wonder I didn’t recognize his voice. He hardly ever spoke to me and when he did his voice taunting and cold.

His voice was now soft and kind, something I had never heard from him.

“What are you doing here? Why? To hurt me?” I asked pulling my legs closer to me, making myself as small as possible.

“No of course not! I wouldn’t hurt you.” He said, his voice sounded wounded.

“But you have hurt me before. You let others hurt me...” I said a hint of anger in my voice.

He sighed yet again. “I know. I know Emma. I’m so sorry. I had no idea everything that was going on with you...all the scars...you have been in so much pain and we hurt you even more. I can never make up for what’s been done to you, but I will try if you let me.”

16

I shook my head in disbelief. “How could I ever trust any of you? After everything, I can never trust you.” 3

His blurry figure moved closer to me

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and he reached his hand out to cup my face. I whimpered and readied myself for pain, but

it didn't come.

"I will never hurt you again, and I won't let anyone else hurt you again either. I will not let

you go back to that house, Emma. Your father has been hurting you...they said...that you

had trauma...that you had been sexually abused as well." His voice grows soft at those

last words.

I swallowed hard and tears fell with ease. "Y-yes."

He already knew so there was no point in lying now. "How could they tell?" I asked him.

"They said there was external scarring

that concerned them, so they did an internal exam and

found scarring there as well." He replied with a cautious tone. 3

"Why did they tell you all this?" I asked him, tightening my arms around my legs. 3

"They tried reaching your father at first, but he couldn't be reached, then when they examined

you further, they didn't want him anywhere near you. Leo asked if we could be temporarily

responsible for you until the investigation against your father is complete. Since

you have no other family, and since my father is well known and trusted they agreed."

He said.

I scoffed. "Of course. Your family name was all that was needed to take me from one

place to another with no say from me."

I think he was taken aback by words as much as I was because he fell silent for a while.

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I had no idea where that fierceness came from, but this whole situation was insane. I was as mad now. My chance to get out of this messed up situation had been ruined and now I was trapped in the clutches of the very people who had tormented me for the last three years. No matter how genuine Asher sounded, I didn't believe a word of it. There was a reason why they did this, and I wouldn't let my guard down not even for one second. I may be mostly blind, but I would fight shadows any day then become a victim again. 5 I may be weak, but I needed to get away somehow. There had to be a way to break free.

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