

Forced Destiny
The Destiny Series
Book One

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Creeper

I awoke in a cold sweat. This was the third time this week I'd had the same dream. Though it was more of a nightmare. It seemed to happen every other night. In the dream I am being stalked; by what I don't know: go figure. All I know is that I try running from it but when the red eyes catch up to me everything's blacked out. Then I wake up. I have heard people say that dreams are a way to tell you something. Unless this dream is trying to tell me that some creep is going to throw a blanket over my head, then I don't know what it means.

I sat up with my knees tucked against my stomach. I'd never been one to have recurring dreams. I thought about anything that could've triggered them but there wasn't anything I could think of. What great help I was being to myself. The past two times I didn't go back to sleep, so I knew that it was useless to even try to attempt it. Oh how I wanted to kick this dream's ass. I ran a frustrated hand over my blood-shot eyes and groaned. Since I wasn't going back to sleep I tried to make a mental note on what I was going to wear to work the upcoming day. I didn't have much but cherished all I did have. Money was just making a comeback as currency and businesses were trying to re-establish themselves. Slowly but surely commerce would reclaim its place at the helm of society. And, of course, I was in the middle of it all, as so many people were.

I still couldn't figure out what I wanted to wear. I did want to look good, but at the same time I wasn't a diva and, truth be told, I didn't want to be. The last diva I met I'd wanted to knock her out. I think the fist-to-mouth method works wonders on them.

After finally deciding on what I was going to wear, I decided I could not stay sitting in my bed like a useless lump. So, I got up and strolled into the living room area where the kitchen and the living room were combined. What I loved about this apartment was that it was located on one of the highest floors in our building, and I could get lost by looking out the window towards the vast sky. Most of the time when I gaze out the window it is during this serene time of day. The rain pounded against the building: The rhythmic rataplan lulling me away from the bad dreams and bad thoughts.

They used to call this city ‘the city that never sleeps’ How ironic now that you can hear a pin drop. I have to say that life is better after the war or so I’ve heard. I wasn’t alive during the before time and, I was just a baby as everything started clearing up. I’m grateful for that. I can just imagine the dreams I would be having if I grew up during that crappy time. Anyway, the world is still rebuilding itself, trying to get itself back to where it once was. I guess these things took time, but money was making a comeback and the economy was stabilizing itself. So, there was hope, or maybe I was just foolish. Maybe I am just a blind optimist.

The current economy is run by crooks, crime bosses, and corrupt politicians. I guess we, as humans, do not learn from our previous mistakes. I guess it is in our nature to destroy ourselves. A sudden knot in my stomach snapped me back into my harsh reality, and I realized someone was in the room with me now. I’ve always had good senses; sometimes I feel like they are freakishly good.

“Hey, Zack, why don’t you go back to bed on your own two legs, or do I have to escort you back to Dee’s room?” Dee was my roommate.

“Come on, Luna! You know you have that feeling for me. Just give in to it.” Zack coozied up next to me, and there went my moment of peace.

“Yeah, I got a feeling, and I call it nausea.” Dee always picked the losers. This was the third guy in a month that she’d brought home who had tried to hit on me. Doesn’t help that Dee’s legs are open 22/7. Have to give the girl some time to rest.

“Oh, so you are playing hard to get? I like that. I will be back,” Zack boasted confidently.

“I hope you won’t, or I will be taking you out with the rest of the trash,” I replied to him. He winked at me as he made his way back into Dee’s room. I don’t know what it is. I don’t think I’m ugly but people give me too much credit. I’m not that tall. I stand around 5’3”. I have long black hair hanging down to my waist. I do have two main companions that bring me a lot of attention, but all girls have them. I do have a backside to match my buddies up front. Still, I think people are crazy for hitting on me. I’m just like all the other girls in this corrupt world. One time another girl hit on me. Sorry, girls, my door swings one way and it ain’t yours, but I was still flattered. Then there are creeps like Zack that will just hump anything. Now I know why they are called dogs...

“Hey Lunnnnaaaaa...” I kept hearing my name in a distance, and finally realized that I fell asleep on the couch. I opened my eyes only to see Dee’s companions jiggling in my face, as she was leaning over to call my name.

“Dee, get those things out of my face, before I suffocate.” The last thing I wanted to see in the morning was two naked, melon sized mountains centimeters from my face. “And I think you found another creep.” I repeatedly try to warn her, but knew she wasn’t going to listen.

“Zack is amazing. I think he is the one.”

“The one what? The one for last night?” Nearly each guy she brought home was the “Chosen One” So far there had been at least 20 ‘The Ones’.

“We are going out tonight to Jnco’s. Are you coming or not?” Dee was not paying attention to me. Jnco was a hang out we all went to after work. It was an okay hang out. It was a place to relax after work; especially on Fridays, that served alcohol cheap and had edible food.

“I’ll see! Just make sure you keep that dog on his leash!” If he made a move on me, I would have to put Zack in his place or in a pound which ever was convenient.

“Oh, don’t worry. He will be on me all night.” Dee smiled.

“If I waste a good pitcher of beer hosing you both down, you better be getting your groove on at his place or the alley! I don’t really care where it is as long as it isn’t in front of me.” I know that sounded mean, but even cheap beer is expensive and I wasn’t about to waste any on some bar porn. My alarm ringing from my bedroom stopped our happy discussion; it was time for my ass to get ready.

“I really want to stay and chit chat but gotta go!”

“Well, hurry up, cause I have to go work, too.” To this day I don’t know what Dee does to make money and, honestly, I have no desire to find out. As long as she pays half of the rent: I really don’t care.

“Well, if you weren’t playing slip and slide with Zack you could have had the bathroom already!” I left Dee pouting on the couch, but I knew I’d be quick. It wasn’t worth it to fight with her. We are only allowed to use the shower for fifteen minutes or the building shuts the water supply for that day. One time they shut it down for a week because Dee got busy in the shower for 20 minutes two consecutive days. Needless to say, I stunk bad enough that I didn’t need to ask for alone time that week.

The mornings sucked! People were all around; idiot drivers cutting each other off with cars that weren't top notch. I'm guessing, sooner or later, the car companies will start manufacturing again, but I really don't care. I ride a bike to work. Not one of those badass bikes or crotch rockets, as the older ones would call them, I ride one of those regular bikes that a person has to pedal. Now you know my secret on how I stay so fit. It gets me from place to place so I don't complain. I work in the delivery business until the big name companies get back on their feet. The company I work for is called "On the Run". My supervisor is a douche, but it's okay. I have a few buddies that I work with that make the workday tolerable. I walk in and right away, Billy, my supervisor caught me.

"Luna, you're LATE," he yelled out.

"Thanks for emphasizing the word 'late' because, if you didn't bring it to my attention, I would have never known." This is basically how it goes every day. Billy always shouts out your faults, and we don't listen. Lucky for him, we weren't in the building long enough to hear his mouth.

"Package has to be run to mid-town," he said throwing the small box my way, which I caught with one hand. I am still surprised by my reflexes and, I guess, so was Billy. I tucked the package under my arm and moved my bike toward the locker area. I stuck my orange in my locker before closing it. As I turned to exit the row of lockers I stopped short, as there stood a desperate face sitting on a neck of slouching shoulders.

"Luna, baby, where have you been all my life?" The bald man asked me.

"Wigs, probably not paying you any mind," I responded. We call him Wigs because he'd come in once with a wig that looked like a dead rat on his head and, while on a run he ran into a boy chasing a ball and the wig fell off. The boy and Wigs were fine but unfortunately the wig didn't make it. He was a pain in my ass, but I still loved him.

"Ouch! You always know the right thing to say to a man," Wigs replied.

"You ain't a man. Maybe a boy without hair is more like it," A soft voice said from behind Wigs. Shanel was the toughest girl I knew, besides myself, of course. We called her Shy for short. Don't ask me how we got that name for her because I don't remember...and she is anything but shy. All the other guys loved her because she could be one of the guys and still be hot enough to be one of their dates. She was a little taller than me, but who wasn't? She was

beautiful variety of shades of brown: Maybe Caramel skin, mocha colored eyes, chestnut hair, even brown nail polish, and she was also curvy, guys loved that.

“Now there’s my girl.” I smiled then embraced her.

“Now why can’t I get a greeting like that?” Wigs complained.

“Cause last time I hugged you, my ass ended up in your palms!” I flicked his forehead. I love doing that to him.

“Well, Luna, it was in the way,” Wigs said.

“Well, you are well on your way to an ass whooping!”

“And all three of you are well on your way to being fired if you don’t get to work!” Billy said from behind the dispatch area.

“We are on our way, oh fearless leader!” I hollered as I saluted him.

“You guys are lucky you are not saluting unemployment!” Billy said. “Like I haven’t heard that threat within the last day and a half,” I muttered as all three of us walked past him, and stepped outside into the morning air.

“Any of you guys going to mid-town?” I wasn’t in the mood to be alone, even though I was a loner most of the time.

“I have to go downtown,” Shy said.

“And I’m going into the Village,” Wigs replied.

I think they saw the look of disappointment on my face.

“But we would love to take the scenic route,” Wigs said with a wink. Shy happily agreed. So we were off doing our job, which wasn’t as bad as it could be. We were out most of the time, so it was tolerable.

The day went by in a blur, which I was grateful for that. I just wanted to relax for two days and maybe get some sleep.

Once all three of us got outside, at six, it was a little cooler, but not cool enough to dampen our Friday night festivities. It might not seem like a lot to go to a bar on a Friday, but that is where we all went to just let loose. We all rode our bikes to the Inco bar, which only took twenty minutes; it seemed a lot faster since we were all talking. We stationed our bikes outside the bar and secured them to a fence. My bike was stolen once before, and Billy let me have it when I walked in late the next day. He hadn’t cared that my bike was stolen, and started a long speech about responsibility. It seemed he was waiting for the perfect opportunity to give me that

speech. All I heard though was: blah...blah...blah. That is what I usually hear coming out of his mouth.

When I walked in I saw Dee and , of course, Zack. Dee was straddling Zack's lap. Her skirt was...lets just say that you didn't have to guess what color panties she was wearing, and her movements were suggestive. I guess I was going to waste a pitcher of beer on them. They finally saw me and proceeded to wave me over.

"Don't worry girl. Me and Wigs will get a pitcher of beer. Just save us seats," Shy said.

"You don't wanna sit next to Dee when she is in heat. She would hump a bar stool," I responded. "Wigs get that thought out of your head!" I knew exactly what he was thinking: He wanted to be the next bar stool. I went to meet the two love birds, while Wigs and Shy went to get the beer.

"Hey, Luna. Glad you could make it!" Zack said.

"Yeah, because I couldn't wait to see you!" I rolled my eyes. Of course, Zack winked at me and didn't pick up the hint that I really didn't care if he was there or not. I was saved when Wigs and Shy came back with the beer.

"Remember what I said! Beer bath!" I reminded Dee.

"Oh, that is so hot!" Zack responded.

"I'm going to have to second that!" Wigs agreed.

"How about you second this?" Shy asked, as she smacked the back of Wigs' head.

"Thanks, Shy," I said through a laugh.

"So, you're telling me that there is not going to be a beer bath?" Wigs sounded disappointed.

"Yeah, sure, but you will be the only one attending." It was bad that Dee and Zack were being horn balls. I didn't want to see Wigs getting into that, at least not in front of me. Since I didn't want to lose a pitcher of beer, I went to play darts. Shy joined me. I guess she didn't want to witness what those two were capable of in public. I am all for public display of affection, but when it turns into a make out fest, my stomach isn't gong to handle it.

I was on point playing darts. I couldn't miss the sweet spot. I was on fire. That is what I call it. Wigs came over after his attempts failed to try to join the V.I.P. party of Dee and Zack. That is when I hustled some drooling dope at pool. Hey, I may be little, but I can still hang with the best of them. From thinking I was going to lose money by dumping beer on someone to gaining fifty dollars from hustling some guy, I had a pretty good night. I gave ten dollars each to

Shy and Wigs. It wasn't much, but every little bit helps during these tough times. I also take care of the people who love me for me.

After Shy insisted on playing 'Do the Hustle' on Jnco's ancient jukebox; It was around two in the morning when I went to walk Shy and Wigs out. And, of course, it happened again: My bike had been stolen.

"Are you really kidding me!" I was so annoyed. From euphoric to cranky in 2.3 seconds: a new record.

"Hey, look at the bright spot: Maybe someone else needed that piece of crap more than you did," Wigs said.

"Remind me never to ask you to cheer me up again." I wasn't that mad, but still how was I going to get home? I love the dark, but I was too tired to start walking.

"Hey girl, you can use my bike. Me and Wigs can head towards home with one bike. We live close enough, you know that. He can ride on the handle bars." Shy said.

"No, it's okay. Don't worry. I can walk." So, I watched both of my friends go on their way, and I was left alone in the dark city. I know it sounds crazy but the city when it was cloaked in darkness, was relaxing to me. That's why the walk home didn't really bother me that much, at least for tonight. The darkness did hide some of the chaos that surrounded the battered city. Don't get me wrong sometimes a little chaos is needed, but for tonight I was just going to let the cool night air hit my face and let my mind drift.

At least that was the plan until a knot formed in my stomach. I spun around quickly to see if I was being followed, but there was no one there. However, when I turned back in the direction of home, Zack was in front of me. Cue the chaos.

"You scared me," I blurted out. Zack looked kind of creepy in the shadows, well, creepier than usual.

"Hey Luna, why are you all by yourself?" Zack asked in a deeper and darker tone from the one I'm used to hearing.

"I'd ask you the same question. Please don't tell me she rejected you. That isn't a good look for you, matter of fact it isn't a good look for any man." This guy was creeping me out. Another knot formed on top of the knot I already had in my stomach. Zack stood in awkward silence.

“You know you are creepy enough already. This silent makes it way worse.” I know it was not the best choice of words but, again, I will not hold back, and sometimes that does get me into trouble. Finally I attempted side stepping him to make progress to my apartment, but Zack grabbed me with such a force that I was momentarily lifted off my feet.

“You are not going anywhere,” he growled.

“Is this how you treat all your ladies? And for a second I was thinking you were a ladies man,” I responded, as I tried to play off that I needed a miracle to remove his hand from my arm.

“Let go!” I commanded, but that didn’t make matters any better. He started to half drag me into the alleyway. “I guess you don’t take rejection very well, huh!” I was fighting as good as my current status of practical immobility would allow, but he didn’t budge. Zack was strong; a little too strong.

He kept advancing us into darkness. My voice had now failed me. All I could do was squeak. Way to perform under pressure. Soon, no one would see us, but I continued to struggle and squeak. Damn vocal cords that failed me when I needed them. I’m pretty sure this wasn’t supposed to be happening this way. Within moments of our meeting we were consumed by darkness. Zack now shoved me against the wall.

“Just give in!”

“Wow! Manners, Zack, manners. I guess the asking nicely went out the window, huh?” I questioned as my vocal cords started to kick in. He pressed himself against me pinning me to the wall. If I got out of this alive, I was going to kill Dee. Struggling against him seemed to please him so I tried to stay still and think. I had to make one final attempt to try and push lover boy off me but, before I did, I felt a sudden surge of energy course through my body. I pushed hard. It was successful. Better than expected actually. I’d slammed Zack against the opposite wall. I’m pretty sure that he was as shocked as I was, but I didn’t want to stick around to ask or observe. I was out of there. No look back. No tearful good-bye.

I’d reached the mouth of the alleyway when I felt a hand grab my shoulder and toss me back into the alleyway like a ragdoll. I landed hard on my back. What was going on? He had super human strength. I lifted my head, and I saw him jump into the air with the agility of a tiger and land right next to me.

“Well, you finally got me on my back. What’s the next step?” I wasn’t going to show this guy that I was scared but, truth be told, I was terrified out of my damn mind. His face was so

close to mine that the smell of liquor on his breath was making me tipsy. He moved in closer near my neck. And that is when I heard something move on the pavement behind my head.

“What a classy guy. Trying to get some on the first date are you?” A velvet-whisper of a voice spoke from the darkness. Zack looked toward the location of the voice. He snarled at the newcomer.

“You’re a real catch,” The voice said.

“I suggest that you leave before you get hurt,” Zack growled.

“Aww. Look at that, Luna. You even found a real humanitarian. He cares about the well being of others.”

The fact that the owner of the voice knew my name registered in my head but, I was pre-occupied with Zack having been in the process of removing my shirt to give it much thought. Zack lifted himself off me.

“I warned you!!!” Zack ran towards the corner with an inhuman burst of speed. His body flew out of the corner just as fast. He landed on his back harder than I landed on mine. Zack looked a little freaked out. It seemed that he really wasn’t accustomed to failure. He got up and ran off.

I quickly stood up. The ground was spinning. I guess I’d also hit my head. Or maybe it was adrenaline, or all the blood redistributing. And now I had to deal with another creep. He did save my life, yet he’d known my name, and I’m not a person to campaign my name with ‘Hi my name is Luna’ t-shirts.

“You really know how to pick the winners, huh?” The voice observed with a trace of amusement.

“Who the heck are you? I mean, don’t get me wrong: I appreciate the whole saving of the life thing, but could you use a less creepy tactic for next time? Just a suggestion.”

“Wow! You don’t waste any time snapping back, do you?” The owner of the voice was still in the darkness. I guess he really didn’t want to be seen. “Luna, and don’t ask me how I know your name. I won’t tell you. Save yourself the disappointment. I have been watching over you for quite some time now...”

“Oh, and you waited until some douchebag wanted to play Dr. Feelgood in a dark, dirty alley before you introduced yourself? Thank you so much I do appreciate the dramatic entrance.”

“I needed to see if you possessed the power I thought you might have. And tonight you proved to me that, with some patience and practice, you can develop these powers. These gifts.”

This guy was starting to creep me out. I was grateful and all, but this guy was way off his rocker.

“I thank you for saving my life, but since you are a wacko, I’m going to get back on my way to my apartment. Don’t try and creep anyone else out tonight.” I turned around to make my way out of the creepy alleyway, but I was still dizzy and almost fell. I balanced myself against the wall.

“You are the key to saving the world,” The figure in the darkness proclaimed.

“Wow! And you tell me I’m quick and snappy,” I replied fighting the losing battle against the dizziness.

“Well, since you are willing to leave so quickly I need to be direct to try and keep you here.”

“Don’t worry, once I can see straight, I...”

“There is a war coming. Things will be back to what they once were. And you are the key to stopping it,” the man explained.

“Okay, you get extra points for just trying to flatter me with the whole I’m the key thing.”

“You have powers that are natural that others are trying to possess through un-natural ways. There will come a time that you will have to choose the fate of the world.”

“Okay, whatever, the flattery is turning creepy. Oh, and how in the world did you know my name?” I asked even though he wasn’t going to answer me, but I was stubborn. No answer.

“Hello!” No answer. Damn it. What a night it has been. I may stay in tomorrow. I think I have dealt with enough creeps and nutcases to last a lifetime. I opened my eyes and noticed that the ground had stopped spinning so I took that as my cue to make my way towards my home...

-2-

Alleyway Blues

Some place in the city:

“Where is the test subject?” a deep voice rumbled.

“Dead,” A soft voice replied.

“That is the third one that we tested the serum on.”

“Before they were lasting mere days. This kid lasted a week and a half.” The owner of the soft voice stated optimistically apparently trying to gain approval from the other person in the room.

“It seems that the serum is attacking the test subjects’ immune systems which is in turn killing the host,” The deep voice observed with an under current of disappointment.

“We have to keep on experimenting. We did have a test subject that survived the process. And that subject was just an infant.”

“That was our prize. That child was a miracle. I still do not know how her mother escaped with the child so long ago. That child may be the key to everything.”

“Sir, it has been nineteen years since you have last seen the child. You wouldn’t know where to start looking.” The soft voice pointed out hesitantly.

“Natalia, we were ending a war that crippled the world. You think they are out of the city? I know she is still here. It is just a matter of time before she springs up.”

“Sir, how do you know?”

“That boy, Zack, had a confrontation last night before the serum took control of him. Nikko was supposed to have surveillance on him from the moment he took the serum. What Nikko reported is that he tried to attack a girl in an alleyway. A few minutes later he came running out like a little boy scampering away from a bully.”

“So? That means nothing.”

“Natalia, you are really naïve. The serum gave Zack uncanny strength. And you are telling me that he was outmatched by an average female? I think we may have found her. Have a team scout the area for the next few days. We must find out what happened in that alleyway.”

“Yes, sir,” Natalia replied.

Luna’s Apartment:

I woke up with a headache. The only headache that was remotely worthwhile was from a hangover. I had a feeling this wasn’t worth it! I’d had the weirdest dream (different from the last one): Zack was attacking me, and a creepy guy ended up saving my life, or, was it something that really happened? I had no clue right now. However, I had all day to dwell on it, so I decided that I was going to get some cheap coffee from the kitchen first. I heard a myth that

before the war there was this coffee place that charged an arm and a leg for coffee, but it was so good that it left people happily broke. I don't know about all that. I think I could contain myself. No coffee was going to get me that excited...and no man I may add.

I walked into the living room, only to find Dee was sitting there crying her eyes out.

"Dee, if you had the water shut off again, I'm really going to give you something to cry about," I threatened. I was going to be honest with her. Smelling like I took a swim in a dumpster for a week wasn't the highlight of my life.

"Zack's dead!" Dee sobbed.

"Wow! Let me remove the big ass foot from my mouth," I replied. Not only did I have to remove the foot with a gigantic shoehorn but I also had to get into best friend mode with Dee. I don't think I'm a bad person, but Dee was a drama queen. She knew Zack for as long as I knew a stray dog, and she was crying over him. Still Dee was my trampy friend that needed me. Then it hit me! What if my dream wasn't really a dream? So, I asked the question.

"Did Zack leave at any time of the night after I left Jnco?"

"What?! Didn't you hear he is dead? Who gives a crap about what happened after you left the bar," Dee responded harshly. I'm pretty sure it would've been better to ask it later in the conversation, and I'd jumped the gun and operation best friend was dissolving into a disaster. I attempted to redeem myself and here I went.

"I'm sorry, just asking...maybe something happened after I left since I didn't see anything crazy happen while I was there." She seemed to be coming around. I put in the time, I even patted her arm and everything.

"Oh...sorry, I'm just a little on edge," Dee sobbed.

"That's okay," I said hiding a smirk knowing that I'd dug myself out of a hole. "Do you know what happened?"

"No, I went over to his apartment for a booty call..."

"Since he's the one and all," I commented as I rolled my eyes. She didn't see me.

"Yeah, exactly, and I let myself in since he gave me a key. We were talking and stuff, and he fainted. Come to think of it he said he needed some fresh air last night, and that was right after you left," Dee explained. Damn, so my dream was a reality? Maybe. Inconclusive.

"And then what happened? After he fainted? I know the ending of the story, so give me the in-between," I pressed on, eagerly trying to piece my puzzle together...as well as caring for Dee.

“Well, I called the ambulance. I mean there was very little care they could give. It’s not like he was bleeding, so they couldn’t do anything...I followed them. But they say that he died on route.”

“Did they give you anything? Like what the cause was?”

“No...” Dee said as she let out more tears. I sat next to her and hugged her. I did feel bad for her. This wasn’t like a guy that just ditched her after a one-night stand.

“Oh, and someone left your bike in front of the door. You walked home yesterday?” Dee asked between sobs.

“What?” I raised a brow and released my hug.

“Yeah, when I came back from the hospital this morning it was there.”

“Where is it now?” I questioned anxiously.

“Behind the counter,” Dee said between gasping sobs. I hopped over the couch. I was surprised at my unaccustomed agility. I went behind the counter, and there stood my bike all in one piece. The way I left it prior to the robbery. There was a note taped to the seat of the bike. “Take better care of your things.” Now I knew it wasn’t a dream. I needed to know what was going on. Too many things were happening and trouble seemed to find its way through my doors. I’d need to go back to the scene of the crime, but I would have to do it later tonight. The creepo had stayed in the shadows and hadn’t wanted to be seen. I had a feeling he wanted to keep it that way. I comforted Dee for the rest of the day. Thank goodness she fell asleep for a nap. I was giving her till 1 a.m. to find the second ‘The One’ of the month. I, on the other hand, was pre-occupied with my own thoughts as the clock neared ten. This was my time. It was pitch black out and raining. I didn’t mind the rain, and the weather was warm so I didn’t have to worry about freezing my ass. I dressed in all black...not going to lie: I felt like a ninja waiting for action.

The problem with having long hair is it gets annoying when wet. I didn’t want to cut it short. I have mistaken too many women for men because of their choice of hairstyle, and I didn’t want to be one of them. When I reached the alleyway I didn’t feel any threat like the night before. But, still, it wasn’t a genius idea to go down the same dark alley where I’d got my ass whooped. Good thing I’m not Einstein. I like to read up on history. I’m a very well read girl. Well at least I thought I was. Guys don’t like it. They just want me to sit there and giggle, bat my eyes and open my thighs. Two words for them: screw you. Well, not literally.

I walked down the alleyway, and for the second straight night I was engulfed in darkness. As I made my way deeper into the alleyway I recalled the events from the previous night. That set a knot in my stomach. I looked in the corner where the man's voice had come from the night before. I made my way towards the corner, but all that was there was trash. I have no idea what I was expecting, but it wasn't a banana peel and half a burger.

"Back so soon?" The voice came from behind me. I quickly spun around. Again the figure was in the shadows.

"Well, you left a girl wanting more. You must be a hit at parties," I replied.

"In my field of work it is hard to party. But, thanks for the compliment."

"Hey, I try to boost the male ego," I replied to the man. For some odd reason I knew he wasn't a threat to me. How I knew this, I still had no idea.

"If you wanted to know whether or not I killed Casanova: the answer is no. Which upset me really, since I wanted to take some notes on how to score with the ladies."

"He was a charmer, wasn't he?" You saw how he had me eating out of the palm of his hand, and you wanted to know the secret. I truly understand," I responded sarcastically.

"I'm also not going to tell you who I am. Though I'm glad that you made your way back."

"I've got to tell you: your approach to win me over isn't working. Answer me this then. If you didn't kill him, who did?" I questioned, hoping that this guy wasn't a total douche.

"Technically, no one. It isn't as easy to explain as you may think," The man offered as a weak explanation. Wow, I guess I got a total douche, but I wasn't going to insult him just yet. I wanted to see where this was going.

"How about you go into the corner that you hid in yesterday, and let's have story time." Annoyance and sarcasm were dripping off my words.

"Luna, Luna, Luna, always to the point. I guess I can't make friends with you, huh?"

"I have enough friends. But if there is an opening I'll let you know," I responded. Wow, this guy was getting on my last nerve. If I hadn't seen him throw Zack across the alleyway like he was some type of ragdoll I would have tried to punch him.

"I guess you deserve some answers."

"I'm glad that you decided to come to your senses."

“Well, first off, Zack was on something to make him ‘super human’. I’m pretty sure I know where he got it from. He was a test subject.” The voice shifted quickly to the corner he was in the previous night.

“How do you know this?” I questioned.

“He was probably injected with some type of substance to enhance human abilities. Strength, smell, hearing, seeing, and feeling, of course, there may be more to that. At the same time the substance attacks the human immune system, which in turn kills the host. What you saw last night was super human being using his powers for evil...or maybe he was an angry ex.” The voice chuckled.

“Hey, I have that effect on the opposite sex,” I responded after I was given this wealth of information. If it was fact or fiction I didn’t know yet, but why would this man, I think he was a man, be lying to me? “How do you know all this? You obviously have super human strength since you threw Zack across the alleyway like he stole something. Did you think I missed that?”

“Were you really dizzy or did you just say that for dramatic effect?” The man asked. Oh, this guy was going to get his ass handed to him.

“I take back the life of the party comment,” I replied.

“Well, you do need answers: the reason I know what I know is because I was the only test subject to survive!”

“I didn’t see that one coming, but why hasn’t it attacked your immune system like you said. I don’t know if I’m disappointed yet on that out come.” I really didn’t know how I felt about this guy.

“Because I have created a counter antigen to help my immune system to fight the serum that gives me super human strength. Unfortunately, the antigen is becoming ineffective against the serum as time goes on, and, eventually, will kill me.”

“Who’s being dramatic now? The way you speak of this serum thing, it’s like you made it.” Silence. He better have not left me. “Hello!” I yelled. Then thought: maybe I shouldn’t be so loud. Oh well. Too late.

“I helped create the serum, yes. It was a mistake that happened right after the war. It was supposed to be good for mankind. But then there was him...Frank. He wanted to create his own army to start another war. I could not let it happen. I created the antigen after I took the serum trying to get lucky, and it has worked...until now.”

“So, where does that leave me in all this?” I was confused. I was just another girl trying to get by, so why was I so special? “Were you drunk last night when you were telling me I was the key crap?”

“Well, that is because...”

“Hey!” Another man’s voice shot from behind us. I quickly turned around.

“You know that is not a polite way to get someone’s attention. Next time say excuse me!” I admonished the stranger, knowing that my source of information was gone.

“You okay, miss?” The middle aged man asked.

“I was until you showed up.” I retorted.

“Sorry, ma’am,”

“I’m not an old lady! So watch yourself!” Ma’am was used for the older folks, and I was nowhere near their age. I started walking past the man to make my way out of the alleyway.

“Again, I’m sorry. I thought you were in trouble. I heard you speaking to someone.”

“I told you I was alright. I’m fine, thank you. Now, please, let me go on my merry way.”

“A young girl like yourself shouldn’t be venturing out this late at night,” The man comment.

“Thanks daddy, I will keep that in mind for future reference,” I said leaving him behind. I was expecting a repeat of last night, but fortunately I didn’t get it. But what the jerk did was manage to end the Q&A portion with me and the guy in the shadows. Maybe I should call him shadow man...nope too corny. I will need to come up with a nick name for him. Man in the shadows is to damn long...

Nikko:

Nikko grabbed his phone, and dialed out.

“There was a girl in the alleyway. She seemed like a wack job. Maybe a druggie.” Nikko started to listen to instructions from the other side of the phone.

“But she seems like any other girl,” Nikko replied. Nikko awaited further instructions.

“Yes, sir. We will have her followed. I’m just telling you that it is just a lost cause.”

“DO IT NOW!” The man from the other side of the phone shouted loud enough for other people to hear.

“Yes, sir.” Nikko said in defeat. He put his phone on its clip and then released a walkie-talkie from his other holster. “Follow the subject.”

“Yes sir.” The voice replied from the other end. Nikko shook his head.

“Why do I feel like this is going to a wild goose chase.” He left the alleyway and left the darkness behind...

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Close Call

Why in the hell does everything have to happen in that alleyway? And, why did it always involve a creep? Something had seemed odd with that guy. Like who really played ‘The knight in shining armor’ these days? Uh...no one. I bet if some other guy had come along while Zack had had me pinned to the wall he would have helped Zack out. Anyways, I scolded myself, I didn’t care about that. I was out of that situation. Now what I needed to do is decipher the information given to me by Mr. Wonderful. That’s the name I’m going to give him. He basically gave me nothing to go on. I still have no clue why he insisted on saying I was the ‘The Key’. What I knew was some super hero was trying to rescue the innocent damsel. Ha! If only...then I felt it again: the knot in my stomach. I couldn’t catch a damn break, could I?

I looked all around but only saw nothing or no one. Maybe it was just a mistake since I was just thinking so hard about crazy things. The rain still pounding against the pavement and my parka made me wrap my hair into a bun and put my hood up. Then I heard it, footsteps approaching from behind me. I pretended not to hear them and kept moving forward. It could be another person just walking home, but I still had to make sure. I stopped and pretended to have to tie my sneakers to test this theory. I know, not the most genius idea, but it did work. The footsteps stopped when I stopped. I was surrounded-completely blocked in. There were at least two people following me. How I knew that, I don’t know, but I could sense them clearly now. There was one behind me, another person across the street, and I heard another pair of footsteps stop a little further up, across the street. They had all stopped at the same time. Why me? What was I going to do? A small girl against probably three guys, should have sent a lady to do this job. I thought this ruefully before shaking myself. What was the job exactly?

I decided to do the only ballsy thing I could think of, which was to confront them. After three deep breaths, I stood up, turned around and made my way towards the person on my side of the street.

“Excuse me...are you bored?” I cocked my head a little to the side as I looked up at him. This threw him off a little...good!

“I...I’m sorry?” The man stammered. Clearly this man wasn’t the brains of the operation.

“You heard me: Are you bored?” I repeated.

“No...”

“Then why the HELL are you following me?” I can summon up a fair amount of bravado for my staggering five foot three frame. The second person that had been following me approached now. What a party I was going to have, and, FYI, so far I was two for two (another man).

“I’m sorry, ma’am...I mean miss. We wanted to make sure you made it home okay?” The want-to-be-hero from the alleyway offered. I can’t stand when people make a statement that sounds like a question.

“You may not be with a fist in your face!” I huffed. Something was off here. I was making plans for an escape when...

“We have a tough girl here, don’t we?” The third person commented after crossing the street. I was two for three. It was a woman.

“I would love to show you how tough I am,” I replied, “but I have somewhere less wet to be...” Why were the odds always stacked against me?

“Let’s take her in,” The lady spoke with a British accent.

“How about I take you down?” All of a sudden, everything was magnified and clear as day. These guys were packing heavy. I guess the ‘hero’ was the leader, and he had two guns holstered under his jacket. The other man had one secured on the holster on his belt. And the British Bitch had one holstered on her belt as well. Then just as quickly as it had come, everything went back to normal.

“The orders were to just follow not engage,” the hero cautioned.

“I guess I ruined your plans then, huh? So, what now? You all wanna discuss it over a cup of crappy coffee?” What was I to do? These guys wanted me for some reason, but for what? I may have to move out of town if I continued to draw this much attention. The British Bitch moved in

on me. She tried to use a forceful tactic to disable me, but instinct told me to grab her arm and twist down. So, I did. She was shocked (and honestly so was I). I grabbed her arm twisted it down and pushed her against the two other guys and ran.

“Get her!” The hero yelled. I needed a new nickname for him, what kind of hero will try to kidnap a person? Anyways it was only a matter of time before they caught me. I heard the quick footsteps catching up. It was over for me. They were going to take me in. Where? I don’t know! From what the British Bitch said I was going to be the life of the party. I mean that is great and all, but I wasn’t into the type of parties they were throwing.

“Luna!” A familiar voice yelled. I quickly looked to the left, and for the first time in a while I sighed in relief to see Wigs. He was on his new bike: A custom built one for two people. He’d been working on it in his spare time during the past few weeks. He stopped in front of me.

“We have to go, now!” I panted and looked behind me. Damn. They were close.

“Well, hello to you too!” Wigs replied indignantly.

“I will give you your proper hello once I get away from them,” I yelled and pointed towards the three that were gaining with each second I spent talking to him.

“Okay, I will take you up on that offer. Hop on.”

“Best idea you ever had.” I muttered as I jumped onto the seat behind him and held on. Wigs pedaled faster than anyone I’d ever seen before, maybe because he was scared out of his damn mind. I looked back to see if we were being followed. I saw no one, and the knot had untied itself in my stomach.

“Please stop!” I found myself saying after a few moments. Wigs did me the favor and stopped.

“You okay?” He asked as I dismounted the bike. I didn’t answer. I just stood staring at the ground. What just happened? Why was all this happening to me? Who were these people?

“Luna, you’re shaking!” Wigs pointed out.

“I’m just so excited to see you,” I said. I actually was, but my tone wasn’t grateful. Too much had happened to me to even concentrate on civilities. I was overwhelmed. And now I felt myself shaking. It wasn’t cold out, so I don’t know what it was. Wigs put his hand on my shoulder, and I didn’t make him remove it. I needed someone right now. All of a sudden I found myself embracing him and crying at the same time. That took him by surprise. It took me

by surprise, too! I don't break down like this not in this tough world where if you let your guard down it will give you a swift kick in the ass.

"Grab my ass and I will kick yours," I mumbled as he put his arms around me.

"Luna, even I can use discretion on that," He said smiling. I smiled too.

"Glad you're learning." It was good to have people that in our time of need would back you up.

"Listen, Luna, you can stay at my place. Don't worry I will grab the couch, and you can sleep in my room," Wigs offered. I nodded my head. I was too traumatized to walk home, especially with those psychos out to get me.

We arrived at Wigs place ten minutes later, and I was in shock: It was actually livable!

"Wow, I got to say it, I was thinking 'junk yard'. You are full of surprises, aren't ya? Please tell me you have piles of erotica somewhere so that I don't have to revise my judgment of you."

"When I ran into you I was leaving the strip joint. That ten dollars you gave me was well spent." He winked.

"Money well deposited into a lady's g-string. Appreciate that you continued to let me know you are a pervert. Is there such a thing as a hero pervert? Or, is it perverted hero?"

"You know...that is a good idea. By day helping the helpless, by night helping the strippers by throwing dollar bills their way."

"Such a humanitarian you are." I smiled. Wigs actually made me feel better.

"The bedroom is over there, and the bathroom over there." Wigs gestured.

"Thank you," I said sincerely. "Listen, if you would not tell anyone I would appreciate it." You know I have a bad ass rep to up-hold." Today was one of the lowest days of my life.

"Hey, I will let you beat my ass on Monday," Wigs replied.

"You probably will deserve it by then." I winked before making my way to his room. I was exhausted. I plopped myself on to the bed and it moved. It was a waterbed. Leave it to captain pervo to have a waterbed. The movement of the bed actually put me at peace, and before I knew it I was zoning out...

I awoke to the sound of a TV blasting. I got up. I wasn't wet anymore from the previous night's drenching. Of course my hair was a mess. I had my days where I was such a girl. Wigs was watching a big screen TV that I hadn't noticed the previous night.

“How in the hell did your broke ass afford that,” I yawned.

“Luna, you are asking the wrong question,” Wigs responded.

“I’m truly sorry. Where in the hell did your broke ass steal it from?” Some of the retail stores were starting to carry high definition TV’s again, along with providing service for programming. Most of the programs were fairly old since companies were still trying to come up with new things. The newer shows were sporting events.

“I like to say I found it,” Wigs stated matter-of-factly.

“You know what? That is a politically correct way to say it,” I commented, but I had to get going. I needed to get home, and think stuff through. If this trend kept up six people were going to try to attack me tonight.

“I gotta bounce,” I said. Wigs got up from his couch and approached me.

“Thank you. You really came through for me, and I will not forget that. But tell anyone and I will kick your ass.” I smiled at him and flicked his forehead.

“Now that’s the Luna I have grown to fear,” Wigs replied. “I will see you at work tomorrow.”

“Yeah, can’t wait to see you in that environment,” I smirked before pausing to look at Wigs. The man had basically saved me; I embraced him once more. “Thank you,” I muttered, I let go and left.

It was bright, warm and sunny. The best part of this day was that there was no one trying to kidnap me, or cause me physical harm. I didn’t think anyone would try to do anything to me now: too many witnesses. I arrived at my apartment around an hour later, and guess what? I was right. It only did take a day for Dee to get over Zack. I walked into a shag fest on my couch! I was going to need a miracle to make it what it once was.

“Wow! ‘The One’ for today!” I squealed as I shielded my eyes, as they both fell on the floor.

“Luna!” Dee squealed in surprise. “I didn’t know you were coming back...so early. You know, I thought you were on a booty call.”

“You haven’t trained me yet, so how would I?!” I snapped back. That couch was my baby. I loved the soft, supple leather but it was deflowered now. “How about you and lover boy take it into your room.”

“Hi” A nude man stood in front of me.

“You will be saying bye to ya little pal if you don’t scam!”

“Luna! That is so rude!”

“Babe, don’t worry,” The man said as he stretched his still naked self. Freaking gross!

“Rude is deflowering my couch! To repeat myself, now scam,” I demanded. They both went into Dee’s bedroom. My poor couch! But, I had other things to worry about, like what the hell was I going to do? There were too many things going on in my life right now, and none of them good. The possibility that those goons would be waiting for another shot at me in that alleyway is rather high, so I needed Mr. Wonderful. Oh, and that British Bitch annoyed me. What was I going to do? Come to think of it that stupid question annoyed me too! Maybe if I just pretended that nothing happened, maybe it would come true? I may just try that tomorrow. But, for now I wasn’t going to venture outside anymore today. Enough with living dangerously for now. I was going to take a nice shower, and then lay in bed with a good book. I usually collected books. People didn’t cherish books like they once had, but I did. They took me away from my problems. Let me travel to distant lands or times. And, during this time of my life I needed to travel cheap and far away from this place.

I awoke to my alarm clock the next morning. I guess I was so tired that I fell asleep with the book I was reading across my chest. I rubbed my eyes to get the groggy feeling off my face. I grimaced as I remembered that there could be naked trouble in the living room.

“Any naked parties going on out there?” I yelled in the direction of the living room.

“No, Jon left,” Dee responded. Good, I got up, made my way into the kitchen, and made myself some coffee.

“So, you got a good look at Jon, huh?” She giggled.

“No, I got a good look at you! How do you lug those things around? I have trouble with mine and they are the same size, and you let them roam free every night.” It was hard to contain my buddies, but they were holstered away more than Dee’s who had them on display every night, I’m not even exaggerating on that.

“Don’t worry they can hold their own,” Dee said shaking them in my direction. “Maybe I can teach you.”

“That is one training lesson I will not sign up for. Trust me. I gotta go. My wonderful job of delivering mail to the wonderful douches of the world awaits.” I did my morning routine:

shower, dress, and out the door. Today was going to be the day where no one will be chasing me.

I got in right under the gun, a minute early. So for now I didn't have to hear our fearless leader yelling. I got to my locker, and put my apple in. Apple a day keeps the doctor away. Am I kidding? I can't afford a doctor anyways.

"Hey girl!" I turned around at the greeting and saw Shy.

"Hey, how was your weekend?" I asked embracing her.

"Good, and yours," She asked. How do I edit my weekend? Oh, I knew how.

"Wonderful!" I said exaggerating. Wonderfully horrible, I know it didn't make sense, but Shy seemed not to notice my lie. Nor did she press for details. I searched for Wigs, but he wasn't here.

"Hey, Shy, is Wigs in the bathroom?" I asked as she got her packages ready to go.

"No, he didn't show up today."

"He called out?" I was concerned now.

"No, a no show today," Shy replied.

"Damn, Billy is gonna have a field day with this," I muttered.

"Billy is going to have a field day with what? Oh, your bum of a friend not showing up to work? Oh, I won't have a field day with him. He would have to be employed here for me to have a field day with him," Billy grumbled darkly, as I quickly spun around to face him.

"Billy, come on now. We can't be on time all the time or we would miss your motivational speeches," I implored trying to stall to see if Wigs actually made it in late.

"If you don't watch it you will have a speech about being fired. I think it is my best speech," Billy replied harshly.

"I'm pretty sure I have heard it, and I must say: not your best stuff, but nice try. Listen, I will go pick Wigs up. He probably had a flat or something," I offered the excuse weakly. Wigs needed this job, and he saved my life. This was the least I could do.

"Well, since you are heading over there, these packages have to head down over to that part of town. Make sure he is back here by noon! Or, you both will be receiving my two word speech," Billy practically growled at me.

"That's my least favorite of all your speeches. Tell you what... write a new one. I'd love to hear it. Maybe one with the word 'raise' in it." I said sarcastically. Billy was a douche

sometimes but he did give people plenty of chances. I should have been fired ten times by now. I took the packages and stuffed them into my backpack and went outside.

“Hey girl, why are you so concerned with Wigs? You know he has done this before.” Shy looked confused.

“Come on, girl, if a pervo like that isn’t around to keep us on our toes who will?” I replied.

“I will go with you. I’m gonna whoop his ass if he is just watching TV.” Shy mounted her bike and followed me.

I didn’t have a good feeling about this. Something happened to him. They probably followed him, or recognized him, and did something to him. It was my fault if anything happened to him.

We got to his apartment complex and let ourselves in. When I got to the door it was locked. I knocked on the door, and nothing. I knocked a second time, and nothing. A girl came out of her apartment and stared at us.

“Andrew hasn’t been back to his apartment since yesterday. He left around mid-afternoon and didn’t come back.” Her big glasses, pointed nose short hair gave the impression of looking like a rodent.

“Well, aren’t you the nosey one?” Shy commented.

“The information I’m giving you is helping you out, isn’t it? Or, you would just stand there looking like fools.” The girl remarked with a snotty tone. Shy was about to attack, but I stopped her.

“Operation whoop ass will have to wait,” I said standing in front of Shy preventing her to pounce on the queen of the rats. I turned back to rodent girl, “You being nosey has benefited us, but, lets see how good you really are...do you know where he went yesterday?”

“No, I don’t get into his business like that.” She turned to go back into her apartment. Then turned back. “He wore no coat, and didn’t bring his bike. I don’t think he intended to be gone long.”

“Wow, good way to come through in the clutch. As you can see my friend is still in attack mode.” I said grabbing Shy’s arm to drag her out of there, but not before she growled at rodent girl who quickly went back into her apartment. I delivered my packages just to make sure I didn’t hear the stupid two word speech, and then tried to figure how to locate Wigs.

Me and Shy sat down for lunch at a sandwich shop to see if we could put our heads together, but nothing came to mind. Well, nothing that I could share with her. I had to go back to the alleyway and confront those wonderful people that tried to kidnap me. I was risking my life, for someone that had done the same for me. I had no choice; tonight I was going to come face to face again with the British Bitch...

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Searching for Trouble

Luna's Apartment:

It was a disastrous day for me. I got back to work around two in the afternoon and Billy ripped into me when I didn't show up with Wigs. Wigs better be in trouble or I was going to whoop his ass. I looked out the window sitting on the floor for now since my couch was violated the night before. I was nervous. I was going back to the scene where I found trouble, and today I was looking for it. What happens if they hurt Wigs? So many freaking questions and no answers to them. I have no clue how this was going to end up. I didn't even know if Mr. Wonderful was going to show up to bail me out. That is a risk I am willing to take, and I hope it is well worth it.

Nightfall hit, and I was ready to go. I had paced around my apartment waiting for it to come, and now it was here. I left my apartment around ten at night. Dee asked where I was going and I told her she had inspired me to try her booty call technique. She gave me a thumbs up, and I threw her one thumb up and then left.

I basically ran to that alleyway, and made it there in half an hour. For some odd reason I wasn't tired or breathing hard when I arrived. And come to think of it I hadn't stopped once to catch my breath. I don't run much, but even the well trained athletes would be out of breath after a 30 minute hard run. When I made my way into the alleyway my stomach knotted up again, oh how I love that feeling. I wanted Mr. Wonderful to show himself, I wanted answers and I wanted to make him beat the crap out of the three that are stalking me so that I would get my answers.

"So, lets get this show on the road. Give me more information." I spoke to the outline of his shadow in the corner of the alleyway.

“You know I missed you so much yesterday. You stood me up,” Mr. Wonderful responded.

“I would have missed a lot more if those goons kidnapped me. You know for being a hero you really suck at it,” I retorted.

“That’s not a nice thing to say to a man that saved your life a few days ago. You keep this up, and you might hurt my feelings.”

“Damn, I still haven’t accomplished that? I have to work harder then. They took him, my friend! I know they did. They wanted me and they got a look at him the other night. I need to save him, or let me rephrase this, I need you to save him.”

“This is war: there will always be casualties.”

“Not on my watch!” No one I knew was getting hurt.

“You do not know how to control your power, nor do you have the training to use it.”

“What power?!” I yelled.

“Oh, the power that we are seeking.” A British accent came from behind me.

“Oh, the British Bitch is back. Can I just call you BB for short?” I wanted to take this lady down.

“How about you come with us-no-hassle- and you can see your friend again?”

“How about your blonde ass shows me Wigs, and maybe I will consider on making a deal with you.” I retaliated and moved into my defensive stance.

“We don’t need to do anything, but since we are supposed to bring you back in one piece I will honor that request.” She replied and whistled softly.

From where I stood I heard a door open two people stepped out and a door closed gently. A few short moments passed but it seemed to take forever. Then the ‘hero’ now the ‘douche’ from the other night came into the alleyway walking with Wigs. I sensed he was injured, but how injured he was I couldn’t tell. The man let him go and Wigs fell to the ground.

“Good job in not killing him Nikko.” The British Bitch commented as she looked down at Wigs.

“Finally! I can put a name with your face.” I exclaimed, “but I like douche a whole lot better.”

“Now before we take you in, a question. Who were you talking to?”

“No one. I just love this alleyway. Memories, you know? Of me and guys just having our way with each other,” I replied.

“How about you tell us the truth? I saw how a kid just was flung out of this alleyway like yesterdays trash,” Nikko demanded.

“So, are you telling me that me being a whore isn’t believable? More mini skirts? Maybe lower cut shirts?” Why I was trying to stall, I’m not certain. Hopes of Mr. Wonderful saving me had diminished.

Nikko went over to Wigs and kicked him in the stomach, “Are you gonna start speaking or am I going to start kicking?”

“You know, if he hadn’t saved me the other day I would have said start kicking away, because normally he deserves it. However, I have grown fond of him. So there is only one thing to do.”

“Which is?” The British lady asked.

“Kick your ass, of course,” I replied rolling my eyes mockingly. At that time I saw the third guy from the other night walking into this alleyway. “Now we have enough for a party! Drinks on me! But Wigs gets first drink.”

“Foolish girl, I’m done waiting around. Are you coming with me quietly, or do you want a bullet in your friend?” The British Bitch removed a gun from her belt holster, and aimed.

“You know...with you ladies there is always an ultimatum.” Mr. Wonderful’s voice pierced the silence, and made B.B. jump.

“Finally! I thought you were going to bail like last time! And not all women are like that. Just this bitch.” I gestured to the blonde who was now pointing her gun at me.

“Who are you?!” She demanded of Mr. Wonderful.

“Just a bum trying to get some sleep in his house until all this crazy crap started happening. You are technically trespassing,” Mr. Wonderful explained. He evened the odds considerably though I wasn’t much of a fighter. When the other two goons pulled their weapons I figured the odds went down a whole lot.

“Come on guys! How about we talk about this over a cup of that crappy coffee I mentioned the other night.” I replied. I am not a big fan of guns.

“Let us take the girl and you can have the roomy alleyway all to yourself,” Nikko replied.

“I don’t think I can do that. She is doing community service by stopping by and feeding me every so often.”

“Yea and I’m telling you it is really community service helping this guy out.” I replied.
“Can you just kick their ass so I can take Wigs home?” I said quickly, this bunch seemed to be trigger happy.

“Luna...Luna...Luna always wanting things done your way...even with guns pointing at you.” Mr. Wonderful did have a point.

“So, you think you can take down three armed soldiers?” British Bitch challenged. I guess I was wrong about Nikko being the leader. This lady was showing that she had bigger balls than him.

“Oh, I bet I can take all three of you down before you get one shot off.” Mr. Wonderful replied.

“I would love to see you try,” Nikko replied. As quick as he said that Mr. Wonderful rushed towards the British lady, and took her gun out of her hands. This was done in a blur, but I still saw that Mr. Wonderful was dressed in all black, and hooded up, so I really couldn’t see what he looked like. In a blink of an eye he disarmed Nikko. The third guy who I hadn’t even heard speak just stood in shock as Mr. Wonderful quickly moved his way towards him and disarmed him. This guy moved fast, and he was as fast as he was strong. I guess he did have enhanced abilities, and then he broke up my thoughts.

“Too bad we didn’t bet on that.” He said.

“How did you do that?” The British Bitch was confused, and I was enjoying it.

“Now that is a personal question. Miss...? What do you call her, Luna?”

“My name is Natalia if you must know,” She snapped.

“I’m still calling you British Bitch...it fits you so well.” I smirked.

“I want to know how you pulled that off?” the British Bitch questioned once she regained her composure. She didn’t seem to be threatened by Mr. Wonderful, but why?

“You don’t seem surprised. Unless that turned you on?” Mr. Wonderful said.

“How in the hell would you think she would consider you? I wouldn’t even consider you...I haven’t seen you yet, and I have also been told I pick some ugly ass people.” I said. Wigs coughed.

“How about you guys save me, and talk about who wants who later?” Wigs muttered from the ground.

“You are not taking the girl anywhere. I advise you to turn around and leave before she whoops your ass.”

“Yeah...hold it! What?” I stammered. This guy was throwing me into a fight. Yeah I’m a bad ass but I don’t know how to really fight. Kick a guys crotch, and punch a diva’s face is all I really knew.

“I’m going to see how you handle yourself against these delightful people.” Mr. Wonderful explained.

“You know it is official. You are annoying the crap out of me. I am not the key...” Right in the middle of my rant one of the guys grabbed me. “Do you really want to piss me off? I’m pretty sure that it isn’t a wise idea.” At that moment a burst of energy ran through my body and I was flipping the guy into the wall. Problem was that in his panic he had gripped my arm tighter before letting go. Good thing my parka was roomy and no damage was done. “Told ya not to piss me off.”

The British Bitch moved in on me and the douche was behind her. “I understand I pissed you guys off, but that is what I do.” All of a sudden Wigs grabbed the British Bitch by her leg, she quickly put a knee to his face, “Ouch, Wigs, you were never a ladies man.” I replied as I was ready to get my karate stance on. The only reason how I knew what one looked like is I saw a karate movie on a friends TV. Come to think of it there was a lot of yelling and almost no fighting at all, so I would try to scare them off, “Waaaaaaaaaaaaaa”

“That’s all you have? Maybe I should reconsider the whole key thing,” Mr. Wonderful said.

“How about you reconsider whooping their ass?”

“Fine, since you asked so nicely,” He retorted. Both of them started to rethink their steps. As easily as Mr. Wonderful disarmed them, was how easy he would beat on them. Mr. Wonderful made his way towards them. They both moved back. The guy I’d flipped into the wall, had smashed his head against it, was coming around.

“James, lets go. We will fight this another day. At least now we have confirmation she is the one we need,” The British Bitch said.

“It is always good to be wanted!” I responded.

“Big talk for a girl that has her chaperone with her,” She remarked.

“You won’t be saying the same thing when you try removing my foot from your ass!” I stepped towards her without thinking. Mr. wonderful held me back. This was great for dramatic effect.

“We will be meeting again...” She responded.

“I hope so! I’m missing you already.” I waved as they helped the man James up and walked out the alleyway. I heard them getting into their car and I heard them peel rubber.

“You know what, Luna? I’m not ever going to touch your ass again if this is what’s going to happen.” Wigs mumbled then spit out blood and sat up against the wall.

“I told you, but you don’t ever want to listen.” I knelt down next to him, “How are you feeling?”

“Like I got my ass whooped.”

“Don’t worry you don’t look any better,” I replied. “We have to get you to a hospital” He looked horrible and it was because of me. And for what? I had to face it: something bigger than I wanted to admit was going on.

“You are not too bright. If you take him to the hospital they will have easier access to you and him. Yes, you heard them leave, but do you honestly think they will give up? You bring him to a hospital they will know.”

“You know for the first time in these many days you have been helpful, but what do you suggest, genius?” He was annoying me again. Honestly, it didn’t take much these days since my ass is ducking under cover every few hours.

“Well, I have no idea...”

“I take the genius comment back,” I replied.

“Luna...” Wigs coughed up more blood.

“That is healthy,” I replied.

“I can make it to my apartment.” He coughed again, but this time he didn’t spit blood. Thank goodness. Yeah I’m a girl, and I do have girl like traits, so sue me.

“Hold on...” Mr. Wonderful extend his long arm and grabbed Wigs left arm. His body was still consumed by darkness “Oh crap...”

“You know most of the time ‘Oh crap’ means something bad, but I’m going to take the optimistic route here, and say you have trouble expressing wonderful news,” I replied trying to hope for the best.

“Optimistic thinking isn’t going to help him...they have injected him with the serum...”

-5-

Race Against: Time Part I

“What do you mean by that!” I questioned anxiously. He had to be mistaken.

“Well, I don’t know how else to break it down to you: He was injected with the serum.”

“How can you be so sure?” I quickly surveyed the exposed parts of Wigs’ body. I saw no marks other than from the pounding he’d taken. “And no long ass explanations, please, just get to the point.” I was so anxious I felt the chunks churning in my gut.

“The injection point is right there.” Mr. Wonderful still didn’t venture out into the open; he let go of Wigs arm and just pointed at the insertion point.

“Luna, they did inject me with something. I don’t know what, but it was a few hours ago,” Wigs quietly volunteered this troubling information. I looked at his arm, and there was a small mark right in the crook of his elbow. Just great. Like I didn’t have anything else to worry about. Now Wigs’ life was on the clock, and I couldn’t do anything about it. Could I?

“How did you see that?”

“Luna, Luna, Luna...you never listen, do you?” I have told you that I have abilities that you also possess.”

“You know what. I’m going to charge you every time you say my name, since you said it like 100 times since I have met you. I just need answers right now, and I need them like now! The games have stopped once a friend is in danger. No more speaking in cryptic riddles.”

“You consider me a friend? Luna, I knew you always cared.” Wigs smiled.

“I’m auditioning for new ones, so don’t press your luck.” I did not take my eyes off the dark figure in the corner as I spoke. “Come out of the damn corner and let me see what you look like!”

“You know yelling isn’t the polite way of asking. Just say please.”

“Oh you don’t think so?” I piled my hair into a bun. “I’m gonna drag you out here myself.”

“Luna, why are you so worked up? I’m alright.” Wigs stated calmly as he began to make his way to his feet.

“Yes, Luna, Wigs is okay.” Mr. Wonderful said. I made my way towards the corner and Mr. Wonderful quickly shifted into the other corner. “Oh that is getting old!”

“I will show myself to you when I’m good and ready.”

“I’m pretty sure that tonight is good of a night as any. Just a thought.” I replied.

“In due time, Luna. You will know who I am.”

“Fine! Can I get a free shot at your face when that happens? And what about Wigs! I’m not going to let him die.”

“Violence does not solve anything Luna, but if you can get a shot in, well then power to you. As for Wigs he will be okay for the time being. He has a few days, even a week or so, before we’d need to be anxious.”

“The bright side doesn’t sound so bright,” I commented and rolled my eyes. “You may want to work on your bad news approach.” A co-worker and a friend of mine was dying, but I had no idea how to handle it.

“I will have to research on how best to proceed. If he was just a random person I would have let them die.”

“What a humanitarian your are,” I retorted.

“Hold on a minute! When you say die, do you mean like...” Wigs asked as he moved his thumb from one end to his neck towards the other.

“No, the other death, Wigs.” His face got paler than usual. “It’s okay. Me and Mr. Wonderful will fix this some how.” I turned back to my new forced ally. “Well? How about this? You give me some good news?”

“Well, I’m gonna give you a double whammy here...”

“I knew you had it in you...” I said sarcastically.

“Well, he has around a week to two weeks to live with things as they are. They actually made progress on perfecting the serum. They have found a way to block it from destroying the immune system. At least, immediately destroying it. In the mean time I will take a blood sample of your friend here, so I can study it.”

“So, your going to use him like a lab rat? I mean, he is a bit of a rodent but not a lab rat.” I winked at Wigs to reassure him everything will be alright.

“Thanks, Luna, I always knew I could depend on you to insult me during my time of need.”

“I’m the best friend you will ever have during a time like this.” I smirked.

“Luna, here.” Mr. Wonderful handed me a syringe that looked like it could hold blood.

“Why can’t you do this. You are hooded up and covered head to toe like a damn ninja I’m not going to see what you look like.” I still took the syringe and moved towards Wigs.

“Dramatic effect.” Mr. Wonderful said, I could sense him smirking. I rolled my eyes and inserted the needle into Wigs skin, and saw the syringe fill with blood.

“If this was a different circumstance I would enjoy this a little more...” I replied.

“Well, give it to me.” Wigs quickly took the syringe while it was still filling up with blood, from my hand.

“Party pooper.” I said playfully, still trying to show that everything was going to be okay. He handed it to me, and I hesitated to hand it to Mr. Wonderful.

“Thank you, I will examine the blood sample and hopefully we can find some answers.”

“While you try to find an answer, we will try to go back to the easy life,” I replied.

“You will know when I have found something.”

“How? You going to send up a smoke signal? Don’t you think that will draw my new fan club to me?” I asked tossing my hair like a diva.

“I know that you want to hold on to your only fans, but I will be careful. Just give me a few days, and I will get back to you.”

“Okay, when do you think that will be?” No answer. “Hello?” No answer. I’m going to put a damn bell on that guy.

“What a charmer,” Wigs observed as he stood up.

“You got him beat in that department trust me,” I replied.

“What’s going to happen to me? That guy was freaking me out with the whole I’m going to die deal,” Wigs voice was tinged with a sense of dread as he spoke. He believed it. After just only meeting Mr. Wonderful he believed every word that came out of his mouth...and who would blame him? He’d been kidnapped, beaten by a bunch of thugs and injected with a foreign substance.

“Don’t worry. We will figure it out. In the mean time we will have to come up with an excuse for our fearless leader, and, uh keep an eye on you. Can you walk?”

“I think I would need you to hold me,” Wigs replied. I saw the smirk on his face. The same old Wigs. It was good to see during this time.

“I’m going to give you some tough love, and make you walk off the ass whooping that they gave you...oh, how did they kidnap you?” This was a question I almost forgot in all of the commotion.

“They stalked me out at the strip club the next night, and then after that everything was a blur,” Wigs explained.

“I told you going to those strip clubs for t&a sessions would get you into trouble,” I mock-scolded him. I was trying to distract him from the most obvious thing on both our minds: if he was going to die or not.

“You think I’m gonna croak?”

“You will be fine as long as you don’t go to any more strip clubs for a while. Let’s get you home. We will figure something out. You are not going to die on my damn watch. What would Ginger, Amber and Lacey do without your dollar bills saving their g-strings.”

“You know what you are right!” Wigs laughed. He was in much better spirits than I would’ve expected.

I walked Wigs to his house. My nerves were unsettled, and for some odd reason I sensed Mr. Wonderful watching us. Probably hidden in the shadows. My thoughts took me to everything that happened in the past few days. What was going on? Questions that have no answers really annoy me. Bigger question was this: do I really want to find out what was going on? I had a feeling that answer would lead me down a path with a lot more questions.

Once we got to his apartment it took a few seconds to open his door; enough of a delay for rat face to open her apartment door.

“Thanks for your help in finding Wigs. You are a real humanitarian. I really hope you aren’t thinking there was a reward involved.”

“Are you okay, Andrew?”

“He’s fine,” I said pushing Wigs through the door before he could say anything. I didn’t trust Ms. Nosey Rat. We entered his apartment but I refused to take the water bed. I told him I would sleep on the couch due to the circumstances, and I was small enough to sleep comfortably. Plus, there was a big ass TV in the living room, I could watch it until I fell asleep. Why wouldn’t I want to sleep out here? I wasn’t going to venture home tonight, not after all that had happened tonight. This was the safest place, well, at least I hoped it was...

I awoke drenched in another cold sweat. Another nightmare. Joy. Something was following me again, but I couldn't tell what. I mean, why would it right? I noticed I'd been covered with an ugly yellowish blanket. Had Wigs put it on me while I was sleeping? If Wigs wasn't a douche half the time he would be a real catch, I guess. I shivered, so I wrapped the blanket around my shoulders. I sat up and just stared at the wall. I wanted to get away...run away from my problems, but that is how cowards handle their issues. I was small but I wasn't a coward.

"You were having a nightmare." A voice came from the window. I quickly turned my head to my right. It was Mr. Wonderful.

"Not going to lie to you, but you are not the first thing I wanna see or hear when I first wake up," I stated. Talking to him reminded me what type of mess I was in.

"Now, Luna, you know what to say to hurt a man," Mr. Wonderful responded, but there was a sense of amusement in his voice.

"Man? I've seen no proof of that..."

"What's going on out here?" Wigs interrupted as he came in limping into the room. I looked towards the window, but Mr. Wonderful was gone.

"Nothing you know how I love talking to myself." I didn't want Wigs to worry about Mr. Wonderful dropping in for visits. "By the way thanks for the blanket." I still had it wrapped around me.

"I didn't give you that blanket..."

"Oh, I must have taken it myself," I lied quickly. I realized that it had been Mr. Wonderful who covered me up.

"We have a long day later today. How in the world is Billy going to believe that I was kidnapped by thugs and that I was drugged?"

"Well if you didn't look like that every day of your life you could pull it off," I pointed out.

"Good point there... I guess I should take the hint and at least wear nice clothes from time to time."

"Or maybe bath once and a while. You would be surprised how much that would work." I could see Wigs smile through the semi-darkness. Me and Wigs were now linked to what ever was happening, and in order to get through it we had to have each others back.

“So, how are we going to play this? I mean, we can’t exactly tell everyone what happened or that I’m gonna croak,” Wigs groaned as he sat next to me. Immediately I felt the warmth coming off him.

“Damn, you’re hot!” I exclaimed, and I knew what was coming.

“Well, Luna, I’m glad you finally realize it. Better late than never, I always say.”

“How about I help you move along with your death sentence,” I retorted. Heat was radiating from his body. I touched his arm, and I felt as if I’d been scorched.

“Your body temperature is through the roof.”

“It’s cause I’m so hot! I also feel fine. All the aches and pains I had from the ass whooping are gone...”

“It’s the serum...”

“What do you mean...”

“I will tell you tomorrow or later today depending on what time it is. I can’t tell you now cause you will cause a damn ruckus, and I’m sure rat face would love that...”

“Luna...Luna...Luna...” I woke to hearing my name playing in harmony. I opened my eyes to see Wigs dancing along with his rendition of how my name would sound in song.

“Well, not exactly the way I wanted to be woken up by a man, but at least you are in tune,” I commented as I rubbed my eyes to get the morning daze out. All of a sudden Wigs jumped from the back of the couch and landed right next to me.

“I feel so freaking amazing. Let’s go to work!”

“Wow, the is the first thing you wanna do when you feel so amazing? You sure you aren’t still sick?”

“I feel great,” Wigs exclaimed. This broke my heart. I gave him a smile, but the reality was if we didn’t do something quick he was going to die. I really wanted to know what Mr. Wonderful was planning.

“Luna...Luna...Luna.” Wigs repeated again in a musical tone and did a little shimmy this time. I smiled. I guess the news that he was going to die didn’t phase him much.

“If I didn’t know any better I would have thought I had done nasty things with you,” I stated.

“Oh don’t take offense to this, but I feel even better than if I had piece of action.” Wigs smirked.

“That’s because you don’t know what you’re missing!” I smiled back at him. Hold it...was I flirting with him. Stop it, I scolded myself. “Go take a cold ass shower!” I commanded.

“I did already, and I ate breakfast, and made you an omelet. Don’t ask me how I managed to get cheese and eggs in this wonderful economic time. Cause I think it will even make you squirm.” Wigs replied. I was taken back, no one made me breakfast before. I mean Dee did make me a crappy cup of coffee from time to time, but that was after she screwed up on something. You would think someone would make me a better cup of coffee if they were trying to get back on my good side?

“Wow! It almost feels like we did do something last night,” I remarked. Wigs smirked.

“Hurry up so that we can head to work. I want to show Billy who’s boss!” Wigs was practically bursting, but it was what he said that caught my attention. What did he mean by that? So, I asked him: “What did your bald ass mean by that?”

“I’m going to put him in his place! You know he will try to fire me today since I didn’t show up yesterday. I’m just so full of energy today I feel like I can do anything!”

“Calm down, there, don’t get ahead of yourself. We have to keep an eye on you. You being fired is the least of your problems. I’m pretty sure you dying is more significant.”

“Luna, how the hell is that possible? I feel so amazing. Your pal was wrong.” Wigs sounded so certain. I wanted to believe him. Some reason I still knew, that he only had a week maybe a little more or less unless if a miracle would occur. I went over to the kitchen counter where the omelet awaited me. I sat on a stool and picked up a fork that was next to the plate. I shoved a piece of omelet into my mouth and then all of a sudden I felt my taste buds and the food having a fight. Wigs obviously didn’t know how to cook. I swallowed it, and I knew the war in my mouth was going to happen in my stomach.

“So? Is it a culinary miracle?”

“More, like a culinary nightmare. I think you need to make better use of your new found energy,” I commented as I looked at my watch. I’d started wearing one since I started to have all this drama in my life. It was 7:30, so I still had time to get home, get a new set of clothes on and then back to work. I know I’m going to stink, but I had to get under Billy’s good side. On second thought...forget going home. I needed to be early. Wigs needed to fly way below the radar. “Wigs, I need you to be on your best behavior.” I stood up from the stool and rubbed his face like a three year old.

“Why! Look what I can do!” Wigs quickly scooped me up and lifted me up with one arm. Yes, this was weird. I’m curvy person not fat. But it still took a lot to lift a human up with one arm. I smacked him on his head, and he placed me down.

“Control yourself, boy!” I scolded him. “Stay under the radar and let me speak to Billy, you just shut your hole.” If I could get Billy to allow Wigs off the entire week it would be helpful, but I wasn’t going to hold my breath. “Lets go! You have to put yourself into kiss ass mode!” I knew it was going to take more than that to get Billy to hire or not fire Wigs. Billy was an understanding douche. However if Wigs walked in feeling like a million bucks with no scratches or bruises there would be no way of reasoning with him.

We arrived at work half an hour early. Of course no one in their right mind was there yet because they couldn’t stand their job. The upside was that begging wasn’t too bad, and there were no witnesses.

“What! I should fire you just for proposing that idea to me!” Billy yelled at me...as Wigs stood beside me and smirked. He was so getting his ass handed to him later. “Now Billy I know you have a heart in that chest of yours, maybe a small black one, but I know it is in there.” Horrible choice of words.

“And how is that supposed to be kissing my ass again?” He sounded gruff, but I knew he was softening.

“Listen here...” Wigs started to speak: It was going to be nonsense so I kicked him in his groin, and he hunched over. Billy smiled at this.

“I will keep an eye on him.”

“And who is going to keep an eye on your lazy behind?” Billy countered, but I’d won. However, I needed him to think he won.

“Ok, I will break it down like this oh fearless leader. Give him a probation period. If he doesn’t perform then you can get rid of me and him. Deal?” I proposed. I could hear the gears grinding in Billy’s head. Then his eyes lit up like he saw a stripper when the door at the entrance chimed.

“Ok, he has a month to shape up. Since he is on probation, and I’m getting two for one deal, you are on probation too, missy. If you fail to meet my expectations you are gone! Out of here. Fired!” Billy sounded far too jubilant.

“Pretty sure that I got the gist of it,” I responded. It was then that I saw who’d helped Billy’s mood improve. A new person was approaching us. He was around six foot, brown hair, brown eyes. Someone that Dee would bring home for the night, and if lame in the sack, ditch him like a bad habit.

“Mr. Nelson, I’m ready for my first day on the job,” The man smiled and actually sounded eager. I really couldn’t tell his age. He had to be around 23-30 I was horrible at guessing ages. He acknowledged me for the first time and showed me his pearly whites. Wow, didn’t know teeth could be that white. I pride myself in good dental hygiene, well besides today. This guy had to spend a minute on each tooth.

“Hi my name…” the man extended his arm.

“Is I don’t really care,” I snapped.

“Now, Luna, is that a way to treat a new co-worker? One who could possibly be your replacement?” Billy couldn’t stop smiling. “He even calls me by my last time. Oh, this kid is going places.”

“Only place he’s going is up your ass,” I stated. “Make sure you use lubricant…”

“Probation must I remind you?” Billy interrupted.

“Must I remind you I’m not on the clock?” I smirked and pulled Wigs over to the locker area. “You will behave. My ass is on the line!”

“Oh, and what a nice looking ass it is.” Wigs responded his perverted response. Well, he wasn’t letting last night get to him.

“Yeah, and if you get me canned your ass is grass.”

“Okay, okay, I will try and keep under the radar, but I feel like I can do anything.”

“So, I guess I don’t have to explain what is going on with your body…”

“Not unless you wanna tell me what is going on with yours?” This comment earned him a shove, and he actually slid a few feet back. He looked surprised.

“Hold on a sec, are you…” And as if reading his mind I shook my head.

“Your just light.” I retorted. I don’t know what is going on, so I didn’t want Wigs to jump to conclusions. Thankfully Shy arrived, and I had an excuse to switch gears.

“Remember PROBATION!” Billy said as me, Wigs, and Shy all headed out to make runs.

“What is that all about?” Shy raised her eyebrows and looked at me and Wigs.

“I had to stick my neck out for his ass.” I said as I smacked Wigs on the back of the head.

“Luna, I was ready to give the man a piece of my mind.”

“That is the problem right there! You don’t have one to give him,” Shy said. I just smiled. Then out of nowhere it hit me: the knot in my stomach. I nearly doubled over.

“Damn.” I tried to cover it up with a cough but was unsuccessful.

“What happened, girl?” Shy asked.

“Uh, nothing. I forgot one of the packages on the dispatch desk. You go. Me and Wigs will catch up. He has to stay with me as part of the probation.”

“Girl, I can wait, no problem,” Shy offered.

“Yeah, she can wait.” Wigs responded, knowing full well I didn’t want Shy around us because I didn’t know what was going to happen.

“Plus, I have to go to the bathroom. I had a lot to drink this morning.” She gave me a what in the world is wrong with you look.

“Okay, girl, you can just say you don’t want to ride with me,” Shy sounded hurt as she left. I felt bad, but this was to protect her. Wigs didn’t know how this was going to end up, and he apparently didn’t care.

“What is wrong with you?” I was angry. I was not going to have Shy caught up in this. I shoved Wigs again, and he fell off his bike onto the ground, leaving his bike standing. I had to smile, it was nice to see Wigs sprawled on the pavement. “We have to be careful. Something is up, I can sense it.”

“Nothing I can’t handle,” Wigs snapped as he nimbly jumped back to his feet.

“Don’t think because you can lift me you are bullet proof. I would love to be the first one to prove you wrong.” I got on my bike, put my backpack over my shoulder, and I was off. Wigs rode right beside me. The knot in my stomach was overwhelming me now. Something was up. I was on high alert. I didn’t notice anything out of the norm, but then again nothing is what it seems anymore. Then one of the packages in my backpack started to vibrate. This couldn’t be happening. Someone was planning to blow me up? At least I would go out with a bang, right? I skidded to a stop.

“What is it?” Wigs asked as he stopped next to me. I didn’t answer him. I unzipped my backpack and pulled out one of the smaller packages. It was going nuts. I was about to open it, when...

“Luna!” a voice yelled my name. I turned and Pearly White was high tailing it towards me. Really? Why did this guy need to be here right now?

“I’m glad that I caught up with you.” He exclaimed as he got off.

“Did you follow us here, little man?” Wigs said trying to sound tough. He failed, but I was amused. Pearly White knelt down and began retying his shoe.

“You yelled my name to stop here and what? To get pointers on how to tie your shoe? How about this advice? Stick with velcro.”

“Do not open the box. Once you open the box it will activate the cell phone. Which, in turn, will cause the tracking device they have in your friend to be activated.

“You know if you are trying to get on my good side, you are taking the wrong approach.” I said.

“What? Luna...what...did he...did you...” Poor Wigs was sputtering.

“How do you know?” I knelt down to look at him eye to eye.

“I just do!”

“I know your pearly whites didn’t get snippy with me,” I snapped. Who did this guy think he was? “And how did they know where to find us?”

“They didn’t. Look at the address on the package,” Pearly White explained. I looked down and saw that it had Wigs address on it.

Betrayal

-6-

Out of Time: Part II

“How the hell did this happen? If I were you I would get those pearly whites yapping and fast!” I responded to him.

“Don’t you want to know my name?” He grinned.

“Depending on what type of information you give me, maybe then, I will ask for it,” I responded. So far this guy hadn’t brought anything to the table. “Why did they put a tracker on my friend here... Wigs! Let me repeat: I’m looking for new ones, depending on what Pearly White tells me maybe he can replace you, if you keep acting a fool!” Wigs wasn’t helping matters with what seemed to be his new found powers... whatever they might be. Maybe this

morning with the whole picking me up with one arm thing was just that he was strong... I doubt it.

“They want to track him to see how long he lasts and what type of powers he develops.” Pearly white responded. I digested this information for a second. So far he was making sense. The British Bitch had to track down her property. “I hope that piece of information allows me clearance to offer you my name,” Pearly White said, interrupting my thought process.

“Your clearance only allows you to give me your first name,” I responded. He smiled at me, and all I could do was smile in return. He couldn’t be that bad.

“My name is Yazmin, I would ask you yours but your boss already spoiled that surprise for me.”

“You must have been made fun of as a kid. It probably hasn’t really made that much of a difference as you reached adult hood.” I responded.

“It is a wonderful conversation starter with the ladies,” Yazmin said with a charmingly exaggerated wink. So far this guy was growing on me.

“I’m not going to call you Yazmin. How about Pearly? Hmm, that may be worse. But that is your name for now, though it may be even worse than the original.”

“You see. We are having a wonderful conversation,” Pearly replied.

“I wouldn’t go all out and say it is wonderful. Maybe okay...”

“Eh...hem...” Wigs interrupted the conversation. He had puffed his chest out in an attempt of manliness. I just chuckled. “Why don’t we concentrate a little here? What do you mean they have a tracker on me?”

“Wigs, I’m pretty sure that it is self-explanatory. And Pearly over here gave you a good enough explanation as to why they implanted that in your ass. But, here is a question, how did they find out where he lived? Wigs, didn’t you tell me they kidnapped you away from your place?” Brining out my best Sherlock Holmes impersonation while I asked the question.

“They took my wallet, Luna. They searched me when they took me in,” Wigs admitted kind of grudgingly.

“You are such a bearer of good news, aren’t you? And what about you...” I directed my question to Pearly, “Just how do you know so much about all this? I warn you keep on my good side.”

“Well, the same person that has been saving your ass is the same person I work for.”

“What?! Are you telling me you are Mr. Wonderful’s lackey?” My astonishment was beyond description. Suffice it to say my mouth hung open a full minute, at least.

“Yep.” Pearly seemed very nonchalant about the whole thing.

“That is all you have? Is yep? Um...I’m looking for more details than that. You said you loved conversation, so now spill it!”

“Well, it is a long story, and my main mission right now is to make sure nothing happens to you guys.”

“Wow, you’re a white knight to match your pearly whites, huh? And, I don’t wanna burst your hero bubble, but I don’t need to be taken care of. All I need to know is what is going on! Why does a phone call from this cell phone trigger a tracking device?”

“Good question. What I have been told is that since technology was, of course crippled for a while this type of tracking device that this company is using can be only be triggered by activating a signal. In this case it is a cell phone.”

“Wow, they knew Wigs would be dumb enough to pick up a suspicious looking cell phone. Well played.”

“Hey! How do you know I would do that?” Wigs exclaimed.

“Wigs, I have seen you do some stupid things in the past, that would just be added to the list.” I replied. Wigs stood there just thinking about the comment. I think he was just reminiscing about all the stupid things that he did in his life.

“Okay, I’ll give you that one,” He said with a smile.

“So, what is the next step then?” I turned a hopeful face to Pearly who I hoped knew what to do.

“I don’t know.” I could sense he hadn’t wanted to admit that. At least he didn’t let me spend much time on optimistic thinking.

“You better tell Mr. Wonderful to send someone more capable, because this isn’t working.”

“Don’t you understand that you and your friend are in danger!”

“Well, danger is my middle name!” Wigs exclaimed puffing his chest out.

“Wigs, put that thing away, it’s making me sick!” I was getting tired of his machoness. I turned my attention back to Pearly.

“I don’t feel like someone is going to whoop my ass out here, at least not this second. I need answers! Not hints that my life is in danger. Plus, you say that phone will activate the tracker,

right? Well if nobody answers it they can't track him. So what is the big deal for the time being?"

"What do you call him? Mr. Wonderful? Well, he was right, you aren't too bright, are you?"

"You are probably single, aren't you?" I responded.

"They have a look out outside his apartment. They will find him, and you."

"So, what do you suppose we do, genius?" I was getting annoyed with each passing moment.

"I don't know. I'm basically to go with you and whatever happens we deal with it as it arises."

"I feel so safe with you," I said and just glared at him. "You know, I may have to get Wigs here to take care of business." I patted Wigs on the back, but he didn't puff his chest out like I hoped he would. Wigs! This is your chance! Come on! Do you chest inflation thing!" I said.

"Oh! Well, why didn't you say so!" He pumped his chest out again, "I can keep Luna baby here safer than you." Wigs said. I elbowed him in the stomach and his chest deflated. Pearly stood up from the longest tying of a shoe in world history and looked at us both. The package vibrated again in my hand.

"What do we do with this?" I cautiously gestured to the stupid phone.

"I think I will take it back to Mr. Wonderful to see if we can do something about reversing the tracker and possibly even tracing it back to whoever did this." Pearly suggested. Something occurred to me that didn't before. How did this guy know that this was the route whoever was taking to tracking Wigs.

"How did you know this was a move they were going to make?"

"I can't get into that. Mr. Wonderful will have to tell you that."

"Oh, because he is such a wealth of information," I rolled my eyes. Pearly grinned, must have received a few explanations in the form of riddles from Mr. Wonderful.

"Move it!" Some guy huffed as he shoved me aside. The box flew out of my hand and hit the pavement. A knot in my stomach formed. This couldn't be good. I spun quickly around to try and catch a glimpse of the douche, but they were long gone. The knot started to get tighter in my stomach. I didn't see anyone around me that sent up a warning flag. The three goons from

the previous nights were not among the crowd. I would have recognized them. Maybe they sent some fresh meat. Then it hit me. The phone.

“Open the box!” I whispered shrilly.

“Luna, chill. Nothing is wrong.” Wigs started to say, but I cut him off.

“Oh, how sweet that you are trying to reassure me.” I picked up the box, and took the tape off it, and stared at the phone, which was staring back at me with the dial pad glowing light green. The vibrating had stopped because the impact with the pavement had triggered the phone as being answered. Wigs’ tracker was live.

Somewhere in the City:

“Yes, the tracking device has been activated. It took a little longer then expected, but it has. He will lead us right to the girl then we will bring her in for testing. Are you even sure...” Natalia cautiously began but was quickly interrupted.

“Yes, she is the one. I’m sure of it. The way you described her, and the way that man in the alleyway protected her: she is the one that will bring our whole operation back up to speed. I will have my perfect solider.”

“She will not come easily. She is feisty. I would love to get a few rounds in with her,” Natalia responded.

“You will in due time, Natalia. It is our time to shine, and when shit hits the fan people will turn to me to get help...”

“Yes, sir.” Natalia responded.

“I have a meeting to attend. Take a team out into the field and follow the test subject. Hopefully, he can last a lot longer than the rest of them did.” The man’s voice held little optimism.

“Will do, sir,” was Natalia’s curt reply before she turned around and left the office.

Somewhere else in the City:

“Damn it! Another complication. Well, things were going so smoothly. I guess this was coming.”

“The plan had been to avoid activation, I think that was simple enough. Now time to think of a contingency plan and fast,” Pearly responded.

“I see you are the dramatic type, huh?” I responded back.

“Well, we will see how dramatic I get when the people tracking him find him, and find you as well.”

“Wow, I’m sorry. I meant really dramatic.” Honestly, I knew that this was going to complicate things a lot more than it had to be. I couldn’t really be around Wigs right now. If they found me I would be in so much trouble; although I would love round two with the British Bitch but not today. A girl has to rest from kicking ass. Why me, though? I had an unsettling feeling that I would find out sooner than later, and to top it all off Wigs was on a timer.

“Okay, Wigs, you go with Pearly. For some odd reason these goons are trying to find me, and being with your ass is going to be hazardous to my health. Well, more hazardous than before.” I turned around and was about to get on my bike, until I realized that I wouldn’t be able to come back to work at the end of my shift. “Hey!” I said, and Wigs turned around. I tossed my beeper at him and he caught it.

“Why are you giving me this?”

“Well, I can’t come back here tonight can I? So, you will have to hand in my beeper to our fearless leader. Just make sure you come up with an amazing reason why you are giving it to him and not me. Make sure you make me look amazing.” I tossed my hair playfully and rolled my eyes.

“Yeah, okay, Luna.” He rolled his eyes as well.

“And behave! Listen to Pearly. And hey, Pearly, tell Mr. Wonderful we need to talk, without any cryptic messages.” Then before any one could say something I got on my bike and went on my way to delivering packages to wonderful citizens.

I was screwed. Just a week ago I was trying to make it in this tough world. Now I was just trying not to get killed on a daily basis. I’d just delivered my last packages, so my shift was basically over. I just wanted to go home and rest now. I haven’t really been home in over a day, and I haven’t showered. I was starting to stink.

When I arrived at my apartment Dee was reading a book on the couch.

“Must be a slow day if you are reading a book, and not on top of a guy,” I commented as I brought my bike into the apartment, and closed the door.

“Even I need rest from time to time. And you are one to talk. You didn’t even come home last night.” She smirked and winked at me.

“Oh, if that is how I spent my night I wouldn’t be so stinky and cranky trust me.” I responded. “What are you up to tonight?”

“I’m gonna go out and meet Jon at his place for some quality time.” Dee overemphasized quality. She was going to take her sexcapades out of the apartment, at least that was going my way.

“Well, I think you guys had quality time with my couch the other night. Now it has been violated. I need a miracle to get off all that nasty stuff.”

“Well, we can always get a plastic cover,” Dee replied as she got up from the couch and went to sit on one of the stools we had by the kitchen counter. She’d brought the book along with her, and I now saw that she was reading a book on sex.

“Trying to perfect your craft, huh?” I remarked and took the book from her: I skimmed through it. All I saw was pictures with descriptions. Some of the pictures looked like they were wrestling. Only their legs were bent in ways that were unnatural. “A picture book, huh? And to think I was going to give you credit.”

“You know, you wanna borrow it. I will leave it here for your reading pleasure tonight, since I didn’t see any guy following you in.”

“Girl, you know how I love to play hard to get.” I handed her the book.

“Well, while you play hard to get I’m going to try page 52 tonight.” Dee giggled. All I could do was smile; she was such a skank.

“I just want to take a shower and sleep. I haven’t had much sleep in in the past few nights. But best of luck with page 52,” I said with a laugh while I hugged her. I went into my room and got a new set of clothes, and shower here I come. Too damn bad I only had fifteen minutes, an hour would have felt so amazing.

I sat in bed with only a towel covering me and my hair dripping wet, but I didn’t care. Dee had left for the night, and no Casanovas were going to surprise me or try to hit on me tonight. I closed my eyes to just try and clear my mind. I needed this alone time. With all that has happened the past few days I didn’t have any time to think about...nothing. Sometimes a clear mind is a happy mind. It was then that I heard a knock on my door. Are you serious! I was about to just let my mind drift and reality set back in. I got up and walked to the door.

“Who is it?”

“Girl, it’s me, Shy!” She said through the door. I forgot that I was rude to her today. I guess she wanted to talk about it. Shy wasn’t one to hold her feelings in, and I loved that about her. I opened the door, and she looked really worried. Wow, maybe she was really bothered by that.

“Hey, girl, come in.” I stepped a side from the doorway to let her in. She was making her way to the couch. “No!” I said without thinking. She stopped in her tracks.

“What’s wrong?” She asked as she looked at me crazy.

“Dee violated that couch in ways you can’t imagine,” I explained. A look of disgust crossed Shy’s face. “Stay over here. It is a lot safer.” I gestured to one of the stools by the counter. I hopped on the other one.

“Thanks for the save.” She said in a low tone. Something was clearly wrong. I guess this was my time to apologize to her for earlier today.

“Listen, girl, I’m sor...”

“Wigs was shot! He is in the hospital!” Shy blurted out, and tears flowed from her eyes down to her cheeks.

“What! How in the world did it happen?” And do you know who did it?” I questioned. There were a series of thoughts running through my head. None were good.

“It happened so fast. Me, him and that guy with the bright ass teeth were leaving work...oh, and how is that old lady that you helped after she fell down the stairs on that delivery?” Shy asked switching the topic quicker than Dee switched men. I was confused a second until...Wigs had to make up a story on why I wasn’t back.

“Well, you know how old people are. Every other step is an adventure.” I shrugged. “She is fine though. The ambulance came and said that she just bruised her foot, or something, but I’m pretty sure that Wigs being shot is more important than some old lady hobbling around. What happened to Wigs?”

“Oh yeah, well, we were walking out and for some odd reason he went crazy on someone that was across the street...” Shy continued as her tears started to subside. And I think I knew what really happened. He saw one of the goons that kicked his ass, and got all macho on them. I knew I shouldn’t have told him to do that last chest inflation. “He ran across the street...he was super fast come to think of it, and picked the guy up with one arm, and started punching him with his free arm. I think Wigs is on steroids and that is why he lost all his hair...”

“I think a man can also lose his manhood, but that is a rumor I heard...”

“Well, then some lady came from behind him and shot him in his side and his leg.” Shy blubbered, “What is this world coming to?” Shy embraced me. This world wasn’t going anywhere. It was going to stay put and be corrupted by the evil inside it. I know I have said this before, but I’m not going to let that happen on my watch. At least, not with Wigs.

“Girl, everything will be alright. Baldy is strong. Lets go visit him, just let me get ready.” I didn’t care if British Bitch was watching the place. Wigs was my friend and he needed me. He needed us. I will deal with what ever happens when it happens.

Somewhere by On the Run:

“Sir, it couldn’t be avoided. Nikko was attacked by the test subject. Also, no one questioned it after the witness saw our badges and made it look like he attacked an officer.” Natalia spoke calmly into her cell phone. She was now busy listening to muffled orders through the phone. “Sir, I didn’t shoot to kill. He will survive. Our main concern is the blood results from the hospital tests. They will show up as abnormal. People will start asking questions. We can not afford that.” Natalia went silent to hear her next mission. “Okay, so you want us to kill the test subject and collect all the samples. I understand, sir. You will have my confirmation within the next hour.”

“Oh, this should be fun. Going into a crowded hospital, taking out a test subject and then making sure all blood samples go missing. I don’t see anything going wrong with this,” Nikko said.

“Nikko, that is why you are not leading this operation. You worry too much instead of getting results. We will be just fine.”

Hospital:

Luckily I’d left a pile of clean laundry on the chair in my room. I dressed light since it was mid spring and it wasn’t cold out. Shy and I entered the hospital and went right towards the receptionist area.

“Hi, we are here to see Andrew Wax,” I said to the heavy set receptionist who must have been in her fifties. She glanced at her log.

“Are you family?” Shy nodded. The receptionist looked back at her log. “It says he just is out of surgery, and was just put into room 359. He may still be groggy from the anestisa.”

“Oh, don’t worry when he see’s us he will perk right up,” I said. The lady gave me a dirty look. I was about to say something but Shy pulled me away and that is when we started to make our way towards the elevator. My guard was on high alert. The goon squad had to be around here somewhere. Just lurking around doing what goons do when they lay in wait. I was as calm as I was going to get. The loud ping caused me to jump. Shy walked into the elevator and I followed. Shy looked at me strangely.

“You like him, don’t you?” She questioned. Confusion flooded my face.

“That is the dumbest thing I have ever heard. Especially from you. I will let it slide because you are emotional due to this whole ordeal.”

“You wanted him to yourself today, only you and him riding together. The other day you wanted to know where he was, when he was obviously fine, he just ditched, like he does from time to time.” The evidence was against me if that was the only evidence. What should I do? Deny this? Or tell her the truth. Or confess my false undying love for Wigs? The ping of the elevator saved me from having to say anything. Saved by the ping I guess. We both exited the elevator and took a right hand turn. The last time I was in the hospital I got lost. Why couldn’t they just make it easier to find the damn rooms? When we found room 352 we just followed the room numbers. I knew which room was Wigs cause Pearly was standing outside of it. When he saw me, he looked angry or maybe worried. I just met him so I really couldn’t tell his facial expressions yet.

“Shy, go in, I’ll be right there,” I said. She went into Wigs room without question.

“What are you doing here! You know they will be around this building!” Pearly yelled while whispering. Which I must say was very impressive.

“He is my friend! My question to you is, why did you let him get shot! He was your responsibility.”

“It happened so quickly. With his enhanced abilities he was across the street and chocking someone before I could even say whoa. The two shots were fired and they pretended to be officers. They made it seem like it was an attack on the police.

“Did Mr. Wonderful just hire you? Cause you suck at your job. The only thing I know your good at is whispering loud.”

“You need to get out of here, before they show up. They have to show up. They will need to get the blood work and the other test results, because, of course, his blood is already altered. He’s no longer only human, Luna.” This seemed odd to me. When Zack died Dee told me that they couldn’t find anything out of the ordinary with his autopsy...unless if they got to his results first. How deep did this run exactly? I don’t like to get scared but I was almost getting to that point. “I just want to see him that’s all.”

“Make it quick. The doctors removed the bullets but there was no reason for them to poke around his ass, so...” Pearly was right. I nodded at him. If I wanted to survive I needed to be quick. I pushed the door open and saw Shy sitting in the chair looking at Wigs, who had his leg in a sling. I couldn’t see the other wound. He was still unconscious. Shy was crying again. I would too if I didn’t have so much on my mind.

“How is he?” I had to ask even though I knew that Shy wouldn’t know.

“I don’t know. I don’t believe this is happening. One minute we were at work and the next...he has more holes in his body than he should have.” Shy said.

“That is the nicest way I have heard anyone say someone being shot.” I commented. I went over to her and hugged her. I needed to keep it together, just a little longer, and then I could leave. “He will be alright.” Then it hit me! A knot in my stomach. Here we go. I released my hold on Shy to look around the room, and saw no one lurking. Then a light knock came at the door.

“Come in,” Shy said muffled. The door opened, and the knot clenched. At that moment my back was facing the door, so the person that just walked in didn’t see my face yet, and then I knew who it was...

“My name is Dr. Taylor. I need a minute with the patient...” A British accent came from the door.

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Out of time: Part III

What was I going to do? She really didn’t know what I looked like from the back, well, at least I didn’t think so. She’d only seen me during the night time, but I knew she’d know me.

Should I get ballsy again? When I usually ended up in trouble Mr. Wonderful would always help me out. I don't think he was going to show this time. Too many lights. My heart was racing. Tonight may be the night that they took me in. Also I had to worry about Shy. I didn't want her to get caught up in this business.

"Leave now," I whispered to Shy. She gave me a look of confusion as she stood up from the chair. "Get out of the hospital. I'll catch up later." I knew the British Bitch had to be getting suspicious.

"What are you talking about girl?" Shy whispered to me and grabbed my arm digging her nails in. "What's been going on? Something has..."

"Ladies, please. I need to check this patient."

"Okay." Shy looked both worried and confused as she made her way to the door. I heard the door close. I counted to ten and turned around.

"Hi! I missed you so much!" I said to Dr. Taylor.

"Excuse me?" The doctor said. It wasn't the British Bitch.

"Sorry doc, I thought you were someone else. But I'm relieved it is you. Is he going to make it?" I asked trying to switch the subject from me looking so stupid.

"He will make a full recovery, but I must check on him now. If you would leave us alone for a few minutes."

"Yeah," I said and walked out the room. The knot still was in my stomach, but I didn't see any danger what so ever. Shy was sitting down in one of the chairs in the hall way, but Pearly wasn't around.

"Where is Pearly?"

"Who?" Shy questioned in confusion. I forgot she didn't know his new name.

"The new guy from work. I haven't gotten you up to speed with his new name."

"Oh, I don't know. He wasn't here when I got out here."

"Speaking of which, didn't I tell you to leave the hospital?"

"Yeah, what is wrong with you? Something has been going on, hasn't it?" At that moment the knot tightened so hard that I almost hunched over.

"Well, next time you should listen to your friend, dear." A British accent said from behind me. I spun around so quickly I nearly fell. British Bitch!

“You know I was worried that you wouldn’t show. I guess better late than never is what they say.” She was only with her goon the douche, so maybe it wouldn’t be so bad...yeah right.

“Luna, you know these people?” Shy interrupted my stare down with the British Bitch.

“We go way back! All the ways to last week. We are almost family!” I glanced towards a couple nurses who had just come out a near by room.

“Causing a scene will not help you. To them we are officers here to question a criminal.” She smirked. Yep, I was stuck in this crappy situation.

“I think you could have tried posing as a doctor instead, so much more original.”

“Luna, honestly who are these people? I mean I already know the blonde is a bitch.”

“You see! I knew you gave off that type of vibe!” I commented. “But Shy honestly just shut it.”

“Excuse me?”

“I’m pretty sure that your bad ass tough girl attitude is not going to make us bullet proof. But I will definitely hide behind you.”

“What do you mean, Luna?” Shy was so confused and frustrated that her voice was almost whining.

“She means this!” The British Bitch pulled out a gun and pointed it at us. Her goon was shaking his head. I guess he didn’t want things to go down like this.

“You assured me that everything would go smoothly,” The douche commented.

“Nikko, just follow orders. Everything will...” The British Bitch began but was interrupted by a scream from Wigs’ room. The goons took off toward the room. I had two choices: run and get to safety or go see what happened in Wigs room. All of a sudden the answer shoved himself into me.

“We have to go right now!” Pearly commanded.

“But Wigs...”

“We have Wigs. Well, he has Wigs. Aka Mr. Wonderful. He snuck into the room and took him. He didn’t plan on the doctor being there.” Pearly pointed out.

“And he says I’m not bright.” I snorted and rolled my eyes then started to run. Shy was still stunned by all that was happening but she was smart enough to save her ass first then ask questions later. We bolted out of hospital and down the street.

“We have to get out of here! They will be following us since they lost your friend.”

“Hold on just a damn minute.” Shy stopped in her tracks. “Why are they after Wigs? What type of trouble is baldy in now? What trouble are you in? Who were those people? And who is Mr. Wonderful?”

“Are you sure those are all your questions?” I responded sarcastically. “I would try to answer them, but unless you want to get shot in your ass you will start moving!” I really wanted to avoid any type of bullets grazing my ass tonight. We saw an old bus a block away. If we made it, we could be safe. Pearly started running, and I followed. Shy was the slowest of the three of us, but she managed. We were about fifteen feet away from the bus when Shy yelled out.

“Let go! You scum bag!” She was trying to twist her way out of the hold Nikko had her in.

“You know I’m getting jealous. I thought I was the girl you guys wanted. And I’m not normally the jealous type. I guess there is a first time for everything.”

“Come with me, and I will let you friend go,” Nikko said as he jammed his gun in Shy’s temple.

“I am still number one! I was so worried.” I was scared. I wasn’t going to lose Shy. Pearly positioned himself behind me.

“Is there anything in Mr. Wonderful’s manual about hostage situations?”

“I haven’t read the entire manual. Don’t forget. I’m still a newbie,” He retorted.

“You know every time you do something good you follow it up with something half ass.” As soon as I finished speaking a burst of energy went through my body. It felt the same as the burst of energy that coursed through me the other night in the alleyway. Something triggered in my mind to just rush at the douche and everything would be fine. I had to make a quick decision. Knowing that the British Bitch was not far behind this guy. So, I did it. What other choice did I have? Mr. Wonderful was off saving Wigs. I rushed towards the douche. I don’t know how to explain it but it was like slow motion. Yet, I reached the douche rather quickly considering the amount of space that was between us. I stepped on his foot, and he dropped the gun. I’m glad it didn’t go off. I didn’t want to be the next person in the damn hospital. Then I punched him in the stomach. He flew a few feet and hit the ground.

“How did you do that?” Shy was amazed.

“Girl, I told you. I take my vitamins. Now lets get out of here!” The bus hadn’t moved, because the driver was too busy watching a free action packed thriller. We boarded the bus, and I glanced at the driver trying to find three dollars in my pockets to pay for the three of us.

“It is on the house. I don’t want you whooping my ass,” The driver said. I smirked.

“Finally a good man in this town.” I said as I joined the others in the back of the bus.

“Luna, what is going on? Why do ass holes have guns pointed to my head? And when did you become a damn ninja? I always knew you were bad ass, but that just took it to another level.” Shy looked a little pale.

“Well, I’m taking that as a thank you for saving your ass.” I wasn’t ready to tell her the truth, I don’t think I was ready for the truth and I was involved in the damn thing.

“Well, in all honesty, they sent those goons to collect payment for the apartment. You can’t even be a month late these days.” I had a feeling that Shy wasn’t going to buy my lie.

“You are more than a month late if they ready to shove bullets in you.” Shy replied. The bad part was Shy wasn’t dumb.

“I need to find dumber friends.” I sighed. “Shy, I will let you know some day. I don’t think you will believe me anyway. I don’t even believe it myself come to think of it.”

“What about this guy? What part does he have in all this?”

“Why can’t you be happy that you aren’t dead?” Pearly was taking the wrong approach with Shy.

“Uh oh. You are going to get your ass whooped now.” I said leaning back against the seat and closing my eyes. I needed a little time to think. What was the next course of action?

“Oh, I know you aren’t getting snappy with me,” Shy retorted. I just smiled I could just picture Shy’s expression. I continued to hear the two bickering all the way to our stop. I knew Wigs was in good hands now. I would worry about him come tomorrow. I said bye to Pearly, while Shy gave him a dirty look and we headed to my place. I told Shy that she can stay with me tonight since Dee was going to play with her new boy toy. She gladly accepted.

We walked into my apartment and luckily Dee had kept her word and wasn’t there.

“Girl, I don’t care what happened on this couch: I’m exhausted and I need to sleep.”

“You can’t be tired enough to sleep on that bad boy. Let me get you a sheet that I can cover it up, and I have a few extra pillows.” I was tired as well. Today’s events had taken a toll on me. While I was getting the stuff to put on the couch I thought about how I took out the douche

aka Nikko without breaking a sweat. What was happening to me? The goons that were after me, the energy running through my body, and the knots in my stomach... I started to shake. Everything was setting in, and my adrenaline was gone. I started to get scared.

“Hey girl?” Shy’s soft voice took me out of my thoughts. I turned to her and gave her a weak smile.

“Listen, I know you will tell me what is going on when the time is right. And I know you are scared about what is happening. It seems that you have enough to worry about.”

“Wow! A soft spot to Shy? Who would have thought?” I smiled. She smiled along with me.

“Girl you know I have my moments. But you better tell me soon, or I’ll whoop your ass.” I smiled and went over to the couch to get it ready.

Shy was knocked out within minutes of laying on the couch. I covered her up with an old blanket, and went to bed myself.

I didn’t know where I was heading. I just kept running. The best part was that something or someone was following me. I stopped, put my hands on my knees and attempted to catch my breath. Then I saw it move in the shadows. I saw the red eyes staring me down and then move towards me.

“What do you want!!!” I yelled as I started to move again. My lungs were screaming as I started to run again. They weren’t ready to move, but I tried my best. The shadow was now moving a lot faster than I was. It was going to catch up to me sooner or later. I kept running disregarding the pain in my lungs, and I glanced back only to see that the shadow was right on my tail. I was just about to give up when the shadow disappeared. “That’s right! You can’t catch me,” I mumbled. I turned around but the shadowy figure with the red eyes was right in front of me. “Oh, crap!” The shadow made an eerie sound before blanketing me completely and everything went black.

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Secret is Out

I woke up screaming. I was shaking and in a cold sweat. What did that dream mean...before I could even think about it even further Shy rushed in.

“Girl! What is going on? Are you all right? I heard you scream.” Shy sat next to me and put her arm on my shoulder. “Girl, you are drenched.”

“Yeah, I do a lot of cardio in my nightmares.” I felt my self shaking again. I needed to know what was going on in that dream and what that dark figure was. I almost cried but I held it in.

“You want to tell me what the nightmare was about?” She prodded gently.

“No, I don’t want to re-live being chased and caught.” I said staring blankly now at the ceiling.

“Well, if you need to talk I’m here for you girl.” She stood and started to leave the room.

“Shy...”

“Yeah...”

“Thanks...” I said. She was trying to be the best friend I could have. And she was succeeding.

“I know...” She said and then left the room. I looked at my alarm clock which read 1 a.m. I knew I wasn’t going back to bed, so I needed to find something to do. I needed some answers, so I was going to do the only thing I knew that made sense. Back to the alleyway. I waited until Shy went back to sleep then snuck into the shower, and washed off the sweat. I didn’t dwell on the nightmare. I really didn’t want to any more. I just really didn’t want to think. There was too much to think about. I got dressed as quietly as possible so that I didn’t wake Shy. I thought about bringing my bike, but I needed this time to just let the early morning air hit my face. I needed to get my thoughts together.

The morning air felt so amazing on my face. For some odd reason my worries just drifted away while I walked. To bad they weren’t going to stay there, away. Then all of a sudden I was in front of the alleyway. Why does every thing that felt so good lasted what felt like seconds, and me running away from goons seem like it lasted a lifetime? I sighed and walked down the dark alleyway to where it all started.

“You know how to keep a guy waiting,” Mr. Wonderful said from a corner.

“I’m a respectable girl, that loves to keep guys wanting more. How is Wigs? I hope that was you that saved his ass. That’s what Pearly said to me.”

“Yes, it was. I’m glad you created that diversion so I could swoop in and save his ass. You are ballsy, I have to admit that,” Mr. Wonderful complimented.

“Well, I can’t say the same about you since you are always running around in the shadows. I’ll lend you mine if you want.”

“Luna, keep them. Yours are big enough for the both of us.”

“What’s going on? I need answers now. I feel like we do this every other night. If you are trying to date me this is not the proper way to pursue me, just letting you know.” I responded.

“Well, first things first. Wigs is safe and his tracker has been removed. If it wasn’t for you he would have been dead.”

“Well, yeah, of course, I gave you a way in without being detected, at least not by many...”

“No, not because of that. I would have got him out of there without a problem regardless. Letting him live causes complications. Your dedication to not letting him die is what I meant. He is another part of this war, another statistic. But you want to try and save everyone...”

“This world has seen meaningless death! Maybe if someone stood up for what is right we as a society will not make the same mistake as we have done in the past!”

“And you are the one to protect everyone?” Mr. Wonderful prodded.

“No, but I’m brave enough to attempt it. But I think I’m rubbing off on you. You saved Wigs. You could have made an excuse and just let him die or let the British Bitch do what ever she was going to do to him,” I retaliated.

“She was there to kill him. And clean up the mess that was made by him being in the hospital. His blood flows with serum. The blood results would have been different from any other human being. The doctors would have probably kept him for testing if nothing was done to try and kill him.”

“You see these are the answers that I’m looking for. I’m glad you learned how to give more direct answers. It is about time, I say.”

“We are running out of time. If they catch you I’m afraid it is over.”

“I spoke too soon. Here we go with the riddles again. What does that mean?”

“You haven’t figured it out? You are the key! They want to create a super human soldier!”

“Who are they?!? These goons that I have given nick names to and are following me? I don’t know who they are!” I was exhausted. I really needed sleep.

“These are the same people that helped start the war. They want to control the world. They do not want a free world. They want power and control. In order to obtain that they need to create a perfect soldier; a super soldier.”

“Okay, so what does that have to do with me?”

“Sometimes I would love to knock some sense into you.”

“And I would love to see you try,” I said. He probably could, but I didn’t feel like letting my guard down.

“You have that power. The power they are trying figure out. They are testing all these people and they are dying. But you...you have had it all along. It hasn’t attacked your immune system. They will run tests on you until they can find out where they went wrong. And if they kill you in the process then so be it.”

“Wow, Debbie Downer, aren’t you. They aren’t going to catch me. Plus, what is this power you speak of? I haven’t really done anything extronidary.” I lied.

“Oh really? Yazmin told me everything. How you took down Nikko without a problem.”

“His name matches his gossiping ways. He couldn’t wait to tell you that, huh? And by the way, he sucks at his job. I’m the one protecting his ass.” I huffed and crossed my arms over my chest.

“Trust me he is good at what he does.”

“Yeah, I know, being a blabber mouth.”

“Well, everyone I choose for my team is good at what they do,” he said cryptically.

“What do you mean? You have more than just Pearly working for you?” This was interesting news to hear.

“Of course. Trying to save the world is hard by ones self.”

“You are doing a horrible job trying to save the world. Just an observation. Letting me get into so much trouble, and almost letting Wigs die twice. You may want to have someone else take over.”

“Sooner or later it will be you!”

“I was afraid you were going to say that.”

“They will catch you. It is just a matter of time. They know who your friends are, and they know you are loyal to them. They know that you would do anything to keep them safe. It is just a matter of time, Luna.” Mr. Wonderful sounded concerned, and he was right. They now knew who Shy was, and they would probably try to kidnap her like they kidnapped Wigs! This couldn’t be happening right now. I didn’t even think about it that way until now!

“What do we do then? And don’t say let her die. Because that is getting old. How about we think happy thoughts?”

“When I first met you I didn’t think you would have a heart, yet it seems to me that you have a big old heart in you. Since that is the case we must train you in how to use your powers and quickly. Especially since they will come every which way now to get at you, and you need to learn how to defend yourself.”

“I don’t know what you are talking about me and training. I call the whooping on that guy Nikko pay back. Nothing else. I don’t have any power!”

“You do, Luna, and you will learn how to use it. I will let you know when your first session will be. Well, Yazmin will. In the mean time keep a low profile. Wigs is in good care with me at my place. They will not track him at all, and here. Take this.” Mr. Wonderful extended his gloved hand. He held a piece a paper.

“What is this? A note to get me out of school?” I asked playfully.

“Well, you are close. Maybe you are a lot brighter than I give you credit for.”

“I got looks and I got the brains,” Even though I wasn’t too confident in my looks, and my brains for that matter.

“That is a doctors note from Dr. Taylor. She wrote it up before I took Wigs,” Mr. Wonderful replied. I sensed him smirking in the shadows knowing full well I was going to ask this question.

“How did you get this from her?”

“Luna, I told you! I have picked my team wisely. Even though some of them do not know each other.” Mr. Wonderful said. That explained why Pearly didn’t know the doctor. “She also was the decoy to help you escape. So if you ever run into her be nice. Okay?”

“That is all I know how to do,” I replied playfully.

“Anyways, that is a note to get your buddy off the hook with Billy. He isn’t going to be in for a few days until he recovers. I’m hoping that the serum that was injected into him will help him heal a lot faster than a normal person, but I haven’t seen anything like that yet.”

“Trust me if he can milk this injury then he will. And when he gets back he will not be able to shut up how he got shot and survived. He is probably going to try and make a rap video. Speaking about my buddy, have you found anything remotely close to a cure yet?” No

response. He didn't do this to me again. "Mr. Wonderful? You better be there or I'm gonna kick your ass."

"No not yet." He responded. "I love doing that to you."

"Your gonna love a fist in the mouth if you keep it up."

"As much as I would love that, I must leave now. Things to do and people to try and save because of you."

"I'm glad that I could make you a better person." I smirked. "So when will you let me know about the training crap?" I questioned and there was no answer. I kind of knew that he wasn't going to stick around. I turned around and made my way out of the alleyway, and this was the first time I would leave this alleyway without any drama. The lack of sleep was really getting to me. I looked at my watch. It read 3 a.m. If I got home in the next half hour I could actually try to sleep up to three hours, and then head to work.

I was walking for around ten minutes when I heard the foot steps behind me. There was no one that I saw when I left the alleyway, so this person must have been in the dark. Sneaky bastard. I did the tie the sneaker move again. The person kept walking. There was no knot in my stomach so there couldn't be any danger. I sensed the person creeping closer and closer. Even though there wasn't a knot in my stomach, my pulse was racing. I just wanted a peaceful night. Oh well. I spun around, with my fist ready to hit someone only to see Shy right in front of me.

"You could get killed doing something like that!" I yelled.

"Oh but you can't get killed running into dark alleyways, and talking to crazy guys in the dark?" She retorted angrily. She did have a point.

"You know I love to live dangerously, and you have known me to pick up some bad boys from time to time." How much of the conversation had she heard? Hopefully not much.

"I heard everything!" Well at least she didn't leave me guessing.

"Well that guy is just crazy. I just met him the other day, and he is trying to impress me. That's all." I shrugged.

"Luna, what is going on! I want to know. That guy said that I may be in danger because I know you." She wasn't going to back down from this. Damn it, but I was going to try my hardest to avoid this conversation.

“Like I said that guy is just crazy. That is why I just visit him at night and in that smelly alleyway.” All of a sudden I sensed Mr. Wonderful watching us, and I knew he was enjoying this. What a jerk.

“I would believe that, if we weren’t attacked by people with guns, and have that British Bitch try to shoot you...”

“You call her that too! We have something else in common.”

“Luna! You also pulled some ninja moves that I didn’t think I could see coming from you. What is going on, Luna! I want to know, and I want to know now!”

“Did I tell you that you look great today?” She wasn’t going to drop it. She was as stubborn as I was, maybe even more. She gave me that Shy scowl. “I liked you more when we first met. There was that new friendship smell. You are just as stubborn as I am.”

“I’m glad that you realize there is no way out of this conversation.”

“Drinks on me this Friday at Jnco” I said with one final attempt to try to tempt her not to ask questions, because I had a feeling that she didn’t want to now the answers.

“Yeah, literally. That is if you don’t start flapping your lips.”

“Fine, you know wet and sticky isn’t my style, but lets get to my place. I don’t want to be out in the open.” Tonight had went well. No one trying to shoot me, kidnap me or kill me. I wanted to keep it that way.

We arrived at my place a little past three thirty. Shy was about to sit on the couch, but I wasn’t ready. The hurt still lingered after my couch was violated a few nights back by Dee and her ‘The One’ tool. We sat on the stools in the kitchen.

“You look tired. And we probably have tons of work to do at work since Wigs won’t be there due to his accident with the law. We should go to bed.” Why couldn’t I just tell her? I trusted Shy with my life.

“Girl, I seen you whoop some guys ass, but don’t think that I won’t take you out.”

“Feisty this morning. You running on all bitchy cylinders today, huh? But I guess I can get you started. Where to start?” I sighed. I really didn’t want to talk about this. Living it was bad enough.

“From the beginning.”

“Well it was dark and stormy night...” I started. Shy reached over and pinched my arm.

“Well, it was a dark night. I think it was a little stormy so I am not being overly dramatic, but anyways...” And I started. Shy hung on every word I said. Even though if someone were to be saying these things to me I would have said two magic words: Bull and Shit. As I was telling her the events within the past two weeks I couldn’t believe it myself. When I started to tell her about Wigs I could see tears trying to escape her eyes, but she jailed them back in. Wigs was a douche a lot of the times, but he had our backs when we needed him. He would like to have us on our backs occasionally, but we denied him of that.

“So, where does that leave you?” She asked after taking a moment to digest my wonderful adventure.

“I don’t know. Scared out of my damn mind, I guess.”

“And you really think you have some special abilities? I mean, that is far fetched, but the way I saw you move, I don’t know what to believe. I mean, I still don’t believe it. You may just be that damn good. But some of the things you said do add up. I mean Wigs getting shot. And I did see Wigs lift that man up without a problem, and he is a weak ass.” Shy was trying to focus on the believable parts of what I’d said, so that she could allow herself to believe everything I said. I wouldn’t blame her if she’d wanted to run out the door screaming like a raging lunatic, but there she sat.

“I appreciate it.”

“What?” She looked startled and confused as she replied.

“Not calling the crazy hospital and trying to admit me.” I smiled. She smiled in return. I’m scared. “Really scared. I don’t know if you believe me or not. But, I can’t run forever, you know?” This was the first time I’d admitted my fears. I mean Wigs knew I was scared the night he saved me, but this is different. I wasn’t only scared for me. I was scared for everybody. People could die because of me.

“You will figure something out. You say this Mr. Wonderful is a good guy. He has to come through, right?” Shy tried to sound hopeful, but she wasn’t too confident. I wasn’t either. I didn’t know anything about that man, and he was fine with having some casualties.

“I’m just going to try and sleep for an half hour or so, then off to work. You can borrow some of my clothes. I mean you are taller but you should be able to fit into some thing I’ve got. I would offer you Dee’s but I don’t think you want to go slutty today.” I replied. Shy smiled at me.

“Don’t worry, girl, try to get some rest and we will deal with the clothing when you wake up.” Shy hugged me, and I held her hard. I felt I had the weight of the world on my shoulders. I really didn’t know what to do, but I guessed time would tell that. I let her go, and I went into my room. When I put my head on my pillow I cried. Yeah, it seems that I have been crying a lot, but I’m a girl so I am entitled to it once and a while. I closed my eyes, hoping that when I woke up this would all be a bad dream and everything would be back to the way I wanted it to be.

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Public Affair

I awoke about an hour after I fell asleep. Shy was in my room with a towel draped over her. “Hey girl, sorry to barge in here butt naked almost.” She said almost blushing.

“Don’t worry it is like having Dee here, but you are wearing a towel.” I said. Shy smiled. I helped her pick out an outfit and we were off to work a little early since Shy didn’t have a bike. We both walked with me walking my bike of course. The big question of this day was: what was in store for me, I guess I should say us, since Shy is involved in this since they know what she looks like and that she is my friend. On the way to work I was always looking behind me to make sure we were not being followed. I looked so paranoid, and Shy noticed. She didn’t say anything probably because she had witnessed what these people were capable of so maybe my paranoia was well placed.

I walked into work early for the second straight day. People that noticed were probably thinking that I was kissing Billy’s ass. My problems just kept stacking up. At least this problem could solve itself with a swift kick to Billy’s ass, but I didn’t want to dirty my nice sneakers.

“Well, well, well, if it isn’t Miss humanitarian herself. How convenient that you save an old lady on your first day of probation! You know the whole old lady excuse is getting old.” Billy said pestering me before I was even on the clock.

“Well, if you keep it up, it is gonna be an old man as my next excuse,” I replied.

“Keep it up, missy, and this old man is going to fire your behind,” he replied. Billy wasn’t that old. He had to be in his fifties, but that was old to me. “And tell your felon friend to pack up his things once he is out of the hospital. He is fired!” Well I guess the doctor’s note was not going to come in handy, but I’d keep it. Just in case.

“What? No speech?” Come on, Billy, you know how long you have wanted to give that speech to him.” Wigs was fired, since British Bitch and her gang of misfits had produced id’s that looked like they were law enforcement. I was lucky I wasn’t getting fired to.

“You are well on your way to joining him on the red carpet,” Billy added.

“I will make sure that I’ll dress for the occasion.”

“Billy, cut her some slack. She isn’t even on the clock yet and you are firing her.” Shy attempted to break the bickering up.

“Yeah if you have any thing else to say contact my lawyer.” I said as I pointed to Shy and walked past the locker area, where there was a mini fridge. I deposited fifty cents and the door of the fridge opened. I took out a bottled water and sat in the lobby area of my wonderful place of work.

“Girl, everything will be okay. You know that, right?” Shy asked as she got her own water bottle.

“I don’t know that. I don’t know what I’m up against,” I responded exasperated.

“Well, girl, from the looks of it, maybe they don’t know what they are up against either. You did whoop a full grown man ass, last night. And he had a gun I might add.”

“I get bonus points because he had the gun.” I smiled.

“Well, I could have handled it, but you beat me to him.” Shy shoved me playfully. Maybe she did have a point. Even though they think I possess some type of power they didn’t know what type of power. Well, I didn’t know either.

“Hey! Look it’s Wigs!” I heard someone say. Then I heard it. The television. Yeah, another thing that gets regular broadcasts is the news, and for some reason they never share good news, only bad.

“Just last night Andrew Wax escaped police custody from his hospital room. Mr. Wax had been shot by local authorities due to Mr. Wax having attacked one of them.” The news lady said. How deep did these guys really go? Should I just give in and save myself the trouble? I really didn’t want to deal with this any longer, but where’s the fun in that?

“I don’t believe this! What are we going to do?” Shy whispered.

“Well, he always wanted to be a celebrity. It’s just that the cops want to love him instead of adoring female fans.” The news lady continued on the story:

“Local law enforcement is handing out a ten thousand dollar reward to whoever spots him and calls his whereabouts in. They also advise that the public should not try and confront the man. He is very dangerous. This is Jacenta Miller, bringing you the latest news, until next time...” And that was that the news was turned off. I got up from the lobby area and went towards my locker only to be blocked by Billy.

“You know where he is, don’t you? You want the reward money.” Billy accused me.

“Billy, how dare you accuse me! Why would I want to get ten thousand dollars in reward money when working with you is a reward all in it self.” I shoved myself passed him.

“They will find him, you know that!” He yelled.

“Billy, isn’t there any time that you don’t talk?” Shy interrupted. “How about you go find Wigs, and you let someone more capable run this place for a day, like me.”

“Oh, missy, I wouldn’t dare let your bumbling behind run this place, but you do bring up a good idea. I can be a hero! And I can be on TV once I catch him.” Billy nearly clapped his hands at the thought.

“You may want to lose some weight. You are heavy enough without the fifteen pounds the camera adds on.” I winked at him. He was about to say something when Pearly walked in.

“And, there he is! Mr. I-make-all-my-runs-in-record-time-on-the-first-day.”

“That is too long to put on a plaque, isn’t it?” I said as I brushed by Pearly and Billy to head out.

“He will run dispatch until I get back,” Billy declared.

“Are you out of your damn mind? I knew you were crazy, but insane? I didn’t think you had crossed that line yet,” Shy said. “He has only been here one day!”

“Well, you could learn a lesson from this young stallion.” Billy gushed as he patted Pearly on the back. I was enjoying this.

“And there we have it! A Billy in training. You are basically a certified douche now,” I said to Pearly. “Congratulations.”

“My dream come true, I tell you.” He responded far less enthusiastically than Billy had hoped.

“It is easy. Just shout out where it needs to go, and get one of these slackers to do the run. I will be back in an hour or two, so you don’t have to worry,” Billy explained. Shy just looked at a loss.

“Boy, you are on my lists. And to get off it, you have to do some major kissing ass,” Shy huffed as she took one of the used bikes from holding to use for her runs.

Billy left as soon as he tossed the head set on to Pearly. Me and Shy left to do our runs. It looked like Shy wanted to give Pearly a good old beat down, but he was doing as he was told, so she really couldn't be that mad at him. Billy was the one that she should be pissed at. Come to think of it I should be mad at him too! Wigs was one of us, and he was innocent. He was just caught up in my situation. How was I to find Wigs, and then it occurred to me. Pearly! He had to know where Wigs was; he worked for Mr. Wonderful.

I was done with my first part of the day routes quicker than anyone that day. When I got back Billy still wasn't there. What a douche. He was trying to cash in on Wigs. But at the same time this was my chance to get some answers from Pearly.

“Hey, I have to tell you, you look like you were born to kiss ass,” I commented. He was working behind the dispatch area like Billy told him to do. I sat on a stool that was by the dispatch area.

“Speaking of ass kissing... I know what you are going to ask me. Where is he? Aren't you supposed to be puckering them up?” Pearly pointed to my lips.

“My lips are chapped, but how about I shove my foot up there?” I responded. I don't like to kiss ass. Kicking it is another story.

“Well, by the way you handled that one guy last night, I'm not going to get on your bad side.” Pearly responded.

“Your on the job training is coming along nicely.” I winked at him.

“Well, I'm a quick learner. Especially when bodily harm is involved.” He said as he was going through the packages. “Arron, package has to go to Broadway,” Pearly called out, as he handed the envelope package to someone.

“No way, man, I'm on lunch,” He said with a smirk across his face.

“Must be nice to eat the entire day huh?” Pearly mumbled. I intervened.

“Can you please do this? If you don't I'm going to have to go to Broadway, and I just got back.” I said touching his arm.

“Well...uh...okay only because you asked, Luna,” Arron responded with a blush. He took the package and left the dispatch area.

“You see, Pearly? Just takes a woman's touch.” I said, as he shook his head.

“What does, girl?” Shy asked as she walked in. We’d had to go opposite ways today, so we didn’t have the chance to ride together.

“Showing these guys how stuff gets done.” I boasted. Shy stood next to me.

“You got that right. If I was behind that dispatch area I would have things done already, but noooooo Billy is a fool, and hired a bigger fool to replace him.” She smirked.

“Shy, he isn’t all that bad. He looks like a lost pup behind that dispatch area.” Shy merely snorted and crossed her arms.

“So, lets get down to the details. Where is he?” Pearly seemed a little hesitant with Shy around. “She knows everything. She wouldn’t leave me alone about it. And I thought I was annoying.” I rolled my eyes.

“Girl, you haven’t seen persistence yet.”

“And I hope I don’t have to,” I retorted as I gave Pearly a stern look. “Don’t make me let Shy loose on your butt.”

“All you have to know is that he is safe, and no one can find him but me,” He whispered.

“I’m pretty sure I have to know more than that,” I said as I stood up from the stool, which didn’t help because I dropped a few inches. Being short sucked sometimes, and other times had its advantages. Even though I couldn’t remember any of them at the moment. “So, the question that you have to answer is this: when can I see him?”

“I can’t really tell you right now. We don’t know. Those goons are looking for him. They keep replaying that news story from this morning like he robbed an old person out of their medication money,” Pearly said wearily.

“Wigs rob an old person? That isn’t Wigs. He would try to hit up a child before an old lady,” I replied. “Listen, they want me just as bad. Well, maybe not since they haven’t made me into a felon yet. If they do, I better have done something really bad. I want to be out there in style you know?” I said smiling at Pearly. And that is when the knot in my stomach returned in full force. Damn, why does it have to happen when I was having a somewhat decent day? I knew Wigs was safe. Billy wasn’t here, and no one was trying to beat my ass. Well, at least the first half of my day was good.

“Local authority figures have located fugitive Andrew Wax. He was just seen fleeing from a super market.” I heard the news lady inform. The TV had been on all day since the Wigs

incident. This lady must be happy as a nerd at a science fiction convention since she was having her fifteen minutes of fame over this story.

“We have our own Natasha Spitter on the scene covering the story live. Natasha, what do you have?”

“Well, I’m here with one of the employees of Quick Marts and she is saying that he went in and bought some what?” The reporter turned to the freakishly tall Quick Marts attendant.

“Well, first off: Hi mommmmmmmmm!!!” The attendant said. She was taking advantage of her two minutes of fame I see. *“Well, he was hooded up, and he came in walking with a limp. I found him to look suspicious, so I just eyed him down. He went straight towards the naughty magazines. That is a popular section in our store. He bought three nudie magazines, and when he lifted his head to pay I recognized him. I quickly called the cops once he left, and you know the rest. And another thing...Monica, I’m on TV bitch!!!”* I smiled. I liked this girl, even though she called the cops on Wigs but it wasn’t her fault.

“Enough of that...Jacenta back to you.” The reporter said. I stopped paying attention, and turned to Pearly.

“Well, don’t worry about not telling me where he is. I’m pretty sure I can figure it out all by myself. He is going to want to fondle those magazines that he just purchased.”

“Cops will be all over, and with the real cops will also be your favorite bunch of people.” Pearly reminded me.

“I was starting to miss the whole running for my life thing.” I had to go after Wigs even if it meant I would have the police force on my ass.

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Good Bye

“Girl, I’m coming with you!” Shy said as she gripped my arm. I was about to say no, but she was like me: stubborn and would have followed anyways.

“Okay, I may need you for a distraction. You are good at causing a ruckus.” She smirked at me, and we both walked our bikes outside, mounted them and were off. I thought I heard Pearly shouting after us but I didn’t care. I had to get to Wigs before the goon squad. I knew where that Quick Marts was. It was around fifteen minutes out. I couldn’t believe Wigs would risk going out just to see some boobs in a magazine. If Mr. Wonderful was as well connected as I

thought he was, he must have known that Wigs was on the most wanted list. Well, maybe not. As I was thinking I was weaving around people and traffic, and Shy had trouble keeping up.

“Girl, slow your ass down! It looks like you have a rocket up your ass,” Shy called out as she was trying to catch up.

“I told you this morning you were too heavy for that bike.”

“Oh, girl, I know you don’t want to get into a battle right now.”

“You are right, Wigs would be pissed that me and you did that without him.” I smiled. So did Shy. She knew she wasn’t big.

We got to the Quick Marts parking lot rather quickly, and there was still news crews and reporters all around. Wigs had to be long gone from here, but which way did he go? If he was smart, which I had doubted for quite sometime now, he wouldn’t go back to his house. I also hoped that Mr. Wonderful would be trying to locate him as well. My instinct had me going north. I don’t know why, so I just went with it, and deal with the problems as they came.

While trying to find Wigs it occurred to me that Billy was out there looking for him too! What would we do if he saw us trying to find Wigs or protect him? Then I saw some police troopers running a few blocks down.

“Over there.” I pointed in the general direction.

“What?” Shy said. I pointed over to where the police were racing down another block.

“Luna, what are you pointing at?” Shy questioned again.

“The cops over there, damn girl.” I replied.

“Luna, all I see are black dots moving quickly.”

“What?” I turned to look at her and felt my vision shift. This was odd. When I turned back to the scene the cops had become black dots to me as well. What was happening to me?

Awesome. Another super power I had no control over, but at this time I could not speculate.

“We have to hurry, I think they are up ahead by a few blocks.” I said trying to avoid the whole conversation on how I saw them from almost a mile off. And it worked. Shy didn’t question me at that moment. We went right towards the crowd of cops. The news story had really spread, since there were a lot of people around. Too much to control; what was Wigs thinking? And at that moment I saw Billy.

“Shy, Billy is over there,” I whispered, as we got closer. Shy seemed to notice when her eyes were able to see what mine were seeing.

“So what are we going to do?”

“I have to be the beauty and brains of this operation?”

“Please girl, you know the fellas look right past you to look at me.”

“Yeah cause you’re taller. Give me those six inch heels you wear, and it would be fair game,” I replied. Shy smiled. But honestly what was I going to do? Then it hit me. “Okay, you go ahead. Stall Billy. Tell him you are here to help him, and you want to split the reward money,” I suggested, hoping that Shy would go with the idea. After around thirty seconds of silence she smiled.

“Okay, I like the idea. Messing with Billy.” I sighed in a big relief.

“Okay, I’m gong to take the back alleyway, that I can try to cut the cops off and see if I can get Wigs out,” I said, and I hurried off without saying anything to Shy. I had to move with haste. I didn’t know how much time I had. I raced down the alleyway, and then made a left at the end, and raced down a side street. I was now on the other side of the crowd, and that is when I saw Wigs come out of the end of a side alleyway. Why didn’t the one alleyway I got my ass whooped in have an exit? Maybe if it did I wouldn’t be in this mess.

“Wigs,” I pretty much whispered and was amazed when he stopped at the sound of his name and looked in my direction. I waved at him, and he quickly ran towards me. He made it to me faster than I seen any human run. “Damn that serum stuff kicked in, huh?” I said as I embraced him.

“Luna, I’m just happy that you came to your senses and recognized how studly I am.” He said as I let go.

“Trust me you are still a dud, but you are my dud. I would love to catch up on how are your bullet wounds and things like that, but I’m pretty sure you have a bunch of people with pitch forks chasing you.”

“The wounds are healing faster than I thought they would, so I can run.”

“Okay, but if I leave your ass behind, I still get brownie points for trying to save your ass,” I said. Wigs nodded and he started running ahead. He was fast. I couldn’t believe how fast he was. What was in that serum? And is that one of the powers that Mr. Wonderful thought I had? For some odd reason I didn’t have any trouble keeping up with him on my bike. Actually I was ahead of him on my bike after a few minutes, pedaling faster than I ever have before. I felt we were far enough away from the crowd where they wouldn’t be able to find us.

“Look, Wigs!” I said, while pedaling, and I pointed to an alleyway where we could hide and not be seen. I pulled over and got off my bike. I normally didn’t ride that long, hard or fast. Certain, uh, places needed rest. Wigs entered after. He was a bit winded. I, on the other hand, was breathing without a problem.

“What is wrong with you? How is it that Mr. Wonderful let you out of his sight?”

“Well there is an easy answer to that...” He started. Then a knot in my stomach clenched, almost making me bend over in pain. I didn’t understand...we were safe. I didn’t see anyone out to get us. Then I was taken by surprise. Wigs shoved me into the wall. A pain shot right through my spine as I slid down to the ground.

“Is this the way we are showing our affection?” I shook off the hit, and stood up. I sensed him about to swing at me, I ducked and he missed. I regained my balance and quickly turned around to face Wigs.

“Okay, I understand all the times I rejected you may have made you crazy maybe, but this is a bit much, isn’t it?” What was he doing? Was the serum attacking his brain or something? Wigs rushed me, and I wasn’t ready, and he pinned me against the ground as I tripped and he landed on me. “Wigs, if you had waited a little longer I would have caved,” I responded trying to keep calm. Truth be told I was in total shock, and afraid at the same time. A good friend had turned against me. The same friend that saved my life was now trying to cause me harm.

“They want you, Luna, and I’m bringing you to them,” Wigs growled as he had his arm to my throat. My heart sank. He was working with them now? How long had this been going on?

“Well, I guess it is only fair since they were first in line,” I choked out. Even though I was hurt by Wigs words I needed out of this situation. Then a familiar burst of energy went through my body. “Wigs even though this one on one convo is wonderful, you are pissing me off.” I wedged my right arm against his chest and pushed. He seemed to jump off me, and he landed on the ground. I got up quickly, and turned to Wigs. He quickly stood up and faced me.

“I’m pretty sure that your ass got shot by them, so forgive me if I’m a bit confused. Is that the way you guys play?” I said trying to figure out why Wigs would all of a sudden try to bring me in instead of help me.

“Luna, you know I like the rough stuff.” He again rushed at me, but I was ready for this move. I side stepped him, and at the same time brought my elbow down across his spine, and he fell to the ground. I could feel the tears swell up in my eyes.

“WHY!” I cried out as he looked up at me.

“They want you. They say you can help cure me. They need to run test on you to see what makes you special!” Wigs growled.

“I’m not special! I’m the same girl that you have worked with for two years.” The tears started free falling onto my cheeks.

“This is a tough world, Luna, and people need to do what they need to do to survive. And turning you into them is the only way I will survive.”

“Mr. wonderful has a counter antigen! He can help you! Just stop it!” I said not even bothering to fight the tears. He stood up and faced me, he was no more than ten feet away from me.

“He tried that, but the antigen is only engineered for his dna, whatever that means. That was the final straw. If he could have helped me I would have stayed on this side, but I need to play for the team that is going to win.”

“Well, I guess you choose the wrong team! I’m not going to let you take me.” I was hurt badly, though not physically. This was bad, but at the same time I needed to pick myself up during this crucial time.

“Finally, you said something I liked.” A voice said from behind Wigs, and my heart jumped in a good way.

“You must love a dramatic entrance, or do you go off key words? If so, please tell me those words.” I sobbed.

“Wigs, I suggest you leave, and tell your boss that you will not get Luna. But you kids now a days don’t listen, so I don’t think you would take my suggestion.” Mr. Wonderful said. “I would ask you how in the world did you pull this one over on me, but at this time I really don’t give a crap.”

“I’m gonna have to second that.” My tears were starting to slow up. Wigs looked like he was going to attack, but he backed away.

“This isn’t over!”

“I guess being a bad guy has made you smarter,” I said as he ran pass me and out the alleyway. I felt so alone, even though I had Mr. Wonderful with me in the alleyway. I couldn’t hold back the tears, and let them free fall on my cheeks again. All of a sudden I felt a hand on my shoulder.

“Luna...”

“Why...” I couldn’t finish the sentence. I was chocked up. A close friend was now my enemy. Where was the loyalty in this world? I understand the thought process, but he still had time to save himself before making that decision. As I thought of it I cried harder. Who else was going to turn against me? I was emotionally exhausted, and didn’t want to fight this battle. I should have let him take me in. Then I felt myself embrace Mr. Wonderful, and he didn’t back away. Of course, he was dressed in all black and in a big hood so I couldn’t see his face, but I just shoved my face into his chest. He was a little shorter than Wigs but not by much. I sobbed some more. I know, I’m such a wuss, but due to the circumstance I think I’m allowed.

“What do we do now?” I asked.

“We fight back.” He responded.

Caught Up

-11-

Days Prior

“Where is she? A British voice demanded from a dark corner. There was a dimly lit bulb swaying on a wire. It casted strange shadows as it moved. The room was cold and damp with just a door letting people in and out; the room was surrounded by old brick walls and nothing else. Wigs was sitting with his arms and legs bound to an old chair.

“I’m not telling you anything! How about you give me your digits?” A fist came from the darkness and connected with his mouth.

“I guess that’s a no, huh?” He replied.

“Why don’t you just give in? She means nothing to you! She is just a girl.”

“Have you seen how hot she is? She isn’t just any other girl. Not even the strippers that I see on a nightly basis are as hot as her.”

“Listen kid, your loyalty has just gotten you beating after beating, why not just tell me where she is or where she lives. We don’t want to hurt her. We just want to speak to her,” Another voice came from the shadows.

“I’m pretty sure you plan on giving her the same treatment that you have given me today. I don’t know if you are aware...but it sucks. Nothing to write home about.” Another punch

connected with Wigs face. "I'm pretty sure that I would give you something if that fine British lady gave me a smooch!" Wigs spit out blood as he winked in her direction.

"Do you want to die here?" The British lady snapped nastily.

"If only you would kiss me. It may be worth it." Wigs said smiling, his mouth filled with blood.

"He isn't going to talk so, we might as well kill him! Nikko, you and James take him out and shoot him. He isn't going to talk to us."

"Yes, ma'am," James responded.

"Natalia, he hasn't done anything," Nikko countered. "We can just let him go."

"Just follow orders!"

"Natalia? That's a sexy name." Wigs said out loud but no one was paying any attention to him.

"No!" An eerie voice spoke silencing all of them.

"How many of you are you in this damn room?" Wigs asked as he looked around trying to figure out who else was in the room with him.

"But, sir?" Natalia was taken aback.

"He can be useful to us. Nikko is right: we will not kill him." The eerie voice said.

"I like this guy!" Wigs again spoke to no one in particular. This earned a sharp blow to his stomach. Wigs groaned. "This is getting old guys."

"Leave me alone with him. I want to talk to him alone." The eerie voice commanded.

"But, sir..."

"Now," The voice ordered. The three people that were in the room left, and it was just the eerie man and Wigs in the room.

"You think you are protecting a friend?"

"You know something your voice sounds familiar. Have you been on TV or something?" Wigs attempted to avoid the question.

"She belongs to us, you know," The voice replied. Wigs looked towards the direction of the voice.

"What do you mean by that?" She's a robot huh, I knew she was too hot to be a real live person." Wigs said. The voice in the room remained silent for a moment and then continued.

“If you don’t want to help us the easy way, then I’m going to make a deal with you.” The voice’s arm poked itself into the lit area of the room, and in his hand was holding a syringe containing an orange substance. He quickly injected the substance into Wigs’ arm.

“What was that? I’m not due for any shots for another six months!”

“That, my young friend, is basically your life on a timer,” The voice answered cryptically.

“Yeah, okay, you are so dramatic.” Wigs gulped.

“Listen to me. You bring the girl to me, and I will help you find the cure to what I just injected you with. You can come work for me. You will have no more troubles if you did that. Your financial worries will be taken care of. You mentioned strippers; you won’t even have to pay for them. They will be wanting to sit on your lap; perhaps other places, too, if you catch my meaning. Obviously my team can’t get the job done, but I have a feeling that you can.”

“Okay, dude, you are off your rocker. Where are the cameras? Is this a new TV show or something? Some twisted show where you beat the crap out of people and then yell: gotcha!”

“Think about what I offer. You can be loyal to me, and I will take care of you.” The voice said. Wigs remained silent about the offer. It was a chance to become someone, or at least, to live above the poverty level.

“Will you hurt her?” Wigs genuinely cared about Luna.

“You will not have to worry about her once she is in our possession,” The voice replied.

“What about your people that were whooping my ass?”

“Oh, they will not know that you are working separately from them. You are on your own on this one.” Wigs fell silent as his loyalty to Luna started to waiver.

“No! I can’t,” Wigs said.

“Well, so be it then. I will not kill you. Well, not today. My offer still stands if you want to reach me here is my direct number.” The man stuck a card into one of Wigs’ shirt pockets while still remaining in the shadows, and then the man turned around and opened the door, and left.

Present Day:

Wigs ran away from the crowd that had just come around another back alleyway. The cops were still after him, since he was a wanted felon. He remembered the number to call if he wanted back in with plan, he had to get rid of the card, because Mr. Wonderful would have found it so he memorized the number. He now believed the eerie voice about the whole life is on

a timer thing. He had to find a public phone and soon, because, if not, he was going to be done for. Not even the people that worked for the voice knew about his involvement, so they would probably shoot him on sight.

“Wigs ducked into another alleyway then onto a main street. There was no one trying to kill him this second. He didn’t have any time to lose though. They would soon find him. Then he saw it: a pay phone. He ran towards it, unhooked the phone, he had to toss the card that the man in the shadows gave him because he didn’t want Mr. Wonderful to find anything out. Wigs took out two quarters; his dirty index finger hitting 2-3-1-5-5-1-5-1-5-5. The phone rang, and rang, and then a familiar voice picked up on the other line.

“Okay, I’m in. I will help you catch her and bring her in. Only if you can save me, do what ever it takes.” Wigs listened to the answer on the other end of the line, and he was pleased with the answer that he was given. He kept listening as further instructions were issued as to what to do next. “Okay, I will meet you there...also, since you want me to inform you about crazy stuff, there is someone else that has this power. I haven’t seen him. He saved me from the hospital, but I have not seen his face so I can’t really tell you that much about him.” Wigs again just listened. Then he heard the crowd that was after him make their way on to the main street. “Oh, and another thing, which will help me do my job better, can you please get the towns people off my ass! I have to go before I become the towns next bbq.” Wigs hung up the phone and he ran up the hill, now allying himself against Luna.

Somewhere else in the city:

Natalia was watching the crowd that was after Wigs when her phone vibrated in her pocket. She quickly reached into her pocket and hit the answer button.

“Sir, we almost have him.” Natalia boasted enthusiastically. She waited her instructions. “But sir, you said that you wanted him captured.” Natalia’s defiance earned her an earful. “Yes, sir, I will contact the news, and let them know about the mistake.” Natalia hit end on her phone and sighed.

“What is it?” Nikko asked.

“I don’t know. He wants us to make sure Wigs is left alone.” Natalia responded with annoyance clear in her voice.

“What? Why?” Nikko looked concerned.

“I don’t know. It doesn’t make sense, and when I dared question him he verbally ripped me a new ass hole.

“Better you than me I say.” Nikko smirked, but was glad that it was only Natalia and himself. James would have reported Natalia.

“You ever wonder if maybe she isn’t the one we should be trying to get? Maybe she is the good guy?” Natalia murmured as she zoned out looking at the crowd of people.

“That right there will get you killed. And don’t tell me that little girl is growing on you?” Nikko looked curiously at Natalia.

“Oh no, I still want to whoop her ass, and you should, too! She gave you a walloping that no man should admit that they got.” Natalia smirked as she looked at Nikko.

“I told you: I didn’t feel like shooting anyone that night.” Nikko rubbed the back of his head. “I think I did pretty good, especially against a hyped up girl.”

“I’ll give you that then. But now we have to contact the police and news stations to drop the hit on Wigs.” Natalia said.

-12-

Sneak Attack

“Take a few days. You are going to need it.” Mr. Wonderful muttered soothingly as I released him.

“Hold it.”

“What?” He asked clearly concerned for me.

“Don’t you dare tell me you are growing some kind of heart!” I smiled at him, as he retreated into the shadowy corner.

“Oh, you won’t be saying that in a few days. But I’m going to take that compliment and cherish it until your next insult,” Mr. Wonderful replied.

“You always do everything half-assed, you know that?”

“That only lasted a few seconds.”

“Probably a world record, I know.” I took a deep breath and wiped some tears off my cheeks. I couldn’t believe I was crying so much. Wigs really had hurt me. I just couldn’t believe that he was one of the bad guys now.

“Get out of here, and go home or work or whatever you kids do these days. When you get home make sure you let your roommate know to stay clear of Wigs at all cost. He is an enemy now.”

“Thanks for making sure I got the point, chief.” I replied. “I guess I should get to work. It will get my mind off things.” No answer. I expected that. I walked out of the alleyway and into the clearing. I saw some of the crowd coming towards me, but they wouldn’t really think anything of me. I wasn’t the one with my face plastered on the news cast. I got on my bike and I went the way I came from.

All I could think about as I went back was Wigs. I held my tears in. How could he turn on me? What in the hell did the British Bitch say to him to get him to switch sides? This was hurting me more and more each time I thought about it, but my brain couldn’t think of anything else. What would happen if it came to blows? I couldn’t really fight him. The alleyway wasn’t a fight. It was more like a pillow fight that girls have when they sleep over each other’s house.

When I got to ‘On the Run’ Billy was back, and he looked so pissed. That made me feel better. I saw Shy, and she was smiling. I went over to her, “What happened?”

“Well, Pearly handed out ten wrong deliveries today. So, Billy has to back-track to see what packages went where.” Shy was nearly bursting with joy. I smiled. This made me forget about Wigs a little.

“Told you, Billy, hire a woman to do the job next time, and you will get great results,” Shy said.

“Yeah, and you should also hire a woman to do your motivational speeches. We may actually be motivated.” I added.

“You know what? You guys are absolutely right! You two should also help me track down those packages,” Billy retorted.

“Second thought...I think you are the right ‘Man’ for the job,” I countered and hurried to my locker. Shy joined me.

“So?” Shy looked at me wanting some information.

“Not, good,” I said dropping my head. I really didn’t want to talk about Wigs right now. I was trying to forget about the whole ordeal, and I don’t know how I was going to manage that since I was probably going to confront him a lot sooner than later. “Well, he is playing for the bad guys now, if you must know.” I sighed trying to hold back tears again.

“Huh? You telling me that...” Shy was interrupted by someone.

“Hey, turn it up! Wigs is on TV again.”

“Andrew Wax is now a free man. Police officials informed us moments ago it was a mistake in identity, and that he is cleared of all charges. The man hunt and the reward money are retracted...” I stopped listening to the TV, and looked at Shy.

“He tried to take me in. They must have offered him some type of deal, or an extra life or something.” I closed my locker, and went into the lunch area.

“Girl, I’m so sorry. You know they probably said money and he was like...”

“Ching ching.” I finished the sentence for her. Shy smiled. I really hope she didn’t become a causality in this craziness. I was going to need her more than I expected. I had to make sure to talk to Mr. Wonderful about making sure that she is protected at all cost. If I lost her I don’t know what I would do with myself.

“Hey,” I said looking around for Pearly. “Where is Pearly?”

“Billy sent him on a long ass run. He won’t be back for a while. Probably not until closing.”

The rest of the day went smooth. Well, as smooth as it could. Shy and I rode together. I told her I didn’t want her staying at her place any longer. Staying with Dee and I would be better. Wigs lived too close to her, and she would be in danger. She started to protest, but I gave her the ‘Luna danger look’: she caved. She said only for a few days. That was enough for me. I needed to know what Wigs was capable of. I don’t think he would hurt Shy. I hadn’t thought he would bring me down either, though he did a pretty good job of convincing me otherwise in the alleyway.

We arrived at Shy’s apartment to get some of her stuff so that she didn’t have to share my limited apparel. She lived alone and had a pretty nice place. I’m pretty sure she knew how to sweet talk the building owner, but honestly I really didn’t want to know how she could afford this snazzy apartment. I still liked mine better because of the amazing view I often got lost in. Maybe I would do that tonight, and just let all my problems drift. She was pretty quick in gathering her stuff. No wonder a lot of guys liked her. She wasn’t like most girls that took forever to get things. We got outside her apartment building, when the knot clenched in my stomach. What now?

“It wasn’t smart to come back here. And I’m the dumb one.” Wigs said from behind us. I spun on my heel and put Shy between me and him behind me in one fluid movement.

“Oh trust me you are still the king.” I replied.

“Come with me? Make this easy! Or things will get messy.”

“Oh, and here I thought you liked it messy,” I retorted while I got into my fighting stance. I guess fighting a friend wasn’t any different than fighting a foe. Well, he wasn’t my friend any more. This was so damn confusing. Shy was standing in shock. Some things are hard to believe until seen with your own eyes.

“Shy, baby. You’re looking good.” Wigs addressed Shy, which seemed to bring her back into reality.

“You won’t be once I’m done with you,” She attempted to get by me and to Wigs. I stopped her.

“You don’t want to mess with him. He’s been injected with stuff you can’t find at the pharmacy. You don’t want to get tangled up with that.” I again moved between them. He was probably going to whoop my ass. I was wondering where Mr. Wonderful was. Wigs rushed at me and grabbed my arm twisted it up my back and pressed me flush against him.

“You always wanted to cop a feel. I would have thought it would be under different circumstances.” I shoved my knee in his groin, which caused him to let me go and hunch over. I kicked him in the gut and he slid a few feet on the pavement right into a fire hydrant.

“Double whammy.” I said. “Shy you’ve got to go. You know where to go. I will meet you there.”

“But...”

“Go! Now! I will be right behind you,” I lied. I had no idea if I was going to make it out of this. However, she did as I asked and got on her bike and was off like she had a rocket up her ass.

“Now I know why they want you!” Wigs growled as he got up.

“Hey, this girl is in demand. Too bad you ain’t gonna be apart of that.” I said. He made his way towards me faster than I’d anticipated and my legs were out from under me before I could react. I fell hard against the pavement. “Damn, didn’t see that one coming.” I said springing up, just to have a kick land against my stomach. I fell backwards.

“I told you this was going to get messy,” Wigs said as he attempted to grind a foot in my face. I quickly rolled out of the way, and got up to face him.

“For some odd reason I thought you were a fibber,” I replied. He quickly ran towards me and put his hands on my shoulders. I did the same to him even though; it was harder since he was taller. I felt another burst of energy run through me, so I swiped his arms away from me and punched his chest. He didn’t fall but slid backwards about ten feet. I didn’t know what this power was, but so far it came in handy. Wigs came walking back towards me. He spit up some blood. I dropped my guard. I didn’t want to do this. The Wigs I knew still had to be in there. He just had to be. Maybe if I reasoned with him.

“You don’t have to do this, you know that. Whatever they are saying to you, we can do better. Just give us time,” I pleaded. Trying to convince him to return with me. “Mr. Wonderful will come up with a cure for that serum.”

“I don’t want a cure! I just want it to be altered so that I won’t die! And they can give me that.”

“Damn, did they also put a price tag on the Brooklyn Bridge?” I put my hands on my hips to show him I didn’t want to fight. Big mistake. I felt my head hitting the ground before I could process how I got there.

“What happened to the whole guys not hitting girls thing?” I muttered right before my lip got busted open. I got up, and then I felt a sharp pain in my back, Wigs just kicked me back to the ground.

“I did offer you a peaceful way out,” Wigs reminded me.

“Oh, the whole come with my thing? You know I don’t pay attention to anything that you say.” I tried to get back up again after my comment, but he stepped on my left wrist. I screamed as pain shot up my arm. This was it. These guys were going to get what they wanted. He removed his foot, and reached down to lift me up. “And I thought we were friends,” I choked out. I lifted both my knees to my stomach before planting my feet right into his chest as hard as I could. He flew back and to the ground. I was hurting, but I had to run. I think I pissed him off, because he caught up to me within seconds. He swung me into a big ass tree. Out of all the places this tree could’ve taken root why did it have to be here. I must have hit my head again, because the ground started spinning as I fell towards it. I couldn’t keep my balance.

“Well, since you can barely stand I guess I can take it easy on you...” Wigs started to say, but I didn’t feel anything. Maybe I was slipping into unconscious, but then I heard him: Mr. Wonderful.

“Wigs, I suggest you leave.”

“You again,” Wigs growled. I didn’t hear any fighting. I closed my eyes until I threw up.

“That is, nasty,” Mr. Wonderful commented.

“I think I did pretty good considering I just got my ass put on a platter and handed to me.” I tried to stand up, but began to fall back down. He quickly caught me.

“By the way you are LATE,” I said, and then everything went black.

I could hear voices, but my head was pounding. My bed felt so good right now. I tried to move my left arm only to have a sharp pain greet me. I just remembered I just got an ass whooping from an old friend. I guess whoever was in the room didn’t see me move. I kept my eyes shut, and pretended that I was sleeping to hear what they were saying.

“How did this happen???” I heard Dee question. I hope the question was being directed at Shy.

“Baby, she is still alive. That is all that matters. Lets go to your room.” I heard a male voice interject. That must have been Jon, maybe a Tim, or an Alvin.

“Jon, shut up. She is badly injured! I think nookie is that last thing on my mind!” I heard Dee reply back. Wow! She’d stayed with the same guy over two days, and she was more worried about me than nookie. I had to keep listening to hear what else was going to shock me. There was a first time for everything...

“I don’t know. I was walking home when I saw her like this. No one was around,” Pearly explained. What was Pearly doing here? Especially in my room? Where was Shy? I didn’t hear her. I didn’t feel good about this. If Wigs found her and took her, I wouldn’t be able to live with myself. Then I heard her and I started to calm down.

“I got the warm towel to wash her cuts with,” She said. I could hear the sadness in her voice. All that I cared about was that she was alive and well. I could take a few bruises. I felt the bed shift with her weight. Then felt her clean some of the cuts on my arm.

“Boo.” I mumbled. Shy was startled and the warm water that she had in a bowl splashed on her shirt. Another pain shot through my arm, and also in my back, but I think it was well worth it.

“Oh girl, you are gonna get it,” She said smiling. The others were smiling as well.

“Hey Jon, sorry to keep you from nookie. Next time I’ll schedule my ass beating around your nookie schedule.” I said. He didn’t say anything, but he walked into the other room.

“Girl, what happened?” Dee joined us on the bed.

“Wow, a slumber party, huh?” I said then looked up at Pearly. “Thank you for finding me and bringing me home.”

“I’m pretty sure that is the nicest thing you have said since I’ve met you.” He smiled. Dee saw this and just stared at Pearly. Uh oh, he was the next ‘The One’. I was pretty sure that Jon was on Dee’s shit list due to his comments.

“Don’t get used to it. I’m not planning on getting a whooping all the time.” I smiled.

“I’m going to get going so that you guys can have your pillow fight.” He winked and then left.

“What happened?” Dee asked again and again. I didn’t want her to know anything, truthfully. The less she knew the better off she would be.

“I really don’t know,” I lied. “I was walking home, and this group of gangsta teenage girls wanted to make a point since I was on their turf.” I shrugged.

“Really!” Dee said in surprise.

“Yes. Craziess I say. Just crazy.” I gestured with my right arm for dramatic effect. Shy smiled. She knew exactly what had happened. I winked at her, and just kept along with the story, at this time I needed to.

“Oh, don’t worry I will have the cops called on them.”

“Dee, don’t worry, I got a few punches in. I think they got the point.” That was the truth, well kind of.

“How long was I out?” A sharp pain ran through my head. I remembered hitting a tree that had no give to it.

“Not long. Pearly brought you in an hour ago.” Shy answered.

“How are you holding up?” I was concerned about Shy.

“Girl, I’m not the one that looks like I got into a fight with a rabid dog,” She said.

“Pretty big ass rabid dog, huh?” I said. Shy smiled. “Honestly though I think I just want to call it a night. I don’t know what it is about an ass whooping that gets a person tired.” I really was exhausted and for some odd reason I felt safe. It made me wonder if Mr. Wonderful was

near by. Both Dee and Shy hugged me carefully before they left the room. I just turned my head, looked at the wall and let a few tears slide down my cheek. This was real. Wigs, the freakish powers I seemed to have, and everything else that threw itself at me. What was I to do? There wasn't a day that passed that I wasn't faced with tough questions. Only to be responded to with tougher answers. I closed my eyes, and dosed off.

I was running again, and this time I knew it was coming. A dark figure or creature...I didn't know what it was but I knew it wanted me. I just kept running up the sidewalk hoping I could run from it, or maybe tire it out. I kept running as the black figure slid up the sidewalk after me. There was nowhere I really could hide. I was out of breath, but I still kept running as fast and as far as I could but I knew that it was no use. This sucker was going to catch up to me. I couldn't run anymore, and I needed to take a rest. I stopped and hunched over putting my hands on my knees. I looked to my left and saw the figure standing there looking at me with those red eyes. "What do you want from me!?" I gasped out, trying to catch my breath. The figure just stood in silence. "Okay, how about an easier question. Who or what are you?" Still silence. "Not much of a talker are ya?" I said scared out of my mind. I started running down the street again. How to escape this thing? Then I did the only thing that made sense; I got ballsy. I turned around to try and confront it and it was gone. I breathed a sigh of relief. Being ballsy worked. I turned back around and...

"Wigs?" I choked out. "What are you, but when..." I said. I looked at Wigs but he seemed off. He was pale. And his eyes were red like the black figure.

"Luna, stop running. You can not escape it."

"Escape what?" He just looked at me. "That serum crap is effecting your head huh,"

"Luna, you can not escape what your running from. You must come face to face with it."

"What are you talking about?" I raised my voice to Wigs.

"The thing that you are running from is...your destiny!"

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Rest and Relaxation

I awoke from the nightmare, or whatever it was. I was drenched again, but I didn't scream. Finally! Finally I knew what the stupid black gross blob wanted, but even though I found out

what it wanted, and what it represented it did throw me a curve ball! What in the world was my destiny? Even my dream life is riddled with riddles. I tried moving only to have a sharp pain shoot through my arm. I looked at my alarm clock and it read 7:30. I was running late! And I didn't want to hear Billy's two word speech. I had to be out of the apartment in fifteen minutes. I know impossible for a girl to do. I'm so happy I'm not an ordinary girl. I got out of bed, and was greeted with pain all over my body. This task was going to be harder than I thought, but I was determined to make it to work. I quickly made my way into the living room area, and Shy wasn't there. Why hadn't she woken me up? Maybe she was going to make an excuse to Billy. What a horrible mistake.

I made it out of the apartment within ten minutes. Pretty damn good since I was hurting, and only had one good arm. I made it into work right under the buzzer. Billy was about to tell me something, and I held my hand up.

"Give me one second and me and you can get into it, boss man," I forestalled him. I went towards the locker area where Shy was.

"Eh hem!" I over dramatically cleared my throat as Shy was fiddling with her back pack.

"Oh, hey girl." She said absently before turning to face me.

"Oh, there better be more words to accompany, oh, hey girl." I was annoyed that she had left me hanging in the apartment.

"Girl, you got your ass whooped. I told Billy you were mugged and beaten, and I guess he seemed to be okay with it."

"I'm glad I look the part then."

"How did you even get out of bed this morning?" Shy looked shocked.

"Girl power," I replied smirking. I then walked over to the dispatch area to speak to Billy.

"So, I thought your gal pal was lying to me, but you looking like crap confirms the mugging story." Billy observed as I approached him.

"I would state the obvious with you looking like crap every day, but I don't like to repeat myself," I retorted.

"As much as it pains me to say this..." Billy coughed. "You are off your probation period. Now scram. Go home, before I put you to work!"

"I heard rumors of a heart being in your body, but I just thought they were rumors," I replied with a smile. Like I said before. Billy is a pain in the ass, but he is a fair person.

“Well, I’m not a monster. Plus, I need you at full strength!” He said as he looked down at some type of paper work.

“Ah, that is the Billy I have come to talk crap about.” I left and met Shy by her locker before Billy changed his mind.

“Can you believe he is letting me leave and go home? All I have to do is make it home without getting beat up, and I can say I had a good day.” I smiled at Shy. At that moment I heard a familiar voice.

“What are you doing here?” Pearly’s concern was unexpected but evident in his voice. I turned to face him.

“Pretty sure that I’m employed by this fine establishment.”

“You need your rest! And a doctor, if it wasn’t for your abilities you would have died!” Pearly attempted to speak quietly but failed.

“Please, speak a little louder. I don’t think everyone heard you,” I whispered sternly.

“Hey, Luna, are you alright?” A squeaky voice came from behind us. A brown hair kid probably about the same age as me with glasses and freckles stood there. I guess he over heard us, or just saw how bad I looked.

“I’m fine, Brent.” I didn’t mean to, but I sounded a little rude. Pearly lecturing me was putting me in a bad mood.

“Oh, I’m sorry. I’m glad that you are alright.” He sounded dejected. Brent was about to walk away, but I needed to apologize.

“Brent, wait. I’m sorry. I’m fine really. Thanks for asking. Yazmin over here is just being a thorn in my ass.” He stared at me for a such a long moment that I was going to tell him to take a picture it will last longer, but he smiled and walked away.

“I think you made his day,” Pearly commented.

“Well, you are not making mine.” I said grumpily.

“You really aren’t too nice after an ass whooping, huh.”

“You better hope it doesn’t happen again...”

“Luna, go home, and I’ll bring something to eat when my shift ends. We can just have a relaxing girls night,” Shy interrupted.

“Finally, a good idea for today.” I winked at Shy.

“So, it is a deal,” Shy responded.

“Yeah, and make sure Pearly brings you to my place. Wigs is around. We do not know what he is capable of.” I hugged Shy, and poked Pearly and then left. I don’t know how I was going to feel about this free day. I was going to be by myself in my apartment, which gave me time to dwell on my dream, and what was the next course of action. Maybe I would sleep the whole thing off until Shy arrived. I didn’t know. As a ‘On the Run’ employee I had not had a day off pretty much ever, so this was amazing. Who would have known an ass whooping is all I needed for me to have a day off.

I arrived at my apartment an hour later. I had taken my time to get home. The day was nice, so I walked the scenic route. And since there were no knots in my stomach I didn’t have to worry about anything. However, the figure in my living room that wasn’t Dee or any of her ‘Ones’ startled me.

“Always keeping a man waiting,” Mr. Wonderful commented as he looked out the window.

“Cut me some slack. Maybe if someone whooped your ass you would be walking a little slower,” I replied.

“And all the other times you left me waiting?”

“Oh, that is just me playing hard to get.” I grinned.

“No wonder you are still single,” Mr. Wonderful replied. I sensed a smirk cross his face.

“I know you have seen the low lives out there. I know this cause you are one of them.” I playfully said. “Well, not really since you are saving my life and all.” I smiled.

“Luna, coming from you that doesn’t hurt as much as it would if it was coming from someone else.” He still hadn’t turned around. Why was he hiding from me?

“Well, you know I’m glad that you developed some thick skin since you met me. I sensed that you were somewhat sensitive.” I went to sit on one of the stools. I sensed that Mr. Wonderful wouldn’t want me to get too close to him.

“We have to move with haste.”

“Wow, another cryptic message. Go figure,” I complained as I shifted on the stool slowly so that I didn’t hurt myself.

“Well, a few things happened that I had not expected. First thing…”

“Let me guess! I love guessing games.” I interrupted him. “Me being some what of a humanitarian.”

“Wow, you really are good at this game.” He responded, still looking out the window.

“Wigs wasn’t supposed to be a complication just a causality. If they run any blood test on him they will see traces of my antigen, and they will try to work out a better serum. They have the resources to work faster than I do. Meaning I have a lab not the equipment or the people. It just a matter of time before they find out how to perfect the serum.” Mr. Wonderful said as I gulped. He sounded dejected. That wasn’t good.

“Well, you weren’t lying about the whole moving with haste thing, huh?” I responded.

“What do you want me to do?”

“Be ready. I need you to be ready to fight and endure. This is a battle that is going to be long. No one is safe, not even me. Not your friends...”

“Hold up there Debbie Downer. I will make sure that doesn’t happen. And I’m pretty sure that it is a great idea that you don’t let that happen either.” A sharp pain ran through my back. I wanted to sleep. Why couldn’t this wait until later? Oh yeah...we have to move with haste.

“Well, I’m telling you what you need to know. I’m not going to sugar coat it,” He retorted.

“How about you just dip it into a bowl of sugar. Sometimes we need some sugary, happy thoughts. This world needs it. I need it.” I was tired of hearing it couldn’t be done, or things of that nature.

“Well, I don’t have a big enough bowl.”

“Don’t worry it doesn’t have to be one bowl.”

“I will call upon you. Soon. Will you be ready for what is to come? You faced Wigs with all his power, and you almost died.”

“Dramatic much?” I questioned.

“Well, based on how you look...” Again I sensed him smiling.

“And here I thought you were a well mannered gentleman.” I playfully said. “I held my own against baldy. It won’t happen again as long as you get your ass there faster.” I replied.

“I’m an old man, cut me some slack,” He said.

“What can I say? You spoiled me.” I smirked, but I was beginning to feel weak.

“Well, that is going to stop soon. For right now, I’m going to go. There’s work to do.” He said as he made his way to the door. I still couldn’t see his face. His hood was covering his entire head. I guess when the time came he would reveal his true identity.

“So you are telling me you walked right into my apartment through the front door? That isn’t very ninja of you,” I said surprised.

“Picking the lock is so ninja of me.” Then he was gone. As quickly as I could I tried to go after him. I needed more answers, but when I looked out the door into the hallway he was gone.

“At least he didn’t leave me talking to myself this time,” I said to myself, and closed and locked the door. I wasn’t going to think about anything today besides the girls night I was going to have. I didn’t want to think about Wigs or that stupid drama about me and my destiny, or that I was some sort of key. I went into my room, and curled up under my covers with my arm still hurting, and my back joining in on the pain, along with every other pain in my body. But I was home and relaxed. Which was all I could ask, because by the way Mr. Wonderful was talking I wasn’t going to have many more of these days.

Somewhere else in the City:

Wigs stood in a dimly lit room. A figure was lurking behind a desk hiding in the shadows.

“So, you mean to tell me that she escaped again. Even after the beating she sustained?”

“Sir, she was mine, but that stupid guy interrupted. He is faster and stronger than me.” Wigs coughed. He was uneasy.

“So, it must be him then.” The voice said.

“Who?” Wigs blurted out without even thinking.

“You do not need to know who this man is. All you have to worry about is getting the girl. Stay out of my other teams way. They know nothing about you, and I do not want to have to explain myself to them,” The voice responded.

“You’re thinking about killing them?”

“I knew you weren’t as dumb as you look.” The voice chuckled.

“Hey, I can surprise people, you know.”

“Well, surprise me by trying to get the girl.”

“I will. I know where she works, and who she hangs out with. You will get her. But I have a question...” Wigs stopped waiting for approval from the voice in the shadows.

“Go ahead, I’m feeling kind today.”

“How long do I have? I mean your people said probably a few days to a week and half. It has been a few days already. And that guy injected me with some antigen to see if it would keep me alive longer.”

“What!” The body that belonged to the voice stood up in the shadows.

“Well, yeah, I didn’t think it would be important to you.”

“I take it back. You are dumber than I thought.” The owner of the voice remained still and quiet for what seemed to be forever. “I would like you to go down to the lab, maybe, just maybe, there is still a trace of that antigen. We can try to duplicate it.”

“Sir, the man said it wasn’t going to work because it wasn’t catered to my dna,” Wigs explained a little desperately.

“We have the best team to work on that. Hopefully you can live longer than I expected. Now go.”

“Yes, sir.” Wigs said and he almost ran out of the room. A ringing in the room drew the voices attention. The figure in the room looked down at a red light that was going off on the phone. He pushed the button down.

“Yes, Natasha.” He replied, in a different tone than what he used with Wigs.

“*Chief Shopper is awaiting you in the lobby,*” Natasha his assistant replied through the intercom.

“Please send the Chief of Police in,” The voice answered, as he turned on the lights.

Luna’s Apartment

Dee decided to postpone any late night sex adventures to spend time with Shy and I. I was shocked. She gave up a piece of ass, to just hang out with me to make me feel better. Maybe Mr. Wonderful was right. There was another war coming.

We sat in my room and chatted through the night. I loved this girl night thing. It beat running away from the goons or decoding cryptic messages by Mr. Wonderful, and getting my ass beat up. Shy loved doing my hair. It wasn’t easy to stay still because my body still hurt. I must have squirmed too much for her so; she just left it in pigtails. Shy and I grilled Dee about her skanky sex life. Shy and I commented that she could be inducted to the hall of fame of sex. Dee must have taken that as a compliment because it was then when she launched into some of

her sexcapade stories. Come to think of it I really didn't know how I wanted the comment to come across, but we listened. Me and Shy just looked at each other at times and just smiled. Shy brought ice cream, which was quite expensive so she must've really wanted me to feel better. Needless to say, the tube of ice cream didn't stand a chance with the three of us hanging around.

"So...that guy that was here last night. You know the guy that brought you back here...what's his story?" Dee asked. I rolled my eyes. She wanted a piece of Pearly.

"No! You have enough men to scandalize," I said.

"Luna, if you have a thing for him, tell me, and I'll back off."

"The only thing I have for him is a kick in the ass," I murmured as I shoveled more ice cream in my mouth.

"Luna, he isn't bad looking. And you have terrible taste," Shy pointed out.

"Girl, what are you talking about? Are you trying to say I have picked some defective men?"

"Defective is an understatement. How about that one guy with so many pimples on his face you could play connect the dots." Shy chuckled.

"I say that was a learning experience." I chuckled along with Shy. "What about you! You went out with the kid that couldn't pronounce your name. that's how we got Shy! At least he was good for something." I smirked. Now I remembered how we came up with her name.

"How about me?" Dee chimed in.

"Dee, we do not have enough time in this life to go through the guys you have brought home that would not have made the list." I said.

"Well, this world needs loving. I provide that." Dee winked suggestively.

"How can I argue with that? That makes perfect sense! Shy, let's go and share our love!"

"I don't know, Luna. Would we want to put Dee out of the loving business?"

"Trust me...there is enough to go around if we wanted to try." This is what I needed. Just to get away from everything. Dee and Shy helped me with that. The conversation shifted but I wasn't paying attention. I just looked at my friends and my thoughts drifted to what Mr. Wonderful had said. They will come through them to get to me. Was I ready? Was I ready to fight? Especially to fight Wigs again if I had to? I was thrown into a fight I didn't want no part of. Who was behind it? I don't know. All I knew was I would fight to keep my friends and the

people I cared about safe and out of harms way. This was something I didn't know I had in me until a week or so ago. I cherished that feeling with every breath.

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Testing

Somewhere else in the City:

A man in a white full-length lab jacket stood in the same room that Wigs had stood in a day ago. The lights were dim, and a figure sat in a chair in the darkness.

"I hope you have news." The voice said.

"Sir, there is something in his blood stream, but we are having trouble isolating it properly to duplicate it. You see, at first it prevents the serum from eating away at the immune system, but in only a few hours the antigen weakened enough to let the serum attack the immune system again."

"Can you figure out how to stop it?"

"Sir, at this time no. The antigen isn't putting up a long enough fight for us to study it. Whoever is making this antigen and using it is clearly on a timer as well. They must be taking at least a few doses of it a day. Maybe more, but soon enough the antigen will be ineffective."

"And I thought I was going to hear bad news."

"But sir..." The man in the lab coat started.

"I think you should quit while you are ahead. Continue to work on the antigen and keep me up to speed on the progress," The voice interrupted. He reached out one hand out of the shadows and dismissed the doctor. When the doctor walked out Natalia walked in.

"You wanted to see me, sir?" Natalia asked.

"How is the search coming for the girl?"

"Well, we haven't had another encounter with her since the hospital incident. We lost track of the boy as well. His tracker has gone off the grid. Whoever this girl is working with is good," Natalia responded.

“Obviously better than you considering they are a step ahead of you.” The voice angrily said. Natalia didn’t appreciate the tone that was taken with her. She was trying the best she could, but someone was always interfering with her progress.

“Sir, this guy is super human...I guess that is the best way to put it. He has people working for him, so it is hard to get a hold of him. He moves in the shadows. How are we supposed to take him down if we can’t see him?”

“I’m am paying you to, am I not? I want some results or I will find someone that can!” The voice commanded. “Now go get me some results...”

“Yes sir.” Natalia responded and then left the room.

Luna’s Apartment:

I awoke at ten in the morning. Shy told me that Billy gave me another day off. And guess what? It was a paid day off. I had to ride this wave until Billy got back to his douche self. My bad arm was wrapped in a bandage. I don’t know what that was going to do, but it was the thought that counted. I took a quick shower, decided to have a cup of coffee, and took my time getting ready. I had decided to have lunch with Shy today: my treat.

I walked outside without my bike. I just wanted to walk and let the fresh air hit my face, and hopefully that would be the only thing that would. The thought crossed my mind that maybe I shouldn’t be risking being out like this but the job wasn’t that far by foot. I didn’t have anything else to do. Time flew by this last week and a half, and I realized that it was Friday. Maybe Jnc0 was the way to go tonight. Just hang out with some of our friends from work.

I joined Shy for some lunch surprising her with sandwiches I bought for the both of us. Billy threatened to put me to work, but then I told him that I will just slow everything up with my bad arm and all, and he bought it. He was so easy, or maybe I was just that good. I’m not going to toot my own horn... why not, maybe I was that good. I noticed Brent walking alone towards a vacant table. I did feel bad for the other day with the whole snapping at him and all.

“Hey, Brent,” I called over to him. He looked at me with shock. He looked towards his left, and towards his right, and then pointed to himself. I chuckled. “Are you the only Brent that

works here? If not then the invitation is everyone that is named Brent.” He started walking towards us.

“Girl, what are you doing? He is a total geek. I’m pretty sure that not even Dee would give him the time of day,” Shy whispered.

“You know what they say, geeks need loving too!” I smiled.

“I’m so...sorry. Were you saving that table for someone?” He stammered then looked at the floor. This kid was really shy.

“Sorry, I’m not on the floor, so you’re going to have to look at me to speak to me.”

“Or you can just go back to that table,” Shy blurted out. Brent looked dejected and was on his way back to the other table without saying a word. I smacked Shy’s arm.

“Don’t listen to her. She is just cranky because I get to leave here when lunch is over, but she has to endure our wonderful leader. Come have lunch with us.” He stopped walking and quickly turned his head in confusion. “Yep, I know the concept of lunch is kind of hard to get your mind around, but I think we can help you with that.”

“I’m sorry. You have never asked me to have lunch before. Or to do anything for that matter.” He said as he walked back towards us.

“Wow, we are making progress. We have full sentences and everything.” I said playfully. “Well, you asking me how I was yesterday showed me that you had some kind of heart, and that impressed me. So, you get to dine with two classy ladies.” I smiled. Brent smiled along with me. He pulled up a chair, but he didn’t sit too close to use. “We have been vaccinated and everything, so you don’t have to worry about catching anything from us.”

“Oh, I’m flattered.”

“You hear that Shy? How many guys would say they are flattered to eat with two girls like us? Usually they throw cheesy pick up lines at us within two minutes of meeting us.”

“Well, I mean he is a geek.”

“You always have a way with words,” I replied as I saw Brent’s face drop a little.

“Don’t worry about her. A geek hurt her feelings once, and she hasn’t really forgiven geeks since then.” I said. Brent smiled. “So what you got there?” I pointed at his brown paper bag. He wasn’t pulling anything out of it.

“Food.”

“Wow, one word answers. I would have not guessed you had food.”

“Oh, I just got an apple.” He responded as his stomach growled. He blushed. I looked at Shy, and she rolled her eyes. I still had half a sandwich. I sighed inwardly. Brent needed it more than I did.

“How about trades?” I asked.

“Huh?” He looked confused.

“You aren’t playing the role of geek very well are you? I’ll trade you this half of sandwich for the hidden apple in your bag.”

“But...but that isn’t a fair trade,” He stammered.

“Listen, I need to keep my figure in check. I’m out of commission for a bit with my injuries, so I have to eat healthy,” I replied.

“Oh, but you look...look good the way you are,” He blushed. He almost had me blushing as well.

“You keep complimenting me like that I’m going to have to keep you around. Make sure you compliment Shy as well, she loves it,” I smirked. I pushed my sandwich towards Brent, but he backed away a little.

“She looks...looks...great as well. And I’m not...not...saying that because she could put me in a head lock,” Brent said. Shy looked at Brent and laughed. I laughed along with her. He pushed his paper bag towards me, and I took it.

“You know, I like your style. I think he is a keeper,” Shy stated then bit into her lunch again.

“Well, of course. Especially since we have an opening with the recent defection...” Just thinking about why he was gone got me thinking sad thoughts. A chomping noise brought me back from my thoughts. Brent was devouring the sandwich.

“I’m glad that you waited for my hand to be out of the way before you started to eat,” I commented. “Aren’t you glad that you traded with me?”

“And you can be glad that I’m not firing your ass for keeping my staff from doing their jobs!” Billy yelled from the dispatch area.

“I know you are cranky since you don’t have your best worker on hand, but I think you can manage,” I said playfully. Shy finished her food and stood up, and I followed her lead. Brent had stopped eating and was watching our movement.

“Thank...thank...you for the sandwich,” Brent said. I looked down at where he was sitting and smiled. I pulled out the apple from the bag, and gave it to him.

“How about a healthy dessert to go with the non healthy sandwich?”

“But...but...then that isn’t a trade at all.” He stammered. He looked confused and a little put out.

“Hey, you know how to sweet talk a girl. I’ll see you around.” I went to join Shy who was putting her packages in her backpack.

“Girl, were you just flirting with Brent of all people?”

“No way! I just wanted his apple.” Shy didn’t know I gave him the apple back.

“I guess he is a nice guy. Really shy, I guess. You had him stuttering like he never spoke to a girl,” She observed.

“Pretty sure he hasn’t had much interaction with a girl. He got two for the price of one today.” I said. “So, Jnco tonight?” I asked quickly, as I saw the fearless leader eyeing us down.

“Girl, you are still recovering!” Shy said, and as she said that a pain shot up my arm.

“I’m glad that you reminded me. I’d nearly forgotten since the pain all over my body isn’t a constant reminder.” I know it isn’t a good idea, but what are we going to do? We can’t hide from what is going to happen. We have to deal with it when it happens. I inferred running into Wigs, or whoever else might come after me and the people I cared about most. I hope talking to Brent didn’t expose him as a victim. Great, now I was afraid to talk to anyone, well maybe not Billy. Stupid blonde bitches, a stupid bald pervert, I guess that was another day in the life of Luna.

“Luna, you know that you always hustle some guy at pool every time you go to Jnco. Do you think you could do that with a bad arm?” Shy pointed out trying to convince me not to go to Jnco.

“You know I always like a challenge,” I said smiling at her.

“Yeah, I can see that. Trying to make that kid look cool.” Shy shook her head as she looked at Brent who was still sitting down.

“Geeks are in this time of year,” I suggested.

“You know what else is in this time of year...” Billy said from his dispatch area.

“Don’t say it! I want to guess. Being fired, or how about being unemployed,” I responded to him as I rolled my eyes.

“You know how to take a joy out of a man’s heart don’t you?” Billy questioned.

“Now, Billy, that is not fair! You make all our lives happy, and we all want to do the same thing for you.” I replied.

“Missy, you can make me happy by getting your behind to work!”

“Don’t want to make you that happy!” I replied. “Shy, I will see you later. Be careful!” I said as I hugged her good-bye.

As I made my way towards the door Pearly came in.

“You can’t stay away, can you?” Pearly’s voice was heavy with concern, which I choose to ignore.

“It’s that you are so desirable. I’m just so giddy I can not keep myself under control.” I said as I smiled at Pearly.

“Watch out, Luna, one day you will lose control.” He smiled. I shoved him playfully. “Make sure Shy gets to my place safe. No more rookie mistakes that is just getting old.”

“Come on, Luna...I’m a seasoned veteran now.”

“That doesn’t make you any better.” I smirked.

“Thanks...a...again for the sandwich, Luna.” Brent said as he walked towards me and Pearly.

“Any time. Next time take your time. Give yourself a chance to taste the food.” I said as I poked him. He moved back a little, and he blushed when I smiled at him. He nodded briefly at Pearly and was out the door.

“Brent? You are into him?”

“Don’t get jealous. We are just friends.” I winked. “Make sure you deliver your packages properly this time.”

“I don’t like to agree with Miss Bossy over there, but she is right! Your behind better be flawless!” Billy said over hearing our conversation.

“You heard the man, do not let our fearless leader down! Your behind must be perfect! Flawless!”

“Yes, ma’am!” Pearly said.

“Now get your pansy ass to work!”

“You both will be discharged if you don’t get your behinds together.” Billy said.

“Captain leaving now!” I said as I gave him a salute and left the building.

Somewhere else in the City:

Wigs sat in the receptionist area fidgeting. He was too nervous to keep still. He was being tested all day. He had marks on both arms from needles that they shoved repeatedly into his veins. The scientist in the lab said that the man in the shadows demanded that he go see him, and that the scientist wouldn't discuss anything. Wigs had no choice. The man in the shadows told him that this could extend his life until they brought Luna in. Wigs hadn't wanted to go against Luna, but in order to survive he needed to. Wigs thought about why this man kept to the shadows? Why was he hiding? And why was the man hiding the lab? The man in the shadows had warned Wigs not to tell anyone about the lab that he was a lab rat in. This was all odd, but Wigs didn't question any of it, since this man was trying to keep him alive. Now he waited, and kept on waiting until the man called him into his office. He was going to receive the test results, or at least that was what he hoped. He was tired of playing pincushion.

"Andrew?" A soft voice came from Wigs' left side. He turned his head and saw the receptionist looking at him. "He will see you now."

"I was getting ready to order room service." Wigs stood up and walked past the desk. The receptionist looked down at some paper work, as Wigs pushed the office door open.

Wigs entered the office. Once again it was dimly lit, and of course, the area the man sat in was in darkness.

"Hello, anyone here?" Wigs whispered.

"Nice to see you alive and well, Andrew."

"You almost sound disappointed. Aren't you the one that created this crap that put my life on a ticker? You should be over-joyed that I'm still walking around. I know that I am."

"Oh, that is where you're wrong. I'm happy that you are still alive. What I'm not happy about is that the girl is still out there. How hard is it to catch a little girl when your life depends on it?"

"This is the first time I have heard that saying in the literal sense," Wigs responded. "Also, you don't have to face a freak of nature every time she is around."

"You make a valid point there. Even though your motivation should be able to get you beyond that obstacle. A super human that is stronger than you, can cause a problem."

“Wow. I didn’t think you would go that route.” Wigs said in surprise.

“I will want to see this man in action,” The man said.

“Big talk coming from a guy that doesn’t want to be seen,” Wigs muttered.

“You better hope that I can back up that talk.”

“I hope so too! I am used to living.”

“Do you have any leads on the girl?” The man pried obliviously hoping for some good news from Wigs.

“Well...no. We usually go and hang out at a bar on Fridays, but, since I think I put her out of commission, she may not show.”

“Well, it does not hurt to look tonight. Go there and see if she is brave or dumb, enough to show, if she does give me a call. Make sure you stay hidden that she doesn’t see you. If she is there the man that you speak of should not be far off,” The man said.

“I hope you are ready to see this.”

“You have no idea how ready I am.”

Luna’s Apartment:

Shy arrived safely at my apartment with Pearly following.

“You follow directions really well.” I said playfully. “You just had to make sure that she was safe getting here, not bring your ass up here too.” I smiled.

“You afraid that your geek of a boyfriend may be jealous?”

“Jealous of a dud like you? I don’t think so.” I said playfully going along with Pearly.

“Girl, dud isn’t even the word for this fool.”

“Wow a tag team on a guy, would have never seen this coming.” Pearly said.

“Doesn’t surprise me, you never do.” I smirked. The door opened and Dee walked in. She stopped at the sight of Pearly and smiled.

“Oh, hello,” She said as she peered up at him. Pearly was now Dee’s next victim. Pearly just nodded at her, turned to face me, and mouthed ‘help me.’

“Easy girl. I will throw cold water on your ass just to make sure you leave your underwear on.” I said. Of course she ignored me.

"I don't think we properly introduced ourselves last night." She said as she walked over to Pearly and placed a hand on his arm. I have to admit I was enjoying seeing Pearly uncomfortable. He politely tugged his arm away from Dee's slutty grip.

"Well, Yazmin tell her your name." I said knowing full well he didn't want to reveal it.

"Oh, Yazmin! That is such a nice name," Dee said.

"Girl, you are in heat! Well, you are always in heat, but you are taking this to another level," Shy observed from the couch.

"I have heard people say stepping it up to another level, but you have everyone beat." I said as I went to sit on one of the stools. "Did you know that she is reading up on her trade...actually how is that coming along? You know what I bet you, Yazmin over here would probably like to see some of your moves." I said. It was odd hearing myself calling him by his real name.

"Oh, I would love to show him some."

"Oh, well, start with page 52." I winked at Pearly. He looked like he wanted to kick me. I enjoyed every minute of it.

"Well, I have to be leaving. I have somewhere to be that isn't here," Pearly stated as he again removed his arm from Dee's grip.

"You have some muscle to you. How nice." Dee giggled.

"Oh, that is the jacket. I'm just a puny, small guy." Pearly moved towards the door, but Dee followed.

"Pearly, stop being so modest, you stud. Come on just flex a little," he gave me another dirty look as he opened the door and walked out. I thought Dee was going to jump on his back. Dee closed the door and went to sit next to Shy.

"He is your next victim, huh?" I asked. "He may be a tough one, but I will give you an 'A' for effort," I said.

"Oh you better add the plus, because I'm going for extra credit." Dee smiled.

"You made your way to page 53 I see." I said.

"What are you talking about?" Shy looked confused.

"It's about sex, sex, and did I mention that the book was about, sex." Dee was lucky that I loved her slutty ways. My arm started to hurt again. The pain in my body was reemerging every so often and it reminded me that I'd gotten my ass whooped. My arm was the worst. It wasn't broken, but the tenderness almost made it useless.

“You alright?” Shy asked when she saw me wince in pain.

“Yeah, just my body reminding me that I got my ass handed to me,” I replied.

“Well, that is it! We are not going to Jnco tonight. You still need your rest.” Shy crossed her arms and raised her eyebrows in challenge.

“Will you stop over reacting? How is Dee supposed to hunt if we don’t go along?” I said playfully.

“Don’t worry. I can go hunting by myself.”

“At a girl don’t let nothing stop you.” I turned to Shy. I’m going to take it easy tonight. I need to get out.” It was a bad idea to go out, but I was going stir crazy. Shy told me that Billy had given me Monday off as well, so I could rest up even more.

“And what happens if Wigs shows up? How are you going to handle round two with our bald headed nemesis?”

“Wow a little dramatic with nemesis?” I questioned.

“If he kicks your ass again, I’m pretty sure that would be a proper name.” Shy said. Dee wasn’t even paying attention to us.

“You know what you are right. Hold off on giving him that name until round two, and only if he beats my ass.” I said. Shy was right though. Wigs was looking for me, and he knew that we liked to unwind at Jnco’s. There was no way I could go there tonight. “I can’t stand when you make a good point.”

“Someone has to attempt to be the voice of reason with you.”

“I must be bad if you are my voice of reason.” I smiled. “Dee I guess you are going to go hunting without us. I was looking forward to watching a master predator in the wilderness.”

“Oh, don’t you worry! I’m use to flying solo.”

“I’m glad you put my worries at ease.” I smirked. She winked at me and went into her room to start getting ready.

“You would think that by now she would’ve found one that would satisfy her needs,” Shy commented as she watched Dee go into her room.

“Didn’t I tell you? She was born with some male dna.” I smiled.

“That would actually make sense,” Shy responded.

We said good bye to Dee, as she walked out the door with almost nothing on. That girl didn’t rest at all. I didn’t even want to think how she would handle herself when she was older.

I heard a term used by someone once, and I think it was cougar. I wondered if Dee's body would last that long though She was a long way off from cougar status, so no need to worry just yet.

We decided to enjoy a cup of crappy coffee. Then stared out into the darkness. We swapped stories that the 'old folks' had shared with us through our 'On the Run' tours. Each of us trying to out do the other for the most outrageous one.

A knocking at the door ruined our wonderful conversation. I got up and all of a sudden another knot twisted in my stomach. Really? This had to stop. I opened the door, completely disregarding the warning. It was Pearly. He was breathing heavy, and his face was bloody.

"Who in the world did this to you???"

"It's Wigs, he took Dee."

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Alleyway Again

"You better be lying to me," I responded.

"I'm fine by the way," Pearly said as he dragged himself into the apartment. A sense of panic surged through my body. Pearly walked towards a stool and sat on it.

"What in the world happened to you?" Shy asked as she came towards him.

"I'm pretty sure I would receive better treatment from a bunch of street thugs."

"Street thugs have nothing on me." Shy responded and she sat next to him gently examining the bruises on his face. "I'll get you a damp cloth so that we can clean those cuts up."

"What happened?" I finally asked.

"Well, he had to be stalking the place. He was pulling Dee out of the bar when I arrived."

"Now, here is a question for you: Was she going under her own free will? Or was he actually pulling her out of the bar?" I know this didn't make a difference he was going to harm her, and use her as bait, but if she was willing to go with him, I still had time to defuse the situation.

"I'm pretty sure, 'let go jerk' is a great indication that she wasn't willing to go with him."

"And she says that to no guy," I stated. I was just going to let these people take me in. I was tired. Exhausted and hurting and at every corner I was putting my friends in danger. I had a feeling that he was going to be at the alleyway where this crap had all started. I guess it was

going to end there as well. "I am going to turn myself in. I can't do this anymore." I said as calmly as I could with tears welling up in my eyes.

"Luna, are you freaking insane? That is what they want," Pearly said.

"Thanks for stating the obvious. But I'm tired of all this. You are sitting there bloody. Shy almost got killed. Dee has been slut-napped. What is next? Billy giving me a pay raise?" I said.

"He let me live. He could have easily killed me. I was stupid for trying to fight him."

Pearly shook his head.

"Well, that is something that I'm going to agree with you about. But this has to happen. Have you spoken to Mr. Wonderful yet?"

"No not yet. First thing that I thought of was come here and let you know..."

"Yeah, Mr. Wonderful has a way of knowing things that he shouldn't know. It does get kind of annoying."

"Girl, you ain't getting a pay raise from Billy. Stop the craziness." Shy said as she brought out a cloth and started running water from the sink.

"Shy, always bringing me back to reality. Speaking of reality I'm going to go save my skank of a friend."

"They are doing that to get to you."

"Wow, you are very observant," I remarked. I was getting really pissed. I knew I had to do this, there was no other way. Dee was running out of time before Wigs actually took her in to whomever he reported to.

"Girl, you know I don't like agreeing with a fool, but Pearly is right," Shy said as she now was applying the damp cloth on Pearly's face.

"There is a first time for everything," Pearly replied.

"And there is a last time, too," Shy responded. Pearly was in dangerous territory since Shy was touching his face.

"Do you have any other amazing ideas?" I responded to both of them. They both remained silent. "Not all at once now."

"What do you suppose you will do if you see Wigs?" Pearly finally asked.

"Well, I was thinking I would dress slutty and seduce him." I said rolling my eyes.

"That might work," Shy commented.

“I know I’m a genius.” I said. I’m going to do what I was apparently made to do: I’ll fight. Get pretty boy cleaned up while I get ready to save our skanky friend.” I walked past both of them towards my room.

“There is nothing that we can say to get you not to go?” Pearly questioned. I turned and looked at him.

“I’m glad you know me so well after a short period of time. There is hope for you yet.” I winked then continued towards my room.

I finished getting ready and I was greeted by Pearly and Shy by the door.

“Aww you are here to see me off, huh?” I said playfully, but I was getting nervous.

“We are going with you.” Shy stated firmly. I just shook my head. I didn’t want them to go with me. They would be in danger, but I knew Shy wasn’t going to budge.

“I’m going to ask a crazy, border line stupid question. Is it worth trying to argue with you?”

“Girl, you are right, that was a stupid question.”

“Whoever said that there are no stupid questions is an idiot.” I looked at both of their solemn, resolute faces and nodded. “Come on then, lets go.”

“Hold it!” Pearly exclaimed.

“Pearly, are you getting cold feet?”

“We don’t even have a plan,” Pearly replied.

“That ass whooping has knocked some sense into you.” I knew we didn’t have a plan, but did it make any sense to actually have one?

“We do not know what he is going to do! And Dee, could get killed in the process,” Pearly explained.

“I really hope your worry isn’t to get it in with her, because I will smack you. I remember this guy with a bright ass smile saying this to me once: we deal with what comes our way when it comes. Or something of that nature, I wasn’t paying much attention to you at the time.”

“Of course now you throw that back at me.” Pearly said.

“It was only a matter of time before I did. But we can pick this conversation up later. Lets get Dee back.” I was worried. We’d spent too much time talking, or, at least, I felt we had. We did manage to leave right after that small conversation about plans, but I didn’t feel good about this. If Wigs hadn’t brought her to whoever he was working for he was going to want me in return for Dee. I was ready for that. I didn’t care. No one else was getting hurt because of me.

Pearly didn't seem to be hurt too bad. I think Wigs took it easy on him; a lot of blood, but no permanent damage. I don't think Wigs wanted to be in this predicament. He'd panicked and made a horrible decision, but, then again, he did whoop my ass a few days ago. Right now I didn't know what to think.

We arrived at the alleyway probably half an hour after we left the apartment, and a knot formed in my stomach. This is good at least I knew now that I was on the right track.

"I should have stayed behind," Pearly commented as he winced. Maybe he was more hurt than I thought.

"No, horrible idea. We can throw you at whoever is chasing us so that we can get away," I suggested.

"Great idea," Shy chimed quickly. She was nervous, and scared. I hope she survived this. I hope we all did.

"Always leave it up to Luna to come up with all the ideas," Pearly responded.

"I'm the brains of the operation," I said. We walked into the alleyway, and that is when I saw two outlines. One was standing, and the other seemed to be kneeling on the ground.

"Wigs, this place brings back memories, doesn't it?" I called out.

"Girl, Wigs is nowhere to be seen," Shy whispered.

"Luna why not bring you back to where it all started." Wigs revealed himself to the others with his voice.

"How did you know he was there?" Shy looked confused.

"Trust me, Wigs gives out that pervo vibe," I answered before addressing Wigs. "Where is Dee? And is she okay? Better yet, she better be okay, because if she isn't you're going to be in a world of hurt."

"Luna, come on do you think I would hurt your skanky friend knowing that it would get me closer to you? You are the only one I want."

"Oh don't make me blush." I said. "But I don't think I will go anywhere with you...rejected, again."

"Luna, I don't think you have a choice in the matter. Either you come with me, or Dee gets this wonderful injection." Wigs said as he came out of the shadows revealing both himself and a syringe with an orange substance in it. "You know they are looking for volunteers."

“By the looks of things Dee isn’t volunteering. How about I volunteer to kick your ass?” I offered.

“Now, Luna, is that any way to speak to an old friend?” Another voice came from behind us. This voice stayed in the shadows so I couldn’t discern any shape at all. I knew only that this was a man.

“Why do all you guys stick to the shadows?” I asked in frustration. “You guys can’t all be that ugly.”

“How about you come with us? We leave your friend behind...no harm has come to her, and then I can reveal myself to you,” The voice said.

“I have a counter offer...no,” I replied. This guy was creeping me out more than Wigs was.

“I think that you are looking at this all wrong. You have an opportunity to help your friend Wigs here, and also help me along with my research.

“Your sales pitch really sucks, you know that right?”

“Luna, you will come with me either way,” The man boasted.

“Now, is that any way to ask a favor?” Mr. Wonderful now joined the party.

“Now all the guests have arrived we can get this party started.” I exclaimed. I was much happier to have Mr. Wonderful here. At least he was on my side.

“Why do I have a feeling that this party is going to be allowing guests in but not out?” Pearly said out loud to no one in particular.

“You are just a Debbie Downer, aren’t you?” I responded. But he was right. I don’t think any of us were going to get out of here. Having Mr. Wonderful here made me feel better, but this new guy was really giving me the creeps. Another thing that threw me off: the knot in my stomach didn’t go off with this creepo.

“Yazmin, take everyone out of here. I will handle this.” Mr. Wonderful said.

“I’m not letting go of Dee until Luna comes with us,” Wigs countered. Wigs yanked a semi-conscious Dee from the shadows. I had been wondering why I didn’t hear anything come out of her mouth: it was gagged.

“Wigs, let her go. What I’ve come here for will be mine.”

“But sir...”

“Just do what I tell you,” The guy in the shadows said. Wigs followed orders and picked Dee up and placed her in front of me.

“Aww, how nice. I didn’t know you still delivered…” I said. Shy crouched next to Dee to see how she was doing.

“She is hanging in there.” Shy advised. I was on high alert. I couldn’t afford to look down at Dee. I was watching Wigs and also was observing the outline of the man in the shadows.

“Mr. Wonderful, I know you love taking things slow, but can you get us out of here, like, uh now.” I said.

“Luna, he can’t do that. It is either I let your friends go, and you two stay behind or no one goes,” The man in the shadows explained. I really needed to give this guy a name.

“You told me that women always give the ultimatum. Yeah I’m talking to you, Mr. Wonderful.”

“Well, this guy is quite feminine.”

“Woman or not, there is only one or the other. I will stay while these guys go,” I insisted.

“Luna?” Shy looked at me with a scared look on her face as she was tending to Dee.”

“Shy, I have to. There is no other way to get you guys out of here safe.”

“Luna, we can fight these guys off together,” Pearly responded.

“I’m pretty sure you should take it easy after that ass beating you had earlier. Just go,” I said sternly. Pearly looked at me. So did Shy. Trying to plead with concerned eyes. I was scared out of my damn mind. What type of testing would they do to me? Why was I jumping the gun? Mr. Wonderful was still here, and he could take on one obnoxious guy and Wigs. Well, come to think of it, two obnoxious guys.

“Girl, I’m not going to leave you,” Shy attempted again.

“I’m as stubborn as you are. And there is no way I’m going to let you get away with this one. Just go. Get to safety,” I demanded. I was stern, and she knew it was the smart thing to do, because she didn’t know what she was dealing with. Pearly also gave into defeat. He knew I should be safe with Mr. Wonderful around. Pearly picked up Dee, and they left the alleyway. I hope this wasn’t the last time I would see them.

“I’m glad that you followed orders, but let me add another person to the party. Ricky come,” The man in the shadows called out. Another person emerged from the shadowy recesses.

“I don’t like blind dates.” I said.

“Oh, trust me, you will enjoy this one,” The man in the shadows said. Mr. Wonderful stood in between me and the two guys in the shadows, but that still left Wigs behind me. “Mr.

Wonderful take care of those two goons while I try to take care of Wigs,” I suggested as I motioned towards Wigs. Then I heard the man in the shadows say something that made my hair stand on end.

“We could have done so many great things together.” The man in the shadows said to Mr. Wonderful.

“You are right. Trying to make your own personal army is great.” Mr. Wonderful replied. “And what is it with the muscle? You injected another poor sap with the serum?” Mr. Wonderful examined.

“Oh no, I just don’t want to get my hands dirty,” The man in the shadows said.

“I’m pretty sure they are dirtier than anyone else I know,” Mr. Wonderful retorted.

“So, will you come with me? Without a problem?” The man in the shadows questioned. I started moving towards them, and Wigs followed behind me. Why were they so calm? The way this guy was talking he had to know that Mr. Wonderful could whoop his ass.

“You make a really good argument, but I’m going to have to decline and...I’ll need to reschedule.”

“I was afraid of that answer. Gentleman,” The man in the shadows said. Then all of a sudden three red dots were on Mr. Wonderful and three red dots were on me. Two on my chest; great a perverted sniper.

“Well, this night is turning out to be amazing.” I said.

“Luna, I’m sorry. How rude of me. It is nice to finally meet you.” The man in the shadows said.

“Too bad I can’t say the same about you. Take the red crap off me and my friend here, and I may re-think the whole thing.” We were so screwed. Mr. Wonderful was fast, but he wasn’t that fast.

“Oh, Luna, you will love the facility where we will be keeping you.”

“Mr. Wonderful, you are right, this guy can’t make a compelling argument.” Why was this guy trying to sell me on something I knew was crap? “I don’t know why you want to take me in. I’m just an innocent girl.”

“Oh, Luna... first things first...” The man shot Mr. Wonderful with what seemed like one of those electric taser guns. He fell to the floor. Well there went any hope of escaping. “Now, oh

yes, Wigs here has told me so much about you. So much so that I would love to see what you are all about.” The man remained in the shadows as he spoke.

“I’m pretty sure Wigs here has told you enough.” I replied. I guess I should have known this was coming. At least everyone I cared about was safe. Well I hope they were.

“So, are you coming with me the easy way, or are you going to end up like your hooded friend?” The man posed the option. Ricky the muscle-head was now picking up Mr. Wonderful.

“You are not leaving a girl with many options, huh?” I replied trying to prolong the conversation, but I didn’t know why. Either way I was going with him, so, I decided that I wanted to stay awake. Maybe I’d see where I was going. “I’m going to take the option of staying vertical.”

“Always playing hard to get, huh?” Wigs commented.

“You didn’t ask the right questions when you were playing for the good side,” I retorted.

“Good choice, I see that you’re a lot smarter than your partner in crime.”

“Well, it doesn’t take much, does it?” I replied.

“Oh, I like you. Maybe you can come work for me.”

“I told you, sir, that you would,” Wigs joined in.

“How about it?” The man in the shadows asked.

“Na, your company probably offers a horrible benefit package,” I responded.

“Wigs, take her out of here.” The man said. Then all of a sudden that same energy right before I whooped ass went through my body. Everything was clear as day. I saw clearly into the shadows. Ricky looked just like any other street hooligan that was just tamed, and the ring leader was cloaked. I couldn’t see what he looked like. He had to know about some of my abilities. What was I going to do? I doubted the snipers would shoot to kill. Probably only to slow down, so maybe I had a chance, but that was only if I was calling this right. Maybe they would shoot to kill and just cut me open. Why not make a run for it? So I decided. I elbowed Wigs in the stomach and he hunched over. I quickly jumped over his back just as three darts hit him in the back. I was right, shoot to stun. The man in the shadows quickly advanced and pointed the electric taser gun at me. I quickly kicked his arm and dove for the taser gun that had hit the ground. With speed unknown to myself I picked it up and tased him in the back. He went down faster than a stripper picking up dollar bills. I only had one man to beat. I felt all the snipers getting ready to shoot as I faced down Ricky as he put Mr. Wonderful down. The only

thing I could do was run. So I did. I ran right at Ricky. I heard all six shots fired. How I heard that I don't know, but I'm not going to ponder that thought until I was safe from darts being shoved up my ass. Just as the darts were going to hit me, I slid between Ricky's legs. Three darts hit Ricky, and the rest hit the ground. I had a few seconds until these horrible snipers were about to shoot again. I went back for Mr. Wonderful. He had saved my life so many times before that I owed him this. I tried to go back for him but then I felt a sharp pain in the front of my arm, too late. Everything went black.

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To Rescue or not to Rescue

I awoke in a dark room. The last thing I remembered was that I was going back to get Mr. Wonderful and trying to get him out of the alleyway. Oh no, I must have been captured. Well, at least I wasn't in pain.

"Hey girl, are you okay?" I heard Shy's familiar voice talking to me. Did they capture her too? This couldn't be happening. They must have had people following them all. I moved my arms, and they were free. Nice prison. I rubbed my eyes, and tried to get my eyes to focus.

"Girl, I repeat are you alright?"

"Girl, let me shoot you with a dart, and you tell me if you are alright." I responded. I was still a little groggy. "Is Dee alright?"

"Yeah, she is. She even said that she wasn't injected with anything, so I guess you don't have to worry. She even said she wouldn't have given in to Wigs no matter how bad he roughed her up."

"All she needed was a little more time. She would have caved." I glanced around it was my apartment. "How did we get back here? I mean, I'm not complaining but it seemed that they were going to take my ass in."

"Well, you know when you told us to get out of there? Well, we only followed directions to a certain point..."

"Let me guess...you messed up on the get out part." I just wanted to lay there. The way things were going I didn't even want to go back into the world. This was the safest place right now.

“Well, Pearly said he wasn’t leaving you guys behind. He told me to take Dee away, and I did. He went back to get you and that guy, Mr. Wonderful.” Shy was explaining when I saw her head look down. I had a feeling that they’d only saved me.

“They got Mr. Wonderful, didn’t they?” I asked hoping to hear good news.

“Yes, they did.” Pearly responded from the doorway. “He said if anything were to happen to him, let it, but to keep you safe at all cost.”

“I see that you followed that direction. Look who is going from newbie to veteran,” I said as I sat up. “So, what are we going to do to get him back?” I questioned knowing full well that Pearly wasn’t going to have a brilliant idea.

“I don’t know,” He replied.

“You not knowing what to do? Who would have known?” I was annoyed. I was going to get this guy back, and then force him to tell me who he was!

“He always told me in that situation to make sure you were the one that was safe,” Pearly explained. I could see that he was taking this hard. This had to be the ultimate let down.

“Well, I’m happy to tell you that we are not going to let him stay hostage. We will find a way to rescue him,” I declared.

“And how do you supposed we do that?” Pearly questioned.

“I’m going to take a page from your book and say I don’t know, but you better bet your ass I will find a way to get him back.” Like I said before no one was going to get hurt any more on my watch. “Where is Dee? Please don’t tell me she is back at the bar going on with her skanish ways.”

“She is sleeping. She had a rough day,” Shy stated.

“I’m pretty sure we all had a rough day. I guess more her than all of us. She had to deal with Wigs.” My thoughts ran back to Mr. Wonderful. What were they doing to him? How long did we have until they decided to dispose of him? At least these are new questions that have no answers instead of the regular ones that I usually ask. I really didn’t know what to do, and I was scared. Mr. Wonderful was the one who always had some type of answer even if it they were ones that I didn’t want to hear.

“So, what do we do now?” Shy questioned.

“You get your Dominican ass out of the situation. That is what you have to do.” I replied. Shy needed to get out of this, and now. Dee probably didn’t know what was going on so I was safe with that.

“I know you are not telling me to stay out of something that I want to be part of,” Shy replied. I saw Pearly shake his head. He was probably thinking the same thing I was: that Shy was off her rocker to want in on this.

“I see you pick things up quickly.” I responded.

“Yes, and I responded to them with a stubborn attitude.” She just gave me a look.

“We can have this staring contest all day if you want. I hope you are aware I’m the staring contest champ, but you are out of this. I can not risk you getting hurt,” I said sincerely.

“I’m a big girl, I think I can handle myself.” Shy responded. And she was right on that. She could handle herself. Not many people that I knew could go through what she has gone through the past few days and still want to deal with it. At the same time all I thought about was what happens if the same thing that happened to Wigs happened to her, or they actually kidnap her.

“Don’t complain to me if you get kidnapped. I don’t want to hear it,” I responded. I knew she was just going to either follow me and Pearly’s every move, or just be a bitch the entire time until I gave into her demands. This was easier. All of a sudden the idea came into my head. I turned to look at Pearly. “Take me to his place.”

“What are you even talking about? I think you need some more rest.”

“Mr. Wonderful’s place. That is the place to start. We could see what he was working on and maybe that can lead to some type of clue. Remember I’m the brains of this operation, and Shy is the looks. And you are, well you just get in the way.” I smiled

“At least I’m good at that right?” He smiled back.

“Glad that you like your role.” I replied as I got out of bed.

“Luna, where do you think you’re going?” Shy questioned.

“Yeah,” Pearly added, “Where?”

“Well, I’m pretty sure we can’t wait around, so we have to go now.” There was no stopping me right now. I wanted to start the search.

“Girl, it is six in the morning,” Shy stated.

“Thank you for being the time keeper, but we don’t know how much time he has or what they are doing to him. The faster we find his ass the better we all are.” I responded.

“Shy, I don’t like to agree with her, but she is right. If we want to save him we have to act now.” Pearly added.

“Finally, you are good for something,” I stated as I walked past him into the living room area. The sun was starting to come up. I had to get out there. In the darkness we could blend in the shadows that no one else could see us. Come to think of it...recalling last night I realized my buddy, the British Bitch wasn’t there. Why not? I mean I’m grateful that she wasn’t, but why didn’t he bring her along? Another question to add to the ever growing list.

“Shy, you should stay here. Look after Dee, and no guys over today,” Again attempting to get her to stay out of the way. I could also sense that Shy was exhausted, and she really wanted to be there for me on this, but she needed her rest. She had worried about me so much during these tough times that I think she may have slept less than I did.

“Girl, like I said, I’m coming with you,” She said sternly.

“Shy, this is just going over to this guys house and check out any clues. We don’t need a field trip over there.” I was getting annoyed right now. I just wanted to go, but I saw that she was going to succumb to her desire to stay here and rest, so, I was going to help her along. “I really need you here to make sure that Dee is alright.”

“You know, you are right, I’m going to stay this one time to make sure Dee is alright. Next time I’m tagging along.” She replied.

“Eh, hem. I didn’t even tell you that I knew where he lived or where he does his business out of,” Pearly said. I know he didn’t let me get all worked up on my idea and then just deflate my bubble.

“Choose the next words out of your mouth wisely,” I threatened.

“I do not know where he lives, but I do know where the hideout is,” He offered with a smile.

“You did choose you words wisely. Lets get going to your secret hideout with the secret hand shake to let you in.”

“I hope you can get it on the first try.” He said.

“Oh, the challenge is on.” I put my jacket on and left to embark on a wild goose chase.

Somewhere else in the City:

Mr. Wonderful was bare chested and laying on a surgeons table. He'd known this day was coming, but he also hoped that it was just his paranoia. This was the first time his face had been exposed in quite some time, and certainly this wasn't by choice. He was glad that Luna had escaped. Yazmin had done exactly what he was told: save Luna at all cost. She was the key to all this. He knew that they were going to probe him and run many tests on him. The fact was he had that power that they wanted. Too bad for them they could run all the test they wanted, but they wouldn't be able to secure a serum that would work properly to enhance the human system. He was running out of time either way. His counter antigen was becoming useless. A few more weeks maybe was all he had, unless he found a permanent cure.

Mr. Wonderful looked around the room. He remembered it well. Many years ago he'd been a scientist trying to help find a way to enhance humanity. His goal had been to enhance the immune system and cure diseases. Meanwhile his fellow scientists tried to use it as a way to create a super army...Mr. Wonderful heard foot steps approaching, which stopped his thought process and brought him back into the present.

"This is a wonderful, welcome back," Mr. Wonderful commented.

"Well, since you didn't want to agree to come to my terms you get option B: table treatment," The man said as he approached quietly. Mr. Wonderful just quietly observed his nemesis. "Tell me where the girl is, and I will let you go."

"You still suck at lying. You know you will not let me go. I am the closest thing you have to a cure or a better serum." Mr. Wonderful now looked away from the man in a suit.

"Finding her is my top priority, and I will find her," The man in the suit said.

"Trust me, if tonight was any indication of what you will do when you find her then I will sleep well at night." Mr. Wonderful said.

"You took her and her mother from this facility," The man said. "We will find her, and, when we do, I will catch up on all the research."

"Well, since you weren't the brains around here I'm not too worried."

"Why are you trying to protect her?" The man said, but before Mr. Wonderful could speak a bald-headed man walked into the room carrying some paper work.

"Sir, we were only able to duplicate the antigen for a small dose. We only have enough for a day, maybe two," The small man said as he looked down at the ground.

“That will be good, Nelson. Start creating it that we can keep him alive.” The man said and then dismissed the smaller man. “You will learn one way or another: I will have what I want. You will not be able to stop me. She slipped from my grasp today. I don’t know how she did it, but she did. I will have my team after her, all day and all night until she is mine. And that guy Wigs is getting closer.” The man boasted before he left Mr. Wonderful to his thoughts.

Mr. Wonderful closed his eyes and pondered what was going to happen. He usually was on top of things, but he’d messed up this time, which had of course, cost him dearly. He had no doubt that Luna would be found, but he didn’t know how she would handle it. Up to now she had surprised him at every turn. He didn’t think that she would be able to use her powers so quickly and without training. He could only imagine how dangerous or special she could be if she knew how to use her power. He was scared. He knew that his kidnappers knew these same things. They would not stop at nothing to get her, study her and run tests on her like a lab rat. He could only hope that she actually be able to fend for herself. He had hoped that she would learn how to use her powers and that is all he could do at this point was just hope.

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Hideout

We arrived at the secret hideout probably an hour later. The sun was starting to make itself known on this early day. The hideout was located in a sewer. Now I know why they called it a secret hideout.

“Why in the world did you guys have to pick a hideout in a creepy alleyway in a bad neighborhood? You needed a bad boy rep, huh?”

“You are a tough girl. I think you can handle it.” Pearly said.

“Normally on the weekends I like to take it easy.” I smirked. We approached the manhole and Pearly gestured grandly.

“Ladies first.”

“Chivalry isn’t dead? Or at least not yet. Are you trying to bring it back?” I said. I felt for a railing so that I could start my descent. I finally felt something that felt like it was a railing. I didn’t feel a knot in my stomach so I knew for the time being I wasn’t going to get my ass whooped. Shortly after I started making my way down so did Pearly. The way down wasn’t that steep.

“Welcome to the secret hideout.” Pearly said grandly.

“Isn’t there any type of badge I get or initiation, stuff that I have to go through?” I asked playfully. I scanned the area. It was dark, but oddly I could see everything. There were two tunnels in front of us. Pearly took out a flashlight, and he lead the way. I followed him through the tunnel that lead to the left. Surprising enough there wasn’t anyone down here. The smell was rancid so I put my arm across my face in attempt to protect my nostrils from being violated, but that didn’t work, so I just dropped my arm. We walked in the dirty sewer for about thirty minutes until we reached a door.

“Welcome,” Pearly said. “This time I mean it.”

“Do I have to do a secret hand shake to be allowed in?”

“Well, yeah, but this one time I’m going to let you in without it,” Pearly advised.

“You are a real pal you know that? First letting me go down the sewer first and now this? What is next? You actually coming up with some type of plan out of our next problem?” Pearly just stared at me. “No? I guess I’m pushing it, huh?”

“Well, don’t underestimate my will to try and impress you.” Pearly smirked.

“How about you walk before you run? It is working up to this point.” I said as Pearly pushed the door open. He let me in. I would have been surprised at what I saw, but the person on a computer nearby pulled my attention.

“Uh, excuse me did you do a secret handshake to get in here?” I questioned. There was no knot in my stomach and whoever got in here needed to know where they were going, so I doubt they were one of the bad guys.

“Hey the girl asked you a question.” Pearly said. The person, who was a woman with blonde hair running past her shoulders now stood up from the seat that she was sitting in and looked at us. At once I knew who it was, Wigs doctor.

“Who are you?” Pearly questioned.

“I can ask you the same thing.” The lady responded with her British accent. This made me realize how I didn’t miss the British bitch at all.

“Uh, I’m pretty sure he asked first. Where are your manners?” I questioned. “Do you work for Mr. Wonderful?” I just had to double check. Mr. Wonderful told me she did.

“Who is that?” The lady asked in confusion.

“You know Mr. Wonderful. The man we follow blindly yet explains nothing.” I said.

“Come to think of it he didn’t give me a name when he recruited me,” Pearly commented.

“Me neither,” The woman added.

“Let me get this straight. You guys don’t know who he is, nor do you know that you both work with him? What kind of secret club are you guys running here? Just letting anyone in here, huh?”

“We have only one goal, and that is to protect you, Luna.” The woman said. I couldn’t get over how much she sounded like the British Bitch.

“Well, you guys are not doing a good job. The past few days I have had danger shoved up my ass.” I know I shouldn’t be so rude, but they were doing a horrible job.

“Luna, these people have the means to get what they want. We are trying our best.” The woman responded. I looked at her more closely. She was pretty. She had big blue eyes, was tall, well, to me anyone was tall giving the proper shoes.

“So, what do you know? Are you aware that he was kidnapped? We don’t know where they took him. Pearly said.

“Hey, I wanted to say that,” I said.

“Yes, we were in communication while he was watching over Wigs at that Bar. Once he took the blonde girl from the bar we knew that it was a plan to get Luna out in the open.” The woman informed us both. I needed to know her name.

“It is nice that everyone and their friends knows my name, but I’m the last to know everyone’s name. So I’m going to take the direct approach. What’s your name?” I asked the nicer British lady.

“Well, that is only fair enough, Francine Taylor is my name. Please to meet you.” She responded.

“Wow, manners, and so pleasant. Hey, Pearly, why don’t you take a page from her book.” I smiled. Francine smiled back at me. “Yeah, it got me out alright and out in the open in front of the snipers.”

“I don’t know who that man was that led the attack in the alleyway. I know only that he must be powerful.” Francine replied.

“I’m pretty sure I figured that out all by myself with all the man power, along with the sniper nipples, from last night. What I need to know is there any way to find him?” I was hoping Francine would bring some optimism to the table.

“That is why I was on the computer actually. I was trying to find any leads, but they are very good at hiding who they really are,” Francine explained. Why couldn’t these people actually know anything? When we get Mr. Wonderful back I was going to have a good talk about his screening process.

“How about this? How about we find something that we can work with and go from there. I have had enough with ‘I don’t know.’” I said in such frustration.

“I was the one that helped him create that antigen so many years back to help him battle that serum,” Francine defended herself by starting to give me her resume with Mr. Wonderful.

“Okay, so that gives you an edge over nitwit over here, but not by much.” I pointed at Pearly.

“Luna, I do not know where to start next. How are we to find them?” Pearly was beginning to sound defeated. I wasn’t going to let this get to me. I know we had something. I just needed to find it.

“We will find a damn way. I know it,” I encouraged the other two. I walked past Francine to take in what I saw. It was an empty platform. It had many wooden boards with paper taped onto them along with pictures. In the middle were many computer screens that were turned off. Of course the equipment was old due to what has been going on in the world. The lighting was dim down here, but that was expected, I don’t think the electric company knew that they were supplying a secret hideout with free electricity. I walked over to one board and there was a few pictures of me walking out of work, and another walking into Jnco. He was stalking me? Well, I guess this time I will let it pass because he did save my life numerous times. I think that supersedes the whole stalking thing. I moved on to the next board, and I found a map what looked like the city. It was marked up. I wondered if these were the places that he’d actually looked to see if he could find the people in charge of making my life miserable. I kept looking around some more at the boards, and then I came up to one, which made me stop short. I saw a picture of Brent. Why would Mr. Wonderful have Brent’s picture?

“Pearly, get your bright white teeth over here,” I called. He was busy helping Francine on the computer. I doubt that is what he was trying to do. He was trying to hit on her.

“You beconed?”

“Come on, checking her out while we need idea’s to get back Mr. Wonderful? At least do it after we are above ground and there is no stench, how can a girl even fall for someone with that crap in her nostrils.”

“You make a good point.” He smiled.

“I may be a tough girl, but I’m still a girl, so pay attention. Anyways, why does he have a picture of Brent on here?” This was odd. Pearly looked closer. I had a feeling that he was going to say his magic line...I don’t know.

“I have no clue, Luna. Maybe that is his next recruit?” He said raising his eyebrows. Why was Brent the next person that Mr. Wonderful was after? I guess I would have to wait to find out why. In the mean time I had to find a way to locate where he was.

“Did you get any closer to where these people have him or only closer to Francine?” I asked playfully.

“No, he really didn’t leave anything on the computer, but we really aren’t technology savvy,” Pearly admitted. Who would have known that? I just shook my head. Then I saw Wigs picture on one of the boards. I guess Mr. Wonderful was watching him, but couldn’t find out where he met up with these guys.

“There’s a shocker.” I said as I looked at Wigs picture. Then the idea hit me. I can use myself as bait, and let him take me in. He had to know where their operations were, well, I hope he did. “I got it. Lets get Wigs involved.” My arm still hurt from the ass whooping I’d gotten, but not much. Come to think of it, my body wasn’t hurting that much really. Another thing to dwell on later, always later.

“Did he give you a concussion when he beat your ass?” Pearly questioned.

“I think that ass beating helped me come up with the idea.” I said. “Just listen, first we need to see what Brent brings to the table. I still don’t know what you bring, but that is besides the point. Then we have to have Wigs take me into their hideout.

“Luna, dear, that is entirely too dangerous. There is no guarantee that we will be able to track you.” Francine chimed in.

“Do you have a better idea?” I asked with frustration. Each minute that passed we could be losing Mr. Wonderful.

“We were told to let him be if he was ever captured, so I think that is what we should do,” Pearly suggested.

“A cowardly response from you.” I replied. “But he isn’t going to be gone that long. I am going to get him back. With or without your help. If it were you, you would probably want me to come after your ass,” I said. I don’t believe that I was hearing this from them. “Plus don’t you guys need to make sure that I stay safe, and not get my ass whooped?” I saw Pearly roll his eyes.

“Fine, I’m with you on this.” Pearly finally gave in into my demands.

“Finally, I knew insulting you would get me my way. What about you Francine?” I looked at her hoping she was on board with this. She just looked between Pearly and I, trying to figure us out. Then after a minute or so she gave me a hesitant yes. I smiled. We had our own little team. “But we first need to know what Brent brings to the table.” I didn’t know why I was making this about him, but I had a feeling that we needed him for something.

We scanned the rest of the hideout to see if Mr. Wonderful left any trails for us to follow only to find nothing. He hadn’t wanted a rescue mission. Well, I was going to have to disappoint him then. I really wanted to look around the whole hideout, but I would be able to do that once we get Mr. Wonderful back. Then we could get to the bottom of this, and I could get the whole story. If we could get Brent to tag along with us, plus Shy, we would be six strong including Mr. Wonderful. Six strong for what? I didn’t know, but all I now is that he was going to give me answers that I needed, and there was not going to be no but about it.

“I guess we can leave, I will be able to look at the place better once we get Mr. Wonderful back.” I needed to sound optimistic. I could sense that the other two weren’t optimistic. They probably thought I was crazy for even trying to bring him back, but I didn’t care. Their number one priority was to keep me safe, so they had to go along with everything.

I got back to the apartment to find Dee and Shy talking. Of course they were both huddled and talking around the sex book. Dee had to have a mind of a guy. She was just kidnapped, rescued and back to sex. Any other person would sit and dwell on what just happened in their life.

“Well, it is nice to see that even being kidnapped doesn’t throw you off your game.” I commented.

“Luna, did you find anything?” Shy started to get off the couch and make her way towards me. I shook my head in disappointment and made my way towards them. Shy went back to the couch and sat down.

“Hey girl, how are you?” I asked, maybe the sex book was a front. Dee stood up and the embraced me. Didn’t see this one coming.

“Thank you,” She whispered. She released me from her hug.

“Hey, I needed to rescue you. You keep the balance. Who else will be running the sexcapade act? Also don’t think a kidnapping would let you off the hook with the rent money due next week.” I winked. She smiled, and sat back down and started to flip through her book again. I really wanted to ask her how she let Wigs get the best of her, but I decided against it.

Shy and I exchanged worried looks.

“What is it girl, when you give me that look I know something is up.” She responded.

“I need a new worried look.” I replied. I didn’t want to worry Shy, but she wasn’t going to back down. Maybe she was too good of a friend. If she kept tagging along with me she was going to eventually get hurt.

“I have a wonderful idea,” I said with a smile on my face. “How about you stay here, and look after Dee until I get my situation settled?”

“Aww, girl you thought I was going to take the bait on that?”

“I really need dumber friends.” I said shaking my head. “You will get hurt, you know that right?” I ran a hand through my injured arm, which wasn’t that bad any more. Still didn’t know how I healed so quick, probably another freakish power that I was supposed to have.

“I can take care of my self. So, that’s out of the way, what is the next course of action?” Shy questioned in concern. Dee was hearing our conversation, but I think she was too traumatized to even question what we were talking about, she didn’t really know what was going on, and I was going to keep it like that.

“I’m going to leave you in suspense and tell you later. Right now I’m tired and need some rest.” I said, and noticed how drained I felt. I really didn’t get that much sleep. Whatever was in that dart didn’t put me out that long, probably an hour or so, but that wasn’t the type of sleep I needed. I didn’t dream at all when I was drugged or whatever you wanted to call it.

“I’m going to let you slide on that one since you did have a long ass day.” Shy said. Long ass didn’t even begin on how long it was. It was now daylight outside, and I was heading to bed.

“That is the understatement of today. But you know I like to whoop ass, so there should be no problem.” I said walking to my room. “Oh, and by the way we have to talk to your favorite geek. So try to be nice to him. Meaning no barking, or punching.” I said.

“Girl, come on, that is not fair request.”

“Hey, you wanted to sign up to this secret club and live dangerously. This is your first mission, well, our first mission. Just think of it as your way into the club.”

“And me tagging along with you early this morning or last night doesn’t count?” She asked.

“Oh, no, your butt volunteered for that. You have to do something against your will to be part of this club.” I smirked.

“Fine.” She said in defeat, and then I walked into my room and joined my bed. I shoved my face into my pillow thinking about what I was about to do in the next few days. I was scared. I had that feeling a lot lately, and it really hadn’t happened that much until now. I was about to do the biggest thing I have ever done in my life. Basically with a plan of me being kidnapped, and hopefully me being followed. I just kept my head in my pillow until I dosed off and let sleep over take me.

Somewhere hidden in the city:

“You let her escape again.” The man said in the shadow in his office.

“Sir, your people took aim at me like a piñata only without the blind folds.” Wigs tried to plead with the man. “Also, you had your shot at her, and I don’t see her around here either.”

“This is true, but I did bring in the next best thing,” The man in the shadows replied. Wigs could sense a sense of accomplishment in his tone.

“Have your scientist found out anything that can help my situation?” Wigs questioned urgently.

“Andrew, you can only prevent your outcome by bringing the girl in. She is the one that can help you,” The man stated bluntly. Wigs knew he was right. And now he had to move with haste. “You must leave. I have a meeting, and you must not be seen here.” Wigs took the hint and left the room quickly knowing what had to be done.

Around ten minutes passed before the man’s intercom came alive.

“*Sir, Natalia is here to see you.*” The voice said.

“Please, tell her to come in.” The man said. Several moments passed before the door opened and Natalia entered the room.

“Sir, there has been no sign of the girl. It seems that she has gone into hiding.” Natalia said anxiously waiting to hear what the man was going to say.

“Just because you are not doing your job doesn’t mean she isn’t out there.”

“Sir, I have a feeling that she has returned more than once to that alleyway, but you said that wasn’t needed,”

“There is no need to waste your time with that avenue any longer, move on and...”

“Sir, you know that finding that girl is all that is important to me...”

“Do not interrupt me again. With your unique motivation to find this girl I expect results. Your sister is depending on you to do your job. So do it.”

“Yes, sir, I will find her and bring her back.”

“I hope you will. Your sister is depending on it.” Natalia didn’t wait to be formally dismissed. She turned around and walked out; with tears in her eyes.

To Be Continued...

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