FROM THE AUTHOR OF THE NURSES OF MONROE HOSPITAL, AND PRINCESS BITE. MYKAYA RILEY, PRESENT

LIKE MOTHER, LIKE DAUGHTER.
LIKE MOTHER/LOVE DAUGHTER

Sterling Maxwell is tall, brown, and handsome. And is one of Houston hottest stripper, at Club Mandigos. Picking up all the money the women throw on stage, Sterling can't help thinking back on his turbulent past, and the two women he ever loved. Permanently, and temporary gone.

Invited to do a show for a successful African American sorority, Sterling get's involves with a woman whom is married, in whom he didn't know would connect him to his past, and maybe future.

Patricia is the co-owner of Urban Houston magazine, that interview Sterling as H-town sexiest man, and he is attractive to her beauty, and intelligent, and opens his heart after almost five years. When his past and future collides, Sterling wonders if love is real, and life is worth living...

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CHAPTER 1

The airbrakes on the schoolbus could be heard, as it made its second stop, at the corner of Dowling and McGowen, in the Houston Third Ward community. Ms. Reed pulled on the handle, to open the door. Putting on their backpacks, Sterling and his best friend Dana, been two of the few kids that exited the bus.

"Bye bye Ms. Reed, see you in the morning." Dana smiled. At eight years old, Dana been early into girls, and women. A poster of Ashanti, hung on his bedroom wall. Dana would tell Sterling when he make it to the N.F.L, that he was going to marry her and have a bunch of kids.

While Sterling followed Dana off the the bus, Ms. Reed displayed an infectious smile to Sterling, causing him to return a half smile. Sterling been a bit shy with girls, and could tell that Ms. Reed was a real man killer in her youth. Her dark skin still looked flawless, and ageless, with little makeup. Ms. Reed full lips was just touched with the right color of lipstick, to blend in with her skin. Her thick black fro, been pulled up in a ball, on top of her head. Her ebony eyes behind the retangular glasses, made Ms. Reed look like a college professor, rather than a busdriver.

"Have a good evening Sterling."

"You too Ms. Reed." he replied, extending his smile.

The other students that exited the bus, started running home to catch the beginning of their favorite cartoon, Dragon Ball Z. Sterling and Dana stood on the corner conversating about their plans for the evening, until Sterling heard his name shouted from the bus. He looked up to see Erica Price, the prettiest girl in the third grade, hanging out the window. Showing her kid model smile, it was the second time in minutes that a female has cause him to smile.

"Yeah." he answered.

Erica didn't get a chance to speak, as the bus started to drive away, but threw at him a balled up piece of paper. Again Erica called out
his name, before he reach down to grab the crumbled paper. As the bus turned the next corner, Sterling saw Erica kiss her hand and blow.

Dana saw his friend face flush in embarrassment, as he patted him on the back. "Gee man, all the prettiest girls in the third grade likes you. Even some in the fourth do too."

"Yeah, how do you know?" Sterling looked confounded at him.
"When you are not around,they come and ask me your name."
"For real?" Sterling stunned, watching Dana toss up his football, just over his head, then catching it with both hands. Like the American Express Card, it was one thing that Dana never leaves home without.

"Yeah. You know that tall chocolate girl, with the skinny legs, and looks like that black girl on that cheerleader movie, Bring It On."

Lines appeared on Sterling forehead, as he tried to remmeber the gorgeous woman name. "Gab. Gabrielle."

"Yeah Yeah. I think that's her name." Dana tucked the football under his arm. "Well, while you went to the restroom during lunch-time, her and two other girls came to the table wanting to know your name."

"Yeah." Sterling scratching his head. "I wonder why?"
"FOOL! they wanna get with you."
"Why? Their older than me."
"That's the new thing for women today. Dating younger men."
"You sure know alot about women at eight."
"Thanks to watching Oprah with my mother, and having older brothers."

Dana had witnessed many time his brothers bringing home girls, and making out with them. He watched Sterling uncrumbled the balled piece of paper that Erica had thrown, and read it in silence. Sterling showned no expression, in which made Dana inpatience, wanting to know what Erica had written, "What did she say?"

"She said she think I'm cute and smart. And write the letter Y or N, in the box next to the three questions."
"What's the questions?" Dana now standing beside him, wanting to read them.

"Do I thinks she's pretty.'

"Well that is a for sure yes." Dana answered for him.

"Do I like her?"

"Do you?" Dana asked, looking sideways at Sterling.

Sterling hunched his shoulders. "I guess."

"WHAT! you guess. Erica is the prettiest girl in the third grade. Maybe in the whole school."

Sterling didn't combat his friend comment, as he tried to sort out his feeling towards Erica. Dana read the last question. "Will you be my boyfriend? "Sterling you will have all the dudges in the third grade jealous of you, when they hear that Erica Price is your girlfriend." Dana told him, and again begin throwing in the air the his football. Sterling responded to him with a uncertain half smile, in which made Dana frown.

"What!" Dana exclaimed.

Sterling turned to him with a befuddled look. "What do you mean what?"

"Having Erica Price for your girlfriend should not be a hard question to answer." Dana replied starring at Sterling mysteriously, placing the football back under his arm. "Your not gay Sterling, hunh?"

Sterling gave his friend a glower look, feeling no need to answer the ridiculous question. Folding the questionnaire, Sterling put it in his front pocket. After a moment of silence had passed between them, both begin walking in the direction of their dwelling. "You want to come over to my house? My mother is working the evening shift at the nursing home. And my brothers might have some girls at the house making out." Dana stopped in his footsteps, before continueing.

"The day before yesterday, I saw some titties."

"FOR REAL!" Sterling got excited. "How were you able to see them?"

"I go outside, grab a bucket and go to my brothers bedroom window."

"And they don't see you?"

"Unnh unnh. The music be loud and they be into whatever they be

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"Trying to do."

"Dana your crazy." Sterling chuckled.

"Yep.' he laughed along. "So you coming to my house?"

Sterling thought about it for a quick second, before answering no. "I need to go home to see if my mother is there. She haven't been home in two days."

Dana gave him a grave expression, knowing about the situation in Sterling home. "Things seem to be getting worse?"

Sterling displayed a grime feature, nodding his head, looking out into the distant.

"You have something to eat at home?" Dana concerned.

"Yeah." Sterling shook his head, lying.

"Good. Because it's gonna be hard trying to do this multiplication homework, Mrs Turner given us on a empty stomach."

"True." Sterling sighed, pressing his lips together.

"Tomorrow." Dana said, as they both exhibited their best friend handshake, and went in opposite direction at the next block.

Sterling climbed the three steps on to the porch, of the two bedroom wooden frame house. Before going inside, he knew his mother, Grace wasn't home, seeing the mail still in the mailbox. Retrieving the four pieces of mail, he glanced at them. One from Publisher Clearance House. Another from the Harris County courthouse. Sterling assumed that his mother had warrants. The other two were bills.

"LAST NOTICES" one read in big black bold letters. He could see their address printed on the pink paper inside. He sighed heavily, before pulling open the screen door, sticking his key in the door, to go inside.

Though it was spring, inside felt cold and lifeless. Sterling felt this icky feeling countless times, coming home from school. Though the outside the house badly needed painting, Sterling did his best to make sure the inside stayed clean. There wasn't much inside their home. In the livingroom was a fake leather dark brown sofa and loveseat. A huge floor rug laid in front. On top sat a large wooden table that matched two end tables. A black Walmart entertainment cen-
ter held a old thirty two box television. A Panosonic stereo, a new
t third grade picture and a photo of he and his mother, when he was
four,sat on top. It was the last picture they took together.
Taking off his backpack, Sterling tossed it on the couch and made
his way to the kitchen. Pulling a chair to the kitchen counter, he
stood on top of the chair, opening the cabinets above. Only finding
three contents inside, a half bag of no named rice. A box of Frosted
Flakes, and a half jar of peanut butter. "At least it was named
brand." he thought. "Jiffy."
Excluding the rice, Sterling quickly decided between the peanut butter
and Frosted Flakes. "GREEAT." he smiled, sounding like Tony the Tiger,
grabbing the box. Getting a bowl, he jumped down, heading to the re-
frigerator. Disappointment covered his face, realizing there wasn't
any milk, along with hardly nothing else. But three eggs. A pitcher
of red Kool-Aid, and some grape jelly. Now he didn't have to second
guess, what he was about to feed his hunger.
Fixing two peanut butter and jelly sandwiches, Sterling made his
way back into the livingroom, to catch the end of Dragon Ball Z. No
batteries in the remote, he had to turn on the tv manually. Flipping
to the station, Sterling been thankful that the old entertainment
box was still showing a decent picture.
After finishing his homework, Sterling took a bath and grabbed the
blanket off his bed, then made himself comfortable on the couch. He
wanted to hear his mother come in, if she decided to come home to-
night.
Watching a rerun of Martin, Gina made him think about Erica, and
the three question she had asked. The last one he pondered more on.
Erica was beautiful and smart, and he was curious why she liked him,
when he thought that she could have any boy in the school. He would
sleep on it, and answer her in the morning.
CHAPTER 2

A little after one in the morning, Sterling heard his mother stumble through the door abit tipsy. Half opened eyes, he saw that she wasn't alone. He knew that it been one of his mother tricks, because he was white. "Come on inn." his mother pulled him inside.

"Are you sure." he questioned her.
"Yes. No bodies here but my son."

Once inside, Grace removed his hat and dark suit jacket and tossed it on the other couch. Pecking him on the lips, his mother took the brown bag he held. Sterling shut his eyes, when his mother started towards him. Squatting down beside him, she shooked Sterling gently, to wake him. "Wake up Sterling baby. Mommies home."
Sterling played the role waking up disorientated, rubbing his eyes and sitting up. Forcing a smile, he told his mother that he was happy that she was home.

"Sorry baby momma been gone, but you know momma got to go out and hustle for the rent money. And." Sterling mother stopped in mid-sentence, as she casted her eyes to the floor. Sterling watched his mother scratched her neck, then her arm. He knew his mother was fiending for a fix of heroin. Sterling saw how the drug started to steal her beauty. Grace caramal face had aged ten years. Bags was showing under her eyes, from no sleep. Her light brown eyes were no longer bright, but dark, like a broken soul. Clothes that once hugged her Gail Dever frame, now hung off her.

"Are you home for tonight?"
"Yeah baby." she kissed him on the forehead. "Look, I brought you something to eat. Your favorite, McDonald."
Sterling gave her a short smile, accepting the bag. Never glancing inside, his eyes locked with the caucasian man, wearing a dark short haircut. It was something about the stranger that didn't sit right with him. Even though he knew the man reasoning for being here, Sterling asked who was he.

"Oh, this is my friend Bill." his mother stood up and walked over to him, taking his hand. "Bill, this is my son Sterling."
"Hi Sterling," the man nodded, smiling at him. Bill sinister looking smile gave Sterling goosebumps, making him turn his eyes down to the floor. A short moment of silence passed between the three, until Sterling began opening his bag asking what was inside.

"Big Mac, fries, and a cherry pie."
Pulling out the Big Mac and fries, Sterling was abit surprised that the food was still warm. "Eat your food, while your momma and Bill go to my room and talk business. Okay?"
Sterling said nothing, displaying a look of disappointment. He watched his mother pulled Bill towards her room. Again he locked eyes with the stranger, whom exhibited another wicked smile, returning his goosebumps. Hearing the door closed, Sterling opened the styrofoam box with his hamburger. The smell of the special sauce been enticing, but knowing what and how his mother had gotten it,ruined his appetite.

Grace told Bill to make himself comfortable on the bed, as she walked over to her dresser mirror, and check her appearance. Grace had notice for the first time, what her son had saw. How the heroin, had begun to deteriorate her beauty. She couldn't find the strenght or will in the reflection she been starring at. It was because Sterling father, that the Dark Tar, had totally taken control of her life.

"You have a handsome son." Bill spoke, bringing Grace out her sorrow.
"What?" hearing blurry words.
"I said you have a handsome son."
"Sterling." she reached in her fake Chanel purse, removing some lipstick. "Yes he is. He's a good son, that puts up with alot of his mother shit." Grace replied then, reapplying her lipstick. Satisfied with her appearance, she forced a smile at her reflection, and swivelled to face Bill, whom sat on the bed with his hands on his knees. With a wide smile, Grace moved seductive towards Bill, unbuttoning her blouse. Bill watched as her shirt felled to the wooden floor, and Grace reached behind her back to unhook her bra. Bill showed
no reaction to Grace full erect breasts. "You like?" she asked, squeezing them both. Bill responded with a light smile, watching Grace squat before him, working on his belt and zipper. Standing to his feet, Grace pulled down his slacks and boxers to his ankles. She held in her laughter, at Bill's size. "Oh yes, I'm gonna be satisfy with this dick tonight." she lied, boasting his ego.

Grace inserted his below average penis into her mouth. Bill listened to her hums, as she went back and forth on his dick, gripping his ass at the same time. Bill watched her in the mirror, as Grace picked up pace, trying to get his dick to rise. After another minute, Grace stop, starring up at Bill, whom had a blank look.

"Dam baby, what's wrong? You don't like how I'm sucking your dick?"

"Yes." he answered, reaching down for his pants. Grace stood to her full height, looking at her trick puzzled. "I need something more to arouse my sexual needs."

"What is it baby? There's no limit for. the right price. What, you like anal sex?" she lightly giggled, grabbing his penis.

"No, that's not it."

"Then what is it baby. The money right, we can do it."

"What I want to do doesn't involve you." he gave her a earnest stare. Grace released his penis, taking a step back

"What are you talking about?"

Bill remained silence for a moment. His light grey eyes shifted from Grace, to the picture of Sterling on the dresser. "I have a thousand dollars." Bill reached into his pocket, pulling it out the money on a money clip. Grace eyes widen at the sight of the hundred dollar bills. A thousand dollars was far more than the sixty he had offered to pay.

"And what sexual favor you want for a thousand bucks?"

"A few mintues alone with your son."

Sterling heard his mother voice in the livingroom, cursing at the trick. "WHAT THE FUCK ARE YOU? A PEDIPTHILE?"

"I won't touch him." he explained.

"WHAT!" Grace still stunned, as he tried to explain what he wanted. "GET YOUR ASS OUT MY HOUSE!" she grabbed her purse and threw it

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at him. She watched Bill zipped his pants and fixed his belt. Grace
glared at him while he slowly made his way out the room. She turned
to look at herself in the mirror. She was beginning to feel ill, for
two reasons. One, the sick twisted behavior of her trick. The other,
er her need for a fix. Grace clutched her stomach in pain. It's been
two days, since she shot some dope. She knew that she needed that
money badly. Its was more than enough to pay the over due bills, and
keep a roof over their heads for the next month. Grace slightly bent
over feeling another sharp pain in her stomach. After the momentary
\underline{\textbf{cramp}}, she thought about the \underline{\textbf{bill}} that he had gave her. "I won't touch him."
Sterling was sitting up when Bill walked into the livingroom, retrieving
his hat and suit jacket off the couch. Bill saw that Sterling had not eaten his food, and spoke. "Your not hungry?"
Sterling answered by shaking his head, side to side.
"Well maybe later." Bill said, turning to leave. As the front shut,
Grace raced out her room, and out the front door. Bill paused in
stride, hearing her called his name. "Bill Wait!"
Swiveling back to her, he watched Grace creep slowly up to him, with
her head down. She began to scratched her forearm, while clearing
her throat. "Do that offer still stand?" she raised her head, looking
pitiful. Bill nodded his head. "And you're not gonna touch my son?"
Bill answered again, nodding his head yes. Grace said nothing, thinking
again about the situation. Her eyes narrowed, giving her features
a hard expression. "If you touch my son, I'll kill you."

"I promise." Bill raised his hand swearing.
Grace turned to head back inside, feeling defeated, as Bill followed.
Sterling been abit surprised to see Bill following his mother back
inside. Grace directed Bill to go to her room, while she have a word
with her son. She waited for Bill to shut her door, then turned her
attention to Sterling. His soft brown eyes were already lock on her.
His mother forced a smile, before making her way over, sitting next
to him. She held her smile, gazing at her handsome son. Sterling
forced a smile back, until his mother began to scratch her arm.
He knew that she was dying for a fix. Grace now noticed that Sterl-
ing hadn't touch his food. "Your not hungry baby?"
"No, I ate at Dana house,' he lied.

"Well I'll put that up for you in the refrig. You can have it for breakfast." Grace sighed heavily, shifting her wirght on the couch. She scratched her left forearm again, before speaking. "Momma needs a big favor from you."

Sterling said nothing. His face mixed with curious and grief. "Well you know my friend Bill?" she paused, swallowing her throat. "Well he wants to talk to you."

"Why do he wants to talk to me?" Sterling voice sounding frighten.

"He just wants to spend a minute alone with you."

"For what?"

"You just have to go see. I promise he want harm you. Or touch you. He's willing to pay alot of money for your company. A thousand dollars. And you know that we can use that money to pay bills, and keep a roof over our head. PLUS! its enough money to buy the Gameboy you wanted."

Sterling remained silent, looking into the pain, grief and desperation in his mother face. "Okay, for you momma." he slowly shooked his head.

"For us." she responded, forcing a smile. Grace gently rubbed the waves on top of his head, then stood to her feet. She extended her hand for Sterling to take. On their way to her room, Sterling asked his mother again. "Are you sure he's not gonna hurt me?"

She turned to look down at his fearful face, and softly squeezed his hand. "He's not even gonna touch you. I promise. Just do what he ask. Okay?"

Sterling said nothing, shaking his head yes. Grace opened the door to her room to find Bill sitting on the bed. She told Sterling wait at the door, while she walk over to him. "Don't touch my son." she scrowled.

"I promise."

Grace continued a moment longer, giving Bill the look of death, before making her way back to Sterling. She kissed him on top of his head. "Everything is gonna be fine. I promise. Just do what he ask."

Sterling gazed up at his mother with innocent eyes. "It's okay."

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his mother showing a half grin, then nudging him into the room. Sterling took a few steps inside, holding his head down. His shoulders slumped. Finally lifting his head, he saw again the wicked smile on Bill face. Sterling turned his head in search for his mother, whom was reaching for the doorknob. "Everything will be fine. Momma is right outside the door."

The last thing Sterling saw was his mother unassuring smile, as she slowly closed the door. He turned back to the sinful grin of Bill, then put his head down, and spoke. "My mother said that you want to spend some time with me. And do what you ask. Your not gonna hurt me, hunh?"

"NO! NO!." Bill stood. "I would never do that. I just want to play a game with you, called Scout Master Command. Have you ever been in the Boys Scouts?"

"No." Sterling shook his head.

"Well, it's a game that's played in the woods in a tent."

"And how do you play?"

"Well." Bill paused, placing his hand on his chin. "Since I am the oldest. I'm automatic the scout master, and your one of my troops. And you have to obey my command."

"So what would you want me to do?" Sterling asked, with his head still down, sliding his foot side to side.

Walking over to Sterling, Bill kneeled down to look into his face. "First you have to pass a physical exam. And to do that, you have to take off your clothes."

"All of my clothes?" Sterling lifted his head, wanting to cry. "Mmm hmm. I have to see if you are physically fit."

Sterling remained silent, as he stared back down at the floor, sliding his foot. "Do you want me to help you get undress?" Bill offered.

"No. I can do it myself." he answered sadly. "My momma said you are not to touch me."

Bill raised his hands in the air, standing to his feet. "That's right." Bill sat back on the bed, and watched Sterling slowly strip out his pajamas, down to his Fruit of the Looms. He stood in them for a moment, head still down, rocking side to side. "Your underwear
müʃt come off, to be examine."

Sterling glanced up, displaying his sorrow light brown eyes, for the longest second, then removing them. Bill face brighten, viewing Sterling untamper young brown body. He been struggling to contain the devil inside him, to not touch Sterling's abnormal penis.

Come get in the bed." Bill patted it. Sterling slowly walked over to the bed, climbing on top. Bill asked him to lie on his back, to admire his phallus. Still fighting every fiber in his body, not to touch it, Bill ordered Sterling to roll over on his stomach. Covering his face with his hand, to hide his tears, Bill bit on his top lip, while unzipping his pants. Sterling never look up to see Bill penis out, but knew he had been doing a sinful act, hearing his grunts.
"STERLING! STERLING! come back to earth man."
Sterling pupils dilated, bringing him back to the present. He turned his eyes from his grave feature in the mirror, to the solid black chiseled man, wearing a leopard skin G-string. "Are you okay man? You seem like you were on another planet."

"I'm okay. I was thinking about something in the past." he replied, his eyes shifted back to his dolor face in the mirror.

"Well it must have been something serious. I called your name several times."

"It was, but I didn't let it ruin my life." Sterling picked up his brush, and began brushing his waves in his hair. Twenty four now, Sterling still love and missed the people who created him. He had to credited them for his handsome looks. For his physique, that was all him, working hard in the gym. At six one and a half, and a even two hundred pounds, Sterling had the face of an angel and a body of a greek god. He used those assess to make a decent living. Paying for a few college classes, and a expensive six weeks writing seminar, by the world best writers. Reading was sometime away to escape the trouble of childhood. And one day he hoped to become a national bestseller. Hoping one day the stories that he writes, will help someone escape their tribulation. Even just for a little while. Brushing his trimmed beard now, Sterling looked at the wad of money in the African warrior hands. "I see that the stage been good to you tonight."

"Yes, the ladies loves some Shaka. Especially the whites ones." Shaka licked his thumb, and began counting.

"They come to find out if the myth is true." Sterling glanced at his penis.

"Keep breaking me off, they can find out." Shaka smiled, grabbing his piece. Sterling lightlly laughed at his co-worker, as he stood up, heading to his locker. Dressed in a dark plaid suit, he opened his locker reaching inside taken out a briefcase. "OH SHIT, you bringing out the briefcase." Shaka grinned.

"Yeah. You said that that the ladies are paying tonight. So I need
to fill this bitch up. Its the end of the month. A brother got bills to pay." Sterling gave a smirk look.

Inside Mandigos strip club, the large crowd of women were still in a uproar by the performance of the last dancer, named Magnis, whom had the women bewilded, with his Micheal Straham body and features. Moments later a medium height chisel man came on stage, wearing a fitted window pane suit, that matched his brown skin. With no shirt, his suit jacket was opened, displaying his six pack. He grinned, when he heard a woman shouting, is she could come on stage and feel his body. Granting permission, he wave for the woman to come on stage. The middle age woman giggled like a little school girl, when he opened his jacket. She was touching him at first, as though he been fragile. Requesting for her to use both hands, and roam wherever she like, the woman jumped back, giggling again, covering her mouth, when the M.C made his chest bounce. He signaled with hand for her to come closer, giving her a tight embrace. Kissing and squeezing her ass, she reached in her bra, pulling out a twenty, stuffing it inside his pants. He thanked her with another kiss, before she exited the stage. Listening to the women murmur throughout the club, the M.C gotten the women attention when he began to introduce the next dancer.

"The dancer coming to the stage, works hard all day, and still comes home to cook for you. Then after do the dishes. Working all day and coming home doing all the chores, he still haves the energy to please his woman. And tonight he wants to please you." he turned, requesting for someone to bring to the stage a chair. Placing the wooden chair in front of him. "Which one of you lucky ladies would like to come to the stage and be pamper, by the next dancer?" The M.C lightly chuckled, watching the women go hysterical, screaming, pleading to come up on stage. Searching the crowd, the M.C choose a light skinned beauty, thirtyish woman. Her tight black pants suit, made her chubby frame look shapely. Her short hair, had been cut perfect for the structure of her face. She jump up and down excited before she was asked to take a seat.

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"Ladies without further ado. I bring to the stage the black god. Osiris."

Old school BabyFace (Soon I Get Home From Work) started to play. Sterling walked smoothly out on the stage, wearing his plaid suit, and briefcase in hand. The women beginned to scream as the spotlights illuminated his handsome face. Swaying and singing along with the classic ballad, they watched in suspense, as Sterling circled the woman, making her yellow skin blush. Now standing before her, Sterling rolled his body until he was down on his knees, opening up his briefcase. The woman smiled, covering her mouth with excitement, when Sterling pulled out some strawberries. Kicking the briefcase to the end of the stage, he straddled over the aroused woman. Taking a bite of the strawberry, Sterling fed her what was left. Just like the M.C before, Sterling had the woman giggling like a little school girl. Sterling took another strawberry, putting it half way in his mouth. He moved closer, face to face, offering her the other half, in which she ecstatic accepted with her mouth. Swallowing their appetizer, Sterling passionately kissed her. She grabbed his ass, as Sterling through his head back and started to grind. "RIDE HER BABY!" some woman could be heard over the cheers.

As the song ended its chours, "I'll Give Good Love" Sterling leaned into the woman ear and whisper. "You wanna see more?"

"Mmm Hmm." she nodded her head. Standing to his feet, the music stop playing. Sterling exhibited his sexy devilish smile:

"You ready?"

"Yes." she nodded her head again.

Simultaneously, Sterling ripped off the top half of his suit, when Ginuwine (Pony) blasted through the speakers. The women stood to their feet screaming, watching Sterling move his body to the rythum of the music. Now at the end of the stage, Sterling been on Q again with the beat, tearing off his pants. The women ranned to the stage, wanting to get a closer look at the huge bulge in the white G-string. Sterling teased the women in the chair with his impeccable body. Making his way back over to the woman in the chair, Sterling strad-
dled her again, backwards. He took her hands, placing them on his 
chest. She smoothly ran them back and forth on his manicure chest, 
circling his nipples. Sterling leaned back, kissing her on the cheek. 
Her hand slid lower, riding the ripples of his six pack. The ladies 
screamed in fascination, as her hand slid lower, clutching Sterling's 
penis. Sterling with the smoothness removed her hand. Now on his 
feet, he turned to her, waving a finger to her like Mbotombo, after 
blocking a shot, displaying a shameful smile. Pointing to his phal-
lus, indicating if she wanted him to take it off. She nodded yes, 
his smile widen to the max. Sterling gave her the 'show me the money 
sign', rubbing his fingers together, letting her know it cost to get 
the first look of the black god dick. She removed from her pocket 
a fifty dollar bill. Sterling inclined his head, indicating more. 
The woman looked at him with shock, then reached back into her pock-
et, retrieving another fifty dollar. For that, Sterling gave her 
the pleasure of removing his G-string. The thick beauty jilted in 
unbelief, mesmerized at his manhood, attached to the body of god. 
When Sterling turned to give the rest of the women a view, his 
briefcase begin to fill with money.

Back in the lockerroom, Sterling pumped a satisfying smile, opening 
his briefcase. He spun around in his swivel chair in front of his locker. The ladies were beautiful and their charity had been 
generous. His briefcase was full of Washington, and sprinkled with 
some Jackson and Jefferson. It wasn't too many fun job like his, 
that you could make this amount of money in ten minutes. Separating 
his earning, he heard the chuckling sounds of Shaka behind him.

"I see that the ladies are still paying well."
"Yeah. Must be alot of rich ones out there tonight. Or they have 
rich husbands."

"Both. But maybe more of the latter." Shaka watched for a moment 
Sterling continueing seperating his money, before asking if he was 
going out to mingle with the ladies, and do private shows.

"No. I have a writing seminar class in the morning. John Grisham 
suppose to speak tommorrow."
"Really."
"Mmm hmmm. Sterling nodded.
"I like his books turned into movies. The Firm and Time to Kill."
"Yeah." Sterling swiveled in his chair to face him. "Sorry, but I didn't picture you as a person who sat down and read books."
"That hurt." Shaka jestingly laughed. "Yeah, I read little Dickey, Webber, Street novels and a lot of Zane. Her books gives me the insight what a woman wants."
"Now its clear why you drive them so crazy."
"And satisfied." Shaka simpered, clutching his penis. "But I love reading African history. Its where I chosen my name. Blacks would be in awe, if they knew what the white man all have stolen from us."
"Brother I know." Sterling replied, placing his money in his briefcase. Closing it, he stood to his feet. "My aunt is a African American professor at T.S.U. Her and her husband were pro-black and adamant that I and my cousin Kiya know our history."
"Its the reason why we struggled as a people." Shaka commented.
"Mmmm, I agree." Sterling pondered a second, retrieving his clothes out the locker. "So you going out to mingle?"
"Hell Yeah. I want to buy some dubbs for my LandRover."

Their conversation suddenly been interrupted, hearing their names being called by their boss, Rene. Rene was a definition of a black Amazon. Tall, dark and thick, with her hair style in cornrows. Rene black stonewash jean outfit struggled to hold in her large breasts, hips and ass. Holding on to her beltloop, been a young high yellow beauty named Nina. Rene's main girl toy. Though sometimes switches witches lanes, Rene prefer women.
Sterling thought back to the day of the interview with Rene. Working as a stocker at night at Walmart, which didn't pay much. One of the most prosperous super change store in the world. Sterling been one of the workers, along with hundreds, protesting for higher wages. Years later Walmart decided to reward their employees with higher pay from minimum wage, to nine dollars. Though nine bucks an hour still barely kept the light on, looking for another job in the paper, Sterling broke out into a hard laughter, reading an business article
about Walmart. Their stocks in the first quarter were down 00.1 percent, due to giving their employees a nine dollars an hour. But earned 14.6 billions that quarter. "Dam! I guess there goes their beach front property."

But there he found it in the classified, in the adult section.

"NEEDED! A BLACK PHYSICAL FIT EXOTIC MAKE DANCER. MAKES LOTS OF MONEY. CLUB MANDIGOS."

Considering himself a pretty good dancer, Sterling thought how hard could it be doing it naked.

On a hot June afternoon, Sterling was escorted inside the club by a humongous bald bouncer, with a goatee, named Jeff. At a table near the stage sat Rene, along with Nina, and another woman. Sterling extended his hand to introduce himself. Rene exhibited an unfriendly grin, quickly shaking his hand. She ordered him to step back, to examined him from head to toe. Rene raised an eyebrow in amiration.

She thought that Sterling had an majestic face. His blonde mohawk fit the sculpture of his skull. His goatee, trimmed perfectly around kissable lips. His smile could have been on a toothpaste comercial.

Rene kept him in suspense for a moment, before she leaned forward now, wanting to see the product. "I need you to get naked."

"Hunh." Sterling pretended not to understand.

"I need you to get naked. I need to see what you inherit from your father."

Dressed in a pair of Polo jeans, and a dark green pullover shirt, Sterling slowly took off his shirt. The unknown woman that was sitting with them, Sterling had heard her hum in delight. When his jeans fell around his ankles, both Nina and the unknown woman leaned forward to get a closer view of the bulge in Sterling boxer brief. Stepping out of his pants, Sterling kicked them to the side. They saw that his lower half was just as chisel as the upper. Silence been thick in the room, as Rene waited patiently for Sterling to get completely naked. "We need to hurry. Time is money. And I hate people fucking with my money."

Sterling removed his boxers, and another sexual sound could be heard coming from the table. "DAM!." the unknown woman said. Nina bit
her bottom lip in lust. Rene reached for her pack of cigarettes and lighter, before leaning back in her chair. "Bless is what you inherited from your father."

"Is it alright for me to put back on my clothes?"

"Not yet. I need to see if you can work that pulchritude body of yours."

Nina pressed play on the old school ghetto box, giving Sterling some music to dance too. The Dream (Falsetto) played and Sterling slowly began to move his body to the beat. Rene lit her Virginia Slim, crossing her legs, smiling gradufied in the way he moved. Ordered Nina to stop the music, Rene inhaled her cigarette, then blew her smoke in Sterling direction. She gave him a pleasing grin. "Who taught you how to dance like that?"

"My cousin Kiya."

"Are you gay or bi?"

"No." Sterling laughed.

"Can you fuck?" Rene asked serious, taking another puff of her cigarette. Sterling showed a look of unbelief, caught off guard by the question.

"Excuse me?"

Rene uncrossed her legs and thumped the ashes of her cigarette in the ashtray leaning forward. "You gonna make some money with that handsome face, nice body, and tight ass. But if you want to make lots of money, you got to give the women what they really want."

"And what's that?" Sterling asked, sort of knowing the answer.

"Good dick." Rene exhibited a devilish smile. Pulling hard on her cigarette, and again thumping the ashes in the ashtray, then leaning back. Rene kept looking on Sterling, whom was looking a little nervous, not knowing what's about to happen next. "Tamela." Rene revealed the unknown woman with the shoulder length dreadlocks name.

"Yeah."

"You wanna try Mr. Maxwell out?"

Sterling intensely watched the light chocolate woman make her way to the stage, smiling. Her tied up suede thigh high boots, echoed on her way up the stairs. Tamela ass cheeks hung out of her Tru Religion
cut shorts. Her nipples was peeping through her fishnet shirt. She stood before Sterling, locking her grey hazel contacts with his light brown eyes. Sterling body became tense, as Tamela ran her fingers around his nipples, then south across his ripped abs. She stopped at the edge of his pubic hair, giving him another seductive stare.

"I'm going to have fun with you." she whispered in his ear. Tamela circled Sterling once more, before standing behind him. Goosebumps covered his body, while Tamela lightly ran her manicure nails down his back. Grabbing both of his ass cheeks, she kissed Sterling on the shoulders. Tamela made her way down his back with soft kisses, at last kissing both cheeks. Sterling eyes remained on the earnest face of Rene, until Tamela parted his cheeks, and touched his backdoor with her tongue.

Sterling closed his eyes heavily exhaling, before he begin making grunting noise. Never before had he had his salad toss. And never before had he thought that this nasty shit could feel so good. Sterling felt the pulsing of his dick coming alive, as the blood started rushing to the head. Tamela slapped his ass cheeks, turning him around to assist his dick to its full hardness and length.

Removing her jenshort, she got on all fours facing Rene. Looking back at Sterling, she commanded him fuck her. Sterling stepped closely behind her, and slowly fell to his knees. He kept a stone expression, looking at Rene, as he inserted his huge rod into Tamela pussy.

Tamela mouth ajarred, sucking in air, feeling Sterling fill her passage up. Slowly sliding in and out of her, Sterling face harden, grabbing a handful of Tamela dreadlocks. The sounds of their bodies clashing, resounded in the room, occupied by four. Tamela cursed in both pain and pleasure. Rene saw his jaw and the muscles in his whole body tighten. She knew that Sterling was about to explode. "I wanna hear you cum." she shouted.

A minute later, Sterling grunting rattled his throat, then escaped through his mouth. He called the Creator by his english name, holding Tamela tight around her waist. Filling her sexhole with jism, Sterling felled on top of Tamela with exhaustion. Rene displayed a satisfied smile. "Yeah, you gonna make me alot of money." she said.
Rising up from under the table, Nina. Rene smiled wide, seeing her pouted lips covered with her wetness.

Sterling eyes was on the seductive expression on Nina face, as she stood behind Rene, biting her bottom lip, like the first day she saw him naked. His eyes shifted back to the dismay look of Rene, as though she seem to be upset to see him packing to leave. "Your not through for the tonight Sterling."

"Tonight I am," he replied earnest
"No your not! I have women out there asking for private shows for you and Shaka."
"What room?" Shaka asked.
"A group of white women in V.I.P two."
"Well see you later Sterling. Gotta make that dollar. Might able to puts some dubbs on the Rover tomorrow." Shaka smiled, patting Sterling on the shoulder, and leaving.
"Peace." Sterling said, and turned his attention back to Rene. "I would love to entertain the women some more tonight, but I have a writer seminar in the morning."

"WHAT! You wanna be a writer?" Rene face changed from dismay to surprise.
"Yeah. I don't want to shake my ass my entire life."
"And I can understand that," she said, watching Sterling pull out a pair of Levi's jeans, and a T-shirt that read OutLaw football.
"But tonight I need you in V.I.P one. It's two high price women willing to pay big money for a private show."
"Sorry I can't."
"No, sorry you will. Or you can clean out your muthafucking locker!" Sterling countered Rene remark with a harsh stare. "That's not fair."
"Life ain't fair." she turned, making her way out the dressing room, with Nina attached to her beltloop. "So shake what your father gave you and get our money." she shouted, never looking back. Sterling saw Nina look back at him with a knotty smirk, before they exited.
"Rene thinks she's a pimp." Sterling mumbled thwart.
"Technically she is. A female Don Wan." another dancer replied,
In V.I.P room two, Shaka had one white woman in the front, and one other in the rear, kissing his back, grinding along with him to the rhythm of the music. A third woman sat in a circle lounge with her right leg over the arm, massaging her vagina.

Sterling entered his V.I.P room to find two attractive middle age women. He could tell that their pockets were deep, by their demeanor and expensive attire they wore. The one dressed in lambskin leather pants and jacket, introduced herself as Cynthia.

Her cocoa flawless skin, and ebony eyes were bright. Cynthia painted full lips widen, showing a perfect set of pearls. Her hair been cut like halle Berry, in the James Bond movie.

Sterling studied the second women, sitting next to Cynthia. He had somehow seen her more than once before, but struggled to remember where. Sterling watched the slit in her white Prada dress expose her athletic legs, when she crossed them. Her hair was pulled back on top in a ponytail. The extension hunged to the middle of her back. Sterling thought the matching neckband made her look like a ancient Egyptian goddess.

"And my name is Lory," she finally introduced herself.

Lines appeared on Sterling forehead, trying to register her first name, with the face. A short moment later, Sterling mouth ajared, before transforming to a, I know who you are grin.. "Lory Steele, the accident lawyer. "I'll get every penny that's owed to you."

Sterling lightly chuckled, mimicking her commercial. Lory flashed her commercial smile, speaking.

"I hope to see what's owed to me for what I'm paying."

"Well not much. Thirty dollars for two songs. Ten more to touch the phallus."

Lory reached in her bra and pulled out a hundred dollar bill. "What will it cost to see you cum," she simpered. Cynthia reached in her blouse and pulled out a hundred. Sterling smile tilting his head at the women in amazed and curiosity. Their request wasn't anything new to Sterling. Many women come here to fulfill their desires, and have their fantasy come to life. Whatever they lack at home, with their husband or boyfriend, the men at Mandigo's met their needs.
Sterling was no longer angry at Rene anymore. Again, how many jobs makes two hundred bucks in ten minutes. Sterling glanced back and forth at the beautiful ladies. Maybe fifteen minutes, changing his mind. 
Wearing a jean vest and matching thong, Sterling went into action hearing Bobby Valentino, BEEP! BEEP! BEEP!.. 

CHAPTER 4 

Sterling and Dana were in the shadow in end of the community pool. Dana been trying to teach Sterling how to swim. Explaining and demonstrating after a few strokes, Sterling would sink to the bottom like a boulder. Dana shook his head. "This gonna take some time." he said. 
Half an hour later, Sterling was able to stay above water a quarter way of the pool width, of the olympic size pool."Better." Dana smiled. 
Soon their attention been drawn to a group of girls that entered the pool area. In the group with them been Erica Price. The prettiest girl in the third grade, that had a crush on Sterling. The boys followed them with their eyes, walking over to the lockers, and removing their shorts and shirts, revealing their swimsuit underneath. All had on one pieces except Erica, whom wore a pink two piece. Sterling and Dana watched Erica and her posse waved off some boys trying to push up on them. They could hear the sounds of their laughter, as they started to make their way towards the pool. 

"HEY ERICA!" Dana shouted her name. 
Erica gave Dana a drool look, watching him wave at her if he was drowning. But her expression quickly changed when she spotted Sterling next to him. Though Sterling rejected her proposal, she never gave up pursuit to make him hers. "Hey Dana." she finally replied back to him, then to Sterling, smiling widely. 

"Hi Erica." Sterling gave her a shyful smile. Observing Erica, Sterling thought she looked like a Smooth Girl model, from the magazine, that he and Dana peep through a convients stores. Though she
way under develope, her bikini fitted nicely over her little derriere and mosquitoes bumps over her chest.
Sterling was in awe as he watched Erica walk over to the edge of the pool and dive in. She swammed over him and Dana to the middle of the pool, like a Olympia champion. The shyful expression remained on Sterling face, as he witness her pushed back her thick shoulder length hair. The water seem to sparkle, running down her coffee skin. Up close, her feature were radiant, like the summer sun.

"I didn't expect to see you here today." Erica spoke.
"Yeah. Dana and I put down to video games today, and decide to go swimming. It's a nice day." Sterling looking up at the sun.
Silence parted them for a long second, until Dana intervene. "Say Erica, who is your friend in the Minnie Mouse bathing suit?"
"That's my best friend Karen."
"She's cute. I never seen her at school."
"Because she lives with her cousin during the school year, and go to their school."
"She must be smart?"
"No smarter than Sterling, I believe." Erica gave Sterling a model smile. "You want to talk to her?" Erica asked, shifting her attention back to Dana. "You know how to swim?" she asked him.
"Yeah." Dana shaking his head. "I was here teaching Sterling how."
Erica turned to Sterling somewhat surprised, that he didn’t know how to swim. Embarrassed, Sterling tried to hide his shame behind a lie, telling Erica that Dana was trying to teach him how to backstroke.
"Ohh. Maybe after he teach you, you can teach me how to backstroke."
she smiled, believing him. Erica turned to call her friend Karen. All watching Karen make her way down the steps of the pool, and fight the water over to them. After introducing Sterling, Dana been all teeth, when Erica introduced him. "Dana here is a good swimmer. In fact he's the one that taught me." she lied to have Sterling alone. Karen gave Dana a warm smile. "Dana here is gonna teach you how to swim. While I talk about something with Sterling."
Karen agreed and the four separated in pairs. Erica turned and swam a few stroke away. Stopping, she swiveled to find Sterling hadn't
followed her. Inclining her head smiling, she waved for him to come over. Happy that Erica didn't swim to far away, Sterling felt it wasn't necessary to swim over to her, and walked.
Erica dipped her head under water again, and smoothed back her hair. She wiped away with her hand the access water off her face. Silence parted them again momentarily, before she spoke. "You know you hurt my feeling, when you didn't want to be my boyfriend."

"I'm sorry. I didn't mean too." Sterling felt dejected.
"You don't think I'm pretty?"
"I think your pretty. I think you are the prettiest girl in the school."
"I don't understand. Do you hate me?"
"No." Sterling shaking his head side to side. "Of course not. Why would I hate you?"
"I don't know." she hunched her shoulders. "Do I frighten you?"
Sterling sense his shyness. "Why are you scare of me?"
Sterling hunched his shoulders, staring down into the clear water at his feet. "You just so pretty." he mumbled, with his head still down. Erica had a huge smile.
"I think you are handsome too." she stepped closer to him. "And smart."
"Thank you." Sterling slowly raised his head, displaying a bashful grin.
Erica was about to continue to speak, when their attention were drawned to the scream of a teenage boy, jumping off the platform. The splash of his long fall, could be heard throughout the pool area, as the water felled back into the pool like heavy raindrops. Erica turned back to Sterling, reaching for his hand. "Come on."

"Where are we going?" Sterling puzzled.
"To the deep end. I want to jump off the diving board."
"Off the top platform?"
"No, no. That's to scary for me."
"Good. Thank you." Sterling said to himself.
"The high diving board next to it."
"Are you sure?" Sterling prayed that she was kidding.
ling closed his eyes, waiting to hit the bottom, so he could push himself back up to the top, and start swimming. Slowly falling deeper, his ears began to pop. Opening his eyes, Sterling looked up, then down, realizing that he was only halfway from the bottom. He began to panic, releasing the air from his lungs.

CHAPTER 5

"HELP! HELP! HELP! SOMEBODY HELP ME!" Sterling screamed. He could feel the water splashing in his face, taking his breath. Shaking his head, fighting the nightmare, Sterling been awaken by the barking sounds of his German Sherpard, Max. Max stood on his hind legs, with his front paws on the bed, looking over Sterling. With his wet tongue hanging out his mouth, Sterling forced a smile at his buddy.

"I was having another bad dream," he said. Max barked a few times, then whined, claiming that he comprehend. Licking around his mouth, Max licked Sterling across his face a few times. Sterling understood now why the dream seemed so real. Checking the time on the nightstand, he realized he had less than an hour to fed Max, shower, get dress, then speed across town, for the first day of the writing seminar. Killing two birds with one stone, Sterling let Max out the door to relieve nature, while he showered. Dressed in a pair of Sean John jeans and a purple pullover IZOD shirt, looking in the mirror, Sterling saw the business card he taken from Cynthia last night on the dresser. He learned that she was a C.E.O of the largest nursing home in the nation. She wanted him and some dancer to perform at their sorority party in two weeks. He chuckled to himself in the mirror, remembering last night. "Rich women are wild."

Calling Max inside the townhouse, Sterling watched him eat for a moment. "I'll be gone for a few hours, watch the house for me." speaking to Max. Max looked up for a second, barking once. "Good dog." Sterling leaned down to rub his shiny black and tan coat, before leaving.
Roberts. They all had to start at the beginning. I will be truthful with you. There's no true key to becoming a successful, and having a long paying writing career. "Brewer threw up his hand, pausing in his speech as though he had anaphimany. "Did you know that Stephen King self published, and give away his first five books. But later picked up and became a bestseller. At the time, King posses early in his writing career, two of the four elements to become a successful writer. The first one." Brewer held up one finger. "Good writing. Two, knowledge of the writer market. Three is professionalism. And four, persistence. King posses the first and last."
Sterling began writing as Mr. Brewer broke down, explaining the essentials that a writer needs to know to become successful.

Three hours later the seminar took a thirty minutes break for lunch. Sterling chuckled inside watching Charlie wrestle with the snack machine, trying to get it to take his dollar. Reaching into his front pocket, Sterling offered Charlie a better condition bill. "Here, this machine might take this dollar."
Charlie turned pushing up his glasses, to witness Sterling peeling a dollar bill, from a large wad of money. Charlie thank him, exchanging the bill. Sliding the exchanged bill into the machine on the first try. "YEAH," Charlie gleed. Knowing what he wanted, he pressed C3, and smiled, watching the bag of Fungin slide forward, then fall. Taking his chips out the machine, Charlie stepped to the side for Sterling. Sterling pressed A1, and witnessed the machine do the samething, as it did for Charlie. Sterling retrieved his item from the bottom of the machine. "Need my sugar rush." Sterling smiled, holding up a honey bun.
Swiveling on his heels, Sterling walked over to the soda machine behind him. Charlie followed. "Need more sugar." Sterling fiend. Again Charlie saw Sterling pull out the wad of money. He turned to ask if Charlie wanted something to drink.

"Yes. Please. Thank you." displaying his gratitude, turning up the right side of his mouth.

"What kind?"
"Well I guess you need to get started on your query, and come up with the perfect pitch to sell your fantasy book." Sterling commented while hopping in his car. He turned the ignition, bringing the black machine back to life. "See you tomorrow." he smiled, backing out. Charlie heard the roar of the floor master pipes, as Sterling sped away. Thinking, Charlie face contorted, wondering if Sterling comment again had been encouragement or a insult.

CHAPTER 6

Late one morning coming home from Mandigos, Sterling been stop by the police, for not coming to a complete stop at a stop sign. He cursed pulling over to the curve, and turning down his music. With dark tinted windows, the officer couldn't see him lift up his mat on the passenger side, and placed his nine millimeter in the secret department he had install.

Grabbing his insurance card out the glovebox, Sterling looked in the side mirror, and saw the white officer approaching. He cursed again, as he shined the flashlight in his left hand. His gun still in his holster, but right hand on the handle. Sterling knew that it was still killing season for unarmed black men in American. "Don't let me die tonight God." he prayed.

The officer knocked on his window with his flashlight, and gesture with his head to let it down. With the tinted window down, Sterling squint his eyes from the bright light of the officer flashlight. He asked for Sterling license and insurance, which he handed to him.

After looking over his identification, the officer flashed his light back in Sterling face, then stepped back to view his car.

Shinning the light back in his face, the officer asked Sterling were there any drugs in the car. Not like Charlie, Sterling took offense to the officer question. "No sir." he gritted his teeth, hating to show the officer respect.

"Stay put, I'm going to check to see if you have any warrants." Sterling watched the officer walk back to his unit. He exhaled in relief, knowing that he didn't have any warrants. A few minutes later
the officer returned, blinding Sterling again with his flashlight.
"I need you to step out the car sir."
"WHAT! what for? Sterling surprised.
"Step out the car sir!" the officer repeated aggressive. Sterling eyes followed the officer hand, grasping the handle of his gun. He said another short prayer, as he opened his door, and slowly got out. The officer ordered him to turn around, and put his hands behind his back. Sterling did what he was told, while asking the officer, what's the reason for being cuffed.

"You have some warrants, for running a stop sign, and failing to appear."
"I didn't have to go to court. I paid the ticket through the mail."
"Well tell that to the judge downtown." he said, leading Sterling to his police unit.
"What about my car?" Sterling questioned before being shoved into the back seat.
"It will be impounded."
Sterling cursed. "SHIT!" after the officer slammed the door.

The young female jailer smiled at Sterling, while fingerprinting him. She held each finger gently as she laid out his prints on a white card. Asking for his left hand, she asked what he was being arrested for. "You don't look like a criminal."
"No." he replied, flashing his contagious smile. "What do a criminal look like?"
"Surely not like you." her eyes roamed up and down his body. After sitting in a large holding cell for an hour, Sterling was finally led to a court room, along with other offenders. When the judge walked in, all was ordered to rise. "Judge Willington is now presiding."
Dressed in her traditional black robe, the beauty of the judge soften Sterling anger features, as he watched her take her place at the bench. The judge almond skin, had just a touch of blush on her cheeks. The same was for her full lips. Her thick sculpture eyebrows and long lashes, made her brown eyes hypnotizing. The judge silky hair...
was done in a bun. Sterling listened to her sultry voice, going over the formalities of the court. When she finished, the court clerk called the first name to the judge. Sentencing a husband and wife to one week in jail, she ordered them to check into a rehab, finding out that they were addicted to drugs. The next two defendants had to remain in jail, until their tickets were paid in full, of time was done. Before his name been called, Judge Willington lower the boom on a man that assaulted his girlfriend, giving him six months. "Shit!" been the repeated word of the night for Sterling, as he crepted nervously to the bench. Standing before the bench, Sterling put his hand behind his back, looking up at the judge with a disturbed look. He listen as she read off his charges.

"Mr. Maxwell the court is charging you for not paying a $110 fine for running a stop sign, and failure to appear in court. How do you plea?" she asked inclining her head, starring at him with raised eyebrows.

"Your honor, I paid the tickets by mail, and thought I didn't have to show up for court."

"When did you sent off the money?"

"Mmm. I believe alittle over a week before my court date."
Judge Willington swiveled to her desk clerk, whom sat in front of a computer, ordering her to check and see if Sterling had paid for his ticket. Within moments, the clerk confirmed that Sterling had. "Why does it not show that he had paid, in the police unit?" she asked.

"I don't know your honor." she hunched her shoulders.
The judge turned her attention back to Sterling, apologizing for the misfortune of being arrested. "Why were you pulled over tonight?"
Shame covered Sterling face, as he answered the question that he was pulled over for not completely stopping at a stop sign. The judge shooked her head in disbelief. "Stop means stop, Mr. Maxwell. Not yeild."

"Yes, I know now your honor."
Sterling watched the judge write something down, then speak as she stamped some papers. "Was your car impounded?"
"Yes your honor." he answered, hoping that she could do something about the cost.
"I'm sorry about your car being impounded, there's nothing I can do about that. The towing company whom might have tow away your vehicle is separate entity from the city. But your case is dismissed, and you are free to go."
Still upset for being falsely arrested, and then have to come out of his pocket to get his car out the pound, Sterling recived his property, and sat outside on the steps of the city courthouse. With his IPhone to his ear, he heard the sleepy hello on the other end of the line. "Kiya, sorry to disturb you this morning, but I need you badly."
Kiya was Sterling cousin on his mother side. In fact the only cousin he had. Kiya was short for Kiyadonte (Ki-yaw-don-tay). She inhaled heavily, then exhaled, trying to rub the sleep from her eyes. Looking over at the clock on her nightstand, Kiya frowned, asking Sterling what he needed with her at four in the morning.
"I need you to pick me up at the downtown city courthouse."
"Why in the hell were you arrested?"
"I was falsely arrested for not appearing in court."
"Right." Kiya sat up, believing not a word. "Boy I told you to not buy that car."
Sterling didn't reply back yo Kiya comment, needing her to come, and pick him up. There was a long pause of silence, that made Sterling wondered if she was still on the line. "Kiya, you still there?"
"Yeah boy." she exhaled heavily again. "Boy you get on my nerves. Give me a minute. Chris is not here, so I have to get the kids together."
"Cool. No problem. I'll buy yall breakfast."
"And we don't want no McDonalds!"
Sterling chuckled. "Okay. Love you Kiya."
"Yeah right." she frowned hanging up.

Sterling smiled, standing to his feet, spotting Kiya Ford Explorer turning the corner. He made his way two steps at a time down the stairs. Jumping in the passenger seat, Sterling kissed her on the
Cheek, hoping it would reverse the perturb expression on her face. No luck, her turned his to view the twins, strapped in their carseat. Exhibiting his contagious smile, the two and half years old Chris jr. and Chrystal returned theirs. "Hello bad bandits."
Both giggled at Sterling, waving. "Yall wants some Burger King break- fast?"

Chris and Chrystal nodded their heads in excitement. Sterling turned his beaming face back to Kiya, whom still had the agitated look.
"What! You said no McDonalds."
"Don't play boy." she scowled. Sterling chuckled lightly. "Where's your car?"
"They say at some pound on Telephone road."

Paying the hundred and sixty towing and impounding fee, a worker drove his car up front. Sterling inspected the black machine for any scratches. Satisfied, Sterling told Kiya to follow him, that he knew a great mom and pop resturant that serves good breakfast.

They took a booth in the back, as Chrystal sat on Sterling lap, and Chris sat in his mother's. Their table was loaded with scrambled eggs, turkey bacon, toast and grits. Sterling watched in delight Chrystal suck her chocolate milk through the straw. The twins had posses the good look of both of their parents. Kiya husband was a all American in high school, playing a little football at Grambling State, in Louisanna. Failing to make the pros, he landed an excellent job at a chemical plant.

Kiya comment to Sterling that they weren't going to be able to eat all this shit, he had ordered. A License Vocational Nurse at South- west Memorial. Kiya micro braids were highlighted on the end, and pulled back in a ponytail. Her mocha face was without blemish. Her heart shape lips, long lashes, and ebony eyes, made her easy on a man eyes.

"Don't worry, you can put it all in a doggy bag, for Chris to eat when he gets home. See, breakfast is already taking care, for your man"
"Shut up boy." she retorted. Sterling chuckled, kissing Chrystal on the cheek, after she fed him a piece of her bacon. Sterling asked how things were going in the household.

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"Fine. Chris was promoted to shift leader, and given a raise."
"Well, that's great."
"Yeah. Now I hope he will buy me that new Benz or B.M.W. sports utility."
"Dam Kiya, isn't that Explorer just two years old?"
"Yep, but I want something foreign."
"Nice home, with a pool in the back. New SUV. Women are never satisfied."
"Never. Hell I need to drive something sexy, like me. Not nothing plain, that screams I'm a mother."
"But you are."
"Yeah, a sexy one." Kiya pointed her steak knife at Sterling. He laughed again at her assertion. Cutting her breakfast steak, Kiya spoke before placing a piece in her mouth. "Maybe Chris now can get you a job at the plant. Then you can stop shaking your ass, and hoing for a dollar."
"Would like too, but sixty hours a week would interfer with my writing."
"You still want to be a writer?"
"Mm, hmm. Going to a six weeks writing seminar now."
"Still want to combine history with fiction?"
"Yeah." Sterling shooked his head.
"Have a story in mind?"
"Sort of." he looked off into nowhere, contemplating.
"When you become a bestseller, don't forget to give a shout out to your favorite cousin."
"Your my only cousin." Sterling laughed.

Raking in the rest of their breakfast in a styrofoam box, Kiya wanted to hurry home, to be there when her husband arrive. Sterling kissed the twins goodbye, after strapping them in their car seat. Standing outside the driver door, he thanked her again, kissing her on the cheek. Kiya informed him that he needed to call Aunt Tammy. "Momma been asking about you."
"I will." he waved goodbye.
Spraying herself twice with some expensive perfume, Diane studied her frame in the bathroom mirror. She pulled on the hip band on her red lace thong. With a busy schedule, it been a long time since her and her husband had had sex. Diane was in heat like a bitch. And she wanted to smell eatable tonight. At fifty two, she massaged her flat stomach. With exercise and using Ambi products, that eliminated any signs that she given birth to two kids. Topless, Diane still posses the breasts of a woman in her twenties.

Brushing out her eyelashes, she went over her heart shape lips with lipstick. Removing the bang that covered her right eye, Diane reflection displayed a light smile, pleased at what she saw. Taking a seat on a stool, she slip on matching color Jimmy Choo pumps. Grabbing the silk thight high robe off the hook, Diane slipped it on, covering her breasts only, leaving the middle exposed.

Stopping at the bathroom door, she leaned against it and watched her husband sitting up in the bed, looking at his laptop. Diane startled him some, when she called his name. "William." Looking up, he saw that his wife looking sexy, in a thing, short robe and heels. His face didn't express a feature of delight, but fright, as he watched her walk seductive towards him. William pressed a button on his laptop, changing the screen and closing it. Diane ceased in front of the bed, then placed a pump on top. She opened wide her silk robe, exposing her thirty two size. She circled her nipple with her finger, before sliding her hand down her stomach, then into her thong. "You see anything you like?"

William answered with a gratifying smile, removing his rectangular reading glasses. "Anything you see and want, you can have." Diane told him.

"We're happy, you wouldn't like to indulge into what you are given, but tonight is not the best night. I have a lot of work to do." Diane became upset, removing her pump off the bed, placing her hands on her hips. "You need to stop working on work from the office, and take care of some homework!"

"Diane please! I have to go over these new promos, for some new
shows on the network. Sorry honey I promise that I will make it up to you." he said, putting his glasses back on, and opening back up his laptop. Diane stared at him sharply, inhaling and exhaling deeply. Her desire was still on fire, and she wasn't giving up to get her husband to fuck her tonight.

Sliding off her robe, she let it hit the floor. Diane crawled on the bed like a wildcat, trying to seduce her husband with freaky talk. She closed his laptop, tossing it to the side. Taking off his glasses, she straddled him, and began kissing her husband on the neck, forehead, and lips, forcing her tongue inside his mouth. Diane grind hard her lovehole against his dick. Moments later Diane notice the effortless response from William limp dick. She stoped, showing a disappointed and pique stare. "What's wrong with you. I'm I not desirable to you anymore?"

"Of course you are baby. You are just as beautiful as the first day we met. I just have a lot of work to do."

"I know. And I do know that you have a televising station that can be demanding. But we haven't fuck in over a month." she emphasized. William gave her a look of displeasure, for her use of language.

"I'm way pass in wanting to make love. I need to be fuck!" William raised an eyebrow, while replying. "You talk now like some street whore."

"I feel like I'm being treated like a whore, than your wife." William sighed deeply, taking her hand, coercing a smile, speaking.

"I'm sorry honey, but my mind is elsewhere."

"On your job." she intervened, folding her arms. William sighed heavily again, looking off momentarily, then back to the rejected brown eyes of his wife. "I will make it up to you. Soon." he promised, pecking her on the lips. "But right now I need to go over these promos, and present it to the board in the morning."

Reaching for his laptop, Diane removed herself on top of him, flopping down on her side of the bed. She angrily watched for a moment William study the screen of his laptop, before getting under the covers, and turning her back on him.
In the large conference in the Marriott hotel downtown, the African American Women of Success was gathered for one of their twice a year dinner and entertainment event. The African American Women of Success is a nation wide sorority, where the big event is held in Atlanta.

Eating between the choice of lamb and lobster, the thirty or so women, sat quietly, listening to their president Michelle Miller, of the Houston chapter. Requesting the sisters to stand and raise their glasses. "To my successful and beautiful African American sisters sitting here. And to the others around the nation. May we keep striving, fighting, and conquering what was our in the beginning. Knowledge. Wisdom, and Understanding."

After the women toasted themselves, congresswoman Miller, asked Lori and Cynthia to inform the women about the entertainment.

"Hello my successful sisters. ASS-WOS!" Lori whooped. Both ladies face beamed, hearing back the response to their catcall. "You know at out last dinner, we had Tank to perform. And wow, can that handsome man blow. Do you agree sisters?" Lori heard the cheers of agreement. But this year we wanted to do something different. Something ripped. Dark. Tall. And naked. Tonight we purchase a tribe of the finest black men. Not from Africa, but right here in Houston."Cynthia spoke.

"These men are here to arouse your nature. Please the eyes. Fulfill your desire and bring to life your fantasy." Lori smiled.

"We know some of us here are married. And some are well known figures in the Houston area. So if you look into the bag under your seat, you find a mask, to sheild your indentity." Cynthia informed.

"Whatever you do tonight ladies, will be known between your sisters and God. Enjoy yourself ladies, and prepare to leave here with your purse empty." Lori grinned wicked.

"African American Women of Success, I give you the men of Mandigos strip club." Cynthia yelled. All the men took the stage in fluorescent thongs, performing a choreography strip dance. The women in the room went into an uproar, cheering, whistling, and catcalling, holding their money high in the air.

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For two songs the men came off stage to shake their trunks in the women faces. There been no less then twenty dollars being stuffed in their trunks.

Lori and Cynthia laughed at one of their sisters, starring mesmerized, at Shaka big bulge in his G-string, while he dance in front of her. Married to a white dentist. "I bet Dennis doesn't have a big dick like that." Cynthia commented.

"Jesus Christ no!" she leaned closer to pull on his thong, and peeped, placing a twenty inside.

After two more song, the dancers took a short break, to allow Lori to introduce the main event. Asking if the women were having a good time, the walls echoed with cheers. "BRING THOSE FINE BLACK ASSES BACK OUT HERE!" one woman shouted, making the room errupt in laughter.

"Hold patience for a moment. The men are taking a short intermission and will be back. But until then, I want to see who's the lucky lady coming up stage, to be up close and personal with the headliner of the night. Lori and I pick him out ourselves."

Cynthia stuck her hand in the pink box next to her. Her face beamed announcing the winning ticket. "Number 21."

"THAT'S ME!" a woman in the middle of the dining room stood up surprised. The sisters clapped as Cynthia and Lori waved for her to come up on stage. Her masquerade mask matched the black and gold silk Tulle Maria Lucia Hohan evening dress. A long slit been cut on the left side, up to her rear, showing her shapely legs. Backless, a gold necklace held up her dress around her neck. Assisting her to the chair in the center of the stage, she adjusted the gold mask, that had three feathers sticking out.

"Sisters he is more handsome then Shamar Moore. finer than Idris Elba. He is his name. A black god. My sisters I gavr you Black Osiris."

The lights went out in the dinning room. Two beams of lights lit the stage. One on the lucky winner, the other on Sterling, whom was wearing a Trojan outfit, with helmet and sword. Sterling marched to the sounds of the drums, coming from the speakers. On Q, he ceased in front of the woman, when the drumming stop. The room been dead
silent, when Sterling removed his sword from his sheath, and began swinging and twirling it, like a professional swordman. Finishing his sword act, Sterling planted the sword into the wooden stage. Removing his helmet, an astonished smirk appeared on the woman's face. The room went into an uproar, when Trey Songz (Love Faces) blasted through the system.

Sterling moved and rolled to the rhythm, slowly taking off his warrior gear, never unlocking eyes with the woman sitting before him. In one smooth motion, Sterling kicked his leg over the woman, spinning, landing in her lap. When the chorus of the song played, silhouette of a couple appeared on the walls, making love, in which drove the women crazy. Sterling took her hands, and softly begin to grind his ass on top of her, while sucked her fingers. Turning, he kissed her on the cheek, and placing her hands on his chest, guiding them down his body.

Riding the waves across his stomach, he lead her hands inside his G-string, stopping at the edge of his trimmed pubic hair. Sterling kissed her once more on the cheek, then shocked his head, indicating "No, no, no."

Standing to his feet, he danced his way to the end of the stage, where the rest of the ladies waited to stuff large bills in his G-string. Waist deep covered with dead presidents, Sterling danced his back to the waiting woman on stage. With his back to her, Sterling bent over backwards like an Olympic gymnast, balancing himself on his hands. Slowly he lowered his legs on the shoulders of the unknown woman, sitting in the chair. Moving backwards on his hands, Sterling ceased his private part inches away from her face. She inhaled the intoxicated musk, between Sterling legs. Her spirits were aroused, watching his tight ass clench, as he rolled his body.

With another move, Sterling was sitting back in her lap. Taking her hands again, he placed them on his chest, guiding them south on his body, pausing at the fabric of his G-string. Again he kissed her on the cheek, then whispered in her ear. "Would you like to touch it?"

"Please," she answered.

Sterling pulled open his G-string, and the women in the room screamed
in amazed and excitement, as Sterling allowed the woman behind the mask, stroke his rod.

When the night ended, the women A.A.O.S were pleased, and the men from Mandigos were with their earning, as all thank Sterling for choosing them to make some extra money. Cynthia stood at the door, as the men exited the back door out the dinning room. She stopped Sterling whom trail last, to express her appreciation, how good of a show he and his friends put on tonight.

"Thank you. I'm very happy that you and sorority siters are pleased with the performance, and gotten your money worth."

"The satisfied smiles on your associates faces, say that both sides are very pleased."

"Good."

"But there's some extra money for you if you want it." Cynthia showing a devilish smile. Sterling smiled widen, examining Cynthia, Vivca Fox figure in her egg shell, Elie Saab pants suit. She bursted into a light giggle, reading Sterling thoughts. "It's not me. But maybe in the future. It's one of my sisters. She wants a private dance with you."

"Is that all?"

"I don't know. It can go as far as you wanna take it."

A smirk appeared on Sterling face, hearing her reply. Stepping closer to inhale her lovely scent, then asking, "Does she looks as good as you?"

His compliment made her cocoa color skin blush. "I'll let you be the judge of that. She's waiting up stairs for you in suite 611."

Cynthia flashed her perfect set of pearls, before turning on her heels.
Sterling exited the elevator on the sixth floor, looking for room 611. He noticed that all the odd numbers were on the left side. Finding it, he knocked soundly on the door three times. From the inside he heard a women voice petition for him to come in. Stepping inside, Sterling closed the door behind him. He been abit blown away with the decor of the suite. The walnut king size bed sat high, with thick handcarved posts. To the right of the bed an eight draw dresser, and oval mirror. Shutter style doors were open showing a mini bar, stocked with alcohol. Sterling searched for the woman whom requested his present. "I'm delighted you choose to come."
Sterling eyes shifted in the direction of the woman voice. Though it been a warm February night, the suite felt soothing. Fixing his eyes on the burning fireplace, Sterling couldn't find the incognito female. "I really enjoyed your performance tonight." she spoke again. Sterling finally located her present, when her arm appeared behind a high back oval sixteen century chair. She was holding a glass of wine.

"Thank you. I do my best to give you ladies your money worth."
"That you did." she stood up revealing herself. Sterling mouth curled upwards on the right side, he instantly recognized the beautiful dress, of the woman he dance for on the stage. Her identity was still withheld from him, as she was still wearing the mask. Sterling watched her make the short steps to the fireplace, and in grabbing something off on it, "I have fifteen hundred dollars here to require your service for the rest of the night."

"Sterling raised an eyebrow, inclining his head. "What, you would like for me to dance all night?" he chuckled lightly."
"No." she replied. The mystery woman finished her drink, and place the bowl like glass on the mantel. Sterling watched her seductively walk over to him. He could see her brown eyes roam up and down his body, before revealing her intention. "I want you to be my servant." she said, displaying a wicked smile behind the mask. Sterling eyes locked with hers, studying them. He knew that he had seen them somewhere, and lately. But couldn't remember where. Spending the night with estrange women had been something he had done a
Sterling hesitated for a moment, wondering, before doing what he was told. The mask woman stared forward, sipping on her French wine. She turned to Sterling's nakeness, when he asked, "Is there something else you want me to do my lady?"
Her excited brown eyes roamed Sterling handsome face, chisel chest, ripped abs, then halted to his massive piece. "Mmm."
This she moaned, biting her lips. "Come bathe me."

"Yes my lady,"
Sterling bowed, swiveling to retrieve a washcloth, and soap. Returning, he began to sit on the edge of the tub, until she ordered him to get in. The mask woman sipped her wine, closing her eyes, as Sterling gently washed every part of her body. When he finished bathing her, Sterling dried her off and lead the mask woman to the bed. Laying her down, he told her that he'll be right back. In the bathroom, he searched the cabinets, and smiled, finding what he was looking for.
Relax and lying naked with her eyes closed, the mask woman opened them, lifting her head, curious, when she heard the beeping sounds of the microwave. She watched Sterling make his way back over to her with a smile, and a bowl in his hand. Climbing in the bed beside her, she asked what's in it. "Warm baby oil."
Sterling dipped his fingers in the bowl, and sprinkled the warm oil on her chest and stomach. She moaned softly, loving the warmth of the oil. Dipping his fingers again, Sterling begun to massage the warm oil into her unblemished almond skin. Starting from her shoulders, then down to her chest. Sterling felt her nipples harden, while massaging the oil into her breasts. Doing her stomach, Sterling continued down her legs and feet.
Done with the front, he made a request for the mask woman to turn over. A sound of satisfaction Sterling made, looking at her perfect ass, before he begun to sprinkling the warm oil on it.
Grunts of pleasure left her lips, when Sterling straddled her, massaging her back and neck, releasing the tension. "Oh My God, that feels so good."

"Your body do feel tight."
"Stress."
"From home?"
"From life."
"Forget about your problem tonight, and let me take care of you."
"Mmmm. ' she moaned pleased. "Surely you are doing that."
Sterling lifted the cups of her ass, rubbing the oil in. He grasped much of her ass in his hands, loving the feel, squeezing it like the Sharman toilet paper. "Dam, that feels good." she sighed deeply.

"I can make you feel better."
"Okay."

The mask woman bit her bottom lip, from the soft kissed on her neck and back. She begin to shutter, when Sterling tongue parted her cheeks. A hard grunt, escaped her mouth, as she called out for God for help, feeling his tongue where the the sun don't shine. She clutched the satin sheets, making cursed words sound like holy ones. The sensation sent her to a celestial bliss.
Sterling raised his head between her cheeks, slapping her softly on the ass. The mask woman lifted her right leg over Sterling, lying on her back. Sterling sat up on his knees, between her legs. He rambled his fingernails up the side of her legs. He felt the goosebumps on her body from his touch. He stop, inclining his head, right to left, studying the mysterious eyes behind the mask. "Continue." she behest. Sterling lifted her legs, folding them into her chest, and beginned licking and sucking her wetness, savoring the fresh taste. Again the mask woman recited the scriptures in curse words, forcing Sterling head deeper into her passage. He felt her body tense, while her thighs squeezed his skull like visegrip. Lifting her ass off the bed, she screamed in rapture, releasing her germ in Sterling mouth. Sterling kissed his way back up her body, to her waiting mouth, sharing her love. The two commence to grind, while they continued kissing passionately. The peek-a-boo role playing had Sterling aroused and hard. He now wanted the mystery woman more than she wanted him. Grabbing the back of her left thigh, lifting it, he heard the mask woman suck in air, as he inserted his hard steel inside. The sounds of pain and pleasure escaped her mouth, as she fell back into the rapture of Sterling rythum strokes.
Awakening, Sterling found himself in the bed alone. Sitting up, he searched for the mask woman. He was hoping that he would wake up before her, to remove the mask, and find out who she was. Sterling turned his ear to the bathroom, listening for the shower. Hearing no running water, his head jerked in the direction of the voice in front of the fireplace. It been de-ja-vu, when Sterling saw her arm appear behind the sixteen century chair, holding a glass of wine.

"I see that you have finally awaken."
Sterling waited a moment to respond, glancing over at the handcraft wooden clock on the wall. It was a minute past seven thirty a.m.

"How long you been awake?"
"I never been asleep."
"Well I didn't do my job."

"Darling believe me, you were satisfying. You can say I'm a night person."
Sterling gave her a light grin, knowing that the unidentified woman been pleased. Getting out of bed, he walked over to her in his nakedness, hoping to see her face. He been disappointed to find that she was wearing the mask. She stared at his stout limped manhood, letting out a sated moan, taking another taste of her wine, and placing her glass on the end table before standing up. She ranned her hand down his chest and stomach, then gripping his piece, stroking it. "You know you are a very handsome man. Both of you." she tittered, looking at him.

"I thank my parents for my looks."
"They did create an angel." she responded, rising on her toes, to kiss him passionately. Stopping for air, Sterling asked what do we do now. "Go home." she turned, to go collect her Judith Lieber clutch purse off the dresser. Sterling watched the mysterious woman make her way to the door.

"Wait!" he called out to her, as she reached for the doorknob. She swiveled back to him, her expression of her emotion hidden. "Who are you?"

"Maybe you will find out in the near future."
"So I'm gonna see you again?"

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"Maybe," she smiled, opening the door. Before closing it, she spoke. "And don't worry about your little violation, its taking care of." she told him, closing the door. Sterling stood there in his nakeness, puzzled by her last statement. Walking over to the fireplace mantel to collect his money, Sterling counted an extra five hundred dollars. He knew then that she been satisfied.

CHAPTER 10-

Diane drove up the long driveway of her eighty five hundred square foot Victoria home, in the Houston Height area. She sat in her Maserati Quatto sport. A twenty five year anniversary present from her husband two years ago. Parking next to the white Escalade, she was abit surprise that her husband been home. Finally on saturday morning William plays golf with exuctives associates. Though their relationship wasn't strain, their sex life was. William never been the best dickman in bed, but Diane love for him made their sex satisfying. On her drive hom, Diane was thinking of an excuse, of why she didn't come home last night. Getting her story in line, Diane pulled the visor down to check her make-up. Running her fingers through her hair, she been okay with her appearance. Reaching for her purse on the passenger seat, she paused seeing the mask she wore all night. Her thought went back to last night, and the good sex she hadn't had in a long time. "Dam." she whispered, biting her top lip. Picking up the mask she placed it in the glovebox, in case she might need it again. Getting out the car, Diane acknowledge the yardmen, with a smile. Walking through the double stain glass and wood doors, she placed her purse on the chestnut dresser in the hallway. The heels of her shoes could be heard on the mahogany floors, as she made her way to the kitchen. There she found her husband sitting at the breakfast table, his face hidden behind the U.S Today. She stopped getting her nerves together. About to speak, her husband spoke first, "I see you decided to come home." dropping his paper, revealing his concern
"Sorry darling, some of the sisters and I drove to Surfside. One of the sorority sisters has a beach house there. We sort of did the Waiting to Exhale thing, sitting around a campfire, and drinking." she kissed him on the cheek, before waking over to the counter to pour her some coffee. Adding some creamer, Diane took a sip. Pleased with the taste, she sat next to her husband at the table. "Before I knew it, it was late, and I was little tispy." William displayed a understanding smile. "You made the right decision to stay the night. I wouldn't know what to do, if something happen to you."

Diane forced a smile, feeling guilty, hearing her husband comment. "Same here darling." she responded, sipping her coffee.

William been ten years older than Diane when they met at a dinner party for the children station. A manager exeuctive at the time, Diane been a corporate lawyer, that handled the station problems and affairs. Fascinated by her athletic figure, and long silky hair, William found an acquaintance to introduce them. At first, Diane didn't think William was pleasing to the eyes, but wasn't a sore either. Not in bad physical shape, his dark suit fitted nicely on his running marathon frame. His grease black hair was parted on the left side, combed over to the right. Quickly Diane became attractive to his speech. His intelligent, and ambition. After seeing her radiant smile, William knew that Diane was going to be his wife. Two kids, and twenty seven years later, William and Diane was still holding on as husband and wife.

"That's a lovely dress."

"Thank you. It looked a lot better on me last night, before I slept in it."

"Look like you slept in it standing up." William countered, showing a curious grin, before going back to his paper. Diane became stone face, with William withering comment. She decided against it, to ask what he meant by that, knowing the dress been off half the night. Taking another sip of her coffee, she spoke.

"I thought you would be playing golf this morning."
"I was, but something came up with an associate, and been pushed back to noon."

Almost later their housekeeper Ms. Emily entered the kitchen. Greeting Diane, she complimented her on her dress. "Thank you."

"Can I fix you some breakfast mam?"

"No thank you Emily, the coffe is suffice."
Standing beside William, Ms. Emily asked if he had enough to eat, before taking his plate. "Yes, thank you Emily. You prepare plenty."
Removing the plate, she nodded at them, turning to leave. Diane eyes followed her to the kitchen sink, as she rinsed the dishes. Bringing her her attention back to William, in dept with the business section, she interrupted him with a question.

"When will you be back from playing golf?"
"I don't know, why?" he looked over his paper.

"Well." she paused momentarily, showing a light grin. "I was hoping that we could catch a movie tonight. Its two great movies playing in theaters, A musical called LA Land. And a broadway play now on screen called Fences. Starring Denzel Washington and Viola Davis."
William raised an eyebrow, tilting his head. "Something tells me that you prefer to see Fences."

"And what makes you think that?" Diane acting naive.

"Denzel. I know you love some Denzel."
Diane giggled, then sipped her coffee, after placing her cup on the wicker table. "The only man in the world I would ever love and exhibiting a simper grin, leaning in her chair.

When William left, Diane went upstairs to take a hot bubble bath. Relax and drinking a glass of Chianti Italian wine, Diane was reading a book by Zane, Sex Chronicles. The sex scene in the novel brought Diane to the remembrance of last night. Her body heat started to rise to the temperature of her bath water. She could feel Sterling hands massaging the hot oil all her body. She closed her eyes, and her body tingled, as she felt his tongue lick places unknown. Lost in to last night, unconsciously, she lifted her leg outside her tub, and placing her finger on her clitoris. Diane applied pressure on it,
moving up and down. Though Sterling wasn't present with her. Diane could clearly see his fuck faces, as he rammed into her. She moaned while her hands and hips rotated in the opposite direction, but in sync. Now seeing his handsome face contort, Diane's body commence to jerking, as she climax. Catching her breath, she slid deeper into the tub, thinking, "I can never see him again."

CHAPTER 11

Max barked excited, seeing Sterling coming through the door. His heart been warmed, appreciating the reception home. Sterling kneeled down rubbing the head of his companion and protector. He apologized for being out all night. Max barked twice, licking his face. "Yuck!" Sterling laughed, touching his nose with his. Sterling leaned against his front door, chuckling at Max expression of shame, releasing his nature. Scooping up Max poop, Sterling check his answering service, and saw that there were three messages. Two from a telemarketing company, trying to sell something, and the last from his best friend Dana. "Where you at man! Trying to hit you up all night on your cell. Like your home home number, your not answering. Anyway, I just wanted to remind you to come see your boy run the rock tonight. Rice stadium. Be there or I'm gonna kick your ass." Dana laughed. "Love you."
Sterling chuckled at his friend messaged. He had no plans of missing his game.

After taking a shower, Sterling stood in the mirror naked, brushing his teeth. He replayed last night event with the mask woman. The mystery of knowing who she was, incapacitated him. Making him want her more. Rinsing his mouth, Sterling stared at himself in the mirror, pondering on her last statement. She said, before leaving the hotel room. "And don't worry about your little violation. It's taking care of."
Thinking hard, Sterling couldn't come up with any idea, what she could be referring too. Refusing to rack his brain any further, Sterling got dress, and headed down stairs to the kitchen. Feeding Max, he
opened his cabinets, and retrieved the box of Honey Nuts Chereeoos. Fixing a bowl, Sterling sat down at the table, and opened up his laptop. On his drive home this morning, ideas flowed through his head about the next chapter of his book. Eating another spoonful of cereal, he placed the bowl on the table, and aligned his figures with the computer keys.

"Chapter 5."

The squeaky wheels of the coach, and two black stallions, huffing, trotting the dirt road, was the only sounds that could be heard in the still night. Thomas dressed in his English attire been controlling the reins. He was bringing home his master from a pocky game, playing with other plantation owners.

Ten minutes later Thomas rode through some gates, under a sign that read McClendon plantation. Over fifteen hundred acres, the McClendon plantation was the largest cotton and sugar producer in Mississippi. Dave McClendon owned over 200 slaves to cultivate his riches. Thomas stopped in front of the four columns, eight bedroom plantation mansion. Jumping down from the coach, he hurried to open the door for his master. Thomas caught McClendon in his arms, as he stumbled out the coach, stinking druck. "Watch yoself massa. Fo you hurt yoself."

McClendon looked at Thomas with a stone expression. Then second later his lips spreaded wide, before laughter escaped his mouth. Standing upright to the even height of Thomas, McClendon threw his arm around his shoulders and spoke. "Thomas what would I do without you. You my best nigger I have."

"Thank you sah. I try to please."

"One day." McClendon pointed his finger at him. "I might set you free."

Thomas smiled. "Thank you massa McClendon. I would sho prectiate that." McClendon smiled at Thomas, patting him on the back. Thomas assisted his master inside, to the waiting house servants at the door. McClendon tilted his top hat to them. "Hello ladies." McClendon grinned wide at them, winking his eye to the younger dark beauty, name Lilly. She casted her eyes down ashamed.

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"I see that massa is drunk again." the oldest servant spoke.
"Yeah a tiny."
"No, a lot."
Thomas asked where's the misses and kids. "All sleep." the older answered.
"Well take massa McClendon upstairs to his room, to sleep off his drunk." Thomas said, handing over McClendon to the two servants.
"One vous gals better hurry up and marry Thomas, he's gonna be a free nigger one day." he laughed lightly.
Helping him up the stairs, and to his door of his room, McClendon informed his servants that he could handle himself from here. "Yo sho massa McClendon?" the older servant questioned.
"Yes I say." he retorted, given her a harsh stare. Both women took a step back and bowed, saying goodnight, then turning to leave. McClendon opened his door to the darkness of his bedroom. He heard the light snores of his wife Gloria. Stumbling his way to the huge cherry posted bed, his wife was awoken when he flopped down next to her.
"Decided to come home." his wife turned to him, sounding concerned.
"Sorry darling, just out with the other massa playing alittle poker." he rolled over into the bed, trying to kiss her. Gloria face twisted, smelling the stank of the alcohol on his breath.
"Oh My Lord Dave Your Drunk!" she pushed him away, sitting up.
"So what baby, I'm little drunk." he moved closer, chuckling, clutching one of her big boobs. Gloria slapped his hand away, and cover herself with the sheets.
"You can not lay with me in this kind of manner."
"Why? its been awhlie for us, and your husband need some pussy." he replied, leaning inn with his thin pucker lips, trying to kiss her again.
Gloria in her younger years was an attractive woman to Dave, whom he met her at the town's ball. A true redhead with blue eyes, Gloria stood out from the other women in a southern purple satin flare waist dress. After bearing four kids, Gloria arousing appeal declined, adding some weight.
"It's seem like the only time you desire me." she said, turning her head and folding her arms.

"Ahhhh that is not true Gloria." McClendon unfolded her arms, and kissing the flesh of her breasts, that wasn't covered by her lace slip.

"NO, DAVE!" she pushed him away again. "I do not feel comfortable having sex with you when you this way."

"Come On Gloria." he pleaded.

"No, sober up first."

McClendon sighed heavily, sitting erect, glaring angrily at his wife. "SHIT!" he cursed. Gloria rejection sort of a bomb dropped him upon, he got out of bed, and staggered out the bedroom, and down the stairs to his library. He walked over to the bar, to fix another drink of Scotch. He sat in a large button leather chair, and stared into the burning fireplace. Throwing back his head and the Scotch, McClendon features a contorted as he grunted from the burning sensation of the alcohol. Staring back into the fire, thinking, he shouted for Lilly to come to the library. In moments Lilly appeared, standing at the sliding door.

"Ya sah massa McClendon."

McClendon examined Lilly in her black ankle high cotton dress. Her thick hair in two plaits, hunged out the back of her scarf, around her head. Lilly casted her dark eyes to the floor, seeing the lurking stares in her master eyes, McClendon displayed a sinister grin, placing his glass on the end table. "Come inn and close the door behind you." he ordered. Lilly hesitated a moment, before doing what she been told. "Come and stand in front of me."

Walking slowly with her head down, Lilly stood shameful, and frighten before him. Lilly beauty drew another sinister smile. McClendon stood to his feet and step closer to her, leaning to smell the fresh scent of her dark skin. "Mmmm." he hummed.

Lifting her head up with his finger, McClendon gazed in her innocent dark brown eyes. He saw the plea in them. "Is gonna be alright. Your a pretty color girl Lilly." he told her, trying to console, lightly touching the side of her face. McClendon placed both of his hands on her shoulders, slowly pulling down her dress, exposing her breasts.
A wide smile appear on his rugged face, as he grasped them. Then lowering himself to take one in his mouth. Lilly stood still, shaking, as he sucked it.

Standing back upright, McClendon turned Lilly towards the fireplace, ordering her to put her hands on the mantel. Raising her dress, he pulled down her underwear. Unbuckling his belt, his pants dropped to the floor. Pulling down his underwear to his ankles, McClendon penetrated Lilly from behind. She held in her tears and pains, while her master violated her.

Finished, Sterling sighed deeply, leaning back in his chair. It grieved him writing the chapter, but he couldn't ignore that facts of what happen in the days of slavery. He was a writer, and the story had to be written truthfully. Sterling turned his attention to the whining sounds of Max, lying on the floor. "I know boy. Our women went through hell. But don't worry, Mr. McClendon will get his in the end."
In the stands at Rice University, Sterling and Dana wife, Karen was cheering for the Outlaws semi-pro football team, that Dana played for. Down five in the fourth quarter, the Outlaws had the ball on their on thirty five yard line, with less than two minutes to go. Breaking the huddle, Dana lined up behind the quarterback, and scanned the defense. Hiking the ball, Dana stepped up to block a rushing linebacker, knocking him off balance enough to run out and catch a dump pass. With ten yards of open field in front of him, and no time out, Dana made the decision to stay inbounds, and turn inside, making two tacklers miss, and gaining another twenty yards. The offense hurried up field, to spike the ball, stopping the clock. Now on the opponent thirty five, the quarterback looked over to the sidelines for the next play. Completing two throws for eight and fifteen yards, the Outlaws were twenty two yards from winning the championship. Going for it all, the Outlaws quarterback threw an incomplete pass to the receiver in the endzone. The incomplete pass stop the clock with thirty second. The quarterback looked again to the sidelines for the next play. A interference call on the next pass play, the Outlaws were on the three yard line. Back in the huddle, Dana screamed at the quarterback to give him the ball. "Coach sent in a pass play." the quarterback told him.

"MAN FUCK THAT! THAT'S HOW SEATTLE AND ATLANTA LOST THE SUPERBOWL!" Dana retorted. The quarterback eyes shifted to everyone in the huddle. He could read their expression agreeing with Dana.

"Coach is gonna be pissed, if you don't score.

"I will." Dana smiled.

"Twenty two dive." the quarterback called the play.

The quarterback handed Dana the ball, and the hole between the center and the right tackle, opened like the Red sea. But standing a half a yard in front of the goalline were two defenders, ready to stop him. Lowering his head, Dana crashed into the two defenders, digging into the turf, pumping his legs, driving the defenders back enough for the ball to cross the white plain. When the referees threw up a sig-
nal, the crowd of three thousand jumped to their feet roaring, sounding like a pack stadium. Karen jumped up and down pumping her fist, turned to Sterling whom was doing the same thing. She hugged him, then kissed him on the cheek, before kneeling down and picking up her son, Devon, and covering him with kisses.

Getting to his feet, after being under a pile of teammates, celebrating his touchdown, Dana made his way over to the sidelines, clutching tight to the game ball. His coach smiled, slapping him on the helmet. "Good run."

Dana carried his three years old son in his arms, as they headed out to their cars. Sterling invited Dana and his family for dinner, on him. Before they could reach their vehicles, a stranger approached them, wanting a moment with Dana. Handing his son to his wife, Dana excused himself, to find out the stranger business. Dressed in some khaki pants, Dana noticed the bull, with the star on his pullover shirt. With a wide grin, the man extended his hand for Dana to shake.

"That's was a great game. You showed alot will and strenght in scoring that touchdown. Winning touchdown that is."

"Thank you sir." Dana smiled, releasing his hand.

"Let me introduce myself. My name is Dennis Smith, a scout for the Houston Texans. And I been watching you this season. I believe you have the skills to play in the N.F.L."

"You think so sir?"

"Yes."

"Thank you Mr. Smith for your praise." Dana looking excited.

"Well the reason I wanted to talk to you, is to give the opportunity to play this great game at the highest level."

"WHAT! REALLY?"

"Yes. But for now I'm going to put you on the practice squad, for you to work on a few things."

"Cool, cool, that's fine.. I'm with accepting any input in improving my game."

"Good, that is how one becomes a great player, by listening, and accepting the coaches expertise."

"When I can start?"
"Come to the practice facility across the stadium next Tuesday. Give security at the gate your name, and he'll let you in."

"Thank you sir." Dana extended his hand. "I will be there. And again thank you for this opportunity."

"You worked hard for it."

Dana face beamed brighter than the parking lot lights, as he made his way back over to his wife and Sterling. "Who was that?" his wife asked, catching her husband contagious smile.

"A scout from the Houston Texans."

"What! what did he want?" Sterling inquired.

"He wants me to be on the practice squad." Dana answered, still beaming.

"What!" Sterling excited.

"Does that mean that you're on the Texans football team." Karen questioned, trying to fully understand the good news.

"Technically, yes and no." his face exhibited uneasurance.

"What do you mean, yes and no?"

"Well, I'm on the team, but I want be playing on Sundays, unless someone playing running back or special team gets injured, and they call me up from the practice squad to fill in."

"Oh shit man that's great. You almost there in accomplishing your dream, in playing in the N.F.L"

"Yeah. I would have been playing if I hadn't torn my A.C.L really bad in college."

"Well you didn't quit my friend, and your hard work and determination is about to pay off."

"Yeah baby, I'm proud of you." Karen kissed him.

Dana picked up his son, hoisting him in the air. Devon laughed with excitement. "Your dad is going to be a Texans." Dana told him, then kissing him on his forehead.

That mean now your paying for dinner, millionaire." Sterling joked, making them all laugh.
up in this house with us, watching the horror of his parents suffer in sickness. He shouldn't have to see and go through shit like he has at three years old."

Grace displayed a grief expression, thinking about all the things her baby boy scene and been through. They needed to make it up to him somehow. "I think Sterling would love to go to the zoo, and have a picnic in the park."
Stanley slipped on his pajama bottom. "We got money still left on the LoneStar card?"

"Yes."

"Okay. You get up and get dressed, and I'll go wake Sterling and get him ready."

After stopping at a corner store to buy food and drinks, Sterling and his parents waited at the bus stop, to take them downtown.
Sterling been all smiles, arm wrestling with his father, whom allow him to win. Stanley rubbed the waves on his son's head, praising him on his strength. Full of joy, Sterling gave both of his parents a hug.

Standing to his feet, Stanley looked down the street, looking for the bus. It was running fifteen minutes late. Retaining his vulgar words, he sat back next to Grace.

Soon their attention were drawn to the sounds of a car horn. "SHIT." slipped from the lips of Stanley, watching the Chrysler 300, do a u-turn. Grace clutched her son in fear, seeing the two big youngters, wearing wife beaters, exited the car. Stanley patted Grace on the hand, trying to assure her that everything would be okay.

"What up Stan?" the larger one asked, exhibiting a wicked diamond crush grin. "Where the fuck you been for the past weeks? Where my muthafucking money!"

"I don't have it now, Troy. But I will."

"When? You owe me four hundred dollars."

"I know. I promise to have your money soon."

"I want my money now nigga." Troy stepped closer to him.

"Please Troy have patience." he pleaded. "I have my son with me." Troy looked over at Sterling, whom been holding his mother hand tight.

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It was the first that he knew of Stanley and Grace having a child. Troy scoffed, showing his crushed diamond grill again. "What!" he chuckled. "You trying to do the family thing Stan?"

"Yeah. And trying to kick the habit. Grace and I."

Both men looked at each and laughed. "Man you know that shit ain't happening. All that shit you and your bitch do to cop a fix."

The other dealer turned his attention to Grace. He been somewhat taken back by her appearance. Grace features were no longer glommy, but somewhat bright. Grace watched the dark bald man, bite his bottom lip, starring in lust.

"Say Troy, maybe Grace can pay off their debts, with her service."

"Maybe." Troy agreeing, now eyeing Grace in her fitted sun dress.

"Its not happening." Stanley saidired.

"Why? Its not like we haven't traded her off before."

Troy stepped closer to her, massaging her cheek, with the back of his hand. "Dam girl, you clean up pretty well in a few weeks."

"I bet you still suck a mean dick." the other dealer commented.

Stanley stood to his feet, furious, slapping away Troy hand from Grace face. "I'm asking you to not disrespect my son mother in front of him. I will get your money."

"How? When? Most of the times your bitch pays for your debts. What now, trying to be the family man and be responsible." Troy laughed, hitting his buddy in the chest. "You don't want your son to know that his mother sucks a mean dick, and have trains ran on her, while you in the other room getting high."

The other dealer unexpected witness Troy diamond grill fly out of his mouth, and stumbled back into the street. Troy was able to keep himself from falling to the pavement. Holding his jaw, he spitted blood on the concrete. Next, Troy heard the sounds of his grill under the tires of a vehicle, traveling north. Simultaneously, Troy began to stand upright, while reaching behind his back. Sterling remembering seeing the chrome 45 bling, off the sun's rays, and the screams of his mother, drowning out the two shots, that open his father chest. Everything seem to be going in slow motion, as he watched his father stumbled backwards over the bus stop bench. Dead.
Troy turned his weapon on Grace, about to pull the trigger, until his riding buddy talked him out of it. "No Man! Let's Go!"
Troy shifted his killer stare at his friend, whom was wearing a stunned look. Turning his reaper stares back at Grace, frighten expression, Sterling stepped in front of his mother to shield her. Troy tighten his finger on the trigger, ready to pull it, until again he heard the plea of his friend, not to do it. A sinister smile appeared on Troy face, as he took his finger off the trigger, and lower his weapon. "Consider your debt paid." Troy told her, moving backwards to his car. "And if you tell the police, I'll come for you and your son." he finished, getting into his car, and burning off.

Sterling blinked his eyes several times, coming back to the present. Sitting on the park bench, he saw Max turning in circles, barking at him. Sterling mouth curled up on the right side, seeing his best friend. Max whinnied, sensing something was wrong, putting his front paws on his lap, licking his face. Max affection made Sterling chuckle. "I'm okay boy. Just another bad memory down horror lane."
Max jumped down and sat next to another canine. Sterling smiled at the brown and white color Boxer. Sterling did not to guess if been a male or female, seeing the red bow around its neck.

"I see that you found a friend." Max barked twice. "She's cute. You two gonna get marry, and raise a family?" Max barked twice again. Sterling laughed at Max, before shifting his focus to the well behave boxer sitting. "And what's your name?" Sterling leaned forward.

"Candy." a voice answered. Sterling turned looking up to the vision of a gorgeous young woman. She removed the strands of hair from her face, that the light breeze blew, revealing mesmerizing green eyes. Her high yellow features was flawless, and radiant like the day's sun. Sterling thought her track star frame looked stunning in the black capri pants, and a T-shirt that said F-Trump.

"Beautiful boxer."

"Thank you. Candy say thank you." she commanded, in which Candy barked twice. Sterling smiled wide. "Now shake his hand." she gave another command. He watched Candy walk up to him, and stick out her
paw. Sterling chuckled, as he shooked it.

"And this here is my trusted friend Max. Short for Maxium. Say hello Max." Max made a whining barking, sounding like hello. "Now shake your tailfeather." Sterling gave Max a second command. Max leaned down stretching his front legs, keeping his rear in the air. The pretty woman bursted into laughter, watching Max move his rear side to side.

"That's cute. How did you teach him how to do that?"

"He learned that on his own watching me." Sterling answered, showing his attractive smile. Before they could continue their conversation, she heard her name called in the distance, and swivel to see her boyfriend waving for her. Sterling saw that he was white.

"Well I have to go. It was nice to meet you and Max."

"Ditto." Sterling watched her called Candy, and walk away. After. Sterling turned his attention to the barks of Max. "Yeah she's fine."
For lunch Sterling took Charlie to a mom and pop restaurant he knew about not to far from the hotel. Sterling grinned in amazement, watching Charlie tear the meat off the fat of his pork chop.

"You really enjoying that pork chop."
"This is good." he replied, with pork chop grease around his mouth. "I'm surprise that you didn't get one."
"I don't eat swine."

"Charlie looked at him curious. "What, you muslim?"
"No. I stop eating pork when I moved in with my aunt. Her and her husband were real concious people." Sterling answered, taking a bite of his salmon.
"Concious." Charlie held his curious expression.
"Remember telling you the were neo-soul types."
"Yeah. But what does that mean?"
"Pro-black. Proud of their color, culture and history. They also own a bookstore, that sells majority of books from black authors."
"Well I don't know to much about black history."
Sterling scoffed, reaching for his Mountain Dew. "You be surprise how much blacks don't know about their history. If we did, we would be a much successful race."

Riding back to the hotel, Charlie thanked Sterling for the meal. Sterling held his laughter inside watching Charlie trying to act cool. Asking what kind of music he listen too. "I like pop music."

"Yeah. I figure you to be a techno freak." Sterling spoke to the carsystem. "Play new pop music." moments later the song from Weekend, blared through the speakers.
Going over what their learned this morning, about self-publishing, and having the perfect pitch to land a six figure deal. "Have you come up with a perfect pitch to sell your fantasy book?"

"No. Have you?"
"No. I'm working on two books at the moment."
"There's no question what kind of audience I'm trying to target."
"Yeah, people who wished that they lived in medevil times." Sterling joked.
Charlie hunched his shoulders. "Maybe that's true. What kind of audience you trying to grasp?"

"African American for now. Particularly the women. I want to create them as saviors and sheroes."

Later that night in his dressing room at Mandigos, Sterling was preparing to leave early. The Tuesday night was abit slow, and things almost gotten out of hand on stage, when a heavy set woman stormed the stage, to embrace him, almost knocking him to the floor. She pressed her unwanted thick lips to his, trying to follow it up with her tongue. The bouncers ran on stage to recue him, but Sterling signaled for him to stop, and requested for a chair. Smooth and gentle, Sterling manuever the healthy thrill woman into the chair. He stood before her and gave her a show.

Sterling laughed at himself in the mirror, wiping away her red lipstick all over his face and neck. His eyes then shifted to the reflection of Rene, entering the dressing room. Coming his way, Nina liked always was holding onto Rene beltloop.

"You handled that fat bitch nicely. Very smooth."

"My motto. Never mistreat a fan, who helps you pay the bills." Sterling responded to Rene in the mirror.

"A good motto to live by. If the women are happy, the dollars keeps piling."

Sterling smiled at her epigram. His brown eyes turned to Nina, whom always displaying, I want to fuck you look. Sterling wouldn't mine laying pipe to Nina, but she was off limits, because he knew that Rene was in love with her. Plus, he needed his job at the moment, and life. Rumors, Rene was more than just a club owner, but also a Queen Pin of the southside.

Rene saw Sterling belonging piled up next to him, and asked if he was leaving. "Yes, the night is slow."

"Well the pace just have pick up for you."
Sterling swiveled in his chair to face Rene. "What do that mean?"
he asked looking curious.

"Lisa at the bar say a woman left a address for you to come visit
her tonight." Rene answered, handing Sterling the folded piece of paper. He unfolded, reading the short note.

"The misses needs her servant tonight." signed, The Woman in The Mask. Sterling saw that it been another address, that they wasn't meeting at the hotel. He looked up at Rene to ask if she knew or seen the woman whom left the note.

"No. What, you have no idea who she is?"
"No, and yes"
"What the hell you mean yes and no?" Rene shifted her weight to the right.
Sterling leaned back in his chair and sigh, before filling Rene inn.
"Two weeks ago, some of the fellas and I, danced at a sorority. African American Women of Success. All the women had their indentity behind masquerade masks."
"Must been some famous, important, and married women there?"
True, I guess. Remember three weeks ago, the two women requested to see me in V.I.P?"
"Yeah." Rene nodded her head slowly.
"Well, one of those women was Lori Steele. The tort lawyer."
"I'll get you every penny owed to you bitch!"
"Mmm hmm."
"Yall niggas got paid that night, didn't you?"
Sterling only answered with a smile, before continueing. "Anyway, this woman summon me to her hotel room, for a private show."
"And you must have fucked her good, for her to request you again."
"She claimed that she was satisfied. But kept that mask on the whole time."
"That's some freaky shit."
"Diffently different." Sterling commenting, swiveling his chair back to the mirror.
"Are you going?"
"Don't know." Sterling stared at himself.
"Your going, because you like the anonymous sex, and anxious to find out who she is."
Sterling didn't sat nothing, watching Rene and Nina walk away in the
mirror. Gathering his things, Sterling went to the bar to see if he could get a indentity, or description of the mask woman. Coming up disappointed, Lisa could only described the mask woman as a middle age, wearing a expensive suit, and Chanel shades. "Oh yeah, a good tipper too." she finished.

Sterling exited highway six, and turned on a hundred acres horse ranch. He drove across a cattle guard, and under a sign that read Stallion Ranch. Driving down the long entrance, he pulled up in front of a large white farm house. Sterling sat in his car scanning the house. There was no lights on inside the house, and no vehicles out front. He clicked on his high beams, to see the address by the door to make sure he been at the right place. Some blinking lights drew his attention to the left. They were coming from a parked car in front of a stable.
Sterling pulled next to the Maseratti. Killing the engine, he saw the huge barn door closed, but a smaller one opened, built into the huge door, and lights coming within. Getting out of his car, he walked to the back of the Maseratti, to get the license plate. Sterling scoffed in disbelief, finding no plates.
Making his way slowly to the stable, Sterling could hear the multiple sounds of lucusts buzzing, and horses whining. Stepping inside, on the right, the stable been filled with horse feed and hay. On the left, were ten stalls. Sterling couldn't see if all the stalls had horses in them, except the first four, seeing the steeds sticking their heads out, watching him. "You like horses?" he heard a voice asked above him.
He looked up to the wide smile of the mask woman, wearing five inch pumps, and a Camilla Mare trenchcoat, that been buttoned up and tied. In her right hand, a glass of champagne. "Yes. I think they are beautiful and amazing creatures."
"Can you ride?"
"No."
"I must teach you one day. Come up." she gestured with a wave. Upstairs, Sterling saw that the walls were stacked with more hay, ten bales high, and a small opening in the middle. A red and white table
CLOTH COVERED THREE BALES OF HAY. The mask woman stepped up to Sterling to hand him a glass of wine. She stood on her toes to kiss him softly. "I'm glad that you are here."

"I thought not to come." Sterling sipped his champagne.

"No you didn't. You curious to know who I am."
Sterling scoffed in amusement, knowing that she was telling the truth. He watched her turn on her heels, and take a seat on the bale of hay. Crossing her legs, she took another sipp of her champagne, studying Sterling in his fitted Tru Religion jeans, and tight V-neck T-shirt. "Mmmm... God Dam, you are sexy."

"Again, I credit my parents."

"An a true gentleman you are. You handled that situation with that out of control fat woman nicely."

"So you where there tonight?"

"Mmm hmmm." she slowly nodded her head.

"I'm there to put on a show and please my fans."

"Surely you give the ladies their money worth."

"That's how I pay the bills." Sterling replied, glancing around the stable. "Is this your place?"

"No." she answered standing to her feet. "A in-law. Just one of their properties."

"A in-law hmmm."

"Mmm hmmm. Here is where the two thousand eight Kentucky Derby winner was bred."

"Really?"

"Mmm hmmm."

Sterling moved closer to her, gazing in the mysterious brown eyes behind the mask. He exhibited his mesmerizing smile, massaging her cheek, with the back of his hand. Sterling really wanted to know who was this mysterious woman behind the mask, and couldn't help feel aroused not knowing. Finishing his drink, he tossed his flute glass over his shoulder, which landed on a pile of hay. Untying her coat belt, she finished her drink, while Sterling slowly unbutton her coat. He took her glass and tossing it over his shoulder, landing next to his. His features beamed, examining her nakeness. "Are we
doing some breeding tonight?"

"Hmm. I think I'm a little too old for breeding. But we can mate." she smiled.

She stopped when Sterling tried to remove her coat. "Wait. Let me undress you. Raise your arms." she requested, in which Sterling obeyed. Raising his shirt over his head, she tossed it to the side, then ran her manicure nails across his chest. She circled his nipples, before doing the same with her tongue. Sterling let out a grunt sound in pleasure, feeling her teeth.

Laughing like a little schoolgirl, she kissed her way down, until she reached the seams of his pants. Eyeing Sterling bulge, she gave it a squeeze. Unbuckling his cowboy belt, at the same time she pulled down his pants and brief. "I that somebody is ready to mate."

Smirking at his creation, as she stroke it, she desperately wanted to put it in her mouth, but held her patience, standing to her feet. "Lie down." she ordered him. Sterling did what he been commanded, lying on the cloth, covering the bale of hay. The mask woman studied Sterling naked body in fascination, for a long moment. Then she reached down for the bottle of unfinished champagne, and slowly poured it all his body, causing him to jilt abit, from its cool wetness.

Emptying the bottle, the sounds of glass being broken, was heard, when she tossed the bottle over her shoulder. Still wearing her trenchcoat, she climbed on top of him, and began licking the champagne off his chest, navel and dick.
CHAPTER 15

After going for a ride of her life, the mask rider laid her head beside Sterling, exhausted. He could feel the warmth of her breath as she tried to regain it. Sterling turned to her showing a concern smile. "Are you okay?"

"I'm wonderful now." she kissed him. Grabbing her trenchcoat, Sterling covered them both. Massaging her body with his hands, they laid together quietly, listening to the running and whinning sounds of the horses. The mask woman began to feel little guilty, thinking about home and her husband. She tried to justify being with Sterling, by William missing their movie date, to entertain associates. Then when he tried to make it up to her with sex, she felt that William wasn't emotionally into it.

In their twenty seven years of marriage, she never cheated on him. But their sex life was becoming non-exisiting. Thoughts of William being over sixty, maybe had something to do with his libido decreasing. Maybe she needed to have a talk with him, and convince William to see a doctor. Maybe the doctor could subscribe something, a pill, that would help with his sexual dysfunction. She still loved William very much, and knew that she couldn't continue this outside behavior. But shit, she was becoming hook, by this young black god holding her.

Sterling interest grew more tonight, wanting to know the latency woman in his grasp, and her intention with him. Though she didn't have it on tonight, Sterling remembered the huge diamond rock on her finger. So he knew that there must be some problems at home. He knew that there were three reasons why this unveiling enchanting woman was in his arms, instead of her husband. That she knows, or caught him cheating. Or shit isn't right in the bedroom. It been a little difficult for Sterling to conceive that her husband would cheat on this symmetrical, ageless, obscure beauty. "Do we go home now?"

"You don't, but I must." she sigh sorrowfully.

"Did he cheat on you. Or is the sex bad?" Sterling asked raising on his elbow. Her brown eyes narrowed behind the mask, as he glared
at Sterling. He held a waiting expression for her answer.

"The second."
"I see." he turned his eyes up at the ceiling.
"It's not like our sex life is horrible." she paused, then let out a
soft gaff. "But it's not in the same cosmos as yours." she sat up,
letting go another depressing sigh.
"What's wrong?" Sterling sat up behind her.
"Sometime I feel like my husband isn't attractive to me anymore." Sterling began to massaged her back as he replied. "Your husband
must be blind or insane, to not desire the beauty before him."
She looked up at Sterling with a half smile, removing the uncertainty.
"Thank you."
"No thank you. It's true."
The right side of her painted lips curled up, completeing her smile.
Rising to her feet, she sat in Sterling lap, placing her arms around
him. Her eyes followed her red nails, sliding down his chest. "Have
I told you how handsome you are?"
Sterling chuckled. "Maybe once or twice."
"Fine too." she looked up at him.
"Thank you."
"No thank you. It's true." she repeated Sterling words of appreci-
ation earlier. She kissed him passionately again, then asked what do
he do other than entertain woman for a living.
"I'm a writer. Well a inspire one."
"Really." she been surprised.
"Mmm hmm." Sterling nodded.
"What kind of books do you write?"
"History, mixes with alittle of fiction. And books for you." he
pointed at her.
Lines appeared on her forehead, at lost with his last answer. "What
do you mean, books for you?"
"Books for black women. Relationships, friendship, and sheroes. I'm
writing a book about a detective name Fatima."
"Mmm." she nodded. "And about the history and fiction?"
"Well, this book I'm working on is sort of a special to me. I call
it Freedom Love. About four enslave black family, struggles during the Civil War. What transpired during the war, and the things that happen on plantation will be true, except the fictitious family that the book surround."

"That sound interesting."

"Have ten chapters done already. And most of my detective book."

"Well bring them this weekend." she told him.
Sterling face twisted not understanding. "What do you mean this weekend?"

She giggled, pecking him on the lips, then standing to her feet.

"Where?" Sterling asked another question. She continued her little school girl laugh, putting on her trenchcoat. Sterling watched her buttoned it up, and tie the belt in a bow. She walked up to him, and leaned down to kiss him again, sticking her tongue in his mouth.

"Mmmm." she moaned, swiveling on her stilettoes, making her way to the stairs. Sterling called out to her, before she begun to descend.

"You never told me where we going?"

"Can you swim?"

"Yes."

"Then wear some sexy trunks." she replied, decending the stairs.
Sterling moved his head listening to some old school Isley Brothers, (Who's That Lady). Exiting the beltway, a few blocks from his home, Sterling cursed seeing the flashing lights in his rearview mirror. Looking down at his speed gage, he been going only three mile past the speed limit. He knew that he didn't have any warrants, after recieving a letter in the mail, from the courts, saying that his stop sign ticket, had been dismissed. "What the hell they pulling me over for." he thought. Turning on his hazzards, Sterling pulled close to the curb. He quickly removed his insurance card out the glove box, and license from his wallet. He wasn't giving the police any reason to shoot him tonight. Specially happy trigger white ones. "FUCK!" Sterling saw a young white officer approaching in his side view mirror. His hand on the handle of his gun. Sterling started to turned to the white office, until he been blinded by his flashlight, and ordered to put his hands on the steering wheel. The officer held the light on Sterling for a moment, before showing the light on the dashboard, and then the rest of the inside of his car. "You have any drugs in the car?"

"No sir." Sterling answered him with his eyes still forward. The officer took a step back, shining the light on the outside of his car, blinding himself from the glossy black paint job.

"Nice car. How can a nigger like you afford a car like this, if your not selling drugs. "You play sports?"

"No sir. I'm an entertainer."

"What, you one of those gaddam rappers?"

"No sir. A dancer."

"What kind of goddam dancing you do to afford a sporty car like this. You not square dancing."

"No sir."

"Well nigger, what kind of dancing do you do?"
Sterling took a moment to answer. "I'm a stripper." he said barely audible.

"What! what you say?" I couldn't hear you," the officer requested him to answer again, shining the flashlight closer to his face.

"I'm a stripper sir." Sterling said louder. The officer stared at Sterling momentarily, before displaying a smile.
He gaffed before speaking. "What, you tell me that you make enough money shaking your ass to afford this car?"

"Yes sir."

The officer studied Sterling feature some, concluding that he was a fairlooking man. But it must have been something just his looks that made him his money. "You must be one of those Mandigos?"
Sterling turned to him with a frown. "Excuse me?" taking his hands off the steering wheel. The officer stuck the flashlight closer to his face, blinding him, and commanded Sterling to place his hands back on the steering wheel, and look forward. About to protest, Sterling saw the officer put his hand on his gun.

"Don't make me shoot you. You know we getting away killing niggers." Furious by the white officer comment, Sterling still conceded to his commands. A oppressive smirk appeared on the officer face. He traveled his light from Sterling face, down to his lap. "Now I asked you if you were one those Mandigos?"

"I don't understand your question. What you talking about."

"You know what I'm talking about nigger. You got one of those big dick?"
Sterling begun to become terrified by the officer questioning. Lynching started to cross his mind. His thoughts was set, if the officer requested for him to step out of the car, that he would refuse, and stomp on the gas. Sterling flinched, from the unsudden tapping of another officer flashlight on his passenger window. He couldn't see his face, standing over his car. "Row down your window." Sterling heard the second officer ordered. He complied, turning his attention to the officer, leaning down to show his face. Sterling sighed happily in relief, then cursed at the smiling officer.

"Man, what the fuck you scaring me like that. You know its killing season on blacks."

"Sorry brother, I couldn't help it." he chuckled. "I wish I could have seen your face, when he asked if you have a big dick."

"I thought I was about to be lynched." Sterling turned to look at the white officer, whom had an apologetic expression.

"He made me do it." he pointed to Sterling brother.

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"Doing your Denzel Washington, Training Day session, Terrell?"

Terrell Waston is the older half brother of Sterling by four years. Different father. Terrell's father Scott, was a city busdriver. He had an affair with a young nurse aid, whom he gotten to know, riding his bus route to work every morning. Leaving their mother, Terrell father came back for him, after Grace gotten heavily hooked on heroin. Sterling and Terrell wasn't the closest brothers, but was not estranged either. Terrell didn't process the angelic looks like Sterling. Dark skinned, light mustache, and thick lips, with a wavey ivy league cut, Terrell white cornea made his sable eyes bright. At six-two and a half, he had a bulky physique. Introducing his partner, Terrell asked if he was coming home from work.

"I guess you can say that."
"What do you mean by that?"

Scratching his chin, Sterling thought for a moment how to answer.
"Can't say she's a client, because I don't know who she is."
"What? You losing me Sterling?"
"She wears a masquerade mask, the two times that I met with her."
"Oh, she rich or someone important."
"Both. Or she knows some rich people. I just came from seeing her on a horses ranch off highway six."
"Stallion Ranch. Terrell partner intervene."
"Yeah."
"That's the McCann farm. A realtor estate tycoon. Her horse, Lord's Prayer won the Kentucky derby sometime back."
"Black woman?"
"No, she's white."

Sterling scratched his head, wondering heavily who was this masked woman, who hunged out with billionaires. Sterling had laid with and escorted women with a little dough, but the mysterious woman was surely on a higher level. Terrell disturbed his brother thoughts, asking when was the last time he visit there mother. "It's been a few weeks."
"You?"
"Last week. I brought junior with me."
"How is she?" Sterling asked about their mother, then about his family.  
"She's looking good and doing well."
"I try to keep her account fat?" Sterling said, letting him know.  
"She said that. And she told me to tell you thank you. And like to see you soon."
"I will."

CHAPTER 17

Sterling stepped off the city bus in the Third Ward area. It been over a year, since he been back in the neighborhood, after his mother went to prison for murder. Standing on the corner of Alabama and Le-mont, Sterling saw that nothing changed. Jesse the bum was still pushing around his shopping kart, up and down the streets, filled with junk. The jobless older men, drank cheap beer all day, and played dominoes in the empty lots.
Sterling been drawned by the loud music coming from a custom slab,(car) pulling up at the corner. With a blunt in his mouth, the driver nodded at Sterling. Returning the same greeting, the driver made a wide turn, keeping his gorilla spokes rims, from hitting the curb. Sterling swiveled on his heels, hearing his name called. He saw coming up the street in a tight fitting skirt, and yellow blouse, that been tight around her waist, showing her pierce navel. A woman named Marrenda. Marrenda stayed on the same street as he and his mother did, a few houses down. A heroin addict just like his mother, Marrenda and Grace use to runn the streets all day and night, finding tricks to support their habits.
At one time, one could see that Marrenda was a pretty woman. Somehow she still maintain her straight stunner body, as the threads stretched to hold her Buffy the Body ass. Her shoulder length hair was combed to the back. Marrenda dark brown eyes were in a hole of darkness, Smoking her lips,Sterling noticed the faded lipstick on her melon size lips. "How is your mother?"

"Holding up I guess." Sterling hunched his shoulders.
"Have the courts offer her a plea yet?"
"30 years."
"'30 YEARS!' she shouted, then exhaled sorrowfully. Shifting her weight to the left, she scratched her scalp. "Tell your mother I'm praying for her."
"I will." Sterling replied emotionless.
"Anyway, what are you doing back in the trey, now living with your will to do aunt? To see Dana?"
"No. To see someone else."
"Didn't know you hung with any other people than Dana."
Sterling forced a half smile, not responding to Marrenda annotation. She wished him well, giving him a hug, before journeying in the opposite direction.
Walking three blocks, Sterling made a left, and walked five houses down. Climbing the steps of a white chipped wooden two bedroom cinder block foundation house, Sterling opened the squeaky screen door and knocked. Hearing several locks unlock, the door opened. Standing at the thrish hole was the prettiest girl in the grade.

"Hey Erica."
Her young innocent features beamed radiant from her smile. "Hey Sterling. I'm glad you came. Come inn." she reached for hand. Sterling glanced around the livingroom. It was the first time he'd been in Erica house alone with her. The dark wooden floors been waxes nicely. A inexpensive leather sectional took up must of the livingroom, with a square gold plated glass table in the middle. A fifty inch box R.C.A television held photos of her and her brother James. The clicking sounds of Erica locking the door, caused Sterling to turn back to her. Erica leaned against the door, starring at him with a sensual look in her eyes. "You look nice. I guess things are going well for you living with your aunt?"

"It's okay. I miss my mother and my friends."
Erica giggled at his replied. "You have only one friend. Dana."
"True. I been told that earlier." Sterling chuckled abit abashed. Nervousness aroused, when Erica started towards him. "So your mother and brother aren't home?" he stuttered.

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"No. My mother is at work, and my brother is at a basketball game. I thought I told you that on the phone."
Sterling face flushed in embarrasssment. "Yeah right, I forgot. Long bus ride."
Erica exhibited a comforting smile. "You are so cute when you are nervous."
"Aren't you?" he questioned.
"Very." she answered taking his hands. "We talked about this several times on the phone."
"I know, but I'm still nervous doing this."
Erica kissed him 'passionate, then told him how much she missed and love him. Sterling been still in a chimera, when Erica released her lips from his. "Do you miss me Sterling?" Sterling nodded his head yes.
"You say you love me, do you?" again Sterling answered with a nod of his head. Erica saw the sincerity, but some fear in his light brown eyes. She kissed him once more. "Did you watched the movie?"
"Yes."
Erica requested for Sterling to watch a movie called The Wood. It was her favorite movie. She love the scene when the two teenagers were in the girl room, and her favorite song came on, and they made love, in which it was funny to her, because he only lasted for thirty second.
Erica lead Sterling down the short hall to her room, and pushed opened the door to her pink and white oasis. Posters of Destiny Child, Bow Wow, and Mario hunged on the walls. A white wicked four draw dresser stood on the left side of her room. A full body mirror hung on her closet door. In the middle, Erica white metal twin bed, covered by white sheets and a pink blanket.
Inside, Sterling watched Erica walk over to her dresser, where a mid-size stereo sat on top. Erica grabbed her C.D case beside it, looking for the C.D she wanted to play. Finding it, she placed it into the C.D player and pressed play. When the music flowed through the speakers, Sterling was somewhat caught off guard by the J. Holiday song (Bed). Erica smiled making her way back to him. "This isn't the song that's played in the movie." Sterling said.
"I know. It's your favorite song." she kissed him. "I wanted everything to be perfect."

"What we do we do now?" Sterling wondered.

"We get undress." she pecked him on the lips, then turned towards the bed. Erica gestured for Sterling to stand on the opposite side. She gave him a tender smile before removing her shirt. Sterling eyes left the beauty of her face, mesmerized by the red bra, holding her grapefruit size breasts. She gestured for him to the same. Sterling pulled off his Nikes T-shirt, exposing his chisel physique. Erica smile widened admiring the ripples on his stomach. Erica unzipped her skirt, letting it fall to the floor. Sterling eyes widen with awe, staring at her in her matching panty. Sterling thought her young coffee color body resembled the women in the Victoria magazine.

"You like?"

Sterling nodded his head nervously yes. He followed Erica grey eyes down to his basketball shorts. Sterling displayed a half smile, before pulling down his shorts. Erica lightly gasped, starring at the huge bulge in his black brief. Pulling back the covers, she climbed in the bed. Under the covers, she took off her panty, and tossed them on the floor. Playfully Erica signaled for Sterling with her finger to join her. Sterling inhaled deeply, before lifting the covers enough to climb inn. He laid on his back, nervous, staring up at the ceiling in a-daze. Erica sat up on her elbow, giggling at him, kissing him on the cheek. "Aren't you gonna take off your underwear?"

"Huh?" he looked at her. Erica questioning snapping him out of a-daze.

"Aren't you gonna take off your underwear?"

"Oh yeah." feeling embarrassed

Removing his brief, Sterling laid them on the floor. Lying on his back, Erica ran her hand slowly down his chest and stomach. Goosebumps covered her body feeling Sterling pubic hairs, then she flinched in shock, grasping his manhood. Lifting the covers, Erica been astonished by his size. Sterling looked at Erica with concern.

"Is something wrong?" he asked.

"No. Just hoping it will fit."
Sitting up. Erica removed her bra. Sterling thought her breasts were the most beautiful things he had ever seen. He watched them flatten a bit, as she laid on her back. Kissing momentarily, she pulled Sterling on top of her, and continued kissing. Sterling felt Erica tighten her grasp and begin grinding against him. Unconsciously, Sterling found himself in rhythm with her, along with the music in the background. Erica whispered to him, asking if he was ready to enter. To be her first, and take her innocent. With an earnest expression, Sterling whispered back yes.

Erica spread her legs for Sterling to fall between them. Taking his penis in his hand, to insert, Sterling saw Erica's grey eyes widen, and her mouth ajar, sucking in the air in the room. He stopped, asking if she was okay.

"Mmm hmm." she shooked her head up and down. "It's big."

"I'm I hurting you?"

"Just a little. But I'll be okay. Just go slow."

Following her request, Sterling witnessed Erica face cringed, hearing the sounds of her grunts. Clutching his shoulders, as he slowly re-enter, Sterling slowly slid in and out of her innocent. Moments later, he heard her tones of grunts, change to pleasure. Erica pulled Sterling closer to her to kiss him, before wrapping her arms around his neck, and asking for him to go deeper.

"Oh God. this shit hurts so good." she whispered in his ear. Sterling breathing became heavier, increasing his thrust. His eyes were closed as he became stimulated in Erica's rapture, warmth and wetness. For the first time Erica heard the moans of Sterling as he was coming closer to climaxing. She dugged her nails in his back, as she told him that something is happening, then cried out in delight.

Finished, Sterling rolled his limped body off Erica, as they both tried to catch their breath. Sterling stared back up at the ceiling, thinking about the act they just committed. "This turned out to be better than the movie." Erica broke their silence. Sterling turned to her with a query grin.

"Really?"

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"Mmm hmm." she sat back on her elbow, showing her beautiful pearls, shaking her head. "How do you feel? Did you like it?"

"I never imagine sex could." Sterling paused, trying to find the right word or words. "Emotional."

A muddled feature appeared on Erica face. "Emotional is a odd description."

"The experience was frightening, warm and heavenly. I never thought having sex can feel so good."

"Well my emotion are too in bliss. That we experience this act of love for the first time together." Erica letting him know, leaning over to kiss him. "I love you."

Showing his affectionate smile, Sterling repeated her words.

"You mean that forever?"

Sterling took a moment to answer, gazing in her pretty grey eyes. Erica had truly had his heart. He placed the palm of his hand on her cheek. His touch brought a adoring smile. "Forever." Sterling assured her, pulling her lips to his.
CHAPTER 18

The knocking on the passenger window brought Sterling back to the present. He turned to see the puzzled face of Kiya, waiting for him to unlock the door. Unlocking her door from the inside, Kiya got in and thanked him for picking her up from work. Her Ford Explorer was in the shop on a recall. "No problem cuz."

"I hope the thing want start again."
Sterling laughed at Kiya comment. "You still trying to get Chris to buy you a Beamer or Benz sport utility?"
"Yeap." she folded her arms.
"You no putting on him right."
"Boy shut up." she frowned at him. Sterling laughed, pulling out the parking lot. They rode in silence listening to some old school Mary J, on their way to pick up the twins. Though her parents were well educated, Kiya's father a high school principle, and her mother a professor of African studies at Texas Southern, they reminisced how her parents would throw barbeques, and listen to old school music. "That's my song!" Kiya's mother would yell, when Al Green, Love and Happiness would come on.

"Momma you high?" Kiya would asked her parents.
"Sweetheart weed is natural. It comes from the earth." her parents would tell her, when she confront them. "Plus, we need something after dealing with yous bad ass kids of today." her mother would finish explaining. Having her own kids now, at time Kiya understood what her parents were saying.

While laughing about the past, Kiya received a text from her husband Chris. Texting him back, that Sterling had picked her up, and their on their way to get the twins first. Sterling saw Kiya smile, receiving a text back from him. "Dam, what Chris text back that got you cheezing?"

"He just say that he loves me, and we're going looking at new S.U.V this weekend."

"What! I guess you are putting it on him right." Sterling chuckled. Sitting at a redlight, Kiya recognized a solemn look on Sterling
face. She thought back when she found him reverie, and to tap on the window to get his attention. "What are you thinking about?"

"What? hunh?" he turned his eyes to her. Kiya placed her cell in her purse, turning in her seat to him.

"What's on your mind?"

"What make you think that something is on my mind?"

"You just had that same sorrow look, before I gotten into the car. Before I interrupted you, you were thinking heavily about something. Something painful. Were you thinking about your mother?"

"No." Sterling given no more details.

"Who?"

Sterling stared at Kiya, debating if he should answer her question truthfully. Unable to hide the affliction in his eyes, Kiya would easily recognize that he was lying. "Erica." he revealed, looking forward. The light turned green, and Sterling pressed the gas. Kiya sighed, before asking, "You really loved her."

"Yeah." sounding dejected.

"I like her too."

Sterling gaffawed, thinking back when Erica first saw Kiya. Even though Kiya been Sterling cousin, Erica trusted no woman around him. Especially pretty ones, when she wasn't in his present. "Yeah, it took a moment to convince her that you were my cousin, and that it could never be something sexual between us."

"UUUGGGG!" they both bawled, laughing after.

"It's crazy?" Sterling said.

"What's crazy?"

"That what I was thinking about, when you tapped on the window."

"Sex with Erica?"

"Mmm hmm. The very first time. The first time for the both of us."

"Unforgettable?" Kiya trying to describe in one word. Sterling looked over to her with a warm smile. "Emotional."

Kneeling down, Kiya face been lit with joy watching her twins Chris jr. and Chrystal race to her. Squeezing them both into her embrace, feeling their affection. These were the moment she never regretted having them. The twins had referred to Sterling as their uncle

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as he also kneeled to embrace them. Giving them both a kiss, Ster-ling eyes were attracted by a pair of red strap stilettos in front of him. Following the tone chocolate legs up to the knees, the rest of her Niomi Campbell body was in a white sheer form fitting Charlotte Ronson dress. Her dark brown eyes were big and spellbinding. Her Tish Campbell lips painted red. When Sterling stood to his full height, he saw that she processes the whiteness teeth, he ever saw, making her beauty more radiant. She shifted her to Kiya whom was hold-ing Chrsystal in her arms,, and greeted her. Exchanging salutation, the woman pinched Chrystal on her cheek, making her blush. Then she smiled down at Chris, to say goodbye, whom was clutched to Sterling leg. Her eyes went back to Sterling. "And who do you have with you Mrs. Dixon?"

Sterling detected her approval tone, as she shown her top model smile again. "This is my favorite cousin Sterling Maxwell. And Sterling this is Ms. Langton, the owger of the daycare."

Ms. Langton extended her hand for Sterling to shake, in which he did. She held Sterling hand a little longer than normal. He could see the nymphomania in her eyes. "Nice to meet you Mr. Maxwell."

"Sterling please." "Sterling." she inclined her head towards him, repeating his first name.

"Same here Ms. Langton."

"Linda please," she gave him her first name. "Okay Linda." Sterling agreed, finally releasing his hand. "So Sterling, do you have any children?"

"Ohh no." he laughed. "Not quite patience enough to have little around full time. A few hours of chasing the twins is exhausting."

"Yes I know, kids can be a handful. But a joy."

"That they are." Sterling replied, massaging the waves in junior head.

"Well don't be stranger, feel free to come by and visit the twins anytime you like."

"Thank you. I might just do that." exhibiting his playboy smile.

Walking out the daycare, Sterling looked over and saw Kiya shaking her
CHAPTER 19

At a small private airport outside Tijuana, Sergio Velquez waited for a client inside his limousine. Spotting the C6 making its way to the hangar, his driver let down the tinted glass divider to inform him. Snuffling out his Panatela cigar, Velquez waited for his driver to open his door. Short and bald at the top, Velquez struggled to button his dark Corneliani suit coat over his big belly. Checking his Ulysse Nardin watch, a slight smile appeared on his rugged face, happy that his patron plane arrived on schedule. He held the welcoming smile on his face, watching the cabin door open, and the gentleman he expected, descend the stairs, carrying a over night bag.

"Sergio." the man extended his hand.
"William, my friend. Glad to see you. It's been a few months."
Sergio, taking his hand.
"I know. Trying to run a tv station, requires alot of your time."
"We have to keep the kids entertain."
"Yes we do." William flashed an ill hearted smile.
Sergio clapped his hands together, and then rubbed them. "The adults also have to entertain. Don't they."
William responded to Sergio remark with a malicious grin. "Come, come get in." Sergio gestured to his limo. "I have what will please you at my home."

After a thirty minutes drive from the airport, Sergio driver drove up to a eighteen foot high wrought iron gate, that had the initial S.V. His driver radio security inside to open the gate. Driving down quarter mile driveway, Sergio driver pulled in the circle driveway of a 13,000 square foot Mediterranen mansion.
Stepping out the limo, William saw some of Sergio exotic cars. A GT Ford 500. Lambo Diable, and a California Ferrari droptop. "Business must be good?" William commented.

"Both my venture." smiling gratified.
Inside a servant greeted them both, asking if there were anything he could do for them. "Is everything ready for my guest?"
"Yes sir Mr. Velquez. Everything is set up, and waiting in the guesthouse."
She hid her indentity behind another masquerade mask, that coordinated with her attire. The spike heel hovered over the wax wooden deck, as she rose on her toes to kiss him. "I'm happy that you came. Did you bring your trunks?"

Sterling nodded. "I can tell by the welcome." Sterling referring to the kiss. He gave the yacht a quick scan, again being very impressed. "Is this the same in-laws yacht, that own the ranch?"

"Oh no, there's is twice as big. This my yacht."

"Really." Sterling taking a step back in disbelief. "Didn't know you were in the bracket to afford such luxury."

"Technically, no I'm not. But my husband and I was fortunate to get this yacht at a good deal at a federal auction."

"MMM." Sterling looking over the yacht again. "And the mention of your husband. I have a question. No three."

"Okay, Abd they are." she tilted her head to the right.

"Where is your husband?"

"In San Diego, on a business trip. And your second question?"

"I see no crew or captain on board. Who is navigating this ship?"

"I am." she held out her arms.

"What!"

"Yes. William taught me ten years ago."

"William?" Sterling repeated the name, not know to him.

"My husband." she answered his query. "And your last question?"

"I'm I going to find out who you are tonight?"

She smiled, stepping close to Sterling to inhaled his Nautica cologne.

"I'm little disappointed that you haven't figured it out yet. I given you two clues."

Her smile widen seeing the puzzled look on Sterling face, as his memory tried to think back to the hidden clues she claimed that she given him. Sterling locked eyes trying to put a face with it. Coming up with no match, with no permission, or resistance, Sterling slowly removed the mask. The unexpected and beautiful face startled him, taking in the salty air. "Oh shit." he stepped back, pointing at her.

"Your the judge that dismissed my warrants. Judge." Sterling snapped his fingers, trying to remember her name.
"Judge Willington." she refreshed his memory, lightly giggling.
"I also took care your stop sign ticket." she stepped back in his
face. Sterling thanked her, while still trying to gather his thoughts
and composer, disrupted by the unveiling mask woman. "What's wrong?"
she teased, loving Sterling bewildered act.

"I can't believe its you. I can't believe I'm ."
"That you fucking a judge." she finished his thoughts. Sterling a-
gain caught off guard by her language and correction. Unbelievable
that he was fucking a judge, and a married one at that. But fucking
wasn't the appropriate analogy he wanted to use.
"No. I wasn't going to say that."
"Then what?"
"That some one with high authority and respect would want to be
associated with me."
"Why not?"
"People consider my line of work a sin. Your job is to sentence
those who sin."
The judge laughed and gave Sterling a quick kiss on the lips. "The
rumor that say, that justice is blind, is totally true. The courts
is a cooperation. It's all about money. But I try to be fair, especial-
ly to my people."
"You meaning black people?"
"Correct. What other people?"
"Mmm. Then I again thank you Judge Willington."
"Diane please. We're not in court.
"Diane." Sterling displayed a pleasing grin. Her name been sublime
with her elegance. It was the second time this week that an older
beautiful woman given him their first name.

"So what's up, do you still want to go sailing with me? There's
nothing more beautiful than to see the sunrise off the gulf water.
Plus, I want you to sentence me for my sins." Diane opened her robe,
exposing more of her flawless almond flesh. Placing her hands on
her hips, Sterling eyes tour upwards from her waistline, up to her
solid abs, ceasing momentarily on her clevage of her thirty-two size
breasts, trapped in the lace bra. He then continued up to Diane

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splender beauty.
Sterling moved closer placing his finger under her chin, lifting her head to lock lips. Sticking his hands inside her robe, Sterling massaged her back, while listening to her soft moans. Creeping down her back, he squeezed, Diane ass before hoisting her up by it. She wrapped her legs around his waist, as Sterling carry her inside the yacht cabin.

CHAPTER 21

My partner Milo William assured me that he was going to be okay, after being ambushed by the suspect, we been chasing for a years, called the Riddle killer. Inside a large warehouse filled with aluminum barrels and pallets, I hoped the there wasn't any back exit out of the warehouse, trapping him inside. Except the buzzing sounds of the fluorescent lights, the warehouse almost been dead silent. I been in a similar scenario a few months back, chasing another serial killer inside the Houston zoo. Like the Uber killer, I had no intention of letting the evil being get away. Hearing pallets fall behind me, I quickly swiveled on my heels to investigate. Not spinning fast enough, the killer knocked Justice out my hand with a two by four, in which it slid under a shelf. The killer connected two more blows to my jaw and stomach, knocking me down to the cold floor. As I laid there in agony and confusion, to consider which blow to nurse, the killer decided for me, kicking me again in the stomach. As I listen to the killer taunt me, I though about my parents, and how upset they were, when I told them I was joining the Houston police department. These were the situations they would stay up at night worrying about. My mother a register nurse, wanted me to be a doctor. My father a machinist, wanted me to be the President of the United States.

The shadow that blocked the morning rays, caught the attention of Diane, whom was lying topless in a thong, sunglasses, and a straw hat. She dispayed a smile, bright as the mourning sun, viewing the sculp-
ture of Sterling body, in a pair of dark blue spandex trunk.

"Do you ever sleep?" Sterling asked.

"Yes." she laughed. Sterling saw that Diane had one of his manuscripts. He asked which one she was reading. "Fatima Justice. I just read the prologue. I also read a few chapters of Freedom Love."

"What do you think?"

Diane placed Sterling manuscript on a small glass table beside her, before answering. "I think you have a career in writing. I like it. Surprised someone as young as you would write or want to write about the dark and unjust history of America."

"I credited my Aunt Tammy and Uncle Gregory in teaching me African history and pride."

"Mmm." Diane shooked her head. "Well I hope that McClendon meets a tragic end."

"The story wouldn't be right if he didn't." Sterling chuckled, leaning over to kiss her. He flopped down in the lounge chair next to her. He gave Diane a brief summary of Fatima Justice. A black female detective, who is devout muslim.

"That's interesting. Out the box."

"That's the sort of writer I'm trying to be." he replied. Sterling inhaled deeply, staring out into the calm waters of the Gulf. Enjoying the warmth of the sun. He asked Diane how many miles they were from land.

"Ten."

"It's peaceful out here."

"Yes. This where I come to get away from the nonsense of the world."

"What else do you do for relaxation, then lie beautiful on the deck half naked."

"Read good book." she held up Sterling manuscript. "Fish and swim."

"In That Deep Water!" Sterling interrupted, sitting up, looking at Diane in unbelief.

"Of course. I'm from the country of Mississippi, where my sibling and I didn't have a neighborhood pool and we learned how to swim in a lake. That sometime had alligators."
name. Taking another deep breath, he went back underwater looking for her. Again nothing, he came back to the surface. Sterling scanned the calm waters for any disturbance, then cried out Diane again.

"So you would risk your life to save mine."
Sterling turned around giving Diane a furious look, demanding to know why she keep scaring the shit out of him. "I want to see if you like me." she said.

"Well doing this kind of shit will surely make me hate you, then like you."
Daine stared at Sterling momentarily with contrite eyes. She swam closer to him. "When I first saw you in my courtroom, I thought you were a handsome young man. Surely to handsome to be in jail." she giggled. "Then it was this crazy consequence of having the winning ticket, and you of all dancers comes out to dance. The night I requested you to come to my hotel room, I had no intention to go that far. Receiving no attention at home, I just wanted someone to make me feel special. And you did." she placed her hand on his cheek. "You handle me with care. Your touch is electric, Making me tingle between my legs. You make me feel sexy and relevant."

"But you are."Sterling assured her, in which Diane returned a warm smile.

"After that night I swore to myself, That I would never cheat on my husband again. But I can't stop thinking about you. Its like you have this spell over me. Sort of like a school girl crush," she giggled like one. "I just wanted to make you my slave that night. But when you kissed me." Diane kissed Sterling. "Then licked me there, I became your slave."
Sterling was sort of taking back by Diane confession. He searched her brown eyes and expression for any signs of malice, but found nothing but sincerity. "Didn't know that you had feeling for me, in such a way. I thought I was just your boy toy, to fill a void you were missing at home."

"I thought so too."

"But your married, and that's a reality. I can only fulfill your fantasy."
essence.
Grinding his face, she commanded Sterling to feed himself. She pleaded for him to not stop, as she looked up passed the sun into the heavens. The calmness of the waters and the silence of the air, was disturbed by the cries of Daine ecstasy. Sterling heard her moans as she threw back her head, to help catch her breath and strengh. He kissed his way up Diane naked body, reaching his full height. Planting more kisses all over her neck, again he hearing more moans. Diane brought her head down to exchanged tongue. Before pulling away, she made Sterling chuckled, asking if he still wanted some blueberry pancakes.

CHAPTER 22

Diane sat in a chair with her legs folded under her, holding a plate of her blueberry pancakes. Before diving into hers, she waited for Sterling result. Sterling made a humming sound, savoring the delicious taste. "Wow, these are good."

"Really." Diane beamed. "I told you would like them. My kids use too."
Sterling fed himself another mouthful, and expressed that she should open up a small breakfast joint, after retiring from the bench. "You think so?" she questioned him, then stuffing her mouth. Sterling swallowed down his pancakes, then reach for his glass of orange juice.

"Yes. You can rack up a nice profit, like this mom and pop restaurant called Frank's. A breakfast joint that opens it doors in the early morning hours, until noon. You should see their business on the weekend. The line be outside, as if they were giving out government cheese."
Diane laughed. "Really?" somewhat curious.

"Yeah. Frank's reminds you of a small cafe in the sixties." Sterling gave Diane an image, before turning up his O.J again.
After they finished breakfast, Sterling and Diane spent the rest of the daylight hours, riding jet skis, and fishing. At night they cuddled up on the yacht front deck, under the moon. Sterling commented
how the moonlight glow reflected off the dark waters. Knowing his occupation and his dreams of becoming a writer, Diane wanted to know more about him.
Sterling exposed more of himself about being sexual abuse as a child, and how his parents were both heroin addicts. His father being killed right in front of him, when he was three years old. Sterling saw the pity in Diane’s eyes. He smiled warmly, wiping away a tear from the corner of her eye. After revealing all the tragedy in his childhood, Sterling kissed Diane on the forehead, and letting her know that life had gotten better for him, when he moved in with his mother sister. That his Aunt Tammy brought love, security, and balance in his life. And that his Uncle Gregory came to all of his baseball games in high school. Taught him how to drive. "He treated me like the son he never had."

"So you played baseball?"
"Yeah, a little in high school. But I wasn’t that good to earn a scholarship."
"So how did you end up in male entertainment?" Sterling laughed. "Male entertainment sounds more professional, than a male stripper."
"In reality, that’s what you are. And you do it well." she reached up to kiss him.

"I needed some extra money, because Walmart wasn’t paying enough. I saw this ad in the paper, and Rene like the way I look and move, and hired me. Stung, how much money I made the first night, I said goodbye to my day job."
"It would be shocking if the women didn’t go crazy over you. I’m sure you had girls chasing you through the school halls."
"Mmm, not really. The girls at my school were mostly white. And my Aunt Tammy would tell me, if they don’t eat barbeque and watermelon on Juneteen, don’t bring them home."
Diane erupted in laughter, then kissed Sterling before sitting up to refill their glasses. She told him that her parents felt the same way, and how blunt they were about it. "Don’t bring no peckerwood to their house."
Diane parents would remind her and her sibling how white folks would mistreat negros in the early century in Mississippi. Hanging them, and sometime cutting off black men phallus. Handing Sterling a refilled glas, he recognized the momentary grievance in Diane face. Sitting, up he asked her is something wrong.

"I was thinking about my parents." she answered, putting her drink down, and folding her legs.
"They must be very proud of you?"
Diane stared out into the gulf waters for a moment, before responding. "No, not really."
Sterling been baffled by her reply, questioning why. Now sitting up beside her. "I disappointed them."

"How?"
Diane turned to Sterling roaming his brown eyes. She displayed a dishearting smile, answering. "I married a white man."
Sterling been speechless, in how to respond and comfort her. Now that somethings had come to light. It’s not that Sterling didn’t think black men didn’t own yachts or mansion, but it explains the large sum of cash she leaves. "So your relationship with your parents been strained?"

"More like non-existence." she held the same expression, before looking back out into the still of the water. "When my father died of a heartattack, at his funeral, my mother told me that I was the cause of his death. After twenty five years of not speaking."

"You didn’t believe her humph?"
Diane turned back to him with grieving eyes. "I don’t know." she shrugged her shoulders, then casted her eyes down. Diane tittered, reminiscing about her father. "My father was a hard working man. Even though those white folks at his job at the lumber yard gave him hell, he never brought his anger home."
Sterling raised her head with his finger, to lift her spirits. "You wasn’t the cause of his death. He was. By with holding his love for you inside. If we don’t share the love with the ones we suppose to love. It can kill us."
Diane forced a encouraging grin, appreciating Sterling comfort words.
"When a person feels like he or she is not receiving the love they think they deserve, can cause one to go astray." Diane caused Sterling to incline his head, suspicious.

"I assume we are not talking about your parents anymore?"
"No." she turned her stares back to the gulf. "Me."
Diane enjoyed Sterling company, and having him fulfilled her sexual desire. But the guilt would return heavily after her pleasure was over. William gave her no choice to seek elsewhere to fill her void. Diane knew that it was more lust than love for Sterling, and how he could make her feel the heavens. But she knew she had to get her emotion in check before getting in to deep with him.

"You do love your husband?" Sterling asked.
"Very." she faced him.
"How long you two been married?"
"Twenty seven years, With two kids."
"Long time." Sterling replied, pausing for a moment. "I'm not a marriage counselor, but I'm sure all marriages have bumps along the way. Especially after twenty seven years. Just sit down and talk, and tell him how you feel. Together find a solution. But first, you have to smooth out your bumps."
Diane searched Sterling face for the meaning of his annotation.
"You." she told him, tilting his head. Sterling facial expression read yes, causing Diane to sigh sorrowfully, and stare back out into the gulf.

Sterling held Diane hand as the two walk down the boat pier to her car. He scoffed in amazement that he had parked next to her Lexus LC 500. Sterling eyes admired the brick red four hundred horses, two door sport car. "This car haven't even come out yet."
"Yeah, for another six months. My husband knew someone that had connection."
"It's nice. But don't you think it an little to much horse power for you to handle?"
"I'm handing you?" she followed her reply with a mischiveous grin. Sterling gaffawed interpreting Diane remark. "Tu-shay."
Diane comented that she liked his Camero, that the car fits him nicely. "Couldn't afford it without the generosity of yours beautiful women."

The crashing of the water hitting the boats, and the seagulls above could be heard as a moment of silence passed between them. The light breeze blew Diane hair over her left eye. Sterling removed it, curling up the right side of his mouth. He liked Diane very much. She's smart. Beautiful. Mature. And a great fuck in bed.

He knew nothing could go beyond that, because she was married. And messing with a married woman would only lead to trouble. Diane looked up at Sterling with painful features. "You know this the last I will see you."

"I know." Sterling forced a smile now.

"Thank you for making feel wanted again."

"Your not hard to want. You and your husband will work your problems out. He's no fool to lose something, that's one of a kind."

Sterling words made Diane face beam, like the afternoon sun. "God, I envy the woman who will capture your heart."

Diane stood on her toes, wrapping her arms around Sterling shoulders, kissing him passionately. Bringing one arm down, she grasped his penis, before breaking their kiss. "Dam, I'm gonna miss this too."

She giggled, then pivoted around to get in her car. Sterling shut the door, and then heard the engine come to life. He watched Diane grabbed something from the console, then let down her window. Here's your money." she had in a yellow envelope.

"No thank you, keep it. I should be paying you for the wonderful weekend."

"Please." she wanted him. "You have earned it in more ways than one." Diane gave him a satisfying smile. Reluctantly, Sterling took the money. "Goodbye Sterling." saying her final words, before throwing her car in reverse.
Yamaha let out a sarcastic scoffed again at Terrell reply. He looked up at the sunny blue sky, then at the players on the basketball court, and scanned the rest of the complex. Where there was a few barbeque pits burning. "I don't see no drug dealing going on. No gun play. Or gangs members, snatching any old ladies purses. I see sexy women, a good game of basketball, and the smell of barbeque, with Frankie, singing in the background. Its a lovely weekend in the project. Your doing an excellent job Officer Watson. I think I'm gonna write the Chief of police, and request that you get a raise."

Terrell gave Yamaha a unfriendly smirk, nodding his head. Thanking him for the nice gesture. Terrell took a step back to get a better examination of Yamaha new Wraith. "I see that you step up your game. Business is booming. Dam, how much did this Rolls run you? Three, four hundred thousands?"

Yamaha chuckled at Terrell question, but didn't answer. He turned his stares at Terrell partner. Folding his twenty one inch arms across his chest, Yamaha asked who is the new rookie. "Officer McCaffrey." Terrell stepped closer to him. "Runs a ten one, one hundred. And under two minutes half mile. So tell your goons don't even try to run."

Yamaha laughed again, glancing over at his sidekick, whom had joined him. "Running is for track stars and corwards. You should know that." Terrell face turned from Yamaha reply. McCaffrey saw him placed his hand on the handle of his gun, and quickly placed his hand on top of Terrell, to stop whatever he had in mine. Coming back to his senses, Terrell continued his sterned stare at Yamaha, before turning up a half grin. He stepped closer to Yamaha for him to hear him clearly.

"You know I don't like you muthafucker. I don't have proof, but I know you killed Robert. When I do, watch your back."

Yamaha lightly chuckled at Terrell threats. "I think you got that twisted. I think you need to watch your back." he retorted, showing a defiant grin. McCaffrey called Terrell name for him to take a look around. When he did, Terrell saw that the whole basketball court had ceased playing. The look of drama had been on their faces.

"I think we need to go Watson." McCaffrey advised, knowing they
were in a win situation.

"I think it will be smart to heed to the rookie advise." Yamaha holding a victory smile. Terrell eyes narrowed lower, hardening his feature.

"Enjoy your new ride, because the next blue ride you'll be in, is on a prison bluebird."

Yamaha waved at Terrell and his new partner, as they drove away. Exiting the complex. McCaffrey made a left on Little York, heading east. Driving a couple of blocks, McCaffrey looked over at Terrell, seeing the rage in his face. McCaffrey spoke, breaking the silence, and Terrell thought. "I sense there's something personal between you and that guy Yamaha."

Terrell swiveled his head to give his partner an earnest glare, remaining silent. Terrell turned his stares back out the front window, and went back to his thoughts, annoying the blaring sounds of the ambulance, that went by them in the opposite direction. Making a left on Tidwell, traveling south, McCaffrey shook his head in disbelief, seeing a teenager walking down the boulevard. His baggy pants hanging under his ass. Stopping at a light, McCaffrey glanced back over at Terrell, whom still been in rage, about what transpire. Then turned his eyes up at the traffic light, waiting for it to turn green.

"It's fine, you don't have to talk about it, But it would be nice to know why, I could have gotten myself almost kill back there." McCaffrey wanted to know, breaking the silent. Terrell sighed heavily, taking a moment to respond. "Yamaha killed my last partner."

"Then why is he not on death row?" McCaffrey puzzled.

"Because I can't prove it."

"Then how do you know that Yamaha killed Officer Roberts?"

"Earlier that night in a club, Roberts and Yamaha had gotten into a confrontation about his goons pushing people to the side, to make a path for Yamaha and his bitch. Heated words were exchanged, which escalated to threats. Roberts pulled out his badge, and had Yamaha and his crew kicked out the club for disturbance. Later that night, Roberts and his girlfriend, were gunned down at a intersection."
McCaffrey hit the gas with the permission of the light. He took a deep breath, then exhaled, contemplating on what Terrell just reveal.

"How do you it was Yamaha? It could been anyone."

"Because I don't believe in coincident. Plus he don't deny it, making uncriminating remarks."

"How long have you been trying to find proof that Yamaha was involved in Officer Roberts murder?"

"A year."

"Driving around in a four hundred thousand dollar car, look like this Yamaha has his enterprise tight and in order."

"For now. But that muthafucker will soon slip. They always do."

CHAPTER 24

Diane sat back in her gold button high back chair, signing her signature on some warrants. She was working the day shift, sitting in for a judge, whom had injured his back playing golf. Signing off on all the warrants, she sat back and her mind beginned to wander, about the weekend with Sterling on the yacht.

It been almost a month since she parted ways from him. Knowing that she needed to keep it that way, so she could work on her marriage. Diane struggled to removed Sterling from her memory. The vision of his handsome features. His god like body, and massive penis. Closing her eyes, she could feel his touch. His manhood inserting deep inside her. Diane became unconcious, caught in the rapture, thinking about him. She awoke, from the trembling vibration of her moans. Opening up her eyes, Diane found her hand inside her suit pants. She cursed Sterling, removing it. Looking through her desk draw, she found some wipes to clean her hands. Swiveling in her chair to toss the wipes in the trash can, she caught a glimpse of the picture of her and William on the beach of Hawaii. A picture taking three years ago. William alittle grey, but still fit, Diane remembered the great time the two enjoyed, except the misunderstanding that accured one night when William went to the corner store.

Before reheasing the incident, Diane been disturbed by a knock at her
door. Gathering herself, she asked whomever it been on the other side, permission to enter. Mr. Lance, the court baliff opened the door. He explained that a woman wanted to see her, saying that she was family. "A Mrs. Tina Black."

Diane been surprised that she was here to see her, and asked Mr. Lance to send her inn. Diane beamed at the woman walking into her chamber, dressed in a mauve Nicolas Jebran dress suit, and black blouse. Her Rene Caovilla pumps matched her suit. Tina thick frame balance evenly with her five nine height. Her short due been cut perfect, for the structure of her face. Tina bright smile told Diane that she was happy to see her, as she got up from her chair to embrace. "What brings you sis?"

Tina Black is the older sister by two years. A preacher wife, her husband Reverend Donald Black, minister one of the largest church on the southside of town. With a congregation of about twelve thousands, Tina didn't have to lift a finger. Drive her 500 S series Benz, and play the role of the devoted wife. Diane gesture for her to have a seat, before returning to her's behind the huge mahogany desk. "I haven't seen or heard from you in weeks. I stop by the house, and your house keeper told me you were here, filling in for another judge."

"Yeah. Judge Coolridge. Hurt himself playing golf." Diane replied, brushing away the crinkles in her suit pants, after recrossing her legs. "How's things with you big sis?"

"Good. God is great. Donald and I are going on a cruise next week to Acapulco. The kids and the grandkids are fine. Donald jr. made sergent at the firestation. And John is preparing to take his position at the church. How are you and Will and the kids?"

"They are fine also. Trish is working hard to expand her new magazine. Colby is still inventing app, for Silicon Valley. As for Will and I, we're making it."

Tina raised an eyebrow at her siter last remark, detecting something was wrong. "What do you mean, you two are making it?"

Diane gave her older sister a somber look, before sighing dejected. The only sibling that speaks to her, since she married William, Diane
and Tina were very close. The only girls out of six children, their parents had. She always confided in her older sister, even when they were little. "Mmm." lines appeared on Diane forehead, as she shifted in her chair, still wondering if she should confess her sins.

"Are you two fighting?"
"Not us two, but me."

Her answer cause Tina to frown, baffled. "I don't understand, what are you struggling with?"
"My desires."

Tina inclined her head, narrowing down what Diane was talking about.
"Sex?"

Diane shooked her head yes. "You and William not having sex?"
"Not fulfilling sex."

"Explain Diane, what Will ain't hitting it right. Or going down town?"

Diane giggled at her sister, a preacher wife, talking slang. "What? What you laughing at?"
"Your language. A preacher wife isn't suppose to know or speak slang like that."

"Shoot, because Donald and I live for the Lord, don't mean we don't get our freak on in the bedroom. At times, we have to put the good book in the nighstand draw."

"Shut up Tina." Diane continued laughing.

"Lord knows I ain't lying." Tina replied with a straight face, shifting in her chair, and crossing her legs, right over left. Gathering herself, Diane elucidated what been happening in her bedroom, that she has to almost beg William to make love to her. "Do you think he's seeing another woman?"

"I don't know." Diane answered, looking off for a moment.
"You notice a change in his routine?"
"No. Just always on his laptop a lot."

"Think Will hooked on On-Line porn?"
"Shit if he was, you would think he would act out his fantasy."

"True." Tina shrugged her shoulders. "So how you been handling your problem?"

Diane answered her with a ignominious look. Tina shooked her head
cated to fixing our small problem in the bedroom."
Tina look back at the picture of Sterling again in his trunks.
"Sweet Jesus. I'll pray for you. A lot of praying, because you gonna need it."

CHAPTER 25

Patricia opened her green eyes to the rays of the morning sun, shining through the large window of her boyfriend bedroom window. She groaned trying to adjust her vision to the light. Rolling over to the inside of the bed, she muddled not finding her boyfriend lying next to her. Looking at the clock on the nightstand, it read eight thirty seven. Sitting up, Patricia was about to call her boyfriend name, until she heard the shower running.

A smile appeared on her face, reminiscing about last night. Yesterday had been her birthday, and her boyfriend Glenn, planned a whole day for her. A day of pampering at the spa. A shopping spree, and dinner at Houston most expensive restaurant. Glenn had one last present for Patricia, as he drove out to his mother horse ranch. Patricia asked why were they there. "I bought you something else."

"What?" she looked at him curious.
"It's inside the stable."
Patricia frowned. "Don't tell me that you bought me another horse?"
"Technically yes." he grinned.
"But you already bought me a horse. Matter of fact, two!" she held up two fingers.

Glenn chuckled at Patricia agitation, turning off the engine to his Hummer H1. "You can never have too many horses. Plus, I promise you'll like this horse." He told her before getting out. Angrily, she watched Glenn walk in front of the Hummer, then waved for her to get out.

"I can't believe he bought me another goddam horse. What's next he want me to race in the Kentucky Derby."
Standing in front of the huge red stable, Glenn pulled opened the double doors, and yelled "Surprise!"
Patricia mouth felled ajar, sucking all the air on earth. She fought
with all her might from keeping her knees from buckling. This wasn't
the horse she was expecting to see. "Happy Birthday Baby."

"You bought me a Mustang?" still in disbelief.

"A Shelby 500. I told you, you can never have to many horse." he
said, smiling. Patricia stepped closer to the car, to massage her hand
over the red and black racing stripe paint. The twenty Lexani rims
gave the Mustang a muscle look. Glenn had her name stitched in the
racing seat. Standing behind her, he asked if she like the horses he
bought for her.

"Yes." her face frozen in enthusiasm.

Dangling the keys in front of her. "You wanna hear the horses roar
to life?"

Patricia smile widen as she threw back the covers, hopping out of
bed, to join Glenn in the shower. As she gotten closer to the bath-
room, she heard his voice. Glenn swiveled around in time to see Pa-
tricia naked body come to the door, and stop. Displaying an uneasy
smile, he spoke a few more words, before ending his call. Placing his
cell phone on the bathroom counter, he leaned against it, folding
his arms across his chest. "Good morning. I see that you finally a-
waken."

"Hoping that you would be next to me when I did." she replied,
leaning against the door frame. "Who were you talking too?" Patricia
curious.

"Norwood. He has a client wanted to look a building in the Galleria
area. A big commision if I make the sale."

Patricia smiled, examining Glenn six one, hundred and ninety pound
frame, wrapped in a bath towel. She thank him for giving her the per-
fected day and present for her birthday. "You welcome. I'm glad I'm
able to do nice things like that for you."

"You know I would still love you you shouldn't."

"Would you?" Glenn inclined his head, trying to search for the lie
in Patricia green eyes.

"Yes. I don't love money. I love you."

"Hmmm." he raised his eyebrow.

"I do! Didn't I show you how much last night?" she giggled.
"Mmmm, I don't remember." Glenn scratched his head, pretending to have lost his memory.

"Oh you have amnesia now." she laughed, standing on her toes to kiss him. "Let me see if I can jog back your memory." she said, kissing him again on the lips, and moving downward to his neck. Then Patricia kissed his right nipple, then left, creeping southward, stopping at his navel, tickling it with her tongue. She removed the towel around his waist, grabbing his dick. Glenn closed his eyes, throwing back his head, waiting for Patricia to blow his brain out. Anticipating the warmth of her mouth around his shaft, Glenn looked down puzzled to find Patricia just holding his penis, starring at it.

"What's wrong?"
Standing to her feet. Patricia held an blank expression. "I forgot what to do?" her answer embroil Glenn. Then slowly a grin creep on her face, making Glenn chuckle.

"Oh, you want to play game?"

"I thought that's what we were playing." she turned and made her way to the shower. Patricia paused to look back at Glenn, then looked down. "What you gonna do with that." she questioned him with a mischievous look. Glenn followed her stares to his hard penis. When he looked back up, Patricia been under the shower water. Joining her, Glenn removed her wet hair from around her neck, and Patricia automatic tilted her head for Glenn to lay soft kisses. The feel of his lips made her moan, while his hands traveled to the end of her shoulders. Turning her around to see her beautiful face, he kissed her passionately, exchanging tongue. After kissing, Glenn spunned Patricia back to him again and then grabbed hold of her long brown hair, turning her face to him. Exchanging tongue again, he ranched his free hand over her ample breasts, and down to Patricia wet-hole. She place her hand over his,assisting Glenn in massaging her pussy. She motion her body in the opposite direction of her lover groove, releasing his lips. She gasped heavily as her green eyes fluttered, when he inserted his finger inside her soul. He touched the walls of her vagina, making her moan in pleasure. "Do you like that?"
"Hunh hunh." she bit her lips.
"You ready for this?"
"Hunh hunh."

Glenn placed Patricia hands on the shower wall, and reclutched a handful of her hair, pressing his body against hers, penetrate Patricia passage.

The powerful engine of Patricia Mustang echoed off the U-shape business complex in the Galleria area. Pulling up next to her business partner, Maria Sanchez, Patricia revved up the engine of the 500 horsepower a few times, to get her attention. Maria mouth parted in amazement, as she check out Patricia new ride. Maria pretty feature displayed animosity. "I hate you." Patricia read her lips and laughed.

Maria exited her convertible Beamer 325, wearing a ForEver 21 jumpsuit, that hugged her Ariana Grande frame. Her long permed black hair was highlighted blue to match her beamer, and pulled back in a ponytail. Stepping around to the driver side of Patricia, they embraced. She did a outside inspection of her car, then stuck her head inside to look. "I didn't know our magazine was racking enough dough to afford this."

"Girl you know it don't. Not yet anyway. Glenn bought it for my birthday."
"I see that you finally let him buy your independent ass a car. Got you out that Camry."
"No, I still have the Camry. He took me out to his mother ranch, wanted to surprise me with a new horse, that he bought for me."
"Yeah, five hundred of them." Maria commented and closed the door. "Now along with your idol Beyonce, you can also be like your other sheroe, Danica Patrick, racing up and down Westheimer."
"Be out there friday." Patricia cheezed.
"Girl you crazy." Maria shooked her head.

Patricia and Maria were co-owners of a magazine called Urban Houston. A magazine that informed Houstonians what's happening. What matter, Who's hot, and making a difference in the hispanic
and African American community.

They entered their small seventeen hundred square foot office. On the walls were famous Houstonians, and a plaque awarded to them as best new magazine. Also on the wall was the magazine quote. "Commitment Is Not A Title, A Not A Word."

Two of their three employees were hard at work on the articles for next month issue. Maria put her purse and belonging down on her glass desk, and made her way over to Raymaond, whom been working the printer press. Looking over the sketches laid out on the table, Maria been please with the cover piece story about Micheal Strong and Flacco Perez.

Two ex-gang member working together trying to keep young boys and girls from joining gangs. At five ten, faded haircut, and goatee, Maria thought Flacco had this sexy combination features of rugged and cute. The Houston Astro logo was tattooed on the left side of his neck. So she wasn't offended when he expressed how beautiful she is, and wanted to take her to dinner. Maria might would have accepted, if she didn't have a boyfriend.

Patricia sat at her desk and opened her laptop, reviewing the pictures of a party thrown by a local rapper named Lil Ke Ke. It was a party thrown for the memory of a Houston legend named DJ Screw.

Patricia been satisfied with the photos she taken with Latoya Luckett, Tela, and Scarface. But hated the picture she taken with Paul Wall. Her favorite rapper. Gregg had taken the picture with her eyes close. Deleting the photo, she recieved a text on her cell. Checking it, it was Gregg, informing her that he had an emergency, and that he would meet her at Eye Patch studio.
Patricia made a right of FM 212 into a middle class neighborhood. Locating the address she been given, she learned the Patch Eye T.A.S.E studio was run out of his detach two story garage. Patricia had to park her Mustang in front of the next door neighbor house, because Patch Eye driveway been full with foreign and candy cars. Gathering her things, she exited her car. Hitting the alarm, she been relieved to see Gregg Jeep Wrangler turn the corner. Parking across the street, Gregg got out of his white rugged utility with a briefcase, storing his photographer equipment. Wearing some fitted Calvin Klein jeans, and a tight black T-shirt, that showned off his gymnast upper frame. In bold red letters, his shirt read, STAND STILL. With the height and looks of Morris Chestnut, many women become disappointed when they learn that he's gay. Patricia gave him a welcoming smile. "I'm glad that you made it."

"I almost didn't."
"What was the emergency?"
"I almost sent Tracy to the emergency room."
"Your boyfriend?" Patricia stunned.
"Yeah. That nigga ran up my credit card on bullshit!"
"On what?"
"On this ugly ass fifteen hundred dollar suit, that I can't even pronounce."
"Ewww." Patricia face grinned.
"Eww is right. I'll be snapping pictures for the rest of my life to pay that shit off."
Gregg glared down at Patricia, wondering why she was laughing. "That shit ain't funny."
"I know. And I'm sorry." she continued giggling. "But you know you two will back together in bed tommorrow."
Gregg continued his loathing stare at Patricia, before turning up a half smile. "True. At least he could have bought me one."
"Then you'll be in debt for three thousands dollars." she told him puzzled.
"It's the thought."
introduced to them his team of artists. His group, Street Life, consist three young men from different neighborhoods in Houston. Fast Lane, and Big Mac were both solo artists.

Patch Eye lead them to the corner of the studio garage, where two fake leather love seat sat across from one another, divided by a cheap glass table. On top, sat a yellow cigar box. Patricia interview many rappers before, and knew what was inside the cigar box. Wearing a pair of baggy Rock-A-Wear jeans, at six two, Patch Eye upper muscles stretched his tank top, exposing all his tatoos. Patricia thanked him for taking his time out for the interview.

"Thank you for the extra exposure and recognizing my work."

"I think all of Houston have recognized. You have the hottest song out now. Unfair Justice. Tell us about the song, and what inspire you to write it?"

Patch Eye scoffed, giving Patricia a look, like where you been. "Here in this America, after four hundred years of being so-called free, black people is still recieving unfair justice. Police gunning down unarmed blackmen, with no repercussion. We doing outrageous time for bullshit felonies, but if a white man embezzle millions of dollars, he get a slap on the wrist, doing time in a luxury federal prison, playing golf.

"I see." Patricia nodded her head. "Do you have a solution to fix America racial problem?"

"Yeah. Seperation. Our own land. Because this marching in the streets ain't working."

"Do you agree with the shooting of the policemen in Dallas, and Baton Rouge?"

Patch Eye paused for a moment, as his only seeing eye look away, thinking, massaging his goatee. "No, because those might have been good cops. But I do understand. " he replied.

"Understand what?"

"The frustration, seeing the cops go free."

Patricia changed the conversation and brought the interview concerning him. She learned that Patch Eye real name was Richard Jones, and that he had served five years in prison for robbery. When the SWAT
team kicked down his door to arrest him, one of the officer poked out his eye, while he was handcuffed. Receiving a million and half from a lawsuit, Patch Eye founded T.A.S.E records.

"I see that its a period between every letter in T.A.S.E records. Does that mean something?"

"Yeah, The All Seeing Eye." he answered, with a half simpered grin.

"And what do you mean by The All Seeing Eye?"

Patch Eye gaffawed. "Self explanatory, ain't it?"

"Yeah. But I'm sure it means more than having one eye."

"That true." Patch Eye sat back, spreading his arms across the love-seat. "It mean." pointing to his eye. "That this eye see's the un-justice, struggles of the African American people. The greed and corrup-ration of America. Also, the eye recognized talent."

"What label you call your style of rapping? Concious?"

Patch Eye shrugged his shoulders, pondering the question. "I'm consider myself just a messenger."

After his vague answer, Patricia asked about his relationship status. Learning that he was single, with one child, Patch Eye flipped the same question on her. "What about you?"

Patricia gave him a light smile, before telling him that she was in a relationship. Patch Eye chuckled, tilting his head, studying Patricia features. Her light green eyes and yellow skin, and uncousine long brown hair. "You are a mix breed, aren't you?"

Patricia gave him a baffled look, before answering him. "Yes. My mo-ther is black, and father white."

Patch Eye chuckled again, while leaning forward to retrieve a blunt from the cigar box. "I bet you never lived in the hood? Rich too. And have a white boyfriend."

Patricia gave him a sharp look, knowing he was right. "Why you want to report what's happening in the hood? What you know about the hood?"

"To informed the people in and out, the good." she answered his first question. "And I know that shit you about to smoke is one of the reasons holding us back."

Patch Eye gave Patricia a askance smile, placing the blunt back in the cigar box.
After Gregg snapped a few pictures of Patch Eye and his crew, Patricia thanked him. Walking in silence to their cars, Gregg detected a vibe from Patricia that something was bothering her. She didn't noticing that Gregg had stop in his tracks, as she walked on.

"Are you okay Patricia?" he asked, breaking her thoughts.
"Hunh." she stop realizing that Gregg wasn't along side her.
"Are you okay? It look like you are in the twilight zone."
The right side of her face showned a sign of grief, before she look away for a second, then back at Gregg, whom beguned to walk toward her. "You not thinking about what Patch Eye said?"
"Was he right? What do I know about the hood. The struggles. Do a privelege girl like me have the right to report what's happening?"
"You might be born with a silver spoon in your mouth, but your mother was raised poor in Mississippi, right?" Patricia nodded. "She knows about the struggle, and told you about it. Don't be shame because she worked hard to become what she is, so you wouldn't have to struggle."

Patricia didn't respond as she soaked up Gregg annotation. "Just keep doing what you doing, and report what's happening in the hood. Good and bad."

Patricia looked up to the smiling Gregg, when he placed his hand on her shoulder. "Okay." she forced a smile, nodding her head again.
"Plus, I need this job to pay off this fifteen hundred dollar suit." he said, making her laugh. Gregg felt the vibration of his cell phone in his front pocket. Pulling it out, he scoffed, seeing it was a text from Tracy.
"I assume Tracy?" Patricia guessed.
"Hell Yeah. Telling me that he's sorry, and he will pay every penny back. HOW! that nigga ain't got no job."
CHAPTER 26

The volume on the nineteen inch tv been low as Sterling fell asleep on the livingroom couch. Like many nights before, he tried to stay up, hoping that his mother comes home. It's been three days since he seen her. And he didn't know if she was dead or alive. A little after two in the morning, Sterling was awoken by the sounds of laughter of his mother, coming through the door. His content expression was quickly erased, when he saw that she had brought home another John. He was a heavy set black man, and he slapped his mother on the ass. "Ouch, that hurt." she teased, giving him a pouty look.

"Sorry. You just have that type of ass that makes you want to slap it." he smiled, showing two opened face gold teeth. The fat man turned his attention to Sterling, and asked Grace "Is he your son?"

"Yes." she answered, then asked Sterling why he was still up. "Waiting for you momma."

"Well I'm home. Have you eaten?" she questioned, coming over to him. Sterling answered with the nodded of his head. "Good." she leaned to kiss him on his forehead, and ranned the back of her hand across his cheek. Locking eyes, Sterling could see the embarrassment and shame in his mother's once beautiful brown eyes. But until she is able to kick her heroin addiction, selling herself was the only way to keep a roof over their head. His mother forced a smile, then told Sterling to go back to sleep. "I'll fix you a big breakfast before you go to school. Okay?"

Sterling forced a light smile, nodding his head. He watched his mother make her way back to the John, and take his hand, leading him to her room. Sterling laid down and covered his ears with a pillow, wanting to drown out the fake cries and moans of his mother, booster the John ego.

Grace sat up in the bed watching her John put on his pants. Inside she been disgusted with herself, allowing someone who had the looks of humpy dumpy, laying on top of her. He smiled at Grace in the dres-
ser mirror, whom she coerced a satisfied grin. He inspected his looks like he was Denzel Washington. Pulling out his cheap wallet, he threw some money on the dresser, and put on his button down shirt. From the bed, Grace could clearly see that the money been short of their agreement. She got of bed, putting on her robe, and sashay over to him. Standing beside him, she placed a hand on his back, and the other one on his pot belly, then kissed him on the shoulder. Pressing her breasts against him, Grace lied, boosting his sexual ego, on his performance. It was a maneuver in not upsetting her John, when asking for the rest of her money.

"You surprised me."

"And how is that?" he looked at Grace in the mirror with raised eyebrows.

"Didn't know you could work it so well around all this love." she massaged his stomach.

"When you got a big dick like mines, having this belly don't matter." Grace let out a fake laugh, while in the back of her mind she thought, "I know this nigga didn't say he had a big dick. Without a mirror, I bet he can't look down and see his tiny peter."

"I love that big dick. You have to come back and give me some more." she grabbed it, and kissed him on the cheek. As he started to button up his shirt, Grace reached for the three bills on the dresser. A Grant, Jackson, and Lincoln. She masked her frown, and sweetly asked about the rest of her money. "Hey lover, you short seventy five more." He turned to Grace, telling her that's all he had, removing her hand from his stomach, then finished buttoning up his shirt. Grace face harden, knowing that the John was lying. She knew he had a wallet full of money, overhearing him telling the bartender at Mack, hole in the wall, that he had won fifteen hundred dollars, playing a scratch off.

"Don't lie! I know you holding a wad of money." she placed her hands on her hips.

"How do you know?" he gave her a harsh stare.

"I don't. But we made a deal for $150."

"You think I'll pay hundred and fifty dollars for some dopefiend
pussy. Bitch, you didn't think I didn't know you over heard me telling Mack about my scratch off ticket. Shit, you lucky I gave you half, for that busted up pussy of yours." he scowled, turning back to the mirror. Grace couldn't believe this muthafucker had the nerves to say her pussy was busted, with his tiny dick. She bet that all pussy felt busted to him. Shit, it was no way she was letting this butterball, chicken dick nigga, leave without paying what he owe. Grace mind was in a state of chaos, in trying to get the rest of her money.

"I need the rest of the money you owe me." Grace angrily said. he scoffed at her. "Be happy with you got. I'm outta here." he replied, pushing her to the side. Grace barely held her balance, from falling to the wooden floor. Before the John could get to the door, she beat him there, jumping in front of him.

"You fat little dick bastard, we agreed on a hundred and fifty. I need my money!"

"I have a wife and four kids! I need my money too!" he revealed, letting Grace know that he needed his money much more than her. Trying to remove Grace from blocking the door, she held her ground, while trying to dig in his pocket, for his wallet. The John backhanded Grace across the face, knocking her to the floor. He stared down at her, as she tried to regain her senses. Touching her bottom lip, Grace withdrew her hand to find blood on it. She looked up at the John with a expression of shock. "Keep Your GodDam Hands Out My Pocket! Bitch I told you I'm not giving you no more money." he snarled, then stepped over her to exit the bedroom. Full of rage, Grace struggled to her feet to give chase. Catching him in the middle of the livingroom, she jumped on his back, and started punching him in the face. The John turned in circles, trying to throw her off. Having a flashback of the Tyson and Holyfield fight, Grace bit the John's ear. Screaming in agony, he flipped Grace over his back, slamming her hard on the floor. The John checked his ear, as Grace laid on the floor daze and in pain. Discovering that she bit a hole in his ear, he been happy that he still had a whole one. Pissed, he stared down at her cursing,
then kick Grace in the stomach. "BITCH! you tried to bit my ear off." Grace curled up like a baby in pain, grasping for air. About to kick her again, the John back arched and his knees buckled, as his screams of pain echoed throughout the house. Turning around like cripple, the John saw Sterling with a look that could kill, holding a baseball bat.

"GET THE FUCK OUT OUT OUR HOUSE!" Sterling shouted, holding the bat like he was ready for a pitch. The John face grimance, trying to rid his mind from the pain.

"Little nigga I'm gonna to kill you." he grunted at Sterling, as he started towards him, with a menace look. Sterling swunged the bat, making the John jump back, missing him. He gave Sterling a wicked grin, before charging him. Sterling paniced, swinging the bat late. The John rammed Sterling hard against the wall, putting a hole in it. Knocking the wind out of him, the John grabbed the bat, that Sterling dropped, and stood to his feet. He stared down at Sterling, whom was now daze and in pain.

"So little nigga, you want to hit people with baseball bat." he spoked, hitting the palm of his hand with the bat. "Little nigga have you ever seen the movie Misery? Well you gonna need a cane to help you walk for the rest of your life." he raised the bat above his head. Sterling stared up at him with wide eyes, paralyzed. Suddenly a hard grunt escaped the John mouth, as his face held a expression of shock. Sterling eyes followed the short stubby man crashing face first the the floor. He didn't know if the man was dead or alive, as his dark eyes stared at him. Moments later, slowly a pool of blood begin to flow in front of the John face. Looking up, Sterling saw his mother standing over the man, holding one of his baseball trophies.

"Hi son." Sterling mother greeting brought him back to the present. This time he looked up to her lovely smile. Though it was political incorrect to say, Grace prison stay had done her justice. Now 48, Sterling mother now could be mistaken for his sister. Grace caramel skin, now been without blemish. The dark circles around her eyes removed. Her cornea white, and light brown eyes hypotizing.
Sterling pulled in the driveway of a gray brick two story home, and parked behind a emerald green Navigator, with new tags. A smile appeared on his face. He knew that the new S.U.V had to be Kiya. "Oh Chris duged deep into his pockets to keep his cousin happy." he thought.

Sterling sat in his car for a moment, thinking, before he grabbed his cell phone, to text someone. "Hello pretty lady in the black robe. I haven't heard from you in a while. Hope that things are working out with you and your husband. The reason for this courtesy, because I was hoping you could do me a favor. Lunch on me."

Sterling sat in his car for a long minute, waiting for a response, before gathering his things and getting out. He peeped through the windows, of the sixty thousands dollar ride."No exspense spared."

Sterling thought again, looking at the peanut butter leather seats, in emerald green trimming. It had enough wood inside to clear a forest. And a seventeen inch pull down screen, to keep the kid occupy. After knocking on the door, Sterling cell chime, recieving a text. He displayed a smile reading the text. "Lunch tommorrow. Sally sandwich shop, on Center street."

Opening the door was an elegant paper bag color woman. Her shoulder length dreadlocks was pulled back in a ponytail. Her full lips was painted red, formed into a smile, enhancing her clear and bright eyes. Sterling saw that she was already in warm mood, wearing her Hakeem Olajuwon basketball jerry. "I'm glad that you finally made it."

"Hey Aunt Tammy." Sterling stepped inside, kissing her on the cheek. "I had to make a stop this morning."

"Where?"

"I went to see momma."

Sterling reply changed his aunt expression from gay to concern. "How is my sister doing?" she closed the door.

"Good. Looking good." he chuckled. "She had her hair done in cornrows, trying to look young."

"Really." his aunt giggled. "God willing I will go visit her next weekend."
"She would love that. You know she's coming up for parole next year?"
"Yes, and I already contacted some parole lawyers."
"I'm working on some contacts myself."
"Who?"
"Someone I befriended at the writing seminar, who's father is a judge." Sterling lied.
"That is great. With a lawyer. A judge, and her family, I can't see a reason why Grace would be deny parole."
"I agree." Sterling giving her a optimistic grin.

Sterling followed his aunt out back where the rest of the family were hanging out. The smell of the barbeque pit burning filled his nostrils, as he found his Uncle Gregory and Kiya husband, Chris, lounging on the patio furniture, watching the Rockets game. Sterling laughed at his uncle, curse out the Rockets, for allowing Klay Thompson to hit a three pointer, giving the Warriors a ten point lead at halftime.

"Then niggas can't play no defense."
"GREGORY!" Sterling aunt yelled his name, upset at him for the use of the N-word.
A former basketball player at McNeese State University in Lake Charles Louisiana, is now a high school principal. Sterling uncle is a mild manner man and well spoken. A fanatic sport fan, it was the only time then, you could hear his Fifth Ward upbringing, when his Houston teams are losing.

He rose from his lounge chair to his full height of five eleven to embrace the son he never had. Chris did the same, showing family love. At six five, two hundred and eighty pounds, Sterling six two, two hundred and five frame, disappeared in his embrace. "What's up cuz?" Chris grinned, hitting Sterling in the chest, with the back of his hand.

"Nothing. Just come to chill with the family, and eat some barbeque."
"Feel you. Nothing like being with family." Chris noted, having a similar childhood like Sterling. Chris mother was on crack, and he never knew his father, whom could have been any of his mother's tricks.
"I see that it cost to keep the family happy too." Sterling remarked, brought out a heavy chuckle from Chris.

"Sixty four thousand." Chris referring how much he paid for the Navigator. "Kiya wanted one of those little Benz or B.M.W sports utility. Hell if I'm going to pay over fifty thousand for a S.U.V, I have to be able to get in it.

"True." Sterling laughed, then excused himself to say hello to Kiya, whom was sitting on the steps of the pool, watching the twins float. Kiya been all teeth, watching Sterling come her way. Not because she was happy to see him, but to bragg about her new ride. Sterling spoked to the twins, before kneeling beside Kiya to give her a kiss on the cheek. "Hey cuzin."

"You see my new S.U.V.?" Sterling laughed, guessing correctly, for the reason of Kiya beaming features. "How can I not see that big ass green Navigator, with paper plates."Nice."

"I know. Chris got all the upgrades."

"Yeah, I took a little peep inside. Must take me for a little spend later."

"That's automatic."

The dining room was filled with the smell of barbeque. No swine, the adults were wiping their mouths and the twins licking their fingers, loving the savory taste of Kiya mother grandmother secret sauce. Uncle Gregory was back to his educational manner, after the Rockets won the game on a last second three pointer by James Harden. He been discussing a matter at his high school, about a transgender boy, whom filed a lawsuit against the school district, not allowing her to use the boy's restroom. "This Title X that Obama signed into law, when he was president, is not clear if this applies to schools, and not just public restroom."

"Do he have a penis?" Aunt Tammy asked.

"No."

"Then she?" she stressed. "Should be using the girl's restroom."

"I agree momma." Chris spoked, wiping his mouth. He reached for his Budweiser. "I don't see this reason for she who wanna be a he, wants
to used the boys bathroom. She still have a woman tool, and has to use a stall, because she can't stand up and use the men pisser."

"Can't get naked and shower with the boys, after gym class either." Kiya gave her belief.

Uncle Gregory nodded his head in agreement with his family, then turned his eyes to Sterling, whom had Chrystal sitting in his lap, feeding her french fries. He asked Sterling for his opinion. A slight strain appeared on his face, as he exhaled, giving thoughts. "Well I'm not homophobic, but Chris do make alot of sense. Why does a transgender boy want to use the boys bathroom, when they can't stand up like a man. Now if he or she have the surgery, I have no problem."

Sterling smiled down at Chrystal, who tried to feed him a frie.

"I have no problem either." Kiya interceded. "Because right now how the law is interpret, every man or boy can claim to feel feminine that day, and use the women restroom."

"And I ain't feeling that." Chris noted.

They followed the discussion concerning the transgender, discussing the current events in the world and the killing of unarmed black men in America. Sterling told the story, how he been nervous when the white cop, pulled him over that night.

"Though I'm license to carry a gun, when I saw that white officer, I hurried and hid my gun in my secret department, and got out my license and insurance before he walked up to my car. I wanted not to happen to me, what happen to that brother in Minnesota."

"That scary bastard fire four shots, with a child in the backseat." Chris said upset.

"So was the officer that pulled me over. He kept the bright flashlight in my face, and the other hand on the handle of his gun."

"I worry about Chris everytime he rides alone. I know they would fear his black ass." Kiya spoked, with all eyes turning to the dark, bearded man. "My baby ain't nothing but a big old teddy bear, that wouldn't hurt a fly." Kiya smiled at him.

"All these officers are getting off for these murders. We have to do more than just march." Aunt Tammy suggested.
"Like what?" Sterling questioned.

"Hold the police responsible. The ones who commits the act, and those who keep silent. They are just as guilty. How can you declare an oath to protect and serve, then keep silent when wrong is done to those you claim to protect and serve. The young man who was shot in Chicago sixteen times, and the city tried to hide the video. The man in Carolina, running away, shot eight times in the back, and the officer tried to say he was trying to take his taser. But he didn't know that someone was taping the whole incident."

"You know its not just these unarmed black men getting killed, its how many times they pulling the trigger." Uncle Gregory commented.

"The white people on my job say all lives matter. I tell them if so, then why only unarmed blacks men being killed." Chris noted.

"What about what happen in Dallas?" Sterling asked his aunt.

"About those policemen being killed?"

"Mmm hmm." Sterling nodded.

Aunt Tammy placed her fork down and stared off, contemplating an answer. "Killing is never good, unless justifised."

"Was it justifised?"

"No. But I do understand the people anger." she answered, then paused, lifting her fork, pointing at Sterling. "I hear these police spokesmen and police chiefs call these acts cowardly. Remember the men who committed these acts were in the military. They saw it as a war on them. The African American. But what about these officers that keep silent. They either condone it, or cowards to come forward."
CHAPTER 28

Patricia been awaken by the ringtone of Georgia Florida Line, song, Holy, on Glen cellphone. She turned over in the bed to find him missing again. Since Glen wasn’t present to answer his phone, she broke her rule and answered it. Patricia knew that Glenn was trying to close a deal, and been waiting on a confirmation call.

"Hello, this Glenn McCann cell, can I help you."
Patricia waited for a reply, but heard nothing but silence on the other end. Patricia said hello again, in case the person on the line didn’t hear her. But this time, she heard the dial tone. Checking the screen to see who had called, she discovered that it been a anonymous. Baffled, Patricia started to put his cell phone back on the nightstand, contemplating the anonymous call. She didn’t want to let Patricia send the combination to the call. Patricia trusted Glenn, but she sorted detect a little change in his pattern lately. He was staying later at the office a lot lately. And these sudden morning calls. She uncovered herself and sat up in bed, with his cell still in her hand. Curious to know, Patricia pressed some button on Glenn cell, getting it to call the last caller, who call to his cell. After the second ring, Patricia heard a female voice on the other end. "Hello Glenn."

Patricia features harden hearing the other woman say her boyfriend first name. "Who is this?" Pataicia demanded the woman to indentify herself. There was a long pause, and Patricia asked another question.

"Are you the person that just call Glenn cell?"
After another brief silence she answered, "Yes. My name is Jessica James. And I was trying to contact Mr. McCann for the secretary job."

Patricia face changed from harden to surprise, having no knowledge that Glenn been looking for a new secretary. About to respond back to the woman, Patricia turned hearing Glenn questioning her why she’s on his cell.

"Some woman named Jessica James is calling you about a secretary job." she extended her arm for him to come and recieve his cell phone. Patricia noticed that Glenn face was covered with confusion, as he
slowly made the short walk over to her. Taking his cell phone, his lost dark hazel eyes locked with Patricia apprehensive face.

"Glenn McCann speaking, and who is this?"
Patricia watched Glenn say nothing for a moment, as his face still displayed a perplex look. Finally speaking, Glenn told the woman that the secretary job was no longer vacant, and thanked her for applying, then hung up, placing his cell back on the nightstand. He leaned down to kiss Patricia good morning. She returned his greeting, coercing a smile.

"I didn’t know that you were looking for a new secretary. What happen to Teressa?"
"Teressa had given me a two weeks notice that she was quitting, to move to San Antonio with her boyfriend, whom had gotten a better job at the military base there."
"So you hire someone else already?"
"No." Glenn pivoted, making his way to the bathroom. Patricia watched him disappear through the door, still somewhat baffled about everything. She heard the clank of the toilet lid hitting the tank, then Glenn peeing.
"Have you consider anyone yet?"
"No, no need."
"Why? You decided that you don’t need a secretary?"
"Of course I do. I have to much shit to do myself." he answered, flushing the toilet. Patricia heard the sink water running for a second, then saw Glenn appear at the bathroom door wiping his hands. He leaned against the door frame, and continued to fill her inn about his secretary matter. "Something happen and Teressa changed her mind."
"What?"
"She found out while her boyfriend been up there, he been cheatiing."
"What! Really?"
"Yeah. And that’s why the secretary job isn’t vacant anymore." he turned back inside the bathroom, to place the towel back on the rack. Patricia sighed in relief, believing Glenn, and the woman Jessica. As she gotten out of bed and retrieved her robe, another thought crossed her mind. She made her way to the bathroom to question him.
Stopping at the door, Glenn was at the sink brushing his teeth. In the mirror he saw Patricia looking puzzled at him, with her hands on her hips. He stopped brushing his teeth, asking what's wrong.

"Why did she call you by your first name?"

Glenn gave her a stunned reaction, then spitting out the toothpaste in the sink. He turned to face her. "What do you mean that she called me by my first name?"

"When I answered your cell and said hello, Ms. James didn't answer, hanging up the phone. At first I thought the signal drop, so I called her. Because the call was anonymous."

"So you answering my cell phone now?" he questioned, tilting his head slightly upset.

"I thought it was the people you were waiting to hear from about the big condominium deal downtown. But when Jessica answered her phone, she didn't say hello, she said you name."

"She did?" Glenn replied, his weary face showing the wrinkles on his forehead.

"Yes. It's strange for a potential employee to call her employer by their first name."

"It is. But when I do interview, I try not to make the interview tense, but comfortable, allowing them to call me by my first name."

"I see. But how did she get your cell number?"

"Glenn looked away, as through he was thinking for a moment how, then shrugged his shoulders, answering her with a guess. "Maybe Teressa had given it to her, when she called the office."

"That's not protocol, is it?"

"No. But I don't know how she got my cell number. I'm just guessing."

Glenn could read Patricia expression, seeing that she wasn't accepting his explanation. He rasied an eyebrow, shifting his weight to the left, holding eye contact. "Why you giving me a look of unbelief?"

"Just thought the whole situation was strange."

"Strange in what way?"

"Don't know. You tell me?" Patricia folded her arms.

Glenn jolted back. Stunned by Patricia amorphous reply. "What are you
insinuating Patricia? That I'm cheating on you." he frowned.

"Are you?"

"Glenn chuckled. "Of course not. I love you, and hope one day you will be by wife." he walked over to her. Patricia stared up in hazel eyes, exhibiting a beaming smile.

"Really?"

"Yes. I'll be a fool to let anyone else have you." he answered, placing an adoring kiss on her unpainted lips.

CHAPTER 29

The monday afternoon been pleasantly warm wit a slight breeze. Sterling sat on the patio of small sandwich shop, drinking a Mountain Dew, waiting for Diane. She had texted him earlier to let him know she'd be running alittle late. Sterling heard his cell phone chime again. Checking to see who had texted him, he was hoping that it wasn't Diane telling him that she couldn't make it. Raising an eyebrow, Sterling learned that it was a text from his so-called boss, Rene. "When you come to work tonight, come to my office first." the text read. Sterling thought for a moment, wondering why would Rene wants to se him.

Placing his Galaxy phone on the table, Sterling looked up to find a young white female smiling, starring at him. He returned his adoring smile, and greeted the ladies with a nod. He turned his attention away from the two women when his cell chime again. Picking it up. "I'm here." it read. Looking up into the parking lot, he saw the rossi red Massetti driving up.

Sterling watched Diane hips dance side to side, as she made her way up the few steps onto the patio. Dressed in a navy blue Belen Rodriguez strap fitted dress, and Rene Caovilla strap heels, Diane had enough legs and cleavages showing, making all the men there stare, wiping the drool from their mouths. Sterling stood to his feet, taking Diane hand, greeting her with a kiss on the cheek. He thanked her for accepting his invitation, giving her attire a once look over again. "Munh. No one would ever guess you were a judge."
"What would they think my occupation be?"
"A model."

"While thank you." she blushed.

"It's true. As I was watching you make your way towards me, your husband crossed my mind."

"Why?" Diane puzzled.

"I just have to wonder if he's gay or blind."
Diane giggled, while being assisted in her chair by Sterling. Taking a seat across from her, he glanced around the establishment, and commented about the western style joint.

"I come here alot for lunch. Sally has the best roast turkey sandwich in Houston. Family owned, since 1961."

"What you say must be true, for them to be open so long."

"The location also help too." she smiled.

"That what I hear, when trying to open up a business. Location, location, location."

A pretty redheaded waitress came to the table and asked if they were ready to order. Diane ordered them both a roasted turkey sandwich, then held a light grin, while her eyes ravished Sterling attire and goodlooks. Wearing a pair of Tommy Hilfiger black jeans, and a fitted red, white and blue, pullover shirt. It been over two months, since she seen him, and like the new mohawk look on him.

Diane painted thick lips widen, when Sterling ordered them both fries. Turning his focus back to Diane, Sterling was abit taken back by her felicitous feature, causing him to reflect the same.

"You look good. I like the new hair style."

"Thank you. I decided I needed a change, considering my occupation. So it was either a new haircut, or a tatoo."

"Happy that you choosen the hairstyle. It would be a shame to defile that body with ink."

Diane remark made Sterling chuckled. He asked how thing were coming along at home, then saw the strained expression appear on the right side of her face, as she looked way out into the boulevard.

"It's not getting better." she sighed. "At first it seem like it." she turned back to him. "But only for a month. And now I'm pleaing
tè have sex. Darn near like Obama trying to get a bill pass in the Senate."

"Sorry. Could be the stress on the job."

"He stays on that dam laptop."

"You don't think he's cheating?"

Diane gaffed at Sterling question. "If so. How can I be upset?"

Sterling pressed his lips together, comprehending her point. "At least I know what's the problem."

The waitress was back with their drinks. Diane asked the waitress for a straw, in which she handed her one from her front pocket. The waitress informed them both, that she'll be right back with their order.

Unwrapping her straw, and sticking it in her drink, she noticed the two white women, looking her way, with envy expression. She sure they were wondering what relationship could a young and handsome man like Sterling have with her. Diane flashed them a Yeah Bitch, He's With Me Smile, leaning forward, placing her soda on the table, reaching Sterling hand. "I was happy to get a text from you yesterday. I thought about you on my lonely nights." she paused, making a giggling sound. Sterling raised an eyebrow, tilting his head, catching Diane titter bug.

"What are you giggling about?" he asked.

Diane stared sincerely into his brown eyes a moment before answering. "I even think of you when I'm fucking my husband."

Sterling remained silent, not knowing what to say or comfort her. Except taking her to bed. "But we're not here to talk about my problems. But about yours." she squeezed his hand, before releasing it. "You texted me because you asked for a favor. So how can I help you?"

"Well, you remember when I told you that my mother is in prison?"

"For murder?" Diane remembered.

"Right:" Sterling nodded. "Okay." Diane sat back in her chair.

"Well my mother is coming up for parole this year, and I was wondering, hoping that you had some connection with the parole board."
"To help her get release?"
"Yeah." Sterling answered, sounding unassured. Now having second
thoughts about coming to her. "I'm wondering if you knew anyone on
the board that owes you a favor, or could influence, in granting my
mother her first parole?"
"I don't know anyone on the board. I sometime deal with parole and
probation officers. But." Diane held up a finger. "I know someone
who does. State Senator Bannor. I met him at a C-Pac conference. He
was trying to hit on me." she laughed. "I'm sure he has connection
to the parole board."
"You think he might do it?"
"I think I can put in a word for your mother, with a little persuasion." she
told him, showing Sterling a mischievous smile. Sterling chuckled,
thanking her.
"If any possible way that I can return the favor, let me know." he
informed.
"You can." Diane still holding her mischievous look.
"How?"
"Have you ever had sex in a Maseratti?"
Before Sterling answer her question, the waitress returned with their
order. He gave Diane a serious glare, then turned to the redhead
waitress, and apologized for the change. "Can we take this to go?"
When the waitress returned with their doggy bag, Sterling stood to
his feet, then assisted Diane to her's. Leaving the resturant holding
hands, Diane glanced over her shoulder to see the two white women
starring in awe, and giving them a wink.
Later that night Sterling entered the dresser room at Mandigos and sat down in front of his locker. He lightly smile, shaking his head, thinking about how he and Diane almost gotten busted in the parking garage at her job, by a co-worker.

Sterling was amazed by Diane stamina that she possess. After finishing their round of pears, she rode him hard for another ten minutes, setting off her alarm to the Maseratti several times. As the inside was filled with their sex, the two cuddled in the backseat, listening to some contemporary jazz.

Diane expressed to Sterling that she was sadden how her husband Will seem to be falling out of attraction with her. "After a good month of having sex three times a week, he hasn't given me a second glance in the last three weeks."

Diane continued, letting Sterling know how much she missed his company. His touch. His love. Her last words made Sterling loosen his hold on her. He was somewhat unclear what she meant.

"What do you mean my love?" he questioned, placing his finger under her chin, and turning her sadden face to him.

"Hunh." she stuttered, pretending not to understand Sterling question.

"Love. What do you mean by that?" he repeated his question. Diane said nothing for a second, roaming Sterling eyes. "And by love I mean this." she squeezed his penis, massaging the mushroom part with her thumb. "You sure know how to work it."

"You said your husband is in his sixties, right?"

"MMMehmm."

"Maybe you wore him out." he chuckled.

"Maybe. Or maybe I shouldn't married an old man. Someone younger like you." her comment, continued Sterling laughter.

"When you and you husband said your vows, my mother and father haven't even met yet."

Taking Sterling back to his car, at Sally parking lot, Diane she would do everything within her powers in assisting his mother release. He kissed her tenderly, thanking her before she drove away. Sterling turned to his car, and noticed a note on the windshield.
Grabbing it, he opened and read.

"Hi my name is Cindy, the sky blue eyes blonde sitting earlier at Sally on the patio, with my friend. I think you are handsome, and would like to set up a lunch date, if you would like that. Here's my number. 713-516-9578. Hope to hear from you."

Sterling remembered the two white young women starring at him. An remembered the blue eye blonde. Though both were cute, Cindy was better looking. Sterling figure them to be college girls. He folded the note, putting it in his pocket. Maybe he will call.

Opening his locker, Sterling prepare to take the stage, grabbing his blue scrubs and stethoscope. He wanted to play doctor with the women tonight. As he begin to change, Sterling turned to the dressing room door, when he heard his name called by Rene. Hooked to her like always, was Nina. "Didn't you recieve my texts earlier today?"

"Yes, to come to your office, I forgot." he removed his shirt. Sterling shifted his stares at Nina for a moment, seeing the lust in her grey contacts. "What's up Rene, why you wanna see me?"

"You need to be here tommorrow at noon."

"Why?" he frowned.

"Urban Houston magazine wanna do a interview with you. They voted you the hottest dancer in Houston."

"For Real." sounding surprised. "With who?"

"Maria Sanchez."

Once or twice Sterling had bought the magazine, and seen her face. He thought she was pretty.

"Yeah, so be here, and represent the club." Rene said, before swiveling on her heels to leave. "Wear something tight." she shouted, never looking abck.
Sterling stepped out the shower and dried off his chisel physique. Wrapping a towel around his waist, he went into his bedroom, then paused in his steps, to look down at Max, whom lying down on a bear rug, starring up at him with sad eyes. "I know I promise to take you to the park. But I got a surprised interview with Urban Houston magazine. As the sexiest man in H-town."

Max lifted his head and barked at Sterling. "Okay." Sterling laughed. "Maybe not the sexiest man in Houston, but the hottest dancer."

Standing in front of the dresser mirror, he reached for the Hugo Boss cologne, and dipped his finger in the oil base fragrance lightly, touching both sides of his neck. Combing his mohawk, Sterling found his eyes drawn to the picture, tapp[ed] to his mirror.

With mesmerizing grey eyes, her beautiful face exhibited a cover girl laugh, as the giraffe leaned down to lick her cheek. Though the picture been taken years ago, Sterling remembered that day vividly. It was the last outing the he and Erica had had. A week before their visit at the zoo, Erica had been waking up somedays weak and exhausted. Sterling would plea with her to go to the doctor. But Erica would refuse, putting on a mummer, contributing her exhaustion of training to hard for the cross country marathon.

A few days later Erica wasn't able to get out of bed. At the hospital, Sterling learned that Erica had leukemia. Not detected in time, Erica white blood cells incresed to much, that the doctors were unable to do anything for her.

Sterling was there by her side holding her hand. The prettiest girl in the third grade was quickly fading away. Lying in the hospital bed, Erica turned to Sterling mustering up a smile. He looked into her dark eyes, matching the rings around them. It pain him to see the woman he loves, with so much enthusiasm and fight, now disconsolated and fragile.

"Remember when we said we were getting marry and having kids. A boy and a girl."

Sterling forced a smile remembering having the conversation several times. He would argue with Erica that he wouldn't allow her to work.

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That he wanted her to be a stay at home mother and take care of the kids. Erica dreamed of wanting to be a registered nurse, and he wanted to land a job at one of the oil refineries. Erica lifted her head and looked down at her feet. Sterling asked if something was wrong.

"No. I'm just looking down at my feet."

"Why?" Sterling curious.

"Remember that you said that I wasn't never going to see my feet, because you were gonna keep me pregnant?"
Sterling laughed. "So I can keep you from working." he squeezed her hand gently. "Listen here. I'll make a deal with you."

"What kind of deal?" she tighten her face.

"If you get well for me, I might let you work."

"Might!" she frowned.

"Yeah." Sterling shooked his head. "So you can't say that I lied, if I changed my mind."

"In which you never did." Erica recognized Sterling bullshit. He continued lightly laughing. "You wanna have one more fight with me before I go?"

"Your boldness and fire. That's what I love about you."
Sterling words made Erica smile. For the first times in weeks, he saw the beauty in her features. Her eyes roamed his face, still in love with the boy, since the third grade. "Your kindness. Your love. And the way you dealt with your trouble childhood, is what I love about you."

Sterling smile down at her. Brushing away her hair off her forehead. He could now see the pain returning in her eyes. The pain knowing that they wouldn't spend the rest of their lives together. Sterling leaned to kiss her, feeling the love through her lips. He held in his tears, trying to be strong for her, and for him. "Everything is gonna be alright. When we get married, I'm gonna take you to Hawaii for our honeymoon."

"Make love on the beach?" she asked."

"Make mad love. Then watched the sun rise."

"That sounds nice." she mustered a smile.

Erica told Sterling that she loved him, and that he been the only
man she wanted and ever love. Revealing her feeling, he saw Erica chest rise, as she turned away from him, and began coughing heavily. Sterling watched helpless, not knowing what to do. After her coughing spasm ended, he stood to his feet, witnessing her struggle abit to regain her breath. Taking her hand, Sterling asked if he needed to go get a doctor.

"I'm fine, except my throat is dry from coughing. Can you get me a soda."

"What kind?"

"Boy you know what kind of soda I like." Erica giving Sterling achaft stare. He gave her a peck on thr lips, and promise to be right back. When he returned back to her room, Sterling was complaining how the soda machine tried to take his dollar.

"People was looking at me crazy, shaking the hell out the machine. But I got you Mountain Dew."

When he lifted his head, Sterling stop and smile, shaking his head, thinking that Erica had falling asleep. Placing her soda on the table, she pulled the covers over her, he notices that Erica wasn't breathing.

"Erica." he called her name. Praying to God she would respond. Sterling put her hand on her cheeks, repeating her name. "ERICA BABY! WAKE UP PLEASE! I LOVE YOU!"

Sterling eyed Max in the mirror, when his barking brought him back to the present. Turning his stares back to himself, he saw that tears had falling from his eyes. He took a deep breath, wiping away the tears that flowed down his cheek. He had turned his attention back to Max, whom had barked again. "I still miss her," he sighed. "I wish you have known her, you would have love her as much as I did."
CHAPTER 32

When Patricia waked into her office, she found everyone hard at work. Raymond was on the press machine, and Gregg developing and arranging photos. Rachel, their secretary was going over appointments, schedules and taking calls on the phone. Patricia didn't see Maria Beamer parked outside, or her phone in the open office. Walking over to Rachel's desk, she asked if she heard and knew where Maria was.

"Yes. Maria said that she might come late or might not show at all. Saying she had a bad case of diarrhea."

"What?" Patricia laughed.

"She said she tried to call you, but couldn't contact you. Nor received a response, when she texted you."

Patricia grabbed her IPhone from her purse. She cursed, realizing that she never turn it on. Her mind this morning been preoccupied with Glenn. Lying half asleep in bed, she heard his cell phone buzzing on the nightstand. Feeling Glenn rollover to check, who's calling, Patricia heard him mumbled under his breath, then get out of bed, and go to the bathroom. Glenn closed the door behind him. When Patricia beganned hear tention in his conversation, Glenn had turned on the sink water. Sitting up in bed, when Glenn exited the bathroom, with her arms folded, she asked what was so intense on the phone.

"That was Norwood telling me we didn't get the deal on the condos downtown."

Scrolling her texts messages, Patricia anger intensified more, reading a text from Glenn, telling her that their dinner plans tonight has been cancel. "A meeting with a out of town client." his reasoning. Patricia saw Maria texts and miss calls. All eight of them. "Also she said you need to do the Sterling Maxwell interview."

"I see that now." Patricia replied, reading the rest of her texts. "What time is the interview setup?"

"Noon."

"Shit!" Patricia look at her watch. 9:45. "That don't give me much time to work on Patch Eye article, because Mandigos is on the north side of town.

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"That's correct." Rachel answered, giving her the address.

Sterling, Rene, Nina, and the bartender were the only people inside Mandigos. Packed with screaming women at night throwing away all their money, the club seemed strangely quiet. Rene had shown an expression of confusion, expecting to see Maria. She had been acquainted with her, having done an interview about Mandigos.

Rene stood to her feet, towering over Patricia, to shake her hand. After introducing her photographer, Rene took an quick inspection of Gregg. Tall, nicely built, and smooth dark skin. With a freshly trimmed beard, Gregg smile been inviting. Rene knew that he was gay, by his handshake. But that was okay with her, because some of her dancer were. Rene expressed that she was informed that Maria was doing the interview.

"Maria took ill this morning." Patricia explained.

"Mmm." Rene shook her head. "Well here is the man you come to interview. Sterling Maxwell. A.K.A, Black Osiris."
Sterling been dressed in a well fitted Tru Religion jeans and jacket. Under the jacket, he had a U-cut tank top. Exchanging handshakes, Sterling and Patricia held their grasp a little longer than normal. Sterling was trying to figure out where he had seen Patricia before.

"Have we met before?" Sterling asked.

"I was about to ask you the same question." Patricia smiled. "If so maybe it will come to us later." she released his hand. Sterling gestured for Patricia to have a seat. Rene invited Gregg over to the bar, so Patricia could conduct her interview, and while over drinks, she would press her proposition for Gregg to come work for her.

"Well its easy to see why you are the main attraction at Mandigos." Patricia commented, while making herself comfortable. She was wondering how could she forget a face as handsome as Sterling. Placing her recorder on the table, she began her interview.

"That screaming woman that comes to see you take it off, knows you as Black Osiris."

"That's true."
"Isn't Osiris a Greek and Roman god?"
"By name yes. This name was changed from Ausar, whom was the husband of Aset. The Greeks and Romans know her as Isis. Ausar was responsible for bringing agriculture to the Nubians and Kemets."
"Excuse me Black Osiris." Patricia interrupted. "Who were the Nubians and the Kemets?"
"Black people that inhabitant the land we call Egypt, long before the Greeks and Arabs invited them.
"Mmmm. I didn't know that."
"Most people don't. "Well anyway Ausar was murdered by his brother Set, and was later resurrected, and became known as the Lord of Judgement. Like I said earlier, the Greeks and Romans changed the name to Osiris, and worshipped him. The black represent the true god."
"Okay." Patricia impressed. "Thank you for giving us the true meaning of your name, and the history lesson. Not only are you goodlooking. Smart also."
"Really thank Rene the owner of Mandigos for giving me this name."
"I see. Thank you Rene for choosing a name that fits you well. A god you are. But I'm sure the women would like to know your real name."
"Sterling Maxwell."
"Mmmh. That name seem to fit you well also. Does it mean anything?" she smiled. Sterling chuckled.
"No, just a name my parents given me."
"Okay." Patricia leaned back in her chair, crossing her legs. Sterling apologized for his unpoliteness, to offer her a drink.
"Yes, thank you. Amarillo Sour please."
Sterling shouted over to Big Jake, and ordered Patricia a drink, and himself, Vodka and cranberry juice. Turning back to Patricia, Sterling exhibited his contagious smile, causing her to do the same.
"So how did you get involved in male entertainment, and how long have you been taking it off for the ladies?"
Patricia last question made Sterling laughed lightly. "I was working at Walmart, and needed some extra money. I saw Rene add in the paper looking for dancers. She like my looks, built, and moves, then hired me. And I been entertaining the beautiful women that comes here, for over a year."

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"I assume that you don't work at Walmart anymore?"

"No." Sterling chuckled. "Working here at Mandigos provides a comfortable living. And I like to thank the ladies for that."

"So who taught you to dance and move the way you do?"

"I credit my cousin Kiya. We used to have dance contest against one another, when we were teenagers."

"Who would win?"

"She does, most of the times."

Patricia paused before asking another question, as Big Jake interrupted them, bringing their drink. With her legs still crossed, Patricia leaned forward to grabbed her drink. Sterling waited for her reaction, to see if she was satisfied, before tasting his. "Good?"

"Perfect." her features expressed satisfaction. Sterling toasted his drink to her, then took a short swallow, waiting for Patricia's next question. "Okay Mr. Maxwell." Patricia stopped and apologized. "I'm sorry, what would you like to be called? Black Osiris, or Mr. Maxwell?" she placed her drink on the table.

"Sterling will be find. That's what my friends calls me. And the ladies that comes to see me are my friends."

"That's kind to say, Sterling." she uncrossed her legs, and adjusted herself. "For the women out there who's reading this article and coming to see you, wants to know are you single?"

"Yes."

"Wow. You just made every woman in Houston happy."

"You think?" he chuckled.

"Yes. When this issue is publish, and the women learn that you are available, Mandigos crowd will increase."

"Rene, myself and the other dancers would love that."

"I bet. So what are the qualities you look for in a woman?"

"Ambition. Not saying what she wants to do, but working towards it. And yes, must be funny. There's isn't a more beautiful sound than a woman laughter."

"Really?"

"Yes. You see goes back to my childhood. My mother was sick alot, and had alot of bad days. So whenever I heard the sounds of her
laughter, I knew that she was feeling okay. And it was going to be a good day."
"I sense that you love your mother very much, and have respect for women?"
"I just try to fulfill my duty to make them smile, and give them their money worth."
"Have there ever been a problem where a woman went to far, while you were on stage?"
"Several."
"And how do you handle the situation?"
"I will gently, smoothly remove their hands, waving my finger at her smiling." Sterling demonstrated. "You know, depending on the situation."
"Which is?"
"If its alot of the song remaining, I'll bring her up on the stage. If not, I will kiss her softly, and continue my routine."
"Okay, that's interesting. But maybe we should delete your answer to the last question, from the interview, because the ladies might take advantage, wanting your attention and kisses." Sterling chuckled again. "I think you're right." taking a sip of his Vodka. Between a short pause, Sterling asked if he could ask her a question?
"I guess. Sure." Patricia inclined her head curious.
"Have you ever been to a male strip club?"
"I want to see the Chipindale dancers, with my mother." Sterling burst into laughter. "What?" Patricia confuses why he been laughing.
"The men with the bow ties and stiff moves, are not strippers."
"They do take off their clothes."
"Stripping is more than just taking off you clothes. Its an art in doing it."
"Ohh." Patricia leaned forward, placing her arms on the table. "So what is the art in taking off the clothes?"
"Come tonight and see."
"Since my plans for tonight been changed, I might just do that."
she gave Sterling a wanton look. For a moment, Sterling lost himself in her exotic green eyes. He thought Patricia could be someone he would like to know better. She broke off their eye contact, retrieving her drink, and leaned back in her chair. Patricia wanted to ask Sterling two more questions, before ending the interview.

"Sterling since you are single, and not dating, leaves you with a lot of time to your self. What do you do with all your free time?" She asked her first question, taking a drink.

"I like to write books."

"Wow, really? What kind of books you write?"

"Books for women. Detective, Urban. A little history with fiction mixes."

"Anything published yet?"

"No. It was a hobby at first. But now I'm taking it more seriously. And hope to be a national best seller."

"And I'm sure your audience will be looking forward in seeing a Sterling Maxwell bestseller, in the near future. Last question. Any last words you like to say to your screaming fans?"

"Thank you to all the ladies who comes to support me, and get a joy in what I do. You the reason why I take it off."

After the interview, Sterling posed for some pictures. Patricia expressed that she enjoyed interviewing him, and promise to one night, come and see him dance.

"Bring a friend, if you like."

"Maybe." she gave him a flaunting smile, releasing their handshake.

Rene escorted Patricia and Gregg out, and gave them a message from her for Maria, to get well soon.

Though Sterling's preference were black women with straight stunner bodies, he didn't mind a little milk in his coffee. Patricia went filled her D.K.N.Y jumpsuit, displaying a nice bump.

"She's cute isn't she?" Nina disturbed his thoughts from behind. Sterling turned around to see Nina simpered grin, and the lust in her eye.

"She's okay. Just can't figure out where I seen her."
Patricia stayed late at the office by herself, working on Patch Eye and Sterling article. Maria never made it to work. On her way back to the office, Patricia called Maria to check up on her partner and college friend. Believing that she had a twenty four hour bug, Maria cursed out Patricia, when she made jokes about stopping by Sam wholesale, to buy her a bundle of toilet paper. Satisfied with Patch Eye article, Patricia pulled out her recorder and listened to the question and answer of Sterling interview, while reaching for the vanilla envelope on her desk. Inside there were photos that Gregg had taken. She studied his handsome face. Patricia thought his mohawk haircut went well with the structure of his head. Sterling trimmed beard and goatee, framed his sexy lips. His brown eyes were drawing. Of all photos, she liked the one of him sitting backwards in a chair, in his fitted jeans and upper body, chisel in a tank top. He was leaning like Tupac, on the album cover of All Eyes On Me.

Sterling didn't display the Tupac serious features, but a smile that been captivating. Again, it was clearly to see why the women went wild for him. He was without flaws. Perfect. A created masterpiece.

"So what are the qualities you look for in a woman?"

"Ambition. A woman not saying want she want to do, but working towards it. And yes, must be funny. There isn't more beautiful sound than a woman laughter."

Hearing Sterling answer the question, she reached for th recorder to press stop. She looked at the picture of Glenn, and her on the ski slopes in Aspen. Sterling replied made her think about her relationship with Glenn. Picking up her phone, she checked it for any missed call or texts. No missed calls, but Patricia did recieve three texts. One from Maria, Telling her that she was feeling better, and will be in tomorrow. Another from her mother, claiming that she was doing her motherly duties, and checking on her child. Last, her wireless service, informing that her bill is due, NOW! Not one from the person she was hoping to hear from.

Glenn haven't been making her laugh lately, acting a little distant.
Working a lot lately. Canceling lunch and dinner dates. And now the puzzling morning phone calls. Patricia struggled, not wanting to believe that Glenn may be cheating on her, when he just spent over fifty thousand dollars on her birthday present. Though no hard evidence, something wasn't right. Call it a woman's intuition.

She texted Glenn, "I miss you, but I understand that you have to make a living. Spending the night at my place. Hope to see you later. Love you."

After texting Glenn Patricia decided to call it a night. Haven't eaten all day, on her way home, she plan to stop by Taco Cabanana and buy a chicken quesadía, and sit in front of the big screen and fine a movie.

Sitting in the drive-through, Patricia watched a man at the window. The lastest Nikki Minja song had put her in a better mood, as she bobbed her head to the up-tempo club beat. The 1400 horsepower engine reverberated off the upper fast food restaurant as she drove up to the window. The cashier let her know that her order is $10.35.

Handing her a twenty, Patricia placed her change she received back in the ashtray.

When she looked up, her eyes put her mind in a state of confusion, spotting a black Humvee, passing by the restaurant. For getting about her food, Patricia smashed the gas, making the restaurant drive-thru cover and window rattle from the roaring of the engine.

Waiting for several cars to pass by, before exiting the parking lot, Patricia had her eyes beamed on the taillights of the Humvee. Fish-tailing onto the boulevard, she cursed, being stop at a traffic light. Patricia kept her eyes glued to the taillights of the Hummer, as she maneuvered vehicles, on the three lane street. She saw the Humvee cross a major intersection, and Patricia Michelin back tires left black marks on the street, when the driver in front of her, decided to stop at the sight of a yellow light. "SHIT!" she cursed again, knowing that it was impossible, stretching her neck, trying to look over and through the Sport Utility in front of her, to read the license plate, and the direction it been going.

Patricia pushed the garage door opener, pulling in next to her Camry.
Grabbing her food from the passenger seat, she entered her condo, through the kitchen, placing everything down on the counter, except her cell phone. She checked her cell again, for the upteen time, for any missed texts or calls from Glenn. Patricia had texts him when she went back for her food. Seeing that there were none, she placed her cell on the wooden and glass table in the living room, then headed to the bathroom to pee.

After jumping out the shower, hoping to wash away all her tension and suspicious of Glenn. Warming up the quesadia and grabbing her favorite soda, Patricia flopped down on her huge leather and suede sectional. Picking up the remote, she flipped through the channels on her eighty inch, to find something to watch.

Tired of hearing the new president Trump mouth, and antics, Patricia hated that it been a tuesday night, and no football. Her favorite sport. She continue flipping through the channels, and then stop, looking at the handsome man being interviewed on B.E.T. The male model Tyson Beckford. Dark brown, bald, sexy eyes, and thick lips. It was hard for Patricia to believe that he was in his mid fourties.

She sat there listening, mesmerized, as he talked about his new role in the movie, from the novel written by Zane, Addictado.

Tyson good looks made her think about Sterling. Patricia could still smell the scent of his cologne, and hear the charm of his chuckle. Rough neck, urban wearing men, with illegal and occupation like Sterling wasn’t her type. Though it sounded hypocritical, owning a magazine called Urban Houston, Patricia was attractive to men whom wore suits, and ties. And could conversate about more than rap music and sports. But something was different about Sterling. His present was inviting. What he wanted in a woman, he also meant for himself,

"Can I ask you a question?"
"I guess. Sure."
"Have you ever been to a male strip club?"
"To see the Chipidales, with my mother."
"The men with the bow ties, and stiff moves?" Sterling laughed.
"They do take off their clothes."
"Stripping is more than taking off your clothes. Its an art in
doing it."

"Ohhh. So what is the art in taking off the clothes?"

"Come tonight and see."

Patricia glanced at the table in front of her sectional, that held her cell phone. She saw that it was still not a response from Glenn. Patricia's green eyes turned back to the screen, with Tyson Beckford striking looks. She sighed deeply, and pointed the remote towards the tv, turning it off. Standing to her feet, she went to her room, and to her closet.

CHAPTER 34

Patricia entered Mandigos dressed in a seventy fashion, wearing a dark gold peasmat blouse, and brown suede boot cut pants. The six foot, bald muscle doorman let her know that she could exchange her large bills for ones at the bar. For a tuesday night, Patricia been abit surprised how packed Mandigos been with screaming women. She stood watching a moment, a woman standing by the stage, waving dollar bills, to attract the attention of this chisel, and smoothest dark skinned black man that she have ever seen. Wearing a violet purple thong, she thought Sterling been right, Chipidales don't move like that. Dancing to R.Kelly(Let Me Serve U Up) Patricia watched momentarily the male dancer flexes, move and roll his body to the tune of the music. Making her way to the bar, to the left, was another small stage, where another chocolate man entertain a small group of white women. Patricia smiled at the sight of the white women, whom gave her the impression that they were members of a book club. And they all just finished reading an exotic novel, of a slave tale and his misses.

"Let Me See It!" she heard one yelled.

Big Jake smiled, remembering Patricia from earlier today. Ordering another Amarillo Sour, she exchanged fifty for ones. The dark demigod just finished his two song set, when she was lucky to find a table near the stage. Patricia fought her urge to check her phone.
DURING the short intermission to see if Glenn had called. Taking a hard swallow of her drink, she stared at her black suede clutch purse. Patricia soft feature harden. She kept wondering, what the hell is going on with Glenn. No longer able to fight her curiosity, she started to reach inside her purse, until a female distracted her attention. Looking up at the stage, she recognized Rene, the owner, asking if the women were having a good time. The inside walls echoed with the screams of yes and cheers.

"And here at Mandigos, that's our mission to bring and entertain you with the finest black men. Here locally and nationwide. And next coming to the stage is Houston finest, and will feature in next month Urban Houston magazine. So go and buy the magazine, and fine out what he likes in a woman. With no further ado, here is Black Osiris." Trey Songz (Sex Ain't Better Than Love) blared sexually through the speakers, as the red spotlight beamed down on Sterling. Dressed in all white slacks, suit vest, and shoes, the women shouted for him to take it off. Making his way seductively to the front of the stage, Patricia watched closely, Sterling body flow with the rhythm of Trey Songz words. Sterling had tuned out the screaming women, and stared forward, as though he been arousing himself in the mirror. Removing his vest, Patricia mouth ajarred alittle, liking the sculpture of Sterling upper body. Making his pecs jump to the bass of music, the women ranted to the stage with their small and large bills, ready to stick it in Sterling pants. He squatted eye level of a healthy size woman in a flower printed dress. Sterling removed some of her lipstick, giving her a long and passionate kiss. Standing back to his feet, Sterling smiled down at the woman, as she placed her hands over her heart, and yelled I Love You. Blowing her a kiss, in gesture that he loved her too, Sterling danced around the stage. Pausing for a moment; he spotted Patricia gaiety face. He gave her a wink, which broke Patricia out of her little trance. Dancing his way back to the chair on the stage, Sterling kick his right leg over, and sat down, all in one motion. Taking off his shoes, he tossed the right over his left shoulder, and the opposite with the left. Massaging his oily body with his hands, Sterling creep
down, to unbuckle his belt. Playing with the zipper, before giving the women a glanced of his white G-string, he slid slowly down his pants, taking them off.
Sterling then sat backwards in the chair, and the ladies screamed, watching his ass tighten, as he pretend to fuck the chair.
After his two song set, Sterling rushed back to the dressing room to get dress. He wanted to have a word with Patricia. He wanted to know did she enjoyed his performance.
Wearing a pair of Levi's jean and a fitted longjohn shit, Sterling was abit disappointed to find Patricia not sitting at the table where he remembered. Not much in a taking picture mood, Sterling didn't ignore the few women who wanted to pose with him for a selfie. Coercing a smile, after the ladies thanked him, Sterling scanned the club again for Patricia. The smile that appeared on Sterling face wasn't force, hearing the pleasure voice of Patricia standing behind him. "Looking for me?" Sterling turned around to find a beaming green eyes Patricia, holding two drinks in her hands. Giving her the once lookover, he was loving her Jill Jones frame, rocking the old school look.

"I like the attire you wearing."
"Thank you."
"Very past and present."
"After that performance, I thought you might need a drink. Absolute Vodka, with a hint of cranberry juice. Right?"
"Correct." his smile widen, watching Patricia come closer to hand him his drink. "Thank you." he accepted. "I'm happy that you were able to come. Fulfilling your promise so soon."
"I made no promise. I said I might come." she smiled.
"Okay." he chuckled lightly. "I'm glad that you still came."
"My plans for tonight were cancel, and when I turned on the television, there was someone on it that reminded me of you."
"Who?" Sterling foreheadrowned lines, curious.
"Tyson Beckford." Patricia exhibited a shy grin. "He was promoting his new movie, Addicted."
"Mmm." Sterling lightly grinned, before tasting his drink.
"What?" Patricia couldn't read his reaction.

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"Oh nothing. I consider it high praise that I could be picture with a world class model like Tyson Beckford."
"Well I'm sure you knew it is more than just your moves that makes you the sexiest dancer in Houston."
"Well it takes two things in this industry to be able to pay the bills. Three to live comfortable."
"And what is these three skills?"
"A men fitness cover magazine body, and good dancing skills." Sterling answered two, then reached for his drink. Patricia watched him take swallow, then look around the club. Placing his drink back on the table, Sterling leaned back in his chair, he could see in Patricia features, that she was waiting for the third reason for success in male entertainment. "What?" he played with her intelligent.

"Well, you revealed only two. What's the third?"
Sterling let Patricia guess for herself, lifting an eyebrow, then slightly tilted his head. Holding eye contact for a moment, Sterling chuckled when he saw the surprise reaction, when she figured out the third skill. "So you must be rich?"
Her comment continued to make Sterling laugh. "Not Tyson Beckford rich. But comfortable."
"But you are bless," she commented again, grabbing her drink, and leaning back in her chair, crossing her legs.
Sterling guffawed, knowing what Patricia was referring too. "So did you enjoy the show?"
"Just let me say that you were right about the Chipidales. If stripping is a art, you are Picasso."
"I take that as a yes," he gave her a pleasing smile. Taking another swallow of his drink, Sterling placed his glass back on the table. Patricia started to become alittle unsettled at his contemplating and awkward stares.
"Why are you looking at me like that?"
"Do you have a dog?"
"Yes. Why?"
"A boxer?"
"How do you know that?"
"I'm sure you do." displaying a mischief grin, watching Patricia get up from the table, and step away. Before Patricia could ask, what, where, and why it took so long to return her calls. Glenn wanted to know where she is, hearing the loud music and screaming women in the background.

"I'm at work." she gave him a amorphous answer.
"What the hell, you having a party at your office?"
"No. Since you wouldn't return my calls and texts, I came out to check the person I interview this afternoon. dance."
"Where?"
Patricia been hesitant to answer, looking over her shoulder, she found Sterling still watching her, still wearing a satisfying grin.
"At Mandigos."
"MANDINGOS!" Glenn repeated confused. "What kind of club is Mandigos?"
Sounds black."
"In a sense."
"What do you mean by that?"
Patricia paused a moment again before answering. "It's a black male strip club."
Glenn laughed. "Didn't know you were into black men."
Glenn remark made Patricia frown. Ignoring to reply back to his bigotry, she asked. "Where are you?"
"Was on my way to your place."
"Well keep going. I'll be there in forty minutes."

Hanging up with Glenn, Patricia swiveled back to Sterling whom been looking over his glass at her, as he drank his Vodka. Making her way back over to him, she apologize without detail, informing him that she had to leave.
"Family emergency." Sterling jested, putting his drink back on the table, and folding his arms, smiling.
"No."
"Or someone said come home?"
A dissatisfying smirk appeared on Patricia face, as she shifted her weight. "Thank you for the drinks."
"I didn't buy the drinks, you did." Sterling reminded her.
Entering through the gates of her condo complex, Patricia saw Glenn black Humvee in the parking lot. The Shelby monster engine rattled the inside of the garage, parking next to the Camry. Taking the elevator to her place, inside she found Glenn on the couch eating the quesadia she bought earlier. Watching a re-recorded MMA fight on E.S.P.N., with a mouth full of food, Glenn gave his salutation, then chuckled, asking if she had a good time watching those black men get naked.

Patricia scoffed, ignoring his bigotry question again, placing her purse and keys on the kitchen bar. She then went to sit down on the sofa next to him. She could smell the cheese on his breath, when he kissed her on the cheek. Patricia watched Glenn take another bite of her quesadía, and continued to watch the fight. Realizing now that she still hadn't eaten, she had some question in her head, which made her ignore her hunger pain.

"So who was the unexpected out of town client?" she asked, folding her legs under herself. Glenn chewed his food two or three more times before swallowing.

"Zue Ming. A chinese realtor investor from Dallas. He's looking for property to build a shopping center."

"Where did you entertain your client?"

"Why?" Glenn turned to Patricia with a suspicious look.

"Because you eating my quesadía. And I know you usually entertain your clients at restaurant."

"And I did. At Houston." he answered, putting the rest of the quesadía that was in his hand back in the box. Still holding a suspicious look, Glenn asked was there something behind the question.

"Well I thought." Patricia was hesitant to respond, as her soft features tense, scratching her head. "Well I thought I saw your Humvee earlier tonight, driving down the feeder of 59."

"You saw me driving?" he questioned, pointing to himself.

"No." she shook her head. "Just a black Humvee like yours."

"Well it wasn't me. After I left Houston, Norwood and I took Mr. Ming out to Pearland, down the beltway."

"In your Hummer."
"Yeah." Glenn rasied an eyebrow. "What's up?"
"Well, when I thought I saw your Hummer, I tried to call and text you. And you never returned either, until almost midnight."
"I'm sorry baby." Glenn gave her a light grin. "After, Norwood and I, dropped Mr. Ming off at his hotel, we met some buddies at a sport bar, and watched the ball game. California rivalry. Dodgers and Gaints."
"Gee, you didn't have a moment to answer my texts?"
"Patricia you know how it is when you with the boys. You lose track of everything."
"I guess." Patricia casted her eyes down, having to accept his reason, and stop speculating, with no clear evidence that Glenn is cheating. But Patricia demeanor told him that she wanted to say more. And Glenn knew what she was thinking. Lifting her head up by the chin with his finger. "Do you think I'm cheating on you?"
Patricia took a moment and questioned him. "Are you?"
Glenn lightly laughed, kissing her on the lips. "Have I ever cheated on you." he asked her, whom Patricia slowly shooked her head no.
"Have I ever given you any suspicious before?"
"No." she shooked her head again.
"Do I look like a fool? Where am I going to find someone smarter and prettier than you?"
Glenn word's made Patricia blushed. "I love you. Always and only you." he told her. Patricia face beamed with color, from happiness. She wrapped her arms around his neck, kissing him passionately. Patricia apologized to him, that the thought of him cheating entered her mind.
"It's okay. I can understand tonight events. Me not returning your calls sooner. I will do better, when I'm with the boys. Promise."
"Thank you." she kissed him again.

Grabbing his unfinished quesadia, before taking another bite, Glenn questioned Patricia accusation. "You not accusing me because you feel guilty, going to see some black men strip?"
"No!" she frowned. "It was someone I interview earlier for the magazine. I wasn't suppose to interview him. Maria was, but she got sick today."
"Unnh hunh." he shook his head. "When did the magazine started interviewing strippers?"
"We have twice, when their names rings in the streets. Both were females before."
Glenn took the last bite of his quesadia, then washed it down with a coke. He remained silent until the end of the fight round, then questioned Patricia. "So was he goodlooking?" he turned to her. Patricia jolted, caught off guard by his question.
"He was okay looking." she answered, restraining her true thoughts about Sterling.
"Okay enough for you to go see him get naked."
"He didn't get all the way naked."
"Naked enough to answer your curiosity." Glenn noted, tilting his head towards her.
"What curiosity?"
"To see if the myth is true. To see if black men have bigger dicks."
Fiery filled Patricia eyes, appalled by Glenn annotation. "Fuck You! I can't believe you would think of something like that about me. I never had any intention of going to see him dance, until you cancel out plans."
"I texts you this morning canceling our dinner plans. I'm sure before you interviewed this stripper."
"So what are you insinuating Glenn?"
"Maybe you like what you seen, You tell me?"
Patricia eyes narrowed, almost making her thick eyebrows touch. "Don't you turn your not returning my calls and texts on me, Glenn."
"The next time I have to cancel out plans, because of business, so I can buy that beach front property in Florida, you going back to, what the hell of that strip club called, to see those black bucks shake their dicks?"
Patricia cursed Glenn again, rising from the couch. Glenn watched her walk away. He questioned where she was going. "To take a shower, and hope you'll be gone when I'm finish." she shut her bedroom door. When Glenn heard the shower running, he grabbed his cell phone to
text someone. Pressing send, he waited a moment, hoping to receive a response back. After a minute, his cell chimed. Glenn smiled reading the text. "I'm at home."

The hot shower made Patricia contemplate Glenn question about her intention, in going to see Sterling dance tonight. "Maybe you like what you seen. You tell me."

Patricia thought back to her reaction, when Sterling told her the reason why he wanted to see her again. Dam Sterling was one of the most handsome man she ever seen. And a body that was hard for any woman to keep her hands off of.

Sterling present was inviting, and confident. Patricia knew there was more to him than his good looks. He was also smart. Her mind played back Sterling performance on stage, and how he moved every muscles on his body. She turned her face up to the shower head to wash away the vision of Sterling humping the chair. Patricia began to think that she was emotionally cheating on Glenn. Pulling her thick wet hair back, with her hands, she hopped out the shower, and put on her robe. She headed to the living room, hoping that Glenn didn't leave. She wanted to apologize for her harsh words to his accusation, that had somewhat of truth.

Together for four years, Patricia loved Glenn very much, and never once thought about cheating on him.

When she entered the living room, she been chagrined to find the tv still on and Glenn gone. Patricia walked around the sectional, and flopped down. She stared into the bloody and bashed face of the winner of the fight, that Glenn had been watching being interviewed. She didn't pay attention to a word, with her mind in a state of chaos, about tonight events. Looking over at her cell phone on the kitchen counter, she considered calling Glenn, then decided against it.

Seeing the quesadia box on the table, Patricia realized she still hadn't eaten yet. Opening the box, her facial features hardened, to find only one slice left.

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The rays of the morning sun made Patricia eyes fluttered. Walking up in her room alone, it was something that been rare in the last three years. If Glenn wasn't out of town on business or personal reason, she usually woke up either in his bed or her's with him lying next to her.

Sitting up, she checked the time. 10:17. Realizing that she had slept most of the morning away, by staying up part of the night upset about her and Glenn spat. She reached for her cell phone on the nightstand to see if Glenn had called. Patricia sighed dejected, finding that he hadn't.

Instead of texting him, she wanted to hear his voice. Patricia also wanted to apologize, and let him know that she still loved him very much. And that it is foolish to believe that she could fine someone that could love her more than he.

The soft smile erased from her face, when her call went straight to his voicemail. Restraining her mind to wander or become upset, she remembered it being late, and called his office. Teressa, Glenn secretary answered the phone, greeting her with the small realtor company recitation.

"Good morning Teressa, this is Patricia. Is Glenn in his office?"
"Hi Patricia, Mr. McCann is in his office, would you like for me to transfer your call?"
"Please."
"Hold please."

Glenn picked up the phone on the first ring. "Hello, Glenn speaking."
"Hi honey." Patricia greeted nervous.
"Good morning. I see that you feel somewhat better than last night."
"I'm sorry. I wanted to tell you that last night, after I took shower. But you left."
"You requested for me to do so. Remembered?"
"I'm sorry." Patricia apologized again. "I thought it was unfair how you accuse my love, my loyalty to you."

"Same here." Glenn responded. "It dawn on me after I apologized for not returning you calls and texts soon enough, that it was the
second time in two weeks that you have thought or accused me of cheating."

Patricia sighed defeated, knowing what he had said been the truth. "And again, I'm calling to apologize. Can you forgive me?"

Glenn exhaled, pausing for a moment, rocking in his chair. "I'll be a fool not too. Where I'm going to find someone smarter and prettier than you."

Patricia giggled, remembering Glenn same words from last night. "Ditto."

Happy that their spat was behind them, Patricia wanted to know if they could have lunch together. Before Glenn could answer, his attention been disrupted by a light knock on his office door. A pleasing grin appeared on his face, surprised to see the unexpected visitor.

"Not lunch. I still have business with Mr. Ming today, and then come back to my office later this afternoon to do some paperwork. But should be through by this evening, ready to take you to dinner at eight thirty. How does that sound?"

"Sounds wonderful. I love you."

"Ditto." Glenn responded, widening his smile.

Sterling was looking out the window of the Subway sandwich shop, at his step-brother 79 black Corvette, setting on chrome Ashanti. It was his father car once, then giving to him after graduation from high school. Rarely driven, Sterling commented how well kept the classic car looked.

"Hope to pass it down to Tye." Terrell told him.

Sterling brought his gaze back to the table. He smiled, watching Terrell five year old son, dressed in all Lebron James gear. Wearing a mohawk haircut like Sterling, Tye was a splitting image of his father. Sterling chuckled lightly watching Tye little mouth open wide as it could, trying to bite off a chunk of his footlong sandwich. Sterling asked his little nephew is he gonna be able to eat the whole sandwich. He continued laughing, when Tye shooked his head yes, chumping away.

Sterling let Terrell know that Aunt Tammy and Uncle Gregory had
been abit disappointed that he and Yolonda couldn't make it to the barbeque and watch the game. Terrell explained that his wife was having a bad day."

"Is she feeling better?"

"Yeah."

Sterling wanted to have lunch with his stepbrother to discuss their mother, in doing everything in their powers for her to make her first parole. Taking a bite of his roast beef sandwich, he asked Terrell when was the last time he went to visit her.

"Not since I saw you last. I told you I took Tye with me."

"I'm sure she was thrilled to see him."

"Almost squeezed the life out of him." Terrell laughed. "She was looking very well. The darkness around her eyes removed. Pick up a little weight." Terrell paused, turning his stares away from his son, whom was still chumping on his sandwich, to Sterling. "It's amazing how you inherit her looks."

Sterling didn't take Terrell last remark as being jealous. Not bad looking himself, Terrell never before shown any animosity.

"Much of the reason I make okay :money." Sterling chuckled.

"That's another amazing thing, how your not shrubbled up from all those women you lay with."

"Might sound surprising big brother, but I spend way more nights alone, then with a woman."

"No one special in your life?"

"No. The ones that I do like or always married or committed."

"One day younger brother. One day." Terrell encouraged Sterling to keep hope alive, in finding a girlfriend of wife. Biting into his turkey sandwich, Sterling let his brother know that he went to see their mother last weekend, before going over to Aunt Tammy barbeque. He beginnnd chuckling, describing to Terrell, how their mother was trying to look young with her hair braided back in cornrows.

"They put a young girl in the cell with her, and she tries to keep momma hip to what's going on."

"I'm for anything that will keep our mother drug free."
"So I'm I," Sterling nodded. "You know momma is up for parole soon."
"Mmm:hm. Later this year."

"And I'm trying to get every family member to use whatever resource he or she have, to give momma the best chance to make her first parole. Aunt Tammy said she retained a parole lawyer. I know a judge, who's know a Texas Senator, whom might can pull some strings. And you being a police office, should have some connection or influence."
Terrell reached for his Mr. Pibb, meditating about how he could assist in helping his mother make her first parole. "I don't know some federal judges, from some cases I had to testify inn. I can speak with them."

"Good," Sterling smiled.

"If all come together with a lawyer, judges recommendation, and I a police officer. I can't see why our mother wouldn't make her first parole."

"With all that, I can't see that not happening either."

Patricia finished editing Sterling interview, then consulted with Gregg in what photos to use for the magazine. Both struggled for awhile in deciding, seeing that Sterling couldn't take a bad picture. "He's one handsome man," Patricia thought to herself.

Approaching the deadline, Patricia sat with Maria to go over last minutes details of this month issue, before printing. Checking her watch, she realize that it was getting late, and didn't have time to go home and get ready for her dinner date with Glenn.

With office being a short distant away from her's, Patricia decided to surprise him there.

Pulling up in the parking lot of the small business center, on Richmond boulevard, Patricia spotted Glenn Humvee, along with a few other vehicles. Norwood, Mercedes, and Teressa Ford Fusion was not there. Hopping out of her Mustang, Patricia entered the 600 square foot office, that held a small reception area. Glenn and Norwood offices. and a restroom.

Patricia saws that Glenn office door was open, and heard him having a conversation. Their conversation stopped, when Patricia lightly tapped on the door. A startled expression covered Glenn's face for
a brief moment, to see Patricia standing there. Replacing his fear features with a smile, Glenn greeted her standing to his feet, and walking over to her, kissing Patricia on the cheek. "What are you doing here. I thought I was suppose to pick you up at your place?" he asked confused.

"You were. But I lost track of time at work, needing to get this month issue out by next week. Realizing I didn't have enough time to go home to shower and change. I thought I meet you here." Patricia glanced at her watch again, it been after seven thirty.

"I see that you also lost track of time." she turned her attention to the blue eyes blonde woman, sitting in front of his desk. Glenn followed Patricia stares, then cleared his throat to introduce Kelly Cooks.

"Mrs. Cooks here is Mr. Ming personal assistant."

"And accountant." Mrs. Cooks added, showing Patricia a cover girl smile. "Nice to meet you."

Hearing the misses to her last name, sort of erased any suspicious that Glenn might had some kind of relationship, with the beautiful woman. "Nice to meet you also." Patricia replied back, forcing a smile. Glenn glanced at his Malvudo watch, a gift from Patricia for Christmas and realized that it was after seven thirty. "Sorry baby, I did lose track of time, trying to finish the paperwork on this deal."

"Its fine Glenn, we can finish everything tommorrow." Mrs Cooks intervene, closing her folder, and standing to her feet. In five inch stiletoes, Patricia watched Mrs. Cooks pulled down her smoked grey dress suit, that she thought was to tight and to high. The black big collar button down shirt, exposed an inch of her cleavage. Making her way to Glenn and Patricia whom were standing at the door, Mrs. Cooks extended her hand first to Patricia to shake, then Glenn.

"I will call you tommorrow, to let you know of a convenient time to get together and finalize the deal."

"Thank you."

Mrs. Cooks nodded her head, then acknowledge Patricia. Glenn escorted Mrs. Cooks to the front door. After thanking her again, they bid farewell goodnight. Glenn turned to Patricia with a big smile, asking
her where she would like to eat.
"Surprise me."

CHAPTER 36

William sat in the study in his home, his eyes glued to the sexual contents on his laptop. He became aroused watching the man fondle the black inexperienced male. The frighten features on his face, told William that he been a virgin, in which heighten his whet, as he begin to feel the blood flow to his penis.

Both were naked and lying in bed, William squeezed his dick, watching the elder man kiss and stroke his gull innocent. Before he could witness any further action of the unvalid act, William heard his name called, and echos of high heels on the wooden floors. Not replying, he quickly changed the screen on his laptop in time before his wife found him. She called his name again, and he turned to see Diane entering the doorway. Leaning down to kiss him on the cheek, she asked him why he didn’t respond, when she called his name.

"I didn’t hear you darling, I was probaly caught up in my work," William gestured to his laptop. Diane eyes followed her husband gesture and saw that William was going over some promotions of two new kids shows. A chinese kid, whom is a music prodigy. And some African American sibling in elementary school, from the project, that inherited superpowers, from a toxic chemical spill.

"I see that the network is trying to become diverse."
"You told me that children of other ethnics, prosper better in life when they see themselves as geniuses and heros."
"They do."
"And by me running a children network, its my responsibility to ensure all children of all race succeed." he smiled up at her.
"That’s wonderful baby, that you care that non-whites children sees themselves on tv." Diane leaned down and kissed him on the lips. She slid over his laptop, and placed herself between William and his desk. "So baby, now that you save all the children in the world when are you going to take care of the home responsibilty."
William watched his wife unzipped both sides of her suit pants, then let them fall to the floor. Taking off her suit jacket, Diane stared in husband blue eyes, slowly unbuttoning his shirt. He studied his wife, wearing white lace panty and bra. William had to admit, for a woman in her fifties, that Diane had an amazing body. But lately his unnatural craving no longer made him desire the beautiful woman before him. Again, William knew that if he deny his wife of her needs, she would be suspicious, and find out about his evil secret.

He turned his eyes away from Diane partial nakeness, and to his laptop on his desk. William remembered the man softly touching and kissing the young male, and imagine Diane was him, pulling down her panty. He placed one of Diane feet on the arm of his chair, then inserted his tongue into her wet and waiting pussy. In ecstasy, it's been a month since Diane called his name.

William ordered his wife to sit on the desk, while he took off his pants. He lifted her legs, to plant his penis inside her. Diane saw William remote features, knowing he was mentally far away. He grunted, thrusting into her, rewinding the image of his time in Tijuana, pounding away her sexhole.

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Patricia opened her eyes to find Glenn back against the headboard, watching the morning news. Last night been wonderful, as they had a nice dinner, downtown at Marty, listening to local bands play. After, Glenn took her for a canoe ride down the city Buffalo bayou. Patricia almost had a hernia, holding in her laughter, while Glenn tried to sarinated her, with Ed Shareen hit song (Thinking Out Loud). Patricia thought the night couldn’t be more beautiful, as Glenn kissed her softly all over, and gently entered her waiting wetness. Glenn turned his attention away from the news, hearing Patricia moan good morning. He displayed a smile, seeing her sleepy green eyes.

"Good morning beautiful."

"You up early." she returned a warmhearted smile.

"Trying to see what's going on in our city. And Houston is crazy like the rest of the world. A shoot out at a club on the southside. A convient store clerk killed in a robbery. And a warehouse fire, a few miles from your place." he pointed to the tv. Patricia sat up on her elbows, to look. She read the location at the bottom of the screen. The three alarm fire wasn’t a few miles from her condo, but three blocks. It was a warehouse that sold pallets, Patricia cursed, hoping her complex wouldn't have lingering smell of burnt wood. She need to get a morning kiss, then laid her head on his thigh, and listen to the news reporter, reporting the rest of the chaos in the world.

While during a commercial, Patricia thanked Glenn for last night, and expressed how much she loved him. Running his fingers through her hair, he reminded her his feeling.

"As long as we been together, I didn't know you knew how to sing." "You like my singing?" Glenn excited.

"No." Patricia laughed.

"Ohh that hurt." he folded his arms.

"Sorry." she pecked him on the lips. "But I love the effort." "Well, I’m gonna have too work on my vocals." Glenn saw the hedious look on Patricia face. "What? I sound that bad?"
Patricia raised an eyebrow, shaking her head yes. "Hey baby don't be disappointed, its one thing your good at."

"And what's that?"

"Making love." she beamed, grasping his penis, stroking it. 

"One becomes good at things, when he or she enjoys doing it."

"Well, show me again how much you enjoy making love to me." Patricia began kissing him on the lips, neck and chest. Softly biting him on the nipples, the blood that begin to flow between his legs ceased, when his cell phone chimed. A heavy frustrated sigh came from Glenn, as he grabbed his cell phone off the nightstand. Checking to see who had texted him, Patricia had stop angrily, wondering why Glenn couldn't wait later to see who had text him. Hearing him scoff, she asked him what's wrong.

"Kööl wants to meet in a hour." Patricia frowned. "That's on short noticed."

"Yeah. She said she has to catch a flight at noon. Mr Ming wants to see her."

Patricia sat up, and glanced at Glenn screen in his hand. She withheld her question of curiousity of why Mrs. Cooks had a angry emoji at the end of her text.

Glenn glanced over at his clock on the nightstand. 8:24. He would catch the tailend of the Houston traffic to mid-town if he leaves now. Asking Patricia for a raincheck, Glenn gave her an apology kiss on her forehead, uncovered his nakeness to go take a shower. Patricia stared at Glenn pale white ass, making it way to the bathroom. Not: in amazement, but in suspicious.

Patricia revisited in her mind, last night encounter with Mrs. Cooks, and remembered that she been missing something. She waited to hear the running water of the shower, before grabbing her cell phone, and texting someone

Patricia had to ride with Glenn to his office, leaving her Mustang in the parking lot of Glenn office. She watched Glenn moved his neck like a chicken, singing along with Blake Shelton(The Boys Around Here)

"Chew tobacoo, chew tobacoo chew tobacoo, spit."

Patricia laughed, as he pretend to be spitting out chewing tobacoo
out the window.

Though Glenn was a city boy, he had a little country in him. Patricia been glad that he didn't chew tobacco, because that would have been an automatic turn off for her.

When Glenn pulled up into the parking lot of his office, Patricia was pleased to see her Mustang there with all four tires. Untouch. Glenn parked next to Norwood Mercedes, and shut off his engine. He scanned the business center parking lot, happy knowing that Mrs. Cooks haven't arrive.

"Do you have a busy schedule today?" Patricia asked.

"No, not really. Just finish closing this deal with Kelly, for Mr. Ming. Then a showing with a client. Why? What's up?" he turned in his seat towards her.

"Well I was hoping that we can catch a movie tonight."

"To see what?"

"The new Fast and the Furious movie."

"Glenn laughed lightly, before responding. "You must want to see Vin Disel?"

"Him too." she giggled.

"I see no interference in going to the movies. I'll give you a call later this afternoon to make sure."

"Okay." she leaned over to kiss him goodbye.

From his office door, Glenn waved as Patricia drove away. Making a right on Richmond avenue, Patricia drove two blocks, and pulled into a Jack in the Box, parking next to a B.M.W. She gave the person sitting in the driver seat a weary smile. Getting out, she embraced the woman, for going out of her way to meet her.

"Thank you Maria, for letting me borrow your car."

"No problem. I'm just confuse why you wanted to meet me here, and not at the job."

"I will explain to you later." she hurried and said, jumping into Maria car, and turning the ignition. Patricia let down the window to inform her that she will meet her at the office in a few hours. Leaving the Jack in the Box parking lot, Patricia drove back up Rich-
mond towards Glenn office. Parking across the street, she been lucky to find a parking spot facing Glenn office. Checking her Fossil watch, it was 9:45. The woman that she been searching for was running late. Tapping her nails on the steering wheel, Patricia nerves were jumping, hoping that she would discover nothing, opposite of what her instinct been telling her.

Patricia ceased tapping the steering wheel, as her eyes narrowed, watching Mrs. Cooks pulled up into the parking lot, driving a Mazda Miata. Wearing a tight pair of blue jeans, white blouse, and white strap heels, Mrs. Cooks smooth back her hair in a ponytail. Patricia green eyes narrowed lower, almost making her eyebrows touch, noticing that Mrs. Cooks wasn’t carrying any folders or briefcase.

Wanting to know the answer to her curiosity, Patricia had to sit and wait patiently. Tapping her nails again on the steering wheel, she didn’t have to wait long, witnessing Glenn and Mrs. Cooks leaving his office. Patricia inclined her head, seeing Mrs. Cooks arms folded and a pique facial expression. She seem to be ignoring Glenn words, as they both got into his Humvee.

Driving Maria Beamer, Patricia closely tail Glenn, without being noticed, as they drove several blocks to a StarBuck coffee shop. Driving passed it, Patricia made a u-turn at the next intersection opening, and parking across the street at a flower shop. Finding Glenn and Mrs. Cooks had already ordered their coffee and dessert, sitting outside on the patio.

Though she couldn’t hear their conversation, Patricia knew the two wasn’t talking about realtor state. She could see and sense that their conversation been tense, by Glenn hands gestures. Patricia leaned forward, straining her eyes, when Mrs. Cooks pulled out some papers from her clutch purse, handing them to Glenn. She watched Glenn read with an intense look, then dropped his head. Mrs. Cooks took one of his hand, and he lifted his head, giving her a dejected look. Patricia fought every intention and muscles in her body to restrain herself from jumping out the car.

She needed to be sure. Have facts. Patricia couldn’t go inside a public establishment an act a fool, then be embarrass, if her curiosity and accusation turns out to be false. "Be cool Patricia. What ever
is done in the dark, will be shown in the light." she told herself. Ten minutes more of conversating, the two stood up, and Glenn took Mrs. Cooks hand, as they headed back to his vehicle. Patricia frowned, as she watched Glenn assist her into the passenger seat. Patricia entered on to the freeway, two car behind, heading into a familiar direction. Her mind now deep in chaos and disbelief, that her boyfriend of four years. The only man that she loved, would cheat on her. Badly, Patricia wanted to rammed Maria B.M.W into Glenn Humvee, but withheld for three reasons. The first two, it wasn't her car, and Maria three series would do minor damage to Glenn military vehicle. Last, she was hoping Glenn wouldn't make the exit off the freeway, that she and him made many times. Patricia found it hard to breath, while her eyes became distorted from tears forming. Glenn had exited the 1960 off 45. Like last week, Patricia got caught at the light at the intersection. But it didn't matter, because it was clear where Glenn was going. Patricia made a right off 1960, into the upper class neighborhood. New and still under construction, the neighborhood was enclosed behind a ten foot brick wall. Slowly driving five blocks, she stop looking left, to see Glenn Humvee parked in the driveway, four houses down. Making the left, Patricia drove passed Glenn one story home, parking on the street, two houses down. Looking back in her rearview mirror at Glenn Hummer, Patricia saw Maria boyfriend baseball hat in the back window, and grabbed it. Leaning over to the passenger seat, she opened the glove department, to find a pair of shades. Finding two, this wasn't the moment to be stylish, and grabbed the first one her hand clutched. Patricia forced a smile, and nodded at the old white woman walking by with her chihuahua. Smoothing back her hair, she put on the Astros ball hat, and shades. Retrieving her keys to Glenn house, she exited the car in hope from being noticed, making her way up to the front door. Two five foot rectangles windows were on each sides of the stain oak door. Peeping inside, Patricia didn't see Glenn or Mrs. Cooks sitting in the livingroom, in which see could see off the foyer. Sticking
her key in the door, she slowly opened it, stepping inside.
The twenty six square foot house been silent. Taking all caution,
closing the door, Patricia removed her shades, then ceased at the opening of the livingroom. Scanning it, she spotted Mrs. Cooks strapped heels in front of the kitchen bar. Patricia emotion crashed inside her. Feeling hurt. Shock, and anger.
Hearing sounds of moaning down the hall, Patricia emotion settled
on a new emotion. One that she didn't know that was inside her. Murder.
Rushing to the kitchen, she pulled out the largest knife from the wooden knife holder. Her tears couldn't put out the fire in her eyes, as she made her way to the room that echoed the sounds of ecstasy.
Pushing wide open, the slightly ajarred door, and knowing what she was about to encounter. The actual vision of Mrs. Cooks naked legs spreaded apart, and the man she faithfully loved for four years, between them, pounding away.
The sound of the butcher knife hitting the ceramic floor, caused,
Glenn to stop stroking and look back. Paralyzed and speechless, he saw the crying green eyes of the woman whom he wanted to be his wife one day. No words herself, Patricia ranned out the house. About to give chase, Mrs. Cooks grabbed Glenn arm, pleaing to let her go. Removing himself off top of her, he sat on the end of the bed, and sighed deeply, placing his face in the palms of his hands.
Inside the car, Patricia turned the ignition, ready to drive away.
Putting her hand on the gearshift, to put in drive, she broke down bawling in the same manner as Glenn.
Crying for what seem like an eternity, Patricia anger deepen, realizing Glenn didn't even give chase after her. After wiping her tears, something down the street drew her attention. Throwing the Beamer in drive, she drove to the end of the street, and into the driveway of a unfinish brick home. Getting out, Patricia grabbed something in the driveway, then jumped back inside the Beamer.
Speeding back to Glenn house, she skid to a stop, and hopped out.
"FUCK YOU GLENN, YOU CHEATING SON OF A BITCH!" she yelled, throwing a brick threw his window, then speeding off.
Maria cursed, trying to text Patricia for the up-teen time. It was late afternoon, and not knowing what Patricia wanted her car for, started to make her worry. Rising from her desk, Maria wanted to check on Raymond, their printer engineer to see how far production he had done on this month issue. While making her way over, she glanced out the office tinted window, and stop, spotting her Beamer in the parking lot.

Standing there for a moment waiting, Maria realized that Patricia wasn't coming inside. Walking to the door, she paused for a second again, and could see Patricia just sitting inside paralyzed, starring forward. Maria headed out to her car. Knocking on the driver side window, Patricia didn't respond, as though she been unconscious of her surrounding. Maria could barely see Patricia through the heavy tint, and leaned over to look through the windsheild. She saw that Patricia's eyes were blood shot red. Maria didn't ask what had happen, it was clear now why Patricia wanted to borrow her car.

Maria heard the door unlock, and walked around to the passenger side to get in. Taking one of Patricia hand she squeezed it gently, letting her friend know that she was here for her, and that everything was going to be okay.

"Fuck that punk bitch Glenn. You don't need him. You can do better." Maria tittered, thinking back when they were in college. "Remember when I caught Tyric cheating on me with that aithead blonde chick?" Patricia thought back, and couldn't withholds her smile inside, clearly remembering being with Maria that day.

In the small town of Bryan College Station at Texas A&M, Hungry, Maria and Patricia pulled into the parking lot of a Sonic, and found Tyric sitting with a white girl, in her Pontiac Solace, locking lips. Maria opened the girl door, and snatched her out by her hair, and began punching her in the face. Tyric got out of the car to pull Maria off the girl. She then turned her rage on him, as he tried to explain, but Maria wasn't hearing a word, kicking him in the nuts.

"Look at me now. I have a boyfriend that plays for the Astros. And Tyric is playing semi-pro football, still trying to get in the N.F.L."
Patricia remained silent wiping away the falling tears. "Do you think I'm ugly?" she asked, turning to Maria.

"WHAT! Why would you ask that stupid question? Patricia, you are mix breed woman with green eyes, and a body like Rihanna. The best of two world in one package. Your every man dream." Maria reply, drew a light smile. "Then why do men like blondes so much?"

"Because their dumb and easy to fuck."

Maria answer brought Patricia back to what she heard and saw, when she opened the door to Glenn's bedroom. Her man, the one she been dedicated too, for four years, in the bedroom that they share many nights, with another woman. Her legs spread apart by her ankles, banging away, as he praised her pussy. Maria questioned snapped Patricia out her resent trip down horror lane. "Hunh?"

Do you want to spend the night at my place? Stanley is gone on a four game road trip. And you know that cheating muthafucker Glenn is gonna be waiting at your doorstep."

"I know. But I know how to by pass him tonight. Thank you for offering your place to hide from Glenn. But I'm gonna spend some nights at my parents." Patricia placed her hand over Maria, squeezing it lightly. She asked if Maria mind if she took a few days off. "I know this month issue is due this week."

"Of course not. Take as much time as you need. I got it."

Patricia drove her Mustang into the parking lot of a gas station, a few blocks from her condo. She knew that Glenn been waiting for her at her place. He been texting her all day, wondering where she was at. Grabbing her cell phone, she texted him. "Meet me at Razu in ten minutes." A few minutes later, Patricia green eyes watched Glenn Humvee sped by. When he was out of eyesight, Patricia slammed the race horse in jet drive, speeding to her place. Parking her car in the garage, she rushed upstairs to grabbed much of her belonging as she could, before realize that he been dupe. Throwing enough clothes in a suitcase, and other necessities in a over night bag, with her boxer Candy in tow, Patricia took the elevator down to the garage.

Lifting the trunk of the Camry, she tossed her things inside. Opening
the back passenger door for Candy to get in, the boxer moaned.

"What's wrong?" she questioned baffled. Candy looked back at the Mustang and barked. "What, you wanna take the Mustang?" Candy answered barking twice.

"Well we can't. The car is going back. I don't want nothing from that cheating bastard. Get in!" she ordered. Slamming the door, Patricia turned the ignition, and hearing for the first time in weeks, the rumbly, but strain engine of the Camry. Her eyes were casted down to the illuminating glow of her cell phone. A text from Glenn. "I'm here. Where are you?"

Fighting back her tears, Patricia pressed slightly harder on the gas pedal, to hurry to her destination.
Patricia drove her car into the stretched driveway of the seven thousand square foot Victoria home. She scanned the manicure landscape yard of her childhood home, that held great memories. Checking the time on her dashboard, Patricia been surprise to see her parents bedroom lights still on. Early sleepers, she was hoping that they were sleep, so she wouldn't have to answer the hundred of question that they would ask. For a short moment, Patricia thought about throwing her car in reverse, and driving away, but came to a conclusion that she came to the right place to sort out her situation about Glenn. Glancing at herself in the rearview mirror, she wiped the tears from the corner of her eyes, then ran her fingers through her hair. Turning off the engine, she checked her key ring to make sure that she had her house key. The same key she had since the fourth grade. Patricia took one more look at herself in the mirror, to examine her wide lips, and could easily detect the fraud in her smile. She heard the whining sounds of Candy in the backseat, as she noticed it too. Sighing defeated, Patricia opened the door for the both of them, and gathered her things out the trunk. Seeing that the lights were still on in the foyer, she stuck her key in the oak and stain glass double doors, to let herself in. Inside, she made her way to the end of the long foyer, into the living room. Patricia ran into her mother, whom was exiting the kitchen with a cup of coffee. Her mother stopped in her tracks abit surprised, but nevertheless happy to see her daughter. Displaying her motherly smile. "Patricia." saying her name.

"Hey momma."

Her mother smile faded, seeing the suitcase and overnight bag strapped over her shoulder. One needed not to be a rocket science to know what had happen. "What ever happen between you and Glenn must be really bad."

The sorrow expression shown heavily on Patricia face, causing her to case her stares down to the polished dark wooden floors. Patricia mother felt the pain of her daughter, knowing that she just encountered the ultimate betrayal. Placing her coffee mug on the antique escritoire, Patricia mother walked over to her to give her a comfort hug.
After a long embrace, her mother exhibited a partial smile, studying the maternal and paternal beauty of her daughter. Locking eyes for a second, Patricia cast her eyes back down to the floor. Her mother put her finger under her chin, lifting her head. Patricia forced a smile.

"Don't beat yourself up, questioning why and what you did wrong. Men, it's in their nature."

Emily, their housekeeper, entered the living room, interrupting their bonding. Happy to see Patricia, Mrs. Emily gave her a hug. Candy licked Emily hand as she scratched under her chin, acknowledging the canine. Noticing her belonging, she then asked Patricia was she staying the night at the house.

"Yes. Maybe a few nights."

"Wonderful." she brought her hands together. "Let me take your bags to your room." Mrs. Emily reached for her suitcase. Patricia stopped her, knowing that her suitcase was a little too heavy for her to take upstairs, at her age. Grabbing her overnight bag, Patricia handed Mrs. Emily too take upstairs.

Patricia and her mother watched Mrs. Emily make her way up the stairs, and disappear to the left. Mrs. Emily been working for her parents as their housekeeper and nanny, since she was nine years old. After fourteen years, Mrs. Emily wasn't just an employee, but family. At times traveling with the family on trips around the world.

Patricia turned her stare back to her mother, and forced a smile.

"Is my father here?"

"No baby. He's out of town on business."

"When will he be back?"

"The day after tomorrow."

Patricia didn't reply back verbally, fortunate that she didn't have to explain to him at the moment, what happen between she and Glenn.

Her mother read her expression, placing the palm of her hand on her cheek.

"Stay as long as need. Get some rest, and we can talk about it when ever you are ready." her mother kissed her on the cheek.

"Thank you momma." holding her forced smile, before grabbing her suitcase and going upstairs to her room.
Patricia walked into her childhood room, to find Mrs. Emily fluffing the pillows on her white canopy posts bed. "Thank you Mrs. Emily, but that's not necessary."

"Just making sure that everything is the same as you left it." she smiled. Before leaving the room Mrs. Emily reminded Patricia again that she's happy that she was spending a few nights at home.

"There's no place like it." Patricia returned her happiness. Saying their goodbyes, Patricia closed the door. She sighed weary, scanning her room. The right side of her lips curled, noticing that nothing had changed, since she moved out on her own five years ago.

Will Smith, Usher, and Justin Timberland, posters hung in a frame on her peach walls. The matching chivel mirror was still in the far corner of her room, where she imagine that she was Snow White, Pocohonis, and Beyonce, when she was a little girl. Patricia walked over to the window, opening the shutters, and stared out into the lovely view of their backyard.

A peanut shape pool, with a slide and diving board, lit up the manicure lawn. Patricia and her brother Colby threw many pool parties. Still scanning, Patricia eyes ceased on the pool house, that stirred up some emotion. It was where she lost her virginity.

Obsess with one of her brother friends on the lacrosse team. Randy was his name. He was tall, and lean, with similar features of Zac Efron. One day he had stop by the house looking for her brother, whom was not home at the time. Home alone, Patricia welcome him inside, lying that Colby would be home soon. Already in her swimsuit, she asked him to join her outback, and go swimming. "Sure." he accepted.

"Great. There's a extra pair of swimtrunks in the pool house."

Randy followed Patricia out back to the pool house. He stood behind her watching as she looked for him some trunks on the shelves. In a two piece, Patricia had on some tight jeans shorts, that hugged her little rump. Randy tilted his head observing it. When she turned around to hand him his trunks, she found him smiling. Her pretty feature soften, as she returned the same expression. Patricia model the trunks at his waist to see if they fit. "Perfect." she said.

Locking her green eyes with his hazel, she asked if he needed help putting them on. Randy raised an eyebrow, wandering Patricia eyes,
school, that had a crushed on her. Walter was smart like Einstein. But reminded you of Steve Erkel of the tv show Family Matter. Scrawny, thick glasses, and dressed though he shopped at Walmart, he wasn't fortunate like many of the students that attended her school. Turning down his invitation to go on a date, Patricia never shown any rudeness towards Walter, always acknowledging him, when they crossed paths in the hallway. She remembered one night on a date with Glenn. A handsome black gentleman walked over to their table, and said her name. Patricia stared up baffled at the man in the Armani suit, and magazine smile.

"You don't recognize me?" he asked.
"Should I?"
"The baby blue teddy bear." he gave her a hint, still smiling down. Patricia eyes widen, and mouth ajar. "Walter."
She been shocked at the transformation. No longer skinny, his bi-focus was replaced with lazer eye sugery. Walter looked like he could be on the cover of GQ. Patricia learned that Walter was now running his own sofeware company, and had a big contract with NASA, and the federal goverment.

"Dam! why I couldn't see that swam in the ugly duckly." she thought. Squeezing the teddy bear, she placed it in the rocking chair. Pulling back the covers, Patricia hopped in the bed, Still restless, somehow the comfort of her old bed quickly put her to sleep.
The next morning Patricia opened her pretty eyes in a short moment of confusion, as she forgot the room she slept in her old bedroom. Getting out of bed, she walked over to the window, where the soothing warm sun was shining through. She spotted her mother sitting out back, on the wicked couch, curled up, drinking coffee, and reading a book. Finding a pair of pajamas in her draw, she went downstairs to join her. Her mother lifted her brown eyes from her book, displaying a warm feature, when she spotted her daughter making her way towards her.

"How are you feeling this morning?" she asked, watching Patricia flopped down in the chair in front of her.

"Not much better."

"Well, I thought wearing your Ms. Piggy pajamas always made you feel better," Patricia mother held her warm smile. Looking down to examine her nightwear, Patricia let out a light giggled.

"You always did know how to make me laugh."

"I'm your mother. It's my duty to make you laugh when you are sad. And also to comfort you when you are hurting."

"That I am both."

"I know darling. And I promise things will start to get better, when you decide what you want to do."

"What do you mean? You think I'm going back to Glenn?"

"I don't know. Are you?" her mother gave her a questioned look.

"Never! after what I saw."

Her mother remained silent, not knowing specifically that Patricia had caught Glenn in the act. Folding the pages in her book, she sat beside Patricia, and leaned towards her. "I'm sorry baby, didn't know that you caught him in the act."

"At his house, in the same bed we lay."

Reaching for her hand, she remained silent as she listened to Patricia give details of everything from the beginning.

"Almost every morning Glenn would get these calls. He would claim it was his secretary. But one morning I answered his cell, while he was in the shower, and a woman on the other end hunged up. "When she asked for him by his first name, been the reason why I Star 69 her back."

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Patricia mother face cringed. "Glenn tried to give me this bullshit, that this woman who had call, was looking for a secreteary job. That his old secretary Teressa was quitting to be with her boyfriend in SanAntonio. He cancel his diiner date, and I spotted his Hummer one night passing by, while I was in the drive-thru, getting something to eat. I tried to catch him, but lost him at a traffic light. So I texts and called, but he never returned any of them. To calm my nerves I went out that night, and when I returned home, he was sitting in my livingroom. I confronted him, in which he denied, and we had a small falling out. Feeling bad the next morning, I called to apologize, and we decided to have dinner that night. I surprised him at his office, and Glenn was alone in his office with this woman.

"This Miss James?" her mother speculated.

"No. A Mrs.Kelly Cooks, the accountant of this Dallas business man, he claimed he entertained that night, when I spotted his Hummer."

"Miss James is really Mrs. Cooks."
Patricia nodded her head slowly, with a grieving look.

"How did you know it was her?"

"I could feel the immediate deception in the atmoshpere. And the cleavage she exposed." Patricia gave her mother half smile, scratch- ing her head. "Again, Glenn recieved a text from Kelly, claiming they needed to met to finalize their deal, because she had to catch a noon flight back to Dallas. Leaving my car at Glenn office, I had to catch a ride with him. But while he was in the shower, I texted Maria, to meet me down the street to exchange cars.

"So this Kelly shows up, and her and Glenn leaves?"

"Yes." Patricia answered again, slowly nodding her head in grief.

"They stopped at a StarBuck at first, and sat out on the patio. It took every muscles in my body to restrain my cool, because the two haven't yet committed anything to prove my accusation. But I could see from where I was, that things had gotten intense between them. Then Kelly handed Glenn this envelope, and he seemed depleted after reading the content. I was left confused, when I saw them leaving holding hands.

"And when you continueing following them?" her mother wanted Patricia to finish.

"Glenn took her to his house. Straight to our bed." Patricia paused,
folding her legs. "I parked down the street, and quietly snuck in-
side using my key. In the livingroom I saw Kelly strap heels, and
knew then." her feature tensed, as she continued. "Then I heard the
sounds of them having sex, that drove me in a killing rage."
Patricia stared out into the distance, as she replayed the horror scene
in her mind for the hundred time. "I went into the kitchen, and grab-
ed the largest knife I could find. I was ready to take Glenn's life
and hers; But when I opened the door, and saw Glenn thrusting into
her, I became numb. Frozen. The pain. The hurt took emotionally over
my anger. I don't know how long I was standing there. They didn't
even know I been watching, until I dropped the knife." she finished,
turning back her stares to her mother. "I just ran out the house."
With tears beguned to overflow, her mother rose from her seat to
embrace, and comfort her daughter. Patricia withheld her wail, drawing
strength from her mother love.

"You know what the hurting part?" she ask, not actually posing the
question to her mother, whom loosen her embrace, to see Patricia face.
"I don't know." she smoothed back her daughter hair.

"He didn't even give chase after me."
Her mother sighed heavily, roaming the beauty of Patricia green eyes.
"Forget Glenn, its his lost. Your smart. Beautiful, and can have
any man you want."
Patricia forced a smile from her mother encouraging and expecting words.
"And Glenn must pay for his lost." her mother said, displaying a
wicked grin. Not knowing what her mother meant, Patricia showed her
feature of confusion.
Patricia and her mother entered the house with laughter, and many shopping bags from high end stores. Her mother had showned her how to get Glenn back, by maxing out his credit cards that he had given her. Patricia wish she could see the livid face on Glenn when he receive the bill at the end of the month. She expressed how much she enjoyed the day with her, thanking her for making her feel better.

"Shopping is the best therapy for almost any woman problems. And a much pain reliever when its someones esle money." she jeered.

"I guess you talking about my money." a voice interrupted from the balcony.

"Daddy!" Patricia beamed.

"Hello sweetheart. Its a joy to see you. Its been weeks."

"William." Patricia mother followed her husband surprisingly making his way down the stairs. Dropping her bags when her father reached ground level, Patricia gave him a kiss on the cheek, and squeezing embrace. Pulling away while still holding hands, her father inspected his only girl, smiling at the replica of his wife. Only the green eyes of Patricia separated their beauty. Kissing her on the forehead, he asked how was she doing. Patricia couldn't hide her distress look, dropping her eyes, dreading to tell her father what happen.

"Patricia caught that bastard Glenn cheating on her." Patricia mother answered for her.

"I'm sorry to hear about that sweetie." he replied, embracing his daughter again. "How can I help with the situation. You want me to put out a hit on him?" her father temper jest made her laugh.

"No. But thank you daddy. I almost came close in doing it myself."

"So I suggested another way to get back at him." Patricia mother holding up her bags, displaying a wicked smile.

William released his daughter hand, and stepped to his wife, giving her a kiss. Hello Diane." finally giving a verbal greeting, then again surveying all the bags. "How is spending my money shopping getting back at Glenn?"

"First of all William, your money is my money, in which it makes it our money." she put her bags down. Second, it wasn't our money,
it was Glenn money. We maxed out his credit cards."

"Ahhh I see." he examined their purchase again. "The only pain equal
to the heart is the pocket." he chuckled.
"I thought you wouldn't be returning from your business trip until
torrow."
"Correct. But I was able to wrapp up things early this morning and
catch a flight, hoping to take you to dinner."
"That's sweet of you. I'm sorry honey." she kissed him.
"I texted you, but I guess you ladies were to busy enjoying spending
all of Glenn money."
"Sorry again. Raincheck?"
"Surely." he smiled.

Patricia excused herself, picking up her many bags. Kissing her father
and mother, her father been disappointed that she was leaving, until
Diane explained to him that Patricia is staying with them for a few
days, to avoid Glenn. Not thrill of her reason why, but her father
was still happy to have his baby girl back home. Even though it is for
a few days.

Patricia sat all her bags on the bed, then went to close her door.
Going over back to the bed, she reached inside her purse, retrieving
her cell phone. Checking not all day, she already knew that her
voicemail and texts messages would be full of Glenn apologies, and
wanting to talk.

Between the fifty texts, she saw that Maria had texted. Patricia gave
her a call to see how things were coming along with this month issue.
Happy, learning that everything will hit news stands on time, she was
also informed that Glenn came to the office twice. The second time,
sitting in the parking lot for hours, until everyone left.

Maria never told Glenn Patricia whereabout, claiming that she didn't
know. Patricia knew that Glenn wouldn't call or check her parents home,
wanting to keep what happen unknown as long as possible.

Bragging to her best friend, that her and her mother went shopping
and maxed out all of Glenn's cards. Maria guffaw, replying "Get the
cheating son of a bitch where it hurt."

Patricia gave Maria an idea that she might be back in a few days,
and thank her again for taking up the slack.

- Running around the malls and with her mother, sort of wore her out. Searching through her bags, and finding what she was looking for. A pair of satin and lace panty and bra set. In her favorite color. Peach. Stripping naked, she walked to the enjoining bathroom, connected to her room, and stood under the steaming water.

Lotioning up her flawless skin, with expensive lotion that had a French name, Patricia loved the feel of the Victoria Secret material on her skin. Looking at herself in the bathroom mirror, she smiled loving the way it also look.

Pulling back the covers, she hopped in the bed and grabbed the remote off the nightstand. Flipping through the channels, searching for something to watch, Patricia features expressed satisfaction, finding one of her favorite movies. Love and basketball.

After watching the movie in it entirely, she turned off the tv, covering herself up to her neck, hoping that the movie would have brought her tranquility, only brought her anger and depression. Never will her and Glenn have a fairy tale ending like Sanaa and Omar, in the movie. Never will she be able to erase the vision in her mind, Glenn fucking another woman.

Tossing and turning, Patricia squeezed her eyes, trying to rid the uncut film in her mind. Upset, she threw off the covers, and sat up.

"Why did you do this to me." she cried, placing her face in the palms of her hands. Unable to erase her problems with Glenn, which wasn't gonna allow her to sleep. Surely not in peace, Patricia knew she needed to do something before she go insane. She needed something to alter her senses. Thinking momentarily, she realize what she needed. She needed a drink.

Jumping out of bed, she grabbed the many bags she purchase earlier and begun going through them. Able to find almost anything she wanted to drink downstairs, at the home bar. Patricia thought it would help her forget about Glenn, if she got out the house. With clothes sprawled all over the bed, she found the right combination she desire. Dressed in Prada, Patricia put on a black long sleeve fitted shirt, that exposed her athletic stomach. A pair of dark white
capri pants, that flared out below her calves, and fasten up around her waist, like swimtrunks. With her nails and toes freshly painted, she slipped on some open toes strap heels. Her hair pulled back in a ponytail, Patricia viewed herself in the full length cheval mirror, pleased with her selection.

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Turning off the engine, Patricia look around the parking lot, and exhaled lightly. She couldn't figure out why she came here to have a drink. She put her hand on the key that was still in the ignition, ready to turn back on the engine and drive away. But the other being of her Gemini, decided against it. Patricia removed the key from the ignition, and grabbed her clutch purse.

As soon as she entered the establishment, the music of Boys to Men (Unn Ahh) along with screaming women, rattled her ears. Patricia stood watching, as all eyes were on him, moving seductive center stage. She continued watching him in amazement, as women tossed their bill money, rent money, and welfare checks, and their husband hard working money on stage. Along with a few panties.

It was easy to obey and carry out his command, with moves that were hypnotizing. Surely on stage, that what he demanded. He was leading all the women in the room to where they wanted to go. ToEcstasy.

Patricia eyes fix momentarily on the bulge in his G-string. A naughty thought, replaced the son of a bitch, whom she thought had love her dearly. She had to shake her head to rid the sinful act, but couldn't as she continued being mesmerized by the sculpture creature working the stage.

After his performance ended, Patricia watched him pick up all the money that covered the stage,

Handing the bartender a ten for her drink, her face cringed from the strong burning sensation of the Remy Martin. Brown liquor wasn't her chose of alcohol. Patricia was a sweet-a-holic, and wine cooler drinker.

Taking a seat at a table two rows from the stage, she enjoyed the present chisel tall midnight man now performing. He had features that was somewhat rugged, but handsome. Patricia thought he work his body

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almost as well as the gentleman before him.
Patricia bounded her head along with the beat of Drake and Future (JumpMan). Her eyes were glued to the package in his G-string. Picking up her drink, she took another sip, making her face cringe again.

"If you add little coke to it, it would alleviate some of the burning sensation." a voice spoke, from the right of her. Patricia turned her head to see the charming smile, of the man whom was just on stage.

"Mr. Maxwell." she called him by his last name, in which made Sterling chuckled. Patricia placed her drink on the table.

"I needed something more stronger than usual tonight."

"Oh." Sterling tilted his head. "I sense your having problems with your boyfriend."

"And what makes you think that?" she frowned.

"Isn't that the reason you were here the last time?"

"I never indicated that there were problems with me and my boyfriend. Or revealed that I had one."

"Ohh that's right. I forgot, you had to leave because of a family emergency." Sterling responded, shifting his weight to the left, showing a mischief grin. His sarcastic reply, made Patricia eyes narrow, as she inspected his gear. Sterling was wearing Dickey overalls, with no shirt. He had one strap unhooked, exposing the left side of his chest.

"Darn! this man is fine." Patricia thought. "I guess you about to implement the third part of your skills." she remark. Sterling inclined his head, tempary baffled by Patricia comment. When he finally comprehended, he lightly laughed.

"The sacrilege act wait be needed. The ladies tonight showed their appreciation for my other two skills."

"Mmmm." she turned her head back to the black knight on stage. Patricia asked Sterling how did he know that she was here.

"It's impossible to miss the most beautiful woman in the room." Patricia cutted her eyes back at Sterling. "I see that your words are just as smooth as your moves."

"There wasn't nothing unctuous about my words. It the truth."

"Not everyone think so." Patricia picked up her drink, and took a
head swallow. Sterling watched her pretty face cringe again. He stop a waitress walking by and requested a coke, and what Patricia is drinking.

"May I?" Sterling gestured to the empty seat, and taking it before she could reply. Patricia gave him a bold stare, as though she wanted to be alone, then turned her green eyes back to the performer on stage. Sterling watched momentarily along with her, as the women pulled on his G-string, stuffing money inside. Soon the waitress returned to their table with Sterling drink and coke. Taking the can, he poured some in Patricia drink then his. "Try it now." he requested. Patricia lifted her drink, taking a taste. The sting in the Remy was still there, but not enough to make her face cringe. "Better?"

"Yes. Thank you."
Sterling took a swallow of his drink, while Patricia had turned her attention back to the stage. "He's almost as good of a dancer as you." she commented, never looking him.

"Almost." he questioned.

"Almost." she turned to him, displaying a light grin.

"Shaka is another reason why the women comes to Mandigos. Especially the white ones."

"Why do you think white women come to see black men get naked?"

"To confirm the myth. Some to mark a check next to their buckle list."

"The buckle list, you mean to have sex?"
Sterling confirmed her answer with a half grin, shrugging his shoulders, then taking another swallow of his drink. "They told you this?"

"No. They have told Shaka. Plus you can see the lust in their eyes."

"You like white women?"

"They're beautiful, but not my perference."

"And what is?"

"I told you in the interview. Ambition. Funny. And exotic eyes."
Sterling last statement made Patricia blush. "Also who will be there for her man, honoring every stage of her vows. Surely I will be their for her."

Patricia contemplated on Sterling last answer. She leaned forward, stirring her drink with the coffee straw, placing her elbows on the
table, before speaking. "What is said in a marriage vows. Better or worst. Richer or poorer. Through sickness and health, til death do us part."

Sterling tittered. "I think it say something like that. I never been married before."

"What if he of she cheated?"

"Depends weathered it's emotionally and physically."

Patricia held eye contact after his reply, in which Sterling saw in hers, that she been referring to the physical. He cleared his throat before answering. "Any thing can be work through. Overcome, depending on how much the two people love one another."

Patricia casted her eyes down at her drink, restirring it. She turned her head back to the stage, when she heard the DJ, tell the women to give one more applause for Shaka. After bowing in appreciation, she watched Shaka pickup all the money and a few bucket list numbers. Sterling studied Patricia demeanor for a moment, and could see the act done by the man whom she loved, hurted deeply. He again studies Patricia features. Her light skin, brown long hair, and green eyes, clearly told him that she was miss. Patricia had all the pluses. Beautiful, and running her own magazine company. It was sort of unimaginable for any man to cheat on someone like her. Unless it was Halle Berry.

You know there's another skills to this job to be successful." he spoked, getting her attention.

"Oh, there is." she raised an eyebrow.

"Yeah. You have to be a great listener." Sterling placed his drink on the table, and leaned towards her. "And if you want to talk about it. I'm all ears. I want judge. And only give my opinion if ask."

"There's nothing to talk about. I just wanted to get out the house, and have a drink."

"And you happen to chose here?" Sterling pointed down, indicating Mandigos.

"No place entertain like Mandigos, while having a drink." Patricia smirk, brought a smile to Sterling face.

"That is what we are here for."

Silence stood between them for a moment, as Patricia stirred her drink.
before taking another sip. Sterling saw that her beverage was almost finish, and offered to buy her another one. "I owe you."

"No thank you. I have to drive home."

"Surely we can't have nothing happen to someone as beautiful as you." Sterling toasted her, exhibiting a pleasing grin. Patricia features soften, blushing once more from his compliment.

"Thank you. At least someone think so. And your not bad looking yourself. But of course you hear that all the time from many women."

"Not many. But maybe a few." he lightly laughed.

"Yeah right." she retorted, rolling her eyes, laughing along with him. After their short laughter, she asked Sterling if he was performing again.

"No. Unless you want me too." giving her a seductive smile.

"I would love to see you work it. But perhaps you entertain my curiosity."

Sterling raised an eyebrow, leaning back in his chair. "Meaning?"

"I want to know more about you."

"What you wanna know?" Sterling reached for his drink:

"How is that someone as handsome and smart like you, don't have a girlfriend?"

Patricia compliment and question made Sterling chuckle again. "I have not found the woman the meets some or all my qualification. And when I do come across her, she taken." Sterling gave her a wanton look, making Patricia flushed again, dropping her eyes.

"So there's never been a woman that held your heart?" she asked, raising her eyes, to find a grieving look on Sterling face. Sterling looked off, bitting his bottom lip. He took a hard swallow of his drink, then brought his stares back to Patricia.

"Only one." he answered.

"What happen, if you don't mind telling me." she leaned forward, curious.

"She died." he revealed, finishing his drink, then placed the empty glass on the table.

"I'm sorry." Patricia gave her late condolence, confused, not knowing what to say next. She could see that Sterling had care deeply for this woman. A awkward moment of silence came between them, before
Patricia been able to gather her words to speak. "She must been someone special to reel you inn to herself."

Sterling chuckled, thinking back. "Its amazing how you use that terminology. Ever since the third grade, Erica was consistent on having me as her boyfriend. She was the prettiest girl in the third grade. Maybe in the whole school. For almost three years I sort of ran from her."

"Why?"

"Erica was smart Also. She wanted to be a register nurse. I" Sterling guffaw, pointing to himself. "Wanted to be a pro baseball player. We would be on the phone all night, until one of us falls asleep. Talking about getting marry. Having kids, and spending my millions."

Sterling laughed again remembering.

"I can see that you loved her very much."

Sterling sighed painful, as his eyes wandered around the club. Reaching for his glass on the table, he had forgotten that he finished his drink, tilting it, seeing nothing but ice. Looking up into the heart-felt eyes of Patricia, he spoke. "Erica was the rock during my unstable childhood. My first love. My first everything."

Patricia felt Sterling pain. His lost. She felt that she was going through the difficulty, in which he been through. Glenn been and was her everything. She loved him dearly. She wanted to be his wife. To be the mother of his children. Though Glenn was n't dead, Patricia felt his betrayal to their commitment as dead. She believe she could never erase the vision of Glenn pounding away between that bitch legs.

Conscious from her thoughts, Patricia found her hand on top of Sterling. Both displayed an awkward half smile. "I'm sure Erica doesn't want you to live the rest of your life alone."

"It's hard to replace her. Erica was one of a kind."

Before Patricia could respond, they were interrupted by Rene lover, Nina. She was wearing a fitted Donna Karen navy blue jean dress. The dress had fasten in the front, with gold rings, that started at the navel. The end of the dress had an elastic band, that made the dress cuff the bottom of her ass. Patricia scanned her in her matching knee high boots, that laced up like trunks, then brought her glares to Nina face. Questioning the black lipstick she chose to wear.
"What is it Nina?" Sterling asked, a bit upset.
"Rene wants to see you."
"I thought Rene wasn't here." baffled lines appeared on his forehead.
"She is, and is waiting for you in her office."
Sterling turned his attention back to Patricia, whom he could sense that
Patricia didn't approve of Nina interruption and attire. Apologizing,
he stood to his feet, explaining that Rene was the boss, and owner,
and he had to go see what she wanted, if he wanted to continue making
a comfortable living.
"I understand."
"Will you be here when I return?"
"You'll have to see, when you do?" she answered, with a mischievous
smile.

Nina walked over to Sterling, locking arms with him. Sterling asked
Patricia to please stay, while Nina tugged on his arm, leading him
to Rene's office. Walking away, Nina looked over her shoulder, giving
Patricia the expression, and devilish smile, that Sterling was hers,
whenever she wanted him. Patricia scoffed, not buying any of Nina
bullshit.

Nina opened the door to Rene office, and Sterling followed her inside.
Rene office was small, but decorated nicely. A high back gold button
leather chair sat behind a moon shape glass desk. Pictures on the walls
of famous people she had encountered. P. Diddy. Nikki Minja. Floyd

Sitting on the desk of Rene was a photo of Nina and Rene. Though
Rene had other females on the side, that which Nina knew about. Nina
was Rene ace of them all, and off limits.

Nina requested for Sterling to have a seat in front of Rene desk. As
he took a seat, Nina took a seat behind the desk in Rene's chair.
She crossed her legs, exposing her right butt cheek. Blinking her long
lashes, she gave Sterling a seductive smile. He responded with a frown
asking where is Rene.

"She'll be here in a minute." Nina held her smile, swiveling a bit
in her chair. Sitting in silence for a moment, Sterling checked his
watch. "You only been away from her for only two minutes." Nina giggled.
lightly, sticking her manicure pinky finger between her teeth. Sterling gave her a stern glare, shifting in his chair. "You like her don't you?"

"Where is Rene, Nina? I thought she wasn't suppose to return from New Orleans until tomorrow." he asked, ignoring her question.
"She's in the locker room talking to the other dancers."
"Why does she wants to talk to me alone, and not with the other dancers?"
"Sterling, you know that your Mandigos ace, Rene's main attraction." Sterling didn't question her remark, but still gave Nina a askance look. After another awkward moment of silence, Nina uncrossed her legs, as she spoke. "Never have I seen you interested of any woman that come here. What so special about the salt and pepper magazine girl? Is it her green eyes?"
Sterling gave her a disdain look, and wondered why the interest of he and Patricia. "I have no interest in her. She said she needed to get out of the house and have a drink, because she's having problems in her relationship."
"That's what she told you?"
"Not exactly. But I can sense it."
"And she came here?"
Sterling shrugged his shoulders. "And what's wrong with that?"
Nina laughed standing to her feet, making her way around the desk. She stood in front of Sterling. "She likes you. And you like her. I watched you two from a distant, and the way you look at each other."
"You watching us?" Sterling frowned.
"From the moment she walked through the door." she replied, lifting herself on the desk. Nina placed her high heels boots on each arms of Sterling chair, making her dress rise up to her hips, revealing her pussy. Shaved and piercing, Sterling could smell the sweet fragrance of it. He brought his eyes back to the sinister look of Nina, whom leaned forward, placing the palms of her hands on his cheeks. "Do you want me, the same as you want her?"
Sterling eyes narrowed. "So this is why you brought me back here?"
"I been wanting to give you some this pussy, since the first day I saw you. I know you want it."
"Bitch you crazy!" Sterling knocking her feet down off the armrest. "You trying to get me f*cked off." he stood to his feet. "I know of Rene, and who is her brother."

"Rene won't never know." Nina grasped his wrist, as he tried to walk away.

"I know, because it won't never happen." yanking his arm from her grip. Nina gave Sterling a glower look. Watching him head to the door. "SHE'S GONE!" she shouted, causing him to stop in his tracks. Turning to face Nina, whom now was showing a wicked grin, crossed her legs.

"And how do you know?"

"Because I sent her away." she told him, looking down at her dress, pretending to remove some lent. Angered, Sterling wanted to curse Nina out, but swiveled quickly to see what she said was true.

Making his way back to their table, Sterling apologized to some women, wanting to take a selfie with him. Not finding Patricia sitting at the table, he scanned the club, in search for her. Sterling anger elevated, learning what Nina had said, been true.
Patricia been awaken by the whinning cries of Candy, her boxer. She could sense that Patricia wasn't sleeping well, watching her toss and turn, hearing the pains in her moans. All night she was reliving the horror of Glenn betrayal. Her somber features changed into a light laughter, when Candy jumped in the bed, licking her face. "YUCK!" she continued laughing. After taking a shower she put on her pajamas, and headed downstairs. Reaching the bottom she found her father getting his briefcase, and making his way out the door. "Leaving already daddy?" she walked over to him, rising on her toes to kissed him on the cheek.

"Yes sweetheart. Bills has to be paid." he chuckled. "Plus it's 11 o'clock. I'm already alittle late." he said acknowledging Candy, rubbing her chin.

"Where's mother?"
"In the library reading. Will you be spending another night with us?"
"Yes. Maybe until the end of the week, if you don't mind."
"Stop being foolish. Of course not. Stay as long as you like."
"Thank you daddy." she gave him her baby girl smile.
"How is your magazine company coming along?"
"Fine. This month issue will be out this friday. Finally now, starting to see some profits."
"Running a magazine is just like running a network. You have to know what the people are interesting inn."
"Yes I understand." Patricia nodded her head. "Hope next year to take the magazine regional."
"Your hope will become a reality, if you keep working hard at it." he encouraged, kissing her on the forehead. "You'll be here for dinner tonight?"
"Yes. I have no plans."
"Good. I'll see you later."
Patricia stood at the front door, watching her father walk out with his briefcase, and into his Escalade. She waved goodbye, like she did many of times when she was alittle girl. Scanning the houses on the street, Patricia features soften, remembering the fond memories, of riding her bike, and playing jump rope with the other girls.
Closing the door, she went into the kitchen to feed Candy. While opening a can of dog food, Mrs. Emily walked in, greeting her with a warm smile. She wanted to know if she could fix her something to eat. Requesting two eggs, toasts, and a glass of orange juice, Patricia thanked her, informing Mrs. Emily she'll be in the library with her mother.

Often times when Patricia finds her mother in the library, she'll be researching a case. Her mother was still old school, and like to find answers in books. Patricia mother had a saying, "That Google will give you many answer, but the library will give you the right one."

Surprised, she found her mother head, not in a law book, but reading a novel. "What are you reading?" she interrupted her.

"A new book written by this new author, called, The Nurses of Monroe Hospital."

"Must be good. you seem deep into it."

"So far. It has this girl in here name Lekesha, who is a stripper and works part-time at the hospital, and having sex with her supervisor husband."

"That's low."

"Yeah. but the crazy part, the husband doesn't know that the woman he's cheating with, works with his wife."

"Damn." Patricia tittered, taking a seat in her father chair, across from her mother. Noticing that Patricia was still in her pajamas, her mother assumed that she was taking another day off from work.

"Calling in today also?"

"Yeah. I still don't won't to see Glenn cheating ass. And I know he'll be staring my office."

"He's going to do that until you two talk."

"Yeah I know. I'll take the rest of the week off, and return Monday. Maybe my thoughts of killing him would have subside."

Her mother was sadden, and felt helpless, to removed the pain her daughter was going through. Closing her book, and taking off her reading glasses, her mother asked if there were anything that she could do for her. "You wanna go shopping again? This time on me." she displayed a warm smile.

"No thank you momma." Patricia face soften by the gesture. "I'm
somewhat 

out. I'm going to go upstairs and check on Maria to see how this month issue is coming along. And." she pointed. "Catch up on my soaps today."

"Nothing changed. The Newman family are mad at Victor for the upton times. When they found out he was the reason for Adam being dead."

Mrs. Emily came into the library with Patricia breakfast. While Patricia ate her mother brought her up to date, on what's been happen-
ing on the Young and the Restless.

After her meal, and being filled in of all the soap operas, Patricia went up stairs and grabbed her cell phone, and flopped on her bed. She checked her messages and again saw it filled with Glenn's pleas. She knew that one day she would have to face him, and decide on what she wanted to do. But at this moment, she isn't ready to deal with him. Through the clutter of Glenn's texts, Patricia saw that Maria had texts her twice, claiming that it was urgent. The strain in her face, made lines appear on her forehead, when she didn't recognized a miss call number. Not knowing the number, she had no intention of calling it, as she deleted it, thinking it might be Glenn using another number. Patricia called Maria at the office. "About time you called girl!"

Maria being her sarcastic self.

"Got your texts."

"That was two hours ago." she retorted, playfully, rocking back in her chair.

"Having breakfast with my mother. I left my phone in my room. What's up? What's so urgent? Is there a problem with this month issue?"

"No. everything is fine. Truick will be here this evening, for it to hits stands friday."

"Great. What, has Glenn been coming to the office harrassing you about my wherabout?"

"For the last two days. Shit, he don't think I know he be sitting out in the parking lot in a rental car. So you still haven't spoken to him. And I know why." sounding rogished.

"What are you talking about?" Patricia frowned.

"I didn't know Black Osiris look so much better in person."

"Again, what are you talking about Maria?"

"Mr. Maxwell came to the office looking for."
"Really?" Patricia surprised.
"What do you two have going on?"
"Nothing." Patricia still astounded. "I needed a drink to rid my mind from Glenn."
"And you happen to go to a strip club to have one." Maria not buying her story.
"What's wrong with having a drink and being entertained at the same time?" Patricia replied, not sounding assuring.
"MMM HMMM." Maria still not buying her friend bullshit. "Something tells me that wasn't your first time at Mandigos."
Patricia ignored Maria comment, and asked her what been Sterling reason for coming to see her. "He wanted to apologized for the interruption last night."
"Hmm." Patricia only respond.
"What the hell you two were talking about last night?"
"Nothing really. Just learning alittle more about him." she said, turning over on her back.
"You like him?"
"WHAT! I don't know him well enough to like him."
"Fine as he is, who gives a shit. Get to know him."
"I'm not sure I'm over Glenn."
"I'm sure this Sterling can help you get over Glenn ass." Patricia exhaled deeply, grabbing one of her stuff animal, contemplating on her friend words. "So I guess he haven'y call you yet?"
"How, Sterling doesn't have my number."
"Ahh he does now." Maraia informed.
"GODDAM MARIA!" Patricia realizing now the unknown number been Sterling. She sat up in bed, holding her stuffed animal in a headlock. About to cursed Maria out, she heard her phone beep. Checking the screen, she remembered the number as Sterling. "Shit!" she cursed nervously.
"What?" Maria wondered.
"Sterling is calling now."
"Answer it!"
"What do you think he wants?" Patricia feeling uneasy.
"To apologize! And maybe have lunch."
"There's no reason for him to apologize."
"Okay. Let him know. Continue to see what Sterling is about. He could be the aspirin to your headache, that's sitting out in the parking lot, like he's on a stakeout."

Before Patricia could respond to Maria annotation, Maria lied that she was having problems with the pressing machine, and needed to go. "Have a nice day with Sterling." she said.

Patricia called Maria name in hopes she wouldn't hang up. Hearing the dail tone, Patricia called Maria a bitch. She saw that Sterling was still on the other line, hearing her phone beep again. Staring at the screen for a short moment, Patricia sigh, pressing the answering button, "Hello." sounding timid, running her hand backwards through her hair. Recognizing her voice, Sterling sounded excited, calling her name.

"Yes this is her. Who's calling?" playing innocent.
"Sterling." he answered, Ranged down waiting for any negative reaction. Recieving none, he continued. "I hope your not upset that I'm calling. I stop by your office this morning to apologize for last night interruption. But your associate Maria said you wouldn't be in the office for a few days. And insist on me having your number. Hope you don't mind."

Patricia didn't immediately reply to Sterling last query, standing on her feet. "In any other case I would. But I guess not you."

"Okay." Sterling slightly chuckled, not sure how to interpret her reply.

"You didn't have to call or come by the office to apologize to me for your departure. Your boss wanted to speak with you. Hope everything is fine."

"Everything is perfect." Sterling revealing no details of Nina true intention. Patricia walked over to her bedroom window, and asked Sterling was there another reason for his call.

"Well I wanted to know if you had any plans for today and if not, I was hoping we could have lunch. On me. You know I had a good night last night."

Patricia laughed at Sterling witticism. Looking out the window, her laughter suddenly ceased, as she scoffed in disappointment at what she saw. Candy was out back, digging a CatSite in her mother flower bed.
"No Candy."
Sterling questioned, wanting to know if something was wrong. "Yes, but nothing serious. Hey, I have a better idea than lunch. Meet me at the park at at two. I think Candy would like to play with Max."

CHAPTER 43

Patricia found Sterling, wearing a number 29 Texans jersy, leaning against his car, in the zoo parking lot of Herman park. Max was next to him in a sitting position. The bright greeting from Sterling made her beam, like a little school girl, as she parked next to him.

Getting out, Patricia opened her back door for Candy to jump out. disobeying Patricia orders, Candy ran around her rear to greet Max, to do what dogs do. Barking and sniffing each other. Sterling smile widen, pleased to see Patricia beauty, and what she was wearing. With her wavy brown hair up in a ponytail, the nylon yellow and black stripe eighties gym shorts, molded her nice rear and exhibited her smooth legs. With a matching long sleeve half jacket, Patricia wore a white shirt that had a Addidas symbol. After putting Candy on a leash, she introduced herself to Max, massaging his head and chin. She bursted into laughter as Max responded by shaking his rear. "I can see that Max is a very smart dog. And also cute like his owner."

Sterling laughed replying back. "The owner of this lovely boxer is also a eye candy."

Sterling comment made Patricia smile like the thursday breezy shinny day. Clearing her throat, she gave Sterling Camero a lookover, complimenting it. "I see that your job do pay well." adding a satiric remark. "It pays comfortable." letting go a charming laugh.

Letting her know that he was happy that they could meet, Sterling lead Patricia to the food stand, where he bought hot dogs, fries and sodas. Sterling had frowned when Patricia mention that she wishes the food stand had serve sourkraut. Giggling at his shock look, she explained that it been a northern tradition. In that when she use to visit her
cousin in New York in the summer time, hot dogs stands were everywhere, and that's the way New Yorker like their hot dogs.

"I'm glad. I'm from Texas, because I can't stand the smell of sauerkraut."

She watched Sterling add a lot of mustard and relish to his hot dogs. After adding all the mustard and ketchup to hers, they found a bench nearby. Releasing their canines from their leashes to go play, Sterling and Patricia sat down to eat. Before biting a chunk out of his hot dog, he asked her if she was on vacation.

"No. I just needed to take some time off." she glanced at him, then looked off into the distant. The mild grief in her feature, told the tale why she wasn't going to work.

"You know he'll be up at your office hounding you, trying to please his case."
Patricia gave Sterling a stern look. "I don't know what you talking about." she retorted.

"I am talking about the fool that broke your heart."
Patricia held her stern expression for a moment, before claiming that she didn't want to talk about it, turning her eyes away.

"That's fine. I understand. But whenever you like to talk about it, remember, I told you I'm a good listener."

"And you want judge or give your opinion, only if ask." she turned her austere glare back at him.

"I see that you remembered." he exhibited a concerning smile, filling his mouth with fries. Washing it down with a Mountain Dew, he watched Patricia fondled with her fries in the ketchup, then put one in her mouth. She chewed on it slowly, as though she lost her appetite.
Sterling followed her stares over to Max and Candy, playing with two young kids, chasing a soccer ball.

"Ooh! I forgot to tell you." Sterling getting her attention, grabbing some fries, and dipping in his ketchup. He let Patricia know that Maria had giving him a copy of this month issue of the magazine.

"I must say that I'm very please with the article. You made me look very intelligent, and what I do for a living a public servant. Not someone getting naked for money. I love the pictures you choosen also."
Patricia showned a satisfying smile, happy to know that Sterling been appeased with the article. She let him know that she didn't change a word he said. Just printed the question and answer on paper. He also let her know that he enjoyed the Patch Eye interview, informing that he liked his new track, Unfair Justice.

"Patch Eye interview." she paused, trying to find the term. 
"Hard knock." she tittered. "Trying not to get high from all the smoke. I learn that Patch Eye is destined not to repeat his mistakes. Very conscious, and street savvy." 
Patricia made known that Patch Eye been abit contemptuous towards her, learning that she never stay in the hood. And that she couldn't relate to the African American struggles and fears, by being mixs.

"That was after you turned him down." Sterling gave her a side glance. Patricia let loose a light laughter, while reaching for her hot dog.

"How did you know?"
"That's how most men respond, after being rejected. We get defensive, especially in front of our homie."
"So that the way you behave when you get rejected?"
"I never been rejected."

"Why I didn't know that." Patricia shook her head in amazement, at Sterling, before bitting into her hot dog. Sterling reached for his hot dog, then commented before taking a bite.

"Like you every been rejected." raising an eyebrow at her. Patricia simultaneously smile, while chewing on her hot dog, enjoying the company of the handsome and witty man. She didn't know what was happening, or what would become, of the gravitation towards Sterling. The last thing on her agender had been to get involve with another man. Or to get revenge on Glenn, and do what he had done to her. Revenge wasn't in Patricia nature. She would either accept a person apology, or part way with the individual. Plotting revenge took to much time and energy. When time and energy could used in postive ways.

The time she spent with Sterling made her temperary forget about her anger and pain that Glenn had inflicted. Sterling was a breath of fresh air. Sterling also couldn't figure out his intwine feeling towards Patricia.

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Never since Erica, have he desired wanting to know more about a woman. Right now, Sterling knew that he had to caution about the cognated relationship they somewhat have. Even though she haven't said it, he knew that Patricia just been hurt by someone she loved deeply, and could be still undecided on what she wanted to do.

It been almost five years since Erica death, and he thought it was time to let the pain and the memories of the only woman he ever loved. Washing down her hot dog with a Root Beer, Patricia asked Sterling to tell her more about him. A curious look appeared on his face, wondering what else she wanted to know about him. "What do you wanna know. I think you know more about than my mother." he chuckled, tossing a fry in his mouth.

"It's about that."

"About what?" Sterling looking confused.

"Your mother."

A long pause passed between them, as Sterling studied her fearful features, as though she thought his mother been a forbidden topic of discussion. "What do you wanna know about her?"

"Well, you were sort of vague about her illness."

Sterling sighed painfully. Patricia curiousity about his mother sickness brought back nightmares of his childhood. He shifted himself on the bench, as he stared down at his food for a moment, contemplating where to start. "My mother had the same sickness alot of mother and father had in the neighborhood of Third Ward. She was hooked on heroin. Her and my father. I saw my father get murdered because of his debts, from the addiction." Sterling let out a scoff laughter, looking around the park. "The day he was killed, he, my mother, and I were on our way here." Sterling saw Patricia cover her mouth in shock. Forcing a half grin, he continued. "Many of days I would go into my mother room and find her curled up in the bed, humming in pain from withdrawls."

"That's why you enjoy the sounds of a woman laughter."

"It told me that she was feeling okay, and it was gonna be a good day." Starring in Patricia green eyes, he could see the same sorrow of painful memories in them. The dolorous emotion they both shared, had them unconscious that they were holding hands again.

The barking of Candy and Max, brought them back to the state of con-
cious, finding their eyes casting down to their connection. Their eyes met again, now with warmth and confusion.
Sterling turned his attention to Max's barking, and asked what's wrong. Max turned his focus to the food on the table, and barked twice.
"You hungry?" he smiled. Max barked twice again. Patricia asked Candy the same question, in which she gave the same response. Sterling let Patricia know that he had some cans of dog food and bottles of water in his car.
Leaning against his Camero, watching their canine friends eat. Patricia could see that Sterling took well care of Max, by the expensive dog food he brought. She asked why he choose the name Max. "Well his full name is Maxium. After Russell Crow character in Gladiator. One of my favorite movie. And you?" he folded his arms over his chest, turning his head towards her.
"What? the reason I named her Candy?"
"Mmm Hmm." Sterling nodded.
"No particular reason. She a female, and I just wanted her to have a feminine name." she answered, shrugging her shoulders. Sterling chuckled, turning his attention back to the canines, whom heads were still buried in their bowls.
"Well you chosen a perfect name for her. She's a eye candy, just like her owner." he noted, turning his eyes back to Patricia. Her smile and green eyes magnified her beauty, as he was becoming more attractive to her. He broke their affinity asking her do she like football.
"I love it."
"Great. Would you like to go see the Texans practice. Though it's not football season, my best friend Dana just got recruited to the practice squad, in hope in making the team."
"That's his jersey you wearing?"
"Yep. Trying to represent my boy."
"I would love to go see the Texans practice. Maybe I can get an interview with Desean Watson."
"Maybe." Sterling smiled brightly.
Terrell and his partner McCaffrey were driving south down Shepard boulevard, discussing President Trump's woes and his connection to the Russian. Both had agreed that the Russian interference had nothing to do with the outcome of the election. America wasn't stupid. The working class white were just tired of the same politics and wanted a change. "They're just ignorant, thinking that Trump can bring back their rust belt jobs." Terrell argued.

"Companies and employers aren't going to never pay American workers their worth. As long as they can pay the Mexican immigrants $11.00 to well, and you not $19.00. And continued to buy steel from the Canadians cheaper. Greed." McCaffrey said.

Terrell looked over at his partner. "You white people call it capitalism."

"Just give Trump a chance. America will be great again."

Terrell guffawed. "Keep believing that bullshit."

While Terrell listen to the reasoning that Trump will succeed, and win a second term as president, his attention been drawn to a black on black Escalade, driving in the opposite direction. Terrell swiveled his neck ninety degrees, watching the eighty thousand dollar S.U.V pass by. The heavy tinted window wouldn't allow him to see inside, but he knew who was the driver. At the next median opening Terrell made a u-turn, in pursuit of the Escalade.

McCaffrey questioned Terrell on what he saw. "You know in a second." giving him a vague answer, quickly pulling up behind the vehicle, and turning on the police lights. The driver made a right on a residential street and stop. Terrell left the unit lights flashes, as they exited the car. Terrell walked up to the driver side and McCaffrey the passenger. The heavy tinted windows were still up, and Terrell knocked on it with his knuckles, ordering the driver to let it down. He could hear the power window come down, which reveal the fierce face of the trimmed bearded, bald man.

"Officer Watson. What's the problem?"

"Your tint are illegal. To dark. A motorist violation."

"Not according to my insurance and the D.M.V."

"Terrell cut the shit, what the hell you pulled us over for?" a woman leaned forward, giving him a austere look.

"Latanya." Terrell said her name. He gave her the lookover, wearing
the two disappeared behind the dark tint, and driving away.
Both officers watched as Yamaha pulled into a driveway, then backed right out. Terrell made eye contact with Latanya, when they drove by.
Getting back into their unit, Terrell repeated the same process like Yamaha, then crossed Shepard boulevard median and headed north. The two officers râde in silence for a moment. McCaffrey knew that Terrell mind been in a state of anger and chaos.
McCaffrey could feel the vibration of the bass, as he eyed everyone at the carwash, conversing as they passed by. It been filled with hustlers, getting their foreign and candy colors cars washed by dope-fiends.
He glanced back over at Terrell, realizing he was still furious in what just transpired. McCaffrey scanned their surrounding while scratching an imaginary inch, thinking. "I know you believe that Yamaha killed your last partner."
"I don't believe, I know." Terrell corrected him, looking at his partner with a hard stare.
"You mean that it was Yamaha driving that Escalade?"
"Yeah."
"You wanted to fuck with him?"
"Yeap. Every chance I get. Until I find a way to send him to jail or hell."
McCaffrey didn't have to ask Terrell what he meant, in sending Yamaha to hell. This warfare between he and Yamaha was personal. And if somehow Yamaha is found somewhere not breathing, he could never be ask to testify, knowing that his partner wanted Yamaha dead. Though he was only a rookie, and been Terrell partner for four months, he sense the beef between he and Yamaha been deeper than his last partner death.
"Is there something you not telling me Watson?"
Terrell gave McCaffrey another cold stare. "What makes you think I'm withholding something?"
"I get the feeling that this aggression towards Yamaha goes beyond Officer Roberts getting killed."
"Still what makes you think that?"
"What Yamaha wife said before they drove off. What was she talking about, when she said you needed to let it go?"
Terrell held his cold stare at McCaffrey for a another moment, before looking forward, and sighing heavily. "Yamaha, Latanya and I, all went to the same high school. Yamaha was the known thug at the school. I,a football player, and track star. Latanya was the most popular girl at the school, and head cheerleader. And also my girlfriend." Terrell revealed looking out the window. McCaffrey cursed, running his hand backwards through his hair.

"What happen between you two?"
"Yamaha." he answered, giving McCaffrey a stupid look. Turning his stares back to the road, Terrell continued to give his partner the full detail of the past. "Yamaha always wanted Latanya, but she would reject his advancement, because we were in love. Well I thought." he chuckled to himself. "I had plans to go to college, play football, and go to the N.F.L. and become rich. Latanya and I would talk about all the things we would buy. Places we would go, when I make it big."
He look over to his partner. "A girl for her and a boy for me."
Terrell let out a scoffed laughter before continueing. "Well the kid issue came sooner than expected, when Latanya found out that she was pregnant late in the school year. So I turned down my scholarship to Texas, and joined the Marines. I needed money to take care of my unborn child."

"So you and Yamaha wife have a child together?" McCaffrey shocked.
"No." Terrell look back at his partner with sorrow. "While I was away in basic training, Yamaha and Latanya hooked up, and he convince her to have an abortion."

Terrell revelation stunned McCaffrey, almost causing him to lose his breath. His feature tense. He had been lost for words, starring out the window. "I never knew if it was a boy or girl. crazy shit, hunh?"

"Antonish." McCaffrey replied, still looking out the window, watching a young black woman pushing a stroller down the street. "So the real reason your after Yamaha is not just justice for your last partner, but revenge for your unborn child?" McCaffrey asked, turning to him.
Terrell didn't answer his question. There was no need too. The answer had been in his eyes. Terrell cold stare told him Yamaha being dead
was the only revenge for his unborn child. Terrell turned his attention back to the traffic in front of him. McCaffrey held his stare on his partner a moment longer. He had a gut feeling, the war between he and Yamaha wasn't gonna turn out favorable.

CHAPTER 45

Monday morning Patricia was pulling into the parking lot of her magazine company. She circled the parking lot once, looking for Glenn's vehicle or him sitting in any rental car. Finding no sign of him, she parked her Camry in front of her office. As she gathered her things, she heard her cell phone chime. Checking it, Patricia saw it was a text from Sterling, telling her that he enjoyed the new Tupac movie. And to remind her that he was picking her up tomorrow to go see the Texans practice. "And have a nice day back at work."
Patricia found herself smiling. She was still uncertain about this connection, that somehow been building between she and Sterling. He was different from any boy or man she been attractive too. Sterling was urban, and also suburban. Like Sean Combs, who could fit in, and connection with any social crowd. Smart and witty. Finding the words to encourage, and a smile that makes you forget about your woes.

"Whoa." Patricia exhaled. "And he's fine too." she thought. She texted back, thanking him for the movie, and that she haven't forgotten about seeing the Texans practice. "Looking forward to it. And may your day go well also."
Exiting her car, she was caught off guard by a voice. "I see that someone is already making you smile."
Looking up to find Glenn standing before her. "Damn, it haven't been a week and you already moved on."
"What the fuck do you want Glenn?"
"We need to talk Patricia." he answered, stepping off the sidewalk, trying to get closer. Patricia made it clear that she didn't want him near her, stepping back two steps, showing a fury look.
"What the fuck we need to talk about?"
"About what happen."
"We don't have to talk about what happen. I clearly saw what happen."
You were fucking a bitch in the bed that you and I sleep inn. That's what happen."

"It's not what you think. It didn't happen like that."

"So you saying that I didn't see what I saw?" Patricia anger heighten. "Tell me Glenn. Tell me what the fuck you I think I saw?" she folded her arms.

Glenn exhaled defeated, massaging his hands over his face, realizing what he wanted to say came out wrong. "Patricia believe me when I tell you that there's nothing going on with Kelly and I."

"OHH, you two are just fuck buddies."

Glenn scoffed at himself, rubbing his temples, again improperly trying to explain the situation. "No baby. I have no feeling Kelly. I love you."

"What the fuck I walk in on is your way of showing your love. If so, Keep It! I don't want it."

"I told you its not what you think. Kelly was blackmailing me."

"And why was she doing that?" Patricia gave him a askance look. Glenn ranned his finger through his hair, exhaling sharply, before giving an explanation.

"She said if I didn't have sex with her, she would make sure Mr. Ming would find another realtor to help find the building he needed."

"That don't sound like blackmail to me. It sound like you had a choice."

"True. But I needed this deal, it was worth millions." he wanted her to understand. Patricia understood clearly what had been more important to Glenn.

"I hope you learned that money isn't everything." she turned to walk behind her car. Glenn called her name, but Patricia didn't respond, never looking back, as she went into her office, locking the door.

Patricia didn't accomplish much, as she wanted, being disturbed by this morning encounter with Glenn. Catching him in the act of fucking another woman, in the bed she thought that was theirs, Patricia was still confused about her feeling for Glenn. Deep inside, she still love him very much, and had second thoughts if she could ever forgive him for his astraying sin. It was transparent that the pain still overpowers the masses, for the reason of the hooking of the infidelity.
of him having sex with Kelly played in her head.

Maria tried to get her mind off Glenn, and think what my become of her and Sterling. Patricia couldn't hold back her smile from appearing, as Maria gave her a hundred reason why she should start seeing him. Ninety nine of them was how goodlooking and fine he was.

She questioned herself about going into another relationship. Patricia thought it was to soon, just right after her sacrilege discovery of Glenn. But it been hard for her to deny the attraction she was having for Sterling. He been the anidote in relieving much of her pain.

Leaving early Patricia mind been deep in thought, while heading to her car. As badly she wanted to never to see him, she had one question for Glenn.

Getting into her car, she placed her key into the ignition, turning it on. About to throw it in reverse, she looked over to her left, and spotted a blonde hair woman starring at her. In her state of chaos, Patricia never recognized the light green Mazda Miata parked next to her. Both held their stares for a long moment. One feature exhibiting an expression of regret. The other loathe.

Patricia watched the woman get out of her car, and turned off her engine. Maybe she might get the answer to her question, that been on her mind all day. The woman made no attempt to walk over to Patricia, staying on the passenger side of Patricia car, looking over the roof. Again, both held their stares another long moment. Patricia asked what did she want. "And why are you here?" she scowled, tilting her head.

"We need to talk."

"Wow, everybody wants to talk now." she scoffed. "What you want to talk about?"

"I want to tell you I'm sorry. That it was all my fault in what happen, between me and Glenn."

"Apology not accept bitch."

Though Kelly already knew what might be the response to her apology, her face still shown a dejected look, while turning her blue eyes away, nodding her head, following a passing car. "I understand." she said, turn her eyes back to Patricia. Patricia folded her arms, and shifting her weight to the right, before revealing what Glenn
had told her.

"Is it true that you wanted to have sex with Glenn, for exchange of the realtor state deal?"

"Is that what he told you?" Kelly surprised.

"Yes."

Kelly didn't answer immediately, feeling ashamed. "It's true. I'm a married woman. Neither happy or satisfied. At one time I was, until my husband had a terrible car accident two years ago, that paralyzed him."

"So you decide to extort my man, to satisfy your sexual needs."

"And I'm sorry."

"That you are." Patricia retorted, unfolding her arms. "And Glenn is just as weak, guilty and sorry as you. You two are perfect for each other."

"I'm married and he loves you."

"Not more than he loves money and blondes."

Patricia remark made Kelly pale face flushed in embarrassment. Patricia stopped leaning against her car, holding a harsh look, while studying Kelly demeanor. She realized Kelly real reasoning why she wanted to talk. Not to profess Glenn love for her. Patricia sense that Kelly had feeling for Glenn, and she wanted to know if Patricia still had feeling for him. Was she considering to forgive him and take Glenn back. He must have made it known to Kelly that he didn't want her, and that he was still in love with Patricia.

Knowing that if Patricia have cancel Glenn from her life, it would make her path alot easier to his heart. Patricia revealed to Kelly that she followed them that morning to StarBuck, which brought a shock expression on her face. She let her know that she seen the two of them argueing, before she pulled out some papers, that caused Glenn's spirits to deflate. Patricia asked what was those papers. Kelly took what seem like eternity to answer, sighing pitifully, before telling Patricia they were result of a pregnancy test.

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Patricia sat in the stands with Sterling, excited pointing at the popular Texans players running out in full gear in the indoor practice field. Sterling pointed out to Patricia his best friend, Dana, jogging along with first string running back Lamar Miller. He expounded on their history of he and Dana, and how he became his best friend. And that he never went nowhere without a football in his hand.

"Dana deserves this opportunity to play in the N.F.L. He work hard to pursue his dreams. Never giving up, playing in the semi-pros, and working hard at his job to take care of his wife and son."

"Oh, Dana married?"

"Yeah, her named is Karen. I known her too since the third grade. She was Erica bestfriend. We were both there when the scout invited him to try out."

After watching the team stretch and do drills, it was time to play offense against defense. Lamar Miller and Alfreed Blue ran the first two offensive plays, and next been Dana turn to showcase his skills. The offensive coordinator called a toss play to the right. To the side of the best defensive player in the N.F.L., JJ Watts.

Four yards behind the rookie Desean Watson, Dana got into postion. His eyes alert, scanning the defense. When the ball was snapped, Dana took to his right, his eyes on the rookie quarterback Watson, as he swiveled 190 to toss him the ball. Catching the ball, he placed it inside his forearm, squeezing it tight between his bicep and the palm of his hand. Dana saw that JJ Watts had beat his offensive lineman, and waited to tackle him for a loss. Fooling Watts, as though he was trying to go around him, Coaches, players, and spectators were amazed when Dana made a ninety degree cut, making JJ stumble to the turf.

After a eight yard gain, Dana was tackled by a linebacker and a safety. On his way back to the huddle, Watts tapped him on the helmet, complimenting Dana on his juke move.

"Woo, he's good." Patricia impressed.

"I told you." Sterling boasted.

After practice, Sterling introduce Patricia to Dana. She praised him on how good she think he is. Thanking her, Dana joked "Why is a beauti-
tiful woman like her, is seen with some one ugly like him! Dana pointed at Sterling. Patricia laughed, answering that Sterling had paid her. Laughing at her reply, Dana embraced his friend, appreciating in taking the time to come see him practice.

"Have I ever miss a Outlaw game?"

"No." Dana chuckled.

"I'm here along for the ride. When you sign that multi-million dollar contract, you said we're going to Atlanta. Magic City, and make it rain, like the other big time athletes."

"I'm married now."

"Yeah I know. But we have to do it at least one time."
Dana chuckled. "Yeah at least one time. We just can't tell Karen."
Sterling chuckled along with Dana, placing a finger to his mouth. Patricica commented how devious they were. In which Sterling asked why Karen wasn't present to see him practice.

"Devon been feeling sick the last two days. So Karen took him to the doctor."

"I hope he's okay."

"Just probaly something he caught at the daycare." Dana hunched his shoulders.

"I need to stop and check on my nephew and say hello to Karen."

"Do that my friend. Devon would love to see you. Karen also."
Sterling looked around and spotted the first round draft pick, Desean Watson, and another rookie making their way back to the lockerroom. Sterling quickly explained to Dana that Patricia was the co-owner of Urban Houston magazine, and he was feature in this month issue. Sterling asked Dana if there was a possibility that he could call Desean over for an interview with Patricia.

"I can see." Dana turned to call his name, waving him over.

"We kind of got to know one another, since he's the only one at the moment handing me the football."
Patriricia became excited, when Desean excused himself from his teammates. Dana introduced Sterling as his bestfriend, and Patricia as co-owner of Urban Houston magazine. Exchanging handshakes, Patricia face beamed. —Much taller and bigger in person, Patricia thought he was even handsome.
"Patricia wanted to know if she could ask you a few question, for her magazine." Dana explained.

"Just a few." Patricia displayed a half grin, showing a tiny symbol with her hand.

Desean chuckled. "Sure. I have a minute for a few questions." he imitated her gesture. Fond of her green eyes and beautiful smile. Pulling out a small recorder, Patricia memerized the questions she wanted to ask, as Sterling stepped back and watched her use her charisma and journalist skills, letting Desean know that she was rooting for him in last year National Championship.

Sterling and Patricia stood in the parking lot of the Texans facility, looking over the pictures she snapped of Desean Watson on her cell phone. She thanked Sterling again for inviting her. "Maybe next time you'll interview my boy Dana when he lead the league in rushing and touchdowns."

"I would love too. What you have told me about him is inspiring."

"Yeap. I'm happy for him. He worked really hard for this opportunity." A awkward moment of silence came between them, as they both held licentious glares at one another. They knew that it been some kind of attraction between them. But also knew that things were complicated. Especially on Patricia end. Sterling letting go the memories of Erica. Patricia, getting over the pain, and to ever trust again, after Glenn's betrayal.

Sterling broke their stares, clearing his throat, and looking up at the warm sun. Bringing his sight back to Patricia, Sterling asked if she was hungry.

"Starving."

He expressed that there were thousands of places to eat any food she desire, in the area. And that lunch was on him. Drawing a light laugh from her, Patricia informed him, if he was paying, she wasn't complaining.

Sitting inside a mom and pop restaurant, Patricia eyes bulged when the plump middle age white waitress sat down the two pound cheese burger and basket of fries. Sitting across from Sterling, she expressed that it was going to be impossible for her to eat the whole burger.
"You said you were starving." Sterling leaned towards her.
"Yes, but not famish." she remarked, still astounded by the size of the burger. Sterling lightly laughed, explaining that what she didn't finish, she could take home in a doggy bag. "And have enough leftover for two days."

"Whoa." Patricia sat back in her chair, holding her stomach, claiming to be full. Sterling smiled, somewhat surprised that Patricia ate over half of her hamburger. He reached for his Mountain Dew, and asked if she was for sure, that she wasn't famish. She covered her mouth with both hands, feeling embarrassed. "I hope you don't think I eat like this all the time."

"I hope so. I'm not fond of salad eating women. It's a sign that they can't cook. Or they don't like to cook."

"I might be that first indication."

"So God is still the only perfect being." Sterling displayed a pleasing grin, before sipping his soda. Patricia blushed, grasping the meaning of Sterling's observation.

"I'm not so sure of that," she countered. Sterling leaned back in his chair, showing a half grin. Communicating with their eyes momentarily, they were interrupted by the waitress, wanting to know if they needed anything else.

"Dessert?" Sterling asked. "They have an excellent cheesecake."
Patricia waved her hands no, saying she didn't have room in her stomach for another bite. Sterling asked for a doggy bag, and the bill. Patricia exhaled lightly, rubbing her stomach, looking around the saloon style cafe.

"How do you know about this place?"
A solemn look appeared on his face, as he placed his drink back on the table. His solemn expression been replaced by a light smile, reminiscing. "Erica and I use to come here." he looked around the place. "She used to work at the General store, down the street."
Patricia inclined her head, a bit baffled by the revelation. She didn't know what to make of Sterling reasoning, for choosing to bring her here. "Was she able to eat a whole hamburger?"

"Oh No." Sterling laughed. "Most of the time we would share a burger,
because we didn't have enough money to buy two.

"Knowing now that I can't eat this dinosaur burger by myself, maybe next time we can share the next one." she suggested smiling. "Maybe." he returned his.

Sterling walked Patricia to her car, his Camero been parked two parking space over. Patricia thanked him for lunch, holding her doggy bag. And access in seeing the Texans practice. Sterling nodded his head, gesturing that she was welcome. A moment passed between them, as Sterling was finding words to say. It was part of his profession, knowing how to use the way of words. Sterling didn't want Patricia to detect any fraud from him. Ever since the interview, he felt an engergy, a connection with her. And he could sense the same from her.

"I don't know where this." Sterling paused, searching for the right words for their quer connection. "Affinity between you and I is heading. But in the little time I spent with you, I have enjoyed. I think about you alot. Though you haven't admitted it, that you are currently in a relationship, I can sense you two are going through something serious. I want to continue seeing you, but I don't want to get in the way, or to deep, if there's a possibilty that you two may reunite, and work things out."

The right side Patricia mouth widen, exhibiting a sorrow expresssion before she turned her head, to watch the cars pass by on the busy street. Sterling saw her body raise and fall. "Yes, I was in a relationship."

Sterling heard the past tense word, was, and let Patricia continue as she turned her attention back to him. "And yes, you sense right, that we were going through something serious. Our relationship is over. It can't be work out." Patricia sigh again, locking her green eyes with Sterling. "I can't deny that I'm confuse about this attraction with you. Is there really something between us. Or I'm I seeking revenge, for the pain I'm feeling. I know it just to soon for me to get back into another relationship. My world has been devastated by the person who claimed to love me. And I just haven't had any time to collect myself."

"I understand." Sterling taking her hand. "Surely I'm not trying
to rush you to the alter or be committed. I'm not sure I'm ready for a committed relationship. I just wanted to let you know I enjoy spending time with you. We can move what's between us at a snail pace, and see what become of it."

Sterling saw the question mark in her face, not sure of his proposition. He squeezed her hand gently, before speaking. "Check this out. I have to go out town for the two days. That will give you time to think about what you want to do. Okay?"

Patricia thought about it for a long second, then nodded her head.

CHAPTER 47

Patricia drove through the gate of her condo complex. She decided it was time to come home. She scanned the complex parking looking for Glenn's Hummer or Ford dually, before pulling into her garage. A displeasure look appeared on her face, pulling up next to her sixty thousands birthday present.

Gathering her things out the trunk, she made her way to the elevator. Abruptly, Patricia stopped in her tracks, hearing Candy bark. Candy sat next to the Mustang driver door barking. The flout expression returned to Patricia face. "No. The shit is going back." she told Candy. Candy barked twice, as if to questioned her. Patricia gave her a harsh look. "Because I don't accept gifts from cheating bastards. Now let's go." she commanded, in which Candy obey, whinning to the elevator.

Opening the door to her place, Patricia became deaden to find her condo filled with flowers of all sorts. She didn't have to guess where they have come from. She walked over to the largest arrangement of bouquet, consist of lillies, orchards, and color roses. A peach teddy bear held a greeting card. Patricia had no intention in reading the card, but couldn't resist. Reading it out loud. "Saying I'm sorry is not enough. I will move the heavens and earth to have you back. You the only one I love."

"And ever will."

Startled, Patricia looked up to find Glenn leaning against her bedroom door, showing a surprise smile. She sat the card down, to ask why was
he here. "We haven't finish talking."

"What? You forgot to tell me something. Like that bitch Kelly is pregnant."

Glenn's face contorted, wondering how she knew. He was hoping to keep that a secret until a paternity test was done. If the child turns out to be his, Glenn was willing to offer Kelly a large sum of money to keep quiet, and raise the child herself. "Kelly paid me a visit also. She tried to persuade me that she was there vouching your love for me. But I knew her true intention, wanting to know if there was a chance of me ever forgiving you. In which I told her never."

Glenn lowered his head in defeat. "So she told you?"

"Not right up front. I let her know that I followed you two that morning, and saw y'all arguing at StarBuck. Then witnessed the life drain out of you, when she handed you those papers."

"I'm not sure that the baby is mine. We only had sex one time!" he held up one finger, explaining. Patricia scoffed in disdain.

"You sound like one of those ignorant niggers on Murray." she associated Glenn with one of her favorite TV shows. Glenn sometime use to watch the show with her, and she would get upset, when he would make derogatory comments about the blacks men that comes on the show, and make fools of themselves. Glenn made a jeer utterance, deserving Patricia remark.

"Patricia what can I do to make this right?" he pleaded, moving towards her.

Not wanting to harm him, she gave Candy a command to protect. Rising to her feet, Candy came forward growling. Halting in his steps, Glenn stared down at the dog, whom he thought at one time were companions. The moment been filled with contrite, anger, and hate. Glenn turned his eyes back to Patricia, whom now wore the same snare as Candy. Glenn gave a defeated sigh. The same sigh when Kelly handed him the result of her pregnancy test. "You can have the Mustang. It's yours."

"I don't want it."

"Do whatever you please with it."

Patricia didn't respond, but had a thousand ideas, in what she wanted to do. Like run Glenn and Kelly over with it. Glenn started to make
his way out the door, finally concluding that Patricia wasn't ready
to forgive his thoughtless action. As he turned the doorknob, he heard
her phone chime. He waited to see if Patricia would answer it.

"You gonna answer it?"
"It's not important."

"It might be. Maybe your new beau. The black guy with the black
Camero." he displayed a wicked grin, before leaving. Patricia anger deepen,
realizing that Glenn isn't the only one being followed.

Rene had rented a R.V, and brought Sterling and four other of her
best dancers to Louisanna to the Essence festival, in New Orleans.
Along with Nina, Rene and two other dancers had the R.V clouded, smoking
marijuana. Sterling was trying prevent himself from getting high, as
he and the other dancers watched a throwback movie. New Jack City.
While Nina knew that Rene was sort of incoherent, she made sexual stares
at Sterling, which was making him upset. Before they reach New Orleans,
they made a stop in Lafeyette, performing in a small club.
The dancers performed in the popular lady club called Margret. Money,
bras, and panties were flying on the stage, as the men grind to Pretty
Ricky song. Doing his solo performance, Sterling never witness so much
madness, as security had to wrestles off women from the stage. He had
one woman almost ripped off his G-string, while being pulled away.
Sterling thought with the money he made tonight, he could take off
the rest of the week, and maybe take Patricia somewhere, or do some-
thing special for her.
The trip to Louisanna had almost been perfect, until Shaka almost went
to jail for assaulting a transgender, whom he was giving a private dance.

Now at home, Sterling texted Patricia to inform her. Recieving no
immediate response, he assumed that Patricia was busy. Texting again,
"Thinking of you." Sterling had second thoughts, before pressing send.
He figured that he needed to be more patience, knowing what Patricia
was going through. And not add any emotional chaos in her life.
Sterling pressed delete, and looked over at his non-paying roommate,
Max, eating. Tapping his finger on the kitchen table, Sterling mind
still been on Patricia. He couldn’t concieve why he was so drawn to her.
Patricia in noway resembled or reminded him of Erica. Though both were beautiful in their own way. Smart. Ambition, to succeed in life.

"Shit." he cursed, coming to the conclusion that they do resemble. Sterling sigh confused, as he leaned forward to rubbed Max, while he still ate.

"You think she likes me?" he asked Max. Sterling didn't recieve a response, as Max continued chewing his expensive dog food. Looking up to check the clock on the wall, the morning been still young. With no intention of going to work, and in no frame of mind to write, he sat a moment wondering what to do to day.

Suddenly a smile appeared, as he picked up his cell phone, and text.

"Hello cuz. Lunch later?"
"What time?"
"Three. Cheesecake Factory."
"I'm free."
"See U then."

Finishing his apple juice, Sterling smiled down at Max whom was now through eating, and looking at him. Patting him on the head, he remembered he needed to stop by and visit someone before meeting his cousin for lunch.
STERLING pulled up in the driveway of a mauve one story brick home, in Stafford. A small suburb outside of Houston. He grinned seeing the Texans bumper sticker on the Volkwagon Passat. Sterling stepped around the Dodge Ram 4x4 powerwheel, while walking up the walk way. Knocking on the door, he scanned the street of the middle class neighborhood. A chocolate skinned woman answered the door, processing a perfect set of white teeth. With dark brown eyes, her thick mane been pulled up into a afro puff. Dressed in a pair of tan capri pants, and a white Puma shirt, she waved for Sterling to come inside. Embracing him, she kissed him on the cheek. "How are you doing Karen? he asked.

"Fine, that you are here." she replied, closing the door. Karen gestured for him to have a seat. Sterling asked about the whereabout of Dana and Lil Devon. She informed him, that Dana was at practice, and Devon was at her mother.

"Dam, I came by to see little man. Dana told me that he been sick, and you had to take him to the doctor."

"Yeah. Dana had told me that you came to see him practice. Devon is fine. He just had the chicken pots." she made known, flopping on the couch beside him, and tucking her legs under herself. "And also, Dana told me you had some pretty woman with you. You finally found a girlfriend?"
Sterling lightly laughed. "I don't know. Maybe." he sat back on the leather couch, making himself comfortable.

"You like her?"

"Yeah I do." he nodded his head. Sterling gave Karen Patricia name, and how they meet. Giving her a brief detail of the drama Patricia might be going through, she promise to pickup the magazine and read the article written on him. She told Sterling that she was happy that he might finally found someone.

"Yeah." Sterling sighed weary. "Its been five years since Erica died."

"I thought you would never get over her."

"I haven't. And never will. I loved Erica and miss her very much." Both looked at each other in silence, displaying a sorrow smile, contemplating their memories of Erica. Scratching her scalp, Karen cleared
her throat. She apologize, jumping to her feet, for not offering him something to drink or eat. She bursted into laughter, when Sterling asked if she had any Mountain Dew in the house. Which she knew too, that was Erica favorite drink. Apologizing again, that she didn't. "What about Roar Beer?" he made another request.

"That I do have." Karen disappeared into the kitchen. "Is it what your newest interest like?" she shouted. Karen comment forced a restrain laugh from him.

"Not sure. Its what she ordered both times for lunch."

Waiting for Karen return with his drink, Sterling eyes wandered around the livingroom, until it rested on a large white photo album, on the coffee table. He leaned forward to pick it up. Opening it, Sterling gotten emotional choke, looking at the pictures inside.

Their were photos of Erica a few months before she died. Sterling remembered vividly every pictures that he saw. On the ferris wheel, during the LiveStock and Rodeo carnival.

Another one inside the Toyota Center, to see Kanye West in concert.

The four of them having fun in Galveston, as Karen and Erica struked posses, like swimsuit models. Turning the page, Sterling body became numb. His eyes paralyzed. Her smile was radiant, like the morning sun. Her head tilted, looking back, hair blowing in the wind. He remembered just before he snapped the picture. Erica had told him she love him.

Karen had snapped Sterling from his daze, making her way back into the livingroom. Handing him his root beer, she saw that he was flipping through the photo album. She flopped back down beside him, with a wine cooler, leaning over, asking what picture he was starring at.

"The picture I took of Erica on the ferry."

Karen look, crackling a half smile, also remembering that day. "Erica looks like a covergirl model in that picture."

"Yeah." he answered, still thinking back to that day. "We didn't have enough money at the time, so we use to pretend the ferry was a cruise ship." he tittered.

"Erica was so in love with you, whatever you said it is, she believe. Ever since the third grade, there wasn't no other boy or man she wanted, but you."

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"As time passed being with her, I felt the same."
"Erica wasn't allowing no woman to get close to you. Remember in middle school, Erica wanted to beat up that girl Tara. Because she was at your locker, and thought she was trying to hit on you." Karen giggled.

"When only Tara was trying to explain to me about a petition she wanted me to sign about redesigning the school logo." he laughed.

"Yeah, Erica was crazy about you. All night we were on the phone talking about you. She would tell me everything." Sterling leaned back on the couch, looking at Karen bewildered. "Everything?" he questioned.

"Mmm hmm." she gave Sterling a mischievous grin, then sipped her wine cooler.

"Like what?" Sterling curious.
Karen took another sip of her cooler, she locked eyes, giving Sterling a shameful grin, leaning closer to him. "She told me about her plans, wanting to have sex with you. The day. Where and time."

"What else she told you?" Sterling frowned.
"What do you mean? About the day you two had sex?"
"We can start there."

"Nothing." Karen gave him a devious look. "She didn't have to tell me."
Karen held her devious features, seeing the baffled look on Sterling face. She inched closer to him, while continueing speaking. "Erica wasn't the only girl that had a crush on you, growing up." she told him, staring into Sterling eyes with desire. "I saw you two."

"What the hell you mean Karen! That you saw us?" Sterling now becoming furious, hoping he was misunderstanding what she was telling him. Holding eye contact, Karen took a moment.
"I saw y'all have sex."

"WHAT!" Sterling yelled, standing to his feet. "How?"
Karen lowered her head in embarrassment. "Through the window."

"What kind of freaky shit you on!" Sterling pissed.
"You suppose to be with me!" Karen exclaimed.
Sterling features went to anger to shock. "What the hell you talking about now?"
"I saw you first." she began to explain, standing to her feet. "I pointed you out to Erica, and she pursued you before I could build up enough nerves to tell you that I liked you."
Sterling exhaled heavily, rubbing his hand across his face. "Did Erica know?"
"That I wanted to talk to you back then. No."
"This isn't some cool shit to drop on me Karen."
"You asked Sterling."
"You could have told me other secrets, between you and Erica. Not you peeping in windows, watching people have sex. Then telling me that you had a crush on me."
"Have." she corrected him.
Sterling stunned expression reappeared. "Karen you can't have a crush on me. You married to my bestfriend, whom you have a son with. And he's on the verge of giving you a dream life."
"True. Don't get me wrong Sterling, I love Dana very much. And I have no intention of leaving him. He's a good husband and father." Karen replied, creeping towards Sterling. He saw the desire in her eyes, as she ceased inches in front of him. At five seven, she stared up at Sterling, with no more desire in her eyes, but sexual lust. "You know when Dana and I are having sex, in my mind, sometime I can still see you making love to Erica. Then I closed my eyes and vision its me you making love too."
Sterling sighed deeply, running both hands against the grain of his mohawk. He couldn't believe the shit Karen was saying. Never in all the years he known Karen, she gave any indication that she liked him.
"I'm asking you Sterling just this one time." she spoked, interceding his chaotic thoughts.
"Karen, you not asking me what I'm thinking?"
Taking his hands, Karen answered. "I'm asking you one time to make love to me. Just like I saw you do with Erica."
"You are a psycho." he retorted, before turning to leave.
Sterling found Kiya sitting in her Navigator, in the Cheesecake Factory parking lot, listening to some old school Keith Sweat. Knocking on the window, he startled her. She gave Sterling a evil look, letting the window down. "You scare me boy. Don't do that shit." she cursed. "And you are late." she added, looking at the clock on her dashboard.

"Sorry. I had to make a stop and visit someone."

Inside, a young waitress escorted them to a table. The caramel skin, and burgundy micro-braids woman kept starring curious at Sterling. After taking their order, she flashed Sterling her colgate smile, with her thick lips. Kiya rolled her eyes, witnessing this act many times. Women drooling over Sterling. Sterling jolted abit, looking at the austere features on Kiya face. "What? he hunched his shoulders.

"I can't help if I'm sexy."

"Shut up ugly. The women don't consider once that I could be your wife or girlfriend." she retorted, making Sterling chuckle. "You know Linda been asking about you."

A muddled expression appeared on his face, wondering who is Linda. "Who's Linda."

"The Andy that own the daycare that the twin goes too."

"Really." recollecting the vision in his mind of the chocolate middle age beauty.

"Hell. she might give me half off,if you go out with her a few times."

"You trying to pimp me?"

"Hell Yeah. If I can cut half this high ass daycare bill."

While laughing at his cousin reply, the waitress brought the order of Po-Boy shrimps sandwiches, and two cherry cheesecake. The young belle asked if she could get them anything esle, spreading her painted red lips. Informing that they had everything they needed at the moment, the waitress then tilted her head right to left, studying Sterling. She rasied her finger as though she was school, wanting to ask a question. "Are you the stripper in this month Urban Houston magazine?" Then snapping her fingers, trying to remember his name. "Sterling, a.k.a, Black Osiris."

Sterling exhibited his charming smile, nodding his head. "I'm he."
"Dam, you better looking in person."
"Thank you." he held his smile.
"Are you performing tonight?"
"No, I'm sorry. I'll be back on stage next week."
"Dam." she was disappointed. "Well is it okay if I can take a picture with you?"
"Sure."

Pulling out a Galaxy phone from her apron, Sterling rose from the table, placing his arm around the waitress, cheezing for two pictures. Kiya watched shaking her head, amazed how these women just drool over her cousin. Sterling sat back down, and chuckled at Kiya, displaying a, "That don't make no dam sense look"
"Men would flock to mya, if you wasn't wearing a wedding ring. And didn't have that Andre the Gaint husband."
She laughed at Sterling comment. "I'm satisfied. I love my big teddy bear."

"Chris is a good man. Loving, caring husband and father." Sterling praised Kiya husband, then taking a bite of his shrimp sandwich. He heard his cell phone chime, informing he had a text. Glancing to see who it was, Kiya saw the disturb look on his face.

"Who's that?"
"Karen."
"Dana wife?"
"Mmm hmm." Sterling nodded, rereading the text. "I'm sorry. I was way out of line. Please don't tell Dana."
Kiya heard the trouble in Sterling sigh, and asked what's wrong. Sterling held up a finger for Kiya to hold one minute, to text Karen back.
"I want. I love Dana to much. And he loves you and Devon. 'Never do that shit again.'"
"I know. I want. Thanks." Karen responded back to his three annotation. Sterling placed his cell phone back on the table, retrieving his Mountain Dew, he exhaled, leaning back in his chair. Kiya could see the disturbed feature in Sterling, as he drink his soda. She stopped chewing, asking what's wrong with Karen. "Is everything alright with her and Dana?"

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"Yeah, but something happen that I would never expect."
"What's that?"
"Karen wanted to have sex with me." he answered, looking at Kiya seriously.
"You bullshitting?"
"Mmm hmm." Sterling nodded, placing his drink back on the table, and ran the whole story to her. "You know Dana is working out with The Texans, trying to make the team. Or least the practice squad."
"I didn't know. That's great."
"Yeah. Well me and my friend went to see him practice, and Karen wasn't there, because she had to take their son Devon to the doctor. I promise to stop by to check on lil man and Karen. Devon wasn't home. He was at Karen mother house. Looking at a old photo abulum, with Erica and the four of us. Karen tells me this story that she saw me first, and that I should have been with her, not Erica."
"Really?"
"Yeah. But asking me to have sex with her wasn't the fucked up part."
"What was?" Kiya frowned curious.
"She was looking through the bedroom window, the day we first had sex."
"No bullshit! That bitch is freaky and twisted."
Sterling remained silence, tapping his finger on the rim of his glass, replaying what happen earlier with karen. He was furious knowing that he and Erica first intimate moment been violated. Erica made plans to make sure their first experience would be perfect. She thought she could confide in Karen, her best friend. But I guess not, all the time jealous of their relationship.
"So she texted you to make sure you don't tell Dana." Kiya figured, interrupted Sterling thoughts.
"I don't have to ask if you going to tell Dana, because I know you love him like a brother. But you should have let that bitch squirm."
"Holding secret over people head isn't my forte."
"WHAT! Kiya exclaimed, leaning forward. "What about the time you blackmail me, sneaking through my bedroom window after curfew from a party."
Sterling laughed remembering. "Why in the hell you was in my room anyway?"
"You and your girlfriends were so loud, when they dropped you off. I knew you wasn't walking through the front door at two in the morning."

"So you waited to catch me, so you can blackmail me?"

"Not at first. But when you started to plea with me for not to tell Aunt Tammy, I decide to have a little fun."

"Yeah. Made me clean up your room for a week. And cut the grass."

Sterling laughed again, thinking back. "You should have seen the neighbors faces as they drove by, seeing you mowing the lawn, and me laying back drinking sodas."

"I hate you." Kiya glowered.

Sterling continued laughing, hearing his cell phone chime again. His laughter stop, as his mouth widen, cheek to cheek. Kiya puzzled by his expression. "Who is that, that got you looking like the joker?"

"My friend." he held up a finger. "Hi, glad to hear from you. Busy day. Had two interviews."

"Are you at the office?"

"No, in my car, about to go home."

"Are you in for tonight?"

"I was. Why?"

"Maybe I though we could go see a movie."

"Which one?"

"Planet of the Apes."

"Where? Time?"

"Let me check and get back to you."

"Okay."

"Later."

The whole time Kiya watched Sterling texts back and forth with a paralyzed smile. Kiya lifted the bun of her shrimp sandwich, and grabbed one of her shimp, eating it. She spoke after swallowing. "What got you all aroused? Beyonce?"

"Someone more beautiful than her."

"Who?"

"Patricia, the co-owner of Urban Houston. She's the woman that interviewed me. Patricia is the friend I took to see Dana practice."

Sterling informed, flipping through the picture gallery on his phone. "Here's a pictures of her, Desean Watson and me." he handed Kiya the
phone.

"She's pretty." Kiya studied her features. "Half breed. You think she's the one?"

"I don't know. I haven't been intrique about any woman since Erica. Patricia was just in a relationship, in which something happen. I don't know the whole story yet, but she assured me their relationship can't be worked out. And she not ready to jump into another relationship. So I'm moving in a snail pace."

"For who's purpose, yours or her's? Kiya questioned, wondering if he was ready to move forward, knowing his heart will be forever Erica. Sterling reached for his drink, and remained silent, scanning the establishment, pondering on his cousin question."
Sterling and Patricia moved along with the flow of the crowd, leaving the movie theater. The quarter of the moon revealed itself, with a slight breeze. Sterling had his thumbs in his front pockets of his slacks, walking Patricia to her car. She expressed how she enjoyed the movie, and how motion pictures technology has improve so much, making everything look so real.

"Yeah Caesar is a beast. And I mean that literally and physically."
Sterling lightly laughed, making Patricia do the same.

"Do you think that can ever happen. Chimps and apes becoming that smart?"
Sterling chuckled again at her question. "No, I don't think so. I think the Creator created man, with a certain intelligent. Now sometime we don't use it. But every other being is created to do what it suppose to do. Animal act on instincts. Now computers." they stop at the rear of Patricia car. "That might can take over the world."

"Why do people think that?"
"Why, you don't think so?"

"No. Because all we have to do is unplug it." Patricia threw up her hands, and shrugged her shoulders. Sterling forehead wrinkled, as he scratched his head, thinking about all the movies he watched, concerning computers, threaten to launch missile attacks. With all the engineers, generals in the room, no one ever thought of shutting down the power.

"Things that makes you say mmmmm."
Patricia smiled, replacing the constellation in the sky. Amazing how simple some problems are." Sterling replied.
Silence passed between them as Sterling watched Patricia removed some strings of hair from her eyes. He still didn't know why he felt this magnetic energy with her. True, he have seen and been with beautiful women. Some even more beautiful than Patricia. And wealthy. But none he felt a true connection or attraction too, in like he had with Erica.
Watching a young couple walk by, Patricia ended their silence asking how things turned out in New Orleans.

"The women were lovely, horny and wild. Tossing more than their money on the stage." he laughed, being honest. "The booking was a
great idea by Rene. Abling me to take the rest of the week off."

"The women love you that much." she exhibited a playful jealous look.

"The loved us all. Even those with the confusion or uncomplete gender."
Patricia was sort 66 baffled by Sterling last remark. "Uncomplete gender."

"Yeah. Shaka was giving a private show, and found out the person he was shaking his private in front of, was a transgender. Still with a rod. Shaka is from Africa. Kenya. And homo sexuals are not accepted there. The outcome there could be death. He was fortunate to catch a murder case."

"What did he do?"

"Broke the transgender nose, and increased his or hers dental insurance."
Patricia face gringed, having a mental picture of what happen. Removing the strings of hair from her eyes again, she asked Sterling what would he had done. "I don't think I would have done what Shaka did. But I would be pissed."

"You have something against L.G.T.B?"

"No, not at all. Be all that you can be. And what you wanna be. I just believe I have the right to know if you are a man or woman. Not what you think you are. That's deceitful."

"Meaning?" Patricia wanted clarification.

"If a transgender tries go to bed with a straight man and doesn't disclose he's still packing. It could be some deadly reprecussion."

"What if they have surgery?"

"It doesn't matter. He was lead to bed under false pretense. Give him or her the decision." Sterling paused, scratchting his chin, thinking.

"Would like for a person who has AIDS, to tell you first?"

"Yeah, but I don't think that's the same."

"Sure it is. I hear stories of people who catches AIDS, because their partner didn't tell them. And they are angry and sleep with anyone and everyone, spreading it. It can be the same if a straight man finds out he been deceived, and becomes mentally F-up, wanting to seek revenge on transgenders."
Sterling saw Patricia expression that she been contemplating on what he just said. "You hear all the time the L.G.T.B community say, when
they were in the closet, or was seeking what their sexuality is. They clamored to finding their true self. And when they do, they need to be truthful with others, because everyone doesn't agree with their suppose truth you found about yourself."

"I can see your point." Patricia bit her bottom lip. Silence again, both of their attention were drawn to a car horn in the parking lot a row behind them. A fender bender almost occur, when a driving backing out, didn't see that car behind him. Learning that things were find, Sterling and Patricia brought their focus back to themselves. Holding eye contact momentarily, Sterling check the time on his Fossil watch. A minute pass ten, he asked Patricia if she given any thought about what he discussed the last time they were together.

"The affinity between us?" she noted, showing a solemn look.
"Yes." smiling uncertain.
"Some." Patricia lowered her head. "Alot." giving Sterling her honest answer. He waited patiently for her to reveal her thoughts. Patricia lifted her head, letting her eyes roam Sterling handsome face. A weary look covered her's, before she spoke. "Like I mention before, there's no chance of me reconciling with my boyfriend. And I'm not looking to get into another relationship any time soon."

"Okay. I understand." Sterling hiding his disappointment.
"But." she reached for his hands. "I would like to continue seeing you in a platonic manner."

"Friend." he interpret.
Patricia shooked her head. "For now."
Sterling looked at her for a moment, then flashed a light smile.
"For now." he repeated.

Patricia glared down at her hands while Sterling sooth them. His hands were big, smooth and teasing. The comfort of his touch was castin a spell over her. She thanked God when Sterling broke her trance, asking when they could get together again. She cleared her throat, simultaneously removing her hands from his grasp. "I have to put together the interviews and photographs. Also, I have to give a speech at a local high school."
"Really." Sterling impressed.
"High school girls. You know for the girl empowerment campaign."
"What about this weekend?" he asked, seeing that the rest of her week is busy. "I'll cook for you dinner."
"What, you can cook?" she giggled.
"I had to learn how when I was a kid."
"What are you cooking?"
"You just have to accept my invitation and see."

CHAPTER 50

After work the evening shift at the court house, Diane sat in her Maseratti with her eyes closed listening to some Marvin Gaye, Sexual Healing. Just like the song, she been in the mood of some sexual healing. William had texted her just before court had started, informing that he was home. He was gone to California for the week, on business, concerning the children network. Glad that her husband was back, Diane was hoping that William been up to fulfilling his husband duty, because after some weeks, she was feeling like the first verse of the song. She was hot like an oven.
Inside, she walked down the foyer, and ranned into Mrs. Emily coming out the kitchen. Exchanging greeting, Mrs. Emily asked Diane if she could get her anything.

"Something to eat? Something to drink?"
Informing her that she was fine, Diane thanked her, and asked about the whereabout of her husband. "I believe his in yall bedroom. After I prepare him something to eat, Mr. Willington commented how tired he was from the business trip."
A chargin expression covered Diane face. She prayed that William wasn't already sleep. If he was, she plan to wake him. She needed her inch scratch. And she was in no mood in hearing, NOT TONIGHT, I HAVE A HEADACHE SHIT!
Diane said goodnight to Mrs. Emily and swiveled on her Jimmy Choo heels, and headed upstairs. Entering her bedroom, she heard the television, blaring out the chaos that was continuing in the Trump ad-
administration. He said that his administration was running like a fine
tune machine. Less than six months, about eight people on his staff
has either resigned, or been fired.
White America, has truly elected an idiot, Diane thought.
Turning eyes to thick high pots bed, the chargin expression returned
to her face. Finding William back, against the headboard his head leaning on
his left shoulder. The remote still in his hand. "Hell NO."
Diane walked over to the bed. She kick off her shoes, and pulled up her
knee high shirt, before crawling on to the bed. She removed the re-
 mote from his grasp, then crawled on top on him. Diane woke her husband
with two soft kises on the lips. Opening his grey eyes, to the smiling
face of his wife, he greeted her, then turned his attention to Diane
massaging his dick, through his pajamas.

"I'm glad your home. I miss you." she kissed him again.

"I miss you too." repeating the mutual feeling, cracking a half smile.
Diane asked how things went in San Diego, as she continued to squeeze
and massaged his penis. William informed that he met with several
new advertizers, and pitch for the new show. "One of the producer
found a eight year old girl from Louisanna, who has a huge following
on social media. The gives the daily news, and dance tips, and do
impersonation."

With the ability to multi-task, Diane listen to her husband speak
about the new black talent from the Boot, while at the sametime, notic-
ing that his dick went limped. "That's great, that things went fine."
she climbed on top of him, and begun grinding. "You say that you
miss me, but it look like somebody didn't." she kissed him again.

"I'm sorry honey, but I'm not feeling to well."

"What's wrong?" Diane trying to sound concern, but was furious inside.

"Someting I eat."

"What did Mrs. Emily cook for you?"

"Some salmon cassarole. I don't it agree with the taco salad I ate
at the airport."

Diane let out a frustrated sigh, not believing the shit her husband
was telling her, as she climbed off of him. "Can I get you something
for your upset stomach." she asked, holding in her scowl.
"Thank honey, but I already took some Pepto Bismol. Raincheck." he gave his wife an apologetic grin.

"Do I have a choice." she said in her head. "Raincheck." she reluctant agreed, flashing a fake warm smile. She leaned to kiss him one last time on the forehead, and told him she was going to take a shower.

Diane was hoping that the hot shower would efface her lascivious desire, at least until the morning. If William was feeling better, maybe she could cash in her raincheck, with a quicky in the morning, before he leaves for work.

Somehow the feel of the soft sponge caressing her body, reminded her of Sterling's touch. Closing her eyes, dam she wish he was here in the shower with her. Diane could feel the heat of his breath, as he whispered in her ear, that he missed her. As he layed tender kisses on her back and neck, she whispered looking up back at him. "I miss you too." then kissed him.

Feeling Sterling solid erection against her body, made her nipples hard, and pussy wet like the running water. The warmth of the shower water, with the touch of Sterling hands over her body drove her mad. Diane let out a moan in pleasure, when Sterling inserted his fingers inside her wetness. "He don't love you. He don't know what you want. he don't know how to satisfy you, like I can."

Sterling words in Diane head, had her hallucinating. "Look at him." Daine turned her stares out the shower glass, to see William standing there. His eyes in shock, looking at them. Sterling leaned Daine forward, placing her hands on the wall. Her eyes never diverting from William paralyzed face, as he witness his wife mouth open, sucking in air, as her beautiful brown eyes widen, when Sterling slid his big dick inside her. William watched helpless, hearing his wife called out the Creator name, asking for forgiveness and thanks. "O'Father forgive me for my sin, but thank you for sending him to fuck my brains out."

Diane looked back at Sterling in bliss, enjoying the state of rapture he had taken her. "Show him baby what I want. Show him baby how to satisfy me." she commanded breathless, making eye contact with her husband, William stared impotent, as Daine braced herself, moaning
in pleasure, while Sterling clutched her waist to pound into her pussy. Diane opened her eyes to find one foot on the shower wall, and her fingers deep in her slit. She stopped the rotation of her body moving in the opposite direction of her hand. Diane removed her hand from her wetness, and saw her been covered in white liquid. Washing it off under the shower water, she turned off the hot water, replacing it with cold.

Diane body tense, sticking her head under. For sure she knew it would turn off her oven.

Standing in front of the bathroom mirror, drying off. Looking at her hair, Diane now needed a emergency appointment with her beautician, after messing up her stylish cut under the water. Opening up the drawer, she grabbed a comb. Still naked, Diane comb her thick shoulder length hair to the back. Like the feel of the soft sponge, the teeth of the comb, reminded her when Sterling stroked his fingers through her wet hair, when they were swimming in the Gulf of Mexico. She cut eyes to see Sterling smiling behind her, in the mirror. "Dam, you have a body that would make a twenty year old jealous." he said.

Diane gave him a appreciated smile, and thanked him. She watched excited in the mirror, Sterling creep towards her. Her body was covered with goosebumps, he ran his hands smoothly across her shoulders and arms. Sterling kissed the back of her neck, and lowered his kisses down her spine, pausing at the divider of her round cheeks. Laying a kiss on both buns, Sterling parted her cheeks, and lick her exit hole. The sound of the comb hitting the sink, brought Diane back out of her second erotic fantasy with Sterling. "Jesus, what have you done to me." she said to herself in the mirror.

She put on her lilly print terrycloth thigh high robe, and went into the bedroom. Diane paused for a long moment, looking at William sleep. She loved her husband very much. William have giving her a wonderful life. A lovely home, and two beautiful children. She felt alittle a-shame about her adulterated acts, and fantasy. But to an extent, William was alittle to blame for that. Diane inclined her head, thinking. Something been off lately with William, that she couldn't figure out. Her concious keep yelling inside her that it was something terrible. Whatever William was doing, would come to the light soon. "Feeling
naustaed my ass." she thought, turning around to grabbed her cell phone off the dresser, and head back into the bathroom. Sitting on the egde of the claw foot bath tub, she scrolled the rolo-dex in her phone, to find the number of the person she waited to call. Pressing send, a anxious grin appeared, while waiting for the person to answer on the other end.

"Hello lady in the black robe." the unstrange person answered. "Hi handsome." Diane pleased that he answered. "I saw your article in the magazine. You look nice."

"Thank you."
"What are you doing?" she questioned, pulling open her robe.
"Just pulling up in my complex."
"Coming home from work?"
"No. I took the week off." Sterling explained about he and the fellas. going to New Orleans, for the Essence festival. Hesitsnt at first, Sterling revealed that he was coming home from the movies.
"Surely you didn't go by yourself?"
"Mmm, no." he lightly chuckled.
"What a client?" now curious.
"No." Sterling laughed again. "A friend, she say for now."
Caught off guard by Sterling last remark, she uncross her legs, standing to her feet. "So you think you have found someone?" she asked, trying not to sound jealous. Standing in front of the mirror, Diane rannd her finger through her hair, with a jaundice look.
"Maybe. Time well tell."
"A woman you met at work?"
"Well, it's the woman that interview me for the magazine."
"Really. Wow." Diane stunned, closing her robe. "Ummm, I saw the pictures of her in the back of the magazine. Patricia is her name, right?"
"Yes."
"I can see why you would like her. She's pretty." Diane paused, turning away from her reflection. "I'm happy for you, that you might have found someone."
"My heart is open, and fingers crossed." Sterling responded, getting out of his car.
"I guess I can cancel one of my reason I'm calling," she tittered jokely.
Sterling knew his first reason and apologized. He liked Patricia very much, and wanted not to ruin her chances in furthering their relationship.
"I'm off the market. For now, I'm only available at work. Strictly dancing. So, what the other reason for your call?"
"Oh yes." Diane snapping out the stunning revelation. "I have had the chance to speak with the senator, who can help your mother in getting release.
"Great." Sterling stop in front of his townhouse door. "What did he say?"
"Well, I explained to him what happen, and he said he would check his contacts, and get back with me later."
"Thank you very much Diane. I don't know how I'm going to ever repay you."
Diane turned back to the mirror, looking at her earnest features for a second, before a wicked grin replaced it. Pulling opened her robe, she slid her pointed finger down her chest, between her breasts.
"Don't worry, I'll find someway." she let him know.
STERLING shooked his head trying to remain patience while being 
pat search, as he entered the prison. After taking everything out of 
his pocket, he turned to the middle age female guard, holding out his 
arms. Slowly the heavy set boss lady ranned her plastic glove hands 
down Sterling arms, to his shoulders, massaging his traps. "Your Grace 
Maxwell son, aren't you?" she asked, now running her hands slowly 
down his back.

"Yes." he answered. Sterling tittered, shaking his head again, as 
the guard copt a free feel of his ass, while she continued down his 
legs.

"Your the talk of the unit."

"Really?" Sterling surprised.

"Yes." she answered, standing upright, and placing her hands on his 
chest. "Mmmm." she copt another free feel, and moved sexual down his 
abs, speaking. "Yeah, we all read the article on you in Urban Houston 
magazine."

Sterling frowned looking back at her when she squeeze his dick. "Was 
that necessary?"

"Have to make sure that your not packing anything illegal." she gave 
Sterling a sinful smile. "You even better looking in person..."

"Thankyou." he forced a smile.

"Have a nice visit." she gestured for him to enter the visitation 
area.

Sterling stop by the snack machine to by some sandwiches and candy, 
before his mother came. He thought it been a perfect day to visit out- 
side. While waiting on his mother, he opened his soda, then scanned 
the inmates and visitors. He paused finding a pair of pretty ebony eyes, 
lock on him, wearing white. The young light skinned beauty gave him 
a soft smile and a wink. Sterling saw that she was being visit by a 
man around her age, wrestling with a toddler. He wondered if it was her 
child. He returned the secret greeting with a nod and half smile. 
Suddenly Sterling been disturbed by a voice while taking a swallow of 
his soda. "There must be someone special in your life?"
Sterling looked up to give the middle age woman a warm smile. "Why do
you assume that?"

"I never knew you to drink nothing but Mountain Dew."

"Your assumption may have some truth." he chuckled, rising to his feet,
to give his mother a loving hug. Sterling stepped back to examine her.
Though he had miss her very much, the time in prison had brought back
his mother beauty. Grace long thick wavy hair was no longer in corn-
rows, but combed to the back. Her white uniform, starch. She had on
a pair of mesh Reebok, that were now sold in commissary. "You look
good."

"Thank you." she flushed, appreciated.

"Shoot, I'm going to have to find a way to keep all the men abate." Grace laughed at her son comment. "Ain't no man going to want a ex-con
for a woman."

"With your beauty and paralegal skills you attained in here, those
lawyers gonna be asking you to work late, claiming they need some re-
search done, but really want to do some research on you."

"Yeah right." Grace continued laughing, as they took a seat across
from one another. "Surprised to see you this weekend. What brings you?
she asked observing the food on the table, then choosing the turkey
sandwich and Dr. Pepper.
Sterling face contorted by her question. "Your my mother. I love you,
and miss you."

"That's sweet." she gave him a motherly smile. I love you too." she
reached for his hand. Sterling patted her hands, and revealed the
second reason for the visit.

"Plus, I have some good news. Remember that judge that I said I knew."

"The one that you were." Grace raised an eyebrow. Sterling held in
his laughter with a smirk. He avoided responding to her query, and
informed his mother that she talk to her senator friend whom has con-
tacts with the parole board.

"She gave him the rundown of what happen, and he will look into it
and see what he can do."

"That sounds promising."

"A recommendation from a senator, is almost like a pardon from the
governor."
Grace made a question expression. "I hope so. I'm ready to get out of this hell hole." she opened her sandwich and soda. Sterling watched her take a bite.

"You have money on your books?"

"Plenty. Thank you." she answered with a mouthful. Picking up her soda to wash it down, Sterling mother let him know that she received the pictures he sent of the Essence festival. "Look like you had nice time."

"Yeah, it wasn't all work. You see that I met some singer and stars. Your girl Patti Labelle and Mary J. Steve Harvey. Erica Badu, and my girl Taraji P."

"You like Taraji?"

"I love me some Cookie." he laughed. "When you are release, we're going to next year festival."

"I would like that. I'm always showing you off to the girls in here."

"I sort of detect that." Sterling gaffawed.

Grace raised her eyebrow again. "Why you say it like that? If its a bad thing."

"Well the guard told me that all the women in here saw my article in the magazine."

"Miss Johnson."

"I guess that's her name, who does the pat down."

"What she tried to hit on you?" Grace giggled.

"No, she did more than pat me down."

"Like what?" Grace frowned. Sterling waved it off, and requested for his mother not to worry about it.

"Just keep your nose clean and stay out of trouble, so you can come home."

Grace turned her head to see Miss Johnson through the window inside. Her brown eyes narrowed in anger. She wasn't sure that she was going to let Miss Johnson get away for assaulting her son. Grace would forever feel guilty, for what she allow to happen to Sterling in the past. Her being hooked on heroin wasn't no excuse.

She turned her attention back to her son, whom was turning up his root beer.

"So who is this new woman in your life?"
Grace knew that Sterling drink Mountain Dew in the memory of Erica. He leaned forward, rotating his soda, starring at it for a moment. He gave his mother a half smile, looking at her. "It's the woman that interviewed me for the magazine."

"The mix breed girl?"

"Mmm hmm." Sterling nodded.

"She's pretty."

"And smart." he added. Sterling informed his mother that he been seeing Patricia for some weeks. That she just ended a relationship, and that they were friends for now. "We're taking things slow."

"Taking things slow is maybe a good thing for you two. To make sure she is over her relationship. And you, ready to open your heart after Erica."

"It's been almost five years."

"Yeah. But you loved her for a long time. Since the third grade."

"Mmmm." Sterling stared off, remembering the first time Erica told him, she like him.

Bringing his stares back to his mother, he found her with a mischief grin. Knowing that she been thinking. "Why are you grinning, as if you got away with something?"

"I can see you and Patricia having pretty babies."

Sterling gaffawed at his mother comment. "OH NO!" he waved his hands. "You thinking way to far ahead."
Early that Saturday evening, Terrell patrolled the northside Aldine Mail route area by himself. His Mariner was in East Texas, where's he from attending a funeral. Listening to Chance the Rapper new song, "Problem With Me." Terrell been opposite of the song. No pen, no pad to write tickets. The sun was shinning and the hood was at peace. Terrell cursed in delight, looking at two fine female in tight gym shorts, walking down the street. Yeah like Ice Cube said, Today Was A Good Day.

Driving a few blocks, he drove into the parking lot of a convient store, in need of getting something to drink. Before pulling on the handle of the door, he listen to an accident reported on 45 freeway and Crosstimber. Five miles away from the scene, he let another officer handle the situation, since there were no injuries reported. Getting out Terrell spoke and left alone the homeless man sitting out in front of the store. He stop in his tracks, after bumping into a woman exiting the store. He took a moment to observe her attire. Wearing a pair of open strap Sophia Webber high heels, and tight Pzi jeans, and a yellow blouse that exposed alot of her cleavage. The twenty something woman long high lighted micro braids flowed around her soft structure face. Her full lips painted dark red, The odious stare from her pretty brown eyes offset the rest of her beauty. "Latanya." Terrell said her name, surprised running into her.

"Terrell." she replied, giving him a quick lookover with a snarl expression, as though that she was disgusted with his uniform and profession. Terrell looked down and saw that she had purchase two cases of wine cooler.

"You know its not safe to drink and drive." he joked, displaying a wicked grin.

"This is for a surprise party at my beauty shop."

"A surprise hunh." Terrell raised an eyebrow.

"Yeah. A baby shower." Latanya revealed, now showing a sinister smile herself. Knowing that the mention of anything concerning a baby would sting Terrell deeply. His ebon'y eyes narrowed, making his forehead wrinkle, giving Latanya a look that could kill. The cow bell of someone exiting the store,
brought Terrell out of his furious rage, of wanting to choke the life out of his former high school sweetheart. He tittered, scratching his head, as he scanned the parking lot for her Escalade, but spotted a expensive American made sedan.

"I guess that your Lincoln Continental?"

"Yeah." Latanya looked back at her Coco Cola color sixty thousand ride, on 22 inch Ashanti. "Brandon bought it for me, because I keep getting pulled over in the Escalade for having dark tinted windows."

Brandon was Yamaha real name. The name she calls him by. Latanya response cause a smirk on Terrell face.

"Behind dark tinted windows is where most criminals activities are done." he returned the satirize.

Latanya resisted her laughter, again telling Terrell he needed to let it go, of what happen in the past. "You have a beautiful wife, and son. And I'm with Brandon and we have a son. Live the life that you have now Terrell, and let me live the one I have." she told him, before trying to swivel on her heels and leave. Terrell grabbed her arm.

"It's hard Latanya!" he told her harshly. "I love my wife very much, but she can never be you. I love you still. And always will."

Remorse covered Latanya face, as she was being pulled into Terrell sorrow and affliction. "Don't do this to me Terrell." she plead, looking away.

"Latanya don't you ever think about the dreams we wanted to share. Or our baby?"

She turned to look into the pitiful eyes of Terrell. Lost for words, she cased her eyes downward. "He's gonna bring you down Latanya. I'm going to bring him down, by any means necessary."

She looked up at Terrell with unbelief for a moment. Latanya studied the man face she once loved in anger. In wanting to destroy the man she loves now and her family. "I have to go." was the only thing she said. Terrell tighten his grip, as Latanya tried to leave. She glared down at his hand, and Terrell released her, feeling the heat of her eyes.

He watched her hurried to her car and get inside. Turning th ignition, Terrell heard the roar of the turbo engine. Placeing her hand on the gearshift, Latanya gave Terrell one last austere stare, before throwing
the Lincoln in reverse.

CHAPTER 53

Sterling been all smile after opening the door to find Patricia looking lovely. The violet top she wore over her L.A capri jeans, bared her left shoulder, and had one sleeve, with a acute angle cut in the front. A nice black and white stone necklace hung nicely around her neck. Wearing Todd's black strap high heeels, Sterling noticed that Patricia's toes were painted the same color, as her nails. Her hair been permed straight. Patricia returned Sterling welcoming smile. "You look nice."

"Thank you."
Sterling step back and gestured for her to come inside. Patricia entered, and survey Sterling townhome. She been impressed with the decor of his place. Sterling livingroom was furnished with a suede and leather couch, that been shape like a music note. A lounge chair wide enough for two, was also made of the same material. A two glass swivel table sat in front of it. Books and photos, filled the built-in-bookshelves. Patricia green eyes were drawn to two photos. One of Sterling holding a woman around the waist, wearing a white uniform. She figured to be his mother. The second, was a selfie of Sterling and a beautiful teenage girl on a ferris wheel, in which Patricia assumed to be Erica. She walked over to the crown molded fireplace, to get a closer look at a painting that caught her eye. Patricia thought it was an exquisite piece. It was a black woman, wearing a black, blue, and yellow kaleidoscope dress. Also wearing red stocking on her arms and legs, and black lipstick. Her ebony eyes were underline in pink, like a football player. Five solid triangles represented her hair style. Maybe an afro puff, Patricia thought. "Beautiful painting. Who's the artist?"

"Star. A woman that sells her work at the flea market."
"She has talent. Too much, to be exhibiting it in a flea market."
Sterling walked up behind Patricia speaking, "Maybe you can help Star in getting exposure in your magazine."

"I think that's a good idea." she turned to him and smile. Patricia's coquette look in her eyes, as she roamed Sterling handsome face.
"You have a very nice place. I love the decor. I see dancing is paying you well."

"It paid the rent." he softly chuckled.

"And its has other benefits." Patricia jested.
She inhaled Sterling musk. The scent of his cologne been intoxicated.
His fitted dark green pullover Polo shirt, framed his wide athletic
upper body. Patricia nosed twitch, as another scent invaded her nostrils,
that cause her to look around Sterling and towards the kitchen.

"Whatever you cooking smells good."

"I hope it taste better."

"Why? I thought you said you can cook." Patricia puzzled.
"I can. It's a chinese dish I found in a magazine, and its the first
time preparing it. It's shrimp and Carolina gold rice."

"I don't know what the hell Carolina Gold rice is, but its hard to
believe the wonderful aroma I'm smelling can test bad."
Sterling gave her a possible gesture with his face. "I didn't know what
Carolina rice was either. But I learned its a type of long grain rice,
grown on a family plantation for generations. Had to go to an organic
market to find it."

"Mmmm. I see that you went alittle out your way." she smiled.
"For good reason." he replica her teasing smile. "Dinner is ready, if
you are ready to eat."

"It's the reason why I'm here, right?" holding her soft smile.
"Yes it is." he laughed, stepping aside, and gestured towards the din-
ning area.
Sterling been a gentleman, pulling out Patricia chair. Thanking him,
Sterling promise to be right back. Returning with a eighty dollar bottle
of red wine, and glasses, he spoke, while pouring Patricia a glass.

"The chef of this recipe claims red wine goes well with the dish."
He watched her as she took a taste of her wine. "Mmmm. Nice. Rich."
she approved.

"Good." Sterling held up a finger, and again promise to be right back
with the food. Back with two plates, Patricia reacted in awe, comment-
ting that the meal he prepared, looked like it came straight out of
Patricia gave him annoying smirk. "You know what I mean."
"I know. Thank you. I wanted everything to be right. You know the saying to a woman heart is through her stomach."

"I thought that was the saying for a woman when she's trying to get a man?"

"It is. But this way is much affordable than buying a diamond ring."
He replied being funny.

"I see that you are a funny man tonight."

"At times I tells a few jokes."

Picking up their utensil at the sametime, Sterling allowed Patricia to be the first to taste test the meal. Abit impatience, he waited and watched, as Patricia displayed many expression, while she was wed.

Suddenly Sterling flinched, now seeing a feature of disgust on Patricia face. "What wrong?" he asked sounding disspirit.

Patricia begun to gag, as if she wanted to throw up. Sitting across from her, Sterling rose from his seat, rushing to her side. Frightened, he questioned if she's okay. Patricia looked up at him, still gagging as though she been near death, then arruptly stop. Sterling been at lost when Patricia produce a pleasing smile. "This is delicious."

Sterling exhaled deeply, realizing Patricia wasn't dying or having a allergic reaction. Raising an eyebrow, simultaneously holding a frown.

"Oh. I see that you have jokes now."

"At times I can be funny too."

"Touche." Sterling giving her a you got me look. Taking a seat, he asked Patricia, "So you really think it taste good?"

"Delicious." she took another bite.

Picking up his fork, Sterling tasted the new recipe for the first time. His facial expressed approval how well it tasted. When Patricia asked, Sterling revealed to her some of the ingredients and spices, that gave it a tangy flavor. She hummed in delight, taking another bite.

"Is there anything that you can't do?" she questioned, reaching for her glass of wine.

"There's alot I can't do." he laughed.

"Like what?"

"Sing."

"That's surprising. I assumed that you could sing like Brain McKnight."

"No. More like Tito Jackson."
"Who? Patricia puzzled.

"The forgotten Jackson of the Jackson Five." Patricia giggled, before sipping her wine. "And I still can't do my laundry. Still washing the colors with the whites. Screwed up a lot shirts, thinking bleach would remove my food stain. If you go to GoodWill, all the stained shirt you see there are probaly mines." Sterling joked, trying to hold a serious face. Patricia continued to giggled at Sterling non-sense, a moment more.

"Well I must come by to show you how to do the laundry." she suggested, sipping her wine.

"That would be nice."

"May way of repaying you for dinner."

"Cooking I enjoy doing. I just never had anyone to cook for. Unless you count my cousin kids, and nephew. Boiling Ramen noodles soup is not classified as cooking." he chuckled, picking up his glass of wine.

"I'm pleased that you accepted my invitation." he toasted her.

"I'm pleased too." she toasted back.

Eating the meal without a word for a moment, Patricia broke their silence, referencing to the picture on the bookshelves. "I know now where you got your good looks."

Patricia saw the baffled look on Sterling face, behind the comment, and explained. "The woman that your hugging in the white is your mother, right?"

"Yes."

"She's pretty. Look like she could be your sister."

"That's what some of the guards say. Prison has ressurected her. My father wasn't bad looking either." he laughed. Patricia giggled along with him, then made a remark about the woman, he was cuddled up with in the photo, as she reached for her drink. "Erica is beautiful also." she said before sipping her wine.

"Yes she was." Sterling relied in past tense, placing his fork down, reaching for his drink. A mental picture of Erica entered his mind, causing a slight smile. Patricia could see that Sterling was deep in thought about her.

"I can understand now why its hard for you to move forward."

Sterling exhaled sharply, while placing his drink back on the table.
He looked at Patricia with a solemn expression, and spoke. "Yes, Erica was one of a kind. My first and only woman I've loved, other than my mother. When my mother went to prison, Erica was my comforter. As though like the Holy Spirit when Jesus left. And when she died, I was devastated. Heart broken. Alone. To love or to open my heart to another woman had been hard for me too. Because I feel like it can be snatch away from me again. And I didn't want to go through the pain again. So I built a wall." Sterling grabbed his fork, and poked a shrimp. Patricia watched with contrition eyes, as he twirled the shrimp on the end on his fork. "After almost five years, I'm not just alone, but lonely behind these walls." Sterling revealed his soul to Patricia, with wanton eyes.

Patricia sat back mute, looking at him. She grieved heartbroken, experiencing now somewhat how Sterling was feeling. Patricia been devastated by the man she loved for four years with all her heart. The cement on the walls around her heart hasn't even dry, and Sterling was already trying to knock it down. It was too soon, Patricia felt. She was still struggling with the vision of Glenn pounding between Kelly legs, and the sounds of their moans. She thought Glenn infidelity would keep her behind her wall as long as Erica death did Sterling.

Sterling had noticed that Patricia had left their dinner for a moment too, mentally. He asked if she was okay. Patricia turned her weary eyes to him. "I'm okay. I guess." she sat back scratching her head, "I apologize, if I made you uncomfortable, with my feeling towards you. I remembered clearly you saying you only want to be friends."

"For now." she displayed a heartfelt smile.

"For now." Sterling replica her smile. Silence sat between them. as Sterling and Patricia communicated with their cordial smile and eyes.

"Whoa, this man is handsome. Sexy, and can cook." she thought to herself. She heard the words of Sterling feeling. His pain. His rejection of love. His loneliness. Now he is ready to open the doors to his first. Why her, of all the women he could have, she asked.

"She told me."

Patricia frowned, confused by his reply. "Who's she?"
"Erica. She told me the night before the interview."
"How do you know that Erica was referring to me. Did she say my name? Did she describe me or something?" Patricia totally baffled.
"No." Sterling gave her an obscure smile. "She said that I would know when I see her."
"Okay. But its not clear to me why you think its me." she pointed to herself.
"I'm not guessing, I'm sure." Sterling leaned forward, looking sincerely into her beautiful green eyes. "When I first saw you, I felt like the little boy in third grade."
Patricia temporarily stop breathing. Her mind went into a state of utopia, taking back by Sterling revelation. It been clear to her now how he had felt. Exhaling deeply, Patricia eyes dilated to now she saw Sterling starring back at her, concerned. She reached for her wine and finished what was left of it. Sterling asked if she wanted some more.
"Mmm hmmm." she shook her head, "Please."
Sterling poured her another half of glass. "To the rim please." she requested. Sterling displayed a worry grin, and replied with her request. He watch her down her drink in two gulps. Sterling figure what he revealed been to overwhelming for Patricia, again apologizing. She waved him off, informing that there was need too. Pointing to her empty glass. "Again please," requesting another refill.
Sterling watched her again down half of it. Truthfully, it wasn't how Sterling felt about her, it been how she felt about him.
The first time she laid eyes on Sterling, Patricia was attractive to him. When he invited her to come see him dance, she been eager to see Sterling move. The the eccentric circumstance occur, that allure Patricia temptation to go see him.

"Its probably best if you slow down on the wine. It has has twelve percent alcohol in it." Sterling reading the bottle. "And you can't drive home drunk."
"I'm fine." she said, showing a half smile. Sterling gave her a look of concern.
"You sure?"
"Mmm hmm." Patricia took another sip before putting it down, and pick-
ing up her fork, filling her mouth. Sterling let her know that he was content with whatever it is between them, and continued to take things slow. "I agree." smiling softly, while chewing.

Sterling had eaten the shrimp that he had stuck to his fork, and chewed slowly, staring at Patricia play with her food. Swallowing his, he filled his mouth with another mouthfull, never taking his eyes off her. She looked up feeling his stares. Patricia inclined her head, sensing Sterling wanting to say something.

"What are you thinking?"
"I'm trying to understand." he remark, swallowing his food. Patricia sat straight up, attentive, and confused, by his reply.
"What do you not understand?"
"How could he cheat on someone as beautiful as you?"
"I never told you he cheated on me." she responded with a askance look

"Not verbally. The pain I saw in your eyes, at Mandigos, when I asked if he cheated mentally or physically."
Patricia sighed defeated, poking at the shrimp on her plate. Sterling rinsed his throat with the red wine, wondering if Patricia was going to tell him what happen. Putting his glass back on the table, he placed both of his elbows on it. "I can promise I'll never cheat on you." Patricia stared at Sterling a moment with dejected eyes, "That's what he said." she dropped her fork

"I'm not him."

"How do I know you are not like other blackmen, that wants to screw ever Sally, Mary and Sue." Patricia scowled.
"What the fuck you mean by that!" Sterling anger by her annotation, causing Patricia to wrench by his sharp response.
"I'm sorry Sterling that came out wrong." she regretted her austere statement.

"Did it?" his eyes narrowed, wondering. Sterling thought Patricia believed what the media most of the time portray blackmen. As criminals, thugs, abusive, and deadbeat fathers. Which is far from the truth.
"Yes, believe me." she sincerely asked forgiveness. Sterling stared harshed at Patricia gloomed face for a second, then grabbed his wine

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glass to take a drink, but thought against it, sitting back. "Your boyfriend was white, isn't he?"

"Yes." Patricia nodded her head still embarrass by her comment. Sterling observed her demeanor, and recognized the same pain in her features, when she came to Mandigos the second time.

"I get the feeling its more than just him cheating on you." Patricia look up at him with grief. Sterling never knew much about process so much sorrow. Patricia sighed deeply, glaring down at her hands, twirling her thumbs.

"I saw them." she painfully replied.

Sterling muddled, gave her a question look. "What do you mean that you saw them? What, holding hands in the resturant. Kissing in the park?"

"No." she looked up at him, with water in her eyes. "Having sex."

The townhouse became silence; his mouth slightly ajared, as Sterling was lost for words. His deep breath broke the silence in the room, as he scratched his head. He watched Patricia reached for the fork on her plate, and play with her food. She replayed the whole story to Sterling, when she became suspicious of Glenn cheating, with the mysterious morning calls. The first night when she came to Mandogos. Borrowing her girlfriend car, and following him after finding him alone at night with a pretty blonde in his office.

"I followed them to a StarBuck down the street from his office. The two were going back and forth with words."

"Arguing?" Sterling clarifying.

"Mmm hmm." she nodded. "Then she showed Glenn some papers, that seemed to take the life out of him. The argument stop, replaced by affection, as they left the coffee shop holding hands." Patricia paused for a moment before continuing. "I thought about confronting them both right then, but something inside wanting me to know if they were." she stop. Sterling needed not for her to complete her suspicion. He knew the two words.

"I following them north on 45, crying. Knowing where they were going. But I still didn't stop them. Its like I wanted to catch him in the act. When I saw his truck parked in front of his house, my heart stop. I was struggling to breathe. Parking down the street, I use my
key to go inside. There was no present of Glenn and Kelly in the livingroom. Just her stiletoes shoes. I knew that it was only one place they could be." Patricia paused again, looking at Sterling with hollow eyes. Replaying the betrayal act in her head, for the million times. "I remember going blank from rage, and going into the kitchen. to grabbed the biggest knife I could find. I was ready to sent both of them to hell. And me to jail. Slowly I walk closer to the bedroom, my rage increased, hearing the moans of them having sex. But when I opened the door, and witness the man I once love, between another woman legs. In the house he wanted me to move inn. The bed I picked out. I became paralyzed. Hearing the knife hit the floor, what made them stop their sexapade. The look on Glenn face, when he turned to find me standing there. I didn't know for sure the shock look on his face was from getting caught. Or fright, from the large knife I dropped." she paused again. Her green eyes dilated, as she no longer saw through Sterling. "But you know what the most stinging part?" she questioned, not expecting an answer from Sterling, as he shook his head. "The satisfying smirk on that bitch face, knowing that she would forever be a part of Glenn's life."

Sterling immediately interpreted Patricia last remark. "I'm assuming you talking about the piece of paper that she showned Glenn, that took the life out of him."

Patricia remained silence, astonished, that Sterling had figured what document Kelly presented to Glenn. "The woman that he cheated on you with is pregnant."

Patricia answered him with a nod. Sterling exhaled sorrowfully, again lost for words, as he watched the tears flood Patricia eyes. Rising from his chair, Sterling walked around the table to her, extending his hand. She stared at it for a long moment in confusion. Then up at Sterling, whom had a heartfelt look. "Please." he pleaded for her to take his hand.

Patricia took another moment before grasping it. Sterling took her other hand into his. He spoke no words, observing the beautiful woman standing before him, wondering how he could erase her pain. He wanted her to see in his face. His eyes, that he was here for her. In whatever manner she needed him to be.

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Wiping away a falling tear down her cheek, and kissing her on the forehead. Sterling pulled Patricia into his fold, and she closed her eyes, welcoming his comforting embrace. His care, encouragement, reminded Patricia that she was still beautiful and smart. And that what happen wasn't her fault. That Glenn had been the fool, and it was his lost.

Sterling walked Patricia out to her car. Thanking him for dinner, both stood quietly, looking at each other trying to guess one another thoughts. Staring up at the night, a few stars and the reflection of the crescent moon barely lit the heaven of the city. Turning his vision to Patricia, Sterling expressed a cordial grin. Her once weary feature soften into a light smile.

"Are you okay?"
"I'm fine now, because of you. I'm going to have to find a way to repay you for dinner."
"So I am going to see you again?"
"Surely."
"Well I can't wait to see how you're gonna top my shrimp and Carolina feast, since you claim." he pointed to her. "That you can't cook." he chuckled.

"I'll find a way." she smiled, then swiveled on her heels to unlock her door. Before getting inside, she turned back to Sterling. "I need to tell you something."

"What's wrong?" Sterling noticing a expression of concern. Looking at him a second with strain and worry. "I came home to find Glenn inside my condo. He had my place looking like a flower shop, hoping I would forgive him. When I told him I wouldn't, I asked him to leave." she paused, as her disturbed expression intensified. "Glenn been tracking me."

"How do you know?"
- "Before he left, he let me know that he knew I was seeing a black guy." Sterling raised an eyebrow, thinking. "He didn't mention you by name. But I'm sure he knows."
Sterling flashed Patricia a confident smile, telling her not to worry about him, and change her locks."
"Already done."

"Good." Sterling appeased, reaching around Patricia to open her door. His gentleman act made her smile wide. Locking eyes momentarily, Patricia lifted herself on her toes, catching Sterling off guard, kissing him on the cheek.

"Good night." she told him, quickly getting into her car. Sterling close the door, as she turned the ignition. "I'll call you soon."
Sterling read her lips through the window, before she back away.

Sterling watched Patricia until she exited his complex gate. Before turning to go inside, he remembered the last thing Patricia had told him. "Glenn been tracking me. And before he left, he let me know that he knew I was seeing a black guy."
Sterling scanned the parking lot, searching for anything that may look suspicious, or out of place. His eyes narrowed, as he turned on his heels, and headed inside.
Yamaha walked through the doors of his six thousand square foot custom home, and called out his wife name, to informed her that he was home from his trip. Receiving no answer, he dropped his shoulder bag on the floor, and walked down the short foyer, into the living room. Off to the left is the kitchen, in where he didn't find his wife. About to make his present known again, he heard the shouting of a young voice out back. "Watch me momma!"

Looking through the kitchen nook window, Yamaha smiled watching his five year old son bouncing, barely moving the diving board. Then tried to dive in the water. He chuckled, at his belly flop. Yamaha turned his eyes to his wife, who was also giggling, before junior came up for air. She gave him praise, and encouraged him to continue to practice to perfection.

Yamaha watched for a moment the two people that meant the world to him. Though he was a high rank drug dealer, one of the many rules, is to never bring the streets home. Only two of his lieutenants knew exactly where he lived. And at times, he thought that been one two many. Even though in the treacheous dope game, one must trust someone, in helping to run a small empire.

Growing up struggling in Acres Homes, Yamaha's mother was killed by a rival gang member, when she refused to give up her purse. He and sister, Rene went to live with their father, whom was an alcoholic, and abused them alot. Being the oldest of the two, Yamaha hustles in the streets, stealing, selling weed, for he and his sister to have food on the table, because their father stole their social security check. Spending it on alcohol, and crack and whores.

Joining the Rolling Sixty Crip gang, Yamaha dropped out of school and rose in ranks in the gang and streets. One night coming home off the block, selling dope, Yamaha walked in the house to find his father naked on the couch, on top of his crying sister. Asking no question, Yamaha pulled him off his sister, and retrieved his Glock 40, and fired two shots in his head and heart.

Yamaha felt like he was living the American dream. A house with a white picket fence. A beautiful loving wife and son, whom he could
relive his dreams through him, in becoming a professional athlete. A family is all he ever wanted since childhood. And Yamaha was willing to remove anything or anyone, who tries to destroy what he have work hard and build for his family. Because everything he claims he does, good or evil, is for them.

He slid opened the patio door and shouted that he was home. His son shouted with joy, hopping out the pool. Latanya placed the book she been reading in her lap, welcoming her husband with a warm smile. She watched Yamaha kneeled down to embrace his son, and questioned him if he been behaving while he was away. Lil' junior shooked his head smiling. "And I protected momma like you told me tooâ€”" Yamaha beamed proudly. "That's my man." giving him dap.

Rising to his height to almost six four, Yamaha walked over to his wife, whom sat in a long lounge chair in a sexy Versace one piece, with a middle diamond cut in the front. Latanya removed the matching shades, still wearing the warm welcoming smile. Standing to her feet to kiss him, Yamaha pulled her tight into his embrace, then reached down to squeeze her ass. He wanted to take her there, but the present of their son been the only reason.

"Dam, you look sexy in this swimsuit."
"Thank you. Seeing the glow in your smile, I assume things went fine down in Laredo."
"Things went smooth." Yamaha kissed her again, then took a seat. He requested for his son to dive for him again. Excited to show off his skills in front of his father, Lil' junior ran over to the diving board, almost falling. "Slow down Brandon." Latanya yelled. She sat in her husband lap, placing her arms around him. Both holding smiles, watching their son barely bouncing on the diving board. Then both face grimace, when their son did another belly buster again. Coming up for air, their son aquired about his dive.

"Getting better." Yamaha lied. "Keep practicing."
Latanya felt the vibration of her husband chuckle, as she pecked him once more on the lips. Yamaha rubbed his hand up and down her shapely legs, and asked what did she do while he was away.
"Nothing really. Took Brandon to see the animated movie. Went shopping and bought this bathing suit. Oh yeah, I had a baby shower at the beauty shop, for Regina."

"That's nice." Yamaha replied, turning his attention momentarily to his son, as he swammed to the shadow water, then back to Latanya.

"When is Regina due?"

"In two weeks."

"Well I hope Regina and the father of her child enjoy the blessing." Yamaha paused smiling at his wife. "Because that how I feel with you and junior in my life. Bless."

In bliss by his words, Latanya been at lost with hers. She hugged him tight, holding back tears of happiness. "I love you too."

was all she could say, as she tighten her hold on him. Yamaha repeated her words, letting his wife know that he felt the same way. But he couldsense the nervousness in her embrace, asking what's wrong. Unbracing, she gave him a faint smile, before informing him, that she ranned into Terrell at a convient store.

"What did he say. WAIT!, let me guess." Yamaha had a smirk on his face. "He wanted you to leave me."

"Of course. But you know I'm not going nowhere. But Terrell is trying to do everything in his power to bring you down."

"I know this baby. He just still pissed about the past."

"He let me know that too Brandon." calling him by his real name.

"But it was the look his eyes, when he said it. By any means necessary. If though if he had to kill you himself." she looked off.

"Is that the vibe you got?"

"Mmm hmm." she turned her focus back to him, shaking her head slowly.

"He's determine to break up our family."

Yamaha put his index finger on her chin, flashing a assuring smile.

"No one is gonna break up our family. I promise you. I'll take care of Terrell."

Yamaha last statement caused her to lock eyes with his. She wanted to ask what he meant, but knew better. Whatever her husband had in mind for Terrell, at the moment she didn't give a shit.
Sergio Valquez limousine drove down the alleyway of the San Diego warehouse district, then made a left, stopping in front of a large metal building, marked F1. His driver blew his horn twice and waited patiently for the large door to slide back. Sergio driver nodded to the Latino wearing a pair of tan khaki shorts, and a Hawaiian shirt, as he creep inside the warehouse. The warehouse been a storage place for plastic barrels and pallets. Sergio driver stop the limo close to the only two vehicles that was inside. A Maybach and a white Volvo moving van. Sergio driver jumped out and rushed to open his door. He pulled on his suit jacket of his Tom Ford suit, that perfectly fitted his butterball shape. His six eight bodyguard, stood beside him with his hands in front of him, holding a dark brown leather suitcase, as they waited for the gentleman they came to do business with to exit his vehicle. With the silence in the warehouse, Sergio and his bodyguard heard the latch of the Maybach door unlock and open. From the opposite side of the backseat, a dark hair, white man, wearing a off the rack dark suit, walked around the back of the Maybach and stop at the back door. Before opening the door for his boss, he wanted assurance that Sergio was he. "I am." Giving him the answer that God gave Moses, without a word, he opened the door, and Sergio smiled with delight, liking what he saw. Stepping out the mini luxury limo, a long hair brunette, blue eyes caucasián woman, fitted in a black and pink pokadot dress. Holding a cigarette in her hand, she took one last drag of her Virginia Slim, before tossing it to the ground, and snubbing it out with the matching color pumps, to her dress.

"Mr. Valquez, I see that you are on time." she spoke, holding a stern look.

"Time is money. Money is time, Mrs." Sergio wanting to know her name.

"Ms., Ms. Waldman." she gave it to him. "George is my younger brother, he sent me to handle business today. Is there a problem with that?"

"Ohh... no problem." Sergio waved his hand. "I'm sort of glad George didn't come."

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Ms. Waldman turned up the right side of her red painted lips, at the same time glancing down at the briefcase in Sergio driver hands. "Shall we conduct business? You said time is money." she held her smile as started toward the truck. Ms. Waldman noted to Sergio if he wanted to expand his business with prostituting young boys and girls, to adult female, that she was able to get him the most exotic women in all races. "It's very profitable." she looked back at him, flashing a sinful smile.

"Business is good now, with all these sick psychos. But I will keep your offer in mind."

"Do that." she replied, stopping in front of the moving truck. The man that was with Ms. Waldman, raised the door, for Sergio to inspect the product. The hairs on Sergio butterball frame stood up, as his knees buckled, looking at a truck full of F.B.I agents with guns pointed at him.

Sergio sat in the F.B.I interrogation room for hours, as Agent Lowry pressed for answer, as to who are the other smugglers he dealt with and clients. Sergio features fatigue and weary, he gave the agent for the upteen time, that he's putting his life and family in danger, if he rat out the smugglers. "I can promise you protection." Agent Lowry informed.

Sergio gaffawed. "You can't promise me protection in prison. I'll be dead within the first hour, I set foot inside. This shit is larger than you can imagine. The people who's involved are right under your nose."

Lowry glared at Sergio, as his mind pondered Sergio last statement. Scratching his temple, and turning around his wooden chair, to sit backward. "You can do life for child sex trafficking. And you life will still be in danger, when the inmates finds out you rent children to grown men for money. Two things convicts hate in prison. Child molesters, and crime against old people."

Sergio face became grimmed, by Lowry righteous analyst, and sighed defeated. Either way, he knew that his life was in danger, cause by his sins. But snitching was still not an option, he could be dead before his court date. Sergio held eye contact with Agent Lowry momentarily, thinking, ready to strike a deal.

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"What if I can give you someone that's high profile. Can you promise me I'll do time in one of those white collar prison?"

"Depend." Lowry leaned forward in his chair. "How high profile is he?"

"Very." Sergio responded with a devilish grin. "He loves working with kids."

CHAPTER 56

Patricia parked next to her mother Maseratti. The Escalade next to it told her that her father was home also. Making her way up the walkway, her father opened the front door. Both beamed estatic, happy to see one another. After a kiss and a warm embrace, Patricia observed her father attire, wearing a Panama Jack hat. She knew that he was heading to the golf course. Greg Norman a.k.a The Shark had been her father favorite player. "Going to play a few holes?"

"Yes. Going to beat up on some old college friends. There here for a few days on business." her father imitated his golf swing, making Patricia giggled. "How are you sweetheart?"

"I'm fine. Working hard to keep the magazine afloat. You read this month issue?"

"Sorry sweetheart." he reached for her hand. "I haven't had time to read. Been busy on some new shows. Bit I promise to, tonight. I'm free all weekend."

"Okay." Patricia faked a smile.

"I talk to my brother, and he said that Dorthy is very upset what happen between you and Glenn."

William brother, Richard, is married to Glenn’s mother.

"Do they know everything?" Patricia inquired.

"That that Kelly woman, he cheated with is pregnant? Yes." he nodded, slowly. Patricia looked down and sigh. "Sorry." her father gently squeezed her hand.

"No need daddy, I'm over him already?"
Her father gave her a surprise look. "Really? What, you found someone already?"
"Maybe."

Patricia's father witnessed the beamed in his daughter's face. "I hope your not moving too fast into another relationship."

"I'm not. We're just friends for now."

"Okay." he squeezed her hand: again. "Don't rush into anything please. And if you need anything, or still want Glenn kill, let your father know. I love you and never let you down."

Her father's promise made her smile. "I will." she replied, kissing him on the cheek.

"Are you free tonight? Come and have dinner with me and your mother."

"Sorry daddy, I have plans."

"With your new friend I assume?"

Patricia nodded her head. "Okay. We must find time to catch up. I missed you since you moved back to your place. It felt like old times."

"It did." Patricia beamed. Looking at his watch, her father realized he was running late, and kissed Patricia on the forehead. Grabbing his golf bag and clubs, he let her know that her mother was in the backyard, before rushing to his vehicle.

Inside Patricia bumped into Mrs. Emily, greeting her. She asked if she could get Patricia anything. Informing her no, Patricia made her way to the backyard. Finding her mother in her normal spot, laid out on the outdoor couch, reading an Essence magazine. Patricia greeted her with a kiss on the cheek, and lifted her legs, sitting down, then placing her mother's legs in her lap.

Massaging her mother's feet, she could tell that she just gotten a fresh pedicure. "Surprised to see you this morning." her mother happy to see her, but baffled.

"Went to the gym early this morning, and then had to run some errands on this side of town. So I decide to check on my parents."

"You just missed you father."

"No, I caught him on the way out. Going to play some golf with some college buddies. He asked me to come by tonight and have dinner with you two. But I already have plans."

"I see." her mother disappointed. "What plans you have that's more important, than having dinner with your parents?"
"I have a date."
"Oh really?" her mother gave her a bogus smile. "You seeing someone so soon?"
"We just friend for now. Taking thing s slow."
"I see." Diane nodded.
"He knows everything that happen in my last relationship, I just come out with Glenn. So he been patience, and understanding."
"You like him?" her mother curious. Patricia facial features glowed, as she shook her head yes.
"A woman can't help to like him. Especially his physical features, he's handsomme and fine. And has moves that make you want to get in bed."
"Really." Diane replied, as lines appeared on her forehead as she questioned the meaning.
"You have read this month issue of the male dancer, Sterling Maxwell?"
"Yes. Are you referring to him?" she tried to sound surprised.
"Hunh hunh." Patricia shooked her head.
"Ohh, he is handsome."
"Not also just that, but intelligent. Considerate, truthful. He's a inspire writer."
"I remembered reading that."
"Also he can cook." Patricia grinned, thinking back to dinner.
"Is that so?"
"Yeah. I had dinner at his place a couple nights ago, where we open up more to each other."
"That's wonderful. They say communication is the key."
"With so much that happen to Sterling in the past. His mother being a addict, and now in prison. Being molested, and the only woman he loved other than he mother died of cancer. It's incredible that he's sound."
"Some people are survivors." Diane gave her a half siming smile.

Silence paused the conversation, while pondering on Sterling for different reasoning. Patricia hoped in the future that their relationship elevate beyond friends. Her mother on the other hand, needed to find a way to stop a on coming train wreck.
"So what are you and Sterling doing tonight?"
"I'm going to display my hidden talent, at the spotlight." she smiled.
Sterling found the Spotlight in the corner of a small shopping center on San Felipe avenue. He got out of his car and scanned the parking lot for Patricia Camry. No where to found, he wandered where she could be. Hitting the alarm on his car, Sterling decided to wait inside. He could tell from outside that the place wasn't that big, and that it would be easy for Patricia to locate him.

Entering the establishment, Sterling learned that the Spotlight had been a cabaret and karaoke place. The ambiance of the two thousand square foot restaurant felt welcoming. The small crowd was enjoying a cowboy whom just looked like he rode in on a horse. He was rapping and dancing to Sir-Mix-A-Lot, "Baby Got Back." Sterling chuckled watching the cowboy slap his rear, rapping to the lyrics with out looking at the monitor.

After his performance, everyone stood to their feet applauding the tight Wrangler jean, Grey Stenson cowboy hat wearing man. As Sterling clapped along, his attention been drawned to a lovely older Japanese woman, dressed in a white ruffle blouse, and flare white bottom pants. Her dark hair been pulled back in a ponytail, that hung down to the middle of her back. Her oval shape face and oblique eyes, blended perfect with her beauty. Sterling thought these women were beautiful but had one flaw. "Hi, you must be Sterling?"

A curious look appeared on his face, wondering how she knew his name. The Japanese woman smile at his skeptical feature, in which enhanced her beauty. "My name is Sue Ann, and I'm a friend of Patricia." she extended her hand for him to shake. Sterling did, as she continued to speak. "Patricia had described you to a T. Tall, brown and handsome. And again handsome."

"Thank you." Sterling appreciated the praise.

"Welcome to the Spotlight. I'm the owner of this delightful establishment. Patricia is here, but is in the back doing something, and she asked me to escort you to your table, if she wasn't back in time."

"What is she doing?"

"Don't know. Maybe repowdering her face." she answered, shrugging her shoulders. "You guess is as good as mine, look. "Follow me please."

When Sue Ann turned around, Sterling glared down at her rear, and been
REMINDED OF A ASIAN woman flaw.
She lead Sterling to a table in front of the karaoke stage. A lit candle
and a chill bottle of Moet sat on ice. Sue Ann pulled back a chair,
gesturing for Sterling to have a seat. Taking a seat, she asked if
she could do anything else for him. "No thank you, I'm fine."
"Nice meeting you Sterling. Enjoy the show."
Wanting to open the bottle of Moet, Sterling thought it would be more
gentleman like if her waited for Patricia. Again Sterling scanned the
mists crowed, and been alittle surprised, that he haven't heard of this
place.
The voice of the M.C, turned Sterling attention back to the stage.
"Coming to the stage to sing a old school classic by Pattie Labelle.
2017 Spotlight karaoke champion, Patricia Willington."
Sterling became dumbfounded, watching the spotlight follow Patricia
to a stool in front of the stage. He thought Patricia looked awe strik-
ing, dressed in a Versace silk off white and gold dress, that only
covered half of her thighs. Inches were added to her five seven height,
wearing a pair of four inch calve high suede boots. Taking a seat on
the stool, Patricia found Sterling and smiled widely for him. His face
soften, returning his,
"This song is for him, my new man."
Sterling listen, as though he was in a trance; Patricia sing, If You
Only Knew. In the most lovely tone he had ever heard. Never unlock-
ing eye contact, Sterling listen to Patricia bring alive every word of
Pattie classic ballard.
When she finished, Sterling stood to his feet, applauding her. His new
girlfriend.
Patricia bowed in appreciation, before making her way over to Sterling,
whom waited with opened arms. gently embracing, he kissed Patricia
passionately for the first time, enjoying the feel of her full painted
lips.
He pulled out a seat for her to sit down, then sat close next to her.
She retrieved the champayne from the ice chest, and poured them both
a glass. "I didn't know that you could sing."
"A hidden talent, I guess."

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"Why would you with hold a voice like your from the world?"
"Singing is what I like to do for fun. Journalism is my passion. I like meeting people in the community, and telling their story. I hope to take Urban Houston nation wide one day. Like Essence and Ebony. I do have other ideas."
"Like what?"
"Creating a magazine like Stars or Us, featuring African American. Without the gossip and lies. Catching and finding them doing what regular people do. We see the same blacks in those magazine. Mariah, Beyonce, RiRi and the Kardashians."
"The Kardashians aren't black." Sterling commented.
"I know, but I'm tired of seeing their asses." Sterling laughed at her reply, before tasting his champayne. "It might be in my best interest if you didn't become a famous singer."
"Why?" Patricia curious.
"Then I don't have to battle with the rich and famous men for your attention."
Patricia giggled at his annotation. "As long as you can move like you do, you never have to worry."
"Really?" Sterling leaned closer to her.
"Huh huh." she met Sterling face to face for a kiss. After their short kiss, his eyes roamed the beauty of her. Fansinated with her green eyes, and long light brown hair, flowing over her perfect structure face, he asked.
"So, is it true, that I'm your man now?"
"If you still want me to be your woman." she responded with affection in her eyes. Sterling momentarily teased Patricia with a questioned expression, as though he was thinking about it, then displayed a wide grin. Patricia giggled like a little school girl, as Sterling leaned in to kiss her, adding some tongue. "Mmmm." she hummed, with her eyes still closed, then opened them to a pleasing look of Sterling. "Your a good kisser."
"Only because I enjoy the softness of your lips." His response made them both laugh lightly. Taking a break of acting like teenagers, in love, Patricia took a taste of her champanye, and watched the performance of a white woman, trying to sing a Celine Dion song.
"She sounds pretty good." Sterling commented, sipping his drink.
"She does."
"So you are the 2017 Spotlight karaoke champion?"
"Mmmm hmm." Patricia turned to him with a soft glow.
"What song did you sing?"
"Alica Keys, Falling."
"Wow, I used to hear my mother sing that song."
"Oh, your mother can sing."
"Like a bird."

Both enjoyed their champagne listening to the woman finish the Celine Dion in silence. They clapped along with the small audience, pleased with her performance. After the short applause, Sterling asked Patricia would she sing the "Alica Keys, Falling for him. "You really like to hear it?" she somewhat surprised.
"Yes."

Patricia green eyes roamed his face, before agreeing. She leaned over to peck him on the lips, then leaving the table, going on stage to speak with the karaoke D.J. He witnessed the D.J nodd his head, then Patricia made her way to the mic. "Back to perform her 2017 winning karaoke song, Falling. Patricia Willington." the D.J introduced her again.
Sterling watched Patricia exhaled deeply, closing her eyes. She blew softly the acapella beginning of the song. As the music started to play, she slowly open her green mesmerizing eyes. Sterling leaned forward, placing his elbows on the table. Hypnotize with her voice, from the stage, Patricia saw the audience sway to the enjoyment of her talent.

Receiving another standing ovation, Patricia acknowledge their appreciation, with a bow. Sterling praised her on the performance, understanding why she won. Ready to assist her back into her seat, Patricia suggested that they go somewhere more secluded.
"Where?" he asked.
"I haven't figure where yet. I just want to be alone with you."
"Okay. I follow your lead." he gestured towards the exit.
The sounds of vehicles moving up and down the boulevard ambushed their ears, as Patricia reached for Sterling's hand, making their way to his car. She kissed him on the lips, then turned and leaned against his Camaro. A idea in her head caused her to giggle.

"What got you so tickled?" he pressed his body against her.
"You wanna go to my place?"
"If that's where you desire to go."
"It is. But." Patricia held up her finger. "You have to be able to keep up with me."
Sterling been alittle lost what in what she meant. "What do you mean keep up?"
"We came in separate cars, correct?" Sterling nodded his head, but still confused, what Patricia was talking about. "In order to find out where I live, you have to be able to keep pace with me."
Sterling began laughing at Patricia insane idea. "I don't think my SS will have any problem keeping up with your Camry. Isn't that a four cylinder? he continued laughing, looking for her Camry.
"No, it's a six. But I didn't drive my Camry tonight."
"So what are you driving that you feel that you can leave me in the dust?"
"That." Patricia pointed to her birthday present. Sterling eyes bulged at the sight of her Shelby 500.
"When did you get that?"
"That's not important right now." she pecked him on the lips, turning on her heels, making her way to her car.
Sterling watched Patricia jump inside, and heard the powerful engine roar to life. Seeing the glow of the backup lights, she stop in front of Sterling, displaying a huge smile. He thought she looked sexy behind the powerful sport car.

"So I guess you don't want to know where I live?" she teased.
"Do you know how to drive that thing?" he gave her a questioned look.
"When I pull up in my parking lot complex alone, you'll know." she replied, making the tires squeal burning rubber. Sterling cursed, rushing to get inside his car. He cursed again, fumbling to find the
key. Finally sticking the ignition key inn, The Black Knight came to life. Looking into the rearview mirror, Sterling saw Patricia cross the boulevard, and head south. Throwing his gear in reverse, then drive, the roar of the flowmaster pipes, echoed throughout the parking lot. Sterling timing was perfect, as he cut across the boulevard without happening to wait. Caught at a redlight, Sterling strained his brown eyes, and saw that Patricia been held up at the next light. A smirk appeared on his face, now that he had Patricia in sight.

At the permission of the light, the Camero Michelin tires gripped the concrete, leaving black marks. Flying through a couple of traffic lights, he saw Patricia make a right on the freeway feeder and entered the ramp connected to 59 freeway, heading south. Patricia checked her rearview mirror, and didn't know the unmated. Sterling had vision on her. "I guess you don't want to know where I stay." she noted.

Sterling been some distance away from Patricia, but in eye sight, in which, in fifteen second he enter the 59 ramp. The flashing of head-lights behind her, caught Patricia attention. Looking into the rearview mirror, she saw it been Sterling. A pleasing smirk, now appearing on her face. "So you do want to know where I stay. "Let's see just how bad." throwing the Mustang down into a lower gear. Sterling mouth jared, watching the Mustang pull away.

"She must think she'd Dànica Patrick." Sterling thought. "But she don't know I'm Male Earnhart, and racing cars is still a man's sport." he remark to himself, throwing his car in a lower gear, feeling the jerk of the transmission thrusting forward.

Now Patricia cursed, as she had to drop her speed from a 100 to 70, being held up behind four cars, driving stuttered step on the four lane freeway. Looking in the rearview mirror, she frowned watching Sterling come up fast. Patricia flashed her highbeams, as though she was in Germany on the Autobahn. Realizing the cars in front of her wasn't going to move out the way, she drove onto the shoulder lane of the freeway, flying pass. Sterling shooked his head in amazement, thinking Patricia wasn't Dànica Patrick, but insane.

Watching her taillights fade away, Sterling followed Patricia insane maneuver, flying pass the cars on the shoulder lane. He noticed every-
thing around him became a blurr, as her glanced down at his speed
gage, and saw that he was doing over a hundred and forty miles per
hour. Never have Sterling before pushed the black machine this fast.
A bit frighten, but at the same time, loving the adrenline, a satis-
fiyed grinned appeared, witnessing Patricia taillights quickly become
clear.
Before they exited the Freeway on highway Six, Sterling could read, TRICIA
on her license plate. Making a right, both raced a few miles, before
turning into her condo complex. Sterling observed Patricia complex,
and figure two things. That Patricia came from a rich family. Or the
magazine she co-owned, is doing very well.
Patricia pointed Sterling to the guest parking space, then hit the
remote to open her garage. Waiting for Sterling, she crossed her legs,
and leaned against her car. Patricia displayed a felicious smile,
looking at him walk toward her, shaking his head in unbelief. Think-
ing that Patricia is not only just beautiful and smart, but crazy.

"I see how badly you wanted to know where I lived." her smile widen.
"You know your crazy?" Sterling questioned, standing inches from her.
Patricia softly giggled from his reamrk. "Where did you learn how to
drive like that."

"Racing go=karts."

"Hmm. I should have known." Sterling took her hand. "Well please,
promise me that you want ever drive like that again. I don't think my
heart could take it, if something happen to you."
Patricia heart melted, seeing the sincerity in his brown eyes, while
holding back with all her might the falling ones from hers. "I promise."
she assured him, lifting herself on her toes to kiss him. Holding
eyes contact momentarily, Sterling broke their silence.

"I guess I see you tommorrow?"
Patricia smacked her lips and frowned. "Come inside silly." yanking
on his hand. Both walked the short hallway from the garage door, to
the elevator. On the second floor, Sterling followed her down another
short hallway to apartment 233. Patricia took out what appear to look
like a credit card, swiping it through two metal plates. Sterling
could hear her door unlock, as Patricia pushed it open.

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Closing the door behind himself, Sterling survey Patricia place, impressed with the material, designed, and decor. It been easy to see that her condo was layout with highend furniture.

Placing her purse on the kitchen bar, Patricia squatted to greet Candy, whom ranned out her room. Asking it she remembered Sterling: "Max's owner." Candy ranned over to Sterling and greeted him with a bark. He kneeled down to pat and rüb Candy. He smiled at the champion looking boxer, informing that she and Max will have a playdate soon.

Patricia commanded Candy to return to her room, in which she whined a moment, but obeyed.

Taking off her boots, she swiveled on the balls of her feet, and headed to the kitchen. "You want something to drink?"

Whatever you drinking," he replied, taking a seat. Still soaking in the abient of Patricia place, he revealed at the sametime that he hadn't eaten. That he suspected dinner as one of things they would do tonight. Patricia apologize, relaying that been part of the plans, at the spotlight. She made known that she threw out the leftover Chinese food, but could whip up some sandwiches, or order pizza.

"Sandwiches will be suffice, as long its not ham."

"Turkey."

"Great."

Not waiting long, Patricia brought Sterling two delicious looking sandwiches on onion buns. Impressed, he asked her did she sneak out the back door and go to a deli. Patricia tittered. "If one can't cook all that well, you have no option but to learn how make a great sandwich."

Sterling joined his laughter, taking the plate of sandwiches. Patricia rushed back into the kitchen, returning with a bottle of wine. She handed to Sterling to open. He raised an eyebrow at the name.

"Yalumba! I didn't know Africa make wine."

"It's not from Africa. Its Australian. Not exxpensive, and goes excellent, eating a turkey sandwich."

"Is that right?"

"Mmm hmm." Patricia shook her head, taking a bite of her sandwich. Sterling made a pleasing humming sound, then asked what's the yellow stuff she put in the sandwich. Patricia told him it was Grey Poupon.
"The mustard advertise in the commercial?"

"Hunh hunh." she answered, taking a bite of her sandwich. Sterling told her that he might change his recipe that require mustard, for the Grery Poupon.

Retrieving his glass of wine off the coffee table, Sterling took a large swallow of the Australian wine. He thought the wine had a nice citrus and minerality taste. "You right, this Yalumba goes great with a turkey sandwich." he jested, taking another bite. Patricia laughed at his remark, taking a sip of hers.

Swallowing his food, he complimented Patricia on her place. Thanking him, she admitted that she’s very pleased and comfortable living here. Scanning the livingroom, Sterling disclose to her, what he been thinking.

"This condo must be expensive. Your magazine must be selling well, or you have rich parents."

"A little of both. But more of the latter. My father got me this place. he’s friends with the property owner."

"And what do your father do for a living?"

"He runs a television network."

"Your mother?"

"Law enforcement."

Sterling didn’t question exactly what she meant, assuming that her mother was a police. But he did ask about the art work over the black marble fireplace. She told him that it was a painting of a relative of a famous french painter. And that her parents bought it while they were in Italy.

"What famous french painter?"

"Claude Monet. Born in the mid 1800."

"Sterling studied the painting for a moment longer. It was a beautiful portrait of a woman holding her child, as they stood on the bridge, over the Vienna canal. Sudden Sterling frowned in confusion.

"Italy are consider Italians, correct?"

"Yeah." Patricia answered, confused by the question. "What’s wrong?"

"You said that the Monet painter was French. That’s in France, right?"

"Yes. Must be a distant relative."

"Oh yeah." Sterling thought, looking off, then back at Patricia.
"Just like my cousin living in California." he commented with a goofy grin. Patricia caught on that Sterling was only being silly, punching him lightly on the shoulder.

Again Sterling commented how nice her condo, and then taking another bite of his sandwich. Patricia sipped heavily on her wine, then kissed Sterling on the cheek, before jumping to her feet, standing before him. She questioned Sterling if he could dance regular, as well as he dance on the stage.

"Yes. Why?"

"I feel like dancing." she turned, heading over to her Kenwood stereo on the bookshelves. Patricia ranned her finger down a S shape CD stand, searching for some dance music. "You Like Bruno Mars."

"Love him. Can't ride without my boy."

"Great, because I love this song, That's What I Like." as it blared through the speakers, Sterling sat back momentarily, smiling watching, impressed, Patricia dance as though she been one of J.Lo back up dancer. While the chours of the song played, she danced over to Sterling, extending her hand for him to take. As Sterling grasped it, Patricia yanked him to his feet, pulling him to the small opening of her living-room. Both moved to the rythum like they were on Soul Train. Backing her rear against Sterling, and grind, while Bruno repeated the titled of his song.

She looked back and up at the smiling Sterling, whom specked her on the lips, before spinning her around, and grooved to the ending of the song. With their arms around one another, Bruno ballad, (Versace on th Floor) played next. Swaying side to side, no words were said, as they were speaking loudly with their eyes.

Patricia closed hers, when Sterling ranned the back of his finger down her cheek. He been in bliss, holding this beautiful woman in his embrace.

"You are so breathtaking?" he told her.

"Credit my parents."

Sterling chuckled in delight from her response. It been one of the saying he used many of times, when told how handsome he is. "I will certainly thank them when I met them."
"I love this song." she let him know.
"Crazy coincidence that you are wearing Versace."
"it is?" she whispered.

Patricia saw the unassurance expression on Sterling, from her reply, and softly smile. "Let's just kiss til we'll naked baby. Vercase on the Floor."

Sterling saw clearly in Patricia green eyes, what she wanted to do. She could read the question in his features, then assured Sterling, by kissing him passionately.

Stopping for air, Sterling ranned his finger through Patricia hair, removing the headband, that suspender it back. Sterling eyes followed his finger down her cheek, to the cleavage of her V-neck dress.

He could see visibly Patricia erect nipples. He leaned forward, kissing her deeply, pulling her tight into his embrace. Both their hands roamed one another body, as soft moans escaped their lips. Desperately wanting him, Patricia pulled his shirt out his pants, unbuttoning it, then taking it off.

She laid two soft kisses on his pecks, then traced the sculpture of his chest, as Sterling could feel the electricity, as she slid her manicure nails down, and over his six pack.

Patricia look up giving Sterling a wanton smile. Tenderly kissing her lips, and neck, Sterling continued, reaching the center of her chest. She sigh deeply, when he squeezed gently on of her breast, massaging her nipple, between his pointed finger and thumb. Patricia clutched his head enjoying the bliss of his touch and kisses. Sterling heard the whispers of Patricia light cries of her wanting him. He stop, to look into her eyes, to once again to assure this is what she wanted. Patricia nodded her head slowly, knowing what Sterling had asked.

Lifting her arms, she closed her eyes as Sterling raised her silk dress over her head. She head, Patricia light brown hair fell around her face. Opening her eyes, starring at Sterling, Patricia been abit muddle of what Sterling was thinking. He survey her flawless athletic lemon cream frame, covered now only in Victoria Secret. White thong and bra. Sterling ranned his fingers through her hair, displaying a satisfied smile.

Pulling Patricia back into his embrace, he slid his tongue in her
mouth.
Smoothly unhooking her bra, his hands continued down south, clutching her firm ass, lifting Patricia off her feet. She wrapped her legs around his waist, while he carried her to the sofa, where he laid her down.

Patricia removed her bra, waiting for Sterling to do whatever he wanted. He began planting kisses, starting on her forehead, nose, both cheeks, lips, neck, then lick around her erect nipples, before taking one in his mouth. She held his head, sucking in air. Goosebumps followed the trail of Sterling hand, as it traveled up the side of her leg. He moved slowly down, kissing her stomach, and stopping a short moment, teasing her navel with his tongue.

Simultaneously, Sterling continued south with his tongue, while sliding down her panty. Trimmed nicely, Sterling brushed through her light bush, tasting her wetness, sending Patricia in a state of nirvana. Patricia thrust her body against Sterling tongue, as he licked her spot. Feeling her body to begin to shiver, Sterling stopped his tongue pleasing, and climbed Patricia naked body, to let her savor the taste of her womb. Pulling his tongue out her mouth, he stood to his feet, to remove his pants, and brief. Patricia bit her bottom lips, astonished at Sterling manhood.

Patricia lifted one of her legs on top of the couch, allowing Sterling to lay between her legs. She thrust her head back, sucking in all the air in the room, as Sterling slowly inserted his hard dick into her waiting essence.

After adjusting, Patricia held eyes with Sterling, pleading for him to not stop. He watched her green eyes become glossy, and heard the heavenly sounds of pleasure, as he deepen his strokes. Digging her nails in his lower back, Sterling never with another woman felt one in this act of sin, since Erica.

Making sex faces, Patricia could feel the swell of Sterling mushroom, as he increase the pace of his thrust. Seeing his contorted face, Patricia pulled Sterling into her embrace, wanting him to pour all his love into her, as they cried out to the heavens together.

Laying on top of her, she could feel the warmth of his breath on her neck, panting from exertion. Completely satisfied, Patricia exhibited
a soft smile, while lightly running her nails up and down his back. Lying in silence, both were lost for words, thinking did they rush to soon to consummate their relationship. "Are you okay?" Patricia asked.

Sterling raised off of her, showing a concerned look. "I'm bliss." he answered, somewhat weary. "Are you?" propping himself on his elbow. Patricia didn't answer the question right away. She placed a hand on his cheek, while her transport eyes roamed his query face. "Your not having any regret are you?" Sterling questioned.

"No." she answered him with a pleasing smile. "You are what I needed." "And that is?"

"Someone that make me forget about the past. The pain. My knight. To make me feel beautiful."

"One has to be blind or dumb to not see your beauty, here and here." Sterling pointed to her face and heart. "And everytime we touch lips, is to acknowledge your beauty and my love." Sterling words produced a heartfelt smile. It been easy to see why Patricia fell so quickly for this man. Sterling was everything. Fine. Handsome. Smart and sincere. Patricia lifted her head to kiss him, then asked if he wanted another turkey sandwich. He laughed at her quaint question.

"No. I just want some more of you."
Patricia heard the charming sounds of Sterling begging for her to wake up. Her eyes fluttered open, adjusting to the morning rays, coming through the windows. Focus, a warm expression appeared, seeing Sterling standing bedside in his briefs, showing his ripped abs, holding a tray that held breakfast. Patricia sat up, exposing the top half of her nakeness. Sterling watched her green eyes travel back and forth, from him and to the breakfast steak, eggs, and toast, he had cook.

"What's wrong? Aren't you hungry?"
"Mmm hmm. I just can't decide what I want first. You or breakfast. Both looks delicious."
Patricia answer made Sterling chuckled, as he sat beside her, and requested that she eat something before they start round four.
Spending the rest of the weekend together, and their dogs, Patricia awaken Monday morning in Sterling bed. Badly as she wanted to lie in Sterling arms all day, she needed to get to the office, and finish composing next month isuse. He understood, offering to watch Candy for her. Thanking him with a kiss, she hopped out of bed to take a shower. Stopping at the bathroom door, she looked over her shoulder, back at Sterling, still lying in bed. "Your not coming to help wash my back?" she asked seductively, than disappeared through the door. A delightful smirk shown of Sterling face, removing his briefs, exposing his nakeness, to join Patricia under the steamy water.

Walking Patricia out to her car, Sterling been a gentleman, opening her door, and closing it. He reminded her to call him, when she was almost ready to leave work, so he could bring Candy to her. He leaned inside her car to kiss her goodbye. A silly smirk appeared on Sterling face when he heard the roar of the Mustang. After, his smile turned to laughter, when Patricia said "Later slow po."
He stood watching her drive through the gates, with Max and Candy sitting on opposite sides. For unknown reason, he remember what Patricia had told him, when they had dinner. He scanned the parking lot of his complex. He noticed something similar the night of their dinner. Patricia revealed that she was being followed.

Entering her office, Patricia found Maria on the phone and their
small staff hard at work, trying to get the next issue out on stands. Greeting everyone, Patricia dropped her belonging at her desk, and went to check on Gregg, to see how he had arrange the pictures of Desean Watson. A benefit dinner that was held by a prominent black C.E.O of a tech company. And H-town slab weekend in the Fourth Ward area.

A grin exhibited on Patricia face, loving the funny face of Maria, when rapper Paul Wall kissed her on the cheek. Approving the photos that Gregg had choose and arrangement, she looked over her shoulder at Raymond working the printing machine. Getting word from him that everything is fine and on schedule, Patricia headed to Maria desk and flopped down in one of her pleather chairs in front of her desk. She been on the phone, wearing a serious expression.

Patricia thought she was on the phone with her pro-player baseball boyfriend, until she heard her thanking the mayor of Houston for his time. "And I can't wait to meet you personally next Wednesday."

Maria hung up the phone, looking at Patricia stare curious at her, mouth slightly ajarred. "How did you pull off an interview with the mayor?"

"A journalist never reveals his or her sources." answering Patricia with an old cliche.

"Bitch please!" Patricia frowned.

María laughed swiveling in her chair, and revealed that Carlos her boyfriend had put this in motion. "Mayor Turner is a huge Astros fan, and held a charity benefit with the team at the children hospital. A fan of Carlos, he mention our magazine."

"That's great."

"Wahíasmaorporíiatáctan."

"Our first politician." Patricia giggled.

"I need you to write down some question to ask, that I may miss."

"Sure."

If we put Mayor Turner on the cover with a good subtitle, hopefully the magazine will sale out side the urban area, into the suburban ones. Whites are going to want to know is Mayor Turner spending to much of Houston money on the lower community, in which their not benefitting."

"Sounds logical."
After discussing business, and knowing her plans, Maria saw Patricia face blush, when she asked about her weekend with Sterling.

"That good." Maria commented.
"Mmm hmm." Patricia showed all thirty two of her teeth. "I song for him. Pattie LaBelle classic, If You Only Knew. And he love it."
"Why wouldn't he, you can sing."
"Also Falling, by Alicia Keys." Patricia tittered, before continueing informing Maria, that she made Sterling somewhat work, to find out where she stayed. Maria shooked her head, laughing, telling her that she was crazy. "Knowing that I had little skills in the kitchen, I made us some sandwiches, got a bottle of wine, then conversated. Then the Yalumba put me in a dancing mood, and I put on some Bruno Mars, and Versace On The Floor came on."
"And yours hit the floor." Maria guessed, before Patricia could tell. Patricia face turned red, with embarrassment. Maria face had a awe unbelief look. "You gave him some?"
Patricia put her head down, as she shook it yes. Maria leaned forward asking in a low tone. "Was he good?"
"I'm wet now, just thinking about it."
"Dam! he was that good?"
Patricia face was beaming when she look up. "And fulfilling."
"And that big too?"
Patricia answered shaking her head, if though she was in freezing below degree weather. "Sterling is the whole package. Almost flawless." Maria watched Patricia sit back in her chair and sigh excited. She sense that Patricia was looking at her, but through her, thinking, what was Sterling flaws. Her pupils dilated, bringing Maria into focus.

"His occupation."
"What? You don't want him to dance anymore?"
"Am I wrong?" she wanted to know.
"You're not jealous or insecure, that he might cheat on you?"
"In secure no." Patricia answered the latter, adjusting herself in her seat. "Maybe jealous, if that's the word. Of other women seeing and trying to grasp what's mines now."
"So ask him to stop dancing."
"That wouldn't be right. And deny him of his lively hood. Wouldn't it?" she questioned herself.

"If he cares for you, and you two are in relationship now, Sterling can find another job."

"I'm sure. But will it be one that can pay his expenses, and leave him time to write."

"Probaly." Maria replied. "I'm sure you two can come up with a compromise."

"I'm sure." Patricia contemplating, wondering if she might be asking too much from Sterling to soon.

"Have you heard anything from Glenn?"

"Yeah, he's still texting me. Begging for me to forgive him. Sending present. He even went as far in saying that the baby might not be his."

"Dam, he's sounding like a real nigga now."

Patricia gave her a vex look. "I wouldn't make that remark in front of Sterling." she responded, and explained how she made a similar remark the night they had dinner.

"That time it was universal. Lazy, sorry, irresponsible. Like those men that comes on Murray."

Patricia burst into laughter, telling her best friend that's one of the reason why she loved her, because she was crazy. After listening to Maria headache of being lonely during Carlos four days road trip, she went back to her desk. Glancing out the office window, Patricia froze in her tracks, seeing Glenn come through the door. He gave her a, Can We Have A Minute? Look, and didn't wait for a reply. Patricia sat paralyzed, watching Glenn make his way towards her. He stood a moment in silence, absorbing her beauty. The weary smile that appeared on his face, revealed how much he missed her.

"Hi." he spoke.

"What are you doing here?"

"I wanted to see you. It's been weeks."

"Why, it's over between us."

"It don't have to be Patricia, we can work through this." Glenn tried to reach for her hand.

"No we can't Glenn!" she gave him a sharp look, shaking her head. "I will never be able to erase the image of you between
that bitch legs."
Glenn sighed in defeat, scratching his head, trying to find the right words to say next. "I'm sorry. I'm willing to move mountains, to make things right with us. I swear to you that I have no feeling for Kelly. I only love the woman that standing before me. I screw up badly. Patricia. I know. Don't let one mistake." Glenn held up his finger, "Break up what we built in the last four years."
"Your one mistake had several disrespectful acts connected to it."
Wrinkles of confusion showned on Glenn forehead. "You didn't have the respect to take that bitch to a motel. You took her to our going to be home. Then fucked her in the bed that I picked out. The bed that we made love in. The bed where you tell me that you love me."
Glenn dropped his head depleted, after hearing Patricia blast off, his acts of betrayal. Raising his head, he scanned the office and saw that all eyes were on him. Running his hand through his crew cut style hair, he sighed heavily again. Turning his stares back to Patricia grieve face, Glenn forced a smile, hoping it would lighten Patricia demeanor. "I understand. I hurt you very much. I understand that you need more time to heal."

"Separation from you is the only way I will be able to heal."

"Don't say that Patricia."

"It's over Glenn."

"So what, you into this Sterling guy?" Glenn eyes narrowed. Patricia displayed a shocking look. "Yes I know his name. That's he's a stripper. I know that his mother is in prison. Where he lives. The night you had dinner, and the nights you spend at his place." Glenn paused to restrain himself. "If you slept with him, I forgive you." sounding pathetic.

"Why are you following me?"

"It's my job to protect you."

"I don't need your protection. I'm fine."

"Come on Patricia, you can't be serious." Glenn guffawed. "You willing to give up everything I built for us, for a man who takes off his clothes for a living?"
Patricia ignored Glenn question, folding her arms, irritated. "I think you
need to leave. I have alot of work to do."

"Yeah, I think you need to leave, before I call the police." Maria walked up behind Patricia and seconded her request. Glenn told Maria harshly to stay out of their business, that this was between he and his girlfriend.

"I'm not your girlfriend anymore Glenn." she yelled.

"Yes you are. You just mad now. Tell me that you don't love me anymore, and I'll leave."

"She don't love your cheating ass anymore. Now get the fuck out!" Maria answered for Patricia. Glenn look down at Maria with firey eyes, scowling at her to stay out their business. "Let Patricia answer!"

Patricia stared a long moment sorrowfully in the face of Glenn grey eyes, before answering. "At one time I love you more than anything in the world. But AI don't anymore. Its over for us."

"Patricia." Glenn pleaded, reaching for her hand. Stepping back, she again requested for him to leave.

"You heard her answer and her request for you to leave." a voice spoke from behind them. Glenn turned to see Sterling standing at the door, wearing a stern expression. Glenn survey Sterling from head to toe, then exhibited a sinister grin.

"Oh, looks who's here. The man who wears a G-string to work." Glenn turned back to Patricia, and asked again. "Is this the guy you want to spend your life with." he gestured back to Sterling. "A stripper, My Gød Patricia."

"At least his honest and he has a big dick." she retorted with a sarcastic smile. Everyone in the office watched Glenn face turned fire truck red, as Maria struggled to hold her laughter. "Its over Glenn, will you please leave, and never come back."

"And let that be the last time she ask you that again." Sterling said sternly.

"And if I don't." Glenn turned his firey eyes at Sterling. "What you gonna do about it?"

"We'll remove you by force." Glenn laughed at Sterling, folding his arms. "You and what army? What you brought your thong waering thugs with you?"

"No." Sterling opened the door to let his helpers inside. Glenn jolted
witness the two canines, take their place on opposite side of Sterling.
"You already know Candy here. Meet her new boyfriend Maxium. My best friend."
Glenn stood alittle terrified, hearing the growls of the dogs. He tried to communicate with Candy, but her snarls became more aggressive, along with her barks. Glenn been chargin by Candy betrayal, as he was the one that purchase Candy three years ago for a birthday present. Glenn swiveled back to Patricia, giving her a disappointment look. "So this is what you want," Glenn. "I don't love you anymore Glenn."
Patricia last remark took the life out of Glenn, as he dropped head and stare down at the black carpet. His moment of sorrow been quickly re-placed with anger. "Go ahead and be with your Magic Mike. Let me help with the wedding." Glenn dugged in his pocket, and tossed three hundred dollars at her. "Stick that in his G-string."
On his way out the door, Glenn stop in front of Sterling. "No body in your profession is honest. If there's some fucked up shit about you, I'll find it." He gave Sterling a wicked smile, before walking out the door.
Sterling commanded the dogs to sit and stay, while he checked on Patricia. Forcing a smile, she asked what was he doing here. "I had a feeling that Glenn would be paying you a visit."
"How did you know?"
"The Chuck appliance service van I saw parked in my parking lot this morning, when you left for work. It was the same I saw that night we had dinner. And my brother is a cop, so I had him do a check on Chuck appliance. And found out that the company doesn't exist. So I figure whoever he had following you, would have filled him inn, that you spent the night with me."
"I'm glad you came." she stepped closer to kiss him. "I thought we were going to have to call the police, to make him leave."
"There's no need for them now, he's gone."
"Yeah, for now." Patricia replied worried.
While contemplating about Glenn, Maria pretended like she was clearing her throat, tapping Patricia on her hip. Patricia look back and giggled, seeing the, Are You Gonna Introduce Me, look on her face. "I'm sorry."
Patricia step to the side. "You met before my best friend, and co-
owner Maria Sanchez. The one who gave you my number without my permis-
sion." Patricica gave her a side look.

"And I still haven't gotten a payment or a thank you, for hooking
her up with one of the finest man in Houston."
Sterling face beamed from Maria compliment, thanking her, on he and
Patricia behalf.
Taking his hand, Patricia introduce Sterling to the rest of her staff.

CHAPTER 59

Three o'clock in the morning, Sterling pulled up to his complex
gate, and punched in the code to get inside. Turning off the engine,
he exhaled exhausted, abit tired how the night went at Mandigos.
Surprise by the large crowd on a Monday night, there were two parties
thrown. One for a nurse working at Ben Tuab county hospital. Still in
uniform, Sterling swore that the whole second shift staff had came.
Another party was for a set of triplets, whom invited their friends,
in whom invited their friends. Money was flying all over the stage, as
Shaka, Black Knight and the other dancers entertained the women.
Sterling sat in his car for a moment, rewinding back to the white middle
age nurse, exhibiting a hundred dollars, requesting for him to get
naked. Coming to a compromise with Patricia, Sterling agreed to no longer
get naked for private showing. And while pleaing with him, to show her
his penis, she confess that her husband is a lawyer, and had a dick the
size of a twelve year old. "I can tell by the lenght and girth of the
imprint,that you have a big black dick." she said sexually. Sterling
had ran her a story that it been against city ordiance to dance fully
naked. "BULLSHIT!" the lady cursed Sterling. "That's the purpose of
those back rooms. You think I don't know?

"I'm sorry to disappoint you." Sterling straddled her, grinding and
kissing her on the forehead, and cheek." I don't get naked anymore."

"Why?" she held his waist.

"I promise my girlfriend."
But the nurse didn't respect or give a shit about his girlfriend, pulling
down his thong, exposing his manhood. She cursed, excited by the size. Sterling jumped to his feet in anger, but remained professional, informing the nurse politely that he didn't appreciate what she done. The nurse laughed, standing to her feet, and stepping inches from Sterling. She ran her manicure nails over his chest and nipples. Displaying a seductive smile, looking down, noticing the imprint of his green thong enlarge. "Dam." she looked back up at him holding her wanton smile. "Your girlfriend is gonna make you lose alot of money. Here." she pulled open his thong, and dropped the hundred dollar bill inside, never looking down.

Sterling knew what the woman had said had been the truth. But it was a small to pay to be with Patricia.

Finally exiting his car, he made his way to his townhouse, almost to his door, the flashing of headlights drewed his attention. Turning, he spotted the Rossi red Italian car. Sterling mind been boggled, wondering if that's whom he thought it could be. Making his way to the car, he couldn't see the person behind the dark tinted windows.

Giving by the moonlight, he saw his reflection disappear as the driver window came down, and the elegant face of the judge appeared.

"Diane." he said her name in suprised.

"Hello handsome."

"What are you doing here?"

"To see you. I miss you."

"How did you know where I stay?" he asked, ignoring her answer, still baffled by her announce visit.

"I'm a judge remember." she smiled. Scratching his head, Diane response made. Sterling feel like somewhat of an idiot. Sterling reached to open her door, when he heard the door unlock. Diane got out, catching Sterling off guard with a passionate kiss and embrace.

"Oh, you don't know how much I miss being in your embrace."

"Same here." he comfort her for a moment, before disengaging. Giving Diane a heartfelt smile, Sterling killed any sexual expectation, reminding Diane that he has a girlfriend. And that he is faithful and committed to her.

"I remember. The girl at Urban Houston magazine. Patricia is her name, right?"
"Mmm hmm.' he nodded his head, still curious of her reason showing up in his parking lot. A moment of silence passed, before Diane ask if Sterling was going to be a gentleman, and invite her inside his place. Diane placed a hand on her throat, teasing that it was dry. Sterling fake a awkward smile. "Sure. Forgive me for my rudness." he extended his hand.

"Apology accepted." she beamed, taking his hand.

Inside, Sterling inquired what Diane would like to drink. "Something aging, red, and mind altering." she teased, running her finger across his cheek.

"I think I might have two of the three, in the refig." Sterling removed her hand and squeezed it gently. He gestured for Diane to make herself comfortable anywhere that she please, as he went into the kitchen. Diane been impressed with his bacherlor pad, and asked if Sterling decorated the place himself. "No, my cousin Kiya had some imput." Diane walked over to the fireplace, observing the painting over it.

"Beautiful painting."

"Thank you." Sterling entered the livingroom with their drinks.

"Will you believe that I bought it from a black artist at the flea market."

"Wow." Diane turned to him, taking her glass of wine. "She or he has talent." she commented, taking a sip.

"She."

"How should have known." Diane replied cynical. Sterling inclined his head, raising an eyebrow at her remark.

"And what do you mean by that?"

"You have a nice little place. I wondered how many women you entertained here."

Sterling chuckled, watching Diane look up at him while she took another swallow of her wine. "I can count on one hand."

"Really." she gave him a contemp look. "I find that hard to believe."

"Why? I never told you where I lived."

Sterling response stung Diane feeling. "I guess you didn't have the same feeling for me, as some of your other clients." Diane countered walking away from him, and taking a seat.
Folding her legs under herself, Diane fitted Charlotte Ronson dress, exposed her sexy thighs.

"No that's not true. I'm very fond of you. In fact, none was fun to be with. Conversate with. Intelligent or beautiful as you." Sterling reply filled Diane with confident and desire. "They were some rich women. Some married. Some wasn't. Only wanting to have an orgasm. No string attach." he sat next to her. "I was just their boy toy." Sterling explained, finally tasting his wine.

"What blind fools they are, to not see what I see."
"I appreciate that." Sterling laughed. But he had no interest in them either.
Diane stared at him with lustful eyes, while tasting her wine.
"MmmM." she hummed in delight.
"You like the wine?"
"I love the wine." Diane slid closer to him. "What is it?" she swished the wine under her nose, inhaling the fragrance.
"Some wine from Spain, I can't pronounce. Biondi Santi Rosso Di, blah, blah, blah." Sterling struggled to pronounce the last name. Diane softly giggled, massaging his thigh, in which Sterling started to feel uncomfortable. He smoothly grasped her hand and squeezed it gently, position their elbows on top of the couch.
He asked if there was another reason why she came to see him, at these hours of the night. Other than she missed him. Diane sipped her wine first, then placed her glass on the coffee table, and made known her other reason. "My senator friend contacted me and said he'd spoken to the Pardon and Parole panel who will be reviewing your mother's case, and assure that your mother will make parole, seeing that she completed all her programs required."
"For real?" Sterling face brighten up the dimly lit room.
"Hunh hunh." Diane nodded her head, slyly placing her hand back on Sterling thigh. "But she might have to wear a monitor for ninety days."
"I don't care. I just want her home." he noted, leaning forward to put his drink on the table. Sterling rambled on, telling Diane about things they were gonna do. That his mother had a list of movies she wanted to see, and recipes she wanted to prepare. "When I go visit her,
She tells me that she never wants to see another Ramen noodle soup item ever again. Or she'll commit mass murder, she jokes." He made known to Diane clearly. "Thank you." He kissed her on the cheek.

"I'm happy that I could help." She gave Sterling a alluring smile. "How I'm going to repay you back?"

"I don't know, since you have a girlfriend now." Diane started again massaging his thigh. This time Sterling didn't remove her hand. "I heard you are a excellent cook. Maybe you can repay by cooking for me."

"Where did you hear that from?" Sterling gave her a suspicious look.

"I think you told me." She giggled lightly, running her manicure nails under his chin. Silence for a moment, Sterling saw the lust in Diane eyes, and needed to find away to cool down her harmones, and his. Diane beauty and appeal was difficult to ignore, as the tingle of her nails sliding softly up and down his jeans, was beginning to give him a rise. "Oh how I envy your girlfriend, in abling to lock you down,"

"If you knew her, I believe you would see why."

"She's that beautiful hunh?"

"Patricia is more than just look. She smart. Driven. Fun. And sometime reckless."

"Reckless, how? she wanted to know, placing her hand on her chin. Sterling gave her the details of the condition, if he wanted to know where Patricia lived. "Must gotten her D.N.A from her mother." Diane gave him a sly smile.

"I'm sure her beauty and smarts. Her reckless, I think that's all her."

"Maybe." Diane retrieved her drink off the table. "Again, I must say I'm jealous of her, that she took you away from me." she teased, sipping her wine. Sterling laughed, and reminded Diane that she was married. "Not happily at the moment." she let him know, informing her sexlife had come back to a halt. Sterling took her hand an apologize, that her needs weren't being met at home, and advised Diane to remain patience, that her husband could be going through some sort of male menopause. "Maybe so." she finished her drink, and placed it back on the table. Diane folded her legs back under her, making herself comfortable. She took Sterling hand, and massaged it between hers, while soaking in his features. She wanted to know if she wasn't married
could he see himself with her, being an older woman.

"Definitely. You are one of the most sexiest and mature woman I ever met. I was attractive to you at first, when you enter the court room."

"It wasprobably the robe." she jested. Sterling guffawed. "Probaly."
During their laughing session, Sterling look down to find his hand on Dîane smooth warm thigh. Not sure how it got there, he tried to remove it, but Diane stop him. No words were spoken, as they held eye contact. Diane slid his hand inside her dress, to let him know that she wasn't wearing any underwear. Touching her wetness, Sterling never broke his stare, watching Dîane move closer to kiss him. After one to three pecks on the lips, Diane forced her tongue in his mouth. Sterling caught momentarily in her rapture, pulled away, standing to his fet. "I'm sorry. As much as I want, we can't go there Diane. I'm in a committed relationship."

"She doesn't have to know." she stood to her feet, inches from him.

"But I'll know." he shooked his head. "I could never look her in the face with honesty again, if I go to bed with you. She been hurt already. And I promise to never bring her no pain."
Sterling oath to never bring pain to the woman that he loves now, brought sorrow to the woman that stood before him. He witness her lovely brown eyes become glossy, and a tear form in the corner. Sterling put his hand on her cheek, and apologize again. Diane copied his gesture, letting her eyes roam his dejected face.

"She don't know how lucky to have you." she noted, then kissing him softly.
Sterling walked Diane out to her car. Before getting inside she ask him if she was still promise that home cook meal. He assured her, along with a nice bottle of wine. Kissing him one last time, Diane got inside her car. She exhibited a mischief smile, saying she'll see him soon, before driving away.
The sun was out with a light breeze in late August. Sterling and Patricia was having lunch on the patio at one of Houston popular restaurant, Razu. While waiting to order, they discuss about taking a weekend trip to San Antonio, and visit the Alamo, and both theme park, Fiesta Texas, and Sea World. Both couldn't believe the Houston Astro-World wasn't no more.

Ordering a seafood platter, Patricia and Sterling change their topic, discussing the upcoming football session, and how the Texans would do. Sterling felt by week three or four, that Desean Watson would be starting.

"Why?" Patricia questioned.

"Three reason. The Texans had Salvage for years, and never once considered him a starter. Or even a backup. Second when he do play, he get's hurt. Third, his last name is Salvage."

Patricia laughed. "Your last point was the strongest." she took a bite of her breadstick, then washed it down with root beer. Sterling continued giving his opinion about the Texans, when Patricia cell chimed. Laying on the table. Excusing herself, she check to see whom was texting her. Sterling saw her smile, and beginned pressing on the keys pad. He heard her verbally say the last part of what she text. "Come have lunch with me. I'm at Razu."

Patricia place her cell back on the table after recieving a text back. Sterling asked who she was inviting to join them for lunch.

"My mother."

"Really. That's nice. Now I finally get to meet her."

"Yes. she's fifteen minutes away."

"I don't know to much about her or your father. I been so into you." he joked, sipping his drink.

"Ditto. I wake up in the morning, when I'm not with you, and can't wait to read the loving texts, or encouraging quotes you leave." Hearing or reading something positive in the morning is the second best thing behind prayer."

"Agree."

"Hope that your mother approves of me." Sterling commented, taking another swallow of his soda, then placing it back on the table.
"Why would you think she wouldn't?"

"My occupation." Sterling raised an eyebrow. "She might think I'm a gigolo, or an opportunist."

"What, and try to swindle me out some money. Good luck!" she laughed. Because I ain't got any. My nose being above water is the only reason I'm breathing." Patricia annotation made Sterling laugh. "Your handsome, smart, an a inspire writer. A survivor. Just be yourself, and she'll love you just like I do."

Reaching for her drink, Patricia still saw the insecurities, and concern features in his face. "Did I include that you were handsome?" Sterling looked up at her smiling widely. "Yes, I believe it was the first attribute."

Patricia ordered another seafood platter and asked the waitress to hold their order, because they were expecting another guest. Five minutes later Patricia spotted her mother coming, stepping out onto the patio.

"She's here" Patricia waved her hand to get her attention. When Sterling saw her, a cold chill ran through his body, witnessing the smiling mother of Patricia come their way.

Matching her daughter beauty, wearing a pair of Donna Karen fitted jeans. Her black bra could be seen through the thin white white rayon ruffle blouse, on the shoulders and wrists. Daine faced Sterling while he watched her kiss and embrace Patricia. She gave him a mischievous smile.

Patricia stepped back to view her mother attire, and joked about trying to catch a younger man. "You look young and sexy."

Diane thanked her daughter, and revealed that she seen the Kardashian mother, Chris, wearing something similar in a magazine.

Sterling stood to his feet, when Patricia introduced him. The betrayal grin reappeared on her face, as she extended her hand for him to shake.

"Hi Sterling, I'm Judge Diane Willington."

Sterling began beating himself inside, not connecting Diane and Patricia last name. "Nice to finally meet you. Patricia told me somewhat about you. And one thing she said that's true, I see."

"And that is?"

"That you are handsome."

"Thank you, inherit it from my mother." he faked a smile. "I see
where Patricia inherit hers. Please have a seat." holding a facade, Sterling gesture, and assisted Daine into hers.

"And I see that you are a gentleman too."

"First impression are the most memorable." Sterling made sure that Diane was comfortable. Patricia let her mother know that she had ordered for her. Thanking her, Diane turned her attention back to Sterling, whom was trying to withold his turbulent emotion.

"So Sterling, my daughter tells me your occupation is." Diane hummed, trying to find an appropriate name. "Male entertainment."

"Yes, I entertain women for a living."

"Meaning taking off your clothes?"

"MOTHER!" Patricia embarrassed.

"Not any more, since seeing your daughter."

"I read your article in my daughter magazine, and women that's come to see you strip, must be disappointed?"

"They will survive." he chuckled. "Soon they would have too. I'm thinking about giving it up."

"To do what?" Diane questioned.

"Maybe construction. I know a little something about wiring houses."

"Hmm. I'm sure you strip as a construction worker on stage?" Diane teased.

"Mother!" Patricia interceded again. "Why are you acting like this?" Diane laughed, as she waved Patricia off, and retrieved her drink of the table. "I'm just teasing with this handsome man. I like him better already than that conceded Glenn you was with. The only reason I dealt with him is because of you, and he's your uncle step son."

"I don't want to talk about Glenn, mother."

"Darling, nor do I." Dianne gave Sterling a seductive look, while Patricia was looking away.

"Back to you, Mr. Maxwell."

"Sterling please, your honor." he flashed a witty grin.

"Sterling." she obeyed his request. "I remembered reading that you are a inspire writer."

"Yes. My dream is to be famous one day, like Patterson, Grisham, King."

"What do you write?"
"Books for African American woman. Some history and fiction combined."
"If I could afford another employee, I'll hire him myself." Patricia joked.

"Darling to much time together in a relationship is bound to be dis-
aster. You two will quickly get tired of being up under one another.
Having your own little space is good for a relationship. Make you en-
joy each other company, when you together." Diane elucidated, before
again tasting her drink. Looking over her glass, she saw her daughter
give Sterling a loving smile. "Your father and I been together for
over twenty seven years. How do you think we keep our marriage intact?"
Diane questioned, but wasn't really expecting an answer.

While eating lunch, Patricia asked her mother why were she on this
side of town. She made known to her that she heard about a college, a
former black judge that been badly ill. "Judge David Smiley. He's
eighty something, and quickly developing dementia. He taught me the in's
and out's, and everything of being a judge. Judge Smiley was a man of
intelligents and integrity."

"Did the judge recognize you, in that outfit?" Patricia joked.
"I don't know, but he didn't stop smiling." Diane reply made everyone
lightly laugh. "So after I visit the judge, I was hoping to spend
sometime with you, and have some mother and daughter time. But I see
the day turned out perfect for me, finally meeting the man that repaired
my baby heart."

"Your daughter filled the void in mines." Sterling noted.
"Mmm really? A goodlooking man like you and occupation. How was my
daughter able to peek your attention?"
"I thought she was the most beautiful woman I seen when I encounter
her at the park." Patricia inclined her head, hearing this for the
first time.

"So you meet my daughter before the interview?" Diane abit baffled.
"Somewhat accidental. Max, my German shepard, brought Candy over to
me at me. And Patricia here, looking for her, found Candy with Max,
conversating with me. A short conversation about our canines friends
took place, until her ex called out for her. I knew it wasn't a coin-
cident, when I seen it was her as the one who interviewed me. I knew

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Patricia was the one, and I knew I had to get to know her."

"So you knew who I was all the time." Patricia surprised.

"No. I just knew that you were the woman that I seen in the park." Sterling answered, displaying a satisfied smile. "I know you now." Touched by Sterling revelation, Patricia reached for his hand. "I know you now too, baby."

Diane eyes darted back and forth, while sitting between them. She commented how they were maybe destined to be together, but felt opposite inside, as her eyes rested on Sterling. "Let me order a bottle of wine to celebrate your new found love. Red wine you think." Diane gave Sterling a sly smile.

"Thank you, what a lovely gesture." he responded, giving her a cold stare. Waving over the waitress, Diane ask for the most expensive red wine they had. Attending back to their food, Patricia cell phone rung. Checking the caller ID, she apologize, excusing herself, claiming she had to take this call. A jested smile appeared on Diane face, witnessing Sterling stand, and nod in respect, as Patricia momentarily left.

"You never shown that type of respect for me." Diane teased, holding the same expression.

"What kind of fucking games you playing Diane?" Sterling scrowled through his teeth.

"Uuh baby, why such the harsh tone?" she tittered, reaching for her glass of wine. "One must watch his language, when speaking to a judge. Do you know what the punishment are for speaking vulgar to a judge?" she questioned Sterling, while looking over her wine glass. "Dissolution." she answered her own question, exhibiting a sinister half grin. Still looking over her wine glass, she watched Sterling look over at Patricia standing by the rail, displaying a harden look.

"MMM, this wine taste almost as good as the one we had the other night." she commented, making Sterling turn his stares back to her.

"What do you want? You knew for weeks that I was dating your daughter." "Nothing." she laughed.

"Stop bullshitting!" Sterling wasn't buying it. Diane continued to giggle from Sterling reply and expression. She thought he looked even

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sexier angry. Diane sat back and cross her legs, taking another taste of her wine. She looked over at Patricia whom was still on her cell.

"If you worry about me telling Patricia that we dated one another at one time, she'll never hear it from me."

"We wasn't dating. We had a arrangement." Sterling clarified. Diane guffawed. "Oh, that's what that was." she resented Sterling remark as she finished her drink, and placing it back on the table.

"Yes. I gave you what you wanted, and you paid me."

"So what you said was a lie, about us could have been a union, if I wasn't married?"
Sterling didn't respond, looking away. There was no fraud in his reply he given her the other night. Truely Sterling felt that Diane was intriguing. Intelligent, and beautiful. Controlling the chaos inside him, Sterling was still trying to figure out why Diane didn't reveal to him, that Patricia was her daughter. He knew that Diane didn't want to tell Patricia that she and her mother had slept together. Knowing it would cause a devisive between the two. And maybe a divorce with William.

Diane can see the wheels spinning at warp speed in Sterling head. "She doesn't never have to know Sterling."

"I don't feel right holding secrets from Patricia."

"Darling, you think you can tell Patricia that you was having sex with her mother, and continue to have a relationship. Sterling think!" she pointed to her temple, and uncrossed her legs. "Patricia has quickly falling in love with you. And I see that you have too."

"Your visit the other night, was a test to see how much I love your daughter?"

"No, I wanted to fuck." she leaned forward. "Yes, I know I'm Patricia mother, but I'm still a woman who needs to be satisfied. And you the only one I know who can do that."

"We can't do that anymore."

"I know, and its hard for me to keep my harmones in check when I'm around you."

"I guess Patricia and I are going to find somewhere esle to spend Thanks giving and Christmas."

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Diane bursted into laughter, while reaching for the bottle of wine, to pour herself some more wine. Sterling took the bottle from Diane &gasped, and poured it for her. "Thank you." she told him.

"Don't. I'm just making it look good."

"I want lie, it hurts, how you toss your feeling aside about me, for my daughter."

"If I knew that she was your daughter, I would have never been interest in Patricia."

"So Patricia being the most beautiful woman you ever seen was bullshit?" Diane glared curious, swirling the wine in her glass."

"You know what I mean." he frowned.

"Do I." she remark, sitting back in her chair and smile. "Don't worry about our rendezvous, again Patricia want hear anything from me. Just keep my child happy."

"And who's gonna make you happy?"

"MMM." Diane raised an eyebrow. "I'll find someone."

Returning back to the table, Patricia apologize again for her momentarily absent, explaining she needed to take the call. "It was a rep for Solange Knowles. She's doing a show at the Ariel arena, and I'm working to get aabackstage interview."

"Solang is the younger sister of Beyonce, correct?" Diane asked.

"Yes she is. Solang is very much grown, and doing her own thing." I hear her lastest ablum got four stars." Sterling noted.

"I have heard it. Its nice." Patricia commented, settling back in her seat, and retrieving her utensil. "So what you two talked about, while I was away?"

"Debating where you should spend Thanksgiving." Sterling gave Diane a sharp stare.
The garage door was opened and Sterling parked on the opposite side of the Navigator, that was parked in the garage. Instead of heading to the front door, Sterling changed course, through the garage, when he heard Kiya shouting from the kitchen, inquiring what kind of ice cream the twins wanted.

"Vanilla." Sterling answered, frightening Kiya. Panting, with her hand over her heart, she cursed Sterling for scaring her. "The garage door was open. And plus, I told you I was coming by."

"Yeah I know. When you texted me, I was out picking up a few things for dinner. I just got back five minutes ago." Kiya retrieved the orange sherbert from the refrig. "You want some ice cream?" she maneuvered around the kitchen island to get some bowls.

Homemade Vanilla, if you have some." Sterling walked around the island and leaned against it with his rear.

"You sure you don't want some chocolate mixs with some of your vanilla?" Kiya teased.

"Funny Simone." Sterling rolled his eyes, knowing that Kiya been referring to Patricia bi-racial background. "Where are the twins?"

"Upstairs, watching Cars 2, for the upton time."

Saying hello at the same time, Sterling offered to take the twins their bowl of ice cream, so Kiya could get dinner started. Returning back downstairs, Kiya been in the act of seasoning some ground meat. Sterling placed a spoonful of melted ice cream in his mouth, while surveying what Kiya had laid out on the counter, and concluded she was making tacos.

"I see that the family is having a fiesta night." Sterling took a seat at the kitchen bar.

"That's what the twins wanted." Kiya massaging the meat.

"The twins are spoiled."

"I know. I can't help it. Chris try's to be the disciplinary of us two. But feels bad after speaking to them in a harsh tone, an gives them five dollars."

Sterling burst into laughter. "I know that they have hundreds of dollars in their piggy bank. Those kids are smart. They know what their..."
doing. I caught them grinning devilish at each other." Kiya told Sterling.

Together laughing, after their short laughing session about the twins, Kiya asked what's up. "In your texts, you said you had something important to talk about."

Sliding his bowl to the side, "Yeah, it about Patricia."

"Y'all having problems already?" Kiya stopped, turning to him.

"Our relationship is fine now. But I found out that this perfect union could be ending soon."

"What the hell you talking about Sterling?" she frowned confused.

"Patricia and I were having lunch at Razu, when her mother texted, and joined us."

"About time after a few months, you finally met her mother. So what, she didn't approve of you?" Kiya inquired, leaning against the island.

"Very much. You can say to much." Sterling sighed sharply.

"Okay, you losing me." she folded her arms.

"I and her mother had a short arrangement a few months back."

"Who, Patricia mother?" Kiya anxiously wanted to know. Sterling held eye contact as he revealed who Patricia mother is.

"THE JUDGE!"

Kiya stared at Sterling with her mouth ajar, paralyzed, lost for words. "I know. That's what happen to me, when I seen Diane come strolling towards us. And you wanna know what the fucked up part about this situation."

"What?"

"Diane knew for a while I was seeing her daughter, and said nothing." "How do you know, she knew?"

"Patricia had told her about me. And I told her I was in a committed relationship, and with who. She showed up at my townhouse a few nights ago."

"Maybe to test your commitment to her daughter."

"No, she wanted to have sex."

"How do you know?"

"Because she told me."

"So what do you think the judge is up too?"

"I don't know. Nothing she say. Claiming that Patricia will never
find out our fling from her."
"That's a good thing hunh?"
"Is it? I don't feel right holding secrets from Patricia. Especially this dreadful."
"But if you tell Patricia that you slept with her mother, the relationship is over."
"You think so. Even though it was before we met?"
"HELL YEAH!" Kiya stressed. "It doesn't matter if you slept with her mother before, during or after. The Relationship Is Over! It isn't like you had sex with her best friend. You can always get another best friend. But you only have one mother."
Sterling exhaled deeply, knowing that Kiya had said the truth, and ask what she think he should do. "Depending how much you love and really want a relationship with Patricia."
Sterling sighed again, running his hand over his head, looking away. "Patricia mother told you she had no attention of telling her of you two affair, right?"
"Arrangement." Sterling corrected Kiya.
"Whatever." Kiya threw up her hands, before turning back to the kitchen island and begin massaging her ground beef. "Do you believe her?"
"I don't know. She expressed the ramification if our relationship is to become known."
"Her husband."
"That's one reason. But still made it known to me, that she desires me, and struggles to control her hormones, when in my present."
"Sounds like you just have to steer clear from the judge, if you want this relationship to continue."
"I know." Sterling contemplating on how to do that. "What are you doing for Thanksgiving?"
Childish Gambino new song Red Bone, played low in the background, as Sterling drove home from work. He was thinking about quitting dancing at Mandigos, after Rene expressed her contempt about the complaints she was receiving about his private performance. Rene was sitting behind her desk when he entered her office. Nina came around her desk, and sat on the edge. Dressed in a pink bodysuit by Kat, she crossed her legs, giving Sterling a lustful smile. Enjoying the sight of his tight Under Amour shirt, and the bulge in his thong. Sterling responded to Nina with a sharp glare, before bringing his attention back to Rene, who had a ire look. "What the fuck is going on with you?"
Sterling frown caused wrinkles to appear on his forehead. "What are you talking about?"
"Costumers are complaining, saying your not taking it off. Why?"
"Because I think he has a girlfriend now. Sterling has the heart for that mix breed girl, that interviewed him from Urban Houston magazine." Nina said, showing Sterling a sinister half grin.
"If that the case, I don't give a shit if you do or don't have a girlfriend. I'm trying to run a business here. And you and Shaka are my star studs. Women come here and pay to see your sculpture chest, abs, tight ass, and that huge bulge in your G-string. They pay thirty or more dollars for a private showing to see and touch it."
"I know, but I promise my girlfriend, that I won't dance fully nude anymore."
"Again I don't give a shit what you promise her. Women pay you to see that dick of yours. So show them that big dick of yours, or I'm gonna have to cut you loose."

The humming of the engine echoed off the townhomes walls, in the silence of the night. Pulling into his assigned parking space, and shutting off the engine, Sterling went to the mailbox first, before making his way to his dwelling. Flipping through the mail, the car note, insurance, and cell phone bills, made him quickly conclude that he couldn't quit his night time job just yet. A excited look displayed on his face, seeing a reply back from a publishing company he written a few months ago. Sterling paused in his
steps to read their response. Slowly his eyes read the publishing company reply, to a disappointment ending.

"Thank you for considering Manny Publishing, unfortunately at the time we received a new submission, due to overwhelming inundation of submission. Thank you again and we wish you that best of luck in writing career."

"Dam." Sterling cursed, sticking the letter back in the envelope. Entering inside his townhome, he dropped his gym bag on the sofa, and the mail on the counter, then headed to the kitchen to grab a bottle of Sunny Delight from the refrig. Popping the top and taking a deep swallow, Sterling realized something wasn't right.

Max was nowhere to greet him. Calling out his name, Sterling listen out for the sounds of Max running down the stairs. Hearing none, Sterling called out Max name again, placing his drink on the counter. He began to worry if his best friend been hurt or dead.

Climbing the stairs, Sterling started towards Max room door, until he heard his bark coming from his room. Opening his bedroom door, he found Max lying on his belly, in the direction of his colonial four posts bed. Rising to a sitting stand, Max barked again, looking at him, then turned his sight back to Sterling bed. When Sterling followed his sight, his eyes turned firey red, discovering who been lying in it, wearing a cashmere coat and heels.

"You don't look to happy to see me." she spoked.

"What the hell you doing here?"

"So your not happy to see me." she gave him a dejected look.

"How did you get into my place?" Sterling avoided her question.

"Have you forgotten darling." she sat up, crossing her legs provocatively, leaning back on her hands. "I'm a judge. I can do anything." Sterling watched Max come over to him and sit. Looking at one another, he answered Max's bark. "This is Patricia mother." patting his head.

"I thought I taught you to kill intruders." Diane laughed at Sterling remark, standing to her feet. "Wow, that's a rude thing to say to your future mother-in-law."

"I'm sorry, but I can see that you on some Thin Line between Love And Hate Shit."

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Diane sarcastic lightly laughed again, while walking over to Sterling dresser. She ranned her hand over the items on it, then picked up one of the three different bottle of cologne, and softly inhale the fragrance. "Mmmm, this smells wonderful. What is it?" she turned to him.

"You should know, you bought it for me."
"Yes I know. Givenchy Gentlemen." she giggled. "It tells me that you still haven't forgotten about me. And appreciate my taste."
"I did." Sterling responded, then questioned Diane for the upteen time for the reasoning for being at his place. Diane again avoid his question with a wicked grin, and swiveled back to place the cologne bottle back on the dresser. She brought her brown eyes to a halt, removing the picture, of the young beautiful woman, plastered to his mirror.

"I assume this is Erica?" she asked, looking at Sterling in the mirror.
"It is."
"I understand now why it was so hard for you to let go of her. She gorgeous." Diane continued to speak, when she didn't receive no reply from Sterling. "So Patricia approves of you still having Erica picture tape your mirror?"
Sterling walked over to Diane as he spoke. "Your daughter is not threaten by Erica. She understand." taking Erica photo out of Diane hand, and putting it in his middle draw.
"I see you want answer my question for the reason you burgularized my apartment."
"No sweetheart, that's the wrong charge." Diane leaned close to him, inhaling his scent, recognizing the same musk, the night she sat on stage. "The correct charge is tresspassing." she tittered.
"What's with the behavior? Why are you acting like the bitch in Fatal Attraction?"
"Because I need you. I want you." she opened her coat, to expose her nakeness. "Sterling, you don't want me anymore?" she asked, dropping her cashmere coat to the floor, and sitting her bare ass on his dresser. Diane stucked her hands inside Sterling jeans,pulling him closer to
hér. "Give to me Sterling one last time, and I promise I'll never harrass you again."

"You wouldn't behave this way, if I was commited to any other woman. But since the other woman happen to be your daughter, you are jealous, that I fell in love with her."

Diane gave Sterling a grieving look, then casted her eyes downward. She remained siént for a moment, before revealing her feeling. "You know my sex life is suffering before I met you. My husband had me believing that I was undesirable. Pueriled. Your touch and kisses, all over my body felt like unexpode territory. Now you tossing me out in to the sea, for someone younger."

"Is it because of a younger woman, or because its Patricia? "Are you jealous of her?"

"You were mines first!" Daine exclaimed.
Sterling guffawed. "You are married Diane, which mean you could never be mines."

"You want me to get a divorce? I will." she sounding depress.
Sterling shooked his head in unbelief. "No Diane, I don't want you to get a divorce." he reached down to grabbed her coat. "I want you to go home, and tell your husband how you feel. And start acting like a respectable judge you were, and not that crazy bitch Glen Close."
he let her know, assisting Diane off the dresser, and covering her nakeness. She stared at Sterling with sadness and shame.

"You really love my daughter?"

"Very." Sterling beginnend buttoning up her coat, and lead Diane downstairs. Reaching her vehicle, Sterling realized why he wasn't alerted by her present, when she hit the alarm on the extended Escalade.
He opened her door for her, and Diane swiveled back to him, to tell Sterling her first reason for coming to see him.

"Oh yes. I talked to one of my sisters who is a editor of a publishing company. She said send her a few chapters of your book, and she'll look at it. Her name is Shonda Carson." Diane pulled out her card, from her coat. Sterling read the card. "Dark and Lovely Publishing. Atlanta Georgia."

"Thank you." he appreciated.

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"Just remember to mention me in your dedication." she smiled. "I won't." giving her a reassuring smile.

Holding a long gaze, Diane apologized for her wreakless behavior, lifting herself on her toes to peck Sterling on the lips. "Treat my daughter righteous, or you have to answer to me. And remember I'm a judge." she displayed a serious expression, before widening it into a smile.

CHAPTER 63

The next morning Diane went downstairs to find William in the kitchen having a cup of coffee and reading the US Today. Greeting one another morning, Diane walked over to the counter, and poured herself a cup. She asked if Mrs. Emily, their housekeeper and cook was here. Turning the page of his paper, her husband informed that Mrs. Emily was having problems, and had to take her car to the shop. "She'll be being later this morning."

Diane brought up the idea that they should buy Mrs. Emily an updated car. The her Honda Civic was seven years old. Maybe her told Diane, after checking their finances.

Diane glanced at the clock on the microwave, and saw it was all most ten thirty. Grabbing a bagle out the glass cover dish, she took some cream cheese to spread over it. Taking not, her proper seat at the breakfast table, she sat closer to her husband.

"When I came home last night you wasn't home." Diane noted. "Sorry sweetheart, I was at the office with some producers working on that new kid show I told you about."

"The one about the black kid?"

"Mmm hmm," William nodded his head, never looking at her, turning the pages of his paper. "What time did you come inn?"

"A little after four."

"Why you didn't come to bed?" Diane sounded somewhat upset. "I didn't want to wake you."

"Where did you sleep?"

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"In the library, with my laptop in my lap."

"I wish you would have. I needed you badly to extinguish the warmth between my legs."

"Sweetheart, I don't think you would gotten a rise out of me. I was jade."

Placing her bagle on her plate, Diane sigh sharply, drawing her husband full attention. Closing his paper, he question her if something was wrong. "Very." she answered, exhibiting a hard look.

"What is it?" he folded the paper, and putting it on the table. Grabbing his luke warm coffee, he heard his wife say "US!"

"What about us?" he frowned curious. Diane was silent for a moment, trying to find a way to express how she felt. But thinking how out of character she been acting lately, she needed to be straight forward.

"Our sex life. It's fucking non-existing."

William jolted somewhat, caught off guard by Daine language. "I did not know it was that bad."

"Worst," she replied gloomed. "When the last time we had sex?" William held eye contact with his wife, while thinking. "A month ago William, and it wasn't that memorable." Diane answered for him.

"You seem to remember." he joked.

"Yeah. How pissed I was of the sixty second love session we had. And you snoring loudly next to me, like you handle your busiess."

Lost for words, William sighed defeated, reaching for his wife hand. Squeezing it gently, he apologize for not fulfilling her sexual needs, blaming work and his age. "You know I'm sixty four, hardly the man when we first met."

"And I can understand somewhat about that. Maybe we can make an appointment with the doctor, to find option to better boost your testosterones. They have all type of advertizment on tv, to enhance a male and female libido."

William was contemplating, what Diane was saying. "Hmmm." producing a warm smile. "I can take the day off. Can you? Maybe we can make an appointment for today."

"I will. There's always a sit in judge at the courthouse. And I'm sure our doctor, can find away to fit us into his schedule." Diane read from the phone to all.
rosed from the table, to give her husband a kiss on the lips, thanking him. "I'm going to call Dr. Kim right now, so I can get my husband back." she seductively giggled, reaching down squeezing his penis.

Mrs. Emily retrieved her house keys to the Willington home from her apron. About to stick the key in the door, she been startled by two clean shave white men, possessing guns, holding one finger over their mouths. "Shhhh." they requested gallantly. Shocked and frighten, with wide eyes, Mrs. Emily read the three gold letter on their black jackets, F.B.I.

"Nod your head if you speak english."
Mrs. Emily shook her head frantically yes, letting the agents know she understood. "Answer our question only shaking your head, yes or no." the older of the two agents said.
"Is Mr, William Willington the home owner inside?"
Emily nodded slowly yes, parking next to his Escalade.
"Anyone else inside the home?"
Nodding her yes again, she held up one finger.
"The misses?"
Emily shooked her head frantically yes again. Flashing a signal, another F.B.I agent came to escort Mrs. Emily from the front door. Knowing that Mrs. Emily was saway and safe, the older agent gave a one, two, three signal, then kicked in the front door.
Just entering the livingroom, Diane screamed, not knowing who were the men bursting through her front door. Frantic, Diane couldn't comprehend the F.B.I commands, when they commanded her to get down. Standing frozen with her hands halfway up, William rushed out the kitchen, wondering what was happening, then stopped in his tracks, seeing all the guns pointing at him. He quickly saw the three letter abbreviation on their jackets. Anger, William questioned their purpose for kicking down his door, and scaring his wife. Ignoring his question, FBI asked, wanting to confirm if he was William Willington.

"I am."

"Put your hands up, your under arrest."

"For what?"
"Soliciting sex with a child and child pornography.""
Diane stared at husband in unbelief, wide eyes, mouth ajar, speechless.

Patricia pushed her mother something to drink, then took a seat
next to her in the livingroom. The FBI were still gathering the last
of their evidence, and making the way out of their home. One of the
agent's hands Diane a card, and asked to please call them if she had
anymore information concerning her husband case.

"Really! you kidding me." she scowled, giving the reverse flat top
agent a killer look.
Patricia waited for the last FBI agent to walk out the door. Then
after, Diane burst in a bawl, crying. Struggling to stay
composed for the both of them, Patricia fought back the flow of her tears.
Massaging her mother back, Patricia waited for her mother to gather
herself to question what was going on. "The media has the whole street
blocked off" Wiping her eyes with a damp hankerchief, Diane took a deep breath to
compose her nerves. "Your father and I were drinking coffee this
morning at breakfast, dicussing the problems in our marriage. Well I
was expressing my grievence to him."

"What grievance?"
"Our sex life." she look at her daughter. "It been non-existing.
Your father agreed to try one of those new pills, always being adver-
tize. I was frighten by the front door being kick down, on my way to
call Dr. Kim, to make appointment. Guns were pointed in my face. I
never seen so many, just pointed at me. They were asking for your fa-
thar."

"Is it true, what they say father is charged with?"
"I think so." she nodded, starring into nowhere. "They found his lap-
top full of child pornography of young boys. And texts he made on his
cell phone to the informant." Diane revealed all that she knew.

"I can't believe this is happening." she finished, wiping her tears.
Patricia also couldn't believe this was happening, as she comfort
her mother, holding in her thoughts.

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CHAPTER 64

Mailing off a few chapters of his manuscript, Sterling was suppose to meet Patricia for a late lunch, but had received a texts from her apologizing, that she couldn't. "Family emergency."

Stopping at a nearby park, to allow Max to stretch his legs, Sterling received another text from Dana, asking if he was coming to his game this Sunday, verses the Colts. Dana been called up from the practice squad, after starting running back Lamar Miller pulled a hamstring.

"Yeah, if you got free tickets." he texted back joking. "I wouldn't miss it for the world. See you from the stands."

Back at home, Sterling poured Max a bowl of dog food, and fresh water. With no late lunch with Patricia, he opened the refrig, and took out some leftover Timmy Chan shrimp fried rice. Also grabbing the half two-liter of root beer, after stick his food in the microwave. While waiting, his cell phone chimed, for the third time this morning. He was hoping that it was Patricia informing him that everything was okay at the home front. Seeing that it was his cousin, Kiya: "Where are you? If you near a tv, turn on the news. The FBI just raided the judge home."

Sterling didn't bother to text her back, as he rushed over to the coffee table and grabbed the remote, flipping it to CBS. He listen to the breaking news, watching all the chaos that was going on behind the asian reporter. As she reported the events and the reason why the FBI had raided the Willington million dollar Victoria home, the pretty oblique eyes woman face was replace with the mugshot of the culprit, the FBI came to arrest.

Sterling had saw a picture of Diane husband briefly, of the two on vacation in Hawaii. After hearing what Diane husband been charged with, Sterling eyes narrowed studying the mugshot.

Sterling never heard himself curse, realizing now where he recognized William Willington face, from wayback past. He had visited his home twice with his mother, when they lived in Third Ward. At the time he was known as Bill.

Reaching for his cell phone, he called Kiya. When she picked up on the first ring, Kiya wanted to confirm if it was the judge home, that been
raided. Confirming that it been Patricia parents home, Sterling revealed that the relationship with Patricia had just taken unknown twist from the pass.

Falling asleep on his couch, Sterling barely heard the light knock on his door. Sitting up, he found Max already attentive, standing in the direction of the door. Wiping the matter from his eyes, he stood to his feet, to head to the door. Before opening it, he didn't have to guess whom was on the other side.

It was the second time since he had known her, that Sterling was lost for words of comfort. Looking into her doleful green eyes, that stole her beauty, as they held stares. The spirit of her pain transfer to him, as he stepped outside to embrace her. "How can I help?" he whispered.

"Make it go away."

Sterling exhaled depleted, disappointed, knowing that he couldn't fulfill Patricia request. Kissing her on the forehead. "If I had the power, I would baby. I would." he said, squeezing her gently, then leading her inside. Assisting her to the couch, Sterling squatted in front of her, asking if he could get her anything to drink. Patricia answered shaking her head yes, and Sterling patted her hand and told her that he'll be right back.

While in the kitchen, Patricia knew that Max had sense her dejection vibe, and placed his head in her lap. She heard him whine, and begin rubbing his head. "I'm gonna be okay." she forced a smile.

Returning with her drink, Sterling sat next to her, before handing it to Patricia. He watched her take a light swallow, then look up at him, forcing another smile. "I thought you could use the taste of your favorite soda." Sterling lightly grin.

He thought about sending Max to his room, but saw that he been therapy. The two sat in silence for a moment, as he didn't want to question Patricia until she was ready. Sterling watched her take another sip of her root beer. Patricia face features seemed unConnell, never looking at Sterling, while she began to speak, still rubbing Max's head. "Everything is like a nightmare, in that in which I can't escape, or wake up from. I still can't phantom with what my father is charged
Sterling was glad that Patricia wasn't looking at him, as he cast his downward, as she continued to vent how she's feeling. Though she couldn't believe his acts, he could. But it never crossed Sterling mind to tell Patricia what her father had done to him.

"Our family has been embarrassed widely. Being plastered all over the news. TV cameras are still parked outside our home. "Oh my God, I Hate Him." she finally look at him. "My mother is a judge, things has to be excruciating for her."

"How is Mrs, Willington holding up?"

"Her brown eyes are bloodshot red, from crying. She was there when the FBI kicked in the front door, pointing their guns."

"I don't mean to sound unpleasant. Why are you here, and not with your mother. Don't she need you?"

"Mmm hmm." Patricia shook her head slowly. "We finally got her to calm her nerves, with some help of some sleeping pills. So my Aunt Tina, her sister is watching her. With the chaos still swirling around my parents house, I just had to get out of there."

Sterling reached for her hand, with the both of his, massaging hers. "I hate the circumstances of why you are here. But I'm glad. I can't imagine what you and your mother is going through. Though I can't make it go away, I want to help in any kind of way."

"You can. Just smile when I can't."

Sterling gave her a warm hearted smile, And with a bit of struggle, Patricia produced one herself. Pulling her into his embrace, he held her in the middle of his home, swaying her gently. Sterling offer to take care of Candy until the abyss settle down. She thanked him, but needed Candy present for therapy. "Someone to listen to my cries and pain when you are not with me."

"Patricia I'm here with you." he pointed at her heart. She pulled away from him to exhibited a smile, her way to say thank you for reminding her.

About to comfort herself back into Sterling bosom again, when a thought entered her head, causing her to place her hands over her mouth. Baffled, Sterling asked what was wrong. Patricia shooked her head

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slowly as she answered...

"I can't believe how inconsiderate I been thinking abbut my family! How my father embarrassed me, my mother, my brother. But what about those little kids he sexually molested. It just makes me sick. I never want to see him again. EVER!" Patricia covered her face with her hands in disgust. Sterling cupped her face in his hands, giving her words of encourage that everything will be fine.

"Those was hurt by your father and other men are safe now. True, some won't, but many will survive and be okay. Trust me, I know." Patricia became gloomed, remembering stories of Sterling childhood. She carress his face, apologizing for his unfortunate childhood.

"For what, its not your fault. And I don't hate my mother. The herion had her sick. Changed her DNA, took away her freewill. The same with your father. Its DNA unbalance, that he has no control over. He's gonna need help. Therapy, and his family to cure his illness."

Patricia contemplated a short moment about what Sterling had said.

"I don't know." shaking her head.

"Your just upset and discàncert right now baby. What I learned from my tragedy, is that time heal all wombs."
Patricia exhaled deeply thinking. Sterling placed his hand on her cheek, seeing her distraught face. She raised her dejected green eyes to the level of his, and mustered up a half smile. Sterling leaned forward, kissing her lightly. "Come on, I want to do something for you."
Terrell and McCaffrey was working the nightshift, patrolling the Arce Homes area on the Northside of Houston. Like always, the two were into a friendly, but heated debate about the kneeling issue, during the National Anthem. McCaffrey, who thought the football players were disrespecting the flag, by not standing, and the military, who defends this country.

"Black and white feels different about this issue. White people only want to see one side. Not our side. The kneeling during the anthem had nothing to do with us not being patriotic. It's the in justice that we encounter. It's crazy that white people believes a piece of cloth, is more important then a black person life. Look, we are both policemen, whom took an oath to protect and serve the community. All communities. We know some of these officers got away with murder. How can a white officer justify shooting a unarmed black man, multiple times. The Chi-town man sixteen times. Baton Rouge man, twice in the chest. The Carolina man, eight times in the back. Then was caught on camera, planting the stun gun, claiming the culprit had took it. Castilla in Minnisota. Seven shot, hit four times, while a little girl sat in the backseat. I can keep going if you want me too. Like the the cop in Dallas, that shot the teenage kid, claiming that the car was coming towards him, but video proves that they were clearly going the opposite direction. Trayvon Martin."

"Zimmerman wasn't a cop."

"Yeah right. A self proclaimed captain of the neighborhood watch. If he would have listen to the dispatcher and stay his ass in his truck, Trayvon would be alive today."

"What do you think what happen?"

"When Zimmerman confronted Martin about his business in the complex, Martin felt assualted, that Zimmerman excused him of being a thief, and words were exchanged, which lead to a fight. They say Trayvon was a big boy, and got on Zimmerman ass, and he shot him."

Terrell look over at his partner to see him starring out the window thinking. McCaffrey thought Terrell had some merits to what happen. Driving, Terrell turned his eyes back to the road, while speaking again. "Look man I love my profession. And I love my people. Not say-

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ing that I don't like white people. I like you."
McCaffrey laughed. "I'm glad to know that."
"And Kim Kardashian."
"She's not white." McCaffrey look at him, with confusion. "She's Armenian."
"She 's not!" Terrell turned to him with the same confusion expression. "Oh, explains now why she had all that ass." he smiled jokely, hoping that McCaffrey comprehended the joke. In which he did, as he chuckled shaking his head.
"We are good cops McCaffrey, trying our best to uphold out oath and laws. White officers can't be using the same excuse that they fear for their life. Of course be caution, but if you fear black people when you encounter them, then you shouldn't be a policeman."
McCaffey squinted his eyes, biting his bottom lip, looking back out the window. "Let me tell you one last thing about this whole matter. Trust is what we trying to earn in the community, and as cops, we get frustrated when the community remains silence about crimes we're trying to solve. Murder in particular. No snitching, is the street code. You don't think the black community knows what our code of silence means?" Terrell finished, looking over at his partner, whom gave him a confound stare. Again, Terrell had a point. What's the different between the code in the streets, and the police. Both means no snitching on your own.
"You know the story about me and Yamaha, and how I believe he killed my last partner. And the matter with Latanya. I could have been sent Yamamha to jail, by planting a gun or drugs on him. But I'm not that type of cop. I'm gonna get his ass the right way." Terrell pointed a finger. "He's gonna slip up one day."
"He may be slipping tonight." McCaffrey pointed to the black Escalade, making a right on a dead street. Driving in the opposite direction, the median which seperated the north and south lanes of the boulevard.
Terrell drove two blocks to the next median intersection, and made a u-turn. Before making a right on the dead end street, Terrell turned off the headlights.
Driving slowly, they found the black SUV at the end, parked in the middle of the street. Thinking that they drove up undetected, Terrell put the unit in park, and turned on the flashing lights. Picking up the reciever to the police unit intercom horn, to give commands, Terrell and McCaffrey saw the doors fly open to the SUV and four suspects trying to flee the scene. Running in pairs in different direction, along a ditch, Terrell and McCaffrey jumped out the unit giving chase. Terrell requested McCaffrey to go after the fellas on the passenger side, running north, as he chase the culprit on the driver side, thinking that Yamaha been behind the wheel.

In pursuit with his weapon drawn, and as a former track star, Terrell was quickly closing in on the suspects. He shouted a command for them to stop. But they took no heed, as they continued to flee. Terrell cursed, particularly to himself, knowing that those fools wasn't going to stop. Gaining more ground, out from nowhere a person came running out the ditch, and blindsided Terrell like a dirty football player.

Flying through a wooden fence, Terrell lost the grasp of his gun, as he clutched himself, rolling left and right in pain. Moments later, he became still, opening his eyes, after hearing the familar voice creeping towards him. He saw the moonlight disappear, when the six four, two hundred and forty pound frame, stepped into view. The darkness of the night been illuminated by Yamaha pearly white, as he squatted down next to him.

Still in a little pain, Terrell was still curled up in a fetus position when he noticed that Yamaha had had his gun. "Nice piece." Yamaha examined Terrell, Smith and Wesson 45, turning it side to side. "I'm sure you wanted to use it on me several times, for stealing Latanya, and killing your partner. Especially what hurt, is convincing Latanya to have your son abort." Yamaha smiled placing the weapon to Terrell head.

"Fuck You, YOU Punk Bitch!" Terrell scowled. Yamaha responded with a baritone chuckled, rising to his full height, blocking the moonlight again.

"Well tonight Terrell my foe, you will have the chance to arrest me, or take me out. Mano to Mano, we will fight to the death, like
gladiators. The feud between me and you will end tonight. No weapons" Yamaha waved over his comrades, and handed one of them; Terrell gun, while he unbuttoning his blue flannel shirt. He demanded for Terrell to stand his punk ass up, so they could quickly get it over with. Terrell stared at Yamaha with fire in his eyes for a second, before making a grunting sound, getting to his feet. Taking a deep breath, in hopes to rid the rest of his pain.

Standing just over six two himself, Terrell hoped the training he learned from the police academy and karate course he took a few years back, would be enough to defeat Yamaha. Removing his police belt, and shirt, Terrell ripped muscles could be clearly seen through his white tank top. Yamaha displayed a sinister grin, watching Terrell move his neck side to side, cracking it, before getting into a fighting stance. The sounds of Yamaha cracking his knuckles, echoed in the still of the night, as he did the same, and signaled for Terrell to come on. Terrell did, throwing a right and left, missing Yamaha, as he easily weaved them. Terrell threw another handful of combination, and again Yamaha continued easily maneuvering his uncalculated punches.

"I know you can do better than that, Officer Watson. Maybe I did your unborn son a blessing. The way you fight, he might been a pussy." Blood rushed to Terrell eyes, causing his features to look like a demon. He cursed, Yamaha before charging him again. Terrell missed him again with the next two punches, but connected the next one to Yamaha right jaw, making him stumble backward. Terrell pressed forward with his assault, connecting a few more blows to the face, until Yamaha caught Terrell punch in the palm of his large hand. Terrell grunted in pain. When Yamaha twisted his wristed upward. Not panicking, and thinking quickly, Terrell kick him in the side of his left knee, making him release his strong grasp of his wrist, and bend over. Free, Terrell roundhouse Yamaha in the face, sending him to the ground. Lying on his back, Yamaha stared up at the three moon in the sky. Trying to shake his sensing back, Yamaha witness the moon on the right and left, infuse into the one in the middle. Making it to one knee, Yamaha chuckled, after spitting out blood.

"You got a few good ones in Officer Watson. But you made one grave
mistake."

"And what that's?" Terrell eagerly to know.

"You should have taken me out while I was down." Yamaha said, rising to his feet, and waiting not for Terrell to charge, but moved towards him. He tried to dislocate Terrell head from his body with a wild wide swing. Ducking, Terrell missed with his punches, but connected the next one to his temple, causing no damage. Kicking him in the ribs, Yamaha yanked him in pain, while still abling to catch his leg.

All the air left his body, after Yamaha hit him with a devastated punch to the stomach. Slumped over, holding his stomach, Yamaha lifted Terrell off his feet with a uppercut, causing him to land on his neck. On his back, Terrell saw the same three moon, that Yamaha has saw earlier. Gritting, he tried to shake his senses back, but everytime he stop shaking his head, the moon would seem to multiply by two.

Getting back to his feet with the assistance of Yamaha, Terrell heard the echoed of his laughter, along with the ringing in his ears. His vision still blurry, seeing two Yamaha's, Terrell threw a punch at the one on the right, connecting with the mirage. Yamaha laughed, telling him wrong one.

Landing two vicious blows to the right and then left jaws, Yamaha tried to finish Terrell with a crushing straight punch to the center of his nose, sending him to the edge of the ditch. With his nose broken, Terrell laid on his back, half conscious, blood running from his nose like a facet. Yamaha walked over to him, while he was still on the ground, and assisted Terrell to his feet again, holding him up, as he could barely stand. Gritting in his face, Yamaha told him that this could have been avoided, if he had accepted lifes path. "Now you can be with your partner and your unborn son."

Terrell mustered up an angry expression, and spit his running blood in Yamaha face. Furious, Yamaha front kick Terrell in the chest, and down into the ditch.

Wiping the blood from his face, Yamaha watched him float in the water on his back. Making his way down, into the waist high water, Yamaha grabbed Terrell, turning him over. "By Officer Watson." he said his adieu, then stuck his head under water.
Back at the police unit, McCaffrey was placing one of the fleeing suspects he caught in the back seat. He called Terrell on the radio, asking for his location. Getting no response, he radioed Terrell once more. In which again, McCaffrey received no response. He cursed, "Where the hell are you Watson."

Opening the backdoor, to tell the handcuffed suspect don't run off, "I'll be back." he let him know, pointing his finger. Slamming the door, McCaffrey headed in the direction Terrell went.

Radio Terrell again, McCaffrey heard the echoes of his voice from Terrell walkie-talkie. Walking a few more yards, he saw the knock down fence, and spotted Terrell police shirt, belt, and radio in the back-yard. Pulling out his flashlight, McCaffrey shouted out Terrell name, as he begin to scan the area.

Shinning the light around the backyard, then north along the ditch, McCaffrey saw no sight of Terrell. Running his light back south, his eyes widen with horror, finding Terrell body lifeless, floating face down.
Patricia stirred between the satin sheets, before opening her eyes to Sterling not laying next to her. Noticing the bedroom door opened, she sat up, to rub the rest of the sleep from her green eyes. Remembering last night, Sterling tried to temporarily make her forget about the tragic embarrassment that took place at her parents house. Sterling had took her upstairs, and undress her. Massaging her neck, and shoulders under the warmth of the shower water. Lying her down in his bed, Sterling rubbed hot oil over her body, while whispering loving words.

"Good morning beautiful." he greeted Patricia with a warm smile. She turned to find Sterling standing in the window, in a pair of pajama bottom.

"Hi." she returned his smile. "How long have you been up?"

"Not long." he answered, making his way over, to kiss her. "How do you feel this morning?"

"Depends on if what happen yesterday really happen." she gave him a weary look.

Sterling sighed dejected before answering. "I'm afraid so."

"Then I feel awful." she folded in her legs.

"In time, everything will die down and go away." he took her hand.

"I wish I had that device in that movie Men In Black. In which Will Smith takes out this little pen, and press this button and a light flash making people forget."

"I know." he watched her sigh disspirit. He kissed her once more on the cheek, before standing to his feet, never releasing her hand.

"You hungry?" he asked.

"A little. I haven't eaten anything since yesterday breakfast."

"Then you should be starving. I make a mean omelette."

"Sounds good." she mustered a smile.

"Okay. Chill and relax, and I'll be back with your breakfast in twenty minutes."

Patricia held her coerced smile, as she watched Sterling begin making his way out the bedroom. When he made it to the door, she called out his name. Stopping, he asked what's up. "Can you turn on the tv for
me. I want to know if there's still chaos surrounding my parents home."

"You think that's a good idea right now?"

"Good idea or not, I still have to go there and check on my mother. I just wanted to know if I have to fight through the media."

Understanding what Patricia was saying, Sterling still hesitated grabbing the remote off the dresser and turning it on. "What channel?"

"Doesn't matter. All of them were there yesterday."

Sterling flipped the station to 11 news, and saw breaking news of a Houston police officer killed, last night on the city northside. He didn't hear another word after the African American reporter on the scene said his brother name. "Officer Terrell Watson, a five year veteran was found dead in a ditch by his partner."

Patricia been confused, when she saw Sterling drop the remote.

Diane exited the elevator on the sixth floor, and walked over to the desk where two federal officers sat behind. She stated that she wanted to visit William Willington. Being on all the news station yesterday, the two officer didn't ask for her ID, knowing who Diane was. "Sure Judge Willington." as one of the officer got on the phone. After making the request, the officer directed Diane, by pointing down the hall, three doors on the right.

Inside the vitiation room were two visitors, in the ten booth room. Five on opposite sides. Diane saw the two visitors turned and stare at her awkward. She knew why they were starring at her, recognizing her from the news. Displaying an embarrassing look, Diane took the first booth, and waited for William to come out.

She started to pulled out her mirror to check her appearance, then thought what for. Her husband doesn't like her or women. He likes little boys. Cursing him out in her mind, Diane stop when she saw the jail door open, and a guard stopping, holding it open. A second after, stepping through in a orange two piece suit was William. He paused a long moment, looking at Diane. He could see clearly the layer of emotion in her brown eyes. Murder. Shame. Pissed. Hurt, and a tiny show of love left.

Taking a seat on the other side of the thick glass, William paused
again, for another long moment, with the phone in his hand, before placing it to his ear. He said nothing, waiting for his wife to speak. Observing William, she noticed that he hadn't gotten any sleep, seeing the bags under his eyes. Maybe being questioned by the FBI all night. Finally picking up the phone. "You look good in orange."

"Might be the color I'll be wearing for a while."
"You deserve it." she frowned.
"I'm sorry for everything. The embarrassment."
"Are you?" she scoffed. "The media is still posted in front of our house." she tittered., then continuing. "Now its very clear to me why you didn't want to make love to me. You were out fucking little boys!"

William dropped his head in shame, having no valid response. "So when that boy at the station, Tommy Lopez accused you of touching him in an inappropriate manner, fifteen years ago, he was telling the truth?"
William answered his wife with the nod of his head. "I'm struggling with this evil inside of me. I need help. I need you. I'm sick."
"Really?" Diane gave him a wicked grin. "Well I know the exact medication to cure your sickness. You want to know what it is?" she leaned forward, as though she's going to whisper. "Castration. You sick monster."
William dropped his head again, and rubbed his hand through his grey short crew cut. "Maybe that is the only thing that can save me."
"Or spend the rest of your life behind bars." Diane suggested another option.
William stared at his wife with haunted eyes. "I can't spend the rest of my life in prison. I'm too old. I want survive."
"You should have thought about that, when you were ruining those little boys lives."
Running his hands over his face, William sighed defeated. "Did you hire me a lawyer?"
"No, not yet."
"Are you?" sounding desperated.
"For what! You don't deserve one."
"Please Diane." he pleaded.
Diane leaned back in her seat, starring at her pathetic husband.
"I don't know what sane lawyer would take your case."

William breathed heavily in relief, believing Diane's reply, that she might get him a lawyer. After another moment of silence, William asked about their children. Diane leaned forward, placing her elbows on the shelf. "Patricia is devastated. Colby will arrive here today. I'm picking him up at the airport, after I leave here."

"You think the kids are going to come and see me?"

"Colby maybe, but Patricia, I think no time soon." she looked sternly. Diane heard the gloom, pain, the stress in his voice, when he asked.

"What about us?"

Diane guffawed, wondering did he just ask that question.
Sterling arrived at the Houston Herman hospital medical center alone. Patricia badly wanted to come with him, but he persuaded Patricia that her mother needed her more, and that it wasn't much she could do. Stopping by the front desk, and asking where's the body and the family of his brother, the nurse first gave her condolence and pointed in the direction where the rest of the family were grieving. There he found his Aunt Tammy, Kiya, and her husband, huddled together conversating. He acknowledge them with a nod, and turned his attention to Terrell father whom was trying to console Terrell devastated wife. He struggled to fight back tears, when he witness Terrell son trying to do the same. Sterling dreadfully made his way over to his wife, kneeling, taking her hand. She raised her head to look at him, fighting her painful emotion to exhibited a smile. Happy that Sterling had come, his wife, Yolanda, was one of the darkest beautiful woman that Sterling had ever encountered. Inside and out.

A accountant for a large bank, Yolanda mesmerizing brown eyes been circumscribe in red. "I don't know what to say." Sterling dropped his head, feeling helpless, exhaling heavily, to where his body been visible seen rising up and down. "I know that he love you and Lil Terrell with all his heart. You two was the world to him." Yolanda held her smile, while squeezing his hand. "I know. He told me everyday."

"Remember we are still family. We got you. What ever you need."
"Thank you."

After speaking with Terrell father, reminding that his son did what he loved, and was trying to make a different in the world, and his community. Recieving confirmation from his father that he would be okay, Sterling turned his focus to Lil Terrell, whom was now sitting errect, hands in his lap. With a encouraging expression, Lil Terrell wiped away the tears that weld in the corner of Sterling eye. Sterling lightly smiled, shaking his head in slight embarrassment, showing infirmity. And junior so young, showing strenght.
Sterling took his hand, asking if he's okay. Terrell son shook his head yes. "Momma said my daddy was call to go to heaven, and be with Jesus."

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"Yeah, God needed his assistance." Sterling trying to give him a reasonable reason. "In the mean time while your daddy is gone, I need you to be the man of the house, and look out for your mother. She need you more now, at the moment."

Lil Terrell shooked his head yes again, understanding. "I hear you." he replied, giving Sterling a hug, then looking over at his mother. "I got you momma." he told her. Yolanda fought back her tears, as she embrace her son.

As Sterling stood up to go converse with his aunt and Kiya, McCaffrey entered the waiting room. He walked over to Yolanda to give his condolence, apologizing sincerely, for not being there by Terrell side. Angry by her husband death, Yolanda emotion got the best of her, as she begin to scream at McCaffrey, blaming him for his death. McCaffrey took a step back, when Yolanda rose to her feet, to continue her rant of pain. Sterling and Mr. Watson, stepped in trying to calm her down, and convince her that it wasn't McCaffrey fault.

"Why It Wasn'T You!" was the last thing she screamed, before colasping back on the couch, and crying. Understanding and devastated himself about his partner death, McCaffrey didn't take offense to Terrell wife last statement. He deeply apologized again, before turning to leave. Sterling swiveled to call out McCaffrey name. He wanted to know who had killed his brother. Standing outside the waiting room, McCaffrey gave Sterling details what took place.

"Terrell and I spotted a well known drug dealer SUV, turning onto a deadend street. So we went to check and see what he was doing, in hope in catching him in a drug deal. For anything. When we drove behind the SUV, four men jumped out running, They split in pairs, running in opposite direction along a ditch. Terrell and I split up, as he gave chase of the suspect running south. I thought I caught one of the culprit."

Sterling interrupted McCaffrey, showing a look of confusion. "What do you mean you thought you caught one of the culprit?"

"The man. Well the teenager, a seventeen year old, had jumped the fence from his girlfriend house, after her father caught him sneaking out her window. When I brought the youngster back to the police unit,
Terrell wasn't back. So I radio him, wanting to know his location. And when he didn't answer back, I went to search for him."

"And you found him in the ditch."

"Mmm hmm." McCaffrey nodded. Sterling look away from McCaffrey, as a vision of his brother lying face down in a ditch came to his mind. After a moment with no words, Sterling asked who was drug dealer. The suspect.

"Brandon Joseph, a.k.a known on the street as Yamaha."

"Chills shot through Sterling body, as he knew the history between his brother and Yamaha. "Where is Yamaha?" he asked angrily.

"We don't know."

"He had to be the one that killed my brother."

"It's gonna be a big problem trying to prove that."

"What do you mean?" Sterling eyes narrowed.

"Yamaha SUV was stolen. And I didn't see Yamaha personally fleeing. Nor its on the dashcam."
CHAPTER 68

Patricia stop by her condo to pick up Candy, then briefly talk to Maria, letting her know she wouldn't be in for the rest of the week. Completely understanding, with all the drama surrounding her. Maria encouraged Patricia to take all the time she needed.

Arriving at her parents home, the media chaos that staked out their home, had dwindled down to two. CNN and a hispanic news station. Patricia understood the station obsession. CNN being a world news channel. As far as the latino station, it was the allegation of a former latino star, that accused her father over a decade ago. Her father claimed the accusation against him were false, and horrible lies. That he was being blackmail by the young latino star, in wanting more money, for high rating, of his name show. He had found out that he was being payed less than the white young actors. But in the end, the station settle quietly, and cancel his show.

As Patricia was getting out of her car, two reporters tried to rush her for questioning and comments, but they quickly halted in their tracks, when Candy jumped out the backseat. "Protect." she commanded her. Which Candy growled and barked, making the reporters draw back.

Inside the house, Patricia didn't find the present of her mother on the first floor of the house. Heading to the kitchen, she called out for her mother, informing her that she was back. Letting Candy out into the backyard, Patricia made her way back into the living room, to see her mother coming downstairs. "Where's Aunt Tina?" she asked, watching her mother head to the bar.

"She went home."

"I thought you was suppose to be watching you."

"I thought you was." she looked back, somewhat dismay at Patricia. Diane turned her attention back to the selection of alcohol, then placed her hand on the Crown Royal, then changed her mind, and grabbed the Remy Martin. Retrieving a shot glass, her mother spoke. "I'm sure you were with Sterling last night."

"Yes. He been concern about me. After we gotten you calmed down and to sleep. I needed to get out, away from the media circus out front."

"I understand. Your father caught us all off guard. Confusion and
embarrassment."
Patricia sighed sadly. "True. But we will survive. My heart goes out to the children and their lives my father destroyed."
"I agree." Diane consented, taking a sip of her drink, as she walked over to the couch. "Your brother is here."
"Really." Patricia excited. "Where is he?"
"Gone at the moment to visit your father."
"Oh." her excitement quickly faded.
"I also went to see your father this morning, before I picked up your brother from the airport."
"What did he say?" Patricia sat next to her mother.
"What can he say." Diane eyed her. "I told him that he's a sick son of a bitch. And I will be filing for divorce." she told her, taking another hard swallow of Remy.
"He left you no choice."
"No, he didn't."
"Damn, the world around me is falling apart." Patricia exhaled deeply, folding in her legs. Her mother turned to her curious, with the notion, that she was referring to something else.
"What's the problem, are you and Sterling okay?"
"Sterling and I are fine." she sighed heavily again. "This morning. Sterling found out his half brother Terrell Watson, a police officer was killed last night in Arces Homes."
Diane mouth fell open, seeing the story on the news, before leaving to see William. "Why are you not with him?"
"He figured it wasn't much I couldn't do, and believed I didn't need to be around painful and grieving people, in which I'm already enduring. Plus, Sterling felt that you needed me more."
"How considerate of him." Diane gave a warm smile. "I will extend my prayers to him and his family."
"Truely, we can all use God's hand right now."
with my brother Terrell death."

"And what the fuck do you mean by that?" Rene eyes narrowed. Sterling replied with a look that could kill. Rene inclined her head, as she watched Sterling turned and leave. Stopping at the door, he looked over his shoulder to let Rene know that he quit.

CHAPTER 70

Glen sat back in his leather chair, tapping his finger on the arm of his chair, in his office, watching the evening traffic pass by. He saw the embarrassing news of Patricia father, plastered on tv. He tried to text Patricia a few times, concern about her well being, and wanted to know if he could help in anyway. He was a little upset that she never texts back, knowing that Patricia was maybe getting support from Sterling.

His thoughts been disturbed by a knock on his door. Looking up to see his secretary Teressa, he asked what is fit. "There's a Mr. Dotsing here to see you."

Glenn at first displayed a puzzled look, before remembering the name. Requesting for her to send him inn, Teressa let him know that she was leaving for the night. Approving, Glenn thanked her, wishing her a good night.

Teressa signaled for Mr. Dotsing to enter her boss office. After Teressa said good night, Mr. Dotsing walked in holding his detective like hat, in his left hand. Glen gave him a pleasing smile, noticing the large envelope in his right hand. With think eyebrows, he had a wide nose for a caucasian, and facial features that told he been in his late fifties.

Glenn exchanged handshakes, then gestured for Mr. Dotsing to have a seat. "It's been awhile, I guess you finally have something for me."

"Yes I do. And you'll be surprise." Mr. Dotsing replied with a raspy voice, leaning forward, and tossing the envelope on his desk. Glen pick up the eight by ten package and opened it. He was confused by the contents inside. "Son of a Bitch." he whispered somewhat unconscious.

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"Will that help matters?"
"More than you will ever know." he smiled satisfied.

Two weeks had past since the the tragic events that happen within twenty four hours. Patricia father was still in jail, denied bond. Reason that he might be a flight risk.
She was also there by Sterling side at his brother funeral, as the Houston Police Department gave him a hero farewell, and gun salute.
Staying at her parents house, Patricia was having breakfast with her mother. Her brother Colby had already went back home to Phoenix,do to his wife expecting to go into labor anyday. Still concern for her mother well being, Patricia expressed she wanted to stay alittle while longer, until she decide to go back to the bench. "I'm fine sweetheart. I don't need you baby sitting me. I'm going to take a leave of absence, to handle some personal business."

"To hire a divorce lawyer?"
"Mmm hmm." her mother nodded, then sipped her coffee. "The take off to Phoenix, after the baby is born."
Patricia smiled. "A grandchild will maybe bring you peace and comfort."

"That it will." Diane responded taking another sip of her coffee, than placing back on the saucer. "And you have your magazine to run, don't you?"

"Maria and the crew say they got it."

"Why Patricia, I don't need you looking after me. I'm fine. Don't you think that Sterling can use some company, after all what just happen?"

"I talked to him briefly this morning. He's still grieving his brother death, and feeling that some drug dealer name Yamaha had something to do with it."

"Why is that?" Diane curious. Patricia explained in short details in what Sterling had told her. She had also let her mother know that he had stop dancing at Mandigos, because the club owner was Yamaha half sister.

"At this moment the police has removed this Yamaha from the suspect list. After confirming his alibi, that he was in Miami at the time."
"Sterling doesn’t need to worry, finding his brother killer is the police top priority. They will find him." her mother assured Patricia, picking up her coffee.

"I hope so."

"The police will do their job, just like you need to do yours."

her mother raised an eyebrow.

"Are you trying to get rid of me?"

"Mmmmm hmm." looking over her coffee cup rim, as she took a sip.

CHAPTER 71

Obeying her mother request, to give her some alone time, Patricia texted Sterling before leaving the house, informing him, that she was going to spend a few hours at work, then stop by his place after. Hopping in the Mustang, then tossing her purse in the passenger seat, Patricia still love the sound of the 500 horsepower engine, when it came to life. Backing out the driveway, onto the street, all of a sudden Patricia cursed, bringing her car to a screeching halt, having her path blocked off.

Her green eyes narrowed, starring at the man sitting behind the steering wheel of the Ford Dually. She wanted to throw the Mustang in reverse, but for some unknown reason, she didn’t,, as Patricia watched Glenn get out the truck, heading towards her.

Noticing the large vanilla envelope in his hand, she wondered if they were papers, transferring the Mustang into her name. She stared at Glenn for a second, before letting down the window. "What do you want Glenn." she asked irritated.

"I heard what happen to your father."

"The whole world have." replying chafe.

"Even though we are not together, I was worry about you and how you and your mother were holding up."

"We’re managing. Thank you for your concern." she answered without emotion. Glenn gave her a half smile, while stepping back and looking at her birthday present he bought.

"I’m glad to see you driving it, and not on the corner with a for sale sign."

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"You know me well. Believe me, I thought about it."


"Unless you find something more gorgeous."

Glenn frowned, scratching his head by Patricia rebuttal. "Is there another reason you wanted to see me, because I'm late for work and I have a lot to do."

Glenn flashed an okay smile, while massaging his chin. "Where's your new boyfriend? Are you two still together?"

Patricia now glower, annoyed by the question, but answered. "Yes we are still together. He's at home." she added that Sterling had just dealt with some tragedy, revealing that the police that was found dead last week been his brother.

"Sorry to hear that."

"Is there anything else you wanted?" becoming more ire.

"Oh yes." holding up the envelope. "This envelope was delivered to my house." he handed her the envelope. Patricia was puzzled taking it. After reading the name, she pondered why the owner of the building where her magazine is located, would mistakenly sent whatever important to Glenn's house. She thank him, and sat the envelope on top of her purse, in the passenger seat.

"Are there any other reason?" sounding unpleasant.

"Unnh no. I guess that's it." he pointed to the envelope. "And to how your doing."

"Well I appreciate that you are concern for me and my mother. We are fine. Goodbye." she responded, letting her window up. Glenn grabbed it, wanting her to hold up. Patricia frowned, scowling. "What!"

"I still love you, and if you need anything, I'm here for you."

"I'll keep that in mind." she said, letting up her window. Glenn stood a second looking at Patricia with sadness, but she didn't return his stares. She saw his shadow off her windsheild, as Glenn swiveled on his heels, and walk woefully back to his truck, and get inside.

Back out of Patricia path, she threw the Mustang in drive, speeding by Glenn, never looking his way. He watched Patricia make a left at the end of her street, before he drove off in the opposite direction.
stopping at the corner. He grabbed his cell phone, and texts Patricia. Almost out of her parents neighborhood, she heard her cell chime. Deleting Glen picture from her cell phone memory, she recognized the number. She waited until she reached the next stop sign, to read his text.

"I think you need to open the envelope."

Patricia features harden, looking over at the eight by ten vanilla envelope. Grabbing it, she opened, and found some photos inside. As she flipped through them, her eyes begin to fade, as though she was about to pass out. Patricia place her hand over her chest, gasping to breath. Her mind in a state of disorder, that she didn't hear the driver behind her blowing its horn.

A tear fell on one of the photos, awakening her. Tossing the pictures on the passenger seat, she smashed the gas, doing a one eighty, back to her mother house.

Racing up the driveway, Patricia sked inches from the garage. Snatching the photos, she quickly jumped out, rushing inside the house. Calling out for her mother, Mrs. Emily came out the kitchen and noticed that Patricia been crying heavily. Asking what's wrong, Patricia avoided her question, asking again the whereabouts of her mother.

"She's still outback."

Without a word of gratitude, Patricia sped passed the housekeeper to the backyard. Finding her mother still sitting at the patio table, on the phone, her mother did a double take, seeing Patricia coming her way, with flowing tears.

Tossing the pictures on the table, Patricia asked. "How long you been fucking Sterling!"

Diane saw the picture of her kissing Sterling the night she improperly invited herself inside his townhome. She excused herself from her conversation with her divorce attorney, and placed her cell phone on the table, picking up the rest of the photos. "Where did you get these from." her mother questioned.

"It doesn't matter. Answer my question mother?" Patricia cried angrily.

"It's not what you think Patricia." her mother sighed lost, rubbing her hand over her face.
"Then tell me what it is mother?"
Diane took another moment to answer, praying and trying to gather her emotion. Already too much chaos, separation, in-fighting is the last thing her family needed. "I met Sterling months before you met him. One night at my sisters AAWOS gathering. I won a up stage pass where Sterling came and dance." Diane stared off before continuing. "I became mesmerized by his looks, his body, and the way he smell. And at the time your father and I sex life was non-existing. So I rented a hotel room, and invited Sterling.

"So was that the only time you and Sterling been together?"
Diane turned to her daughter, with sorrow eyes, and answered no. "We saw each other a few more times. Even spent the weekend on the yacht."

"Oh my God." Patricia cried, her tears begin to flow heavier. Her mother rose to her feet, trying to approach her. Patricia extended her arms, stepping back, requesting her mother to stay away.

"Patricia please." Diane's pain was displayed in her eyes. "What you think you see in these pictures, is not what it seem. Sterling loves you very much, and is committed to you one hundred percent."

"Really! So you was at his townhome in nothing but a trenchcoat, to see if you could get one last round with him?"
Diane didn't respond to her daughter question, casting her brown eyes to the ground.

"I don't believe it." Patricia shaking her head in disgust. "Just like dad, I hate you too!" she screamed! turning to leave. Diane started to give chase, then decided against it. Thinking it was best for Patricia to be alone and sort out her anger. Taking a seat back at the table, Diane face colapsed in the palms of her hands, as she made a soughed sound. "Shit!" she cursed, asking God for help.
The sounds of Candy whinning drew her attention, as she looked at her, sitting, with her head cock. Candy barked, then licked around her mouth. "I know, I'm a bad mother."
Candy barked twice, before running off. Contemplating for a second, Diane cursed again, grabbing her cell phone. Finding the number she been looking for, she pressed send. Hearing the first ring, "Pick up Sterling." she spoked to herself, wanting to give him the heads up, that Patricia was on her way to his place. After several more rings,
Diane cursed again, hearing Sterling voice mail.

CHAPTER 72

Coming home from a late morning jog, Sterling was in the kitchen pouring Max fresh water, and something to eat. He leaned against the counter and watched Max eat, thinking about his brother Terrell, and how much he will miss him. Sterling thought since Patricia was spending a few hours at work, he would later stop by and check on his wife and Lil Terrell. Kneeling down to rub Max's head, he begin to make his way to his bedroom, where his cell phone been, to call Yolanda, until he heard a rapid knock on the door. Sterling paused a second puzzled, wondering who could visiting him. Peeping through the peephole, Sterling been surprised to see Patricia. Quickly opening the door, his puzzled look remained, seeing that Patricia been crying heavily.

"What's wrong?" he started to step closer to her, but was halted with a slap to the face, that made his ears ring. Wide eyes, and stung, Sterling asked furiously. "What The Fuck That's For!"

"Like you don't know you Son Of A Bitch!" Patricia yelled, and beginned throwing cat punches at him. Sterling back away, while dodging and blocking, while at the sametime still questioning what's the problem. Finally getting seperation from Patricia using the couch. At the moment thinking that he was safe, Sterling threw up his hands, when Patricia picked up a porcelain adoremnet off the coffee table. "GOT DAM IT PATRICIA WAIT! WHAT THE HELL IS GOING ON!" he shouted.

"How Long You Been Fucking Mother!"

Seeing the shocked look on Sterling face, Patricia didn't wait for an answer, throwing the porcelain piece. Ducking, the porcelain bear crashed into the kitchen cabinets, landing on the floor, making Max screech, and run to his room. Patricia now begunned to spin in circles, looking for something esle to pick up and throw.

"Patricia it's not what you think!" Sterling trying to explain, getting her attention.
"REALLY!" putting her hands on her hips. "That's funny, my mother said the same shit! Then what was it between you and my motherm Sterling?"

Sterling basically told Patricia the same truth, of what her mother had told her. That he never knew that the Judge Diane Willington was her mother until that day at lunch. "But she knew that I was seeing you, when she." Sterling paused, thinking it would be best, not to finish. "I told your mother I was interested in a woman that runs Urban Houston magazine, and my activities were over, wanting a committed relationship with you. I love you Patricia." he tried to assure her.

"Don't Say Those Fucking Words To Me!" she yelled. Sterling sighed depressingly, wondering how to deescalate the crucial situations. "Why was my mother here last week, late one night, coming out of your place, being seen kissing you?"

Sterling raised an eyebrow, baffled. Believing Diane wasn't that stupid to offer that info. "How do you know about that?"

"That's not fucking important. Answer the question."

Sterling could only give the explanation of her mother being at his place, in which she gave him. To test his commitment to Patricia, and give him the information about a publisher, she knew, willing to look at his book.

"And the kiss?"

"What kiss?" Sterling threw up his hands, confused. Patricia reached in her pocket, and tossed the folded photo on him and her mother kissing at her car. Sterling stared at the picture, remembering, then explaining that that kiss wasn't intentional and unexpected.

"What do you mean unexpected?"

"Your mother unexpectedly lifted herself on her toes, and pulled me into her." he clearly explained. "Where did you get this?" he wanted to know.

"Glenn." Patricia scowled his name. "He was waiting outside my parents home, claiming to be worried about me, but been eager to give me these photos, of you kissing my mother."

Sterling had a smile on his face. Trying again to assure Patricia that there's nothing happening between he and her.
mother, anymore. Patricia placed her face in the palms of her hands, shaking her head. Sterling walked around the couch trying to embrace her, only to be rejected and pushed away. "DON'T FUCKING TOUCH ME!"

Sterling cried out Patricia name, looking lost and hopless. "I can't believe this shit is happening again. What makes it worst, you was cheating on me with my mother."

"That's not true. This was way before I met you."

"It doesn't matter. You still kept it from me. You and her!"

"I wanted to tell you, but your mother thought it would be best not to."

"Hoping you two could start back your fling again."

"Never of my wanting," he responded, letting her know that he loved her, and committed only to her.

"SHUT UP! If you truly love me, you would have told me. No matter what."

Sterling sighed sadly, rubbing the back of his neck, thinking if he had told her, would she have reacted the same. He looked at Patricia bewildered, caught off guard by her next question. "Did you ever have feeling for my mother, or was it just business?"

Sterling gave Patricia a long grieving stare, before casting his eyes down to the floor. "Oh my God." tears flooded her eyes, as she covered her mouth in shock. "I hate you, and I never want to see again." she bawled, turning to leave.

Sterling gave chase after her, catching Patricia at the door. Grabbing her, hoping to get her to calm down, and understand. She begun punching, kicking, and cursing, wanting not to hear a word of rational from him. He finally let Patricia go, when she scratched him across the face, with her nails, removing some skin. Cursing, Sterling placed his hand on the stinging area, then drew back his hand, seeing the blood on it. Stepping right outside his door, he watched Patricia jump in her Mustang, making the tires scream, leaving his complex.

Rubbing his hand across his scratch face, Sterling drew his hand again, to find that he was still bleeding. Stepping back inside, he headed to the bathroom, to intend to his wounds. Both of them. He cringed
from the stinging of the alcohol.
After stopping the bleeding, he turned his face side to side, examining the scar, in that he figure wasn't that bad. But enough to keep him off the stage, if he was still dancing.
Never before have Sterling suffer any scars or wounds to his face, except when he was hit in the head by a baseball playing catch, trying to show off in front of Erica.
Sterling looked down beside him, hearing the whinning sounds of Max.
"It don't look that bad, does it?" he asked Max, about the scar.
Max whined at first, then bark twice for yes. Sterling cursed, looking back in the mirror. Turning his attention after hearing Max bark again, Sterling leaned against the bathroom counter, and sighed sorrowfully. "Right now it's bad. We might be both without a girlfriend."
He rubbed Max's head apologizing, then stepping in his bedroom to retrieve his phone, wanting to call Patricia.
Learning that there were messages left on his phone, Sterling opened it to find four from Diane, and one from a job he had applied for. For now the job would have to wait, as he dialed Diane number, knowing that she already knew."

"Sterling!, finally you returned my call." Diane answer frantic.
"Patricia knows about us."
"I know, she was just here." Sterling dejected.
"What did you tell her?"
"What esle! the truth."
"What did she say?"
He took a second to answer, walking over to the dresser, looking in the mirror. "She say she hates me, and never wants to see me again." Diane was silence for a moment, placing her hand over her eyes. "She told me the samething."
"She feels betrayed. Cheated on."
"But that's not what happen."
"In her eyes it is, since we didn't tell her."
Diane exhaled defeated. "Oh my God. My family is going through enough already. We don't need anymore difficulties."
Sterling understood, still mourning the death of Terrell.
"Do you maybe know where she might have gone?"
"No clue."

CHAPTER 73

The discovery of Patricia finding out that he slept with her mother, Sterling changed his plans to visit his brother wife and son, and checked on their well-being being by phone. He promise to come tommorow and take them to lunch. At the moment his was at Kiya house, with Chrystal sitting in his lap, observeing his fresh scratch on his face. Sterling ranned down everything that happen, in which she gave him her opinion, if she was in Patricia situation. "It depend how much I love him, and how much I trust both him and my mother. But I have no idea what Patricia might do. There's diffidently indication that her mother is not trustworthy. She was at your place, waiting in your bed naked.

"She said she was only testing my loyalties to Patricia." Sterling protested.

"Yeah right." Kiya guffawed. "Diane was wishing that you would split her open." Kiya stood up, to go get dinner started. Sterling eyes followed her, while he contemplated. Chrystal drew his attention touching his scar.

"Looks bad hunh?" he asked the two and a half. In that she answered with a nodd of her head. Sterling grunted in disappointment. Chrystal gave him a quick kiss on the lips, that brought a smile to his face, then jumped off his lap, going to the kitchen to join her mother. Sterling held his smile as he watched, thinking and hoping that one day that he and Patricia would have a child.

About to rise to his feet, he heard his cell phone chime, recieving a text. Learning that it been from Diane, he was puzzled, seeing Diane messsage in all capital letters. "CALL ME A.S.A.P!!"

Dailing Diane number, she picked up on the first ring. "Sterling!" she said his name frantic for the second time today.

"What's wrong? Have you heard from Patricia?"

"I'm at the hospital. Patricia has been involved in an accident."
Sterling drove his car up the ramp to Ben Taub hospital emergency entrance, jumping out, running inside. He was told by an employee that he couldn't park there, or his car would be tow. But he pay no attention, as he continued running through the sliding doors. Sterling stop the first nurse he encountered, asking did she know anything about a young woman, that had a car accident, that been brought in to not long ago.

"Ms. Willington?" the nured assumed.
"YES.YES!" Sterling frantic.
"She's still in the emergency room. Her family is waiting down the hall, two doors on the left." she pointed.
Sterling thanked her, and begined walking fast to the waiting room. Turning the corner, he found Diane being console by a bbyebone woman. A slight older, he could see alittle resemblance in features, when he drew their attention. "Sterling." Daine called his name softly. He saw that Diane eyes were bloodshot red from crying.

"What's going on with Patricia?"
"We don't know for sure. The doctors came out and told us that Patricia suffered head trauma, and many broken bones. She wasn't wearing a seatbelt."
"How did this happen?"
"Witnesses say that she was driving over a hundred miles an hour, and somehow her front tire blew out, causing her to lose control, and flipping several times."
Sterling vasterned blank in unbelief. I don't know what I'm gonna do if Patricia doesn't pull through." Daine last said, bursting into tears. Sterling embraced her, giving words of encourage, that Patricia is strong, and that she'll be okay.
He made eye contact with the other woman, that was with Diane. She gave Sterling a weary smile, and introduced herself as Diane sister, Tina. "And that's my husband, Pastor Donald Black of Trinity Baptist church in Harlem Clark." she pointed at him, sitting in the corner, in whom Sterling never saw. Both men acknowledge one another with a nod. "I have heard so much about you."
"I hope not bad."
"Eventfulness I heard," she displayed a half smile. "The doctors saying their doing all that they can. We can only now sit back and pray."

Diane slightly pulled away from Sterling to stare up at him. Her face showned confusion, finally noticing the scar on his face. "What happen to you?"

"Nothing." he answered, not wanting to talk about it, and focus on Patricia. Diane held his face by the chin, looking into his eyes, that told her that Patricia did it.

"Oh my God." she cried, as she turned away to seat down. Her sister hurried over to her, to console, once again, and convince Diane that Patricia accident wasn't her fault.

Sterling watched Diane grieve, helpless, unable to turn things back to normal. His thoughts was disturbed by a tap on the shoulder. Looking to his right, stood the pastor, with a heartfelt look.

A big bone man, Pastor Black was wearing a blue pullover Polo shirt and tan khakis pants, he resembled his occupation, with salt and pepper hair. Trimmed beard, and gold frame retangular glasses.

Sterling said nothing, as he waited for him to speak. "Do you believe in God young man." he asked.

"I do." he answered, looking away at Diane.

"Then why haven't you call on him yet?"

Sterling look over at the pastor muddled, then at Diane whom was bent over in her chair, with her face in the palms of her hands. Her sister Tina rubbing her back, whispering the Lord got her.

He sighed deeply, closing his eyes and did what he haven't in a long time. Pray to the Creator.

"Amen." Sterling finished his plea to God, opening his eyes when the doctor entered the waiting room, requesting for the family. Diane stood to her feet to answer, as Sterling and the others, quickly went to stand next to her.

As the doctor explained Patricia condition, Sterling ears went deaf hearing the five last words. "Sorry, Patricia didn't make it." Unconicious reaction, Sterling caught Diane when she fainted.
Two death in less than three weeks of the people he loved dearly, had been too much for Sterling to handle. He could not escape death that seems to surround him, he thought. He witnessed his father get killed at an early age. He saw his mother killed the John to save his, that landed her in prison. Leukemia, taking the life of Erica, the only other woman he loved, other than his mother. Now death had patiently waited for him to let down the walls around himself. And his heart to snatch away Patricia.

Sterling sat on the end of his bed, tears flowing from his eyes. He shook his head back and forth, apologizing to Max, as he barked repeatedly. He took all this as a sign, and decided he wasn't going to wait for death to come get him. He was going to meet death.

Apologizing to Max again, Sterling raised the three fifty seven to his temple. His hands and lips trembling, as he placed his finger on the trigger. Saying a short prayer, asking God to forgive him, for he cannot cope with the trials and tribulation that he had laid out in his life. Closing his eyes, Sterling yelled, before squeezing the trigger, several times, hearing the clicking sounds of the hammer.

He began to heave, opening his eyes as though he was having a panic attack. Falling to his knees, he started crying like a baby. Sterling wanted desperately to be in heaven with his father. His brother. Erica, and Patricia, but was a coward to join them. Unable to do something so simple, and take his own life.

Feeling the wet tongue on his cheek, Sterling looked up at Max, whom was whimpering for him in sorrow. He forced a smile, then smooth Max's head. "I can't do it Max. I'm a survivor. I have to keep going."

Max's responded with repeated barks, and licked to remove his tears. Sterling laughed lightly. "Yeah, we have to keep going."

While hugging Max, he heard the ringtone of his cell phone. At first in no mood to speak to anyone, he decided to go check the caller ID and see who was calling. He been contented to find out that it was his mother.

Sterling cleared his throat, and gathered himself together, while the automation went through the process before he could press one, to accept her call. "Hi momma."

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Sterling tried to sound strong for the both of them, remembering also that she had lost her first born. "How are you doing?"

"I'm holding. I'm wondering how you were doing?" his mother knowing about the death Patricia.
Sterling exhaled deeply, looking at Max, whom been looking up, standing beside him. "I'm surviving. Max's been holding me down." he answered, making the right side of his mouth curl upwards.

"I know you feel that everything around you is crumbling down, but you have to stay strong, and continue living. God one day will reward you. Like he reward Joseph in the bible.
Sterling tittered, before responding. "I ain't going nowhere. Surely not on my account."

"Good. I'm happy to hear that son, because it's another reason I'm calling you, with some news that could maybe ease some of your sorrows."

"And what news is that?"
"I been granted parole."
"Are you serious!"
"Yeah, a F.I. 1. I'll be home in four to six weeks. They just have to verify your address."

"Don't worry, I'm not going anywhere. I'll be here waiting on their call and visit."

They continued their conversation until their phone time been up, discussing all the things they were going to do and see, when she get's out. Hearing the computer operator say you have one mintue, Sterling and his mother said their love yours, and goodbyes, promising to come see her this weekend.
Sterling laid his cell phone down on the dresser, then stared at himself in the mirror. He placed his hand on the scratch, that Patricia put there, picturing her face. He couldn't erase the last image he had of her. Anger. Pain and betrayal. Quickly as the scar was healing, Sterling was hoping that he could heal as fast.
Max's bark drew his attention. Smiling down at him, he spoke. "My mom is finally coming home. You gonna like her too. She's beautiful and funny. It also mean that we have to share a room again."
Max barked responding. "Yep, just like old times."
CHAPTER 73

Sterling locked his front door, as he exited his townhome. Taking Max with him, whom ran a couple of doors away, Sterling called out his name, commanding for him to come back. Putting a leash on him, he decided to check his mailbox, before he left, since he haven't in a few days.

As he begins to walk away, flipping through mail, and a due car note, Sterling paused in his tracks, seeing a letter from Shonda Carson, of Dark and Lovely publishing. Opening the letter, he nervously read. ""Congradulation Mr. Maxwell, we here at Dark and Lovely are very interesting in publishing your novel, Freedom Love. We believe it will be a success. We would like for you to submitt the rest of your manuscript, so we can quickly get started and have your novel published by next year!"

Sterling face been lit with joy, as he pumped his fist, and said a ""Hell Yeah."" He looked up after hearing a voice making a quizzical comment about him.

Standing in front of Sterling, waiting to hear what got him so excited, he took a moment to gather himself, caught off guard by the woman question and beauty. Her full lips formed a welcoming smile. Her ebony eyes were drawing, and dark skin, smooth and radiant. With above average breasts, her cleavage shown some, wearing a peach and black spandex bodysuit, and matching Nikey. With an athletic body, and tall for a woman, around five eleven, Sterling figured that she had to played basketball or volleyball at one time.

With one of her headphone earplugs in her ear, Sterling figured she just came from the complex gym, or from a mourning run, seeing the sweat on her forehead. ""Excuse me."" he questioned, never hearing what she said.

""I said something that you received got you excited."" she shifted her weight to the left.

""Oh yeah."" Sterling smiled, waving the letter. ""A publishing company accepted my book."

""Really!"" she was taken back by Sterling occupation. ""So you are a
"Soon to be publish."
"That's great:" she congadulated him, while observing his features. 
"I figure you to be a model." she smiled seductive.
Sterling chuckled. "You can say at one time, in a way I did."
The beauty didn't ask Sterling by what he meant, as a brief moment of
silence passed between them. Extending her hand, she told him her name
was Kimberly.
"Sterling." he gave his, and introduced Max.
"Gorgeous German Shepard." she smiled down at Max.
"I never seen you around here before. You must be new to the complex?"
"Yes, I moved in last week."
"Well I'm sure your going to like living here. It's nude and quiét."
"I like it already." her remark, referring to Sterling.

Making his way to his car, Sterling was halted again, spotting the
Rossi Red Maseratti, parked behind his Camero. Though he couldn't
see inside, he knew who was behind the wheel. Standing outside the
driver's door, he saw his reflection on the dark tinted window dis-
appear, as the window went down.
Diane hair was combed straight back, wearing a burgundy head scarf,
and matching Fendi shades. Sterling haven't seen or heard from Diane
since Patricia funeral. And even then, few words were said.
Removing her shades, Sterling saw that most of Diane beauty had return-
ed, which had been temperary strip by scandal, grief, and pain.

"She's pretty." Diane spoke, confusing Sterling.
"Hunh?"
"The woman you were talking too, at the mailbox."
Sterling looked back to see if Kimberly was still there, at the mail-
box, but was gone. "I just met her. She's new to the complex. Her
name is Kimberly."
Diane gave him a sly grin. "She likes you."
Sterling raised an eyebrow. "And what makes you say that?"
"She gave you her name."
Sterling remained silent, not commenting. He stepped back after hear-
ing her car door unlock. He survey Diane wearing a fitted Black and
burgundy stripe dress, and burgundy calf high boots.
Closing her door, she leaned against it. Diáne check out Sterling attire, then examined his face, and been happy that his nasty scratch had almost faded.

"What made you come today?"
"I was wondering how you were doing? We haven't spoken since Patricia funeral."
"I'm holding up. What about you?" Sterling truely concerned. Diane didn't answer right away, sighing confused, and casting her eyes down at Max, whom was starring at her, tongue hanging.
"Still struggling. Feeling guilty and alone."
Sterling reached for her hand, squeezing it gently. "If I had told my daughter about us, at this moment she'll still be alive."
Sterling didn't disagree, knowing what Diane said might had some merit. He comfort her with his embrace. Assuring her in time, her struggles will become easier as the days pass. And that her family would make sure that she's never alone.
She revealed that she been staying with her sister, and contemplating about selling the house. That it held to many memories. Sterling nodded, understanding her circumstances.

"I know that it been yours and your children home since they were born. And leaving or staying is both painful. But maybe the change can begin to slowly ease your pain."
"Maybe," she look away sorrowfully. "Tomorrow I'm going to Pheonix, to spend time with my son. His wife just gave birth to his first child." Sterling congradulated her, and complimented that she doesn't look like a grandmother. "I wouldn't believe you were over fourty."
Diane blushed, thanking him. "It's a girl. Colby name her in the honor of his sister."
"Mmmm. A lovely way to honor and remember his sister. Surely she is beautiful as Patricia was."
"Yes, she has green eyes just like her."

A awkward moment of silence came between them, not knowing what to say next. Diane look down at Max, whom was still looking at her with his tongue out, then spoke. "I see you and Max are on your way some-
"Huntsville. Today my mother is being release."
"That's wonderful! You been waiting for far to long, for her to come home. And now is the day."
"Yes it is, thanks to you. I can't wait to kiss and hugg her outside those barewire fence."
"So I know your next few weeks will be spent with her."
"Let's say the next few months. Its so much I want to do and show to her."
"I guess you haven't found a job yet, since quitting Mandigos?"
"No." Sterling shook his head. Forgetting, his mouth opened with excitement, telling Diane that he just recieved a letter from Shonda, accepting his book. Ecstatic for him, Diane threw her arms aroundSterling, kissing him unconciously. When she finally realized, she held eye-contact with him for a moment, thinking back to their fling, remembering how intoxicating it was. Releasing him, she apologized for getting carried away, as she pretended to straighten out some wrinkles in her sixteen hundred dollar dress.
Sterling let her know that no harm was done, reminding Diane she is the reason why his dream is coming to a reality. "My dedication will be to you and Patricia."
Diane gave him a appreciated smile, thanking him. Congradulating him again, she glanced at her watch, and asked what time his mother is being release.
"They say around ten."
"Well I think you need to get going, its five after nine. And Huntsville is at least a fourty five minutes drive."
"Yeah, your right." Sterling looked at his watch, then back at Diane, showing a melancholy look. She displayed the same feature as Sterling, knowing that it would be the last time she would see him. Diane placed her hand on his cheek, starring into his handsome face and brown eyes, releasing a sober sigh. Feeling a little shameful, wanting him one last time. Sterling had been the most handsomest man she ever seen and been with. And she was going to miss him deeply.
"Don't give up on love Sterling. She's out there waiting on you."
Diane words of encouragement, put a pleasing smile on hon his face.
After a brief yearning stare, Sterling didn't resist, as Diane rose
on her toes to kiss him one last time. "Goodbye Sterling." she said
last, turning to get in her car. Sterling stood silent, disconlated
hearing the Maseratti come to life. Diane put on her shades over her
tearful eyes, to prevent him from seeing them, then glanced up at
Sterling.
"Goodbye Diane." he woefully said his fareweell. Diane coerce a
smile, before driving away.

With Max sitting beside him, Sterling waited across the street from
the Huntsville prison. He saw the golden bars open inwards, and a
crowd of women come rushing out. Sterling searched for his mother
in the mist. Finally spotting her, he waved his hand, to get her
attention, as Max barked. A radiant smile appeared on Grace face,
changing her disconbobulating walk, realizing now that she is free,
into a run, into her son embrace.
After praying, Sterling opened his eyes in time to see the Middle-
eastern doctor enter the waiting room. He couldn't read the expres-
sion on the doctor's face, if he was bringing good or bad news, about
Patricia condition.
Sterling and her family, stood behind Diane as she held her hands to-
gether under her chin, praying for the doctor to give her good news
about her daughter. "How is my daughter doctor? Diane asked trembling.

"Patricia is still in critical condition. She suffered severe head
trauma, and several broken bones." he informed them, then paused, be-
fore delivering the crucial status. "Patricia also suffered a severe
spinal injury, that could leave her paralyzed."

Diane chest rosed, sucking in all the air in the waiting room, before
covering her mouth. Before her legs could give away from under her,
Diane made her way, crying to the couch. Sterling spirit inside left,
as he exhaled, trying to register what the doctor had just told them.
Tina, been the only with strength to step forward, and ask. "So at
the moment, you saying that my niece is paralyze?"

"At the the moment we're not sure. There's alot of swelling in her
lower spine, and we can't tell until we remove some of the swelling,
and see how badly she's spine is damage. The next three days will tell
us alot. There's nothing more we can do until then."

"What can we do?" Tina inquired.
The doctor gave her a unassurance smile, before answering. "Pray."
Sterling called out to the doctor before he exit the waiting room. The
doctor turned to him, hoping to answer any question that he had.
Sterling exhaled dejected, asking if there's a possibility if he could
see Patricia. "At the moment Patricia is not in the condition for
visitor. she's unconscious now. And have cases on her legs and arms."

"I understand. But I need to see her. I need to hold her hand, and
tell her I'm sorry. And how much I love her."

"And who are you sir to Patricia?"
Sterling locked eyes with the doctor. "Her husband one day."
Sterling reply brought a slight smile to the doctor face. "Five minutes."

(1)
was up. He turned and nodded to her. Sterling exhaled heavily, standing to his feet. He squeezed Patricia's hand, leaning down to kiss her lips. His sorrowful brown eyes survey her face, in hopes of any signs that she still loved him. Finding none, Sterling told Patricia that he loved her always, before turning to leave.

Making his way out the room, Sterling gave the nurse the same forced smile, she gave him. About to exit Patricia room, a voice made Sterling pause in his tracks. "It's kind of hard squeezing your hand with this case on."

Three years later, Sterling sat in his home, working on another novel. His first published book, FREEDOM LOVE, turned out to be a national bestseller, and is now in works to become a motion picture. At his writing desk, he cursed, having writers block, and got up to go the the kitchen. Retrieving a two liter root beer from the frig, Sterling grabbed a glass. It was noon, and he hadn't had anything to eat except coffee, since he woke up at 6:45 this morning.

Waking over to the pantry, he opened the double shutter doors. Full of can goods, cereals and junk food, Sterling eyes went to the Frosted Flakes and Fruit Loops. Then shifted to the peanut butter and jelly. Reaching for the Frosted Flakes, his peripheral spotted something that cause him to smile. Leaning down, he grabbed the small bag of hot fries, and retrieved his glass of root beer.

Flopping down on the couch in his living room, Sterling reached for the remote, to watch SportCenter, until he heard a car horn outside. Looking out the window, Sterling saw the custom Suburban in the driveway.

He went outside to greet the person inside. When the SUV door opened, Sterling asked the green eyes beauty, do she need any help getting situated.

"No thank you," she told him, as he watched her struggle abit to get out, and place both her arms inside the rings of her aluminum crutches. "You can get the groceries bags, and your spoil child out the back seat."

Sterling opened the backdoor to a brown eyes, beautiful, smiling two years old girl, with a bag of hot fries.
he held up his hand. "No more."
"Thank you doctor. That's all I need."

Sterling knees buckled, when he entered Patricia I.C.U room. There were so many machines hooked up to Patricia, that the beeping sounds from them, sounded like a chaotic factory. But Sterling knew Patricia been still alive, seeing the lines on the monitors zig zag up and down. Sterling rubbed his hand across his face, trying to refocus his sight. It pained him to see Patricia body half case, like a mummy. Both her legs, left arm, and right wrist were in a case. A large bandage around her forehead, had a dime size red spot.
Sterling took another hard breath, as he reached for her hand. "Oh God Patricia I'm so sorry. This is all my fault. I should have told you when I found out that Diane was your mother. I wanted too, but I was confused, and I didn't want to lose you. I swear to you, I have been faithful, ever since you came into my life. There's nothing between your mother and me. Your the only woman I love. And I was hoping one day you would be my wife."
Sterling paused for a long moment, then a slight chuckle escaped his mouth. "I was holding my cousin two year old daughter, Chrystal on my lap, before I gotten the terrifying call about your accident. My mother say we're going to make beautiful babies. I said to her WHOOO! hold up. I think your thinking to far ahead."
Sterling chuckled again. "But I think my mother is right. We'll make beautiful babies. Smart too. Surely that's part coming from your side." he laughed again. Sterling became silent again, listening to the beeping and humming sounds of the machines. "Oh God." he cried, running his hand through his hair.
"Please forgive me baby. come back to me. To us. I love you very much. And no matter what, I'll take care of you for the rest of our lives. I need to know that you forgive me, and that you still love me. I know you can hear me. Give me a sign baby. Squeeze my hand. Move something. I'm suffocating not knowing if you don't love me anymore." 
Sterling waited a forever minute, receiving no response from Patricia. Sighing defeated, he buried his face in the palms of his hands, as he prayed to God to spare Patricia life. He asked God also to give him any sign if Patricia still loved him.
Sterling distress been disturbed by a nurse informing that his time