

## 19. Eye for an Eye

The more his eyes raged, the more joy I got from the act. His rage swarmed on the surface, desperate to break free, which made me all the happier to be performing the service. I had started with blunt, one of my favorite torture subjects, leaving his body wrecked and raw with bruises. Ready for more severe pain. He hadn't lost consciousness since he woke up, which was pleasing to me. He wanted to be saved in his own way; he wanted to be aware of his salvation through bloodshed. I was glad for his participation – it added a whole new twist to things. He struggled uselessly against the bonds that held him into the chair, having already tried a number of times to tip it over. He had succeeded here and there, but I returned him right side up every time.

I spoke to him, calmly, like a child, as I carried out my deeds. He understood, in his own way, but that wouldn't stop him from attempting to rebel. I explained to him that he was correct, that I had murdered my parents. It gave him a sort of peace, the truth finally coming to the surface. I told him calmly how I shot them in cold blood, without giving a second thought to their patients or colleagues. The people who needed and depended on them would be forced to start anew, to work something out on their own. I was pleased to free all those people, to make them independent and free. Jerome didn't agree, which I didn't expect him to at such an early stage of the procedure.

I carried on for a number of hours, switching into other torture mediums, though careful to keep the noise to a minimum. I didn't want anyone to get curious and check in. I explained to him at great length how I had loved his sister, how I was still grieving her loss. That upset him greatly. The chair thudded and jumped against the floor, no doubt worrying his neighbors below. I shot him up with some more drugs, to keep him calm and sedate, less mobile, and the noise stopped

again. I spent a long time discussing Damiano, and her most painful death. However, nothing I told him seemed to console him, seemed to slow his rage. If he could have, he would have destroyed me with his eyes, ripping me to shreds.

Such is the state of power, the weak powerless to interfere in the grand design of the big and powerful. I was slightly amazed with how easy it had been to overthrow the order, to shake the balance. I now held an officer of the law captive and there would be no one to come to his aid. He would suffer and ultimately die alone, barely remembering the peace he was sworn to protect. He had served his family and community well, or so he had thought, and his position would keep him safe from the darkness that had claimed his other relatives. At least in theory, such were the thoughts in his mind before I burst into his door and changed everything forever.

What novel delusions one can survive with before reality takes true hold.

I decided that there was more information to be found here, things that Mister Morrow was intentionally hiding. How long had he known about my parents' true killer? Who was he trying to protect here? Why was he skulking around without his sister lately? There were more questions to feed into my paranoid suspicions, issues I could get answered now. His position made him very vulnerable, and I would do everything in my power to make good on that. Power made everything possible, even your wildest aspirations were in reach. The more he struggled, the harder I worked, determined for some sort of answers. Another hour or so of twisting sharp shards of glass into his flesh yielded nothing though, and I took a break.

What was worth hurting, worth dying for? Why would he hold back what he knew? If he knew anything at all...could it be? Maybe I was trying to pull a void from him, a source of pointless and useless information. Or was I second-guessing myself too soon? What could he possibly know that I didn't

already have on lockdown? My mind started arguing with itself, reasoning and disagreeing at random with my theories. Either way, I continued to inflict pain and demand answers, watching his reactions change to confusion only for a split second. For the majority of the time, he was filled with the incorruptible rage that comes with sin and madness. I was pleased with being able to force him to face it.

Our most dangerous enemies in this world are commonly ourselves. Not creatures of myth, not concepts of our imagination, but the mental doppelganger in our minds. We're fighting ourselves more often than not, rooting for the underdog and conspiring our own failure. We need to operate as such – balance is a necessary and fundamental part of life. So I would argue the pros and cons of my situation until my mind was weary and the voices weak, I would carry on my mission without an ounce of regret. I was purifying a man wrought on anger, one of the seven deadly sins. He needed to be brought into the light before things got out of hand, before he hurt others with his rage. I was fortunate – I was bold...but what about others? I was confronting this treacherous possibility before it got out of hand.

A public service really.

The day died slowly over the horizon, and I was still speaking to Mister Morrow. I explained to him why I had chosen him, how what I was doing was important. He didn't understand, or chose to ignore me. I explained that his death would serve a greater good, as a symbol, a lesson to others like him. After all, wasn't his job bent around serving others? He was being given a chance that officers seldom receive, the honor of a lifetime, a legacy all his own. Just for suffering for a day, just for bleeding a bit in return. He needed to earn the freedom I was about to bestow.

The doorknob started to shift just then, catching my attention instantly. Officer Morrow seemed to be pleased, allowing a

self-satisfying grin possess him. I smiled slightly in return, realizing that I was about to ruin his sense of security. I crept closer to the door, standing just beyond the hinge as the lock finally gave and it opened slightly. Syringe in hand, I jumped immediately on to the twin Morrow, dragging her back and plunging the needle into her throat. She coughed slightly, fighting for a fraction of a second before slipping backwards into my arms.

“You didn’t think I wasn’t prepared for visitors, did you? Sorry to spoil your fun.”

I propped her against the door, eyes vaguely open as her mind struggled to process what was real. The drug was built to immobilize her, which it did effectively. All she could do was watch as I carried out my work, which I decided was time to draw to a close. I had tormented Jerome Morrow significantly, and received nothing of value from him. Man can only tolerate so much, and I was only so patient. I would need to prove a point, to finally instill my values. Perhaps I could convince the remaining Morrow to assist me along the way.

I moved back to the kitchen, where I had gathered some supplies for my various tricks of the trade. Janus continued to watch in wide eyed horror, her muscles twitching as she fought in vain for them to function. I selected the gas can, bright red, slightly darker as the heavy liquid inside sloshed around. I moved over to the chair containing my prisoner and started to pour a healthy amount on the top of his head, soaking immediately through his uniform. He jumped with the cool temperature, but was just as nervous as before as he smelt his fate. I moved on around the apartment, watching it saturate the bed and linens, the furniture more resistant to the liquid. Finally, I made a path leading to the door, leading to where Janus Morrow sat. I propped a cigarette in her mouth, standing to pull her upright, holding her back to me.

"I'm sorry, Miss Morrow, for what I'm about to do. An apology that I doubt you will accept. But please, try to accept my gift, this enlightenment, as a token of my severe appreciation for all you've done for me."

Lighting it carefully, I lit another one for myself, careful of any unnecessary spark. I worried momentarily that I might light my hands aflame, but such was the risk for what I was about to do. Both cigarettes flared immediately, though she had noticeable difficulty grasping hers. Her eyes changed from horror to hate within seconds, as she wheeled her eyes to lock to me. I was collected and calm, smiling at the scene ahead, the struggling Morrow male strapped to the chair. The good Officer would show the pain of violence.

Show me your rage.

Scream for me, lad. Show us all what you're truly about.

It only took a few minutes, but as planned, Janus' cigarette eventually hit the floor, followed closely by my own as I threw it to ensure a steady light. The path sparked immediately as a cool red flame raced across the floor, quenching its thirst. The burning moved up the young officer quicker than expected, as muffled screams and agonizing facial expressions contorted him. I opened the door behind myself slowly, letting the smoke seep out, letting the audience in, but the deed was done. I carried Janus with me, deciding that enough was enough. She had witnessed the close of the mission, and hopefully the experience would make her better for it.

As I backed to the stairway, I side stepped and let her collapse before me, watching unsympathetically as her body bounced and blundered, landing with a sickening thud at the base of the stairs. She would survive, as the spirit in her would mandate, and live to fight another day. I wondered if she would give in to the vengeance that had destroyed her brother? In his wake, she would be a new creature, independent

and dangerous, capable of anything. I was eager to meet her on the other side of mediocrity.

With that, I went up a floor, racing down the fire escape two steps at a time. I was pleased with myself, and allowed it to play on my face. Who would suspect the merry murderer, walking away from the scene with a whistle? Perhaps I really was mad, but it was hard to say anymore. I could feel my wings spread and bend, excited for their new use, as I moved toward home. I'd sweep into the shop first and have a look around – maybe borrow some cleaners to wipe the day's grime from my hands.

I'm sure my money's bought the best sterilizers in town.