

Untouchable Love

Untouchable Love, Volume 1

Mia-Lize van der Merwe

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This is a work of fiction. Similarities to real people, places, or events are entirely coincidental.

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Written by Mia-Lize van der Merwe.

Dedication

First of all, I would like to thank the Lord, because without him I would not have the talent to be able to tell this story.

Secondly a big thank you to my parents, who supported me when sometimes I got so absorbed in the story that I wouldn't leave the computer. But they also knew when was the best time for me to stop and I am so grateful for that. You guys were also the first people who read some of my work and you were also always honest.

Then I would also like to thank my grandmother, Mia, and grandfather, Herman, who would always hassle me and ask me how far I am with the book.

Thank you to my other grandparents, Herman(bet you didn't see that coming:) Both my grandfathers have the same name) and Martie, who helped nurture my love for reading from an early age.

Then last but certainly not least...thank you to you. Yes, you! The person reading this book! Thank you for taking time off your schedule and reading a brand new book from a brand new author. You just made my day...

Without all of you, this book will not exist and Alisha and Jason would still come nagging me in my sleep every night, begging me for their story to be told.....

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A joyful heart makes a cheerful face, But when the heart is sad, the spirit is broken.

Proverbs 15:13



1. <https://www.obooko.com/>



~CHAPTER #1~



“*I am proud to present next year’s Student council leaders. The grade 12’s that will mold, form and change our school for the better for many generations to come.*” The headmaster said, and everyone went dead silent. You could hear a pin drop. This is the night that the entire group of grades 11’s have been waiting for. So many people hoped it would be them even though everyone already knew who it would be ...

“*So, without further ado. Our Head boy for next year is ... Matthew Le Rouge!*” The headmaster screamed over the microphone even though it was really not necessary.

Matthew went on stage and waved like he is the new king of the country. I rolled my eyes. How did my idiotic cousin manage to become head boy? He has no brains. He could barely pass the school year. Then he is also as arrogant as hell. Is money all that matters in this school?

I really hated my uncle when he started sponsoring everything this year because it not only affected Matthew but me too. Everything that happens with Matthew affects me now too.

“*And our Head girl I am proud to say is also our Dux learner this year.....Alisha Le Rouge!*” Everyone went into applause ...

Everyone knew I deserved this as much as anyone who has worked as hard as I have, but of course, there will be many people saying that I only got it because of my uncle. Sometimes I really wished I could stand on my own feet, without him and my darling cousin, Matthew, in the background. But that is how things are, for me anyway. I guess I should be happy that he tries to make this school a

better place for Matthew and me, but I miss my own parents. They would have wanted the best for me but would not have helped my chances through bribery. It is now 3 years and I still can't stop missing them ... I can still remember that night three years ago. We were driving home after the school's annual spring dance. As always Dad followed the rules and everything, but that did not stop the other driver from being drunk. I still don't really know what happened. All I remember is a white flash, my older brother screaming; and then the next thing I remember is waking up in the hospital, my uncle telling me that they have all died in the accident ...

I went on stage and received my badge and I could almost imagine my parents' faces if they could have been here. Before I knew it the night had come to an end.

"Tonight I am getting so drunk! I can now legally drink so I don't care what anyone thinks," said Matthew in the car while riding home. He did a year over in Junior High, so he is a year older than everyone, where I skipped a grade.

"What about Uncle Max? He will be furious if you drive home drunk?" I said and rolled my eyes, for what felt like the hundredth time this evening. How can he be so stupid? He is two years older than me. He is supposed to be the responsible one.

"That is why dear cousin that I invited all the grade 11's and 12's to our house for a party. I already talked to my Dad about it. He says it is fine as long as we end before 1 pm." He said as he stopped at home. There were already ten people sitting on the lawn.

The party started and everyone started drinking and dancing. I must admit that I also had a few drinks too many. The music was way too loud and it felt like it is beating through my skull. At one stage I had to go outside for some air because I was starting to get nauseous. This is the first time that I have drunk more than one drink. I was not really part of Matthew's crowd.

I went and stood in the rose garden that is a long way from the house and the only peaceful place around the whole house. I stood and watched the water in the fountain. Although there were a lot of people inside, I felt so lonely. I turned to look at the moon and wondered if it had also felt as lonely as I did. Suddenly I heard footsteps behind me but when I turned around there was no one, just the slight breeze playing in the leaves.

Most of the people assumed that I was the life of the party, but they didn't really know me. If they really did, they would know that my cheerleader persona was all only an act.

I turned back and looked at the moon once again but it is clouded over with clouds. Suddenly someone grabbed me from behind and put a hand over my mouth to stop me from screaming. I tried to fight the person but he was way too strong.

"Stop fighting, you STUPID BITCH! If you know what is good for you, you will follow me without a fight...So, princess, do we do this the easy way or the hard way?" the person said.

It is a deep voice. Definitely a man I thought. I bit his hand and hit him with my elbow on the stomach. This dude did not know who he was dealing with; I have been training for years for this day. If only I had a weapon with me right now, I thought.

"Oh, I see! Our little queen has decided on the hard way ... so much like daddy aren't we?" he said and I stilled.

There weren't many people who knew my father, at least not in this country. We immigrated to South Africa a few months after the funeral. I just couldn't stand seeing all the places that we, as a family, visited together. The memories haunted me at night and nothing I did could stop it from happening. But after we moved, things got much better.

He grabbed my arm again he held me so tight against him, that I almost couldn't breathe. *"What do you know about my father?"* I tried to scream but it barely came out as a hiss.

Then he was holding my neck so tight that he almost choked me. “OH! Darling, I know enough about your father!” he said and put a little cloth over my mouth.

The last thing that I could remember was his laugh before everything went black ...





~CHAPTER #2~



I woke up with a strange bitter taste in my mouth. *I wondered where I was.* I tried to stand up but my hands were tied at the top of my head onto something that feels like a pole. I tried to look around the room but my eyes were still a little fuzzy.

What happened? I could remember the prize-giving ... the party ... the rose garden ... oh ... the unknown man. Where is he? Is he here? Well, if he is here; I really can't see him. Who was I kidding; I could barely see anything.

What did he mean ... about knowing enough about my father?

Suddenly I heard a loud noise, and my eyes came into focus. I was on a big military-style bed. The room was a shade of light green. Everything was pretty and classy. Everything from the big chandelier to the big floral curtains to the big vanity table standing near a window and not even mentioning the big grand bookcase filled with books from top to bottom. Everything was sophisticated except the bed that I was laying on. It felt extremely out of place like it did not belong in this room. When I was little I might have called this a princess room but this bed upsets the whole mood of the Victorian room.

"I'm glad to see you did not die ... we have had enough of that in your family the last while." A soft feminine voice said.

I turned my head to where the voice was coming from. It came from the other side of the room which I have not turned to yet, before hearing the voice. The voice came from a thin blond lady that can be as old as what my mother would have been ... if she were still alive.

"Where am I?" I tried to say but I could only mouth the words. Nothing came out.

"Don't worry dearie...you are just a little dehydrated, that's all. Here" she said and gave me a glass of water *"drink up."*

With a warm smile, she watched me drawn all the contents of the glass. *"I presume you are Miss Alisha Le Roux,"* she said and gave me a small smile.

I nodded and asked *"What happened?"* it was barely a whisper.

"Well....." The blond lady was interrupted when the door swung open with a loud crack.

"Is she awake? She better be. We need to see how responsive she is. I heard the Greek market likes big girls." A loud man said even before entering.

"Yes she is awake but very dehydrated.....how long did your boys have her before bringing her here?" the tall blond woman asked with no more friendliness in her expression.

"Two days! Bloody morons! Every time she starts to come by they give her more stuff!" he screamed at her like she is deaf. Maybe she is? Who knows? At least I didn't.

"Now mademoiselle.....you are probably wondering what the hell is happening now...Aren't you?" he said to me with a lifeless smile.

All I could do was nod because I did not know if I would have been able to let a peep out.

"Well here is what is happening.....your father loaned some money from me right before you were born. He loaned the money to buy a nice big house and to be able to buy the things you need, but then everything went wrong. Your parents lost everything and I loaned them everything I had at that time. I said to him that, you know, he can pay me back when things get better and he promised me that he will. Things did eventually get much better as your father ended up being a billionaire but there was one thing he forgot.....little old me." The man said.

I looked at him and tears started to flow into my eyes. What was he going to do to me? How could my own father not have told me about any of this? How was I going to pay back....the dept?

"Oh! Hush now little one we won't hurt you...yet," he added with a slight smile.

"Com' on Larry, the girl is frightened as it is, do you really need to make it worse?" the blond-haired woman asked the man with a stern look in her eyes.

"Fine get her ready, we need to see how she ...responds," Larry said with an amusing look in his eyes.

"Larry, no. I don't think so. This is a bright girl and she is very smart. It would be a waste to make her one of your...prostitutes," the woman spat the word out in pure disgust and added *"no I have had someone watching her. She will be much better in the IT department or as a field worker."*

"You want to waste that pretty face in the IT department?" he asked sarcastically and snorted *"she may work as a field worker, but as one of our girls...."*

"NO! I said I don't want her as one of your girls, and that's that!" She screamed at him and banged on a table next to her and I cringed slightly. *"Sorry honey, I didn't mean to startle you,"* she said with a slight smile and patted my knee and it helped me to relax slightly as she added, *"this one is special..."*

"Fine do what you want, you're the boss!" he yelled and stormed out. When he was out the door she started speaking again.

"Sorry about him sweetheart, he's not always like that," she said to me and undid my handcuffs and gave me some more water *"I'm Irene; by the way, we should probably take you to your own room. I really tried to stop him from taking you; I mean you just became head girl...and yah. Oh, I'm probably talking your head off."* She said with an apologetic smile.

"What is going to happen to me?" I asked softly and looked down at my hands.

"Dear, do not worry," Irene said tilting my head up so that I could look at her in the eyes "I will personally make sure nothing happens to you and if I can't I will make sure someone else does. Now you will be a field worker. In other words, you will kind of be a spy, just for the bad guys. But not right now. We will first train you in all the ways of a field worker, then probably when you are 18 we will send you to do the actual work."

"So, what type of stuff will I be learning now?" I asked and stood up from the bed.

"You will learn fighting skills, shooting, coding and a few more extra cool stuff," Irene said and we walked out the door.

The room was in a very long passageway. Every few feet there was a door on either side of the hallway. All the doors were closed, but on each door, there were two names and a number. At the end of the hallway, we came to a stop at the last door with only one name on.

"So, here is your room. You will be sharing with Jason." Irene said holding out a small key that I took and suddenly looked back up.

"Jason? Isn't that a guy's name?" I said anxiously.

"Yes, sorry. This was the only available room. No girls' rooms are open at all. Jason is my son and will take great care of you." Irene said with a small smile.

I took a deep breath and opened the door. The room is not as I thought it would be. It is not a room at all, but an entire suite.

I stepped into the living area of the 'room' just as a guy came out of the bathroom with only a towel on. He stopped dead in his tracks. Slowly but surely I moved my gaze over his body from his black hair, blue eyes that resembled ice, coldness and you could see the hurt in them, but they also let you feel as if they can look into your very soul. Perfect bow mouth, to his upper build shoulders and a well-defined six-pack and quickly moved my eyes back to his eyes.

His lips were in a slight smile to one side and in his eyes flickered a slight look of interest before he composed his emotions, so fast I almost didn't see it.

"Alisha this is my son, Jason." Irene suddenly said, startling both of us.

Just then his facial expression changed to an annoyed look, which I guessed was his normal facial expression. *"Why did mom bring a chick in here?"* he said with the same annoyed look still on his face.

"Well, Jason, this is Alisha. She is your new roommate." Irene said copying her son's tone perfectly.

That brought some emotion back into his expression. To be more specific he got furious. *"You have got to be kidding me, this chick? Tell me this is a joke! I am not going to share a room with this prissy pink princess! She probably doesn't know anything about living normally! She probably has a butler, maid, nanny and who knows what else at her home!"* he said flaring daggers at me with his eyes.

"Oh! Yah! How would you know? You don't even know me," I said and held my hand up just as he was about to interrupt me, *"wait I'm not done. I have been through hell the last ...I don't know how many days, but I am not going to listen to you insulting me."*

"Wow! Who knew the princess could stand up for herself. Well, I need to go put some clothes on. Mom, we'll talk about this later." He said with an amused smile and walked into another room.

"Okay, this is your room," Irene said and walked to a door, opened it and put the lights on.

The room was another Victorian style, just this time in blue. It had a big chandelier of crystal. The big bed was probably a king size. There were a big breath-taking couch and a whole walk-in closet which was full of clothes of all types. Glitter, leather, lace, etc. All of them were girls' clothes...

"I got the guys to get you the clothes, they should fit perfectly. Anything that you might need, just come to me and I will make sure you get them. Now, I need to go sort some things out, and so I will get Jason to bring you to the dining hall for dinner." Irene said and patted my arm when she saw the scared look on my face

"Don't worry dear, everything will be okay. It will take some time to get used to things, but I have a feeling that you will be just fine." she turned around to go out of the room.

"Wait up Irene!" I said and Irene turned around to look at me, *"Thank you for taking so good care of me, I don't even want to think about where I would have been without your help today."*

Irene smiled and walked out.

This is not what you have in mind when you think about a kidnapping. I was really lucky. Things could have been so much worse. I thought back to the time just before my parents' death. Dad was quite edgy and I could never understand why. What really happened in that crash? No one really knows as the car suddenly exploded right after the police got there. No one could understand how I got out but they didn't. The only way we knew it was a drunk driver incident was because the person confessed to everything, or so my uncle said. But is there a way that these people could have been involved?

Suddenly I felt really tired and went to lay on the bed for a bit. Before I knew it I was asleep.





~CHAPTER #3~



I was woken up by a loud banging on the door. *"Hurry up and get out of there. We need to get to the dining hall or else we're going to miss out on the good pieces of meat. Oh and mom said you should probably dress in something more comfortable. Just hurry up!"* Jason screamed through the door and pounded on the door a few more times.

"Ok, I'll be right there. And stop banging on the door, or do you want to feel a five-inch heel up your ass." I said as I opened the closet and saw all the different types of heels.

"Oh! Who knew the princess has such a dirty mind!" he chuckled through the door and added, *"Too bad I'm not into those types of kinky stuff."*

I quickly changed into a black jean, black crop top, and black high heeled boots. I quickly took a hair tie and made a high ponytail.

"Goodness gracious, are you crazy?" Jason said when I stepped out of the room.

"What do you mean?" I asked and turned my head to one side.

"You are not at home anymore." He said closing his eyes with his hands, *"In other words, you can't run around half-naked. All of the people in the hall will be guys. Well not all of them, there are eight girls."* He said with a smirk.

"Half-naked? What do you mean?" I asked and looked down at my outfit

"That shirt," he said pointing to my crop top *"Not good."*

"Fine! I'll go change!" I huffed out and turned on my heel and walked back into the room and slammed the door.

I heard him chuckle and threw a pair of heels at the door. Why is he like this? I quickly changed into a black t-shirt and went back out.

"Happy now?" I asked with narrowed eyes.

"Oh, you didn't have to change to make me happy. That is way too nice of you, though I would probably be much happier if you don't have any clothes on." He said and moved his gaze slowly over my body, only stopping at the things that make me a woman.

What is it with guys; do they only care about one thing? A grin slowly spread when his eyes came back to mine.

"Can we go now?" I asked in an irritated voice.

"Fine, fine, you're probably hungry, or no what do you girls call it? Hangry....." he said with a smirk.

The dining hall was huge. It looks like one of the ballrooms in the movies. It had a long dark wood table, with all different types of dishes in the middle. On each side, about thirty people were sitting. Mostly men, or no not yet. They look more like teen boys and young adult men in their early twenty's. The table was decked in red, blue and gold. It looks like a true royal meal.

"These are only us, the youngest of the group, which is dining right now." he suddenly said in my ear. I tried to remind myself that he is only talking in my ear because there was so much noise, but that did not stop my body from reacting as he continued on, *"In about three hours, the old peeps will have their chance. Every group has a head of the table, which has to sit at both meals."*

"Wow, there is a lot of people here. So who is our head of the table, you?" I asked with a smile and gave a nervous chuckle. Why is he affecting me so much? Sure he's hot but hell, he is part of the people who took me from home. Kidnapped, abducted, whatever you want to call it.

"Nope, not me. It was almost me, though. My cousin, Jeremy, is the head of our table. He is five years older than me and just out of college. He was lucky though. He got to leave this place, even if it was just for a little

while. Well, my time will come in about a year's time." He said and looked around uncomfortably.

"So you're still in school?" I asked surprised. I had assumed that he was already done with school.

"Yeah, seventeen-year-old soon to be senior in high school. So anyway, how old are you? You look like you are around my age yourself." He asked with a glimmer of something in his eyes that I just could not place.

"Jip, I am also almost a senior, but I am not seventeen, I'm sixteen," I said with a smile.

"Well let's go and eat." He said returning my smile.

Dinner was a very pleasant experience. The food was amazing!

Everyone was nice, except the girls at the table. It was obvious that they saw me as a threat, which was just stupid. I didn't even want to be here, why would I be any competition for them? But then again, if they really knew me, they would know that there no competition at all, in anything that I do. I ALWAYS WIN! The boys were all extremely nice, almost too nice. I didn't know how old Jeremy, Jason's cousin, thought I was, but he kept flirting with me.

"You are so beautiful, Alisha. Has anyone ever told you that you could be a model?" he asked with a heavy French accent.

"No, I can't say that anyone has ever told me so," I said nervously.

"Comment est-ce possible? Tu es la plus belle fille."

"Oh, I'm sorry. I can't speak French. Only English and Afrikaans." I said but he only smiled.

During dinner, he kept touching me for random reasons; like putting a strand of hair behind my ear or brushing so-called crumbs off my chin. It was starting to make me really uncomfortable, but I couldn't do anything about it because he was sitting right next to me. Well not directly, he was at the end and I sat at the first chair at the beginning of the table. Then Jason sat right across from me, next to his cousin. Suddenly Jeremy's knee pressed against mine as if it was an accident, but I knew better.

My cousin was the head Casanova in school and he used these same tactics to get girls. I just about had enough. Jeremy was watching me over the rim of the glass of water he was drinking and added a bit of extra pressure. That was it. I put my foot on top of his, fluttered my eyes as if I were flirting back and stomped my foot so that one of the boots that I was wearing's heel came crushing his foot. He spat his gulp of water out in pain.

Jason saw what has happened and quickly saved me, by coming and standing behind my chair to help me out of my seat and said, *"Well Alisha, we are both done so I think it's time to go back to **our** room."* He said emphasizing the word 'our' as he took my hand.

We left the room without giving anyone any time to respond. When we were outside the room he started laughing and pulled me into a bear hug. *"Did you see his face? You were the first girl ever to not fall for his charms! You have seriously made my night!"* he said and let me go.

"Mmh, yah who said I didn't fall for his charms?" I said, saw his face darkening and burst out laughing, *"Just kidding, dude you should have seen your face. No, don't worry he is not my type."* I said and gave him a cheeky smile.

"I didn't think so. My cousin is way too nice, you would eat him up for breakfast and spit him right back out. Am I right?" he asked with a raised eyebrow but before I could answer he talked again. *"Or is it perhaps the other side around, that this is just a persona."* He asked and coked his head to the one side.

He looked at me with a curious expression in his eyes, but I pinched my mouth into a straight line. He did not need to know why I could never show anyone the real me or why I was sometimes as unemotional as a witch. It had nothing to do with him.

But then I taunted, to hell with it. *"You don't even know me, so what gives you the right to make assumptions?"* I screamed at him.

That made him look as if he was caught by surprise. Good, I was sick and tired of people pushing me around. First my cousin, then Jeremy and now him.

He quickly composed his features and responded in a grim voice, *"Exactly, I don't know you."* He turned on his heel and walked on in the hall.

We walked in complete silence. We went inside our room and I went straight to my bed to go to sleep.

Just as I closed my door I heard him shout, *"I'll wake you up tomorrow for your first day of training, so get a good night's sleep."* And I hope you have nightmares the whole night, I thought.





~CHAPTER #4~



The next morning Jason and I walked to the dining hall for breakfast, but I noticed that he is so much different than he was the last time we walked this way. Gone was the playful boy and in its place came a cold, hard, young man.

I just wouldn't believe that he was upset because of the conversation last night. Sure I snapped at him, but it wasn't THAT bad. Wait, why would he care about that? Why would I care about his moods? No, his moods shouldn't matter.

Once again the dining hall was very full and of course, the only place open was the one next to Jeremy.

I was a little hesitant at first, but a little nudge from the back, from Jason, gave me all the courage that I needed.

I went and sat next to him and was not surprised when he didn't even try to talk to me. Alisha1, Jeremy 0, I thought with a smile.

I quickly looked around but I saw no sign of Jason. Did he really just leave me here all alone in the middle of it all? I was extremely relieved when he returned after breakfast. He still looked in a bad mood. What is going on with him?

"Hey, are you okay?" I asked him when we left the dining hall.

He suddenly stopped and turned around slowly. His face was totally unreadable as his gaze slowly turned to mine.

"Yeah, never better." He said and turned around and continued walking. He is upset; I could see that, but why?

"So, where are we going?" I asked as we walked down a long hallway with mirrors on the walls.

There was only one door at the end of the hall. He opened the door and held it open for me. It was dark inside and I could only make out something with the shape of a rectangle. I didn't like it one bit, but what can I do. I felt so helpless in the dark. It kind of felt like that other night. He flicked a light switch on and I immediately relaxed. We were in the middle of a training room. And the thing in the middle ended up being a punching bag.

"As of today, I will be teaching you hand to hand combat. You will learn to not only be able to defend yourself but also how to protect others." He says as he goes to stand directly behind me. *"We wouldn't want a repeat of the night you were brought in here, now would we?"* he added and I could clearly hear the smile in his voice.

He clearly knew nothing about me, because if he really did, he would know that I was our school's champion fighter. Why didn't I fight that night they abducted me? Well, I will hate myself for that every day for the rest of my life, because of that.

When he took my hand and tried to place it at my back, I turned around, took his other hand and flip him over so that he was lying flat on his back on the ground.

"You were saying?" I say sarcastically with a sweet smile on my face and he chuckled. You are going down, I thought.

We trained and sparred the whole morning and might I say, I actually enjoyed it. At school, I never could get anyone brave enough to fight me. And when they did, it was always too easy for me and they usually didn't even last ten minutes before I knocked them to the ground. Fighting was always something my father never wanted me to do, so when he thought I was at ballet practice, my brother actually sneaked me across the road to my grandfather's old jujutsu studio.

I remember the day my father found out, he was furious and banned me from training again. But when I started to get too agitated

ed he quickly changed his mind. I started training and even joined my school's team.

Everything went amazing until two years ago when my grandfather died. After that, I kept my fighting strictly to the school gym. So now my skills are a little rusty, but I still wiped the floor with Jason a few times. He kept saying that he went easy on me, but I know better. A person can't fake the sulking expression he had on when I beat him those few times. He was really fun to be around even though he is extremely annoying.

We went to lunch at around two and then he disappeared. Irene came to get me after lunch and we went to a room that had different types of targets set up. She was quite surprised when she saw that I could shoot with both a gun and bow and could throw knives. Target was always something that came to me much easier than fighting ever could.

We practiced until six when it was time for dinner. Dinner was pleasant and no one bothered me.

Jason showed up just as I was done eating. He was still in a weird mood and I didn't want to press it. We went to the room and he left again without a word. It was weird, him not giving me some snarky remarks and me retorting. But at least we weren't fighting, but that didn't give me much comfort.





~CHAPTER #5~



“You need to hit harder, why are you trying not to hurt me?” Jason screamed at me as we were training again.

It is the second day of training. We got up super early, but apparently, I was not only hitting him too softly, but I was also too thin. I was considered overweight where I come from and now he is telling me I am too thin? What is wrong with him?

“I think it is time you two take a break.” I heard Irene saying from the door.

I didn’t even hear her coming in. I was happy for the distraction as I was already exhausted. He was still in a bad mood and he was trying to take it out on me.

“Fine, let’s go get some water.” He huffed and he stormed out of the room, me running after him.

We got to the kitchen and there was an old lady standing in front of the stove. She was humming the melody of a famous pop song. She suddenly turned when she saw us, *“Oh, hello Jason. Why have you not been helping me out in the kitchen lately? I almost thought that that uncle of yours has gotten you killed somewhere,”* She said shaking her head.

Jason smiled sheepishly, *“Sorry Janet, things have been busy. We got a new recruit, you see, and I had to start training her.”*

He looked so uncomfortable like I had just discovered his biggest, badest, darkest secret. Did I?

“And who is this pretty girl you have brought here?” Janet asked and Jason moved from one foot to the other. He looked like a little boy who was about to get into trouble when he did that.

"Oh, this is Alisha..." he said when Janet interrupted him when she started talking excitedly to me, "Oh! You have to keep this boy, never ever let him slip through your fingers. He is not only handsome but an amazing cook, as well."

She smiled at my awestruck face, and then I finally registered what she has said. *"Oh no, we aren't together..."* I tried to say but she quickly hushed me and said with a sweet smile, *"No need to explain anything to me, your secret is safe with me,"* she smiled and winked at me. She then said to Jason *"you can come back to get something to eat, anytime you want, and I will make sure that the meat is just the way you like it, medium-rare."*

After we have drunk our water, we went outside.

After everything I have heard and just learned, the only sentence that I could think of was, *"I also like my meat medium-rare."*

Suddenly he started laughing, and when I say laughing I mean he laughed so hysterically he could barely stand upright. Well, maybe that was a bit too overdramatic.

"You just found out that I am not as macho as I seem, I mean I cook and bake, and the only thing you could say is 'you also like your meat medium-rare.' You are so different from anyone I have ever met." He said through the bellows of laughter.

Then I also started laughing along. People who walked down the corridors probably thought that we were using some of the stash that they were trying to sell. Or maybe they would think that we were supposed to be in a mental hospital. We kept laughing for a while, but when it did start to clear up all we did was smile at each other.

"So now you know why I have been in such a mood." He said and smiled and I asked, *"What do you mean?"*

"Well, let's just say, that if I don't cook or bake for a while I get a bit scratchy." He said sheepishly.

"Yeah well, I never did think you were macho," I said and smiled at his expression.





~CHAPTER #6~



It was the third day of training and the first day of the weekend, so we finished early. Apparently, everyone else visits their families during the weekends, but Jason's whole family lives here.

I wandered around the stronghold for the majority of Friday. I had to see if there was a way out, I could not give up. My parents would not have wanted that. Well, maybe they would have, as they got me into this mess in the first place.

I ended up in the training center at about 8 that evening and saw Jason training with a training dummy. He was as graceful as a swan but as dangerous as a panther. As he swung his hand at the head of the dummy again I leaped in front of him and caught his hand.

"Why are you here all alone?" I asked with a smile.

At first, he looked shaken, only for a moment, but then smiled back at me. *"Just blowing off some steam,"* he said.

I looked at him and he looked at me and there was this thing between us that is different from anything I have ever felt before. It was like he was looking right into my soul. The moment was broken when we heard the dummy crack and fall on its side. We both laughed and then realized we were still holding hands. I let go of his slowly and suddenly I thought of the best idea ever.

I pulled him after me, making sure I took his wrist rather than his hand, and I ran, *"come on, come on, come on!"*

"Where are we going?" he asked while laughing, almost stumbling, as I pulled him after me. Suddenly we stopped in front of the kitchen and I made a 'ta-da' motion.

"We are going to bake cookies," I announced with a smile.

"Cookies?" he asked dumbstruck.

I rolled my eyes and said, *"Sugary goodness that can fix anything in the world. Something most grandma's bake at Christmas time. Ring a bell?"*

He looked at me and his smile was so big, it was like looking into the sun. It felt warm and real and bright. It was one of the most beautiful things I have ever seen and I wished he would give a genuine smile more often than he gave his half-smirks.

We slipped inside, it was already dark and the lights were already off. We didn't want to raise suspicion, so we went and got a flashlight to be able to see with. Oddly enough, we didn't have any problem with finding any of the ingredients.

We made a deal, he would bake the cookies and I would decorate them. I think it was only a way to engage me in the process because I had no idea how to bake anything, not that I would ever tell him that. I don't think I have ever laughed as much in one evening before.

When my turn came for the decorating, I made them all different colors and different patterns. At one point half my face was full of icing sugar and I could see that he was laughing at me, even though he was trying to cover it with his hand. So I did the only thing I could think of, I iced that side of his face. That resulted in a full out icing sugar war, him icing me, me icing him. It was crazy!

We were so startled when the light suddenly got switched on. Luckily it was just Janet. *"What are you two doing? Look at the mess in my kitchen if you two get out right now and I might consider not telling your mother,"* She said as she shooed us out of the kitchen and added, *"and leave some of those cookies."*

We quickly ran down the hall toward our room. Only then did I notice how bad we looked. Every color of the rainbow was splattered all over our face and clothes.

"I have not had this much fun since..." I stopped myself just before I said my parents' death and just said, *"Well let's just say, in a very long time."*

"Me too!" he said and gave me another one of his genuine smiles. Two in one night? What have I done to deserve this? *"We should probably go shower,"* and as if only now realizing what those words sounded like quickly stammered out, *"I didn't mean together..., I mean we both should..., I mean you shower here and I will go shower in my mom's room."*

"I know what you mean," I said with a smile.

He let out a whoosh of air and quickly turned around and almost fell over his feet in an attempt to get out of the room.

Only then did I allow myself to laugh. Maybe he wasn't as bad as I had originally thought. I went and showered, then went to bed. I didn't hear him coming in again before I fell asleep.

That night I dreamt of rainbow-colored frosting and a smile like a sun.





~CHAPTER #7~



The next day I slept in late and only woke up when I heard a door banging closed. What is going on? Is someone trying to get into the room or what?

I quickly jumped out of bed, put on some clothes and rushed out of my room. But there was nothing out of the ordinary, only Jason sitting on a couch watching TV. Wait a minute, TV? That wasn't there before, I walked closer and only then did he notice me.

"Oh, you're up. How was the beauty sleep, princess?" he asked and gave me one of his smirks.

It looks like there are no sunlight smiles this morning. I walked one step closer when I finally noticed the bruise on his cheek. I quickly ran to his side and sat down next to him. I put my hand softly on his cheek and he flinched slightly.

"What happened?" I asked gently. It was a big bruise and looked very fresh.

"It's nothing, don't worry about it." He said and quickly averted his gaze.

I tried to turn his head so that he would look at me, but he quickly jumped up. *"So, what would you like to watch?"* he asked as he quickly jumped from the one channel to the other.

He was hiding something, but what? He keeps avoiding my gaze. Finally, we settled on a live-action adaptation of a classic fairy tale. We were silent for the whole movie.

I kept taking peeks at Jason, sometimes he caught me looking and would smirk, but never smiled. Even though we were quiet, it was

content. We could just sit in silence the whole day and it would be the most peaceful thing ever.

I am not a big fan of fantasy movies, but I must admit that this one was not as bad as usual. When it was done I looked at him and didn't avert my eyes when he looked at me too. I gave him a certain type of glare that said 'spill' but he didn't even crack. I was so disappointed, as it always worked on people at home.

"Where did the TV come from?" I asked him, finally withdrawing in our staring contest.

"Oh, yeah. My mom brought it in this morning. Nice quality isn't it?" he asked and I just nodded.

"So, what would you be doing if I wasn't here right now?" I asked him.

He looked startled at the question, but then he smiled sheepishly, *"I would probably have been studying something."*

"Studying? What do you mean?" I asked.

"I really like learning new things, like languages and other types of things." He said and looked at his hands.

"First a cook slash baker and now a super SWAT, there is so much more to you than meets the eye," I said and took his hand.

He looked up at me and it looked like he was arguing with himself. He looked so shaken. I took both his hands in both of mine and pleaded with him, *"Please, please, please tell me what happened. Your cheek looks horrible."*

He looked at our joined hands, then shook his head. "Wow, thanks for the compliment this early in the morning. You know you don't exactly look like you stepped out of a fashion catalog either."

"You know what I mean," I said and looked deep into his eyes.

How was it fair that he can look into my soul, but I could only see what he wants me to see. Those eyes... Will I ever be able to break through his hard shell? I thought that we were, might I say friends. But it looks like that wasn't true. No matter how hard I wished it could be true. He stood up and went into his room.

I didn't see him for the rest of the day or the weekend.





~CHAPTER #8~



It has been a week since I woke up here. Jason just became more and more detached. He only really talked to me when he had to and I haven't seen one of his signature smirks in a while. He really won't tell me what happened to him and that made me so sad. But there were also other things he was hiding from me, which is fine I guess. I mean everyone can have their secrets.

Another thing I noticed is that there is no way out. I am really stuck here for good. No windows or doors leading to the outside world at all. How do these people survive it, never seeing the sun?

Irene and I were practicing throwing knives when a shout came from down the hall. *"Can everyone please come to the dining hall for an emergency meeting in five minutes, thank you."*

I turned to look at Irene, who was standing behind me with a confused face. *"Is this normal?"* I asked her.

"No, not at all." She said her brow furrowing.

This is the first time I have seen my friendly cool calm mentor shaken up.

We quickly headed out to the dining hall. We saw a big man standing in front of the table. He had a suit on that looks a lot like an Armani. You could see he was someone with authority.

Irene quickly stopped me with a hand. I turned to look at her and she looked really scared.

"Alisha that is my brother-in-law Azazel, you need to be really careful to not get in his way. He can be ruthless and evil and if he wants to do some-

thing, not even I would be able to keep you safe." She whispered to me and I noticed that her hand was shaking.

Up until now, I was under the impression that Irene and Larry were the ones in charge. It looks like I was wrong.

Azazel cleared his throat as Jason and Jeremy came inside. *"Now that everyone is here, we have a very urgent matter to discuss. We have received word from our spies that the cops are onto our tail. They know about this place and will come to raid it on Saturday. Today is Wednesday, so we have exactly three days to get the hell out of here."* He said and everyone in the room started to talk at once. Everyone except me and Jason.

I took a peek at him and my breath hitched. He is watching me with such an intense gaze, it feels like I am going to light on fire. What is going on with him? Has he always looked at me with such intensity? Maybe just the time when we came back from baking the cookies, I smiled at that thought and he smiled back as if he could read exactly what was going on in my head. My gaze traveled over his face, down his broad shoulders, then back to his eyes. His cheek didn't have any marks on anymore. I looked deep into his eyes and that's when I truly noticed the stormy color of his eyes. It made me think of the sea and all the troubles, but still within intensity to.....my thoughts suddenly got interrupted as I felt someone touching my bum.

I don't even think before I caught the person's hand, flip him over and went and sat on his back. Only then I notice who it really is. Jeremy. How dare he? Did he not get that I don't like him? I mean, I basically tried to break his foot with a heel. Is he so dense?

"Who gave you the right to touch me?" I hissed into his ear.

I heard a commotion and quickly looked up right into the furious eyes of Azazel. He started striding towards us.

"Oh, no..." I said silently and I know only Jeremy can hear me.

I hear him groaning, then he muttered, *"merde."* Azazel was coming closer and closer, but before he can reach me, someone else

reached me first and draped me over his shoulder. Very slowly he walked with me over his shoulder out of the hall and towards my room. When we got there, he threw me on the couch. I wobbled a bit and then fell off the couch and on the floor.

How feminine, a small voice in my head chides.

I have yet to look up into the eyes of my rescuer. Who he was, was still a mystery to me. I slowly let my gaze travel up, ever so slowly. Until I look up into the stormy blue eyes that have captivated me only a few minutes ago. But now they look much different. They are now an icy blue that could probably make Azazel squirm in fear. But like the type of girl I am, I stared right back with the same intensity. I will not back down. He thinks I am some frail girl who would be scared of him....well I have news for him.

"Do you know what you just did? Any other time I would not have had a problem with you killing him, but not with my uncle in the room!" He shouted at me. "You are probably on his shit list right now. Who knows what he would have done if I wasn't there. You are stupid, impulsive and completely foolish."

With that, he stormed out of the room and slammed the door.

Suddenly I feel something wet on my fingertips. Then they came. The tears I couldn't keep inside anymore.

I stood up and walked into my room. I went and lied down under the covers. I can't take it anymore. Everything is just too much. But I have to go on, be strong. Just maybe not now. Probably after I got some rest...





~CHAPTER #9~



When I woke up someone was leaning over me, but I did not even take a second look. I flipped the person on his back on the bed and pulled out my pocket knife.

"Wow! Wow. Chill it's just me! It's just me!" Jason said and held up his hands in surrender.

I blew out a breath of air in surprise. I stood up and put my knife back into my boot. No one was supposed to know I took that knife from the training room...

"Don't sneak up on me!" I screamed at him and went and sat next to him on the bed and put my face in my hands.

"Sorry..." he said quietly.

He sat up next to me and put a hand on the small of my back and I just couldn't take it anymore. I started crying. That's right crying! I never cry! Not even when my family died. But still, here I am crying in front of one of the most gorgeous guy I have ever met. Wait, no I can't think of him that way. Why does everything have to be so hard? Why did he have to be part of the people who captured me? It would have been so easy if we have met in my previous life. If we really got a chance. In the real world.

"Hey, are you okay?" he asked and took my hands away from my face.

I probably looked terrible. Like the crazy lady, he accused me of being just a while ago. If one of my friends from home could see me now, they probably wouldn't believe that it was me. Me, Alisha le

Roux without a single drop of makeup and not a single piece of hair styled with either a curling iron or a straightener.

I sniffed slightly as I looked deeply into his blue eyes. They were now in a bright blue color: it was calming and caring. I had to admit this was my favorite version, after the stormy ocean color, of course. Why does he have to be so near, yet so far from my reach?

"Of course, I'm not alright. I lost my parents three years ago and had to move in with my uncle and his spoiled brat of a son, who is also my cousin. Then I get kidnapped and brought to a strange place. I have a roommate that already hates me and keeps secrets from me. His uncle wants me dead and I..." I tried to continue but I started to sob. I never cried at home, but one argument had me acting like a baby. What is going on with me?

What must he think of me? Probably that I am one of those needy girls. That's when it hit me. I was crying, not because of everything that has happened, but because of him. I was crying because of the things HE said. Why? Because even with everything that has happened I started caring. Something that hasn't happened in a long long time. I started caring about him. That was never supposed to happen.

What I didn't expect was when he quietly slid nearer to me picked me up and put me on his lap. He put his arms around me and he just comforted me. He softly smooths my hair with his hand and kissed my temple. That was when I really noticed how near to him I really was. He smelled like the woods and the ocean.

"Hey, hey. I don't hate you." He said softly in my ear and stroked away some tears that were still running down my cheeks and said, "And my uncle does not want you dead, maybe just a little hurt." He turned my head so that we were looking at each other in the eyes and said with a stern voice, *"You will be alright, do you hear me! You will not give up! I will not allow it! Now, listen to me! When we go out of these doors, you will not show any emotion. They will only take advantage of your state*

and you and I both know who I am talking about when I say 'we'. You will put back the mean girl front, go out these doors and kick anyone's ass that tries to touch you, do you understand me?" he says in a stern voice, that is slightly broken when his face brakes into one of his cheeky grins.

I almost smile back when I remember what happened earlier. "But earlier, you were mad. Why were you mad that I stood up for myself?" I asked quietly.

I was so scared that he would go to the version of himself he was earlier. I liked this softer version much, much better. The one who bakes and would watch terrible remakes of classic fantasy movies. 'You care too much', the little voice in my head said. 'I already figured out, genius', I told it back. And it responded with the line that is the reason for me being so unemotional for this time, 'caring will get you hurt...'

Jason's face got a strange look that I just couldn't place. It had such raw emotion, I almost choked. "I am so, so sorry. I didn't mean to frighten you or to make you distrustful of me. I was just so furious that I wasn't able to keep you safe. That I couldn't be the one to get in a punch or two in for what my cousin did. Then I became scared about what would happen to you. My uncle is not nice and will not think twice to hurt you, but he won't kill you." He gave me a genuine smile at that then added in a soft voice, "I am so sorry." I looked deep into his eyes.

We sat like that for a while. Me in his lap, his arms around me and us looking deep into each other's eyes. When we heard a knock on the main door, both of us jumped up.

We heard Irene shouting through the door, "If you guys need boxes for your stuff, they are in the dining hall."

Jason quickly went to leave the room, but suddenly turned around in the doorway. "We need to start getting the stuff together, only two days left."





~CHAPTER #10~



That day Jason and I worked side by side. Two days was not a lot of time to pack up the whole place, so they were planning to leave some stuff here that we can't pack apparently Azazel thought it would take the cops very long to sort through everything, thus keeping them off our trail for a whole long while. We were packing up things and stuffing them in boxes. But we didn't just pack; me and Jason talked about everything. Movies, TV shows, books, games, you name it. I must admit, there were much more arguing than real conversations. No, arguing is a bit too extreme of a word, more like a debate about everything. I like action and sci-fi movies, and he likes horrors and comedies. We were already becoming friends before but now, if I am completely honest, I felt much more.

Apparently, no one thought I would be able to escape, as they didn't even bother to hide any information about the 'move'. Apparently, we were moving to a very large estate in Botswana. How they were going to be able to get over a hundred people across the border (most of which were probably on the most wanted in South Africa list) was a mystery to me. We were going to make sure to be out of the place just as the authorities arrive. Apparently that would make them think that they were on our trail, but actually, they weren't. I have been trying to think of a way to get out, and the best time I can think of when is the big move. No one would expect it, as everyone is already bothered with getting everything away.

"Have you thought of a plan yet?" Jason suddenly said as he puts a large load of books into a box.

Wait, does he know about my plan? That is obviously what he is talking about. He is going to stop me and I will probably be stuck here forever. Why does someone so utterly gorgeous have to be on the enemy's side, wait did I just say gorgeous, I meant annoying.

"I mean, you have been here for more than a week. If it would have been me, I would have made a plan of getting out of here. I mean you are basically a prisoner and I am well aware that I am the nephew of the big boss and probably the last guy you would talk to about your escape plan. I know it is probably hell being here," he said and gives me a sly smile and continues with the words I least expected in the world *"and that is why I am going to help you."*

I couldn't believe my ears. Here is this guy. He is part of the enemy, the people who brought me here. I couldn't stop thinking that this is a trap. As nice as he is, he is still one of them. Why would he want to help me?

"What's in it for you?" I ask, purposely avoiding looking into his eyes. I have lost myself in his eyes too many times in this last week.

"You wouldn't be the only one escaping..." he said in a whisper.

What did he mean by that? Surely he wouldn't need to escape. His uncle is the big guy, the big boss man. I mean Jason is practically royalty around here.

My curiosity got the better of me as I said, *"What do you mean?"*

"Well, let's just say that I don't exactly want to follow in my mother's footsteps one day. I don't want this life. Criminals, prostitutes, drugs, that's not me. I want to be able to help people who suffer from these things, not help them get into this shit." He said in a hard voice.

And probably be somewhere you can kook and bake without anyone judging you, I thought to myself. I never knew that he wouldn't want this life. One would assume growing up here would immediately make it that you would want to. But I guess there are many things I don't know about him. What would it be like when we both get out of here? Will we be acquaintances, friends, more? Wait; do I actual-

ly want that, to have more than a friendship with him? And another thing, how will we be able to describe how we know each other to my friends and family, I don't want him getting in trouble for something he didn't even do. I will lie if I have to. But if he does get out, what then? Where will he go?

As I looked up into his face that was so full of hope and into those blue, blue eyes, I knew that I would do anything in my power to help him, so I said with a smile, "*OKEY, let's do it!*"





~CHAPTER #11~



We made many different plans to escape, but most of them got thrown out, as they would not work in the short timeframe that we have left. That was until Jason came up with the idea that would work. We would hide somewhere until the cops arrived.

Apparently, he thinks no one would even notice that we are gone, but I'm not so sure. I mean, he is the family of the big boss. As time drew nearer, we became more and more anxious.

The night before the 'big move' everyone was on edge. There were quite a few fights during the day, so I went to bed early. That was the wrong choice. At midnight I woke up again. Why would this dream demon not leave me alone? It has been a while; it's not as if it happened just yesterday. I stood up and went to wash my face. As I walked to the bathroom, I heard screaming outside. What is going on now? I quietly walked to the door and leaned against the wall and heard voices, they kind of sounded like Jason and his mother.

"....I know that it is stupid but it is the truth!" he said.

"You know what bad news it would be if your uncle found out? He would kill you for sure!" her voice, though strong like always, had an emotional edge to it.

"I don't know what I can do about that now, I can't change things. I wish I could, but this is how things are." I heard him walking to the door, so I quickly hurried back to my room and left it only a little bit open so that I can peek into the sitting area.

He walked in just as I did so. I wondered what they were talking about. I really hope he didn't tell her about our plan, which would be

catastrophic! He stood still for a while then turns toward my door. He walks a little closer, and I am sure he sees me so I come out.

"Are you okay? You look as pale as a ghost." He said and came closer to me.

"Yah, yah. Um, it's just a bad dream, again." I say and roll my eyes. He couldn't know that I was listening to the conversation, could he?

"Well get yourself some other clothes on, I want to go show you something." He said with a smile.

I did that and we walked down the corridor out of our room. We walked past the eating hall and down into a corridor I have not yet been in. Where are we going? We come to the end of the long passageway and there are stairs going up. He suddenly takes a long piece of cloth out of his pocket.

"Now I'm going to blindfold you to make the surprise more exciting." He says and gives me one of his signature smirks.

He ties the blindfold over my eyes and it is suddenly pitch black. He gently brushes his hand at the back of my head, leaving goosebumps in its wake.

"Here, I'll walk first then you can just hold on to my shoulders." He said as he softly took my hands and put them on his shoulders.

I kept quiet not wanting to spoil the moment if there is one.

We walked very slowly up many stairs, I don't even know how many. Then fate just had to be cruel, I other words I almost tripped over Jason as he suddenly stopped and said, *"No, no, no! We are going way too slow! If we keep going at this pace, we won't even get there before the end of the week."*

I practically snorted at that, *"Way to be sarcastic, Star-lord."* I said and rolled my eyes, even though he can't see it. He kept quiet, but suddenly picked me up and put me over his shoulder. *"Hey! Put me down, you idiot!"* I screamed and hit my hands against his back, but he is as hard as steel, he does not budge.

"Number one, I am definitely rather Iron man than Star-lord and number two, I am doing us both a favor," he says and lowered his voice to a whisper "you can't really escape if your leg is broken."

He quickly ran up the stairs, as if I weighed nothing. I assumed we were at the top when I heard him open a door. It squeaked and he walked on. He slowly lowered me to the ground.

"Ok we're here now..." he says quietly in my ear.

I felt a wind blowing through my hair. He turned me around and very slowly took the blindfold off. I kept my eyes closed, too scared to look where we were. There were so many things that could happen, so many things I should be scared that he would do to me, but I wasn't.

I felt so safe with his hands on my arms and him whispering in my ear, *"You need to open your eyes or else this was all for nothing."*

I could feel the smile in his voice as he said that, but also another emotion I couldn't quite place. I opened my eyes very slowly, one inch at a time.

The first thing I noticed was all the colors and all the lights. We were on the roof, which was flat. The stars were so bright, as we were not near any other cities or towns. I looked out and could only see the galaxy for as far as I could see. It was absolutely breath-taking.

I had to thank Jason for this amazing gift he bestowed upon me. But as I turned I saw that he was watching me very intently. Only then did I really remember how close we were really were to each other.

I looked deep into his eyes and once again marveled at the blue depth of them. I slowly let my gaze drop to his mouth. What is happening to me? I am supposed to be a focused person. We were supposed to escape tomorrow, but all I could think about were how those lips would feel on mine.

His head came nearer and nearer. He stared into my eyes and said in a husky voice, *"Tell me to stop, tell me no, please."*

I licked my suddenly dry lips and his gaze goes to it. He brings his head nearer, puts his forehead against mine. I can't. That is the whole problem. I can't tell him to stop, because I didn't want him to.

"Please stop me please; you don't deserve to be brought into this even deeper. This world, this life." He pleads again, this time with his eyes closed.

I was slowly bringing my head closer when the door at my back suddenly opened and we jumped apart. *"Everything alright up here?"* one of the guard's said. I can't look up as I feel my cheeks burning.

"Yes, everything's alright. You may return to your post and make sure no one else bothers us." Jason said in a stern voice. He definitely did not sound like the guy who was about to kiss me. He quickly closed the door and we were alone again.

I slowly walk to the edge of the roof. *"It's beautiful up here,"* I said as the silence became too much.

I didn't know what to say. We were about to kiss and that would have been the biggest mistake there is. We are from two different worlds. But would it really have been that bad? He walked and came and stood next to me.

"Tomorrow is the day. We will get out of here and we would not have to see this place ever again." He said.

"Where will you go?" I asked softly.

There were so many things we didn't know about each other. We barely met more than a week ago, but just thinking of never seeing him again made me want to...stay.

"Don't worry about me. I already talked to my grandmother, I will be staying with her and I will be going to a school there for my senior year." He whispered.

"What if it doesn't work? The escape plan I mean." I asked in a fragile voice. That is something I didn't want to think about, but we can't keep avoiding it. There was a big chance that we will still be with these people.

"I will find a way. We will try and try again. I can't let you get sucked into this world further." I looked into his eyes and I saw the emotions in them and I knew, with him on my side, I will get out of here.

"You really do care about me, don't you?" It slipped out of my mouth even before I could think about it.

"No, I mean yes, I mean..." his eyes were as big as saucers as he stammered on.

"I guess we should go get some sleep then. Can't escape if we're asleep right?" I said interrupting him before he could make a bigger fool of himself.

We walked back to the stairs and when we got there he picked me up and carried me down again. But he didn't put me down when we got to the bottom. He kept carrying me until we got to our room.

Only there he put me down very delicately like I was as fragile as a flower. He picked up my hand very slowly and kissed me on my wrist. It only lasted a few minutes, but it felt like lifetimes. As he took his lips off of my wrist and looked into my eyes, I knew everything will be different from now on. *"Until tomorrow."*





~CHAPTER #12~



It was the morning everyone has been preparing for. Everyone was scared. No one knew what would happen. Did the contact in the force tell the truth or was it a trap? No one knew, but everyone was on edge. Everyone helped Brad, one of Azazel's cousin's, to get everything out and only leave the things that we want the police to get. It was almost afternoon when Azazel walked in and went straight towards Jason. The two argued for a while, but I could not hear what was said, as I was too far. The two walked out, right past me. But when I caught Jason's eyes I knew something was wrong. We worked for a while longer, but when I did not see Jason or Azazel I decided to go investigate. Something was going on and I had to find out what. I quickly slipped away without anyone seeing me, marveling at how easy it could actually be. I walked out into one of the corridors I looked at all the things that were not yet loaded. It was the portraits of Jason and his family. To anyone else, they would look like the perfect, rich and privileged family. But we knew better. We knew that they were everything but perfect. I came to a stand at a picture of Irene and a much younger Jason.

Suddenly the picture next to it swung open, revealing a small blond-haired boy standing in a secret passageway. He took my hand and without a word he led me into another room. The room was empty except for a small twin-sized bed.

He led me to the bed and as we sat down he spoke in a small voice, *"You have to stay in this room, please. The police will be able to find you and Jason here. You can't tell anyone that I am here, you hear? My mom would*

kill me if she were to find out. I am not supposed to be anywhere near my father's family, but I had to help my brother." I looked into the eyes of the boy. Those eyes that were so much like Jason's.

"So, you are Jason's brother?" I asked stunned. I didn't even know he had a brother.

"Jip! You probably have not heard of me yet. The reason being that I live with my grandma. Mom wants to keep me a secret from uncle Azazel, to keep me safe." He said as he jumped off the bed and quickly added, *"Stay here, Jason will be here soon. He is arguing with uncle Azazel, but everything will be alright. I just know it."* He smiled as he went out of the room. I really hoped he was right, that everything will be alright.

I wondered what they were arguing about. Will our plan still work? I sat there thinking for a while. The house became all the more quieter and quieter.

As I started to become uneasy Jason came into the room. He looked so stressed that I almost didn't recognize him. He was usually so relaxed and calm, but now he looked like a wreck. *"We need to get out of here, the plan has been changed. Everyone is already out of the building. Now Azazel wants to light the place on fire. Apparently, there is proof that he is involved here and he wants to get rid of it."*

He took my hand and we ran out of the room, down the corridor into the now empty eating hall. We ran past our room and I almost stumbled, but Jason held me up. Eventually, we ran into an empty room. There was only one door at the end of the room. We made a move to run to the door when we heard a scream behind us. The scream of a young child.

Jason's brother.

Jason slowed down, looked at the door, then to the corridor we came from and then back again. His eyes turned to mine and he stepped closer to me. *"I need to go back. My brother needs me. If you go out this door you will be safe. Tell the police only the truth. They are the on-*

ly ones that I will trust you to be safe with," he said and made a move to leave, but I caught his hand and turned him back to me.

"I can't leave you here, we had a deal. It is both of us or none of us." I said quietly as I put my hand on his cheek. He closed his eyes at my touch and when they opened they were the darkest and stormiest that I have ever seen his blue, blue eyes.

"I have to let you go. You mean much more to me than my freedom ever would," he said as he put his hand on the back of my head and brought our heads closer so that there was only a small space between our faces.

"So, you do care," I stated with a grin.

He nodded sheepishly and gave me a lopsided grin, then said in a husky voice, that I didn't recognize him with, *"Promise me you will go and be safe and I will promise you this; we will see each other again. Deal?"* I nodded my head and I felt the tears run down my cheeks.

Then both of us said at once, "Deal!"

He kept coming closer and as his lips finally met mine, they had all the gentleness of the world in them. It was the type of kiss that would want you to laugh in victory, scream in frustration and cry of sadness all at once. When he finally lifted his head I knew, as I looked into his stormy blue eyes, that I wasn't the only one affected by the kiss.

He was also crying, but tried to brush it off and act macho. But I kissed the tears off. As we walked in different directions, it was as if in a trance. I walked off as if in a dream, or was it a nightmare? I walked through the room, and as I was about to open the door it swung open on a face that I thought that I will never see again.

My brother.





~CHAPTER #13~



“Anthony?” I asked shocked. Here in front of me stood the brother that I thought was dead.

For more than three years I grieved his death. For three years I thought he was gone. But no he lied to me. He didn’t say a word as he took my hand and lead me toward the police. The rest of the cops were about to go into the building, but then it blasts in flames. A sop broke out from me Jason was still in there; he promised we will see me again. But now he wouldn’t be able to keep that promise.

Anthony tucked my head against his shoulder as I started sobbing and said in that familiar voice I knew so well, *“Don’t worry, it’s over now, it’s over. I am so sorry you had to endure that. I am so sorry.”* But his words did nothing to me. When I was little my big brother’s hugs could have helped anything. But now it was like a stranger hugged me. I didn’t have anyone more than I had before I was brought here.

Nothing was going according to plan. But when does anything ever go according to plan for me?

Everything went in a blur I went to the hospital, but when they asked me questions I just didn’t have the strength to speak. There were people who came to visit me in the hospital, but I never said a word. I wasn’t sure why I was in the hospital. There was nothing wrong with me. The time I spent with Jason I was probably treated better than I have ever been treated in my life. But they didn’t know that. Everything looked duller to me. The world had fewer colors, sounds were not as beautiful and people were just a blur of faces. One of them had emotion. Nothing looked as beautiful as that night on

the roof, nothing tasted as good as Jason's cookies and no one's smile came near his. My brother never left my side since the day that he found me. I don't really know why, as he faked his own death for over three years. Everything changed for me at that time and he wasn't there in the time that I needed him most. When the time came for me to get checked out of the hospital, it was the first time I saw my uncle since the night of the award ceremony.

When my cousin saw Anthony he almost passed out.

My uncle was told about the situation beforehand, so he was prepared in a way. They tried to make jokes and draw me into the conversation, but it just didn't feel right to talk to while he didn't get the chance to.

Now I know what you are thinking, it was his choice but was it really? He didn't have a chance against the flames. But what if he got out in time? I really couldn't keep hoping like that. There could be a way that he is alive, but to hope would only break me. Hoping would give me dreams that I am not supposed to have. Dreams of the future. Dreams of our untouchable love.





Epilogue



I would like to thank everyone for coming to this celebration. Most of you know what this is about, but for those of you who don't let me tell you about this day one year ago." Uncle Max talked over the mike.

It has been one year since I have been brought home. That day that I found out my brother was never dead. Apparently, because of our dad's connection with Azazel, they had to get someone from our family to investigate things. They didn't trust Uncle Max; I was too young so that left only Anthony.

He doesn't talk much more than I do. I have started speaking much more than the beginning, but I am still not the same as I was before all of this. None of us ever would be.

My graduation was last week, so this is a graduation party slash celebration of life. I looked at the faces of the people around the room. There were so many people here, most I didn't know, you couldn't even see the last two rows of people. I didn't want anything this big, but my uncle thinks that it will help him in the coming election. Oh, didn't I tell you his newest conquest was to be elected as mayor of the town? I wasn't so sure that the people would like him, but we would have to wait and see. My uncle finished his speech and everyone came one after the other to congratulate me and Matthew on graduating. A blur of faces, each one holding smiles. I had a smile on too, it wasn't a real one but it was better than nothing. Then came the last group of people, who were our neighbors and far off family members. My brother was in the background somewhere, after announcing that he wasn't actually dead earlier this evening. It was

quite easy to keep it a secret a whole year, he generally only ever came out of his room when we had dinner. I wasn't sure what he was doing in there, but I bet that it has something to do with the investigation.

The line became shorter and shorter until it was the last person. Our neighbor, Sarah has been like my surrogate mother since we moved here. She would give me advice on boys and fashion. Even though I couldn't even talk to her about that week, she still helped me get out of the depressing state I was in. she smiled and kissed both my cheeks and said, *"oh, my dear, dear girl. You are looking marvelous tonight, I see you did the right thing and bought that purple dress I emailed you a picture of. Oh, I want to introduce you to someone. Oh, where is that boy now?"* she looked over my shoulder and smiled. *"Alisha, I want to introduce you to my grandson. Alisha this is Jason....."*



WHERE TO FIND ME ONLINE



First of all, I want to thank you once again for reading my book. To stay up to date with everything I do be sure to follow me on all social media platforms.

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About the Author

Mia-Lize has always been outside of the box.

She started performing to her family even before she could walk. She was six when she started singing, with her mother, in church. In primary school, she would always entertain her peers. One would think that with her focusing on the performing arts that she would not have done good in school, but that was not the case. She achieved the best marks in her grade every year and was even chosen as head girl of her school.

For high school, she was thrilled to receive the great achievement of being chosen for the National School of the Arts.

The arts are very important to her and storytelling in all forms is her passion.

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