**Chapter 12: Falco's Smile**

❤️ "You can’t confess what you can’t name." 🎵 Track: "Heresy" – Nine Inch Nails 💦 Fluids: Sweat, Blood, Cum 🕯️ Ritual Tag: False Saints / Sensory Collapse

The walls were velvet. Deep burgundy. The kind of color that swallowed light and secrets. Somewhere downstairs, jazz and coke-disco bled through a gold-trimmed stereo system. Ice clinked in cut crystal. The party murmured like a slow-moving beast.

Upstairs, in the real room—the one with no cameras, no servants, no wives—Mayor Dominic Falco was on all fours.

Naked.

Hairy.

Sweat-drenched.

He grunted into the cunt of a woman named Simone—one of three in the room—all professionals, all paid, all high as goddamn satellites. Her thighs hugged his face like a crown. Her full 70s bush glistened with spit and sweat. She was moaning, but her eyes were elsewhere—fixed on the third woman, Cassandra, who was currently strapped up and pounding the mayor’s ass with brutal rhythm.

The harness squeaked against her hips. She grinned like a predator.

"You like that, Dominic?" she purred. "You like being fucked like a back-alley dog?"

He tried to groan something—mouth full of Simone’s cunt—but all that came out was wet noise and desperation.

The second woman, Lola, was bent over in front of him, one leg up on a padded chair. He’d been fucking her minutes ago, sweat dripping off his chest hair into the curve of her back, before he begged for the other hole to be filled.

And of course, Cassandra obliged. She always did.

There was cocaine dust on the antique mirror table near the bed—three thick lines already gone. Their noses were raw. Their teeth grinding. The air itself tasted like cum and powder.

Lola reached back, tugging the mayor’s thinning hair. "You wanted morality, Mr. Mayor?" she hissed. "You wanted purity?"

He grunted into Simone’s pussy. Cassandra slammed in deeper. Lola smeared her own cum on his back.

This was his real campaign. Not in city hall. Not on the news. Here. In this locked room, between three women who knew exactly what he liked and exactly how much he paid to make it happen.

He started to come—grunting, twitching, his cock leaking into the sweat-soaked sheets.

Cassandra didn’t stop. Simone grabbed his face and made him stay. Lola laughed. "Don’t you fucking finish until she’s done with your hole."

He choked, gasped, bit down hard on Simone’s thigh. Blood bloomed beneath his teeth.

"Fuck, fuck," he moaned, voice wrecked. "Harder—don’t stop—"

Cassandra gave him three more brutal thrusts and then pulled out with a slick, wet snap. The mayor collapsed, twitching, cum pooling beneath him. His asshole raw, spit trailing from his lips. He looked like a hunted animal, post-fuck and post-truth.

Simone slapped his face lightly. "Smile for your legacy, sweetheart."

He grinned.

Blood in his mouth. Coke in his nose. Cum in the sheets.

Somewhere inside, he still thought this was penance. That every whimper bought him another week of pretending he was clean.

And not a single camera in the room.

The press conference smelled like cologne, sweat, and denial.

Mayor Dominic Falco stood at the podium in a crisp three-piece suit. Navy. Subtle pinstripe. The tie a tasteful red. His hair was combed back, slick with product and denial.

Grease glistened in the part of his hair, and the pancake makeup caked into the cracks around his temples, crumbling under the heat like dried confessions. Not a trace of last night’s depravity lingered—except in the hollowness behind his eyes.

The cameras clicked like locusts.

He cleared his throat. Stepped into the light.

"This city is sick," he said, voice steady, fatherly. "And I intend to cure it."

Behind him, the city seal gleamed like a halo. Reporters sat in tight rows. Flashbulbs popped.

The air buzzed with the stink of burnt coffee, stale sweat, and cigarette smoke crushed under camera bags. The fluorescents overhead flickered like dying halos, spitting light across the sweat-slick faces below.

"We are at war with vice," he continued. "With pornography. With prostitution. With the perversion of our youth and the moral decay that threatens every corner of New York."

Cameras zoomed. Pens scratched.

He smiled, teeth sharp and white. Practiced.

"My administration has already begun cleansing the streets. Massage parlors will be shut down. Peep shows will be replaced with family-owned businesses. Crackdowns are coming. Morality is not optional. It’s our only chance."

Applause. Or was it just the echo of camera shutters?

"The soul of this city is not for sale," he said.

Not for everyone, anyway.

Because in the rooms behind closed doors? In his mansion on the edge of the city? The soul of New York was for sale.

But only if you were rich enough to buy it. Only if you could afford women like Simone, Cassandra, and Lola. Only if you could come with a mouth full of pussy and coke and still wear a crucifix the next morning.

He looked down at his notes. Then directly into the cameras.

"We’re going to clean this city up," he said. "And anyone who stands in the way… will be removed."

He stepped back.

Smiling.

Holy.

Covered in last night’s sin beneath the starch of his shirt.

Cruz watched from the back row, arms crossed, stomach a taut knot she couldn’t name.

Above it all, a cracked wall speaker coughed out bursts of static from the city seal announcement. The broken fluorescents hummed like rotten teeth gnashing against the marble.

Across the room, Vivien Vale stood near a marble column, hidden behind wide dark sunglasses and a loosely draped shawl. Silent. Still. A specter in satin.

When Falco stepped away from the podium, he moved down the aisle—brushing so close to Vivien she could feel the stale heat of his body as it passed.

The smell hit her.

Sharp. Chemical. Masculine.

Sweat bloomed under the silk shawl. Her pulse stuttered against her throat. But her face stayed still.

The same fucking cologne.

The same scent she'd noticed on every man she had killed.

Vivien’s breath stuttered in her chest. Under the sunglasses, her eyes burned. Memory stabbed her vision:

* Ellis’s head falling into her lap.
* Blood spraying her thighs, her cunt, her chest.
* The masked killer’s breath hot behind his steel-and-cologne mask.
* The glint of a ring on a glove-slicked hand.

Falco’s hand brushed close.

Vivien glanced down—past the cuff of his suit jacket—and saw it.

The smell. The ring. The memory.

And something else.

The cigarette case. Tucked in the bottom drawer of her apartment, wrapped in one of the silk scarves she'd used to bind men to motel beds. Scarves that smelled of sweat, surrender, and prayers no god had answered.

She hadn’t thought it mattered.

Now, the memory of its brushed metal surface burned behind her closed eyes.

She needed to go back.

Needed to trace the symbols with her fingertips. Needed to breathe it in, close enough to catch the scent she hadn’t known she was hunting until now.

Because the map wasn’t just painted in blood and come. It was etched in gold. And she was finally ready to read it.

A ring. Not on the wedding finger. Thick gold, etched with a symbol she couldn’t fully make out.

Her throat closed.

This was it. The final piece she hadn’t let herself see.

She didn’t know the full truth yet. Not how they were all connected. Not why the scent tied them. But she knew enough.

Falco was part of it. The blood on her thighs wasn’t random. It had always been a map.

Across the room, Cruz saw it.

Just a flicker.

A tightening in Vivien’s jaw. A stillness too taut. A breath held just a second too long.

No one else noticed.

But Cruz did.

Because she knew Vivien Vale’s body now.

Falco brushed past.

Oblivious. Drunk on his own false salvation.

Vivien stood frozen for one more breath.

Then whispered, so quiet the shawl caught it like smoke:

"Soon."

The door shut with a heavy thud. Soundproof. The kind of quiet that made secrets echo.

Dominic Falco loosened his tie with one hand and exhaled slow, like the speech had been foreplay and now he was coming down from it. The driver didn’t speak. Knew better. Knew his job was forward motion and silence.

The car slipped into traffic, and the mayor leaned back against the leather, letting his head rest on the cool window.

He looked immaculate.

Suit crisp. Tie tight. Hair precise.

But under his collar, sweat had started to bloom again. Not from nerves—from memory.

He reached into the inside pocket of his jacket. Pulled out a small manila envelope.

Inside: a single Polaroid. Fresh.

Three women. One strap-on. One bloody thigh. One open mouth with a tongue extended like a communion plate.

His own face was in the center. Bent. Feral. Worshipping.

He stared at it for a long moment.

Then—without shame, without hesitation—he brought the photo to his nose and inhaled.

Deep.

Slow.

Filthy.

A smile twitched at the corner of his mouth.

Then he slipped two fingers into his mouth. Sucked them clean. They tasted faintly of latex and last night’s perfume. He let them drag down across his chin, like an afterthought.

"Praise be," he muttered to no one.

He folded the photo and tucked it into the breast pocket of his shirt—close to his heart.

The car kept moving.

Outside, the city roared on—unaware that its so-called savior was stroking his ego with the scent of last night’s sin and smiling like salvation was something you could buy by the hour.