CHAPTER 8: BLOOD PSALM

Midsummer. Late night. Their apartment smelled like wine, rain, and perfume. A record hissed low and sultry, spinning "Almost Blue" on vinyl.

Vivien was already barefoot by the time they got inside. She dropped her heels in the hallway and turned the lock without looking. Her lipstick was smudged, her mascara kissed the edge of her cheekbones, and she was laughing—giddy from the drinks, from dancing, from Ellis.

He was right behind her, jacket half-off, shirt unbuttoned, eyes locked on her ass like it owed him money.

"Still think I’m the best dancer in that club," he said.

She turned, arching a brow. "Baby, you stepped on a waiter’s foot during a slow song."

He shrugged. "He recovered."

They laughed, fell into each other on the couch. Her legs across his lap. His hand at the back of her neck. Wine glasses already poured and mostly ignored.

"I forgot how much I love that place," she whispered.

"It’s where I fell for you," he said.

She smiled, soft and slow. "No, this—" she leaned in, kissed him, let it linger "—this is love."

They kissed deeper. Hungrier. Her hand cupped his cheek; his slid over her thigh. They undressed each other with reverence.

Her dress slid off her shoulders like a sigh. His shirt unbuttoned slowly, her fingers grazing the skin she already knew by heart.

They kissed between each removed piece—collarbones, ribs, hips, thighs—until the only thing between them was breath.

"You always look at me like I’m a magic trick," he whispered.

Vivien grinned. "You always make me come like it’s my first time."

She pushed him down on the bed, straddled him slowly, her blonde curls tumbling over her shoulders. His cock was already hard—thick, curved slightly upward, the head flushed and slick with pre-cum.

Vivien licked her lips. "Mmm. My favorite."

She slid down his body, kissing his chest, biting his hip, then took his cock into her mouth—just the tip, her tongue teasing under the ridge.

Ellis moaned.

She slid deeper, letting the head press against the back of her throat, then pulled off with a wet pop.

"That’s not fair," he groaned.

She smirked. "You want fair? Go date someone boring."

Then she squeezed her full, soft breasts together and slid his cock between them—up and down, slow and wet, her nipples brushing the shaft with every stroke.

He gasped. "Jesus, Viv—fuck—you’re gonna make me come."

She grinned. "Not yet you’re not."

Then he grabbed her, rolled her under him, kissed her until she melted.

Her dominance gave way—willingly—to his worship.

He kissed her neck. Her breasts. Sucked her nipples one by one, biting just enough to make her moan.

"You’re perfect," he whispered, kissing down her belly.

"I know," she said. "Now shut up and eat me."

He knelt between her thighs.

Vivien’s pussy was already soaked—wet and glistening, plush lips swollen with arousal, her trimmed blonde patch soft against his cheek.

Her scent hit him—sweet and earthy, like salt and skin and something he would never get enough of.

"You smell like heaven's dirty secret," he murmured.

And he devoured her.

Tongue wide and slow, licking from her dripping entrance to her clit, then back again. He flicked her clit gently, then sucked it between his lips, moaning against her like a man starved.

Vivien writhed, her thighs pressing around his ears. "God, baby—yes—don’t stop—"

He didn’t.

He spread her wider, buried his face in her pussy like it was the most expensive meal in Manhattan.

And for him, it was.

Her taste was divine. Tangy, slick, addictive. He licked her hole, circled her clit, sucked and teased her until she was panting.

Vivien’s fingers tangled in his hair. Her other hand stroked her own nipple, hips bucking into his face. In her chest, something cracked open—not just lust, but a wave of worship and terror that she could still feel this much.

"You taste like fucking sin," he groaned. "I want to live between your legs."

"Fuck—Ellis—I’m gonna—"

Vivien’s orgasm broke over her in shudders—hips twitching, pussy clenching, her cum dripping down the crease of her ass—and in that fractured instant, she heard it.

Ellis, moaning her name.

"Viv..."

His voice, soft and helpless. A memory, a promise, a prayer.

And then—

The window shattered.

The sound was like a gunshot—followed by the rush of glass and wind and nightmare.

Ellis’s head shot up. "What the—?"

The figure came out of the shadows.

Mask. Gloves. Wire. The smell of iron and sweat.

Vivien screamed.

"ELLIS!"

Too late.

The piano wire looped around his neck. Yanked hard.

Ellis gasped, arms flailing, fingers trying to dig into the wire.

Vivien moved. Instinct. She lunged.

She grabbed for the wire, nails tearing into leather. The glove ripped free—her hand closing around bare skin.

A ring.

Thick. Gold. Oval-shaped with an intricate sigil engraved in blackened grooves—a crossbar design, like a bastardized church window. Worn wrong—on the next finger over, not the wedding one.

And then blood sprayed her face.

The wire bit deep.

His neck tore.

And with a final pull—

His head came off. The sound was wet and sudden, a thick snap that didn’t seem real until the blood came with it—flooding out in violent pulses, drenching the sheets in something irreversible.

Blood sprayed her body.

And then—

His severed head dropped into her lap.

Landing on her still-pulsing pussy.

Blood pouring over her clit.

Her own cum glistening beneath it.

His eyes were open. His mouth hung slack. His blood mixed with her pleasure. The sacred turned obscene.

Vivien stared.

Her hands moved without thinking. She touched his cheek, cupped it like she always did after sex—expecting a sigh, a smile. But now it was slack. Heavy. Wrong. The cold bled into her fingers before the shock did.

Reflex. Muscle memory. The warmth was already fading.

His headless body collapsed beside the bed.

Vivien stared—naked, soaked, stunned.

For a breathless second, she couldn’t move.

Then the killer turned toward her.

Vivien snapped.

She kicked him square in the chest. He stumbled backward.

She grabbed the bedside lamp—ceramic, heavy, brutal—and smashed it into his face.

Glass. Blood. Screaming.

She shoved past him—covered in cum and blood, barefoot, naked, sobbing.

She ran.

Down the stairs.

Bare feet slipping. Blood and rain. The city swallowing her.

Into the night.

Into the storm.

Into the hunger that would never end.

Vivien stood alone now, dripping rain and memory onto cracked pavement. Shaking.

She stared at her own hands—blood under her nails, a ghost between her fingers.

The ring.

She could still see it. Heavy. Gold. Marked like a secret no one was supposed to know.

Not a wedding ring.

Not an accident.

An answer.

The final breath of doubt left her.

It wasn't just a hunch. It was truth. Branded into her memory as surely as blood stained her thighs.

The man who wore that ring had killed Ellis Monroe.

And Vivien Vale—

was going to make him remember it.

With his last fucking breath.