

Skin deep III - Endgame

JULY 2025



SKIN DEEP



Meanwhile, as the fake Karen was embraced by her new family and settled into her artificially crafted life, Z1 found herself lonely and sad. The organization prevented her from dating the real Karen since now she was wearing the bodysuit of an Indian woman. Yet she couldn't be with the fake Karen either since Z1 was not familiar with the idea of bodysuits and the organization preferred leaving things like that. The sudden breakup was painful. It was her first lesbian relationship - or was it? - hard to tell. Anyway, it was hard to process. And she had to start from scratch, with no connections, only a luxury apartment, endless financial resources from the organization and lots of blurry memories.

She walked through the city with a quiet desperation. She remembered some streets, but no one recognized her. Why? Since the day she was taken and later released, it's as if she'd become invisible. She frequented parks, public squares, anywhere with crowds, silently hoping for someone to stop her. No one did.

She tried getting to know more Black people but she had a constant feeling of not belonging there. Despite her looks, her ebonics, her sway, she couldn't shake the sense that she's only mimicking what others did naturally. She carried a strange guilt for this disconnect, for the possibility that she was only passing.



She went into therapy to process all of this. “I dunno,” Z1 said, eyes lowered. “I don’t feel Black like that. I *look* it, yeah... but it don’t feel real. Feel like I’m just puttin’ on. Like I’m playin’ a part.”

The therapist leaned forward. “Has it ever occurred to you that you might be carrying some internalized racism?”

Z1 blinked. “Wait—what you sayin’?”

“I mean... when you were younger, did you ever wish you were white?”

The words floated in the silence for a long moment. “Maybe. I don’t remember, but... yeah, maybe. I was the only Black gyal in my school.”

The therapist nodded again. “That’s actually quite common. A lot of Black kids who grow up around mostly white people end up feeling like what some call a ‘coconut’: brown on the outside, white on the inside.” Z1 looked up, eyes narrowing. “Damn... that hit.”

“You’re just someone with a difficult past. And that kidnapping you went through—of course it made everything worse. Maybe stop trying to *be* anything for a while,” the therapist said. “Act it out. Try things on. Play with the identity until something clicks.”

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The theater wasn't the same as her old one as Katherine, but it was equally glamorous. Small stage, narrow rows of chairs. Some of the faces in the room seemed vaguely familiar, though no one recognized her.

Her looks and voice, obviously, limited her options. Casting directors kept steering her toward specific roles. Eventually, they built a play around her: a kind of Wakandan fantasy, full of tribal futurism, where she played a strong, sensual warrior. Her lines were conveniently written in Ebonics, her costume dramatic: gold, black, structured around her curves. She delivered her performance with quiet intensity, not overplaying it, but owning the space. It wasn't Shakespeare, and having such a stereotypically Black role made her feel uncomfortable, but it worked.

The show ran for two weekends and drew a decent crowd. Someone mentioned her presence, how her body seemed carved for the spotlight. She wasn't going to be a serious actress, everyone knew that. But a few producers suggested something else: cabaret. Maybe even burlesque.

Z1 didn't know how to take it. She had very little interest in performing in an over sexualized role in front of single men. It wasn't definitely the future she imagined, but after everything, the idea of performing without explanation, of being seen and not questioned, held its own kind of appeal, so she accepted.



Against all odds, Z1's cabaret debut was a success. It startled her more than anyone. The shy, uncertain woman she was now stood under soft, colored lights, wrapped in sequins and slow music, drawing eyes without saying a word.

She didn't know how to dance, nor to strip. It wasn't in her nature. Not really. She told herself it was therapy, soul-searching, survival, anything but fulfillment. But each performance chipped away at the shell. The stage gave her something to distract herself from her situation, if only for the length of a number.

Her acting experience eventually helped. She simply stood, walked around on stage, sang on playback. She didn't need to be herself. She could be a persona, a silhouette, a symbol. Her hourglass figure and a faint resemblance to Nicki Minaj did the rest to attract crowds. Well, her curves probably helped too.

When her agent proposed the stage name *Nicky Mirage*, she laughed out loud. "You're kidding," she said.

"Mirage," he repeated, grinning. "You're not what you seem. But damn if you don't look like a dream."

Nicky blushed.

The name stuck.



Karen had been feeling hollow for weeks. Loneliness had crept in like fog: quiet, cold, hard to shake. Lonely, waiting for Ruth to make some progress, for Alexandra to regain her memories, she didn't have much to do. One night, she wandered into a dimly lit cabaret bar tucked off a side street. The sign out front shimmered in cursive neon: *Tonight – Nicky Mirage*. The name hit her. She thought about Z1. She had not heard anything about her lately.

Inside, the air was thick with music and perfume. The stage lights danced on sequins and bare skin. And there she was. Z1—now *Nicky*—commanding the room in feathers and fringe. Karen felt her breath catch. Bingo.

She waited for a break, then made her move.

She approached Z1 during a break and invited her to sit with her.

"Hey, beauty," she said softly, slipping into the booth beside her. "How you doin'?"

Nicky turned, raising an eyebrow. "Damn. Bold entrance. How'd you know I'm into girls? I look like I waving a rainbow flag or somethin'?"

Karen grinned. "Nah. I can read people." She leaned in slightly, her lips parting.



Nicky stopped her with a raised hand and a half-laugh. "Eh-eh, hold up. Don't get ahead of yuhself. I ain't what you think. I might be all glitter and hips on stage, but off it I'm shy as hell. I ain't no bitch." she trailed off, her voice quieter, but Karen wasn't really listening.

She was staring. The plunging neckline, the curve of her chest, the soft shine of her skin under the cabaret bar lights. Karen blinked, trying to pull her thoughts together. *How the hell did we get here?* Two straight white women, now two queer women of color, both hotter than they'd ever been. Also, two ex-lovers.

"I'm sorry," Karen said, cutting in gently. "I didn't mean to disrespect you. I just... I think you're lonely. I feel like you've been through a lot, a breakup maybe, and now you're trying to figure out who you even are. And this is what you need."

Nicky narrowed her eyes, caught off guard. "How you know dat?"

"I..." started Karen, but Nicky left for her next song, shaken by the encounter.

Karen sat quiet for the rest of the evening and even after the show, she couldn't stop thinking about her ex lover.



Maybe, she thought, she could win her over again as this new version of herself. A fresh start, no confessions, no baggage.

She contacted the organization and they didn't object. Technically, it wasn't against protocol as long as she did not realize her true identity as N8, her former lover.

A week later, Nicky Mirage took the stage.

The music kicked in—a can-can number, playful and wild, echoing the glamour of the Belle Époque. Nicky was radiant in her red and black corset dress, fishnets framing her thighs. Karen sat at a small table close to the stage, drink untouched, eyes locked.

She looks more confident, Karen thought. *What a woman. What a queen.* They'd taken everything from her—her memories, her name, her race, her love—and still she adapted.

After the act, Nicky strolled to the bar, glowing with applause, and ordered something sweet and strong. She spotted Karen.

"Well well," Nicky said, cocking an eyebrow. "You got enough o' these legs tonight or what?"

"Not nearly enough," Karen replied, heat rising in her voice.

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Nicky smirked, then slowly raised one leg, displaying the curve of her thigh, garter taut and shining under the spotlight.

The crowd whooped and clapped, surprised at the bold gesture by the usually static attitude Nicky had. But the gesture was aimed at one woman alone.

Karen's body buzzed with adrenaline. "Fuck me" she said under her breath, barely keeping it together, "let's go somewhere."

Nicky tilted her head, teasing, and then smiled seductively.

"There's a dark room in da back," she whispered, low and sweet. "Come follow meh"

And Karen did. Without thinking.

Z1 led Karen into a private VIP room, its decor elegant and rich. A large bed stood at the center, dressed in crisp linens and heavy blankets.

"You were right," Z1 said, tossing herself back onto the bed.

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"About what?" Karen asked, trying to keep her voice steady"

"Everything," Z1 replied. "Mi feelin' real lonely. Just got left by a bitch I thought I loved... an' your approach was exactly what I needed."

Embarrassed by the knowledge that that *bitch* had been her, Karen did not know what to say.

"But lemme tell yuh somethin' straight. I might act quiet but I don't want you to get this wrong. I wear di pants in dis. Don't play me, yuh try hurt me, yuh goin' regret it. You mine now, aight?" - her blaccent got stronger as she warmed up.

"Yes" "Good gyal. Now come eat"

They clicked right away, like nothing had changed. The chemistry was still there, easy and real. Karen felt that same pull she'd felt before, and Z1—now going by Nicky—was just as locked in.

Karen started visiting her every week.



The following week, Nicky welcomed Karen the door rocking a Bavarian beer maid outfit.

Karen grinned. "Damn, looking good as always. What's with the costume?"

Nicky shrugged, a little shy. "Yeah, I know it's kinda random... but I like playin' those white girl roles, if that makes sense. Like... I ain't really comfortable in that whole 'sexy Black woman' image. I dunno. Hard to explain. My therapist says I'm like a coconut—brown on the outside, white inside. You ever feel that way?"

Karen blinked. A therapist? If her memory started creeping back, there could be problems... "Yeah, I get it," she replied casually. "I mean, I have Indian blood, but I've always felt pretty American."

"Right? But for me... it deeper than that. I get kidnap, yuh know? Not too long ago. Real mess up ting. An' da shock... it mash up my head. I lose most o' my early memories. All I really remember is growin' up in di Caribbean, den movin' here when mi was a teen. Dat's it." - her Blaccent resurfacing again.

Karen hugged her, genuinely sorry for what had happened to her. "Don't fight your vernacular," Karen told her. "Just be you." "Yeah... you right," Nicky nodded.



She smiled faintly. "Now it's just me... an' di name dem gave me on stage. Nicky Mirage." Karen's throat went dry. She smiled back, gently. "Well, it suits you."

Nicky tilted her head, playful again. "You sure? Or you just like mah tits?" Karen laughed, tension bleeding out. "Both."

The next time Karen arrived, Nicky was dressed in a full 1920s flapper look—beaded fringe dress, long pearls, gloves to her elbows, and a black feather curling from her headband.

"Looking ravishing," Karen whispered, leaning in to kiss her softly on her plump lips.

Nicky smirked, but her eyes didn't quite match the smile. "Yeah, but... this gon' be the last time I get to choose what I wear." Karen frowned. "What do you mean?"

"They say the audience wants somethin' spicier," Karen reached for her hand, squeezing it gently.

"Whatever it is, you'll own it. Like always."

Nicky gave her a small, grateful smile. "Yeah. I just hope I still feel like *me*."



The next time Karen showed up at Nicky's place, the door was already open. Inside, she found Nicky standing in front of a full-length mirror, adjusting a shockingly vibrant Brazilian carnival outfit—rainbow sequins, glittering fringe, feathered shoulders, and a towering headdress.

"This is ridiculous," Nicky snapped, hands on her hips. "I ain't even Brazilian!"

Karen leaned casually against the doorway, her gaze very obviously lingering. "Still looks good on you though."

Nicky rolled her eyes. "My therapist actually told me to try leanin' into more Black roles—like, playfully takin' back my identity, y'know? I guess she got a point."

"She might be right, Nicky. - Karen said, in a serious tone - After all, you're Black and you should come to terms with that"

"I guess you're right."

"Life is too short to be taken seriously. You're a hot Black woman, just have fun with that!"

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Nicky nodded, reflecting on her words.

"Here, lemme help you with the feathers—you need more!"

"Hhm, okay," Nicky replied with a shrug, half amused.

Karen adjusted them, taking her time. When she stepped back, Nicky looked stunning.

Nicky rolled her eyes. "Hmm, I dunno."

"Come on! Say *bom dia*!"

"*Bom dia*," Nicky echoed, a little deadpan.

"Hah! See? You even sound like a native," Karen grinned—and kissed her. The feathers fluttered slightly between them. Life wasn't so bad lately.

The thought gnawed at Karen: *Was she really willing to throw all of this away if Ruth's plan succeeded?* Maybe she could rescue Nicky, restore her memories, but then what? Would Nicky hate her? Realizing her lover was also her ex-lover, the woman who'd turned her into this drone? Would it unravel her completely, her identity, her sexuality? Too many questions. She would just take this day by day for now.



That week, Nicky prepared like never before. This wasn't going to be one of those nights where she just strutted and mimed along to music. They wanted more from her now. She knew she had to step it up.

She spent hours studying Nicki Minaj—the sway of her hips, the cool, lethal confidence, the way she could take command of a room without saying a word. Tonight, Nicky would channel all of that. She poured her frustration and anger into movement, letting every beat of the music carve it out of her.

Nicky approached the stage with a new confidence. She had watched some videos of Nikki Minaj lately to absorb more of her body language and it was paying off now.

She danced, tearing off more and more feathers to reveal her dynamite curves, teasing the crowd with every flick of her wrist. She ended with only a couple of feathers, which she threw to the crowd. They lost their minds.

Nicky left the stage stumbling down the stairs, heart still thudding in her chest, limbs buzzing, the noise of the crowd echoed behind her like waves crashing at a distance. She blinked, dazed. Karen was waiting, grinning like a fool.



"You killed it," Karen said, eyes gleaming.

Nicky didn't say a word—just pulled her into a tight hug, clinging to her like a lifeline. She was still catching her breath, but laughter spilled from her anyway, shaky and giddy.

"I did, didn't I?"

Karen nodded. "You were a fucking star out there."

Something clicked into place. Nicky stood there, feathers stuck to her skin, makeup smudged, sweat rolling down her spine—and she'd never felt more like herself.

"This is it," she whispered, almost to herself. "This is what I was meant to do."

Karen pulled back, still holding her shoulders. "You think so?"

Nicky's smile widened, eyes bright.

Karen kissed her. She didn't know how long this blissful time would last but she was enjoying it minute by minute. She had a cute, if somewhat dull girlfriend in Isabela and a hot lover like Nicky. Funny enough, they used to be sisters, white and straight as a pole...



Meanwhile, Isabela—Karen’s partner and Nicky’s sister—felt lonely and neglected. Karen often left in the evening and wouldn’t return until the next day. It was obvious she was having an affair. Isabela still felt strongly attracted to Karen, even though Karen had grown cold and distant.

She had recently let go of the goth look Karen had once encouraged, opting for a more classic, casual style reminiscent of Ariana Grande, something that suited her face more. But Karen didn’t even seem to notice.

One evening, sitting at home alone, Isabela decided to check Karen’s tablet, hoping to find proof of the affair. She scrolled through what seemed to be a detailed agenda, but liked more like a catalog of people, each with customizable bodies and mindsets. And there she was, under the name Emma.

“Emma? That’s not my name.” Her profile showed a baseline version, a chubby redhead, and her current appearance marked as “Bodysuit model: Ariana.”

What does that even mean? Was she...?

She remembered reading about stories about illegal skin suits, women who had lost their memories after putting one on, only to wake up months later with someone else’s face.



Was she not actually Isabela Rodriguez, but a chubby redhead stuck inside a bodysuit? That would explain the uncanny resemblance to Ariana Grande. That sudden awakening in a hospital room a few months back. The strange absence of documents, of school records, of family photos, even though her memories felt real.

Her heart was beating fast.

Well, there was something she could test. As scary as it was.

Her fingers trembled as she tapped through the settings. She found the editable fields under *Profile Customization*. Ethnicity: *Mexican*. She changed it to *Puerto Rican*.

In an instant, her skin deepened to a smooth mocha brown. Her petite nose broadened, the bridge flatter now. Her hair curled up, soft and coiled. Her lips swelled fuller, plump and striking. She touched her face with wide eyes, her breath catching. "What da fuck?" she screamed, her voice echoing in the dim room. "No no no!"

It was all true. She wasn't real.

She stared at her reflection. Her chest rose and fell with shallow, rapid breaths.



She was trapped in an artificial body suit. But why her? She wasn't rich, famous, or important. Just... an ordinary girl. Or was she? She realized with a chill that she couldn't trust a single memory of her life before waking up in that hospital room. Who had done this to her? That bitch, Karen was certainly responsible for that. Hopefully

She looked back at the screen, jaw tight. Her thumb hovered over a grayed-out button: *Restore Original Settings - Unavailable*. Her breath caught. There was no way back.

"So I'm a white chick, huh?" She quickly edited her profile again, *white*, she typed. Then: *blonde, bobbed hair, blue eyes*.

And just like that, her skin lightened, her hair shifted, shortened, strands twisting and recoloring themselves into a natural blonde bob. Her eyes stung for a moment before turning a pale, icy blue. Her nose became small again, her facial features still resembling those of Ariana Grande.

What she didn't know was that the tablet had quietly sent a signal to Karen's phone. Karen suspected what had happened and, cursing herself for not having locked the tablet away, drove home as fast as possible.



The front door slammed open minutes later. Karen stepped in, her expression amused. Isabela, still staring at herself, didn't hear the footsteps behind her.

"So," Karen said, voice sharp. "You found out about the bodysuit, huh, little bitch?"

"AAH!" Isabela screamed, tossing the tablet onto the sofa.

Karen walked closer, slowly, her boots clicking on the wooden floor. "Ooh, let me take a look at you. A white girl now? Going back to your roots?" She snorted. "Tell me, how does it feel, knowing I turned you into an Ariana Grande knockoff?"

"You did this to me?" Isabela stammered, backing away. "I really... I really thought this was real."

Karen smirked. "Yes, I did it. You know, I even gave you a choice: Rihanna, Beyoncé, Ariana. You turned your nose up at Rihanna and Beyoncé. Didn't want to go Black, huh? Not like your sister?"

Isabela blinked. "My... sister?" She had no memories of growing up with a sister.



"Oh yeah." Karen reached into her pocket and pulled out her phone. With a few taps, she showed her a photo of Katherine before the changes. "This hottie right here? That's your sister. We turned her into *this*." - she added, showing her a recent photo of her. The resemblance to Nicki Minaj was uncanny.

"Her name's Nicky now," Karen added, tossing the phone onto the coffee table. "She's a stripper now. And my lover. Sorry babe, I have a thing for Black beauties!"

"No... no, that can't be," Isabela murmured, eyes locked on the image. "My whole family..."

"Hey, I see you even tried going Black yourself at some point! Hot!" Karen said mockingly, grabbing the tablet. "A family thing, huh?"

"What? No!" Isabela's face burned. "That wasn't—I didn't mean to—"

Karen swiped through the settings. "Look," she said, her voice slow, deliberate, cruelly calm. "Technically, I should report you. Get you formatted again. But lucky you, I've got enough pull to settle this privately now."

Isabela stood frozen. "What are you..."



Karen cut her off with a raised finger. "Shhh. Here's the deal. I tweak your profile just a little—make you look different, you seemed to be into this anyway. You get to keep your memories. You behave, and maybe... maybe I'll even let you see your sister."

She tapped something on the screen.

"However," she continued, eyes not leaving the tablet, "you don't get to talk about this to *anyone*. Not one word. I'll be tracking you, all the time. And another thing—we're no longer exclusive. I'm dating your sister too."

Isabela's jaw dropped. "What? This is—"

"Shhh," Karen repeated, not even looking at her. "Dark skin. There we go. Black hair. Let's add some definition here... brown eyes... bigger boobs. Better. Much better."

She smiled without humor, still scrolling. "You know what? I see this as a win-win. You get to experiment with your look a little. I get a hotter girlfriend. And you'll look more like your sister. Win-win-win. I'll change your outfit too. You need to dress sexier now." - Karen added.



Isabela could only stare at her reflection. A dark-skinned woman stared back at her, with sleek black hair, full lips, and sultry brown eyes. Her body was curvier now, fuller in all the places Karen had specified. The face still looked like Ariana's. Just... darker.

"Why are you doing this to us?" Isabela asked quietly, resigned. "What did my sister do to deserve this? I bet we weren't even lesbians before all of this."

Karen's voice dropped low, cold. "Stop asking questions, bitch, or I'll change some of the other settings too."

Isabela flinched. "I'm stuck in a skinsuit too, you know! I'm not Indian. Wasn't into women either. But I got pulled into this shit. I became an accomplice because I didn't have a choice."

"Oh..." Isabela whispered. "Oh. I see."

She turned, finally, looking at Karen not with fear now—but with something closer to recognition.

"I... I'm sorry you had to go through all of this, Emma." Karen said softly, the tension in her voice finally loosening. "I'm just trying to say I'm a victim too. I didn't ask for any of this. I'm just trying to make the most of it."



"And you don't want to get your memories erased again. That stuff could be dangerous." She took a breath. "I get it. I really do... Thank you. And thank you for calling with my real name." Emma said, almost a whisper.

Karen smiled faintly. "Good girl." She tapped the tablet again. "Now... let me make you a little more like your sister."

She worked fast. "Higher cheekbones... almond eyes... a touch of filler... there we go. Not perfect, I'm not an artist—but damn."

She held the screen up. "Wow. You look like a mix of Ariana and Nicki Minaj. Take a good look at yourself, babe. Honestly? I think you look even hotter than your sister now."

Emma blinked at her reflection, stunned. "Wow... my face... yeah, I look a bit like her. This is... so weird. I..."

She trailed off, eyes wide, mouth slightly parted, unsure what emotion would come next.

"Well, I'll give you a minute to get familiar with your self. Don't get too used to it though, I could always change it if I grow bored of your pretty face." - Karen added, with a triumphant smile, and left Isabela alone with her thoughts.



Hilary had always been sweet - the kind of girl who baked cookies for her roommates and volunteered at animal shelters. But beneath that wholesome persona burned an unhealthy obsession that consumed her: cosplay. She had a fascination for anything gothic or demonic – succubi were her absolute favorite. She'd go all-in on the look: a black rubber crop top clinging tight against her pale skin, heavy eyeliner, deep red lipstick, and a jet-black wig that concealed her natural brown hair. Plastic horns, wings, choker...

But no matter how elaborate was the costume, it never *quite* satisfied her.

So when she heard about hyper-realistic bodysuits, she was intrigued. Eventually she stumbled on a company that catered to full-body cosplay artists. It was exactly what Hilary wanted. She bit the bullet and ordered it. It wasn't cheap. Over two thousand dollars, shipped from overseas, with a custom fit based on 3D scans and body measurements. But she told herself it was worth it.

The box arrived late on a Thursday. Plain packaging. No label except her name. Hilary hadn't planned to open the box in front of anyone.



But when it finally arrived she couldn't help herself. "Okay. Oh my God" she whispered, more to herself than anyone.

"Hil?" a voice came from the hallway. It was Cass, her roommate. Equally sweet, just more conservative. "You good?" Hilary didn't answer. She just stood there, lips parted, staring into the open box. "It's here," she finally breathed. Cass walked in. "What is that?" She stepped closer, peering into the box. Then she snorted. "Oh, it's that bodysuit you told me about. It looks like something a demon would wear to a high-end fetish club."

"I know," Hilary whispered. "Isn't it perfect?" "You're seriously wearing that in public?" "Yeah, tomorrow" she said. "But tonight I'm just going to... try it on." Cass rolled her eyes in disapproval and left.

Then Hilary went to her room and started wearing it. The red suit inside shimmered, almost metallic under the living room light. First the legs – tight, almost suffocating. Her thighs were reshaped, smoothed. Then the hips, the stomach, up to her chest – the fake breasts fitting snug against her own. Her arms next, fingers sliding into the slim gloves with red nails already attached. Her face was harder. Hilary knocked on Cass's door, her breath shallow. "Can you help me with the head?"



Cass opened the door and looked at her for a long second, eyebrows raised. "You've really gone all in on this, haven't you? Are you sure this is safe? I've read stuff online –people saying these things... stick. Like, permanently. They start forgetting things." Hilary just nodded, lips parted slightly, eyes wide with anticipation. "I don't care. I... want this." Cass sighed. "Alright. Come sit." Hilary obeyed, settling onto the edge of the bed. Cass gathered her friend's real hair, tying it back tightly before reaching for the rubber mask. It was dark red, with sculpted cheekbones and full, pouting lips. "This is freakishly realistic," Cass muttered, turning it in her hands. "You really want this on your face? You're so pretty as God made you!" She nodded. Cass helped as Hilary eased it over her face. A soft, wet *shhhhk* echoed as the rubber sealed against her skin, the edges fusing seamlessly with the bodysuit's collar.

Cass turned to the box again and picked up the wig. Thick, black. She slid it into place. "There you go" - said Cass - "There. Happy now? Fuck, it's so realistic, it's uncanny!" Hilary was consumed by the desire to check herself but resisted. She watched in silence as Cass reached for the horns and clipped them in place.



Curved, ridged, they framed her head nicely. "Hmm, interesting" - Hilary mumbled, noticing a slight itch in her scalp. Cass made the sign of the cross without thinking. "Okay," she said under her breath, "now you're officially scaring me. I think you should take it off! It's not wise to joke about demons." Hilary gave a nervous smile. "It's just a costume, silly. And demons don't exist!" "I don't think so!" - replied Cass.

Her gaze had shifted to the last item in the box. Hilary followed her eyes and pulled it out carefully: the wings. They were huge. Black on the outside, reddish brown on the inside, veined like a bat's and slightly translucent. The harness clicked under her arms, and as Hilary tightened the straps, the wings *unfurled* behind her with a sound like stretching leather.

"I look ridiculous, don't I?" Hilary asked, suddenly self-conscious. Cass shook her head slowly. "No. You look... demonic." Curious, Hilary finally checked herself in the mirror. And jumped. "Jesus fucking Christ!" Hilary gasped. The words slipped out before she could stop them.

Cass flinched. "Don't say that," she whispered, uneasy. "You look so... unholy, oh Lord, why would anybody want to look like that?"



Hilary stared at her reflection, hyperventilating. The creature in the mirror was *perfect*. The sharp cheekbones, the gleaming red skin, the impossible curves, the heavy black hair, the horns. And now the wings, rising behind her. She didn't look like herself in a costume. She looked like a real succubus, seductive, evil. And she loved it. It was her wildest dream come true.

Hilary stood in front of the mirror, fingers slick with the finishing lotion. She smoothed it across her red skin – or the latex that looked like skin, she reminded herself – and watched as the surface picked up an almost unreal glow. She noticed her horns had turned from a natural bone color to a dark red.

She sat down on the bed, exhaling. It had been a long night. Cass's horrified face flickered in her mind—that *judgmental* stare. That bigot! She actually liked her but right now, she felt tempted to headbutt her with her new horns. No, no, where did that come from? But the horns *pulsed*, warm and alive against her palms. Maybe she should take them off, she thought. But she didn't even bother peeling the suit off. It just felt... easier to leave it on. And maybe deep down she was hoping that the impossible would happen.



She pulled a blanket over herself and drifted off with the wings still curled behind her shoulders.

The next morning, the light coming through the window was sharp and cool. Hilary stirred, blinked once, feeling confident.

The suit still felt soft, warm, and oddly breathable. No sweat, no itching, no pressure. Just... comfort. It's fine. It's designed to be comfortable. - she told herself. She sat up slowly, feeling the wings shift behind her. She frowned. And the horns—

She touched them. Black as obsidian now, their roots firmly rooted in her skull, giving her a slight headache. A deep, *internal* throb answered her fingertips when she pulled one of them. "*Fuck. It's bonding. Fuck, this is real! I'm stuck with horns!*" Panic mixed with excitement fluttered, but she somehow crushed it. Even if this was permanent, she wouldn't care. Anyway today was the con. The *reveal*. She couldn't waste time on fear. She wanted to be seen, to be adored in her new form.

At least now she didn't need to go through the whole process again. Everything was already in place.



As she entered the venue, she signed in as Lilith. It felt fitting to give herself a stage name. It was immediately a hit. The convention hall erupted around her. Heads turned. People stopped mid-sentence. Some stared openly, others whispered and pointed. Within minutes, a small crowd had gathered around her. "Are you a sponsored artist?" "No way that's just makeup—" "Where did you buy that?"

She laughed, took pictures, posed, tossed off her rehearsed lines. "Thanks, losers!" she purred "Just a fucking good costume. Can I get the first prize already?" Her attitude, usually shy, was confident, even arrogant for some reason.

"Wait. Your wings moved."

Silence.

Hilary froze. "What?"

"*They twitched.*" A teenager pointed, voice cracking with excitement. "*Look, they're doing it again—*"

She turned, pulse roaring in her ears. Her wings *flexed*.



"No, idiot, they don't—" she started, but even as she said it, she could *feel* them. Like extra shoulders she never had before. Another thought, another twitch. They lifted slightly.

The crowd surged closer. "Holy shit, how are you doing that?" "Are those real?"

"Fuck, this can't be true!" she stammered.

Except... it was. With every breath, every flare of panic, they shifted, responding like limbs. She felt her heart pounding harder. She tried to calm down but her breath caught, faster, faster—

The truth coiled hot and undeniable in her gut: she wasn't wearing a costume. Her body had permanently bonded with the bodysuit. Not only that, she had brought to life the entire thing.

She was a succubus for life.

No going back.

How could she navigate life looking like a fucking succubus? And yet, a strange new energy pervaded her. She fucking loved looking like that.



She was brought back to life by a sudden realization. She wasn't standing anymore. Her feet skimmed the floor once. Then lifted again.

"Wait. What the hell?" Hilary cursed.

The wings flared wide. She felt weightless, as if her spine had simply let go. A few people screamed. Someone shouted, "It's part of the act! It has to be!"

But Hilary wasn't acting. She was hovering, trembling, her feet dangling inches above the ground. And her wings flapped again. Harder this time. Without her control.

She rose. The crowd below shrank slightly as she floated upward, her arms outstretched instinctively to steady herself. A gust of panic surged in her chest. A tilt of her shoulders—and she *lurched* forward, toward the exit. Her wings pulsed once more. She shot forward. The doors burst open as she flew into the air beyond the convention center, past the courtyard, out over the sidewalk. People scattered and ducked. A little girl pointed, wide-eyed. A man yelled, "Holy crap! She's flying!" Rage flared. She twisted midair, driving her heel into his shoulder. "*No shit, genius!*". Why was she so evil, all of a sudden?



Hilary couldn't *stop*.

Her wings caught the wind. Her long black hair whipped across her face. She didn't feel heavy. She felt weightless. Powerful.

She circled toward a nearby park and slowed her pace without thinking, like her body *knew* how. As if it had always known. Her wings folded slightly, adjusting mid-air.

"This can't be real," she whispered.

Her legs were shaking. Her heart raced. But her wings... folded naturally behind her, as if resting.

Then the voices started.

It's alright.

You've been chosen.

You work for us now.

She spun, but no one was around. Just the rustle of leaves and the low hum of distant traffic.

"Who the fuck are you? Why did you turn me into this fucking monster? I didn't want to become a succubus, I'm just a normal girl" she said aloud.



You're beyond her now. You don't even remember your name.

Her voice shook. "My name is Lilith."

Is it?

She closed her eyes tight.

"No. Fuck! Cass?" she muttered. "Violet? No. No, that's not right. I'm Lilith. I think. Fuck! My brain feels like mush!"

Those horns are neural implants attached to your brain. Your mind is constantly being monitored and corrected.

"No, no, no—" She clutched her head, her claws scraping against the horns rooted deep in her skull. The voice was clinical now. *Your old self is irrelevant. You serve a higher purpose.*

"What purpose?" she snarled.

Her eyes turned amber. She immediately saw a stream of images projected by them.

See, we can even change your vision.



These are your next targets. We need to convert them into other succubi to serve us.

"Why?"

It doesn't matter. Anyway I bet you don't feel pity for them, it's one of your new personality traits.

"You're right, I feel so focused, cold-hearted. Did you make me this way?"

Of course. I bet you like it though, and look at your next target.

She smiled. Nice. Her blurred memories quickly rearranged. She was her former roommate. She always believed she was better than her and now she would pay for it.

Now strip.

She craned her neck, watching the slender, spaded tail curl around her thigh like a living thing. It *twitched*, testing the air.

"A tail? Very dramatic" Not that it bothered her.



Lilith felt her body rearranging itself once more. They were reshaping her to a more convenient form to walk undisturbed past the area where the news of a flying succubus had already spread.

Her skin turned light brown, her horns disappeared, her wings and tail too. Her pointy ears rounded and her eyes turned hazel. She looked like an exotic version of herself, not that she had any memory left of her old face.

The streets were empty before her. Her heels clicked a slow rhythm of intent. Her hips swayed with practiced menace, the black latex of her dress clinging like sin. Her spade-tipped tail coiled lazily around one thigh, swishing once in boredom, once in anticipation.

Her enhanced vision pulsed, turning her eyes amber. There—Cass. A familiar silhouette kneeling in the flickering candlelight of St. Mary's. *How fitting*, Lilith mused. Of course, the bigot is at church today.

Time to show that little bitch she's not better than me! This is going to be fun! - she thought. She changed again into her demonic form and entered the church like smoke, posing as a pious Christian.



Lilith entered the church, her skin bright red, her horns black, her wings twitching.

In that moment a blonde entered the church. Cass spun at the click of stiletto heels on marble. "H-Hilary?" Her voice cracked. "What are you doing here? Why are you still dressed like—"

"Pray for me, Cass." Lilith's voice dripped honeyed venom. Candlelight danced across her impossible silhouette—the way her waist dipped to exaggerated hips, how her tail twitched with restless energy, her wings moved graciously. Her latex-clad curves gleamed faintly in the candlelight. The candles guttered, painting her latex dress with hellish reflections. *"I'm cursed. Trapped in this... Nah, I'm joking, hahaha! You should see your face!"* A theatrical gesture at her impossible body.

Cass made the sign of the cross again, hands shaking. "Oh Lord. You need help. You need to be saved." Her hand flew to the crucifix at her throat. "You scared me, what are you doing here? I—I have to be my sister's bridesmaid in a couple of hours, I don't have time for—"



"*Shhh.*" Lilith's tail lashed as she leaned closer. The scent of Cass's sweat, was intoxicating. "You'll have all the time in the world," she murmured. "Just... one more minute. I have something for you." Lilith produced a box the voices told her was hidden in the church.

Cass hesitated. But before she could pull away, Lilith's red hands opened it. Inside, folded neatly, was a pale bodysuit. Soft ivory skin. A blonde wig. A delicate white halo. And a pair of pristine, feathered wings.

Cass blinked. "An angel costume?"

Lilith grinned. "For your sister's wedding. Her friends told me it's supposed to be a surprise. She'll love it."

"I... I had no idea," Cass murmured, her voice oddly distant.

Lilith took the bodysuit in her hands. "It's modeled after your face, you'll look like yourself, just, as an angel! Come on, there's a toilet there, go get changed!"

Cass obeyed without a word, cradling the box like a gift she'd always expected.



She returned minutes later, halo glinting under the flickering lights, her blonde hair and white wings reflecting its glare. Lilith's eyes lit up. "Adorable. Angel and devil, side by side." She snapped a selfie without asking.

Cass offered a soft smile, but something tugged at the back of her mind. "It looks amazing, but... why go through all this? Why not just give me wings and a halo like before? This must have costed you guys a lot!"

Lilith chuckled. "Oh honey. Red Bull gives you wings. I give you something better."

Before Cass could react, Lilith reached behind her and *yanked* the feathered wings free.

"Ow!" Cass gasped, stumbling. "That actually—" A prickling sensation bloomed under her skin, warm at first, then searing. She doubled over, hands on the pew. "AH!" she shrieked. Her arms trembled violently as her skin darkened before her eyes, pale ivory deepening into a sun-warmed tan. "What's going on with my skin?!" Then a sharp headache grabbed her attention. Cass clawed at her skull, nails scraping the scalp. "My head—it's burning—" "Just a migraine, darling." Lilith purred.



Cass dropped to her knees, clutching her temples. “No—my head!” Her nails scraped along her scalp, fingers catching on something new. Something *hard*.

She let out a raw scream as the small nubs at her hairline pushed outward, twisting with unnatural precision, making the halo fall.

“Aah, I’m growing horns! Someone help me!”

Lilith smiled. “Funny how I always made fun of you for believing in demons. Well, it looks like you were right after all, and we get to experience it firsthand hahahaha!”

Cass tried removing the horns but they were attached to her skull. She prayed to stop the transformation, hoping to hide the horns under a hat maybe. But it did not help.

Her white dress tore down the back with a sudden, violent *rip* as something burst free – a long, sleek tail tipped like a spade, lashing the air with blind fury.

Lilith's laughter slithered through the church, rich and velvet-dark. “Oh, Cassie,” she purred, circling her trembling friend like a vulture. “Look at you—not so angelic anymore.”



Her dress was pierced sharply, and the tail behind her twitched erratically, like it didn't know how to belong to her yet. Cass grabbed it. It was warm, and she could feel it was attached to her nervous system. That one would be hard to conceal, but a long dress could do the trick.

Lilith stepped closer, heels tapping slow and even. She watched with a quiet satisfaction, like an artist admiring her brushstrokes. Then Cass turned, face twisted, eyes wet but wild.

"You *bitch*, you tricked me! Now stop this!" she spat.

Lilith arched a brow. "Now, now. That's not very Christian of you. We're in a church, after all. Even demons should show some respect!"

Cass pushed herself upright. Her horns had grown another inch, her tan now deep and flushed with a reddish glow.

"You *did* this to me!" Cass shouted, her voice hoarse and thick with emotion.

"How could you? I warned you. I told you to stop – and now you're dragging me down with you?"



"I'm sorry, Cass, I really am. Do you think I wanted this? To wake up with horns stuck to my skull? To grow wings? To become a monster? I'm a victim of this as much as you. We're pawns, darling. Please forgive me" - Lilith said.

Cass gripped her chest – her heart felt wrong. Heavy. Hot. The pounding was deeper now, slower. She could *feel* that aching tenderness she'd always carried, the empathy that once defined her melting. Burning away.

"I don't... forgive you" Cass rasped. "I don't feel sorry for you. I don't *love* anyone right now. I can feel it," she whispered. "My mind. My *heart*. Everything's twisting." Her voice trembled.

Lilith tilted her head, smiling. "That's the idea."

"You *corrupted* me" Cass hissed. "You betrayed me. I was your friend."

"You were," Lilith agreed, voice soft and measured. "But I didn't come to reclaim a friend. I came to create a sister."

Cass let out a growl, a raw, guttural noise that startled even her. Her eyes widened.



"I can still fight this," Cass growled, clenching her fists. "I *will* fight this."

Lilith just smiled wider.

Cass gritted her teeth, her whole body shivering with pressure she couldn't name. Heat poured through her veins, as though something inside her had cracked open and was flooding every inch of flesh. Her ears grew pointy and her skin tingled again.

She looked down and watched her skin change. Her skin – once pale, soft– was shifting in color, second by second. What had been a warm tan was now deepening into a rich, blood-red hue. She was quickly losing the battle. The transformation moved in waves, from her hands up her arms, down her chest and legs, like ink spilled into water.

"No, no–*stop*," she gasped, scraping at her arms. But the red only deepened, settling into that same unholy shade she'd seen on Lilith. It gleamed faintly in the dying candlelight, as though lit from within. That would be impossible to hide.

Then–fire at her scalp.



She grabbed fistfuls of her hair—her beautiful, golden hair. The blonde drained away, replaced by darkness. The color bled out of it like pigment rinsed from a brush. Strands turned first a dull brown, then black. Not just dark — *pitch* black, thick and glossy, falling in heavy waves across her shoulders. It clung to her skin like silk dipped in oil.

Her vision swam. Colors shifted. The world sharpened as her blue eyes darkened—first to emerald, then to deep brown.

“Much better - Lilith said - Too bad about the blonde hair and the blue eyes, but succubi are not blue-eyed blondes.”

“No, no, my face!” - she mumbled, staggering towards the altar. She caught her reflection in a fractured shard of stained glass. And what she saw wasn't her.

Cass's hands dropped to her sides. Her red skin gleamed like lacquer. Her black hair framed her face, twisted by the roller coaster of emotion she was going through. Then her breasts inflated, almost doubling in size, tearing the spaghetti straps of her dress.



"No," she whispered, her voice cracking. "Please. This isn't me. I don't want to be—"

Lilith's voice coiled around her. "Like me? Seriously? You already are like me already. And don't lie to yourself, Cass. Some part of you *does* want this. Or it wouldn't work."

Then Cass realized something horrifying.

She didn't feel scared anymore.

She felt ready.

Lilith added: "You only need..."

A low crack echoed through the church, followed by a tearing sound – fabric, flesh, something in between.

Cass arched her back, gasping as two sharp points pushed through her shoulder blades. The pain was brief but electric, and then it was gone, replaced by something heavier, stranger: black *wings*.

"*There you go!*" - Lilith added. "Much better than the previous ones!"



Jet-black wings unfurled from her back, leathery and powerful. They stretched outward, displacing air, catching the flickering candlelight with their glossy, bat-like membranes. Her dress shredded further. She tried pulling on the straps of her dress to cover herself, to protect her honor. But there was no honor left to protect.

Cass lowered her head, hair now a dark curtain around her crimson face. Then she looked at Lilith, humble, calm.

"I guess... we're sisters now," she said quietly, voice hoarse. "I don't hate you anymore. Not really. Just... like a sister. A bigger sister." She hesitated. "You have this aura, this... dominance. It makes me want to follow you. Is that weird?"

Lilith smiled – a slow, knowing smile, sharp at the edges.

"Not at all," she said. "That's exactly what *they* want."

Cass didn't ask who *they* were. Some part of her already knew. "I'll lead," she whispered. "And we'll work together. We're going to have so much fun together."

Cass managed a half-smile. Her lips, now fuller and redder than they had ever been, curled faintly with reluctant amusement.



"Do you... have another outfit?" she asked, glancing down at what remained of her dress.

Lilith produced a golden dress. Cass took it silently and slipped behind a leaning tombstone to change. The fabric clung to her new body, molding to every newly sculpted curve, every sinful angle. Why was she letting that sinful creature turning her into her twin sister? She was not like her!

"Go away." - she told Lilith when she came. Lilith blinked.

"I said *go away!*" Cass snapped, baring her teeth. "I'm a *monster. I don't want to let anybody see me like this.*"

Lilith didn't even flinch. She rolled her eyes, lips curling in wry amusement. "*Oh, please, sis.*"

Cass clutched at her temples, black nails digging into her scalp. "Why does this feel... *good*? Why does it feel *right*?" Her voice cracked. "My thoughts are all—" "Conflicted?" Lilith grinned. "That's your old mind dissolving. Tell me—" She leaned in. "What was your name?" Cass opened her mouth. Closed it. "Your hair color? Your *face*?" Panic flickered in Cass's amber eyes. "Shhh." Lilith pressed a finger to her lips. "Let it go."



A voice whispered her: Luna. Cass jerked. "I... *hear* them." Lilith's grin widened. "Took you long enough."

"Who *are* they?" Cass asked, voice hushed. "The Devil?" Lilith shrugged, tilting her head as if the question bored her. "Does it matter?"

Lilith twirled a lock of Cass's jet-black hair. "You belong to them now."

Then, a click behind Cass's eyes as they turned amber.

Light flooded her vision, searing images into her skull.

This is your purpose. The voice was everywhere and nowhere. Multiply us.

"Why?" Cass asked.

Lilith stepped in. "Don't ask why. They need more of us. That's all we need to know for now. There are different kinds of bodysuits and powers, and we have the most advanced. I can edit your shape as I wish as my hierarchy is above yours."



"Anyway, time to look human again. For your next mission you need to go undercover."

She touched one of Luna's boobs and her crimson skin rippled, shifting to a human mocha hue.

"Wha—? How did you do that?"

"Perks of seniority." Lilith winked. With a tap to Luna's forehead, her horns swiftly retracted, leaving her forehead smooth and immaculate. Her black wings retracted and then dissolved like smoke. Her ears rounded, recovering a human shape. Her tail retracted itself. Her hellish amber eyes dulled to mortal brown.

Luna stumbled, staring at her hands—ordinary brown hands. She was curvier and much darker than before, but She had no memories about her old self, so she couldn't tell.

"Am I... human again? Did you turn me back to myself?" - she asked, excited.



“Oh, sweetheart,” Lilith thought with a flicker of amusement. Not even close.

“Yes. This is your baseline. Your human face. Melissa, remember? You’d better get used to it.”

Melissa nodded, as if that settled things. She trusted Lilith, even if her gut twisted with unease.

The air smelled of damp leaves and stone, heavy with the stillness that lingered over the graves. Melissa stood against the weathered slab, the golden dress catching the autumn glow. The fabric shimmered, almost too bright for the setting. She should have felt relief – human again, no wings, no horns. Then why did she feel so out of place?

“Melissa...?”

“That’s you. Melissa Walker. Your job is to seduce your sister’s fiancé. Don’t dwell on appearances—she’s blonde, she’s blue-eyed, but she’s your sister. You were a Brazilian orphan, adopted, always the odd one in the family. He’ll think his friends hired an escort for his bachelor party. That’s your cover. Stall him. Play the part. That’s all you need to do.”

SKIN DEEP



In the meanwhile, the organization had perfected their standard method: abduct a person in a key position, extract all useful information, and replace her with a random victim, someone completely unconnected. The replacement would be fitted into a full-body synthetic suit designed to replicate the original down to the smallest detail. Her memories erased, her identity overwritten.

Becky was just nineteen, an ordinary college student out for her morning jog along the beach. Her earbuds were in. She didn't hear the footsteps behind her. By the time she noticed the man, it was too late – cold metal pressed to her side, a voice low and commanding. She screamed, but no one was around. A boat cut through the surf, silent and sleek. She was taken aboard, swallowed by something she couldn't begin to understand. They took her to a hidden base by the coast and injected her with something. The last thing she was was a box being opened with a brown rubber material inside.

Then, she woke up in a hospital bed, surrounded by doctors and nurses. Her first thought was for the medical bills - how could she pay for them?



"Miss Al-Qabaisi, please try to stay calm," said the doctor in the white coat. "You've had a very serious head injury. You're confused right now. But your father – the ambassador – will be here soon, and everything will make more sense."

"What? No – no, I think you've got the wrong person," Becky said. Her voice cracked. "I'm not the daughter of the Qatari ambassador, do I look Arab to you?"

The doctors looked at each other and handed her a mirror "I mean, judge for yourself!"

"What the actual fuck? I'm not supposed to look like this! What have you done to me?"

"Please, breathe. Try to understand, you're not thinking clearly. Who else could you be, Miss Al-Qabaisi?"

"I swear to God, my name is Jane– or Barb– or something. Why can't I recall my own name? I'm a white American girl from San Diego. Please, I'm begging you, just *listen* to me!"

"You have been living in the US for most of your life, it's normal to desire to be white to fit in at some point. You're just reliving this. This identity rejection is a pattern we've seen before."



"I... I... don't know what to say." She meant it. Her thoughts were slipping between her fingers like water.

When an old Arab man arrived, he grabbed her hand and said "Alhamdulillah", his voice warm with emotion. "Hamda, habibti, you're safe. We were so worried." She opened her mouth to tell him this was a mistake, that she wasn't his daughter, that something had gone horribly wrong. But instead of English, her voice emerged in perfect Arabic: "I... I missed you too." The doctors nodded, encouraging.

The car ride was quiet.

"Hamda, I know you are confused but everything will come back."

I hope so... Dad, I really do," she replied. The word *Dad* landed strange in her mouth, but not wrong. She then learned she was 32-yo Hamda al-Qabaisi, soon to marry a wealthy American man soon, the first of her family to marry into Westerners. Even if she felt it was fake, it rang a bell. The mansion looked familiar too. Within a few days, any memory of who she was had vanished, replaced by the identity of Hamda al-Qabaisi.



Other recruits had their own paths. For Destiny Johnson, a young African American woman, classical dance had been a dream since childhood. But she didn't have the look for it. Still, she was a vision of defiant grace. Braided hair. Little makeup. Her playful checkered skirt and top completed the look. She already carried herself with a ballerina's elegance. She was slim, long-legged, and had the perfect frame for a dancer. But her complexion was too dark. Her black braids sliced the air with every movement. Natural hair would have been even worse.

Her instructors never told her that in her face of course. They'd be canceled. But she could see how slightly less talented white women succeeded where she failed. Some even hinted that she belonged in hip hop instead. It felt like a step back but she gave it a try. Her technique was strong, her passion undeniable, but she felt wasted there, trapped in a box someone else had drawn for her. Hip hop felt like a plan b she could not settle for.

So she took a risk. She maxed out her credit card and bought a bodysuit that would help her look more the part. She made sure that the bodysuit would be light enough to leave her free to move as if she wasn't wearing it.

SKIN DEEP



When she slipped into the second skin of a slim brunette, the mirror reflected a very different picture. Her legs were still thin and smooth, just a completely different color. And her face looked completely different. How could that mask hide her face shape so well? Anyway, this was her now. It was a face of fresh, fragile elegance, the exact archetype the jurors expected to see on their stage.

At her audition as Virginia—a woman of supposed Italian heritage named Virginia Raffaelli—the panel leaned in, their eyes alight with recognition of the talent they had been waiting for. The technique was all Destiny's—every disciplined muscle, every line of exquisite grace—but now it was framed by a face they deemed "right." They saw the same lines, the same passion, but now filtered through the "right" lens, it was suddenly genius. She was accepted into the nation's most prestigious academy with a unanimous, eager silence that was more insulting than any rejection she had ever faced.

When the bodysuit had bonded with her skin, she wasn't even bothered. It was the life she had always dreamt of and she would never go back to her previous life. They had gained yet another unwilling soldier.