

# Skin deep

OCTOBER 2024



Karen hesitated, eyeing the clock. The costume party she was invited to at the last minute would start soon, and she still had no idea what to wear. The thrift shop was her only option now, but she wasn't too optimistic. As she stepped inside, the smell of old clothes hit her, and she sighed.

"Excuse me, I need a costume. Something original, you know..." she said, not expecting much.

The old man behind the counter barely glanced at her. "You want something special? Try this." He took a large, bright box and slammed it on the desk. "Princess Jasmine, from that Disney cartoon."

Karen blinked, taken aback. "Do I look like a Jasmine to you?"

"Trust me," he said, a grin creeping across his wrinkled face. "This will fit you just right. It's all in here - bodysuit, wig, everything."

"A bodysuit? Like a rubber thing? Oh God it's going to be so hot in there." She commented, but deep down the idea of slipping into something tight like that was intriguing. "Well, the costume itself leaves lots of skin visible, so you'll need the rubber skin to keep you warm." She felt the bodysuit in her hands, it was rubbery but not as elastic as she had expected. Would it look realistic? Worst case, she could be a creepy Disney princess zombie, now *that* would be original she thought. She sighed and handed him the money, more than she had planned to spend, but there was no going back now.



A part of her hated being a last-minute replacement, but another part was excited. Maybe tonight she'd finally have her chance to stand out—even if it meant looking nothing like herself.

When Karen got home, she glanced at the clock. *Still two hours, good.* She opened the box and laid out its contents: the brown rubber suit, a black long wig, a small bottle of oil, a tube of glue, a bald cap, and a box of contacts. She took a deep breath, heading for the shower. After drying herself off, she carefully blow-dried her short hair.

Once her hair was dry, she fitted the bald cap over her head. It felt strange, she avoided the mirror, not wanting to see how ridiculous she looked. Then came the suit. She felt the odd material between her fingers before stepping into it, starting with her legs. The tight rubber stretched over her pale skin, and she tugged it upward, inch by inch like stockings. After a couple of minutes, she stopped to stare at her legs in shock. It looked kind of real. The texture, the brown hue... She continued, pulling the suit over her torso, arms and head, carefully matching her nostrils, lips, and ears. The feeling of having her lips completely covered was unsettling, and adjusting the suit around her nostrils made her breathing a bit difficult at first. Also, her ears, muffled under the layer, dulled the sounds around her. It was still a highly detailed product though and zipped it shut, the transformation was almost perfect. Only a long seal under her armpit hinted at the suit's existence.

## SKIN DEEP

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Karen reached for the bottle of oil, hesitating. She didn't want to overdo it and end up looking greasy, but when she applied it, the material seemed to absorb the oil instantly. Surprisingly, the rubber took on a soft matte look. Her skin didn't feel like rubber either now. It felt warm, alive, like real human skin—the skin of someone born in the Middle East or Latin America. She eagerly applied the oil on every inch of her body, mesmerized by the change in look. Everything looked real and alien now: her larger, brown breasts with dark aureolas, her vagina, her buttcheeks. The sight of her intimate body parts made her uncomfortable—so foreign, so different from her own. For the first time she felt a mild discomfort and thought she might have gone a bit too far with that costume. She checked the time. One hour and 30 minutes, including the ride to the venue. She definitely didn't have the time to get out of the bodysuit and look for something else. She put on the Disney princess costume, adjusting it over her now larger breasts.

Finally, she allowed herself to look in the mirror. Staring back at her was a bald young Arab woman with strikingly out-of-place blue eyes. Despite the mismatch, the realism was far beyond what she had expected. She noticed her facial features had been altered by the bodysuit too, a bigger nose and different cheekbones giving her now an exotic vibe. All the resemblance the brown woman staring into the mirror to Karen was limited to her height, eyes and voice.



A black wig and a pair of brown contacts completed the kit. Karen hesitated at the thought of putting in the thrift shop contacts—an eye infection was the last thing she wanted. But the quality of the suit had impressed her so much that she couldn't resist seeing the full transformation. Carefully, she popped the lenses in, blinking a few times to adjust until they found their natural position. They didn't disappoint. Her baby blue eyes vanished, replaced by a deep, dark brown that looked unnervingly real. No hint of her original eye color peeked through. She stared into the mirror for a few minutes, mesmerized by the intelligent brown eyes that now seemed to be her own.

Next, she put on the long black wig, which felt like a stuffed animal, as heavy as it was. "I hope it's clean. Oh well, at least it won't go directly on my skin." She secured it to her fake scalp with the provided glue, feeling its weight attached to her head, and stepped back to check herself in the mirror.

"Fuck, I make a pretty convincing Jasmine! I could work at Disneyland!" - she thought "Not even my mum would recognize me!"

She had been worried about looking frightening horrifying with the skin suit on. She wasn't just passable, she looked gorgeous and 100% Arab. Too bad nobody would believe her if she showed the pictures to her friends!

## SKIN DEEP

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Karen, now fully transformed into Jasmine, headed to the Halloween party feeling confident that her outfit would turn heads. She took a cab to the venue, the cool autumn breeze brushing against her fake skin, yet she didn't feel a chill despite her revealing costume. As she stepped out, she immediately noticed the stares, and though no one recognized her, she enjoyed the attention.

At the party, a random guy approached her, clearly intrigued. "Where are you from?" he asked, his eyes lingering on her face.

She smiled, her voice light. "I thought my accent gave it away—I'm from here."

"No, but where are you *really* from?" Karen blinked, caught off guard. Then she laughed, realizing the misunderstanding. "Oh, right! The costume, haha. Nah, it's just a bodysuit. I'm actually white."

His eyes widened in disbelief. "No way!"

"Yeah, really! Oh, wait, my friends are here!" she said, making her exit as the guy remained stunned.

At first, she had fun using her new look to flirt silently with a few guys, watching their reactions. But as soon as she started talking, her familiar voice gave her away. Her friends were shocked by the transformation.

"Old boring Karen, pulling off a flawless Jasmine?" one of them exclaimed. "No way!"

Karen smiled. Tonight, she was anything but boring. If anything, she felt like the star of the party.

## SKIN DEEP

---



Karen had grown accustomed to the tight embrace of the bodysuit, to the faint smell of rubber lingering in her nostrils, to the muffled sounds around her, and to the dry feeling of the contacts irritating her eyes. By the end of the night, the sensation of wearing the suit felt almost natural. When she finally got home, she was too exhausted to take it off, and didn't mind sleeping in it, collapsing into bed with a strange comfort in the idea of sleeping as a princess.

When she woke up the next morning, the weight of her hair remained her of the transformation she had underwent the day before. Her long, braided wig had come loose during the night, now hanging soft and free. She casually tugged at it. A sharp pain jolted through her scalp.

Frowning, she grabbed the thick, black mane and pulled harder, wincing at the pain. Her thoughts scrambled to make sense of what was happening. Her mind raced, panic rising. "It won't budge!" - she thought.

Her skin felt different too. When she had first worn the suit, it felt like being coated in tight rubber. She still felt the pressure keeping his body in shape, but she could swear she now felt the breeze against her brown skin and her panties sliding against her vagina as she walked.

## SKIN DEEP

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Karen hovered her brown fingers over her torso, feeling the warmth, the texture, the sensation of her nails digging into what should have been the bodysuit. But it felt real—too real. She scratched deeper, expecting the suit to tear, but instead, she felt a sharp pain, as though the suit had fused with her nerves.

"No, no, no... there's got to be an explanation," she muttered, trying to stay calm. Karen had always been cold-blooded in tense situations. She could detach herself, take a step back, and evaluate things as an outsider. "I can't be hallucinating. This is just a nuisance. There's a way out of this! Just as I put the suit on, I can take it off. The seal on my arm—that's the key." She frantically searched for the seam under her arm, the one she had seen the night before. Nothing. She lifted the blue top, turned up more lights, and searched her body for any sign of the seal. Her fingers skimmed over her skin, but the seam was gone. Completely vanished. The sight of her own brown hands searching her arm made the realization even starker.

A horrifying thought struck her—how would she convince anyone, especially someone who hadn't heard her voice, of what had happened? Her vision blurred as panic washed over her, and she nearly fainted. But Karen took a deep breath, pulling herself back. "Okay, this is my life now," she told herself. "I might be stuck like this for a while, but I'll figure it out." She grabbed the box the suit had come in, desperately looking for clues. There were no instructions, no brand, not even a "Made in" label. Nothing. Where had this thing come from?

## SKIN DEEP

---



Then she noticed the bottle of color contacts. A sudden wave of dread crept over her. Focused on her brown skin and black hair, she had forgotten about her eyes. Were the contacts stuck too?

She blinked, feeling her eyes dry out slightly, and rushed to the bathroom. The reflection of an Arab woman stared back at her, amplifying her anxiety. "Let's see if I can at least get rid of these contacts. If I can show my real eyes, I'll have some proof I'm not really Jasmine."

She carefully pinched at the right contact, and after a few tries, managed to remove it. She let out a small scream of triumph before checking her reflection. Her heart sank again. Her right eye was still dark brown. She glanced at the contact lens in her hand—it was transparent. Just an ordinary vision lens. She leaned closer to the mirror, examining her eye. It looked completely natural, as if the pigmentation had transferred onto her iris, like some kind of bizarre, permanent tattoo.

Karen stared at her face, now fully in trance, studying the features she was stuck with. After minutes of silent desperation, she took a deep breath, removed the other contact, and placed both lenses in their container. At least that was proof that the costume had existed.

But this was serious. Really serious. People don't absorb bodysuits into their skin like this.

## SKIN DEEP

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The first challenge was canceling all of her plans for the weekend. She had been scheduled to visit her mom on Sunday, but that was clearly out of the question now. She couldn't just show up like that and explain that her all-American daughter was now an Arab woman with brown skin and exotic features all because of a bodysuit she had foolishly tried on.

She sighed and dialed her mom's number, her fingers trembling.

"Hi mum!" - she has, her voice uncertain.

"Hi, baby! How have you been? We haven't talked in a while. I've been looking forward to your visit!"

"I miss you too, Mom!" Karen hesitated, her heart heavy. "About the trip... I, um, wanted to let you know that my college friends and I are planning an impromptu beach trip. I'm really sorry, but I'll have to cancel our visit.

"Oh, it's okay, sweetheart," her mom replied warmly. "I'm just glad you're having fun and making friends over there." Karen forced a smile, though her throat tightened with guilt. The conversation dragged on awkwardly until she finally found a moment to wrap it up.

"I've gotta go now, Mom. Talk soon, okay? Love you, bye."

"Oh mum, I'm sorry." - she thought, ending the call, tears on her brown cheeks. "But I can't let you see me like this."



Karen finally stripped off the princess costume and threw on a black crop top and skirt—she still felt extremely warm due to the extra skin layer and took a last glance at her reflection. That outfit had never flattered her before, but now she looked... gorgeous. "*At least I'm pretty,*" she muttered to herself. But this wasn't a costume anymore. She was about to face the world looking like a completely different person.

Stepping out of her apartment, she carefully scanned the hallway, worried that one of her neighbors might see her. What would they think? That she had a lesbian lover over, maybe, and was leaving in the morning after a secret rendezvous? In the parking lot, she spotted a familiar face—one of her neighbors—and panic surged through her. *Not now,* she thought, ducking slightly. She stood there awkwardly, fidgeting with her long hair, then she pretended to check her phone, waiting for him to leave. After what felt like forever, she unlocked her car and quickly slipped inside before anyone else could notice her.

Driving to the nearest first aid center, Karen's nerves began to build. As she sat in the waiting area, she felt the eyes of elderly patients on her—hostile glances, suspicious of the woman they assumed was of immigrant descent. She could almost hear the whispers of xenophobia in their stares. *Great,* she thought bitterly. *As if I didn't have enough to deal with.* Karen sat in the waiting room, time dragging on for hours. Unnoticed by her at first, her curves seemed to swell slightly, the fabric of her crop top growing tighter against her skin.



Adjusting it absentmindedly, she frowned. "*Weird,*" she muttered to herself. "*I could've sworn these were smaller.*" Finally, she was finally seen by a doctor at the first aid clinic. Nervously, Karen handed over her ID card. "I know this is hard to believe, but this is me," she said, her voice shaking. "I am stuck in a skin suit. A realistic skin suit. I wore it for Halloween, and now I can't get it off."

The doctor scoffed, clearly unconvinced. "That doesn't sound like an emergency to me, but let's take a look."

After a few minutes of examining her skin, he found no trace of the seal she'd mentioned. Frowning slightly, the doctor decided to believe her and took a small skin sample and a blood test. As Karen sat there, waiting for the results, the reality of her situation began to sink in even deeper. Something was terribly, terribly wrong. The doctor returned with a look that made Karen's heart sink. His face was pale, his eyes wide with disbelief.

"I owe you an apology," he began, his voice unsteady. "These results... they're unique."

Karen's pulse quickened. "What's going on?" she asked, her voice tight with fear.

"The suit—it's not just a suit. It has a cell-like structure, and it's merging with your body. Your skin is still there, but it's being transformed."

## SKIN DEEP

---



"The epidermis, your outer layer, is being pushed deeper, becoming part of the dermis. Which means... Your original skin is beneath it, but it's no longer functional as a protective layer."

Karen's head spun as his words sank in. "So, what does that mean?" she asked, her voice barely a whisper.

The doctor sighed. "The bodysuit is now a part of your body, it's using nutrients carried by your blood vessels. If we tried removing it, you'd be left looking like a burn victim. And it looks like the bodysuit is further integrating into your body as the cartilage of your ears and nose has also merged with the bodysuit."

Karen stared at him, her mind racing. She wanted to argue, to scream that it wasn't possible, but the doctor spoke with such authority that she began realizing deep down that she was stuck.

"So..." she stammered, "this... this is my face now?"

The doctor nodded solemnly. "I'm sorry."

"And what about the hair?" Karen asked, her voice hollow, as if she were in a trance. By now, anything seemed possible. "It's a wig... so why does it hurt when I pull it?" She anxiously tugged at a strand, feeling the sharp sting at her scalp.



The doctor leaned in, producing a small lens to examine her hairline closely. After a few moments of silent inspection, he straightened up, his expression apologetic.

"I'm sorry, but... that's your hair. It's growing from your scalp. Completely real."

Karen's heart pounded in her chest. "But I'm blonde!" she blurted out, disbelief flooding her mind.

The doctor shook his head. "Whatever adhesive was used to attach the wig seems to have bonded it to your actual hair follicles. And now... this hair has taken over. The follicles are producing black hair."

Her fingers trembled as they ran through the long, dark strands. The weight, the feel—it was all her own. *How could this be real?* Her thoughts then drifted, and a new concern took hold.

"Doctor... is it possible that my breasts are also... changing? I had an A-cup yesterday, and now... these feel like they're part of me. They're much bigger."

The doctor's expression shifted slightly as he considered the question. He quickly ordered a mammography, and after a brief examination, the results were clear: Karen was now the proud owner of natural-looking D-cups. This wasn't just a wig anymore. It was *her*. All of it.

## SKIN DEEP

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Karen's shock gave way to rage. "No, no, this is not fair!" she shouted, her voice trembling. "I didn't even want to wear this stupid costume! And now I'm trapped in it forever? I don't want to look like this! I'm *white*, for fuck's sake!" She stormed out of the doctor's office, her heart pounding with fury, and headed straight for the thrift shop. The old man was behind the counter, oblivious to the storm brewing in the busty Middle Eastern woman charging towards him. "Can I help you, miss?" he asked. Karen slammed her hands on the counter. "Look at what your damn costume did to me!" "I beg your pardon?" he stammered, confused. "I bought the Jasmine bodysuit here yesterday, and now I'm stuck looking like this! The doctor said the suit bonded with my skin and *merged* with my body." The old man's face went pale. "I—I don't know what to say. I—" "You sold me the bodysuit. *You're responsible* for ruining my life!" The man raised his hands defensively. "Listen, I can't help you... but I remember who gave me the package. There was this short lady. She came in, gave me a demonstration—she tried on one of the suits herself. Looked pretty realistic, though nothing like this. She said she worked in theater, and when her company went bankrupt, she got some of their gear as severance." Karen's eyes lit up with a glimmer of hope. "Can you contact her?" "She left me her number. Said she might have more to sell later." He fumbled through a drawer, finally pulling out an old, wrinkled notepad. Karen scoffed. "Ever heard of smartphones? They can save numbers." "Hey, I'm *trying* to help you, young lady!" he snapped back, his voice tinged with frustration. After what felt like an eternity, he found the number and scribbled it down. Karen quickly added it to her phone, her hands shaking slightly. Finally, a lead.

## SKIN DEEP

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Karen jumped in her car, her heavy breasts jiggling as she sat, reminding her of how deeply her body had been modified by the bodysuit. She hadn't yet allowed herself a moment to truly process what the doctor had told her. The horrifying reality that her own skin, her organs, and even her most intimate parts had been overtaken by the suit weighed on her.

She caught a glimpse of herself in the rearview mirror and adjusted her long, black hair. Her exotic brown eyes, fuller lips, and radiant brown skin stared back at her. Every time she looked at her face, she saw the face of a stranger. "Who are you?" she whispered to the woman in the mirror. "Why are you doing this to me? What did I do to deserve having my identity overwritten by a stupid bodysuit?" Her thoughts raced. Who was this woman who sold the suit? How could she get her real self back? And if she couldn't... how would she live like this? With a deep breath, Karen glanced down at the number saved on her phone—the only lead she had.

Before Karen could do anything else, she had one more thing to fix: calling in sick at work. There was no way she could show up looking like a Saudi Arabian princess, and she definitely didn't want anyone spreading rumors about her disappearance. She worked part-time at a lingerie shop, and her shift was scheduled for the following day. She'd never taken a sick day in six months, so they'd likely trust her. Nervously, she dialed her manager, praying she wouldn't have to explain too much.



The call rang out without an answer, and Karen felt a brief moment of relief, about to turn her attention to calling the mysterious woman behind the bodysuit. Just then, her phone buzzed. It was her manager—calling her back. A *video call*. Karen's heart skipped a beat. She couldn't let her manager see her like this. She quickly picked up, choosing audio-only. "Hey, sorry," she said, her voice tight. "I didn't turn the camera on because I look terrible. I'm sick. Just wanted to let you know I can't make it tomorrow."

"Oh," her manager replied, clearly disappointed. "Yeah, better stay home, don't want to spread anything to your coworkers. You sound awful, by the way."

Karen froze. She hadn't realized it until now, but her voice had changed. It was deeper, more guttural, with a stronger "h" sound, like she was speaking English through the filter of a slight Arabic accent. The bodysuit hadn't just altered her appearance; it was reshaping her throat, her vocal cords. The last remaining part of her true self was slipping away.

She swallowed hard, trying to clear her throat. "Yeah," she said, forcing a laugh. "My throat's all messed up."

"Well, take care of yourself and let me know when you're feeling better," her manager replied.

"Will do," Karen said, ending the call as quickly as possible.

For a moment, she just sat there, stunned. She tested her voice, speaking aloud, even recording voice messages to hear it back. Each time, it was the same—*someone else's* voice. She was starting to sound like a different person entirely.



Every organ, every cell, becoming something... *else*. She had to act fast.

Without hesitation, she dialed the number the old man had given her and waited, heart pounding. No answer. Of course not. Why would this mysterious woman pick up? Frustrated, Karen considered driving back to the shop to press the old man for more information. But before she could start the car, her phone buzzed. An SMS.

*Who the hell sends SMSs nowadays?* she thought, her pulse quickening as she opened the message.

It was from the mysterious number: *"I was waiting for your call."* It was followed by an address and a time.

Karen checked her phone. Two hours to go, and the location wasn't far. *Why an SMS?* she wondered. *And how did she know I was going to call?* Her paranoia flared—was this a trap? But at this point, what did she have to lose? Half-human, half-replicant bodysuit as she was, the risk felt less daunting than doing nothing.

Her stomach growled, interrupting her thoughts. She hadn't eaten since yesterday, and it was nearing lunchtime. There was a fast food place nearby, so she decided to stop and grab something familiar—a hot dog, one of her favorite guilty pleasures.

But as soon as she took the first bite, her stomach turned. The taste was awful, repulsive. Karen frowned, staring at the hot dog. It was a normal one—nothing wrong with the food itself. *What's happening?*

## SKIN DEEP

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Then it hit her. If the bodysuit had altered her throat and vocal cords, had it also changed her taste buds? Her body wasn't responding to pork the way it used to. Her Arab form wasn't used to eating it. She groaned, tossing the hot dog into the trash. *Great. Now I even have the taste buds of a Muslim woman.*

Sighing in frustration, she pulled out her phone and searched for the nearest halal restaurant. The smell of falafel and kebab wafted through the air as she approached, and her mouth watered involuntarily. It was food she had never cared for before, but now... it was all she wanted.

She ordered a meal and devoured it quickly, the rich flavors settling her hunger in a way the hot dog hadn't. *Well*, she thought grimly as she slurped the last of her drink, *I guess this is my life now*. She took a moment to reflect and noticed how some men were staring at her. Her looks and outfit make her look like an attention-seeker and she could imagine some of those men were judging her for not being modest despite her obvious Arab and presumably Muslim background. Karen groaned and left quickly.

Karen drove to the address, the rundown part of town giving her a sense of unease. She parked as close as she could and quickly made her way to the building, knowing a busty woman like herself wouldn't go unnoticed if anyone passed by. She was still getting used to the increased attention she was receiving from men and needed to be careful. She was ten minutes early but rang the bell anyway, her nerves on edge.



After a few long seconds, the door opened. A short Asian woman stood there, unremarkable except for her sharp, intelligent brown eyes. Her olive skin and short brown hair gave away nothing about her age—she could have been anywhere between 25 and 45.

The woman didn't say a word, so Karen followed her inside, her mind swirling with too many questions to even begin asking.

The woman offered Karen a cup of tea from an old ceramic kettle. Karen hesitated, suddenly questioning her decision to come here. *Why had I even come? What am I hoping to achieve?* Feeling a surge of insecurity, she decided to hide her true motives.

"My name is Mary, nice to meet you," the woman said.

"Ka... Karima," Karen replied, instinctively choosing a name that fit her new form.

"So, what brings you here?" Mary asked, her lips curling into a smirk.

"Oh, I came on behalf of... Matt, the owner of the pawn shop," Karen lied, recalling his name from the papers on his desk. "He wanted to know if... you had more items. He said your products sold really well, and he'd pay you generously for more."

"I see. Let me check." Mary disappeared into another room.

## SKIN DEEP

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"Maybe I should go" Karen thought waiting, but then she glanced around the space, her eyes catching on a familiar-looking box. She opened it and froze—inside was another bodysuit, this one with dark brown skin and kinky hair. Her heart skipped a beat. She quickly closed the box just as Mary returned.

"Oh, you found a bodysuit?" Mary asked casually.

"I... I didn't mean to—" Karen stammered.

"It's fine," Mary interrupted with a knowing smile. "You can stop lying to me. I know you're wearing one too."

Karen's pupils dilated with horror. Her instinct screamed at her to run, but as she turned to flee, something stopped her. Her legs moved of their own accord, walking her back to the chair. She tried to grab her legs, but her arms went limp. She screamed for help, but her body no longer responded. Her limbs, betraying her, crossed elegantly as she sat back down. Panic welled inside her as her mind screamed for control.

"It's unpleasant, I know," Mary said calmly, holding a strange device. "Just be obedient, and that won't happen again."

Karen stared at her, terrified, struggling to understand what had just happened. "So that's why you tricked me into coming here?"

"Smart girl. As you've probably noticed, the bodysuit has taken over most of your body," Mary continued, her voice eerily soothing. "Your skin, your hair, your throat, even your digestive system. By now, most of your muscles aren't really yours anymore."



"Your nervous system has been partially taken over too. But your brain—well, that's still mostly intact, which is why you're freaking out right now." Karen's face contorted in confusion and dread as her brain fought for control over her own body. "Why the fuck did you do this to me?" she spat, her voice trembling. "You've turned me into some kind of replicant Arab woman, under your control! Who the hell are you? A witch? A scientist? An alien?"

"That's irrelevant" Mary replied coldly, cutting her off. "All you need to know is that I can and will control your body if you don't follow my instructions. Understood?"

Karen nodded, terrified, as she felt control return to her body. She uncrossed her legs, her breaths coming in ragged gasps. "I will... I promise I'll do whatever you want. Just please don't do that to me again."

"Good," Mary said, her smile returning. "We don't need to be enemies, you know? We will work together." She raised her cup of tea. "To a successful partnership."

Karen shakily lifted her cup, still struggling to process the nightmare unfolding in front of her. Mary's smile widened. "A glass of champagne would have been more fitting, but I'm afraid that's not something you'd find palatable anymore."

Karen took a sip of the tea, her body tense. But before she could think further, her eyelids began to droop. She tried to speak, but her lips barely formed the words. "Noooh..." she slurred, before her body went limp, collapsing into the chair.



Karen woke up, her head groggy. She instinctively checked herself. Seeing the familiar brown D-cups and silky black hair brought her a strange sense of relief. At least she hadn't been further altered. Only her attire had changed—the black crop top and skirt she'd been wearing were replaced by a shiny pink crop top and a miniskirt. The room, too, was different. It was no longer the dingy space she had entered earlier. Now she was in a luxurious, high-end apartment.

The Asian woman appeared again, her expression calm and unsettlingly friendly. "Oh, you're awake!" she chirped. "You're now in your new apartment. You'll have everything you need: a car, money. You work for us now. Of course, everything here belongs to us, as you, strictly speaking, do not exist."

"What? Why... Why did you drug me?" Karen demanded, slurring.

"We could trust you... to some extent," the woman replied with a faint smile, "but we didn't know exactly how much yet. We preferred not to take any risks. For your own good." Karen felt a shiver run down her spine.

"All you need to know is that we brought you here to our... headquarters. We carried out some tests and implanted a small device in your brain. We can now override your muscles and take control of your persona from anywhere, we are not restricted to a certain distance anymore."

Karen's hand instinctively moved to her head, trying to feel for the implant.



"Don't bother," the woman added smoothly. "There's nothing for you to find there. Microsurgery from the inside. No scars, no marks." Karen stared at her, stunned, as the woman continued.

"Oh, one more thing, could you remind me of your name?" - the Asian lady asked her, maliciously.

Karen blinked. A look of confusion appeared on her face. She opened her mouth to speak, but her mind was blank.

"Do you recall where you live? Or your parents' name? Or how you used to look like before?" - the woman pressed, her questions firing off rapidly.

Karen's hand instinctively moved to her thick, dark mane, her mind running a thousand miles an hour. She could not for the love of her life recall her own name, her hometown or her parents. As for her face, she clearly recalled looking very different once she had put the skin suit on, but all she could picture in her head now was a gorgeous Middle Eastern woman with dark brown eyes and black long hair and brown skin. Somehow, that face—*her face*—felt comforting and familiar. Before her encounter with the bodysuit, she only had vague memories. She still retained all of her knowledge from school and daily life, but any personal memories had vanished. After half a minute she turned up her eyes to the Asian lady, who was smiling condescendingly back at her. "What have you done to me?"

"Good. Nothing to stress about, sweetie. We got rid of any piece of information that could allow you to reclaim your old identity. Now, you're merely a human drone—*our* drone—and you belong to us."



Karen's mind reeled at the sheer scale of what was happening. "But... my family? My friends? They'll be looking for me!" she said, her voice rising in panic. Even if she could not picture her in her head, she knew she was beloved. "Can I at least let them know I'm okay?" For the first time, the woman showed a rare flicker of empathy.

Karen's heart skipped a beat. *Had they killed them?*

"I'm sorry, that's no longer possible. Your old identity is officially dead. We used your car and some synthetic body parts with your DNA to simulate a car accident."

The news hit her like a punch to the gut. She wasn't entirely surprised though—these people clearly had the resources and technology to pull something like that off.

"But the police... they'll investigate," she stammered.

"They won't find anything," the woman said coolly. "The only person who could help them reopen the case is you, but you wouldn't be able to recall a single detail about your old identity. Good luck walking into a police station with a story like that." Karen was silent, absorbing the weight of it all. She was absolutely right. After a moment, she managed to ask, her voice barely above a whisper, "I only have two questions: why? And who are you?"

"We are your employers, bosses, and masters," the woman said, her smile returning. "That's all you need to know."

"But why me?" Karen pressed, her voice cracking with exhaustion.



The woman's smile disappeared. "Not everyone is compatible with the bodysuits, unfortunately. You're among the few compatible ones. And there are only so many ways we can get unsuspecting people to try them on without raising suspicion. The costume package was one of them."

Karen slumped back, defeated. Karen stared at her brown, natural-looking arms, her voice thick with disbelief. "So the fact that I look like an Arab woman is completely random? Just to match that stupid Jasmine costume? To trick me into wearing this... thing."

"Yeah, pretty much," the woman replied nonchalantly. "But the fact that you look nothing like your original self is a safety measure for us. Plus, your good looks might come in handy. Is everything clear?"

Karen sighed, feeling a mixture of resignation and bitterness. "Got it. Well, it seems like you're only giving me the information you want me to know. I guess I'm ready to work for you... my *masters*."

The words left her mouth with a bitter taste. The woman simply smiled, as if Karen's submission was inevitable all along.

"Good," she said, her voice dripping with satisfaction.

"What is my new identity then? Since I lost my old one, do I get a new ID card or something?" Karen asked, her voice carrying acceptance of her new reality.



The woman smiled, her tone matter-of-fact. "You can choose any name you like when it's necessary, but don't expect any documents or ID. For us, you're simply drone N8."

Karen's eyes widened. "So, I don't get an identity? No ID? Nothing?"

"We want you to remember that you're just a drone in our hands, not a real person," the woman said, her voice dripping with condescension. "Keeping you nameless ensures your dependency on us." Karen was speechless. The codename—N8—was so short, implying there were very few agents like her. A quick calculation told her there couldn't be more than 260 agents. And that was probably an overestimate. For all she knew, she might be one of a handful. Or even the only one. At least it meant they wouldn't dispose of her easily.

"I understand," Karen said quietly. "What's my mission then?"

"Your task is simple: find others like you—people who are compatible with the suits—and get them to wear one."

Karen's stomach churned at the thought. Finding more innocent people to trap, to turn into nameless drones for some shadowy organization? It made her sick. On the other hand, she had no choice.

"I know it's not glamorous," the woman said, reading the disgust on Karen's face, "but it's safe. No one's going to shoot at you or anything."



Karen scoffed. "How do I even find them?"

"We've already done some tests on you and identified a list of possible matches based on their genetic makeup." - she said, handing her an iPad with a list of profiles.

Karen's brow furrowed. "Why do you need *me* to do this?"

"As you noticed, the merging process typically takes about a day to fully complete. Normally, we would have to monitor a candidate and wait, which is inefficient and risky. But with you, it's different. The moment you make physical contact with someone wearing one of our bodysuits, the merging process accelerates. It acts like a catalyst," the woman explained.

"The process begins immediately, cutting down the time drastically. What normally takes a day can now be verified in a matter of minutes. And once that happens, they're ours. It's quicker, more efficient, and far less detectable than any other method we've tried."

Karen hated it. She was being used to trap people even faster, to trigger their transformation just by being near them. She had become a living weapon for this mysterious organization. Once everything was explained, Karen received her first target: a young theater actress. "It's an easy one to start with" the woman had assured her. "It won't be hard to convince her to try it on! You have a few hours to familiarize yourself with your new surroundings. The meeting with the victim is in two hours."

## SKIN DEEP

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The Asian lady left, leaving drone N8 alone, her head still full of questions. She looked outdoor. She was in a high-rise building in a large American city. Her phone location told her she was in Austin, Texas. She noticed a laptop in the room and immediately been browsing information. It was late November, so about 3 weeks had gone by since the Halloween party. She took a moment to try and remember any face or detail from that party, but could only recall her own Jasmine costume.

She searched for recent car crashes, around the first week of November. She found many, all over the US. A quick search showed an average of more than 100 daily fatal car crashes in the US. She immediately lost hope. Even trimming down her search to women around her age would be too many. *Maybe I'm not even from the US. Heck, maybe I wasn't even a woman!* She stared down at her round brown orbs. *Maybe I was a Russian teenage boy the bodysuit had turned into an Arab woman! Mary mentioned that I now look very different from before...* The thought made her cringe. *No no, let's be rational, why would a man have dressed as Jasmine? I must have been a woman all along. I was probably in my 20s or late teens given that I went to a costume party for Halloween, and I speak English fluently. My Arabic accent was probably implanted to match the body and overrode my original one but I'm pretty sure I was American. I recall some Spanish from school, so I probably grew up in the US. Or maybe I was Hispanic.* After reading the results from the most recent Census, painting the picture of a very diverse population in her age group, she realized she had no clue how she had looked like.

## SKIN DEEP

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Drone N8 read all the documentation they provided for her for her first case and left the building. She found a new pink Porsche waiting for her in the parking lot, the back seats already stuffed with boxes of bodysuits. One was marked for Katherine, today's victim. She adjusted the rearview mirror, staring at her own reflection. *Can I really do this?* she wondered. She was now an agent for a shadowy organization that had taken her life and overwritten her identity. Could she really trick someone else into the same fate?

With a heavy heart, she drove to the address she was given, a small theater where a semi-professional theatre collective composed of young, passionate actors worked part-time while aspiring to establish themselves in the industry. Her mind raced with doubts, but she pushed them aside as she arrived. A young woman greeted her at the door—a white actress with striking green eyes, wavy red hair and a thin body.

"Karima," she introduced herself, sticking to the name she had adopted with Mary. "I'm from AlterEgo Suits, a startup specializing in realistic skinsuits. We're new, but we're already making waves in the industry. Our products are extraordinary!"

"Katherine," the actress replied, shaking Karima's hand. "I got your email. I'll admit, I'm a little skeptical, but the idea was too intriguing to pass up. We're always looking for ways to cover more roles with fewer actors, and if these suits work, it could be a game-changer. Actors could play multiple roles!"



"Exactly!" Karima said, pretending to be excited. She was torn between wanting to connect with Katherine as a fellow human being and the gnawing guilt of knowing what might happen next. "Can I show you one of our products?"

"Of course!" Katherine said, clearly intrigued.

Karima opened the box she had brought and handed it to Katherine. The young actress carefully removed a skinsuit—a beautiful replica of a curvy mixed woman of mixed origins with mocha skin and beautiful facial features.

"Oh, it seems they gave me one of our Caribbean suits. Sorry about that!" Karima said, feigning embarrassment. "I might have another one in my car. We offer suits in all ethnicities and body types, of course." Obviously, that suit had been carefully selected before. There were no backup suits in any case.

Katherine waved it off, laughing. "No worries. This is a test. If I can pass as a Caribbean woman, then these suits must be incredible!" Katherine's genuine trust in her was disheartening.

She lifted the suit, marveling at how real it looked. "Hmm, it's pretty heavy!"

"Yes, but it feels light once it's on. You'll forget you're even wearing one after a while," Karima said, trying to mask her unease. "I've tried one myself."



Katherine excused herself to try the suit on, heading to the changing room. Karima stood there, feeling a pit form in her stomach. Moments later, Katherine emerged, half-dressed with her wig unsecured to her scalp, the thick skinsuit clinging to her skinny body.

"Wow!" Katherine exclaimed, inspecting herself. "This is... surreal! I'm so thick! I would have never thought it would have looked realistic with a body type like mine!"

Katherine looked very alluring in her new form. "Looking good," Karima replied, forcing herself to focus. "Let me help you apply the solution. It'll make the skin look even more lifelike."

Her hands trembled slightly as she approached, knowing that once she touched Katherine, the transformation process could begin—if Katherine was one of the few compatible. Her excitement didn't go unnoticed as *they* took control of her hand and forced her to massage the solution into Katherine's skin, watching as the suit subtly shifted to a more lifelike Caribbean hue. She immediately dropped any excitations, regaining control over her own body. The feeling of losing control of her own body was so terrifying she gave up on any moral concerns. "Let me help you attach the wig too," Karima said, doing her best to maintain a professional tone as she carefully glued and adjusted the wig to Katherine's scalp. As she worked, Karima forced a smile. "You know, we also provide realistic color contacts to match," she added, trying to hide her growing guilt beneath the thin mask of a saleswoman's charm.



Katherine stared at the mirror, her green eyes wide as she carefully placed the brown-colored contacts over them. Her once bright, piercing eyes now gleamed with a rich, deep brown hue, perfectly blending with her newly caramel-toned skin. She blinked a few times, adjusting to the sensation of the lenses, then admired the result for a second, before slipping into a red, silky dress that hugged her curvy figure.

Karima watched as Katherine admired herself, twirling in front of the mirror. The bodysuit had reshaped her entirely into a Caribbean bombshell, with full, pouty lips, high cheekbones, and expressive brown eyes that now matched her dark, cascading hair. Karima felt surprisingly intrigued by the Black beauty standing next in front of her. Had she gained a new kink?

"I'll be honest—I am speechless," Katherine said, breathless with excitement. "This stuff works like *magic*. My skin looks real, and even my facial expressions come through so naturally! And this body is so... curvy!" - she added, checking her curves. "I wish my boyfriend could see me now!"

"Amazing, right? I believe this model is loosely based on Nikki Minaj!" Karima said, with a smile. "Why don't you keep it on for a bit longer? You'll see—it won't bother you at all, if you've got time, that is."

Katherine smiled, smoothing the fabric of the dress over her hips. "Oh, okay, sure! What would you like to do in the meantime?"



Karima's mind raced as she bought herself some time, still unsure if the bodysuit had begun to fully merge with Katherine. Though the transformation was visually perfect, she needed to wait at least fifteen more minutes before allowing her to attempt taking it off. Her eyes flicked to the seal beneath Katherine's arm, watching for any signs that it might disappear.

"You could show me around," Karima said, feigning casual interest. "I've never been backstage in a theater before."

"Oh, really?" Katherine replied, clearly excited by the idea. "Sure, nobody's around right now. I could show you our costumes! Actually," she added with a playful grin, "there's one that would look *really* good on you!"

Karima laughed nervously, the Caribbean-looking woman slowly getting used to her heavier, curvier body, her body movements getting more natural by the minutes. That was also a sign the suit was bonding. Karen followed Katherine through the back corridors of the theater. The Katherine rummaged through a rack of costumes before pulling out a silky turquoise and gold outfit, the shimmering fabric catching the light as it draped over her arm.

"I don't want to sound racist, but... have you ever been told you'd make a really convincing Jasmine?" Katherine teased.

Karima smirked, rolling her eyes. "Yeah, I get that a lot."



"This costume is high-quality—one of our best—but we've never found anyone who could *really* pull it off."

Katherine stepped forward and helped Karima slip out of her tight pink top and miniskirt. Karima felt a strange sense of déjà vu as the soft fabric of the new outfit brushed against her skin—this wasn't so different from the Jasmine costume she had worn on Halloween, except this version was far more refined. She hated being reminded of the way a bodysuit had trapped her in this life. The gold detailing shimmered, and the gloves felt soft against her skin, completing the sexy look.

Katherine adjusted the fit, making sure the costume hugged Karima's body perfectly and styled her long black hair into a traditional Jasmine hairdo with fake golden rings. "You look amazing," she said, admiring her work. "This is the best I've ever seen this costume look on anyone!" Karima stared into her to detect any hint that she might be into women, but her look was one of mere appreciation, not lust.

Karima glanced at her reflection. She looked darn hot. She could easily be a pornstar, with her looks.

"Thanks!" Karima replied, adjusting her gloves with practiced ease. She kept her movements calm and measured, though inside, her mind raced. Katherine moved with surprising fluidity in her new body, her gestures natural and unforced. Karima had a sinking feeling that Katherine might indeed be one of the few unlucky ones, doomed to become just like her—a drone



As they chatted about costumes, Katherine suddenly paused, a frown forming on her face. As she turned slightly, her sleek black bob brushed against her cheeks. The sensation made her blink in confusion.

“Wait a second,” she interrupted, running her fingers across her face. “I can feel my fingers! And... my fingers can feel this skin!”

Karima’s heart sank. She glanced at her watch—enough time had gone for the skin suit to do its job. Her eyes darted to Katherine’s arm. The seal was gone. Katherine was trapped, just like she had been. Karima wondered how they had managed to get enough information about Katherine’s genetic makeup to figure out she was compatible with the bodysuits. What kind of organization collects DNA samples from a large enough amount of people, that they can spot the rare ones who can actually merge with the suit? Or maybe the compatibility wasn’t such a rare gift, after all.

“Yeah, our suits are incredibly sensitive,” Karima said, trying to sound casual. “People can feel everything through them, just like real skin.”

Katherine shook her head, her agitation growing. “No, this is different. It feels like it’s *my* skin.”

Karima swallowed, compassion bubbling up inside her for the innocent woman.



Then Katherine checked her arm. "Where's the seal?" Katherine's voice dropped, her tone sharp with panic.

Karima hesitated, forcing a smile as she tried to calm her. "Don't worry, it happens sometimes. You're fine."

"I need to get this thing off!" Katherine said, her voice rising with panic. "I have a play later today. I can't show up looking like this!" Her hands frantically scanned her arms and shoulders, searching desperately for any hint of an opening in the bodysuit.

Karima kept her expression calm, professional, though inside, guilt gnawed at her. Soon, all of this pain would be over for poor Katherine, at least. "Let's go back to the changing room," she said, with a nervous smile. "I have a solvent there for situations like this." Obviously, there were no solvent or anything that could help her now, but she needed to buy herself some time.

Katherine nodded, trusting Karima, as she followed her. Still wearing the elegant Jasmine costume, Karima discreetly touched an earpiece hidden in her earring and whispered, "Subject positive" as soon as she gained a few meters of advantage on the woman wearing the Caribbean bodysuit. She just had to stall the poor woman until the big guns came. Probably not more than a few minutes.

"Let me take a look," Karima said, moving swiftly as she grabbed Katherine's arms and snapped handcuffs onto her wrists.



Katherine's eyes flashed with anger. "Is this some kind of joke? I am not amused."

"Not a joke," Karima replied, her voice steady. "This way, you won't scratch your skin. The suit is still unstable."

Katherine yanked at the cuffs, her frustration boiling over. "Ok, just use that goddamn solvent. Hey, listen, the bodysuit was really convincing—I'll give you that. I don't know if this is part of your demonstration or whatever, but it's gone on long enough. Get me out of this, or else—"

"You'll never get out of it, stupid. Haven't you figured it out yet?" Karima snapped, her own stress bubbling to the surface. "The suit has merged with your body."

Katherine froze, her expression turning from anger to disbelief. "Huh? What are you talking about? I don't *want* to be stuck as a chubby Black lady! You better get me out of this, or I'll sue your company!"

N8 sighed, her heart heavy with frustration and a touch of empathy. "Listen... I've been through the same thing. I *wish* someone had told me this sooner, so I could've had time to process it. You're stuck like this—*forever*. You're going to be a Caribbean woman for the rest of your life. And they are way too powerful to be sued."

"You? Stuck?" Katherine's voice shook as she tried to make sense of it. "You're wearing a suit too? Are they forcing you to do this?"



Karima nodded slowly. "Yeah... and I can't take it off either. I work for them now. They gave me no choice. Also, I am sorry it had to be you. You seemed a nice person."

Karima tied Katherine to a chair, securing her tightly as she waited for her colleagues to arrive. It wouldn't be long now. Any moment, they would break in and take over.

"You should enjoy these moments, though," Karima said, her gaze drifting into the distance.

"Why?" Katherine asked, still struggling to process the nightmare unfolding around her.

Karima sighed. "Your body might be gone forever, but at least you still remember who you are. You still know your name. You should savor those memories... hold on to them while you can."

"Isn't your name Karima?" Katherine asked, confused.

Karima shook her head. "No. I can't remember my real name. Or my real face. They messed with my memories. I only know that I wasn't always like this... I wasn't Arab before."

Katherine stared at her, wide-eyed. Her looks, her accent, it all seemed so real! Would something like that happen to her too? "So... will they erase my memories too?"

Karima's voice softened. "Yes. Eventually. It's only a matter of time."

## SKIN DEEP

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Moments later, the organization's agents arrived. Katherine let out a weak scream. "Please don't hurt me, I beg you!" she pleaded as the agents used their device to take control of her body. With calculated precision, they activated the device. Her body jerked, and her panicked cries turned into raw screams of terror as she felt control slipping away, her limbs no longer obeying her will.

Karima turned her head, unable to watch. It wasn't a sight she wanted to see again. She still remembered how it felt—*the first time is always terrifying*, she thought. Once the agents confirmed the Caribbean beauty's body had fully merged with the suit, they used their powers to make her follow them. Once they confirmed the transformation was complete, the agents used their powers to command her, and Katherine, her face twisted in silent distress, had no choice but to obey. She followed them, her movements stiff, her eyes wide with fear. They led her to an underground garage, where a dark minivan awaited. Karima trailed behind, her presence a quiet shadow, offering no comfort.

The ride to the facility was silent, save for the soft hum of the engine. Karima left them to do the rest—the erasure of every personal detail from their new victim's memory. They told N8 they had improved slightly on the technique and were eager to see the results. Her task was complete.

Still dressed in her Jasmine attire, N8 drove away, the attention of passing men lingering on her as she slipped back into the cold reality of her own existence.



A few hours later, Katherine or whatever she had been twisted into woke up in a hospital bed, surrounded by a medical team and Karima. With the sight of Karima's face, still dressed in the Jasmine costume to help the new drone remember her, the memories of what had happened slowly began creeping back. "I remember you... But... weh am I?" - her voice rougher, huskier than before, her flawless diction replaced by a thick African-American Caribbean accent. To N8's surprise, it didn't bother her at all.

"Please refer to me as drone N8. You're in a hospital," N8 replied softly. "You had a small surgery. How do you feel?"

"Surgery?" Katherine repeated, her brow furrowing in confusion. "Weh?"

N8 smiled, reassuringly. "The surgery used nanobots. No incisions, no marks." "Here, look for yourself." She handed Katherine a small mirror.

She took it, staring at the reflection of her curvy, dark-skinned body, checking her beautiful brown skin and black hair. The skin suit had permanently bonded to her body by now but she didn't seem to care. Her body seemed... right, somehow. "See, you look fine. Are you feeling better now?" Katherine nodded. She made no comments about the skin suit. "What did yuh do to me?"

"Don't worry too much about that right now. You'll adjust. We'll get to that. But first, let's start with something easy. I just need to ask you a few simple questions."

"What's your name?" N8 asked, her gaze sharp and focused now.



Katherine's eyes went blank, just like N8's from that fateful day. Confusion flickered across her face. She stared at N8, panic creeping back into her chest. "What's goin' on? Why can't I remember nothin'?"

"It's okay, baby, many of your memories have been erased. You won't need them anymore. Relax and accept the situation." N8 said soothingly, placing a gentle hand on her shoulder. "I remember meetin' you... an' I was mad at you 'bout somethin', but... I can't recall anything before dat. Not even my name."

"Don't stress. Next question: nationality and ethnicity."

Katherine blinked, trying to grasp something solid in her mind. "Well, I'm American, an' Black, of course"

She had completely forgotten about the bodysuit. "Are you sure?"

Katherine's face twisted in confusion. "Dat's one thing I sure 'bout. I remember growin' up in deh States... but I don't know exactly where. I remember beaches, though. Maybe Caribbean? I... tink I have a little accent" she added, as if noticing it for the first time. "Maybe I moved here when I was a little gal?" N8's eyes widened subtly, though she quickly masked her surprise. The real Katherine had been born and raised in a small Texas town, 100% white. The fact that Katherine now accepted her new appearance and origins as part of her identity was staggering. They had managed to implant new memories—a new way to make victims adapt more easily to their transformations.



"New question. What's your sexual orientation?"

"Hmm, I'm into gals." - the dark skinned beauty answered confidently.

N8 paused, taken aback. She remembered Katherine mentioning her boyfriend. Had they changed her sexual orientation too? A part of her was egoistically happy to realize that the two of them were now compatible, although the idea of dating a woman she had forcefully turned into a different person was morally disgusting.

"Are you sure you're not straight?"

"Nah, I like pussy haha!" - she responded with a carefree laugh. Her expression turned playful, her eyes scanning N8's body with a newfound boldness. "An' I feel like yuh might do too, the way yuh look at mi!" N8 stiffened, trying to maintain her composure. Her eyes widened slightly, but she quickly masked her reaction with a professional smile. "Yeah, I'm into women too," N8 finally admitted, her voice softer than she intended. Talia's grin widened, her eyes lighting up with satisfaction. "I knew it" she said, leaning forward slightly, her tone playful yet certain. N8 reflected for a second. She had never paused long enough to truly acknowledge it before, but the truth was undeniable now. She was a lesbian too, and she couldn't help but wonder: Was this really her, or had even this central part of her identity been manipulated?

## SKIN DEEP

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“Never mind. Now, look carefully at these photos,” N8 said, his tone cold and clinical. “One of these is a family portrait of your sister and your parents. If you guess correctly, we will release you. If you’re not sure, just make your best guess.”

It was a cruel game, designed to ensure her memory had been erased and to test how thoroughly they had rewritten her mind. The screen flickered to life, dozens of faces of young women with their parents of all ethnicities scrolling in front of her. Katherine’s brown eyes darted from one face to another, searching for a glimmer of familiarity. She gave one more look at her reflection in the mirror. She felt her nose, its shape broad and pronounced. Her warm brown skin, the black hair. Vague memories of her parents drifted through her mind, like fragments of a half-remembered dream. She could see them—Black and Caribbean, maybe Indian too—but their features remained blurry. “They haven’t erased everything,” she thought, relieved in some strange way. The very idea that she could have been anything else—Asian, Latina, or White—was utterly absurd. Without hesitation, Katherine skipped over the images of white women, including one of her real family, not recognizing the pale faces staring back. Confidently, she focused on the images of Black and brown women, her attention caught by a photo of an African-American woman with her parents who bore a vague resemblance to her current self. It felt...right, or at least close enough. “Dis one” she said, her voice filled with shaky confidence as she pointed to the picture.



"Wrong answer." N8 declared, her voice cold and companioned.

"I'm sorry. You will now work for us as a nameless drone. Just like me. Welcome to the crew, drone Z1."

Katherine's heart sank further as the weight of her new reality settled in. "Can't yuh call mi someting else?"

"They want us to remember," N8 continued with a sad smile, "that we're just a drone in their hands—not a real person. However, if you behave well, they might reward you by tell you your name and family history again" - she added, following the script. She knew they would only give her a fabricated name and identity and felt pity for her. "You had a neuralink device implanted in your brain to grant your new owners full control over your body and mental functions."

"Owners?" Katherine's voice trembled as the memories rushed back. "Oh lawd, mi remember now! Dem thugs... dem own mi now? Dis can't be real!"

N8 sighed, giving her a reassuring smile. "I have it too. It's not as bad as it sounds. "And you'll do fine. Your good looks haven't been altered" - she added. It was a lie, a small one, but necessary. But for now, she wanted to ease the girl's fears, to make this transition less painful.

Z1 was escorted out of the hospital bed, to a safe location, to help her adjust to her new self. N8 followed her.



Katherine looked up at her, and N8's heart twisted in her chest. The attraction had been there since they'd first brought Katherine in, but now, standing here in the dimly lit room of their safe house, it was growing stronger. N8 cleared her throat, pushing her feelings down. "It's not that bad, living without memories," she said, her voice quieter now. "You'll learn that it's easier... when you don't have to remember who you were. No more pain, no more past. You can just... exist."

Katherine's brow furrowed as she processed N8's words. She was still scared, but there was a flicker of something else there now—curiosity, maybe. Or resignation. N8 wasn't sure.

"You won't be alone. We're in this together, right?" She stepped closer, her heart racing, unable to stop herself. "We would make a good couple" she blurted out, the words tumbling from her mouth before she could catch them.

Katherine's eyes widened, and N8 instantly regretted it. She had gone too far. There was no room for personal feelings for drones like them. "I—I'm sorry," N8 stammered, her face flushing with shame. "That was... out of line. I didn't mean it like that. I—" But before she could finish, Katherine reached out, her hand gently brushing N8's arm. "No, I understand," she said softly. N8 felt a surge of relief, mixed with something else—something dangerous.

"Anyway," she said quickly, backing away, "I need to get back to work. And... I've got to change out of this ridiculous outfit."



Nothing else happened, and when N8's job was finished, she and Z1 were separated.

A few days later, N8 was getting ready for an unspecified new mission when she noticed Z1, now dressed provocatively in a black PVC crop top and miniskirt, sitting in her car, blissfully ignorant of the bodysuit that had reshaped her entire existence. To her, this was just another playful moment. The desire in her eyes was clear, and her intentions even clearer.

"Hey, babe," Z1 whispered, her voice a mix of playful and sultry. "Wanna take a ride wit' me?"

N8 bit her lip, trying to steady herself. "Drone Z1, what are you doing here? Aren't you on a mission?"

Z1 leaned closer, a mischievous glint in her eye. "You are my mission."

The words sent a shiver down N8's spine. She took a deep breath and quickly contacted her boss through her earpiece. "Z1 is here, flirting with me. What's the meaning of this?"

The response came quickly, direct and devoid of emotion. "We are done testing Z1. She has proven to be a complete success. On the other hand, we want to keep her unaware of the existence of bodysuits, so she won't be directly involved in our operations. She'll occasionally have some secondary tasks, but she's free most of the time. Consider this our way of rewarding your hard work—she's available to you."



“Available?” N8’s voice trembled slightly, unsure of where this conversation was going.

“Our data indicates you two are sexually compatible. Just take her as your lover. We know both of you have urges, and we’d prefer you not interacting with strangers.”

N8’s stomach twisted. They had turned Z1 lesbian just to make them a match. “So, you turned her lesbian so we could be together?” N8 asked, her voice a mixture of anger and disbelief.

“Bingo,” the voice on the other end replied casually, as if discussing the weather. “Did you also change my orientation?” N8’s voice cracked slightly.

“Maybe. You already know enough for now. Just enjoy some time off duty and take her home.”

The line went dead, leaving N8 sitting in stunned silence. Her heart was racing, her thoughts tangled in a web of desire and guilt. Had they manipulated her too? Even her most intimate feelings—her attraction to Z1—was it something they had implanted? Or had it always been there, waiting for the right moment to surface?

She glanced over at Z1, who was still sitting in the car, unaware of the storm raging inside N8’s mind. Her top had slipped slightly, revealing more of her flawless skin. The temptation was there, right in front of her.

## SKIN DEEP

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N8 sat in the car, her heart racing as she stared at the gorgeous Black woman sitting next to her. Z1's dark, radiant skin, her playful smile, her confident posture—everything about her was mesmerizing. Did it really matter that everything from her looks, to her accent, to her personality had been artificially crafted? She needed some affection right now. And Z1, despite the artifice, was here, smiling at her with warmth. Without thinking, N8 leaned in, her breath catching in her throat. She felt the pull, a magnetic force drawing her closer to Z1. Her hand gently cupped the side of Z1's face, her fingers brushing against the soft, smooth skin.

The kiss was tender, hesitant at first, but as Z1 responded, it deepened. For just a moment N8 allowed herself to feel something she hadn't in so long: intimacy, warmth, and the illusion of being with someone who cared. The touch of Z1's lips—full, warm, and sure—made N8's head spin. In the back of her mind, the memory of Katherine, the shy redhead, flickered for a moment. But that Katherine was gone. The woman she was kissing now—this confident, seductive woman—was nothing like her former self. From her expert touch to the way her full, round breasts pressed against N8's, everything about her was new, a carefully constructed persona. N8 pulled back slightly, breathless. "What's up, babe? Look like you was enjoyin' it" Z1 teased, her lips curling into a smile.

"Not here," N8 replied, still catching her breath. "Let's go to my place. It's just a few blocks from here, 301 W Ave."

## SKIN DEEP



"Ooh, I like where this goin'" Z1 purred as they switched seats. N8 started the engine, the soft rumble of the car breaking the momentary silence between them.

"You know what strange?" the Caribbean woman asked. "I can drive 'round here, I remember dese streets!"

"That makes sense, right? You lived here!" - N8 replied.

"Of course, babe. You lived here for a while before moving. You're just remembering bits and pieces."

"Yeah, but they not worried somebody might recognize me? Cameras all over the place; police could find me easy if they lookin'!" N8 remained silent. *She's starting to remember.* Trying to maintain control of the situation, N8 swallowed her guilt and forced a casual tone. "I dunno. Maybe they did some work on your lips and boobs, haha!" Z1 laughed and felt her breasts. Maybe some cosmetically procedures had altered her just enough to make look like a different Black woman. Not fully convinced, she asked: "Wah 'bout you? You know dis city?" "Not at all, I grew up somewhere else in the US, no idea where." Z1 nodded "Yeah yeah", still thinking about the inconsistencies about her situation.

N8 felt her pulse quicken, her mind scrambling for an answer. Now she had to gaslight her lover into accepting the lies she'd been fed. "The people we work for are powerful. They control everything. We don't even need IDs to get around. You've seen that for yourself." Z1 nodded again. "They have... influence. Probably a mole at the police. Maybe they erased your file." "Yeah yeah..." N1 looked convinced.



"An' another thing... When I roll through a Black neighborhood, it don't feel like home. An' I don't even feel safe 'round Black folks neither. I ain't tryna sound crazy, but I don't *feel* 100% Black. I mean, my looks, my ways, my accent all say I am, an' I remember growin' up as a Black girl, but..."

"I'm sure you're just confused". N8 was tired of her doubts and only wanted one thing: sex.

The Black beauty undressed herself, revealing a black lingerie set. She was horny and despite her lack of experience she seemed to have great skills when it came to woman-on-woman action. Surprising, considering she had been a perfectly straight woman until not so long before.

Z1 guided N8 through it—showed her how to touch, how to kiss. She followed, eager to learn.

"This feels so right," the Arab woman said, her voice soft, embarrassed by how new it all was for her.

"First time with a gal?" Z1 asked, a teasing glint in her eye.

N8 nodded, feeling her cheeks flush. "It... it was just something I'd thought about. Never tried."

Z1's smile softened. "Ooh. Then I'm real happy to be ya first."



In the meanwhile, Z1's sister, a 19 years old short redhead with freckles named Emma, had never given up hope after her sister's disappearance. Even though N8 and her colleagues made sure to delete the email Katherine had received from the bodysuit startup company, she had mentioned it to Emma. On that day, getting worried as Katherine didn't reply to her messages, Emma decided to check the theater. As she got there, she noticed a strange group walking away from the same block. Among them were a very clumsy Black woman with a slight resemblance to Nicki Minaj and a strikingly beautiful Arab woman dressed as Jasmine who drove away in a pink car. Later that day, when Katherine had officially gone missing, some of her colleagues at the theater mentioned a missing Jasmine costume. Katherine's disappearance was surrounded by other strange clues, she had likely been abducted and those people had to be involved somehow.

One afternoon, she spotted the same pink car parked in an upscale neighborhood. She hid in a nearby café, watching from a distance. Eventually, she saw two women enter the pink car, both in revealing outfits. One was the same stunning Black woman she had seen on that day. The other woman, Arab with a smart, focused expression was definitely the one who was wearing the Jasmine costume. To Emma's shock, she saw the two women kiss. Raised in a strictly conservative Christian family, Emma felt utterly disgusted by the sight.

Summoning all her courage, Emma made a bold move, trailing the car at a distance with her scooter.

## SKIN DEEP



N8, always vigilant, realized they were being followed and swiftly set a trap. She drove away from the center keeping a low speed so that Emma wouldn't lose touch with them. Then, before Emma knew it, she was caught in a dead end road. The Arab beauty stepped down the car and walked towards the redhead.

Emma, although intimidated, demanded answers, trying to hide the fear that gripped her. "I'm Emma, Katherine's sister. I saw you on that day, I know you're hiding her! Where is she?" Emma's voice wavered.

N8 sighed, stepping closer, towering over the redhead. "You're brave, I'll give you that. But you won't like what you're about to hear. Anyway, you have a right to know. Follow me." N8 took her to an isolated room in a building they owned in the area. N8 locked the door behind her and produced a gun, while Emma stood her ground, shaking. N8 towered over Emma, her expression unreadable.

"Good news is, your sister is alive and well. However, she's changed in ways you wouldn't even begin to imagine." N8's lips twisted into a faint smile. "In fact, you two have just met again, yet neither of you recognized each other. You see, the Black woman in my car, my lover... is your sister." Emma's breath hitched, her body tensing as N8 pulled out her phone, showing her a series of videos captured to document the change. The first showed her sister, wearing some kind of bodysuit, her voice still recognizable, her mannerisms unmistakably Katherine. Then, video by video, Emma watched in horror as Katherine's voice shifted—her pitch altered, her accent changed, her gestures morphed into the woman she was now. It actually made sense, Katherine mentioned a bodysuit!



"But... How come she didn't recognize me then?"

N8's gaze darkened, a flicker of pity passing over her face. "Her memories have been completely erased. She can't even remember her own name, her family, anything about her. She can't recall being anything else than the sexy Caribbean beauty she is now."

Emma's face went pale as the reality of it sank in. "You're lying. This can't be true. She can't be like that, she's a good Christian, not a lesbian!" she whispered, shaking her head in disbelief, her voice cracking with emotion.

N8 smirked, watching Emma's horror unfold. "Oh, she is now. Trust me, she loves to eat my pussy!" N8 added cruelly, her smile widening. "See, your sister has completely changed values and personality. And guess what? She's happy now. She didn't really have a choice about her new identity and there's no going back for her. But you... you still have a choice." Emma's heart raced, and she stumbled back. "What do you mean?"

Emma's heart raced as N8 opened a large case, revealing rows of bodysuits neatly lined up inside. "Let's face it, we can't let you go around like that, you know too much at this point. "We can't just let you walk away. But lucky for you, our data shows you're compatible with these," she said, gesturing to the suits. "After all, you share your sister's DNA. Now, the real question is—what should we turn you into?" Emma backed up, her hands trembling. "Please, no..." It's time for you to open your horizons! I bet you don't like Mexicans, am I right?" She pulled out a curvy Latina bodysuit, the rich brown skin gleaming in the light. "Maybe you'd make a cute Chinese girl, given your petite frame?" N8 mused, holding up a suit with silky black hair and delicate features.



"Emma's eyes were wide with horror, her lips trembling. "No... please... I don't want this..."

N8 tilted her head, a smug smile playing on her lips. "Come on girl! I'm giving you the chance to choose your new look. Not many get that luxury. Heck, your sister certainly didn't. She would have never chosen the which Black body she's rocking now..." N8's grin grew wider. "Hey, speaking of her, since your sister looks like a celebrity now, maybe you should too! Who's your favorite one? We have a good selection here" . She added, in a merry tone.

Emma's mind raced. "T-Taylor Swift" she stammered. If she had to become something else, she might as well turn into her idol.

N8's face twisted into mock disappointment. "You're a Swiftie? Jeez, how predictable. Boring. Sorry, that won't do. We need to change your ethnicity to make you even more unrecognizable. It's our policy." Her eyes gleamed as she picked up a few other bodysuits from the case. "How about Rihanna instead? Or Beyoncé? Or... maybe Ariana Grande?" N8 held up the Ariana suit, its long sleek hair and tanned skin gleaming in the dim light, a twisted smile spreading across her face.

Emma trembled, her heart pounding in her chest as tears streamed uncontrollably down her face. "Please... no... just let me go... I won't tell anyone, I swear."

N8's smile didn't falter. "Oh, I believe you won't. But you're not leaving this room as Emma."

## SKIN DEEP



N8 played with her weapon, her gaze cold. "There's no escape. Now you're going to be part of this, just like your sister. Pick one. Now." Emma's heart pounded as she hesitantly reached for the Ariana Grande suit. It was instinctive; she didn't want to become Black like her sister. Slowly, with shaking hands, Emma disrobed and rolled the rubbery material up her pale feet and legs, watching as her skin was replaced by sleek, toned bronzed legs. "Good choice, let me help you!" - N8 commented.

Her torso and chest were next, the synthetic material pressing tightly against her, reshaping her figure into that of a celebrity she had never wanted to be. She paused, clutching the last piece in her trembling hands, her reflection a distorted mix of her old self and Ariana. "Go on" N8 urged, her tone cheerful. With a deep breath, Emma pulled the final piece over her head. The suit felt tight on her face, but it quickly adjusted to it. N8 calmly stepped forward, grabbing a long black wig styled into a ponytail and placing it on Emma's head with practiced precision. "Hold still," she muttered, sliding brown contact lenses into Emma's eyes, replacing her natural blue with a warm brown. "There you go". N8 pulled out a bottle of solution, pouring it into her hands. "Let me apply some solution too. It'll make the skin look more lifelike. Soon, you'll look in the mirror and not recognize yourself, and soon enough, you won't even remember who you were." Emma stood motionless, a lone tear falling freely onto her newly bronzed cheeks as N8 worked, rubbing the solution over her body with clinical efficiency.

"So will I also be... formatted? Turned into a mindless drone like my sister?" Emma asked, terrified by the changes awaiting her.



N8 shook her head, focused on applying the solution evenly. "Not mindless. Just without any personal memories."

"So I won't even remember that the Black woman I saw earlier is actually my sister?" Emma's voice cracked, her heart breaking as the reality of it sank in.

N8's voice remained firm. "Yeah, that's correct. There you go! Have a good look at yourself! Oh my God, it's so twisted! You're a Swiftie, and yet you're stuck looking like an Ariana Grande lookalike! Isn't that ironic?"

Emma's mind struggled to process the flood of new sensations. The unfamiliar tug of her long black hair, styled in a high ponytail, brushing against her back. The sight of bronzed arms where her pale skin had once been. But the biggest shock of all came when she caught a glimpse of herself in the mirror. Although she was prepared, what she saw there still shocked her. Staring back at her was a living replica of the Hispanic-looking Italian-American star. Her gracile, pretty face, her skin tone, her eyes, her sleek black hair. "Jesus Christ! That's not me. That *can't* be me! How is this even possible?" - she screamed, her long lashes and makeup making her shocked facial expression somehow seductive.

"This never gets old! - N8 commented - Here. Put on the outfit that comes with it." Emma's hands felt numb as she took the clothing. She pulled on the tight black crop top and miniskirt—Ariana Grande's signature look. She stood in front of a mirror, stunned by her reflection.



N8 stepped back, appraising her work. "Hell, you make a pretty convincing Ariana Grande! This suit was made way too well." She commented. "Honestly, this is almost a problem. You're *too* convincing. Hiding you's going to be a pain." she added.

Emma's hands trembled as she touched her face, the unfamiliar reflection sending a fresh wave of panic through her. "Holy shit," she whispered. "My body, my face are just gone. I have *her* face now."

"Well, you better get used to it," N8 replied cheerfully. "Because that's your face now! But we're not done yet. Time to erase those pesky memories. Follow me."

Emma swallowed hard, tears still flowing. "Wait! Please, can I see my sister? Just one more time... before I forget everything?"

N8 hesitated. "Alright, fine. I'm not a monster after all." She pulled out her phone and called Z1, then she adjusted some settings on a device linked to Emma's bodysuit. A few seconds later, the Caribbean beauty entered the room. "Hey, it gettin' cold out deh!" - she said, sounding pissed. Emma's heart pounded. The body language, attitude, everything about her was different, yet there was something in her brown eyes that reminded her of her beloved sister.

"Hey sistah! Looking good!" - she said, her lips moving on their own. She grabbed her head, panic rising. Was she already losing control of her mind?



"You too babe! Who dis Ariana gal? She kinda cute!" - Z1 commented, oblivious to Emma's internal struggle. "Hold on, were yuh two just kissin'?"

"Nah, don't get jealous all of a sudden," N8 teased, wrapping her arms around Z1 before pulling her in for a kiss, right in front of Emma, who could do nothing but watch, helpless.

"That's... so hot," Emma heard herself say, her voice dripping with unwanted enthusiasm. Her eyes widened in horror. She hadn't meant to say that. If anything, she felt disgusted staring at her sister, in the body of a curvy Black woman, making out with her kidnapper. And yet, she genuinely seemed to enjoy it. What had they done to her poor soul?

N8 smirked. "Yeah, I bet you'd like a piece of that too, huh? Sorry, we're a couple." She shot a wink at Emma before turning back to Z1.

"Well, this has been fun, but we've got a job to do, don't we?" N8 said, her tone shifting. "Z1, babe, why don't you take my car and head home? I've got a little business to finish up with this beauty right here."

Emma's stomach twisted as Z1 shot her a final glance, grinning playfully before turning to leave. "Sure ting. But don't take too long, yuh hear?" The room felt like it was closing in, her sense of control slipping further away with each passing moment. The Black lady left, still feeling a little jealous of the new addition to the team.



With Z1 gone, the real nightmare was just beginning.

"I'm sorry, I had to take precautions," N8 said when they were alone again, her tone almost apologetic. "Your sister might have been triggered if you called her by name or said something personal to her."

Emma's voice trembled as she replied, "What have you done to me? My mind... it's not under my control anymore."

"I know, and that's nothing compared to what we are going to do to you. I'll make sure to supervise your mental changes. You're smart, I can tell. You could be an asset to us... or a threat. You've always been the clever one, haven't you?"

Emma, stuck in her Ariana Grande suit nodded, frightened. What did N8 mean by 'threat'?

N8 smirked. "I'll make sure to personally supervise your mental reconditioning. We'll shave off a good chunk of that high IQ of yours." She leaned in, her voice dropping to a near whisper. "By the time we're done, you'll be a bubbly, giggling little airhead. You'll forget all about this resistance nonsense. In fact, you'll love it."

Emma's eyes widened in horror. "No, please! Don't do this!"

"Oh, it's definitely going to happen" N8 said, her smirk widening. "And you know what? You'll adore Ariana Grande's music too. Every lyric, every beat. You'll be singing her songs in no time."

## SKIN DEEP



N8 approached with a pair of handcuffs, her smirk widening as she expertly secured Emma's wrists.

"Why are you doing this? You already have control over my body!"

N8 chuckled, tilting her head slightly. "Smart girl. Well, let's just say... it's a kink of mine. I'm only human, after all," she said with a wink. "And it'll help me with what I'm about to do."

Emma's heart pounded as N8 stepped closer. She was tall and imposing, a mix of strength and femininity that made Emma feel even more vulnerable. Emma's breath hitched as N8 leaned in, their faces mere inches apart. She knew what was coming but couldn't stop it. Her body refused to obey her desperate commands to move or turn away. N8's smile widened before she closed the gap, her lips pressing against Emma's in a slow, deliberate kiss. Emma felt the softness of her lips, the firm yet teasing pressure of her breasts against hers, it was gross, yet oddly exciting.

The kiss seemed to last an eternity, until N8 finally pulled away, her smirk now tinged with satisfaction. "Congrats, Emma," she said mockingly. "You've just had your first kiss with a girl. How was it?"

Emma's cheeks burned with shame, and she turned her head away, unable to meet N8's eyes. "I wanted you to experience it while you're still... you." N8 continued, her tone light and almost playful. "After the mental reconditioning, it'll be too easy. You'll be begging for it then." She laughed, the sound echoing in the small room, as Emma's heart sank further into despair.

## SKIN DEEP

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Emma woke up in a hospital bed in a private, secret clinic, just like her sister had before her. The room was sterile and unfamiliar, the white walls almost glowing under the harsh lights. Her mind felt hazy, thoughts slipping through her fingers like sand. Blinking, she turned her head to see an Arab woman standing beside her, smiling warmly. There was something familiar about her, but Emma couldn't quite piece it together. The woman leaned in slightly, her tone smooth and affectionate. "How are you feeling, babe?"

Emma scrunched up her nose, her reply coming out in a high-pitched, nasal drawl. "Ugh, I dunno... good, I guess? Ugh, why's it so bright in here? This lighting is, like, so not it." She felt a headache just by looking at the lights.

The woman leaned closer, her smile unwavering. "Who are you?" Emma tilted her head, her expression brightening. "Isabela Rodriguez! I'm an Ariana Grande lookalike!" She giggled, striking a pose on the bed.

"Good girl. And who am I?" she asked, her tone approving.

Emma squinted, tilting her head like a confused puppy. "Hmm... no clue. But you're super pretty!" She giggled, twirling a strand of hair around her finger.

N8's smile deepened. "And what are we to each other?"

Emma stood, wobbling slightly in her heels, her bronzed skin glistening under the clinic's lights. Placing her hands on the woman's shoulders, she leaned in without hesitation and kissed her. It was clumsy, overly eager, but undeniably intentional. Pulling back, Emma grinned, her lips glossy from the contact. "Very, very good friends." Her voice was playful, her eyes half-lidded with mischief.



Emma—now Isabela—was breathtaking, with bronzed skin, and dark, glossy hair that cascaded perfectly down her shoulders. The spitting image of Ariana Grande a few years back, in her prime. But she was dumb. Painfully so. Her once-sharp mind was gone, replaced by an endless stream of bubbly thoughts and simple pleasures. She was also handed fake IDs and a backstory they thought was flawless. Not that it mattered; she didn't question a thing. Unlike her sister, who was still relatively smart, Isabela accepted her world without any doubts. Her handlers set her up in a chic apartment, complete with a wardrobe full of trendy clothes, boxes of makeup, and a ring light for her "content."

When she wasn't out shopping or sipping iced lattes, Isabela spent hours staring at her reflection in the mirror, snapping selfies, and testing out TikTok filters. Her Instagram and TikTok accounts were recent and bare, with only a handful of followers. "Why don't I have, like, a million followers yet?" she pouted one day, her lips jutting out into a dramatic duck face.

"They blocked your old accounts, remember?" N8 replied. "You had to start over."

"Oh yeah! So lame" she said, distractedly smoothing her hair. Any notion that had not been instilled in her mind yet was easily accepted by her new, naive persona.

Isabela pulled out her phone and struck a pose in front of her vanity. The growing audience she had seemed to enjoy her airheaded charm, perfect for platforms like Tiktok, and left comments filled with heart emojis and compliments. Each post and video reinforced her sense of purpose. The likes, the hearts, the attention—it was all she lived for now. Soon enough, she was addicted to it.

## SKIN DEEP



One day, N8, now a close and somewhat intimate friend to Isabela, lounged on the plush pink couch in Isabela's apartment, scrolling absentmindedly through her phone while Isabela twirled in front of her mirror, admiring herself for the hundredth time that day. A new tight top highlighted her breasts.

"I'm such a hottie," Isabela chirped, snapping a pouty selfie and giggling. "I mean, I'd totally follow me."

N8 smirked. "You're not wrong. You're really hot, in fact. But if you want to really build your brand, you've gotta do more than just look cute, babe."

Isabela turned, pouting. "But I'm an Arianator! Everybody loves Ariana. I already look just like her."

"Sure" N8 said smoothly, leaning forward. "But Ariana's changing style all the time, isn't she? She's not locked into her thing. If you want to stand out, you've gotta develop your own style too. Something unique. You'll stand out more, and your followers will go crazy. They'll see you're not just another Ariana clone, you're Isabela, the queen of her own vibe."

Her brown eyes sparkled at the thought of more likes and comments. But changing her image was still something unpleasant given how much she associated herself with the pop icon she once couldn't stand.

Isabela tilted her head, her glossy lips pursing in thought. "But, like, what do you mean? I'm already perfect. I've spent years perfecting this look!"



"You are not wrong." N8 agreed, her voice laced with subtle manipulation. "But imagine... an edgy look. Something that screams **you.**"

"Edgy?" Isabela's nose wrinkled. "Like... goth? Ewww, no way. Goth girls are geeks!"

"Not goth, maybe." N8 said, holding back a laugh. "Just different. A new makeup style, some clothes that are a little out there, maybe even a new haircut. Or some piercings."

Isabela gasped, clutching her phone to her chest. "Piercings? That's, like, so much!" N8 stared at her for a few seconds. Emma was a strong, opinionated woman, Isabela was not. She was a bit of a pushover actually. N8's confident stare slowly changed her mind.

"Okay," she said finally, giggling. "But no piercings right away! Maybe just a new outfit? Something a little edgy. Or a new haircut!" - she replied, repeating N8's suggestions as if they were her own.

N8 smiled knowingly. "Perfect. Let's start there. A new haircut."

N8 took Isabela to a hairdresser where the vapid brunette sat, staring into the mirror. The hairdresser leaned in, gently removing the choker from Isabela's neck. "Shorter hair will be so much more practical," N8 murmured, her tone low and coaxing. "You'll love it. And trust me, you'll be even prettier."



"Prettier?" Isabela perked up, her vanity momentarily trumping her hesitation. "Okay, fine. But not too short! I still want to look cute."

"Of course," N8 assured her, glancing at the stylist with a conspiratorial wink.

"This won't take long, sweetheart," the hairdresser cooed, before combing through the brunette's long, glossy mane. The scissors snipped decisively, and dark locks began to tumble to the floor. Isabela stared at her reflection, wide-eyed as the stylist worked her magic, shaping her hair into a sleek, symmetrical bob.

"Maybe a little bit shorter" - N8 added to the hairdresser, who proceeded shortening Isabela's black hair by an additional couple of inches.

When it was over, Isabela tilted her head, taking in the unfamiliar reflection. "Oh my gosh!" she squealed, running her manicured fingers through her hair. "I look... still hot but different! Ariana never looked like this!"

N8 nodded approvingly. "Told you. This is just the beginning, babe. This is so you!"

"The beginning? Gosh... What do you have in mind? Well, at least I'm still pretty!"

"I told you!" - N8 replied. Watching Emma—now Isabela—reduced to a vapid, eager-to-please airhead, putty in her hands, was more satisfying than she cared to admit.



A few days later, Isabela paced around her apartment, clutching her phone as her face contorted in dismay. She scrolled through the dwindling numbers on her TikTok and Instagram accounts, her jaw dropping further with each refresh.

“Who’s this girl?” one comment read. “I thought you were an Ariana impersonator. Ariana never had a bob!”

Tears welled up in her eyes as she dramatically flopped onto her couch. “They don’t want me anymore!” she wailed, thrusting her phone toward N8, who was perched casually nearby. “I should get extensions! My hair, my beautiful hair!” she screamed, her voice echoing through the room as she clutched the blunt ends of her bob.

N8 concealed her satisfaction with a practiced expression of concern. The organization—whatever it truly was—had no interest in their project attracting too much attention. An Ariana Grande impersonator could have gone viral, bringing unwanted scrutiny to Isabela’s manufactured identity. This setback was perfect.

Calmly, N8 leaned forward. “Why don’t we go the opposite way instead?” Her tone was gentle but persuasive. “An edgy look, we said, remember? That would attract more attention!”

Isabela sniffled, still clutching her phone. “Edgy? Like, what, shorter hair? Eww, no way! They already hate the bob!”

N8 suppressed a smirk, her voice as smooth as silk. “Not shorter, necessarily. We’re talking bold. Unique. Something nobody would expect from an Ariana clone. Maybe a nose ring... a new style...”

## SKIN DEEP

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Isabela wrinkled her nose instinctively, looking up from her phone. "A nose ring? You think that's what they want?" Her tone was unsure, but her reflection in the mirror betrayed a flicker of curiosity. "It's not about what they want, babe. It's about what *you* want. You'll stand out more this way, trust me. Make them forget Ariana and focus on Isabela. The real you."

Isabela blinked, staring at herself with a mix of skepticism and intrigue. "Hmm... like, goth outfits and a nose ring? You think that'd work?" Her tone shifted slightly, as if testing the idea out loud. N8 leaned back, giving her a playful smirk. "Now you're getting it. Let's make you unforgettable."

"Okay," she said finally, her excitement bubbling up. "But it has to be, like, super cute goth. Not, like, scary goth."

Under N8's watchful eye, Isabela nervously tilted her head as the piercer approached with the small, delicate nose ring. She winced slightly at the sharp pinch but relaxed when N8's calm voice cut through her nerves. "You can still remove it anytime," N8 reassured her. "It's just an experiment, babe. Trust me, you're going to love the way it looks."

Isabela blinked at her reflection in the mirror, her manicured fingers brushing lightly against the tiny silver ring. "Hmm... it's kinda cute," she admitted, her pout softening into a curious smile. "I guess I look a little edgy now."



"Exactly," N8 said, her tone encouraging as she handed Isabela a sleek black leather miniskirt, top and a pair of black fishnet stockings. "Try these on. It's all about mixing soft and hard, you know?"

Isabela hesitated, holding up the stockings with a wrinkle of her nose. "Fishnets? Really? And leather?"

N8 nodded, her confidence unwavering. "Totally. They'll make your legs pop, babe. Pair them with a cute skirt and the top, and you're golden."

Minutes later, Isabela stood in front of the mirror, fidgeting slightly. Her reflection stared back, undeniably edgy yet still unmistakably her.

"Hmm... I don't know," she said, cocking her head to the side. "I *do* look edgy, though."

N8 clapped her hands together, grinning. "That's the point, Isabela. You're reinventing yourself, and it's working. Let's see how your followers react to this."

Isabela smiled tentatively, striking a pose in front of her phone camera. "Maybe they'll love it. Or maybe..." she paused, giggling. "They'll think I'm, like, so extra!"

N8 chuckled. "Either way, you're giving them something to talk about."

However, her followers kept on dwindling. Only a niche of goth girls enthusiasts kept on following her.

## SKIN DEEP

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When her edgy attempt failed to impress, N8 saw the opportunity to step in. "Maybe you're not edgy enough," she suggested, crossing her arms. "You're playing it too safe. Leave this to me."

The next day, N8 presented Isabela with a new outfit. A black leather skirt and top set, both covered in white cross patterns, paired with fishnet gloves for her arms and a black leather choker with a silver cross dangling from it.

Isabela gasped as she pulled the pieces out. "Whoa, this is... intense".

"Exactly," N8 said, smirking. "Now that's really edgy. Try it on, and let's turn some heads."

Isabela hesitated for a moment but eventually stepped into the outfit. When she turned to look at herself in the mirror, her jaw dropped. "Okay... now *this* is so edgy" she admitted, running her fingers along the choker. "What are you doing to me? This is so much!"

N8 grinned, satisfaction gleaming in her eyes. "Told you. Actually, why don't we take this out for a spin? Just the two of us."

Isabela blinked, then giggled. "You mean, like, go out? I guess... sure!"

As N8 watched Isabela preen in front of the mirror, her eyes lingered on the crosses. "I don't know why, but I kinda like these crosses" Isabela mused, touching the patterns lightly. N8 suppressed a smirk, her mind flickering to Emma's past life as a deeply Christian woman. *It's almost poetic*, she thought, amused by how that devotion had resurfaced, twisted and redefined in a way that suited the new Isabela perfectly.



Once Isabela had adjusted to her new looks, N8 had some time for herself. One day, while relaxing at home, the doorbell rang. N8 checked the camera—it was a handsome man with blue eyes and black hair, nothing particularly remarkable. She hesitated before answering.

“Yeah, who is it?” she called.

“Karen, I know it’s you! Please, open up! I’m the doctor who examined you after you put on the skin suit!”

N8’s mind immediately flashed back to that hazy day. It had happened after she was already in the bodysuit, but before the memory erasure so her memories were fragmented, blurry. She couldn’t recall his face, but the mention of her old name—*Karen*—hit her like a shockwave.

“Karen? Was that really my name? Me, a Karen?” she thought. But before she could act, something in her mind clicked. They were taking control of her again. Her body responded without her consent, her voice dropping into a sultry tone. “Hmm, that doesn’t ring a bell... but if this is a trick to get to meet me, it’s definitely working. Just give me a sec.”

She opened the door and, as the man took the elevator up to the 24th floor, she hurriedly changed into a red latex outfit. Her heart raced, knowing they had taken over because they couldn’t trust her to handle this on her own. Suddenly, Mary’s voice crackled through her hidden earpiece. “Listen, this is serious. Stall him. Seduce him if you have to. Get him to talk, we need to know how many people have traced you here. Don’t try anything funny or we’ll take control over you. Understood?”



"Yes," Karen replied automatically, though her mind was elsewhere. A spark had ignited deep within her, a sense of strength she hadn't felt in a long time.

*Karen.* Her name was Karen. Knowing that gave her something to hold on to. It sounded like the name a white woman would have. A little fragment of her old identity. And for the first time in what felt like forever, she felt a flicker of hope.

The man stepped into the room, scanning it quickly before his eyes locked onto N8/Karen. Though Karen was back in control, the autopilot had shifted her demeanor into something far more seductive. She smiled playfully, her movements smooth and practiced. "Hey, handsome, grab a drink," she purred, tossing him a flirtatious look. "Sorry for the mess—bachelor life, you know!"

The man blinked, momentarily taken aback by her confidence. But it was definitely her, there was no mistaking it. "Karen, you sound just like her. You look like her... don't tease me!" he said, his voice tinged with urgency. "I remember your case. It was unprecedented in medical history! I tried contacting you, but you didn't reply to my emails or calls." He paused. Karen looked relaxed, flirty. Something was off. "When I read that a woman with your name had died in a car crash, I couldn't shake the feeling it was connected somehow. It was too much of a coincidence."

Karen smiled flirtatiously at him, not showing any attention at what he was saying.



He paced slightly, his eyes narrowing as he spoke. "So I did some research, and that's when I discovered the body parts found were actually yours, before you wore the bodysuit. I was about to let it go when I remembered a friend in the police department. She has access to a software that scans faces from public cameras. I took a few screenshots from the medical center and tracked you down to Austin... to this very block. It took some time, but we eventually spotted you. She's sitting in her car now, waiting for me."

Karen chuckled. "Amazing, doctor. Smart *and* handsome? Guilty as charged, it's me!" she said, her voice playful. "Now, is your friend gonna jump out and handcuff me? Soo kinky, don't you think?"

His expression hardened. "How can you joke about this? You were clearly in distress..."

"You missed something," Karen interrupted. "I *wanted* this. I hated my old life, and I realized I had a chance to live as someone else. So, staged my death and moved here."

The doctor's eyes widened, disbelief washing over his face. "That's... insane. I didn't get this impression from the visit though. So you're fine with being stuck like this?"

"More than fine," she said, her voice purring with satisfaction. "I'm much hotter than before, wouldn't you say?"

He hesitated, his gaze flickering over her. "You are... yeah."



Karen stepped closer, her voice dropping into a teasing whisper. "Was I boring before? What do you think? You must've seen some pictures in your searches."

The doctor swallowed, his voice strained. "You were... cute, kind of a plain Jane though. But that was *you*! And you know it's a crime to fake your own death, you must know that, right?" "I know," Karen replied smoothly, her voice carrying a hint of mischief. "And I'm ready to be punished. But wouldn't you want to test in person how realistic this bodysuit feels before turning me in to the police? It would make a great appendix on your groundbreaking article!"

The doctor hesitated, his resolve softening under her gaze. "What do you mean?"

Karen edged closer, her smile deepening. "I mean, you were so committed to finding me. Maybe there were some... *extra motives* behind it? Were you eager to see me again?" Her voice dripped with flirtation, as she stepped closer, brushing her hand lightly against his arm. His breath hitched, and he glanced at the door, uncertainty flashing in his eyes.

Karen's lips curled into a sly smile. "Do we... have some time before your friend shows up? Can't you tell her to wait? Just one more hour... before she comes to arrest me?" she whispered, her tone dripping with seduction.

The doctor fumbled for his phone, his fingers shaking slightly as he scrolled through his contacts. "Maybe" he said, voice low. "One more hour to get to know you better... would be nice."



They kissed passionately, and Karen led her victim toward the bedroom, her control over him growing with each step. She slipped off the red latex suit, revealing a seductive Victoria's Secret lingerie set that hugged her body perfectly.

"Come on, doctor," she purred, her voice thick with desire. "Admit it—you've been thinking about having sex with this body from the moment you laid eyes on me."

He hesitated only for a second before breathing out, "I can't deny that." Karen smiled, guiding his hands over her curves. "Feel these, doctor. Do you think they've permanently attached to me? Do they feel natural?"

"More than natural," he replied, his voice hoarse with desire.

Karen leaned back, her eyes twinkling mischievously. "Well then, let's continue the examination, shall we?" She moved closer, whispering into his ear, "Look at this, my labia... darker, fully ethnic. I'm no longer a plain white girl anymore. I have Arab blood coursing through my veins. Isn't that exciting?" Her tone was teasing, her control over him absolute.

She guided his hands lower. "Go ahead, doctor. Touch me. Explore. Test everything thoroughly... reach as deep as you want."

In the meanwhile outside, the police agent, Kate Miller, was growing suspicious. She had been sitting in her car for too long, watching through the window, catching glimpses of movement. Something felt off about this whole situation. She had escorted the doctor here, and everything about this felt wrong.

## SKIN DEEP



Her instincts kicked in. "I'm not waiting around anymore." She had a look at a photo of the woman they were looking for. Attractive, with black hair and brown skin. She could have been an actress. With a hint of insecurity she admitted she was much better looking than herself. Maybe she had seduced the doctor. Grabbing her gun, she exited the car and approached the modern residential building, her heart pounding.

Without hesitation, Kate stormed into the apartment, her gun raised. "Police! Hands where I can see them!"

The doctor jerked away from N8, almost naked, panic flashing across his face. "Kate, wait! It's not... She's..." he stammered, but it was too late. Kate's stomach churned. *Men!* she scoffed inwardly. But her gaze snapped to N8, and something about the woman set her on edge. There was an aura of confidence, almost smugness, radiating from her. She seems happy looking like this Kate thought, her gun pointed squarely at N8. "You're not innocent. You're *involved* in this!" She took a step closer, her finger tightening on the trigger. N8 didn't flinch. Instead, her smile twisted into something colder, sharper. "Bingo," she whispered, her voice low and almost teasing. "You're a smart one, aren't you?"

Before Kate could react, N8 moved with lightning speed, pressing a hidden button beneath the table. A small dart shot out, striking Kate in the neck. The policewoman's eyes widened in shock. That bitch had taken her by surprise! She staggered back, her vision blurring, the world spinning around her. "My colleagues will come for me..." she managed to slur before everything went black.

## SKIN DEEP

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Kate woke up sitting in her squad car, parked in front of the apartment building. The keys were on, everything looked normal. Weird, she never fell asleep while working. Then she recalled the apartment, the strange woman –had it all been a dream? But something was wrong. As she moved, she felt long silky hair brush her shoulders. Kate pulled down her phone, her breath catching in her throat as she stared at her reflection. The hair framed the attractive Middle Eastern face she had just seen. Her pale skin, was now a darker, exotic caramel hue. “What the hell did they do to me?” she whispered, her voice trembling. With trembling hands, she opened up her jacket, revealing the smooth, tan skin underneath. Her figure was curvier, her waist slimmer. Panic surged through her. “No... no, no, no...” she whispered, her voice breaking. She was wearing a bodysuit. One identical to the one the woman had been wearing. No seal was visible.

Kate’s phone buzzed in her hand, and she almost dropped it, her fingers trembling as she swiped to answer the call. N8’s voice came through the speaker, smooth and mocking. “Wow. From policewoman to criminal in one afternoon. Congratulations, sister. Your evil arc begins now.” “What... what did you do to me?” Her voice cracked as she looked at her reflection in the mirror. N8 laughed softly. “We turned you into my twin sister, sweetie! Your face is now known to the police. Your colleagues are already coming for you. But here’s the fun part... can you even remember your name?” Kate froze. She could remember she was a White female cop, her colleagues... but her name? She couldn’t recall it. “No... no, I can’t...” Kate whispered.

“Haha! That’s perfect,” N8 said, her laughter cold. “Good luck explaining to your colleagues that you’re not me when you can’t even remember your own name. You’re trapped in there, sister.”

## SKIN DEEP

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Kate's chest tightened as she heard distant sirens in the background. They were coming. She had to think fast, but her thoughts were clouded, fragmented. "Please, help me!" - she was begging the criminals who put her in this situation. "I can't let them find me looking like you!"

"Don't worry, sweetie." N8 continued, her voice turning playful. "You have a way out, but you're going to have to follow my instructions. Tell your colleagues over the radio that you've found the headquarters of the people behind all of this. Make them chase after you. Drive fast, head to the address saved in the GPS. You'll find a car waiting for you." The sirens were getting closer. "Why should I trust you?" Kate asked, her voice shaking. "Oh, darling, you don't have a choice," N8 replied sweetly. "Unless you want to get caught, looking like me, with no memory of who you really are. Your colleagues will think you're part of the organization. They'll lock you up... or worse." Kate's hands tightened around the steering wheel. She knew N8 was right. She was trapped.

"Now, be a good girl and do what I say," N8 purred.

With trembling hands, Kate reached for the radio. Her voice sounded off, but the radio communication was hopefully bad enough for her colleagues not to suspect anything.

"This is Officer... 418," she said, reading the code on the receiver. "I've located the headquarters of the suspects. I'm in pursuit. Follow my lead." The radio crackled with a response. "Copy that, 418. We were getting worried about you. We're on our way. Stay with them." Kate hit the gas, and sped off, her heart hammering in her chest.



The GPS guided her to her destination. She managed to gain a few seconds on her pursuitors, when she took a sudden turn and entered an indoor parking slot. Kate could feel the adrenaline surging through her veins as she sped into the indoor parking lot, the echoes of the police sirens fading as she managed to shake off her pursuers. Her phone buzzed again.

“Good job,” N8’s voice purred through the line. “Now, put on the dress in the backseat. You’re not a policewoman anymore, and you won’t need that uniform.” As Kate quickly slipped out of her uniform, she couldn’t help but catch a glimpse of herself in the rearview mirror. It was unsettling. But there was no time to dwell on it. She grabbed the silky red dress and pulled it on, the fabric hugging her new curves in all the right places.

She turned to the purse and, as promised, found the key to the waiting SUV—a Cadillac Escalade. She stepped out of the patrol car, her heels clicking on the concrete. The strong, confident policewoman she was until not long before was gone, replaced by a feminine, busty Middle Eastern beauty. Her badge, her documents—everything that tied her to her old life—lay inside, abandoned. In the adrenaline of the moment, she didn’t think to check them. After all, her colleagues could still find her and arrest her. Without realizing it, she was starting thinking like the criminal she looked like. With a heavy sigh, she grabbed the purse and slipped into the driver’s seat of the Cadillac. N8’s voice crackled through the phone again. “Now, drive. Stick to the route on the GPS. I’ll guide you from there. And remember—don’t stop for anything.” “Alright,” she said, gripping the steering wheel. “Let’s do this.”



Fast forward a few days. N8 was getting dressed, staring at her reflection, feeling again an unsettling disconnection from the image that stared back. The once-familiar features of the Arab beauty she had grown to accept as her own were gone. In her place stood a gorgeous Indian woman with unusually dark skin, a toned body, and long, wavy black hair. Two layers of bodysuits now covered her skin, her original identity slipping away from her even further.

Mary congratulated her on her new appearance. "It will take some time to get adjusted to it. But that's the point, right? You need to look different. Luckily wearing double bodysuits has no consequences!"

N8 nodded absentmindedly, still processing the change. "Yeah, of course. Thanks for letting me choose a body of my choice by the way. I wanted something that wasn't too different from my old bodysuit." she said softly. It was true. Faced with the possibility of a choice, even though she knew she was a white woman under the skinsuit, she couldn't see herself as anything else than a brown woman now. "No problem, N8. You've been granted some privileges as a result of your services..."

With a final glance at her reflection, N8 picked up the tight, glossy white outfit laid out on the table. She slipped into it, the material clinging to her new body, accentuating every curve. "So" N8 asked, adjusting the outfit and posing seductively "what happens to Kate now?"

Mary waved a hand dismissively, her tone light but firm. "Oh, don't worry about her... She's in safe hands."



"Hmm ok, whatever... Changing topic, I need to tell Z1, my girl, about the change. I'm looking forward to show her this body!" Mary's expression darkened. "I'm sorry, N8. She doesn't know about the bodysuits, and we'd rather keep it that way. You can't see date her anymore."

A flash of anger surged through N8, but the bodysuit's programming suppressed any action she might have taken. Her voice trembled with restraint. "All the changes I've gone through, and now you ask this of me? Z1 was everything I had! She's my lover!"

Mary crossed her arms, her tone sharp. "Remember, N8, you are a drone, not a person. You are not worthy of relationships or love because you are *nobody*. You are just a body with needs, and we understand that. You will be assigned a new lover."

N8 swallowed hard. "Yes, Mistress. Of course." She shifted her posture, slipping into her usual seductive pose, masking her true feelings.

Mary's smile returned, cold and calculated. "Good. Now, I can't promise anything but we could assign you Isabela for example. After all, you dated her sister; it seems fitting, doesn't it?"

N8 hesitated. "I remember she wasn't into women, Mistress."

"Oh, she is now," Mary said with a twisted grin. "We reconditioned her. And don't worry, she's also far less conservative than before."

N8 nodded. "Ok, Mistress. Thank you. Keep me posted."

## SKIN DEEP



N8 continued posing in front of the mirror. She tilted her head just right, ran her fingers along her glossy hair, and gave a small, coy smile, playing the part perfectly. But behind the surface, her mind raced. About everything they had taken from her, everything they still denied her. A mix of hatred, determination fused together to form a plan, or the seed of a plan. N8, or Karen, or whatever she was, began plotting her revenge.

But more was still to come. A few days later, they informed her that Kate had been released. N8 blinked, genuinely startled. "Released? Just like that?" she asked, struggling to process what she'd heard. "But they'll find her and..."

"Oh, they have already!" Mary smiled. "But... they will identify her and contact her... my family..."

"Relax," Mary said smoothly. "We wiped even more personal information and recent memories from her mind first. She remembers absolutely nothing about us or her old identity. And we released another drone wearing a bodysuit identical to the policewoman she was to avoid raising suspicions. The doctor has been taken care of, as well." N8 looked worried.

"Look, the police were getting too close to the organization, so we had no choice. We had to return her to your family. They'll believe she's the real Karen. And with their happy reunion, they'll stop searching for *you*." N8 was holding back tears. Her family, the last fragile thread connecting her to her past, now belonged to someone else. "Look" - Mary added - "It looks like they took her to your family!"

## SKIN DEEP

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A few hours earlier...

Kate, or what was left of her, woke up in a hospital, feeling confused. She had vague memories of a car chase, a bodysuit... Right, the bodysuit! She checked herself: brown arms, black hair. That felt... right?

A doctor walked in, holding a file. "How are you feeling?" he asked. "I... I don't know," Kate said, her voice shaky. It sounded strange to her ears, softer than she remembered. "What happened to me?"

"We think you were taken by a group involved in brainwashing and changing people's appearances. You are wearing a bodysuit that bonded with your body, altering your appearance permanently. Your memory loss is likely from what they did to you."

Wide-eyed, Kate asked "Me? A bodysuit? So... who am I really?"

"According to what we've found, your name is Karen. You're a young white woman, here's a picture of you."

"Karen," she repeated softly, holding the photo. "That... rings a bell. Is this me... without the bodysuit?" The doctor nodded. Nothing made sense. Her past felt like a wall she couldn't see over. Her body felt real, natural, and yet the doctor was probably right. The doctor told her more: how the police had rescued her during an operation, how they'd tracked her down and brought her here. They said her family had been alerted and wanted to see her as soon as possible. An ambulance would take her to their place soon. None of it felt real, but she smiled weakly anyway. "That's... good. Thank you."

## SKIN DEEP

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Kate sat quietly in the ambulance, staring at her hands, at the unfamiliar brown skin that still felt... oddly natural. Her once-brilliant mind, the instincts and training that might have told her something was wrong, were all gone. Stripped from her like everything else. What was left was a muddled, trusting version of herself, too dulled to question anything. The doctors had given her answers, and the proof they showed her, photos, videos, documents, had seemed undeniable.

The ambulance pulled up to a suburban house that looked like it belonged in a postcard. The bright lawn, white shutters, and neat garden beds gave off a sense of calm she couldn't share. Stepping out, she tugged her dark mane over one shoulder, glancing down at herself. A simple top clung to her curvier figure, leaving little to the imagination. She felt exposed, embarrassed at returning to her family like this.

She rang the doorbell. A young blonde woman, who turned out to be her sister Becky opened the door. "Oh my God... Karen? You look just like in the pictures they sent us!" Her voice cracked with disbelief and joy. The brunette nodded, overwhelmed by emotions.

"They told us you don't remember much, but that's okay. I'm Becky, your sister. We'll guide you. You'll remember everything soon, I'm sure!" Karen hugged Becky, letting herself be held. Becky's words were meant to comfort her, but they only deepened the hollow pit in her chest. She couldn't shake the feeling that nothing was as it seemed. Yet Becky's warmth, her tears, her hope... it was all so real. "Yeah," Karen whispered, her voice barely audible. "I hope so, too." Becky smiled. That voice was definitely Karen's!

## SKIN DEEP

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N8 rushed into the control room, her heels clicking sharply against the cold floor. “No, wait! This is wrong! That should be me!” she shouted, her voice cracking as panic crept in.

She froze in front of the screens, her wide eyes darting between the images. Every monitor showed live footage of a suburban house—her house, apparently, with Kate being welcomed by her family. It looked picture-perfect, the kind of place where normal lives unfolded.

But inside that house, Kate-as-Karen was would soon be taking over her life. N8’s chest tightened as the realization settled in.

The perfection of the scene mocked her. N8 gripped the edge of the console, her knuckles turning pale. How could they do this? How could *she* be erased so easily, so cruelly, while someone else pretended to be her?

Her reflection on one of the blank screens caught her eye, her new, flawless form that didn’t belong to her either. The glossy white outfit clung to her as tightly as the false life she was now forced to wear.

Mary joined her in the control room. “I see you’re struggling to accept this, but it’s for the best, trust me. Your family is now happy they have found you again. They will learn to love her again as you and you won’t be bothered by the police anymore.” The Indian-looking woman remained silent. “I see you’re not convinced. Why don’t we take a trip there?” N8’s dark brown eyes went wide. “Are you serious?” “Why not? You need closure. This is probably the only way to convince you.” Karen nodded. A private flight was arranged for the following day.



"You'll be free to talk with your family freely, without any mind control. Isn't that what you wanted? If you manage to convince them you're the real Karen, you can go!" - Mary explained her on the plane. Karen's dark eyes narrowed, her voice rising in irritation. "Ah, very good, very good. But why you are making me sound like I just stepped off the plane from India? The way I'm saying the words, the rolling 'r's... too much, no?" - she asked, in a song-like tone. No matter how hard she tried, every word rolled off her tongue with a heavy Indian accent. Mary grinned. "My dear, we just wanted to be safer, you know. Less chance of anyone believing you're the *real* Karen. Besides, you sound really cute!" The Indian woman rolled her eyes.

Hours later, they dropped Karen off in the quiet neighborhood that was supposed to be *hers*. She went immediately to her family house, hoping to reminisce something. Nothing. When she reached the front yard, a strange emptiness settled over her. The house looked exactly as it had on the control room screens: neat, suburban, and utterly unfamiliar. She wasn't even sure it was the right one.

A young blonde woman doing jogging appeared around the block. "Hello!" Karen called, the sing-song accent came out thick and unavoidable. "I am new neighbor. This is the family where that girl in bodysuit was found recently, no? Yes?" Becky's face darkened instantly. "Listen, we don't want any attention, okay? We've been through enough. "Karen realized it was the same woman who had welcomed the fake Karen! Her sister! "I am real Karen! I am also trapped in bodysuit! I am your real sister, she is impostor!" "Oh come on, people have no decency!" "No... wait!" she replied, desperate, but it was pointless..