

# Chapter 17

## The Shadow

uck. She's so pretty when she thinks no one is watching.

**F** My little mouse trudges into her bedroom, her tattered slippers dragging against the smooth stone floors. She's tired. Dark circles are beginning to form underneath her eyes.

I want to smooth them away, just to bring them back again. But I want her to be tired from staying up all night, taking my cock into her body until she's depleted of all her strength. Even then, I'll still fuck her.

I deprived myself last time. Refused to touch her with my own hands when she hadn't earned that from me yet. But watching that gun slide in and out of her pussy was just as torturous for me.

I barely made it to my car before I was coming in my hand, the sweet melody of her smoky cries echoing in my head.

That woman's voice alone can bring any man to their knees.

And now, she's wearing nothing but a long white t-shirt, the soft cotton ending mid-thigh. Her rosy nipples poke through the thin material, and my mouth waters with the need to take one into my mouth and suck on it until she's wriggling beneath me.

I lick my lips. Soon.

Her tantalizing, creamy skin is on full display, and I get hints of her red cotton panties anytime she bends over. Like when she pulls the covers back and pounds her tiny fist into the pillow to fluff it up.

I get a full view of her ass when she slides her feet out of her slippers, and then bends down to arrange them neatly before her nightstand.

My cock hardens, her perfectly round ass overflowing her underwear. Her pussy is on full display. Just a thin piece of fabric separating her from my tongue.

I close my eyes and work to regain control.

I have to be quiet.

She doesn't know I'm hiding in her closet. Waiting for her to fall asleep so I can stare at her beauty in peace.

Right now, she fears me. Rightfully so.

I'm a dangerous man, and I kill people daily. Not only that, but I enjoy it too.

She should fear me, but only because once she ultimately submits to me, she'll have no chance of escaping me.

She's already started to and hasn't even realized it yet.

I've never been in love with anything other than my job. I haven't even bothered fucking a woman for over a year. I just don't have time. They were always a quick fuck, and then I'd be off again, the release rarely easing any tension.

After dealing with enough tears and desperate attempts to get me to stay with them, I grew tired of the hassle.

The moment I saw her sitting in that bookstore, working to hide her nerves and anxiety, there I was—a grown-ass man, falling in obsession at first sight.

And now, I feel like a fifteen-year-old boy who just discovered what pussy feels like. Every time I set eyes on her, I'm ready to bust in my jeans just from looking at her.

I want to touch her, kiss her, and make her mine in every sense of the word. Marking her body wasn't enough. But I get the feeling I will never feel like I've had enough of Adeline Seraphina Reilly. At least on paper.

And I have no fucking shame. I never claimed to be a good man.

She slides into her bed, curls up under the duvet, and picks up an old leather book.

Her great-grandmother's diary.

After Addie had left one day to run errands or some shit, I flipped through the pages.

Her great-grandmother also had a stalker. It made me smile when I realized history was repeating itself.

Addie flips through the diary for an hour, her face pinched with an unreadable emotion as she inhales Gigi's deepest, darkest secrets. It looks like she's searching for answers, and the only thing that will give her clarity is her great-grandmother's words.

Part of her looks disturbed by the diaries. But a bigger part of her seems fascinated. Enthralled. Like she's trying to picture falling in love with her stalker, and the thought both excites her and makes her deeply uncomfortable.

I want to laugh at that. Because that's exactly what's going to fucking happen.

I'm going to make her fall in love with every single fucked up part of me. I want this girl to see me at my most depraved. I want her to experience the true darkness residing in my soul.

When you make someone fall in love with the darkest parts of you, there's nothing you can do that will scare them away.

They will be yours forever because they already love all the fucked up bits and pieces of you.

Her eyes start to droop, her head lolls, and the diary begins to slip from her black-painted fingers.

She jolts awake, her eyes rounding before she settles down. I bite my lip, too many feelings invading my chest.

Giving up pretenses, she snaps the journal shut, slides it on her nightstand and clicks off the light. Instantly, the room goes black. The moonlight filtering through the balcony doors casts shadows across the room, creating monsters out of wooden furniture.

The only real monster in this house is me.

Once her breathing deepens, I slowly slide the closet door open and wait in the shadows, making sure she hasn't awoken.

Just as I go to take a step, a burst of ice blooms across the back of my neck. Goosebumps rise on my skin as I turn my head and look around in the closet, fighting against the urge to chatter my teeth.

It's an unnatural cold, and it's not the first time I've felt it. But whatever is breathing down my neck isn't going to deter me. I feel its eyes on me, and I hope I meet its stare so it can see I'm not the least bit afraid.

Seeing nothing, I turn and step out into the room. The chill recedes as I make my way over to her bed. I'm tempted to brush her hair away from her face, but I know it'll wake her.

She senses danger easily, and I know she's going to catch me soon.

A large part of me wants her to. There's a depravity in my mind that enjoys seeing her scared. I want to see her scream because I know every

time she gets scared, my little mouse gets turned on, too. It makes the blood rush straight to my cock, and I want more than anything to show her exactly how hard I can make her scream.

But the softer part of me wants to watch her sleep in peace. Especially because I know I'll bring her so little of it when she's awake.

Slipping the rose out of my pocket, I lay it on her nightstand. She'll freak out in the morning, and I'll make sure to play the video back so I can see it and find joy in her terror.

She stirs, and a loud noise disturbs the air.

Something between a snore and snorting like a pig.

I bring my fist to my mouth, biting down hard to keep the laughter from exploding out of me. Immediately, I turn and exit the room, struggling immensely in keeping quiet.

I don't think I've ever heard a noise like that come out of *anybody*, let alone someone that looks as cute as Addie does. I've tortured and killed a lot of people, and that was... that was unlike anything I've ever heard.

It's only when I'm out of the house that I let loose a bark of laughter.

But my laughter is cut short when my phone buzzes in my pocket. I pull it out, seeing Jay's name flash across the screen.

"Yeah?" I answer, my steps quickening as I make my way to my car.

Jay only calls me for work purposes. And usually, that results in shooting one or twelve people dead.

"Mark Seinburg is in town," he starts, diving right in. It's what I like best about Jay. He gets straight to the point. "Along with his colleagues Miller Foreman, Jack Baird, and Robert Fisher."

I open my car door and sink into the leather seat. I turn on my car, but don't make a move to leave yet.

"Where are they?" I ask.

"I've gotten hits in casinos, a couple of high scale bars and a private gentlemen's club. Members only. All places that are heavily guarded."

"Guards mean they have something to hide," I say. "They're of no concern to me."

It's not cockiness, it's just facts. My confidence in my skills is the only thing that keeps me alive.

You can't go into a lion's den with the confidence of a gazelle. You go in knowing that you're going to walk back out with their blood on your hands

and their heads rolling on the ground.

It's the only way you'll ever survive.

"They're not," Jay acquiesces. "It's too soon to storm their hangouts, though. I got you access to a couple of the gentlemen's clubs they attend. I think they're going to be our best bet for information. Just go there, scope them out, start making more appearances there, and gain their trust. See if there's anything amiss."

The laughter from Addie is long gone. It almost feels like I never felt such a... *happy* emotion only minutes ago. Dickheads trafficking innocent children will do that to you.

"Fuck, Jay, you want me to mingle with a bunch of rapists? I can hack into their cameras."

"Hacking into cameras only gets you so far."

I sigh, rubbing at the tightening muscle in my shoulder. He's right. Their cameras won't have audio, and there's a lot more to learn when listening in on conversations.

"And right now, we have nothing," Jay continues, driving home his point.

I nod, though he can't see me. Making friends with the pedos means I could be invited into the ritual. Based on the video, it's definitely deep underground. Gaining access will be incredibly difficult, but nothing is ever impossible for me.

Not only that, but it'll put more people on my radar to take down.

It's a fucking network of pedophiles and once you meet one, you meet a hundred more. It's fucking exhausting—the never-ending list of people to kill.

But I'm a very patient man.

"I know," I agree. "I'll make the necessary connections."

I *will* find this place, and once I do, I will kill every single motherfucker associated with that hellhole.

By the time I'm done, the entire government will be dismantled.