

Virginie T.

## The fallen angels - Tome 2



Run away, My Angel



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**Run Away, My Angel**

«Tektime S.r.l.s.»

**T. V.**

*Run Away, My Angel* / V. T. — «Tektime S.r.l.s.»,

A paranormal romance between a fallen angel and a human. Azazel is the first of the fallen, the one everyone turns to when they have a problem. So when his former neighbor asks him to host a runaway woman, he accepts without hesitation. This woman will move him deeply and Azazel will begin to hope for the same happiness that his brother Baraqiel has known with Caitlyn. Only that to achieve this, each of these two tortured souls will have to make peace with their past.

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Run Away My Angel

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The Fallen Angels-tome 2

Virginie T.

Translated by Eduardo Jiménez Lopez

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## Chapter 1

### Mallory

He walks around in circles, lips pursed and a stiff back. I know him by heart. I know he is holding back the words he is dying to throw to my face. I would have to be a masochist to want to hear them. And I am not, far from it, but I think that silences and unspoken words are even more cruel. More destructive, too. I am also convinced that a couple can only last if they have good communication. How do you want to solve a situation if the other party does not speak? Have you ever heard of a negotiator who would not say a single word when trying to fix up a situation? Well, in this case it is the same.

— Talk to me.

He angrily stares at me and I am almost tempted to backtrack. However, it is not in my nature. I was not raised that way. I am a fighter. I do not shy away from difficulties. I face them holding my head high, whatever the consequences.

— Tell me what you're thinking.

After my insistence, he gives in. Or rather, he explodes and his rage hits me like a punch in the stomach.

— You've resigned! Once again! Damn Mallory! I'm tired of your not keeping a job for more than a few weeks. I'm tired of struggling to keep our heads above water, when obviously you don't give a damn! You only think of yourself Mal.

Again and again the same scolding for months. I know that professionally I am quite erratic. But I am still young and at twenty-six I am still trying to find my way. I try, I make mistakes and I change. It is only in this area that I am undecided. Apart from that, I know what I want in life: a husband, children, a house. In short, a Cinderella-style tale as you can see in magazines and romance novels. I was born in Manhattan and I lived there until I was twelve. It was not always easy. I was always a reckless girl, a bit of a daredevil and a bit rebellious against authority, and I often got into trouble. I was not a bad student, I was not an exceptional one either. In short, I was ordinary and I took our departure to Montreal as a new beginning in my life. I was only twelve years old, but after hearing my parents say that I would end up going wrong, I finally believed what they said, and on the day we moved I said to myself that this was going to be a way to ward off any bad luck. Against all odds, I made new friends with a singing accent, I worked hard in class, I even got a business degree. The problem was that my life lacked fantasy, had no pep. I wanted glitter in my life. Everything was a little too planned-planned. The fact is that I was young and bored to death.

My meeting Brandon was like a second wind, a rebirth. All I have to do is look at him and I remember everything as if it had been yesterday. With my friend Beth, we had decided to go out for a drink to relax ourselves after a hard day's work as waitresses in a small road restaurant. My feet were on fire and just the thought of sitting down and us being served sounded like heaven. We dressed up and went out, arm in arm. The powerful duo. The blonde and the brunette. The luscious and the... well, me. In summary, once at the bar, we started to chat with girlfriends and to stare at the male specimens as on any self-respecting girls night. After all, we were two singles and watching has never hurt anyone. Brandon then came to where I was, or rather he came to the bar to order a drink and then I, too lost in my contemplation, spilled my glass on his feet. Damn it! The shame of my life. I mumbled some endless excuses while I dabbed his shoes with paper towels. I still remember his laugh that brought goosebumps to my arms. And his voice... A seductive voice telling me that was the best drink he had ever had. We have not separated since, and that was two years ago.

The honeymoon is now over and the landing has been rough. I love Brandon with all my heart, but his criticisms hurt me and our relationship weakens with each new argument.

— It was not a position for me.

He laughs with derision.

— There is never a job for you. When you don't quit, they're the ones who fire you. In any case, it has never worked and you keep starting all over again from scratch. I'm tired of this situation. Aren't you?

I am not tired of my work. What wears me out are these endless arguments and the sadness that every time wraps me like a second skin.

— I'll find another job that will suit me better.

— Of course! Until you get bored again. I can't believe you don't care.

— Yes, I do. I care about you.

I approach him and he takes me in his arms. The noose around my heart loosens with this contact.

— I love you too. Simply, I want us to be able to build our future and for that, we need two jobs for us to have the means.

I sigh deeply. Deep down I understand him. I have the same aspirations, the same desires.

— I want a mini us, Mal. This requires long-term sustainable finances.

A child? A child with me? Does he feel ready to commit to me at this point?

— Would you like us to have a baby?

I have tears in my eyes.

— You are the woman of my life. I want to do everything with you. It's time we act as adults.

I kiss him until I almost suffocate him.

— I promise I'll make an effort. I'll do my best to find a job, so next year you will have to go out in the middle of the night to satisfy my pregnant woman cravings.

He walks away from me with a smile.

— In the meantime, it's high time we prepare some food. Lilas is coming to introduce us to the new man in her life.

Of course! The new one before the next one. If I change jobs as shirts, in the case of Lilas it is the men who do not last long in her life. Brandon's friend, which took me a lot of time to appreciate, is not really the type to settle into a couple routine! When my boyfriend introduced us, at first I was stung by jealousy. Knowing that such a sexual bomb was so close to him was unbearable to me. It is true what I say! Lilas is the stereotype of the male dream: endless legs, narrow hips, breasts that overflow cleavages and plump and seductive lips. Even her voice is a call to sex! Every word, even innocuous, becomes erotic in her mouth! Fortunately, Beth then pointed out to me how Brandon looked at Lilas: like a big brother watching over his little sister so she does not get into trouble. But when he looks at me... his eyes are as hot as embers.

— Beth also comes with Tom. He's here for the weekend and it seems they have some great news to tell us.

The meal takes place in a very friendly atmosphere. Lilas, Beth and Tom have known each other for a few months and it turns out that the newcomer, Leon, fits in very well with our small group. I did not expect that somebody looking the way he looks could be Lilas' boyfriend. She is rather of the fickle type and her priority are precisely the looks. So, she rather sets her sights on the archetype of the beautiful guy: tall, muscular, tanned and... it does not matter what they have in their brain as long as they have what it takes in their underwear. Leon is far from complying with these codes. He is not ugly either, let's not exaggerate. He is simply different. From the top of his five foot five, he is only a little taller than me. Instead of a three-day stubble that gives men a deliciously manly air, he sports a several week beard that instantly irritated my skin when he kissed me to greet me. Only the muscles are in line with her old boyfriends. Leon has biceps as big as my thighs, covered with tribal tattoos that intrigue me. Curious by nature, I ask him questions to discover what has seduced our sparkling Lilas.

— What do you do for a living, Leon?

— I'm a computer scientist. I track cybercriminals on the web to help the police.

Wow. That's serious. I'm impressed. Has maybe Lilas drawn the right number?

— You're doing an important job.

He laughs, with a deep bass laugh, that makes his eyes squint, with some fine wrinkles showing in the corners of his eyes.

— I have skills in this area. In fact, I just type on my keyboard all day long, comfortably seated in my desk chair, and I send by email to the police station any important data that I discover.

And modest about it. Obviously, Brandon has to get involved. The suspicious and protective brother is back.

— You're not a cop then?

— No, I've never even met most of the inspectors who call me. I work freelance and everything happens remotely most of the time. It's rare that I have to go there. I'm more of a stay-at-home guy type.

I intervene before my darling turns this dinner into a fiasco with unfounded and rude remarks.

— Who wants some coffee?

I prepare the hot drinks with the help of Beth who seems on a small cloud.

— What are you dreaming about?

She shakes her head without answering, making her short blonde locks fly in all directions.

— Come on! I'm your best friend. You have no right to hide anything without first putting me in the loop.

— You'll know everything at the same time as everyone else.

— Beth! Don't be a jerk. What?

She keeps her mouth tightly closed. Only I have enough to taunt her too.

— If you tell me your secret, I'll tell you mine.

Her eyes light up and she points two laser beams at me.

— You have no secrets. You always tell me everything the minute something happens to you.

— That's right. Only it happened just before you arrived and I didn't have time to call you.

She scrutinizes me, determined to unravel the true from the false.

— Are you changing jobs again?

My shoulders slump. Beth has the same opinion as Brandon when it comes to the way I manage my professional life, and one discussion a day on this topic is enough for me. I do not want to talk about this again today.

— That's not the subject we are interested in.

My friend understands the message and luckily, she does not insist. I thank her silently, my morale suddenly undermined by not living up to the expectations of the people who matter most to me.

— Okay. Don't look at me with puppy eyes, I can't stand it. Are you ready to jump for joy for me?

I shake my head vigorously, eager to hear the news first.

— Tom is coming to live with me. He's put his New York apartment up for sale and he's already found a job in Montreal.

— Wow, wow.

There you go, it is not right. My friend tells me that she is settling down with her boyfriend and that is all I can say to her. I mentally shake, I slap myself, and I jump on her to hug her with all my strength.

— Congratulations, I'm so happy for you.

I know that Beth always had doubts about their relationship. Not because of her boyfriend's lack of commitment. Tom devotes boundless love to her and everyone can see it, but because of the distance between them that would put any couple to a test. I am glad she endured, without ever losing



hope, because today this is paying back. She will live with her man. She is so moved that she sheds a tear despite her dazzling smile.

— What about you? What's your secret Mallory?

Mine is a little pale, since it is only a promise, but a promise that I intend to keep then...

— Brandon wants us to have a child.

— What?

— Brandon wants a baby.

My friend stays silent. Too much. And I thought she would rejoice for me!

— What's the problem? Don't you like Brandon?

— You know that I do. I'm surprised, that's all. You keep changing jobs. It's not an ideal situation to conceive a child. Don't you think?

Obviously. Beth has a practical mind, just like my fiancé.

— I promised Brandon I'd get a job and I'll keep it. That's the condition for us having a child together.

— I see.

His remark vividly stings me.

— What is what you see?

Beth is well aware she is walking on eggshells and she takes the time to gather her ideas, under my somber gaze.

— Mallory, you've been a great girl and my best friend for too long to keep counting the years, but professional consistency is not your strong point.

— You don't think I can keep a promise I made to my fiancé?

— Mal, it's not that...

— I'll prove to you that I can change. You'll see, I'll do it.

With that, I return with my guests, more determined than ever to prove myself.

## Chapter 2

### Mallory

For months I have tried to keep this damn promise and I only went from disappointment to disappointment. I am unable to know what I should do in terms of work. I chain experiences in various fields in search of answers, from being the cashier in a bottling factory and a tour guide to a medical secretary, and it becomes more and more difficult to explain my so unrelated choices during my job interviews. Recruitment managers feel that I am not trustworthy since I change jobs so often, and now most refuse to give me a chance despite my impeccable motivation.

As for those who do, they irretrievably end up dismissing me blaming me for my lack of compromise. I am in a dead end, more depressed than ever, and I cannot even confide in Beth. Since our argument during the meal at home, our relationship has deteriorated. No, that is not the right word. Let's rather say that we have distanced from each other. Mainly my fault, I must admit it. At first I justified my behavior by pointing out that since she was settling down with Tom, both needed privacy to build their new life. The truth is I have distanced myself. I did not want to read the disappointment in her eyes with each of my new failures. I have enough with Brandon's. Beth was right to doubt me and I resent myself the most. It is true! What is wrong with me that I am unable to settle down for good? If I don't do it for my fiancé, then what the hell can make me decide to ask this to myself?

I am not the only one who does not know what I want. As I supposed, Lilas and Leon split after a few months. I note that she is progressing. Usually the count was in weeks. It is a pity. I like Leon. We saw each other several times for our foursome outings and I admit a friendship was born between us. Even today, despite the fact that he is no longer with Lilas, we continue to see him. He is by the way the only friend I can really confide in without him judging me. He has kind of become my confidant, and I can never thank him enough to be there for me under all circumstances. After an umpteenth argument with Brandon, he told me in a joking tone that I should leave Brandon and start a relationship with him. I adore Leon, but I don't see him that way. Despite our rants, I'm addicted to Brandon and our quarrels are always white-hot knives stabbed in my heart. Even today I am afraid to walk through the front door and tell him that I got kicked out of my child care job. I thought this job would be a good workout for our role as parents, but the parents in question, for whom I worked, did not like my presence in their house. Well, especially the lady, who suspected her husband was feeding fantasies about me. Jealousy, when you have a hold on us! So, she fired me manu militari after catching her husband intently admiring my ass while I bent down to pick up a toy, and now I have to tell my fiancé who doesn't give a damn what were the reasons for my dismissal. All he sees is that I have no job, period. My phone rings, offering me a reprieve before the upcoming argument, and in spite of myself I smile when I see the name that appears on the screen.

— Hi.

— Hi pretty Mal. What's new?

A deep sigh escapes from my lips while my shoulders sag.

— Mallory?

— I got fired.

A first tear comes down my cheek at full speed. The first of a long series that I have been holding back since I left the house of my former employers.

— Hey Mal, don't cry my beautiful. You know I can't stand it. Tell me what happened?

— The husband was staring at me once again without being discreet and this did not suit his wife's taste!

— OK, OK. Calm down. It's not your fault, sweetheart. You couldn't help it if the guy couldn't handle his libido in the face of your beauty. Their marital relationship doesn't concern you. They're the ones who have a problem to deal with. Come on, stop crying.

I continuously sob and I wonder how Leon is understanding what I am trying to say.

— What will Brandon say? We're going to fight again and...

— Stop Mal. Brandon loves you and if he is not able to accept you as you are then he does not deserve you. You are a great girl and any man would be happy to be with you, okay?

I am still down, but Leon has the knack for doing good to my ego. I breathe deeply several times to get over it.

— Thank you. It felt good to release the pressure.

— You're welcome. I have told you this already. I will always be here for you. You can call me day or night.

I do not know how to answer to so much kindness. Sometimes, I think he expects from me more than I can give him, only, in a very selfish way, I do not want him to walk away from me.

— Thanks again. I have to go.

— Call me later to tell me how it went. I'll be there in a minute if you need to.

I do not answer. I'm not sure I'll be able to call him after the conversation that awaits me.

— Promise me, Mal.

— I'll try.

I hang up before he goes on. I have already involved him too much in my relationship. It is time for me to act as an adult and take responsibility for my actions.

Despite my good intentions, I very reluctantly come into the house. Brandon is there, on the sofa, arms folded and eyes fixed on me. Obviously, he was waiting for me.

— Hello.

— You don't have a job anymore?

I shudder despite of myself as I take off my shoes. I am trying to buy some time, but he is not in the mood to give me a break.

— You don't have to put this off. You stayed in the car for half an hour. Were you looking for a way to once more tell me the news?

— It wasn't my fault, Brandon...

He does not let me finish the sentence, he stands up abruptly and raises up his arms.

— It's never your fault Mallory. You are never to blame, but it ends up being the same: you don't have a job and it's still up to me to take care of everything, from groceries bills to the gas of my car that you use to go to interviews that again lead to nothing.

This is the first time he has accused me of being a kept woman and I take it very badly, to say the least.

— I'm sorry to be a burden to you. I thought that by living together, the couples were united, but obviously I was wrong.

He raises his voice, getting more and more angry as he begins to pace the room in front of me.

— United doesn't mean that I have to pay for everything while you take it easy.

I, too, am exasperated by his unfounded words.

— Because according to you I don't do anything? I spend my time looking for a job!

— That's the point Mallory. You're just looking. Only, you find less and less, and the few times you're hired, you barely hold a job for a week before leaving and then it starts all over again. It's endless and I'm sick of it!

I don't know if I should laugh or cry. I am so worn out to see our relationship crumbling for so little. Because for me it is ridiculous. As long as we love each other, that should be what mattered the most and our relationship should strengthen through the trials we go through. Only, on the contrary,

our relationship is torn apart at every obstacle and I am afraid that soon there will be nothing left despite all the love that we have. I then launch the first idea that comes through my head.

— We should have a child. With no delay.

This has the merit of stopping him and then he sets his eyes on me. I try to explain myself before his anger resumes and he will no longer be listening to me.

— Why wait? You said it yourself, I'm available, I'll have plenty of time to take care of this. What matters is that we love each other and that this child is a proof of it.

Brandon laughs out so loud that it echoes in our sparsely furnished living room.

— You suggest to me to have a baby you will take care of, while I toil like a mad man to take care of you and your offspring?

My offspring? I almost choked on my saliva and somehow I sit down on a chair before collapsing on the floor.

— Because do you really imagine that I still want to have a baby with you? After all our arguments, do you really think I want to be this committed to you?

His eyes are icy while he scrutinizes me, waiting for my answer. However, what can I answer to this? I realize that I was not aware of the gap there was between us. I thought it was only a passing setback and that eventually we would get over it. However, I am far away from reality. I can only speak in a whisper, my voice is stuck in my throat.

— No, I suppose not.

Brandon is worn out. He collapses on the sofa with all his weight, making the seat squeak, while he resumes in a dreary tone.

— Honestly Mallory, I'm not even sure I want to go on.

Second dagger in my heart. I do not want him to clarify his thoughts but at the same time, I need to understand the extent of the damage.

— Continue what?

— Us.

I have to be masochist, asking him to clarify.

— That is?

— I'm not sure I want to live with you anymore. I think we should take a break for a while.

A break... Everyone knows the meaning of "taking a break" for a couple. It is a polite way, if there is one, to break up without saying it clearly. If I had not been sitting, I probably would have fallen to the ground in pain. I'm losing my footing and I need Beth more than ever. I need my best friend to heal my wounds. However, I'm too proud to call for help.

— I'll give you time to turn around, but I'd like you to pack your bags as soon as possible.

Because on top of that he is kicking me out of the house? I stand there with my mouth open and my arms dangling, while my life goes adrift.

— You don't have to look at me that way. You can't afford to pay the rent and the expenses. In any event all the bills already come to my name, and I'm the one who paid for all the furniture.

In one day, I lost everything. My job, my dreams of an ideal life and my fiancé. Ex-fiancé. So I better get used to it right away. I get up with a stiff movement.

— Why wait? I'm going to pack my bags.

— Mallory.

He sighs before he continues.

— Don't take it like that. I do it for the both of us.

I'm choking with rage.

— For us? So, you are kicking me out to repair our relationship?

At least he has the decency to look down.

— You only do it for yourself. And now, if you allow me, I will hurry to pack my things so that my presence will no longer bothers you.

Luckily, Brandon doesn't follow me into the room. I wouldn't have had the courage to continue our verbal jousting. The day is not over and my heart is already in tatters when I pack my clothes in a travel bag. I only take the essentials, having no more space, and the sound of the zipper when I close the bag makes me realize the finality of the last events. I am going to have to start from scratch, to rebuild myself, and I'm going to have to do it alone. Go back to my parents? No need to even think about. I am old enough not to live with mom and dad and then have to account for everything I do.

I leave the house without saying a word and without looking back. Brandon kindly offered me to take his car. I bite my tongue so as not to tell him that he could shove the key up to where I thought. As if it were not to later on scold me for having used HIS car! I'd rather have my feet on fire walking than endure another humiliation.

## Chapter 3

### Mallory

I don't know how long I have been walking along the road, but the strap of my travel bag is starting to hurt my shoulder and my legs have trouble supporting my weight, to which it is now added the weight of my big bag. I drag myself around aimlessly, not knowing where to go, when a car pulls up next to me. I turn my head in the opposite direction, having no desire to explain to a stranger what I am doing on the side of the road with my stuff on my back. The unwelcome stranger decides otherwise. I hear the passenger window coming down and the music coming from the car twists my eardrums. The hard-core music is carried by the wind at a mind-boggling sound level. Suddenly the sound dies off and a voice that I did not expect addresses me.

— Mal? What are you doing here?

I turn around to be sure I am not hallucinating, but no, it is my friend behind the wheel of his car. I would cry for joy if my tears were not dry. All I do is stare at him, without moving or answering. He then decides to pull over to the side of the road and goes around the car to join me.

— You're okay?

I nod, unable to speak.

— Let me help you.

He takes my bag and throws it in the trunk before opening the passenger door.

— Hop in. I'll take you home. Let's both talk and you'll tell me what's going on.

I get into the car like an automaton, always silent, and my friend straps on my seatbelt that I did not even have the reflex to do. I suddenly feel less alone and I hope that emptying my bag will allow me to see more clearly and have a plan for the future, because I cannot wander aimlessly forever.

I realize I had never been to his house. Not even once. His house is small, away from the road and from any neighbors. The small path which leads to his front door is rough and I jump on my seat. That dangerously stirs my stomach, which revolts with these chaotic movements.

— Sorry. I haven't had time to fix the outside of the house yet.

I give him a weak smile, keeping my mouth tight so as not to vomit on the gear stick. Fortunately, it does not last more than a minute and we park in front of a small exposed brickwork house that has a crazy charm.

— It's very pretty.

He smiles at me and a dimple appears on his left cheek.

— Thank you, I inherited it from my grandmother a few years back and I've been trying to revamp it ever since.

He goes around the car to open my door, very gentlemanly.

— Come on. I'll make you a nice cup of tea and we can talk.

He grabs my hand and I think of rejecting it. I have not held the hand of any one but Brandon's for a long time and this strange, bigger, stronger hand leaves an unpleasant impression on me. My host does not notice my distress and makes me go inside by an old wooden red door that closes after I come in. I barely have time to detail his entrance decorated with a mirror that leads me to a state-of-the-art kitchen, perfectly equipped, with a huge piano and a large island lined with comfortable high stools.

— Sit down there. I'll prepare you some tea.

I take the opportunity to turn around and look at the house with curious eyes. Everything is modern, friendly looking, and yet I feel awkward. There are no photos, no trinkets, no traces of life. Everything is superb, but sanitized, like a show house without a soul. It is difficult to imagine that a single man lives in this place. Where is the mess? The dirty laundry lying around? Any sign of life, please!

— You take two sugars, don't you?

I turn my attention back to my friend.

— Yes, thank you.

He places my cup in front of me and I take advantage of the warmth on my hands to refocus. It feels good to be taken care of. However, I have to think about what comes next.

— Are you ready to tell me what happened after you hung up?

It is true that when we spoke, I was in tears, confined in my car. My ex-car. Everything became ex after that phone call.

— I told you to call me if you needed to.

— I didn't want to disturb you.

Which is true. In part. I already felt I was a burden for my ex-fiancé. I did not want to become one for Leon, the friend who has supported me in recent months, against all odds.

— You'll never bother me Mal. I have already told you.

He plays with my fingers on the table and a shiver lifts my spine. I get my hand back and I hug my shoulders to warm me, although I doubt that the cold is responsible for my goosebumps.

— I had an argument with Brandon.

The memory of the last words uttered by the ex-love of my life clogs my throat with a ball as big as a football.

— It's going to get better Mal. As always.

The ball gets bigger in my windpipe. I feel like I am suffocating,

— No. No, it's not going to get any better. He asked me to leave. He wants us to take a break.

I start laughing with a laugh that is both hysterical and somewhat frightening, even to my ears.

— Everyone knows what it means to take a break. He has broken up. He has left me. For good.

Leon purses his lips in front of me which now become invisible behind his full black beard.

— Brandon is an idiot. He will regret it.

My laughter gradually turns into tearful sobs and a torrent of tears invades my face before I realize it. It seems that the tear fountain has not dried up.

— He swept away more than two years of relationship as if nothing had happened. As if this time together did not matter. The only one to blame is me. I should have made more effort. I should have listened to his fears. He just wanted me to find a job and...

— Shh. Stop it Mal. Breathe. You're holding your breath.

The fact is I have taken no air during my tirade. Remorse takes my breath away. Leon caresses my back from bottom to top, instructing me to inhale and exhale on his rhythm. The heat of his palm crosses the fabric of my top and once again, I find that he is getting too close to me.

— I'm going to go.

— Don't be silly Mallory. You're not in a position to go anywhere. You don't even have a car. Do you have a place to go at least?

I slump a little more in my seat, shoulders hunched.

— I'm going to have to go back to my parents.

Despite my reluctance, I have no other options. Tears of shame bead in the corner of my eyes. Soon I will turn 27 and I will have to return to live with my parents as if I were a child. I am angry at myself for being unable to be responsible of myself.

— You could stay here for a while.

I jerk my head up and I look at Leon as if a third head or a horn had sprung out of his forehead.

— That's very nice of you Leon, but it's not a good idea.

He stands up his whole height, towering over me, and something like fear creeps into me.

— It wasn't really a suggestion, Mal.

I get up and walk back to the door.

— You're starting to scare me, Leon. It's better if I go.

He walks towards me like a predator cornering his prey. That is exactly how I feel: a prey stuck against a door that refuses to open despite my desperate attempts to turn the handle.

— We're going to be fine the two of us, Mal.

His words have a hard time breaking through the fog of my panic. I shake my head, but I feel like it is wrapped in cotton. I have a hard time putting my thoughts together and when I open my mouth, I suddenly feel my tongue weighs a ton. Halfway to the door I collapse as Leon gets closer and closer. He does not seem worried about my sudden weakness and a suspicion takes hold on me.

— What have you done to me?

I can barely hear my voice. He puts his hand on my cheek and I am unable to even start the movement of revulsion I would like to make. My legs barely hold me. I feel myself slipping little by little to the ground. Before I fall to the ground, Leon passes an arm under my legs and on my back and presses me against his wide chest. My head is tilting back at a painful angle, but I am unable to hold it straight.

— I thought I had a little more time. Your room is not quite ready. I hope you will like it.

What is he talking about? How long has he been planning to kidnap me? And why? I thought he was my friend! My questions will go unanswered. I am unable to express them and I end up sinking into unconsciousness as Leon lays me down on a soft surface.

My eyelids flutter under the strong light. The sun assaults my retina with its light rays. I am disoriented, unable to remember where I am or what brought me to this unknown place. I try to rub my eyes to clear my vision, but my right wrist is stopped with a metallic noise. I insist, but this only causes me pain. A cold metal badly bites my skin. Then I resort to my left hand to rub my eyes, and I can see what is restraining me. Because that's what it is. A handcuff that is keeping me prisoner, tied to a bed. Panic wins me over. I look everywhere around. I am alone in an unknown room and my belongings are stored on open shelves, as if I had been living here for a long time. Anguish twists my guts.

— Is there anyone here?

There is only silence to answer my call.

— DOES ANYONE HEAR ME?

My voice comes out higher than I wanted, but whatever. In the next room, a chair squeaks on the tile and the sound of footsteps approaching speed up my pulse. When the ajar door opens, I cannot believe my eyes.

— Leon???

His smile has something unhealthy and disturbing. It is however no different from usual. It is probably due to the incredible situation I face.

— You're finally awake, I didn't realize I had forced the dose a little too much. Do you have a migraine? Nausea?

It's really a surreal situation. I am chained to a bed and my kidnapper worries about my health after he has drugged me? Because that is what he did, if I understand well.

— Why am I here? Why did you tie me up?

He sits on the edge of the bed and by reflex I move away from him, which makes him sigh.

— Would you have stayed with me if I had asked you kindly?

No, definitely not. I'm trying to slow down my heart rate while he keeps justifying himself.

— We are made for each other Mal. I knew that as soon as I saw you for the first time.

— You were with Lilas. You were good together.

He plays with the strands of my hair and I cannot run away. I cannot stretch my arm any more, and my wrist hurts from being pulled like that.

— She wasn't meant for me. All she thinks about is having fun and fucking. I'm looking for something more serious. I knew right away that you were a passionate and incredibly romantic person. You are my ideal woman.



I try to reason with him.

— I am not the one for you, I am not constant. I am unable to commit myself.

— You don't want to work, which suits me very well since I want you to stay at home. With me. Remember, I work from home. We'll be together all the time. I make enough for both. We're going to be very happy.

He leans over my face, lips forward, and I spit in his face to make him go back. He grunts, wiping himself with the back of his sleeve.

— You will come to your senses. You'll be mine. Forever.

— Never Leon. NEVER.

Then he sits on top of me squeezing my stomach and I gasp under his weight. I am afraid he wants to rape me, so I start screaming nonstop. Then he buries my head in the mattress to muffle the sound and I suffocate with the sheets that get into my wide-open mouth.

— Stop shouting! I am not going to take you. I just want to mark you. You're mine. And when you finally understand that we are soulmates, you will be proud to show it to everyone.

I stop screaming to be able to breathe more freely and hear him taking something out of his pocket. He then lowers the collar of my T-shirt and I start shaking again until I feel a cold metal on the top of my back.

— A mark as a proof of your love for me.

The blade then sinks into my skin as if in butter under my howl of pain. Leon slashes my back with a vertical gash and my blood flows down my neck.

— You're going to be perfect.

After that he leaves me there, stunned, and with my body injured.

## **Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.**

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