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IN AISLES KENOPTIC HIRAETH

Ariana Glăvan

Editura Emia

CHAPTER 1

Callaway sat at his desk. The only light came from a small candle. He sat and watched it burn, chugging some coffee down. Soft old jazz played in the background. His eyes hurt, but he couldn't look away. The door opened.

Evan: Sir?

Callaway's eyes snapped up at him.

Callaway: Um... yes?

Callaway rubbed his eyes.

Evan: You're quiet.

(He flicked the switch on.)

Callaway: Ah—seriously?

(He blinked and blew out the candle.)

Evan: It's late. I wanted to see if you're doing okay.

Callaway: I'm fine, seriously...

The air felt heavy.

Evan: Uh... one of the ladies made tea.

Callaway: What?

Silence.

Evan put the tea on the desk in front of him.

Callaway: Why would she?

(Evan shrugged.)

(Callaway sipped it.)

Callaway: Tell her I said thank you.

Evan: Yes, sir...

(He bowed.)

Evan left.

Jazz made Callaway's mind drift again. He looked outside and saw the lake passing by.

Callaway: (hums)

He remembered...

Callaway cut cucumbers for the others.

Cassie: We're hungry!!

Callaway: Thanks, though... but why?

Ana: I wanted to thank you...

Callaway: You don't have to thank me. I've been doing this for years. You're not the only woman I've helped.

Ana: I wanted to do something nice.

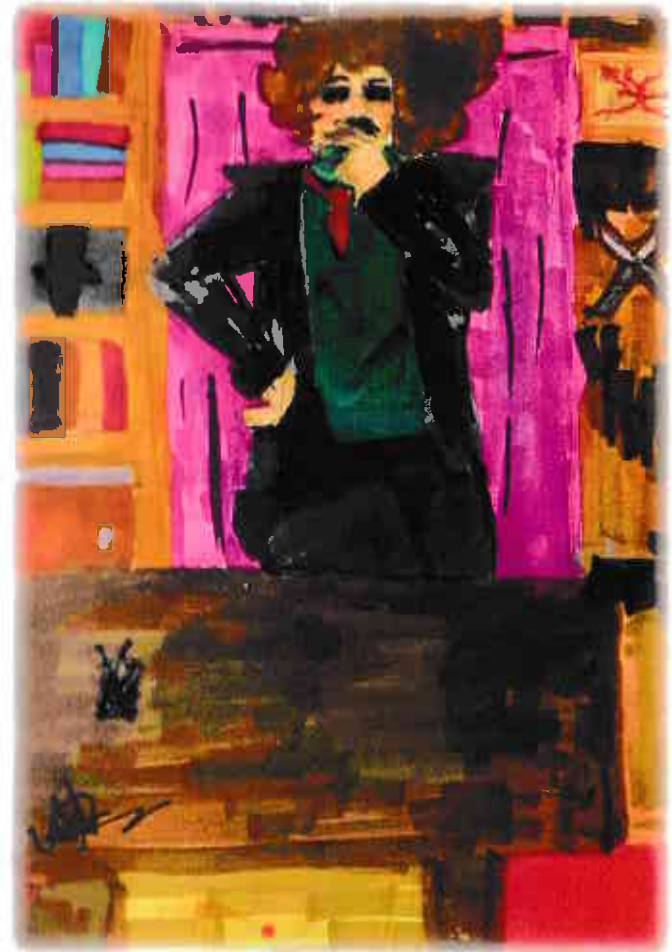
Silence.

Callaway: And I appreciate it.

Silence washes over them again.

Ana: So... how many women have you saved?

Callaway: Lost count. But not enough, surely...



(Callaway leaves the room.)